

**East of Eden Mission Community AGM
8th May 2017 at Langwathby Chapel**

43 people in attendance representing all villages and most congregations. Opening prayer by Rev Les Wallace and introductions by Kathleen Doidge-Harrison – what has happened since the launch in September 2016? and Helen Armstrong - what Mission - based activities are happening e.g. Messy Church at Langwathby, Tea Break at Lazonby and most recently, the Lent lunches across the MC which raised £1000 for Christian Aid.

Three reports from Clergy

1. Buildings by Rev Stephen Pye

'Buildings evolve but can be a problem. There are 5,159 people in the MC within the Eden Valley which is the least densely populated area in England, yet it has 18 buildings - 12 C of E and 6 Methodist. Of these only three have **both** adequate parking **and** toilet facilities.

In some cases the buildings are being cared for by a very small number of people which can be a burden.

To think about: Are we using the buildings in the right way? Could we have more joint services? Will the next generation look after the buildings?

Maybe we could build a new 'super church' in the middle of the Mission Community?

2. Review of lay leadership by Rev Les Wallace

Judith Moore (Kirkoswald), Andy Wilson (Renwick), Roger Campbell (Lazonby) are willing to help in this review. Representatives from the south of the MC invited. Contact LW.

Consider the position when our churches and chapels evolved from small groups – could small groups be useful? One size doesn't fit all. There will be a point where ordained leadership is scarce. How then do we 'do church'? How can we better equip lay leaders?

Action – the group will visit all congregations to listen to needs and how the MC can help, engaging in prayer to support this.

3. Worship by Rev David Fowler

We all have personal ideas about what worship looks like. It is the aim of Christian living; it leads to mission and an expectation that God will touch our lives. **To think about**

- **Buildings need to be open each day for quiet reflection**
- **Where there is a church and chapel in each village, congregations should meet up to discuss options e.g. at Renwick**
- **Avoid clashes of service/events/times**
- **Combine services at Christmas and Easter so that clergy time can be used well across the MC**
- **Worship in other places e.g. village halls, barns etc to increase accessibility for the community**
- **Remember it is the warmth of fellowship that attracts people to join in**
- **Have Mothering Sunday service in school on a week day**
- **Have a MC service once or twice per year**
- **Use lay leadership as well as considering the use of clergy time**

- **Have services on weekdays or evenings**
- **Always remember the prime aim of worshipping God through the person of Jesus Christ**

Governance – this is a group of Benefice and Circuit representatives chaired by Bryan Gray. Their positions will be re generated after three years from the launch in September 2016.

Finance. Ray Wager, treasurer, presented the financial statement noting that restricted fund activity funding for Messy Church (£903), Godly Play (£1099), Easter and Christmas Journeys (-£2.50) were now transferred to the Mission Community account from the Kirkoswald and Alston Moor Circuit account.

The general fund for MC stands at £1074.99 making the bank reconciliation at 31.3. 2107, £3076.27.

Future staffing – new arrangements

2017 - Rev David Fowler leaves Kirkoswald in September - interregnum followed by the appointment of a Mission Community leader who will live at the vicarage.

2019 - a new Methodist minister appointed following the retirement of Rev Les Wallace.

2021 – a ‘house for duty’ appointment following the retirement of Rev Stephen Pye

Therefore staffing will be in place for the Mission Community in 2021

Rev Dave Sargent (Rural Dean) spoke about ‘God for All’ and the Moving Mountains initiative. He was inspired by the Easter message where Jesus says ‘Don’t hold on to me’ – an invitation into something we can’t imagine. In preparation for ‘Moving Mountains’ in March 8-11 2018, what might work in our community be? new people? new activities? those who used to attend? Start where we are and enlist the visiting team to work alongside us.

Q and A

Could the MC leader be of either denomination? – job description and person spec will say this *

Role of and support for lay people? - Methodist meeting for lay preachers and worship leaders now opened up across the MC

Clarification about Alston. Alston Methodist Fellowship is in the MC. The Anglican Church in Alston is in the Diocese of Newcastle.

Bryan Gray, in his absence due to sickness, was thanked for his tireless work to date.

There was a warm word of praise and encouragement from Rev David Sargent.

Thanks were expressed to Langwathby chapel for their hospitality.

* Further information for clarification added by Brian Gray after the meeting. 'Discussions are underway with the Diocese. We are working up a detailed proposal. There will be plenty of opportunity to discuss this when we have a clear proposal before us. All vacancies can in theory be filled by Anglican or Methodist (or indeed Lay). Creating a role profile will enable a discussion on our particular needs'.

HA. 11.5.17