

**A REVIEW OF WESLEY ROAD CHAPEL ARMLEY,
FOR WEST YORKSHIRE ECUMENICAL COUNCIL
2010**

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Background and Brief

Wesley Road Chapel, Armley, shall look to the West Yorkshire Ecumenical Council and Sponsoring Body through the Leeds and Harrogate Committee [sic] for support and guidance. It shall be evaluated from time to time, as provided for in the structures of the Leeds and Harrogate Ecumenical Committee.

[Wesley Road Chapel 1990 Constitution, para. 9]

Although West Yorkshire Ecumenical Council (WYEC) has regularly engaged with Wesley Road Chapel since the inception of both in 1987, not least during numerous Staffing Consultative Groups, there is no record of a full review and evaluation having taken place. Such reviews of the ministry and ecumenical working of Local Ecumenical Partnerships (LEPs) such as Wesley Road Chapel are regularly carried out by WYEC, for the benefit and encouragement of the LEPs, and a WYEC review of Wesley Road Chapel was long overdue.

A Staffing Consultative Group, meeting at Wesley Road on 22 September 2009, revealed a number of issues of misunderstanding and misinterpretation, not least in the areas of finance and ministry, leading to a church leaders' call for a WYEC review.

The Denominational Ecumenical Officers of WYEC agreed on 23 September 2009 to set up a comprehensive review of Wesley Road Chapel, looking especially at issues of ministry, mission and money.

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Executive Summary

Wesley Road Chapel, Armley, a Local Ecumenical Partnership (LEP) involving Baptist, Methodist and United Reformed Church members, is a warm, friendly and welcoming church in an area of severe social need.

It has recently invested in practical new buildings to equip it for mission, with some success, and we applaud those involved in its development. Attention could still be given to the external profile of the premises, so the church's united Christian mission is more evident.

The current mission of the church, especially the work with elderly people, is especially commended. The website is a resource enabling the church to connect with the local community, and it could be used to engage more effectively with young people, a need which church members have identified and something with which many churches struggle.

Ecumenical relations are generally good, though there is not always widespread appreciation of the strengths and differences of both congregational and circuit cultures. This has particularly come to the fore with regard to issues of finance and ministry.

Wesley Road is encouraged to explore the range of lay and specialist ministries available from all of the denominational partners. This applies not only to Sunday worship, as it could also help to enable the church's mission with, say, youth or children's work. The United Reformed Church (URC) is possibly under-represented, not least in provision of leading Sunday worship.

Within the wider debate about ministry, there has been considerable discussion about the present and future pattern of ordained ministry for Wesley Road. We are pleased to affirm the ministry of Paul Allen, who is well-regarded throughout the church. We welcome the association with Wesley Road of Darren Garfield, Superintendent of the new Headingley and West Leeds Methodist Circuit. We trust that he will not be persuaded to give more than would be sustainable. We recommend that Wesley Road should move towards a model of having one ordained minister only – and that minister may not be full time – whose responsibilities would include developing awareness and appreciation of the cultures of each of the participating denominations. Any proposed amendments to the current staffing arrangements should be brought to a Staffing Consultative Group at the earliest opportunity.

Financially, the church is well run, with a general account and historic accounts being the legacy of its component churches. Decisions to proceed with the new building, and to appoint a half-time Baptist ministry in addition to the ordained ministry already provided, have led to a diminution of the historic resources. The URC account in particular will soon be emptied, as the church's revenue budget continues to draw upon these denominational funds. Overall, the church has substantial capital reserves, but, unless the revenue budget is addressed, these will be drawn upon for revenue support as the historic denominational accounts are closed.

Internal denominational processes appear to have let down Wesley Road with regard to the production of a Sharing Agreement for the new building. Through WYEC, we urge those with responsibility for legal and property matters in the participating denominations to pursue the drawing up of a Sharing Agreement as a matter of urgency.

A new set of Governing Documents has been drafted. Subject to approval by Wesley Road, denominational and ecumenical authorities, this should enable the church to register with the Charity Commission, and provide the operating framework for the years ahead.

Wesley Road Chapel is a community of prayer and worship, well placed to provide a unique Christian witness in an area where it is essential that the Good News is proclaimed and lived. It has a strong tradition of ecumenical working, and has the potential to use that tradition to support an outward-looking mission. We wish it every blessing in its future ministry.

Review Team

The Review Team consisted of:

The Revd. Dr. Clive Barrett, Chair,
County Ecumenical Development Officer

The Revd. Dr. Philip Clements-Jewery,
Ecumenical Officer for the Yorkshire Baptist Association

Valerie Jenkins,
Ecumenical Officer for the Yorkshire Synod of the United Reformed
Church

The Revd. Shaun Swithenbank,
Ecumenical Officer for the Leeds Methodist District

Methodology

All members of the Review Team were present at the Staffing Consultative Group at Wesley Road Chapel on 22 September 2010.

The Review Team met formally for the first time on 24 November 2009.

Between them, members of the Review Team have attempted to familiarise themselves with all aspects of the life and witness of Wesley Road Chapel. This has included:

- preaching and leading Sunday worship,
- attending coffee-worship and lunch sessions,
- speaking with the ordained ministers,
- meeting with church officers,
- meeting with the church's treasurers,
- attending a follow-up meeting to the Staffing Consultative Group,
- attending the Annual Meeting of the Church,
- speaking to Wesley Road Guild,
- reviewing the church's publications and website,
- consulting with denominational authorities,
- researching the social statistics of the area.

As will be seen, alongside this there have been various communications and conversations relating to the Constitution and the Sharing Agreement.

Context of Wesley Road Chapel

History

Worship on the Wesley Road site can be traced back to the first Methodist Church there in 1784, at which John Wesley preached. (Much of this section is indebted to *Wesley Road Chapel: The Journey So Far*, by Brian Thompson, 2009.) The present building dates from 1987, and followed a period when the Methodist congregation had moved to Hall Road Sion Baptist Church, during rebuilding on the Wesley Road premises. The official opening of the new joint Wesley Road Chapel was on 14 March 1987.

Records of those early years emphasise a ministry based on both spiritual and physical sustenance. Acts of worship combined with coffee or lunches were commonplace. Within the first year the pattern of regular Saturday coffee mornings was established as one mission focus for the Chapel: 'We can never under estimate the importance of our Coffee Mornings in giving people an introduction and a friendly welcome to our Wesley Road family.' In April 2006, a twice-monthly Coffee Slot, including a time of worship was introduced, being marketed as 'Sunday is not the only time for Worship!'

The initial Baptist – Methodist partnership became a three-way Local Ecumenical Partnership (LEP) in 1990, with the arrival of members of Armley United Reformed Church. A revised constitution dates from this time.

1990-1992 was a time of considerable ecumenical awareness and confidence, reflected in the ability to attract senior church leaders from a variety of denominations. Preachers included: the Catholic Bishop of Leeds, the President of the Baptist Union, the General Secretary of the Yorkshire Baptist Association, both the President and the Vice President of the Methodist Conference, the Chairman of the Leeds Methodist District, the Moderator of the URC General Synod, and the Moderator of the Yorkshire Province of the URC.

Wesley Road Chapel has always played its part in Churches Together in Leeds 12. The annual carol singing on Armley Town Street has been followed by soup in the Chapel since 1992.

The Guild (originally the Men's Guild) began in 1993. It was part of a wider programme of musical productions, outings and social and educational gatherings to sustain the church community.

