

A guide to Ministerial Development Review

As in one body we have many members, and not all the members have the same function, so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually we are members one of another.

Romans 12:4-5



The Methodist Church

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The **Methodist Church** 

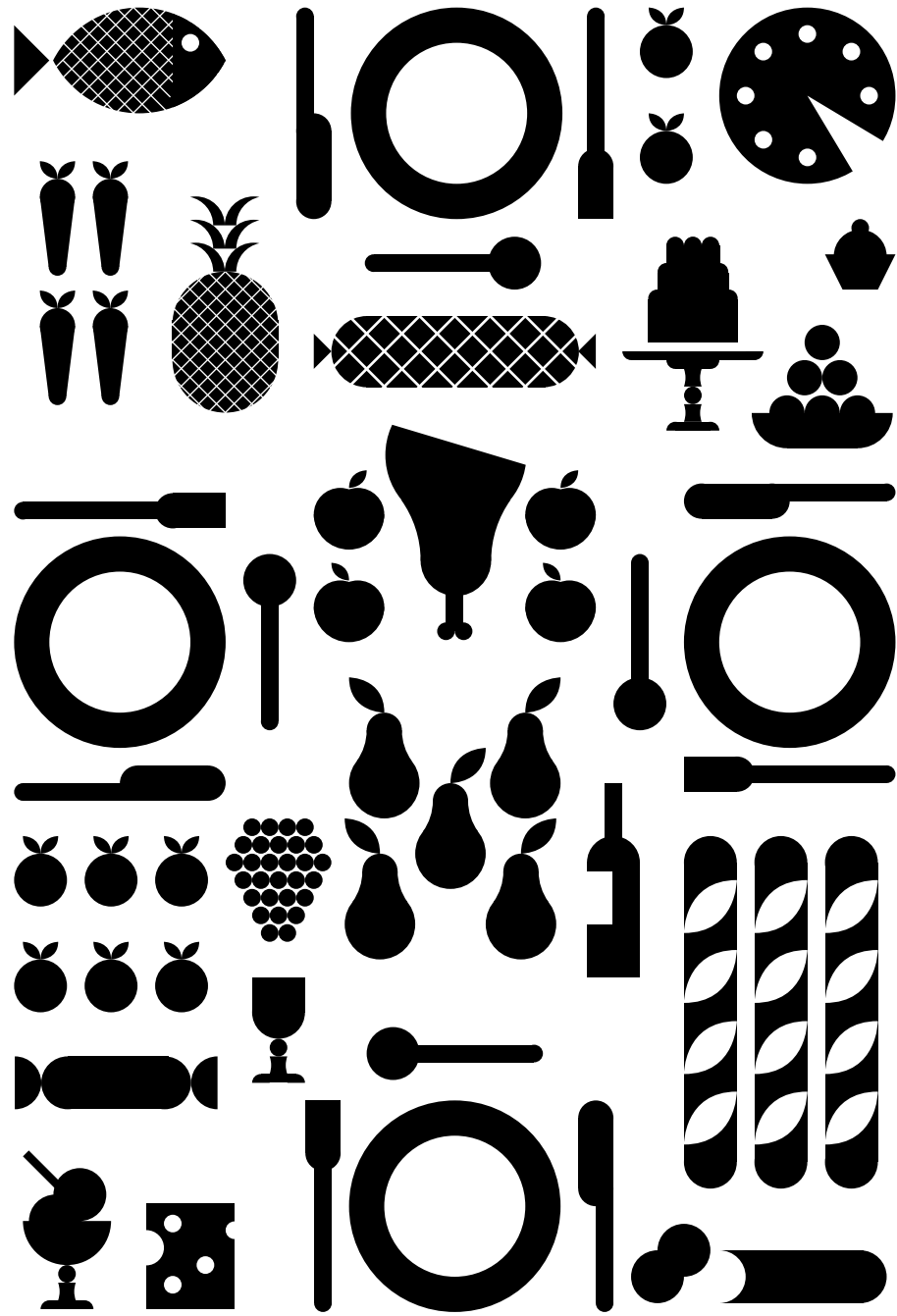
About this guide

This guide is designed for ordained ministers who will be involved in Ministerial Development Review, as well as for those wishing to act as lay contributors. It may also be helpful to those providing administrative support or offering feedback. It offers an overview of Ministerial Development Review, as well as providing supporting guidance and background material which will help all participants to get the most out of the process.

