

# Deliverance Ministry Guidelines

MC/22/53

Date of meeting	2-4 April 2022
Contact name and details	Mrs Gill Dascombe The Revd Dr Nicola Price-Tebbutt
Action required	For decision
Resolutions	53/1. The Council receives the report. 53/2. The Council recommends to the Conference that it adopts the contents of section 2 as guidance for deliverance ministry, and invites feedback to be sent to <a href="mailto:guidancefeedback@methodistchurch.org.uk">guidancefeedback@methodistchurch.org.uk</a> by 31 January 2024. 53/3. The Council recommends to the Conference that it direct the Ministries and Faith and Order Committees to bring further revised guidance for deliverance ministry to the 2024 Conference.

## Summary of content

Subject of aims	To agree the revised guidance for deliverance ministry.
Main points	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Revised guidance for deliverance ministry</li> <li>Suggested extension of period for feedback with a further revision for the 2024 Conference</li> </ul>
Background context and relevant documents (with function)	<i>Deliverance Ministry Guidelines, 2021</i>
Consultations	There has been a period where feedback has been invited from across the Connexion

## Summary of impact

Faith and Order	The Faith and Order Committee is continuing theological reflection on deliverance ministry.
Financial	The revisions don't have an additional financial impact
Legal including impact on other jurisdictions	The revisions don't have any additional legal impact
Wider connexional	The revisions seek to bring greater clarity.
External, including ecumenical	The revisions don't have any additional external or ecumenical impact.
Risk	As the revisions seek to bring further clarity, risks should be reduced in accepting them.

- 1 The 2021 Conference adopted interim guidance for deliverance ministry and invited feedback. It directed that revised guidance be brought to the 2022 Conference. This report brings the revised guidance for deliverance ministry and suggests that there is a further period of feedback and revision.
- 2 Although some feedback was received following the debate at the 2021 Conference, there has been hardly any feedback received during the year. This is not surprising as the training, supervision and process for authorisation of practitioners is still being put in place. It is therefore recommended that there is a period during which further feedback be invited in order to allow time for reflection on how the guidance is experienced in practice. The Faith and Order Committee has also continued to reflect theologically on deliverance ministry and, although some observations will be brought to the 2022 Conference, it would be helpful for there to be opportunity for the theological thinking to inform the guidance.
- 3 This year there have been four groups working on aspects of deliverance ministry: the working party appointed jointly by the Methodist Council and the Faith and Order Committee has responsibility for the guidelines; an interim Connexional Panel for Deliverance Ministry has responsibility for overseeing the development of training and putting the other processes in place for supervision and authorisation of practitioners; the Ministries Committee has been looking at the Terms of Reference for the Connexional Panel for Deliverance Ministry which will be appointed by the 2022 Conference; and the Faith and Order Committee has been undertaking theological thinking in this area. It is recommended that there is one report on deliverance ministry to the Conference, brought jointly by the Methodist Council and the Faith and Order Committee. As the Connexional Panel for Deliverance Ministry will report to the Ministries Committee, it is further recommended that the Ministries Committee and Faith and Order Committee oversee further revision of the guidance in the light of feedback received and report to the 2024 Conference. A resolution is brought to this effect.

## Changes to the Guidance

- 4 All changes to the guidance are shown in bold italics as is customary. Many of the changes have been to bring further clarity in the light of developing theological thinking or as the processes of training and authorisation are beginning to be established.
- 5 The contents of 1.2 in the guidance depend upon how final report, which includes some initial theological comment, is presented to the 2022 Conference.
- 6 An appropriate liturgy is referred to in paragraph 2 iii. This has already been produced by the Faith and Order Committee and will be made available to all who undertake deliverance ministry training, District Chairs and the Connexional Panel for Deliverance Ministry.
- 7 The amendment in 3 vi has already been agreed by the Council in October 2021.
- 8 In 4.3 there is an attempt to distinguish the additional supervision for deliverance ministry practitioners from the Methodist Church's general supervision structure and process. The additional supervision is somewhat equivalent to clinical supervision in other disciplines but the term 'deliverance ministry supervision' was felt to be appropriate.