West Yorkshire Ecumenical Council has made use of Wesley Road premises on several occasions. A consultation of all Local Ecumenical Partnerships was held here in 1996. More significantly, in the run up to the European elections of 2004, Wesley Road was the setting for an important statement by senior church leaders from Leeds Churches Together in Mission on the threat of the British National Party.

A banner-making group, which had been an earlier feature of church life, resumed in 2004. This continues as the Craft Group. Their work adorns the worship area.

Outreach was improved in 2007 with the introduction of a new website, www.wesleyroadchapel.org.

Locality

A church cannot exist in isolation from its locality, and Wesley Road Chapel is no exception. It is rooted in a longstanding working class community which has become multi-ethnic, multi-cultural and also multi-faith. Deprivation levels across the Armley ward are in the worst 10% in the UK.

According to uklocalarea.com, the quality of life in 87% of Armley ward, can be described as 'poor'.

Figures from *An understanding of the Indices of Deprivation 2007: Leeds Electoral Ward Profile – Armley*, published by Leeds City Council, detail the levels of deprivation.

The Armley ward is divided into sixteen extremely local Super Output Areas (SOAs). Deprivation statistics for the ward in 2007 were as follows.

Domain	Number of Super Output Areas ranked in most deprived 3% in UK	Number of SOAs in most deprived 10%	Number of SOAs in most deprived 20%
INDEX OF MULTIPLE DEPRIVATION	0	5	10
Employment deprivation	1	4	7
Income deprivation	0	3	5
Education Skills and Training deprivation	1	7	10
Living Environment	3	5	8
Crime and Disorder	5	12	14
Health deprivation and Disability	1	2	4
Barriers to Housing and Services	0	0	0
Income deprivation affecting Children	0	3	6
Income deprivation affecting Older People	0	2	6

There are various points to note from that table:

- The whole ward experiences fairly high levels of deprivation with 10 of its 16 SOAs ranked in the most deprived 20% nationally in the Index of Multiple Deprivation
- These figures changed little between 2004 and 2007; deprivation is a long term feature of life in the ward. Indeed, although some indices

- improved during this period, e.g. access to housing and services, others became worse, e.g. employment deprivation.
- One of the Armley SOAs is the most deprived in Leeds in respect of Health Deprivation and Disability
 - Crime is the biggest issue with 12 out of the 16 SOAs in the ward ranked in the most deprived 10% nationally in the Crime Domain.

These figures relate to the boom years before the recession. The economic downturn, caused by the excesses of the banks, will inevitably hit the poor disproportionately hard. Cuts in Government expenditure and services will magnify that effect. The most deprived urban areas will see the greatest suffering and it can be expected that social need in an area like Armley will increase even from its levels in 2007.

It is in this context that Wesley Road will proclaim the Good News and conduct its mission and outreach.

Wesley Road Chapel Today

Overview of the Church's Mission

Wesley Road Chapel is a friendly and active Christian community with a strong tradition of worship and preaching, together with an outreach to the community and a strong social life. The presence of God is prayerfully acknowledged, and high importance is given to Sunday worship. The new buildings reflect self-confidence and a determination to connect with the life of Armley. The new extension at has made a considerable difference to the mission opportunities which the church enjoys. The premises are well-designed, flexible and comfortable, and a credit to all who were involved in their construction. There is, perhaps, some external anonymity, however, and the wider community may not realise the pioneering aspect of the church being united. **We recommend that thought is given to the external visibility of the church and its programme of activities to passers-by on Wesley Road.**

Sunday morning worship attracts around forty adult members, with a monthly Communion, and there is appreciation of the standard of worship, something which the church regards as a priority. However, nearly all worship is led by ordained ministers. **The URC is probably under-represented and there is less engagement than might be expected with the diversity of lay ministry.**

There do seem to be good internal relations within the church, and various members commented on the level of friendship and mutual care which exists between church members. Visitors to the church would be warmly and appropriately welcomed. The ministers have had a good record of liaising on pastoral work.

There is an Outreach Committee, and the church has good community involvement, making full use of its fine new buildings outside of worship times, both for the development, growth and social life of its own members and also for outreach to the wider community. Church users include: the Coffee Morning (weekly on Saturdays with 60-80 people attending, and twice monthly on Tuesdays for chat and worship, followed by Soup and Roll lunch); the Craft Group (weekly); Keep Fit (weekly); the Ladies' Fellowship (twice monthly); the Luncheon Club; the Bible Study and Fellowship Group (twice monthly); the Wesley Guild / Ladies Guild (roughly twice monthly). Wednesday lunches attract 40-50 people, including Church of England members from St Bartholomew's Church. The church has a well deserved reputation for hospitality. Together with use of the premises by outside agencies, this indicates that the new buildings are being well used as a resource for the mission of the church.

The social needs of the area are considerable, as has been noted above. Wesley Road Chapel can be an important channel for the shared ministry of the churches in proclaiming the Good News of Jesus Christ to the poor and in providing pastoral care and social provision for the people of Armley, whose

quality of life in many cases is extremely low. **The church and its Outreach Committee are to be commended for all that is done at present, whilst being encouraged constantly to seek new ways of engaging with the most needy people in the local community.**

Wesley Road Chapel has an impressive and sustainable mission to active retired people – something which the social statistics, above, indicate is a considerable local need. Church members are aware of the lack of young people, and this should provide a mission challenge for the church. **It was noted that there is potential for outreach through local schools, and for involving youth and children’s specialists of the partner denominations.**

A major resource in this regard could be the church website, www.wesleyroadchapel.org, which is excellent. It is informative, both reflecting and promoting an active community. *The Messenger* magazine, itself regarded as a positive resource by members, is online, meaning that the website is kept up to date, with a prayer diary that includes even a list of birthdays. There is external news too, from the Armley Forum, and various ‘magazine’ items, indicating an attempt to reach out to the wider community.

Ecumenical Relations

Members generally have a commendable pride in being a shared church, and believe that in consequence they are better able to reach out to the community.

Despite the cover of *The Messenger* acknowledging only that Wesley Road Chapel is 'Working as an Ecumenical Project', this is in fact a long established ecumenical partnership. Members felt they had taken the best of the three constituent denominations and made them work for the unity of the church to the extent that they no longer thought of themselves primarily as three denominations.

Papers from all partner denominations are on display. Although the United Reformed Church profile is the lowest, URC members did not experience any sense of exclusion; with a largely congregational approach, they fully identified with Wesley Road Chapel.

For most members, the primary identification and loyalty is with Wesley Road Chapel; 'We don't work denominationally'. This is obviously true for some members who do not have a denominational background. One issue which can arise for a longstanding LEP is an inward-looking attitude, based on the near uniqueness of one's own position and a sense of not quite fully belonging to the partner denominations. This is not necessarily the case with Wesley Road, but there may still be for some a loss of appreciation and awareness of facets of their own, let alone others', denominational culture and heritage. This is something we discuss in more depth, below. Most members at Wesley Road acknowledge primarily an identity and loyalty that come from being part of that Christian community which is Wesley Road Chapel whilst still being able to recall, at least in part, the particular denominational heritage in which they have their roots. As will be seen, however, there do seem to remain issues for a number of members in appreciating the harder aspects of their own denominational culture and the differences in the cultures of denominations other than their own.

Being a LEP does bring opportunities to be a bridge between churches and to cross some of these denominational boundaries; the recent election of a URC member as Methodist Circuit Steward is a welcome case in point.

Wesley Road Chapel appears to play its full part in Churches Together in Leeds 12.

