Agenda volume two

Annual Conference 2018
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### Resolution

20/1. The Conference receives the Report.

### Summary of content

| Subject and aims                                      | To summarise the work done in response to the Training Review.  
|                                                      | To present the ‘fuller report’ required by the Conference in response to Notice of Motion 2017/106. |
| Background context and relevant documents            | The Summary of the Outcomes of the Training Review (report 43 to the 2017 Conference). |

### Introduction

1. The Training Review Group (TRG) was established by the Methodist Council in the autumn of 2015 in response to Memorials M2 to M7 accepted by the 2015 Conference.

2. The Terms of Reference of the group were set by the Methodist Council in October 2015:
   a. Review the premises and principles upon which current provisions of [ministerial and lay] training were proposed and adopted in the light of subsequent developments and practical experience*;
   b. Review provision of ministerial training*;
   c. Review provision of resources for lay training*;
   d. Review the impact of the post 2013 pattern of training on candidating;
   e. Evaluate how well the post 2013 pattern of training is preparing ministers for the breadth and variety of ordained ministry*; and
   f. Review the discernment process in candidature leading up to and including candidate’s portfolio.

3. In practice, the work of the group allowed them to offer evidence and recommendations in relation to the asterisked items. Whilst the group had access to the statistics relating to candidates from 2008 to 2016 (which show a steep decline), it was impossible to determine whether the changes that were made as a result of the Conference’s decisions were a cause of any trend. The group concluded
that it had insufficient time to review the discernment process in candidating but commended the parallel work on vocations that was presented to the Council in January 2017.

4. The TRG interviewed and/or received written submissions from some 40 Methodists and ecumenical colleagues involved in the formation of ministers and/or in the delivery of training. The group visited The Queen's Foundation, Cliff College, The Wesley Study Centre in Durham and Wesley House in Cambridge. The TRG noted that a significant amount had been achieved since the changes introduced in 2012/2013. This included extensive financial work (to create capital plans for remaining centres and review/amend the budgetary picture presented in the Fruitful Field report (FF)); the establishment of working arrangements with remaining centres and withdrawal from others; turning Methodist International Centre (MIC) and Guy Chester House into income generating units; and an extensive staff restructuring and recruitment programme. The Queen’s Foundation as a part of the Network had established full-time, part-time and circuit-based pathways for initial ministerial training, as well as a probationer pathway. Cliff College, also as a part of the Network, had introduced new short courses. Very significant progress had been made on a new pathway for Local Preachers and Worship Leaders and other connexional deliverables cited by the Network team (although not specifically reviewed by the TRG) included Bible Month, the One Programme and 3Generate.

5. However, the balance of views and evidence given to the TRG suggests that there are both new external developments and substantive issues in the substance and implementation of the recommendations of the 2012 Review of Training which require attention if the Church is to move forward confidently. These led to the TRG making eleven recommendations to the Council in April 2017.

6. The Council made no decisions in respect of any of the recommendations in the report, including those in relation to institutions or staffing. Rather it considered a number of points that have the potential to support evolutionary developments to structures and patterns of formation, both lay and ordained.

7. The Council directed:
   i. the Strategy and Resources Committee to present to the Conference a summary of the report noting the points of consensus and concerns raised by the Council;
   ii. the Strategy and Resources Committee, in consultation with the Ministries Committee and the Faith and Order Committee, to undertake evaluations of the recommendations in order to make detailed provision for any implementation and to make regular reports to the Council.
8. The Conference received the summary report and adopted Notice of Motion 106, viz:

The Conference notes that because of the sensitive nature of some of the recommendations of the review group the report to the Council in January 2017 was not made public, or shared with Chairs of District in the normal way so they could have conversations with the District members of Council, and was dealt with under confidential business. The April 2017 Council considered a further report which was shared with the Chairs but dealt with under confidential business so did not appear in the public domain. Consequently, the summary report to the Conference does not contain specific recommendations but alludes to issues, responding warmly to some, and expressing concerns in respect to others. The nature and reasons for the Council’s direction is not known and cannot be assessed by the Conference because the summary report lacks the necessary detail. Yet the Conference is being asked to agree to direct the Strategy and Resources Committee, in consultation with the Ministries Committee and the Faith and Order Committee, to undertake evaluations of the recommendations in order to make detailed provision for any implementation. The Conference requests a fuller report in response to the six memorials from the Synods of the East Anglia, Manchester & Stockport, Northampton, York & Hull, South East and Cumbria Districts to the 2015 Conference so that the Conference can consider what provisions need to be implemented. The Conference requests that report to be presented to the Conference of 2018.

9. In order to comply with the second of the Council’s directions, the Chair of the SRC requested from the Connexional Team a summary of each of the recommendations alongside the reflections from the Council on the points raised and responses to how plans are progressing to take work forward. That summary was considered by the SRC in November 2017 and referred for discussion to the Ministries Committee.

10. The SRC meeting in March 2018 again reviewed the recommendations of the Training Review as laid out in the report to the Council of April 2017. The committee agreed responses to the eleven recommendations and mandated the Assistant Secretary of the Conference in consultation with the Chair of the Ministries Committee and the Secretary of the Faith and Order Committee to report to the Council in April 2018 with a draft of the report to the Conference in response to Notice of Motion 2017/106.

11. The Council was presented with the report of the SRC in April 2018 and invited to comment on the eleven recommendations and to agree the substance of the ‘fuller report’ to the Conference in response to NoM 2017/106.
12. In what follows, each recommendation of the Training Review Group, together with a summary of the reasons for the recommendation is shown in italics in the boxes. The comments of the SRC and the decisions of the Council are shown after each recommendation. The Council’s comments are shown in bold.

**Recommendation 1**

The TRG considered the language used about a learning Church in the 2012 report but came to the view that this expressed an aspiration rather than a lived reality. The TRG concluded that to become a learning church, all Circuits now need to be actively encouraged to develop their capacity and support for formation and learning, and for the best experience to be shared with other Circuits.

The TRG’s first recommendation, therefore, was

**R1** Since the basic unit for all learning must be the Circuit, the TRG recommended:

a. that the purposes of the Circuit in Standing Order 500 should be amended to include the specific task of nurturing and encouraging the whole Circuit as the key unit of a learning church

b. Circuits should be supported to create learning communities, reflecting examples that already exist and the diverse circumstances of individual congregations.

c. the priority actions for support to Circuits should include:

i. a programme to support circuit and church stewards;

ii. publishing examples of ways to create a learning community - one relatively ambitious model of what might be put in place is given in Appendix 3 by way of illustration; and

iii. a phased approach in which a range of distinctive Circuits, across several Districts, pilot ways in which they can become effective learning Circuits.

12.1 As with many of the recommendations, the SRC bore in mind the changes that are already in train with a realignment of the regional resources of the Connexional Team. As the TRG noted, the Methodist Church comprises Circuits and Districts of different size and structure. From September 2018, each District will have a learning officer aligned to them. Whilst agreeing with the conclusion of the Training Review that all Circuits need to develop their capacity and support for formation and learning (although also wanting to note the considerable amount of learning that is done in circuits as members develop their discipleship), the revised ways of working within the learning network will need time to become embedded in the learning experience of the Church. Part of this embedding will be the sharing of good practice within the Network, Regional Fora, and Superintendents’ gatherings.
The Council has therefore concluded that a period of further reflection is needed before any changes to SO 500 need to be considered; such consideration, if it were to occur, would need to be in relation to all four aspects of Our Calling and not simply to learning.

**Recommendation 2**

The TRG was alerted to a widely held regret that the Connexional Team did not foster and build on the original Open Learning Centre. It recognised the significance of the work being done on Virtual Learning Environments (VLE) as a way of developing supported distance learning but did not presume that it is necessarily the best environment for all supported distance learning. The TRG asked, therefore, that the Council consider establishing a ‘Methodist Open Learning’ function.

**R2** The TRG recommended that the Connexional Team explore:

a. the possibility of establishing a ‘Methodist Open Learning’ function in the full recognition of the implications, and of the lessons to be learned from the previous efforts to establish it;

b. where the resources of the former Open Learning Centre now reside.

12.2 The SRC considered carefully the valid points that the TRG makes about the importance and limitations of virtual learning; it is important to recognise that all those undertaking training, education, learning and formation in the life of the Church need to be able to access necessary resources and that this has been a priority for staff in the Discipleship and Ministries Cluster. However, it also noted that technological and pedagogical change has been considerable since the days of the Open Learning Centre and that the material used then, and still held within the Connexional Team, is now dated. The SRC therefore believes that the investment that the Church is making in VLE will offer necessary, appropriate and effective support to today’s learners.

The Council has therefore encouraged the Connexional Team to continue to develop its virtual learning environment as part of a mixed mode of learning.

**Recommendation 3**

The TRG considered how a learning Church would be resourced and concluded that it requires a Community of Expertise in Methodist Formation and Education. Such a Community would be the catalyst and support for all in the Church to be nurtured and enabled to grow in understanding and faith. This means that the Community would provide (directly or through signposting) to the Conference and individual Circuits the resources
and expertise needed to meet their learning priorities year by year. It would also offer a stimulating academic context for existing experts in Methodist formation, and would support the growth of new theological educators within the Methodist tradition, whether working within the church or outside it.

Such a community would enable the church to ‘learn and re-learn the gospel, and how to proclaim it, in the context of the changed world and increased knowledge encountered by succeeding generations’. The TRG believes that with intentionality and clear governance such a learning community might evolve from the learning network, but noted that there was confusion in the governance relationships between the responsibilities of the Network Committee and the Ministries Committee and that a clearer governance and management structure was required.

R3 The TRG therefore recommended that steps be taken to create a Community of Expertise in Methodist Formation and Education. The first steps towards this would be:

a. Appointment of a highly experienced theologian as Secretary of Methodist Education and Formation (‘Secretary’), with managerial responsibility for the DMLN including responsibility for relationship with centres. It would be a matter for the Secretary of the Conference to determine internal reporting lines, including the possibility for the newly appointed Secretary to report to the Connexional Secretary. S/he would be a member of those committees that have an interest in educational and formational issues, as well as being able to report directly to the Methodist Council and to the Conference.

b. A move to make the Ministries Committee solely responsible for policy matters concerning ministry (lay and ordained), to include consideration of the appropriate priorities for the DMLN/Community of Expertise given budgetary constraints. The Senior Leadership Group of the Connexional Team should have full responsibility for managing work in line with agreed priorities and budget, including managing staff. If this pattern is adopted, it would provide greater clarity, in terms of policy, formation, managerial responsibility, and accountability. We recognise that, to deliver this, the Ministries Committee may need amended Terms of Reference and/or changed working approaches to manage its own workload. Under this suggested structure the Network Committee would be redundant.

c. A senior management team reporting to the Secretary of Methodist Education and Formation that includes expertise in both ordained and lay formation.

d. Work to ensure that the DMLN evolves to make full use of the skills and knowledge of centres with which the Church is associated (see R10 and R11 below) and proactively links with and accesses the resources of people with relevant expertise who work
elsewhere. We believe that many may well be able to contribute to our formational life in innovative ways, including in particular people in university theology and religious studies departments and relevant staff of ecumenical partner churches.

**Recommendation 4**

The TRG also noted what it believed to be a lack of flexibility within the learning network with it appearing to be difficult for staff to be deployed beyond their region or for additional skills to be brought in as needed.

R4 The TRG therefore recommended that the Conference and Council should, within an agreed governance and financial framework and subject to agreed priorities, allow the Secretary to determine the resourcing model (including staffing structure and roles) best suited to the task of the DMLN, so that it can be adjusted as needs dictate.

**12.3 The SRC and the Council considered Recommendations 3 and 4 together:**

12.4 The SRC agreed that the work that the Training Review identified to create a learning community with greater flexibility needs to be done, but felt it difficult to justify the creation of a new post at a time when many other changes are being made to the shape of the Connexional Team. The movement of some staff from the Discipleship and Ministries Cluster into the Conference Office has seen the creation of the ‘Ministries: Vocations and Worship’ Team which will enable the effective management of resources that the Training Review rightly deemed to be necessary without the creation of a new executive post. The Network Committee has now been disbanded and many of its responsibilities subsumed by the Ministries Committee. Further work needs to be undertaken to agree (a) the management of the workload and revised terms of reference for the Ministries Committee and (b) how those already appointed with responsibility for theological education in the life of the Church (in learning institutions and in the Connexional Team) ensure a coherent strategy and the best use of available resources.

The Council decided against the creation at this time of a new post of ‘Secretary of Methodist Education and Formation’ and affirmed the direction of travel described by the SRC.

**Recommendation 5**

The TRG noted that the DMLN was established to receive requests from the Conference and the Council and with a defined responsibility to consult with the Regional Forums. The TRG found the Terms of Reference of these Forums (as set out in SO 340(1)) which pre-date 2012 to be out of date and in urgent need of amendment.

The TRG therefore proposed that the focus of the Forums should be on purpose rather than process. In order to discern and prioritise the learning needs of the church it is important to ensure the effectiveness of the Regional Forums in representing the views of the Circuits and Local Churches in relation to their discerned needs and in relation to feedback about how DMLN provision is meeting those needs. The TRG was concerned that there is an imbalance between connexionally and locally allocated intentional learning resources which should be corrected.

R5 The TRG recommended that the newly appointed Secretary should:

a. Review the Terms of Reference of the Regional Forums and the most effective method of ensuring that the local voice is heard in establishing priorities and providing feedback on current provision.

b. Review the existing regional structure in the light of the decisions on the Larger than Circuit process and if need be amend it.

c. Review the way in which the DMLN supports districts and circuits, and give consideration to models that would give District Chairs a greater control over part of the DMLN resource. Where District Chairs feel the present Network is successful, it needs to be sustained, but where it is felt that it is not working properly, the Connexional Team, together with the Chairs, should provide an alternative solution.

12.5 In response to this, the SRC reported that a strategic piece of work has already been undertaken by members of the Connexional Team to look at the nature and purpose of regional forums. Proposals regarding the policy concerning the purposes and operations of the Regional Learning and Development Forums are contained in the Connexional Team update to this Council. In the light of agreement in that area, subsequent work will be undertaken to ensure that the resources of the Connexional Team are deployed to best advantage. The redefining of the regional forums, the aligning of a Learning and Development officer to each district, and the flexibility to deploy personnel and to draw in others with gifts to share in accordance with their areas of expertise should achieve the responsiveness to both connexional and local needs that the TRG recommends.

The Council affirmed the plans for the review of the Forums.

Recommendation 6

The TRG believed that that if the Church shares its ambition that it should become intentionally a learning church, then the cost implications of that need to accepted and funded. In that regard, while it is helpful to have some designated funds where these help to support fundraising and contribute to the longer-term security of the work on formation and education, it does not make sense for the budget for this work to be varied according to
the performance, good or bad, of so-called income generating centres.

**R6** The TRG recommended:

a. that the funding model adopted since 2012 should be revised to give greater long-term security to the work of formation and education; and

b. that the following potential sources of funding be thoroughly explored:
   i. the re-introduction of specific advocacy for a, possibly renamed, Methodist Fund for Training;
   ii. the best use of freehold assets available at the Westminster College, Oxford site and the Mount Clare property at the University of Roehampton; and
   iii. funds which can be released from the Model Trust funds held by many circuits following property sales over the last 50 years.

