

Marking the 40th anniversary of the ordination of women to the presbyterate

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Status of Paper	Final
Action Required	Decision
Draft Resolution	73/1 The Council receives the report .
Alternative Options to Consider, if Any	

Summary of Content

Subject and Aims	To update the Council on the developments regarding the 40 th celebration to mark the role of women in the ministry.
Main Points	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thanksgiving Service • Other connections with work concerning the role of women within the Church
Background Context and Relevant Documents (with function)	Notice of Motion 206 (2012)

Summary of Impact

Financial	Cost of a Thanksgiving Service will need to be included in existing budgets.
Wider Connexional	The celebration details will need to be circulated via a Methodist website page.
External (e.g. ecumenical)	The aspect of a celebration will need to be shared with our ecumenical partners. For example; by invitation to the service or via a designated Methodist website page.

Marking the role of women in the ministry

1. Background

The Conference accepted Notice of Motion 206 ;
The Conference notes with joy and thanksgiving that 2014 marks the fortieth anniversary of women being ordained as presbyters within the British Methodist Church.

Whilst both the Primitive Methodist Church and the Bible Christians had ordained women, it was not until 1974 that the Conference ordained the first women presbyters following Union in 1932. The ministry of women and men in the life of the church represents the fullness of Christ as described by Paul in Galatians and we rejoice that there are no structural barriers to the full participation of women in the life of our Church.

Recognising that there are still parts of church life where women are underrepresented, the Conference notes and welcomes work underway at Southlands College and within the Connexional Leaders' Forum to explore issues relating to women in leadership within the Church.

The Conference directs the Methodist Council to make arrangements for a service of thanksgiving and celebration of the 40th anniversary of women being ordained as presbyters, to take place at an appropriate date in 2014.

2. An Update

2.1 Since the Conference Doug Swanney, the Connexional Secretary has met with The Revd Ruth Gee, President of the Conference, The Revd Michaela Youngson, on of the Chairs of the London District and Sue Miller, the Ministry Development Officer to discuss the aspects a 40th anniversary celebration and service of thanksgiving.

2.2 The group identified the following key factors for the service in order to commemorate and celebrate this important anniversary:

- a) It needs to enable participation from the original cohort of women ordained in 1974
- b) It should be an appropriate act of worship to mark the anniversary
- c) It needs to be a service open to as many people as possible
- d) Methodist Women in Britain (MWiB) should be involved in the service
- e) It is hoped that World Church Partners will be involved in the service
- f) Consideration needs to be made as to how this service may tie in with the proposed Southlands College Conference on Women in the Church, if at all
- g) How to involve people who may not be able to attend the service from around the Connexion.

2.3 At this meeting the group also discussed other work which is being undertaken concerning the role and leadership of women within the Church which may have a bearing on this service.

3. Future planning

It is envisaged that further work will be undertaken in the weeks to come to incorporate views from the original cohort of women ordainands, MWiB, and other interested parties.

***RESOLUTION:

73/1. The Council receives the report.