Book One is essential reading. It provides an overview of the principles which form the backdrop to Ministerial Development Review and of the key elements of the annual review meeting.

Books Two and Three provide important supporting guidance. **Book Two** considers those aspects of ministry which may provide a focus for ongoing reflection as part of Ministerial Development Review, with specific suggestions for deacons, presbyters, superintendents and district chairs respectively. It also highlights those areas which should form the focus for the annual review meeting. **Book Three** provides practical guidance about the review meeting. It sets out the roles and responsibilities of the participants and outlines the preparation required for the review meeting, including the gathering and sharing of feedback. There are some suggestions about how to conduct the review meeting, and how to identify hopes, goals and areas for learning and development. This book also offers guidance about recording the key outcomes of the review meeting, and includes report templates.

Book Four provides background material. It looks at some of the skills and best practice which will support Ministerial Development Review and help to enable positive experiences for all participants.



*“Contribute to the needs of the saints; extend hospitality to strangers”
“In all things give counsel and encouragement to all whom Christ
entrusts to your care”*

The spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the LORD has anointed me; he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed, to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and release to the prisoners; to proclaim the year of the LORD's favour, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn; to provide for those who mourn in Zion – to give them a garland instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, the mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit. They will be called oaks of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, to display his glory. They shall build up the ancient ruins, they shall raise up the former devastations; they shall repair the ruined cities, the devastations of many generations.

Isaiah 61:1-4 (NRSV)

This passage is read during the diaconal ordination service.

I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God – what is good and acceptable and perfect.

For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of yourself more highly than you ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned. For as in one body we have many members, and not all the members have the same function, so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually we are members one of another. We have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us: prophecy, in proportion to faith; ministry, in ministering; the teacher, in teaching; the exhorter, in exhortation; the giver, in generosity; the leader, in diligence; the compassionate, in cheerfulness.

Let love be genuine; hate what is evil, hold fast to what is good; love one another with mutual affection; outdo one another in showing honour. Do not lag in zeal, be ardent in spirit, serve the Lord. Rejoice in hope, be patient in suffering, persevere in prayer. Contribute to the needs of the saints; extend hospitality to strangers.

Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them. Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep. Live in harmony with one another; do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly; do not claim to be wiser than you are.

Do not repay anyone evil for evil, but take thought for what is noble in the sight of all. If it is possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all.

Romans 12:1-18 (NRSV)

This passage is read during the presbyteral ordination service.

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Ministerial Development Review has its roots in the Church's responsibility to support its ministers, and in the Conference's specific desire to provide a structured means for ministers to reflect on and review their ministry.

A key feature of Ministerial Development Review is the annual review meeting – a significant event which provides an important opportunity for ministers to share their reflections, insights and hopes with others who have a responsibility for their well-being and for their growth in ministry. But whilst the organisation and facilitation of the review meeting is a key task, Ministerial Development Review is about much more than this. At its core, it is not an annual event but an ongoing process of collaborative reflection and learning, of reshaping ministry in the light of experience and feedback, of sharing and addressing blockages to progress and growth, and of celebrating successes and affirming gifts and graces.

It is my hope that Ministerial Development Review will strengthen the Christian ministry in which we share, and help us all as we focus on our prayerful and active intention to be a discipleship movement shaped for mission.

I commend the information contained in this booklet to you, trusting that you will find Ministerial Development Review an affirming, encouraging, developmental process.

The Revd Dr Martyn Atkins

The General Secretary & Secretary of the Conference

**The principles of
Ministerial Development Review**

1.

Ministerial Development Review is a **development review process** that supports ministers both **to grow in their ministry** and **to contribute to circuits and districts in their mission.**

2.