12.6 The SRC agreed that a learning church needs to be properly funded and noted that the funding model has already been revised and there is ongoing work in the Property Development Committee and in conversation with the Southlands Methodist Trust about the future of the Mount Clare site. Methodists can give (e.g., in the collections at ordination services) to the Fund for Training and many do so. As with many other recommendations, the way in which training is resourced financially will need to be reviewed in the light of any other changes that are to be made (e.g., the final response to Recommendation 7, below, and the future development of Methodist scholarship).

The Council’s response to the recommendations is that it has already approved appropriate changes to the funding model.

**Recommendation 7**

The TRG reported that its members were struck by the breadth of concerns, raised by those who were consulted, about the existing framework within which the church currently supports formation for ordained ministry.

The TRG was concerned to understand the circumstances in which candidates accepted for initial training can gain the right formational opportunities at a time when the number of world-class theology departments is declining, and the need for cross-disciplinary understanding and engagement grows in an increasingly secular world. The TRG therefore expressed the view that the church needs to explore further the opportunities for student ministers to have the opportunity to learn in association with the best theology departments, alongside ecumenical colleagues, and with the chance to engage actively with those studying a wide range of other disciplines.

R7 For initial ministerial formation, the TRG recommended:

a. to allow adequate time for discernment, the opportunity for greater breadth of experience (including diverse placements), catch-up where prior theological knowledge is limited, and completion of first degrees where relevant, the normal period of initial ministerial formation for most students should be lengthened from 2 to 3 years for those studying full time and 3 to 4 years for those studying part time;

b. to ensure that ministers can support and facilitate the creation of learning Circuits and local formational communities, there should be a greater emphasis within initial ministerial formation on the skills needed to enable the theological and formational growth of their congregations and of those in their pastoral charge; ministers need to be confident in leading short courses and house groups, tutoring, mentoring, providing spiritual guidance and supporting others in ‘open learning’ environments, as well as in preaching in a way that enables congregations to strengthen their faith and grow in their own theological and biblical understanding in the context of a complex world;

c. given that we are recommending three years as normal for each student (see R7a above), most should attain at least Undergraduate Diploma level (and the majority a degree), while some of those starting with an access course might attain an Undergraduate Certificate level;

d. the Church should publicise its expertise in supporting all students, including those who have had little experience of academic learning since schooldays. Our theological colleges have always had experienced teaching staff who have given individual students the time, encouragement and practical help they have needed;

e. that the opportunity for part time training delivered primarily by distance learning (rather than attendance at an institution) using VLE materials together with tutorial support provided either face-to-face locally or through use of electronic media such as Skype, should be maintained and, if possible, enhanced. We commend the work that is already taking place at the Queen’s Foundation and encourage the continuing development of their Distance Learning Programmes, but we think that more use could be made of local enablers who could provide a local sounding board and help with the motivation of isolated students.

12.7 The Ministries Committee was concerned in seeing this recommendation that there may be a lack of understanding within the Church of the work that is done at the Queen’s Foundation and the quality of formation that those in initial training for ministry receive. The Ministries Committee was therefore pleased to respond to a direction of the SRC that a separate report on initial training be submitted to the Conference [see the Methodist Council report, part three section O].

That report includes the beginning of an evaluation of this recommendation which requires detailed and careful examination. The SRC noted that the TRG makes
some important points about the foci and delivery of learning in initial ministerial training which need to be considered in the light of R7a and the proposal to increase the length of training. Whilst there is a broad recognition that an additional year of initial formation would have considerable benefits for some students, the Ministries Committee needs further time to consider this proposal. There would need to be clarity about the purpose of the additional year and consideration must be given to the effects of modifying the current pathways offered through the Queen’s Foundation, the financial implications for both the accepted candidate and the Church, and the diversity of previous experience and learning with which candidates enter initial training.

The Council therefore declined to propose any change in the ‘normal period’ of initial training but asked the Ministries Committee to give further consideration to this recommendation.

**Recommendation 8**

*Beyond the pathway already in development for probationers, the TRG recommended that provision is made for:*

a. specific training for those identified as having potential for, or actually entering, specific roles (eg superintendency, those entering ministry in local ecumenical partnerships);

b. continuing training needs during the first five years of ministry; and

c. continuing professional development for all ministers.

12.8 The SRC affirmed this as the direction of travel. The Ministries Committee considered and approved in March 2018 a framework of competencies based on the revised selection criteria (2016). The Ministries: Vocations and Worship team will be tasked with ensuring that programmes of continual development are in place and all presbyters and deacons are encouraged to discern their call to particular roles in the Church through Ministerial Development Review and supervision.

The Council concurred with this recommendation and approved the work being done by the Connexional Team in relation to it.

**Recommendation 9**

The TRG voiced its support for those who argue that there is an urgent need for a strategic approach to the development of this and future generations of theologians and theological educators within the Methodist Church. Without an ability to re-learn, reflect on, develop and share the Methodist tradition and understanding of church, ministry and mission the Church will inevitably lose its relevance. Theologians and theological educators might be ordained or lay, and they may have capacity to engage in long-term academic scholarship or
It is essential that the church enables those with academic potential to become not only the liturgists, church historians, biblical scholars and systematic theologians of the future, but also ensures that they are enabled to become imaginative, engaging and exciting communicators who can enable others to capture their enthusiasm not only for study but also for the task of interpreting the gospel of Christ in an increasingly complex world.

R9 The TRG recommended that the Church develops a strategy and identifies commensurate funding sources to enable:

a  identification and support for those with potential to be future theologians and future theological educators; and
b  identification of gaps in current Methodist scholarship and ways in which those gaps could be filled into the future.

12.9 The SRC agreed that this is a vital matter if the Church is to encourage the next generation of theological educators and ensure that there is lively and well-informed theological conversation in every part of the Connexion. It is also, as the Training Review notes, a matter of urgency but is not susceptible to any quick fix. The Ministries: Vocations and Worship team in consultation with the learning institutions and the Secretary of the Faith and Order Committee plans to review the ways in which scholarship is supported in the life of the Church and to advise the Ministries Committee on the longer term strategic development of scholarship and research and the nurturing of future theological educators. It is critical that all developments in this area focus on resourcing the whole Church and not simply the equipping of experts in particular fields.

The Council approved the direction of travel outlined by the SRC.

Recommendation 10

Having visited Cliff College and The Queen’s Foundation and taken into account the range of responses to the decisions of the 2012 Conference, the TRG concluded that there is a strong case for the Methodist Church to engage with more than the two centres currently in the DMLN. This case is fourfold:

a. Notwithstanding the quality of the work done at Queen’s, the TRG agreed with those who have argued that the decision to place all initial ministerial formation in one institution created unwarranted risks for the Church.

b. There is value in creating contexts in which initial and continuing ministerial training happens alongside lay training;
c. There is a challenge for the Methodist Church to make best use of contexts where lay and ordained can be formed alongside those from other denominations and other world faiths; and

d. There are time-limited opportunities for the Church to re-engage with two Methodist institutions which are no longer engaged in initial ministerial formation: Wesley House, Cambridge and St John’s College in the University of Durham.

The TRG therefore looked at ways in which, in addition to working at The Queen’s Foundation and Cliff College, the Church might engage with ecumenical and theological communities with international reputations. Opportunities are readily available in Cambridge and Durham, and may be in the future in Oxford.

**R10** The TRG recommended that the Church extends the range of institutions with which it engages by:

a. pursuing existing relationships in Cambridge and Durham, with each institution supporting Methodist formation in an appropriate way:

   ii. In Cambridge this should include making provision for continuous professional development for lay and ordained members of the Church and placing a small number of student ministers. We consider that development of a new partnership with Wesley House would therefore be beneficial to the Church, and that discussions to understand the desirable shape of this relationship (including any funding issues) should be expedited.

   iii. In Durham we recommend that the focus should be on postgraduate studies for ministers and lay people as part of their continuing development. While this should be the major activity in Durham, we envisage the possibility of sending occasional student ministers to Durham who have already obtained a good degree in Theology. In this case, we consider that it would be highly beneficial for the Methodist Church to fund a Chair in Methodist Studies within the Theology Faculty alongside the existing Chairs in Anglican and Catholic Studies.

b. in due course exploring what might be possible in Oxford.

The TRG noted the sensitivities of these proposals but believed that the Church needs a breadth of provision which can be achieved if the Church needs to review carefully the nature of its relationship with each institution with whom it deals in respect of learning and development, learning in particular from the case of The Queen’s Foundation where talking of a service level approach for all purposes seems to us to have been detrimental. The relationship in each case in respect of governance and finance needs to be transparent and clear to both parties and will vary from one institution to another. Notwithstanding this, it is also helpful for the Church to work in partnership where this can facilitate access to the
12.10 The SRC took careful note of the recommendation and also of the fact that, in the wake of the training review, the Secretary of the Conference has received draft proposals from institutions in Durham, Cambridge, and Oxford. The Secretary is mandated to have conversations with those institutions and others about the possibility of future arrangements for work in the areas of scholarship and the continuing development of those in ordained and authorised ministries. However, the Council needs to be alert to the fact that the number of student ministers in training at present makes unlikely the viability of having students placed in more than one institution.

The Council approved the SRC’s response to recommendation 10.

Recommendation 11

The TRG recommended that the Connexional Team reviews its approach to relationships with institutions involved in learning and development, ensuring that each is tailored to combine partnership with such transparent, clear governance and financial arrangements as are relevant in the particular case.

12.11 The SRC noted that the Council will be presented with the revised Memorandum of Understanding with the Queen’s Foundation and with proposed lines of accountability in the wake of the disbanding of the Network Committee. The Council also takes responsibility for the transparency of arrangements with other learning institutions that report to it or to the Conference. That relationships have to be tailored to each institution and be transparent and robust is essential but the conversations outlined in response to R9 and R10 will need to happen and to be evaluated before any other formal agreements can be considered.

The Council approved the SRC’s response to this recommendation.

Conclusion

13. The Council is grateful for the work of the Training Review Group. It recognises the complexity of the task with which it engaged. The Council is also grateful to the SRC for the work that it has set in train to respond to the concerns raised by the TRG and to members of the Connexional Team who have addressed those concerns, even when some of the consequences have not been easy to enact.

14. There is still considerable work to be done in response to these recommendations. That work will now be overseen by the Ministries Committee, which will report
through the Council to the 2019 Conference on progress and further developments.

***RESOLUTION

20/1. The Conference receives the Report.
SECTION I
GENERAL REPORT (2)

These reports contain those items considered by the Council and not reported elsewhere in the Agenda.

1.1 Governance responsibilities

In accordance with its governance responsibilities, the Council:

- made various nominations and appointments;
- received a report from the Strategy and Resources Committee at each meeting of the Council;
- approved the policy and guidance in relation to external grant funding;
- adopted a data protection policy for the Connexional Team, and agreed to the principle of a requirement being included within Standing Orders for managing trustees to adopt the precedent policies and notices of the Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes as the data controller;
- adopted a policy in relation to Model Trust 20, and directed that work be undertaken to make proposals for a policy on the minimum terms for a disposal under paragraph 20 of the Model Trusts;
- made appointments to the Methodist Lay Employees’ Pension Trust Limited;
- agreed to augment the benefits of members of the Pension and Assurance Scheme for Lay Employees of the Methodist Church, in cases where the salary was not increased or increased by less than 2.5% on 1 September 2017;
- received a report relating to the possible re-shaping of the two Synods in Wales and appointed a scrutiny group to work on its behalf if appropriate;
- received a report which followed up Memorial M21 (2016) relating to the provision of accounting software;
- approved amendments to the Safeguarding Policy in line with the General Data Protection Regulation;
- approved amendments to the Risk Assessment Policy and Procedures in line with the General Data Protection Regulation (2018);
- approved guidance for the purposes of SO 1104(4A), 1121(7)(b) and (c);
- considered points for discussion about the classification of a replacement project prior to the presentation of a connexional property strategy.
1.2 **Other business**

The Council received annual reports from:
- Southlands Methodist Trust.

The Council also:
- heard reflections from the President and Vice-President on their year of office;
- witnessed the attestation of the Journal of the 2017 Conference.

The Council approved a workplan for 2017/2018 allocating work commissioned by the Conference to various groups within the Church. The workplan allocates a substantial amount of work to various parts of the Connexional Team. Members of the Conference are advised that the Team also engages in an additional amount of regular work and further descriptions of that wider brief can be found on the website at www.methodist.org.uk/contact-us/

At each of the three meetings of the Council over the past year, the Council has received a report from the Connexional Team containing a summary of work in progress in the Team. Should members of the Conference wish to view them, these reports are also available on the website at www.methodist.org.uk/council

**Methodist Church House**

As the Trustee body charged with the ultimate care of Methodist Church House the Council received a detailed report on the future of the building. The Council made its decision based on the following report from the Strategy and Resources Committee (SRC).

1. **Historical Background: how we came to Marylebone Road**

1.1 The Centenary Fund of 1839 celebrated 100 years since the foundation of the first Methodist societies in 1739. The major allocations from the fund in 1840 were for foreign missions and for the purchase of a new home for the missionary society, a mission house, called Centenary Hall. This was in Bishopsgate and was rebuilt in 1902-03. Work on a new mission house in Marylebone Road was started in 1939 and the Methodist Missionary Society moved in in 1946.

1.2 During the late 1980s and early 1990s several reports on connexional buildings were received by the Conference and the decision to retain offices in London was consistently agreed. Subsequently the Divisions were restructured into one Connexional Team and from 1996 the offices (other than those related to property) were centralised at Marylebone Road. Since 1996 therefore the mission house has
been known as Methodist Church House (MCH) and in 1998 the decision to remain in London was again agreed.

1.3 It is perhaps noteworthy that there have been two rebuilds of the mission house, the first at Bishopsgate and then a new build at Marylebone Road. It should also be noted that part of the cost of the upkeep at both sites has always come from lettings.

1.4 MCH is held on The Centenary Hall Trust, of which the Methodist Council are trustees, the main purpose of the Trust being to provide a home for overseas missionary work, as was originally the case in 1839. Clearly that is still part of the work of the Connexional Team.

2. Recent history of the fabric and maintenance of the building

2.1 Completed in the 1940s, the existing building was designed to be an innovative building and constructed to the latest standards of the time comprising a steel framed building enclosed in concrete. The entrance at the junction of Nottingham Place gave access to a reception area with steps up to a ground floor above street level. All floors had small segregated offices and narrow corridors served by a grand curving main staircase and two lifts. In the 1990s, a significant development took place, updating the building to open plan with modern air handling and conditioning units. Technological developments such as computing have resulted in still more adjustments to allow these new technologies to be incorporated.

2.2 The responsibility for the maintenance of the building has been with the Methodist Church House Management Committee (MCHMC). In recent years professional surveys have always stated that the building has been maintained in good general condition thanks to those who have served on the MCHMC over the years. However in 2012 the then MCHMC was becoming concerned about the long term maintenance in terms of the renewal of various essential systems. The conclusions of a number of professional surveys in 2013/2014 were that necessary work was needed to comply with fire regulations and to the drainage system. The Strategy and Resources Committee (SRC) agreed that the MCHMC should arrange for this necessary work to be undertaken at an estimated cost of £2.0m plus VAT.

