

17. Faith and Order

SECTION C. NEW WAYS OF WORKING

C1. In light of the moves towards the new network, and in response to the section of the Faith and Order report *New Ways of Working* which came to the Conference in 2007, the Committee has been seeking to develop consultative processes for future Faith and Order work – seeking to be involved in major pieces of work within the Connexional Team from the outset rather than coming in at the last minute with requests to alter work radically which has already been developed.

C2. In order to communicate this information to the wider Connexion, the Committee has produced two papers, *What does Faith and Order do?* and *What is a Methodist Perspective?*, which seek to outline this approach. Both papers are included, for information, in the appendix to this section of this report.

C3. As the Committee prepares for the *New Ways of Working*, it is clear that 2007-8 has been a transitional year of receiving some reports in an almost completed form whilst working with Connexional Team members on new projects from their inception. It is clear that the best theological reflection and scrutiny is possible in the latter context rather than the former.

C4. The Committee has completed the *Terms of Reference* outlining the structure of the network; roles of various sections of the network and people within it; assumed working practices and processes within the network. The Terms also include a Volunteer Agreement setting out the benefits of volunteering within the network as well as the basis of the Agreement between the Methodist Church and the members of the Resource Groups. The Terms of Reference and the Volunteer Agreement are included, for information, in the appendix to this section of this report.

C5. The proposed membership of the Faith and Order Committee is included elsewhere in the Conference's Agenda for appointment. However, the information is included, for information, in the appendix to this section of this report.

C6. The Faith and Order Network will be launched at a conference at St John's College in Durham on 2-4 September entitled 'Doing Theology in the Public Arena: Recreating Faith and Order for the 21st Century'. It is hoped that the Network will be launched by the President of the Conference, the Revd Stephen Poxon at the closing Communion Service at the conference.

*****RESOLUTION**

17/6. The Conference receives the report.

Appendix C:

C.I: What does 'Faith and Order' do?

A Briefing Paper

This paper outlines the work of the Faith and Order Committee (and the new Faith and Order Network from September 2008) and specifically the interface between the Faith and Order Committee and other committees, groups and individuals undertaking theological work on behalf of/within the Methodist Church. In practice, of course, this means a great many people: lay and ordained, paid and unpaid.

The primary responsibility for ensuring that any piece of work produced on behalf of the Methodist Church accords with Methodist doctrine and practice lies with the individual or group preparing that piece of work. Indeed the 2001 report *'Speaking for the Methodist Church'* updated in 2004 as MC/04/141 outlines the responsibilities for those speaking for the Church.

However, the Conference has appointed the Faith and Order Committee with a specific remit to assist the Church in ensuring that essential documents conform to Methodist doctrine and practice within the wider ecumenical perspective.

What does Faith and Order do?

In 2006 and again in 2007, in establishing the new Faith and Order Network which services the main Faith and Order Committee, the Conference agreed the following six points as an outline of the work of the Committee:

The Faith and Order Committee will:

1. Scrutinize internal Methodist Church texts and proposed decisions with respect to the question of how theological continuity with past Methodist traditions in Britain is maintained.
2. In keeping with the 'Faith and Order movement' out of which this Committee first emerged, scrutinize ecumenical texts presented to it with respect to the question of theological continuity with past Methodist responses and in the light of awareness of ongoing ecumenical endeavours in these islands and beyond.
3. Develop ways in which the Methodist Church can contribute to, and learn from, theological exploration undertaken by Methodist Churches outside of Britain.
4. Ensure coherence and quality in all theological work undertaken across the Connexion, especially that undertaken through the Connexional Team, by acting, where possible, as helper, advisor or consultant to any individual, group, working party or Committee linked to a Connexional Secretary/office/desk.
5. Maintain a direct link to the Methodist Conference, thereby enabling it to scrutinize the theological aspects of the work of the Methodist

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Council itself (thus seeking to operate as far as possible *as* the Methodist Council's theological scrutiny panel).

6. Develop stimulating ways of contributing to the creative exploration of theology, through responding to the working of God's Spirit both in society at large and in the Church.

