

# Sharing *News*

## Dear friends

Have you experienced an advertising 'blitz'? Wherever you turn, you see the same message. This year, in the Church, we want one message above all others to come through loud and clear. It's important for us all. The Methodist Church has set down its *Priorities*.

**In partnership with others wherever possible, the Methodist Church will concentrate its prayers, resources, imagination and commitments on this priority:**

**To proclaim and affirm its conviction of God's love in Christ, for us and for all the world; and renew confidence in God's presence and action in the world and in the Church**

**As ways towards realising this priority, the Methodist Church will give particular attention to the following:**

**Underpinning everything we do with God-centred worship and prayer**

**Supporting community development and action for justice, especially among the most deprived and poor - in Britain and worldwide**

**Developing confidence in evangelism and in the capacity to speak of God and faith in ways that make sense to all involved**

**Encouraging fresh ways of being Church**

**Nurturing a culture in the Church which is people-centred and flexible**

These *Priorities* matter for every local church. (In fact they matter for the whole Church, in all its facets). They need to be applied everywhere.

So what are the ways forward? Some hints:

1. Absorb these *Priorities* as deeply as possible. Talk to one another about them. Read the full report to the Conference\* of which they are a part. Capture the sense of hope and challenge; and the concentration on worship and mission.
2. Start prioritising! You can't do everything. But each local church can make some creative contribution. Be bold in using to best advantage your experience and gifts, and take seriously your passionate concerns.
3. Be innovative! Of course, some energy must be given to revitalising what you currently do, in the light of the *Priorities*. But consider an initiative you could take or an imaginative project you could join. Work with others wherever possible. Try to make links with people who at the moment do not come near a church.
4. Tell others what you decide to do! Certainly tell your circuit meeting. But also your ecumenical partners. And seek their support – through their prayers and the use of their resources.

*David G Deeks*

\* Available on [www.methodist.org.uk](http://www.methodist.org.uk) (Site Ref: C0260704)  
It is also printed in *Over To You* (2004)

## Shaping the Future – a Circuit Review

**‘Yet O Lord, you are our Father. We are the clay, you are the potter; we are all the work of your hand.’** *Isaiah 64:8 (NIV)*

The Resourcing Mission Office has produced a new publication called **Shaping the Future**. It offers a suggested process for reviewing the work of your circuit against the background of cultural changes and plan appropriate action. It is designed to supplement the *Our Calling* process and takes for granted that all circuit policy is concerned with worship and mission.

The Resourcing Mission Office has discussed *Shaping the Future* with Churches Together in England and would like to encourage its use in ecumenical situations, e.g. Churches Together Group, Covenanted LEP, United Area, or where a Deanery and Circuit are working together.

Don't forget *Shaping the Future's* companion Church Review, **Pilgrims Way**. We strongly recommend churches using *Pilgrims Way* to invite a Partner from another circuit to accompany them. To find a Partner contact your District Church Review Co-ordinator or one of the people listed below if your District does not have one.

Both publications can now be obtained from Methodist Publishing House.

*Shaping the Future* £2.00 + £1.50 P&P

*Pilgrim's Way* £4.00 + £1.50 P&P

E-mail: [sales@mph.org.uk](mailto:sales@mph.org.uk)

For further information please contact:

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Development Officer. Tel: 0161 236 5194

[swiresw@property.methodist.org.uk](mailto:swiresw@property.methodist.org.uk)

## MAKEPOVERTYHISTORY

The Methodist Church has signed up to become part of the 'Make Poverty History' mobilisation initiative. At its October meeting the Methodist Council agreed to encourage the Conference of 2005, Districts, Circuits, Church Councils and the Connexional Team to become fully engaged in the campaign.

**MAKEPOVERTYHISTORY** is a massive, concerted effort to end world poverty. The campaign aims to mobilise public and political opinion in an effort to get governments to change policies on Trade, Debt and Aid.

Next year is the 20th anniversary of Live Aid, and the G8 summit will be held in Scotland. Along with many other events like Global Trade Justice Week and the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty, this means that in 2005 there is a unique opportunity for us to be the great generation that said 'enough is enough.'

**MAKEPOVERTYHISTORY** encourages people to write to, text or e-mail Prime Ministers, Presidents and Members of Parliament - and repeatedly make it clear that an estimated 30,000 people dying unnecessarily each day from extreme poverty, is absolutely and totally unacceptable.

[www.makepovertyhistory.org](http://www.makepovertyhistory.org)

## Using Technology in Worship

Want to know how to project images in a service of worship? Thinking of having song words up on a screen? Unsure about copyright issues? Read on....

Written by Revd Mark Pengelly, this is a thoughtful and practical resource for the Church in its handling of modern communication methods. It starts with a

theological reflection – technology as a ‘means of revolution’ not an end in itself. Ideas for using film clips and videos, installing equipment unobtrusively and thinking through the message given by the images we choose... all are seen as part of our mission and introduced in a simple, direct way. Ideal for leaders of worship, especially those who feel their questions are too basic to ask.

