

**Proposal received from Tinsley Methodist Church**  
**for permission to Cease Worship**

**Reasoned Statement for the Closure of Tinsley Methodist Church**

Written and presented by Rev Debora Marschner (25<sup>th</sup> May 2022)

Tinsley Methodist Church Council met on March 7<sup>th</sup> 2022. In an open church meeting with representatives from CLT which took place a few weeks before, the anticipated direction of travel towards the end of this connexional year was already outlined.

This discernment process was expressed once more and with a sense of sadness and resolve, the church council members voted to seek permission to cease worship and to sell the Church building. The motion reads:

“The last service of worship at Tinsley Methodist Church will take place on the last Sunday in August 2022, and the church will close on 31<sup>st</sup> of August.” Tinsley Methodist Church Council seeks permission to sell the building.

The voting was; 7 for, 1 against and 4 abstentions.

The decision was taken reluctantly and with much sadness. The Membership of the Church stands at 9 and the weekly congregation averages 4-6 people. The Church has faced a declining membership for many years and has been viable financially only with income from a large bequest.

In 2016, Tinsley Methodist Church began to work in partnership with Freedom Community Project. It started with a comprehensive community audit, followed by a formalised partnership in March 2017 and the set-up of a social café and advice drop-in in June of the same year. Both café and advice offered initially attracted many local people who were welcomed and supported with warmth and love by the church folk who also inherited a community lunch club from October 2017. There was a real community feel and buzz. However, 18 months into this partnership, a number of unforeseen circumstances led to changes of provision and the Covid-19 pandemic meant that the social side with café and lunch club could no longer take place.

Since re-opening in the autumn last year, numbers have been low and the church members originally more involved with it are feeling their age and dwindling energy levels.

Tinsley Methodist Church has always offered a warm welcome to all and has throughout the decades provided many with a spiritual home and caring support. Their biggest legacy in my opinion is, though, that they have nurtured young families and individuals along the way and for the time that they lived in Tinsley. When they were ready to spread their wings or to move on, the congregation of Tinsley Methodist Church was able to release them with their blessing and continued to offer love and support remotely. Almost everyone who at one point in their lives was part of Tinsley Methodist Church has gone on to find another Methodist Church to call home. Some have become local preachers and worship leaders and continue to build the kingdom of God where they are now, knowing that they were nurtured in the Christian faith and continue to be supported in thoughts and prayers by the faithful members of Tinsley Methodist Church.

The existing 9 members are currently deciding where they would like their membership to be transferred to and during the course of the coming months wish to celebrate the life and ministry of the church locally.

**Debora Marschner – Minister in Pastoral Charge**

The Sheffield Circuit Meeting met on June 20<sup>th</sup> 2022 and supported the request from the Tinsley Methodist Church Council to seek permission of the Synod to cease worship and to sell the building.