## Section 2: The Revised Guidance for Deliverance Ministry

~~The Provisional Guidelines for Deliverance Ministry Including Exorcism~~  
**DELIVERANCE MINISTRY INCLUDING EXORCISM**  
~~Interim Guidelines for Good Practice in the Methodist Church in Britain~~

1. Introduction
  - 1.1. The nature of deliverance ministry

It is an important and cherished part of the Methodist tradition continually to hold in prayer any who may be going through **experiencing** times of suffering or anxiety. This may take place in gatherings for public worship, as well as in **pastoral** situations of individual pastoral care.

Some people, though, may seek specific help when they become aware of what seem to be continuing experiences of evil within them or around them. For these people, it may be appropriate to offer help through the Church's deliverance ministry.

The Church regularly prays for deliverance from evil in the words of the Lord's Prayer; deliverance ministry may be seen as part **is an expression** of this intention.

Persons seeking deliverance ministry are very vulnerable. ~~It should be given with due caution.~~  
**Deliverance ministry should only be offered according to the provisions of the Methodist Church as contained in these guidelines**, and in a context of continuing pastoral care.

The following guidelines should therefore be followed.

## 1.2. Theological basis

These guidelines should be read in conjunction with ~~the report on the~~ **theological reflection in the Deliverance Ministry report** of deliverance ministry which the Faith and Order Committee will bring to the 2022 Conference.

## 1.3. Definitions

- i. Healing – The Church's healing ministry is a ministry which may include elements such as appropriate Christian prayer, sacrament or rituals/~~procedures~~ **practices** with the intention of relieving suffering: mental, physical, **spiritual** or emotional.
- ii. Deliverance – The Church's deliverance ministry is a ministry which may include elements such as appropriate Christian prayer, sacrament or rituals/~~procedures~~ **practices** with the intention of freeing individuals from what they understand to be the influence of evil within them or around them.
- iii. Exorcism – exorcism is ~~an aspect~~ **a form** of deliverance ministry, but is more specifically concerned with freeing individuals or places from what they understand to be ~~demonic~~ possession **by an evil spirit**.  
NB Guidance offered in this document applies to both deliverance and exorcism ministries.
- iv. Terminology – For the purposes of this report  
  
the word recipient denotes someone who is seeking, requesting and receiving deliverance ministry;  
  
the word practitioner denotes ~~an approved person authorised to administer it~~ **a person who is authorised to administer it**;  
  
the word supporter denotes a person who assists a practitioner.

## 2. Context

Deliverance ministry is an extension of the prayer life of the whole Church; recipients should therefore be able to have confidence that words, rites and intentions offered express the faith of the whole Church.

It is recommended therefore that:

- i. Deliverance ministry should only be offered when authorised, in each and every instance, by the Chair of the District in which it is to be given, or their appointed representative(s).
- ii. It is never undertaken by one person alone. Each practitioner should be assisted by up to two ~~suitable~~ **appropriate** supporters, at least one of whom is involved in the ongoing pastoral care of the recipient.

***They should set aside time for spiritual preparation before offering deliverance ministry, and their ministry should also be simultaneously supported by a prayer team in a separate location.***

- iii. ~~An~~ ***The*** approved liturgy is used. ~~A liturgical framework~~ ***This*** will be made ***available as part of the training.*** The service may also include Holy Communion or anointing with oil.
- iv. ~~It is not appropriate for~~ Deliverance ministry ~~to~~ ***should not*** take place online.
- v. Deliverance ministry must not be ***exercised with the intention of*** ~~used to attempting~~ to change a recipient's sexual orientation or gender identity.
- vi. Deliverance ministry must not be offered to recipients who are under 18.

### 3. Safeguarding

Deliverance ministry is an integral part of ***the Church's ministry of healing*** and the Guidelines for Good Practice in the Methodist Church in Britain should be ~~read alongside these safeguarding considerations~~ ***followed in conjunction with the safeguarding policy and practices of the Methodist Church.*** Good safeguarding practice must be adhered to at all times and includes addressing the following areas:

- i. Deliverance ministry may only be ~~conducted~~ ***undertaken*** by ~~qualified~~ ***authorised*** practitioners as set out in these Guidelines and must ensure the safeguarding of recipients, practitioners and supporters
- ii. Practitioners must have undertaken up to date Methodist Advanced Module safeguarding training and their supporters must have undertaken up to date Methodist Foundation Module safeguarding training.
- iii. Informed consent (including the limits to confidentiality) must be obtained from the recipient of deliverance ministry and any sacramental acts and rituals/~~procedures~~ ***practices*** that may be used must be explained to the recipient in advance.
- iv. Information shared by a recipient should not be passed to others unless they give consent in advance for specific information to be shared or, the information indicates that they or another may be at risk of harm, or the recipient indicates that they are involved in or likely to become involved in a ~~significant~~ criminal offence, or the practitioner believes that another party is involved or likely to become involved in a criminal offence.
- v. Practitioners' language and body language should always be considerate and courteous, and touch and the anointing with oil may only be used with prior consent.
- vi. Practitioners must have regard to the mental capacity and mental health of an adult recipient and seek advice from a mental health professional if their capacity and/or judgement is in doubt. The District Safeguarding Officer must be informed ~~where the recipient is an adult who may be vulnerable~~ ***in all cases of deliverance ministry.***
- vii. Practitioners must consider whether there are safeguarding concerns and inform the District Safeguarding Officer of any identified.
- viii. Deliverance must be conducted with the minimum of publicity, in a safe space and by more than one person.
- ix. Practitioners must make a written record of deliverance ministry and issue privacy notices to the recipient and supporters.

### 4. Personnel

#### 4.1. Authorisation and accountability

- i. Deliverance ministry may be ~~given~~ ***undertaken*** by ordained or lay persons, however anyone

considering offering it, including both practitioners and supporters, must make themselves known to the Chair of the District in which the ministry is to take place.

- ii. Anyone wishing to be authorised as a practitioner must undergo the Connexional Training Course, after recommendation by their Chair of District or the Chair's appointed representative.
- iii. Authorisation to practice will be granted by the Connexional Panel on Deliverance Ministry after receiving feedback from those operating the Training Course and the recommendation from the relevant District Chair (or their appointed representative).

The Connexional Panel on Deliverance Ministry will ~~comprise~~**include** people with comprehensive experience and knowledge of deliverance ministry.

- iv. ~~The District Chair or their appointed representative must ensure that the authorised practitioner's ministry is monitored by appropriate supervision.~~

## 4.2. Training

### 4.2.1. The Connexional Training course in deliverance ministry will:

- i. be open to all (lay and ordained) who feel called by God to carry out this ministry;
- ii. take place over **at least the equivalent of** one day.
- iii. Components to include:
  - a) The Church's understanding of deliverance ministry;
  - b) Key skills, including intentional listening, allowing people to express themselves subjectively and objectively;
  - c) Different perspectives in terms of theological understanding, use of the Bible, and personal awareness;
  - d) Mental health awareness;
  - e) When and how to ask for help;
  - f) Liturgy, prayer and ritual.

### 4.2.2. After initial training has taken place

- i. Practitioners must be offered ongoing training and support including active membership of a peer support group.
- ii. Practitioners will be invited to attend and contribute to subsequent training days.

## 4.3. **Deliverance Ministry** Supervision

- i. The Connexional Panel on Deliverance Ministry will appoint a **deliverance ministry** supervisor for each authorised practitioner.
- ii. Formal supervision will include an account and discussion on any deliverance ministry that has taken place. A report on the case should be sent to the District Chair.
- iii. Formal supervision is required in addition to peer/group support.
- iv. **Deliverance Ministry** Supervisors will be invited to attend and contribute to training days.

## 4.4. Multidisciplinary team

Practitioners should always work alongside others to ensure the best possible response to the needs of the recipient. These may include the District Safeguarding Officer, psychiatric healthcare

professionals, hospital/mental health chaplains, counsellors and the local pastoral team.

5. Continuing care

Every effort should be made to continue contact with the recipients of deliverance ministry, to ensure that they continue to be offered the support, prayer and care of the Church

**\*\*\*RESOLUTIONS**

**53/1. The Council receives the report.**

**53/2. The Council recommends to the Conference that it adopts the contents of section 2 as guidance for deliverance ministry, and invites feedback to be sent to [guidancefeedback@methodistchurch.org.uk](mailto:guidancefeedback@methodistchurch.org.uk) by 31 January 2024.**

**53/3. The Council recommends to the Conference that it direct the Ministries and Faith and Order Committees to bring further revised guidance for deliverance ministry to the 2024 Conference.**