These six principles could be summarised as:

- Continuity, integrity, ecumenicity, coherence and quality in theological exploration by responding to the work of God's Spirit in society and the Church

The new network will operate with a central Committee of about 24 people, which will meet three times a year: late summer, January and April. This Committee will make decisions on reports, make recommendations to the Council and the Conference, and report directly to the Methodist Conference. The Committee will be assisted in its work by a consultative network made up of twelve resource groups, each with a convenor who will sit on the main Committee:

- Bible
- Ecumenism
- Doctrine and Theology: historical and global
- Interfaith
- Methodism: ethos, history and theology
- Ministry Issues
- Missiology and Evangelism
- Pastoral Issues
- Social and Political Issues
- Theological Education and Communication
- Worship and Liturgy
- Interface (Apologetics)

The resource groups will usually handle work electronically and so, wherever possible, work should be submitted for review or discussion in electronic format. The role of the Secretary of the Committee will include receiving work from members of the Connexional Team and distributing this work to the convenors as appropriate. As such all items should be submitted to faithandorder@btconnect.com.

For what types of work does Faith and Order normally offer scrutiny or consultation?

According to the report adopted by the Conference in 2007, the following material *must* be referred to the Faith and Committee:

1. Texts of a theological nature from other Churches or ecumenical bodies which require a British Methodist response – a separate briefing paper is being prepared for those involved in this kind of work.

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2. Texts generated within ecumenical ventures across the Connexion to which British Methodism contributes, which require doctrinal scrutiny.
3. Decision-making processes which call directly upon matters pertaining to doctrinal tradition e.g. where the doctrinal aspects of questions about use of premises, or about the orthodoxy of a preacher, need to be raised, and which cannot be answered by means of clear precedent or by already agreed principles.
4. Texts generated by the Committee itself or within the Connexional Team which need checking re. their continuity and consistency with British Methodist doctrinal standards.

The following material *could (usefully)* be considered by Faith and Order:

1. Any major text, project or resource which would benefit from theological consultancy or examination or by having its theological implications highlighted by a theological scrutiny group. The Faith and Order Committee can play such a role either through its Resource Groups or through the core Committee itself. This role could be enhanced from the outset by having a Faith and Order member on the working party/group, or in correspondence with the working party/group. Timing is essential since reports should be in a sufficiently mature state to be examined, but should not be presented in their final form or ‘at the last minute’, which would preclude changes being made.
2. Any text or decision-making process which merits consideration from a doctrinal or theological perspective which may not yet have articulated its theological approach or premiss, and yet whose interests correspond to those of one of the Faith and Order Committee’s Resource Groups.

However, Faith and Order should not be seen as just a scrutinizing body – policing doctrine in preparation for a final decision by the Conference. Faith and Order’s main purpose is to provide theological consultation for the Methodist Connexion and for individuals and groups producing work on behalf of the Methodist Connexion which has a specific theological, ecumenical or liturgical content. Moreover, Faith and Order will also endeavour to promote theological education of the Methodist Church in order to improve the appreciation and understanding of the *Methodist perspective* (see separate paper).

This does not mean, of course, that every piece of work, report, or project, needs to go through the Faith and Order Committee or network! We have already seen that primary responsibility lies with Methodist individuals and groups to understand what a Methodist perspective might be and some guidance is given below on how to ensure this. However, it is clear that there are situations where this is not straightforward and as such the Faith and Order Committee/Network can provide guidance and comment where this would be helpful to ensure the integrity of Methodist ‘Faith’ and

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‘Order’. One of the reasons for moving from a Committee to a network is to provide a wider group of people involved in Faith and Order and so a wider resource for the Church when consultation is required or desired.

Conclusion

At root, the role of the Faith and Order Committee/Network is about clarifying how British Methodism locates itself within the wider Christian Church, whilst also being clear about the specificity of its own calling as an apostolic tradition. In this task, the emphasis needs to be less on a list of Methodist ‘distinctives’ spelt out in abstract isolation, and more on particular characteristics (emphases) of Methodism, within the broad sweep of Christianity as a whole.

Faith and Order acts both to scrutinize and to resource – to provide theological consultancy for the Methodist Church and also to check that reports coming to the Conference maintain a coherent and consistent Methodist perspective in order to assist the Church in its mission.

CII: What does ‘a Methodist perspective’ mean?

