

## **North Staffordshire Circuit**

### **Mission Statement & Policy 2023/24**

The calling of the Methodist Church is to respond to the gospel of God's love in Christ and to live out its discipleship in worship and mission. It does this through:

Worship Learning & Caring Service Evangelism

#### **Circuit Mission Statement**

The North Staffordshire Circuit is committed to the calling of the Methodist Church. In living out this calling we seek to be a welcoming and inclusive Christian community with inspiring worship, radical compassion and social justice at its heart. To enable this transforming way of life we will, through the Circuit Mission Policy, work to equip and encourage churches and individuals to become more effective disciples; to offer inspiring and challenging worship; to identify and share resources; to recognise opportunities for working with ecumenical partners and the community; to engage with issues of social and climate justice.

#### **Circuit Mission Policy**

This working document will be reviewed on an annual basis.

The Circuit Mission Policy seeks to put the aims and visions of the Circuit Mission Statement into practice. To enable this we will need to draw on the skills, enthusiasm, commitment and passion of the whole Circuit as we look to respond to the opportunities presented to us and face the challenges before us.

The churches of the Circuit will be encouraged to develop plans for change and growth. Where a number of churches serve within a close geographical area consideration will be given as to the distinctive roles each church plays and how in partnership they can support one another and work together.

Where the mission in a church can no longer be sustained we will offer care and guidance and encourage positive celebrations to mark what has been achieved.

Living out our calling:

**Worship - the Church exists to increase awareness of God's presence and celebrate God's love.**

*The North Staffordshire Circuit commits to:*

1. Underpin all we do with worship and with prayer.
2. Offer inspiring, challenging, diverse and inclusive worship across the Circuit.

*As such during the Connexional year 2023/24 we aim to:*

1. *Hold a Circuit act of worship at least once a quarter.*
2. *Ensure that all Circuit meetings and gatherings include a time of worship and prayer and to encourage individual church meetings and gatherings to do the same.*
3. *Offer at least one training/equipping event for local preachers & worship leaders and to share the details of any relevant District/Connexional events.*

4. *Encourage the use of technology where appropriate and to offer details of training/resources that will help to equip churches in its use.*
5. *Publish an annual prayer diary based on a monthly cycle for use in churches and by individuals.*
6. *Publish a daily scripture and prayer (including the daily prayer from the prayer diary) on the Circuit Facebook page.*
7. *Provide printed/downloadable material to enable 'At Home' worship and for use as a resource for Local Arrangement services.*

**Learning & Caring- the Church exists to help people to grow and learn as Christians, through mutual support and care.**

*The North Staffordshire Circuit commits to:*

1. Providing opportunities for learning more about the Christian faith through study and sharing together.
2. Offering opportunities to engage with training, learning and conferring both locally and through the wider church.
3. Encouraging the development and continued provision of pastoral care networks in each church and across the Circuit.
4. Ensuring that safeguarding policies are adopted, displayed and implemented by the Circuit and all the Circuit churches and that safeguarding training is provided where required.
5. Ensuring that health and safety is taken seriously.
6. Encouraging all the Circuit churches to be places of welcome and safety where equality, diversity and inclusion are central.

*As such during the Connexional year 2023/24 we aim to:*

1. *Hold at least one staff led Circuit bible study course and to facilitate at least one Circuit bible study using a different format eg Godly Play / art*
2. *Encourage every church to establish, or to attend, a house group/bible study group that meets on a regular basis.*
3. *Draw on District/Connexional resources that offer opportunities to increase our knowledge about the Bible and such matters as life issues; leading small groups; dealing with conflict; and to then offer at least two events during the year relating to these matters.*
4. *Offer ongoing pastoral support to the Baldwins Gate congregation where necessary.*

**Service - the Church exists to be a good neighbour to people in need and to challenge injustice.**

*The North Staffordshire Circuit commits to:*

1. Actively support local projects which look to alleviate poverty/social need.
2. Encourage the Circuit churches to explore becoming a Fairtrade Church and to consider what it means to be an Eco Church.
3. Encourage and promote local church engagement with Christian Aid and All We Can.
4. Establish a Circuit Climate and Justice group.
5. Publishing dates of 'Special Sundays' and one-off appeals.

*As such during the Connexional year 2023/24 we aim to:*

1. *Support and promote the work of the Newcastle Staffs Food Bank.*
2. *Provide information about Fairtrade and Eco churches and encourage Fairtrade and environmental matters to be on Church Council agendas; and to follow up on how the Circuit Eco grants have been used.*
3. *Encourage churches to sign up to receive regular information from All We Can and Christian Aid.*
4. *Provide churches with information regarding climate change and social justice and offer opportunities to discuss these issues and to take action.*
5. *Ensure that 'Special Sundays' are published on the quarterly preaching plan and to encourage engagement with them.*

### **Evangelism - the Church exists to make more followers of Jesus Christ.**

*The North Staffordshire Circuit commits to:*

1. Encourage the sharing of our faith stories, both formally and informally, and to promote the use of 'testimony'.
2. Explore the evangelistic possibilities offered through the use of digital media.
3. Offer opportunities for people to explore how we can talk about God and faith and to help a growth in confidence in sharing our belief.

*As such during the Connexional year 2023/24 we aim to:*

1. *Develop Baldwins Gate as a hub for outreach to the local community and explore the building's wider use as a Circuit resource.*
2. *Provide information about training opportunities and resources including raising awareness of District opportunities and all that is offered by the Learning Network.*
3. *Offer support and resources to churches looking to increase their profile in the local community.*
4. *Hold at least one event based upon the practicalities of evangelism.*
5. *Help churches and individuals towards an understanding that evangelism is simply being who you are as a disciple of Christ.*

During the Connexional year 2023/24 this Mission Policy will be resourced by:

The Circuit Finance Budget as presented at the Circuit Meeting on 8<sup>th</sup> March 2023.

The Ministerial Team consisting of three presbyters:

Rev'd Liz Singleton  
Rev'd Christine Legge  
Rev'd Joy Ventom

The Circuit Leadership Team consisting of the above presbyters and four Circuit Stewards:

Mrs Karen Barnett  
Mrs Elizabeth Glover  
Mr Lee Leighton

Mr John Machin  
Mr Bob Alcock (Treasurer)

The Circuit Administrator:  
Mrs Michelle Bradbury

*in conjunction and with the cooperation of the Circuit churches*

External resources:  
The Chester & Stoke-on-Trent District  
The British Methodist Connexion  
+ other agencies and bodies as required

***last reviewed June 2023***