

## Methodist Council Objectives

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<b>Status of Paper</b>	Final
<b>Action Required</b>	To Note

### Summary of Content

<b>Subject and Aims</b>	To present the Council with updates on work undertaken towards the priority areas identified by the Council in support of the objectives.
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### \*\*\*RESOLUTION

**36/1. The Council receives the report.**

#### *Our Calling: Methodist Council Objectives*

**The calling of the Methodist Church is to respond to the gospel of God's love in Christ and to live out its discipleship in worship and mission**

Over the last two years the Conference and the Council has worked on ensuring that the *Our Calling* statement above is kept before all its work as the main strategic driver for our decision making and resource allocation.

The statement was further worked into eight areas of work where the Council recognised there was a task of work to do for which it was responsible.

The Council received in January 2020 MC/20/7 which offered updates on some of the specific priorities that had been identified which related to the tasks above. Work has continued and the following updates are offered in the table below.

Over the summer the Connexional Secretary will review overall progress made towards the objectives and indicate the things that the Council could consider as 'completed' so as to concentrate on the outstanding issues. This will be brought to the Council in October 2020.

#### **Worship – increase the awareness of God’s presence and celebrate God’s love**

<b>1. Proclaiming the Gospel through worship</b>	
<b>The Council’s task:</b> to consider how best to enable every act of worship conducted in the name of the Methodist Church to give honour to God through excellence, creativity, prayerful contemplation and encompassing a variety of spiritualities.	
<b>Therefore the Council will aim:</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To support and enable local preachers and ministers to lead high quality, engaging, authentic, contextual worship around the Connexion.</li> <li>To ensure the support and training is offered to resource local arrangements appropriately.</li> </ul>	
<b>With the following as immediate priorities:</b>	<b>Update</b>
To continue to refine the Worship: Leading and Preaching course – including addressing issues around online mode of	Major work is underway to offering a simplified process of assessment submission. Including guidelines to Local Preacher meetings as to their part in the process.

delivery and appropriateness for Worship Leaders.	
To reflect on the nature and frequency of accreditation of those in authorised ministries and modelling ongoing feedback and review of those leading worship.	Following the introduction of peer review, the Ministries Committee has encouraged the team to reflect on how Ministerial Development Review and Supervision could be integrated. We propose this might have a worship review element. Details to be brought to a future meeting of the Council.
To determine what support and ongoing training may be needed for the large number of supernumeraries leading worship.	We continue to listen to the feedback from supernumeraries following the creation of the web pages for supernumeraries.
To have agreed a mandatory Continuing Development package for Local Preachers.	This is now in place. We continue to develop a bank of Continuing Local Preacher Development (CLPD) resources.
To support development in ministerial training pilots.	Work continues on the pilot of the Circuit Based Learning Programme.
<b>2. The ministry of the whole people of God in the life of the world</b>	
<b>The Council's task:</b> to have a clear articulation of the Church's engagement with God's mission and therefore to ensure there are ministers, local preachers and lay leaders of the required gifts and qualities for that mission and that they are effectively deployed. Enabling all people to discern and utilise their gifts in responding to <i>Our Calling</i> .	
<b>Therefore the Council will aim:</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To have embedded an ethos of whole life, life long and life changing discipleship across the Connexion where a mutual respect of the vocations of lay and ordained flourish.</li> <li>• To achieve an increase in vocations to ordained ministry, compared to 2016 through the opening up of exploration and training opportunities.</li> <li>• To have in place processes to identify and train ministers who are missional, adaptable and collaborative, and able to lead the Church in the 2020s, 2030s and beyond.</li> <li>• To have built on initial developments to offer a broad support package for lay workers and ensure they are deployed effectively in Circuits as well as nurture people into lay ministry roles,</li> <li>• To implement a more effective and strategic Connexional approach for the deployment of ordained ministers including the creating and ending of appointments.</li> <li>• To have inculcated a commitment to accountable discipleship for all Methodist people as a Methodist Way of Life.</li> <li>• To ensure young people are part of strategies to participate in the development of vocations for the age we live in.</li> </ul>	
<b>With the following as immediate priorities:</b>	<b>Update</b>
To implement a strategy for an increased response to vocational discernment, including the diversity of those engaging in our processes.	One major focus of the work of the vocations adviser is on how we encourage vocational conversations in the local context. Stationing Committee is reviewing BAME stationing.  Applications from ministers seeking to transfer to the Methodist Church in Britain continue to increase. Stationing Committee has agreed to cap the number of appointments at 10-12 each year. Work is being done to