It is important for all people engaged in producing a piece of work within the Methodist Church to ensure that they maintain the doctrine and discipline of the Methodist Conference. So, whether individuals are working out a current understanding of a particular doctrine, writing a temporary order for worship, or working on a local ecumenical initiative of some kind, the question of a ‘Methodist perspective’ means more than ‘the personal views of a person who happens to be a Methodist’ – whether or not that person holds office in the Church, lay or ordained.

A Methodist perspective means that the following issues will have been addressed:

- Conference Decisions: What has the Conference said previously about this?
- Methodist Emphases: Are there specific Methodist emphases (drawn from Methodist theological tradition and practice) which need to be brought to bear on this topic/theme/issue, e.g. *Our Priorities/Our Calling*?
- Methodism and Ecumenism: In what way does Methodism stand in full continuity with other Christian traditions (even when some Methodists believe or state the contrary) on this topic/theme/issue?

Clearly, all Christian reflection will want to make proper use of Biblical texts and the tradition of theological reflection from the Early Church through to the modern day. But in exploring a distinctly Methodist perspective, attention is drawn also to the following resources:

- The Deed of Union (1932)
- John Wesley’s 44 standard sermons and *Notes on the New Testament*

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- Statements and Reports of the Methodist Church on Faith and Order (1933-1983)
- Statements and Reports of the Methodist Church on Faith and Order (1984-2000) (incl. esp. *Called to Love and Praise* 1999)
- Statements on Social and Political Issues (1946-1995)
- Hymns and Psalms (1983)
- The Methodist Worship Book (1999)
- A Catechism for the Use of the People Called Methodists (2000)
- Conference Reports (2001-) – available at www.methodistchurch.org.uk
- The Constitutional Practice and Discipline of the Methodist Church (latest edn.)

Some of these resources are easier to consult than others and there are different parts of the Faith and Order network which can assist in working out the details in these areas. Moreover, not all Conference reports and statements carry the same weight. ‘Statements’ are the most significant texts, but very few reports receive the status of a ‘Statement’. Some reports are just ‘received’, while others are ‘adopted’ and the recommendations of ‘adopted’ reports carry greater authority. There is a wealth of useful material contained in the papers which past Conferences have considered that is now accessible on the Church’s web-site, and the stock of electronically accessible material is growing all the time.

A Methodist perspective on any given topic may sometimes be spelt out clearly in one of the above texts. Where there are clear, official statements available, their content will need to be passed on. But very often there will be no clear statement. The practice of doing Methodist theology, in any case, always involves conferring and Conference reports reflect continuing conversations. Determining a *Methodist perspective* means looking for the main theological threads which run through relevant material from the above list. Where there is a lack of clarity or a sense of indefiniteness becomes evident, then it will be important for this to be recognised. Further help may be sought locally or through the Faith and Order network – in the first place through the Secretary to the Faith and Order Committee.

CIII: Faith and Order Committee and Network: Terms of Reference

The Conferences of 2006 and 2007 accepted the revised structure and membership of the Faith and Order Committee and the development of a network of resource groups to assist the Committee in its work. These changes were established in order to enable the Committee to work more flexibly and to respond more appropriately to the diverse tasks and within the wide variety of deadlines presented to it; to enable greater participation in the work required of the Committee; to assist it in its responsibility of providing a theological stimulus with respect to work flowing through the Council and the Connexional Team; and to enhance better integration of the Committee’s work within the life of the Church and dissemination and awareness of its reports and responses throughout the Church.

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The Committee

Within the new Faith and Order Network, the decision making, or executive body, is the Faith and Order Committee. This will meet three times per year and will:

- scrutinize internal Methodist Church texts and proposed decisions with respect to the question of how theological continuity with past Methodist traditions in Britain is maintained.
- scrutinize ecumenical texts presented to it with respect to the question of theological continuity with past Methodist responses and in the light of awareness of ongoing ecumenical endeavours in these islands and beyond, in keeping with the 'Faith and Order movement' out of which this Committee first emerged.
- develop ways in which the Methodist Church can contribute to, and learn from, theological exploration undertaken by Methodist Churches outside of Britain.
- ensure coherence and quality in all theological work undertaken across the Connexion, especially that undertaken through the Connexional Team, by acting, where possible, as helper, advisor or consultant to any individual, group, working party or Committee linked to a Connexional Secretary/office/desk.
- maintain a direct link to the Methodist Conference, thereby enabling it to scrutinize the theological aspects of the work of the Methodist Council itself (thus seeking to operate as far as possible *as* the Methodist Council's theological scrutiny panel).
- develop stimulating ways of contributing to the creative exploration of theology, through responding to the working of God's Spirit both in society at large and in the Church.

