

A Feasibility Study Report on behalf of the Bangor and Holyhead Methodist Circuit by John Hay, March 2024



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Section A: Introduction



A1. Purpose of Feasibility Study

The general purpose of the Feasibility Study is set out in the proposal put forward and agreed by the Bangor and Holyhead Circuit Meeting on 14 June 2023 which stated as follows:

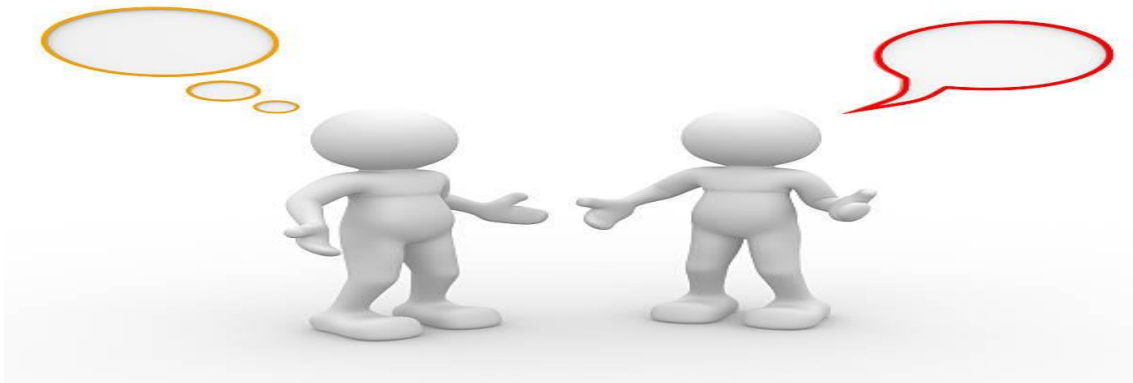
“It is proposed that the Circuit appoints John Hay to undertake a feasibility study to look at the life of the Circuit and its future, with a view to the appointment of a Church and Community Lay Worker for the Bangor and Holyhead Circuit. The study is to be carried out between September 1st 2023 and February 29th 2024, under the supervision of the Rev’d Nick Sissons and the Circuit Stewards and a report will come to the March Circuit Meeting, which will then be given priority consideration in the period before the Superintendent goes on sabbatical in late May 2024.”

Broadly speaking the study explores the worship, life and mission of each of the five churches in the circuit and in particular how each church connects and engages with its community, the wider Methodist Circuit and other local Christian churches and organisations. The emphasis is on not just what happens now but on looking at how each church and the circuit generally can best be equipped to sustain and extend its life, worship and mission going forward. Finally, there is a specific section on vision and development, which includes the Methodist initiative known as New Places for New People (NPNPs) with ideas and suggestions about how our churches and Circuit may get involved with this and how doing so might have a positive impact in the life of the churches, the Circuit and area generally.

A2. Methodology

The methodology adopted has largely involved meeting with people from our churches, their communities and other church groups or Christian organisations; listening to and prayerfully reflecting on their stories; wide reading, study and analysis; idea and vision-making; small group discussion groups (for example, a NPNP group has been formed); regular discussions with Rev Nick and Circuit stewards to talk over issues; attending church councils and other meetings; attending relevant webinars and courses and naturally, drinking lots and lots of coffee!!

Section B: Results of Conversations with members of the five church congregations



The process

These conversations were generally conducted in people's homes, sometimes as one to one or more frequently as one to two or three. They would last for 1 – 2 hours duration, during which people were encouraged to share their views on a range of topics relevant to the church and circuit which they felt to be important. Most of the time they would set the agenda of what was spoken about, but sometimes if particular key topics did not emerge naturally, they would be gently led on to them. The key thing was to give opportunity for people to voice what they really felt, rather than what they thought we might want them to say. I was encouraged early on that this was a good approach to take when one person told me that this was the first time they felt really listened to by someone perceived to be in church leadership.

I did not speak to absolutely everyone from the congregations, but tried to pick a cross-section of people I thought would be representative of different elements of each church.

I took as few notes as possible when speaking to people, so as to not disrupt the flow of the conversations but made sure I wrote substantial notes up straight afterwards. I would reflect and pray both for the people seen and issues raised, making a separate note of any thoughts or observations which came to mind. This was a slow but important part of the process.

From my perspective, I found the conversations a real privilege and blessing to have. People were welcoming and hospitable, and it was a genuinely pleasurable experience to get to know them and hear what they thought important to say.

Contents

Rather than fill the main body of the report with all the relevant points made by people in the conversations, which might create a situation of "not being able to see the wood for the trees," I have set these out as separate appendices. The summaries for each church can be found as follows:

As can be seen from the summaries, there are a variety of views and ideas expressed. Some of the content focuses on existing ways things are done and suggesting tweaks as to how they may be improved. Some of this is at a micro level, relevant only to that particular church, whilst others do have general application. There are ideas for new projects and in some instances, a suggestion that a different culture or way of approaching things may be required.

I would suggest that the stewards and church council members for each church work their way through the comments for their particular church and decide what follow up may be appropriate. Circuit Stewards and members of the Circuit Meeting will need to look at it the broader picture and again, decide what follow-up is appropriate.

The following are three general observations, common and applicable across the circuit, arising from the conversations upon which we might want to act:

1. A view expressed more than once and across different churches is that encouragement should be given to those who are involved in their communities in what might be described as “mission” type activities and that the church should embrace and recognize this as part of its mission strategy. Some feel that in some situations rather than trying to do new mission activities with limited resources when other well-organized community groups are already out there doing it, those motivated and able to do so, should join them. Salt and Light in the world. It is also worth underlining that many from our congregations are already actively involved in their communities in this way. To reflect this, I suggest we ensure this point is clearly set out in to our Mission and Development Plans.
2. People generally agree that the way forward for church-based mission given diminishing resources is to combine forces with other local churches and Christian organisations. For the most part this will be a case of prioritising Cytun involvement and ensuring that we support and are involved at the heart of what goes on there, using it as a springboard for action. In other cases, there are individual churches such as the Lighthouse Church in Llangefni or Christian organisations such as Christian Vision for Men with whom we might want to encourage collaboration. The conversations I have had with other church leaders have been very insightful – it is clear that many are having similar conversations to what we are having about how the future may look, and reaching the same conclusion that the time is ripe to work more closely together. We need to make sure the conversations continue and be willing to commit resources when appropriate opportunities arise.

3. Many people across our churches feel that there is a real need for people to come together in fellowship, whether that is specifically for bible study and prayer, or simply to spend time together, and have welcomed the various initiatives and start-up groups that have occurred in the last 12 months. In particular, the new groups meeting at Holyhead and St John's in people's homes, and the Time and Space group which meets for coffee and chat in Menai Bridge once a month have all been started in that time to meet perceived needs and have been well received. Signs of growing fellowship and discipleship.

The view expressed by many is that more such groups would be beneficial, and a group similar to Time and Space at the Llanfairfechan and Penmaenmawr end of the Circuit is to start in March. Additionally, a Lent Group for those from the Amlwch church meeting in a café at Benllech has been started this year. Might this also in time be extended to include Holyhead and Amlwch on a more permanent footing?

Another idea expressed was that it would be good to start a Circuit Walking Group which would fulfil a similar function. This very much fits in with the sense of encountering God in the outdoors with Wild Worship which many have joined in with over the last 12 months and the NPNP idea currently being developed by the Circuit NPNP group (see Section G).

Some from our churches are not used to the idea of housegroups, but indicated they would be willing to give them a go and this may be a positive step forward to grow fellowship and discipleship further. Certainly, those who currently attend such groups speak very highly of what they have gained from doing so, not just in terms of "fellowship" but also in terms of spiritual and discipleship growth. Thinking specifically of those who live on Ynys Mon, there may be some benefit in looking at arranging home groups based on where people live rather than purely on church locations as some of those who live on the island live reasonably close to each other whilst attending different churches. This would also have the added effect of increasing a sense of identity and unity across the Circuit.

Section C: Circuit



1. Circuit identity

There are varying views held by members of the five congregations about the Circuit.

There are many - probably a majority, and mostly those who have been many years in Methodism - who perceive it to be important as an entity in and of itself, as it serves as a vehicle to provide mutual support and encouragement to Methodists and the individual churches across the area. In one sense the Circuit is well shaped for close involvement due to its small size of member churches. There is one full-time Presbyterian who is also the Superintendent and 4 active supernumeraries with a relatively small pool of Local Preachers to draw on who will each frequently get around the different churches. Many of these same people will be evident at Circuit events, often travelling some distance and going out of their way to do so. Additionally, the benefits of Zoom and technological advances mean it is now possible for many to be involved who would not be beforehand.

However, there are others for whom the Circuit is merely an administrative necessity and whilst they remain committed to their particular church and community, they have no inclination to be involved in Circuit events, travel out of area to do so or otherwise be involved with the Circuit any more than they have to. These people tend to vote with their feet and not attend events, whether live or on zoom. The situation is not helped by the geography of the area with the Circuit being geographically long and thin, spreading some 40 + miles from Holyhead to Penmaenmawr, which makes it difficult and expensive to get around for many. Some of our churches, notably Amlwch and St John's, also have accessibility issues which put people off from visiting. There is also still a significant number who do not have access to zoom, either because they do not have the right equipment or know-how.

There are some key questions we need to answer. Is this disconnect experienced by those described above something we need to be concerned about (this may be the case across most circuits, a case of just the way things are)? Do we want to commit time and effort to improve Circuit identity, unity and help people and our different churches be better connected to each other? If so, how?

First, we need to look at the different reasons people may not currently be involved in the Circuit. Some people may need to be convinced that the Circuit has a relevance beyond an administrative tool which can enhance their own faith

experience and the life of the church. Others may need help to get to events or to be able to access technology.

Some preliminary ideas as how to better unite the Circuit can be found at **appendix 6**. These are intended only as a starter for discussion and definitely not a full worked through action plan. **If the Circuit feels that this is an area worth putting some time and effort into, then it would be best to form a small group with voices from each of the churches to do so, which could report back to the Circuit Stewards and Circuit Meeting with an action plan.**

2. Merge for Mission

A different way of coming at it would be to consider a major structure change in the way the Circuit runs by moving to a one church circuit footing. This is something very much promoted by Connexion and there is a helpful section on the Methodist Website about church mergers which provides a great deal of information and stories from those who have been through the process. See link below:

www.methodist.org.uk/mergeformission

At present we have five different societies across five different sites each with its own church council and officers (stewards, treasurer, property steward etc). There is then a Circuit Meeting, where representatives from those churches come together. In a Circuit like ours, where there is one full-time Presbyterian Minister who is the Superintendent and who must then attend each meeting, this means a great deal of time spent in what is essentially administration. This applies not just to the Minister, but also to key active people from our churches who often find themselves tied up in a round of endless meetings at certain times of the year. Arguably, meetings are by no means the best way of doing business nor very appealing to many within the churches who vote with their feet. **Some Circuits have sought to change this and intentionally liberate people for mission by moving to a one society, one church circuit structure.** In this scenario, though one church it would be across different sites, with worship and mission activities continuing at the different sites. Each church would provide a certain number of stewards and representatives to the Church Council (many opt to do this by allocating a certain number per church, rather than based on membership) and effectively the Circuit Meeting would become a quick technical meeting rather than what it is now, as the real work has been done in the Church Council. There would be small teams of people responsible for say property, Finance etc rather than each society having to have its own office holder.

The other factor to bear in mind is the size of membership. Four of our five churches currently have membership lists below 20 and with an aging demographic there may come a point in the next 5 – 8 years when it may be difficult for some to continue as they currently are.

I have been on courses in the last 12 months when various speakers have extolled the benefits of this type of structural change which has released people and brought

new life and vitality. Resources (people and money) can be shared according to need in a targeted and strategic way. One such speaker was David Speirs from the Northampton Circuit where ten churches became one church across ten sites. He spoke in very positive terms as to his experience of what it has been like since. See appendix 7 for a fuller account of what he said and what else was said on the course about it.

This is something to give thought to in our Circuit.

Any such change would need the agreement of each church. Having mentioned this to a number of people in conversations after I had been on the course, it is true to say that there are very mixed views on this. Some can see the benefits, others fear loss of having a say and loss of control over what happens at the site. As in the Northampton experience, this would involve a great deal of time and effort now to go through the process of consultation and meetings, to bring all of this together and some may question whether we have the willpower and energy to do this as a priority, when we are all so busy anyway. Is there a danger it would detract from exciting mission ventures which are coming to fruition now? There is also the feeling some in our congregations may have, of feeling yet further from the seat of power, from the place they can have say and influence over the way things are run on the church site they attend. A less democratic state of being.

Is this the best way forward for the Bangor and Holyhead Circuit at this time? I am not sure, but it may be and I suggest that as a first step we have a conversation about it at church stewards level, within our churches and at circuit level..

Section D: Community



I have attempted to analyse and understand each of the communities where we have sites and undertook an analysis of the Census 2021 data in an attempt to get a better understanding of community needs. This was time consuming, but the data has thrown up some interesting insights which may be of use in determining the mission direction for each of our churches. There are also some interesting differences between the communities.

The Circuit area generally, apart from Bangor, lacks diversity and broadly speaking has an aging population with higher than national average number of people living in single households. Bangor, as you would expect being a university city with many students drawn from overseas, has a higher than average number of people aged 15 – 25 and is more ethnically diverse than the rest of the area. Holyhead bucks the trend of the other areas as it has a high number of young people aged under 15 compared both to the rest of the area and the rest of Wales, and in fact, has more aged under 15 than it has aged over 65. In Llanfairfechan and Penmaenmawr there is a high rate of home ownership without mortgage, which is consistent with the perception that many move into the area to retire. There are indicators of deprivation in Holyhead and Amlwch.

I have saved the Census data if anyone is keen to see it but have not produced it as part of the report appendices as I feel it does not show anything beyond what might have been expected and does not warrant the space it would take up.

I have also spent time in each of the respective towns and spoken to people in café's, shops and on the streets to get their views on what they feel about their community. As a starting point I used the basic format of the community audit form which can be found at **appendix 14**. Churches may wish to use this form from time to time to check on the key issues in the locality, which may well change with time.

In Llanfairfechan it was noticeable that many of those 75 and over who have lived in the town for many years feel that the strong knit community of the past has been eroded by new incomers who do not engage in a community way. The loss of the carnival is seen as symptomatic of this. There is concern over the difficulty of getting doctors' appointments and overcrowding in schools and a feeling that this will get worse with new housing developments expected to start shortly.

In Bangor, there is a perception that the foodbank is getting busier and that some international students are struggling financially. There are still many empty shops down the lower end of the High Street and most economic activity has moved to the retail parks on Caernarfon Road. The student population, as it has done for many years, dominates the city.

