



Bramhall and Wythenshawe Methodist Circuit

Vision and priorities 2019 - 2020

Growing God's kingdom in South Manchester and North Cheshire

Bramhall & Wythenshawe Methodist Circuit is a group of 12 churches, with a common purpose of serving God in our local communities and nurturing disciples of Jesus Christ. We want each of our church communities to have the resources needed to be effective and passionate in their local ministry. We are stronger and more effective in serving God when we do it together.

We will seek the Holy Spirit at work in our communities, guiding our ministries, challenging our priorities and equipping us for God's work. We will support one another by seeking to serve God as effectively as we can. We will do this by:

- **Focussing on worship:** Enabling people to worship God in rich and diverse ways
- **Focussing on learning:** Equipping followers of Jesus to serve God in their daily lives
- **Focussing on caring:** Having compassion for all God's people
- **Focussing on serving:** Taking action for those in need and challenging injustice
- **Focussing on growing:** Sharing God's love and making new disciples across our communities

As a result of this, we will become a disciple-making, disciple-equipping, disciple-nurturing movement, shaped for mission.

Focused on worship

'Sing a new song to the Lord' Psalm 96:1

Challenges, expectations and passions

Across the circuit, we are passionate about enabling all people, regardless of background, age or tradition, to worship God

in ways that are accessible, engaging and interactive. We want to seek a continuing freshness and renewal in worship, where the congregations are encouraged to become more than just consumers, and to participate fully and actively in worship.

Our circuit priorities are:

- Helping each church community to feel empowered to experiment with worship and prayer in different ways.
- Encouraging variety in worship (through the plan, through preachers, supporting churches with initiatives such as 'café church').
- Seeking opportunity for people to access different worship styles (e.g. large scale, small scale, reflective).
- Encouraging, nurturing and resourcing innovations in music, ideas, and approach.

Participation
Renewal
Variety
Inclusion
Consistency
God
Meeting
Engagement
Expectation

Getting specific (2019-20)

We are prioritising the support and encouragement of new expressions of church.

Re-seeding a new congregation at Northenden by encouraging 12 people to transfer their membership to Northenden. The new service will have a different time from the existing service which will continue as before. This may be supported by a mission shaped ministry course, and the new service will be inclusive and open to all.

Encouraging new forms of worship in established churches, including mid-week worship, Café Church and more contemporary worship. We will enable ideas and resources to be shared across all of our church communities, and seek ways to support churches as start new things.

Encouraging Cheadle Hulme to share their experiences as they start new exciting work focussing on fresh expressions of church and evangelism.

Nurturing the Mindful Church service at Wilmslow, and exploring how it could be adopted as a form of outreach in other places.

Focussed on learning

"Listen then, if you have ears"
Matthew 13:9

Challenges, expectations and passions

As a disciple-making and nurturing movement, we are passionate about equipping each other to serve God effectively in the places where we spend our time. We recognise that whatever our age, background or experience of faith, we all have much to learn, and will support each other on our continuing and varying journeys of faith.

Across our church communities, we want to encourage and enable a growth in discipleship, empowering people to see, develop and use the gifts that God has given to them. We want to kindle a desire amongst our congregations for people to learn more about God, and to apply that learning in their daily lives.

Our circuit priorities are:

- Recognising the power of small groups, helping to contextualise learning to our own lives.
- Seeking opportunities to empower individuals to see, develop and use their God-given gifts.
- Seeking opportunities to share our stories, both as individuals to each other, and as whole churches to our communities.
- Finding ways to identify and share resources with one another.

Training
Story telling
Focus
Time management

Getting specific (2019-20)

Make better use of church websites and Circuit Facebook page, as a means of sharing worship ideas, service preparation resources and relevant courses and events across the Circuit.

Provide training on the use of social media across the Circuit.

Continuing to encourage the use of the Circuit Magazine (and website) for sharing our stories (both as individuals and as church communities).

Use WhatsApp groups for specific reasons.

Promote the theology book club.

Focussed on caring

"Love one another warmly, as Christian brothers and sisters" Romans 12:10

Challenges, expectations and passions

Caring for one another and for the communities in which we are based is a key part of our Methodist DNA and heritage. We want to make sure that the members of all of our churches feel loved and supported in whatever stage of life and faith they find themselves.

We are committed to making sure that our congregations feel supported and not isolated. Particularly with geographically distant or smaller congregations, we want to ensure that individual churches feel loved and cared for.

