

MEETING WELL

Guidelines for Local Preachers' Meetings

Renewing our Fellowship

Attending the Local Preachers' Meeting is one of the duties of a Local Preacher. However, there are many reasons why people don't attend. One might be that they simply don't see the relevance of the meeting to what they are called to do as preachers. The Guidance Note *Meeting Well*¹ has some ideas how to refresh your meetings.

There are all sorts of practical reasons why people find it hard to attend. For some, balancing work (sometimes multiple jobs), family, caring commitments, volunteering commitments etc. etc. is a real challenge. Others might not like to visit unfamiliar places after dark. For some people, meeting early in the evening means missing valuable family time.

To find out what works best, why not ask people, including (and especially) those who don't attend regularly. It's best to do this in conversation either in person or on the phone, and you could ask people to complete a questionnaire. Some suggested questions are below. These could be adapted or changed to suit your circuit, but try to keep the questions as open as possible, and do collect other ideas and suggestions. Most importantly, be prepared to take suggestions seriously, even if it would break a long-standing tradition in your circuit. You may be surprised what people suggest!

Questions to Ask

We are aiming to refresh the Local Preachers' Meeting and encourage more people to join in. We realise that attendance is sometimes difficult, but in order to suit people's needs better, we would value your responses to these questions:

1. Meeting time – please rank these in order of preference from 1 (best) to 5 (worst):
 - a. Saturday morning
 - b. Weekday evening (later, e.g. 8pm)
 - c. Weekday evening (earlier, e.g. 6pm)
 - d. Sunday afternoon
 - e. Other (please specify)

2. Meeting location - please rank these statements in order of importance to you from 1 (best) to 5 (worst):
 - a. We should always meet at the same place
 - b. We should meet at a different circuit church each time (as currently)
 - c. We should meet at a location with good public transport access
 - d. We should meet off church premises (e.g. a café) to avoid access issues and heating costs
 - e. We should sometimes meet on Zoom to avoid travel

¹ Available to download from www.methodist.org.uk/clpd

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3. Meeting venue – please indicate your preference from 1 (best) to 5 (worst):
 - a. Meet in a church sanctuary
 - b. Meet in a room with flexible seating suitable for group discussion
 - c. Meet in a café or coffee shop
 - d. Meet in a community space attached to a church
 - e. Meet somewhere else (suggestions please)

4. Meeting content – as a learning community, part of our task is to learn together. What kind of topics would you like us to look at in our meetings? List three that are on your mind at the moment:
 - a.

 - b.

 - c.

5. If meetings were focussed around the kind of themes you've suggested, would you be more likely to attend?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. Maybe

6. What else would you suggest that would transform Local Preachers' Meetings and make them more helpful to you in your ministry as a Local Preacher or Worship Leader?

Thank you.

Please feel free to contact your Local Preachers' Secretary or Superintendent Minister with any other suggestions for improving our experience of meeting together to encourage and support each other in our shared calling to preach and lead worship.