

Ministries Committee report to the Council 2019

Contact Name and Details	The Revd Dr Andrew D Wood, Chair of the Committee andrew.wood4@btopenworld.com
Action Required	Decision
Resolutions	<p>39/1. The Council receives the report.</p> <p>39/2. The Council adopts the revised Terms of Reference of the Ministries Committee and recommends to the Conference that SO 32A1(2)(iii) be amended as follows:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Developing and supporting the Church's structures, <i>partnerships</i> and resources for learning, training, <i>quality assurance</i>, scholarship, research and development;</p> <p>39/3. The Council adopts the revised Terms of Reference for the Cliff College Committee.</p> <p>39/4. The Council directs that the Faith and Order Committee review the particular duties of Church Stewards as set out in Standing Order 634 in the context of <i>Ministry in the Methodist Church</i> and recommend a redrafted Standing Order to the 2020 Conference.</p> <p>39/5. The Council directs the Ministries Committee to assume responsibility for the Necessitous Local Preachers' Fund.</p> <p>39/6. The Council recommends to the Conference that the terms of reference of the Ministries Committee Manses Group be amended to read (i) a former Chair of District (chair).</p> <p>39/7. The Council appoints the Revd Jennifer A Impey as chair of the Ministries Committee Manses Group.</p>

Summary of Content

Subject and Aims	To bring the Methodist Council up to date with the work of the Ministries Committee.
Main Points	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Learning Institutions • New Places for New People - reports on developments in Fresh Expressions and Pioneer Ministry. • Lay Ministries • Matters relating to Ordained Ministries

Introduction

1. The Ministries Committee is accountable through the Methodist Council to the Conference for:
 - (i) developing and supporting the processes relating to the oversight, accountability and professional development of those engaged in the ministries and offices of the Church;
 - (ii) developing and supporting programmes for nourishing, equipping and resourcing those engaged in the ministries and offices of the Church;
 - (iii) developing and supporting the Church's structures and resources for learning, training, scholarship, research and development;

(iv) in collaboration with other bodies, supporting the development of structures that enable the use of various forms of ministry as resources for mission within Circuits and Districts;
(v) overseeing connexional policy regarding its ordained ministries, including that relating to the processes for offering as a candidate, the oversight of students and probationers, and stationing, but without adjudicating on individual cases, which shall remain the task of the bodies appointed to fulfil that responsibility. (SO 32A1(2))

To that end the Ministries Committee has met twice since the 2018 Conference. The Committee determined in the light of its workload to adapt its pattern of meeting and to meet in September, February (24 hours) and May.

2. The Committee reflected on the additional responsibilities that had been allocated to it with the disbanding of the Network Committee and the ways in which its work had developed since its inception in 2011. It therefore proposes revised terms of reference as follows:

Revised Terms of Reference of the Ministries Committee

The Ministries Committee will be appointed by the Conference and will meet three times per year, one of those meetings will be a two day residential.

Membership

1. In accordance with Standing Order 32A0, the Ministries Committee will consist of no fewer than 12 and no more than 14 persons, including the Secretary of the Conference who shall act as convener, and a chair and a deputy chair of the committee. As far as possible the members of the committee between them represent the interests of:
 - the ordained and lay ministries and offices of the Church, including local preachers and stewards;
 - the Ministerial Candidates Selection Committee and the Ministerial Candidates and Probationers Oversight Committee and the Stationing Committee.
2. The committee may invite such other observers or consultants, from within and beyond the Connexional Team, as appropriate.

General Responsibilities.

3. In accordance with Standing Order 32A1, the Ministries Committee shall report to the Methodist Council to enable the Church to develop and maintain a strategic vision for the use of ordained, accredited, commissioned and informal ministries and offices throughout the Connexion.
4. The committee shall be accountable to the Conference through the council for:
 - 4.1 Developing and supporting the processes relating to the oversight, accountability and professional development of those engaged in the ministries and offices of the Church;
 - 4.2 Developing and supporting programmes for nourishing, equipping and resourcing those engaged in the ministries and offices of the Church;
 - 4.3 Developing and supporting the Church's structures, **partnerships** and resources for learning, training, **quality assurance**, scholarship, research and development;
 - 4.4 In collaboration with other bodies, supporting the development of structures that enable the use of various forms of ministry as resources for mission within Circuits and Districts;

