

We get lots of emails in the Local Preachers' mailbox. Some are joyful with good news to share or an achievement to celebrate. Many are asking for a little advice and guidance - sometimes we can shed a little light on a confusing situation. Some of the saddest messages are from people who want to press on with training as a Local Preacher or Worship Leader, but are held up because they don't have a Mentor. Whilst we're all under a lot of pressure at the moment and reluctant to take on new things, this seems a real shame: being a Mentor has been one of the most rewarding things I've done as a Local Preacher.



So what does a Mentor do? Firstly, you share your services with your student while they're starting out – giving them opportunities to find their feet in worship, and their first opportunities to preach.

Then you are simply there for them as they develop in skill and confidence, encouraging them, praying for them, supporting them at the Local Preachers' Meeting and (if asked) offering a little advice and guidance. For example, we recommend meeting together each quarter to have a chat about their assessed service.

So why the swans? Because they remind me that we don't fly alone - perhaps the swans are a student, tutor and mentor benefitting from each other's wisdom, experience, uplift, enthusiasm and sense of direction as they set off on their journey. Incidentally, they were Whooper Swans at RSPB Burton Mere earlier this year.

If you would like to find out more about being a Mentor, ask your Superintendent or Local Preachers' Secretary. An online introduction to being a Mentor (or a Tutor or Local Preachers' Secretary) role is available - see the [WLP Training page](#) for details.

Events



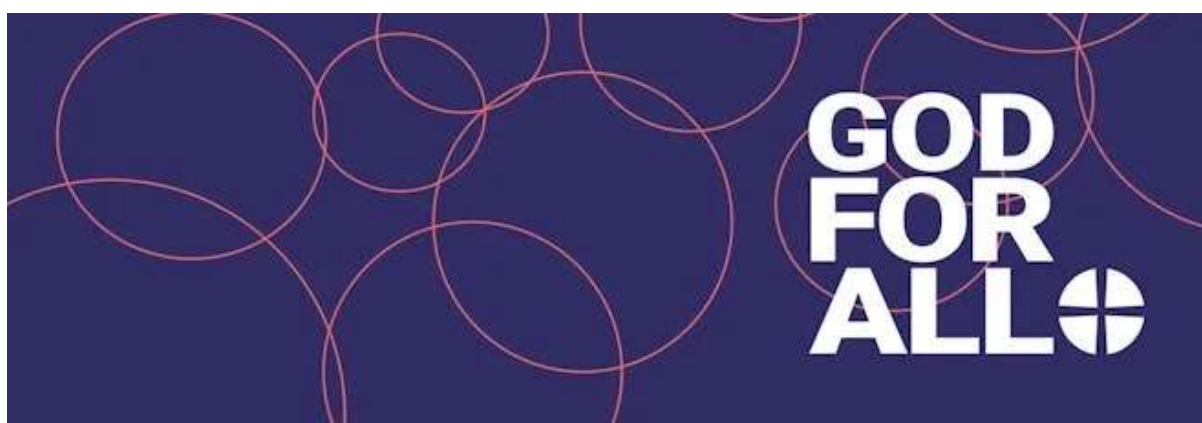
Are you interested in global relationships and mission?

Join for us for a time of storytelling where we will hear from Mission Partners and about the most recent work of the World Mission Fund at the Radiate webinar.

Wednesday 27 September 2023 at either **1-1.40pm** or **7-7.40pm** via a Zoom webinar.

To book your place click [here](#)

For more information about Global Relationships, visit The Methodist Church website [here](#).



The Methodist Church is committed to being an evangelistic church, it's one of the core parts of our calling. All Christians – not just some – are called to listen for, speak of, and live out the good news. And yet, as a Church, we can often lack confidence with evangelism. So we need a tool to help us grow in confidence and make the most of our opportunities for sharing our faith.

Everyone an Evangelist is a course from the Methodist Church designed to help groups from local churches and circuits explore the ways you and your church

community are called to share your faith and to grow in confidence as evangelists. The process will help demystify evangelism and build sustainable, intentional rhythms of both personal and shared evangelism.

See the [website](#) for further information, including an information video, how to attend Everyone an Evangelist Surgeries and how to order Everyone an Evangelist materials.



12 to 14 January 2024, Yarnfield Park, Stone, Staffordshire

The Evangelism and Growth team would like to gather people who have a sense of the hopeful future that the Holy Spirit is leading us to.

At **Whole Hearted** we will spend time seeking God, discerning vision, engaging in strategic planning and workshopping knotty problems.

Places (including accommodation and food) are fully funded but a deposit is required when booking (returned in full after the weekend to all who attend).

To book, click [here](#).

If you need help paying the deposit please contact us [here](#).