In Amlwch, a town with a rich history of commerce and industry, many spoke with concern at how shops are empty, industry all but gone, few jobs and sense a mood of despondency. This is in contrast to Holyhead, a much larger town which despite having pockets of greater social deprivation, has more of a vibrant feel to it. There is a sense of activity and new life emerging there. Businesses are reopening and there is a better sense of hope for the future as money invested from various schemes such as the levelling up fund and the Free Enterprise Zone starts to have an impact. It is also noticeable in Holyhead that there are more obvious places to get help and assistance for those who are struggling. There are also many community centres offering a variety of wellbeing type activities.

Penmaenmawr has a very defined community and a strong sense of identity.

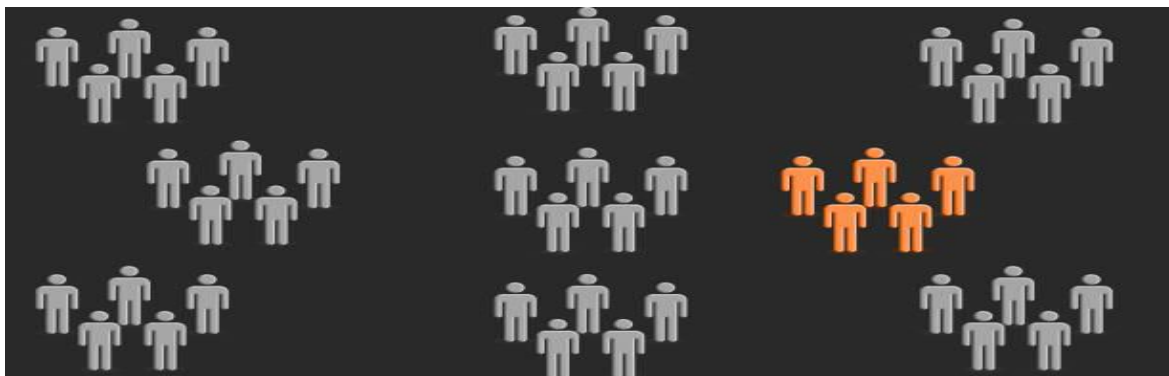
Anglesey, though made up of smaller, often very different communities with a variety of towns and small villages spread across its area, does have a unique identity derived from its island status. It is a distinct county authority with its centre of administration at Llangefni, and there are some people who are reluctant to go over the bridges to the mainland.

Many different people across all the areas mentioned a sense of social isolation, and many of those aged 75+ commented that things have not been the same since the Covid pandemic, with some groups not having re-started and a sense of anxiety prevalent. With the exception of Holyhead, many also feel that wellbeing is not taken seriously enough, and many did not know seem to have much idea about where they might get help with wellbeing type issues or what groups were out there which they might benefit from joining in with, even if they could muster courage to get out and give them a try.

This seemed to confirm my original perception that our churches could make a difference to their respective communities if they focused on wellbeing issues and things that bring people together as part of their mission strategies.

I spent some time reflecting on that, and how we might perceive our activities, church-life and mission through the lens of wellbeing. **See appendix 15.**

Section E: Discussions with other church leaders and Christian organisations



This aspect of the study has been the most interesting and stimulating part for me, but also at times the most frustrating. Stimulating, because it raises all sorts of possibilities for new ways of being and doing. Frustrating, because trying to tie some leaders down to talk about what they are planning, let alone actually doing anything with them, has sometimes been difficult.

Nevertheless, I have had the opportunity to talk to many people from different denominational traditions and have been struck by how many are dealing with similar

issues to us and have picked up many useful insights as to how they are approaching things.

In some instances, there are organisations and leaders who are going through a review and envisioning process very much along the lines of what we have been doing, reaching similar conclusions and with whom it is not hard to see us being able to work with on joint projects. I am thinking particularly of the Anglesey situation, with the very positive resurgence in Cytun at Holyhead and the possibility of developments at Amlwch following initial exploratory talks with Rev Jenny Clarke of St Eleth's, but the same also applies to Bangor and Penmaenmawr Cytuns where our churches play a prominent role. Capel Zinc has a good history of being involved in joint services at significant times of the year and are a visible presence at many of the civic events in the town (such as the Remembrance Day Parade).

Outside of Cytuns, there are other churches in areas such as Llangefni where the Lighthouse Church is located and other Christian organisations such as Christian Vision for Men with whom we might be able to collaborate if we are prepared to commit time and effort to do so. But herein lies the problem. For the most part, church leaders across our area are hard-pressed, under resourced, stressed out and struggling to juggle too many balls as it is. This is particularly true of those from the Church in Wales. To work effectively with others across different churches and organisations will take time, effort, patience and a willingness to give up control. But it does seem to be very much the way forward.

For a more detailed summary of what those leaders have been saying to me, see **appendix 8**

The Church in Wales currently has two major projects in our area. The first is based around developing certain key buildings and is called "The stones shout out". See at <https://bangor.eglwysyngnghymru.org.uk/llefarcerrig/> This has led to significant work at St Cybi's in Holyhead and at the Cathedral in Bangor. The second, based very much around mission is called the Llan Project, and this will have big implications for parts of our area. Full details on the Diocese of Bangor website can be found at this link <https://bangor.eglwysyngnghymru.org.uk/llan/> and I have prepared a summary which can be seen at **appendix 9**.

I have set this out in a way which hopefully people will be able to see exactly how much thought and effort they have put into this, and how much it mirrors the language used by the Methodist Church, particularly with regard to community engagement and development of NPNPs.

A key figure locally, particularly on Anglesey, is Archdeacon John Harvey with whom I had a very productive discussion on 26 February. He indicated that a key focus of the Enterprise element of the Llan project relates to Holyhead and is in conjunction with the building development at St Cybi's. In short, they are creating a modern and adaptable space, which will include a café, which they hope will become the focus

for community projects and other church groups to make use of. This may well become highly relevant to Holyhead Cytun with its Renew Wellbeing project and the Methodist Church should we be looking for venues for any new ventures we seek to be involved with. The other key takeaway from this conversation, is that John fully recognizes the importance of working more closely with other Christian organisations and churches such as ours, and gave every impression that he wishes to make it happen. We need to foster this connection and keep the channels of communication open now that they have been opened.

Section F: New Places for New People (NPNPs) and other missional ideas



Another part of the study has been to consider where God may be leading us in terms of mission; to consider new ways of being church outside of buildings and specifically, to consider whether there may be scope for our Circuit to be involved in giving birth to a NPNP.

NPNPs are new Christian communities in new places for those not yet part of an existing church. Connexion considers NPNPs are the most effective means of connecting new people, new people groups, and new residents to Christian exploration and community. The emphasis is very much on encounter.

New Places for New People is a major Methodist project promoted by the Evangelism and Growth Team to which substantial funding has been made available both at Connexional and at Synod level. Each District, and each Circuit is being encouraged to initiate a NPNP project. The Methodist Church has a major section on its website about how to do so which can be found at this link:

<https://www.methodist.org.uk/our-work/our-work-in-britain/evangelism-growth/new-places-for-new-people/begin-a-new-place-for-new-people/>

The Wales-Cymru District has been given £1 million to fund schemes submitted before September 2026 (final committee in May 2026), at which point the fund closes. At the moment, there is only one funded scheme in Wales, that being Llanddysgwr (Learners Church) near Wrexham but there is another in the pipeline in South Wales. I have prepared a brief summary of some of the projects which have

been granted funding which can be found at **appendix 10**. These give an insight into what NPNPs look like on the ground.

Having read the various publications produced about NPNPs and the website links, I have spoken to key people at Connexion and Synod, and spent time considering the possibilities. **Given what was being said to me by people in our churches and the communities, I was initially drawn think to Wellbeing issues and put together some ideas about this.** These can be found at **Appendix 11**. Views were invited from the Circuit and three suggestions made. These are also included in **Appendix 11**.

In January 2024 a NPNP group was formed to take the thinking forward with an experienced Pioneer, Gavin Mart assisting us. A project idea has come out of this process, and Gavin has put together a basic initial draft which can be seen at **appendix 12**. **Essentially, the NPNP idea is to connect with the outdoor pursuits community and those who are drawn to the Eryri area. It seeks to explore the connection between outdoor engagement and the Christian tradition.** This idea needs to be further developed and information/evidence provided sufficient to be able to submit the application form at **appendix 13**.

On March 7 a meeting took place with myself, Nick and Gavin from the NPNP team with the Chair of the District and Gill Peace, a key person from the Synod Finance team, in which this idea was presented. **It was received positively and they seemed very supportive, particularly with regard to providing a contribution to funding for preliminary work required prior to the making of a full application.**

A proposal is to be put forward to the Circuit Meeting regarding this with a request for some funding to be approved to engage Gavin to further work on the project and put the formal NPNP application together. We are very excited about where this might lead.

If this outdoor community engagement project does proceed then that will become our main NPNP focus but it does not necessarily mean that some of the other ideas set out in **appendix 11** cannot in time be tried out. There may be scope for development of those ideas outside of the NPNP regime, or indeed, in connection with them, particularly if the main proposal regarding a Lay Worker for Anglesey is accepted.

Section G: Conclusions and proposals

No silver bullet

From the outset I have been keen to play down expectations of what this period of review/feasibility study would produce at the end of it. **There never was going to be a silver bullet, an easy solution to the issues we face. And guess what.....I haven't**

found one! However, what I have found is hope for the future. Hope based on the fact that God is at work in our communities ahead of us, and there are some insights which have emerged as to how we might join in with what God is already doing. No great Giant Step, but certainly plenty of small ones!!!!



Participation, ideas and prayer

That hope is also based on the fact that so many people across our circuit have been keen to be involved in this exercise – whether it be from inviting me into their homes to spend time discussing matters with me, praying (at the weekly prayer meeting we have held throughout the six month period or using the weekly prayer sheets or as part of personal prayer times), offering ideas and speaking words of encouragement.

Journey not a destination

At no point have I felt alone with this, rather it feels like we have all been going on a journey together. And about halfway in, it occurred to me that maybe the end destination is not as important as the journey itself. I do feel that the process has galvanized us, brought us closer together simply by having a focus, a conduit which enables thoughts, ideas, frustrations to be voiced and channelled.

Positives and signs of God at work

There have also been many positives as we have been going along, many of them nothing to do with me or the study and some which had just started up in the months before the official start of the study period. Some might be deemed coincidences, but my feeling is that when people invest time, energy and most importantly prayer into a venture, then “coincidences” occur more frequently. Signs that God is at work.

There are some examples of these “positives along the way” set out at **appendix 16:**

General Suggestions and Proposals

- 1) Action the point raised at B.1 that “encouragement should be given to those who are involved in their communities in what might be described as “mission” type activities and that the church should embrace and recognize this as part of its mission strategy” by writing that into our church/circuit development and mission plans, giving space in services for people to give testimony about some of the activities they are involved in and making specific mention in the annual Vocations Sunday service.
- 2) Action point at B.2 re fostering working relationships with other local churches and organisations by making “sure the conversations continue and be willing to commit resources when appropriate opportunities arise.” Do this by making involvement in Cytun events a priority, being open and transparent about what doing in our dealings with the other churches and inviting early partnership with any ideas we might have.
- 3) Action point B.3 to foster fellowship and deepen discipleship by promoting more housegroups across the circuit and developing further the Time and Space fellowship meetings at café’s, to include Amlwch and Holyhead. Someone needed to coordinate this.
- 4) Action points raised in each of the churches conversations as set out in appendices 1 – 5. Each of the church stewards to work through together, and bring any of the ideas for development to their church councils or general meetings.
- 5) Action Circuit consultation on the desirability (or otherwise) of restructuring by moving to a single church circuit per section on Merge for Mission at section C above and appendix 7.
- 6) Action point C.1 above by forming a small group (Circuit Leadership team or volunteers) to receive and work on ideas for improving Circuit identity and connectivity including the starter ideas suggested in appendix 6. Conversations to be had about this across the circuit.
- 7) Action Community Audits (per section D): each church to consider if and when next to do.

Main Proposals with funding requirements

1. Layworker for Anglesey

The feasibility study was initiated to ascertain if there is a viable role for a layworker to support the Superintendent Minister within the Circuit, and if so, where might this be focused and for what purpose. My original vision and idea of the shape this might take was set out in a document presented to the Circuit Meeting on June 2023.

My view is that there is indeed a part-time role for a Lay Worker and that this should be based on Anglesey, where there is a unique sense of identity due to its setting as an island. It is also fair to say that of all our churches, Amlwch currently needs the most input now that David and Liz have stepped back from active ministry and other key members have left the area. Whilst arguably Holyhead is more self-sufficient and

has an active supernumerary in Rev Sue Altree to hand, it also has an exciting ecumenical venture starting up with the Renew Wellbeing Space and will need input and involvement in support.

The main purpose of the role would be to foster the working relationships with other church/Christian groups on the island, in particularly at Holyhead and Amlwch, and to build on the relationships/connections already made. I have found from my dealings to date that there is a genuine openness and desire among many different church groups to work more effectively together, but it will need persistence and patience to ensure this grows into action as so many leaders are busy or preoccupied with their own projects that there is a risk good intentions go no further than that. Someone needs to be there to grease the wheel of change.

The role would also be to assist with pastoral and mission matters at Amlwch and Holyhead; to seek to develop a housegroup structure across the island based on where people live; and to look to develop some of the ideas for new well-being groups based outside of our churches and possibly at different locations. It could also include involvement in leading regular acts of wild worship, study/prayer groups, assisting with the implementation of the other suggestions/proposals set out above (including the circuit based hospital visiting suggestion set out in appendix 6) and acting as a link person to any NPNP project which develops.

It is my view that this role would build up over time as things develop but that for the first 12-18 months, the appropriate level of hours could be set in the region of 12- 15 per week (2 days), so that it remains affordable and sustainable. So far as funding is concerned we will make an application for funds from Synod and I feel there is a good case for this to be granted, at least in part but I suspect the Circuit will almost certainly need to fund some part of this too, hence the importance of making it affordable and sustainable. A formal costed proposal will be made at a future Circuit meeting regarding this.

2. NPNP project

The second proposal with funding implications relates to the NPNP project. The precise wording will be worked out in time for the March Circuit Meeting, but essentially the Circuit will be asked to support the Circuit NPNP Group in taking forward the idea of finding ways of connecting the outdoor spirituality in the Christian tradition with the outdoor community of Eryri and funding Gavin Mart to do the necessary groundwork in order to make a successful application later in the year. Again, it is envisaged, on the basis of what was said at the recent meeting with the Chair of District and District Finance officer that the Synod would match fund the expected costs for this, which would mean the Circuit will be asked to fund the remainder which it will do through the Turney Trust held at St John's. It is my recommendation that this be supported.

The End.....or is it just the end of the beginning!!!!!!

