

Handbook for Ministers from
Other Churches and
Conferences serving in the
Methodist Church in Britain
and for Circuits receiving them



2020-2021

THIS IS THE SECOND EDITION OF THIS HANDBOOK.
IF YOU NOTICE ANY ERRORS OR WISH TO SUGGEST SOME ADDITIONAL MATERIAL TO BE
INCLUDED IN FUTURE EDITIONS, PLEASE CONTACT CLAIRE POTTER
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1. EXPLANATION OF TERMS

- 1.1. MOCC = Ministers from Other Churches and Conferences. These have one of the following statuses with the Methodist Church in Britain:
 - 'Recognised and Regarded' (most have this status in their first appointment)
 - 'Full Connexion'
 - 'Authorised to serve'.
- 1.2. MCB = Methodist Church in Britain
- 1.3. RR = Recognised and Regarded
- 1.4. FC = Full Connexion
- 1.5. There are two orders of ministry in the MCB : Presbyters and Deacons. In the MCB, when the term 'minister' is used, it includes lay and ordained ministry.
- 1.6. HR = Human Resources Team at MCB
- 1.7. CPD = Constitutional Practice and Discipline
- 1.8. COS = Certificate of Sponsorship
- 1.9. EDI = Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
- 1.10. HMRC = Her Majesty's Customs and Revenue. This is the UK Government department responsible for taxation
- 1.11. MWB = Methodist Worship Book

2. INTRODUCTION

- 2.1. This handbook brings together information to enable MOCCs and Circuits to understand their responsibilities in this process.
- 2.2. Initial appointments normally last for five years. However, the Conference stations ordained ministers to Circuits on an annual basis. If any changes are proposed to an initial appointment, these must be fully discussed with the MOCC in advance.
- 2.3. It should be noted that the MCB includes a broad range of contexts and covers England, Scotland, Wales and the Islands.

3. THE PROCESS AFTER STATIONING

- 3.1. Stationing of MOCC ministers takes place at the Initial Stationing Subcommittee in February.
- 3.2. After the Initial Stationing Subcommittee has made matches between MOCC ministers and Circuits, the MOCC and the Circuit will receive the information. Both the MOCC and the Circuit will be sent the respective profiles: the MOCC receives the Circuit profile, the Circuit receives the MOCC profile.
- 3.3. A Circuit steward contacts the MOCC to arrange a date and time for them to visit either in person or by skype or conference call. This is 'direct stationing' so it is not expected that either the Circuit or the MOCC will wish to challenge this match – though if there are very clear reasons why something will not work, either party are asked to contact the Ministerial Coordinator for the Oversight of Ordained Ministries at Methodist Church House immediately: potterc@methodistchurch.org.uk
- 3.4. Soon after the visit, the MOCC will receive a letter of understanding from the Circuit, which they are asked to sign and return.
- 3.5. If necessary, the MOCC will then start the immigration process. If an English language test is required for the visa, the MOCC will have achieved this in advance, as part of their application. This mainly applies to those who will need to apply for a Tier 2 Minister of Religion visa which is sponsored by the Methodist Church in Britain. The Human Resources (HR) team at Methodist Church House will be in touch with the MOCC about this. Even if a Tier 2 visa is not needed, the HR team will ask them to confirm their immigration status and the dates of renewal for any visas so that records are correct.
- 3.6. The recommendation of the appointment will be put to the Methodist Conference, which is held at the end of June and start of July. Conference has the responsibility to agree to the status as RR or FC, and to agree to the appointment. If the MOCC is accepted to be received into Full Connexion, they will need to attend the Methodist Conference service. Information will be sent regarding this.
- 3.7. Arrangements are made between the MOCC and the Circuit regarding the date when they can move into the manse. This is usually in August. Those on a Tier 2 visa can only arrive two weeks before the appointment starts on 1st September (under the terms of the visa)

4. HANDBOOK FOR MINISTERS OF OTHER CONFERENCES AND CHURCHES

4.1 WELCOME.

- The British Methodist Church rejoices in its relationships with its partner churches around the world, partnerships that are often steeped in long relationships which stretch back through history.
- For many years, ordained ministers, and those candidating or on probation, have felt a call to serve in another country or another church, perhaps in order to enrich their experience to benefit their home church, perhaps because they want to explore a particular element of ministry that is possible in a different place.
- Partnership is two way. Methodist presbyters and deacons from Britain are currently serving in many areas of the world and presbyters and deacons of several different denominations and from many different countries are serving the Methodist Church of Britain.
- The British Methodist Church is a very diverse plural church. Having presbyters and deacons within the Connexion who have experiences from many cultures and traditions greatly enriches the church of today in Britain. So you are most welcome and you will be supported through your ministry here.

4.2 THE METHODIST CHURCH IN BRITAIN - HISTORY.

- Many MOCCs come from Methodist churches and will therefore be very well aware of this history. However we also welcome MOCCs from other denominations who may find this summary helpful.
- The Methodist website is a very useful place to discover a range of information about MCB. <https://www.methodist.org.uk/>
- Methodism began not as a church, but as a movement among ordinary people.
- John and Charles Wesley, who were brothers, and priests in the Church of England throughout their lives, developed their methodical approach to Christian faith with like-minded students in Oxford, which earned them the nick-name 'Methodist'.
- The movement was characterised by a concern for personal and social holiness, by Arminian inclusive theology, by a concern for perfection and a rigour in the living of a Christian life. The Wesleys and their communities developed small groups where people could learn their faith and be accountable to one another.
- From the outset it was a wide ranging movement. John Wesley travelled the length and breadth of Britain as well as travelling to America and Europe. In the century following his death, overseas work really took off and missionaries travelled long distances to take their message all over the world. Often they were surprised to discover the faith they found in other countries. Methodist churches developed across the world along with schools, universities, clinics and other organisations.
- Methodist Churches in other parts of the world which were established by missionaries from Britain, are now all autonomous – operating in an equal partnership with the MCB.

4.3 THE METHODIST CHURCH IN BRITAIN - TODAY

- The MCB is a Connexion which includes all of England, Scotland, Wales, the Channel Islands, Gibraltar and Malta.
- MCB is part of the World Methodist Council, which brings together the global Methodist and Wesleyan family of churches. See <https://worldmethodistcouncil.org/>
- Many Methodists from around the world come to the UK at different times and for different lengths of time. There are now several national fellowships in Britain who work to encourage and support Methodists from a particular national background, and particularly to help them to become involved in the life of the British Methodist Church. Some have formal structures and chaplains, others operate in less formal structures. Many MOCCs have found it helpful to be involved in the national fellowship from their home country (where there is one).
- The MCB has two equal and distinctive ordained orders of ministry: presbyters and deacons. Presbyters are ordained to a ministry of word, sacrament and pastoral responsibility. Deacons are ordained to a ministry of service and witness, and they are members of a religious order with a rule of life.
- The British Connexion is organised into 30 Districts, each of which is served by a District Chair, who is a presbyter. In the London District there are three District chairs. The Districts combine to make larger regions within which they operate for some activities, such as stationing and training. Each District contains several Circuits. Each Circuit is served by a Superintendent (a presbyter), and other presbyters and deacons who are appointed to that Circuit. They are often collectively called the 'Circuit staff', and this term can also include employed lay people who have specific roles within the Circuit. Together they serve the churches which are within the geographical boundaries of that Circuit.
- Diversity and inclusion
 - 'It is the Methodist Church's intention to value every human being as part of God's creation and the whole people of God. At the heart of the Methodist community is a deep sense of the place of welcome, hospitality and openness, which demonstrates the nature of God's grace and love for all. Our church communities are called to be places where the transformational love of God is embodied and life in all its fullness is a gift, which is offered to all people. There are no distinctions regardless of gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, religion/ beliefs, pregnancy/ maternity and gender reassignment; As a result everyone has the right to protection from abuse and to be treated no less favorably than others irrespective of any personal or protected characteristic'. *From the MCB website.*
 - Legislative Framework:

It is against the law in Britain to discriminate against someone because of:

 - Age
 - Disability
 - Gender reassignment
 - Marriage and civil partnership
 - Pregnancy and maternity

- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

The above are called protected characteristics.

- The Equality Act 2010 states that discrimination occurs when a person treats another less favourably than they treat, or would treat, others because of a protected characteristic.
- The intention of the Methodist Church to value every human being as part of God’s creation goes beyond any legislative demands or rules and is more about the diversity of identities among the human family, and about our capacity as Christians to live together in graceful relationship as people who are all beloved by God.
- The decisions made by the Methodist Conference can be seen on the Methodist website. These give you an idea of the central issues in a particular year.
<https://www.methodist.org.uk/about-us/the-methodist-conference/>
- Structures:

	Meets in	Presided over / Chaired by	Frequency
Connexion	Conference	President	Annual
Diaconate	Convocation	Warden of the Order	Annual
District	Synod (Presbyteral and Representative sessions)	District Chair	Representative Synod – twice a year Presbyteral Synod - annual
Circuit	Circuit meeting	Superintendent	At least twice a year, but usually meets more often
Church	Church Council	Presbyter in pastoral charge	Three to four times a year

4.4 PEOPLE YOU WILL COME ACROSS:

- **Superintendent.** This presbyter has pastoral charge of churches as well as overseeing the work of the Circuit. They are responsible for the policy, operation and care of the Circuit. Their formal role is *“to enable the relevant courts, officers and ministers to fulfil their specific responsibilities under standing orders and to ensure that they do so”* (Standing Order 520). Usually they are the supervisor for the Circuit staff. (see section 4.9 for information about standing orders) (see section 4.7 for information about supervision).

- **Other Methodist presbyters and deacons.** Circuit staff teams vary greatly in size, but most Circuits have a team of presbyters and deacons who work collaboratively to serve the churches and their communities. Staff teams meet regularly together in staff meetings, at least monthly, though some meet more frequently. Meetings are for fellowship, shared support, prayer and study as well as business.
- **Circuit stewards.** A team of voluntary lay people appointed by the Circuit meeting to offer leadership to the Circuit. They have responsibilities in the stationing, support and care of the presbyters and deacons as well as setting Circuit policy jointly with the presbyters and deacons. One or more of these will be responsible for all matters to do with the manses. They, with the presbyters and deacons, form the Circuit Leadership Team. This is the meeting which enacts the decisions of the Circuit meeting as well as setting the agenda and policy for the Circuit.
- **Church stewards.** Each church has a team of stewards appointed by the Church Council who are volunteers. They have a role to oversee the work of the church including provision for worship. They often meet regularly with the presbyter in pastoral charge in planning and preparing for worship.
- **Other office holders in church and Circuit.** Circuits have a Circuit meeting secretary, a treasurer, and a property steward. Churches have a church council secretary, a treasurer, a pastoral secretary and a property secretary. In the majority of cases, these are volunteers. In smaller churches, some of these roles are combined with that of church stewards. The **pastoral secretary** is a key person to meet when you start your ministry because they hold a list of the church community and can tell you which people are in immediate need of a pastoral visit and which need regular care. The list will contain: **members**, who are people who have been confirmed and received into membership of the church; and **adherents**, who are people who are in regular contact with the church who have chosen not to become members or who might be considering becoming members.
- **Safeguarding officers.** Each church and Circuit has an appointed safeguarding officer. They ensure that all office holders have received the necessary training and Disclosure Barring Service (DBS) checks. These are the equivalent of police clearance checks. These officers will provide access to training where needed. They will also know if there are any safeguarding contracts in that particular church or Circuit. For more information please speak to the safeguarding officers in the church and Circuit and see the Methodist Church website here: <https://www.methodist.org.uk/for-ministers-and-office-holders/safeguarding/>
- **District chair.** This is a presbyter who oversees the work and mission of a District. They may be present at the welcome service at the start of your appointment, and will also meet you at other District gatherings and synods. They have the role of pastoral care and oversight for all of the presbyters and deacons in the District.
- **Lay workers.** Many Circuits employ lay people on full time or part time contracts to carry out particular functions in one or more churches or across the Circuit as a whole. Some will be paid for this work. Others choose not to be paid. The roles are various but include: youth work, families' work, children's work, pastoral work, administration,

chaplancy, community outreach, property development. They often are part of the circuit staff team.

