

NOTES FROM MEETING ON 19th AUGUST

This is to Circuit Stewards, Stewards at Sandylands, Cowan Bridge, Kirkby Lonsdale - that I have email addresses for -so please check and forward on to anyone that I've missed off.

Myself and Nick Burd met with Richard Snow, the Rector at Kirkby Lonsdale, on Friday evening. We should also have been meeting with the Archdeacon, Penny Driver, too, but unfortunately she had to give her apologies at the last minute.

The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the outline of what arrangements would have to be put into place for Rev. Wendy Thornton to work half time with Kirkby Lonsdale and Cowan Bridge Methodist Churches and half time with the churches of the Rainbow parish.

We discussed possible arrangements for housing, stipend, employment, oversight, period of agreement - as well as many of the concerns and potential obstacles that have been noted either by the Circuit Leadership Team or by the local churches.

I think that a fair summary of the meeting is that 'we are all on the same page.' But there are still a number of issues to resolve.

Some of the key ones are:

- Are there sufficient funds available to meet half of Wendy's stipend costs?
- What permissions do we need from the Methodist Church at a national level to go ahead?
- Are there any administrative obstacles to a Methodist minister living in an Anglican vicarage?
- We need a 'Statement of Particulars' for what Wendy would be expected to do in the 'Anglican' side of her ministry.

We also were very clear that the whole change is contingent on us also organising ministerial input for Sandylands that is at least equal to what they currently have. Both parts of this need to work together.

What happens next?

- Richard Snow will report back to Penny on the meeting and he and Penny will look to see about the funds available
- I will seek further clarification from the Methodist Church on what permissions we would need to move ahead
- A further meeting will be needed, that will include Wendy, to work on the Statement of Particulars.
- Once this is done then we will be in a position to table a proposal from the Cowan Bridge / Kirkby Lonsdale part of things.

At the same time we need to be exploring the ministry options at Sandylands. This is happening in a number of ways:

1. There is currently a review underway about the Community Worker's job - a questionnaire which is due in by 4 September and then some facilitated meetings on 25/26/27 September. It might be that no decisions can be made about the future of the post, but certainly we can capture the learning of the last six or more years which will then help inform our decision-making as we go forward.
2. I have asked the Sandylands stewards to consult with the members at Sandylands to see what ideas they have
3. The Circuit Leadership Team will be meeting on 7 September to consider possible options
4. The Circuit Meeting will be able to discuss the situation at its meeting on 12 September
5. The Sandylands Church Council will be able to discuss it further on 13 September - I will attend that meeting
6. I will be meeting with the Sandylands stewards on 21 September

All these meetings are to talk about ideas. If one or more ideas emerge which seem to be workable then we will be able to do more work to turn them into proposals.

To be absolutely clear, there are currently no proposals on the table - just ideas that are being discussed. Therefore none of the meetings mentioned above will be making any decisions. No changes are being implemented.

Once, or if, we have some definite proposals then we will consult as widely as possible on them and then we will see about having a Circuit Meeting to make a decision - but this is some way off yet.

I hope this is clear enough for everyone - if I have left anything ambiguous then please let me know and I'll try to offer more clarification.

There is nothing in this email that is confidential so please share it as widely as you think is useful.

I'm also happy to receive directly any feedback from anyone about any of this. Everything that I receive I am then feeding into the meetings that I am attending.

Best wishes

David Stretton