

44. Releasing Ministers for Ministry

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report proposes a number of measures to clarify the nature of the relationship between ministers (presbyters) and the Church and thereby release ministers to fulfil their vocation, and the Church its calling, more effectively.
- 1.2 The main proposals are:
 - To give better effect to a single presbyteral ministry;
 - To develop a single transparent process of stationing for the most effective deployment of that ministry.
- 1.3 *The original brief for this work referred only to ministers (presbyters). Yet the issues dealt with also affect deacons and lay workers. These are dealt with at appropriate points in what follows.*

2. INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 In 1996 the Methodist Council commissioned a report on behalf of the Conference in response to a number of memorials and other concerns about:
 - The identity, role and deployment of ministers (presbyters), and their relation to other people who are ordained or in authorised lay ministries;
 - The terms and conditions of service of those who are deployed.
- 2.2 The ensuing report *Flexible Patterns of Ministry* was received by the 1999 Conference and sent to circuits and Districts for study and response. The responses were duly analysed and presented to the Methodist Council, and they have helped shape the direction of subsequent work.
- 2.3 In the interim a number of other concerns have been raised which relate to this work. They include:
 - The organisation of Districts and circuits;
 - A continuing shortfall in the number of experienced ministers (presbyters) available to fill all the appointments for which a minister was requested.

This latter concern led to the Chairs of District producing a paper entitled Making More Presbyters which proposed a new category of presbyteral ministry: Ministers with District Licences. This was discussed in many District Synods in 2000-1. Although it did not win enough assent for it to be brought to the Conference of 2001 a number of Memorials to the Conference concerning it were referred to the Methodist Council for consideration alongside the responses to the Flexible Patterns of Ministry Report.

- 2.4 Discussion of the above and of the responses to *Flexible Patterns of Ministry* has been conducted in consultation with the Connexional Allowances Committee which has been conducting a review of stipends and allowances; and with a Methodist Council Working Party which has been looking at how

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changes in employment law may or may not affect the terms and conditions of service of ministers and deacons.

2.5 In the light of those discussions a number of issues initially addressed in *Flexible Patterns of Ministry* have been passed on to be dealt with by those other bodies. A list of these issues can be found in Appendix 1.

2.6 The remaining issues are to do with the nature, responsibilities and deployment of ministers (presbyters) in the context of other ordained and authorised lay ministries within the life of the Church, and are dealt with in this report.

3. CONTEXT

3.1 The British Connexion of the Methodist Church consists of some 6,378 congregations grouped in 621 circuits which are the primary organisms in the Connexion under the Conference, and which in turn constitute 33 Districts. The purpose of the circuits is not just about gathering people for worship and nurture but also, through the discipleship of their individual members and their collective action, to be the agents of evangelism and mission in the wider world. The Connexion also has institutions and individuals formally appointed to work on its behalf in situations which are not directly linked to circuits [e.g. Forces Chaplaincies; Work-place Chaplaincies].

3.2 As at the 31st August 2001 the British Conference had some 2,090 presbyters and probationers in the active work (either full-time or part-time). Of these, 29 were separated Chairs of District; 602 were Superintendents; 1,032 were itinerant ministers in other circuit appointments; 123 were ministers in local appointment; 75 were ministers in chaplaincies or other specialist appointments under the control of the Church; 134 were ministers in sector or other appointments that were not under the control of the Church; 14 were ministers in the Connexional Team; 16 were appointed to serve abroad; 17 permitted to serve abroad; one permitted to serve another Church; 43 allowed to be without appointment; 4 permitted to study. In addition to these presbyters and probationers in the active work, there were 377 presbyters and probationers of other denominations who were recognised and regarded as ministers in Full Connexion or authorised to serve as ministers on behalf of the Conference. There were also 1,536 supernumerary ministers, some of whom were actively helping in circuits or other situations.

3.3 The number of ministers in some form of sector or other appointment has remained steady over a number of years. The number of ministers serving in Britain who are based in an appointment other than a circuit appointment [and excluding those who are without appointment or permitted to study] is just over 10% of those in the active work. Since the Church is as much the Church when it is dispersed in the world as when it is gathered in fellowship, this is theologically justifiable and may tend towards the minimum necessary.