- **Pioneers.** In many areas there are people developing new forms of ministry among people who generally are not currently involved in traditional churches. Much more information can be found here: <https://www.methodist.org.uk/our-work/our-work-in-britain/evangelism-growth/new-places-for-new-people-starting-christian-communities/>

4.5 THE CALENDAR – NOTABLE DATES

September	Start of the Connexional Year Welcome service Circuit meeting Representative session of Synod MOCC induction safeguarding training day (or early October)
October	Church Councils Church pastoral committee meetings Harvest festivals (these could be any time between September and November). They can involve Saturday events, suppers and Sunday lunches as well as a festival Sunday morning service. Local churches determine their own pattern for these events School half term
November	All Souls and All Saints days Date for submission of church statistics Remembrance Sunday (nearest to 11 th November) '3Generate' meets – this is the national Methodist youth event Visit by Ministerial Coordinator for the Oversight of Ordained Ministry to MOCC and their Circuit (or in December).
December	Advent services. Many churches have Advent ring liturgies Christmas – carol services, nativity services, Christingle services, midnight communion on Christmas Eve in some churches, Christmas morning services.
January	Watchnight – some churches have a service on 31 st December at midnight to look back at the last year, to look forward to the new one, and rededicate themselves to their discipleship. Covenant services – usually early in January, but some churches hold them in September. See liturgy in Methodist Worship book page 281. 'Week of prayer for Christian Unity'. Usually around 18-25 January. Groups of local churches of different denominations may meet together as 'Churches Together' and plan a united service during this week. There may also be shared services, discussions or bible studies through this week. Further information can be found here: https://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/week-of-prayer
February	Half term for schools (this may be in early March) Circuit meetings may happen here Church Councils may happen here
March	Ash Wednesday services – where they are held Lent events – these vary from church to church. Some hold ecumenical groups through Lent, some have a series of studies in one church.

	Lent liturgies – some churches place an object around a large cross each Sunday in Lent with a liturgy Presbyteral Synod (or April) MOCC retreat Induction for Circuits receiving a MOCC minister (or April)
April	Holy Week and Easter. Many churches have services on Maundy Thursday and Good Friday, and often some of these are ecumenical. Some churches also hold services throughout Holy Week. Representative Synod Between Easter and Pentecost is a good time to offer confirmation classes Ministerial Development Review – this usually takes place in the Spring. Your Superintendent minister will be in touch with you about this. General Church Meetings (or March or May)
May	Wesley Day 24 th May – some churches have events to mark this Aldersgate Sunday – Sunday before 24 th May (there are readings in the lectionary relating to this – see under ‘worship’ below) ‘Thy Kingdom Come’ season of prayer from Ascension Day to Pentecost. See website for details: https://www.thykingdomcome.global/
June	End of June and start of July – The Methodist Conference meets. Reception into Full Connexion and ordination services take place during the Conference. You can attend if you are an appointed representative from your District or you can be a visitor at your own expense (but you need to inform your District secretary if you wish to do this).
July	MOCC end of year gathering – with families
August	Newly arriving MOCC’s induction

4.6 THE INDUCTION YEAR

- Officers from the Ministries team at MCH are there to provide support throughout your ministry in MCB. This is particularly focussed in the first year, which is a year of induction. It is essential that you attend these events. Invitations will be sent to you for each one. All (apart from the circuit visits) are held at Cliff College, see: <https://www.cliffcollege.ac.uk/>
- **August 24-26 2020 – induction with families.** This is over 48 hours to help you to prepare, and to enable you to meet others who are starting their ministry in the MCB at the same time.
- **September 29-30 2020 – safeguarding training.** Safeguarding is so important in the life of the church that you need to be aware of the issues and policies early in your ministry, especially as things differ between countries. This gives you the foundation level of training specially tailored to your needs. We try to hold this in September or early October so that you are properly equipped at the outset. Once you have done this foundation training, you will need to book in for the advanced module training in your District. See your Circuit safeguarding officer for information.
- **November or December – visits from Ministerial Coordinator for the Oversight of Ordained Ministries.** These visits are an informal opportunity to reflect on the first months of your ministry in MCB. They involve meeting separately with the MOCC, the Superintendent and Circuit steward and then all meeting together. It is a safe space

where you can share any joys or concerns. These will be arranged by the Ministries team at Methodist Church House.

- **March 9-11 2021 – MOCC retreat.** A 48 hour space for the MOCC ministers to take time out to reflect on the first 6 months of their ministry and to share any issues with each other and with officers from Ministries team.
- **July 22-23 2021 – end of year gathering.** A 24 hour time of celebration. This is for the MOCC ministers and their families to celebrate their first year and talk through any further issues.

4.7 SUPPORT

- **Supervision.** In the MCB, all ministers are engaged in reflective supervision. Their supervisor is a named and trained person, often, but not always, their Superintendent minister. For ordained ministers, supervision consists of at least 6 sessions of 1.5 hours each year. Records are kept of each meeting. MOCC ministers receive the same amount of supervision as other presbyters and deacons. You will receive more detailed information about supervision when you first meet your supervisor.
- **Mentoring.** Your superintendent, or another named presbyter or deacon, will be available to you to help you to adjust to ministry in MCB in the early weeks of your appointment.
- **MDR – Ministerial Development Review.** This is an annual process for all ordained ministers. Their Superintendent meets with the ordained minister and a trained lay accompanist. Each year the ordained minister identifies an area of their ministry that they would like to reflect on. Together they identify questions to ask and also identify the people whose feedback they would like to receive. These can be members of congregations, other ordained ministers, Circuit officers, ecumenical colleagues or other people who have a connection with that part of the minister's work. The lay accompanist contacts the identified people and receives their feedback. The three meet again to consider the feedback and identify areas of development as a result. These become the objectives for the following year. Your Superintendent will contact you to arrange the meetings for this each year. There is a process of reporting between MDR and supervision. Note that some Districts have slightly different processes of MDR.
- **CDIM – Continuing Development in Ministry.** Each ordained minister is encouraged to continue developing throughout their ministry. The Learning Network in each region has various courses available. For further information, see here: <https://www.methodist.org.uk/our-work/learning/>.
- There are also online courses on various subjects run by different institutions as well as day and residential courses, for example:
 - Cliff College <https://www.cliffcollege.ac.uk/students/>
 - Wesley House, Cambridge <https://www.wesley.cam.ac.uk/study/>
 - Sarum College <https://www.sarum.ac.uk/>

- The Queen's Foundation <http://www.queens.ac.uk/>

The usual expectation is that an ordained minister will fund one third of the cost of a course related to their continuing development, their Circuit will fund one third, and their District will fund one third. Sometimes Circuits and Districts can provide additional financial support. Other ordained ministers in the Circuit will be able to advise on their experience of this.

- **Cohort.** The induction year means that you will get to know the other MOCCs who are starting their ministry in Britain at the same time as you. These bonds can become quite strong and you are encouraged to pray for each other. Often it is helpful to share experiences and issues.
- **Ministries Team** at Methodist Church House (MCH). This team is available to support you. Together we are responsible for all aspects of ministry. The Ministerial Coordinator for the Oversight of Ordained Ministry (Revd Dr Claire Potter) is the person you will have most contact with, but you will encounter other members of the team at other times. See <https://www.methodist.org.uk/our-work/learning/specialism-teams/ministries-vocations-and-worship/> for information on this team's work.

4.8 IMMIGRATION SUPPORT.

- The Human Resources and Development (HR) team at MCH provide support for all immigration matters.
- The HR team are not immigration advisors, but we contract with an immigration advisor when needed for advice for people who have visas which are sponsored by MCB.
- Non-European Economic Area (EEA) nationals who are not already settled in the UK will need either permission to enter or to remain in the UK as a Tier 2 Minister of Religion. Some may obtain a visa through Ancestry or another form of visa, but most are on Tier 2 Minister of Religion visas.
- To obtain this the Methodist Church will issue a Certificate of Sponsorship (COS). This enables an application to be made for an initial three year visa.
- Non-EEA ministers from non-listed English-speaking countries must have an English language qualification to obtain their visa. This is either a recognised degree taught in English or International English Language Testing System (IELTS) certificate level 6. The MCB requires this to be obtained as part of your application process. We will not invite you to a discernment panel unless you have completed the necessary English qualifications. The MCB will fund the cost of one English test.
- After the first visa, the visa process is repeated for a further three years. HR will keep in touch with you and will assist in the renewal of the visa.
- The cost of the visa application will be borne by the Methodist Church Fund. The costs will cover the visa that enables the MOCC to serve the MCB, along with up to 3 additional dependents i.e. 4 persons altogether.

- The cost of obtaining Indefinite Leave to Remain and full UK citizenship (if applicable) must be met by the MOCC while they are RR. Where MOCCs are in Full Connexion, the costs of Indefinite Leave to Remain or naturalisation can be covered by MCB and are assessed on a case by case basis.
- Migrants from many countries must have Tuberculosis (TB) certificates.
- In addition, the UK government charges an annual fee for the use of the National Health Service by all migrant workers and students until they reach the settlement stage. This will be part of the visa process and will be paid by the Connexion for the MOCC and up to three additional dependents.
- Throughout the time a MOCC's visa is sponsored by the MCB, both the MOCC and the Circuit must ensure that HR are advised immediately of any changes to a MOCC's address, or if there is any absence from the manse for any amount of time. HR are required to inform UK Visas and Immigration within ten days of any change as part of the sponsorship licence.
- The Circuit and the MOCC must also ensure that HR are notified immediately if any contact is made by the Home Office, altering or revoking the visa.

4.9 CONSTITUTIONAL PRACTICE AND DISCIPLINE (CPD).

- You will receive a copy of this each year from your Circuit. It is also available to be downloaded from the Methodist Church website here : <https://www.methodist.org.uk/for-ministers-and-office-holders/governance/cpd/>
- It contains information about Methodist doctrine, laws, policies and processes and is a very helpful resource. It is worth spending a little time noticing the different sections within CPD.
- In the material below, when relevant, a standing order number is listed by the item. The standing orders are the rules or regulations made by the Methodist Conference and they are all found in CPD.

4.10 WORSHIP - GENERAL

- The Preaching Plan. If you have come from a Methodist Church, you may be aware of the preaching plan. This is a calendar of the Sundays in a three month period, and shows which presbyter or local preacher is designated to lead worship in each church in a Circuit on each Sunday. This is a vital document in the life of the Circuit.
- It is the Superintendent's responsibility to produce the plan each quarter.
- It is usually available at least a month before the first date on the plan.
- You will be asked to submit your dates, so you need to plan worship with the churches you are responsible for very well in advance.
- You are asked to indicate when you would like to preach in the churches where you are in pastoral charge, and which of these services are to be communion, all-age, or other forms of worship.

- Presbyters usually find it best to do this in conjunction with the stewards and leaders of the churches (at their regular meetings) to make sure that the plan fits their usual pattern of worship.
- You can also block Sundays for your holiday or if you have been invited to preach elsewhere.
- As presbyters, it is expected that you will be available to preach 2 or 3 times as required on any Sunday apart from the five holiday Sundays you have each year or any other free Sundays as designated by the Circuit.
- Once your name is on the plan, you are expected to honour that appointment, unless there are exceptional circumstances.
- Before you start the appointment, your circuit may send you a copy of the plan so you can see how it works.
- Responsibilities. When your name is on the plan, that does not mean that you have to take every element of that service, but it is your responsibility to oversee the worship and ensure that it is an act of worship properly held according to Methodist doctrinal standards. Some churches have worship groups and worship leaders who regularly lead certain sections of the worship. Working with them can be enormously creative and supportive.
- Timing. Services in British Methodist Churches vary in length, but they are generally around an hour long. Special occasions and services of Holy Communion are often longer. In multi-cultural congregations, service length can also vary. Please ask the stewards in the churches to tell you their usual pattern of worship and their expectations. Congregations will want you to be 'you' in your style of leading worship, not to be constrained by their expectations, and yet a sensitivity and understanding of each church's traditions is very valuable. If the church and the MOCC both understand why they each have certain views and ways of operating, then creative collaboration can result.
- Church information. Churches often provide a document giving information about their worship for people who are preaching there for the first time, or you may be referred to that church's website for this information.

