

The Work of the Faith and Order Committee 2020-2021

Contact Name and Details	The Revd Dr Nicola Price-Tebbutt Secretary of the Faith and Order Committee price-tebbutt@methodistchurch.org.uk
Resolutions	86/1. The Council receives the report 86/2. The Council supports the recommendation of the Faith and Order Committee to the Conference that the reports indicated are deferred.

Summary of Content

Subject and Aims	The work of the Faith and Order Committee 2020-2021
Main Points	Work being brought to the Conference of 2021
Background Context and Relevant Documents (with function)	The Faith and Order Committee reports to the Methodist Conference, and annually provides a briefer report to the Council.

- The role and remit of the Faith and Order Committee is set out in Standing Order 330. In reviewing its work for 2020-2021, the Committee noted that there are potentially 14 reports which it should prepare for the 2021 Conference, most of which are substantial pieces of work.
- In the light of the continuing impact of Covid-19 on both resources and priorities, and because of the number of significant matters which the 2021 Conference will be dealing with, the Committee has needed to make a judgment as to which of its reports should take priority, and therefore will propose that it defer some reports until a future Conference, namely:
 - Theological reflection in relation to the work on deliverance ministry and exorcism.** In order for the ministry of exorcism to resume in the Methodist Church, the priority is to ensure that some guidance for deliverance ministry is taken to the 2021 Conference together with the Council's work on the guidelines for authorising, training and supervising those seeking to engage in this ministry. It is therefore proposed that provisional guidance is taken to the 2021 Conference, with the theological reflection and any revised guidance to follow in 2022.
 - The nature of leadership in the Methodist Church.** Given past and continuing work relating to leadership, the Faith and Order Committee will continue to explore where some theological reflection might be helpful and will report to a future Conference.
 - The Methodist Understanding of Membership in the 21st Century.** In the light of other priorities it is not urgent for this work to come to the 2021 Conference. The work will also be considering the role of the Methodist Way of Life in relation to membership and would benefit from having some further time to see how its practice develops across the Connexion. The report will be brought to the 2022 Conference.

- **Review of the Criteria for Authorisations to preside at the Lord's Supper.** The 2021 Conference will make decisions about the changing patterns of ministry work which may impact on reflection on this, and the work on Holy Communion and online worship may raise further questions about how we understand deprivation. Deferring a final report until 2022 would enable these things to be taken into account.
- **Theology of online life.** This is a potentially broad piece of work and there will need to be some scoping work to decide which aspects it will be most helpful to focus on. In addition it is likely that a number of relevant questions will emerge from the work on Holy Communion and online worship (which will be reported in 2021).

3. The Faith and Order Committee will therefore bring to the 2021 Conference the following reports:

- *Holy Communion and Online Worship*
- *Ministry in the Methodist Church* report and revised Statement of the judgment of the Conference;
- Report on the further issues outstanding in the light of *The Theology and Ecclesiology Underpinning the Diaconate and the MDO* (2019), including any revisions to Standing Orders;
- Revision of guidance on deliverance ministry;
- *Theology of Safeguarding*;
- *Changing Patterns of Ministry* (shared responsibility with the Stationing and Ministries Committees);
- Response to *God in Love Unites Us*;
- Report on the provision of liturgical resources in the light of *God in Love Unites Us* including consideration of the marriage service;
- Response to *Reaffirming Our Calling: Oversight and Trusteeship*.

***RESOLUTIONS

86/1. The Council receives the report.

86/2 The Council supports the recommendation of the Faith and Order Committee to the Conference that the reports indicated are deferred.