



## Derbyshire North East Circuit Meeting 17th June 2025

This meeting at Derby Road was chaired by Rev. Gill Newton (Chair of District & titular Superintendent). Opening devotions were led by Tom Surgay (Young People's Pioneer).

No correspondence had been received but the meeting agreed to send letters of condolence to George Lewis and John Fidler, both recently bereaved.

**In matters relating to the wider church**, attention was drawn to the Sheffield District Gathering on 13th September to be held at Staincross Methodist Church, Barnsley. This Gathering will see the launch of the District Mission Strategy. Conference will take place in Telford from 26th June to 2nd July. If you wish to see what is going on, sessions will be live screened (go to the Methodist Church website and then the Conference section).

**The Mission of the Circuit.** Following meetings involving staff at District and Connexional levels, Bolsover Trustees had recommended that Duckmanton Church be sold. The Duckmanton congregation ceased to meet five years ago and the building contains asbestos sheeting. Circuit meeting approved the decision to sell the church noting that sale proceeds could be used for other projects and that missional activities could still happen in the village but in different forms. On a positive note, Bolsover and Barlborough Churches reported growing congregations and further encouraging reports were received about the work going on in Barrow Hill and the Rother Ward and among young people.

**In regards to resourcing the Circuit**, the meeting received a very thoughtful Finance Report from Roger Jones. In addition to approving grants towards a Methodism presence at Chesterfield Pride on 19th July and to help up to 30 young people from across the Circuit to attend 3Generate, the meeting agreed to include in next year's budget a mission grants fund and property grants fund of £10k each. The meeting also approved a recommendation that the part-time young people's pioneer post be re-designated as a full-time local lay pastor's post starting in September 2025. This will add 6% to total staffing costs next year.

The meeting noted however that without receipts from the sale of property the Circuit's operational financial deficit is likely to continue for the duration of the five year forward staffing plan. (It is to be noted that a buyer has been found for the Bolsover manse at a price of £425,000, that the sale of the Hillstown church site may raise £100,000 and that the Hasland manse is to be sold with the proceeds to be ring fenced to buy, at a later date, a new manse in the Bolsover area). Rev. Gill Newton pointed out that many other Circuits up and down the country are in the same position. Roger has carried out an analysis of Circuit income from local churches. This shows that annual payments to the Circuit agreed by local churches for the period between 2020/21 and 2025/26 have declined by 43% when inflation is taken into account. Over the same period the membership of the Circuit has fallen by 16%. It is acknowledged that just about every church is finding that its free will offerings are declining and certainly not keeping up with inflation but it was suggested that the Circuit could, in the future, recommend some modest incremental increases in payments to the Circuit from some churches. As a point of interest, if levels of church payments to the Circuit were to be maintained at 2020/21 levels and adjusted for inflation then per capita contributions would have to rise by £6.00 per week by 2029/30. There is much food for thought here.

This was the final Circuit meeting to be chaired by the Rev. Gill Newton and the final meeting for Roger Jones and Norman Buck as Circuit stewards. They have worked tirelessly for the Circuit over many years and were thanked for their efforts.

Please remember all of these matters in your prayers over the coming weeks.

Steven