The Resource Groups

The Committee will be assisted in its task by 12 Resource Groups each comprising approx. 6-12 members. Members of the network, whether members or convenors of resource groups or members of the main Committee, serve as volunteers according to the terms of the Volunteer Agreement appended to this document and issued to all members upon the start of their term of office. The whole list of members of these groups will be available for public scrutiny on the Church's web-site. The Resource Groups (RGs) will address the following particular specialisms, and work to the following briefs:

| Group | Brief |
|-----------|--|
| Bible | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• To comment on biblical sections of reports/texts presented to the Faith and Order Committee for comment• To provide biblical material relevant to discussions in the Committee |
| Ecumenism | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• To draft on the Committee's (or Church's) behalf initial responses to ecumenical texts to which formal responses have been invited (e.g. from WCC)• To monitor ecumenical developments and published ecumenical texts and suggest, in co-operation with |

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| | <p>other groups responsible for ecumenical work in the Church, any actions by the Committee or by the Church</p> |
| <p>Doctrine and theology (historical and global)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To advise the Committee on any matters relating to the understanding and development of Methodist theology and practice in the context of the wider Christian tradition • To keep a check on developments in theological thinking, worldwide and vis-à-vis specific doctrines, and to draw the Committee's attention to any matters needing consideration |
| <p>Inter-Faith</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To provide initial theological scrutiny of all texts, and consideration of issues, relating specifically to inter-faith issues brought to the Committee's attention • To be the Committee's reference point with respect to theological matters brought to the Committee's own work from the Inter-Faith Reference Group (of the Methodist Council) |
| <p>Methodism: ethos, history & theology</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To comment on and advise on any draft material which requires that specific attention be paid to Methodist history and theology • To draft sections of any reports which require specific attention to Methodist history and theology • To contribute in a major way to any materials relating to Methodist anniversaries |
| <p>Ministry Issues</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To offer comment on any of the theological aspects of paperwork deriving from the Formation in Ministry office • To draft for the Committee any feedback needed on Formation in Ministry matters on which the Committee is asked to comment |
| <p>Missiology & Evangelism</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To offer comment on aspects of mission and evangelism within the context of the Church's work in these islands and in the World Church • To offer comment on any of the theological aspects of paperwork/ proposals/ initiatives relating to Fresh Expressions, Church Planting, Evangelism • To draft for the Committee any feedback needed on Fresh Expressions/ Church Planting/ Evangelism matters on which the Committee is asked to comment • To take initiative in highlighting any theological aspects of mission or missiological aspects of theology on which comment or exploration may be needed |
| <p>Pastoral Issues</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To comment on material produced ecumenically and within Methodism on pastoral matters • To supply theological insights on such topics when requested |

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|---|--|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To advise on any pastoral work-related topics which merit explicitly theological response (& in what form) |
| Social & Political Issues | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To comment on material produced ecumenically and within Methodism on social and political topics • To supply theological insights on such topics when requested • To advise on what social and political issues merit explicitly theological response (and in what form) |
| Theological Education and Communication | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To be available to comment on and contribute to development in <i>theological</i> education in the widest sense • To undertake the necessary background work related to, e.g., the Committee's links with the Local Preachers' Office and the Adult Education desk • To carry a particular responsibility for making the Committee's work linguistically accessible, and for the production of Study Guides relating to work undertaken directly by the Committee |
| Worship and Liturgy | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To be a resource for the Church in the development and production of liturgical material • To forge links, through the Committee, with ecumenical bodies working in the field of worship and liturgy • To consider, and as appropriate draft responses to, any material pertaining to worship brought before the Committee |
| <i>Interface</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To be a resource group to both the Connexion and the Faith and Order Committee in the area of Christian apologetics and the interface with contemporary culture. • To comment on how F&O thinking comes over (not only in its language, but in how it might connect with debates in other disciplines) • To enable dialogue between Methodists on hot issues around faith and culture • To have oversight of the website www.theinterface.org.uk (which has a semi-independent capacity to encourage dialogue) |

One member of each RG will fulfill the role of Convenor and, on that basis, be a member of the Committee. One or two other members from across the RGs may also serve on the Committee. Most members will not be required to attend Committee meetings.