Feasibility Study Report Appendices

Appendix 1 Amlwch points raised in conversations

Appendix 2 Capel Zinc, Llanfairfechan points raised in conversations

Appendix 3 Holyhead points raised in conversations

Appendix 4 St Paul's, Penmaenmawr points raised in conversations

Appendix 5 St John's, Bangor points raised in conversations

Appendix 6 Starter ideas to bring the Circuit together

Appendix 7 Small churches – what's our future story webinar

Appendix 8 Discussions with other church groups and Christian organisations

Appendix 9 About CiW Diocese of Bangor Llan project

Appendix 10 Summary of NPNP projects

Appendix 11 Ideas for New Ways of Being in the B+H Circuit

Appendix 12 B+H Circuit draft project proposal

Appendix 13 NPNP submission form

Appendix 14 Community Audit Form

Appendix 15 Circuit life and mission through lens of wellbeing

Appendix 16 Positives and signs along the way

Appendix 1

AMLWCH – points raised in conversations

There are some very different views about matters of worship, church-life and mission.

1. People highlighted the following good things about church-life

A. FORUM

A well attended Forum with interesting talks, to which some of the Welsh congregation attend and which most enjoy.

B. BEREAVEMENT GROUP

The Bereavement Support Group which meets in the church or local restaurant, usually run by Richard B and Dr Linda but more recently by David/Liz when RB not available.

C. 3Ts FELLOWSHIP

3T's Monthly Bible Study/Fellowship with meal at David/Liz's but though open to all, not many actual members of the church congregation do attend. Most attendees are contacts from other churches.

D. WELSH LEARNERS

Welsh Learning, whereby some members eg Eddie and Chris attend at café with members of the Welsh speaking church/community and engage in Welsh conversation together. This helps improve relationships and build trust between the two congregations.

E. HAFAN CEFNI

The monthly worship at Hafan Cefni. Everyone agrees this is positive, meets a real need, and everyone enjoys worshipping there with members who are residents and those other residents who come along because it is on. It boosts people to meet together like this, gives a buzz and positive vibe when there.

F. STABLE FINANCES

The Treasurer reports that the Church is financially stable at the moment, breaking even and with good reserves in it's bank account.

2. But many perceive problems/issues with no easy answers about how to cope with the future

A. WORSHIP

Some highlighted disagreements about worship. In particular, some with mobility issues find the chapel inaccessible, the toilet facilities inadequate and would rather not worship there at all. Others love the worship space at the chapel and would far rather worship there than they do under current arrangements. Some enjoy the freedom of café style worship at Clwb y Gorlan, others hate it and won't attend when it is held there. One person made it clear that for them worship needs to be held somewhere that looks like a church and that they would even prefer there to be an arrangement with St Eleth's to use their building than Clwb y Gorlan.

B. MISSION

Some stated that there is no shared vision of what the future holds, particularly with regard to use (or not) of the building and this is tending to dominate perspectives, so that there is limited vision for or talk about mission. The church is not as outward looking as it might be and the only things that regularly happen are the monthly worship at Hafan Cefni and the bereavement group. Others disagree with that view, taking the view that though not doing much in and around Amlwch through the auspices of the church, many members of the congregation are actively involved in their own communities in what may be viewed as mission activities through non-church action groups such as the Benllech Good Turn Scheme which Eddie and Margaret are involved in. Some feel more encouragement should be given to those who are involved in their communities in this way and that the church should

embrace and recognise as part of its mission strategy. They feel that there is little point trying to do new mission activities with limited resources when other well-organised groups are already out there doing it – those motivated and able to do so, should join them.

C. CYTUN/OTHER CHURCHES

The local CYTUN has fallen into disrepair and no longer meets at all. We share much in common with St Eleth's (the parish Church in Wales church) and though everyone speaks well of Rev Jen, beyond the annual town Remembrance Day Service and Good Friday walk of witness, there is very little in terms of working together that goes on. However, in recent weeks there have been some developments. John H had a very constructive conversation with Rev Jen, who shares the view that we could work together and arising from that has invited the Catholic Church to join with her, some from St Eleth's and the Methodists to discuss ways we could do so with a view to getting Cytun up and running again. Very positive progress, sadly delayed when Rev Jen became ill and is not expected back until 04/03/24.

D. WELSH SPEAKING CONGREGATION

Everybody agrees that the relationship with the Welsh speaking congregation is not brilliant, but a little improved from what it was. Attempts to have joint services outside of the Christmas period have not gone well, and when arranged, the Welsh congregation members have not attended. However, more recently bridges have been built which give hope for progress. Some members meet with Welsh members for Welsh conversation, Chris has offered his services to play the organ at their weekly service and two members of the Welsh church joined with those from the English-speaking congregation to make Christmas Cards later delivered to those who live on Wesley Street. Additionally, the 2023 Carol Service and other Christmas services were viewed as a big success, with many more attending than usual including those from the Welsh-speaking congregation, some of whom participated.

E. JOBS

Some are concerned that with David/Liz stepping back and Trish/Godfrey leaving, it will leave a void and more jobs for the active few to have to try and juggle. They are not sure whether they still have the energy to do so.

F. GENERAL MOOD

One person specifically said that they have a bleak view of the future. They want to see more people come to church, but not sure how that will be achieved. They feel that those who remain will become overburdened with more and more jobs. Others are concerned about dwindling numbers, divisions between people, lack of shared vision, some of the things we do. One person expressed dislike of craft activities in services. However, this was back in September. Since then, there have been the more positive developments mentioned above.

G. LOCAL

Most members of the congregation live outside Amlwch in outlying villages – some a considerable distance away, so they are not part of the Amlwch community themselves which means they do not have established relationships to assist in connecting to those who live/work in and around the chapel.

3. Possible ways forward

A. GENERAL APPROACH

Small steps, building blocks is the way forward.

We can build on some of the things we have done before, such as the annual carol service, which in both 2022 and 2023 quite a few from the Welsh-speaking community attended. The recent positive reports about the 2023 Carol Service and other Christmas events continue to give hope.

B. CYTUN

We need to get conversations going with Rev Jen and other leaders to get CYTUN working again. Some people in the different congregations share a passion for music. Could this be a basis for something? Perhaps a CYTUN choir/music group? Could we approach Rev Jen and other leaders and suggest doing something together for the next Week of Christian Unity. Possibly a joint service at St Eleth's, or at least something like a Prayer Walk together? Too late for this year, but maybe for something over Easter. **The meeting initially set for 30/01/24 (but cancelled due to Rev Jen's ill-health) suggests a pathway to progress may be there if we put the effort in to make sure it happens.**

C. WELSH CONGREGATION

All agree we need to keep trying with the Welsh-speaking congregation, and all are happy to have bilingual services. However, according to Ian Morris at the October 2023 General Meeting they do not like the repetition of the English translation when the same thing has just been heard in Welsh. It was also said at that meeting that our congregation would prefer there was a translation in English available when is Welsh spoken. Could we produce materials like they do at St Eleth's (NB – EXPENSIVE) or make use of the bilingual service books? In any event, many are pessimistic about it leading anywhere, fearing that the Welsh congregation will simply not come. **A positive way forward might be that rather than keep trying for joint services all the time, we should seek to build bridges by working together on small achievable projects** – this led to idea about the joint venture to make/distribute Christmas Cards to residents on Wesley Street, which was done with 2 people from the Welsh speaking side present. It seemed to go down well, and hopefully will be something we can build on. The Welsh speaking lessons some are taking with them is also proving beneficial in forming better relations and it is hoped that this can continue. The fact that Chris is playing the organ for them at their services is also going to assist in this. One person suggested both congregations perhaps meet them between the two services for coffee- again a small thing, but maybe

achievable? There is also the possibility of the Knitted Church Project which Rev Ian Morris is keen to see come to the chapel in the summer. However, people are worried about having the resources to do this and what it will mean for use of the building over that period. As of March 2024 nothing further has been heard about this.

D. MORE HAFAN CEFNI?

As all are in favour of the worship at Hafan Cefni, could this possibly be extended to twice a month?

D. COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

The Memorial Community Hall at the top of Wesley Street seems to have lots going on. Could the church join in with some of their activities eg help maintain the Flower Garden, or even consider holding some events there? We could at least start a conversation and see where it leads.

Having given out Christmas cards with the Out of Ordinary scratch cards to residents of Wesley Street might some follow-up contact be made? One idea might be to leave painted pebbles left around the town, something which has been successfully tried elsewhere.

Realistically, the way to be more involved in the community is going to come through Cytun and/or collaboration with St Eleth's with whom we have much in common. Rev Jen appears to have imagination and desire to be more involved in the community, but recognizes that St Eleth's needs to pool resources with the other local churches. When John H discussed getting Cytun going again/ collaborating with St Eleth's, she displayed a great deal of enthusiasm to do so. She clearly sees this a positive way forward for involvement in the community and something that the Amlwch church would be able to be involved in, as they have in the past. Sadly, due to Jen's recent ill health, initial talks arranged with her and other Amlwch church representatives to discuss ways to do this have had to be postponed but it is hoped that this can take place shortly.

Appendix 2

Capel Zinc: points raised in conversations

1. Community activities.

Some felt that there is already much going on in the community. There is a Foodbank and an active library with events, a recent pilot study for Dementia Friends was carried out and the levelling up fund has provided support to several community groups. There are groups in existence covering most things. Most things happen at the Town Hall and the council subsidises rent for community groups. However, others felt there is not currently as much happening in the community as there used

to be with past major events such as the carnival having died off and a perception that new incomers do not join in as much as used to be the case.

2. Community Issues

Main community issues are seen by some as drug taking (particularly in youth) and Mental Health well-being. Others see main issue as elderly isolation and loss of confidence due to Covid experience. Some are concerned that the medical and school services appear to be overwhelmed, others that there is little in terms of affordable housing for locals and worries about money being tight. How might the church be able to address those issues, if at all?

3. CZ's involvement in the community.

The Foodbank is heavily supported by CZ members, many of whom are involved there as volunteers. The Church hosts an annual Christmas Festival in which a number of local organisations participate, a Ploughman's Lunch to which both members of the church and others from the local community attend and an annual Carol Service with Beulah Brass. There is also the regular Flexicise class, Brownies and Knit + Natter groups held on the premises. Discussions were held with the national organization, Re-engage which arranges activities for those 75+ years and meetings have now commenced at the CZ premises. Additionally, the church does clearly have a visible presence in the local community with regular invitations to participate at key civic events such as the town carol concert and Remembrance Sunday services. **Involvement in the community will also now be greatly enhanced by the presence of an Anna Chaplain associated with the church.**

4. Collaboration

CZ has limited resources and will always struggle to take on new ventures, so they should consider collaboration with other Christian groups.

The Libinius Church is very active and have large-scale and successful youth work – they employ a youth worker, have a youth bus and a big vision for the area, but tend not to work with the other churches much. The Church in Wales, St Mary's, is a small congregation in a big building and are more open to working together, but communication can be a problem. Rev Tom is the main link person there. Some feel that not much happens with Cytun, just the occasional joint service with Horeb Chapel, and more could be done to make this work better.

5. Community spaces in town are limited.

Most groups meet at the town hall, usually at the Lloyd Hughes room, but some also meet at the library. The brownies currently meet at CZ, and the premises are used for some community events such as Flexicise, Knit and Natter, and occasional other meetings. Some make the point that building could be made more available for rent/use in the community than it currently is which would assist the financial position, raise the church profile in the community and be of benefit for the community. A very positive move forward on this front is the start-up of a Re-engage

group meeting in the building every month, which if it takes off, will bring new people into the building. Re-engage is a national charity which promotes the wellbeing of over 75's through activities and get togethers. The first meeting took place in February 2024, when 8 people attended, with 2 from the church present as hosts to provide drinks etc. **There is an obvious opportunity for the new Anna Chaplain to link into this new group and further grow the emerging work alongside the elderly.**

6. Elderly

There is an assisted living community, Llys y Coed at the back of St Mary's and another at Abbeyfields – might we be able to arrange services etc, assist with visiting as volunteers to the forthcoming Anna Chaplaincy role? Llys y Coed used to use the church for Re-engage teas on a Sunday afternoon. Might something similar be reinstated? Might some be invited to enjoy something new, like the “Scones of Praise” suggested at 15 below?

The big positive that has happened in this area, is the start-up of an Anna Chaplain for work in the town and at Penmaenmawr. This venture has been prayed about and planned by people from the Circuit over the course of several years, and is clearly going to be a major point of focus for the church its missional thinking.

7. Ukrainian connections

CZ have strong links with the Ukrainian Community due to Geoff and Barbara hosting two Ukrainian people. They have also successfully run events in support in the past. There is possibly scope for making more of these links and maybe doing further things in the future. **What about inviting members of the local Ukrainian community to use the church for a function such as to prepare a traditional Ukrainian meal for the community as a fundraiser, or to run some basic conversational Ukrainian language classes?**

8. Meetings in the Community

Some posed the question whether we could we do Café Style fellowship meeting/get togethers, possibly at the Pavillion along the lines of Time and Space in Bangor? This was fed back and has now led to such a group covering both Capel Zinc and St Paul's at Penmaenmawr meeting in March.

9. Use of Church Garden

CZ was approached by the council about planting fruit trees in the church garden area and allowing public access to wander round and enjoy. This was looked into but it was felt there were potential issues and complications re hazards, liability, access and security such as made this infeasible. But is it? Could such issues be resolved in some way? Maybe this should be revisited?

10. Church opening for Prayer and Chat

As the chapel is so close to the town centre and fronts onto a main road sometimes people will wander in off the streets because they see the church open. Could we make more of this by being intentionally open for prayer and chat on occasions? NB see link to Renew Wellbeing Space at 14 below.

11. Small groups.

There is a fortnightly bible study which meets at Jen's house led by Ken. This is open to all and includes people from other churches but only a few from CZ do go. Beyond this, there is no culture of home or house groups in the church, and some envisaged issues with new groups starting partly due to logistical problems with transport, accessibility etc. **Is there scope for development in this area?**

12. Financial issues.

For some years now, the chapel has struggled to break even with limited income from giving and lettings failing to meet the cost of outgoings, which has led to the chapel having to lean heavily on reserves. This has led to concerns about sustainability. However, in the second part of 2023 the financial improved with lettings and donations up from what they were and now, in the last month, the Church has received the first part a very significant legacy (with more to follow) which has completely transformed the situation. The church now has financial options it simply did not have 12 months ago.