- 4.5 Overseeing connexional policy regarding its ordained ministries, including that relating to the processes for offering as a candidate, the oversight of students and probationers, and stationing, but without adjudicating on individual cases, which shall remain the task of the bodies appointed to fulfil that responsibility.
 5. The committee may, in consultation with the Methodist Council, report to the Conference on matters of policy or process requiring the attention of the Conference that have been identified by the committee or by the Ministerial Candidates Selection Committee, the Ministerial Candidates and Probationers Oversight Committee, the Stationing Advisory Committee or the Stationing Committee.
 6. The committee shall recommend to the Conference, through the council, selection criteria for adoption under Standing Order 710A and, as required, amendments to those criteria.
 7. In accordance with Standing Order 32A2, the committee may convene resource groups and may recommend to the Connexional Team or the Methodist Council the establishment of other relevant bodies and consultations. In particular, the committee receives reports from the Fellowships Subcommittee and the Fresh Expressions Guiding Team.
 8. The committee appoints the oversight group for Ministers of Other Conferences and Churches (see resolution 27/12, recommendation 5, of the 2017 Conference).
 9. The committee reports to the Council on the partnership between the Methodist Church in Britain (MCB) and the Queen's Foundation under an agreement which it will have seen and discussed, **including processes of communication, accountability and quality assurance**. It will receive an annual report from the Principal and/or Governors of the Queen's Foundation on the academic pathways that it administers and any other matters relating to the partnership agreement and will be advised on policy by the Director of Methodist Formation.
 10. The committee keeps in view the relationship between the MCB and Cliff College which will be under an agreement which it will have seen and discussed. It will receive ~~regular~~ **annual** reports from the Principal of the college who will advise the committee on matters of policy.
 11. The committee shall keep in view the use of resources that are deployed to deliver learning for ministry across the Connexion and particularly encourage the articulation of the work of the Learning Network with that of the learning institutions.
 12. The committee will review the work of the Regional Forums (by receiving ~~annual~~ reports from the Director of Regions) **at a time to be agreed by the Ministries Committee**.
3. The Committee reports on its work in four sections.
 - Learning Institutions - picks up the additional responsibilities that the Committee has inherited for Cliff College and the Queen's Foundation following the disbanding of the Network Committee. It also offers the Committee's response to the amended reply to Memorial 2 from the 2018 Conference on Local Training and its continuing response to the proposals of the Training Review as requested by the Conference.
 - New Places for New People - reports on developments in Fresh Expressions and Pioneer Ministry.
 - Lay Ministries

- Matters relating to Ordained Ministries

The Learning Institutions

4. Amongst the Ministries Committee's new responsibilities is reporting on the relationship with The Queen's Foundation and Cliff College. The Committee has reviewed a draft partnership agreement with The Queen's Foundation which was commended to the Strategy and Resources Committee (SRC). The SRC expressed some hesitation about the arrangements which resulted in further conversations between the Chair of the Governors of Queen's and the Secretary of the Conference. The Committee expects to be updated on progress in May.
5. The Committee has also considered a further strengthening of the relationship with the Cliff College Committee, noting that:
 - The College would benefit from wider advocacy and knowledge of its work across the Connexion and from the appointment of a Chair widely known throughout the Methodist Church and with wide experience of its life and structures. It is recommended, therefore, that in future the Chair of the Cliff College Committee should normally be a former President or Vice-President of the Conference.
 - The College would also benefit from closer integration with the work of the Ministries Committee which in turn would benefit from someone on the committee, in addition to the Principal (who sits on the Ministries Committee as a consultant), who understands the wider governance and strategic context of the College. It is recommended a member of the Ministries Committee be included in the membership of the Cliff College Committee.
 - Governance relationships would be further strengthened by an appointment of an additional member of the Methodist Council to the Cliff College Committee. It is recommended that an additional clause be added to the Terms of Reference of the Cliff College Committee, 'a member of the Methodist Council'.
 - Clause 2.2(ii) of the Terms of Reference allows for a Connexional Team member from the 'Discipleship and Ministries Learning Network' to attend governing body meetings as a participant observer. Given changes to the Connexional Team, in particular the creation of a new Discipleship and Evangelism cluster replacing Discipleship and Ministries and the new responsibilities of the Conference Office for the governance of centres, it would make sense to increase this number to two to include both the Head of Discipleship and Evangelism and the Director of Learning for Ministry.

The Ministries Committee was content with these proposals and recommends that the Terms of Reference of the Cliff Committee¹ be amended accordingly as follows:

Revised Terms of Reference for the Cliff College Committee (cf [MC/15/68])

Standing Order 341

The Methodist Council shall appoint the Cliff College Committee to serve as the governing body of the college. The council and the committee shall maintain, administer and develop the work of the college in all its aspects in accordance with their respective powers under the trusts applying to the college and its associated property and funds.