	create publicity and shared stories to encourage circuits to submit a profile suitable for such ministers.
To grow the number of opportunities for vocational exploration.	The ministries team is running two Ordination Exploration Days in March and May, with encouraging numbers signed up for each. The plan is to move these days into the regions via the Learning Network.
To re-invigorate the understanding of the possibilities of offering for presbyteral ministry in a local appointment	The Changing Patterns in Ministry working group will make recommendations to the 2020 conference.
To complete a review of the selection of ministers, and to establish a working group to look at non-stipendiary ministry that need not be itinerant but is nevertheless connexional.	The Ministries Committee has recommended a review of the candidating processes. The Changing Patterns in Ministry working group will make recommendations to the 2020 conference.
To undertake work on the principles of how appointments are agreed and funded and to implement robust systems to scrutinize and approve appointment profiles.	As previously reported there are now more robust processes for scrutinizing profiles in order to identify critical appointments. From the 2020/2021 connexional year, districts will be asked to submit applications for critical appointments on a proforma so that the same information is gathered for each. Stationing regions are being asked to rank the appointments they consider to be critical so that regions are more involved in the process.
To establish the mandatory training of superintendents to ensure they are equipped for leadership at circuit level.	There will be a stronger emphasis on Leadership in the new Superintendents' induction programme from September 2020
To continue to resource the accountable supervision of those in ministry appropriately.	Work is underway to redraft the guidelines for supervisors supervising a probationer which will appear in the Probationers' Handbook
To continue to resource a high quality, locally-based, authorised lay led ministry.	We await the recommendations of the Changing Patterns of Ministry report
To engage with the Faith and Order Committee's work with the Church of England relating to interchangeability and the place of the diaconate.	Following decisions made by the Council in October 2019 the Secretary of the Faith and Order Committee and the Connexional Ecumenical Officer have been working with representatives of the Church of England to identify appropriate ways in which to continue to develop the Covenant relationship.

