

Liverpool (North) Circuit

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To members of and regular worshippers at Maghull Methodist Church (by post or email to each household)

Dear sisters and brothers in Christ

Last Tuesday, the Church Council met with a very focussed agenda; the vast majority of our time was spent considering our future and what to say to the Circuit in response to its request for a mission or growth plan for our church. After a good but difficult conversation, it was agreed that I would write to the Circuit. I also committed to write to you all so that you have a copy of what I said to the Circuit and, as promised in my last letter, to inform you about our next General Church Meeting.

First, this is what I wrote to our Superintendent who also attended the meeting of the Council:

At its meeting on 8 June 2021, the Church Council recognised that much had been done over many years in and through Maghull Methodist Church. The Council believes that it is vital to remember and give thanks for those things and all who have contributed to them.

In the light of a number of reports, including one from the group appointed to consider a mission/growth plan, the Church Council also recognised that it found it very difficult to see a future for the church. Conversations about vision and the life and mission of the church have been taking place for more than 20 years and some of the long-standing issues have now been focussed by the COVID-19 pandemic. The Council is particularly aware that:

- a. we have struggled to make a number of essential and highly desirable appointments, including church stewards and safeguarding officer in the former category and property steward(s) in the latter; and
- b. in addition to the assessment and routine maintenance of the premises, there is approximately £70,000 worth of work that needs to be done on the building and £30,000 would be needed to repair the car-park.

The Council is not, therefore, able to produce a mission/growth plan as requested by the Circuit Meeting.

The Council meets again on 29 June, will consider further the situation, and update the Circuit on its decisions.

I turn, next, to our second General Church Meeting of the year: it will take place before the Church Council on Tuesday, 29 June and will start at 7:00pm. We will be using Zoom again and the details are the same as for Sunday worship and coffee mornings: for those using the internet, the link is <https://zoom.us/j/3183358498> and for those using a phone, the number is 0203 481 5240; the meeting ID is 318 335 8498.

As you know, this General Church Meeting needs to deal with the appointment of at least two church stewards and at least six (though not more than fifteen) representatives to the Church Council. I have

attached or enclose information about the appointments procedure. To pick up on what I wrote in my last letter, I encourage you to consider prayerfully which of our members might be called to serve in either of these two ways. At the meeting, there will also be an opportunity, primarily for those who are neither members of the Church Council nor attend its meetings, to offer their thoughts on our future in order to help the Council as it continues its discussion.

As I write, it appears that Step 4 of the Government's 'Roadmap out of lockdown' will be delayed. Once we know when that step is to be taken, our COVID-19 Group will consider how to proceed.

Lastly, please continue to pray about all these things, remembering that God is more ready to hear than we are to ask and that the Spirit helps us in our weakness and guides us in our prayers.

Yours in Christ

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Neil A Stubbens". The signature is written in a cursive style. A long, thin horizontal line is drawn below the signature, starting from the end of the word "Stubbens" and extending to the right.

Neil A Stubbens