



Guidelines for Mentors

The role of a mentor is to provide practical and pastoral support for someone training to become a local preacher. The mentor is a local preacher or minister, who is appointed by the Local Preachers' Meeting. The role can be very rewarding one as other mentors testify:

- *'Being able to return the help I received when I was on note'*
- *'Sharing services and planning'*
- *'It has made me re-appraise my own approach to the preparation of services'*
- *'Helping a new local preacher discover the world of local preaching - its joys, responsibilities and concerns'*
- *'Sharing in the joy of a student full of enthusiasm with a desire to equip themselves to preach the gospel'*
- *'Seeing the growth in confidence of my mentee'*
- *'Knowing that you are helping the student to lay a good foundation for study and worship preparation'*
- *'Sharing some of my experiences as a local preacher'*
- *'Exchange of ideas and looking at things with fresh eyes'*
- *'Sharing with another Christian the desire to preach the gospel'*
- *'Sharing resources, prayer, joys and sorrow'*
- *'Being a partnership to bounce ideas off'*
- *'Learning from the trainee'*

This brief guide has been prepared to support you as you take on the role of a mentor and to provide the information you will need to support a local preacher when they are 'on note' and 'on trial'.

Other support is also available to you, both locally and connexionally:

- A mentor is appointed by the Local Preachers' Meeting. The meeting will, therefore, support you in that role – other preachers may have already been mentors.
- Some circuits have a training sub-group of the Local Preachers' Meeting to manage and support local preachers 'on note' and 'on trial' – this will also offer you support.
- You should contact and stay in touch with the preacher in training's local tutor. It may also be helpful to speak to the superintendent and the preacher in training's own minister;
- Discipleship & Ministries, at Methodist Church House, is available to offer support and advice:

Discipleship & Ministries, Methodist Church House, 25 Marylebone Road, London NW1 5JR

Tel: 020 7467 5178 Fax: 020 7467 5238

E-mail: localpreachers@methodistchurch.org.uk

What is expected of a Mentor?

Mentoring begins as soon as 'a note to preach' has been given, as you are asked to support and encourage the preacher during their time 'on note' and into their time 'on trial'. This means that you will have considerable influence over the future preaching ministry of the preacher in training*. It can be a daunting responsibility and you are invited to approach it prayerfully.

The purpose of having a mentor is to provide a degree of continuity of support and assessment, so that progress can be monitored. The relationship of care and supervision should give the preacher in training a quiet confidence in their calling and a sense of fulfilment.

Although it is not a requirement, you may find it helpful to read information about *Faith & Worship* so you can make sure you are informed and up-to-date in your thinking about worship and preaching. A summary of Faith & Worship Units is contained in the resource: *Faith & Worship – Units at a glance*, which is available at www.methodist.org.uk/lp

* In these guidelines, the term 'preacher in training' is used to refer to a Local Preacher 'On Note' or 'On Trial'.

What skills and qualities will a Mentor need?

An effective mentor:

- has an enthusiasm for and commitment to mentoring;
- is able to analyse and reflect on preaching and leading of worship – their own, as well as the preacher in training's;
- is able, therefore, to learn from the preacher in training, so mentoring can become a two-way process;
- shows sympathy and empathy in the relationship with the preacher in training – is able to see situations from the their point of view;
- is open in discussion, building mutual respect between the preaching in training and the mentor, so enhancing the preacher in training's self-esteem and confidence;
- is able to identify the preacher in training's strengths and limitations, enabling the preacher to build on success and address areas needing further work;
- is able to observe and record standards achieved and to identify realistic, manageable and worthwhile targets for development and improvement;
- is able to identify and communicate good practice from specific observations;
- gives realistic and constructive feedback to the preacher in training and to the Local Preachers' meeting;
- encourages careful exploration of whether the preacher in training's calling is actually a call to preach;
- keeps informed on the circumstances and progress of the preacher in training;
- knows the administrative regulations and brings them to the preacher in training's attention.

Working with the preacher in training

A preacher in training, whether 'on note' or 'on trial', will have a number of people they can turn to for help, support and encouragement as they work through this process:

- Mentor who provides practical support and pastoral care
- Tutor who is responsible for their studies
- Superintendent who is responsible for making the plan and for organising the interviews at the Local Preachers' Meeting

As the mentor there are a number of tasks that you are responsible for:

1. Information

There is a lot that a preacher in training will want to know and a lot they need to know about what it means to be a local preacher. It is also important that you both get to know each other and that a relationship of trust is built up. You will soon be leading worship together – being open with each other will help this work well. *Beginning your role as a mentor* (see page 5) provides some material to help you in this process, in particular:

- Getting to know each other
- Getting to know the circuit
- Studying together

There is a lot to be done here and it will need to be explored over a number of meetings rather than just one.