¹ MC/15/68

Cliff College and its associated property and funds, is held upon the trusts of two deeds dated the 30 December 1903 and 30 November 1930.

1. Roles and Responsibilities

- 1.1 The Methodist Council has delegated responsibility for maintaining, administering and developing the work of the college to the Cliff College Committee (the committee);
- 1.2 The committee shall exercise such managing trustee responsibilities and duties as delegated to it by the Methodist Council. The managing trustee duties shall include but are not limited to:
 - (i) Ensuring compliance with SO 930
 - (ii) Ensuring the fulfilment of all legal requirements;
 - (iii) Ensuring adequate insurance;
 - (iv) Ensuring the premises are used only in accordance with the relevant trust provisions;
 - (v) Ensuring any properties are maintained and kept in good repair;
- 1.3 The committee shall make recommendations to the Strategy and Resources Committee of the Methodist Council in respect of any disposal or mortgage of any property or part of any property for which the committee has been delegated managing trusteeship by the Council;
- 1.4 The committee shall report annually to the Methodist Council on their fulfilment of their managing trustee responsibilities;
- 1.5 The committee shall annually approve a budget for Cliff College;
- 1.6 The committee shall annually approve the accounts and annual return for Cliff College;
- 1.7 The committee shall be accountable to the ~~Network~~ **Ministries** Committee for the utilisation of the resources provided to the College from the Central Services Budget of the Methodist Church;
- 1.8 The committee shall ~~regularly~~ report **annually** to the ~~Network~~ **Ministries** Committee on work Cliff College has been instructed to undertake on behalf of the Discipleship and ~~Ministries~~ **Evangelism** Learning Network;
- 1.9 The committee shall undertake such other tasks as the Council may delegate to the committee.

2. Meetings

- 2.1 The committee will meet not less than three times per year;
- 2.2 Observers
 - (i) The committee may invite such observers or consultants as it considers necessary
 - (ii) The senior members of staff from Cliff College with responsibility for academic programmes and finance, along with the Student President or their representative, and a **two** Connexional Team members from the **with responsibility for** Discipleship and ~~Ministries~~ **Evangelism** Learning Network **and learning for ministry** shall all be participant observers at open meetings of the committee;
- 2.3 The Chair shall appoint a convener of the committee;
- 2.4 The convener of the committee shall be responsible, following consultation with the Chair, for circulating an agenda prior to each meeting;

2.5 The convenor shall be responsible for ensuring minutes are taken at each meeting and those minutes circulated to all members of the committee, the Chair of the ~~Network~~ **Ministries** Committee and the Chair of the Methodist Council.

3. Membership

3.1 The Methodist Council shall annually appoint the committee;

3.2 The committee shall take nominations with reasoned statements to the Methodist Council each year;

3.3 The committee will comprise:

(i) A Chair of the Committee **who shall normally be a former President or Vice-President of the Conference**

(ii) A Vice-Chair of the Committee

(iii) A ~~person nominated by the Network Committee~~ **member of the Ministries Committee**

(iv) **A Member of the Methodist Council**

~~(v)~~(v) The Principal of Cliff College

~~(vi)~~(vi) Up to five other persons who have skills and experiences that would benefit the Committee.'

3.4 It is envisaged that the Vice-Chair shall be assisted by one other person, appointed under sub-para 3(c)~~(v)~~(vi), in fulfilling their responsibilities between meetings of the committee;

3.5 The committee shall ensure as far as possible the diversity of the Methodist Church is reflected when considering nominations;

3.6 The committee shall consider the skills and experience required for the business of the committee when making nominations;

3.7 The committee shall ensure, as far as possible, that the nominated members include one person with legal expertise, one person with surveyor or property management expertise one person with financial expertise, one person with academic expertise and one person with ecumenical experience;

3.8 All appointments to the committee shall be for a period of three years with an extension of up to **a further** three years;

3.9 A person can be appointed for a further one year term, when a person has been a member of the committee for six continuous years or more, where 75% of the committee members present at a meeting vote to support the nomination for an additional term.

4. Amendments

The terms of reference shall be amended only with the consent of the Methodist Council.

6. The Committee has asked both Cliff College and The Queen's Foundation to report to it annually at its first meeting of the connexional year. This will give an opportunity for reflection on the previous academic year and enable early identification of areas that require work in the course of the year. The Principal [and some of the governors] of the Queen's Foundation will be invited to be present for that discussion; the Principal of Cliff College is, in any case, a consultant to the Ministries Committee.