3.4 It is important to clarify the role of presbyters amongst the complementary roles of deacons, authorised lay workers, lay officers and other members of the people of God so that they may all be deployed most effectively to serve

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the needs of the Kingdom in the Church and the world. Thus any considerations of how to 'release ministers for ministry' need to be linked to considerations of how to 'release circuits and all other parts of the Church's life for mission'. The latter is the concern of programmes such as *Pilgrim's Way* and other forms of church and circuit audit produced by the Resourcing Mission part of the Connexional Team. The work of linking these various concerns was begun at a consultation in March 2002 set up by the Stationing Committee and the Formation in Ministry Office.

4. THEOLOGICAL PRINCIPLES

The following principles underlie this report. They are drawn from an outline framework of an understanding of ministry in the Church which is developed in the report *What is a Presbyter?* found elsewhere in the Conference Agenda. A parallel paper on *What is a Deacon?* is being discussed by the Methodist Diaconal Order and will be shared with the rest of the Connexion and brought to the Conference in a future year. Similar work on *What is a Lay Worker?* and *What is a Local Preacher?* is also being considered.

- 4.1 The Methodist Conference ordains ministers (presbyters) to exercise their ministry in and on behalf of the Church catholic. That ministry can be characterised as a **ministry of word** (e.g. formal and informal preaching, evangelism, apologetic, theological and prophetic interpretation, teaching and the articulation of faith and human experience), **sacrament** (e.g. presiding at acts of celebration and devotion, especially in eucharist, baptism and, in the wider sense of sacramental action, confirmation) and **pastoral responsibility** (e.g. oversight, direction, discipline, order and pastoral care).

All such ministry is, as the word implies, *service*: service to God in service to the Church and the world. Its pattern is the ministry of Christ. This profoundly affects the spirit in which the ministry is exercised, and imparts a distinctive nature to the way in which each of these core expressions of presbyteral ministry is undertaken.

- 4.2 The Methodist Conference receives into Full Connexion with itself those who are called to exercise their ministry through the Methodist Church in particular. They are thereby constituted as a body of ministers (presbyters) who enter a **covenanting relationship** with the Conference. At the heart of this mutual relationship both the ministers and the Conference have appropriate privileges and responsibilities. Under the will of God the ministers are **accountable to** the Conference for the exercise of their ministry and for their execution of the Conference's vision and will. At the same time they are **accounted for** by the Conference in that the Conference is committed to deploying them all appropriately and to providing them with the resources and support necessary for them to fulfil their ministry.
- 4.3 The Conference is committed to enabling the Methodist Church to fulfil its calling in response to the needs of God's Kingdom by discerning (amongst other things) how its ministers (presbyters) may best be deployed in the light of their individual gifts and circumstances. At the same time all Methodist ministers who are ordained and in Full Connexion are called to fulfil their ministry by responding wherever they are most required (in the collective

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view of the Church expressed through the Conference) to meet those same needs.

4.4 The particular ministry of presbyters can be understood only within the context of focussing, expressing and enabling the whole people of God to share in a priestly ministry before God and in the world, in worship, mission and service. As such, all Methodist ministers (presbyters) who are ordained and in Full Connexion are thereby authorised by the Conference to be public people who represent God-in-Christ and the community of the Church (particularly the Methodist Church and its Conference) in the world, and the world and the community of the Church in Christ before God, as they seek to serve the needs of the Kingdom in the power of the Spirit. They do so in who they are, what they do and what they undergo, by:

- focusing the presence and activity of God-in-Christ in the Church and the world, by both embodying and also pointing to the otherness of the love of God;
- offering the Church and the world constantly to God through Christ;
- helping the Church and the world to see themselves and each other more clearly in the light of God's grace and justice;
- representing and acting on behalf of Christ and the universal Church (both geographically and historically) in a particular time and place;
- leading others to play their appropriate parts in fulfilling the same calling.

4.5 As people who represent the Conference, all Methodist ministers who are ordained and in Full Connexion share a **collegial responsibility** for embodying, exercising and sharing with others (lay and ordained) in the courts of the Church and elsewhere, the Conference's oversight of the Church both as it gathers in Christian community and as it disperses in the world for worship and mission. They are deployed as individuals to enact this collegial responsibility. To this end they are all stationed by the Conference. Some are stationed within particular appointments, others without appointment or with permission to study. Wherever possible they are all linked together with other ministers in teams for mutual supervision and support.

