

Permission to Cease Worship

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: Kirkby Malzeard

Circuit: Ripon and Lower Dales

1. What is the present membership? 11

2. What is the number on the community roll? 20

3. What is the average adult attendance at worship? 8

4. What other activities take place on the premises? None

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

Our congregation now is very small, and we have struggled to find enough people to fill all the roles necessary to keep functioning for some time. We have a serious financial deficit which will only get worse, and maintaining our building to be safe will become a problem soon.

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

The formal decision to ask the Circuit on 7 September and Synod on 10 September for permission to cease to meet from 30th October 2022 was proposed by Michael Jordan and seconded by Yvonne Ginn and agreed unanimously by the Church Council on 27 July.

The final services in our building will be 10.30am Harvest Festival and then a 6.30pm Circuit and Ecumenical Service with Rev Ian Pruden and Rev Susan Richardson. We are keen to maintain Methodist presence in the village.

It was decided at the Church Council to investigate a Declaration of Ecumenical Welcome or some agreement with St Andrews to allow a Methodist service once a month from January 2023.

The members decided to again hold a Village Carol service in the Mechanics Institute on 11th December at 4pm. Discussions were also held as to possible informal worship/ coffee mornings in the Mechanics Institute.

Our minister will continue to support community events and be involved in the school from the autumn it is hoped. It is not the end of Kirkby Methodism, we are just moving on from our building and the demands of doing church as we do it now which simply cannot be sustained

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

Probably very little, apart from sadness. We have not had any support from the village and activities stopped in the pandemic and we've been unable to start any new things through lack of personnel and energy.

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

Grewelthorpe LEP and Dallowgill 3 miles, Sawley, 6 miles, Ripon (two churches) 6 miles.

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

Nothing recently. An open meeting was held to discuss possible mission and outreach but there was no support. We are hoping doing some mission and worship from the village hall might attract new people.

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

Yes, we cannot maintain our building through lack of people and money.

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

Our minister is involved in village life and will continue to join in events and offer pastoral care to the current membership, and community. All the other local Methodist churches are in his pastoral charge. See below re ecumenical possibilities.

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

Via our minister. All our members will be asked by him where they wish their membership to rest.

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

We are having conversations with the Anglican Church in the village whether we might enter into a declaration of ecumenical welcome and whether we can hold a Methodist service in the church once a month led by our ministers and preachers. So far conversations have been positive.

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?

We hope some monies can be reinvested into ecumenical mission possibilities in the village. The building will be sold.

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

Not as yet

A Circuit Meeting is being held to obtain Circuit permission on 7 September. The CLT and Superintendent Minister are aware and supportive.

Once Circuit Meeting permission has been given, please send this form to Siân Henderson at the District Office. Permission will be considered at the next District Leadership Team (on behalf of the District Policy Committee), and from there a recommendation to the next Synod can be made