4.11 WORSHIP RESOURCES

- **Hymns and songs**
 - **Singing the Faith.** This is the designated hymn book for the British Methodist Church. But not all churches will have it. Some are using 'Hymns and Psalms', which was the previous hymn book. Some churches have produced their own books of songs or use another publication. Ask the churches which books they usually use, and make sure you have a copy. Further information is available here: <https://www.methodist.org.uk/our-faith/worship/singing-the-faith-plus/>
 - Choosing hymns is usually the responsibility of the preacher for any service, but, where there are worship groups, some of the songs and hymns may be chosen by them.

- **Methodist Worship Book (MWB).** Most churches will have copies of this. It is well worth getting a copy because it is a rich resource of liturgies, prayers and services on special occasions. You can find it here: <https://www.methodistpublishing.org.uk/books/9781858521169/the-methodist-worship-book>
- At the back of the book you will find the **lectionary readings**. Though you are not compelled to follow the lectionary each Sunday, most preachers do so – because it is a good discipline and because the lectionary readings are often used in work with children and young people so this is a way of connecting their work with the worship. The MWB contains a variety of communion liturgies and collects, as well as liturgies for the covenant service, funerals, weddings, baptisms and confirmations as well as various commissioning and dedication services.
- **Bibles.** Many churches have bibles available to the congregation so that they can follow the readings. It is worth checking which version of the bible is in the church so that you know if the reading will differ from the bible you may use when preparing worship. The same applies if you are leading bible study groups. You can, though, request that readings come from a particular translation.
- **Screens and projectors.** Increasing numbers of Methodist churches have screens on which they project elements of the service, such as songs, readings, and notices. This varies hugely depending on the equipment and on the people who are available to operate it. The scope it provides is enormous, so that video clips, internet resources or skype conversations can all be possible as part of worship. However please take time to understand what is possible in each church before being too ambitious.
- **Copyright.** If you wish to project any material or reproduce any material in paper form, or to play recorded music in public, you first need to check the copyright. Most churches buy a copyright licence and some also buy a performing rights licence to cover this. The licence number needs to be quoted on the material produced. Someone in the church is usually responsible for making an annual report on the use of material. There is further information here: <https://www.methodist.org.uk/for-churches/guidance-for-churches/technology-and-church/copyright/>
- **Microphones.** Most, but not all, churches have some form of microphone system. Even if you are able to project your voice very effectively, it is important to use the microphone because some people rely on it in order to hear you through the ‘loop system’ which links into hearing aids for people who are hard of hearing. Ask stewards to explain the system to you before the service and make sure you know whether they are controlling it or whether you need to do so.
- **‘Roots’.** This is a magazine providing worship support information based on the lectionary. It contains useful reflections on the readings, prayers and other resources. A companion magazine provides material for children and young people. Some Circuits provide this for all presbyters and local preachers. See <https://www.rootsontheweb.com/>

4.12 CHILDREN.

- Churches vary enormously regarding children in worship. Where there are children, sometimes they start in worship with the rest of the church and then leave after 15-20 minutes for their own lessons and activities (sometimes called 'Junior Church' or their own local name) elsewhere in the church building. Usually, before the children leave, the preacher or someone else leads an all-age conversation or activity related to the theme of the service and/or the theme the children will be exploring before they leave the service.
- In other churches, the children start in their own activities and then come into the service towards the end, when they often tell and show the congregation what they have been doing.
- Children are always welcome in Methodist churches and many churches have designated spaces with toys and books where children can go, even if there is no organised junior church.
- It is important to value all who work with children and young people in churches. This can be done informally but there is also a formal annual dedication liturgy in the MWB page 347 for this purpose. You might also choose to meet with the leaders and teachers on a regular basis in order to support their work and develop it together.

4.13 HOLY COMMUNION.

- The British Methodist Church has an open communion table. All are invited to receive bread and wine and that includes children. Usually a church makes sure that parents or others have the opportunity to talk with their children about communion before they receive it, or a special session of the junior church might be held on the subject.
- A clear and open invitation should be made at every communion service along with the invitation for people to come forward for a blessing if they do not wish to receive.
- Further information can be found in MWB page 114-116.
- Churches usually have communion stewards who prepare the table and direct how people come forward to receive. It is a good idea to meet with them early in your ministry in a church to talk through how you would like to operate. For example: do you want most of the bread cut up in advance, do you like to receive before or after the rest of the congregation, do stewards usually help administer communion, does the church usually receive 'table by table' or continuously, or in another way?
- It is good practice for those distributing communion to use hand sanitiser beforehand. Please ask a church if this can be provided.
- If the church is in a Local Ecumenical Partnership, you may find that alternative methods of administering communion are used.
- Increasingly churches are using gluten-free bread so that everyone is included. Wine is always non-alcoholic. In most Methodist churches it is served in small individual glasses. Most churches will also have a chalice available.

4.14 PASTORAL VISITING

- Presbyters and Deacons in the MCB both exercise pastoral care as a core element of their vocation. However there is a great **variety** in how this is done.
- Some meet people in their manses, at churches or in other public locations. Others visit people in their **homes** because that is where people are most at ease, where they can share something of their stories and where trust can more readily be built up. When a presbyter or deacon visits, it can give people a real sense of being valued and noticed.
- **Crises.** It is a great privilege and vitally important to visit people at a time of crisis, when there is a clear need – such as illness or trauma or bereavement, though always sensitivity is needed to ensure that your presence is appropriate at that time.
- **Non-crises.** It is important also to try to make time for visiting when there is no crisis because this is when people might feel able to explore their questions about faith and the church with you.
- **Record keeping.** Pastoral conversations are confidential. However all presbyters and deacons are encouraged to keep a record of their visits. It is helpful to keep a notebook for this purpose and note the date, time, name and address of the person visited and a brief summary of the conversation. This is a helpful way to remember names, and it can provide a safeguard for the presbyter or deacon.
- You may also have opportunity to visit your members in their places of **work** or to visit other parts of the community such as schools, charities, offices, or social projects.
- Churches appoint a **pastoral secretary** and a team of **pastoral visitors** or class leaders (the name ‘pastoral visitor’ is most commonly used) [Standing Order 630 and 631], who form the Pastoral Committee [Standing Order 644]. These people share the pastoral care of the congregation, including church members and those on the community roll. You need to meet with them at least once a year to review the membership of the church and any pastoral need. The provision of fellowship or study groups is part of the responsibility of the pastoral committee.

4.15 CHURCH MEMBERS. [Standing Order 050]

- Each church has a list of members and those on the community roll. It is important to keep this list up to date. Usually the pastoral secretary will help with this. Members cannot be taken off the list without their permission, though, if they do not respond despite all reasonable attempts to contact them, an ultimatum may need to be given, that their name will be taken off if they have not responded by a certain date.
- It is good practice to offer membership classes every year. People are far more likely to consider becoming a member if it is offered or suggested to them. There are various published resources for running membership classes available, and many presbyters and deacons produce their own course using material from various sources. Other colleagues in a circuit can advise.
- People become members through confirmation and reception into membership (see Methodist Worship Book – pages 60-61 and page 97).

- Members can be transferred between churches when a minister sends a letter of transfer to the minister of another church.
- Each year your circuit will give you enough membership cards for each member of the churches you are responsible for. Please write the name of each member on one of these and sign them, and their pastoral visitor also signs them. The presbyter usually gives the cards for the members in each pastoral group to the pastoral visitor for that group and they take the cards to the members. Many presbyters choose to do this during the Covenant service which can be a good time also to rededicate the pastoral visitors (see MWB page 344). Please note that some churches have their own membership cards, especially if they are local ecumenical partnerships.

4.16 FUNERALS.

- When you start your ministry, it is a good idea to make contact with the funeral directors in the area and to introduce yourself.
- It is also very useful to visit the local crematoria before you are asked to take a funeral. Make an appointment and the staff will show you around and explain about the systems for that place. These will include how the curtains are operated (often there is a button to push in the pulpit at the right time), and also the music system.
- You could be called on to take any funeral, whether the deceased person was a Christian or not. If you have not had prior contact with the family, the first contact usually comes through the funeral director.
- Some funerals are held in churches, others at crematoria or cemeteries, or a combination. So, for example, some families choose to meet at the crematorium first for the committal and then go to a church for a service of thanksgiving. Others start in the church and end with the committal at the crematorium.
- It is really important to spend time with the family or next of kin if that is at all possible, so that you make sure the service is as they wish it to be. This also gives them an opportunity to talk about the person who has died, and helps you to get a sense of who they were.
- Funerals are very varied, often depending on the cultural background of the person who has died. Some involve a great deal of participation from other people. Others will be taken entirely by the ordained minister. The cultural background will also determine whether there is viewing during the service and whether the mourners fill the grave in at the end of a burial.
- Fees. You are able to charge a fee for any funeral you conduct. Circuits often have a policy to set these fees. There is a standard fee for the leader of a funeral at the crematorium. If the funeral is in church, you may need to arrange for fees to be charged for the organist and others involved. Your fees are yours to keep, but you will need to declare them for tax, so make sure you keep clear records. Often when the funeral is of a church member everyone involved waives their fees, but please make yourself aware of your Circuit's policy, and check with the organist, stewards and flower arrangers.

4.17 BAPTISMS [Standing Order 010A]

- When you receive a request for a baptism, the first thing to do is to visit the family. Even if they are not a church-going family, this is an opportunity for you to discuss God's grace with them and for them to experience the love and hospitality of God through the church. It also enables the church to maintain contact with them.
- If it is possible, it is best to hold baptisms during the usual morning service in a church because this enables the congregation to make their promises and to take those promises seriously. Baptism services can be held outside of this time, usually if there are too many baptism requests for them to be included in the morning service, or if there are specific family circumstances. In these cases, try to ensure that at least one church member is present in order to make the promises.
- The Methodist Worship Book contains different liturgies when the person being baptised is able to answer for themselves and when they are not. (See pages 62, 76, 88 in MWB)
- If an adult asks for baptism, usually this would be followed immediately by confirmation and reception into church membership. (See page 76 in MWB).

4.18 MARRIAGES [Standing Order 011A]

- When you are asked to conduct a marriage for the first time in a church in MCB, ask a colleague to talk you through the process because it may differ from the process in your home church.
- In Britain, presbyters and deacons can act as 'Authorised persons' to register marriages. Some churches choose to authorise certain lay people as well as, or instead of, the presbyter or deacon. The authorisation is a legal process which enables the authorised person to carry out the legal elements of the marriage. When you arrive, or even before you arrive, your Church Council is likely to have passed a resolution about who should be the authorised person and you will then need to complete a form.
- Before you conduct your first marriage in a church, make sure you have access to the church safe where the marriage registers and certificates are kept securely. These should only be completed after the marriage has taken place. Registrar's ink should be used. Ask colleagues about this if there is none available at the church.
- When a couple approach you for marriage, arrange a series of meetings in which you can help them to prepare for their marriage. In these meetings, help them to articulate why a Christian marriage is important to them. Also explain the elements of the service to them, and design the service to meet their requests. They need to give you a declaration (one from each person) which they have obtained from the Registrar. This gives you legal permission to marry them.
- Each quarter you will receive a request from your local Registry Office for you to complete the marriage return for that quarter in relation to each church you are responsible for. There is a form for a 'nil return' if there have been no marriages. If you have had a wedding in that quarter, you need to complete the form which is a

copy of the register and send it to the Registrar with the original declaration documents which the couple supplied to you.