2.3 In 2013 it was also noted that there were likely to be long-term problems with the heating and ventilation systems, with fulfilling energy requirements and with the electrical systems. It was estimated that the cost of these renewals would be likely to be £5.0m plus VAT which would allow a 15-20 year occupancy.
2.4 The last significant work therefore was carried out during 2015/2016. This involved achieving compliance with new fire regulations by removing asbestos throughout the building and improving fire compartmentalisation. It also involved the renewal of virtually all of the internal vertical water and drainage pipes, alongside which the opportunity was taken to renew all toilet facilities. Some cosmetic changes were made to the reception area, and a new staff room was created on the seventh floor, providing increased meeting room capacity on the lower ground floor. In some places, enhanced and more energy efficient lighting was provided. The total cost was £2.5m, in line with the 2013/2014 estimate.

3. The current situation

3.1 On completion of the works in 2016 and in view of the outstanding long term issues identified, the SRC, at its meeting in February 2016, requested a full building condition survey and the MCHMC engaged Tuffin Ferraby and Taylor (TFT) to carry out such a survey.

3.2 The TFT reported to the MCHMC in September 2016 and stated that the heating, air conditioning and handling units were reaching the end of their useful life, that the electrical and IT systems were running at full capacity and that the water pressure in the area was being reduced. There was concern over some of the structure, especially around the plant room and that some health and safety systems, including the fall restraint systems and fire alarm were not functioning correctly. Although not currently unsafe, correction of these defects would be costly and required in any refurbishment. The server room was also of significant concern as the air system to this room is at risk since it is always running at ‘full load’ and therefore no further IT or telephone developments could be installed. Overheating here would seriously curtail Connexional Team activities, causing the shutdown of the connexional database, finance systems, the online suite and the servers which hold most of the Team’s documents. Significant investment to replace these systems was urgently required. The total estimated costs for this work would be in the order of £4.0m, plus VAT. In addition, the report indicated that further continuing maintenance of the order of £650k and replacement of the windows and roof covering (£240k) over the next 10-15 years would be required.

3.3 What the TFT report did not address was the design of the building, and, in particular, the experience of those with reduced mobility. The reception area being lower than the ground floor has resulted in a disabled platform being placed to one side of the entrance area. In addition, the current main lifts are too small not only to accommodate comfortably a standard wheelchair with a companion but also to accommodate an electric wheelchair or mobility vehicle. The lift size, and the dark interiors, give an unacceptable experience to those who may be affected by such
small spaces.

3.4 There is a larger ‘goods lift’ at the back of the building, but this does not serve all the floors, and in particular does not serve the first or second floors. Although it serves the lower ground floor, because it stops at a higher level than the floor, access to the meeting rooms is prevented.

3.5 These problems with accessibility mean that the current building no longer complies with the Equality Act and, as a consequence, the MCHMC believes that it does not adequately reflect the sentiments expressed in the ‘Learning and Caring’ elements of *Our Calling*.

3.6 The TFT report did not address the problems of the basic construction with services hidden within ducts that are inaccessible without major building work. Due to the construction of the building, it is not possible to replace the lifts without substantial and expensive building alterations nor is it possible to provide a level entrance to the lifts from the ground floor. Equally, only 53% of the building is usable office space, 47% is dedicated to stairs, lifts, corridors, common passages, etc (more modern buildings provide a considerably greater useable space, indeed, in a new building one would now expect the useable space to be virtually 75%). In addition, the floor-to-floor heights are irregular and low in many places with insufficient ceiling void space to run additional or new services.

3.7 The MCHMC regarded that doing nothing was not an available option. The current heating, air conditioning and handling units were installed in the 1990s with a life expectancy of 15 years. The survey estimated that there was a maximum of three years life remaining; ie to the end of 2019. It also noted the difficulty in obtaining spare parts, making even a ‘make do and mend’ regime until that time a risk due to a major component failure. It is now clear that some of the small power distribution systems are overloaded and not in accordance with modern standards. Equally, the fire alarm and CCTV/security systems now need to be fully replaced. Terminal failure of any of these systems would close the building.

3.8 The current Energy Performance Certificate indicates that the building is rated as ‘G’. New legislation in force in April 2018 prevents a building with a rating less than ‘E’ being let. This may hamper the use of the building and may prevent, if legally challenged, the building being used as a base for the partner organisations, All We Can, Methodist Ministers’ Housing Society and Methodist Schools who currently occupy space in it. If these organisations were forced to find alternative accommodation it could lead to an increase in costs for them and thus a reduction in funds available for their day-to-day activities and a reduction in income to the Methodist Church Fund.
3.9 After due consideration of all these factors the MCHMC presented the TFT report to the SRC in February 2017 and the MCHMC was asked to look at the possibility of a full redevelopment for 25 Marylebone Road and bring a report on this option after the necessary feasibility study. At its meeting on 30 November 2017 the SRC agreed that the Council as managing trustees should be provided with two options to consider. One option would be to undertake a refurbishment with all the maintenance work required, the other would be to demolish the existing building and replace it with a new purpose built property. The SRC gave permission for the MCHMC to make a pre-planning application to the Westminster City Council in order to test the possibility of a rebuild option.

4. Two options

4.1 Option 1

4.1.1 This option is one of refurbishment of the existing building. It would mean carrying out the repairs and replacements as outlined above in paragraphs 3.1-3.9. Essentially replacing the air conditioning and heating systems, the electrical systems, dealing with the changes necessary to ensure the water supply and sustaining the ongoing maintenance programme over a 15-20 year extended life. The estimated cost of this is £4.89m plus VAT.

4.1.2 After considering the extent of the disruption involved in this work the MCHMC and the SRC both recommend that the building should be vacated for the duration of the work of refurbishment which would be 15-18 months. Knight Frank Ltd (Chartered Surveyors) estimate the cost of leasing temporary accommodation in the area of Marylebone, plus the associated moving costs both ways to be £1.75m plus VAT per annum. For 18 months this would be £2.625m.

4.1.3 The total estimate for option 1 is therefore £7.515m plus VAT.

4.1.4 A valuation of the current building by Knight Frank gave the present building a value of around £23.75m.

4.1.5 MCHMC comments on Option 1

This option is obviously the cheaper option although still considerable. It does not address the issues associated with accessing the building nor fully overcome the difficulties with energy efficiency. The refurbishment would only raise the rating to just meet the target ‘E’ rating although even this cannot be guaranteed.

This option would mean that the Church could not recover any of the expenditure and
that the running and maintenance costs would continue, with presumably increases for inflation. There would thus be ongoing financial support required from the Connexion and the large sum laid out for the refurbishment could not be recouped and there would be no appreciation of the building in accounting terms. The building would be nearing the end of its natural life and the poor space usage and energy inefficiency would remain, somewhat short of the Church’s commitment to the environment as stated in *Hope in God’s Future*.

### 4.2 Option 2

**4.2.1** This option is one of full redevelopment which would include the demolition of the current building to ground level and a full rebuild to a new design. Much in the same way as the current building was modern for 1940s, so the new building would follow the same principles, suitable for all that takes place within and constructed of the latest materials and highest standards of design.

**4.2.2** There are items of Methodist heritage in and on the current building and some of these would be saved so that they could be repositioned and featured in the new building. This includes the frieze above the front door by David Evans, the main door and its surround, the stone sculptures above the windows in the Richmond Room, various items of internal wood furnishing and the stained glass windows in the current chapel.

**4.2.3** An indicative design has been developed to test the model against the policies and demands of the City of Westminster Council. Further work has been undertaken, including a design and access statement, a statement of need, and a heritage assessment. On 9 February, an application for pre-planning advice was submitted, as authorised by the SRC in November 2017. A response from Westminster Council has indicated than an application would be viewed favourably, although they were not supportive of the additional storey that had been proposed. The figures that follow therefore reflect the revised figures that take account of this.

**4.2.4** The proposed new build would yield a building that would accommodate the current occupants of MCH plus offering significant lettable space, with the useable space ratio rising to nearly 75%. This flexible accommodation could be partially let commercially to pay for the whole project and then produce a surplus to be used for Church purposes.

**4.2.5** The initial cost of the reconstruction is approx. £17.5m, although some items such as VAT (which would partially be at 0% and partially at 20% and anticipated to be approx. £1.75m), design fees, local authority fees and section 106 Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and section 278 Highways Act 1980 legal agreements
are currently excluded. It is anticipated that the final build cost will be in the region of £22.5m.

4.2.6 These figures are based on the current sketch design by Cullinan’s (architects) so should be regarded as indicative.

4.2.7 During this work, the occupants of MCH would need to be relocated for up to 36 months, returning eventually to the brand new building. Based on the figure provided earlier by Knight Frank Ltd, this would add up to £5.25m plus VAT to the total project cost.

4.2.8 A redevelopment of the type envisaged would also increase the value of MCH due to it being a modern building of high quality with eminently lettable space and in a desirable location. The new building would measure about 6,027 m² (64,874 ft²). Of this almost 75% (4496 m² or 48,395 ft²) would be usable space. If the Connexional Team and partner organisations used 25% of this usable space (1,124 m² or 12,100 ft²) this would leave 3,372 m² (36,296 ft²) available for rental. We would elect to charge VAT on rentals so that the VAT spend on the build could be reclaimed. Knight Frank report that the Marylebone average rental is around £70 per ft² giving, for this available space, an annual rental of approx. £2m plus VAT. This gives a basic payback period of about 12-15 years, although this may rise depending on the finance option adopted. Based on a rental yield of 7%, this would give a value of the new MCH of about £37m.

4.2.9 With a net income gained from renting five floors, including the service charge, the final redevelopment cost of MCH to the Church would in effect be zero, once the rebuilding costs had been paid off. With the ongoing income stream from lettings and the reduced costs of ongoing maintenance there would be no expected financial support from the wider Connexion, and indeed the income would be to the Methodist Church Fund, potentially reducing the district assessment.

4.2.10 Although initially there would be a carbon cost due to demolition and construction, long term there would be a significant reduction in carbon emissions through provision of a much more efficient building. It would feature an intentionally environmental design and sustainability strategy including renewable energy usage, rainwater harvesting, a high performance building envelope and better daylight penetration.

4.2.11 There are further benefits, although less quantifiable, resulting from open balcony spaces, a roof terrace, café, heritage exhibition and meeting spaces, a better presence on Marylebone Road, the use of green living materials, views from the top floor meeting room and chapel over Regent’s Park and increased building security.
Such features are noted by the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors as being crucial for staff well-being and in-staff retention. A new building of the type envisaged would also give a greater flexibility with regard to the floor spaces, thus an increase, or decrease in the number of people within the Connexional Team would not be critical to the rental potential of the building.

4.2.12 In December 2017 Sadiq Khan, Mayor of London, published his London Local Plan. It specifically noted that there was a lack of office space in Marylebone and in the Marylebone Road Central Development Zone.

4.2.13 The total estimated cost for Option 2 is £27.75m.

4.2.14 MCHMC comments on Option 2

The MCHMC is strongly in favour of this option. At a purely financial level it believes that this is the best option which will provide a new and sustainable building, ultimately producing an income for the work of the Church, rather than an asset that will be an increasing financial liability.

A new building will be a better working environment for the staff and for the continued use by many in the wider Connexion. It will be an example of how the Council is embracing the new connexional property strategy. It will be a bold testimony by the Methodist Church of its faith in the future.

5. Concerns and comments from the SRC and the Council

5.1 The SRC and the Council recognised that this is an extremely important issue for the wider Church. Both bodies considered many of the concerns they perceived will be in the minds of members of the Methodist Church.

5.2 First they raised the question of selling the site with its current building. The current valuation is £23.75M. The advice received is that to move within London to a cheaper area or building would still consume most of the capital released and we would be at a less advantageous site. It is highly likely that travelling to a different area would be more difficult for staff and those attending meetings. In 2017 there were more than 1,000 meetings held at MCH that involved non-Connexional Team members travelling to the building. Marylebone Road has excellent travel links and is in walking distance of many main line stations.

5.3 Next, there is the question of a location outside London. Inevitably this would mean another major centre, although travel from all areas of the UK to places other than London is more difficult and usually more expensive. A building in another city/
town would be cheaper but the amount of capital released combined with the costs incurred in moving staff and the potential rental income do not make this as attractive an option as one might think at first.

5.4 Further, moving out of London would inevitably result in the loss of staff with their expertise and knowledge. Relocation costs and redundancy payments would be considerable, an estimate of unrecoverable costs is £1-1.5m excluding the capital cost of the sale and purchase of any connexional manses which may be necessary. Staff costs outside London may be less but not significant enough to favour a relocation.

5.5 Moreover, links with other partners and organisations would be more difficult since most are based in London. The senior leadership of the Church and Team would need a London base to deal with strategic contacts. Manse provision for ministers in the Connexional Team would probably need to be changed.

5.6 It is worth noting that these questions have been raised on several occasions and always the decision has been to stay in London. This was the case in the late 1980s and early 1990s as well as in 1996. In 2012 and 2016 the SRC reconsidered the question and determined that our site in Marylebone Road was still the best place for MCH. This was reported to the Council on both occasions with no requests to re-open the question.

5.7 The Council, the SRC, and the MCHMC, are fully aware that either of these options is enormously expensive compared to local church and circuit building schemes. It should be remembered that members of these committees are all members of a local Methodist Church and are aware of the financial pressures on many congregations as they struggle with the costs of maintenance, repairs and replacements. So these discussions have not taken place in isolation.

5.8 The SRC suggested that Option 1 is funded by use of reserves and income within the Connexion. It would favour, and the Council concurred that a bank loan be obtained for Option 2, to be paid back over a 12-15 year period from income generated by a new building.

6. Decision

The Council, after careful consideration of all the factors, decided to pursue Option 2, a rebuild on the present site. In arriving at this decision, the Council wanted to signify its hope and faith in the future of God’s kingdom and that the Methodist Church has a part to play in the life of the world as it lives out Our Calling. The Council also took seriously its responsibility as trustees of the Church’s resources, and considers that
option 2 is the more financially viable option.

***RESOLUTION


SECTION J

CHAIR OF THE COUNCIL

The Council brings the name of Mrs Jill Baker to the Conference, for appointment as Chair of the Council from 2018-2022 (subject to the Conference’s approval of resolution 3/18).

Reasoned statement

Jill Baker is the Vice-President of the Conference for 2017/2018. She is a local preacher and a local preachers’ tutor. She has served as President of Methodist Women in Britain (2011-13), a Mission Partner (1994-2001), a member of a District Policy Committee, and as a member of several connexional working parties. She is currently a member of the Ministries Committee and the Worship Leaders and Local Preachers Studies Board. She has extensive experience of attending and speaking at the Conference.

Jill brings a broad theology and an openness to hearing and appreciating different theological approaches and differing views on matters of business and policy. Jill is committed to a collaborative approach to decision-making and discernment and to listening to the range of voices represented by the Council. Jill is a clear thinker and articulate speaker, able to assess information as presented and respond appropriately.

Above all, Jill’s priority is to hold all the business of the Methodist Church in Britain before God in prayer and to seek the mind of God in all its decision-making.

The Council therefore believes that Jill Baker is well placed to chair the Council, and to represent it at the Conference and elsewhere.

***RESOLUTION


[This resolution will be amended if 3/18 falls.]
SECTION K
THE CHAIR OF THE STRATEGY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

The Council noted that Professor Peter Howdle completes six years as Chair of the Strategy and Resources Committee (SRC) in 2018. In accordance with SO 213(2A), the Council agreed to support an extension to this appointment of one year.

