

Memorial M6 (2020) Global Climate Emergency

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Resolutions	90/1. The Council receives the report. 90/2. The Council directs the Connexional Team to bring a report on studies underway in circuits, districts or among ecumenical partners to inform further consideration of memorial M6 Global Climate Emergency.

Summary of content

Subject and aims	2020/M6 Global Climate Emergency – The Conference referred this memorial to the Council for response.
Main points	The achievement of net zero emissions by 2030 would be challenging for churches, circuits and districts. It is proposed that a report on current work is brought to the Methodist Council to inform a response to this memorial.
Background documents	2020 Methodist Conference Memorial M6 and reply 2019 Methodist Conference Memorial M55 Declaration of a Climate Emergency 2011 Statement of Conference ‘Hope in God’s Future’ 2010 Methodist Conference report ‘12 Carbon Reduction’

Summary

The 2020 memorial M6 calls on the Methodist Church to achieve measurable year-on-year reductions in emissions and urgently to examine what would be required to reach net zero emissions by 2030. In its reply, the Conference recognised that the implementation of such a programme would have implications in many areas of our mission and practice across the Connexion. The Conference of 2020 referred this memorial to the Council.

As the reply recognises, the request of the memorial for all churches, circuits and districts to move to net zero emissions by 2030 is a demanding one. This paper suggests that the Council might wish to receive information from Methodist and ecumenical sources on work currently underway before coming to a decision.

1. The challenge ahead

Methodist churches have been committed to tackling climate change by becoming Eco-Churches, through active campaigning and the work of 3Generate and through investments held on behalf of the Methodist Church and associated organisations. To meet the challenge of reaching net zero emissions, churches, circuits and districts would need to go further. Previous studies have shown that much of direct carbon output of the Methodist Church arises from use of our buildings. Studies suggest that circuits and districts would need to think strategically and set targets to plan a path to net zero emissions. The focus would be on direct emissions

that are under the control of churches, circuits and districts with the aim of getting as close to zero emissions as possible and offsetting emissions that cannot be eliminated.

There is work in various places that promises to be helpful in assessing the feasibility and cost associated with an ambition to become a net zero church.

The Yorkshire North and East Methodist District, for example, has embarked on a project to identify what is involved in becoming a zero carbon district. It will identify high impact interventions that can deliver early gains, prioritise buildings with high usage and use consultancy expertise to help build an investment case for accelerated action. In the autumn 2020 Synod, the District committed to becoming a net zero carbon district no later than 2040.

The Christian environmental charity, A Rocha, is currently undertaking a study to assess the current state of practice across denominations in the UK. The results should be available before the end of 2020. The information to be gleaned from these and other studies will help form an understanding of the implications of setting a 2030 net zero target.

2. Recommendation

It is proposed that the Connexional Team bring to the January 2021 Methodist Council a short report on studies underway in circuits, districts or among ecumenical partners to inform a response to M6.

*****RESOLUTIONS**

90/1. The Council receives the report.

90/2. The Council directs the Connexional Team to bring a report on studies underway in circuits, districts or among ecumenical partners to inform further consideration of M6 Global Climate Emergency.

2020/M6 Global Climate Emergency

The Gloucestershire (7/7) Circuit Meeting (Present 75; Voting: 74 for, 1 against), recognising that the global climate emergency is a crisis for God's creation, and a fundamental injustice, and following the resolution of the Methodist Conference 2019 that there is a climate emergency:

- (a) calls upon all parts of the Methodist Church, at local church, circuit, district and connexional level, to work to achieve measurable year-on-year reductions in emissions and urgently examine what would be required to reach net zero emissions by 2030 in order that a plan of action can be drawn up to achieve that target;
- (b) calls on each District to address progress toward net zero emissions every two years.

Reply

The Conference thanks the Gloucestershire Methodist Circuit for its memorial. A programme to achieve net zero emissions across the Methodist Church will involve many areas of our mission and practice across the Connexion and warrants greater attention that can be provided at this Conference. The Conference, therefore, refers the memorial to Methodist Council.