***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 Leadership Team. The Circuit Meeting shall submit any such recommendation to the district committee before any steps are taken to carry the intention into effect.*

**Church:** Barmby Moor Methodist Church

**Circuit:** Pocklington and Market Weighton (29/14)

**1. What is the present membership?** 7

**2. What is the number on the community roll?**  7 i.e. only members

**3.  What is the average adult attendance at worship?**  6

**4. What other activities take place on the premises?**

Currently no other activities take place on the premises which has been unusable for many months following deterioration in the premises during lockdown. Prior to that “Barmby Moor Praise” evening took place once a month. This has relocated to Pocklington Methodist Church.

**5. Provide a financial overview – e.g. income vs expenditure.**

Income for the year 20/21 £1863.17

Expenses for the year 20/21 £2380.25

Total Funds as at 31/8/21 £1772.50.

The church is unable to meet its ongoing running costs or the costs of urgent work on the premises nor offer any financial contribution towards the Circuit Budget for 2021/22.

Ongoing insurance and other costs for the building are being paid by the circuit.

**6. If a new building is not to be provided, what provision will be made for the present congregation and other activities?**

The Methodist Church in Barmby Moor has been struggling for many years and ecumenical working has been explored previously but not pursued. There is a Church of England presence (St. Catherine’s) in the village and a village hall.

Of the present congregation one is now living in France. One is currently in residential care and unable to attend worship. Five have attended worship at Pocklington Methodist Church which is two miles away. We have explored becoming a class of another church and previously explored clustering with other small congregations both options were not seen to be viable and the congregation expressed the view they wished to cease worship after many years of mission and presence in the village.

**7.   What impact will the closure have on the local community?**

There will be little impact on the local community with the only regular activity other than worship happening pre-pandemic on the premises being “Barmby Moor Praise” which has relocated to Pocklington Methodist Church and is happy meeting there monthly on a Friday evening.

**8.    What other Methodist Churches and Sunday Schools are there in the neighbourhood and what are their distance from the property to be sold?**

Pocklington Methodist Church is under two miles away and the five members who are active have transport. There is also a small village chapel at Bolton approximately four miles way.

**9.    What initiatives have the membership tried, if any, to encourage the residents of the community to become part of the worshipping family?**

There has been numerous efforts over the years with special events, leaflets, fund raising projects, invitations but more recently less so mainly due to the size of the membership and age. We have looked at the possibility of Circuit initiatives as part of the circuit strategy but this village is not one of our priority areas for mission. In recent years new Christians in the village looking for a Methodist Church have tended to come to Pocklington Methodist Church.

**10.   Does the membership consider that their mission is complete from this building and why?**

The membership does consider its mission complete and took the difficult decision at its Church Council on 19th October 2021 to seek permission to cease worship. This is a decision supported by the Circuit Leadership Team given the situation the church finds itself in.

**11. Who will offer Christian worship, mission and on-going pastoral care of the community?**

There is an active Anglican Church (St. Catherine’s) in the wider community which has links with the C of E school and Parish Council. In reality most of the mission and ongoing pastoral care of the community has been provided by them.

**12.  What arrangements have been made for on-going pastoral care in the community?**

Transfer of membership for the local church community is ongoing as they discern where they wish to worship but it is likely transfer will be to Pocklington Methodist Church for six of the members. The other member now lives in France.

**13.Have discussions taken place with other denominations in order to maintain a Christian presence in the locality and what was the outcome?**

Yes. These are ongoing, to provide the best in the situation but are not progressing at the moment because the Vicar is on long-term sickness absence and retiring in March 2022.

**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?**

It is intended that the Circuit will sell the building and that proceeds will help to sustain its presence and put into place its circuit strategy for mission. We are currently exploring and reviewing our strategy and way forward following the impact of the pandemic on our local churches. Including addressing governance challenges to free people for mission.

**15.    Has the District Archivist been consulted regarding records and artefacts and records that might need to be conserved?**

Not yet but we will do so and relevant documents will be archived at the Treasure House Beverley. Transfer to archives would therefore be straightforward.

**Additional Information**

The impact of the pandemic has speeded up the steady decline on this faithful congregation. The building is now in a condition that funds are not available to rectify. The Circuit Leadership Team does not see financially supporting the work as either good stewardship or fitting with the circuit strategy priorities. Also in reality there is considerable pressure on limited resources and other churches in the circuit are struggling. The members have also aged and are at the stage when they feel they can do no more. It is therefore proposed that the decision of the local church to cease worship be supported.

This decision has not been taken lightly by any of the parties. Whilst Circuit Leadership Team support this course of action Circuit Meeting has not yet met and our meeting has been deferred until 23rd April for other reasons.

**District Leadership Team are therefore asked to give permission for the cessation of worship subject to such agreement by the Pocklington and Market Weighton Methodist Circuit Meeting so that this request can be approved by Representative Synod in Mat 2022.**