7. The Conference adopted an amended reply to Memorial 2.

M2 Local options for ministerial training

The Cumbria District Synod, Representative Session (Present: 76; Voting: 74 for, 0 against) wishes to express its gratitude for the work undertaken by the Faith and Order Committee since memorial M3 of 2017. The Synod would however like to express its deep concern that no additional work has been undertaken in relation to the encouragement of the Methodist people to consider vocational exploration for self-supporting ministry and appropriate options for training for such ministry at a time where many Districts are facing a shortage of ministers.

The Synod believes that the Mission and Ministry in Covenant report offers a timely opportunity for the Conference to consider how Methodism may benefit from a form of ministry that is so widely used by our Anglican colleagues through their non-stipendiary ministers. At a time when the numbers offering for Methodist ministry are so worryingly low we believe that there is a great deal to learn from the Church of England and the increase in candidates that they are seeing. In addition, the Synod strongly believes that local training is an important part of this imbalance in Methodist/Anglican ministry statistics.

The Synod therefore asks the Conference to:

- (a) Instruct the Ministries Committee to explore the possibility of a trial whereby Cumbrian candidates for ordained ministry be allowed to train with their Anglican colleagues on the Common Awards Scheme training run by Cumbria Christian Learning.*
- (b) Instruct the Discipleship, Ministries and Learning Network/Ministries Committee, in light of the Faith and Order report to the 2018 Conference, to prepare material encouraging the Methodist people to consider the vocational opportunities offered by self-supporting ministry.*

Reply

The Conference is grateful to the Cumbria District Synod and understands the urgency with which it believes that this issue needs to be addressed. The memorial touches on a number of pieces of business that are to be considered by this Conference. Mission and Ministry in Covenant invites us to explore areas that relate to the mutual recognition of ordained ministries; Ministry in the Methodist Church asks the Church to consider the role of the ordained within the ministry of the whole people of God and raises questions about our understanding of itinerancy in the 21st century; the report of the Methodist Council in response to the Review of Training considers whether or not initial ministerial training could or should be offered in more than one institution. The view of the Ministries Committee is that the low numbers of accepted candidates make it inappropriate to make any immediate change in the number of institutions through which initial formation is offered. The report on initial ministerial training the Ministries Committee presented to the Conference includes details on the non-residential training options that are open to accepted candidates.

The Conference accepts the first of the requests and directs the Ministries Committee to consider a possible pilot or pilots for training on local common award scheme courses, and how such training may be integrated with the Queen's Connexional Course.

The Conference is also aware of the changes in the Connexional Team that have been reported to the Council and which include the creation of the Ministries: Vocations and Worship Team. That team is already engaged in producing material to encourage members of the Church to consider a call to ordained ministry and that should include

encouragement to those who see their call as local and self-supporting to explore that with others and to offer for ministry in ways that are already open to them (as outlined in the response to memorials M2 and M3 in 2017). The Conference therefore accepts the second part of the memorial and directs the Ministries Committee to report to the Council in 2019 on the progress that has been made in this area.

8. The Committee was directed to consider a possible pilot or pilots for accepted candidates to train with Anglican colleagues on a local ministry training programme within Common Awards and how it might be integrated with the Queen's Connexional Course. Detailed work uncovered the difficulties that such a pilot would create with the Office for Students.
 - Any student doing Common Awards must be registered with a single Theological Education Institution (TEI) at any given time. Students can, however, transfer from one TEI to another TEI during their programme, with the permission of Common Awards. The experience of The Queen's Foundation is that this not as easy as it sounds. The Cumbrian Learning would need to be mapped against the programmes at Queen's; only if they match in terms of learning outcomes can the credits be transferred. Since programmes vary considerably between TEIs, getting a match is difficult and the likelihood is that some or many of the credits cannot be transferred.
 - It is also possible for a student registered at one TEI to remain registered at that TEI while taking modules at another – as long as both TEIs agree, and Common Awards approve the arrangement. In such cases the home TEI remains responsible for the student's overall programme. Common Awards framework makes this possible in most cases, although TEIs are responsible for what Common Awards admit are sometimes messy practicalities and the financial arrangements.
 - The independent regulator for Higher Education (The Office for Students) has to be informed as to which institution a student belongs. A student cannot be a member of multiple institutions to complete their award. Therefore if the student were a Queen's student Queen's would have to 'designate' the venue and the programme at another TEI as 'theirs'. The Office for Students (OfS) would scrutinise carefully this kind of arrangement because they know it increases risk for a student and it would be a 'red flag' against Queen's on their monitoring system which increases their risks considerably. In essence Queen's would be responsible for what was taught at Cumbria and for their quality, which potentially would put strain between the two institutions.
9. The Committee concluded that the risks involved for both The Queen's Foundation and the Methodist Church as the funding institution outweighed any benefit that a pilot might offer and therefore recommends that at this point no further exploration of a pilot is undertaken. In making this response, the Committee noted the value of the Circuit Based Learning Pathway which enables a student to undertake a significant part of her/his training in a circuit close to her/his home and was pleased to learn that this is being widely promoted and that students are identified at an early stage.
10. The Committee noted the desire of the Conference to see opportunities for self-supporting ordained ministry more widely supported and recognised that this needed to form part of the Vocations Strategy. The Exploring Ordained Ministries days and conversations with District Candidates' Secretaries will be used to ensure that all candidates are aware both that it is possible to candidate with limited deployability and that ministers are not obliged to accept a stipend.
11. As part of its continued reflection on the Training Review, the Committee considered the recommendation that initial ministerial formation (IMF) be a year longer than at present. The Committee was alert to the range of pathways that students pursue and to the way in which the Ministerial Candidates and Probationers Oversight Committee (MCPOC) has enabled those students who would benefit from an extra year to extend their training, and concluded that the benefits of a longer course as normative are not apparent. The Committee therefore encouraged

