**Update from Chairman of Headway (Ireland) – Methodist Evangelicals Together**.

1 July 2017

Dear Friends of Headway (Ireland),

Jude v 3 “Contend for the faith that was once for all entrusted to God’s holy people.”

Greetings in the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Thank you for your witness and prayers throughout a busy half year. New members continue to join. We endeavour to make our voice heard on debatable matters within our Methodist Connexion. We seek to recall ourselves and our Connexion to honour God’s truth as revealed in Holy Scripture. Charles Wesley addressed God as “Thou God of truth and love” and we want to be found “speaking the truth in love” (Ephesians 4v15).

 A recent executive meeting of Headway (Ireland) pinpointed three areas of focus for us at present. They are:

* Promoting the authority of the Bible especially in relation to human sexuality;
* Promoting evangelism in the agenda of our churches;
* Promoting group prayer for the revival of God’s Church.

 At our Spring Conference in Lisburn 2017 the church was filled to hear our Secretary of Conference and an inter-church panel of members discuss “Tackling decline – what next?” It was a challenging evening and we hope to publish a report on this on our website.

 At the Irish Methodist Conference meeting in Lisburn in June 2017 it was encouraging to hear our President, Rev Dr Lawrence Graham, invite people to know Jesus personally. The report from the Council for Social Responsibility presented a helpful insight into the abuse of alcohol and began by recommending that all Methodists consider seriously the claims of total abstinence. They also encouraged Christians to write to Public Representatives not to liberalise abortion laws. The Board of Education report will have encouraged all Christian teachers by defending the importance for Christian education on schools.

 At Conference the new structures for our Church received a mixed response although it was good to hear Rev Dr Heather Morris indicate that the three separated District Superintendents should be chosen with evangelistic and well as administrative gifts in mind. Rev Shaun Cleland had earlier, at the Ministerial Session, made an impassioned plea for prioritising evangelism.

 The Conference discussion booklet on human sexuality was considered. While the document is introductory, our Headway members would have liked more biblical references to have been included.

 Seventy eight persons attended the Methodist Conference breakfast which was hosted by Headway. Peter Lynas from Evangelical Alliance addressed the gathering with biblical clarity, passion and faith as he outlined the challenges facing the church of tomorrow. His talk is worth hearing or reading. An audio version of his talk is available on our Headway (Ireland) website (www.headwayireland.com) and hopefully we can present it in print.

 Our plans for the future include a Spring Conference in Lisburn on May 2nd 2018:

**"Every Methodist an Evangelist" (Tackling decline Part 2)**. Also, we have been invited to speak at a Faith and Order Day Conference on the subject: **"The authority of the Bible with reference to human sexuality."** We will keep you informed of other events which we are planning.

Please let us know of your encouragements and concerns. Please continue to pray, personally and corporately, for the Methodist Church in Ireland and for the work of Headway (Ireland). Our Secretary, Rev Ken Robinson can be contacted at ptrobinson@btinternet.com.

May God bless you.

Rev. Ken Todd (Chairman) Website (www.headwayireland.com)