13. Heritage Centre

The building is seen by many as an asset and is much loved. The building has an interesting design and recently featured in the Corrugated Building Appreciation Society magazine. Could something more be made of this? Some expressed a fear that if for any reason eg Finances, fabric issue etc people were not able to worship at the church then it is hard to see the church society continuing elsewhere. This begs the question whether something more could be done with the building to further cement and improve its footing in the community. **One idea is to invite collaboration with the council, local history and heritage groups, and explore using the building as a community heritage centre, with information about the town displayed and open to the public. Might this also then link in to the community use of the garden area raised in point 9 above. Can ways be found to do this whilst retaining its function as a place of worship and venue for the other groups that currently meet there? This would clearly take some thought and imagination (for example, use of moveable display boards), but perhaps conversations could be started to at least look at this.**

14. Renew Wellbeing Space

Another idea is to host a Renew Wellbeing Space along the lines of what is being considered at Holyhead by the Holyhead Cytun. See appendix 8 attached. As John Hay is involved in the Holyhead venture, it will be relatively easy to use what he learns, how it works etc as a guide/template for CZ's context. This would be both a way of serving the community, a project to hopefully bring Cytun churches together and a further way to raise the profile of the church. There may also be funding streams available eg warm spaces, community funds etc which can be accessed to contribute to funding this.

15. Worship

Presently, people can access a Sunday morning service at 11am each week, a monthly evening Circuit Zoom Service which is regularly a Zoom Songs of Praise

service led by Rev Ken and the weekly worship sheet. The latter is apparently well used and passed around by residents who are church members to non-church members at Llys y Coed and Abbeyfields residential homes.

Two ideas occur.

First, might it be possible to strengthen the links with St Paul's by having an occasional (quarterly?) joint service, alternately hosted at each church with arrangements made for transport for those who don't drive.

Second, rather than hosting a morning service and evening zoom (or live) Songs of Praise service on the same day, why not make the Songs of Praise the main focus by having that as the only service that day, host it live in an afternoon with cakes/scones/tea/coffee as integral features and advertise to the wider community, residents at the local residential homes and other churches to join. A church near Birmingham and another church in Glossop have successfully done this which has brought new people into those churches and both rather amusingly called it a "Scones of Praise" service. Worth consideration.

Appendix 3

Holyhead – Summary of one-to-one conversations

Location and membership

The membership in 2023 is recorded as 19, and the October count revealed an average congregation attendance of 17. Originally the church had its own building which was positioned in central Holyhead, but this closed 10 + years ago. The congregation moved in with the Anglicans, first at a church which later closed and then at the present building which is St David's, Morewelon located in the centre of a large housing estate close to the ferry terminal and port. Some of those who live on the estate commented that others feel the area is socially deprived, but they themselves do not think this is so and most people have cars or other signs of wealth. There is also hope for investment in the future with the area becoming part of the new Enterprise Zone and receiving funding from the Levelling Up Fund. Some feel the real issue for the local community is apathy, lack of integration and reluctance to change.

Some said that they have no particular love or affection for the church building itself. Some feel that all the resources from the Church in Wales goes to St Cybi's and that St David's has been left behind, with a dwindling Anglican congregation and poor facilities. Some wonder what the future holds for the place in the long term unless

there is investment. However, most are not unhappy that the Methodist congregation no longer has its own building and feel that the freedom this has given them from the burden of maintenance is a positive thing. It has brought cohesion and people closer together.

There was originally a partnership agreement in place between the two congregations, but some feel this may have lapsed. A framed certificate is displayed in the vestry which is signed by the then Superintendent Minister and vicar which describes itself as a Vision Statement in which the parties covenant to work with one another in as many ways as possible including prayer and study, mission, witness and social action. Until the Musical Christmas Fayre event in late November 2023 there has not been a recent history of working or worshipping together.

There are a few members of the Methodist congregation who live on the estate, but most reside in outlying villages and travel in. Membership numbers have grown in recent years and they describe themselves as a “happy close knit bunch.” One person commented that of all the churches she has been involved with in the past, this is the happiest she has been anywhere at any time.

On the estate itself, most events take place at the community hall which has a busy programme of events and groups meeting there. The site at St David’s is not used by the community, some think because of its poor toilet facilities. This may change if proposed improvement works are completed.

Methodist presence

There is a weekly service at 11.30am each Sunday, a fortnightly bible study at Robina and Gordon’s house (which many from the congregation attend) and a fortnightly Friday Fellowship meeting at 6pm at St David’s. In terms of outreach and visible presence in the community, there is a Remembrance display put together by the congregation and in November 2023 there was the Christmas Musical Extravaganza jointly put together by the two congregations which was seen as a huge success and which may lead to other similar events in the future. The church also used to be heavily involved in Open the Book and members went into schools which Sue was key in organizing, but this has not been revived since the Covid lockdown in 2020. The church has representatives who attend the local Cytun, which has recently had new life breathed into it, and so there is potential for involvement in any Cytun led projects or to support other churches in what they do.

Some spoken to are frustrated that there is little in signage outside the church so many people will not know the Methodist Church meets there. A few years ago there was a very visible sign displayed, but the Bishop insisted that this be taken down. This is a cause of frustration.

The Church has no digital presence of its own. There is no website or social media presence in the community. However, within the church and between members of the congregation, there is very good communication. There is an effective church

whatsapp group which most of the church belongs to and which provides a platform to share information. As a small church, everyone knows everyone, and word quickly gets round. Many of the members are good friends with each other and pop around to see each other all the time. They are a resilient, strong group with a streak of independence. Members also clearly have a strong affection and respect for Sue, the Supernumerary Minister who lives locally and for a number of years has shared pastoral care with the Superintendent Minister. She leads the fortnightly bible study and most of her preaching appointments are at Holyhead.

Mission

The congregation have looked into the possibility of establishing a work/presence through services at the chapel attached to Penrhos hospital, but this came to nothing when Rev Nick made enquiries with the hospital authorities, who rejected the idea. However, there are a number of local Care Homes nearby and work in this area is potentially something that could be developed.

Some feel that missional activities in the locality are not really feasible on their own, due to low numbers, age and health of members, **but have welcomed involvement with Cytun events. Work with other churches in mission activities would appear to be the best path to take at this time(see below)**

Involvement with other churches

The relationship with St David's is considered weak, but there are signs of improvement and hope for a change in this after the Christmas Musical event. Some expressed frustration about the level of communication, particularly between the clergy and reference was made to a recent attempt to hold a joint service which failed to happen after some miscommunication/misunderstanding, when the Methodists believed it was happening and all sorted, only to nearer the time discover that the Anglicans had not scheduled it in after all. Some also expressed concern that there is a lack of formality in information exchange between members of the two congregations, with snatched conversations in the street being the main way discussions take place.

Some feel that Cytun could work better and that what it does do, could be better communicated. Having said this, at the end of 2022, Cytun came close to being disbanded altogether when key positions could not be filled, but that issue was resolved and there is now a new enthusiasm for doing things together. This has led to a number of events, some of which have taken place at the St David's building and proposals to work together on the annual pop-up charity event in February (which has happened before) and a proposed Renew Wellbeing Space (a new long-term project likely to be in the offing from Easter 2024). This presents a real opportunity for positive involvement in the community, which the Methodists would not be able to undertake on their own. Some have commented that with such a small congregation, of which most people are over the age of 70 and some with health

and/or mobility issues, and with most living outside the area, it is difficult to envisage the church being able to undertake much in terms of mission in the locality on its own. The obvious way forward, which most have commented they want, is to make Cytun and the relationship with the Anglicans at St David's work better. A case of pooling resources and energy - Better Together. This means that when opportunities for cross-church working arise (eg with Renew Wellbeing Space, Pop up Charity shop etc), they need to be grasped with both hands and prioritized.

The Circuit

Some in the church hold strong views and expressed a feeling that the Circuit has little to offer them. They feel that they are somewhat stuck out on their own, that few from the other circuit churches support their events and feel a disconnect from what is going on elsewhere. Some also feel that at a Circuit level, things that were said would be done have not always been done, and when they have been done eg sound system, sometimes they have been done without consultation which has caused annoyance. Distance of travel and accessibility issues at some of our Circuit churches is a put off. Having said this, some of those who expressed the strongest views on this also indicated that they would welcome live Circuit services at Holyhead and others do get involved in Circuit events held elsewhere.

The Future

Most see the future in positive terms.

The recent start-up of the bible study/housgroup has been very positively received. A good proportion of the church attends it, and it fulfils both the need for fellowship, whilst also deepening discipleship. A sign of growth.

There are positive signs that Cytun is improving and that bridges have been built with St David's which will lead to a better working relationship in the future. This needs to be built on.

There is recognition that there are many talented people and opportunity given to exercise those gifts, and one person described the church as a happy adventurous group prepared to take on new challenges.

Appendix 4

Penmaenmawr – Summary of points raised in one to one conversations

Person A

1. We need to get away from saviour mentality where we hold the power in project set-ups started / run by the church for people when thinking

about what we do in terms of mission. A better approach is to start small and personal to us. One street at a time, where we live, making mission/service the focus by befriending and growing trusted relationships, making selves available to those on our streets. Working with, alongside people, not for them. A good example to follow is that promoted by Dignity, SA. This model starts with group building, emphasising both discipleship and service, in small groups with a cell church structure. Bottom up, not top down. The way forward may be to adopt that approach or at least move towards it from how we presently do things.

2. A friendly welcome is really important if we are to have any meaningful impact on and in our community.
3. Community engagement involves meeting people where they are and with what they like to do. One of the best things we have done in recent years is our Halloween event which is a good example of this. Rather than pouring scorn on the concept of Halloween or even creating an alternative to it, we embraced the concept but gave it a spiritual flavour by carving crosses into pumpkins and handing out treats in line with what expected at Halloween. The locals talked about it positively for some time – what we did was totally accepted and it raised the profile of the church.
4. Messy Church is growing and can be deemed a success, which meets a valuable need as there are limited community activities for children in the Pen area.

Person B/C

5. St Paul's provides a friendly welcome, but we need to be careful to not put people off by expecting involvement in doing "jobs" straight away.
6. Would like to see something developed which is less formal than usual worship/bible study/prayer meetings, which it would be easier to bring non-church friends along to. For example, a "Parkinson" style interview of selected guests with a story to tell, with drinks and nibbles, music playing, which is more of an event which people might more easily relate to.
7. Would like to see more use of testimony and people's stories in services.
8. Messy Church is a really positive and important part of the church's mission and meets a clear point of need, but we are missing a trick by

- i) having no follow-up, anything for the children as they get older and ALSO FOR THE PARENTS WHO COME WITH THEM.
- ii) Everyone is so busy doing the nuts and bolts of the craft activities, that no-one has time to spend chatting and engaging with the parents who are left to talk to themselves only or not engage with anyone at all. Person B would love to be free to do this, but to do so, there would need to be more helpers than we presently have.

PROPOSAL ARISING FROM THIS – ENSURE WE HAVE MORE HELPERS AND ASSIGN THOSE WITH GOOD PEOPLE SKILLS WHO ARE APPROACHABLE TO CONCENTRATE ON CHATTING/BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS WITH THE PARENTS/CARERS WHO ACCOMPANY THE CHILDREN. THIS IS EQUALLY AS IMPORTANT AS PROVIDING SOMETHING FOR THE CHILDREN.

9. There are numerous young, often single families with limited support. Could we do something with them? There seems to be so little out there in the community for them. When Anita was employed by the church, she organized regular pram pushes along the Prom. Could we doing something like that again, or at least add our support to others to do so?

10. It feels that the church is often doing things for people rather than inviting them to be involved, take ownership and empowering them to do things with us. For example, when it comes to clearing up after events, doing the cleaning and tidying up etc, the church folk do it all. Far better to talk to people who attend about helping out with them and provide opportunity for them to give back. The same applies to the different community groups who rent the space and use the facilities – they should be asked to clean up after themselves. Ownership is all important.

11. There are some organisations out there we might want to partner with and invite to use our space. One good example is Christian Vision for Men which has a representative locally, Jon Stockley who organizes events for men such as curry nights, testimony-led breakfasts etc. Talk to him, see if any way we can work together in partnership on anything in the Pen area. (NB I HAVE DONE SO, SEE APPENDIX 6)

12. There are a number of good community events and groups which meet locally, for example a community lunch at the community centre, a retired mens “odd jobs” service group and community litter-pick. Members from the church are currently involved in some of these things.

NB – A JH OBSERVATION: Perhaps, the church could feed more into these existing community events by encouraging more members to participate, see that as part of the church’s mission too, and endorsing that no-one to feel guilty if participating in such things means have to miss some church events.

Person D/E

13. The church would benefit from adopting a culture of openness. At present there is a culture of “position possessiveness” whereby people cling to their roles, with the result that others who have skills/gifts to offer, are shut out.
14. Some people need to recognize that knowledge is power – having it empowers, lacking it disempowers. There is an assumption that everyone picks up emails, when not the case. We should be more inclusive about this and ensure that those who do not do emails are kept in the loop by being provided with printed sheets.
15. Communication is an issue. There is often an assumption that everyone knows what is happening or how things are done when not the case. This also extends to simple things like signage. The signage to the whereabouts of toilets etc is not clear in the church and could be much improved.
16. There is sometimes a lack of inclusivity evident in the timing of meetings. Meetings seem to often be scheduled in the day, which immediately prevents those who work from being able to attend. Majority convenience is not the right solution.
17. The church does some really good work in the community, Messy Church and hosting the Foodbank being the two main things but it is frustrating that there is not more emphasis on social justice and political activism issues in the church generally.
18. It is really good that people “muck in” and get involved in church activities such as Messy Church but it feels that there is sometimes a lack of joined up thinking with other aspects of church-life. For example, use of Fairtrade products is very dependant on who does the shopping for products rather than having a fixed policy which everyone adheres to.
19. Messy church is a good thing to do, but it feels like that there is sometimes not enough preparation done leading up to the sessions and the quality of the materials are variable, sometimes good, but sometimes pitched poorly for the age groups we have. We could do with finding a way to adapt materials to the age-groups who turn up.
20. St Paul’s is a welcoming, friendly church and yet it seems that there is somehow a disconnect with some people who come for a while, then drop off. We need to be asking the question, why is that? Is it something about the culture or some other factor which leads to a lack of a

connection between newcomers and the rest of the church. We need to ask some of those who have come in the past but no longer do so.

21. It would be good to have a form on hand, maybe already placed in the pews, so that newcomers details could be taken and passed to the Minister. Additionally, it would also be good to have an information sheet to hand to any newcomers with details of key contacts and list of church activities with time, date, contact person.
22. It is very positive that the Pen Foodbank is run from the Church building. It is a good use of the space and important point of service to the community. It brings people who are often in need into the building and in contact with some members who volunteer at it. It is also good that this is a community-run and not church-run venture, with 4 church people and 4 non-church people involved in helping out with it. However, it does seem odd that there is no general appeal for more volunteers made either within the church or wider community.
23. Warm spaces was a good thing to try as in theory it looked like it would meet a need, but in reality no-one from outside the church membership came, so we have been right not to continue with it again this year. There is a very good warm space at the local pub, so we should refer people to that.
24. The church likes to do its own start-ups rather than joining in with existing community run projects/groups, or even with what other church groups are doing. We would benefit from changing this.
25. The church is not necessarily seen as part of the village. Something could and should be done to build on the 2023 chapel anniversary celebrations, to focus minds of people in the village that we are very much part of the village.
26. Cytun has not always been particularly effective and poor communication has sometimes been part of that. It would be better if there was more lay representation on Cytun to improve this, and to ensure that different perspectives are put.