Reflect

Methodist spirituality

Local Preachers' Retreat 2024

19th – 21st April at the Ammerdown Centre near Bath.

A silent retreat with plenty of space for quiet reflection. Led by Bob Bartindale, Connexional Officer for Worship & Local Preachers

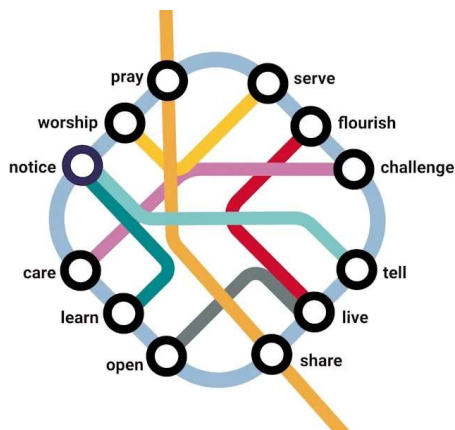
Oh, how I love your law...?

As Christians who emphasise God's love and grace, how can God's Law be at the centre of our faith?

We shall reflect on law and grace, and on Jesus coming to “fulfil the Law”. There will be time to consider how this might affect our discipleship and calling as Worship Leaders and Local Preachers.

The cost for the weekend (accommodation and full board) is £250. Booking forms can be downloaded on the [CLPD webpage](#) or on the Reflect webpage [here](#).

Ideas & Resources



Did you know...

That there are also two **fun animations** to help explain and invite people to follow a Methodist Way of Life. You can find them on YouTube by clicking on here:

[The Journey of a Lifetime](#)
[How to help people to journey](#)



When the 2021 Conference adopted The Theology of Safeguarding report, they recognised that we all need to think through how the Bible and our faith underpin safeguarding.

A set of resources are about to be published, consisting of a four-session study guide with short films, activities and questions for discussion and reflection. There is also a Reader’s and Facilitator’s Guide.

These help us to look at our Christian calling which offers a welcome to all, whilst ensuring that our worship and wider church life is safe for everyone.

When the study guide was piloted earlier this year, the feedback was overwhelmingly positive:

It was thought provoking and challenging in a good way.

...an automatic response [is] to see anything related to safeguarding as heavy going but this wasn't.

...we want to take the learning from whole course forward to help us to be more responsive to the challenges we face in making the church a safe place for all.

The Study Guide and other materials can be found [here](#).

Exploring Scripture with A Word in Time

A Word in Time is an online daily Bible study on the Methodist website. It consists of a week's themed reflections on Bible passages that follow the Methodist Prayer Handbook lectionary. Some background notes and questions are included to encourage reflection.

Each week's reflections are written by volunteers from all walks of life across the Church and beyond – including chaplains, local preachers, student leaders, homegroup leaders, interfaith groups, presbyters and deacons.

More volunteer writers are always welcome! Could you write for A Word in Time? Or are there people you know who might relish the opportunity to explore God's Word by contributing to this helpful resource?

If you volunteer, you will be given a week's theme with the relevant Bible readings, a deadline for delivery and editorial support if required. To find out more, please email the editor at wit@methodistchurch.org.uk



Digital Worship??

Are you a Local Preacher or Worship Leader who would value some digital training?

In the autumn we are launching a short series looking at:

- What's digital got to do with me?
- Going digital in worship
- Introduction to social media

Dates will be confirmed in due course but if you would like a conversation about your digital needs, please contact Fiona Fidgin, our Digital Communications Training Officer at fidginf@methodistchurch.org.uk.

SINGING THE FAITH  PLUS

Newly published on the STF+ website is an **Index to the Lectionary**. Originally compiled by Rev'd Dudley Coates, this is long out-of-print. However, with the help of the Publications Team and Laurence Wareing at STF+, it's now available as a PDF file, and a searchable spreadsheet to download [here](#).

Why is this exciting, you may ask? Here are three reasons to start with:

1. You can find where in the lectionary a particular text appears, in order to track down music and other worship resources related to that text
2. You can find Bible texts which don't appear in the lectionary, so they can be used in worship
3. You can check quickly when a text you're hoping to use appears in the lectionary, so you can avoid treading on other preachers' toes!

I hope you enjoy exploring the parts of the Bible the lectionary doesn't reach, and making connections with less familiar parts of the Bible...



LWPT

The Leaders of Worship and Preachers Trust was created to support worship leaders and preachers to develop their ministries.

Could you be a trustee for LWPT?

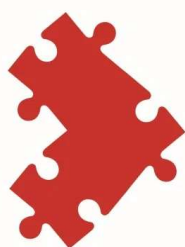
We are looking for people who can offer their wisdom and skills as trustees to this ministry. If you share our desire to see Christian leaders well trained for local ministry in the UK, then we would like to hear from you. If you would like to consider whether this is an option for you, please contact our CEO (Ian Buchanan) at ian.buchanan@lwpt.org.uk for an information pack.