The **RGs** may undertake their work at any point during the Connexional year. However, if, in any given year, material is being considered or prepared for the following Conference, then a RG will need to undertake its work after the post-Conference (July/Sept) meeting, and prior to Christmas. In all likelihood, then, September to November will be the busiest work period. It is expected that most of the work undertaken by

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RGs will be handled electronically – through email conversations and through electronic editing/scrutiny of documents, preferably making use of tools such as track changes in Microsoft Word. However, it is recognized that occasional face to face meetings of RGs will be required and that such meetings are often the most cost-effective way of working. However, electronic communication and telephone conferencing must be the main forms of co-ordination of the groups' work. Where a face to face meeting is necessary, the Convenor will discuss the reasons and arrangements for the meeting with the Secretary to the Faith and Order Committee in order for the appropriate budgetary decisions to be made.

The **RG Convenors** are the main points of contact between the Secretary of the Faith and Order Committee and the Resource Group members. They serve on the main Faith and Order Committee and will manage the distribution of material to the other members of the RG and the collation of the responses from the RG members.

RG convenors will be expected to:

- be members of the Faith and Order Committee;
- chair, or organize the chairing of RG meetings;
- contact members electronically when appropriate;
- function as secretaries for the RG, or arrange a suitable person to act as such, when needed;
- play a full part in the process of critiquing/commenting on/editing texts presented to or generated by the Resource Group;
- ensure that the necessary drafting/writing of material required of the Resource Group happens (but may or may not be drafters/writers of the material themselves);
- be prepared to handle the sparks that may fly when a small group of creative people, and a mix of specialists, gets together!;
- ensure that all Resource Group members have a chance to participate as fully as possible;
- field questions of a specialist nature referred to her/him from the Faith and Order Secretary (either directly, or through consultation with/delegation to other Resource Group members);
- be available to be consulted, in relation to their Resource Group specialism, directly by any Connexional Team member (or indeed member of the Church!), and report on such activity to the Resource Group and the Committee;
- arrange for regular reports on the Resource Group's work to be submitted to the Committee.

RG Members may or may not be specialists in the Resource Group field, but are expected to have a keen interest in the Group's topic and to be developing their interest through and beyond the Group's work.

RG Members will be expected to:

- attend the three-yearly conference of the Faith and Order Network;
- keep in touch with Faith and Order work/developments in theology more generally whilst being involved in a Resource Group (e.g.

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through the three-yearly Conferences and through other briefings about Faith and Order-related work);

- receive Minutes of the Committee, a full report on Faith and Order business from each Conference, notification of all work being undertaken, and any other briefings about Faith and Order work deemed necessary by the Committee;
- respond promptly and appropriately when contacted by the Convenor or Secretary either by telephone, post or, more usually, email;
- read and discuss critically whatever is on a Group's agenda;
- where appropriate and where members have the appropriate skill and experience, draft responses in preparation for the main Committee;
- engage in consultation with other members of the F&O Network or members of the Connexional Team when required when work relating to their Resource Group arises. (Notification will usually be given in July about impending deadlines and plans for consultation between September and December in any given year.);
- comment, where appropriate, on any text considered by the Committee, produced by any Resource Group;
- work within the ethos and guidelines of the Connexional Team and Faith and Order Committee, and within the guidelines provided in the Volunteer Agreement.