Ministry

1. The current position.

Wesley Road Chapel is used to having several ordained ministers associated with the church, though there is no tradition on having an ordained URC minister at the church. Paul Allen's induction took place in June 2000. At the time, Graham Kidman was Methodist minister – about to be replaced by Ian Howlett - and Mavis Beaumont, Baptist, was also then part of the team ministry. Mavis remains at Wesley Road as Baptist Secretary.

In January 2004, Ian Howlett was unexpectedly called to be a Superintendent in Mid-Glamorgan. Ordained ministry numbers were soon back up to three. In September 2004, for one year, an American Methodist minister joined the team, Lanecia Rouse from South Carolina. She was followed in 2005 by Sue Clark (soon to marry David Smith). Sue's time at Wesley Road ended in August 2010, with the new Headingley and Leeds West Circuit being inaugurated on 1 September 2010. The Superintendent of the new circuit, Darren Garfield, is the named Methodist minister relating to Wesley Road.

Paul divides his time between Wesley Road and his ministry as the lead chaplain at Leeds Prison, Armley.

All reports to the Review Group of Paul's ministry have been highly complimentary. He is well regarded and his ministry is greatly appreciated by the people of Wesley Road. **We are pleased to add our appreciation of the positive ministry exercised by Paul at Wesley Road.**

2. Reflection

Wesley Road Chapel members of all denominational backgrounds have a tradition of giving a priority to the provision of ordained ministry. As recently as February 2006, a church meeting declared that 'Wesley Road has always enjoyed and appreciated the rich variety of ministry and worship that has come from our diverse origins and it has helped us to grow spiritually. We feel that Ministry is one of the top priorities in the church...' Separate denominational meetings at that time agreed to 'support the WRC policy of having two or three Ministers and are prepared to support financially up to one third of the cost for at least 5 years as we feel Ministry is a top priority'.

Those statements, however, were not produced in a vacuum. Two years earlier, at a Staffing Consultative Group on 8 July 2004, The URC Yorkshire Synod Moderator, Arnold Harrison, had expressed unease at the lack of wider consultation with the URC over staffing decisions made locally.

The Staffing Consultative Group of 22 September 2009 was, at times a difficult meeting, eventually reaching a practical solution to the needs for ministry at that time, despite the fact that some felt that Wesley Road should have exclusive call on the services of one or more ministers, whereas others

had considered that such expectations were far too high. The Staffing Consultative Group had been convened because of two developments in staffing issues. Firstly, it was known that Sue Smith would be leaving in 2010, and there was a need to review future staffing levels in good time to respond to that. Secondly, the church meeting had again decided, in 2009, to extend Paul's contract, this time until 2014.

This affirmation of the Paul's ministry was understandable, but, from the point of view of ecumenical partners, we would question the terms in which it was presented. It was heard outside the church as having been already decided, whereas it would have been more helpful if it had been heard as a request or recommendation, a contribution to consultation. We are sure that ecumenical partners, recognising the value of Paul's ministry, would have wanted to endorse the decision, but, as it was heard, to some it felt like a straitjacket which restricted room to manoeuvre on other dimensions of ordained staffing provision.

The people of Wesley Road have regarded Paul's ministry as an additional resource, directly paid for by church members, on top of whatever ministerial provision they might otherwise have expected without him. As a result, Wesley Road has been used to multiple ministers, and a high degree of interaction with ordained ministers in worship, teaching and pastoral care.

The Staffing Consultative Group revealed the extent to which this level of ordained ministerial provision is greater than that which would normally be offered by one or more of the ecumenical partners. Wesley Road has cumulatively been receiving around one full-time equivalent (f.t.e.) ordained minister; other churches in the same Methodist circuit, for example, would have had perhaps one third of that provision. This has produced difficulties for the Circuit in responding to Sue Smith's departure. A fair distribution of ordained ministerial provision across the Circuit could not ignore the fact that there was already a Baptist minister in place at Wesley Road. As a result, the Methodist offer of ministerial provision, only part of which would be from a designated ordained minister who 'related to' Wesley Road, a 'strategic presence', made sense from a Circuit perspective, but was not well received by church members at Wesley Road. The financial dimension of this is considered below.

One consequence of this decision is that it would be expected that Wesley Road would increasingly engage with substantive lay ministry, something that is, after all, at the core of each of the participating traditions. It provides the opportunity for the church to ask itself what is the distinctive nature and purpose of ordained ministry, and evaluate different models of spiritual and pastoral leadership and oversight.

In the meantime, we harbour some concern that the church could have unrealistic and unachievable expectations of ordained ministers. In an attempt to satisfy the requirements of the church members at Wesley Road, Darren has generously offered to make himself available in a number of ways relating to the worship, teaching and pastoral life of the church. We trust he has not

been persuaded to overstretch himself in an unsustainable way, bearing in mind his wider responsibilities. Similarly, given that Darren will have a different role to Sue, his predecessor, we trust that Paul will not be tempted to try to fulfill the expectations of those who might expect more than can be sustainably given.

We wish Paul and Darren well as they exercise their various ministries with respect to Wesley Road. We trust they will work out together an appropriate sharing of responsibilities of pastoral and spiritual oversight.

Although we recognise that there are different models of ministry in different LEPs in different circumstances, in the case of Wesley Road **we recommend that the longer term pattern of ministry should be a move away from having multiple ordained ministers from a variety of denominations at one time to a model of receiving ordained ministerial provision from one denominational partner at a time, possibly in rotation.** This would avoid a number of the complications which have arisen during the recent staffing negotiations and would be comparable to the situation in almost all other single congregation LEPs in the area. We urge that any future amendment of staffing provision should only be made in the light of this recommendation.

Even should there only be one ordained minister, associated with Wesley Road in the way we describe above, we would expect that minister to ensure that the riches of all the partner denominations are reflected in both the culture and the worship of Wesley Road Chapel. More than that, we would expect a minister to encourage Wesley Road members to appreciate the fullness of the diverse cultures of the participating denominations and to draw on the variety of other resources available from them, including lay preachers and various other lay ministries, including youth workers and children's workers. Although this review was set up following discussions on ordained ministry at a Staffing Consultative Group, **we would encourage Wesley Road to look beyond ordained ministry to see how it could use, embrace and encourage other lay ministries and resources which partner denominations provide to support ministry and mission.**

We recognise that any future minister would be unlikely to have exclusive responsibility for Wesley Road and would be more likely to be shared with others, with additional responsibilities elsewhere. This could apply to any of the partner denominations, but especially within Methodism as new circuit alignments lead to exploration of concepts of shared and team ministry.

It is essential that, whenever any future change in ministerial circumstances is under consideration or proposed, that a Staffing Consultative Group should be called in good time. It may be, for example, that a SCG could be called as early as next year, should Darren's appointment expire in 2012.

Money

The finances of Wesley Road Chapel are in a sound and well-managed state. The decision to take around £130,000 from historic denominational accounts to support the building of new premises with mission potential has been vindicated. Even after this construction work has been paid for, the funds available to Wesley Road – cumulatively over £250,000 - are healthy for the future mission of the church. **Those historic denominational funds, especially those originating from the URC (see below), continue to be wound down. (We note in passing that each of these funds, whichever its denominational origin, is being used to support a Baptist minister, a decision owned in turn by the members of each denomination at Wesley Road).** Eventually, either capital will have to be drawn upon to support the revenue budget, or giving will have to increase, or spending will have to be reduced. Despite that concern, **it is clear that Wesley Road is well resourced and that there is careful stewardship and management of all financial assets.**

The financial assets of the church are kept in a number of accounts, each with its own accounting period.