2. Leading worship together

As you study together and get to know the preacher in training, you will be able to make a judgement on how much of your first few services together they should take. This may range from reading the lessons to taking much of the service, apart from the sermon. What is important is that you help the preacher in training to gain insights into how you prepare a service and how you prepare yourself.

According to the rate of progress of the preacher in training, you should let them prepare and conduct more and more of the service, until they take the whole service. There is no prescribed time limit for this process: the preacher in training is encouraged to develop at their own pace.

3. Feedback

As time goes on it is helpful to encourage the preacher in training to reflect on the worship they have led, using the *Service Report Form* (see pages 9-11). This form will be used to assess worship led by the preacher in training throughout their training (including their trial services). It is helpful to use this from the start as a way of reflecting on worship they have led.

The form helps both preacher and assessor(s) reflect upon and evaluate worship. The purpose is to help the preacher in training grow and develop their preaching ministry. The questions are designed to be answered both by the assessor(s) and the preacher in training. It is a good idea to ask the preacher in training to make their own evaluation of what happened before you and the assessor(s) make comments – preachers in training are often more critical of their part of the service than you would be, but not always. As a preacher in training will begin by sharing in only part of the service, it is good to agree beforehand which questions you will be focusing on.

As you use the Service Report Form, please emphasise the good and positive points, but be clear about the negative ones. Most preachers (ourselves included) long for informed, clear and constructive assessment of our work as preachers – the preacher in training will want just the same. It is good to encourage them to make an assessment of your part of the service, too – they will learn much from reporting on you and so will you! You are responsible for every service in which the preacher in training takes part and should continue to carry this responsibility into the ‘on trial’ period for at least six months.

4. Reporting

It is your responsibility to report on the progress of the person ‘on note’ to the Circuit Local Preachers’ Meeting. The *Summary Sheet of the Service Report Form* (see page 11) is designed to draw together the preacher’s and assessors’ perceptions into an agreed statement. It therefore forms a good guide of what to include when you give a report on the preacher in training to the meeting.

5. ‘On note’ to ‘on trial’ trial service

Since September 1999 the assignment for Unit 3 of *Faith & Worship – Jesus through the eyes of Mark*, is the ‘on note’ to ‘on trial’ trial service. This service should be assessed by yourself and one other local preacher, using the *Service Report Form*. As usual, the preacher in training should also complete a *Service Report Form* and be part of the discussion that prepares the *Summary Sheet*. This report, and previous ones, will help the Local Preachers’ Meeting decide whether the preacher in training may move from ‘on note’ to ‘on trial’ status. If the report suggests the preacher ‘on note’ has not yet reached a satisfactory standard, then the Local Preachers’ Meeting may extend the period ‘on note’ or invite careful consideration of whether the person’s calling is a call to preach.

6. On-going support

You should continue for at least six months of the ‘on trial’ period with detailed help in preparation of services and sermons. You should also be present at services conducted during this time and give brief reports to the Local Preachers’ Meeting. You remain the mentor for the preacher in training throughout their period ‘on trial’, and the support you provide will depend upon the needs of the preacher in training themselves.

You or the preacher in training may have some questions. Answers to the most commonly asked questions are on the back page of this booklet.

Many preachers in training and mentors become good friends and continue to support each other once the formal period of mentoring ends. As in any good mentoring relationship, the support develops in both directions.

Beginning your role as a Mentor

The preacher in training will require lots of information when they first begin to preach. Some suggestions are provided below (but be careful not to overwhelm them).

- **Getting to know each other**

To begin to get to know each other, it would be a good idea to discover something about each other:

- background and experience

- experience of sharing in worship
- call to preach
- devotional life

On page 8 there is an exercise from *Faith & Worship* Unit 1, 'What do you bring?', that encourages the preacher in training to consider what experience, knowledge and skills they bring to preaching. It might be useful to consider this together and for you to complete one based on your position when you started training or on your current position.

This will enable you to explore what the preacher in training thinks their strengths are, and where they feel they need more support and confidence building. It will also help you to consider what part they could take in the early services you lead together.

- **Getting to know the circuit**

Information about how local preachers are organised and supported in the circuit.

- What area does the circuit cover and how is it organised?
- How is the plan made and how do you make requests?
- When is the Local Preachers' Meeting and what is its role?
- What is said about preacher in training at this meeting?
- What are preachers' travel arrangements and how do you claim expenses?