Our circuit priorities are:

1. Finding ways to support all our congregations so that they feel part of a larger caring community of united Christians.
2. Helping our churches to be safe environments where people can find help, nurture, care and support.
3. Promoting small groups, ensuring that every individual in the Circuit has the opportunity to be part of a small group.
4. Seeking ways in which the Circuit can support individual churches in offering care and compassionate outreach into their communities.

Isolation
Attention
Support
Nurture
Small groups
Training

Getting specific (2019-20)

Continue to place 'Heartbeat' (our Circuit Prayer ministry) at the centre of our Circuit life and ministry.

Provide safeguarding training to all who need it, and ensure that our churches are safe places.

Explore how technologies such as shared calendars and social network communities could improve communications across the Circuit, enabling congregations to be better connected to Christians in other churches.

Encourage our churches to provide support for carers, and for those struggling with dementia. Encourage churches to take practical steps such as creating dementia-friendly signage on their property. Training could also be offered to local preachers who may lead a service with people struggling with this illness.

Continue and develop the emerging wellbeing programme at Bramhall particularly through delivery of the Living Life to the Full courses

Focused on serving

“Kindness shown to the poor is an act of worship” Proverbs 14:31

Challenges, expectations and passions

Across our churches, we find a rich tapestry of individuals, groups and whole communities serving God in practical ways locally, nationally and internationally. Such compassionate action is a key part of our calling as Christians, and at the heart of our Methodist DNA.

We want to empower one another as churches and individuals to continue seek ways in which we can put the Christian faith into action:

- serving God in practical ways
- speaking out against the causes of injustice
- responding to racial and homophobic prejudice

Our circuit priorities are:

1. Finding ways to discover how members of our churches are involved in ‘serving’, will celebrate that and share common needs and concerns across our congregations.
2. Seeking ways for our combined voice to be heard locally and nationally, speaking out against injustice and being seen to put our faith into action.
3. Working actively with other (non-Methodist) churches in bringing a Christian voice into our communities
4. Seeking new partnerships as a Circuit, and seek ways in which the churches can access those partnerships and expert resources.
5. And we will pray without ceasing, praying compassionately for the people whom we serve, and for opportunities to serve.

Getting specific (2019-20)

Supporting the Christians Against Poverty (CAP) project in Wythenshawe, financially, prayerfully and practically. Establish a network of advocates in local churches.

Find opportunities to encourage individuals from different churches to support activities such as Saturday Club at St Andrew’s, where additional support is needed alongside the local church congregation.

Develop further community relationships, such as with Emmaus, and with Studio One and Centrepoint at St Andrew’s.

Compassion
Challenging injustice
Partnership
Responding
Prayer

Focused on growing

“Go and do the work of an evangelist”
2 Timothy 4:5

Challenges, expectations and passions

We want to help each other to feel confident in sharing our faith, and telling our stories. Many members of the churches already do so much to serve God because of their faith, such as helping with food banks. We need to help them to see that work as evangelism and use it as a way of telling their stories.

We want to see the members of all of the churches being supported in living out their faith through the whole of their life, celebrating the opportunities that God has given to serve him.

Our circuit priorities are:

1. Encourage churches to make the link between ‘evangelism’ and existing activities – such as helping in the church charity shop, or working in the foodbank.
2. Seeking opportunities to break down barriers, and make it easier for people to come in to church activities and events
3. Promoting story telling – to one another, to other people, helping individuals to grow in confidence in sharing their stories.
4. Encouraging all of our members to get alongside people outside of the church, sharing hospitality wherever we can.

Being alongside
Love
Telling stories
Hospitality
Invitation
Sent out
Sharing testimony
Credibility

Getting specific (2019-20)

Encouraging churches to be intentional about growth, across all age-ranges. Encourage individuals to tell their own faith stories.

Find ways to encourage Children and Family Workers and Schools Workers who are actively developing ministries across families and young people.

Affirm the work done with different types of toddler group, and engage in creative thinking around toddler and Messy Church groups. Support the establishment of new congregations who see themselves as ‘church’.

Encourage churches to team up to run joint youth activities and services. Enable a group from across the Circuit attend 3Generate.

Keep the Circuit website informative and up to date. Enable smaller churches to use it as their own website. Develop the Circuit Facebook page as a further external communication tool.