- A report was brought to the Methodist Conference of 2019 on Marriage and Relationships. This was commended to the Connexion for study and prayerful discussion. Provisional resolutions were passed on the qualities of good relating, an understanding of cohabitation, celebration of civil partnerships, prayers following the end of a marriage and permission for same-sex marriages to take place in Methodist Churches. The vote on these resolutions will be taken at District Synods in Spring 2021 and a report will be brought to the 2021 Conference based on those responses.
- A clause has been included in the proposals that no one would have to officiate at a same-sex marriage if they feel prevented by their conscience.
- The Conference was aware that this could cause challenges for some MOCCs. Therefore the Conference:
 - directed that the Global Relationships Committee engage in conversation with those partner churches who have permitted presbyters and deacons to serve as RR about the expectations on them and the provisions made for them to act only within their conscience contained in the report;
 - made clear that reasons of conscience permit a MOCC to decline to act in a way that means that she or he can no longer be in good standing with her or his own church.

4.19 SAFEGUARDING

- In developing and implementing our Safeguarding policy, the Methodist Church is guided by the gospel, human rights and international and national law.
- The Church fully supports the personal dignity and rights of all children, young people and adults, as enshrined in the Human Rights Act 1998 and the 1989 United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.
- It recognises that safeguarding work is undertaken within a British legislative and associated government guidance framework which sets out a range of safeguarding duties and responsibilities
- The Methodist Church is committed to safeguarding as an integral part of its life and ministry.
- Safeguarding is about the action the Church takes to promote a safer culture. This means we will:
 - **promote** the welfare of children, young people and adults
 - work to **prevent** abuse from occurring
 - seek to **protect** and respond well to those that have been abused.
- We will take care to identify where a person may pose a risk to others, and offer support to them whilst taking steps to mitigate such risks.
- The Methodist Church affirms that safeguarding is a shared responsibility. Everyone associated with the Church who comes into contact with children, young people and

adults has a role to play. This is supported with consistent policies promoting good practice across the whole Church.

- The Church and its individual members undertake to take all appropriate steps to maintain a safer environment for all. It will practise fully and positively Christ's ministry towards children, young people and adults who are vulnerable and respond sensitively and compassionately to their needs in order to help keep them safe from harm.
- It is essential that you familiarize yourself with the Methodist safeguarding procedures which can be found here: <http://www.methodist.org.uk/ministers-and-office-holders/safeguarding>.
- Ask your superintendent if there are any safeguarding issues in churches that you should be aware of.
- As a presbyter or deacon working in the MCB, you will be required to undertake two levels of safeguarding training – the Foundation and the Advanced Module. We have also prepared a bespoke programme for you and your cohort of MOCCs in order for you to be able to raise specific queries. This covers the foundation module. Once you have arrived in your new church, the District Safeguarding Officer will make contact to introduce themselves and be available to answer any questions. We do hope that this will enable you to feel supported and assured that advice and guidance is readily available for you to undertake your work with confidence and professionalism.
- 'Disclosure and Barring Service' (DBS) checks are needed to be carried out for many roles in the life of the church, including all presbyters and deacons. Many presbyters and deacons are verifiers for these checks, which involves checking people's documents and completing an online form. You may or may not need to be a verifier in the churches you are responsible for. If you do, speak to your circuit safeguarding officer who can help you to be registered for this role.
- You should also be aware of the safer recruitment policy which applies to anyone who is asked to take on any role in the life of the Methodist church. This website gives more information: <https://www.methodist.org.uk/for-ministers-and-office-holders/safeguarding/recruitment-dbspvg-forms-etc/>
- When in doubt about any safeguarding related matter, speak to the District Safeguarding Officer.

4.20 CHAIRING MEETINGS [Standing Order 604]

- **Church Council.** Local churches are required to meet in Church Council [Standing Order 603, 610 and 502]. The Superintendent Minister will give you the authority to Chair the Church Council in the churches for which you have pastoral responsibility. Book VII (at the end of CPD) gives guidance for Church Council agendas. Spend some time with the stewards and the Church Council secretary in advance to plan each particular agenda together. Then you can enable the Church Council to focus on the areas of particular importance at any one time.

- Only members of the Church Council may vote, but non-members may attend unless the Church Council deems any items may be 'closed business'
- **General Church Meeting.** This is an annual meeting of the whole church community where they can discuss the policies and direction of travel of the church, including its financial affairs and elect the church stewards and representatives. All who are members of that church are entitled to vote. [Standing orders 620-623].
- **Other committees.** Churches which have fewer than 49 members may choose not to have a separate Pastoral Committee but instead the Church Council itself carries out its work. The Church Council can also choose to set up other committees to guide its work, though decisions are the responsibility of the Church Council who are the trustees of the Church. Examples of other committees are: stewards, property/finance, mission, social responsibility, youth work, and a worship consultation. Apart from the Church Council, the presbyter or deacon is not required to chair all the meetings of the church and some choose not to, because they feel more able to contribute to the meetings.

4.21 VISITING CHURCH GROUPS.

- Many churches have groups of some form. These may be house-groups, fellowship groups, sports or social groups, groups that come together around an issue (such as a foodbank, debt support or support for homeless people), children's and young people's groups, uniformed organisations (Scouts, Guides, Boys Brigade, Girls Brigade), carer and toddler groups, women's groups, men's groups, fellowship groups from a particular country, or many others. Some will be comprised entirely of church members. Others will be gatherings of a range of people in the local area.
- They will vary in terms of how much contact they want to have with the presbyter or deacon. Some groups will make a formal request for you to speak to them regularly. Others will have no expectations at all. However, one way of really seeing and understanding the work of the church, and its wider mission, is to visit these groups. Make an arrangement with the leader or simply turn up when they are meeting and join in. You do not need to be there at all of their meetings, but occasional visits are very well appreciated.

4.22 LOCAL COMMUNITIES.

- Methodist churches are located in communities and seek to serve them. There are endless possibilities for building contact with the local area. Just walking around the area will show you where people gather, what institutions are there and how they relate together.
- You will soon find your way into the local hospitals when visiting church members, but when you are there, you could contact the hospital chaplains to see what it is like working here.
- You could write to the head teacher of the local schools and offer to lead an assembly or help in another way in the school.

- You can notice what the main businesses of the area are – which will vary enormously depending on the sort of area where you are stationed.

4.23 SOCIAL MEDIA

- It is understandable that you will want to share your experiences in the UK with friends and family around the world, but please take care, especially when you are sharing photographs of other people.
- The Methodist Church has a policy and guidelines in regard to social media. Please make yourself aware of this as soon as possible. You can see it here: <https://www.methodist.org.uk/for-ministers-and-office-holders/guidance-for-churches/technology-and-church/social-media-guidelines/>

4.24 ECUMENISM.

- The Methodist Church has relationships with other Christian churches and in some areas, works very closely with particular denominations. There is information here: <https://www.methodist.org.uk/our-work/building-relationships/relationships-with-other-denominations/>
- Many areas in Britain operate local gatherings of different churches. This may be formally through a ‘Churches Together’ group or a regular clergy meeting, or it may be much more informal.
- Several of the local church leaders may be present at your welcome service, and most are open to an invitation to meet and talk. These may become strong supportive colleagues.
- The Methodist Church is in a formal covenant relationship with the Church of England. You can read more about that here: <http://www.anglican-methodist.org.uk/>

4.25 INTER-FAITH.

- In many areas of the country, Methodist people have connections with people of other faiths. These opportunities vary depending on the area you are in. Many relationships have led to strong support and collaboration on local issues, demonstrating a clear message of dialogue in the local area. For more information about inter-faith relationships please see here: <https://www.methodist.org.uk/our-work/building-relationships/inter-faith-relations/>

4.26 STATISTICS FOR MISSION.

- Every year, each church is required to report to the Connexion, various statistics about each church community including the membership, average attendance, numbers attending the church groups, baptisms, funerals, marriages. This is done on an online form.
- You will be given login details. We will go through the website at the 2020/2021 Induction, please make sure you have your login details.

- Often the presbyter or deacon takes responsibility for completing the form, but sometimes that is delegated to someone else in the church.
- It is worth looking at the guidance here: <https://www.methodist.org.uk/for-churches/statistics-for-mission/online-data-entry/> well in advance so that you know what information you need to gather. For example, keep a note of all funerals that you take because these need to be reported even if they are not held on the church premises.

4.27 PROPERTY.

- Many churches have property stewards who take charge of the maintenance of the church building. Get to know these people and hear about any concerns or plans for the future. There is an annual property schedule to be completed for each church. Information about this can be found here : <https://www.methodist.org.uk/for-ministers-and-office-holders/property/annual-schedules/>

4.28 CHURCH / CIRCUIT FINANCE.

- The Church Council are the Managing Trustees for the local church and the Circuit Meeting are the Managing Trustees for the Circuit.
- Managing Trustees are responsible for managing the financial resources of the church, ensuring transparency in all financial transactions and oversight, and exercising due diligence and good stewardship of the church's financial resources.
- Local churches should each have an appointed treasurer. Early in your ministry, arrange to meet with this person and ask them to go through the church accounts with you, particularly in advance of your first Church Council meeting.
- Where there is no local person able or willing to hold this role, churches frequently employ or contract with an accountant, but there still needs to be a church member who is the responsible person to present the accounts and the budget to the Church Council.
- Please see here : <https://www.methodist.org.uk/for-churches/finance/standard-form-of-accounts/> for further information about managing a church's finances.

4.29 RELATING TO SEVERAL CHURCHES.

- It is most likely that you have been appointed to two or more churches. If you are in a very rural area, you could have several small chapels.
- It is not easy always to know how to prioritise the needs of one church over the needs of another. Where you can plan, such as for worship, meetings and visits, try to do this fairly. So, for example, if you are in one church on Easter Sunday one year, try to be in one of your other churches for Easter Sunday the following year.
- Often the fact that churches share a presbyter means that they will work more closely together and may at times have shared worship services.

4.30 DAYS OFF AND HOLIDAY. [See Part 3 of Book VII of CPD]

- Presbyters and deacons who are in full time ministry in the MCB are usually expected to work 6 days per week, and where possible no more than 2 sessions per day. A session is a morning, afternoon or evening. This is not always possible, especially at the busiest times of the year, so some flexibility is needed.
- In consultation with your Superintendent, please identify which day (Monday to Saturday) you want to designate as your day off each week. The Circuit and church community will be asked not to contact you on that day unless in an emergency. There will be times when you need to work on this day, but you are then encouraged to take a different day off in that week.
- Every presbyter and deacon is entitled to 35 days holiday each year plus the equivalent of statutory public holidays. This holiday amount includes 5 Sundays, 2 of which should be consecutive. When deciding on your holiday dates, please consult with your Superintendent who will want to ensure that there is adequate ordained ministerial cover in the Circuit. Also, please try to arrange your holiday dates well in advance so that they can be built into the preaching plan and other arrangements.
- In addition to the holiday entitlement, all presbyters and deacons are also entitled to three consecutive 'quarter days' in each three months. These are for study, retreat or reflection, preferably away from the manse. Again, it is important that you arrange these dates well in advance and in consultation with your Superintendent.
- Please remember to report any absence from your manse to the team in advance if MCB is sponsoring your visa.