Reasoned Statement
Professor Howdle is a retired Consultant Gastroenterologist at St James’ Hospital, Leeds and Professor of Clinical Education and subsequently Clinical Medicine at Leeds Medical School.

Peter Howdle was Vice-President of the Conference in 2002 and was a co-Chair of the Joint Implementation Commission of the Anglican-Methodist Covenant. He has served as both chair and member of many other Methodist working parties and committees, including the Medical Committee and the group bringing to the 2010 and 2011 Conferences recommendations about ill-health and well-being in respect of Methodist ministers. Peter is a local preacher in the Leeds (North East) Circuit. In 2017, he was awarded the Lambeth Cross for Ecumenism, in recognition of his outstanding contribution to Anglican-Methodist relations.

The Council recommends that the Conference approves the extension of the appointment of Professor Peter Howdle as Chair of the SRC for a further year, until 2019. This will provide the Committee with the continuity it needs, and will ensure that the Chair of the Council and the Chair of the SRC do not change at the same time.

***RESOLUTION

21/3. The Conference extends the appointment of Professor Peter Howdle as Chair of the Strategy and Resources Committee for a period of one year until 2019.

SECTION L
LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT FORUMS

1. The Council noted that, following the work of the training review, further consideration needed to been given to the purpose and function of the Regional Learning and Development Forums. These were conceived originally in 2008 and have been through a number of changes since then. SO 340 sets out the current, but no longer relevant responsibilities of the forums. The Council approved the revised purposes of the Forums, as follows:

The purposes of the Learning and Development Forums are:

- To make best use of the resources available within each District, across the region and connexionally in achieving the aim stated above.
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- To intentionally focus available resources into a priority list for learning and development for the region and each District within the region.
- To work collaboratively so as to agree and own the regional and District learning and development work plan/training diary
  - sharing resource across the region
  - taking into account priorities and dates
  - including annual events, new initiatives and issues raised by Circuits.

2. The Council recognised that the constitution of each forum will need to be flexible so as to take into account the nature of and existing structures in the Districts. As a guide the following is suggested:

- Chairs of the Districts within the Learning and Development Region (core)
- Relevant Connexional Team staff serving the Districts (regional coordinator core, officers desirable)
- Persons in paid District roles (eg evangelism enablers, mission enablers) (desirable)
- Any key volunteers in applicable roles at the invitation of District Chairs (core)
- A Chair of the forum should be appointed who should be a Chair of one of the Districts.
- The forum should agree who will facilitate the forum meetings – this will normally be the Learning and Development Coordinator for the region but it may be a Chair of one of the Districts.

3. The Council recognised the importance of each forum making an annual report at the start of the connexional year through the relevant member of the Connexional Team. The report should include: a summary of the last year’s learning and development events/initiatives, and any areas of concern in regards to enabling Districts to be places of lifelong learning.

4. In light of this the Council recommends to the Conference that Standing Order 340 be amended as follows:

**340 Methodist Training Learning and Development Forums.** (1) The Methodist Council shall approve the establishment of a Methodist Training Forum for each network of training institutions (‘Regional Training Network’). Each forum shall make an annual report to the appropriate connexional bodies, as directed by the council, in order to:

(i) indicate the training needs identified across the region covered by the network;
(ii) indicate how it is planned to meet them;
(iii) report on the distribution of funding and training work carried out through the forum;
(iv) submit a development plan for the next year’s work of the forum, including financial proposals;
(v) report the named members of the forum under the categories in clause (2) below.

(2) The membership of the forum shall consist of:
(i) a chair, who shall be the Chair of one of the Districts relating to the network;
(ii) a representative of each institution in the network which contributes to Methodist training, including any ecumenical Regional Training Partnership;
(iii) the Chair of each District relating to the network or his or her designated representative;
(iv) the Training Officers relating to the network;
(v) a member of the Connexional Team;
(vi) up to three other individuals as determined by the forum itself to be necessary to ensure appropriate representation of other relevant concerns, one of whom shall be a representative of an ecumenical partner if none is appointed under (ii) above.

The purpose of such a forum is to support Circuits in being places of lifelong learning and sharing, so as to encourage and inspire the Methodist people in all aspects of their calling, in worship, caring, service and evangelism in response to God’s love, so that they may live out their discipleship and make known the love of God.

(3) The Council shall be responsible for:
(i) determining the grouping of the Districts into regions;
(ii) approving the purpose of the forums;
(iii) issuing guidance on the constitution of the forums;
(iv) directing each forum to make an annual report to the relevant member of the Connexional Team providing a summary of the last year’s learning and development events and initiatives, and any areas of concern as to enabling Circuits to be places of lifelong learning.

***RESOLUTIONS


21/5. The Conference amends Standing Order 340 as set out in the Report.

SECTION M
THE FUTURE OF THE SENIOR LEADERSHIP GROUP OF THE CONNEXIONAL TEAM

1. Since 2008 the senior leadership of the Connexional Team has operated in a number of different modes. The first outworking of the Team Focus process envisaged a clear split between leadership and management, with leadership exercised by the Strategic
Leaders and operational management exercised by the Senior Managers. These two groupings met separately, with joint meetings taking place less frequently.

2. Subsequent reviews led to the 2012 Conference amending SO 304, and establishing a single Senior Leadership Group of the Connexional Team. The current SO 304 is prescriptive in its definition of this senior leadership group, and includes the Secretary and Assistant Secretary of the Conference, the Connexional Secretary and the three cluster heads (reflecting the configuration of the clusters at that time). It does not mention the Conference Officer for Legal and Constitutional Practice, though SO 116C defines this post as being a ‘senior member of the Team’.

3. Ways of working over the last two years have confirmed that the leadership and management of the Team is not the same thing as the leadership of the Church. The Church has a Connexional Leaders’ Forum and a number of decision-making bodies which make or recommend strategy and policy to other bodies, with ultimate responsibility resting with the Conference. The Senior Leadership Group of the Connexional Team should not be confused with the leadership of the Church. Therefore, to refer to a ‘Senior Leadership Group’ which is focused entirely on the management of the Team or supporting the decision-making bodies of the Church, is a misnomer.

4. The Connexional Team requires a ‘senior management team’ whose responsibility is to oversee the work of the Team and to contribute to the work of leadership bodies. Such a team needs to have the Heads of Cluster, the Assistant Secretary of the Conference, the Connexional Secretary, and the Conference Officer for Legal and Constitutional Practice present at the table, with the Directors in the Team, such as those of Finance & Resources and Human Resources when that is appropriate. The group should be chaired by the Connexional Secretary with an open invitation for the Secretary of the Conference to attend whenever s/he wishes. Indeed, it would be important for the group to hear reflections from the Secretary as s/he in turn fulfils his/her role of playing a principal part in (amongst other things) the strategic management of the Church’s affairs (see SO 114(1A). There is no question that the Senior Managers provide leadership to the Team, and this would continue. However, it needs to be very clear that the leadership of the Church is located in the Connexional Leaders’ Forum, the Council and the Conference. Clarity on this point enables a greater understanding of the way the Team is accountable through the Secretary of the Conference and the Connexional Secretary via the SRC to the Council as the employing/appointing body. Furthermore, the Council concurred that the Heads of Cluster and other managers in the Team could be more effectively deployed within these clear lines of accountability if they were to attend meetings such as the SRC, the Council and the Conference as and when the business of such bodies would benefit from their advice and input, rather than the current pattern of each post holder being
expected, or in some cases required, to attend a large number of meetings.

5. It would be for the Secretary of the Conference to meet with her/his direct reports and the Heads of Cluster whenever was required, to discuss particular aspects of work or to contribute towards strategic development as required by the decision-making bodies or the Secretary. It is believed that this arrangement would render the idea of a ‘Senior Leadership Group’ as defined in SO 304 unnecessary and would clarify that the leadership of the Church lies outside the normal management of the Team but includes a number of the senior management team.

6. The proposed amendments to SO 304 are therefore as follows:

304 The Connexional Secretaries and the Senior Leadership Management Group of the Connexional Team. (1) The Connexional Team shall include Connexional Secretaries, appointed to that office, who shall assist the Secretary of the Conference in the execution of his or her overall responsibilities. Under his or her direction they shall have responsibility, together with the other members of the senior leadership management group defined in clause (5) below, for the work of the Team and ensure that it is effectively carried out, in accordance with the Deed of Union, Standing Orders and the directions from time to time of the Methodist Conference and the Methodist Council, and, with the wider senior leadership of the Church, shall support him or her in leading the development of the Church’s vision of unity, mission, evangelism and worship. They are authorised when so required to act as his or her representative.

[....]

(5) The senior leadership management group of the Connexional Team shall consist of the Secretary of the Conference, the assistant secretary of the Conference, the Connexional Secretaries and the three senior members of the Connexional Team with overall responsibility, under the Secretary of the Conference, for the work of the Team in the respective areas of:

(i) discipleship and ministries;

(ii) mission and advocacy; and

(iii) support services, the Conference officer for legal and constitutional practice, and such other members of the Connexional Team as the Strategy and Resources Committee shall approve.

The following consequential amendments are also required:
102 Representatives of Connexional and Other Bodies

(7) Any member of the senior leadership group as defined in Standing Order 304 who is not appointed as a representative under this Standing Order shall be entitled to attend and speak at the Conference, but shall not be a voting member.

210 The Methodist Council

(7) The chair of the connexional Audit Committee appointed under Standing Order 213A, the secretary of the Faith and Order Committee; and the Youth President elected under Standing Order 250(10) and the members of the senior leadership group as defined in Standing Order 304 not appointed as members of the council under clause (1) above shall have the right to attend and speak at meetings of the council, but shall not be voting members.

213 Strategy and Resources Committee. (1) The Conference shall each year appoint a Strategy and Resources Committee of the council consisting of:

(7) the Secretary and the assistant secretary of the Conference, **the Conference officer for legal and constitutional practice** and the Connexional Secretaries and the other members of the senior leadership group as defined in Standing Order 304 as non-voting members.

**Other members of the senior management group of the Connexional Team may attend as the business of the Committee shall require. Staff so invited to attend shall have the right to speak but not vote.**

230 The Connexional Leaders’ Forum [...]

(2) The Connexional Leaders’ Forum shall consist of:

(7) the members of the senior leadership **management** group as defined in Standing Order 304 not otherwise forming part of the Connexional Leaders’ Forum under this clause;

***RESOLUTIONS***

21/7. The Conference adopts the Report.

SECTION N
MINISTRIES COMMITTEE

The Council received a report on the work of the Ministries Committee.

1. Worship Leaders and Local Preachers

1.1 The committee recognised the priority of equipping and encouraging Local Preachers and the potential of the Local Preachers’ Meeting to be a place of encouragement and renewal. The Connexional Team will work to ensure that high quality resources for continuing development are available to all Local Preachers’ Secretaries. Work is also underway to provide clearer guidance to Local Preachers of their responsibility for continuing local preacher development (CLPD), in particular what the Church expects of them under Standing Orders 563(3)(iii) and 561(v). The committee stressed the value of an annual service at which Local Preachers are invited to reaffirm the promises made at admission and asked the Faith and Order Committee to draft a liturgy for this service.

1.2 The importance of Local Preachers reflecting on their ministry was linked in a response to a memorial in 2013 with the length of appointment of worship leaders.

M9 (2013) Length of appointment for worship leaders

_The Gordano Valley (7/15) Circuit Meeting (Present: 33; Voting: 24 for, 6 against) draws the Conference’s attention to the three-yearly appointments of Worship Leaders by local churches and asks the Conference to direct the Faith and Order Committee and/or the Discipleship and Ministries Cluster to review this period taking into consideration the lifetime admission of Local Preachers to their office._

_There has been growing participation of Worship Leaders in the conduct of worship over the last 20 years. The 2012 report to the Conference, The Fruitful Field Project, acknowledged that “Local Preachers and Worship Leaders make an immense contribution to the life of the Connexion”._

_It is the view of this Circuit Meeting that this level of acceptance is not reflected in the requirement for a three year review of a Worship Leader’s appointment._

Reply

_The Conference thanks the Gordano Valley Circuit Meeting for its memorial and for raising the issue of the term of service of Worship Leaders between reviews._
As noted in The Fruitful Field Project report to the 2012 Conference, flexible and accessible pathways are currently being developed under the oversight of the Ministries Committee for Local Preachers and Worship Leaders. These pathways are currently being developed within the framework of existing Standing Orders; however, the Conference acknowledges that it would be appropriate to revisit these Standing Orders in the future in the light of this work. The Conference is grateful for the feedback of the Gordano Valley Circuit Meeting in this process, and acknowledges that in revisiting Standing Orders it would be helpful to reconsider the period of time between reviews. The Conference therefore refers this memorial to the Ministries Committee to consider as part of their work on Worship Leader training and directs the committee to report back to the Conference no later than 2015.

In 2015, the Conference adopted the following further reply from the Ministries Committee:

The Ministries Committee recommends that no changes be made to the current length of appointment of Worship Leaders noting that there is already provision to extend appointments subject to review. In the light of increased expectations related to the initial training of Worship Leaders, the Committee recommends that Circuits pay careful attention to who is appointed to the role of Worship Leader noting that a Worship Leader is someone who regularly takes a leading or coordinating role in the conduct of worship. The Ministries Committee also recommends that the possibility of a quinquennial review of Local Preachers be included as part of a consultation process with Local Preachers’ Meetings during 2015-16 with recommendations to the Ministries Committee in 2016-17 and, as appropriate, to the 2017 Conference.

[2015 DR 7/13/1]

1.3 Following consultation with Local Preachers’ Meetings, the Ministries Committee recommends that all preachers should undertake peer review of their ministry every three years and that those refusing to participate in a review would be deemed unavailable to take appointments. Guidance on the listing of those who were not available to take appointments will be issued by the Connexional Team.

1.4 The consultation also took in the requirement to respond to M7 and M8 of 2013:

M7 (2013) Local Preachers on trial

The Glossop (19/21) Circuit Meeting (Present:22; Voting: unanimous) suggests to the Conference that the title ‘Local Preacher on trial’ (sic) is outdated and ambiguous and asks the Conference to find a name that more appropriately reflects the nature of the role, for example, ‘Preacher in Training’ or ‘Student Preacher’.
Reply

The Conference thanks the Glossop Circuit Meeting for its memorial. The development of new flexible and accessible pathways for Local Preachers (as outlined in The Fruitful Field Project report to the 2012 Conference) will provide the best opportunity to reconsider the title ‘Local Preacher on Trial’. The Conference directs the Ministries Committee to continue to oversee work on the development of these new pathways. The pathways are currently being developed within the framework of existing Standing Orders (including terminology); however, the Conference acknowledges that it would be appropriate to revisit these Standing Orders in the future in the light of this work. The Conference therefore refers this memorial to the Ministries Committee to consider as part of their work on Local Preacher training and directs the committee to report back to the Conference no later than 2015.

In 2015, the Conference adopted the following further reply from the Ministries Committee:

The Ministries Committee recommends, at this stage, that no changes are made to standing orders but that consideration of the appropriate title form part of a consultation process with Local Preachers’ Meetings during 2015-16 with recommendations to the Ministries Committee in 2016-17 and, as appropriate, to the Conference of 2017. [2015 DR 7/13/1]

1.5 The Ministries Committee has returned to this memorial on a number of occasion in the past few years. A consultation was undertaken with superintendents, Local Preachers’ Secretaries, Chairs of District and District Local Preachers’ Secretaries in 2016 and the results have been carefully analysed by the Ministries Committee. Whilst it is clear that many people surveyed agreed with the sentiments of the memorial that the title “preacher on trial” should be changed there was far less agreement about what a revised title might be.