Tuition Grants

Are you interested in studying further for the benefit of local Methodist church ministry? LWPT offers Vocational Grants for Methodist lay people wishing to study at a UK based learning institution. We offer up to £2,000 tuition plus £500 books / resources grants. If you wish to apply for a tuition grant for future study, please go to the LWPT website or click [here](#).

Learning & Development

Worship:
leading &
preaching



Explore Online

A new series of Explore Online weekends starts on 3/4 November. These weekends are designed to allow students to complete Portfolio A in a year, and both Portfolios in two years. The full programme is on the "WLP Explore Together" page [here](#).

Each weekend starts on Friday evening at around 7pm, and runs through to Saturday afternoon (around 3pm) and consist of Explore sessions for each section of one complete module.

We don't teach the module over the weekend - the sessions provide the opportunity to share our insights and reflections with each other. Because each session is conversational and unique, we don't record them - you have to be there participating.

You still need a local Tutor and Mentor to support you during the course, and you **MUST** have completed the online Learn material before doing Explore Online for that module. This is so that you can participate fully in the conversations, which will assume you are familiar with the material in the module.



New WLP Training Page

Information on training opportunities for Students, Tutors and Mentors can be found on the dedicated **[WLP Training page](#)**.

These include:

WLP Online Induction

All new WLP3 Students, their Tutors and Mentors are invited on enrolment to a 90-minute online induction session, providing an overview of the course and an introduction to the course website. Sessions are generally monthly, alternating between Friday afternoons and Wednesday evenings. You can book on the training page.

Study Skills for Students

A four-session online course for anyone who feels nervous about studying on the WLP course. Perhaps you haven't done any formal study for a long time, or your previous experiences of study have been negative. This refresher on how to get started may help.

Introduction to WLP for LP Secretaries, Mentors & Tutors

A 90-minute Zoom session for those supporting students on the Worship: Leading & Preaching course, or who are considering these roles. The session includes a short introduction to the course with breakout groups looking at the roles of Tutor, Mentor and LP Secretary. Six sessions are held per year - check the training page for planned dates.

Further Skills for Tutors & Mentors

Four separate reflective sessions with shared wisdom from experienced practitioners in adult education. Sessions are booked separately and tutors and mentors are welcome to come to one, some or all. All sessions include case studies or worked examples. See the training page for planned events.

NEW THIS YEAR: Further Skills for Local Preachers' Secretaries

Reflecting the key role of the Local Preachers' Secretary in supporting the training of Local Preachers and Worship Leaders, how can we encourage the Local

Preachers' Meeting to be a positive and engaging place for worship, learning and fellowship?

Hot Tip for Tutors : *Constructive feedback lies at the heart of the way assessment works on the WLP course. Don't be afraid to make comments or suggestions or to ask open questions like: "I wonder whether...?" or "Have you considered...?" Remember: the aim of the project is for the student to demonstrate that the student has engaged with the Learning Outcomes. There is no limit on the number of versions of each project, and moderators look for the constructive dialogue between student and tutor. Also, don't forget there is final stage of assessment – when your student is happy with their project, they send it to you one last time and you select Criteria Summative Assessment Complete. The box then goes green and the project is locked into their portfolio.*

NB: Session 2 of "Further Skills for Tutors and Mentors" covers this topic too.

Footnote

Finally, some words from Isaiah 55 that I keep returning to for encouragement in my preaching:

*For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven,
and do not return there until they have watered the earth,
making it bring forth and sprout,
giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater,
so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth;
it shall not return to me empty,
but it shall accomplish that which I purpose,
and succeed in the thing for which I sent it.*
(Isaiah 55: 9-11, NRSV)

Sometimes, the task of the preacher may seem a fruitless one. We dig deep to find fresh and creative ways to communicate age-old truths to people who have heard us so many times over the years. The comments we receive afterwards (graciously I'm sure) are more likely to be about our choice of hymns than the content of our sermon. We have no idea whether anything we said has made the slightest difference.

But here's the thing: the Word behind the words we speak is not ours, but comes from the God of Eternity. That Word is full of power and promise, and we have no idea what it can achieve. Our task, week by week, is to listen carefully to that Word, and communicate it faithfully to God's people. For within it are words of life that transform and heal, that challenge injustice, that may change a life, a church, a community and bring about an encounter with the God who saves.

That's why we do this crazy preaching thing: week by week, chapel by chapel, plan by plan! We have words of hope and purpose, words that change things, and

we must share them. God bless you as you continue to speak of hope and encourage people to listen out for God's voice.

Bob Bartindale - Officer for Worship and Local Preachers.

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