

8. Methodist Forces Board

Contact name and details	The Revd Chrissie Howe – Secretary of the Methodist Forces Board howec@methodistchurch.org.uk Mr Doug Swanney – Chair of the Methodist Forces Board swanneyd@methodistchurch.org.uk
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1. The level of military activity this year has been quieter than in recent times although there are still British forces deployed in small numbers to several areas of risk which from time to time require chaplaincy support. Chaplaincy in all three services continues to be below ideal capacity.
2. Our complement of chaplains is remarkably stable (with a total of 31 full-time chaplains: 7 Royal Navy, 13 Army, 9 Royal Air Force and 2 full-time Army Reserve chaplains). . This year saw the commission of our first deacon, Jo Critchley, as a RAF chaplain.
3. A full programme of safeguarding training has been delivered. This will be updated as new guidelines apply.
4. The Board is working with the forces chaplains and the heads of the three chaplaincy branches to implement supervision for Methodist forces chaplains.
5. After a long search process, the Board is very pleased to see the appointment of the Revd Chrissie Howe as the Secretary of the Forces Board from 1 January 2019. The Secretary has undertaken a thorough induction programme involving many visits around the country.
6. The Chair was again privileged to accompany the President of the Conference on the annual visit to the Forces, which this year was to the Royal Navy. The President was welcomed to RNAS Culdrose and HMS Devonport and had a number of briefings and searching conversations at these locations. We were glad to welcome the President to the Methodist tri-service Forces Chaplains' Conference at Amport House in February. This was an inspiring and thought-provoking visit which was greatly appreciated. We were also joined for this conference by the Revd Dr John Harrison, Professor at Liverpool John Moores University, to present two sessions on 'Current Issues in Mental Health' and 'Dealing with Clergy Stress', as well as the Revd Dr Jonathan Hustler and Jude Levermore, who led a session on current issues facing the Methodist Church. Dr Hustler also led a session the 'New Vocations Strategy', and it was good to welcome Trey Hall who presented a session on 'Evangelism from Below'.
7. The Board is grateful to the Secretary of the Conference for his attendance at the Guards' Chapel to commemorate one hundred years since the granting of the royal prefix to the Royal Army Chaplains Department.
8. The Forces Board continues to be thankful to the Aldershot Methodist Military Trust for its considerable financial support. It is this provision that has allowed the Board to continue to fund a range of projects including:
 - a children and youth work project within the Aldershot garrison town;
 - two part-time pastoral workers to support the chaplaincy at the tri-service Permanent Joint Headquarters (PJHQ) in Northwood;
 - a full-time community pastoral officer at RAF Benson;
 - a pastoral worker for JITG Chicksands working with Phase 2 trainees;
 - a project for a families' worker at RNAS Culdrose in Cornwall;

- a lay families' worker at RAF Marham; and
- a part-time lay families' worker at RM Poole.

The Board is also hoping to recruit into the extant Families' Worker vacancy at the Defence Academy, Shrivenham.

9. The Projects Officer has provided capacity to explore the potential for new projects by managing this area of work as well as exploring new avenues of service. This has included adapting and publishing a gender-neutral storybook for children who have loved ones serving within the submarine community. The Board has also worked with the Revd Ric Stott to commission artwork based on Army values for use by chaplains. The Board continues to explore work with Circuits with a specific mission to military families.
10. The Board also offers a range of small grants to chaplains for activities within the Forces communities.
11. Following the Methodist Church's signing of the Armed Forces Corporate Covenant the Board is continuing to seek ways of encouraging the Church to express its commitment to our military personnel and their families.
12. The Forces Board continues to express to the Conference its thanks for the prayerful support given to all our chaplains and encourages anyone who would like to know more about Forces Chaplaincy to speak to members of the Board.
13. The Board is grateful for the ongoing diligence and commitment of its Secretary to the ministries of the chaplains and the Board.
14. Members of the Methodist Forces Board for 2019/2020 will be: the Revds John Alderdice, David Barrett, William Gates, Chrissie Howe (convener), Paul Mellor, Timothy Wilkinson, Dr Andrew Wood, Mr Peter Green, Col Philip Harrison, Lt Cdr (retd) Shirley Hewitt, Ms Jude Levermore, Mrs Liesel Parkinson, Mr Mark Powell, Mr Doug Swanney (Chair), Lt Cdr (retd) Matthew Thomas, Mrs Sue Walters.

*****RESOLUTION**

8/1. The Conference received the Report.