4.6 Since the Conference which they represent is made up of both lay and ordained, and ministers are, by definition, ordained, the oversight which Methodist ministers in Full Connexion exercise on behalf of the Conference in the situations to which they are sent comes to its fullness only when it is exercised in collaboration with lay people and, where appropriate, with deacons in those situations.

4.7 All Methodist ministers (presbyters) who are ordained and in Full Connexion therefore represent both the *catholic* and the *apostolic* nature of the Church. In being stationed they are all sent to particular situations to bring the goals, insights and resources of the wider Church to bear on them. They therefore exercise a ministry of visitation to particular groups of disciples and particular situations in the wider world.

4.8 All Methodist ministers who are ordained and in Full Connexion are therefore **stationed under the same discipline**. This means that there should be a

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single overall process of stationing for all ministers in the light of the overall needs and resources (lay and ordained) of the Church, with equivalent procedures for ministers in each of the various types of appointment. Some appointments are based in circuits (but also need to look to the wider Church and world), whilst others are based in other institutions in the Church or world (but also need to look to the circuits). Some appointments are in the control of the Conference (e.g. those in circuits, theological colleges, Connexional Team), whilst others are not (e.g. those in other denominations or secular agencies).

4.9 All processes of stationing should be marked by:

- Common commitment to the requirements of the Kingdom;
- Respect for the perceived needs of both the ministers and the situations requiring ministry, and at the same time a critical engagement with them both;
- Transparency about motives and all material factors affecting the process.

RENEWING ITINERANCY

Methodist ministers (presbyters) have historically embodied the model of ministry outlined in para. 4.7 above and have also been itinerant. Originally, those who were received into full connexion were to be itinerant preachers who were sent to particular regions to travel on a ministry of visitation around a particular 'circuit'. They were to be 'extraordinary messengers' helping people to discern the needs of the Kingdom in new situations. They were not meant to emulate or replace the residential or parochial clergy, although as Methodism gradually separated from the Church of England and the various Methodist denominations came into being, ministers had to adopt some aspects of that role.

Although there were some in the early years who attempted to be 'half-time' itinerants, on the whole those who for financial or other reasons were not able to travel away from home full-time had to remain as local preachers and were not received into full connexion.

This changed, however, in more recent history with the development of ministers in full connexion who were to be stationed in local, sector or other appointments. To some these developments have seemed to be deviations from itinerancy, which is in turn increasingly understood more in terms of full-time stipendiary ministry than of a particular model of ministry. Moreover, in recent times a growing number of itinerant ministers have found themselves restricted in their availability for stationing due to the educational, medical or employment needs of their families. Many have entered the ministry in later life when they have already developed settled commitments. Some wish to remain in their own houses, or to work part-time. At the same time, most ministers in local appointment are now (contrary to the original intentions in creating this category of ministry) remunerated, many belong to the Ministers' Pension Scheme and some live in manses.

In the light of this potential confusion there is a need to reaffirm the model of ministers being 'extra-ordinary messengers' in the church and the world and exercising a ministry of oversight through travelling and visiting in the appointments to which they are sent. This is true for all ministers, whether they are currently in itinerant, local, sector or other appointments.

For this to happen the Church and its ministers would have to reaffirm their commitment to allowing their own needs and gifts to be put into the context of the wider needs of the Kingdom and to be modified by those wider needs if necessary. John Wesley told his helpers "Go always, not only to those who want (i.e. need) you, but to those who want (i.e. need) you most". He would also have wished the Conference to "Send the ministers always, not only to those who need them, but to those who need them most".