The Wesley Road Chapel LEP account.

- The direct income from collections, donations received and Gift Aid for 2008/9 was £13,000.
- Direct investment income was a further £5,000.
- Fundraising generated a further £11,000
- The ministerial payment (c.£18,000) and expenses of Paul Allen were channelled through this account, income having been received from the denominational accounts below.
- Methodist Circuit Assessment and Pulpit Supply (mainly Assessment) amounted to £14,000.
- There was a donation to URC Mission and Ministry of £1,400; a smaller contribution to Baptist Home Mission was subsumed under general donations.
- Total funds held (August 2009) amounted to £173,000.

The following denominational accounts each have their own secretary and treasurer and they are examined by a member of one of the other denominations.

The Zion Baptist account.

- £43,000 had been put towards the new Wesley Road building.
- The Zion Baptist Church account reveals investments to the value of £44,000 (end of 2009), which generated £2,200 income in 2009.
- £5,000 was paid in 2009 towards Ministry (£6,200 in the accounting period of Wesley Road Chapel LEP account)
- £30 was paid for Yorkshire Baptist Association Trusteeship.

- There was under £1,000 cash in hand (January 2010).

The Methodist account.

- £43,000 from the Armley Central Methodist Fund was put towards the new Wesley Road building.
- There is a regular £6,000 contribution towards Baptist Ministry.
- The balance of the principal fund was £32,000 (August 2009) with a further £3,000 in a subsidiary account, £35,000 in total.

The United Reformed Church account.

- In what was an unusual arrangement for the URC, it was agreed that the proceeds of the sale of Hall Lane Armley Church would be put in trust and ring-fenced for use by URC members at Wesley Road Chapel.
- £43,000 from these proceeds was put towards the new Wesley Road building, despite the URC not yet being party to a Sharing Agreement (see below).
- There has been a longstanding annual payment of £3,000 from this account as 'payment for Methodist Ministry' into the main LEP account, a payment first authorised by Donald Hilton, sometime URC Moderator; there is also a regular £6,000 contribution as 'payment for Baptist Ministry'. URC members at Wesley Road have accepted that they have been among the beneficiaries of those providing ordained ministry to the church.
- It is likely that these combined £9,000 p.a. payments will continue until the end of 2012, at which point the (March 2010) balance of £26,500, held by the Yorkshire Congregational Union on behalf of Armley URC, will be exhausted. As nearly all the expenditure from this account has either been on a shared building or on Baptist and Methodist ministry, it is to be hoped that URC members at Wesley Road will not be penalised in the future for no longer having an historic legacy upon which to draw.

It is with regard to the management of the finances that Wesley Road has had the greatest difficulty in coming to terms with the different cultures of the ecumenical partners. Two of the partners, the URC and Baptist churches, address financial matters essentially on an individual church basis.

The Methodist Church, on the other hand, operates on a circuit model and would stress the primary responsibility of membership being to contribute to the total ministry of the circuit, which, in turn, would be a resource for all. Membership implies responsibility, including financial responsibility. It implies that those who are strong in financial or other resources should help to sustain the mission of those who are weaker. This commitment to the wider circuit is part of the denominational understanding of the mission of the church and is not to be understood, in any sense, as a payment for services received. It would be expected from Methodist members, irrespective of the level of ordained ministerial provision. A contribution to the total ministry of the circuit

does not simply 'buy' the time and services of an ordained minister for one's own church, it also helps to support the development and resourcing of mission which both includes and is wider than that which Wesley Road could do alone. The fact that Wesley Road pays its 'full whack', to quote one church member, does not automatically entitle it to the exclusive attention of an ordained minister.

The Methodist circuit operates on the principle of inclusive collegial support for all churches within the circuit – including Wesley Road. Ministry, finance, mission and service are done both locally, by individual church congregations, and in wider terms by circuit – and of course District and Connexion. Therefore the resources of the circuit, including those in the LEP, are available to everyone automatically. In other denominations these resources are often generously shared/given, but in Methodism they are held by the circuit as a common resource. Thus Lay Preachers, Lay Workers, Youth and Children's Workers, as well as building projects, can be given funding and other support directly from the circuit. This is more than just paying ordained Ministers. The assessments from each church in a circuit go towards the work of the whole circuit, and assessments for individual congregations are calculated on their ability to pay. This, in theory, means that congregations or projects who apply for support from the Circuit are given such support on the basis of mission need and not numbers/size of congregation.

This is a transitional period for Methodist circuits in Leeds, part of the 'Way Forward' process, and the new Headingley and West Leeds Circuit, which itself may only be an interim instrument, will need a period of embedding. **It is assumed that, as the total needs of the new circuit are assessed, the financial contribution of Wesley Road will be confirmed or adjusted accordingly.**

Equally, Wesley Road Chapel will be the only LEP within the new circuit; **it is hoped both that the church will play its full part within the circuit, and that other churches within the circuit will appreciate the distinctiveness of Wesley Road, leading to the growth of mutual respect and responsibility.**

Developing an awareness of the implications of different denominational cultures is one of the biggest difficulties which members of Wesley Road have had to face. Given the much lower financial contributions being made into Baptist and URC structures, their contribution to the Methodist circuit seems to them to be disproportionate. This could have led to an increase in voluntary contributions to Baptist and URC mission; in practice, it has led to questions along the lines of 'what are we getting for our money?' There is discontent that the amount of ordained ministry being offered to Wesley Road by the circuit 'is less than we are paying for'. Such a response is perhaps understandable when, from within a Baptist or congregational culture for example, the amount of time given by Paul Allen is directly related to the amount of money paid by Wesley Road for his services. The response, however, seems to indicate a reluctance, not least within some Methodists within Wesley Road, to grasp the connexional attitude, circuit culture and approach to mutual responsibility

which is central and distinctive to Methodism. It is equally incumbent upon those steeped in a connexional culture, to understand, appreciate and value the congregational culture and concerns familiar to Baptist and URC members of Wesley Road.

The way out of this misunderstanding will come from growing appreciation of the cultures of each of the partner denominations. In the long term, there would be reduced likelihood of confusion when Wesley Road moves to a pattern of ordained ministry, which we have recommended above, in which only one of the partner churches is responsible for providing ordained ministry at any one time.

Documentation

There are various documents required for the establishment and continued smooth running of a LEP. These include a Sharing Agreement, addressing responsibilities arising from the ownership and occupation of the Wesley Road premises, and Governing Documents – the Constitution – addressing the nature of the partnership and the way in which the partners interact.

1. The Sharing Agreement

The initial Sharing Agreement was between Methodist and Baptist partners, on an 80%-20% basis. This needed amending following the welcoming of the URC into the LEP. There needs to be some urgency in drawing up this agreement, given the investment of all the churches, especially the URC, in the new extension. The Methodist Schedule 3 document to gain permission for the new building, which obtained District approval in November 2008, stated that ownership of the new premises would be divided into portions to be agreed in a new Sharing Agreement. At some stage, however, the drawing up of this new three-way Sharing Agreement seems to have run into the sands. Somewhere between Armley, Didcot, Manchester and Morley, the latest version seems to have gone astray.

We do not know whether any new draft has been seen by Baptist representatives.