Now revised, in the light of helpful responses to the online draft, this helpful guide is available both on the Methodist Church website (see below) and as a 20-page colour booklet free from Methodist Publishing House (ref. HC109, contribution for p&p welcome)

E-mail: [sales@mph.org.uk](mailto:sales@mph.org.uk)

[www.methodist.org.uk](http://www.methodist.org.uk) (Site Ref: CA230704)

## Faith Meeting Faith – Ways Forward in Inter Faith Relations

### A new resource for groups and individuals

There are more than three million people of faiths other than Christianity living in Britain. Recent world events have highlighted the potential dangers of mistrust and suspicion, often fed by ignorance and fear, arising between those of different faiths.

*Faith Meeting Faith* is a major new resource which aims not to give all the answers or a single theology of inter faith relations, but rather to foster the development of ways forward. How do we engage fully in the multicultural society around us, whilst sharing what we believe and putting it into practice? It contains advice for those leading groups on how to encourage reflection, discussion and plans for action.

Faith Meeting Faith is available from MPH  
72pp. Ref. PA218, Price £8.99 + £3.00 p&p  
E-mail: [sales@mph.org.uk](mailto:sales@mph.org.uk) Tel: 01733 325002

## Saving the Rural Church

Villages around the country may have lost Post Offices and local shops as Britain’s rural identity changes, but the Methodist Church is determined to reinforce Christian presence in rural communities.

Religious leaders and politicians have come together to support ‘Presence’, a new handbook that will shape the way the church will work over the next 10 years. ‘Presence’ will outline how an effective Christian presence can be sustained and promoted in rural areas. Christian churches still constitute the principal representation of faith communities in the countryside. However, the report warns that unless things change quickly, there are going to be huge areas of rural Britain without any effective Christian presence.

The Revd David Emison, Chair of the Cumbria District of The Methodist Church and editor of ‘Presence’, said: “New patterns of worship will be encouraged. There is a growing demand for simple rituals to help people express the sorrows and joys of human experience. An effective Christian presence is not necessarily building-centred or Sunday focused. The church must learn how to respond to popular spirituality, though at the same time retain its authentic Christian witness. The Government is increasingly recognising that faith communities have a role in creating ‘cohesive communities’ in which no one is excluded. The Methodist Church is equipping its churches and its members to serve and support rural communities through times of change and uncertainty.”

Presence is available from MPH  
48pp. Ref PA217 Price £2.50 + £1.50 P&P  
E-mail: [sales@mph.org.uk](mailto:sales@mph.org.uk) Tel: 01733 325002

**NOVEMBER 2004**

7 Methodist Homes Sunday

14 Remembrance Sunday

19-21 Methodist Youth Conference

21 Youth Sunday

21 Prisons Week begins

23-25 Disciple 1 residential training seminar, The Hayes Conference Centre, Swanwick, Derbyshire. Tel: 01733 325002

26-28 Streams in the Desert - A weekend residential event hosted by the Bible Society for all who are serious about mission to culture

[www.biblesociety.org.uk/streams](http://www.biblesociety.org.uk/streams)

28 Women Against Violence Sunday

**DECEMBER 2004**

1 World Aids Day

9 Methodist Council meets

**JANUARY 2005**

9 Vocations Sunday

18-25 Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

23 Education Sunday

27 Holocaust Memorial Day

28-30 World Peace and Disarmament Weekend

30 Homelessness Sunday

30 World Leprosy Day

[www.methodist.org.uk](http://www.methodist.org.uk) (Site Ref: DY111203)

## Chaplain to the airwaves

Revd Tony Miles, the Methodist minister and broadcaster, has recently started a chaplaincy-style role within commercial radio stations. In doing so, he will become the first ecumenical radio chaplain working across a region (London and Essex) and primarily in the independent sector.

Tony, who currently presents the Saturday morning breakfast show for Premier Christian radio, said:

“At the moment it is extremely difficult to communicate the Christian message through commercial radio. Commercial radio listeners don't expect to hear Christian comment. But we must 'keep the rumour of God alive' - that's what my new ministry will attempt to do. I hope to show in imaginative ways that the Christian faith is relevant in a pop culture. My wish is not to “Bible bash”; or preach, it's much more about showing people that we care, are interested in them, and that we have a relevant message.”

John Ellis, Secretary for Business & Economic Affairs for the Methodist Church, said: “This pioneering piece of chaplaincy is exactly the sort of work that the Methodist Church is encouraging. The Methodist Conference recently agreed that we must put much more effort into finding ways of communicating effectively with people who are not drawn to traditional patterns of church life. I hope he will help the Church to learn from the media as well.”

Tony will be based at Methodist Central Hall in London, and will predominantly, but not exclusively, engage with the 100-plus radio stations that can be heard in Essex and East London.

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[www.tonymiles.com](http://www.tonymiles.com)