4.31 SABBATICALS.

- Each presbyter and deacon is required to take a sabbatical of three consecutive months in every seventh year of their ministry. Your years are counted from the time you begin your ministry with MCB.
- This period has to be arranged in negotiation with your Circuit. It should always include one major festival (Christmas, Easter or Pentecost). It is not always helpful to take a sabbatical in the first or last year of an appointment so there is flexibility with the timing. It may be better, for example, to take it in the eighth year.
- The District sabbaticals committee will ask you about your intentions for your sabbatical and they have to approve your plans, which should be submitted well in advance.
- You will need to appoint a support group to help you to plan your sabbatical and to arrange for suitable care for the churches and your other responsibilities while you are absent. For more information please see: <https://www.methodist.org.uk/for-churches/ministry/sabbaticals/>

4.32 PERSONAL FINANCE

- Please see the document at Appendix C at the end of this handbook for information about the financial arrangements for MOCCs.
- You need to open a bank account as soon as possible. Ask a circuit steward for their help. It can be a difficult process when you have not had an address in the UK for very long.
- When you take up your appointment, you will also receive a financial handbook from the Connexional Director of Finance.
- You will be required to complete a tax return each year. It is wise to seek help with this from an accountant. There are firms which specialise in clergy tax affairs and your colleagues in the circuit may suggest some, or you can find them online. You can choose to complete your tax return yourself. See this website for information: <https://www.gov.uk/log-in-file-self-assessment-tax-return/register-if-youre-not-self-employed>
- It is important to keep notes of all expenses which are reimbursed, with receipts. Also keep a log book in your car and make a note of the number of miles for each journey on circuit and church business as well as the purpose of the journey. You have to be able to account for each claim you make for expenses.
- Various things can be claimed against tax, such as use of the manse for meetings and hospitality, books, clerical clothing and worship resources. You are also required to declare additional fees received such as for weddings or funerals.
- You will need a National Insurance number (NI). This Government website gives you information about this <https://www.gov.uk/apply-national-insurance-number>

4.33 COMMUNICATION

- English is the most common language spoken in the UK, however, there are other official languages such as Welsh which is spoken in Wales, In Scotland some Scottish people speak Scottish Gaelic and, in Northern Ireland, a number people will speak Irish Gaelic.
- However, regionally there is a richness of other languages, In London it is said that there are over three hundred different languages spoken. Common languages spoken in major cities across the UK include Polish, Mandarin, Cantonese, Korean, a wide range of African languages, Spanish and Portuguese in both their European and Latin American forms, various Caribbean languages and Indian and Pakistani languages such as Urdu, Bengali, Gujarati, and Punjabi.
- Language in the UK can be further complicated by the use of local or regional words and phrases and very often local slang, for example in one part of England the word 'ginnel' meaning alleyway may be used and in a different part of country the word 'twitchen' is also used to mean alleyway.

4.34 EXPECTATIONS.

- The appointment that you have been matched with has been identified because it was the best match for your skills, interests, and experience as expressed in your profile.
- Some Circuits will have long experience of receiving ministers from other conferences and churches. For others, this will be the first time.
- Members of your Circuit leadership team will have been to a preparation and induction consultation several months before you arrive. They will have taken what they learned back to the Circuits. They will have helped to prepare others in the Circuit, including people in the churches for which you will have responsibility.
- The churches will be expecting to welcome a new presbyter or deacon and will treat you as they would any arriving presbyter or deacon: with respect and a genuine excitement to see what you will bring.
- They will also be aware that for you this is not only a new context for ministry, but also a new denomination or a new country. Some may have a better idea of what that is like for you than others. So you may encounter some misunderstanding and concern about how easy it will be to communicate across cultures. We have found in the past that some members of church communities are fearful about how to deal with difference. Most will work well with you to celebrate all that you bring and to develop good relationships. However it is helpful to be aware of potential fears. This is where pastoral visiting can do so much to help – in building trusting and open relationships.
- Accent can be a major hurdle for some church members. Please remember that you have been appointed as yourself. The MCB wants to celebrate your culture with you. You do not need to try to become something different. But if you have come from another country, your accent may not be one that church communities have encountered before. They may therefore need help (in the early days of your ministry with them) in ‘tuning in’ to your accent and your way of speaking. You can help with this by being open about it, by asking someone to help you to know what particular elements of your accent are hard to understand, by slowing down a little more than usual when you are preaching or leading worship, or by putting the main points you are making up on a screen or on a sheet of paper for the congregation. Always remember that this is a two-way process. You may also need to help church members to know what elements of their accents you find it hard to understand, and for them to find ways to communicate clearly. Often this issue is one of fear of the unknown, and once everyone can be open and honest, the problem disappears.
- One of the major differences you may encounter is in relation to the place of ministers in society. While clergy are generally treated with respect, it may not be expressed as deference. Also, the MCB may be less hierarchical in its structure than you are used to. These things can lead to clashes of expectation. Again, honest conversations are often the solution.
- It might be helpful to find a way to share your culture and tradition with the churches fairly early in your appointment so that everyone can understand you better and celebrate all that you bring. Some churches have held ‘cultural evenings’ specifically

focussed on their new MOCC's home culture where they can find out about traditions, songs, dances, food, dress and other elements.

- You may encounter some unspoken expectations about what a presbyter or deacon 'does' in MCB. These may or may not be fair or realistic. But if there is something you do not understand or you find challenging, the best thing to do is to ask someone to explain. You can go to your supervisor, your Superintendent (if that is a different person to your supervisor), stewards in the churches, other ordained colleagues, or Circuit stewards.
- It is impossible to foresee every possible thing you will encounter – but with an open honesty, a willingness to share and to listen and to develop relationships between you and the people you encounter, most expectations can be dealt with positively.

4.35 YOUR IMMEDIATE LOCAL NEEDS

- **Schools.** The Circuit to which you are appointed will help you if you have children arriving with you who need to start school in Britain. Education is provided by the state for all children up to the age of 16 and all children have to attend primary and secondary education up to the age of 16. This Government website will help you to register your children for schools: <https://www.gov.uk/schools-admissions>
- There are sometimes difficulties in registering because it depends on you being resident in the UK, so it is worth enquiring about schools as soon as you know where you have been stationed. Most schools require students to wear a particular uniform and the school will give information on what is needed and where it can be purchased. Schools also often run second-hand uniform schemes.
- **Doctors, dentists, opticians, hospitals.** Medical care is provided through the National Health Service, to which you will have access. Once you have moved into the manse, you will need to register with a local Doctor (called a GP 'General Practitioner'). The Circuit will tell you where the nearest doctor can be found. Once registered, you can make appointments to see the doctor free of charge. Hospitals are also free of charge for the majority of procedures. Note that there is a fee for residents from overseas, but this will be paid for you by the Connexion. Dentists and opticians are found in most local communities. There are some discounts available but there is likely to be a charge for these services. Again, ask the local church members for their advice. For all medical matters, the National Health Service (NHS) website is worth consulting : <https://www.nhs.uk/>
- **Shops.** Local church members are likely to take you on a tour of the area soon after you arrive. They will show you where to find a supermarket for food shopping, and other shops, including post offices and libraries. They will see this as an important part of their hospitality and welcome offered to you. If no one offers to do this, then please do ask someone.
- **Transport.**
 - The public transport network in Britain is fairly comprehensive but this depends on where you have been stationed. In some very rural areas, a car will be almost essential for you to carry out your ministry because buses and trains are so

infrequent. However in some cities, it is easier to get about by public transport than by driving. Local church members will be able to advise on this.

- If you drive, you may need to transfer your driving licence from your home country. See this website for further information <https://www.gov.uk/exchange-foreign-driving-licence>.
- There can be a delay before you can start driving in Britain so members of churches may need to give you lifts for the first few months. This may feel a little constraining, but it can be a very helpful way to find your way around as well as establishing good relationships.

4.36 MANSE

- Your manse is the **home** given to you and your family for the duration of the appointment. See CPD Book VII part 2 for the guidelines about manses. Circuits know that they should respect that this is your home, but Circuit stewards will on occasions need access if there is necessary maintenance or an inspection which needs to be carried out.
- Many presbyters and deacons choose to use the manse for some church meetings, perhaps particularly the sorts of meetings that are held for consultation, bible study or fellowship. You are not required to use the manse for these purposes and such meetings can happen in churches. But many presbyters and deacons find it helps develop good relationships if they have offered hospitality in this way. If you have a young family, meetings in the manse can make it easier so that you do need to arrange additional child-care.
- **Telephone and broadband.** One Circuit steward will be appointed to be your first point of contact for any issues relating to your manse. They will liaise with you over the setting up of the telephone and broadband. The Circuit pay for these facilities and there will be an arrangement for you to make a contribution for your personal calls and personal use of broadband. If you need a mobile phone in order to carry out your ministry, your Circuit may have an arrangement for you to claim some of the costs of this from the Circuit.
- **Council tax.** This is a tax which pays for local services such as rubbish collection and maintenance of roads. Circuits pay this for all presbyters and deacons and you will not have to take any action. However, please note that in some areas, additional collection of garden rubbish may need to be paid for separately.
- **Utilities.** You are responsible for paying for gas and electricity supplies in the manse, but water is paid for by the Circuit. Please ask the Circuit stewards for advice about gas and electricity suppliers. It is important to make these arrangements as soon as possible so that the account is in your name. Often utility bills are required when you need to prove your name and address.
- **Insurance.** The manse itself is insured by the Circuit. You will need to set up insurance to cover your personal possessions (called 'Contents Insurance'). There are many companies who offer this. It is worth asking for several quotes and making a comparison, and ask local people which company they recommend.

- **Furniture provided.** [Standing Order 803]. Manses in the MCB have to be provided with carpets or other floor covering, curtains, lamp shades and light fittings, fixed fires (where fitted), study furniture, cooker and kitchen cupboards, and with a lawn mower. There is a recognition that MOCC ministers may or may not arrive with their own furniture. Circuits are often very generous in providing essential furniture for you if needed. There is also financial assistance available in the form of an interest-free loan. (see section on Finance in Appendix C).
- **Email address.** An email address is provided for all presbyters and deacons. See <https://www.methodist.org.uk/for-churches/methodist-church-webmail/> for information on how to set this up.

4.37 THE FUTURE AFTER THIS APPOINTMENT.

- If you are RR, your 'status' with the MCB depends on you being stationed to an appointment. The usual length of an appointment is five years.
- Before the end of your third year, you need to decide whether you intend to return to your home church at the end of the appointment or whether you would like to stay in MCB.
- If you would like to stay, you need to apply either to extend your RR status or apply to be received into Full Connexion (permanent transfer). You need this to be determined before you can start the reinvitation process to stay in your Circuit appointment or to go into stationing to be matched with another appointment in MCB.
- Reinvitation and stationing processes start in the August before the start of your 5th year. Applications for extending RR or being received into Full Connexion need to be made by the 30th September in your 4th year, but can be made earlier.
- You may or may not be invited to meet a panel to discern this. You need to be aware that if it is determined that your RR status should not be continued or that your application for Full Connexion is not accepted, you can complete the term of your current appointment but not continue in ministry in MCB beyond that term. There can be variances to these, especially if the status changes mid-year.
- In all cases your home church is consulted and no extension or change of status would be agreed without your home church's permission and support.
- It is hoped that this does not sound too limiting. These processes are intended to be fair both to you and to your home church. All ordained ministers in MCB undergo a review process at the end of each appointment and it is a useful time for all to consider how things are going.

4.38 THANK YOU

- Your ministry in MCB is valued and respected. The MCB are very grateful for the enormous journey you have travelled to undertake this ministry. The gifts, experience and insight you bring will enrich the MCB and open many eyes and hearts. Thank you.