the Queen's Foundation and MCPOC to continue its policy of flexibility in allocations and welcomed the clearer assertions which are now made in candidating material and conversations with the Queen's Foundation that there are reasons why IMF might be extended by a year.

New Places for New People

CIEMAL Programme

12. The Ministries Committee in September 2017 considered the proposal for a scheme to invite mission partners from the Methodist Churches who are part of the Council of Evangelical Methodist Churches in Latin America and the Caribbean (CIEMAL) to work with circuits or districts to help to revitalise their evangelism. The Ministries Committee suggested that a pilot might be run.
13. The Committee was therefore pleased to hear of progress in the Newcastle district with the support of the World Church Relationships Office and the Global Relationships Strategic Oversight Sub-committee to run a pilot.

Pioneers and Fresh Expressions

14. The Committee was directed by the 2018 Conference [Resolution 32/6] "to continue to give attention to pioneer ministry and to ensure that there is a gathering of learning and opportunities for collaborative reflection on questions of practice, policy and theology". It was therefore pleased to learn that, although the funding stream of Venture FX is coming to its end, two VFX projects (in Edinburgh and Kidderminster) will continue in different ways, that the VFX practitioners continue to hold learning and support days, organised by the practitioners themselves, and are exploring together how the experiences of VFX can inform future mission and especially the Methodist Pioneering Pathways, and that one of the first publications for the relaunched *Cliff College Publishing* brand will be a volume of theological reflections on the Venture FX experience.
15. The Fresh Expressions Community gatherings have grown in size with 70-100 people attending and are a very useful clearing house for sharing a lot of developments that are taking place across the ecumenical pioneering community.
16. The Methodist Pioneering Pathways (MPP) continues to grow and now constitutes 64 pioneers with one application in process. This is remarkable growth considering the very limited publicity that the scheme has received. Each region has a community of practice to support the pioneers and training is adapted to each pioneer's specific needs. The Cliff College short course on pioneering is well used by this programme. Each pioneer is allocated a coach and work has taken place this year to establish a short course on '*Coaching Christian Leaders*' at Cliff College to better equip them. The regional communities of practice work in different ways and many of them are cooperating with other ecumenical pioneer gatherings.
17. Having appointed the Fresh Expressions Guiding Team, the Committee was supportive of a suggestion that, given the similar objectives of it and the MPP Implementation Group, the work of these two groups might be brought together in one guiding team so that a more coherent strategy can be developed for the 'new places for new people' work.

Lay Ministries

Church Stewards

18. The 2018 Conference passed Notice of Motion 109 directing the Ministries Committee to conduct a review of Standing Orders pertaining to church stewards and to bring any proposed amendments to the 2019 Conference.

19. It seems premature to suggest amendments to Standing Order 633. Standing Order 634, however, is more prescriptive and the Committee agreed that it no longer fits the practice or the need in many places. The Committee therefore asks that the Faith and Order Committee examine it in the context of their discussions on local leadership and that any changes to the SO should then be recommended to the 2020 Conference. The Committee identified three critical tasks that the church steward should undertake but were minded that the responsibility was to “ensure that” the other work is done. The Committee recognised that more significant and fundamental work needs to be done within the ‘Ministry in the Methodist Church’ conversations in relation to the work of the church steward. The Ministries: Vocations and Worship team will produce a new Handbook for Church Stewards which explores the vocational aspect of this ministry, the significance of leadership in the local church, and the particular duties listed in the Standing Order, once this is articulated.