Working Ethos and Guidelines

All members of the Faith and Order Network will be expected to adhere to the following guidelines and to the broader guidelines provided in the Volunteer Agreement. Failure to work within these guidelines may lead to a termination of this agreement and possible action under the Church's disciplinary measures in accordance with recognized Connexional processes:

- resource the Methodist Connexion to articulate the contemporary Methodist contribution to the Christian Church;
- work with partner Churches, and relevant structures within those Churches, to proclaim the oneness of the Church of Jesus Christ and to call the Churches to the goal of visible unity;
- develop and maintain a clear understanding of a Methodist Perspective (see below) which incorporates personal understanding/expertise but always seeks to provide advice and consultation on what a specifically Methodist contribution would be;
- work collaboratively and flexibly with each other, developing openness within each Resource Group, so as to create synergy of effort in addressing Methodist Priorities and in using each other's particular strengths to the benefit of the whole network;
- work sensitively with documents both in draft and final form, maintaining strict levels of confidentiality throughout and owning work developed by the Committee as a whole – no contributions to meetings, papers, web-based comments or email correspondence should be shared outside of the network or placed on any website private or public without the direct approval of the Secretary to the Faith and Order Committee;

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- communicate clearly and in ways that respect people's different starting places and learning styles.

Length of Service and Make Up of RGs/Committee

- Appointment as a member of the Faith and Order Committee is subject to the normal conditions of Appointments to Connexional Committees (SO 213) and shall be for a period of up to six years.
- Initial appointment as an RG convenor or member is for an initial period of up to six years.
- RG convenors will consult with the Chair and Secretary of the Faith and Order Committee to develop a strategy whereby the group's membership evolves over this initial period.
- It is expected that some members of RG will need to remain in place for more than six years, while others will leave before their six years are completed.
- The Faith and Order Committee will undertake a similar process ensuring that its own membership includes experienced members alongside new members.
- Where vacancies become available on the RGs or the Main Committee, appointments or nominations will be made according to these specific Equality and Diversity priorities:
 - Ensure candidates have the specific skill-set needed for RG/Committee vacancy
 - Maximise participation of BME Methodists
 - Maximise participation of those with impairment
 - Maximise participation of lay people
 - Maximise participation of female presbyters
 - Maximise participation of deacons
 - Maximise participation of young people
 - Monitor Lay-Ordained balance

A Methodist Perspective

It is important for all people engaged in producing a piece of work within the Methodist Church to ensure that they maintain the doctrine and discipline of the Methodist Conference. So, whether individuals are working out a current understanding of a particular doctrine, writing a temporary order for worship, or working on a local ecumenical initiative of some kind, the question of a 'Methodist perspective' means more than 'the personal views of a person who happens to be a Methodist' – whether or not that person holds office in the Church, lay or ordained.

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Determining a *Methodist perspective* means looking for the main theological threads which run through relevant material from the above list. Where there is a lack of clarity or a sense of indefiniteness becomes evident, then it will be important for this to be recognised. Further help may be sought locally or through the Faith and Order network – in the first place through the Secretary to the Faith and Order Committee.

A Statement on the Status of Liturgical Texts

Authorised: those liturgical texts which have undergone the scrutiny of the whole church, through the Methodist Conference and its Faith and Order Committee, and are thus authorised by the Conference as the normative texts of the Methodist Church in Britain. Such liturgies include those published by the Methodist Church in the Methodist Worship Book (2000),

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and in its predecessors and successors. These texts express the corporate doctrinal/liturgical mind of the Conference.

Commended for use: those liturgical texts which have been commended for use by the Faith and Order Committee of the Methodist Church, usually after they have undergone the scrutiny of the Worship and Liturgy Resources Group, or which have been created by them. These texts shall not have undergone the scrutiny of the Methodist Council or of the Methodist Conference itself.

Received for use: liturgical texts which have their origins in a variety of places and which have been reviewed by the Worship and Liturgy Resources Group as a whole, or members of it on behalf of the group. The report of such a review may be reported to the full Faith and Order Committee, but the Committee is unlikely to have engaged in the review itself. Such liturgies are those published by the Connexional Team or from external sources and offered for use on the Connexional Website for Special Sundays. Any material that is placed on the developed liturgical resources page of the Connexional website also falls into this category.

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Faith and Order Committee of the Methodist Church

Network Volunteer Agreement

This Volunteer Agreement describes the arrangement between The Faith and Order Committee of the Methodist Church of Great Britain and you. We wish to assure you of our appreciation of your volunteering with us and will do the best we can to make your volunteer experience with us enjoyable and rewarding.

Name:

Address:

Role:

Part 1: the organisation

Your role as a volunteer is in one or more of the following areas as noted above:

- as a member of a network resource group
- as a convenor or a network resource group
- as a member of the Faith and Order Committee

Your role begins on September 1st 2008 and is intended to last for six years from this date, or to a date agreed by both parties before this date. It is expected that some members of the resource group will be needed for less than six years.

