

Faith and Order Committee Report

Basic Information

Contact Name and Details	Peter Phillips (0191 334 3896, p.m.phillips@dur.ac.uk) Secretary to the Faith and Order Committee
Status of Paper	Final
Action Required	For information
Draft Resolution	Council receives the report
Alternative Options to Consider, if Any	

Summary of Content

Subject and Aims	To advise Methodist Council of the areas of its work on which the Committee will be reporting to the Portsmouth Conference 2010
Main Points	A short report, no main points necessary.
Background Context and Relevant Documents (with function)	The committee reports to the Methodist Conference, and annually provides a briefer report to Council with an overview of the basic contents of its more lengthy report to Conference.
Consultations	

Summary of Impact

Standing Orders	None anticipated
Faith and Order	Drafted report
Financial	Network Conference but this has already been factored into the new budget
Personnel	None
Legal	None
Wider Connexional	None
External (e.g. ecumenical)	The Committee has ecumenical representation
Risk	None

The Work of the Faith and Order Committee 2009-10

1. Ways of Working

- 1.1 The Faith and Order Committee continued to work out the new patterns of collaborative working through the network and through focussing on early consultation with working parties and areas of work within the Connexional Team thus attempting to limit the need for late intervention.
- 1.2 In 2010, a number of new members were brought into the network either to replace retiring members or to provide resources in missing areas. Most of the new members of the network were recruited along the lines of our Equality and Diversity Strategy.
- 1.3 The appointment of the Main Committee is the responsibility of the Methodist Conference. In 2010-2011, a number of minor changes are being proposed. The Revd Dr David Chapman will replace The Revd Gareth Powell as convenor for the Ecumenical Resource Group. In turn, Gareth Powell will replace David Walton as the representative from the Law and Polity Committee. We are sad that David will be leaving the Committee this summer owing to commitments elsewhere as the new Chair of the Methodist Council. We will miss David's contributions to the Committee which have always been relevant and perceptive.
- 1.4 The committee has met three times since the Wolverhampton Conference of 2009 – in July for a one day meeting to establish items for consideration through the year; in November for a 24-hour residential meeting which was extended by a further 12 hours to consider the new hymn collection; and in March for a 24-hour residential meeting.
- 1.6 The Committee has maintained its active links with many other bodies internal and external to the Methodist Church (Church of England Liturgical Commission, Methodist Anglican Panel for Unity and Mission (MAPUM), Churches Together in England - Theology and Unity Group, European Methodist Theological Commission, Faith and Order Advisory Group [of the Church of England], Joint Liturgical Group).
- 1.7 We are currently engaged in three major ecumenical projects with the Church of England – a joint working party exploring the ecclesiology of fresh expressions of Church (*JAMWPEEEC*), a joint consultation on the role of the diaconate, and a proposal for the Faith and Order Committee to meet jointly with the new Church of England Faith and Order Commission in September 2011.

2. Responses requested by Conference

- 2.1 The Committee has been working on a number of responses to specific Conference resolutions relating to the work of the Committee:
- 2.2 ***Draft Service for the Ordination of Presbyters and Deacons***
This document was drafted within the Worship and Liturgy Resource Group but after considerable alteration by the Main Committee and in consultation

with the Methodist Diaconal Order, the Discipleship and Ministries Cluster and the Governance Support Cluster, a final version was agreed in March 2010. Some members of the Committee welcome this pragmatic response to ordinands' personal situations, while others would prefer to keep the Ordinals separate. It is likely that this range of views represents a wider range across the Connexion which may need to be tested out at the Conference.

2.3 ***Revision of the Conference Memorial Service:***

A new draft of the Memorial Service was developed within the Worship and Liturgy Resource Group but it was decided to continue for the time being with the slight alteration made to last year's service and give a longer period of reflection before introducing this revision.

