

## **Aire and Calder Methodist Circuit Vision 2014**

The role of the Circuit is to develop imaginative approaches to staffing and the use of the resources including the Model Trust Fund in supporting the churches which respond to one or more of these objectives. The Circuit wishes to challenge churches to take imaginative and risk taking initiatives in mission development and spiritual growth.

The following objectives, formed from the church responses to the three questions posed by the Circuit Executive and the Executive's own additional proposals, will give a clear focus for the basis of the Circuit's development for the next five years.

### **Mission Objectives**

#### Worship:

1. Encourage the development of different forms of worship, particularly with regard to styles of worship which may hold greater relevance to irregular or occasional worshippers.
  - Church Councils may like to involve the Revd Wayne Grewcock as a consultant in reviewing its worship life and determining future style(s) of worship in the light of available resources
  - Use a “worship consultation” to think through ideas and appoint a small group of interested people to take matters further, maybe from more than one church

#### Learning & Caring:

2. Continue to develop newer forms of Christian education which stimulate an interest in the Bible and biblical themes, which address current levels of ignorance of many things Christian. This includes work in day schools, in community groups as well as through church programmes. If and where possible these developments should be undertaken in partnership with other churches & ecumenical organisations.
  - Make positive use of “a gift of ....” series, making them available at coffee mornings, open days;
  - Hold holiday fun events / clubs which are social and educational in programme design;
  - Consider the establishment of “Prayer Spaces” in local schools and other community settings
  - Stimulate interest in community projects which will involve thinking as well as doing;
  - Stimulate interest in projects overseas which are both awareness raising and practical in their outcome;
  - Use the different form of visual arts to explore a range of themes, issues and challenges
    - And ensure as possible the above includes opportunities for worship, prayer, and reflection
3. Encourage all members of congregations to share in prayer & Bible study, in their variety of forms and approaches, and to take an interest in their own spiritual development through sharing in learning programmes & activities.
  - Encourage the use of personal Bible study guides like “Daily Bread” or the Daily Bible study on the Methodist Church web site ([www.methodist.org.uk](http://www.methodist.org.uk))

- Encourage the public and personal use of the Methodist Prayer Handbook
- Consider the provision of a prayer room / space on the church premises which can be open during the week

#### Service

4. Develop "open house" & other pastoral activities which have hospitality, welcome and listening as their focus and particularly among those who suffer from loneliness, bereavement and illness.

- Review the needs of the community to discover how the church can best respond to people who are lonely and vulnerable
- Review church property and refurbish or redecorate to ensure anyone coming into the property finds a warm, welcoming and hospitable space and in which they find a welcoming people

5. Work to support the various Methodist charities and Methodist funds through sharing in their programmes and themes, and raising awareness in our churches and communities as to the respective needs of the mainly vulnerable people they work with.

- Ensure Action for Children, Methodist Homes, World Church, All You Can (MRDF), Christian Aid are included sometime during the year, particularly using a designated Sunday (if there is one) to give time and energy to the charity.

6. Support and encourage mission amongst the economically poor and homeless through direct action or through local charities who are responding to their needs and to challenge the injustice they suffer from. Offer hospitality and welcome to migrants and refugees who find themselves within our communities.

- Give committed support to organisations & programmes like Community Awareness Programme, Trinity Mission, Pontefract Food Bank, Christians Against Poverty

7. Continue to work towards becoming a Fair Trade Circuit, and work with other global justice initiatives advocated by the Methodist Church.

- Use fairly traded goods as much as possible
- Support the work of Traidcraft Exchange, Traidcraft plc's linked development charity
- Become familiar with material from the Methodist Peace Fellowship on the themes of peace and reconciliation

#### Evangelism

8. Church growth: encourage members of congregations who are not members of the Methodist Church to become members; that becoming a member is a further step in their discipleship & a willingness to take some responsibility for the church.

- Recommend that the Circuit Learning & Development Group reviews *Compass* and promotes ways in which it can be used across the Circuit, including it being used for membership preparation groups

- Set up Alpha groups in your own style and other such courses for people to explore the faith and social issues of the day
- Research the possibility of a “Fresh Expression” project

9. Offer opportunities for discussion about ethical & faith related issues, encouraging non-Christians to join in.

- Make use of the visual arts - set up exhibitions or use film or drama to raise awareness and challenge attitudes and values
- Set up community based discussion groups on topical issues

### **Circuit**

10. World Church: Develop a missional partnership with the Methodist Church in Italy (OPCEMI). This will help the Circuit to look beyond itself & grow an international perspective through prayer & action, learning about another's context through exchange visits, personal relationships.

11. Develop a financial framework which will enable the Circuit to balance its budget over the course of five years, allowing the Model Trust Fund to be used for creative missional purposes in property development & mission programmes (as already agreed & as suggested above).

12. Support the presence and development of a Christian, and where possible and appropriate, a Methodist presence in all the main centres of population in the Circuit.

### **Resolutions**

1. The Circuit Assembly agrees that the strategic objectives as proposed form the basis for the Circuit's missional direction for the next five years.
2. The Assembly recommends that each Church Council reviews the objectives in the light of their own mission strategies and agrees which ones they will pursue, informing the Executive of their decisions.
  - To help with further circuit planning and maintaining momentum, it would be very helpful if some initial feedback is given to the Executive by 23<sup>rd</sup> November.
  - The Executive will ensure information is shared across the circuit
3. The Assembly agrees to hold an annual conversation in the Assembly through stories and developments made in pursuance of the agreed objectives.
4. The Assembly agrees to make finance available from the Model Trust Fund so that Church Councils can pursue their missional objectives with confidence.

#### **Notes:**

- Such requests will need to be within the criteria set for the Circuit Model Trust Fund
- The financial situation allowing, the Circuit Executive will consider the appointment of additional (paid) staff to support churches in the development of the above objectives,

in particular where churches are willing and able to work together on agreed programmes. Paid staff could be part or full time depending on need, and be available for a wide range of contexts e.g. for family work, children's or youth work, pastoral outreach, evangelistic opportunities.

5. The Assembly delegates the financial decision making relating to the objectives to the Circuit Executive but expects the Assembly to be updated through open and transparent reporting. The Executive will act within the agreed annual budgetary constraints and the terms of the Model Trust Fund.

**September 2014**