As well as details about the circuit, the preacher in training will also need specific information about each church where they will preach. Overleaf there is a proforma, *Service fact-finding sheet*, that can be completed for each church. (This is also on page 47 of *Faith & Worship*, Unit 3.). The form should include all the relevant information (completing these forms will provide a useful resource for the preacher in training). If you are part of a big circuit it may be more appropriate to complete these before the preacher in training's first visit to each church, rather than all at once.

- **Studying together**

Along with these guidelines you may have received a copy of *Faith & Worship* Unit 2 (if one was requested). The aim of this unit is, 'to introduce the nature of worship, including its different parts, and to enable the preacher in training to produce a full service and sermon.'

The preacher in training will also have a copy of this unit and you can study it together. The material will help you both to reflect on how you can best lead worship together. The preacher in training will also have a tutor, who will work through the rest of *Faith & Worship* with them – it may be useful to invite them to be involved in this session so the three of you can work together.

The appendix to Unit 2, *Worship Checklist* (page 58), is a useful resource to encourage the preacher in training to check that they have included all the appropriate elements in their worship. It is suggested that they complete a form for each time they preach, but they will need some support to get them started.

Local Church Information

SERVICE FACT-FINDING SHEETName of Church: Anytown Methodist ChurchLocation of Church: Anytown High Street (next to Tesco's)Style of Church building: A multi-purpose hall with seats in a semi-circle

Date of Service: _____

Time of Service: 10.30 am (also evening service at 6.00 pm)Name and telephone number of Church Steward: Chris Stewart (0123 456789)Name and telephone number of organist/pianist: Jo Hughes (0987 654321)When are the hymn numbers needed by? Thursday eveningNumber in the congregation: 70 in the morning (15 in the evening)Age range of congregation: 10 under 40, 20 under 60, rest over 60How many children? Age range: 6-10 mainly under 11 (none in the evening)

Do the children leave or join the adults at any point: YES / NO

If so when? In the morning children leave after the second hymn(and appreciate a short talk related to the Roots theme before they go)Is the *Methodist Worship Book* available? YES / NO

Are there people willing to read lessons? (NIV pew Bibles) YES / NO

Are there people willing to read prayers? YES / NO

Any other information you feel is relevant

There is a worship leader in the morning. The church uses Hymns & Psalms and Mission Praise Combined. There is a choir and a worship band in the morning (both will sing

Use this blank version to complete one sheet for each church in the circuit

SERVICE FACT-FINDING SHEET

Name of Church: _____

Location of Church: _____

Style of Church building: _____

Date of Service: _____

Time of Service: _____

Name and telephone number of Church Steward: _____

Name and telephone number of organist/pianist: _____

When are the hymn numbers needed by? _____

Number in the congregation: _____

Age range of congregation: _____

How many children? Age range: _____

Do the children leave or join the adults at any point: YES / NO

If so when? _____

Is the *Methodist Worship Book* available? YES / NO

Are there people willing to read lessons? YES / NO

Are there people willing to read prayers? YES / NO

Any other information you feel is relevant

What do you bring?

What I Bring to	None	Little	Some	Fair	Lot	Notes or Comments
Experience of life						
Experience of the Methodist Church						
Experience of other denominations						
Knowledge and experience of more than one culture						
Knowledge of the Gospels						
Knowledge of the New Testament						
Knowledge of the Old Testament Prophets						
Knowledge of the Old Testament as a whole						
Knowledge of Church History						
Knowledge of Theology and Doctrine						
Experience of public speaking						
Experience of leading prayer						
Experience of leading worship						
Experience of preparing Bible Studies						
Experience of studying						

(taken from *Faith & Worship*, Unit 1, pages 3,4)

Service Report Form

Preacher:

Signature:

This is a form to help **all** preachers to share in reflecting on and evaluating an act of worship and to receive feedback in order to help development in preaching.

Guidelines on using the form

- This form should be completed in accordance with the guidelines specified in *How to Submit a Section of Faith & Worship for Connexional Assessment* (available at www.methodist.org.uk/lp)
- The local preacher 'on trial' is to provide the assessor(s) with an order of service.
- Both the assessor(s) and local preacher 'on trial' should meet to compare reflections, evaluations and suggestions for further development as specified on the Summary Sheet.
- Once agreed and signed, the Service Report Form (completed by the local preacher 'on trial') and the Summary Sheet (signed by both preacher and assessor) should be submitted for Connexional Assessment as part of your worship portfolio for submission within sections A, B, C or D.
- *The completed Service Report Form and Summary Sheet can be kept as part of the preacher's development portfolio, or submitted as a report to a Local Preachers' Meeting (or the training sub-group)*

If applicable, points for development from the previous Service Report Form:

The Context

Place of worship:	Date:	Time:
Description of worship area:		
Time of liturgical year, Particular circumstances:		

In what ways (and how well) were place, time and season taken into account?

