

From: John Haley
Sent: 03 October 2016 10:48
To: Torbay Circuit Office
Subject: Circuit Office

Hello Everyone

I am grateful to all those who have helped us set up the circuit office. I hope the office will be a useful resource not only for the ministers but also for local churches as we seek to bring the administration of the circuit together and put things on a firm footing. It will take us a while to become familiar with new ways of working and we need to remember to make good use of it.

At the last circuit meeting, I think we realised that the 'Three Town Strategy' we were working towards from 2012 did not work out in the way that many of us had hoped and that it has more or less come to an end. When considering what to do next, I wondered if 'Networking' between the local churches might be a way forward.

By this, I mean that most of us realise that local churches (perhaps different from former times) can no longer offer everything but that across the circuit we still have a wide variety of groups and events. Therefore, a local church that does not have a women's meeting might encourage a new lady who comes and might be glad of that meeting to attend the women's meeting at another circuit church.

The same might be true of a parent and toddler group, or a choir, or a music group or Messy Church, or any of the great variety of things that we still offer across the circuit, as well as different styles and approaches to Sunday worship. If we can view these as complementary rather than competing I think it will be a step forward.

I think that some members might be concerned that a person who attends a midweek meeting at another church might start to attend there on Sunday as well. I can understand that but attending another church is surely infinitely better than not belonging anywhere at all, which might be the outcome of a person attending a church which does not meet that person's needs.

While it might be the case that 'mission statements' are now going out of fashion, I suggested to the circuit leadership team that the circuit adopt the following mission statement, 'Resourcing ministry and mission through local churches.' That will need to be confirmed at a future circuit meeting. If you would like to suggest an alternative statement then please let me know.

The circuit meeting appointed an office management committee and from these a small group was appointed to interview applicants. There were two rounds of applications as no one was appointed in the first round. I was not part of the interviewing group in the second round which took place last Friday. The interview panel appointed Catherine Stead to be the Circuit Administrative Secretary.

The details of the office are as follows:

Torbay Methodist Circuit Office
Goodrington Methodist Church
Grange Road
Paignton
TQ4 7JT
01803 846020
tmcoffice@TorbayMethodistCircuit.onmicrosoft.com

The office hours are 9.30 am - 1.00 pm, Tuesday to Friday.

In due course there will be an email address for the superintendent minister but that is not 'live' at the moment. For the meantime, please use the main office address unless it is something that is confidential that you would not want to send through the office, in which case you should still use this address for the time being.

Like all offices staffed by one person, there will be times when you do not get an immediate answer to your email or telephone call. Holidays, training days, sickness, or just being out of the office for five minutes, can all be reasons why there is no immediate answer. If you do not get an answer after two working days, please refer your enquiry to me or to the appropriate person in the circuit.

Finally, having worked with circuit and local church offices before, I know it can be difficult for staff who might feel they are working for 600 members rather than one line manager. In due course, we will be formalising an office management group but it is almost inevitable I will be the line manager. If you think there are ways we can improve our way of working do let me know but give us a bit of time.

This message is not confidential and you are welcome to forward it to other church members - but if you would kindly take off my personal email address, I would appreciate that. Blind copies and removing email addresses when forwarding, do cut down on spam, malicious emails and the possibility of fraud.

God bless you all.

John

John Haley
Superintendent minister