



**Preston Ribble  
Methodist Circuit**

## **Strategy and Resources Group**

### **Update 2 - February 2017**

This is the second in a series of updates for church members in the Preston Ribble Circuit. It has been written to keep you up to date with the work of the Circuit Strategy and Resources Group. The Group was set up by the Circuit Meeting in 2016 to consider the challenges and opportunities facing the 14 Methodist Churches in the Circuit. These relate to the mission, ministry, worship and discipleship in our churches – and the resources to support them.

#### **What did we tell you in the last update?**

Last November, we explained the challenges and opportunities facing the Methodist Church in the Preston Ribble Circuit. These relate to our plans for paid and unpaid ministry, the use of resources and buildings, how we worship together and our priorities for outreach and social action. We explained that the Circuit Strategy and Resources Group had agreed to conduct its review in 4 stages over the course of a year. We also confirmed that no decisions had yet been taken but that “doing nothing was not an option!”

#### **Where are we up to now?**

The Strategy and Resources Group has undertaken a range of activities during the autumn of 2016 which have included visits to other circuits, reading and research into growing churches, arranging reviews of church finances, property and the age profile of members. During October and November, meetings also took place with a small number of representatives of each of the 14 churches - an invaluable opportunity to get to know the circuit in greater depth.

The Strategy and Resources Group then led a Circuit Consultation meeting at Kingsfold Methodist Church on the 11th January 2017. This event was arranged to feedback on the main themes which had emerged from the work of the Group and was attended by 104 people from 12 churches across the Circuit.

During this meeting, the Group also outlined a number of ideas based on 6 major themes and asked for comments and feedback from those present. The themes discussed were:

- Spirituality/Discipleship
- Worshipping Communities
- Pastoral Care
- Mission in our communities
- Leadership
- Resources

The Group is now thinking through the feedback gathered on the evening and developing more detailed options for further discussion. A further consultation evening with young adults in the circuit is also being arranged.

The Strategy and Resources Group has also produced a “Case for Change” document for consideration by every Church Council in the Circuit at its meeting in February 2017. Please ask a church steward if you would like to receive a copy of this document.

### **What are the possible outcomes from a Circuit Strategy?**

Given the work undertaken to date, the Circuit may be offered the opportunity to:

- Consider how people can be supported to delve deeper into their faith, explore their spirituality and in some cases, consider their vocation;
- Reimagine our patterns and places of worship to ensure they respond to changes in society and opportunities for mission;
- Renew our approach and resources for pastoral care so this can be offered as a ministry of the whole church;
- Offer a clear approach to mission opportunities in our communities. This may involve ceasing some circuit or church activities where it is possible to say “mission accomplished;”
- Explore and develop new models of paid and unpaid ministry which could include a different mix of ordained and lay roles;
- Rethink how we work together across the localities of the circuit to resource the mission and administration of the church.

### **When will I hear more?**

The group will be providing a formal update to the Circuit Meeting on the 14<sup>th</sup> March 2017. A further update like this will be produced to tell you about the actions agreed at this meeting.

### **Who is on the Strategy and Resources Group?**

Jan Astley

Rev Katharine Bland

Rev John Fisher

Rev Malcolm Hickox

Rev Mark Slaney

Andrew Bennett (chair)

John Ferris

Stephen Gregory

Rob Matthews

### **Questions or concerns**

If you have any questions, suggestions or feedback about the Circuit Strategy, please use our dedicated email address: [strategyprmc@gmail.com](mailto:strategyprmc@gmail.com) - or feel free to contact any of the Group members if you would like to discuss any of the issues raised in this leaflet.