Supporting Lay Ministry

20. The Committee continues to consider how effective support can be offered for accredited local lay ministry and is pleased that progress has been made towards an apprenticeship standard for lay people who have significant roles in the life of the church. The committee received a paper in September 2016 on the potential opportunities associated with the government’s introduction of the Apprenticeship Levy. Since that date the Ministries Committee has been kept up to date on the progress of an Apprenticeship Standard for Church Ministry (both lay and ordained), which is being developed by several ecumenical partners including the Methodist Church. The Committee received a paper in February 2019 providing a brief overview of the current state of play, identifying some internal areas of work which will need to be undertaken by the Methodist Church, and providing copies of draft documentation for information. The Church Ministry Apprenticeship Standard will give opportunities to the church to enable people to explore ministry and study for an apprenticeship degree. The standard has been benchmarked against the Common Awards (validated by the University of Durham) and Cliff College (validated by the University of Manchester) is developing a degree programme.
21. It is hoped to run apprenticeships from September 2020. In order to enable this to happen, there are some tasks which the Ministries: Vocations and Worship (M:V&W) Team will need to oversee – given that M:V&W is currently understaffed, these tasks may need to be undertaken by someone external to the team. The key tasks which remain to be completed are as follows:
- A guidance document for local churches, circuits and districts on developing apprenticeship appointments, contracts and links to training providers.
 - Work with the HR Team on revisions to the Lay Employment pack so that the materials are updated to include a section on apprenticeships.
 - Consistent communication and engagement in several forms (eg mailings, website, Superintendents Conferences, Chairs Meeting) to ensure local churches and circuits are aware of the opportunities.
22. The Committee also hopes that the apprenticeship standard might offer opportunities for lay people to test out a vocation to ordained ministry through work in a circuit.

Local Preachers

23. The Ministries Committee has:
- Seen and commented on a draft of an annual service at which Local Preachers are invited to reaffirm the promises made at admission.
 - Seen guidance on the new peer review and guidelines for Local Preachers’ meetings.
 - Considered the needs of the Chinese congregations and the complexity of translating Worship: Leading and Preaching. It has therefore given permission for anyone exploring

ministry as a Local Preacher within the Chinese work to be permitted to train on the Mandarin Translation of *Faith and Worship* by Hazel Yu beyond March 2021.

- Received a report from the Local Preacher and Worship leader Studies Board proposing a change to its terms of reference for the Board of Studies. At present, the Board of Studies is asked to report directly to the Council but both the Board and the Ministries Committee have agreed that this creates a confusing overlap of responsibilities which would be clarified if the Board were to report to the Ministries Committee. The Committee agreed to consider further changes to the Terms of Reference² in consultation with the Studies Board.

Necessitous Local Preachers' Fund (NLPF)

24. This fund was formed in 1940 from the merger of three pre-existing funds designed to support local preachers in need and there are no remaining trustees. There is no longer a Connexional Local Preachers' Committee, so it would appear that the responsibility could be transferred to the Ministries Committee. Permission is therefore sought from the Methodist Council for the Committee to assume responsibility for the Fund on behalf of the Council. At present, the Fund is administered by the Leaders of Worship and Preachers' Trust (LWPT) and the Committee asked the Assistant Secretary of the Conference to meet LWPT to discuss future arrangements and to report back and to work with the Law and Polity Committee on the appointment of the Trustees, suggesting that two should be members of the Ministries Committee.

Matters relating to Ordained Ministries

Candidates

25. The Committee recognised the huge amount of work that goes into our processes for discerning who is called to ordained ministry in the life of the Church. These processes are subject to constant revision and improvement. The Committee received reports from the Ministerial Candidates' Selection Committee on the integration of the new criteria (2016) into all the paperwork and interviews.
26. The 2018 Conference referred to the Committee Memorial M1.

M1 Local ordained ministry

The Sutton (35/39) Circuit Meeting (Present: 30; Voting: unanimous) notices that there is a significant number of lay people in many Circuits who feel called to local ordained ministry, often non-stipendiary, and a lack of itinerant presbyters for stationing, and recognises that God may be challenging us to respond to this. It asks the Conference to act with urgency to select, train and ordain the people God is calling to the ministry that God's mission is demanding.

Reply

The Conference thanks the Sutton Circuit Meeting for its memorial and for the affirmation that there are significant numbers of people feeling a call to ordained ministry in their local context.