Standing Orders refer to a “person on trial” not a preacher, as a way of indicating that a person has not yet been admitted into the fellowship of preachers. The trial in question refers to the person trialling (or trying out) whether a call to the office of Local Preacher is the right one for them as well as signifying the role of the Local Preachers’ Meeting as it seeks to assist a person to discern their call through training, trial services, conversation and appraisal via Worship: Leading and Preaching. The suggested title Preacher in Training fails to capture the nuances of what is happening during the trial period. The Ministries Committee unpacked numerous other suggestions made through the consultation process, none of which quite managed to sum up what is happening in the process of becoming a Local
Preacher. It is of course true to say that a person on trial is also a preacher in training and it might well be appropriate to use that title in certain contexts. However, on official documents, such as the preaching plan, the Ministries Committee believes that on balance, despite its limitations “on trial” offers a better summary of the various elements of becoming a Local Preacher in the Methodist Church.

The Committee therefore recommends that no formal change be made to the title ‘person on trial’.

1.6 M8 (2013) Responsibilities of Worship Leaders

The Sheffield (West) (25/1) Circuit Meeting (Present: 21; Voting: unanimous) draws the Conference’s attention to the current situation relating to Worship Leaders and their relationships with presbyters and Local Preachers and asks the Conference to take the following actions:

To review the responsibility of Worship leaders within Methodist worship, taking into account the variety of gifts now offered by Worship Leaders and the considerable variety of patterns of worship in current Methodist practice and to provide guidance as to the Worship Leader’s relationship to and with the planned presbyter or Local Preacher.

To review the membership, agenda and title of the Circuit Local Preachers’ Meeting to include Worship Leaders as members of that meeting and to enable them to participate in and to vote on appropriate parts of the agenda. To revise Standing Orders as necessary.

Reply

The Conference thanks the Sheffield (West) Circuit Meeting for its memorial and for raising the issue of the responsibilities and relationships of Worship Leaders. Since the introduction of Worship Leaders, their role has changed. We believe that the new pathways for Local Preachers and Worship Leaders that are currently under development will reflect these changes, including a “greater emphasis on the skills required for preaching and leading worship” (The Fruitful Field Project report to the 2012 Conference, para 134). As noted in The Fruitful Field Project report, the new pathways will present an opportunity for far greater shared training and development for Local Preachers and Worship Leaders. These pathways are currently being developed within the framework of existing Standing Orders (including the responsibilities of Worship Leaders and the constitution of the Local Preachers’ Meeting); however, the Conference acknowledges that it would be appropriate to revisit these Standing Orders in the future in the light of this work. This may include
a review of the membership, agenda and title of the Local Preachers’ Meeting. The Conference notes that many Circuits already invite Worship Leaders to be present and participate at Local Preachers’ Meetings.

The Conference therefore refers this memorial to the Ministries Committee to consider as part of their work on worship leader training and directs the committee to report back to the Conference no later than 2015.

In 2015, the Conference adopted the following further reply from the Ministries Committee:

SO 685 reads as follows: At each service in which a worship leader shares the person appointed on the circuit plan of preaching appointments shall retain overall responsibility for the act of worship, but shall seek to work collaboratively with the worship leader appointed to share in that service by the Church Council.

(See also SO 681(1), which draws attention to the role of Worship Leaders in assisting in the leadership of God’s people in worship.)

The Ministries Committee believes that the current Standing Order is clear in identifying the nature of the working relationship between a Worship Leader and those who retain overall responsibility for an act of worship. The Committee recognises that this is not always the case in practice and recommends that consideration of a Code of Practice form part of a consultation with Local Preachers’ Meetings in 2015. The Committee notes that in future Worship Leaders and Local Preachers on Trial will share in significant parts of their training together (Modules 1-4 of Worship: Leading and Preaching). The new pathway for Local Preachers and Worship Leaders includes examples of good practice in collaborative working and the Committee encourages Local Preachers’ Meetings together with Worship Leaders to make use of the relevant part of these resources.

The Ministries Committee recommends that a consideration of the title and agenda of the Local Preachers’ Meeting form part of a consultation process with Local Preachers’ Meetings during 2015-16 with recommendations to the Ministries Committee in 2016-17 and, as appropriate, to the 2017 Conference. [2015 DR 7/13/1]

1.7 The consultation process carried out in 2015/2016 raised few objections to changing the name of the Local Preachers’ Meeting to something more inclusive. However, a number of responses led the Ministries Committee to review the roles and training of Local Preachers and Worship Leaders. The review reinforced the need for clarity around the oversight of both: Local Preachers are overseen by the fellowship of Local
Preachers through the functions of the Local Preachers’ Meeting whilst Worship Leaders are overseen by the local Church Council (taking advice from the Local Preachers’ Meeting). The Ministries Committee therefore continues to encourage Local Preachers’ Meetings to invite Worship Leaders to join them for fellowship and continuing development and has instructed the Ministry Development Team to develop guidelines and suggested agendas in order to develop creativity and best practice. The Ministries Committee was not minded that the name of the Local Preachers’ Meeting should be changed.

1.8 A number of queries had been raised with the Connexional Team about the training of worship leaders. The committee agreed that there should be some flexibility allowed and that a local tutor could recommend to the Local Preachers’ Meeting selected parts of modules 1-4 of *Worship: Leading & Preaching* to be studied. These should be selected to best meet the needs of the potential worship leader and local congregation. In these cases it is still the responsibility of the Local Preachers’ Meeting to monitor the candidate’s progress in and completion of training and probation and the assessment of their suitability for appointment (SO 680(iii)). The committee noted that SO 710 requires those wishing to candidate for diaconal ministry to have completed units 1-4 in full.

2. **The Ministry of Supernumeraries**

2.1 The committee received the conclusions of a consultation around the ministry of supernumeraries. The consultation confirmed the value of the continuing ministry of those who have sat down and the different stages of life that those who have retired experience and the varying care that they should be offered. The committee asked that revised guidance be offered to superintendents and District Chairs about the pastoral care of supernumeraries and their involvement in the life of a Circuit, to circuit stewards and Circuit Meetings about the remuneration and letters of understanding for those supernumeraries offering significant time to a Circuit, and to supernumeraries themselves about how to decide where to live after sitting down and how to be accountable for the ministry in which they are engaged. There was a general feeling that this stage of ministry has not attracted the theological resources that it needs and the committee asked that there be a section of the Methodist Church website devoted to supernumerary ministry. Overwhelmingly, those consulted were resistant to the withdrawal of the supernumerary’s preaching fee and the committee reported that to the Connexional Allowances Committee.

3. **The Purpose, Frequency and Duration of Ministerial Sabbaticals**

3.1 Introduction

The committee presents recommendations on the purpose, frequency and duration
of ministerial sabbaticals in response to memorials M7 (2016), M11 (2015), M7 (2009) and M8 (2009), following an online survey of ministers, chairs of district, district sabbatical officers and senior circuit stewards, conducted during April and May 2016.

3.2 Background

**Current Practice**

Current practice in relation to the purpose, frequency and duration of sabbaticals is enshrined in Standing Order 744: “A presbyter or deacon in Full Connexion stationed in an appointment within the control of the Church shall (in the performance of his or her duties as a minister) at intervals undertake a sabbatical, that is a period of release from the ordinary duties of the appointment, in addition to normal holidays, for the purpose of pursuing an approved programme of study, research, work or experience. Normally the length of the sabbatical shall be three months. Special permission is required for any longer period. Subject to Standing Order 807A(6), the years in which sabbaticals may be taken shall normally be the tenth and each seventh year of travel after it, but sabbaticals may for good reason be taken one year earlier or later and in particular shall not be taken in the first year of a new appointment. Special permission shall be required for any greater departure from the normal dates.” (Standing Order 744(1)-(3)).

**Memorials to the Conference**

Memorial M11 (2015) from the Plymouth and Exeter District Synod asked the Conference to review the duration and frequency of ministerial sabbaticals to provide a greater measure of flexibility, proposing that participants accrue two weeks of sabbatical entitlement a year, with each sabbatical to be taken between three and seven years after the last and with entitlement to a sabbatical to commence three years after reception into Full Connexion. The memorial suggested that such additional flexibility would:

- allow ministers the possibility of following through particular areas of interest/study on a more regular basis;
- prevent some ministers coming to their sabbatical exhausted, and provide a pattern of rest;
- offer better provision for those in the last years of their active ministry;
- facilitate better dovetailing between sabbaticals and ministers moving between appointments;
- enable ministers to take a sabbatical before the current ten years;
- prevent the difficulties some ministers experience transitioning into sabbaticals and then re-entering work afterwards, and the loss of focus and questioning of role some experience through prolonged absence;
● enable sabbaticals to fit more easily into ministers’ personal and family circumstances; and
● be less disruptive to the life of the churches, Circuits and local communities, and less onerous on the provision of cover.

A subsequent memorial M7 (2016) from the Bradford North Circuit Meeting asked that consideration be given in a review to:

i) extending the time interval between sabbaticals beyond seven years, in order to reduce financial strain on circuit resources and reduce strain on the other circuit ministers and congregations; and

ii) reducing the duration of sabbaticals to two months, in order to obviate the difficulties some ministers suffer when returning to circuit duties after a long break and to reduce strain on the churches.

Previously, memorial M7 (2009) from the South Ribble Circuit Meeting had proposed amending Standing Order 744(3) in order to entitle ministers to their first sabbatical in their seventh (rather than tenth) year of travel. A similar memorial – M8 (2009) – was received from the Bolton and Rochdale Synod. Both memorials were referred to the Methodist Council for report and consideration and then subsequently referred to the Ministries Committee.

In response to these memorials, an online survey of ministers, chairs of district, district sabbatical officers and senior circuit stewards was conducted during April and May 2016, and literature was reviewed, investigating perspectives on the purpose, frequency and duration of ministerial sabbaticals.

3.3 Context

a) The Purpose of Sabbaticals

There is scope to explore ways in which sabbaticals could currently better ‘enhance the whole ministry of the people of God’. In their survey responses, ministers identified a wider set of key benefits of sabbaticals than those already itemised in online and hard copy connexional sabbatical guidance (reporting, for instance, that sabbaticals strengthened relationships with friends and family). This suggests that the benefits of sabbaticals could be more comprehensively described in connexional guidance. Also, there may be better ways of communicating to lay people the purpose and benefits of ministerial sabbaticals, especially in view of the fact that church members generally do not receive sabbaticals in their own working lives.

When identifying the key benefits of sabbaticals, surprisingly, ministers tended not
to refer explicitly to how this affected their relationship with God. Equally ‘retreat’ and ‘time to simply be with God’ were not prioritised when they described the nature of their sabbaticals. Ministers may need greater encouragement and help, via, for instance, Ministerial Development Review (MDR) and ongoing supervision processes, in ensuring that this dimension is a key part of their sabbatical. Such processes could also make sure that there is due accountability in the process so that ministers can properly account for their sabbatical activities. Similarly, the process of agreeing sabbaticals might benefit from the introduction of benchmarks, linked to any Continuing Development in Ministry (CDIM) benchmarks which may, from time to time, emerge, to ensure proper coverage and balance.

Ministers sometimes reported that they had spent their sabbatical dealing with a substantial personal pastoral issue, including such things as: caring for ill/aged/dying relatives; recovery from pregnancy loss/illness/accident/burnout; and developing physical fitness prior to an operation. It is significant that a number of these personal pastoral issues might have warranted a period of compassionate leave, rather than sabbatical leave. Ministers also suggested that more work should be done on enabling healthy re-entry to ministry after sabbaticals.

Recommendations

- That a review of sabbatical paperwork be undertaken with a particular focus on:
  - the benefits of sabbaticals for both the individual and the wider Church;
  - identifying mechanisms through which the fruits of a sabbatical can be shared more widely;
  - reflection on the use of sabbaticals as an opportunity to deepen relationship with God and neighbour;
  - the integration of CDIM benchmarks into sabbatical aims and objectives;
  - development of links between sabbaticals, supervision and MDR;
  - ensuring that the literature is clear concerning when periods of compassionate leave should be sought rather than a sabbatical;
  - suggestions on successful re-integration into circuit life after a period on sabbatical.

b) Frequency of Sabbaticals

It is noteworthy that the memorials presented to the Conference point in different directions regarding frequency with arguments made both for more and less frequent sabbaticals. The survey evidence across a range of people surveyed, including both circuit stewards and ministers, expressed a strong preference for the gap between sabbaticals remaining at seven years. There is at present no strong prima facie evidence for a change in the current system regarding frequency of sabbaticals.
There is currently a lack of clarity about accrual of sabbatical entitlement on the part of ministers who are serving, or who have served, in appointments outside the control of the Church. In particular, there is evidence that Standing Orders concerning sabbaticals have been interpreted in different ways once ministers have returned into an appointment within the control of the Church. There are arguments which point to different conclusions in assessing this evidence. On balance, however, it should be noted that in a period in an appointment outside of the control of the Church, a minister serves under quite different terms of service from those serving in appointments within the control of the Church. Bearing this in mind, ministers should accrue entitlement on the basis of numbers of years served in appointments within the control of the Church with sabbatical accrual being paused when ministers undertake appointments outside of the control of the Church.

M7 (2009) from the South Ribble Circuit suggested that SO 744(3) should be amended to enable ministers to undertake their first sabbatical after seven rather than ten years of travel. The literature review indicates that the current position is slightly anomalous dating back to a period when years of travel were calculated according to the date on which someone entered ministerial training rather than the date on which someone entered their first station. There are also arguments that the ministers would be better served by a sabbatical in the earlier years of ministry contributing to well-being and resilience at what is for some a critical point on their journey.

Recommendations

- SO 744(3) should be modified to enable a first sabbatical after seven years and every seven years thereafter. Consultation with the Connexional Allowances Committee has taken place on this point and the effect on the sabbaticals budget overall is manageable.
- The guidance on frequency of sabbaticals should make clear that the qualifying period for sabbaticals relates to the number of years spent in appointments within the control of the Church.
- There are special provisions for ministers from other Conferences and Churches. Although Standing Order 744 refers only to ministers in Full Connexion, SO 732(5) states that ministers who are ‘Recognised and Regarded’ serve under the same terms and conditions as those who are in Full Connexion. Hence, they should be expected to take a sabbatical in the seventh year of their travel in the Methodist Church in Britain (and every seventh year thereafter), regardless of any sabbatical provision in their previous appointments. Those who transfer into Full Connexion should be expected to take a sabbatical in the seventh year of travel in the Methodist Church in Britain (and every seventh year thereafter).
c) Duration of Sabbaticals

Survey evidence expressed a preference for sabbaticals of fixed length, largely opting for the current three months. Although some favoured a variable length, a majority still expressed a preference for fixed length sabbaticals.

Recommendations

- There is broadly a consensus around the current duration of sabbaticals. Given the lack of a strong desire to change the current system, and the provision within the current Standing Order which indicates simply that three months is the 'normal' rather than mandatory length of a sabbatical, it is recommended that no change take place to SO 743(2) regarding the duration of sabbaticals.

d) Date of First Sabbatical and Impact Assessment

Recommendations:

- The Ministries Committee recommends a change in the date of first sabbatical from the tenth to the seventh year of travel.

