**FORM P8**

**COVENANT FOR PROBATION**

During the time of probation, presbyteral probationer ministers have the support of three roles: Supervisor, Minister in Oversight and Befriender. Diaconal probationers have the support of four roles: Supervisor, Minister in Oversight, Spiritual Director and Wise Senior. This form outlines the differing roles of each. In addition, all probationers have the support of a Worship Development Group.

The Superintendent may hold either or both of the roles of Supervisor and Minister in Oversight or may delegate these to someone else who is suitably equipped for the role.

The supervisor may be the Superintendent, but in the Supervision Policy (2021-26) it is strongly recommended that the Supervisor role and Minister in Oversight role are separated and that in the covenant agreement there is explicit explanation if the two roles are held by the same person. This must be in place by 2024 but special attention should be paid to it when new supervision relationships are put in place.

In signing this form, all involved are expressing their commitment to all meetings and to the preparation for each. In all cases there will be mutual accountability for the purpose, structure and content of meetings, and for planning and timekeeping.

**This form is to be completed at the outset of probation and whenever any of the personnel change. A copy of this form is to be sent by the Superintendent to the District Probationers’ Secretary by September 30th in the first year of probation and whenever any personnel have changed.**

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| **Name of Probationer** |  |
| Order of Ministry |  |
| Year of Probation |  |
| Circuit (name and number) |  |
| District |  |

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| **Name of Supervisor** |  |
| Identified by | The Superintendent Minister |
| Role | * Enables the probationer to reflect theologically on the normative, formative and restorative dimensions of their vocation and practice as defined in the Methodist Church’s supervision policy. * Encourages personal growth in Christian maturity by helping the probationer to reflect and discover their own resources. * Assists the probationer in developing healthy, appropriate patterns of work and lifestyle, including the skills in, and habit of, theologically reflective practice. * Encourages, challenges and supports the probationer in considering, testing and reviewing different perspectives, options and strategies. * Assists effective, healthy development in ministry through consultancy, encouragement, challenge and support. * The supervisor will be an experienced practitioner who is approved to supervise under the Methodist Church’s supervision policy and who is recommended by the District Chair. * The supervisor remains in the role throughout the probationary period, and cannot be the supervisor if they are on sabbatical during the time or in stationing or reinvitation. * Able to negotiate the delicate balance between support, guidance and challenge, and between the probationer’s autonomy and their accountability. * Contributes significantly to the Superintendent’s report to the District Probationers Committee, by commenting on the probationer’s ability to engage fully with supervision. |
| Frequency of meetings | Not less than 9 hours of reflective supervision regularly spaced throughout each year of probation. This will become six sessions of 90 minutes duration after ordination. |
| Responsibility for setting meetings | Supervisor |
| Reporting | * Contributes to the Superintendent’s report to the District Probationers Committee. * Through the agreed records of supervision |
| Dates for meetings arranged in this Connexional year |  |
| Agreed venue |  |
| Is the Supervisor also the Minister in Oversight? |  |
| If yes, why are these roles held by the same person? |  |
| *Note that there is an additional covenant form for reflective supervision as set by the supervision policy* | |

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| **Name of Minister in Oversight** |  |
| Identified by | The Superintendent Minister |
| Role | * Role model to the probationer. * An experienced minister who is able to help the probationer to make the transition from being a student minister to being a probationer minister. * Able to adjust to the particular needs of the probationer and strike the balance between sitting alongside and leading by example. * Able to give time appropriately to help the probationer to deal with new experiences in ministry and to debrief afterwards * It is preferable if the Minister in Oversight does not change during the probationary period. |
| Frequency of meetings | Weekly in the initial months of the probationer’s appointment. These meetings will become less frequent as the needs change, but the Minister in Oversight remains in close contact with the probationer throughout their probation. |
| Responsibility for setting meetings | Minister in Oversight |
| Reporting | * Contributes to the Superintendent’s report to the District Probationers Committee. |
| Dates for meetings arranged in this Connexional year |  |
| Agreed venue |  |
| Is the Supervisor also the Minister in Oversight? |  |
| If yes, why are these roles held by the same person? |  |