Although the Methodist Church in Britain does not offer avenues through selection specifically for those offering for ordained local ministry, non-stipendiary ministry or self-supporting ministry, the Church welcomes offers from those who feel called to presbyteral ministry but also called to remain in their locality. In the candidating process, a Superintendent has a conversation with the candidate to establish "what might reasonably be expected of the candidate's future availability for stationing and the terms

² MC/15/88

and conditions of service under which she or he might serve” (Standing Order 710(3)(b)). Where a candidate indicates that that availability might be severely limited, the Circuit and District are asked to consider offering in outline a proposal to station the accepted candidate locally at the end of her or his initial training. It is worth also noting that under Standing Order 801(6) ministers can elect not to receive a stipend.

As part of the response to a similar memorial in 2011, the Ministries Committee was asked by the Conference to review these questions. The Ministries Committee agreed that this discussion should form part of the Faith and Order Committee’s work on Ministry in the Methodist Church which is reported to this year’s Conference. It is clear that in a number of places there are people who feel that God is calling them to ordained ministry but also to remain where they are. That feeling, however, is not the end of the discernment process and sometimes in the testing of a sense of call a different attitude to itinerancy emerges. The report on Ministry in the Methodist Church identifies some of the issues that need to be explored as this discernment continues, not only in the life of the individual but by the whole Church as we reflect on our understanding of the ministry of the people of God.

The Conference therefore declines this memorial but asks the Ministries Committee to continue to bear in mind the issues raised in this memorial in the light of the Ministry in the Methodist Church report.

The Conference is also aware of the changes in the Connexional Team that have been reported to the Methodist Council and which include the creation of the Ministries: Vocations and Worship Team. That team is already engaged in producing material to encourage members of the Church to consider a call to ordained ministry and that should include encouragement to those who see their call as local and self-supporting to explore that with others and to offer for ministry in ways that are already open to them (as outlined in the response to memorials M2 and M3 in 2017). The Conference therefore refers the content of this memorial to the Ministries Committee, directing it to report to the Council in 2019 on the progress that has been made in this area.

27. The Committee received a brief report on a piece of research that will explore the reasons why some of those who consider candidating do not go any further. Those responsible for candidates have been clear with Superintendents and others about the possibilities of candidating with limited deployability and non-stipendiary ministry. This will also be apparent in the *Called to Ordained Ministries* days.
28. The Committee received a report from the Ministerial Candidates’ Selection Committee noticing a discrepancy between the guidance given to candidates about the responsibility for submitting the notice of candidature form. The Committee is minded that it is more appropriate for this to be the responsibility of the candidate than the Superintendent and recommends that SO 711(1) be amended accordingly, as follows.

(1) A candidate intending to offer for the diaconate or the presbyterate shall inform the Superintendent of the Circuit and, if different, the presbyter in pastoral charge of the church in which he or she is a member. ~~The Superintendent shall send one completed copy of a notice of candidature form to the secretary of the district Candidates Committee and one to~~ **The candidate shall request a notice of candidature form from** the Connexional Team member responsible for diaconal or presbyteral candidates **and must shall return the form** no later than the date determined by the Ministerial Candidates and Probationers Oversight Committee. The notice of candidature form shall include the assurances and assessment required under Standing Order 710(3)(a) and (b), a statement by the candidate about his or her developing sense of call to the presbyterate or the diaconate, details of his or her present and future financial obligations and resources, and in the case of presbyteral candidates confirmation of his or her standing as a local preacher, **and in the case of a candidate for the**

diaconate confirmation of his or her standing in respect of the training programme as set out in SO 680(1)(ii).

Vocations

29. The Ministries Committee has supported the work to increase the opportunities for people to explore a vocation to ordained ministry, recognising that this is set in broader question about the nature of ministry and the need for all, lay and ordained, to reflect on their vocations.

Manses Group

30. The Committee received a report from the Ministries Committee Manses Subgroup noting that the Revd Alison Tomlin has reached the end of her term of office as its Chair. The Conference had determined that the group should be chaired by a Past President,³ but the group had had no success in the attempt to find a past President of the Conference to replace the current Chair. Reflecting on this, the group suggested that it was not necessary for the chair to be a past President but that it needed someone with an understanding and experience of stationing matching but who is not currently a member of the Stationing Matching Group. It therefore proposed to the Ministries Committee that its terms of reference be changed to read (i) a former Chair of District (chair).
31. With the Council's agreement to the change of the membership, the Ministries Committee nominates the Revd Jennifer Impey to be Chair of the Ministries Committee Manses Group with immediate effect.