The proposed amendments to Standing Order 744(3) are as follows:

744 Sabbaticals. (3)(a) Subject to Standing Order 807A(6), the first year in which a minister may take a sabbatical shall normally be as follows:

(i) for ministers whose year of entry is in or before 2010, the tenth year of travel;
(ii) for ministers whose year of entry is 2011 or 2012, the year 2019-2020;
(iii) for ministers whose year of entry is in or after 2013, the seventh year of travel.

(b) Subject to Standing Order 807A(6), the years in which subsequent sabbaticals may be taken shall normally be the tenth and each seventh year of travel after that specified in sub-clause (a) above.

(c) A sabbatical may for good reason be taken one year earlier or later than that specified in sub-clause (a) or (b) above, and in particular shall not be taken in the first year of a new appointment. Special permission shall be required for any greater departure from the normal dates.

Calculations have been undertaken on the premise that the new scheme would begin in the connexional year 2019/2020. In that year, those whose 'year of travel' began in 2013 will be eligible for a sabbatical as 2019/2020 will be their seventh year. In order to bring things into line, those whose year of travel is 2011 will have their
sabbatical brought forward one year (ie to the ninth year of travel) and those whose year of travel is 2012 will have their sabbatical brought forward two years (ie to the eighth year of travel). They will then be eligible for sabbaticals every seventh year thereafter. This will mean an increase in the numbers of ministers taking a sabbatical in 2019/2020 but the numbers will stabilise thereafter with increases every seventh year until these cohorts work through.

In 2019/2020 (when those who started in 2011, 2012, 2013 would have sabbaticals to equalise the system) there would be on average about 50 potential extra sabbaticals per year group (ie up to 150 in total). Thereafter there would be an average increase of between 40-50 each year with an increase every seventh year until this worked through the system. The potential numbers would then begin to drop reflecting the fall in accepted candidates (approximately 30 per year). There would also be a significant drop off in numbers with the increase of retirements over against those entering probation although there is currently no way of quantifying these numbers.

e) Financial Impact

Conversations have been ongoing with the Connexional Allowances Committee (CAC) throughout this period – the financial review of sabbaticals is the responsibility of the CAC. The CAC estimates that if these proposals are accepted, there will be an additional cost of approximately £120,000 in 2019/2020 to the Sabbatical Fund. This could be funded by bringing forward an existing proposal to increase the levy level from £60 to £100 in September 2018 rather than September 2019, ie a year early. This would bring in an extra £50,000 in 2018/2019. However, a further payment will be required from somewhere else (eg the Methodist Church Fund) of about £70,000 to fund the proposed catch up which is equivalent to another year’s worth of sabbaticals. Further, the shortening of the period before the first sabbatical leads to more sabbaticals being taken overall and this will cause the levy to increase. Whilst formal recommendations are not being made at this point – there are far too many uncertainties – a rough indication might be an increase in the levy to £120 in September 2020.

4. Transferring Ministers

4.1 Last year the Ministries Committee reported on the extensive work of the Transferring Ministers Policy Review group. The Conference asked the Connexional Allowances Committee (CAC) to consider one of the recommendations in response to a concern that the financial demands placed on Circuits would be unreasonable. The CAC suggested that rather than the cost of a minister’s removal to a Circuit being borne by the Circuit, SO 528(4) be invoked. SO 528(4) provides for the Methodist Church Fund
(MCF) to pay removal costs to/from mainland Britain when ministers move to/from the islands, Malta and Gibraltar, leaving the Circuit to pay only the mainland element of the costs (ie port and airport to/from manse). This would extend a policy designed to apply to ministers being stationed within the Methodist Church of Britain to those of other Conferences and Churches.

4.2 On the advice of the CAC, the committee concurred that when a minister who is recognised and regarded ends her/his appointment, the costs of removal are not the responsibility of the MCB, unless the minister is sitting down in which event some discretionary help can be made available from the Fund for Support of Presbyters and Deacons (FSPD) to cover removal expenses.

4.3 On the prompting of the CAC, the committee looked at the fact that ministers whose right to work in the UK is a Tier 2 (MoR) visa are not entitled to make any demand on the public purse. It agreed that the Connexional Team should spell out clearly to ministers from other Conferences and Churches in the Guidelines document their entitlements to UK state benefits, not least those they may not receive, so that they do not arrive in the UK with unreal expectations of their financial situation. However, it seems unjust that a minister from outside the EU should experience hardship that his/her peers do not and therefore recommends that the Methodist Church Fund should pay the equivalent state benefit substitutes (child benefit and tax credit) until Ministers of other Conferences and Churches (MOCCs) can legitimately claim them.

4.4 The Committee also asked members of the Connexional Team to review the guidance offered to Circuits looking to receive a MOCC in order to encourage the development of suitable appointments.

5. **Update on response to Memorial M1 to the 2016 Conference - Qualifications for Candidating for the Ministry**

5.1 M1 (2016) Criteria for candidating for the ministry

*The Wales Synod, Presbyteral Session (Present: 71; Voting: 69 for, 1 against) recognises the hurt and disappointment felt when for a variety of reasons and at a very late stage in the process a candidate for presbyteral ministry was unable to appear before the Ministerial Candidates’ Selection Committee because of not meeting the three year membership qualification required under Standing Order 710.*

Accordingly, the Synod requests the Conference to:

(a) **ensure that all future information about candidating for ordained ministry makes it clear that the three year membership qualification (under SO 710) refers to membership of the Methodist Church in Britain;**
(b) clarify the end date by which this period of qualification needs to be completed; and
(c) ask the Ministries Committee to examine whether the current period of qualification (three years) is the best one and whether there may be some flexibility allowed where a candidate has been a member of another Methodist Church.

Reply

The Wales Synod raises some important questions for which the Conference is grateful. That the memorial was prompted by a particular and unfortunate circumstance has been noted and the connexional officers concerned have already acted to ensure that as far as possible ambiguity around the requirement of Standing Order 710 (1)(a) is removed from the candidating documentation.

Standing Orders are silent on the question of the date from which the three year period is calculated. Given that the date determined by the Ministerial Candidates’ and Probationers’ Oversight Committee (MCPOC) under Standing Order 711(3) is 30 September, it would seem appropriate that that be the date by which a person should be qualified to candidate. It would, however, make sense for the Conference to bring the membership requirement into line with the other requirement of SO 710(1) that the candidate be a fully accredited local preacher or (if not local preacher and offering for the diaconate) a Worship Leader by stipulating that these qualifications should also be met by 30 September in the connexional year in which the candidate offers.

The period of qualification as a member was examined by the 2011 Conference which decided not to change current practice. Offering for ministry requires a level of embeddedness in the life of the Methodist Church in Britain which can only come with time and engagement as a member in the life of a Circuit or a number of Circuits. The 2011 debate was prompted by the desire of recently baptised Christians to offer for ordained ministry. A slightly different question is raised by this memorial in relation to those coming into the Methodist Church in Britain from another Conference. The Conference directs that this question be referred to the Ministries Committee but asks that committee to note that any who train for ordained ministry without being fully conversant with the life and mission of the Methodist Church in Britain will enter a comparatively brief period of formation at a disadvantage compared to their peers.

The Conference also notes that membership is used as a measure of a person’s involvement in the life of the Church. There is growing anecdotal evidence of resistance to or even neglect of the opportunities and discipline of membership
amongst those who count themselves as Christian and part of the Church. As this memorial demonstrates in one instance, membership frees a baptized person to answer a call to serve the church in a number of ways. The Conference would therefore encourage all Circuits to review the ways in which they encourage those who have not already made the commitment to explore becoming full members of the Church and the ways in which the joys and privileges of membership are celebrated.

The Conference accepts the memorial and directs that the Ministries Committee bring a considered response to the 2017 Conference. The Conference further directs MCPOC to bring a proposed revision to SO 710(1) to the 2017 Conference in accordance with the second paragraph of this reply.

5.2 The Ministries Committee has considered the memorial accepted by the 2016 Conference and the response on which that acceptance was based.

The Ministries Committee remains minded of the value of a period of committed service in the life of the Methodist Church in Britain (MCB) before a person offers as a candidate for ordained ministry and of membership as the appropriate measure of that commitment. It notes that members of other Methodist Churches resident in Britain can transfer their membership under SO 051 and are encouraged in that SO to do so. However, it also notes that (in spite of SO 055) there has often been an apparent reluctance to transfer membership between churches within the Connexion and suspects that the same has been true when the member in question is from another autonomous Conference. It therefore urges that all ministers encourage the transfer of membership to a church in the locality of the member’s home and where s/he is a regular worshipper and that where appropriate the provisions of SO 051 for dual membership be taken into consideration.

For the sake of clarity, the Ministries Committee understands that those who hold dual membership can offer as candidates for ministry in the MCB but only if that dual membership has been held for three years or more. This will still mean that an enthusiastic potential candidate from another Conference would need to live and be a member here for three years prior to candidating, unless she or he has been recommended by their own Conference and can transfer under SO 730.

The 2016 response noted that one reason that this qualification has proved challenging has been the apparent hesitancy of some worshippers in Methodist churches to embrace the opportunities of membership and that there is anecdotal evidence of churches in which membership preparation is not offered on a regular basis. The committee therefore asks the Conference to urge all churches to encourage those who are not members to consider the joys and benefits of
membership and to draw on the resources available through the Connexional Team and elsewhere in this work of encouragement.

The Ministries Committee agrees that the date from which the three-year period is calculated should be 30 September in the connexional year that the offer is made and that this be included in SO 710(1). It also proposes that with the introduction of the new training course for worship leaders and preachers the other minimal requirements of SO 710 also be achieved by 1 February in the connexional year that the offer is made.

6. **Criteria and Competencies**

6.1 The Criteria for Selection approved by the 2016 Conference revised the existing criteria by expanding the six headings of the 2003 version into eight and clarifying that the first has two important dimensions. Each criterion needs to be visibly met in the life and practice of a presbyter or deacon at every stage of her/his ministry in order that the presbyter or deacon might continue to affirm a continued sense of call in the Presbyteral Session of the Synod or the Convocation of the Diaconal Order.

6.2 At its March meeting, the Ministries Committee received a report on work done since the 2016 Conference to produce a set of competencies for particular roles in the life of the Church, to cover the Church’s expectations of:

- Those requesting a note to preach
- Those to be received onto Full Plan as Local Preachers
- Those recommended for pre-ordination training
- Those entering their first appointment in the MCB (as probationers or MOCCs)
- Those to be received into Full Connexion
- Those to be stationed as Superintendents
- Those to be designated District Chairs.

The committee approved the competencies for use in different ways. Those for those in formation for ordained ministry are binding requirements against which the suitability of a student for initial stationing or a probationer for reception into Full Connexion is assessed by MCPOC and those reporting to MCPOC. Those proposed for Superintendents and Chairs are to guide those presbyters considering whether or not they might be called to that ministry and to assist the task of discernment by others (formally or informally).

The criteria for selection will come into force for the candidates in 2018/2019. The Committee agreed that the competencies be brought into use by asking the MCPOC to adopt the revised competencies for initial stationing and reception into
Full Connexion from 2021 onwards. Those for Local Preachers, Superintendents and District Chairs can be used forthwith.

7. **Supporting Local Ministry**

7.1 A new set of pages went live on 12 December 2017 on the Methodist Church website entitled, ‘Supporting Local Ministry’. The pages can be found at: www.methodist.org.uk/supportinglocalministry

7.2 It is hoped that the site will continue to evolve and provide a hub for resources supporting Local Churches and Circuits in nourishing local, lay ministry. The development of work in this area required a definition of local, lay pastoral ministry. The following is a working definition of local lay ministry:

Those engaged in lay ministry authorised by a Local Church or Circuit and acting in a pastoral and mission leadership role in a local congregation. They may be paid or voluntary, full-time or part-time. They are commissioned to engage in pastoral ministry and mission on behalf of, and in collaboration with, local church members, for specified periods of time. An individual’s ministry will vary according to their gifts and skills, and the local situation.

7.3 Much work has been done to help to equip people for these local lay ministries and the Ministries Committee discussed a set of competencies which would assist in the design of job descriptions and person specifications, the provision of district based induction programmes supporting local, lay pastoral ministry and related lay ministries, and the work of communities of practice which will offer a broadly based diet of learning and development over a period of time.

7.4 Related to this is the significant work that has been undertaken with ecumenical partners on the development of an Apprenticeship Standard for local, lay ministry. The ‘trailblazer’ group is now working on a single standard for ministry which apprentices can enter at the start of HE levels 4, 5 or 6, providing opportunities for those in local, lay pastoral ministry to enter training (funded through the Apprenticeship Levy) through an apprenticeship degree at a level appropriate to their needs and experience and with a variety of exit points. At this stage, the University of Durham is open to the possibility of the Common Awards being used to support a standard which would enable The Queen’s Foundation to offer provision if it chose to become an apprenticeship provider. A number of conversations have taken place with Cliff College in recent months and the college is keen to respond creatively to this developing opportunity.
8. **Fresh Expressions**

8.1 The Fresh Expressions Ecumenical Team has made a number of changes this year as it prepares for the next quinquennium of activity with a smaller core team and more resources deployed within the partner denominations, as embedding becomes a more central theme. This has led to a review of all activities as the resourcing for the movement is reduced; the Team sees its work now as a catalyst encouraging others to develop resources and helping them to be publicised widely.

8.2 Research has been completed and will shortly be published into the recent developments in Fresh Expressions. The Ministries Committee has been made aware both of the success stories that are narrated from fresh expressions and some of the tensions that have been reported. In order to oversee some of the processes of change, the Ministries Committee has agreed to the establishment of a guiding team to be appointed by and report to the Ministries Committee on developments in fresh expressions and the ways in which those developments contribute to the mission of churches and Circuits.

8.3 The Ministries Committee receives each year a report on the work of those pioneers who are part of the VentureFX scheme. The scheme has proved a fruitful way of engaging with people who would be unlikely or reluctant to engage with the Church in its more conventional forms. The learning and experience which has emerged from VentureFX has contributed significantly to the formation of Methodist Pioneering Pathways (MPP) within the Discipleship and Ministries Learning Network. Around sixty pioneers around the Connexion have been identified and are now supported by MPP through the DMLN regions. Vocational discernment is offered both to those exploring a call to pioneering and those already exercising it. Pioneer communities of practice gather across the Connexion for mutual learning and support and a cohort of coaches has been created and trained to help pioneers develop themselves and their work in a healthy way. Formal learning opportunities are being made available to help pioneers grow in their ability to reflect theologically on their work, and MPP has been working with Cliff College and The Queen’s Foundation to develop new courses. The most recent development has been the creation of ‘MPP Central’ a virtual environment for pioneer learning, sharing and encouragement. In these and other ways, VentureFX and its pioneers continue to seek to fulfil their task of exploring the most appropriate ways of pioneering in a Methodist context and help to embed pioneering at the heart of the Church’s mission and ministry.

***RESOLUTIONS

21/10. The Conference adopts the further replies contained in section 1 of the report to Memorials M7, M8, M9 (2013).

21/11. The Conference adopts the recommendation set out in paragraph 1.3 that all local preachers be required to engage in a process of peer review every three years.

