

New Places for New People

Starting
new Christian
communities: a
summary of the
practical guide

What are New Places for New People?

New Places for New People (NPNP) are projects focused on forming new Christian communities for those not yet part of an existing church. NPNPs are an extremely effective means of connecting new people, new people groups, and new residents to Christian exploration and community. In addition, NPNPs bring learning from experimental 'research and development', identify and strengthen emerging leaders, and help the whole Church reflect on and examine its calling. NPNPs can be started anywhere, in diverse contexts.

The Methodist Church has suggested the following contexts and people groups as priorities for NPNPs in the next five years:

- new towns or new housing developments
- student/young adult/university
- families with children
- replanting in an existing place, or second site of a growing church
- Church at the Margins (CaM).

NPNP theological foundations

Beginning and ending with God: NPNPs are God's work.

Recognising incarnation is key: NPNPs involve being with and alongside others.

Developing new Christian communities: an NPNP discovers, and joins in with, God's work.

Nurturing new Christians: an NPNP project is for new people in new places and is rooted in our response to God's love.

Open to transformation: at the heart of NPNP is an invitation for everyone involved to come into a transforming relationship with God and with each other.

Church at the Margins

Alongside building on the NPNP theological foundations and core values, CaM projects will be centred in, and focused on a vision of building new Christian communities in new places, specifically among people who are economically marginalised.

Theological foundations and values of Church at the Margins:

God's preferential option for people in poverty

God's character reveals a God of justice and an emphasis on our need to care for the vulnerable, the stranger and those who are living in poverty.

The good news of Jesus Christ

We hold that to abandon people in economic hardship is to abandon the central theme of the liberating, life-giving message of the gospel for us all.



NPNPs are an extremely effective means of connecting new people, new people groups, and new residents to Christian exploration and community.



Evangelism and social justice

Evangelism and social justice are inseparable aspects of our Christian discipleship.

Prioritise the lived experience of people at the economic margins

We believe people with lived experience are the experts and are essential partners in co-designing, co-creating, co-delivering and co-leading any project.

Celebrate inclusion and participation

We will resist service-provider models of community engagement based on the rich doing something for the poor. We believe the whole Church needs to receive the gifts of those at the economic margins to be fully transformed by the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Enable leadership communities

We will nurture, enable, and develop local leadership within people already present and invested in their local context.

How do I begin a local NPNP project?

Each district is invited to establish an NPNP Team to inspire, encourage and oversee new projects. Creating a culture of pioneering and planting to energise and guide the NPNP movement across the district is a vital role of the District NPNP team, alongside prayerful discernment of where to locate a project.

They'll need to:

1. Consider their district context.
2. Listen to the community in the prospective location(s), to God and to each other.
3. Learn about and meet local people.

All across the Connexion, there are people beginning NPNPs.

How do I put together a team?

This District NPNP Team will have the following three functions and will be accountable to the District Synod/District Policy Committee for their work:

1. Initiating the district-led project(s) by discerning a context, vision and focus for the project, playing a role in submission for funding, and leading on any necessary recruitment.
2. Creating a culture of pioneering within the district that inspires every circuit to start an NPNP.
3. Overseeing and managing the funding of circuit-led or local-church-led NPNPs.

The growing number of pioneers in the Church is supported by the Methodist Pioneering Pathways (MPP). We encourage every pioneer involved in an NPNP project to become a member of the MPP in order to access its resources and join the network of support. Pioneers in funded district NPNP projects will be expected to join.



We believe the whole Church needs to receive the gifts of those at the economic margins to be fully transformed by the gospel of Jesus Christ.



What do I need to do to connect with people well?

It is essential for your NPNP/CaM project to be rooted, sustained, and grown in prayer. As we listen to God together, we discern God's will and purpose for God's people.

Listening is a vital skill and a core practice in forming relationships as the NPNP develops. As you listen, always be clear and honest about who you are as an NPNP and share how and why listening is an important and consistent part of your practice.

From the beginning, plan how you will listen to the wider community as a regular part of your activities.

How are NPNP projects funded?

Every district has been allocated £140,000 for one or more district-led NPNP projects. This should be match-funded. Across the Connexion, at least 60 per cent of NPNP funding should be used for Church at the Margins projects.

Each district has also been allocated a specific amount of money, dependent on the size of the district, to fund circuit-led projects. A district will need to have launched one or more district-led NPNP projects before it can fund any circuit- or local-church-led NPNPs. The funding process for circuit-led NPNPs will mirror the funding process for district-led NPNPs.

Further information

www.methodist.org.uk/nnpn-guide

www.methodist.org.uk/mpp

For funding queries email Julian Bond on bondj@methodist.org.uk



Listening is a vital skill and a core practice in forming relationships as the NPNP develops.

