



The Way Ahead

Falmouth and Gwennap Methodist Circuit Outreach News

Let your light so shine, that people may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven. Matthew 5:16

A Deacon for our Circuit

In 2016 the circuit meeting decided that a Diaconal appointment should be created to help churches within the circuit to engage better with their local communities. This role was described as follows:

Priorities. To stand with us (i.e. our membership) & look out, enabling & empowering Mission & Outreach across the Circuit.

Objectives. To do this by:

- enabling and equipping us (circuit focus);
- offering encouragement;
- identifying & developing specific Mission & Outreach opportunities (local focus);
- developing and supporting existing mission and outreach initiatives being undertaken within the Circuit in addition to identifying new opportunities;
- working & sharing collaboratively with colleagues, CLT & local churches to deliver the priorities for this post.

Tasks. To work with CLT and local churches to:

- develop and train us in skills and mind-set needed for Mission & Outreach;
- identify Mission & Outreach opportunities, encouraging & enabling us to develop these & make them sustainable;
- work, where possible, ecumenically and with other community organisations;
- model discipleship that looks out.

Deacon Jane Mills was matched with this appointment and stationing was agreed following a visit to the circuit in December 2016.

So, who is Jane?

Hailing from Sheffield, Jane began as a Deacon in 2003 in an appointment created to start ecumenical outreach to areas of new build in Colchester. In 2009 Jane was stationed to Bedford to a role that was both Methodist minister in two ecumenical Churches and MHA Chaplain.

Before training for ordained ministry Jane was a lay worker with students in Nottingham. Other

experience includes prison chaplaincy, ministry in a day centre for people with Cerebral Palsy, helping to start a movement committed to sharing Christian faith with 'Spiritual Seekers', carpentry and back stage theatre work.

Additional responsibilities:

Deacons follow a 'rule of life' and are required to attend the annual 'Convocation' and meet in Area groups, as there are no other Deacons in Cornwall this involves quarterly excursions 'over the border'!

Jane is also a Member of the District Probationary Ministers oversight committee.

The work so far

The role began in September 2017, Jane began by trying to get to know the circuit churches and has tried to drop in to activities in each church and, by the end of the current plan, will have lead worship in most of them at least once.

In November Jane attended 'Navigating Change' conference in Plymouth with a group from the Circuit, this group has met since to discuss the conference and make suggestions to the circuit. This has fed into the Circuit Month of prayer and vision, culminating in the Circuit Vision Day

Individual Church Vision exploration to date

St Day: Facilitate a meeting to create Vision and Mission statements, Wednesday March 28th.

Falmouth: Facilitating Vision exploration over dinner after the service on Sunday June 10th. Part of the Café Church team, Churches together ministry to Care homes, exploring links with the Beacon Community and school and involved in exploring the Green Church Kernow initiative.

Ponsanooth: Part of team leading Lent Study Group, Messy Church and exploring possibilities regarding outreach and further youth work.

Penryn: Vision meeting Monday April 18th

Mylor: Support Junior Church team

How may this work develop?

Locally

It is envisaged that the majority of the time will be spent with local congregations, assisting with church reviews, identifying opportunities and encouraging the development of a local mission strategy. This is likely to involve close co-operation with two or three congregations at a time, as agreed by the Circuit Leadership Team, whilst being available to help others that wish to discern their vision and explore local opportunities.

A helpful starting point may be to download '50 ideas for Mission' from the Methodist Church website at;

<http://www.methodist.org.uk/media/4542/dd-exploring-evangelism-fifty-ideas-for-mission-0912.pdf>

Circuit wide

- Help to fulfil any training needs identified.
- Facilitate networking between those involved in similar work, to share experience and pool resources
- Encourage more circuit connectivity by ensuring events and regular groups are shared in such a way that members feel able to join groups in other churches if they are unable to attend ones in their own community.
- Working with others to update the circuit Website and explore other potential ways of utilising IT for outreach opportunities.
- Present aspects of this work at circuit meetings, and in local churches by invitation.
- To explore Mission and Outreach within the context of worship, by invitation.
- Encouraging the exploration of different styles of worship, including time, day and venue.

Ecumenically

Whilst focussing on Methodist Churches, it is anticipated that any new opportunities identified would be explored with other churches and service providers, to maximise effectivity and avoid duplication.

The Green Church Kernow Award Scheme can be found at;

<http://www.trurodiocese.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/Environment-Award-Scheme-2017.pdf>

How could the Circuit Deacon help my church?

The Deacon could;

- Help you identify your vision for the future, with particular reference to forming your response to the challenge from the Circuit.
- Be available to help you explore your role in outreach in the wider community.
- Inspire and encourage by sharing appropriate examples from elsewhere.
- Encourage and help equip churches to reach out to areas of new development, the tourist trade, Students, Farming, local industry etc.
- Advise and make available relevant resources and study material.
- Encourage Discipleship and opportunities for church members to explore and develop their faith with others through small groups.
- Encourage members to recognise their gifts and feel able to use them in the life of God's Church.
- Encourage opportunities for working with other ecumenical and circuit churches.
- Help you to acknowledge and celebrate what is already going on.

Prayer Focus

- That Jane is able to discern God's will and use limited time to best effect.
- Guidance for each Congregation as they explore their vision.
- That the circuit can stay true to the vision that inspired this role.
- Openness to the Holy Spirit, attentiveness to what God is already doing and the courage to join in.