Ministers of Other Conferences and Churches

32. The 2017 Conference agreed the establishment of a small oversight group for Ministers of other Conferences and Churches in order to receive reports on the recommendations of the Ministerial Candidates' Selection Committee, the outcomes of initial stationing, the engagement of the Ministerial Coordinator for Oversight of Ordained Ministries with ministers of other Conferences and Churches, and on the supervision of the ministers of other Conferences and Churches. Due to there being no Ministerial Coordinator for Oversight of Ordained Ministries in post in 2017-18, the Ministries Committee delayed appointing this committee.
33. The Ministries Committee in February 2019 appointed Mr John Dilks, The Revd Tony Graff, The Revd Dr Andrew Lunn, The Revd Lansford Penn-Timothy and The Revd Dr Claire Potter to the Oversight Committee of Ministers of Other Churches and Conferences. Dr Olunmi Olayisade will serve as a consultant to this committee on behalf of the World Church Relationships Office. The committee met for the first time in February.
34. The Conference of 2017 adopted a reply to M6 to consider the general issues around ministers serving in other denominations.

M6 Serving another denomination

The Scotland District Synod, Presbyteral Session (Present: 36; Voting: 21 for, 9 against), is grateful for the ecumenical partnerships and working that are now available to us in Scotland and that our Standing Orders allow membership of more than one denomination. We express our sadness however that the procedures for presbyters wishing to serve another denomination (where there would be no requirement for re-ordination) are not being followed by all of our partner denominations and ask that the Ministries Committee collaborate with the appropriate partner denominations to improve the way in which these matters are conducted for a better serving of the present age with a view to reporting to the Conference of 2019.

³ Conference Agenda 2012 p561

Reply

The Conference, like the Presbyteral Session of the Scotland District Synod, is grateful for the ecumenical partnerships in Scotland. It is also grateful that people can be members of the Methodist Church as well as of other Christian communions (Deed of Union, 8(e)(i)).

The Methodist Church has benefitted from the ministry of presbyters and deacons of other conferences and churches in various ways, usually by those individuals being recognised and regarded, authorised to serve, or associate ministers. Some other conferences and churches have their equivalent procedures but there are factors (for example, the way that oversight is exercised or the legal requirements of the nation in which the other church is located) that make reciprocity difficult in some instances. Our procedures for permitting ministers to serve another conference or church are set out in Standing Order 735. It is for each conference or church, including the Methodist Church, to follow its own procedures in these matters and it is desirable that conferences and churches understand each other's procedures and the reasons for them; in this way fruitful ecumenical sharing and learning can take place.

Standing Order 736(1) says, "The Conference shall seek to enter into mutually acceptable arrangements with other conferences and churches as to the well-being and terms of service of and their respective responsibilities for ministers of one conference or church serving for the time being under another." Whilst declining the specific request made in the memorial (as the Conference considers that this relates to the procedures of other denominations), the Conference does recognise that all such arrangements need to be kept under review and directs the Ministries Committee to consider the general issues raised by this memorial and to report to the Conference in 2019.

35. Detailed consideration was given to the question; the Ministries Committee recognised in the light of the *Mission and Ministry in Covenant* proposals and the Covenanted Partnership in Wales that issues about exchange of ministry cannot be separated from broader issues about the relationships between Churches. The committee, therefore, will continue to work with the Connexional Ecumenical Officer to ensure that the wellbeing, terms of service, and respective responsibilities for ministers of one Conference or Church serving in another are considered in the context of meetings between Church leaders and that our information is clear and available to other Churches.

The Committee does not believe that any more detailed reply can be given to M6 (2017)

Fellowships Groups

36. The Committee noted that the Fellowship Groups Subcommittee is now established and received a brief report of this area of work. A fuller report will be made from the subcommittee of the Ministries Committee at their May meeting.

*****RESOLUTIONS**

39/1. The Council receives the report.

39/2. The Council adopts the revised Terms of Reference of the Ministries Committee and recommends to the Conference that SO 32A1(2)(iii) be amended as follows:

Developing and supporting the Church's structures, *partnerships* and resources for learning, training, *quality assurance*, scholarship, research and development;

Paragraph 2

39/3. The Council adopts the revised Terms of Reference for the Cliff College Committee.

Paragraph 5

39/4. The Council directs that the Faith and Order Committee review the particular duties of Church Stewards as set out in Standing Order 634 in the context of *Ministry in the Methodist Church* and recommend a redrafted Standing Order to the 2020 Conference.

Paragraphs 18-19

39/5. The Council directs the Ministries Committee to assume responsibility for the Necessitous Local Preachers' Fund.

Paragraph 24

39/6. The Council recommends to the Conference that the terms of reference of the Ministries Committee Manses Group be amended to read (i) a former Chair of District (chair).

Paragraph 30

39/7. The Council appoints the Revd Jennifer A Impey as chair of the Ministries Committee Manses Group.

Paragraph 31