The last reference we found in Methodist papers was a letter from the Methodist Legal Department to the YBA on 20 January 2009 indicating that the application for a new Sharing Agreement had been approved by the Circuit and the District, but the Methodist Legal Department awaited instruction from the Managing Trustees to proceed with preparing the Sharing Agreement documents.

More recently, we have heard from Sheila Duncan of the United Reformed Church who sent a suggested form of words to the Methodist Legal Department in Manchester in January 2010. However, she has since reported that, following a change of personnel at the Methodist Legal Department, local Methodist Managing Trustees are being told to seek their own legal advice from a list of recommended solicitors. The overall result, sadly, is **not only do we not know where proposed Sharing Agreement papers are currently lodged, but neither do we know any longer what the procedures are for pursuing such an agreement.** We will continue our investigations but suspect that finding a way out of that particular labyrinth will take more time than is available for this review.

2. The Governing Documents

Alongside the Sharing Agreement, the Governing Documents of the LEP needed updating, and this has provided an opportunity to introduce the new Governing Documents as proposed by Churches Together in England in association with the Charity Commission. The members of the Review Group

are empowered to pursue denominational and WYEC approval for the new Governing Documents.

In the Methodist case, the District Policy Committee has authorised the Ecumenical Officer(s) of the Leeds Methodist District to approve these Governing Documents on behalf of the District Policy Committee and Methodist Connexion, as long as they follow a national model for Governing Documents. The Governing Documents will still need to be formally reported to the Leeds District Synod and the Methodist Connexion after authorisation in order to ensure that records are kept up to date. The conclusion of this process would enable Wesley Road to be directly registered with the Charity Commission.

There are three parts to the Governing Documents: an Ecumenical Vision Statement, a Constitution and a Schedule. The existing Wesley Road Chapel Mission Statement is being regarded as the Ecumenical Vision Statement (see Appendix 1). An initial draft of a new Constitution and Schedule has been drawn up, consistent with the national model for such documents, and this is ready to go to the church meeting for approval (see Appendix 2).

Approval by the Church Meeting of the Ecumenical Vision Statement and the other Governing Documents will allow WYEC to confirm authorisation by the participating denominations and to proceed with the registration of Wesley Road Chapel with the Charity Commission.

Analysis and Conclusions

Mission

Wesley Road Chapel is a long-standing Local Ecumenical Partnership situated in an area of high urban deprivation. It uses its new buildings to good effect. Its mission to the vulnerable includes good provision for elderly people. We noted:

- **The church and its Outreach Committee are to be commended for all that is done at present, whilst being encouraged constantly to seek new ways of engaging with the most needy people in the local community.**
- **There is potential for outreach through local schools, and for involving youth and children's specialists of the partner denominations.**
- **A major resource in this regard could be the church website, www.wesleyroadchapel.org, which is excellent.**
- **We recommend that thought is given to the external visibility of the church and its programme of activities to passers-by on Wesley Road.**

Ministry

A Local Ecumenical Partnership has a unique opportunity to become fully engaged in the diverse cultures of each of the participating denominations. Past misunderstandings about ministerial provision can perhaps be linked to a lack of such engagement. We recommend moving to a staffing structure which would reduce the chances of future misunderstanding and would encourage greater engagement with and reflection upon the lay ministries and specialist ministers available within the Circuit, District, Synod or Association.

- **We are pleased to add our appreciation of the positive ministry exercised by Paul Allen at Wesley Road.**
- **We wish Paul and Darren well as they exercise their various ministries with respect to Wesley Road. We trust they will work out together an appropriate sharing of responsibilities of pastoral and spiritual oversight.**
- **We recommend that the longer term pattern of ministry should be a move away from having multiple ordained ministers from a variety of denominations at one time to a model of receiving ordained ministerial provision from one denominational partner at a time, possibly in rotation.**

- **We would encourage Wesley Road to look beyond ordained ministry to see how it could use, embrace and encourage other lay ministries and resources which partner denominations provide to support ministry and mission.**
- **We expect Wesley Road increasingly to engage with substantive lay ministry, something that is, after all, at the core of each of the participating traditions. It provides the opportunity for the church to ask itself what is the distinctive nature and purpose of ordained ministry, and evaluate different models of spiritual and pastoral leadership and oversight.**
- **It is hoped both that the church will play its full part within the new Methodist circuit, and that other churches within the circuit will appreciate the distinctiveness of Wesley Road, leading to the growth of mutual respect and responsibility. The church also has much to offer to the other churches of Yorkshire Baptist Association and to the United Reformed Church Synod and these ties should be cherished and fostered.**
- **The URC is probably under-represented in ministerial provision.**
- **It is essential that, whenever any future change in ministerial circumstances is under consideration or proposed, that a Staffing Consultative Group should be called in good time.**

Money

The recent use of historic reserves to equip the building for mission is something we commend. However, we note that the revenue budget continues to draw on those historic reserves in a way which is ultimately unsustainable. As a matter of stewardship, the members of Wesley Road may wish to consider reviewing their own giving.

- **It is clear that Wesley Road is well resourced and that there is careful stewardship and management of all financial assets. We recommend that this should be extended to include a fund for the regular replacement of furniture and fittings, to enable the interior of the church to be maintained in good order.**
- **Historic denominational funds, especially those originating from the URC, continue to be wound down. (We note in passing that each of these funds, whichever its denominational origin, is being used to support a Baptist minister.)**
- **It is assumed that, as the total needs of the new circuit are assessed, the financial contribution of Wesley Road will be confirmed or adjusted accordingly.**
- **The way out of financial and other misunderstandings will come from growing appreciation of the cultures of each of the partner denominations.**

Documentation

This review has been partially successful in equipping Wesley Road with the ecumenical documentation required for the next leg of its shared journey. New Governing Documents have been prepared which are here commended to the church meeting. Unfortunately, progress is less evident with regard to the Sharing Agreement.

- **Not only do we not know where proposed Sharing Agreement papers are currently lodged, neither do we know any longer what the procedures are for pursuing such an agreement.**
- **Approval by the Church Meeting of the Ecumenical Vision Statement and the other Governing Documents will allow WYEC to confirm authorisation by the participating denominations and to proceed with the registration of Wesley Road Chapel with the Charity Commission.**

Appendices

Appendix 1

THE ECUMENICAL VISION STATEMENT

1. We are God's people worshipping together as his Church at Wesley Road.
2. We have come together as members of the Baptist, Methodist and United Reformed Church in a Local Ecumenical Partnership.
3. We exist by the power of the Holy Spirit in order:-
 - To share together in worship and fellowship proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ.
 - To work together in serving and caring for the community in which we are placed.
 - To build partnership with other churches and faiths.

Model Governing

Documents

(Constitution and Schedule)

for

**Wesley Road Chapel,
Armley**

Version updated on 13.05.10

**Constitution for Wesley Road Chapel, Armley,
a Single Congregation Local Ecumenical Partnership**

This Constitution was adopted on [date] [and amended on [date(s)]] and relates to the charitable unincorporated association governed by this Constitution and known as **Wesley Road Chapel, Armley.**

Introduction

- 1) In this Constitution (including the Schedule to it) the following expressions have the following meanings:
 - a) 'the Area of Benefit' means the area specified in paragraph 2 of the Schedule;
 - b) 'the Charity' means the charity constituted by this Constitution;
 - c) 'Congregational Meeting' means a meeting of the Members;
 - d) 'Co-opted Trustees' means Trustees appointed by the Trustees under clause 22(c);
 - e) 'Elected Trustees' means Trustees elected under clause 22(b);
 - f) 'the LEP' means the Local Ecumenical Partnership specified in paragraph 1 of the Schedule;
 - g) 'the Members' means the members of the Charity;
 - h) 'the Participating Churches' means the Churches specified in paragraph 4 of the Schedule;
 - i) 'the Participating Denominations' means the denominations specified in paragraph 3 of the Schedule;
 - j) 'the Schedule' means the Schedule to this Constitution;
 - k) 'the Sponsoring Body' means the body specified in paragraph 6 of the Schedule;
 - l) 'the Trustees' means the body of trustees constituted by clause 22 of this Constitution (who are the charity trustees of the Charity for the purposes of the Charities Act 1993).

