

STATEMENT ABOUT MINISTERIAL TRANSFER TO THE BRITISH METHODIST CHURCH

The British Methodist Church greatly values the ministry of ordained ministers from other Churches and Conferences who apply each year to transfer their ministry to the British Methodist Church. For many years they have brought insights, energy and wisdom from other denominations and other cultures into the British Methodist Church, enriching circuits and churches in profound and diverse ways.

One of the currently unknown results of the Covid 19 pandemic is its impact on numbers of appointments for ministers in stationing. Immigration laws do not permit the British Methodist Church to sponsor visas for ministers unless there is an appointment to which they have been stationed.

We are also seeing increasing numbers of Ministers of Other Churches and Conferences applying to transfer to the British Methodist Church, either as 'Recognised and Regarded' or into Full Connexion. Each year it is becoming increasingly difficult to match all of those who are recommended through the discernment process, to appointments in the year in which they are recommended. That means that there are usually some who are considered in the matching process in the following year, thus increasing the numbers yet again. Due both to the numbers of suitable appointments being quite low even in a 'normal' year and due to the costs of sponsoring visas, it has already become necessary to limit the numbers of appointments for Ministers of Other Churches and Conferences.

Therefore it has been decided that there will be a two year pause on the transfer processes. This means that we will not be able to accept any new applications from Ministers of Other Churches and Conferences in 2022 or 2023.

Those ministers who applied in 2021 but who either withdrew or whose applications were stopped because of incomplete paperwork or missing home church permissions, or those who were not recommended by the scrutiny panel, will be treated as new applicants and therefore they will not be able to apply again in 2022 or 2023.

Ministers who will be able to apply during the period 2022 and 2023 are:

1. Those who are already 'Authorised to Serve' in the British Methodist Church who wish to apply to become 'Recognised and Regarded' or to be received into Full Connexion, and
2. Those who are already 'Recognised and Regarded' who either wish to be received into Full Connexion or to extend their 'Recognised and Regarded' status.

During these years, further work will be done by several parts of the Connexional team working together to design the most helpful and effective process for ministers wishing to transfer into the British Methodist Church. Therefore we expect that the process after these two years will look different from the current process.

We recognise the disappointment this decision will cause for some who are hoping to transfer, and we hope that potential applicants will understand the difficulties that all countries and churches currently face. The British Methodist Church continues to value greatly its relationships with partner churches around the world and ordained ministers.

If you have any questions regarding this statement, please contact the Revd Dr Claire Potter potterc@methodistchurch.org.uk