

East Solent and Downs Circuit



News

MEETINGS AND PARTINGS

On Saturday 29th February 300 people gathered at Chandler's Ford Methodist Church to offer thanks for the ministry of Andrew Wood, who served as Chair of the Southampton District for 13 years. Andrew's enthusiasm, pastoral heart and leadership qualities have been greatly valued throughout the District. Andrew has been unwell recently, and we continue to pray for him, his wife Dawn, and the wider family.

At that same service Andrew de Ville was formally welcomed as District Chair and we were encouraged to hold him in our prayers as he leads us forward into a new chapter. As a Circuit we are very grateful to Andrew for his 8 years of ministry among us and wish him every blessing in this new role.

That service was part of a busy weekend! The following day we joined together as a Circuit for our own Farewell and Welcome Service at Petersfield Methodist Church.

In addition to saying goodbye to Andrew and Helen we bid a fond farewell to Pam Stone. Pam has spent the last 18 years serving as a Pastoral Worker and her willingness, kindness and soup(!) have been appreciated by all with whom she has contact.

During the service we welcomed Rev. David Muskett as the new Circuit Superintendent, and Celia Withers as the new Lay Pastor for the Bridgemary, Gosport and Lee-on-the-Solent Churches.



VACANCIES

We have 2 vacancies for Circuit representatives to District Synod.

If you would like to find out how you can be more involved in the life of the District, speak to your minister.

CIRCUIT STRUCTURES

Stage 1 of the restructuring of lay and ordained ministry in the Circuit, announced and supported at the September Circuit Meeting, is progressing well. Rev'd David Muskett, Rev'd Claire Simpson and Deacon Janet Heys have all taken up new responsibilities.

At Haslemere, the possibility of a local URC Minister having Pastoral Oversight has been postponed but fortunately Rev'd. John Illsley, a recently retired Superintendent from Bury in Lancashire, very kindly agreed to take this on from 1 January 2020 to 31 August 2024.

Celia Withers started as the Local Lay Pastor for Bridgemary, Gosport and Lee-on-the-Solent on 1 March 2020. Her email address is: pastor@esanddcircuit.org.uk.

The Circuit has been successful in Stationing and Revd Elize Goddess has been appointed to Drayton, Havant and Wymering Churches from 1 September 2020. She and her husband are joining us from South Africa and will be moving into the Drayton manse.

Pastoral Oversight at Emsworth is now shared by Revd. Bill Stilwell and Deacon Laura Evans.

THE S.O.F.T. TEAM

The S.O.F.T Team need new members! We meet on an ad hoc basis and seek to help local churches to look at aspects of their mission where there are or might be opportunities for people to share their faith with others.

We also provide resources or pointers to resources to help build confidence in sharing faith.

If you'd be interested in joining this team please contact: David Muskett:
david.muskett41@btinternet.com

Discussions on the Conference Report "God in Love Unites Us", have taken place at 3 Circuit workshops and at individual churches. The results of these discussions will be fed back to District Synod in April.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Petersfield Methodist Church

Coach Holiday will be to Derbyshire on 18 to 25 July 2020, staying in Willersley Castle with excursions to Hardwick Hall, Sheffield, Buxton and Chesterfield.

For more details contact: Gordon Churchill on 01730 260454

OTHER RESOURCES

'Our Church's Future Story' is a new resource designed to help churches plan their mission. It is available from Methodist Publishing: www.methodistpublishing.org.uk

Guidance on the Coronavirus is available on the Methodist Church website:
<https://www.methodist.org.uk/about-us/news/latest-news/all-news/the-methodist-church-coronavirus-guidance/>