The Congregation

Numbers:	Age range:	Gender distribution:
Background:		

In what ways was the worship appropriate/inappropriate to this kind of congregation?

Relationships

a. With the congregation

In what ways (and how well) did preacher and congregation relate during the service?

b. Collaboration

In what ways (and how well) were gifts of congregation members used?

What feedback did the congregation give after the worship?

The Service**a. Leading worship**

In what ways (and how well) was the congregation helped to worship, encounter and respond to God?

How were different ingredients of worship (prayers, music, readings etc) handled?

Were any ingredients of worship absent? If so, were they deliberately omitted? Why?

How well do you think the language used in the service related to the congregation? Evidence?

In what ways did the service develop, flow, hang together?

b. Strengths and opportunities for further development

What do you think were the two strongest aspects of the worship?

1.

2.

What aspect of the worship do you feel could be developed further? *

c. Preaching (or conveying the Good News in alternative ways)

How clear was the aim of this aspect of the service?

For you, how successfully was the aim achieved?

What were the two strongest points of the content of this part of the service?

1.

2.

What were the two strongest points of the delivery of this part of the service?

1.

2.

What aspects of this part of the service could be developed further? *

* What action could be taken to help such development? By whom? When?

Summary Sheet (Service Report Form)

Name of preacher:

If applicable, points for development from the previous Service Report Form:

The Context

Place of worship:	Date:	Time:
Description of worship area:		
Time of liturgical year, Particular circumstances:		

The Congregation

Numbers:	Age range:	Gender distribution:
Background:		

The two strongest points of the service were:

- 1.
- 2.

The two strongest points of the sermon, or its equivalent, were:

- 1.
- 2.

The following points were noted for further work:

- 1.
- 2.

If applicable, report on action taken regarding points noted in previous services:

Signed

Preacher	Assessor(s)
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(A copy of this form should be retained by the preacher in their portfolio and, if appropriate, copies given to the assessors.)

Frequently Asked Questions

1. What does the *Faith & Worship* course include?

The syllabus for the course is outlined on pages 10-11 of Unit 1. More specific details about the content of units are available from the tutor and from the Local Preachers pages of the Methodist Church web-site: www.methodist.org.uk/lp

2. How is the course assessed?

For each section of *Faith & Worship*, the following need to be sent to Discipleship & Ministries:

- a completed **Connexional Assessment Cover Sheet** for that section
- a **copy of each assignment** for this section of *Faith & Worship*,
 - to be marked by the tutor
 - to have achieved a mark of 40% at least
 - to include any earlier drafts marked by the tutor
 - to have a Student Record Sheet (completed on both sides)
- the **two exegesis passages** for this section of *Faith & Worship*
- a **Worship Portfolio** for this section of *Faith & Worship* which consists of:
 - personal reflection on one act of worship where the preacher in training was present but had no formal responsibilities
 - paperwork for one act of worship taken during study of this section, ie:
 - a copy of the order of service
 - a Service Report Form completed by the preacher in training
 - a Service Report Form - Summary Sheet for that service agreed by the preaching in training and the assessor(s)
 - a brief account of how the points for further work identified on the Summary Sheet will be addressed
 - a transcript of a sermon (or a detailed account of its alternative) delivered by during the study of the section. This may be from the service reported on above. If it comes from another service, please include an order of service for that act of worship. Bullet-pointed summaries will not be accepted for this part of the Worship Portfolio.

Work for a section of *Faith & Worship* can be sent at any time during the year. There are two deadline dates for Connexional assessment: 31 March and 30 September each year. Work received after these dates will be kept for the next deadline date. Comment sheets (with the overall result) will be sent to the tutor before 31 May or 30 November.

3. What are the rules and regulations for the *Faith & Worship* course?

These are outlined on pages 37-42 of Unit 1. They are also available at www.methodist.org.uk/lp

4. What books do I need to buy?

Essential and recommended resources is given on pages 17-23 of Unit 1. Circuit funds and Connexional funds can help preachers who need financial assistance. Contact your Circuit Local Preachers' Secretary or superintendent for details.

5. What is the process for becoming a local preacher?

See 'From "on note" to admission as a local preacher', on pages 43-46 of Unit 1.

6. What will happen at the interviews at the Local Preacher's Meeting?

This is summarised in the 'Circuit interviews for those on trial' leaflet. It is available at www.methodist.org.uk/lp