



## Bramhall and Wythenshawe Methodist Circuit

### Vision and priorities 2017 - 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.

### Focussed 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.

#### Getting specific (2017-18)

Publicise details of special services when each new plan is issued, so that people know where to find Taizé services, praise services etc. Plan Circuit Services at various times and on various days.

Sharing in the magazine or the LP meeting, examples of different styles and forms of worship which have worked well, and why, what has been learned, and how these might be adapted in other churches in the circuit.

Making sure worship events for young people are publicised throughout the circuit. Arrange a closed Facebook group through which youth events can be advertised.

Look at new ways of providing music to support worship where there is no organist or keyboard player available.

## 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 (2017-18)

Resourcing training for worship leaders, house group leaders and pastoral visitors.

Sharing information across the circuit of courses and resources which have worked well and could be used in other churches.

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

Share practical help using the website, for example of how to create a PowerPoint presentation.

Continue to promote and encourage 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 (2017-18)

Collate resources which can be made available in each church, detailing where members and people using the church premises can obtain help for a variety of situations (address of local CAB, help-lines, food-bank vouchers, local interest groups etc).

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

Share examples of how to pray well for those who have requested prayer, and ways to enable those who come onto church premises to express their need for prayer. Establish the Circuit Prayer Team.

Facilitate a Circuit Quiet Day, to offer space for reflection and spiritual growth.

## Focussed 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 (2017-18)

Find ways for us to work together to promote our focus on supporting those with Mental Health issues, which has been adopted as a cross-circuit initiative.

Share information across the circuit of grant-making bodies, to help each church to identify possible funding sources for new work.

Challenging injustice  
Compassion  
Partnership  
Prayer  
Responding

## Focussed 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.

### Getting specific (2017-18)

Sharing resources that can be used in toddler groups for example at Christmas/Harvest, or songs with Christian content that can be used in at toddler group ‘singing time’.

Equipping churches to think about welcome, and sharing examples of how best to engage with those who come onto church premises for other purposes.

In partnership with the District, host the Mission Shaped Ministry course, to help to promote new ways of being church.

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