Purpose of the Charity

- 2) The purpose of the Charity is to advance the Christian faith in the Area of Benefit in accordance with the principles and practices of the Participating Churches.
- 3) In achieving its purpose, the Charity will engage in a range of activities, either on its own or with others, including (but not restricted to):
 - a) the celebration of public worship;
 - b) the teaching of the Christian faith;
 - c) mission and evangelism;
 - d) pastoral work, including visiting the sick and the bereaved;

- e) the provision of facilities with a Christian ethos for the local community, including (but not restricted to) the elderly, the young and other groups with special needs; and
- f) the support of other charities in the UK and overseas.

Membership of the Charity

- 4) The duly authorised ministers for the time being of the LEP (whether ordained or lay) are Members by virtue of their office.
- 5) Other persons shall be entitled to membership of the Charity if entitled to membership of the LEP in accordance with the provisions of the Schedule.
- 6) The Trustees must keep a register of Members, which must be made available to any Member upon request. The register must record the name, address and denominational affiliation within the LEP of each Member.
- 7) Membership of the Charity shall be terminated if the Member concerned:-
 - a) gives written notice of his or her resignation to the Trustees;
 - b) ceases to be entitled to membership of the LEP (including as a result of any disciplinary procedure conducted by one or more of the Participating Denominations conducted in accordance with paragraph 13 of the Schedule); or
 - c) dies.
- 8) Membership of the Charity is personal and not transferable.

Congregational meetings

- 9) There shall be the following kinds of Congregational Meeting of the Charity:
 - a) Annual Congregational Meetings;
 - b) Ordinary Congregational Meetings;**
 - c) Special Congregational Meetings
- 10) Congregational Meetings shall be convened by or on behalf of the Trustees, either:
 - a) by giving 14 days' (or, in the case of a Special Congregational Meeting, 21 days') notice in writing sent to the addresses recorded for the Members in the register of Members; or
 - b) by giving verbal notice given at each service of public worship held in the LEP on the two Sundays (or, in the case of a Special Congregational meeting, the three Sundays) immediately preceding the date of the Congregational Meeting.

- 11) An Annual Congregational Meeting must be held within 12 months of the adoption of this Constitution and once in every subsequent calendar year.
- 12) The business of an Annual Congregational Meeting is to:
- a) receive the report of the Trustees on the Charity's activities since the previous Annual Congregational Meeting;
 - b) review the life and witness of the Charity;
 - c) elect Trustees from among the Members by processes that are clear and open;
 - d) receive the accounts of the Charity for the previous financial year;
 - e) appoint an auditor or independent examiner for the Charity; and
 - f) consider any other business put before it by the Trustees.
- 13) An Ordinary Congregational Meeting shall be convened on not less than three occasions in each calendar year.
- 14) The business of an Ordinary Congregational Meeting is to:
- a) review the life and witness of the LEP;
 - b) consider topics relevant to the local and wider witness of the LEP;
 - c) receive reports covering all aspects of the life of the LEP;
 - d) consider matters brought to it by the Trustees, so as to offer advice or guidance (to which the Trustees must have regard), and to indicate support as required;
 - e) help to shape the life, work and vision of the LEP.
- 15) A Special Congregational Meeting may be called at any time by the Trustees and must be called by them within 21 days after receiving a written request from at least one-tenth of the Members for the time being.
- 16) In the case of a Special Congregational Meeting the notice of the meeting must include an indication of the business to be transacted.
- 17) The business of a Special Congregational Meeting shall comprise that referred to in the notice convening it and no other.
- 18) No business shall be conducted at any Congregational Meeting unless at least one quarter of the number of Members for the time being are present.
- 19) The chair of the Trustees or (if the chair is unable or unwilling to do so) some other Member elected by those present shall preside at any Congregational Meeting.
- 20) Except as otherwise provided in this Constitution, every issue at a Congregational Meeting shall be determined by a simple majority of votes cast by the Members present and voting.

21) Except for the chair of the meeting, who in the case of an equality of votes has a second or casting vote, every Member present in person at any Congregational Meeting is entitled to one vote on every issue.

Trustees

22) The Charity shall be administered and managed by a body of trustees consisting of:

- a) *ex officio* Trustees, being the ministers of the LEP for the time being;
- b) **six** Elected Trustees elected at the Annual Congregational Meeting who will normally be the treasurers and secretaries of the participating denominations; and
- c) not more than **two** Co-opted Trustees appointed by the Trustees.

23) The first Elected Trustees shall be elected at the meeting at which this Constitution is adopted.

24) Elected Trustees shall hold office from the end of the Annual Congregational Meeting at which they are elected until the end of the third such meeting after their appointment, but shall be eligible for re-election at that meeting.

25) No person may be elected as an Elected Trustee or appointed as a Co-opted Trustee unless he or she:

- a) is a Member;
- b) is aged 18 or above;
- c) is not disqualified from acting as a Trustee by virtue of section 72 Charities Act 1993 (or any statutory re-enactment or modification of that provision); and
- d) has indicated his or her willingness to serve as a Trustee.

26) Co-opted Trustees serve until the end of the next Annual Congregational Meeting following their appointment.

27) A Trustee shall cease to hold office if he or she:

- a) is disqualified from acting as a Trustee by virtue of section 72 Charities Act 1993 (or any statutory re-enactment or modification of that provision);
- b) ceases to be a Member;
- c) dies or becomes incapable by reason of mental disorder, illness or injury of managing and administering his or her own affairs;
- d) resigns as trustee by notice to the Trustees (but only if at least two Trustees will remain in office when the notice of resignation takes effect); or

- e) is absent without the permission of the Trustees from all their meetings held within a period of six consecutive months and the Trustees resolve that his or her office be vacated.

Proceedings of the Trustees

- 28) The Trustees may regulate their proceedings as they think fit, subject to the provisions of this constitution.
- 29) The Trustees must hold at least two meetings in each calendar year.
- 30) At their first meeting after an Annual Congregational Meeting the Trustees shall elect the following officers from amongst their number:
 - a) a chair;
 - b) a secretary; and
 - c) a treasurer.
- 31) Any Trustee may request a meeting of the Trustees and the secretary must convene a meeting of the Trustees if requested to do so by a Trustee.
- 32) Questions arising at a meeting must be decided by a majority of votes.
- 33) In the case of an equality of votes, the person who chairs the meeting shall have a second or casting vote.
- 34) No decision may be made by a meeting of the Trustees unless a quorum is present at the time the decision is purported to be made.
- 35) The quorum shall be either:
 - a) two or the number nearest to one third of the total number of Trustees, whichever is the greater; or
 - b) such larger number as may be decided from time to time by the Trustees.
- 36) A Trustee shall not be counted in the quorum present when any decision is made about a matter upon which that Trustee is not entitled to vote.
- 37) If the number of Trustees is less than the number fixed as the quorum, the continuing Trustees or Trustee may act for the purpose of filling vacancies or of calling a Congregational Meeting but for no other purpose.
- 38) The person elected as the chair shall chair meetings of the Trustees.
- 39) If the chair is unable or unwilling to preside or is not present within ten minutes after the time appointed for the meeting, the Trustees present may appoint one of their number to chair that meeting.