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5. PROPOSALS

5.1 To give better effect to a single presbyteral ministry

- a) That a new statement be made of the general role and responsibilities of all ministers in Full Connexion as they work in and on behalf of the Church, and help to oversee it both as it gathers in Christian community and as it disperses in the world.
 - *This would perhaps best fit as a new opening Section to Book III Part 7 of CPD. The proposed new Standing Orders expressing these Principles are to be found at Section 6 below.*
- b) That there be one category of presbyteral ministry which contains all ministers who are in Full Connexion, and that a range of terms be developed to describe the type of appointment in which they are currently stationed [e.g. in circuits; in Districts; in connexional office; as chaplains (work-place, forces, hospital, prison); as mission partners; in appointments not directly within the control of the Church].
 - *This would require the abolition of “local appointment” and “sector appointment” as separate categories of minister.*

5.2 To develop a single, transparent discipline of stationing

- a) That every minister (presbyter) should at an agreed point in their appointment take part in a process of pastoral conversation about his or her future stationing. The results of this should be recorded on a stationing profile and reported where necessary.
 - *Parallel arrangements will need to be made to those currently in place for itinerant circuit ministers in order to deal with those in secular employment, chaplains and those in what are currently known as local appointments.*
 - *Such arrangements would involve relevant people having pastoral conversations with all the ministers residing in their District. So far as those stationed in what are currently known as itinerant or local appointments are concerned, these would involve the Chair of District and Lay Stationing Representative. So far as those in what are currently sector or other appointments are concerned, they might also draw on panels of people in the region who are used to serving on the Connexional Stationing Advisory Committee panels. These pastoral conversations should resemble those currently held by Stationing Advisory Committee panels. The Connexional Stationing Advisory Committee panels would be required to meet with people only where an expert or second opinion is required, or in cases of particular doubt or sensitivity.*
- b) That a clear understanding be drawn up of the role of each minister (be he or she in circuit, Connexional Team, chaplaincy or an appointment that is not in the direct control of the Church) in the life of the Church as it gathers in Christian community and disperses in the world, and of his or her relationships with other ministers, deacons and lay workers in it both locally and connexionally.

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- *As but one particular corollary of this, the stationing policy of each circuit should reflect these understandings and deal with all the ministers, deacons and lay workers who are in any way connected with it.*
- *Ministers' stationing profiles and the stationing policies of circuits and other bodies should reflect clear understandings of how particular ministers will concentrate on the core expressions of presbyteral ministry in a particular place.*
- c) That those offering circuit or other appointments that are within the control of the Church shall state clearly on the profile form whether the appointment is full-time or part-time, stipendiary or non-stipendiary, and whether or not it requires residence in a house that is provided; and that ministers (presbyters) seeking appointments (new or extended) shall similarly state clearly on their profile forms what type of arrangement they are seeking.
 - *The Connexional Allowances Committee Report elsewhere in the Conference Agenda also touches on these issues.*
- d) That where there are mismatches between the types of appointments offered by circuits or other bodies and those sought by ministers (presbyters), the stationing process sets up further pastoral conversations with particular ministers and circuits to ask them to reconsider their expectations in the light of connexional priorities and the needs of the Kingdom.
 - *The covenantal relationship between ministers (presbyters) and the Church means that the Church is committed to respecting the gifts and circumstances of the individual minister, and the minister is committed to serving the priorities of the Church as much as possible. Such commitments require dialogue, trust and discipline on all sides.*

The aims of the process are to:

- *produce greater transparency in the stationing process: ministers (presbyters) and circuits or other bodies need to be able to see easily what options are available to them;*
- *ensure that there is a greater clarity in discerning how the priorities of the Kingdom affect the deployment of ministers (presbyters), and a greater accountability among ministers in serving those needs;*
- *enable circuits and other situations to which ministers (presbyters) are appointed to explore what types of ministry (lay and ordained) are appropriate to their situation: they need to be able to be positive in their approach and flexible in their requirements;*
- *enable ministers (presbyters) to make themselves more available for deployment to serve the needs of circuits and other situations: they need to be able to move from one type of appointment to another as their circumstances change (for example, if a minister's commitments to a spouse's career or other family issues are not to prevent him or her serving the Church at all, it may be important for a time for him or her to have a part-time appointment or to be restricted to a particular region.*

◆ **THE OVERALL GOAL IS TO RELEASE MINISTERS (PRESBYTERS) TO BE AVAILABLE TO EXERCISE THEIR GIFTS**

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AS FULLY AS POSSIBLE IN SERVING THE NEEDS OF GOD'S KINGDOM.