Person F/G

27. The Anna Chaplaincy project is a really good venture for the church. It was a shame that there has been no interest from the other Cytun church groups in the area to be involved. The sisters at Noddfa do their own pastoral work and the Church in Wales does not tend to want to work with others. There is clearly a huge need for this work. In

particular, it has been found from visits to the Gables which caters for elderly people with dementia and/or mental health issues that the 21 residents who live there rarely receive visits from anyone and are tucked away, out of sight and mind like a leper colony. The management and staff are very receptive to visits and input. It feels right that this be a key focus of the Anna Chaplaincy project and a mission-focus for the church. To achieve this, as a church we need to support the appointed Anna Chaplain, to mobilise volunteers to be involved with visiting when trained and to form a group to do occasional things like carol singing and the music concerts.

28. Following on from this, as we now have some experience in this area, there is an opportunity for the church to become “dementia-friendly” and be capable of receiving people with dementia for services and events. To do this, there would need to be appropriate training, not least for Local Preachers who might be taking services when such people are present.
29. Messy Church is a really positive feature of service/outreach in the area, and it is good that so many from the church rally round to make it work, but it is sad that that is now the sum total of our youth work in the area, as this caters only for the younger end. There is not much in the area which caters for the older youth of the area. Until 2020 when Covid struck, the church employed a Family and Children Worker, which was funded in part from Synod resources and local grants, to work initially 20 hours and latterly 25 hours per week. A significant portion of the work focused on older youths, and in particular a group called Action for Youth which successfully ran for some years. This stopped with Covid and then never got going again because the worker, Anita, found another job and we did not seek to readvertise the role. We feel this was a mistake and now that the funding streams have been closed, it would be very hard to get things going again, particularly with the town council having far less available to support this sort of thing. Yet there is still a need. Yes, there are some things happening, for example a youth football club activity at the Gladstone Pub, but this amounts to very little.

JH QUERY/OBSERVATION: THERE IS PERHAPS A CONVERSATION AROUND THIS THAT NEEDS TO BE HAD. HERE ARE A FEW DIFFICULT QUESTIONS TO ANSWER.

WOULD SEEKING TO REVIVE THIS WORK BE FEASIBLE?
WAS THIS SOMETHING RIGHT FOR PRE 2020 BUT NOT NOW? HAVE THINGS MOVED ON?

IS THERE THE APPETITE WITHIN THE CHURCH TO GET IT GOING AGAIN?

EVEN IF THERE IS, ARE THERE THE RESOURCES AND PEOPLE WITH TIME TO DO WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE, BEARING IN MIND THE OTHER VENTURES (Messy Church, Anna Chaplaincy and Foodbank) WHICH PEOPLE FROM THE CHURCH ARE INVOLVED IN? IS THERE A RISK OF SPREADING OURSELVES TOO THIN?

IF SO, WE MIGHT NEED TO GIVE UP SOMETHING ELSE. WHAT ARE OUR PRIORITIES?

IS THIS SOMETHING WHERE PARTNERSHIPS WITH OTHER CHRISTIAN ORGANISATIONS COULD BE SOUGHT? COULD THE WORK BECOME A CYTUN VENTURE? COULD INVOLVEMENT FROM OTHER CHRISTIAN ORGANISATIONS LIKE YOUTH FOR CHRIST BE INVITED?

30. We like the idea of wellbeing spaces and were saddened that the church council decided to drop the warm space work we undertook last winter. Although it is accepted the warm space did not reach into the community and that there were other alternative spaces people could go to such as that at the Pub, we felt it served a need for those from the church who came along. If we tried again as a warm space, or looked to host a wellbeing group of some sort in the future, we might be better to host this at Betty's Café on an afternoon in the week.

31. Cytun does not work brilliantly and could be much better, but at least there is regular contact with those from the other churches through the soup lunches and occasional events. It is hard to coordinate work together, as each church tends to want to do its own thing. The situation with Messy Church was a case in point. St Paul's had had an established group meeting on the first Monday of the month for some time but this did not stop the Church in Wales looking to set a further Messy Church group of its own at the same time – it took some persuasion for them to change their date so they would not be competing and parents could bring the children to both if they wanted. Nevertheless, they did, so conversation worked, which is a positive.

Appendix 5

St John's main points raised in one to one conversations

- 1) We need to make the most of what we have at our disposal now.**

i) Masons Yard.

Nothing has really happened with it. Although there may be a covenant in the legal transfer document which prohibits the selling of items from that area, surely we could use it more effectively and frequently than we do, to do things like give out easter buns to people passing at Easter or soup to anyone passing (whether homeless, shoppers or students). Perhaps invest in cover to provide shelter or shade for when we do. Maybe even have a sofa brought down and have available for people to sit on and do "sofa chat" as recently done by Hope and Anchor in Edinburgh.

This needs to be linked in to wider planning of use of area, for example with regard to the much talked about mural supposedly being undertaken with the Police and graffiti artists. We need to firm down if this is going to happen, and if not, either do it ourselves or invite uniformed groups to do so or at least combine with us to do.

We should spend time planning out the Masons Yard area, develop it and keeping it tidy and then regularly use it (preferably with a sound system) for small outdoor activities which raise the profile of the church.

ii) Fencing

We are missing a trick. We could make better use of it to advertise our activities and those of other groups (especially the uniformed organisations) who meet there by having big visible banners or boards with information right along that space. Worth investing in our own, encouraging the other groups to do so, as that way people will see that there is life here and that this is not just another town dead space.

iii) Talents/interests

For example, crafts such as Banner Making. There are people with talents in the Circuit such as Bernice at Holyhead who could pass on skills and help others to explore this and at same time improve worship area. It would bring people together and brighten up the church. If we have enough, we can rotate.

iv) The worship experience could be improved.

The echo and poor use of microphones needs addressing as many people have trouble hearing, particularly when sat towards the right of the church when wide/sideways set up is used. This is a bit better now given the curtains in place, but is still there. All people speaking need to use microphones and be trained to do so. Point made – people don't put hand held microphones close enough to mouths when using. This could easily be rectified.

v) We need to hold on, cherish and look after better the people we have.

Person A, a long serving member who has served at church and circuit level for many years, recently has felt overwhelmed and exhausted, so relinquished duties and has now lost all motivation to be involved. She is disappointed that not more people have been in touch with her and is now struggling to get along to worship. Pastoral visitors do a good job, but there may be others like her.

2) Consider occasionally having no morning service and instead having a meal together at church

Person B was recently at a Christian Festival when someone said this is what they have been doing at their church and it has worked well.

3) Develop a digital worshipping community with Zoom/Online services and better online presence needed

Person B feels we could

i) advertise the monthly services we presently do more widely, for example, by a specific section on the Church and Circuit website, a banner/notice on the railing or in local paper or on local social media for community events etc.

ii) do zoom specific services more frequently than we do – there are lots of people not able to get along to church or may be introduced to St John's or the other churches this way without having to actually go along. Develop a digital Community. Nb Person E also strongly felt this to be the case.

iii) Might we combine with one of the other Churches in Bangor to do this, as a joint service to be used across our respective churches?

iv) Record services and put on website.

4) More emphasis to be put on small group meetings for prayer, study and fellowship, preferably in peoples homes or cafes rather than church buildings

This could be organized across churches and according to where people live rather than necessarily within each existing church structure. For example, on Anglesey there are many people who live across the island, some worshipping at Holyhead, some at Amlwch and some at Bangor, many of whom actually live fairly close by to others in different churches. Local groups to be encouraged to keep travel to a minimum. Person A and B happy to offer to host one such group. One Person, J, felt that this should be a serious discipleship programme, others that more of a varied approach dependant on who went was better. Many of those seen in the one to ones agree that there is a need for more smaller groups, opportunities to get together.

5) More emphasis to be placed on prayer, especially for people to be encouraged to pray together more regularly.

6) A Walking Group

A Church (or better still, a Circuit) based walking group, would provide opportunity for people to talk and discuss matters of a personal or spiritual nature they otherwise would not do whilst improving wellbeing and engendering a sense of togetherness. This would be a non-threatening activity we could invite friends too, so also potentially an evangelistic aspect to it.

7) Ongoing Training for Pastoral Visitors needed

8) Students to be better integrated into the life of the church

Many different people have made this same point in one way or another.

The presence of students at St John's is a big positive. Could we do more to support them and encourage them? For example, by asking them to take part in services, help out in practical matters and inviting to share more of their stories and also to offer more hospitality in terms of meals, lunches etc. Could the student group occasionally be responsible for sorting coffees or warm space lunches? Might there be an opportunity for cross cultural event when some of them share music, food from overseas? Could we adopt a Student Hospitality scheme and/or have occasional meals with/for them at church? All of this would help them feel they belong, that St John's is their church and would add diversity/value to the rest of church. Point made by some that students are not always sure if they will be attending until last minute. Rather than rely on rota system, perhaps sometimes whoever is there might be invited to be involved eg candle-lighting at Advent – but need to be sensitive, not scare people off with this, aim is to spread involvement without jumping on them.

On a wider level, could we do more to support, engage with the general student population who are accommodated in the block across the road, as they are our near neighbours.

9) We need to ensure that there is better communication

Person C indicated that there has sometimes been delays/breakdown in getting information about what has been said/agreed at CYTUN meetings. Minutes or a brief summary should be put in the notices. Same applies re Street Pastors, Youth For Christ director appointment.

10)CYTUN seems to have lost its focus and we need to help bring it back on track by encouraging closer working for mission and worship together.

For example, could we not occasionally have a joint service with one of the other CYTUN churches, or at least have a Pulpit Swop or a delegation of members go to each other's services for Christian Week of Unity. Additionally, could we not work together with CYTUN churches to ensure that there are regular services held in care homes and look for CYTUN to resume the excellent work that was being done via the Deniol Centre Café before Covid closed it. These are big missional matters which on our own we would struggle to do, but together should be feasible if there is the appetite. Perhaps all it needs is a poke and someone to show enthusiasm and leadership on this point.

11)There are many good things happening across the church and people should be thanked for working so hard and trying new things

Person C and E felt that CAMEO, Time and Space, Wild Worship, Warm Space Lunch and new housegroup have all been really positive developments and meet clear need within the church. Some felt we need to work on culture of gratitude for

work of those doing things, and make a point of thanking those who do things week after week or become involved for first time.

12) Soup Warm Space lunches – could we extend this in some way?

Many have mentioned this, seeing it as a positive mission action and needing to develop/encourage this. It would help if the space was actually warm, so the heating needs to be turned on early enough for the hall to warm up.

Person G observed that there is a developing community of people forming with this, a combination of people from the community on a low income, students and regular church folk who come along to the fortnightly meals. This is really good but could we do more for/with them? Have follow on activities or provide other things for them in the week? Could we encourage them to be more involved – setting up/putting away/preparing food (with training) or doing dishes?

JH OBSERVATION - WE NEED TO ASK THEM WHAT THEY WANT/WOULD LIKE, HELP THEM TAKE OWNERSHIP OF THE GROUP, BE PREPARED TO RELINQUISH POWER IN LINE WITH NPNP/CHURCH AT MARGINS THINKING

Also, could we take it outside, maybe have set-up Soup Kitchen occasionally on Mason's Yard when fine weather and warmer?

13) We need to go out of church, meet people on other terms.

One person suggested possible Flash Mob activities, another reinstating soup run, another encouragement for members to be involved in community groups.

14) We need to be sensitive to newcomers.

Person G commented one newcomer who had been coming for several months appears to have been put off and decided to worship elsewhere after he was put on spot to contribute his views at a meeting. We need to be sensitive to how some people don't want that. Maybe more training is needed.

15) We could make better use of the links/relationships we have with other users of the building, particularly the uniformed organisations.

The uniformed organisations usually have spiritual development as part of their programme. Could we offer to be involved with that in some way? We need to talk to the leaders about this, see how we might assist them in shaping programme. Also, they should be seen as part of the church. Might it be possible to have specific services when will be present, which are more youth-orientated and they might be involved? It would be great to invite Explorers to be involved in developing Mason's Yard, that is exactly the sort of project which Explorers would like to do.

16) Could we be involved in some way at the hospital, if not at a church level, then at Circuit or Cytun level?

Most of us will go to Ysybty Gwynedd for treatment or to see someone who is getting treatment there. It is a difficult unhappy place to be. We also have a number of people with existing connections who work or volunteer there eg Sue E, John N, Richard B. Could we build on that? BUT HOW? Assist with visiting, offer prayer, do

items for Richard's radio show, prepare/deliver Anti Boredom packs for new patients are just some initial ideas. We would need to liaise with existing services, work within strict regulations etc but it is at least worth talking to them.

17) Quality of worship is key to church life and should be developed

Person I and J both felt there should be more emphasis on joyful/exuberant styles of worship and definitely feel a dedicated worship group which regularly meets/practices would be a fantastic addition to the usual piano/organ. Possibly some of the students could be invited into this.

18) "See it to be it."

There needs to be more diversity at "front of house." Most people involved in services are like each other (white/old!). The church would be greatly enhanced and learn much if we heard more from some of those who have come from different backgrounds, different ages/ethnicities. This needs to be intentional.

19) We need to be alert to opportunities to work with other Christian church groups

This might include those not in areas where any of our existing churches are eg Llangefnï. Working with others on bigger projects is definitely the way forward eg Renew Wellbeing Spaces as a Cytun Project at Holyhead. This means we improve communication with other churches, keep abreast of what they are doing/planning to do and try to cooperate and assist where can. This might mean us taking the initiative, and making first contact. For example, the Church of Wales have a big money project called Llan. How might that impact our area? How might we be involved?

20) We should not be afraid to try new things or fear failure.

Might we replicate some things that have been tried elsewhere but put our own stamp on it. EG A midweek Café style service or services at Care Homes. There may be a big link here to the Anna Chaplaincy work that is going on. Generally, we need to encourage new ways to connect.

21) A One Church Circuit

Some felt that this would be of benefit to both the church and circuit, by reducing the number of meetings, positions held and increasing the talent pool. Definitely something to look at if enough from the other churches agreed.

22) We are too busy

Some people feel guilty at not being able to come to everything/support everything. We need to grow a culture that says it is okay not to feel you have to support every single event across the church and circuit, and to be quicker to get rid of some things that we currently do just because we have always done that. Query whether we are doing too much, and need to prioritise better what we do.

23) Mission activities by individuals

The point was made by one person that there are many individuals who are deeply involved in their own communities, for example at Village Halls and/or community centres where they are already doing mission type activities eg organizing warm space soup lunches etc. These people should be affirmed that what they are doing is still part of the Church's mission even if not done in the name of the church, and given clear message that okay to withdraw from church activities to do so.