21/12. The Conference amends SO 563 and 567 as set out below:

563 Duties and Rights of Local Preachers
(3) As to fellowship and training, it is the duty of local preachers:
   (i) [unchanged]
   (ii) [unchanged]
   (iii) if admitted as such after the year beginning 1st September 1995, to regularly review their preaching and to participate in a programme of continuing local preacher development which reflects the guidelines annually produced by the Ministries Committee;
   (iv) [unchanged]
   (ix) to attend the annual Service of Reaffirmation of their call to preach;

567 Accountability and Review. (1) [unchanged]
(2) [unchanged]
(2A) A local preacher found by the meeting to be unable or unwilling to fulfil the duties set out in Standing Order 563 shall not be planned to preach. Any local preachers unavailable for that reason to be planned shall be identified in the circuit plan, either by a mark in the full list of preachers or, in a separate list. The meeting shall regularly review their status in that regard.
(3) Subject to clause (2) above, if a question or concern is raised about the fidelity to doctrine of a local preacher or his or her fitness for the work (including his or her calling, commitment to fulfil his or her duties or his or her competence as a local preacher) the meeting shall follow the guidelines for such circumstances produced by the Connexional Team. The guidelines shall include guidance on the circumstances in which Part 11 applies and on the operation of clause (2A) above.
(4) [unchanged]

21/13. The Conference amends SO 744(3) as set out in section 3.3 of the Report.


21/15. The Conference directs the Connexional Allowances Committee to ensure that the Methodist Church Fund pays the equivalent state benefit substitutes to
those ministers from other Churches and Conferences who are unable to claim them from the state.

21/17. The Conference adopts section 9 of the report as its further reply to Memorial M1 (2016).

21/18. The Conference amends SO 710(1) as follows:

   (1) (a) A candidate for the diaconate or the presbyterate in the Methodist Church shall have been baptized and shall have been a member of the Church in good standing for at least three years as at 30 September of the relevant year.

SECTION 0
TRAINING FOR ORDAINED MINISTRIES

Introduction

1. Following the decisions of the Conference in 2012, The Queen’s Foundation is responsible, under the oversight of the Ministerial Candidates and Probationers Oversight Committee (MCPOC), for the initial ministerial training of all accepted candidates for ordained ministries, as well as working with probationers and some others referred to Queen’s oversight. In the connexional year 2017/2018, the Foundation has worked with 68 student presbyters and deacons (30 part-time and 38 full-time; 9 deacons and 59 presbyters) and 46 probationer ministers. For the purposes of comparison, the numbers in initial ministerial training in 2016/2017 were 65 (35 full-time and 30 part-time; 9 deacons and 56 presbyters) and, in 2015/2016, 78 (37 part-time and 41 full-time; 10 deacons and 68 presbyters). They form about 40% of the Foundation’s learning and formational community, alongside a similar number of Anglican ordinands and curates, and a smaller number of Anglican Readers, Pentecostal ministerial candidates and pastors, and independent students, including those undertaking continuing ministerial development programmes and PhD students.

2. The majority of Methodist student ministers on programmes of initial ministerial training at The Queen’s Foundation are accepted candidates of our Conference. A small number each year are at Queen’s as recommended candidates from other Churches or Conferences, or transferring ministers for whom a transfer panel has identified a particular training and formational need.

3. There are three basic pathways, among which there is considerable flexibility to respond to the needs of student ministers and the Church.
On the full-time pathway, student ministers may move to Birmingham, or they may commute daily from nearby areas, or commute weekly, to engage with the Monday-Thursday timetable of courses and activities. Student ministers are able to engage in the weekly commuting pattern from a large area of the country, with some arriving on Sunday afternoon to help with travel. This pathway is supported by a bursary given by the Methodist Church, in ways currently unchanged from the system before 2012, though the Ministries Committee has recently approved changes which are due to take effect from September 2018, to give further support to groups who have found the financial constraints particularly difficult, especially families with children.

The part-time pathway, the Queen’s Connexional Course (QCC), enables student ministers to engage with initial ministerial training through periods of residence and online/distance learning. The course consists of seven weekends and one residential week each year, with a pattern of online learning including seminars via Skype, as well as other elements of engagement with local churches. The course is named as ‘connexional’ not only because it is designed specifically for the learning and formation of Methodist student ministers, but also because it is designed to enable access to learning and formation from across the whole of the Connexion. In the last three years, student ministers from the Channel Islands, the north of Scotland, Cornwall, the north-east of England, Kent – and all places in between – have been enabled to undertake ministerial training through this pathway.

The third pathway is the Circuit-based Learning Pathway (CBLP). This pathway began in September 2016 and is still developing, in a pilot phase. Students are initially allocated a place on the full-time or part-time pathway (as above) but may express an interest in CBLP, either at allocation or early in their training. Following a discernment process student presbyters can be given permission to continue their ministerial formation through CBLP. This involves them in intensive learning in two contexts: first, in a Circuit chosen for this purpose, where they engage in planned ministerial practice and learning for about half their time; second, in learning through Queen’s, again for about half their time. As full-time learners they are supported by a bursary. All learning pathways engage with ministerial practice in Circuits, but CBLP gives a particular extended opportunity for this, strengthening the partnership in learning between a Circuit and Queen’s, and strengthening a way of learning that particularly benefits some students.

The staff team at The Queen’s Foundation consists of nine Methodist members of staff (seven of them full-time; six presbyters, two deacons and a lay person) as well as 11 others (Anglican; Pentecostal; a mix of lay and ordained). Three tutors have particular responsibilities for supporting BAME students. The Principal is an ordained Anglican and has served the Methodist Church in an authorised category.
for over 20 years. The Director of Methodist Formation is stationed to The Queen’s Foundation as an appointment under the control of the Council. The Methodist staff at the Queen’s Foundation are involved to varying degrees with local Circuits, through preaching appointments, particular targeted pastoral support, and responding to requests. Many are involved connexionally with a number of committees (including Faith and Order; Safeguarding; Ministries and Heritage), projects and one-off events. The staff team is in these varied ways a resource for the whole Connexion.

5. With all student ministers now at The Queen’s Foundation for their ministerial training and formation, it has been noted, by members of the committees concerned, that processes of the Allocations Panel and the Initial Stationing Sub-Committee have become more efficient and more focused. Overall strategic planning is also more straightforward. This has led to developments for instance in probation studies and in the development of new proposals for financial support for those on full-time pathways.

6. At the request of the Ministries Committee in 2015, consultation began on the development of a programme of probation studies that could take advantage of the larger, gathered cohort of probationers who had trained at Queen’s and build coherently on their initial ministerial training. This includes enabling those who choose and are given permission to do so to continue to completion of a BA or MA with the Common Awards programme (or in a small number of cases a Newman University MA programme). The programme began in September 2016 and was fully operative by September 2017. The programme, which fulfils the requirements of probation studies, is built intentionally around the shape and dynamics of the experience and practice of ministry in its early years. It consists of two residential periods of 3-4 days each in the year, and this pattern of gathering probationers together for residential periods has enabled support, the sharing of experience and a deepening of theological reflection that is rooted firmly in the ministerial practice of probationers. Most probationers choose to follow this programme because it provides continuity of learning and because of the value of being part of a cohort which was developed during initial training. In formal terms the programme consists of two modules per year, which can be taken for academic credit or not. Some probationers take the option of one module each year which structures their engagement with the ‘Orientation Project’ (in year one of probation) and ‘Gospel in Context Project’ (in year two) required by Standing Orders, rather than both modules. For those working for academic credit with Common Awards/Durham University or Newman University, this study programme represents a reduction in workload from some previous patterns. Since this is a programme of probation studies, all matters of the oversight of probation remain in the hands of District Probationers’ Committees and MCPOC.
The nature of ministerial formation

7. The programmes of initial ministerial training and other programmes at Queen’s operate with a number of key formational principles:

- Queen’s is an ecumenical foundation and values diversity in many forms. Most students at Queen’s come from the Methodist Church, the Church of England and Pentecostal or independent churches. There is also a smaller number of independent students and research students who come from wider denominational backgrounds. Queen’s has an explicit commitment to supporting the leadership of Black and Minority Ethnic Christians and church leaders, especially through partnership with Pentecostal and Black Majority Churches in the region and beyond.

- Ministerial formation at Queen’s is designed to integrate many elements: the study of theology that is vocationally-focused; the worshipping community; links to ministry in local situations through weekly engagement and more concentrated periods of placement; attention to mission through all the ‘five marks of mission’ drawing together cross-cultural awareness, practices of evangelism and commitment to leadership in social justice; and personal development.

- Queen’s has a long history of engagement with World Church partners. It has a particular relationship with the Theological College of Lanka, through a capacity building programme in theological education where faculty members have been enabled to study at post graduate level with four completing MA studies and two currently undertaking doctoral research, studying ‘at a distance’ but coming to Queen’s for periods of intensive learning. Queen’s is also active in MTSE (the Methodist Theological Schools in Europe) with two members of staff having been its chair in the last 4 years. This enables us to build connections with European Methodism which is beginning to foster student exchanges and the possibilities of some shared learning through the e-academy. A Global Christianity programme is designed to support student exchanges and encounters, capacity building through partnerships with other theological colleges, especially ecumenical institutions in hard pressed circumstances, and a leadership development programme of opportunities for sabbatical and scholarship study. Stringent visa regimes and reduction in funding for these programmes make sustaining this work a challenge, but it is essential to the learning for student ministers to be engaged with, learning from and belonging to the wider world church.

- Teaching and learning at Queen’s are designed to enable students from very varied educational starting points to develop and learn in ways that suit them. In Methodist terms, Queen’s takes all accepted candidates through programmes which enable them to be ready for stationing and for continued formation and
training in probation. It is an educational principle that students are on a path where they learn to learn, and begin to practise enabling others’ learning.

- Every student is supported and challenged by a personal tutor, and all tutors are skilled in responding to the needs of individuals as well as the work of forming a learning and worshipping community.

Academic programmes

8. Most student ministers at Queen’s and a number of probationers follow a suite of awards validated by Durham University. This is known as ‘Common Awards’: programmes designed in conjunction with theological education institutions, with the involvement and endorsement of the Methodist Church and the Church of England, to engage theological study with mission and ministry. A small number of student ministers and probationers engage with Newman University programmes, particularly the MA in Theology and Transformative Practice, for those with particular specialist interests. For the majority, accredited programmes are an effective way of shaping rigorous and accountable learning, but in a small number of cases (six in 2017/2018) a student minister may have a more flexible, bespoke programme designed for them, which ensures that they cover a good range of disciplines and approaches and continue to engage with their formational cohort. There is also a range of mechanisms for learning support, for instance English language tuition and support for students with specific learning needs, such as dyslexia or dyspraxia. Provisions for learning support have been made for eight students this year.

9. The Common Awards programme enables student ministers to study for academic credit towards a Certificate or Diploma in Higher Education and towards a BA. There is also a range of other programmes available for those with prior learning – a Graduate Diploma, a Post Graduate Certificate, and a Post Graduate Diploma. Those who have previously studied to Diploma or degree level in theology may be able to pursue Masters programmes, either through Common Awards or through Newman University. (Post-graduate programmes are more easily accessed by those on a full-time pathway.) Most student ministers study up to Diploma level over the course of either 2 years’ full-time or 3 years’ part-time, and those who continue learning with Queen’s as probationers have opportunities to complete a BA or a PG programme. There are currently 8 Methodist student ministers and 15 probationers on postgraduate programmes.

10. Decisions about the suitability of particular programmes are made through admissions processes with advice from the Methodist Church’s Allocations Panel. There is also regular review as student ministers engage with theological study so that some may be encouraged to progress from engagement with the Certificate in Higher Education straight to a Masters programme, or from the successful
completion of a Diploma to Masters studies. Such decisions are always guided by the
overarching priority of determining what constitutes the best way to prepare a person
for ordained ministry.

11. Programmes at The Queen’s Foundation are supported by a strong focus on research.
A Director of Research oversees not only the PhD programme but also supports all
staff in their continued research and scholarship. Queen’s is unusual among the
Churches’ theological education institutions in having a strong PhD programme, with
typically 30 students pursuing doctoral research at any time over the last 20 years.
They are supported by Queen’s staff as supervisors as well as others engaged in
our research community as Honorary Research Fellows and International Research
Consultants, including seven Methodist scholars. Senior Methodist Scholars, such
as Professor Frances Young and Professor Clive Marsh, are involved in forming
a strong research culture of seminars and public events. The PhD programme
is possible because of the creative partnership with the Vrije Universiteit (VU)
Amsterdam, whose theological faculty of over 30 professors and 400 PhD students
is ranked 5th in the world in the latest listing.1 The research culture also enables the
identification and support of those with the potential to study at higher levels and
develop as theological educators. Through and beyond Queen’s, staff are involved
with the Methodist Studies Seminar and with a range of theological societies and
conferences.

12. Queen’s is one of the few Alternative Providers of Higher Education among Churches’
thological education institutions. This means that Queen’s is subject to exactly the
same academic oversight and accreditation as a university, with accreditation by the
QAA and institutional oversight by the Higher Education Funding Council. The benefits
of this are that Queen’s is rigorous and focused about quality assurance, that it can
access public funds for Disabled Students’ Allowance and Student Finance (for self-
funding students), and is licensed as a Trusted Sponsor for Tier 4 student visas. All
of these are of direct benefit to the Church but the financial costs and administrative
burdens of compliance with the regulatory framework have increased hugely over the
last five years.

Length of training

13. Since the ending of Foundation Training in 20072, there has been a basic pattern

1 In the QS Top Universities ranking for Theology, Divinity and Religious Studies: https://www.
topuniversities.com/university-rankings/university-subject-rankings/2018/theology-divinity-religious-
studies.

2 ‘Talking of God, Acting for God: Report of the Training Institutions Review Group’, par.3.2.1, Agenda of
Conference, 2007
of two years’ training for full-time students (effectively 21 months) and three years’ training for part-time students. The Allocations Panel may allocate to a different pattern where it sees particular reason to do so, for instance to an expected three year full-time pathway for someone beginning doctoral studies as happened in recent years. The period of training can also be extended for formational reasons, including the potential for further study, where the local Oversight Committee and MCPOC deem it appropriate. This would happen after a student minister has begun their formation.

14. The Training Review Group recommended that the standard expectation for length of ministerial training should extend by one year for each of the pathways. There was a positive response to that recommendation from the Methodist Council. While that proposal could prove helpful for some students, the Ministries Committee would need time to consider all the implications of such a change. The question of whether all student ministers, regardless of their previous background and experience, need longer in training should be examined. There would be questions about how the extra year could most profitably be used (it is not necessarily obvious that requiring full-time students to study to degree level in that further year would be of benefit to all student ministers and to the Church). There would also be financial and other resource implications to be examined if student ministers spent longer in initial ministerial training.

Governance and accountability

15. The Queen’s Foundation prepares Methodist student ministers for initial stationing under the oversight of two (local) Oversight Committees, accountable for their work to MCPOC. 45 lay and ordained people from beyond Queen’s itself are involved in this work, most as accompanists for individual student ministers. Together they examine and make recommendations on the progress of individual students and offer critical companionship and advice to the Methodist tutorial staff in the work they undertake.