*Then let the servant church arise
A caring church that longs to be
A partner in Christ's sacrifice
And clothed in Christ's humanity*

From the hymn:
'The Church of Christ in every age'
by Fred Pratt Green

5. HANDBOOK FOR CIRCUITS

5.1 WELCOME AND HOSPITALITY

- Circuits will have been preparing for the arrival of their new MOCC minister sometimes for a year before their arrival, from the moment when they prepared the profile for the appointment. At that point, Circuit and church stewards, the other presbyters and deacons in the Circuit and others are likely to have held conversations about the new colleagues who they would like in the team for the following Connexional year. Therefore they have already noted the **great value** that MOCCs can bring to the British church – such as experiences of young and growing Methodist and other churches around the world, experiences of inter-cultural dialogue, a variety of forms of worship and approach, a fresh perspective on discipleship and collaboration. All of that needs to be brought into the welcome offered to the MOCC and their family.
- **Sharing information.** Please be clear with the MOCC about the information the circuit and churches will be sharing about them before their arrival and where it will be shared. The circuit may wish to ask them to write a short biography and provide a photo to go in circuit magazines or on the circuit website in advance.
- **Welcome services** are arranged in the same way as for all newly arriving presbyters and deacons, but, be aware that MOCCs may not know what is expected of them or what is likely to happen at the service. It is therefore helpful if someone goes through the service in advance with the new MOCC. Their family will also need to know that they too are welcomed in this service. It is also helpful for them to know who else might be present, especially any civic and ecumenical guests.
- **Initial hospitality.** This can be tricky to get right. It is easy either to do too much or to do too little, so MOCCs can either feel swamped or abandoned! The way to avoid that is to have several conversations in advance with them (by telephone or Skype if possible and not just by email), so that you can be clear about what they might need when they move in. Meals and practical help are usually welcome for anyone newly arriving in an area, but you could go the second mile and see if the meals can show some echo of home for them. Try to put yourself in the shoes of this person or family and think about what you would find helpful.
- **Ongoing hospitality.** It can be helpful for the MOCC if there are regular offers of meals or walks or chats in coffee shops so that they can have informal places to get to know people and to get to know the area. Some Circuits identify a few people to form a support group so that the MOCC is not overwhelmed with meeting many new people all at once.
- **Remember the family.** Children in particular may have little context for this new experience, and are facing the prospect of starting school in an unfamiliar place and possibly operating not in their mother tongue. If you can, invite a family with similar aged children to walk alongside them in the first days. MOCCs' spouses may also need particular support (see section 5.7 below). Are there particular people who can care specifically for the MOCC's spouse?

- **Welcome pack.** Please provide a welcome pack for the MOCC and their family. This might include welcome letters to the children, information about each church and their patterns of worship, local maps, and contact information. It is very helpful if photos can be provided of the leaders in the church and circuit along with a note of their name and role.
- **Try to think of all the things anyone needs to know when arriving in a new area and then add a little more.** Libraries and post offices, dentists, opticians, supermarkets, banks, train stations and bus routes may all need a certain amount of introduction. But please be sensitive. Your MOCC may have a lot of experience of the UK or may have none. They may also choose to explore all these things for themselves. So it is best to work out in conjunction with them what would be most helpful.
- **Hobbies and interests.** MOCCs may want to explore these for themselves in their new context, but they may also need a little help in making contacts. Please encourage them to pursue their hobbies so that they do have time for relaxation.
- See Appendix A for a sample support calendar. Each circuit is likely to need to adapt this to their own situation.

5.2 DIARY.

- It is never too early to start a diary for the new MOCC and their family. It is best if you can set this up electronically so that they can see it too. The elements of the induction are essential so please put those dates in early. Also you can add in the District dates such as synods and the welcome service, and keep on adding in other dates as things are arranged.
- Also, ask the MOCC if they have an idea about any holiday dates in their first year. It may be possible before they arrive, for them to agree with their Superintendent which day will be their day off, so this too could be added to the diary to prevent meetings being arranged on that day.
- Try to leave church meetings until October, not September. They would rather have informal meetings with stewards/leaders before formal meetings.

5.3 HEALTH :

- The newly arriving MOCC and their family may not know how the NHS works and what they are entitled to. Even if they do, they will need advice on which doctors' practice it is best to register with, and help with registering.
- They may need help in understanding how to make appointments and the importance of keeping these on time.
- They may need to know when it is appropriate to make an appointment with a doctor and when it is better to ask advice of a pharmacist.
- They may not know how dentists and opticians operate and what is available on the NHS and what is not.

- In this handbook they are directed to various government websites, but they may need help in interpreting what they are reading.
- After an initial introduction and perhaps visiting the doctors' surgery with the MOCC and their family, you will not be able to foresee everything that might happen. In any case, the MOCC and their family may want medical matters to be kept private. So it is better at that stage to offer them a person to contact if they have any concerns or want any help with medical matters.

5.4 EDUCATION.

- If the MOCC has school age children, please ask them at a very early stage if they need any help with registering their children into a school. This can be a very stressful area for many families.
- It is hard to register for a school before you have moved into a manse, and some MOCCs will not have knowledge of the education system, expectations or requirements in Britain.
- Please offer to help them to obtain necessary school uniforms.
- If there is anyone in your Circuit involved in the school system in your locality, who is prepared to help, then please make sure the family know they can call on that person.

5.5 FINANCE.

- This handbook gives the MOCC information about their stipend, tax, grants and loans and other financial matters.
- It is important when Circuit treasurers are presenting budgets, not to make a MOCC feel that they cause additional costs to the Circuit.
- They may need help in the early weeks to manage their finances, though please be sensitive because these are private matters. Examples:
 - Setting up bank accounts. Please be prepared for the fact that they may not have a bank account set up in time to receive their first stipend so the circuit treasurer may need to help them to make another arrangement, in conjunction with the Finance department at Methodist Church House. There are some bank accounts which are easier to open than others so please do some research on these before the MOCC arrives.
 - Understanding the usual cost for standard items to make sure that they are not paying too much for items
 - Expenses. Help them to work with your Circuit's system for the repayment of expenses. Especially encourage them to keep clear records of their expenses and to make sure they have receipts. Help them to know what they can and cannot claim. It is important that they are helped to understand this at the outset of the appointment.
 - Self assessment. They may choose to use an accountant to help with their tax assessment, but it might help them if someone in the Circuit explains to them how

complex this can be for clergy and to ensure that they take responsibility for completing the tax assessment each year. For example, they need to keep a record of the refreshments they offer in the manse, the cost of furnishings, computer equipment, mileage claims, books, stationery.

- Cascade – make sure that they have login details and know how to use this (for payslips and tax forms). The finance team at MCH will provide the login details and advice if needed, but they may need the circuit to request this specifically.

5.6 DRIVING.

- If the MOCC is arriving from outside Britain, transferring a driving licence can be complex and can take time.
- Is there someone in the Circuit who could offer to help with this? This help may mean driving the MOCC and their family to places in the early days of the appointment, and it may mean helping them with the whole process of applying to transfer their licence and buying a car.
- Please remember that this does not only affect the MOCC, but their family (if appropriate) may also need to travel – to school, to job interviews, to shops and other places. Is there someone they can call on if they need help with this in the early weeks?

5.7 SUPPORT FOR SPOUSE AND FAMILY.

- When they arrive in August, often within a very short space of time, the MOCC is busy and is often out of the manse.
- This can be hard for their spouse, who may either have chosen not to look for work, or may not yet have found work in their field. They may find that their experience and qualifications are not recognised or valued in Britain, leaving them disappointed and disillusioned. They can feel very isolated at this time.
- So if there are people who could invite the MOCC's spouse to be part of a fellowship group or house-group, or just to be invited to go out with a group of friends, that could really help.
- Care is needed about the expectations churches have of the MOCC's spouse. They may or may not choose to be part of one or more churches, and they are also free to choose what sort of involvement they want to have. Please be aware that these expectations may be very different in their home church.
- It can be hard to get this balance right – to make sure they feel welcomed without feeling swamped by other people's expectations. The key is to ensure that the spouse has two or three people they can talk to about any of these concerns, and to help them to find their own way.
- Equally it can be difficult for children of the MOCC. They may be in churches where they find they are the only children and there may be expectations that they will therefore reinvigorate a Junior Church. But please remember that these children may

have just been through an enormous cultural shift and are processing a great deal of new information very quickly. They need to feel cared about, noticed and valued for themselves. Anything you can do to help the churches to understand this would be very valuable.

5.8 WORKING FROM HOME AND WORKING PATTERNS.

- The MOCC may have come from a church with a very different way of working than the way they will encounter in the MCB. It can be hard to have so much freedom to organise your own time, to decide your own priorities and largely not to have to answer to anyone.
- When your home is also your workplace, the temptation is either to work too little or to work too much, because you can never leave your working environment. This is a difficulty for any presbyter or deacon, but it can be particularly focussed for MOCCs from churches with different systems. This level of freedom may not be something they expect. Other presbyters and deacons are probably the best people to help with this, and particularly the Superintendent and the MOCC's supervisor (if that is not the Superintendent).

5.9 MANSE

- **Furnishing.** As soon as you have been informed of a match for your appointment, and you have had an initial conversation with the MOCC, it is worth exploring their intentions regarding furniture. Most will bring only their personal possessions with them, perhaps with some other items arriving later. However, some choose to bring all of their furniture. This is usually the case for those who have transferred from another denomination within Britain. Remember that most are initially here for a five year appointment on a 'temporary' transfer as a RR and therefore they will not want to bring everything here. In these cases, the Circuit is asked to help with providing more furniture than they are required to do. It is best to do this in conjunction with the MOCC and their family (if appropriate). Circuit budgets may be tight so they need to understand that the furniture is unlikely to be purchased new but will be second hand but of good quality. However they still need to be consulted about the items they feel they will need. Please try not to make decisions 'for' the MOCC and their family if you can avoid doing so. They are eligible for grant and loans, so can provide some items (See Appendix C)
- **Maintenance.** MOCCs need to know the processes they should follow if there are any maintenance issues with the manse they live in, just as any other presbyter or deacon does. If your Circuit operates with one designated Circuit steward or manse steward for each manse, please make sure the MOCC has the contact details for that person and knows when they can contact them. You may need to explain to the MOCC what they are responsible for and what the Circuit is responsible for as concerns the manse and the garden. Please do not assume that they will know that they cannot sublet any rooms or that the garden is their responsibility (as examples).
- **Utilities.** This handbook and their induction explain to the MOCCs that they arrange for gas and electricity supplies to the manse but that water is paid for by the Circuit.

However, it is likely that they will need help in discovering the most cost effective supplier and in moving bills over to their name. Please walk them through this as part of your initial induction, and explain how to read meters, what to do in an emergency, any servicing contracts that the Circuit has set up and how to interpret utility bills. It is important for utilities to be set up in the name of the MOCC as soon as possible. They often need them to prove their name and address when setting up bank accounts.

5.10 SELF AND CULTURAL IDENTITY

- Having an understanding of self is an important factor for positive psychology, well-being, and self-esteem. Also a clear cultural identity helps individuals to construct a clear personal identity.
- The following are often described as key components of Culture:
 - Shared Meanings
 - Shared understanding
 - Rituals
 - Cuisine
 - Dialect and Accents
 - Politics
 - Social Norms
- Culture is important as it provides a mechanism for a sense of belonging and security, and when challenged or not acknowledged, can lead to a sense of exclusion or intolerance.

5.11 EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION TOOL-KIT

- The EDI Toolkit is designed to support the discipleship and mission of the Methodist Church and to enrich the life of the Church. The toolkit seeks to equip Methodists to go beyond legal compliance, being based on the principle that all humankind is made in God's image, and therefore worthy of dignity and respect.
- The EDI Toolkit makes use of case studies and stories to evidence real experiences, positive and negative. The stories demonstrate how issues arise through different people's life experiences and provides an opportunity to gain a better understanding of these experiences in terms of the pain of isolation, patterns of exclusion and inclusion, oppression, discrimination, joy, hope and fear.
- The EDI Toolkit can be found here: <https://www.methodist.org.uk/for-churches/guidance-for-churches/equality-diversity-and-inclusion/edi-toolkit/>

5.12 UNDERSTANDING AND USING CPD.

- This is discussed as part of the induction, but once the MOCC arrives in their Circuit, they may need some guidance to find the immediate information they need within CPD, and to interpret it.

5.13 PREACHING PLAN.

- It is likely that the Circuit will make the first plan containing the name of the newly arriving MOCC before they can have much input to it. Please take care to ensure that they are taking services in the churches they are appointed to often enough to become known. In the first quarter, the Circuit may decide it is better for them to be mainly planned to lead worship in those churches, rather than preaching around the Circuit.
- Please also consider giving them a slightly 'lighter load' in the first quarter as they get used to their new environment.
- Please also liaise with them regarding some holiday in their first quarter. This is their choice. We strongly suggest that they should take one week of holiday (and therefore one Sunday when they are not planned to lead worship) in the first quarter, but we also need to recognise that some choose to 'save' their holiday weeks so that they can have a significant block of time in the summer in order to visit their family in various parts of the world.

