



## *Circuit Review 2011 - 2012*

Dear Friends,

A Connexional programme called “Regrouping for Mission” began in 2008 and every Methodist circuit was tasked with moving forward and planning for the future as we seek to be a relevant and vibrant church for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. The Methodist Conference this year approved the general ‘direction of travel’ that we truly become again a ‘discipleship movement shaped for mission’.

The churches of the Durham and Deerness Valley Methodist Circuit are therefore undergoing a review of mission and ministry throughout this coming year. The review team would like as many people as possible involved in the life of the local church to be part of the review and each of our churches will, in a variety of ways, be celebrating the good news stories and exploring the challenges we face as church today. To help with the review church Stewards or leadership teams, alongside your minister, will be organising opportunities for discussion and would be grateful for your help in completing the fact finding questionnaire which has been sent to all churches. (We will also put a copy of the questionnaire on the circuit website for information).

### **What is the purpose of the review ?**

The purpose is to ask some crucial questions of our churches in these changing times. For example:

- What is your purpose as a Christian community ?
- Where do you see yourselves in 3 - 5 years’ time ?
- What do you need to do to get there ?

So there’s a need to ask how we might evaluate and better live out our circuit vision statement; to assess what we are already doing; to be confident and courageous in planning for the future; to look for new opportunities in worship, mission and service. In a prayerful manner, as we work together for God, we need to look at contemporary and appropriate ways of being church, fresh ways to reach the hearts, minds and spirits of those in our communities with the love and joy of Jesus Christ, and above all to help each other grow in faith.

### **The Process**

- Review Group set up - *Mrs Sue Smith (Administrator/Circuit Meeting Secretary)*
- During Autumn 2011 they will meet with churches. There is a survey/questionnaire for each church to complete and return by end of December 2011
- Throughout the year - to hear everyone’s views; prayer and discussion focussed on mission
- Gather information together during early 2012 and begin to come up with an action plan
- Spring/Summer 2012 - report back to circuit and finalise action plan for next 3 years, then prepare presentation for District Development Group in October 2012

We have the opportunity to make this review a really encouraging and inspiring time for our circuit churches and to explore new directions with the other churches in our area. Let’s use the process this year to celebrate the Christian journey we share, and to encourage and support one another’s hopes for the future.

*Rev Shaun Swithenbank*