

10. Methodist Forces Board

Contact name and details	The Revd Dr Chrissie Howe – Secretary of the Methodist Forces Board howec@methodistchurch.org.uk Mr Doug Swanney – Chair of the Methodist Forces Board swanneyd@methodistchurch.org.uk
---------------------------------	--

1. This year British Forces have continued to be deployed to several areas of risk, as well as for training purposes, and at times this includes the deployment of Forces' chaplains. The military has also been called to Military Aid to Civilian Authorities (MACA) to assist with the response to the Covid-19 pandemic. This has added additional challenges for chaplains who continue to offer spiritual and pastoral care to military personnel and their dependants, including those who have been separated even though the deployment is within the UK. All three services continue to recruit ordained ministers to serve as chaplains to the Armed Forces.
2. We have a total of 29 full-time chaplains: six Royal Navy, 13 Army, nine Royal Air Force and one full-time Army Reserve.
3. The Methodist Forces Board commissioned the Revd Ric Stott to produce six pieces of art to support chaplains in teaching the moral component of the British Army Core Values (Courage, Discipline, Respect for Others, Integrity, Loyalty, and Selfless Commitment). The Board published 20,000 booklets to help chaplains draw out the experiences of soldiers and make comparisons between the Core Values and the life and ministry of Jesus. We are grateful for the support of the Chaplain General in bringing this project to fruition and for his involvement in the launch.
4. The Board commissioned and published 4,000 hardback copies of a storybook, *Underneath the Sea*, which helps young people understand the work of their loved ones who serve in the Submarine Service. It is based on a story written by the spouse of a US Navy submariner. We were delighted to welcome service families and Command to the launch at HMNB Clyde. We are grateful to the Chaplain of the Fleet for his support in providing this book to the Royal Navy.
5. The Secretary was privileged to accompany the President and Vice-President of the Conference on the annual visit to the Forces, which this year was to the Royal Air Force. The President was welcomed to RAF College Cranwell and RAF Coningsby and had a number of briefings and searching conversations at these locations. We were glad to welcome the President to the Methodist Tri-service Forces Chaplains' Conference at Amport House in February. This was an inspiring and thought-provoking visit which was greatly appreciated. We were joined for this conference by the Revd Cathy Bird, who presented two sessions titled 'Finding God in the Shadows'. The Revd Ruth Gee led a session on Methodist collaborative working, Doug Swanney led a session on current

issues facing the Methodist Church, and Richard Armiger led a session called 'Pastoral Supervision – Being a Supervisee'.

6. The Forces Board continues to be thankful to the Aldershot Methodist Military Trust for its excellent financial support. It is this provision that has allowed the Board to continue to fund a range of projects including:
 - a children and youth work project within the Aldershot garrison town;
 - two part-time pastoral workers to support the chaplaincy at the tri-service Permanent Joint Headquarters (PJHQ) in Northwood;
 - a full-time community pastoral officer at RAF Benson;
 - a project for a families' worker at RNAS Culdrose in Cornwall;
 - a lay families' worker at RAF Marham;
 - a part-time lay families' worker at Hamworthy Barracks; and
 - a full-time lay families' worker at the Defence Academy, Shrivenham.

Initial conversations have also been held exploring the possibility of a unified body to act on behalf of the Methodist Church with respect to its engagement with the Armed Forces, and the Conference is asked to direct that proposals be brought to the 2021 Conference.

7. The Projects Officer has been instrumental in the production of the British Army Core Values artwork and its travel to various military establishments during this year. A number of other projects are in various stages of progression to support chaplains, including the provision of journals for service personnel and raising awareness of Methodist involvement in Armed Forces chaplaincy.
8. The Board offers a range of small grants to chaplains for activities within the Forces' communities.
9. Following the Methodist Church's signing of the Armed Forces Corporate Covenant, the Board is continuing to seek ways of encouraging the Church to express its commitment to our military personnel and their families.
10. The Forces Board continues to express to the Conference its thanks for the prayerful support given to all our chaplains and encourages anyone who would like to know more about Forces Chaplaincy to speak to members of the Board.
11. The Board is grateful for the ongoing diligence and commitment of its Secretary to the ministries of the chaplains and the Board.
12. Members of the Methodist Forces Board for 2020/2021 will be: the Revds John Alderdice, David Barrett, Andrew De Ville, William Gates, the Revd Dr Chrissie Howe

10. Methodist Forces Board

(convener), the Revds Paul Mellor, Timothy Wilkinson, the Revd Dr Andrew Wood, Mr Peter Green, Cdr Mark Barton, Lt Cdr (retd) Shirley Hewitt, Ms Jude Levermore, Mrs Liesel Parkinson, Mr Mark Powell, Mr Doug Swanney (Chair), Mrs Sue Walters.

*****RESOLUTIONS**

- 10/1. The Conference receives the Report.**
- 10/2. The Conference directs the Methodist Forces Board and Aldershot Methodist Military Trust to bring a proposal for a unified body for Methodist engagement with the Armed Forces to the 2021 Conference.**