24)What could we lose?

One person said the evening service, others suggested some of the meetings/reports and linked this to a one circuit church.

25)Other Practical improvements which would improve quality of worship, general church-life and benefit other building users

Improvements should be made to the hall flooring which is substandard and dirty looking, which other users occasionally comment on.

Sound in church is still an issue for many due to echo, as is cold conditions. If heaters cannot be fixed to stay on during services then we need to look at other alternatives eg Plug in eco- heaters.

Some have also mentioned concerns that we have too many unnecessary bright lights on during services, which is not in line with Eco Policy.

When there is no warm space happening, it would be better to serve tea/coffee in the church rather than going into the hall. One person felt that more would stay and more inclusive as some struggle to get into the hall.

Some expressed concerns that the cleanliness of the kitchen was starting to be less than perfect and wondered if every few months a deeper cleaning should happen. The kitchen floor is also looking like it may need replacement.

Appendix 6

Starter Ideas to bring the Circuit together

a) Trial having one service a quarter as a morning or afternoon Circuit Service at one of the churches taking it in turns for venue, or even at a neutral venue (eg Llangefni Town Hall), with no other services planned that day. Combine this with arranging lifts to ensure that those who do not have their own transport can get there. Live stream (if wi-fi available) or record the service and ensure that it can be viewed on-line the same day for those unable to attend in person.

b) Invite each church to be involved in a Circuit Project. Ideas to be invited, but one possibility might be the formation of a Circuit Hospital Visiting Team, initially for our own members and contacts, with a view to arranging people to visit anyone who has to spend time in hospital and provision of a wellbeing pack, with each church contributing to the cost and making up of packs. See Appendix 11 for more details.

c) **If the Circuit were to employ a Lay Worker, that person could be tasked with facilitating communication between all parts of the Circuit and encouraging support for each church's events across the other churches.**

d) An “out of the box” suggestion. The Circuit might look into the possibility of acquiring a mini-bus to be able to transport people about the circuit and take groups to Eryri as part of proposed NPNP project set out in appendix 12. NB – there could be a link also to Rev Jenny Clarke’s suggestion about need for a community transport option link for people in the villages around Amlwch set out in appendix 8.

e) The setting up of further Housegroups based not on Church membership but based on where people live (this will be of relevance primarily to those who live on Anglesey), a continuation of wild worship and the formation of a circuit-based walking group at locations spread around the circuit may assist this.

Appendix 7

Small Churches What's our future story? Webinar 01/11/2023 (Zoom)

A course led by Emma Nash and Sarah Hulme, **with Rev David Speirs** from the Northampton Circuit keynote speaker giving details about how a ten Church Circuit has become a one Church Circuit which meets in 10 locations

David's Story

Idea came about when as Mission Enabler in the Circuit, David realized that issues of property and structure were preventing mission activities taking place. The Circuit wanted to find a way for better decision-making to be delivered strategically. This was achieved by focusing on the positives, dealing with peoples fears and by fair distribution of stewards (one from each of the ten churches) and growing awareness that each steward there to represent the whole church, not their own communities. This was done over three years – two years of discussions, meetings leading to a positive yes to it, and then a year of getting the agreement set up and consolidation of finances (still not completed)

The positives

1. Sharing of resources across the sites can lead to missional opportunities which may not have existed eg One small rural chapel had a heating problem which on own resources they would not have been able to afford to put right whilst at same time having vision to do Mum's and Toddlers group. As one church with better resources able to fix heating issue, leading to mum's and toddlers group happening.
2. They do the property check-list as a team, so people don't feel isolated.
3. Sharing of best practice more eg community litter-picking team.
4. Do at least one joint service a quarter when all come together. Great atmosphere, worship band etc. On those dates there will also be a Youtube recorded service available for those not able to attend.
5. Deeper level of connection, integration and cooperation this way than as ten church Circuit.
6. Quicker decision-making processes, less time spent in management processes and more time to be creative

CONSIDER IF THIS MAY BE AN OPTION FOR B + H CIRCUIT

Merge for Mission

www.methodist.org.uk/mergeformission

<https://www.methodist.org.uk/our-work/our-work-in-britain/evangelism-growth/lead-churches-into-growth/merge-churches-for-mission/>

There are different ways of this. One option per Northampton is one church in different locations. Another would be for a worship community to dispense with own building but relocate to another building and enter partnership with other church or organization. A third is church outside of buildings, new faith groups doing different things away from church.

Top Ten tips for Merger

1. Start ASAP, don't leave it until numbers fall below 12 and have to.
2. Ask yourselves what God is doing
3. Focus on the mission of God
4. Leave buildings until last
5. Invest in relationship
6. Communicate with honesty
7. Acknowledge the cost of change
8. Stay calm in the chaos
9. Collaborate
10. Get support for your wellbeing

Appendix 8

Discussions with other Church groups and Christian organisations

Anglesey Prayer Network (Mike Graveney)

The Anglesey Prayer Network (APN) links church groups across Anglesey for prayer and worship, and produces a regular prayer/news sheet which is circulated to members.

In October I met with Mike Graveney, the APN Chair who often attends the Amlwch café church act of worship at Clwb y Gorlan and also at his invitation spoke at an APN worship gathering held at Llangefni Town Hall about what I was doing with the Feasibility Study.

Mike is very keen for all Christian groups on the island to link and work together more closely. In particular, he has a vision for a mid-week community café church with accessible, comfortable fellowship which he hopes will revive a community of worship, strengthening existing Christian communities across the island. Mike would like to see an emphasis on bilingual worship, drawing Welsh and English-speaking communities together. There is currently a bi-lingual coffee morning held at Carmel church in Moelfre, and he would like to see this extended to Welsh language lessons and singing in Welsh. Mike also has some expertise in unlocking funds which town councils hold on trust for charitable purposes.

I was struck by how much we share in terms of vision and ideas. Clearly scope for working with Mike and others through the APN.

The APN Llangefni meeting led to further contacts and subsequent discussions with a host of people including Deb Stammers from the New Street Baptist Church in Holyhead, Phil Bradbury from the Lighthouse Church (Llangefni) and Alan Lorrimer-Riley from the Snowdonia Christian Fellowship (Beddgelert). I had opportunity to discuss visions and ideas with each and again was struck, that despite coming from very different church traditions, they all shared the same sort of vision for working together, and indeed of what shape that might take.

Lighthouse Church, Llangefni (Phil Bradbury)

<https://www.lighthousechurchanglesey.org/>

Phil is on the leadership team at the Lighthouse Church. He shared with me his vision for a Christian hub for the island based at Llangefni, which the Lighthouse Church and other Christian groups could potentially use as a resource centre and venue for various activities/meetings. In his vision this would include a café, a place for CAP debt and money course services to be provided and accessible prayer cards. It immediately struck me that this could link very well to some of the ideas for wellbeing groups, arts/community projects referred to in appendix 11. Clearly, there is scope for something to happen here, of which in some way, we could be part to

create a Methodist presence in Llangefni. Our church already has some involvement in the community through the monthly service held at Hafan Cefni (a residential care home) by members of the Amlwch Methodist Church. Llangefni is at the heart of Anglesey, it is the County administrative centre and nowhere on the island is more than 25 mins away from it by car. Phil is also keen to encourage bi-lingual worship and the Lighthouse Church is looking to develop an Alpha Course in Welsh. Another shared value.

Snowdonia Christian Fellowship (Alan Lorrimer Riley)

<https://www.snowdoniachristian.org.uk/>

Alan's fellowship is based at Beddgelert in the heart of Eryri and he firmly believes that growth comes via missional local communities, where people do things together based on interest. This is very much line in what person A at Pen (appendix 6, point 1) said to me. Alan is a big networker, knows lots of Christians locally and will be a very useful contact should the NPNP project set out in Appendix 12 proceed.

New Park Street Baptist Church, Holyhead (Rev Deb Stammers) and Holyhead Cytun

<https://www.holyheadbaptist.co.uk/>

Deb Stammers is the minister at New Park Street English Baptist Church, Holyhead and also involved with local welsh speaking Baptist chapels on the Island. She is very keen to engage with other churches and Christian groups and is a key figure in the Holyhead Cytun. She introduced herself to me after the APN meeting at Llangefni, as I had specifically mentioned in my talk wellbeing issues and an organization called Renew Wellbeing as being of interest to me. She invited me to the next Holyhead Cytun, as there was a proposal for a Cytun-led Renew Wellbeing project to be set up in the town. I have since become involved in this and am now a member of the organizing committee. I have attended several Holyhead Cytun meetings and some of their events, including assisting at their Charity Shop event in February. This has enabled me to get to know Deb, the other members of Cytun and members from the linked churches. There is currently a strong group of people involved who seem very committed to working together. It is really important to foster these relationships.

Renew Wellbeing

<https://www.renewwellbeing.org.uk/>

In October, a few days before the Llangefni APN meeting, I called into Penrallt Baptist Church to see what their advertised wellbeing space consisted of and was shown around by its Pastor, John Thompson, who I know through my involvement with Bangor Cytun. I was very impressed with what I saw, and John explained that the church was linked to an organisation called Renew Wellbeing.

Renew Wellbeing helps churches open spaces of welcome and inclusion in partnership with mental health teams to improve mental and emotional wellbeing. Renew spaces are simple cafe style spaces run by local churches where hobbies and activities are shared or co-produced. Each cafe space is attached to a quiet room or prayer space where inner habits of wellbeing are shared. Each church

partners with a mental health professional from the local council or other suitable organisation to ensure good inclusive practices for safe spaces where it's OK not to be OK can be sustained. Its strapline is **Being prayerful • Being present • Being in partnership**.

I immediately felt that this was exactly the sort of wellbeing space I had been envisioning we might want to start at one of our churches (or even outside of a church). It was, therefore, a huge "coincidence" (some might say God-incidence) that people at Holyhead were having similar thoughts and that a brief reference in my talk led to the invite to come along to the Cytun meeting where it was going to be discussed. I am keen to see how the Holyhead project develops, to be involved as it gets going and to see whether this model might work elsewhere across our circuit area. Capel Zinc at Llanfairfechan springs to mind as an obvious place.

Christian Vision for Men (John Stockley)

<https://www.cvm.org.uk/>

A conversation with a member at Penmaenmawr led me to a near neighbour of his called Jon Stockley who is involved with a nation-wide based Christian organization called Christian Vision for Men. I set up a meeting and discussed with him what he did, and what was happening locally. He told me that the aim of CVM is to equip and empower churches to work with men and bring them to faith. They do so in a very supportive, relational way by befriending and creating spaces for men to get together, do things which they enjoy, listen and talk. They organize curry nights, outings, get togethers.

In North Wales the presence is fairly limited and at the time of speaking to him in mid November this consisted primarily of a monthly Men's breakfast in Llandudno. However, he also indicated that he was speaking to two churches in Llangefni, to see if they can support them to get something up and running there. One of these is a Welsh-speaking chapel, the other the Lighthouse church. He indicated that he would be happy to assist us if we were looking to do anything for men in terms of wellbeing and wanted to work together with other churches to pool resources.

Gobaith Mon and Amlwch Pentecostal Church (Andre Rudolph)

I met with Andre in early January, primarily to try and get an understanding of the current work of Gobaith Mon. He is a trustee on the board. We met at the converted barn on land at the rear of his home which is in Rhos y bol, a small village 3 miles from Amlwch. The barn is in two parts with a business on the ground floor and upper floor consisting of a church space for Amlwch Assembly of God Pentecostal Church. It is a wonderful site. We had a wide ranging discussion, and he told me about how Gobaith Mon (a charity Rev David Jones was instrumental in establishing) works through schools and local youth groups on Anglesey to provide a Christian input. The charity employs one worker to do this, but she has been on maternity for the last year and was expected to return to work later that month.

In his capacity as part of the leadership team at the Amlwch AOG, Andre recognized that there is potential to work with the other Amlwch churches and he was very

interested to hear that I had been having similar conversations with other church leaders across the island.

CAP Debt (Ruth Goddard)

Ruth is the new CAP Debt Counsellor funded by Mosaic Church in Bangor. I met with her to discuss ways we might be able to work together as St John's are also linked to CAP through the Money Course which we periodically run. She is keen to foster a relationship and mutually refer clients on, when appropriate. She covers Anglesey and the mainland coast areas which include Llanfairfechan and Penmaenmawr, so there is potential for us to be able to provide services to people struggling with debt who we come across in any of our churches.

Church in Wales (Rev Jenny Clarke, Rev Neville Naidoo, Archdeacon John Harvey)

The Church in Wales has the largest numbers of church sites across our area and were clearly key people to talk to. I have spoken at length to the above three clergy who represent Amlwch, Bangor community and Holyhead respectively. As Archdeacon, John Harvey also has extensive involvement across the area and was able to provide some useful information about what is currently happening with the Llan Project on Anglesey.

When I spoke to Archdeacon Harvey in February, he indicated that the Church in Wales currently has some major staffing issues with 5 out of 8 area leader posts vacant. At that time, Rev Jenny Clarke had also become ill and was off sick until early March. It has clearly been a stretch to cover the parish responsibilities for these areas and that, added to his key involvement in the Llan Project, explains why he had been so difficult to get hold of. John is an important contact, and he has a clear desire to work together. I impressed on him the benefits the CiW could receive from doing so, particularly by inviting input and the participation of other Christian groups and churches in some of the things likely to come out of the Llan Project (see appendix 9). He said he saw this and would make it a priority to do so.

Rev Jenny Clarke has responsibility for Bro Eleth churches, which includes St Eleth's at Amlwch and 5 others scattered about. I spoke to her in early January. She responded very positively to talk about working closely with Amlwch Methodist Church and restarting Amlwch Cytun. St Eleth's has a small congregation with limited resources and she recognized the way forward has to be collaboration with other denominations.

She also has a good idea of the community and felt that one of the big issues in the area is the lack of transport links, particularly for those in outlying villages not on a bus route. This led to some envisioning, and a discussion about an idea she has had to fund a community mini-bus to get people from these outlying villages into Amlwch or Llangejni. She also feels that the Amlwch community itself is affected by factions, polarized views and anti-English feeling in some quarters. There is a desperate need for more investment and the town has suffered from the closure of businesses and

lack of work opportunities. Consequently, there is need for community building. Discussion was also had about starting a Good Turn Scheme along the lines of what they do at Benllech and Beaumaris on the island. She also mentioned about use of the parish church hall at Moelfre which despite the church itself having closed some time ago, is still owned by the Church in Wales and now used by the community. **She sees possibilities for extending what is done there which opens up possibilities for use of the site in connection with the wellbeing groups mentioned in Appendix 11.**

Above all, she recognized the importance of getting Amlwch Cytun going again. Arrangements were put in place for a meeting to discuss this, but sadly before it happened, Rev Jenny fell ill and was put on sick leave for at least a month. It is hoped she will be returning to work in early March.