5.14 FIRSTS.

- Most MOCCs have considerable experience of ministry so they need to be treated differently from the way a Circuit may treat a probationer presbyter or deacon. They may not need the same level of support at the first experience of every element of ministry.
- The support they need is in understanding cultural differences and the traditions of British Methodism. This might be, for example, in funeral customs in Britain compared to other parts of the world (though these are diverse in Britain too), or the way meetings are usually conducted in MCB churches. In all cases it is best to offer help rather than impose it. Think through all the first encounters they will have in the early weeks of their ministry in MCB and see what support they would like in those instances.
- It might be helpful for the MOCC to have a Circuit steward or another presbyter or deacon sitting in the back row of a Church Council just in case they need support (and to reflect with them afterwards), rather than someone coming in and taking over the chair for the meeting. Once a relationship is established with the MOCC, these things can be easily worked out together.

5.15 STATISTICS FOR MISSION

- Please help the MOCC to understand how to complete the online form and the date of when the information is required.

5.16 CONNEXIONAL SUPPORT FOR CIRCUITS

- Induction.
 - Members of Circuit leadership teams of Circuits receiving MOCCs are invited to an induction process in April 2020 which this year is of necessity a virtual process.
 - Together we will think through the issues and expectations that MOCCs may have and those they may face. We will discuss practicalities, theological preparation and potential challenges.
 - We hope this time also gives you material so that you can support and prepare the churches who will be receiving them in September.
- **Immigration.** MOCCs have a variety of visas. Most are on the Tier 2 Minister of Religion visa which is sponsored by the MCB. This is administered by the HR team. They keep track of these visas, helping MOCCs particularly when their visas need renewing. It is important that all MOCCs and their families on these visas inform MCB if they are away from the manse overnight even for a very short time. This is because we have to be able to demonstrate to the Home Office that we know where the MOCC is so we can vouch for them. This information is also used if the MOCC later wishes to apply for Indefinite Leave to Remain. Some though have the right to work in Britain through other routes such as the Ancestry or Spouse's visas. MCB contracts with an immigration advisor to help with any enquiries. Any MOCC who transfers as an accepted candidate, will go to the Queen's Foundation for their training, and, while they are a student, they will be on a student visa sponsored by the Queen's Foundation.
- **Language and culture.** There may be times when it would help a MOCC or their family members to speak to someone in their mother tongue or to meet with someone from their home country. The Fellowship Groups can often help with this. There is also the 'Belonging Together' group, who may have contacted the MOCC on their arrival. Other MOCCs might also be able to help. If your Circuit becomes aware of this need, please contact Claire Potter in the first instance in order to identify someone who can help.
- **General.** The Ministries team in the Connexional Team run a year of induction for MOCCs. Even after the end of the first year, they are still prepared to support MOCCs and Circuits in any way they can. Contact Claire Potter (Ministerial Coordinator for the Oversight of Ordained Ministries) if you have any questions and we will try to help. potterc@methodistchurch.org.uk

5.17 SAFEGUARDING

- The newly arriving MOCC will be bringing unique experiences and insights into their work with you, but some areas of British life and British Methodist life may not be as familiar to them. Safeguarding is a key area where we need to ensure that those who have ministerial responsibilities understand their role and duties.
- They will need to undergo the standard two levels of safeguarding training that all presbyters and deacons are required to undertake (Foundation and Advanced modules). However they are also required to attend a bespoke training session (which includes the Foundation module) on 29-30 September 2020 at Cliff College. This also

gives them an opportunity to tell the safeguarding team about their experience and understanding of safeguarding. Please book them on to the advanced module before arrival.

- Their District Safeguarding Officer will visit them in order to make sure there is a good link with someone who can advise and guide as required. Please ensure your District Safeguarding Officer is aware of them.
- There may also be significant experience among the church and circuit safeguarding officers and they can also play a key role in supporting the MOCC's understanding and responsibilities.
- If there are any safeguarding contracts in place in the churches for which the MOCC will be responsible, the Superintendent should consult with the District Safeguarding Officer to decide the best way of managing these. It may be best for the MOCC not to be expected to manage these at least in the first years of their ministry in the MCB.
- The key resource for MOCCs to be familiar with is the church's Safeguarding Procedures which can be found at <https://www.methodist.org.uk/safeguarding/>. Some Circuits have reported that it helps MOCCs if they are provided with a hard copy of the procedures when they arrive.

5.18 SUPERVISION.

- MOCCs are expected to receive reflective supervision just as all presbyters and deacons are. This means at least 6 sessions of supervision of 1.5 hours duration each year with a trained supervisor (often the Superintendent).
- They will also need more frequent mentoring at the start of the appointment to enable them to reflect on their early experiences, and to offer practical advice. This is provided by the Superintendent or the Minister in Oversight (appointed by the Superintendent).

5.19 PREPARING THE CHURCHES.

- It is important that local churches who will be working most closely with the newly arriving MOCC are helped to prepare thoroughly. It can take quite a shift in thinking to prepare for a presbyter or deacon from another context.
- Please use the material in this handbook in any way that is helpful for your churches and your Circuit.
- Please help church congregations to 'stand in the shoes' of these MOCCs and realise the enormous journeys they are travelling: physically but also mentally and socially. Then it is hoped that congregations will want to do all they can to support them and to smooth their path.
- Then their ministry in the MCB will have a chance to be fruitful and positive. They are greatly enriching the life of the MCB, strengthening partnerships and making sense of the diversity of Methodism in Britain.

6. APPENDIX A

SAMPLE SUPPORT CALENDAR BY A CIRCUIT PREPARING FOR A NEW MOCC.

Please adapt this to your own context.

Month	Support	People responsible
February / March once stationing match is known	Phone, email or Skype contact – or arrange an actual visit if they are in Britain Find out hobbies and interests Establish furniture needs. General information at Circuit Meeting Advice on transferable qualifications for spouse	Superintendent & steward various
April	Contact Connexion to check visa process and timescale Ensure funding in place for removals (in conjunction with Connexion) Send link to Circuit website Start a diary for the minister – ideally electronically so that it can be shared with them	Superintendent and others
May	Information pack (electronic) info from Tourist Office. Email magazines	Circuit stewards
June	Share information across the Circuit Start prayer support group Links with schools and put them in contact Check possible offers of furniture at June Circuit Meeting.	CLT Ask interested people from each church involved Make an initial approach to schools. Stewards
July	Local contacts and put them in touch Set up worship support group (in conjunction with Circuit Preacher's and Worship Leaders' meeting). Look ahead at Plan dates and appointments Plan ahead for furniture Appoint one or two key named people to be first point of call – back-up team to provide support.	Speak to contacts Preachers and Worship Leaders' meeting Team Stewards

	<p>Consider appointing a finance support person</p> <p>Collect information for welcome pack</p>	Stewards
August - arrival	<p>Working party to take responsibility for preparing the manse</p> <p>Get utility bills for manse</p> <p>Arrange transport from airport to meet</p> <p>Someone to welcome at the manse</p> <p>Welcome food, help with settling in</p> <p>Introduction to area (shops, public transport etc)</p> <p>Registering with doctor</p> <p>Induction to the church year, appointments, diary dates</p> <p>Induction at Cliff College</p> <p>National Insurance and Finance Telephone</p> <p>Loans and Grants</p> <p>Car (provide drivers until licence transferred)</p> <p>Computer</p> <p>Bank account</p> <p>Ready money</p> <p>Method for recording expenses</p> <p>Orientation and welcome for children</p> <p>Accompany family to arrange schools for their children</p>	<p>Stewards and volunteers</p> <p>Stewards</p> <p>Stewards</p> <p>Stewards or church contacts</p> <p>Local volunteers / contact person</p> <p>Circuit Stewards</p> <p>Circuit to check travel arrangements to this for whole family.</p> <p>Finance support person</p> <p>Circuit treasurer</p> <p>Youth workers, or local families with similar age children</p> <p>Contact person</p>
September	<p>Welcome service</p> <p>Date of District new ordained ministers welcome/induction event.</p> <p>Date of Sept Synod</p>	Superintendent

	<p>Accompany to all 'firsts'/meeting key people</p> <p>Specific support for spouse/job opportunities (Advice on transferable qualifications)</p> <p>Safeguarding – following up induction</p> <p>Guidance about social media</p> <p>Weekly mentoring</p> <p>Supervision</p>	<p>Small group</p> <p>Form a support/advice group for spouse</p> <p>Circuit Safeguarding Officer</p> <p>Superintendent plus supervisor</p>
October	Cultivating recreation, exercise, outside interests	Circuit steward to check

7. APPENDIX B

A YEAR IN THE LIFE OF AN ORDAINED MINISTER IN MCB *This is an example - details may differ in different contexts*

Month	Event
September	Representative Synod Circuit meeting Welcome service Circuit Leadership Team meeting Local Preachers and Worship Leaders meeting Other committees' first meeting of year Staff meeting (then at least monthly) Marriage returns Supervision starts (weekly at first)
October	Harvest festivals (sometimes in September or November) Church Councils Half term holiday for schools Pastoral committee in local churches (or in September or November)
November	Remembrance Sunday
December	Local Preachers and Worship Leaders meeting (some Circuits) Advent courses Carol services Christmas eve services Christmas Day services Watchnight services (some churches) Bank holidays
January	Covenant services Week of prayer for Christian Unity
February	Half term holiday for schools Church Councils Presbyteral Synod (or March) Lent groups (or March)
March	World Day of prayer service (often ecumenical) Circuit meeting Mothering Sunday
April	Holy week (depending on date of Easter) Good Friday services and acts of witness (often ecumenical) Easter Bank holiday on Easter Monday Representative Synod General Church meetings
May	Two bank holidays Wesley Day and Aldersgate Sunday
June	Church Councils (some churches) End of June – Methodist Conference Circuit meeting (some Circuits)

July	School holidays (about 20 July to end August)
August	Holiday clubs

8. APPENDIX C FINANCIAL INFORMATION

1. INTRODUCTION

- This is not a complete reference document, but it does indicate where further information may be found. It is most important that MOCCs are aware of their own financial responsibilities and what is provided by, or available from the Church, the UK Government or other bodies.
- The financial circumstances of MOCCs and their households vary, and advice and guidance should be sought as and when necessary from reliable sources.
- Dates:
 - The Methodist year runs from September 1st to August 31st. All financial figures and policies determined by the Church apply for that period.
 - The UK Government's tax year runs from April 6th to April 5th.
- Definitions:
 - 'The UK' – the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland – comprises England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.
 - 'Great Britain', or more simply 'Britain', excludes Northern Ireland.
 - For Methodist purposes, the British Methodist Church not only covers England, Scotland (including the Shetland Islands) and Wales, but also the Channel Islands, the Isle of Man and the Methodist Churches in Gibraltar and Malta.
 - The Methodist Church in Northern Ireland is part of the wider autonomous Methodist Church in the whole of Ireland.

2. STIPENDS

- Bank details, etc. on stipend form as soon as MOCC receives it
- From September 1st 2019, presbyters and deacons are paid a standard stipend of £24,852 per year, payable monthly in advance. This is credited directly to the presbyter's or deacon's bank account on the 1st of the month, or on the last working day of the previous month if the 1st is not on a working day (non-working days are defined as Saturday, Sunday or a Bank Holiday). Payslips can be downloaded each month and should be checked so that any queries can be raised without delay.
- The stipend is reviewed annually, and the adjusted figure is approved by the Conference in June/July for implementation from September 1st. However, the Connexional Allowances Committee publishes the recommended figure some months before.

- Some ordained ministerial roles, such as Superintendents, District chairs and Connexional posts, have an allowance above stipend, as listed in the Connexional Allowances Committee's Conference Report.
- There are also allowances above stipend and other financial provisions for those stationed in Circuits outside the UK mainland: these apply to a small number of people and will be advised when necessary.
- Circuits may not pay any allowance above standard stipend without the consent of the Connexional Allowances Committee, and it is granted only in the most exceptional circumstances.

