

Methodist Church House
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www.methodist.org.uk

31 March 2021

To: All Ministers and Probationers Stationed in the Active Work and All District,
Circuit and Church Treasurers

WELCOME TO OUR MARCH 2021 NEWSLETTER

Dear Friends,

We are distributing the link to this newsletter by e-mail to all Ministers, Probationers, District, Circuit and Church Treasurers. Please feel free to forward this newsletter to others who you think may find it useful.

As we start to look forward to the gradual reopening of society following lockdown, we are also aware of just how tight the financial position is for many churches. Decisions made at the recent Methodist Council provide some small help, but we continue to encourage any churches struggling to discuss this with their circuit and any circuits struggling to discuss this with their district.

We do not yet have a reopening date for Methodist Church House, but we hope to be able to deal with the post more swiftly after Easter. The best way of contacting the team remains via email or phone. We also encourage that where possible any payments to Connexional Funds are made by BACS rather than cheque.

Finally, I would like to pay tribute to Joel Dhliwayo who died in February as a result of Motor Neurone Disease. Joel was a much loved member of the Finance Team and will be missed by his colleagues.

Yours faithfully,



Matt Tattersall
Director of Finance & Resources

District Assessment

The Methodist Church Fund Assessment paid by Districts to the Connexion was due to increase by 1% from September 2021 in line with previous decisions of the Conference. However, the Methodist Council meeting in March has agreed a resolution to ask the Conference to reduce the District Assessment by 1% from September. Furthermore, the Council has indicated that the District Assessment could fall by 2% in 2022/23 and 3% in 2023/24. However, such reductions will impact the ability of the Connexional Team to continue providing the current level of support to the wider Church. Consequently, further work is required to understand the impact of these budget reductions.

HSBC 'Safeguard' process

Many treasurers have experienced frustrations with HSBC and their Safeguard process and have been providing us with feedback to pass onto HSBC at a national level. Following a meeting in March, HSBC have 'red flagged' all Methodist bank accounts (or at least those with Methodist in the title) and will not require any churches or circuits to undertake the Safeguard process until HSBC have improved their internal processes. Also, they should not be closing any Methodist accounts as a result of unsatisfactory Safeguard reviews without senior level sign off in the bank. Should any treasurers continue to experience difficulties with HSBC in respect of this matter, please email details to robertsl@methodistchurch.org.uk and your concerns will be forward to HSBC head office.

The Real Living Wage

As reported in our last newsletter, the Living Wage Foundation have published the latest real living wage and this is £10.85 an hour for those that live in London and £9.50 per hour for those that live elsewhere the UK. These rates must be implemented by April 2021. In addition, the value of the additional points that can be awarded to lay employees has been uplifted to £579.00 (£617.30 in London).

Easter Offering

The Easter Offering service in support of the World Mission Fund has been prepared as usual by The Methodist Women in Britain. They have produced a guide "Leader's Notes" and this includes information for treasurers (page 8 onwards) which can be found at [Easter Offering Notes](#).

Pension Scheme Volunteers

The Methodist Council is looking for volunteers to be directors of the Methodist Pension Schemes. If you have a background in pensions or finance and are interested in supporting the church in this vital work, you can find more details at [Pension Scheme Volunteers](#).

Zoom

At the request of the District Chairs the Connexion has negotiated a deal with Zoom. Licences for a Zoom Enterprise licence are available at £72 per annum. Implementation is being managed through the Districts though it could take some time to be fully rolled out. As a result, the new accounts are free of charge until the end of August to give us plenty of time to transfer over. Anyone with an existing account that transfers to the new account will be reimbursed for any outstanding time left on their old contract.

Association of Church Accountants & Treasurers (ACAT)

There are now 360 churches and circuits that have joined ACAT free of charge due to the block membership put in place by the Connexion. ACAT provide a range of resources and training for treasurers and if you would like to join please find the details at [ACAT](#).

Online giving and contactless card readers

As thoughts turn to the reopening of churches, you may also be considering installing contactless card readers as an alternative method of giving. Dona is a Christian Company providing these products particularly for the church market, see [Dona Donations](#). Whilst there are other companies that provide similar services, we have negotiated with Dona to offer Methodist organisations a free online webpage. Further details can be found at [Webpage for Online Donations](#).

Self-Assessment

For untaxed income earned during the 2020-21 tax year, the deadline for filing paper tax returns is 31 October 2021, or online returns by 31 January 2022.

Tax Year End Certificates (P60) for year ended 5th April 2020-21

The Form P60 for Tax Year 2020-21 will be available in May 2021, for anyone on the payroll as at the 5th April 2021.

On receipt, please retain this in a safe place as you may need it: -

- To complete your Self-Assessment tax return (if applicable)
- To claim back any tax, you may have overpaid from HM Revenue & Customs (if applicable)
- To apply for tax credits (if applicable)
- Or simply to provide proof of income

If you are a minister you will probably need to complete a tax return, particularly if you have received untaxed income during the year.

The Tax Office helpline telephone number is 0300 200 3200

Please have your National Insurance number available as you will be asked to quote it.

Form P11d for the year ended 2020/21

The deadline for employers to return forms P11D and P11D (b) for Tax Year 2020/21 to HMRC and provide copies to Ministers and Lay Employees in receipt of taxable benefits and expenses is the 6th July 2021. Further guidance will be provided by the end of April 2021.

As a general guideline expenses incurred wholly and exclusively in connection with employment are exempt from PAYE and NI. Specific guidance relating to ministers can be found in the [Taxation Directory](#).

Contacting the Finance Team

The contact details for Finance team can be found on the Finance page of the Methodist Church website at [contact-the-finance-office](#).

Particular contacts are as follows:

For the Ministers payroll and benefits please e-mail stipends@methodistchurch.org.uk

For the lay payroll please e-mail payrollbureau@methodistchurch.org.uk

For ministerial grants please email ministerial.grants@methodistchurch.org.uk

For the Gift Aid bureau please email giftaid@methodistchurch.org.uk

If you don't know who you need to speak to then please contact Lesley Roberts our Senior Administrator on 0207 467 5264 or RobertsL@methodistchurch.org.uk