6. STANDING ORDERS

- 6.1 The following presents a new opening section to Book III Part 7 of CPD which provides the statement of the general roles and responsibilities of all ministers in Full Connexion proposed in paragraph 5.1 of this report. If these Principles are accepted consequential amendments to other Standing Orders (including Standing Order 520) will have to be brought to the Conference of 2003. It is therefore proposed that these Principles be adopted in 2002 for implementation with the consequential amendments in 2003.
- 6.2 Since Part 7 of CPD deals with both ministers (presbyters) and deacons, the proposed new opening section to it provides Principles for both ministers and deacons. As stated in Section 4 of this report, the parallel paper to *What is a Presbyter?* entitled *What is a Deacon?* will be brought to the Conference in a future year. Major reports on the Methodist Diaconal Order were, however, brought to the Conference in 1993, 1995 and 1997 and it is clear from them and from the preliminary work done on preparing to produce *What is a Deacon?* that the parameters for the Principles proposed here have already been set. The relevant understanding of deacons can be set out as follows.
- 6.3 *In the Conference Reports of 1993 and 1995, British Methodism recognised that as well as being a religious order which focused what it is to be a group of Methodist Christian disciples, the Methodist Diaconal Order also acted as a representative sign of the servant ministry of Christ in both the Church and the world, and as such exercised a formal role of leadership in the Church. The Conference therefore affirmed that the Methodist Church recognises and has received the Diaconate from God as an order of ministry, and in 1998 received all its deacons into Full Connexion to enact this recognition. In so doing, the Methodist Church ordains deacons to:*
- *make visible a ministry of love, justice and service;*
 - *connect the Church with the needs and concerns of the world;*
 - *act on the Church's behalf in and to the world;*
 - *be a sign to the world that the Church is focused on the Kingdom of God;*
 - *enable all Christians to use their gifts and so fulfil their potential in service and in life.*
- 6.4 *The ministry of deacons can therefore be summarised and characterised under two headings.*
- *It is a ministry of service.*
This includes pastoral care, acts of mercy and acts of justice, and being or acting as a prophetic sign.
(Deacons share responsibility for pastoral care and undertake pastoral work, but do not have pastoral responsibility or exercise pastoral charge. They are therefore able to work with people both within and beyond the church community, and to lead them without any sense of presiding in authority over them.)

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➤ *It is a ministry of witness.*

This includes formal and informal articulation of faith and human experience, evangelism, apologetic, teaching, proclamation, and theological and prophetic interpretation; and a leading of worship that (for those who are duly accredited) includes preaching.

(Deacons encourage people to articulate their experience and deal with practical problems in their lives. They draw attention to and help interpret God's activity in the world and daily life. They express the love, grace and judgement of God in everyday action and speech, and help the Church to respond likewise.)

6.5 *None of the individual activities under these headings is exclusive to deacons. Nevertheless, even if they are shared to some extent or another with lay people and ministers (presbyters), the combination of them in the context of being a member of a dispersed religious order is definitive and unique to the role of the deacon. Each of these two aspects of ministry is expressed in both worship and mission. Each is undertaken primarily in the world but also in the Church. The fact that deacons concentrate on service and witness has a profound effect in itself and, at the same time, imparts a distinctive nature to each of those aspects of ministry. There is a distinctive quality to service when it is not linked to pastoral responsibility but offers a prophetic voice from the margins. There is a distinctive quality to the ministry of witness when it is not primarily linked to formal preaching (although some deacons are also accredited preachers) but maintains a vital link with the daily experience of the people who are being served. The deacon leads the Church in actions symbolised by the sacramental act of foot washing, and does so alongside the presbyter who presides at the sacrament of Holy Communion.*

6.6 Proposed new opening section to Part 7 of CPD

Section P7 PRINCIPLES

P70 Presbyteral Ministry (1) Ministers are ordained to a life-long presbyteral ministry of word, sacrament and pastoral responsibility in the Church of God which they fulfil in various capacities and to a varying extent throughout their lives.

(2) By receiving persons into Full Connexion as Methodist ministers the Conference enters into a covenant relationship with them in which they are held accountable by the Church in respect of their ministry and Christian discipleship, and are accounted for by the Church in respect of their deployment and the support they require for their ministry.

