

**Minutes of the Quarterly Meeting
of Local Preachers, Leaders of
Worship and Readers**

**23 April 2026 at 7.30pm
At Stocksfield Methodist Church**

1. **WELCOME:** Rev Beard opened the meeting.
2. **IN ATTENDANCE:** Rev Marie Beard (in the chair), Rev Tony Buglass, Tom Dodds, Ruth Johnson, Norman Fullard, Bob McAlpin, Ian Warburton, Brian Japes, Jacqui Cameron, Fiona Calverey, Sheila Holland, Rev Michael Holland, Daryl Ralston, Elaine Goy, Jess Merryfield-Surman.
3. **APOLOGIES:** Robin Charlton, Glen Smith, Brian Elstob, Rev Gareth Sherwood, Christine Thompson, Sandra Martin, Sylvia Waters.
4. **DEVOTIONS:** Ruth Johnson: *Jeremiah 29:11. Plans for the future.*
5. **PASTORAL MATTERS:**
 - a. New Local Preacher: Jess Merryfield-Surman
 - b. Rev Steven Talbot: is back on plan.
 - c. Noel Rippeth, who was a preacher in the former Ryton and Prudhoe circuit, has passed away at the age of 86.
 - d. Margaret Weatherson is home.
 - e. Bob McAlpin: family bereavement. Please hold the family in our prayers.
 - f. Rev Russell Hilbourne: passed on 18 January 2026.
6. **MINUTES** of the meeting held on 15 January 2026 via Zoom, previously circulated, were accepted as a true record.
7. **MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES** not otherwise on the Agenda:
 - a. Allendale's ISing list will be updated by Rev Michael soon. *TD will arrange to place the pdf on the Website and circulate. Action: Michael/Tom. TD to look at email of 21 January 2026.*
8. **NOTIFICATION OF ANY OTHER BUSINESS** not otherwise on the Agenda:
 - a. Chrestos/Availability/Plan Making: The deadline for Availability is tomorrow!
9. **CORRESPONDENCE:** None.
 - a. Greetings shall be sent to Margaret Weatherson. *TD to arrange.*
10. **PREPARATION FOR SERVICE:**
 - a. Seeking a Note to Preach: None. Please remember to encourage others to come forward to explore their calling to preach.
 - b. Preachers On Note: None.
 - c. Progress of Preachers On Trial:
 - i. Daryl Ralston: Jacqui Cameron is tutoring and Ruth Johnson is the mentor. Daryl continues to make progress, having to complete the Course by 18 January 2029. Another module completed, coursework continues.
 - ii. Jacqui heard Daryl on 8 February at Wylam. The meeting agreed to Daryl continuing On Trial.
 - d. Arrangements for preachers to be heard and a report prepared:
 - i. Daryl Ralston: TD will hear Daryl on 10 May at Trinity and report back.
 - ii. Jess: Arrangements will be made to hear Jess during the forthcoming quarter.

- iii. Fiona recommended that we try the Methodist Church in South Africa Summary Form: you can find a link to the form [here](#).

11. NEWS FROM CHURCHES:

- a. Phillip Mason is a trainee presbyter who will be with us for the next few months.
- b. Fourstones will close 12 July 3pm
- c. Folk Worship on the last Sun in September at Allendale.

12. DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING: June 2026: Bible Month: Marie led this.

- a. Its on Philippians. Jacqui circulated the Reading Guide. We agreed that we would use this resource throughout the four weeks of June across the circuit.

13. FUTURE TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES:

- a. None.

14. PEER REVIEW: Reminder. These happen on an 'ad hoc' basis, but we're always pleased to hear about them at this meeting. TD reported back on hearing Ruth Johnson on Thomas.

- a. Marie shared her recent experience of Greek Orthodox Easter. On Good Friday evening in a village there was a bonfire; a liturgy; nothing like any worship she had seen before. Whole families, the whole community marked Good Friday in the church courtyard. An 'epitaph' was carried around the village. The cemetery was decorated and blessed. It certainly wasn't miserable.
On Saturday, worship continued in church and in the community. It was 'worship' that involved the whole community. At midnight, 'Christ is Risen' was celebrated with noise, fireworks and bonfires.
- b. Easter in Catton was on Fri 20 March, brought forward because of lambing, in the village hall. 55 people attended.
- c. As we come up to Ascension and Pentecost, the C of E will produce materials.

15. ANY OTHER BUSINESS as notified at 7 above: None.

16. FUTURE MEETINGS: (all at 7.30pm unless otherwise stated, *place, volunteer for devotions*)

- **Thursday 9 July 2026 - on Zoom:** *Devotions: T Dodds*
- **Thursday 1st October 2026** at Acomb ('outing'): *Devotions: Communion and Reaffirmation: minute taker required.*
- **Thursday 14 January 2027 on Zoom**
- **Thursday 15 April 2027** at 7.30pm at Hexham Trinity.

17. The meeting closed with The Grace at 8.58pm.