### Learning and Caring – help people to grow and learn as Christians, through mutual support and care

<b>3. Resources for the Church: the use of God's gifts</b>
<b>The Council's task:</b> to use the resources of the Church to support Districts, Circuits and churches to be most effective in their mission, by provide cost-effective Connexional specialist services and relevant local based resources
<b>Therefore the Council will aim:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To support the embedding of Our Calling in every aspect of the life of the Church enabling us all to make focused decisions.</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To have an effective suite of shared services for Districts, building on established services and having introduced new ones in response to demand (to include Property, Finance and other areas).</li> <li>To have in place a financial strategy which <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is working towards a significant reduction in the assessment for local churches as income is drawn from other sources</li> <li>Enables a greater sharing of resources</li> </ul> </li> <li>To consider how Districts can more effectively be resourced and the Connexional principle of support articulated, and where managing trusteeship of Local Churches and Circuits should most effectively reside.</li> </ul>	
<b>With the following as immediate priorities:</b>	<b>Update:</b>
To decide how to make finance available in Districts for the support of Mission and <i>Our Calling</i> .	Work continues with input from the Chair of the Connexional Grants Committee between the Grants and Evangelism & Growth teams to design a proportionate, but robust, distribution process for the Mission in Britain Fund from 2020/2021.
To implement the property strategy and the finance strategy approved by the Council.	A revised approach to allocating resources is included in the budget paper for the Council. Similarly, a paper on the property strategy is also on the agenda.
To ensure delivery from the reshaped Connexional Team for the best support <i>Our Calling</i> .	This continues to be within the remit of the Senior Management Team as it monitors and evaluates all the Team is doing.
To oversee the Methodist Church House re-development project ensuring the process is shaped for the new building to be utilised to support the aims of the Methodist Church.	The SRC continues to engage with the work on this major connexional project.
<b>4. Oversight and Leadership</b>	
<b>The Council's task:</b> to operate the oversight/leadership functions of the Methodist Church as effectively as possible in pursuit of the Church's mission ensuring the most appropriate use of resources.	
<b>Therefore the Council will aim:</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To have refined patterns of oversight/leadership and governance so as to provide high-quality, priority-driven policy-making to deliver <i>Our Calling</i> as the discerned manifestation of the Church's mission.</li> <li>To ensure that Ministerial Development Review and supervision processes are embedded in the life of the Church for all in the active ministry.</li> </ul>	
<b>With the following as immediate priorities:</b>	<b>Update</b>
To ensure the ways of working of the Council, the Strategy and Resources Committee (SRC), the Chairs' Meeting and the Connexional Leaders' Forum (CLF) are fit to deliver the aim of 'having refined patterns of oversight/leadership and governance so as to provide high-quality, priority-driven policy-making to deliver <i>Our</i>	Discussions on this priority area took place at the Council in January 2020, and a report on this subject is now before the Council.

Calling as the discerned manifestation of the Church's mission.'	
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**Service – be a good neighbour to people in need and to challenge injustice**

<b>5. A Church for all people</b>	
<b>The Council's task:</b> to be an inclusive and diverse Church by extending our reach and engagement with those who feel marginalized, ensuring that all feel protected to be able to participate.	
<b>Therefore the Council will aim:</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For every District/Circuit to have a contextual strategy (which is both intentional and inclusive) for engagement which enables it to experience God's grace and people share experiences with the whole Connexion.</li> <li>• To be a Church which is present lovingly serving the areas in most need.</li> <li>• To ensure all people are safe in the Church and communities we seek to serve.</li> </ul>	
<b>With the following as immediate priorities:</b>	<b>Update</b>
To develop a strategy for evangelism and discipleship for those less well served by reason of race or class – including taking forward the work of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Committee in relation to 'The Unfinished Agenda'.	Deacon Eunice Attwood has been appointed as the new Church at the Margins Officer and, with the Revd Matt Finch, Pioneering and Planting Officer, will oversee the launch and embedding of this section of the Evangelism and Growth strategy. The Methodist Pioneering Pathway is being overhauled to include, among other significant changes, EDI and antiracism training for those on the pathway.
To continue to support the growth of the language, cultural and national Fellowship Groups.	A residential meeting for representatives of the Fellowship Groups took place in January and included a session on the Methodist Way of Life. The Assistant Ecumenical Officer will be consulting Chairs of District at their meeting in March as the programme of work is developed.
To continue with the growth of 3Generate as a significant engagement in the discipleship journey of children and young people, paying particular attention to those places where young people are most excluded. This will include encouragement of the Year of Testimony initiative.	Our first 3Generate Influencer Day took place at the NEC in Birmingham exploring vision and content, hearing feedback on current plans and topics to consider further. We are also introducing a satellite group system where we engage groups locally in developing the content and facilitation of sessions at the event. 45 groups including some Fellowship Groups have signed up. Our new venue at the NEC is more accessible. We are developing the 3Generate Reps programme to incorporate a younger age range and Agents of Change programme based around vocation and social action to support discipleship development. This year's theme will be '2020 Vision'. The 3Generate Reps and Youth President are launching a Prayer Tour for children and young people to lead up to 3Generate 2020.
<b>6. Social Holiness</b>	
<b>The Council's task:</b> to resource work and programmes which then transform our society and communities to embody the Kingdom of God through living out our social holiness; offering loving acts of justice and service to all and challenging injustice wherever we see it.	