This work is designed to support the work of the Faith and Order Committee of the Methodist Church of Great Britain, as explained in the Volunteer Handbook and the Terms of Reference for the Faith and Order Committee.

You can expect the Faith and Order Committee:

1. Induction and training

- To provide induction to the work of the Methodist Church, its staff, your volunteering role and the induction and/or training you need to meet the responsibilities of this role.
- To provide regular briefings on the work of the Faith and Order Committee.
- To arrange triennial conferences, covering your accommodation and travel (equivalent to second-class rail travel), where theological training relevant to the work of the Committee will be offered.

2. Supervision, support and flexibility

- To explain the standards and working practices we expect and to encourage and support you to achieve and maintain them.
- To offer opportunities to meet with your resource group convenor, or the Secretary of the Faith and Order Committee as appropriate, to discuss your volunteering and any successes and problems.
- To do our best to help you develop your volunteering role with us.

3. Expenses and Benefits

- To repay travel expenses to and from home to required meetings, usually equivalent to second-class rail travel or, where necessary, at the standard mileage rate for the Methodist Church of 25p per mile (other rates apply for employees/ministers).
- To repay other necessary expenses (postage and stationery), provided these are authorised by the Convenor of the Resource Group prior to purchase.
- To consider an application for loss of earnings for those attending the main Committee meeting or the Triennial Conferences.

4. Health and safety

- To provide adequate training and feedback in support of the Connexional Team's health and safety policy.

5. Equal opportunities

- To ensure that all volunteers are dealt with in accordance with the Connexional Team's equal opportunities policy.

6. Problems

- To try to resolve fairly any problems, grievances and difficulties you may have while you volunteer with us;
- In the event of an unresolved problem, to offer an opportunity to discuss the issues in accordance with the procedures set out in agreed Connexional procedures.

Part 2: the volunteer

We expect you:

- To help the Faith and Order Committee fulfil its role of theological scrutiny and consultation for the Methodist Church of Great Britain;
- To perform your volunteering role to the best of your ability;

17. Faith and Order

- To acquaint yourself with and follow the Committee's procedures and standards, including health and safety and equal opportunities, in relation to its staff, volunteers and clients as set out in the Terms of Reference;
- To maintain the confidential information of the organisation and of its clients, working sensitively with documents both in draft and final form, maintaining strict levels of confidentiality throughout and owning work developed by the Committee as a whole. No contributions to meetings, papers, web-based comments or email correspondence should be shared outside of the network or placed on any website private or public without the direct approval of the Secretary to the Faith and Order Committee;
- To meet time commitments and standards agreed to and to give reasonable notice so other arrangements can be made when this is not possible;
- To provide referees as agreed who may be contacted.

This agreement is binding in honour only, is not intended to be a legally binding contract between us and may be cancelled at any time at the discretion of either party. Neither of us intend any employment relationship to be created either now or at any time in the future.

Many thanks to Volunteering England Information Team for the basis on which this document has been written.

17. Faith and Order

CIV: Faith and Order Committee Membership, as per April 2008

The Conference appoints the Faith and Order Committee:

A senior member of the Connexional Team representing the
Secretary of Conference

The Secretary of the Committee: Revd Dr Peter Phillips

Up to twenty other members (Resource Groups convened in brackets):

Revd Dr Paul Beetham (Doctrine)

Revd Alan Bolton (Interface)

Dr Jocelyn Bryan (Pastoral Issues)

Revd Dr Adrian Burdon (Worship and Liturgy Resource Group)

Revd Sarah Charlton (Social and Political Issues)

Revd Neil Cockling (Missiology and Evangelism)

Revd Dr Jane Craske (Chair)

Deacon Sue Culver (Ministry Issues)

Mr Luke Curran (Theological Education)

Revd Sylvester Deigh

Ms Sue Dunstan

Revd Dr John Emmett

Revd Dr Stephen Mosedale (Bible)

Revd Gareth Powell (Ecumenical)

Dr Helen Reid (Interfaith)

Revd Alison Tomlin

Mr David Walton

Revd Dr Martin Wellings (Methodism)