- 40) The person appointed to chair meetings of the Trustees shall have no functions or powers except those conferred by this Constitution or delegated to him or her in writing by the Trustees.
- 41) A resolution in writing signed by all the Trustees entitled to receive notice of a meeting of Trustees or of a committee of the Trustees and to vote upon the resolution shall be as valid and effectual as if it had been passed at a meeting of the Trustees or (as the case may be) a committee of Trustees duly convened and held.
- 42) The resolution in writing may comprise several documents, each containing the text of the resolution in like form and each signed by one or more Trustees.
- 43) The Trustees may delegate any of their powers or functions to a committee of two or more persons, all or a majority of whom shall be Trustees, subject to such conditions (if any) as they think fit. All acts and proceedings of any such committee must be reported promptly to the Trustees.
- 44) The Trustees must keep minutes of all:
- a) appointments of officers and Co-opted Trustees made by the Trustees;
 - b) proceedings at Congregational Meetings; and
 - c) meetings of the Trustees and committees of the Trustees, including:
 - i) the names of the Trustees or committee members present at the meeting;
 - ii) the decisions made at the meeting; and
 - iii) where appropriate, the reasons for the decisions.

Accounting and reporting

- 45) The Trustees must comply with their obligations under charity law with regard to:
- a) the keeping of accounting records for the Charity;
 - b) the preparation of annual statements of account for the Charity;
 - c) the transmission of the statements of account to the Charity; and
 - d) the preparation of an Annual Report and an Annual Return and their submission to the Charity Commission.

Powers of Trustees

46) In order to further the purpose of the Charity the Trustees may:

- a) raise funds, provided that in doing so the Trustees must not undertake any substantial permanent trading activity and must comply with any relevant statutory regulations;
- b) apply for and accept grants and provide security in respect of obligations under grant agreements;
- c) buy, take on lease or in exchange, hire or otherwise acquire any property and maintain and equip it for use;
- d) where the Charity owns property, sell, lease or otherwise dispose of all or any part of the property, subject to such consents as are required by law;
- e) borrow money and charge the whole or any part of the property belonging to the Charity as security for repayment of the money borrowed, subject to such consents as are required by law;
- f) co-operate with other charities, voluntary bodies and statutory authorities and exchange information and advice with them;
- g) establish or support any charitable trusts, associations or institutions formed for any purpose connected with the purpose of the Charity;
- h) acquire, merge with or enter into any partnership or joint venture arrangement with any other charity formed for any purpose connected with the purpose of the Charity;
- i) set aside income as a reserve against future expenditure but only in accordance with a written policy about reserves;
- j) obtain and pay for such goods and services as are necessary for carrying out the work of the Charity;
- k) open and operate such bank and other accounts as the Trustees consider necessary and invest funds and delegate the management of funds in the same manner and subject to the same conditions as the Trustees of a trust are permitted to do by the Trustee Act 2000; and
- l) do all such other lawful things as are necessary for the achievement of the purpose of the Charity.

Application of funds

47) The Trustees shall pay out of the income and property of the Charity all the proper costs and expenses of administering the Charity.

Trustee benefits

48) No Trustee or any person connected with a Trustee may receive from the Charity any payment of money or other material benefit (whether direct or indirect) except by way of:

- a) reasonable remuneration or stipend paid to any Trustee who is a minister of the LEP;

- b) reimbursement of reasonable out of pocket expenses (including hotel and travel costs) actually incurred in the administration of the Charity;
- c) interest at a reasonable rate on money lent to the Charity;
- d) a reasonable rent or hiring fee for property let or hired to the Charity;
- e) an indemnity in respect of any liabilities properly incurred in or about the administration of the Charity (including the costs of a successful defence to criminal proceedings);
- f) benefits received by the Trustee as a Member where such benefits are no different in nature or extent from those received by other Members; and
- g) payment for employment or services authorised under clause 49.

49) The Trustees may employ, or engage under a contract for services, such of their number or any person connected to a Trustee as they may determine provided that:

- a) the procedure set out in clause 50 is followed;
- b) the Trustees are satisfied that it is in the interests of the Charity to employ or engage under a contract for services (as the case may be) the Trustee or connected person concerned;
- c) the Trustees are satisfied that the terms of employment or engagement are reasonable and will be subject to regular and objective review; and
- d) at no time may a majority of Trustees benefit directly or indirectly from payments made under this clause.

50) Whenever a Trustee or a person connected to a Trustee has a personal interest in a matter to be discussed at a meeting of the Trustees or any committee, the Trustee or connected person concerned must:

- a) declare an interest before discussion on the matter begins;
- b) withdraw from the meeting for that item unless expressly invited by the chair to remain solely in order to provide information;
- c) not be counted in the quorum during that part of the meeting; and
- d) withdraw during the vote and have no vote on the matter.

51) For the purpose of clauses 48 to 50 a person is connected with a Trustee if that person is:

- a) a child, parent, grandchild, grandparent, brother or sister of the Trustee; or
- b) a spouse, civil partner or co-habitee of the Trustee or of any person falling within (a) above.

52) []

Investment

53) Funds which are not required for immediate use must be placed on deposit or invested.

54) Investments and other property of the Charity may be held:

- a) in the names of the Trustees;
- b) in the name of a nominee (being a corporate body registered or having an established place of business in England and Wales) under the control of the Trustees or of a financial expert acting on their instructions;
- c) in the name of a trust corporation as a holding trustee for the Charity which must be appointed (and may be removed) by deed executed by the Trustees; or
- d) in the case of land, by the Official Custodian for Charities under an order of the Charity Commission or the Court.

Amendment of Constitution

55) This Constitution (including the Schedule) may be amended at either an Annual or a Special Congregational Meeting provided that:

- a) No amendment may be made **under** this clause that would have the effect of making the Charity cease to be a charity at law or altering the purpose of the Charity if the change would not be within the reasonable contemplation of the Members;
- b) Clauses 48 to 51 may not be amended without the prior written consent of the Charity Commission;
- c) Members are given 21 days' notice and resolve by not less than two-thirds majority of the Members present and voting; and
- d) the resolution receives the approval of the Sponsoring Body and of the appropriate authority of each of the Participating Denominations.

56) A copy of any resolution amending this Constitution must be sent to the Charity Commission within 21 days of its being passed.

Dissolution of Charity

57) The Charity may be dissolved only with the approval of the Sponsoring Body, and the appropriate authority of each of the Participating Denominations.

58) If the members resolve to dissolve the Charity the Trustees will remain in office as charity trustees and be responsible for winding up the affairs of the Charity in accordance with the provisions of this Constitution.

59) The Trustees must collect in all the assets of the Charity and must pay or make provision for all the liabilities of the Charity.