3. MANSES

- The Circuit is responsible for providing an adequate manse, according to standards published in CPD, not only as living accommodation for the MOCC and family but as the base for work.
- By arrangement with HMRC this provision is not subject to tax.
- The Circuit is responsible for manse general repairs and maintenance, property insurance (but not contents – that is the minister's responsibility), and the payment of Council Tax (the local tax paid to the local authority for the provision of local services) and water rates.

4. PENSIONS

- All presbyters and deacons are automatically enrolled in the Methodist Ministers' Pension Scheme (MMPS). The provisions and entitlements of the Scheme are available from the Pensions Department in Methodist Church House, including arrangements for payment of pension (when the time comes) into bank accounts outside the UK.
- The presbyter or deacon contributes 9.3% of standard stipend into the Scheme and the Church contributes 26.9%. These percentages are reviewed from time to time following actuarial valuations of the Pension Fund.
- Presbyters and Deacons may opt out of the Pension Scheme: if they wish to do so, contact should be made with the Pensions Manager.
- Upon retirement, pensions are based on a proportion of standard stipend (i.e. excluding any allowances above stipend) based on years of service.
- There is a Methodist Ministers Housing Society which seeks to provide a home for ordained ministers when they retire, subject to certain strict qualifying conditions, such as: years of service (currently 10 years service) and their financial situation, for which a rent is charged.
- Any queries relating to pensions, which can be a complex topic, should be addressed to the Pensions Manager.

5. NATIONAL INSURANCE AND INCOME TAX

- Within the band of income for presbyters and deacons, the normal National Insurance (NI) contributions towards to the national provision of health care and other state benefits are 13.8% of stipend by the Church and 12% by the presbyter or deacon.
- Income tax is paid at the rate of 20% above a certain level of annual income (in the tax year 2019-20, £12,500), announced each year by the government. Note, above a higher level of income (in 2019-20, £50,000), it is 40% - i.e. it is regarded as a progressive system. There is a system of allowances against tax which affect these thresholds. Changes in taxation are announced in the 'Budget statement' by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the UK's Finance Minister, each year.
- The ministerial payroll system makes all deductions from stipend – for tax, NI, pensions contribution – automatically, so that the presbyter's or deacon's bank account is credited with the net amount each month.

6. COMPUTER ALLOWANCE

- All presbyters and deacons are paid a 'computer allowance' of £165 per year in 2019-20 (payable in October and reviewed annually), subject to tax and NI but not pensionable, in recognition that they must have access to electronic communications.
- The allowance enables presbyters and deacons to choose and upgrade/replace their own computing devices as suits their ways of working. Ensure that receipts for computer equipment are in the name of the MOCC.

7. EXPENSES INCURRED FOR WORK PURPOSES

- Reasonable expenses incurred in a MOCC's work for the Church may be claimed but must be supported by receipts or other acceptable evidence. These are presented to and claimed from the Circuit, by arrangement with the Circuit treasurer or stewards
- It is advisable to find out what these arrangements are as soon as possible, and to keep clear records of expenses with receipts. Such legitimate expenses are not subject to tax.
- In particular, travel expenses by car can be claimed at the rates set by the Conference (and with the agreement of HMRC, for tax purposes) as follows:
 - 45p per mile for the first 10,000 qualifying miles per year;
 - 25p per mile for any qualifying miles above 10,000 per year;
- There is also a provision of a payment of £315 (taxable) per each completed period of 3 months if a presbyter or deacon is off work through illness: this recognises that their car continues to need the annual vehicle tax, car insurance and (if the vehicle is over 3 years old) the Ministry of Transport (MoT) Test of roadworthiness, which are fixed expenses.

8. INITIAL GRANTS AND LOANS

- All MOCCs being stationed for the first time in the British Methodist Church may apply for an initial grant and/or a loan.
- As from September 2018, the maximum grant which may be claimed is £3000 irrespective of the MOCC's financial circumstances or age. It is assumed that those with sufficient funds will not need to claim the full amount or not claim at all – this is left to their discretion and judgement.
- An initial loan, from the Methodist Church Fund, of up to £6000 may also be made, repayable over a maximum of 5 years (60 months) at the rate of £100 per month. The loan is interest-free and the repayments are deducted from stipend at source each month.
- The purpose of both initial grant and loan is to assist the MOCC and family in establishing themselves in a manse and acquiring a car.
- It must be noted that there are no obligations on the Church, either locally or Connexionally, to offer any other benefits to newly stationed MOCCs.

9. STATE BENEFITS

- It is essential that MOCCs in the Tier 2 visa category understand the UK restrictions on their eligibility to claim state benefits and it is suggested that advice is sought in individual circumstances where necessary to ensure that these restrictions are understood.
- The main elements are that MOCCs, as from September 2018, may claim the equivalent of child benefit and/or tax credits annually from the Methodist Church Fund, via the Finance Office in Methodist Church House, London, for the period while they are not eligible to make a relevant claim on the UK state.
- Also, there are constraints, based on immigration status, on:
 - spouses and older children gaining employment and accessing unemployment benefit when without work and
 - the eligibility of MOCCs' children to access loans and grants for University courses. University funding in the UK is complex, most notably because it is different between England, Wales and Scotland, and also different again in the non-UK territories within the geographic coverage of the MCB. Details are accessible on appropriate websites.
- Please note that the benevolent funds outlined in section 12 below may not be used to offer grants as a substitute for state benefits or to assist with University funding for MOCCs' children.

10. REMOVAL AND RELOCATION IN ACTIVE MINISTRY

- When an ordained minister moves to another Circuit in active ministry (or is requested by the Circuit to move manse within the Circuit), the receiving Circuit, i.e. the Circuit

to which the ordained minister is moving, is responsible for paying the removal costs. These normally comprise the furniture removal and the ordained minister and their family's travel costs.

- For incoming MOCCs, the Methodist Church Fund pays the costs to the UK point of entry for flights of the MOCC and three dependents, together with furniture removal.
- The receiving Circuit will pay the costs from the port to the Circuit manse.
- In these cases the MOCC will need to provide at least three quotes from removal companies on official letterheads. The Connexion will consider these quotes and reimburse the MOCC for the agreed costs. In the case where the cheapest quote is not the preferable supplier the MOCC should provide a reasoned statement to support the request. Should the Connexion decline the request the MOCC will still be able to use the preferred supplier and pay the difference.
- In addition to the removal costs, MOCCs may also claim from the Circuit a relocation grant of £600, which is tax-free if evidence of qualifying expenses incurred is provided. This is to cover modest expenses when moving home which also a workplace. (Note: for two ordained ministers sharing the same manse, it is £800.)
- If MOCCs continue their active ministry (i.e. before retirement) in other Conferences and Churches either within the UK or in other countries, or move to appointments outside the control of the MCB, it is their responsibility to ensure that removal and relocation costs are covered, either personally or by the receiving Conference or Church or employing body.

11. SABBATICALS

- The Church has a policy of enabling presbyters and deacons to have a sabbatical for 3 months after the first 7 years of ministry and every 7 years thereafter.
- There is a Connexional Sabbaticals Fund from which presbyters and deacons may claim expenses up to a maximum of £1000, so long as receipts are provided. The Districts are responsible for the oversight of Sabbaticals and the process of claiming expenses.

12. BENEVOLENT FUNDS AND TRUSTS

- There are benevolent funds and trusts available to presbyters and deacons, as outlined below, but it is emphasised they are used in exceptional circumstances, strictly adhering to the purposes of each fund or trust.
- The Connexional Allowances Committee oversees these funds and trusts, and is responsible for ensuring that decisions on each application are made according to consistent criteria. Where genuine and legitimate need is identified, the Committee seeks to be sympathetic and generous.
- Applications for grants are made on different forms for different purposes (which are available on the Methodist Church website) and should be submitted to the Finance Office in Methodist Church House, London. In certain cases, grants may be tax-free

whilst in others the grant is treated as income and therefore subject to tax and National Insurance deductions, in accordance with agreements with HMRC.

- **Fund for the Support of Presbyters and Deacons (FSPD).** Whilst this fund is mainly for the financial support or supernumerary (retired) presbyters and deacons and their dependants, it may be used in accordance with SO 364(1) to provide support to enable ordained ministers with an impairment to continue in ministry and also to assist ordained ministers 'who are in acute financial need'. In the former case, it is often required for adaptations to a manse, for which the Circuit would apply. The phrase 'acute financial need' is normally taken to relate to unexpected and unavoidable circumstances of hardship outside the ordained minister's control and grants are made very sparingly. Grants are not made to help ordained ministers who:
 - simply overspend their stipend or budget or
 - request financial support to fund choices for which they are responsible or
 - seek to backfill income from legitimately denied sources of other funds.
- **Methodist Ministers' Children's Fund (MMCF) also known as the Trinity Hall Trust (THT).** Grants may be made to ordained ministers to assist with expenses incurred in their children's education (for such things as school trips, music lessons, school uniforms, but not for fees and basic materials such as books). Children must be at least 3 years of age on September 1st and not more than 18 years of age on August 31st. Grants are not given for any expenses for higher or further education, i.e. colleges and Universities. The maximum per child per year is currently £300, must be applied for annually and is treated as income for tax and state benefit purposes. It is granted only when the household earned income is less than or equal to twice the standard stipend.
- **Methodist Ministers' Children's Relief Association (MMCRA).** This fund is used wholly to offer grants to presbyters and deacons who have dependent adult children, usually with physical or mental impairment.
- **Methodist Medical Benevolent Fund (MMBF).** Grants may be made from this fund to presbyters and deacons or their immediate dependants to help pay for emergency medical diagnosis and counselling when the National Health Service (NHS) is unable to do so within a reasonable time; and for recuperative breaks arising from serious illness or a personal crisis. It is not a ready source of private health care.
- **Methodist Diaconal Order Trusts.** There are two trusts restricted to the benefit of deacons and their dependants, with purposes similar to those of the FSPD and MMBF. They are used as far as possible when the applicant is a deacon.

13. REMOVALS EXPENSES AND RELOCATION GRANTS ON RETIREMENT

- Bearing in mind that the receiving Circuit pays the removal costs and relocation grant when ordained ministers move in the active work within the MCB, when a ordained minister retires, there is no receiving Circuit as such. The following policies apply to ordained ministers in appointments within the control of the Church at the point of their retirement.

- Ordained ministers in Full Connexion, and those RR having served at least 5 years, retiring in the UK: the removal costs and relocation grant are paid by the FSPD.
- Ordained ministers in Full Connexion retiring to another country: the removal costs up to a maximum of £3000 and the relocation grant are paid by the FSPD. The Connexional Allowances Committee will consider applications for removal costs in excess of £3000.
- RR ministers, having served at least 5 years, retiring to another country: a discretionary grant from the FSPD may be given with the consent of the Connexional Allowances Committee towards removal costs and the relocation grant. It is expected that RR ministers who retire to their home (or another country) continue to receive oversight from their home Church or Conference, with consequent financial responsibilities.

14. THE CONNEXIONAL ALLOWANCES COMMITTEE

- The Committee is established by SO 212(4) and reports through the Methodist Council to the Conference. It comprises 9 people, ordained and lay, representative of many and diverse constituencies in the Church, and has responsibilities mainly set out in SO 212(3) for all matters of remuneration and expenses for presbyters and deacons as well as acting as the managing trustees of the trusts and funds outlined in section 12.
- The Chair is always a lay person. The Committee meets 4 times a year and carries out much of its business electronically so that decisions about grants and other queries can be processed quickly.

15. FURTHER INFORMATION AND ADVICE

- In addition to the documents listed in section 1, further information can be found in the Methodist Church and UK Government web-sites.
- Contact details for the Financial Department at Methodist Church House are given in the Quarterly Letter and advice is available locally from Circuit stewards and treasurers. The Pensions and HR departments are also based in Methodist Church House.