(3) Ministers in the active work exercise their ministry, including pastoral responsibility, primarily in the setting in which they are stationed, whether full-time or part-time, and whether or not the appointment is directly within the control of the Church.

(4) Some ministers in the active work may be temporarily released from appointment in order to study or to reside abroad, but they are not thereby released from being stationed or from the covenant relationship of being in connexion.

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(5) Ministers who are not in the active work, that is, supernumeraries and those without appointment, remain accountable to and accounted for by the Church, and continue to exercise their ministry as they are able according to their circumstances.

(6) The primary constitutional forum in which ministers account for their ministry and are accounted for by the Church is the Ministerial Session of the Synod. The Ministerial Session of the Conference is the primary constitutional forum in which ministers corporately exercise their ministry of pastoral responsibility for the Church.

(7) Pastoral charge in a Circuit is exercised by those ministers in the active work who are appointed by the Conference to that Circuit; sharing with others, in the courts of the church and individually, the exercise of the particular responsibilities and ministries involved, they have oversight on behalf of the Conference of the worship, pastoral care and mission policy of the Circuit and its constituent Local Churches in accordance with Methodist discipline.

(8) Probationers serve in a Circuit or other appointment under the supervision and oversight of a Superintendent or other minister. They do not therefore have pastoral charge in a Circuit.

(9) Superintendent ministers share with the other ministers appointed to the Circuit the pastoral charge of the Circuit and have oversight of all the ministers, deacons and probationers stationed in the Circuit.

(10) District Chairmen are appointed to give leadership and have care of the life of the Church in the District, and in particular to have care of the ministers, deacons and probationers. The pastoral charge of each Circuit remains, however, with the Superintendent and other ministers appointed to it in accordance with clauses (7) and (9) above.

(11) In its accounting for its ministers and probationers the Conference stations them annually. Some it appoints to serve in Circuits or Districts or in connexional office, others to serve as chaplains or as mission partners with other conferences and churches. Others are authorised to serve in appointments not directly within the control of the Church; each is stationed in a Circuit, where they are called to share the insights of their particular ministry with the persons who are appointed to or are members in the Circuit. Others again are stationed as supernumeraries, without appointment or with permission to study.

(12) Ministers and probationers in a district or connexional appointment may be listed in the stations additionally under a Circuit in which they reside, and are expected to offer such assistance to the Circuit as may be mutually agreed.

P71 Diaconal Ministry (1) All Methodist deacons are ordained to a life-long ministry of service and witness in and on behalf of the Church of God, which they fulfil in pastoral care, outreach and worship in various capacities and to a varying extent throughout their lives.

(2) By receiving persons into Full Connexion as Methodist deacons the Conference enters into a covenant relationship with them in which they are held accountable by the Church in respect of their diaconal ministry and Christian discipleship, and are accounted for by the Church in respect of their deployment and the support they require for their ministry.

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- (3) All deacons in Full Connexion are members of the Methodist Diaconal Order.
- (4) Deacons in the active work exercise their diaconal ministry primarily in the setting to which they are appointed, whether full-time or part-time, and whether or not the appointment is directly within the control of the Church.
- (5) Some deacons in the active work may be temporarily released from appointment in order to study or to reside abroad, but they are not thereby released from being stationed, from the covenant relationship of being in connexion, or from the privileges and duties of membership of the Methodist Diaconal Order.
- (6) Deacons who are not in the active work, that is, supernumeraries and those without appointment, remain accountable to and accounted for by the church, and continue to exercise their diaconal ministry as they are able according to their circumstances.
- (7) Deacons in the active work who are appointed to serve in Circuits share in leadership of the pastoral care, worship and mission of the Circuit and its constituent Local Churches, collaborating with others, ordained and lay, in the exercise of the particular responsibilities and ministries involved.
- (8) The principal constitutional forum in which deacons account for their servant ministry and watch over and support one another as members of a dispersed religious order is the Convocation of the Diaconal Order. The principal constitutional forum in which deacons corporately exercise their servant ministry in the Church and are accounted for by the Church is the Diaconal Session of the Conference.
- (9) Probationers serve in a Circuit or other appointment under the supervision and oversight of a Superintendent or other minister and the Diaconal Order. The preparation of probationers for full membership of the Order as a religious order is under the oversight and guidance of the Order.
- (10) The Warden of the Order is appointed to have overall responsibility for the oversight of the Diaconal Order, and is accountable to the Conference in that regard. The Warden shall be consulted on all matters concerning deacons in relation to their formation, stationing, discipline and pastoral care.
- (11) In its accounting for its deacons and probationers the Conference stations them annually. Some it appoints to serve in Circuits or Districts or in connexional office, others to serve as chaplains or as mission partners with other conferences and churches. Some are authorised to serve in appointments not directly within the control of the Church; each is stationed in a Circuit, where they are called to share the insights of their particular ministry with the persons who are appointed to or are members in the Circuit. Others again are stationed as supernumeraries, without appointment or with permission to study.
- (12) Deacons and probationers appointed to a district or connexional appointment may be listed in the stations additionally under a Circuit in which they reside, and are expected to offer such assistance to the Circuit as may be mutually agreed.

