

## Update Report from the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee

<b>Contact Name and Details</b>	The Revd Stephen Poxon, Chair of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee stephen.poxon@btinternet.com
<b>Resolution</b>	105/1. The Council receives the report.

### Introduction and Background

The Council meeting in March affirmed the four elements of the statement 'The Inclusive Methodist Church'.

That Church is defined as one which:

1. Welcomes in safety all who wish to be part of the life of the Church whether through worship, learning and caring, service or evangelism.
2. Upholds the discipline of the Methodist Church in the face of discrimination, rejecting and resisting all behaviours, which are discriminatory or belittling.
3. Celebrates diversity in the variety of God's creation.
4. Represents the diversity of the Methodist Church throughout its life and structures and affirms that there is no place for discrimination in our processes of selection, discernment and appointment.

The Council affirmed the intention of the Task Group and Committee to work towards this vision. It thanked the EDI Committee and the Task Group for their work and mandated the EDI Committee and EDI Task Group to work together on a final wording of the 'Inclusive Methodist Church' statement in consultation with the Faith and Order Committee and an implementation plan and to bring a final report to the Council in April 2021. In order to enable this, the Council appointed the EDI Committee as presently constituted for a final year to August 2021 and agreed to ask the Conference to suspend SO 336 for the year 2020/2021.

Following the Methodist Council instruction to the EDI Committee and the EDI Task Group to work together to produce an implementation plan, the Inclusive Church Implementation Group (ICIG) was formed. The membership of the ICIG consists of the current EDI Committee and EDI Task Group.

### Report from the Inclusive Church Implementation Group

- 1) The Inclusive Methodist Church (IMC) definition is underpinned by the 5 work streams, as follows:
  - a. Attitudinal Cultural and Systemic Change
  - b. Building Trust and Confidence
  - c. Minimum Standards
  - d. Positive Action
  - e. Scrutiny and Transparency

Each of the above work streams has been allocated a lead facilitator and two additional members from the ICIG. Each stream has started the development of their implementation action plans. In addition a job

description and advertisement has been placed on the Methodist Church website asking for volunteer members from across the Connexion to join the ICIG in delivering each work stream.

The Attitudinal, Cultural and Systemic Change work stream in partnership with colleagues from the Southern and Islands Learning Network have scheduled a follow up symposium on 3 October 2020, building on the outcomes of the racial justice symposium that took place in March 2019.

The Building Trust and Confidence work stream have undertaken an exercise to examine best practice learning from the process used for the Safeguarding 'Past Cases Review', with a view to creating a similar process to hear the voices and experience of those who have suffered racial or homophobic discrimination or hate.

- 2) The implementation and embedding of the Inclusive Methodist Church (IMC) is a significant programme of change and as such it has been recognised that an additional fulltime role (Inclusive Church Implementation Officer), working alongside the EDI Adviser, will be required to ensure timely and effective implementation of the IMC work streams.

A job description has been agreed for the role and is to be reviewed imminently by the Job Grading Evaluation Panel. The role will be on a two year fixed term contract.

The Connexional Team Senior Management Group (SMG) has received a presentation in regard to the progress of the implementation of the IMC model and associated work stream. During the presentation the EDI Adviser explained what would be required of each member and their teams in relation to the implementation of the IMC. Senior Managers were asked to carry out a review of their work area, using themes from the work streams. Further the SMG accepted that a coherent comprehensive plan was required and agreed to construct the plan in collaboration with the ICIG.

- 3) A follow-up round table event will be scheduled to develop action plans further for each of the teams using the results of the associated review.

A similar process is to be scheduled for District Chairs.

- 4) To increase awareness and assist access to information associated to the IMC, the Communications team have agreed to develop a series of web pages, podcasts and videos. Pages will also contain training material and resources. An interactive timeline is under development and will describe significant events and interventions that the Church has embarked upon since its inception, to bring about greater social justice. An interactive calendar of significant equality and diversity events and holidays will also be published.

During October's Black History Month a series of video and podcasts will be published on the Methodist Church website celebrating the ministry of BAME ministers in the Methodist Church.

- 5) The Transgender working group is on schedule to publish a Transgender toolkit and two short film celebrating the gifts and contributions of two transgender members of the Church, in February 2021.
- 6) The EDI Adviser and a member of the Safeguarding Team are currently examining equalities legislation and current safeguarding procedures to explore the most effective method to extend the remit of the Safeguarding Team to include issues of hate, illegal discrimination and abuse.

- 7) In regard to statistical data and monitoring in relation to Methodist ministers and members of committees, following a meeting with Conference Office colleagues, the ICIG will seek to utilise systems already in use and build on data already held. A standardised EDI data monitoring form used to capture data during the annual Methodist Conference will be used to collect monitoring data across major committees and ministerial roles.

**\*\*\*RESOLUTION**

**105/1. The Council receives the report.**