Ministerial Development Review provides a framework for ministers to engage in **reflective practice** in the **context of their current appointment.** Within this wider framework, Ministerial Development Review provides for an annual **review meeting.**

3.

Ministerial Development Review is a **tool** to support ministers in their ministry and to support circuits and districts in their mission. It is **not an end in itself.**

4.

Ministerial Development Review is a **connexional scheme.** It is to be **consistently employed across the Connexion,** allowing for familiarity and parity.

There is, however, room for a degree of **flexibility** in its implementation at district level.

5.

Ministerial Development Review is **transparent** in terms of which information is being shared, and with whom it is being shared.

Some of the information shared during Ministerial Development Review will be **confidential**, and the boundaries of confidentiality will be carefully observed.

6.

All who are involved are **committed** to ensuring that Ministerial Development Review is a **successful process for the minister** concerned.

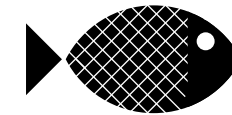
All involved in Ministerial Development Review have **rights and duties** within the process. All **share responsibility** for its success.

Mutual respect and the **valuing of the individual** are at the heart of the scheme and it depends on a **collaborative approach**.

Trust in Ministerial Development Review and in the relationships within the process is crucial to the success of Ministerial Development Review.

7.

Each component of the Ministerial Development Review process is to be **rooted in prayer and reflection.**



**The review meeting
within Ministerial Development Review**

1.

Three participants are closely involved in each Ministerial Development Review meeting (the ‘review meeting’).

- For **circuit ministers**: the minister, the superintendent minister (the ‘ordained contributor’), and a lay person agreed by both (the ‘lay contributor’)
- For **superintendent ministers**: the superintendent, the district chair (the ‘ordained contributor’), and a lay person agreed by both (the ‘lay contributor’)
- For **district chairs and the Warden of the Methodist Diaconal Order**: the chair or the Warden, the General Secretary & Secretary of the Conference (the ‘ordained contributor’) and a lay person agreed by both (the ‘lay contributor’)

2.

The review meeting should be a **face-to-face meeting** which takes place **once each connexional year**, and at an interval of approximately twelve months.¹

Responsibility for convening and chairing the review meeting rests with the ordained contributor or the lay contributor.

All correspondence in preparation for and following the review meeting can be undertaken electronically.

¹ Whilst it is expected that circuits and districts will carry out review meetings on a regular and annual basis, the precise timing and the extent of the gap between meetings may vary according to circumstance. Where a minister is considering an extension or a new appointment, it would, arguably, be beneficial if the review meeting took place before the spring Circuit Meeting. Similarly, for those taking sabbaticals in the summer, an early meeting would assist in making plans and decisions. This will inevitably have implications for the spacing of the meetings, and may lead to some variation in the length of time between reviews.

3.

The review meeting will enable the participants:

- prayerfully and reflectively to **review** together the minister's work over the past year, in the context of their current appointment, and against any hopes and goals set and recorded at the previous meeting - noting successes, challenges, changes in circumstances and learning
- prayerfully and reflectively to identify together **new hopes and goals** for the coming year in the context of circuit / district / connexional priorities
- prayerfully and reflectively to identify together areas for **learning and development** to support the minister during the coming year.

4.

The minister will be invited to nominate individuals who have knowledge of their ministry to **feed into the process** by responding to feedback questions.

The other participants may suggest **other individuals** to feed into the feedback process should they wish to do so.

The final list of those to be invited to be part of this process, and the feedback questions to be asked of them, will be agreed by **all three participants**.

5.

The outcomes of the review meeting – the set of **hopes and goals**, the **areas for learning and development**, and **points for action regarding the wider context** which have been identified – will be agreed by all three participants and a record made.

The minister and the ordained contributor will each retain a copy of these recorded outcomes.

6.

While recognising that, in the vast majority of cases, participants will be committed to the success of the process, there may be occasions when **disagreements occur**.

If these disagreements cannot be resolved between the parties concerned, the matter should be **referred to another party for investigation and mediation**.

In the case of Ministerial Development Review processes for circuit ministers, the matter should be referred to the district chair.