**Therefore the Council will aim:**

- To have resources ways for Circuits and Districts to be a significant voice and proactive participant in communities throughout the Connexion; working with others to bring transformation for the sake of the Gospel. This includes our ongoing work to challenge injustice by engaging on public issues for the sake of the whole community.

<b>With the following as immediate priorities:</b>	<b>Update</b>
<p>To continue to develop partnerships which look to a wide range of individuals and groups (including ecumenical partners) whom we can be in mission with together (including Mission and Ministry in Covenant).</p>	<p>Resources are being prepared by the media team to encourage engagement with the Covenant in local communities.</p> <p>The Ecumenical Officers continue to support the development of a wide range of partnerships encouraging flexibility of approach in order to support mission together.</p> <p>Those from other churches who serve in Local Ecumenical Partnerships were invited to attend a “Welcome to Methodism Day” in February. This was well received and will be repeated annually.</p>
<p>To commit to a key number of issues where we want to act as a prophetic voice.</p>	<p>The Churches which are members of JPIT have continued to work on the six priority areas identified for work in 2019/20. This has included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Responses to Britain’s Exit from the EU on 31 January, including an ecumenical statement ahead of Brexit and a letter to European partners from the four JPIT denominations, translated into 7 European languages.</li> <li>• Working with Global Relationships on developing and implementing a strategy for the COP26 Methodist Campaign, funding by the World Mission Fund. Six young adult global workers will be appointed, including two in the UK (Interviews held in March).</li> <li>• Providing briefings for interfaith partners meeting government COP26 unit members.</li> <li>• Attending a St George’s House interfaith consultation on Climate Change among the religions.</li> <li>• Involvement in faith group organisation in advance of UN COP26 in Glasgow November 2020, including co-ordination of an ecumenical Climate Sunday to take place on 6 September.</li> <li>• Lent resources have been produced for the ecumenical ‘Living Lent’ campaign, focusing on climate justice.</li> <li>• The JPIT monthly faith in politics podcast focussed on International Development and the House of Lords, featuring Sir Desmond Swayne and Bishop Sarah Mullally.</li> </ul> <p>JPIT National Conference 2020, Renewal and Rebellion: Faith, Economy and Climate, is taking place on Saturday 7 March with 300 participants.</p>

For the Committees of the Council and the Connexional Team to strengthen their engagement with MHA, Action for Children and All We Can; remembering their heritage but also our shared hope in a brave new world.	The Secretary of the Conference ensures joint conversations within the ‘family’ as well as encouraging bilateral working where possible.
To ensure our Grants processes (particularly Mission in Britain Grants and Methodist Action on Poverty and Justice Grants) enable work in the hardest to reach places.	In autumn 2019, the Connexional Grants Committee (CGC) awarded £730,000 to British mission projects, out of a budget of £2.39m. New work that was funded included new missional communities and embedded outreach workers, table-top gaming evangelism, and support for deprived communities. The remainder of the Mission in Britain budget will be available for the March grants round, when property grant applications will also be considered

