

Minutes of Swansea & Gower Circuit Meeting at Pitton
on 18th June 2015 at 7.30 pm

Present: Rev. Howard Long in the chair and 36 Members present.

Apologies: Rev. Gill Evans, Kathleen Jones, Owain Davies, Dianne Price, Ruth Pointer, Rev. Siperire Mugadzaweta, Martin Gregson, Ann Gregson, Sandra Pengelly, Michael Roberts.

Devotions: Led by Rev. Leslie Noon who also gave a presentation of the highlights of the launch weekend of 'Uniting Church Sketty'.

Welcome: Rev. Long expressed his thanks to Rev. Noon and re-iterated what a wonderful weekend it was! He then went on to welcome new members to the Circuit Meeting and visitors: Jean Lang (South Wales Safeguarding Officer), Janice Heslop and Joan James (Morrison) Laurie Higgs (Sketty) and Liz Harris - Student Minister studying at Queens College, Birmingham - who introduced herself to the Meeting.

Minutes & Matters Arising: The Minutes of the previous meeting held at Sketty in March 2015 were signed by Rev. Long as a true and accurate record. There were no matters arising.

Pastoral Concerns: The Meeting noted, with sadness, the recent passing of Elizabeth Bevan (Murton), Geoff Clifford (Murton), Pauline May (Brunswick), Sylvia Lewis (Brynhyfryd), Elwyn West (Brynhyfryd) and Rev. Donald Knighton (Former chair of the South Wales Methodist District). A memorial service was held on 16th May in Abergavenny for Rev. Knighton.

A service was held at R.A.F. Pembrey where the late Rev. Alf Austin, was Chaplain to the R.A.F. From 1978 – 2014. Commanding Officer, Guy Jeffs, spoke movingly of Alf's ministry there and it was appropriate that his final resting place should be on the beach facing Worms Head, linking his ministry to the R.A.F. and the Llanelli and Swansea and Gower Methodist circuits. Prayers were led by Rev. Howard Long.

Representatives to Synod: The seven lay representatives to Synod at Newtown on 19th September 2015 are: Bernard Gwyther (Circuit Treasurer), Heather Coleman (Circuit Steward), Sybil Smith, Huw Davies, Cerys Davies, Caroline Buckler and Cynthia Mumford.

Synod Policy Committee: Rev. Leslie Noon gave a report from the Synod Policy Committee, highlighting four items:

- 1) A new Synod Sabbatical Secretary is urgently needed. This is an important admin./pastoral role for ministers.
- 2) Report from District Safeguarding Reps regarding cases in the Wales Synod and important changes in the way we do things in light of the Past Cases Review.
- 3) Marriage and Relationship Working Party which involves a two year process of

reflection on this issue. There will be a Connexional Resourcing event to which the District can send two representatives. There will also be two District events in order to facilitate Churches and Circuits being better informed. Reports back to Synod by February 2016.

4) Stationing update: 12 of 12 appointments filled in Wales.

Circuit Policy: The amended Circuit Policy was unanimously approved by the Meeting. (Proposed by Derek Norton, seconded by Heather Coleman). Rev. Long said that he would like churches to discuss and report back on ways in which the Policy is being implemented.

Finance: A Finance Report was presented by Bernard Gwyther, Circuit Treasurer, and was approved unanimously.

Local Preachers: A report was received and circulated.

Rev. Long congratulated Selina Taylor on her successful completion of the Local Preachers Course. Her Accreditation Service will take place at Pitton on 20th August at 7.p.m.

Rev. Long was also pleased to announce that the Ordination of Bruce Sawyer and Lorrette Hinson would take place on 28th June at the Methodist Conference at Southport. Cards of congratulations will be sent from the Circuit.

Safeguarding: Alistair Elkes-Jones has stepped down as Circuit Safeguarding Officer and Rev. Long thanked him for his three years service to the Circuit. Jean Lang (Safeguarding Officer for South Wales) gave a report on the Past Cases Review and highlighted some key issues. She reported that there is a very dedicated team dealing with victims of past abuse but added that we must all be diligent and transparent regarding this issue. She referred Members to the Methodist Church Website where the report can be read in full.

Mission:

1) Circuit Project 2015 – Amelia Trust Farm;

A report was received and circulated.

Janet Neilson added that fund-raising was on-going (£3,000 had been raised so far) and asked for volunteers to help with the farm garden. Booking forms for the 'Quiet Day' are available.

2) New Circuit Project: A report was received and circulated regarding 'Zambuko ra Jehovah' (Bridging the Gap with Christ). It was proposed that the project run for two years from October 2015. Proposed by Sybil Smith – it was carried unanimously.

3) Connect: The Meeting was pleased to learn that Myra Maddock had received an award in the category 'Clarity of the Christian Message ' which is one of six presented annually to church magazines throughout the country from all

denominations, at a meeting of the Association of Church Editors.

4) Ty Croeso & Foodbank: A report was received and circulated. It was noted that £1000 was received from the Council for Voluntary Services, Swansea.

5) All We Can: Rev. Pam Cram and Alan Cram gave a presentation regarding the work of 'All We Can' (see Connect Magazine) and about Alan's visit, earlier this year to an 'All We Can' partner in Tanzania. Resource packs, posters, donation forms and an 'Inspirational Women' resource are available for churches. Contact Rev. Cram for further details. There is also an excellent article in the Methodist Recorder.

N.B. *Alan Cram is now an 'All We Can' speaker, available to give talks in worship or other events.*

Property:

1) Schemes: Elaine Davies reported that the **Wesley** refurbishment scheme at an estimated cost of £53,000 is proceeding well. The current total raised is £26,560. Further fund-raising events are planned including an 'Evening with Kevin Johns' in November and a Dutch Auction.

2) Sketty: Sketty Uniting Church is closed at present because of a problem with dry rot. Services continue at Bethel until further notice.

3) Manses: Derek Norton reported that the manses were up to date regarding maintenance and that a new roof was scheduled in July for the Sketty Manse

4) Quinquennials: Inspections are on-going. Brunswick : completed .
Horton and Pitton: completed .

Forward Planning:

1) Penlan: The church at Penlan is being well used by church/ community groups including the Christian gardening project and Bible study/prayer group. Discussions are taking place regarding worshipping together at the fellowship at Mynydd-Bach.

2) Morrison: A report was received and circulated.

3) Brunswick: A report was received and circulated.

4) Murton: Rev. Andrew Walker reported that proposals for the refurbishment of the chapel area have yet to be agreed and costs to be examined. An internal leadership review is being conducted regarding different areas of church life.

AOB

- 1) Janet Neilson announced that Brin Jones (Wesley) has taken on the Chair of S.A.C.R.E. (Standard Advisory Council for Religious Education).
- 2) Swansea Hope celebration at St. Helen's will take place this year on June 28th.

The Grace was shared and the meeting closed at 9.04 pm.

Date of Next Meeting **17.09.15 at Clydach**

Future Circuit Meeting : 03.12.15 at Mumbles 17.03 2016