60) The Trustees must apply any remaining property or money:

- a) directly for the purpose of the Charity;

- b) by transfer to any charity or charities for purposes the same as, or similar, to the purpose of the Charity; or
 - c) in such other manner as the Charity Commission may approve in writing in advance.
- 61) The Members may pass a resolution before or at the same time as the resolution to dissolve the Charity specifying the manner in which the Trustees are to apply the remaining property or assets of the Charity, in which event the Trustees must comply with the resolution if it is consistent with clause 60.
- 62) In no circumstances shall the net assets of the Charity be paid to or distributed among the members of the Charity.
- 63) The Trustees must notify the Charity Commission promptly that the Charity has been dissolved. If the Trustees are obliged to send the Charity's accounts to the Commission for the accounting period which ended before its dissolution, they must send the Charity Commission the Charity's final accounts.

Schedule

The LEP

- 1) The Charity:
 - a) gives effect to the local ecumenical partnership **Wesley Road Chapel, Armley**, approved for the Area of Benefit by the Participating Churches;
 - b) comprises the Participating Churches; and
 - c) looks to the Sponsoring Body for support, encouragement and advice.

The Area of Benefit

- 2) The Area of Benefit is **West Leeds**

The Participating Churches

- 3) The Participating Denominations are:
 - a) **The Methodist Church;**
 - b) **The Baptist Union of Great Britain; and**
 - c) **The United Reformed Church**
- 4) The Participating Churches are:
 - a) **Armley Central Methodist Church**
 - b) **Armley United Reformed Church and**
 - c) **Zion Baptist Church.**
- 5) The Appropriate Authority for each Participating Church is:
 - a) **The Leeds District of the Methodist Church;**
 - b) **The Yorkshire Synod of the United Reformed Church; and**
 - c) In the case of the **Zion** Baptist Church, the authority of a decision of the **Zion** Baptist Church Members' Meeting , ratified by the Faith and Unity Department of the Baptist Union of Great Britain or by the Baptist Union of Wales as appropriate.

The Sponsoring Body

- 6) The Sponsoring Body is **West Yorkshire Ecumenical Council**

Christian Initiation and Belonging

- 7) Baptism shall be administered according to the rite and/or practice of any of the Participating Denominations, or according to a rite approved by **the Participating Denominations through** the Sponsoring Body, and shall be set, in normal circumstances, within an act of congregational worship. A register of baptisms shall be kept.
- 8) All persons involved as candidates or parents in baptism, **whether of believers or infants**, should proceed with the full knowledge of the options that are available to them. Infant Dedication and Thanksgiving for the Gift of a Child shall be among such options, as shall be a service for the Re-Affirmation of Baptismal Faith, as appropriate.
- 9) Preparation **for believer's baptism and** for confirmation and admission to the full responsibilities and privileges of membership of the LEP shall be undertaken jointly and shall include specific denominational teaching and instruction. Confirmation and reception into membership of the LEP or a transfer and/or extension of membership shall normally be administered at a joint act of worship according to a rite authorised by the Sponsoring Body, and agreed by the confirming ministers.
- 10) Those received into membership of the LEP by joint confirmation in consequence become members of all the Participating Denominations, as well as members of the LEP.
- 11) Those received into membership of the LEP by transfer and extension of membership in consequence become members of all the Participating Denominations which have received them, as well as members of the LEP.
- 12) Baptismal policy and practice shall be in line with the discipline of the Participating Denominations and Churches. **Baptism of believers will not normally be administered to those who have previously been baptized as infants. If, however, a candidate who has been baptized as an infant holds a strong conviction about being baptized as a believer, the matter should be referred to the ministry team and the appropriate authorities of the Participating Denominations for consideration in the light of nationally agreed policies. Anyone so baptized shall be eligible for membership of the LEP as a Baptist only.**
- 13) Membership discipline shall be in accordance with the procedures of the Participating Denominations. Members affiliated to more than one of the Participating Denominations shall be subject to the procedures of only one of them, as agreed by the Sponsoring Body and the appropriate authorities of the Participating Denominations on the proposal of the Trustees. The standing of any such member with the other Participating Denomination(s) to which they are affiliated shall be reviewed by them in the light of the outcome of that procedure.

Worship

- 14) The LEP shall respect the faith and practice of each of the Participating Denominations. Worship shall safeguard and present the doctrines, practices, traditions and developing traditions of each of the Participating Denominations and be conducted in accordance with denominational practices and/or using rites adopted by the Sponsoring Body. A balanced and varied pattern of worship shall be aimed for in order to maximise the riches of each tradition and to enable the congregation to explore and express its ecumenical life and aspiration, while at the same time ensuring that worship is accessible and sustaining for all its members. Ordained priests, ministers or other duly authorised persons shall preside at the Eucharist as permitted by the rules of the relevant Participating Denomination.
- 15) The authorisations of each Participating Denomination apply to that denomination's services.
- 16) All those recognised as communicants by the Participating Denominations may receive the sacrament. In arranging services encouragement shall be given to the participation of the whole congregation, especially Lay/Local Preachers, Readers, and others authorised as leaders of worship or as preachers.

Ministry

- 17) Authorised ministry within the LEP shall be provided by ministers (whether clergy or lay) duly appointed by the Participating Denominations, after consultation with the Sponsoring Body.
- 18) The procedures of the relevant Participating Denominations shall be followed in the appointment/call of ministers. Recognising, however, the importance of continuity, the LEP expects that those responsible for the appointment/call of ministers shall select persons who will respect and develop the ecumenical character of the LEP. To that end, when it is expected that a minister or member of the ministry team serving the LEP may leave, or before any major changes in the responsibility of the minister presently in post are considered, or if additions to the ministry team are being contemplated, the agreed procedure of the Sponsoring Body shall be followed.
- 19) There shall normally be a practice of alternating ministry between the Participating Denominations, which are Baptist, Methodist and United Reformed Church
- 20) Newly appointed ministers shall be inducted / welcomed at a service at which they, other members of the ministry team, the LEP and representatives of the Sponsoring Body reaffirm the Ecumenical Vision Statement.

- 21) All ministers serving the LEP shall seek or be offered appropriate status within all the Participating Churches.
- 22) Remuneration of Ministers shall be in accordance with the practices of the appointing Participating Denomination.

Relationship with the Participating Denominations

- 23) The Trustees shall be the equivalent of:
- a) the Elders' Meeting in the case of the United Reformed Church;
 - b) the Deacons' Meeting in the case of a Baptist Church; and
 - c) the Methodist Church Council (according to Standing Order 611 of the Methodist Church);
 - d) [*deleted*]
- 24) The LEP shall maintain a proper relationship to the appropriate local and regional bodies of the Participating Denominations, fulfilling necessary constitutional requirements. These bodies are:
- a) in the case of the Methodist Church, the Headingley and West Leeds Circuit
 - b) in the case of the United Reformed Church, the Yorkshire Synod; and
 - c) the Yorkshire Baptist Regional Association and the Baptist Union of Great Britain
- 26) To that end, meetings of the members of the LEP affiliated to a particular Participating Denomination (as opposed to meetings of the members of the LEP) may be held in order to meet the constitutional requirements of the Participating Denomination concerned.

Buildings

- 27) The premises of the LEP comprise Wesley Road Chapel, Armley, Leeds and are subject to a sharing agreement under the provisions of the Sharing of Church Buildings Act, 1969.

Ongoing development

- 28) Other churches in or near the Area of Benefit may seek participation in the LEP at any time, subject to the agreement of the appropriate authorities of the Participating Denominations and the Sponsoring Body.
- 29) The LEP looks to the Sponsoring Body to review its work and witness every seven years, or sooner, with reference to its purpose set out in the Declaration of Intent and this Constitution.

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Clive Barrett,
Valerie Jenkins,
Philip Clements-Jewery,
Shaun Swithenbank

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