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APPENDIX 1: Issues remitted to other bodies

As indicated in paragraph 2.5 of the report, a number of issues which were part of the original Flexible Patterns of Ministry Report overlapped with the current work of the Connexional Allowances Committee and the Methodist Council Working Party on Employment Law. They have accordingly been remitted to those bodies. They are listed below in the form in which they occurred as recommendations in Flexible Patterns.

7. That the Methodist Council be instructed to establish a consistent and clear nomenclature for “stipends”, “allowances” and “expenses”.
8. That the Connexional Allowances Committee be encouraged in their investigation with a view to recommending:
 - Appropriate standards and mechanisms for the reimbursement of legitimate expenses;
 - Mechanisms to authorise additional payments to compensate for excessively high costs related to the geographical location of a minister’s station.
9. That the Methodist Council be instructed to consult widely to discover whether, in the interests of equality:
 - New stipend levels should be established so that all ministers paid by the Methodist Church receive the same level of stipend with proportional amounts paid to part-timers;
 - Mechanisms should be established for the integration of chaplaincy, wedding and funeral fees into the agreed stipend;
 - There should be some consultation with ministers in other appointments about the income they receive, compared with ministers in stipendary circuit appointments;
 - Stipends should be increased to assist with these changes.
10. That the Methodist Council instigate a broad-ranging consultation to establish whether, in the last resort, the Connexion should be bound to find an appointment, a stipend and a manse for every minister in Full Connexion.

*****RESOLUTION**

44/1. The Conference adopts the Report.

44/2. The Conference adopts the Standing Orders set out in paragraph 6.6 of the Report, with effect from the 1st September 2003.

REPORT ON MEMORIALS M73-M81 FROM THE CONFERENCE OF 2001

As stated in paragraph 2.3 of the Report *Releasing Ministers for Ministry* a number of Memorials to the 2001 Conference were referred to the Methodist Council for consideration alongside the responses to the previous Report *Flexible Patterns of Ministry* (to which *Releasing Ministers for Ministry* is the successor).

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Those Memorials are to be found at M73 to M81 on pages 562 –565 of the 2001 Conference Agenda, and copies of them can be obtained from the Conference Office on request. M73 to M77 argued against any suggestion of creating a new category of presbyteral ministry to be called “Ministers with District Licences”, but together with M78 to M81 asked for further work to be done to address the continuing shortfall in the number of experienced ministers (presbyters) available to fill all the appointments for which a minister was requested. Suggestions in the Memorials included:

- Developing the imaginative use of presbyteral, diaconal and lay ministry;
- Wider consideration of presbyteral ministry and the recruitment and deployment of presbyters;
- Developing patterns of ministry needed to meet the opportunities for mission, including requirements for presiding at the Lord’s Supper;
- Identifying procedures that would increase the number of presbyters available;
- Identifying models of presbyteral ministry to serve the present age.

There have been extensive discussions and consultations about these issues since the 2001 Conference, the fruits of which are to be found in the Report *Releasing Ministers for Ministry* and the report of the Stationing Committee in the Agenda of the 2002 Conference. Further work and consultation is planned in the light of the Conference’s discussion of those reports.

*****RESOLUTION**

44/3. The Conference adopts the Report as its further reply to M73 to M81 (2001).