***943 Closure of Chapels.*** *(1) Public services may not be discontinued in any chapel or preaching-place, nor any preaching-place removed from the circuit plan, until permission has been given by the Synod on the recommendation of the managing trustees, the Circuit Meeting and the district Policy Committee. The Circuit Meeting shall submit any such recommendation to the district committee before any steps are taken to carry the intention into effect.*

**Church: Keyingham Methodist Church Circuit: South Holderness (29/32)**

1. **What is the present membership? Present membership is 21. However, two members are moving away from Keyingham in August 2021 and several members have been attending other churches with a view to transferring their membership. Some of the remaining members are housebound, or full-time carers for partners, making it difficult for them to attend worship. There are also members who never attend. Apart from a brief re-opening for one service, the church has not resumed services since the lockdown of mid-March 2020.**

**2. What is the number on the community roll? There are 7 people listed as adherents on the community roll.**

**3.  What is the average adult attendance at worship? Pre-lockdown, the average adult attendance could be 16 - 20 people.**

**4. What other activities take place on the premises? At present, no other activities take place on the premises. Until mid-March 2020, the Brownies were meeting in the church hall. As the pandemic restrictions eased, they resumed their activities in another venue and will not be returning to meet on church premises. The scouts and cubs have moved to other premises in the village.**

**5. Provide a financial overview – e.g. income vs expenditure. Balance sheet at 30 June 2021. Opening balance: £17944, add income: £9705 (cash at bank and CFB Deposit Account), less expenses: £12143,**

**Total Cash and Deposits: £15506**

**6. If a new building is not to be provided, what provision will be made for the present congregation and other activities? Some of the members have been attending churches in the circuit and will be content to transfer their membership. Some members have been attending churches of other denominations situated closer to where they live. A monthly mid-week service and fellowship group had started to meet in Keyingham Methodist Church prior to March 2020. The aim is to resume this monthly service for congregants who live in the village, possibly meeting in the village hall or in Keyingham Parish Church. Support will be offered to the remaining present congregation by members who live in the village, by members of the circuit staff, stewards and supernumerary team and specifically by a local pastor when recruited.**

**7.   What impact will the closure have on the local community? In former years, Keyingham Methodist Church played a significant role in the worship, social and outreach life of the local community. This influence has waned, and the church premises are no longer used as a community hub. Nevertheless, the local community will be sad to learn of the closure of the Methodist church. There are other premises in the vicinity which provide adequate facilities for organisations to use, and the Parish Church provides opportunities for worship and ministry.**

**8.    What other Methodist Churches and Sunday Schools are there in the neighbourhood and what are their distance from the property to be sold? Hedon Methodist Church with youth and children’s activities is situated 5 miles (10 mins) away; Withernsea Methodist Church is 8.6 miles (15 mins) away; Elstronwick Methodist Church is 6.5 miles (13 mins) away from the property to be sold.**

**9.    What initiatives have the membership tried, if any, to encourage the residents of the community to become part of the worshipping family? In recent years, hospitality ventures have been organised to encourage opportunities for welcome and witness. Invitations have been issued to occasional afternoon teas, organised by a small band of dedicated members (no longer attending), with a focus and input from a local charity encouraging community involvement. Also, an initiative to serve lunch after Sunday services encouraging newer members of the congregation to build relationships with more established members of the worshipping family. A monthly mid-week service followed by tea had been established to offer new opportunities for worship and interaction between the worshipping family and residents of the community.**

**10.   Does the membership consider that their mission is complete from this building and why? It has been a painful, yet necessary experience for the members to realise that their mission from this building is complete. Over recent years, leading members have moved away from the village, making it more difficult for them to play an active role in the mission of the church. In December 2020, this situation reached a crisis point as two of the remaining office holders made it clear that they needed to move out of the area. It has proved impossible to find others to take on their roles of treasurer, property advisor, steward and pastoral support to many adults and any children who might attend worship. Maintaining the mission and premises of the church has become too much of a strain given the health and personal circumstances of the current members.**

**Over two years ago, a scheme was considered to alter the building for more sustainable mission purposes but, with diminishing resources and few workers, the decision was made not to pursue the scheme. Other property issues include the location of the church. The building is situated directly on the side of a narrow road that has large lorries delivering to the supermarket opposite. Frequent damage is caused to the roof and guttering from these lorries and a further hazard involves a door near the boiler room which opens directly on to this busy road. During the pandemic, the church building has remained closed and reopening for worship no longer appears to be a credible option for a fragile community.**

**11. Who will offer Christian worship, mission and on-going pastoral care of the community? Those members who live in the village will continue to support each other and there is an aim to start a fellowship meeting and service in one of the community buildings. The Parish Church continues to offer worship and prayer within Keyingham and circuit personnel, including a local pastor (when appointed) will endeavour to offer pastoral care and Christian nurture.**

**12.  What arrangements have been made for on-going pastoral care in the community? Present members, and the circuit ministry team will have a continuing role in pastoral care.**

**13.Have discussions taken place with other denominations in order to maintain a Christian presence in the locality and what was the outcome? There is a new Anglican colleague serving in the community. Contact is being made to discuss the possibilities of working more closely together and of holding a Methodist worship service within the Parish Church.**

**14.   What is to happen to the building? If it is to be sold, how will the proceeds of the sale be used to promote an effective presence in the community the Church once served? If permission to cease worship is granted, the plan is to sell the building. There is also a cottage, which is currently rented out to a small business. The plan includes the sale of the cottage. The proceeds of the sale would be enormously helpful in supporting the agreed employment of a local pastor to inspire and work with others in promoting an effective Christian presence in the community.**

**15.    Has the District Archivist been consulted regarding records and artefacts and records that might need to be conserved? No – not yet. This will be attended to once the final decision is made.**

**Revd D. M. Lucas 8 August 2021**