In the case of deacons, the matter should also be referred to the Warden of the Methodist Diaconal Order.

In the case of Ministerial Development Review processes for superintendents and district chairs, the matter should be referred to another party acceptable to all three participants.

Why Ministerial Development Review?

Ministerial Development Review is one of a number of processes which support the ordained ministers of our Connexion, and which encourage healthy and holistic growth in ministry. Ministerial Development Review is about affirmation and encouragement, as it seeks to support growth and development, both in a local context and within our shared vision of the Methodist Church as a discipleship movement shaped for mission.

Whilst it is to be distinguished from spiritual direction (in that it does not address matters of personal growth in the ways in which those matters would be addressed with a spiritual director), Ministerial Development Review is also a manifestation of pastoral care. Opportunities for ministers to engage in dialogue about call and role, to discuss direction with reference to resources and shared vision, and to renew purpose and focus are crucial to well-being. Without the appropriate environmental setting and support, we will all have difficulty in giving our best. Ministerial Development Review plays a role in creating a positive environment and in providing the support which all of us require to flourish in our ministries.

Ministerial Development Review recognises, embraces and reinforces the mutual respect and accountability – the partnership and interdependence which is at the heart of Christian discipleship, of Christian learning and of connexionalism. These relational principles are often difficult to sustain in a corporate environment, but they mark out a Christian community, and our Connexion in particular, and should thus characterise the relationships in Ministerial Development Review. Ministerial Development Review should truly be a process which enables rather than controls, which empowers, and which releases gifts and skills in the service of the ministry of Christ, in which we all share.

Who is covered by Ministerial Development Review?

Ministerial Development Review applies to all ordained ministers (deacons and presbyters) in a circuit appointment or district appointment,² and to all district chairs. It also applies to every minister who has entered into an agreement with a circuit to undertake pastoral responsibility in one or more local church.

The Ministerial Development Review scheme does not apply to probationers, for whom other structured opportunities to reflect on and review their ministry with input from others are in place.

Where deacons or presbyters are in a chaplaincy appointment or in another appointment not directly within the control of the Church, it is highly likely that there will be a scheme or opportunity for reflection and discussion in place in the organisation to which they have been appointed. The minister concerned will, therefore, have an opportunity formally to reflect on and review their ministry within the particular context in which their ministry is regularly exercised. Similarly, for those given permission to study, it is expected that the particular context of study and supervision will provide structured opportunities for reflection and discussion. Given these schemes and opportunities, it is not expected that ministers exercising their ministry in these contexts will require an opportunity for reflection and review and an associated meeting under the Ministerial Development Review scheme. If in any of these cases, however, a minister feels there is a need for a more formal process and, thus, wishes to opt into Ministerial Development Review, they should contact the

² Where a minister is in a district appointment and a scheme is in use which requires the minister to reflect on and review their ministry with input from others, they may agree with those who oversee their work to participate in the existing scheme in preference to Ministerial Development Review. If, however, it is agreed that they will, instead, opt into Ministerial Development Review, the district chair may be the most appropriate person to act as the ordained contributor for the minister's review, unless another minister is agreed by the minister and the district chair to be a more appropriate ordained contributor because of their greater understanding of, or connection to, the particular context and circumstances in which the minister works. A discussion with the district chair concerned will be necessary in order to determine how best to realise the intentions of Ministerial Development Review.

superintendent of the circuit in which they are stationed or the district chair for advice on how the scheme might be applied in their situation.

Ministers serving as mission partners, those given permission to serve another conference or church and those given permission to reside abroad do not fall within the remit of Ministerial Development Review. Similarly, the scheme does not apply to those without appointment or to supernumerary ministers who have not entered into an agreement to undertake pastoral responsibility in one or more local church.

Improving Ministerial Development Review

Ministerial Development Review has growth and development at its heart. Those of us with responsibility for supporting the Ministerial Development Review within the Connexional Team want our support to develop and improve as the process itself matures. To help this process of growth and improvement, we welcome feedback about this guidance in particular and about your experience of being involved in Ministerial Development Review more generally. Feedback should be directed to:

mdr@methodistchurch.org.uk

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