Rev Neville Naidoo has been in post as University and Bangor Community Chaplain based at Bangor Cathedral since October 2023. St John's and Nick (as part of the University Chaplaincy team) clearly share much in common with his main focus which is on the student base. When we met he spoke in very positive turns about improving engagement and communication, working together better and he is booked in April to come and speak at St John's Cameo group which is an important step in the right direction.

Appendix 9

About Church in Wales Diocese of Bangor Llan Project

What is it?

The Diocese of Bangor stretches from Llanidloes and Tywyn in the South of the diocese to Anglesey and Llandudno in the North. The Llan project is funded by the Church in Wales Evangelism Fund. It's a dynamic project seeking to do lots of new things with encouragement to take some creative, wise risks. The Menter (social enterprise) stream of the project hopes to break new ground in the area of enterprising pioneer ministry, whereby pioneers establish kingdom-orientated social enterprises to provide a different Christian presence, to enable social activism and to bring transformation. These will be commercially viable enterprises, in a sector that allows for a 'gathering' space or function but which are managed with a Christian ethos with the gathering potential of the business space being used by a developing Christian community.

In more detail <https://bangor.eqlwysynqngghymru.org.uk/llan/>

"Llan" is a £3m, seven-year project that will see the development of new ministries across the diocese focused on reaching out in new ways to communities with the

love of God in Christ. Llan will enable CiW to develop a pilgrimage ministry across the diocese, to grow a new Welsh-language church community and to develop Welsh-language evangelistic resources, and to launch four social enterprises pioneering which is a new sort of Anglican presence and witness in four towns and villages.

The idea of the “Llan”

The idea of the “Llan” goes back to the beginning of the life of the Church in the Diocese of Bangor. The first Llans were sacred enclosures established by the early Christian saints as places of encounter and transformation. Our new Llan initiatives will establish twenty-first century Llans – places where encounters with God in Christ and the transformation of lives can take places in today’s world.

Pilgrimage

Llan’s emphasis on Pilgrimage will allow CiW to celebrate places, buildings and landmarks that hold the breadth of our Christian heritage.

The plan is to invest in six new centres of excellence around the diocese, and in new and old pilgrim pathways that will criss-cross the diocese. More importantly, they will also invest in people through training welcomers and guides to become excellent at telling the Christian story, and inviting visitors to become true pilgrims by interweaving their own story with the living story of faith.

Speaking about the Pilgrimage stream, the Archdeacon of Meirionnydd, Andrew Jones, said:

"I am so delighted that pilgrimage is at the heart of our Llan evangelism project. For generations pilgrims have come to our diocese to visit the many “holy pilgrim places” we have on our doorstep. Over the years I have observed with excitement the increasing pilgrimage traffic to Bardsey Island at a time when regular church congregations are weakening. All of our pilgrimage sites are places of silence, beauty, light and even of imaginative transition from this world to the next - spaces of precious and irreplaceable gifts."

What?

What do they hope will be achieved by this stream of Llan?

1. Development of multi-valent pathways to tell the Christian story to include routes connecting churches, shrines, standing stones, wells, historical and cultural sites, saints of all the ages; Day-long and residential pilgrimages; Single-site pilgrimages; Multi-media; For all ages; 2. Building up Church in Wales pilgrimage brand and merchandise; 3. Nurturing ministry of pilgrimage-leading as an evangelistic commissioned ministry; 4. Development of pilgrimage centres.

Early outputs?

What will the outputs be in the first year or so?

Historians, theologians, liturgists and catechists crafting pathways; Director of Marketing, Development & Sustainability building up faith-tourism commercial capacity; Brand developed; Ministry training commissioned with British Pilgrimage Trust.

Outcomes?

What will the five-year outcomes of the stream be?

150 school pilgrimages p.a.; 18,000 threshold encounters; 6 day, 3 multi-day pilgrimages p.a.; 3 church interpretation projects p.a.; 3 Small Pilgrim Places p.a.; Comprehensive online infrastructure

Impact?

How will the stream have a long-term impact?

Enhanced credibility of Church as steward of meaningful things; Capturing stories of faith engagement; Seekers-focused ministry; Accumulating credibility of Church in faith-tourism economy.

Language

Llan's emphasis on Language will see CiW growing a new Welsh-language church community, supported by a gap-year scheme that will allow up to five young people each year to get a taste of Welsh-speaking Christian ministry.

In addition, they will develop a range of Welsh-language Anglican resources to support learning, worship and innovation.

Welcoming the Language stream, Paul Roberts, the diocese's new Communications Officer said:

"Focus on the Welsh-language is a priority in Wales; therefore we must develop and enhance our skills, expertise and our resources to reflect this. Evangelism resources available in Welsh are very limited, and we have faced challenges in nurturing Welsh-speaking vocations. By an injection of new energy into this important area, the Language stream of Llan will provide a constant Welsh-language base to nurture and support evangelism throughout the diocese."

What?

What do CiW hope will be achieved by this stream of Llan?

1)An evangelistic Welsh-language community comprising a Pioneer leader, a gathered worshipping community, a residential community of Evangelist-Assistants and enabling Welsh-language evangelism across the various Ministry Areas

2)New catechetical / process evangelism resources focused on improving Welsh-language communication in Ministry Areas, developing evangelistic Welsh-language online presence and nurturing Welsh-language vocations

Early outputs?

What will the outputs be in the first year or so?

Pioneer leader recruited; residential community dynamic codified, and property identified and developed; Enabler recruited; IT partnership established

Outcomes?

What will the five-year outcomes of the stream be?

Worshipping congregation of 30-40 established; 4 resident Evangelist-Assistants; Welsh-language Alpha/Pilgrim launched; Social media presence established

Impact?

How will the stream have a long-term impact?

Confidence in ministry of Evangelists; Increase in ordained and lay Welsh-language vocations; Deeper Anglican inculturation; Confidence in neo-monastic model

Enterprise

Llan's emphasis on Enterprise will enable CiW to establish four new hubs of community activity in the diocese.

Be it a café or a pub, art space or a workshop for local emerging small businesses, a hostel for hill-walking school parties or a newsagent in a village where services are scarce, we will launch justice-oriented enterprises that will make a contribution to local communities, as well as providing a space for a brand new type of church to gather.

The Archdeacon of Bangor, Mary Stallard, said of the Enterprise stream:

"The purpose of the enterprise stream of Llan is all about evangelism – extending our reach to connect, serve and engage in faith with children, families and young people, who are often marginal or not present in our current work. Our intention is to build on and extend the exciting pioneer work which has already begun in several places in the diocese. It's our hope that we can develop a number of new social enterprise projects: these would be ways of serving the needs of our local communities, modelling Jesus's way of loving service."

Our social enterprises will be "ways of serving the needs of our local communities, modelling Jesus's way of loving service" | Mary Stallard

What?

What do CiW hope will be achieved by this stream of Llan?

4 kingdom oriented social enterprises; 4 pioneer activists; 4 teams; Range of possible enterprises: hospitality, service-delivery, cultural / artistic, sporting

Early outputs?

What will the outputs be in the first year or so?

2 leaders identified; Church Mission Society (“Making Good”) and Church Army (evangelist) programme confirmed and commenced; 2 locations identified and business planning commenced; 2 teams identified

Outcomes?

What will the five-year outcomes of the stream be?

4 enterprises commenced; Intensive contact with 200 in 20-40 age bracket; Looser contact with 400 in 20-40 age bracket; Metric for infant and adult baptism

Impact?

How will the stream have a long-term impact?

Non-church-building evangelism mainstreamed; Community transformation evidence; “College” of practitioners; Confidence to plant within existing Ministry Area resources

In autumn 2024, the Diocese was advertising for three new positions – a Pilgrim Priest at Aberdaron, a Chaplain to the outdoor pursuits community in Eryri and a Schools engagement officer to work specifically with two secondary schools on Anglesey, which reflect the direction of the project in its early stage.

Appendix 10

A Bitesize Summary of Funded NPNP projects on Methodist Website

There is an extensive section on the Methodist website summarising many of the funded NPNP projects. They can be found at this link

<https://www.methodist.org.uk/our-work/our-work-in-britain/evangelism-growth/new-places-for-new-people/begin-a-new-place-for-new-people/funded-npnp-projects/>

Below are brief summaries and videos to watch showing a range of different and interesting NPNP projects.

Birmingham Street Ecclesial Community

Aimed at the street community (homeless and people on fringes with low incomes), this project provides a meal for guests and guests in turn are encouraged to become

hosts in time. Supported by chaplaincy space for one-to-one conversations and spin off faith talk at “Table Fellowship.” An evolving, contextual worshipping community.

Birmingham Bread and Belief

Aimed at Students at University of Birmingham who are sceptical about the Christian Church.

The vision is for a new worshipping community that university students and those who feel a sense of mission and calling to this area can call home through the making and baking of bread.

Peckwood Forest Church

Experiencing God in the outdoors at a quiet woodland site, with regular spaces for different groups to engage in a meaningful way including Forest Church.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JdV7LPOCGXI&list=PLoWWaJT3-_P4ocz97YY0ANIEblthlHNmA&index=15

The No. 8 Bus

Encouraging people to engage with their community on the no.8 bus, with potential to come back to the “depot.”

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VaHua7ZjGMU&list=PLoWWaJT3-_P4ocz97YY0ANIEblthlHNmA&index=13

The Hive

Use of a closed church building to create a wellbeing space with spiritual context.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fzC78Pw9NxM&list=PLoWWaJT3-_P4ocz97YY0ANIEblthlHNmA&index=4

Metal Methodists

A group for people interested in heavy metal music with Christian context

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8Px9QoR92yY&list=PLoWWaJT3-_P4ocz97YY0ANIEblthlHNmA&index=7

DAZ Hairdressing, Plymouth

Connecting with people outside church in a hairdressing salon. This video at 19 mins is quite long, but worth bearing with to get an insight at what lies behind it as an NPNP

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fzC78Pw9NxM&list=PLoWWaJT3-_P4ocz97YY0ANIEblthlHNmA&index=4

Recovery Church, Newcastle

A safe space with ecclesial content for recovering addicts.

Website <https://www.themotherhouse.co.uk/recovery-church/>

Video <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gBCRvHsInpg&list=PLoWWaJT3-P4ocz97YY0ANIEblthIHNmA&index=10>

Small group meditations, London

An online community based around contemplation.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LzvIM9VtWqE&list=PLoWWaJT3-P4ocz97YY0ANIEblthIHNmA&index=9>

Grace Place, Newcastle <https://www.themotherhouse.co.uk/grace-place/>

A café space, offering food and drinks, a chat with information on food banks, soup kitchens, other drop in facilities and a supply of warm clothing and sleeping bags for those in need. Prayer is offered, either by adding post it note to Prayer Wall or praying directly with people if they request it in a private chapel area.

Beachcomber FX <https://www.beachcomberfx.com/>

Has 4 different strands to it – scavenger, wanderer, gatherer, collector, each with different groups within it that explore spirituality and connection with the divine in a different way. Fantastic well developed website.

EG Wanderer - Sunday@thePub is a weekly gathering in a pub with opportunity for people to meet and explore faith and spirituality over food. Relaxed and mostly organic but with some intentional starters.

EG 2 – Wanderer : BFXCreative

A meeting every month when people meet up to share projects each working on, discuss creativity and hear from a creative about their work some fun with monthly creative challenges and on the spot prizes.

Northampton – FEAST

The District umbrella project, which seeks to grow small group and projects based around the arts and culture which lead to spiritual and faith exploration. One church has allowed its fencing to display local art and host a wellbeing writers group and Creative Arts Weekend, the latter of which has led to the formation of small groups involved with Art and Films meeting at a theatre.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2wYPGuDfU_0&list=PLoWWaJT3-P4ocz97YY0ANIEblthIHNmA&index=12

Wales Synod Cymru – Llanddysgwr (Learners Church)

The project will take the form of a part-time diaconal appointment, drawing in Welsh speakers and learners from local churches to assist and support as appropriate. It will seek to build bridges and develop relationships with learners in schools, classes, community groups etc, offering a currently marginalised group of people the opportunity to hear and experience the gospel in a way that's appropriate for them.

Indeed, while the Welsh-speaking community of Wales remains a minority, we consider this to be a project directly related to Methodism's Church at the Margins work.

Appendix 11

IDEAS FOR NEW WAYS OF BEING IN THE B+H CIRCUIT

“The Well”

Development of new faith communities across the area, based outside of church buildings, which are about bringing people together and promoting well-being through a diversity of projects which people enjoy doing. Aim is to address issues of isolation and Mental Health in rural/small town communities, bring people together. The faith element will be a key and transparent element to each group.

Litter Pick and Pray

Meet up to do community litter-pick, followed by coffee/chat and opportunity to relate to faith/pray.

Pronunciation, Panad and Pray

Welsh language basics and pronunciation practice with a faith and social element

Craft Church

Chat with craft element based in café or community centres, visible and accessible, open to all

Possibilities - Faith art, tapestry making, stitching, pebble painting, peg messaging, Christmas card making.

Faith based but aimed at promoting well-being, mental health issues through expressive and creative work, done together and in safe positive environment. Smaller completed items (eg Christmas cards, peg and pebble messages) could be given away to people in community as gifts and bigger items displayed in churches, cafes or community centres.

Creation Church

Wild Worship, Prayer walks, reflections, chat whilst feeling the benefits of exercise in God's creation.

Faith writing

An opportunity for people to write and share own writing about faith – through poems, short stories, prayer or hymn lyric writings.

Café Church(es)

Meet in a café space or other appropriate space, and discuss/share/offer mutual support with potential for faith element

Different groups for different people, possibilities might include:

Menopause Café A safe space for women to discuss how menopause is affecting them, offer each other support, have information sharing and relevant talks from professionals or others with opportunity to relate to faith and pray.

Men's or Women's Mental Health A safe space for people to discuss how mental health is affecting them, offer each other support, have information sharing and relevant talks from professionals or others with opportunity to relate to faith and pray.

NB Follow something along the lines of item below in Methodist News 12/10/23, for people with Mental Health issues “*Hard Pressed but not Crushed* is a discussion group that happens over breakfast on a Saturday where people can have informal and confidential conversations, and get the support they need. And *Stitch in the Ditch* is a women-only group where they can discuss what's on their mind while crafting.”

Renew Wellbeing Spaces

Not a NPNP as such, but suggested RW space in Holyhead run by CYTUN, likely to be at St Mary's church hall to begin with. Clearly something to promote and be involved with and possibly consider as a start-up at Capel Zinc or elsewhere.

