

The Methodist Church

East Lincolnshire Circuit 17/6

Circuit Meeting

Wednesday 11th March 2026

7:00pm at Spilsby MC



in Christ
with Christ
for Christ

MINUTES

Item

Action

Welcome: Rev Margaret gave the opening devotions on Matthew 10:1-4, and the meeting then opened in prayer.

Present: Nick Adams, Susan Alldread, Rev Margaret Asiedu, Chris Banham, Lyn Bignell, Ann Briggs, Andrew Chambers, Helen Clough, Ivan Clough, Linda Hadfield, Tricia Johnson, Peter Mace, Roger Maidens, Bunty Martin, Michael May, Gaynor Miles, Rev Graham Miles (Chair), Edward Mossop, Liz Mossop, Heather Neale, Richard Neale, Josie Towle, Irene Unsworth.

In Attendance: Paul Cooper (Circuit Property Officer), Jane Corden (minutes)

Apologies: Nancy Cartwright, Jean Cawkwell, Doreen Horn, Bryan Utteridge, Carol Clough, Christine Foulds, Anne Moyes, Patsy Pike, Neil Poulson, Shelia Warsap.

Minutes of the last meeting on 9/12/25: Accepted and signed.

Matters arising from the minutes of 9/12/25: Michael reported he was happy to say that the Standard form of accounts have now been independently examined, and he produced the signed copy. He also said that the TMCP accounts have been amalgamated as was requested.

Correspondence: None received.

Graham then informed everyone that Mike Childs had passed away, after a time of illness, he asked for permission from the circuit to send a card expressing our condolences. **Which was granted**

1. Finance: Irene Unsworth – Circuit Finance Liaison Officer

- Connexion are now employing Howard Smedley as the Regional safeguarding officer which means his costs are being met by them instead of the District. It just means the cost is coming out of a different pot, but we still must contribute to it.
- Membership has fallen by 8% over the whole District which is all of Lincolnshire.
- Many Churches in the District are running at a deficit. Connexion, which covers all the districts, anticipates a £5 million deficit in their budget in 2028-2029 which represents a 25% in their work capacity.
- We were reminded that all employees over 22, earning £10,000 must be auto enrolled into a pension scheme. It's up to the employee to opt out if they wish. In particular, keep an eye on part-time employees and those with irregular hours.
- Minister's stipends will increase by 4.47% subject to conference agreement in July.
- **Finance Statement to date:**
- Surplus property costs £12,224 exceed budget of £5104 but are below last years which was £15,757; other income shows a £10,598 deficit vs budgeted £22,000 deficit and last year's £18,961 deficit.
- **District and Connexional Assessment for the year beginning September 2026**
- The suggested Assessments for 26/27
 - District Assessment £12,298
 - Connexion £34,360
 - Totalling £46,658

The Circuit Leadership Team have recommended the amount requested but circuit approval is needed.

Circuit approved assessment of £46,650 unanimously

2. CLT Matters:

- **Synod** will be hosted at Wainfleet junior school, showcasing a faith school, on the 28th March 2026, Graham made a request for Cakes to be made for this event. He also asked for someone to man the creche on the day. It is believed this is for one child, around the age of 9, this person must have a DBS certificate, as a copy will need to be sent to the school.
- **Circuit Invitation Committee:** As Graham is facing possible retirement, there is a need to set up a committee, normally it is the Circuit Stewards who do this, but they need approval by the circuit meeting.
This was approved unanimously
- **Christians Against Poverty.**
Michael May proposed and Irene Unsworth seconded the setup of 2 CAP hubs. Proposal approved to initiate setting up 2 CAP hubs, initially Mablethorpe and Skegness. To address poverty and debt.
Initial funding to come from the sale of circuit properties this will cover startup costs and wages. Concern was raised about a possible duplication with existing activities in Mablethorpe carried out by the CAB. Graham has said that he will contact the CAB in Mablethorpe to see what they do and if it would be possibility to work with them. CAP speakers have had 5 circuit services with positive feedback. Nettleham have a CAP hub, and they report a waiting list, indicating there is an unmet demand for the service.
Meeting voted in favour, approval granted to proceed with advertising the job roles and setup.
 - **Louth Churches for Refugees**
Bryan had sent his apologies but had provided a report which Graham read and will be circulated with the minutes.