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| **Name of Befriender**  **(presbyteral probationers only)** |  |
| Identified by | The Probationer Minister |
| Role | * Understands the demands of ordained ministry but need not be ordained. * Makes regular time to listen to the probationer using skills of active listening * Supports the probationer in developing healthy patterns of life and faith during this transition period * Supports the probationer in understanding the cultural context in which they are ministering and helps identify any cross cultural issues needing attention * Prays for and with the probationer * Brings an external perspective to the work situation and the relationships it involves * May advocate for the probationer with the Superintendent/District Chair should this become necessary. If this is not appropriate for the particular befriender, and such advocacy is needed, the befriender helps the probationer to identify another advocate. |
| Frequency of meetings | Meetings should take place at least every four to six weeks at first but may become less frequent as time goes on. |
| Responsibility for setting meetings | Probationer Minister |
| Reporting | This is an entirely confidential relationship and the befriender does not make a report. However if the befriender is concerned about anything, they should write to the Minister in Oversight, with the consent of the Probationer. The probationer minister will be required to evidence that they have identified an appropriate befriender who is willing to serve. |

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| **Name of Wise Senior (diaconal probationers only)** |  |
| Identified by | The Warden of the MDO |
| Role | * Enables and encourages the probationer’s development and understanding of being a member of a religious order. * Brings an external perspective to the work situation and the relationships it involves * The probationer will be asked to comment on their meetings with their Wise Senior in their written theological reflection. |
| Frequency of meetings | Every 6 to 8 weeks |
| Responsibility for setting meetings | The probationer is responsible for initiating contact with the Wise Senior and ensuring regular contact. |
| Reporting | The Wise Senior does not make a report. However if the Wise Senior is concerned about anything, they should contact the Warden, with the consent of the Probationer. |

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| **Name of Spiritual Director (diaconal probationers only)** |  |
| Identified by | The Probationer Minister |
| Role | * Understands the demands of ordained ministry but need not be ordained. * Makes regular time to listen to the probationer using skills of active listening * Supports the probationer in developing healthy patterns of life and faith during this transition period * Prays for and with the probationer * Brings an external perspective to the work situation and the relationships it involves as appropriate * The probationer will be asked to comment on their meetings with their Spiritual Director in their written theological reflection. |
| Frequency of meetings | Every 6 to 8 weeks for the first six months, which can then become less frequent |
| Responsibility for setting meetings | The probationer is responsible for initiating contact with their Spiritual Director and ensuring regular contact. |
| Reporting | This is an entirely confidential relationship and the Spiritual Director does not make a report. The probationer will be required to evidence that they have identified an appropriate Spiritual Director. |

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| **Name of Coordinator of the Worship Development Group** |  |
| Identified by | The Superintendent |
| Role | * Help the probationer develop as a leader of worship * Report to the DPC on their development * Provide a framework to support reflection on the regular pattern of the leading of informal and formal worship, and on the changes in style, role and method that the move into a ministerial appointment demands |
| Frequency of meetings | To be determined by the group in conjunction with the probationer but at least every 6 weeks |
| Responsibility for setting meetings | Coordinator of the Worship Development Group |
| Reporting | Completes the P3 worship report |

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| **Dual Relationships** |  |
| Please list any dual relationships (where one person holds more than one of these or other roles which relate to the probationer’s ministry) |  |
| Has a conversation been held about these with the probationer? |  |
| What points have emerged which need to be noted  (e.g. confidentiality, boundaries of the roles) |  |

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| **Signature of Probationer** |  |
| Date |  |
| **Signature of Supervisor** |  |
| Date |  |
| **Signature of Minister in Oversight** |  |
| Date |  |
| **Signature of Worship Development Group Coordinator** |  |
| Date |  |