IDEAS SUGGESTED FROM PEOPLE IN THE CIRCUIT

A Bus

A bus for use as a mobile church, to take Christian ministry to where people are, particularly those out in rural communities. It could link to the wellbeing issues, be a mobile small group meeting space wherever needed. Something along the lines of the Godly Play Bus project (but for adults not children) developed in the Lancashire District - see at <https://www.lancashiremethodist.org.uk/godleyplaybus.htm>

Christian Heritage Project at St John's Mason's Yard

Development of the Mason's Yard site to tell the Methodist story.

A Running Club

OTHER IDEAS/THOUGHTS ABOUT AREAS OF OUR COMMUNITY TO FOCUS ON (not necessarily NPNPs)

Students

We have become aware that here is a need amongst some sectors of the student population. Some students, particularly those who have come from overseas to study and brought families with them, are facing financial difficulties. They are running out of money in the face of high prices for accommodation and food, are unable to access state assistance, leading many to seeking part-time employment to

supplement their incomes, but without success. One student we know has indicated they have made 100 applications for work and got nowhere.

Is there more we could do as a church community to address this?

Are there any ideas (NPNPs or otherwise) we can think of which might link into this area of student poverty/hardship? Close liaison with Student Welfare Services, the Chaplaincy and local community support agencies would be involved.

Hospital

Ysbyty Gwynedd is the principal hospital for the area. Some from our church circuit congregations either work or volunteer there. Most people at some time will have cause to attend either as patients or visiting patients. The common view of those who do so, is that there are not enough staff on the wards and those who are there struggle to cope. Most people who have contact with the hospital, particularly as in-patients report a negative experience. It is not a pleasant place to be, and the fact that there are clearly problems in staff morale, the culture of the place and care given to patients is highlighted by the fact that the hospital authority remains in special measures which has been in place for some time now.

Could the hospital be the focus of a circuit wellbeing project? There is a chaplaincy service which includes a chaplaincy suite, with large space for worship and a smaller space for interviews. The chaplains will do bed visits and offer support but have strict rules about when they can do so, which is essentially when they are requested by the patient, or presumably a concerned family member. There is also a non-faith group called the Friends of YG, who also do some form of visiting and raise money. Is there scope to support the chaplains or the Friends group in some way? **Is there scope to offer help with visiting? Or maybe to offer support by making up/supplying patients with a "Boredom Survival Pack" which might include writing materials, crayons, Suduko, chocolate, a piece of fruit etc., Crossword or other puzzles.**

We might try this out with our own members who go in – ensure they get a visit by someone with a pack.

Inclusive Church

Could we have one of our churches (St Paul's or Capel Zinc) become a disabled friendly venue for disabled groups to meet, whilst at the same time having disabled and/or dementia-friendly services or meetings?

Another possibility might be a NPNP community of sign language learners, along the lines of Llanddysygwyr (the Welsh learners community near Wrexham) possibly partnering with the University or other community-based groups. This would be a great resource for the area.

Venue

One possibility to think about is to have an adaptable fixed space, which might become a hub for the above activities and where groups could be based.

This might link to the NPNP current thinking set out at appendix 12 which seeks to foster connection to the outdoors where people might explore faith through walks or just being present outside. A space to come to reflect, but also possibly to take part in activities such as those mentioned above re Wellbeing and along the lines of the Peckwood Forest Church/ Hive projects mentioned in appendix 10.

Appendix 12

B H Circuit Project Proposal First Draft prepared by Gavin Mart: Outdoor Community Engagement Project

Outdoor Spirituality in the Christian Tradition:

Grounded in the Christian faith, this project recognises the inherent spirituality found in the natural world and seeks to explore the connection between outdoor engagement and the Christian tradition. By integrating Methodist principles and practices into outdoor activities, the project aims to provide opportunities for participants to deepen their spiritual connection with nature and grow in their faith journey.

Incorporating wilderness spirituality into our outdoor adventure experiences is fundamental to our project's ethos, aiming to offer participants more than just recreational opportunities but avenues for profound personal and spiritual exploration.

Recognising the spiritual connection found in nature, our project provides opportunities for reflection, contemplation, and growth. Participants engage in outdoor activities such as hiking, camping, adventure sports and nature walks, immersing themselves in the beauty of the natural world to foster awe, wonder, and reverence. Through these integrated experiences, our project aims to create transformative opportunities that nourish the body, mind, and spirit, deepening participants' connection to the natural world and their sense of belonging to the divine.

Project Overview:

This collaborative initiative, led by the Bangor Methodist Circuit in partnership with the NPNP (New People New Places) fund, aims to foster connections within the growing outdoor community and residents in North Wales. Acknowledging the transient nature of outdoor enthusiasts and the enduring presence of local communities, the project seeks to promote inclusivity, enhance community cohesion,

and address rural isolation and poverty through outdoor engagement activities. Additionally, the project endeavours to conduct a feasibility study to explore the potential creation of an outdoor hub centre to house various community projects and initiatives and the increasing trend towards holistic lifestyles.

Objectives:

- To strengthen partnerships between the Bangor Methodist Circuit, local organisations, and the outdoor community to maximise resources and impact.
- To explore the spirituality inherent in outdoor engagement and connect it with the Christian tradition, offering opportunities for reflection, prayer, and spiritual growth.
- To provide opportunities for community members to engage in outdoor activities, promoting physical and mental well-being and combating rural isolation.
- To create inclusive outdoor experiences that foster community connections and a sense of belonging among both local residents and transient outdoor enthusiasts.
- To conduct a feasibility study exploring the viability and potential benefits of establishing a hub centre to serve as a focal point for community projects and initiatives.
- To develop project strategies and write grant applications to secure funding for project implementation and feasibility study.

Key Themes:

- Cultural Sensitivity and Inclusivity: Prioritising inclusivity by respecting local customs, language, and offering activities that appeal to diverse demographics.
- Community Engagement and Identity: Strengthening community bonds and fostering a shared sense of identity through outdoor adventures, community events, and collaborative projects.
- Incorporating spirituality into outdoor adventure experiences
- Impact and Measurement of Success: Measuring success through increased community participation, enhanced connections, and positive changes in residents' quality of life.
- Collaboration and Partnership: Leveraging partnerships with local organisations, businesses, and outdoor groups to maximise resources and reach a broader audience.

Appendix 13

The Circuit-based NPNP Funding Submission Form

Submit: All circuit-based applications are made through your district NPNP team.

Optional: If it is helpful and feasible you could tell the story of your proposed NPNP by creating a video, in addition to completing this form.

Contact Name:

E-mail:

Role:

Circuit:

District:

Name of the new community:

New community location:

Vision:

What is your vision for this new community?

Why?:

Why is this new community wanted?

Background:

How did the idea for this new community come about?

Team:

Who is currently involved? Who is praying for this new community?

How?:

How have you engaged and listened to the needs, wants, and hopes of the people of the community?

Discernment:

How have you discerned God is leading you or your community to do this work?

Nurturing Faith:

How will new people explore and discover faith?

Growing:

Describe how you will intentionally nurture and support faith development.

Transformation:

What changes are you hoping to see after the first year and beyond? How will you achieve the 'fruitfulness markers' (see Chapter 12 of the Circuit Guide:

methodist.org.uk/media/30512/starting-new-christian-communities-npnps-section-4.pdf).

Evaluation:

How will you develop a culture of reflection and learning?

Sustain:

How will you work towards sustaining the new community e.g., people and financial resources?

Inspire:

Describe the various ways in which your new community could encourage others to follow your example in their local contexts.

Risks:

What risks have you identified for this new community and how will you mitigate them?

Safeguarding practice and policy:

Please include a safeguarding policy for your new community written in consultation with your District Safeguarding Officer.

Inclusive Methodist Church:

How will your new community be inclusive? See here for background and the commitments of the Methodist Church to full inclusivity methodist.org.uk/inclusive-church

Budget

Amount applied for:

Please attach a full budget, showing details of matched funding, in a spreadsheet or PowerPoint slide. A budget template is available from your district NPNP team.



Appendix 14

COMMUNITY AUDIT ONE TO ONE QUESTIONNAIRE

1. What made you come to live or work here?
2. What is it about this area that makes you happy?
3. In your experience, how much do people talk to their neighbours around here? Why do you think that is?
4. What would you like to change about our area, if you could?

5. What do you see as important needs in this community?
6. Which local community groups offer practical care and support?
7. How much of a problem is social isolation?
8. How good would you rate well current provision for wellbeing issues? Is need met, or is there a gap in provision? If so where?
9. Are you aware of (church name) Methodist Church?
10. What, if anything, do you value about (church name) and why?
11. Describe a time when (church name) has been important for you, or made a real difference. (It can be just a small thing.)
12. What does (church name) do really well?
13. What would help (church name) to become even better?
14. Is there anything you think (church name) could be doing that it isn't doing already?



Appendix 15

Bangor and Holyhead Circuit from a wellbeing perspective

A. SPIRITUAL WHOLENESS AND GROWTH

FRIENDSHIP/FELLOWSHIP GROUPS

All	Post worship coffee and chat		
Amlwch	Forum	3ts#	
Holyhead	Forum		
Capel Zinc	Knit and Natter	Flexicise	Ploughman lunches
Pen/Capel Zinc	Time and Space 2		
Bangor	Time and Space 1 at Caws, Menai	Singing for Fun	

BIBLE/DISCIPLESHIP GROUPS

Pen	Bible Study	
Bangor	Housegroup 1	Bangor Housegroup 2
Capel Zinc	Housesgroup/Bible Study	
Holyhead	Housegroup/Bible Study	
Amlwch	3t's Bible Study#	Lent Study (The Shed, Benllech)

PRAYER

Pen	Prayer meeting
Circuit	Jean and Jacqueline's Facebook Prayer meeting + Prayer sheet John's Prayers for the Week sheet Feasibility Study weekly Prayer Meeting by Zoom Anna Chaplaincy weekly prayer meeting by zoom Business meetings begin/end with prayer

WORSHIP

Live morning Sunday service in church building - St John's, Pen, Capel Zinc, Holyhead, Amlwch (twice a month)
Amlwch Sunday Morning Service at Hafan Cefni in Llangefni (once a month)
Amlwch Sunday Morning Service at Clwb y Gorlan Community Hall (once a month)
Amlwch Sunday Morning Service at Eddie's Barn (whenever 5th Sunday in a month)
Fearless Worship (live Bangor monthly)
Monthly Zoom Circuit evening service
Circuit weekly Written Service Sheet
Wild Worship (quarterly)
Afternoon Sunday Telephone service (fortnightly)
Occasional Cytun and Civic joint services
Lent, Easter, Christmas, Week of Christian Unity services

B. COMMUNITY OUTREACH FOSTERING WHOLENESS AND WELLBEING

COMMUNITY

Bangor	Soup lunches	Foodbank volunteers	CAP Money
Pen	Foodbank volunteers and use of church premises		
Capel Zinc	Flexicise	Foodbank volunteers	Ploughman's lunches
Holyhead	Renew Wellbeing Space	Charity Shop	(both via Cytun)

ELDERLY

Amlwch	Hafan Cefni monthly worship		
Circuit	Anna Chaplaincy Funded role for Lanfairfechan/Penmaenmawr areas with volunteers from the circuit churches		
Capel Zinc	Venue for Re-engage group meeting at Capel Zinc monthly		

CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Pen	Messy Church	Halloween event	
Bangor	Youth For Christ (funded role with Penrallt and Mosaic churches)		
	Junior Church	Holiday activities	Open the Book (via Cytun)

Appendix 16

Positives and signs of God at work along the FS journey

Time and Space – was launched at Menai in September 2023, an opportunity for people to meet, chat and discuss matters of faith (or not) in an informal café setting. It has gone from strength to strength, with usually 12+ people meeting every month. Out of this some great ideas and chats about church have emerged. Interestingly, the need for such a group was highlighted early on by many people. This concept is now being extended to other areas of the circuit, with a similar group starting in March at Llanfairfechan and Penmaenmawr. A sign of growth in terms of depth of fellowship.

In September 2023 a new fortnightly bible study was started at Holyhead led by Sue and others and located at the home of Gordon and Robina. This occurred “organically” arising from a desire for more fellowship/discipleship from members of the congregation and has been well received. Absolutely nothing to do with me. Another sign of growth.

In November we started a second house group at St John's, principally arising from what people were telling me they wanted. This group meets fortnightly on a Wednesday at the home of Anne and Howard Jackson. We have had nine different people come, with usually 6 – 8 present. We have been using the Methodist resource, "Sunshine and Showers: Prayer's beautiful messiness" which has led to some great conversations and a real depth of sharing. A sign of growth in terms of depth of fellowship and discipleship.

In November, observations were made at St John's that there was a lack of diversity at "front of house" a desire of many for more lively worship in our services. This has led to the formation of a Worship Consultation group and in turn to monthly service when singing with a worship band takes place commencing half an hour before the formal 10.30 start. Preachers and stewards have also made a conscious effort to invite participation in the services from a greater cross-section of people including many of our students from overseas to do readings, give words of testimony or otherwise be involved. A move to increased inclusivity and a sign of growth.

The fortnightly Community lunch which follows the Sunday service has gone from strength to strength at St John's, with larger numbers of people otherwise unconnected to the church coming in for the free food. After listening to what people were saying they wanted, this has developed often to be a full hot meal rather than the simple lunch it was before. Sue also successfully applied for a grant for assistance as a warm space for the winter months.

The children's work at Penmaenmawr (monthly Messy Church staged there) and St John's (regular holiday activities and Junior Church) have seen increasing numbers and positive reaction.

The new Anna Chaplaincy role for the Penmaenmawr and Llanfairfechan area has come to fruition after more than two years of prayer and planning. A successful application for funding from Conwy council was obtained and Jan Isbell has now been commissioned to commence work.

In September, concerns were being raised about Capel Zinc's financial situation but these have improved in recent months with more use of the buildings from outside bookings and in particularly the commencement of a Re-engage group which meets there and which also now provides a ready-made link to the work with elders through the Anna Chaplaincy. Additionally, pretty much out of the blue, the chapel has received a sizeable cheque from the estate of an individual whose family had some links to it some years ago. This has now transformed the financial position of Capel Zinc. A much more positive situation, and a real answer to prayer, which opens up new possibilities.

At Amlwch, we came up with an idea close to Christmas to meet with members of the Welsh congregation to make Christmas Cards which together with a small bar of chocolate and sheet advertising Christmas services were delivered to every house

on Wesley Street where the church is located. This has helped improve the relationship between the two congregations and make connections with people on the street. It was noticeable that the services over this period were much better attended.

At Holyhead, the Renew Wellbeing Project being developed through Cytun is also a positive answer to prayer and something that has arisen organically from different people having similar visions across different churches. It presents a ready-made way for the Holyhead Methodist congregation to be involved in supporting this significant mission activity and improving the working relationship with the other churches involved.

This is not an exhaustive list by any means, but I have felt it important to set out in some detail, so that we can see the way God has been at work among us.