GM

3. Property Update: *Paul Cooper – Circuit Property Officer*

- **St Marys:** The previous sale fell through, still leaving us with a £2,000 solicitors' bill. Market interest has renewed; we have had a new offer of £100,000 but this is subject to the buyer selling an inherited property.
- **Burgh:** Searches have come back and now we are just waiting for the sale to go through.
- **Conisholme:** This Sale has also fallen through due to the planning requirements for the floor to be raised 1 metre, creating major structural work, (roof raise, memorial plaque relocation, and after investigations Paul says there is a void of 2 metres under the wooden floor boards: so therefore requiring a 3 metre concrete fill, this making redevelopment, uneconomic and therefore the offer was retracted. Original planning permission is due to lapse, but the architects do not foresee a problem reapplying costing approximately £200/£300.
- **Seathorne/Winthorpe:** Michael has had the lease drawn up between TMCP as Custodian Trustees and Bryan Utteridge and Nicholas Adams as the Managing Trustees of the Circuit meeting of East Lincolnshire Methodist Circuit and Winthorpe Community Partnership.
Nick and Bryan were authorized to sign the Lease.
There were issues found from the last Quinquennial and Paul is in the process of getting quotes for the outside work to be done. Circuit Meeting approval was asked for that the CLT can agree work up to the cost of £10,000 **This was granted.**
Graham thanked Michael and Paul for all their hard work on this project.

Paul
Michael

4. **Missions:**

- Each church has a Easter offering service on the Plan for this quarter. Easter offering materials, envelopes, palm crosses, posters and Order of Services were available. They are available as a download this year, as booklets have not been produced, Jane had printed off some hard copies, but more are available if they are needed.

5. **Safeguarding:**

Safeguarding administration is now being handled by the Circuit Administrator. We are still looking for a Circuit safeguarding officer. The original plan was for 2 caseworkers one in the north one in the south; district will assume oversight of the circuit if no officer is appointed by September.

We also need more circuit stewards; we have presently have only 3, and go down to 2 in September for 16 churches.

6. **Caravan Chaplaincy:**

- Bryan had sent his apologies but had provided a report which Graham read and will be circulated with the minutes.

7. **Local Preacher Matters:**

- Eliane Craig has been recognized as a worship leader; Chris Rolph is in training. We have 1 Local preacher on Trial and one on note. June is designated as Bible month and this year it will concentrate on Phillippians Study guides and resources are available. There will be a Phillippians study day at Skegness 9.30am on the 9th May 2026. This is open to anyone to go to.

- **Authorisation to preside:**

Approval needed from the meeting to approve the following people to be allowed to preside:

Richard Neale

Tricia Johnson

Sue Allread

This was agreed and Graham to sign off and send details to District.

GM

- **Presidential visit to the District 10th-14th August 2026**

Graham asked for suggestions where in the circuit the President could be taken to be shown the ministry at work.

8. **AOB:**

- **Action for Hope Fund**

Kath Adams had asked for circuit approval for Louth to ask for a Grant for LED Lighting.

This was approved and Graham signed the approval form. Jane to email copy back to Kath.

Jane

- **Circuit Eco-Champions**

Alison Godfrey District officer and PA to the Chair of District, sent an email asking if as a circuit there are any representatives that wish to be in the Eco-Champions Group, she has sent a Job outline if anyone is interested.

9. **Date and Time of Next Meeting**

7pm Tuesday 16th June 2026 - Louth

The meeting closed with a prayer.