Greasby Methodist Church

Letter from the Minister

Dear friends,

May I begin by welcoming you to a new Church year. As I say that I wonder where the time has gone as so many things draw to an end and new things are beginning. But are they really new things or are we just beginning to go through things again that we have done before as each part of the year unfolds before us?



I want to begin with sometime that I have never experienced before and am looking forward to working through. On the 17th August, the Circuit held a special service to Commission Paula as a Local Lay Pastor. This was a first; something new for so many people; Paula in being commissioned as a Local Lay Pastor; the Circuit in having one and Noel in actually commissioning a Local Lay Pastor. You may be thinking that this is not new. However, until this point Paula has only been on probation. Having completed half of the training and been accepted by the Circuit, what is new that Paula has now been commissioned into this role working across the three churches. What is even better is that I have relinquished the pastoral responsibility for Claremount and the Neston District Methodist Churches. Neston District Methodist Church is the new Church with multiple congregations formerly known as the Churches at Neston, Little Neston and Willaston.

A lot has changed over the last few weeks within the Circuit as the Circuit seeks a new presbyter to take pastoral responsibility for the northern churches of West Kirby, Hoylake, Moreton and Woodchurch from Sep 2026. Noel's role as Superintendent will include pastoral oversight of Claremount and Neston District Methodist Church.

But what do the changes mean for us at Greasby Methodist Church together with the churches that we are linked with?

In the commissioning service both Paula and I made a commitment to work together with each other within the three churches of Heswall, Irby and Greasby.

A short video was shown at the service where Paula was interviewed and explaining that her role had three elements to it. She talked about Worship, Pastoral Care and Leadership as being at the heart of what she felt called to do.

Between us, Paula and I are working 30 hours a week on average, just slightly more than 0.75 of a Full Time Equivalent role. Paula is at present committed to an average of two hours a week as she continues with her training with Cliff College for a further year or so. As with all ministers, I am committed to taking opportunities for further training. If I think back over last year that equates to perhaps on average one hour a week.

How will Paula and I work together now that the Circuit has rearranged the pastoral oversight? The key element in how Paula and I make decisions as to how our hours needs to be used is our meeting together on Tuesday mornings. This is usually a time of sharing, talking about possibilities and praying.

Each of the three churches has a distinct unique pattern of ministry based on the Methodist Churches' vision "Our Calling". This divides our work into four areas; Worship, Learning and

Caring, Service and Evangelism. The three churches are involved with each of these in their own way.

Paula and I in our meetings on Tuesday morning look at what is going on, and then decide where the best places are to put our time and effort into . There are other constraints place upon us so that there might be times when we cannot do what we would like to do in visiting particular aspects of the life of the churches.
In our last meeting, Paula and I discussed our thoughts for the period up and to Christmas. Our thinking centred in particular on what we felt was needed over this period to enhance the Worship, develop the Learning, provide deeper levels of Caring and to reach out and meet people's needs, both physical and spiritual.
There will be times when Paula and I will be working together, but the great majority of the time we will be working separately in conjunction with one another and definitely not in competition.
In particular we will be encouraging the churches to work together to support and encourage each other.
Worship is at the core of our activities, and we will be encouraging joint acts of worship as well as each churches own particular pattern.

We are planning to visit all of the members and adherents of the three churches over the coming year sharing in the work with the pastoral visitors. May I remind you that if you know of anyone who would appreciate receiving Holy Communion at Home, please contact Paula or myself and we will arrange to make that visit at a mutually convenient time. It has been a blessing when the friend who suggested the visit comes along as well.
Where we can, we will work alongside the groups working within the churches encouraging them in the amazing work that is being done.

One of the more difficult tasks for us will be that together with the Stewards and Leadership Teams of each of the churches in looking at the way ahead. In particular I believe we need to be looking at the question “What needs to be done and needs to be done well?” rather than how thinly can we stretch our resources to keep on doing what we are doing.

I hope that this helps explain how Paula and I will be working together across the churches for the coming year. To help our planning, it would help if you would contact Paula and I on a Monday so that we can discuss any suggestions at our Tuesday morning meetings.

God bless.
Phyl