2.4 ***The New Hymn Collection***

A good deal of the Committee's workload this year has centred on reviewing and scrutinising the new collection. This has meant a considerable amount of work for the network and committee and the development of a great deal of internal paperwork by the administrator and secretary. A summary of the findings of the Committee was agreed at the residential meeting and forwarded to the Music Resources Group (MRG). Similarly the MRG provided a response to this in time for the March meeting where further amendments to the Collection and additions to it were then considered. The iterative process of sending reports between the MRG and Faith and Order Committee after each meeting has been profitable in that we now agree on the vast majority of items in the collection. Both committees have taken the effort to make their recommendation clear and to offer further information where needed. It is expected that full agreement will be reached before Conference.

2.5 ***Eucharistic Presidency***

In its reply to Memorial 18 (and 19 and 20) 2009, Conference directed "the Faith and Order Committee to review the interpretation of Clause 4 of the Deed of Union found in SO 011 and the Guidance material found in Book VI Part 8 in the light of previous reports and memorials on this issue. Recognising the practical and ecumenical dimensions of the subject, and the anomaly of deacons receiving lay authorisations, the Conference further directs that this review should include consultation with the Authorisations Committee, the Joint Implementation Commission and the Methodist Diaconal Order."

In response, the Faith and Order Committee agreed to develop a threefold approach:

1. A paper outlining the background to the issues being raised
2. Consultation with the Authorisations Committee, JIC and MDO
3. An exploration of the issues surrounding Eucharistic Presidency within the context of Fresh Expressions of Church

The resulting paper was presented to Faith and Order Committee in March and a consultation process begun with the Authorisations Committee, JIC and MDO. We are uncertain whether consultation process will be complete in time for the paper to come to Conference 2010.

2.6 ***Interchangeability***

Faith and Order Committee have discussed this item at every meeting this year and maintained close ties with the processes happening within JIC. We are content that the progress being made in JIC means that no report is needed from F&O on this matter for the time being.

2.7 ***Membership***

A draft report from this working group has been discussed by the Committee and a final version will be ready for our Report to Conference.

2.8 ***NOM203/Extreme Groups/Racism***

The development of this report was undertaken by a working party drawn from among the Connexional Team. Faith and Order were represented on this group and contributed to the paper accepted by the Methodist Council in February and to be recommended to Conference in 2010.

2.9 ***Updated Statement on Abortion***

The Faith and Order Committee offered some reflections on paper presented to the Methodist Council in February 2010. A number of resource groups were unhappy with the proposals and as such an alternative way forward was proposed by the working party.

2.10 ***Embracing the Covenant***

A draft response was developed by the Ecumenical Resource Group and considered at the Committee's March meeting. After further amendment, the report will be submitted to the Joint Implementation Commission for consideration.

3. **Working Parties and Ecumenical Joint Projects:**

- ***Pastoral Care Working Party*** – in response to *Integrity and Skill*
- ***Equality and Diversity Working Party***
- ***JAMWPEEEC***
- ***Multi-lateral Diaconal Conversations***
- ***Proposal for Joint meeting of F&O and FAOC***

4. **Scrutiny and Consultancy Work**

4.1 The Committee has engaged with the following issues/projects/Council papers, offering specific responses to paperwork, continuing involvement in the support of a working group, or commentary on the development of reports. The Secretary of the Committee has had regular meetings with the Head of the Projects, Research and Development Cluster, Trevor Durston, to determine appropriate and helpful ways for F&O to comment on specific project proposals and developments. Where appropriate, specific responses have been sent either to the Cluster Head/Strategic Leader, or directly to the authors of specific reports, or to those providing the lead in these areas of work:

- Discipleship
- Working Party on the role of President/Vice-President
- Fundraising Policy for the Methodist Church
- Living Wage (JPIT)
- *Hope in God's Future* Study Pack

- Signalling Vocation: Possible Clause 4 Amendment
- Faith and Work Papers – Philip Bee as F&O representative
- Projects - in development or under review
 - Evaluation of Team Focus
 - Inspire
 - Inter-Faith Relations
 - Women's Network
 - Chaplaincy – Andrew Sails as F&O representative
 - Belonging Together – Sylvester Deigh as F&O representative
 - Extending Covenant Discipleship
 - Missing Generation
 - One Connexion
 - Education Commission – Luke Curran as F&O representative
 - Venture FX
 - Our Calling, My calling

Pete Phillips
Secretary to the Faith and Order Committee
March 2010