### Evangelism: Making more followers of Jesus Christ

7. Evangelism	
<b>The Council’s task:</b> to equip and give confidence to the Methodist people to share the Gospel of Christ with those in our local communities so as to lead people to making a personal commitment to Christ.	
<b>Therefore the Council will aim:</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To have made decisions which have contributed towards the priority of having halted the fall in numbers of Methodist worshippers in our Districts (reducing the rate of decline in membership).</li> <li>• To have developed the mechanisms to further embed ‘Fresh Expressions’ as important components in contextual missional engagement.</li> <li>• To have concentrated resources where we are, or can be strong, accepting this means we will not be present in all places.</li> </ul>	
With the following as Immediate Priorities:	Update
To have provided the resources and momentum for Districts to establish credible strategies for growth and increased evangelism	A developed, programmed draft of the <i>God For All</i> strategy, which includes several areas pertaining to this Immediate Priority, is before this meeting of the Council for discussion and approval.
Each church, Circuit and District to have in place a ‘Mission Plan’ to underpin the future direction of work, including deployment of personnel and use of reserves.	26 of the 30 Districts have submitted Mission Plans. A developed, programmed draft of the <i>God For All</i> strategy, which includes several areas pertaining to this Immediate Priority, is before this meeting of the Council for discussion and approval.
To evaluate gaps in our apologetic resources to ensure the Church has access to the best resources possible.	Following the development, production, and dissemination of key print and digital evangelistic and apologetic resources, the Evangelism and Growth Team is now seeking to appoint an Evangelism and Contemporary Culture Officer. This role aims to help equip the Church for apologetic and evangelistic engagement and to be a public communicator, advocate, and catalyst for evangelistic and theological engagement with contemporary events, stories, and questions – including the arts, pop culture, and political life – helping the Methodist Church to listen, learn

	and articulate a relevant Gospel message from a distinctively Methodist perspective.
<b>8. One Mission</b>	
<p><b>The Council's task:</b> to be celebrating and playing a full part in the global community of Methodists (eg the World Methodist Council and European Methodist Council) for the sake of transformation of the world through the sharing of the gospel, and being a confident Church acting prophetically in our own Connexion with ecumenical and other partners.</p> <p>A world transformed by God's love;  A confident Church motivated to share God's love;  A people celebrating being part of a worldwide family.</p> <p>[Vision Statement for Mission, adopted by the 2012 Conference DR 3/16]</p>	
<p><b>Therefore the Council will aim:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To ensure that the Mission in Britain Fund and the World Mission Fund are both serving the needs of local communities and global partners.</li> <li>• To be more aware in all the work of the Council of the variety of languages and cultures that make up our own Church.</li> <li>• To have worked with partners such as All We Can to build capacity in partner churches around the world.</li> </ul>	
<b>With the following as immediate priorities:</b>	<b>Update</b>
To continue to realise and grow the Strategy for Global Relationships.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A new Latin American Church CAN project is being explored and there is an ongoing visit to the work in the Church of North India.</li> <li>• Funding has been released and work is progressing for the COP26 project in conjunction with JPIT, Children Youth and Families and All We Can to employ a team of six young adults with a global make up, supported by our Partner Churches. This global group will focus on COP26, interact, visit and create a campaign to engage with Methodist people and partners around the globe</li> <li>• The first pilots of the Global Mission Fellows (GMF) programme in Britain are coming to an end. They have been successful and placement sites are hoping to continue with the programme. The GMF programme is being widely promoted with young adults from the Methodist Church in Britain.</li> <li>• The Encounter Worldwide programme will be having a selection day for new applications in March with starts in September and December 2020 in mind.</li> <li>• A ministerial sabbatical placement was made to the Church of North India, Diocese of Delhi. Two other sabbatical applications are in process.</li> </ul>
Continued work to ensure the 'Fellowship Groups' are understood as a modern day expressions of societies of the Methodist Church and support them accordingly.	The Assistant Ecumenical Officer has continued to work with the Fellowship Groups including addressing particular organisational issues.



	<p>The team is working with the United Methodist Church to facilitate conversation with Methodists who identify as UMC congregations in the UK.</p>
<p>To identify the links which will be nurtured and led by each District around the world with particular focus on Europe.</p>	<p>Monies and advice are available for each District to facilitate a visit from a partner church that will help progress a strategic mission goal of the District and encourage twinning. A policy for sending representatives of the British Connexion to partner churches has been drawn up and the nurturing of district links is now a key element in deciding representation. The Director of Global Relationships has met the Chairs of District to discuss and encourage twinning and a number of conversations to match districts and partners are ongoing as a result.</p>