16. The curriculum and learning pathways are developed to meet the learning outcomes for those at the point of stationing and ordination which are stipulated by the Church, using the framework of Common Awards, whose modules and programmes have been created by practitioners for this purpose. The pathways and programmes offered by Queen’s are validated and reviewed through the Quality in Formation processes and practices which the Methodist Church is part of; through the processes agreed with the University of Durham of external examiners and annual reporting; and through the processes determined by the QAA for Higher Education Alternative Providers. Queen’s institutionally is subject to Periodic Review (often called inspection) by the Quality in Formation panel (the last review was conducted in 2013 with a team of Methodist and Anglican reviewers).
17. The Foundation and the Methodist Church share a Memorandum of Understanding to define and describe their partnership, which is currently under review.

18. The Foundation is governed by a governing body of 14 people. The Methodist Council nominates two governors; the Church of England nominates two governors. The remaining governors are co-opted to provide the range of skills and experience necessary, and to maintain ecumenical balance. There are currently four Methodist governors, four Anglican governors, and three governors from other Churches (and three vacancies). The Articles of Association were amended in 2013 to ensure this strong Methodist representation, the nominating role of the Methodist Council, and to ensure that the Articles cannot be changed without the consent of the four nominated governors. The current President of Governors is a senior Methodist minister, the Revd Ken Howcroft. The Principal and Director of Methodist Formation currently report to the Network Committee and the Ministries Committee.

**RESOLUTION**


SECTION P
METHODIST SCHOOLS COMMITTEE

1. Introduction

The Methodist Schools Committee was established by Resolution 29/3 at the 2017 Methodist Conference. Its primary purposes are to ensure positive and constructive collaboration between the Methodist Academies and Schools Trust (MAST), the Methodist Independent Schools Trust (MIST), the Wesley Trust and their schools, to share resources, to encourage the development of the Methodist ethos in all our schools and to provide annually a coordinated report to the Conference through the Methodist Council on behalf of all Methodist Schools.

2. Joint Working and Planned Initiatives

2.1 Considerable work has been involved over many months in translating the 2012 Education Commission’s call for ever closer working between Methodist Schools and the Trusts responsible for them. This culminated in the first joint report to the Conference in 2017 and has been continued since then in the following ways:

1. The Methodist Schools Committee has been established and the Council appointed the Revd Dr Roger Walton to be the Chair of the Committee.
2. The Methodist Schools office has been reviewed to better serve the administrative needs of the Trusts and identify opportunities for joint working for mutual benefit.

3. A new Methodist Schools website has been launched: www.methodistschools.org.uk. This website, for the first time, brings together information, teaching resources and governance guidance for people involved directly with or interested in finding out more about Methodist Schools across the country, across age groups and across maintained and independent sectors. Various resources have been added to the website since it was launched including: Reforming Christianity (a teaching resource developed in collaboration with the Free Churches’ Group) and a presentation to help people interested in or working at our schools to understand the foundation of the schools and the influence of Methodism on school ethos and values.

4. The documentary film, ‘Doing All the Good We Can’ shown at the 2017 Conference, is on the website together with other edits of the filming undertaken in six schools last summer to capture the life of each school and especially the views of pupils, parents and staff.

5. An Ethos Development Group has been established and is working on a number of initiatives of cross-sector relevance. In due course, the Group intends to establish a working party looking specifically at Religious Education and meeting the ambition that our schools will be centres of excellence in this curriculum area.

6. MIST has seconded one of its Heads to be the inaugural CEO of the Wesley Trust and provided seed-corn funding to support the initial costs of getting the Wesley Trust off the ground.

2.2 Although the 2012 Education Commission report established a number of goals for the development of Methodist education, it was not asked to suggest an educational strategy for the Methodist Church for the development of its schools’ work. The lack of such a strategy has hampered our ability to assess the activities of the three Trusts. Therefore, the Methodist Schools Committee is willing to use its position and opportunities to draw on expertise from its schools and wider networks to lead and coordinate a project to articulate the Methodist Church’s educational strategy and policy. It considers that it would be able to report to the Conference in 2020.

3. MAST

3.1 Facts and Figures

- There are currently 66 Methodist maintained schools under the Council’s oversight, educating approximately 15,000 children.
21. Methodist Council, part 3

- 26 of our schools are solely Methodist and the rest held in partnership trusts, most commonly with the Church of England. All are in the primary phase.
- About a half of our schools are in the North West of England (predominantly in the Districts of Lancashire and Bolton and Rochdale), with the rest scattered across England covering, in all, 40 different Local Authorities and 18 Dioceses.
- Currently 20% children are taught in schools which have become academies in non-Methodist groups; this requires a particular kind of MAST oversight to ensure that the academy chains are honouring the schools’ Methodist Trust.
- In OFSTED terms, just over 93% of Methodist schools are currently judged good or outstanding.
- In the Statutory Inspections of Anglican and Methodist Schools (known as SIAMS) 97% of our schools are good or better; 58% are outstanding. Amongst church schools across the country, this is a particularly good marker.

3.2 In September 2017, Alan Davies succeeded the Revd Dr David Deeks as Chair of MAST. With the creation of the Wesley Trust as a separate vehicle for the academies developments, MAST has been able to refocus its work and concentrate on its primary responsibilities, as delegated to it by the Methodist Council, of securing standards and ethos across all the Methodist schools in the maintained sector. Within this, priority has been given to ensuring that the schools are visited, their health is monitored and that they are supported when they encounter periods of difficulty or transition. MAST schools have high standards of performance as a group overall, which is testimony to the quality of their work; where they have gone through periods of vulnerability, MAST can demonstrate a creditable track record of being able to support schools to improve. This is particularly important as, in most parts of the country, Local Authorities no longer support school performance.

3.3 A particular project for MAST this year has been the development of SIAMS, in partnership with the Church of England. This is the primary means by which the Council’s responsibilities for the Christian character of its schools is secured. Although both churches have shared a strong inspection regime for a number of years, cumulative changes in education and wider society have led to the development of a deeper schedule with questions structured around wisdom, vision, hope, community and dignity. The Methodist appendix has been reworked to give schools and inspectors a richer language with which to talk about our distinctive perspective. Although schools are busy and change is always challenging, initial consultation suggests that the more reflective approach has been welcomed.

3.4 The issue for MAST is fundamentally one of capacity as the infrastructure is very small; giving high quality support to a small number of schools sometimes means that the range of other schools do not experience the same level of relationship with the organisation centrally - although links with the local Methodist communities are
generally helpful. Since September 2017, 80% of the schools have been visited either by the Chair of MAST, the Executive Officers or the Connexional Director of Education and a number of new Headteacher appointments supported, while a handful of schools have received more in-depth support and challenge. There has also been local governor training. MAST has offered two major events to help schools prepare for the new SIAMS framework and two national MAST conferences will be taking place in July.

4. MIST

4.1 Facts and Figures

- There are currently 22 independent schools linked in some way to MIST: Trust Schools (9), Acquired Schools (6), Associated Schools (3), Affiliated Schools (4) – a full list and details can be found on the website: www.methodistschools.org.uk
- MIST is directly responsible as Trustees for the 9 Trust Schools and as Sole Member of the Trusts of the 6 acquired schools; the General Secretary of MIST is a Governor at the Associated Schools and one of the Affiliated Schools.
- There are over 10,000 pupils on roll in Methodist Independent Schools
- Sixteen of the schools have boarders as well as day pupils
- Four of the schools are for children of nursery and primary age only, two have pupils from 11 to 18 only and the rest offer continuity of education from 3 to 18.
- All of the schools are inspected by the Independent Schools Inspection Service (ISI) which reports to OFSTED; all such inspections in the past academic year have confirmed high standards in all the schools. Copies of independent school inspection reports are published on each school’s website and at www.isi.net
- Chairs of District are ex-officio Governors of any Methodist Independent Schools in their District

4.2 The Revd Dr John Barrett succeeded the Revd Dr David Deeks as Chair of the Methodist Independent Schools Trust (MIST) in September 2017. The Annual Schools Conference in April each year and the annual strategy day in September, which includes a Service of Dedication, provide opportunities for school leaders, governors and Trustees to enjoy fellowship, worship together and discuss actions required to help schools meet their challenges and rise to opportunities. Such joint events include the nine Trust Schools which are part of MIST under the new legal structure, the Acquired Schools that have joined MIST recently in order to benefit from collaboration opportunities and shared best practice, the Associated Schools, whose land and buildings are held by the same Trust deed, and the Affiliated Schools. In addition to these events, MIST has organised training and sharing days in the past year for Coordinators of G2L AIMS (Global to Local Action in Methodist Schools), Designated Safeguarding Leads and Governors, HR Managers and Heads of MIST
junior/prep schools; at the latter we were pleased to be able to welcome a number of Heads from MAST schools.

4.3 MIST has reviewed its governance arrangements as part of the legal structure project and has implemented a comprehensive Governance Manual setting out the delegation of responsibilities between MIST and its schools and providing definitive guidance to the schools in respect of key legislation. MIST has also extensively reviewed the Financial Procedures Manual to which all schools operate. These documents are available on the new Methodist Schools website. Responsibility is delegated to the schools in line with the Governance Manual. Each school establishes its policies, monitors compliance and takes direct responsibility for the day to day operation of the school.

4.4 Following the Church’s publication of *Courage, Cost and Hope*, a Schools Safeguarding Review and Audit (SSRA) was undertaken by MIST in the 2016/2017 academic year by independent experts. This review led to the development of group policies which inform operational policies and procedures at school level. There is a Designated Safeguarding Trustee at MIST and there are Designated Safeguarding Leads at each school. There is very close scrutiny by School Governors and formal reporting to the Trustees via the Annual School Reports (ASR). The Trust has a safeguarding adviser available to all schools. This year, she is undertaking visits to all schools to follow up progress since the SSRA audits of 2016/2017. The Trust now runs an annual training day for Designated Safeguarding Leads and Designated Safeguarding Governors. All such initiatives have the objective of not just ensuring compliance but also of encouraging and celebrating a culture that keeps children safe and encourages their personal development in a caring and positive school community.

4.5 Methodist Independent Schools are determined to continue to provide an all-round education infused with a strong Christian ethos informed by their Methodist foundation in an era of political, economic and social scepticism, uncertainty and change. They are committed to doing everything within their power to increase the number of bursaries available to enable the offer of places to as wide a cross section of the community as possible, though several schools are currently working within the constraints of deficit budgets. Moreover, the possibilities of business rates relief being withdrawn from independent schools and VAT being applied to school fees threaten to make them less, rather than more, affordable.

5. **The Wesley Trust**

5.1 The Wesley Trust was created in 2017 to provide a home for maintained Methodist schools to become academies: to provide support and services where Local
Authorities no longer have the capacity, whilst being more closely associated with the Methodist Church. It is unusual in being accepted by the DfE as a new Multi Academy Trust with aspirations to cover the whole of the UK while encouraging its schools to maintain and develop flexible local relationships as they choose. Since its establishment it has brought together an impressive Board of Trustees with an appropriate range of skills including eminent educationalists and those with expertise in law, HR and finance both from within and independent from the Methodist Church. Its inaugural Chair is Alan Davies, who provides a useful overlap (along with a number of other Trustees) in also chairing MAST (Methodist Academies and Schools Trust).

5.2 A small but dynamic Executive Team has been established with expertise in the running of schools and school improvement as well as the financial and legal aspects required in establishing academies and Multi Academy Trusts.

5.3 The Wesley Trust was approved in principle by the National Schools Commissioner, but acquiring formal approval initially in the North West region, has taken a lot of effort and diplomacy and patience. A great deal of work has been undertaken to resolve various issues but following applications first submitted in the summer 2017, The Wesley Trust and its first two schools were finally approved by the Regional Schools Commissioner’s Office (North West) in March 2018. The first two academies are Nutgrove School (St Helen’s) and Rosehill Methodist School (Oldham).

5.4 A number of other discussions are continuing with schools in the North West who have approached us about potential academisation in the next year. A particular area of work is being undertaken with local Dioceses to find a way forward for jointly founded Anglican/Methodist Schools. Work has also progressed in other areas of the Connexion for The Wesley Trust. Meetings with governing bodies of schools have been undertaken in the South East region, particularly around Canterbury and Ashford, and in Telford, Yorkshire and Nottinghamshire.

5.5 Another potential opportunity for The Wesley Trust is in the creation of new schools in line with the Education Commission’s recommendations to the 2012 Conference; initial discussions have taken place with Districts and Circuits in Northamptonshire and Cornwall. The Wesley Trust continues to work closely alongside MAST in order to support all the Methodist maintained schools and to provide them with the opportunity to academise if they wish.

6. **Our Calling** is lived out and reflected in the life and work of the Trusts and the Schools

6.1 Each of the schools’ groups gives serious thought to its Christian character and the living out of what it means to be a Methodist school operating in each particular
context. The joint Ethos Group oversees this, giving an opportunity for each sector to grow together: reflecting on practice, sharing, challenging and being challenged.

6.2 Our schools offer frequent, moving and creative opportunities for children to worship in formal and informal settings. For example, at Kent College (Canterbury), youngsters have this year experienced both the majesty of their candlelit Cathedral carol service and the creativity of Prayer Spaces in Schools workshops – enriching the schools’ spiritual life at both corporate and personal level. At Rosehill (Ashton-under-Lyne) children regularly take part in their own version of the Love Feast; the service concludes as each child receives their piece of pitta bread and a grape to think about the love of God for the world. Worship is very often described as ‘the beating heart’ of the life of our schools.

6.3 The fellowship of community, and the possibility of being a Christian community, is an important hallmark. This provides the context for our learning and caring. All our schools offer a liberal broad and balanced curriculum and all pride themselves on the extent to which they emphasise opportunities for rounded human development by expanding children’s horizons through co-curricular experiences. Religious Education is in a challenged state in many English schools but we aim for Methodist Schools to be beacons of good practice and this is an identified area for future development. The new Methodist Schools website hosts the Reforming Christianity resource as well as the digitised and updated version of the Methodist teaching resources, first published in 2012 but now available to download free of charge. There are additional resources for world citizenship education, particular links with All We Can, and opportunities for teachers to share ideas across the full curriculum. The website is also home to a range of bespoke worship resources and helpful links. Both MIST and MAST offer a fellowship for all those involved in the leadership of Methodist Schools; in MAST this is an area under greater development but is an established part of belonging to the MIST family. MIST’s April conference this year shared this fellowship with several leaders of Methodist schools from across the world and the annual MIST Chaplains’ Conference is a further annual opportunity to reflect with colleagues within and beyond the group.

6.4 Service is a strength of all our schools and one which is widely valued, regardless of individual faith conviction. Our schools have strong relationships with local charities as well as creating a global perspective through links with All We Can, Edukid, JPIT and Christian Aid particularly. Within MIST, G2L AIMS (‘Global to Local’ Action in Methodist Schools) is now building on the work of World AIMS and giving schools opportunity to maximise local contacts and staff special interests as a recognised part of their service and outreach. The new SIAMS inspection schedule requires that schools do not just collect money for charity but that they also challenge children to ‘courageous advocacy’ through opposing injustice. We are making new links with the
work of Action for Children and at least two of our MIST schools have given places to refugee children from Syria, in both cases through links with the activities of local Methodist churches and/or charities.

6.5 Our schools do not proselytise and are non-confessional. Nevertheless, they are chosen by families often because of their Christian foundation and their deliberate focus on values and rounded human development. With around 25,000 children and 5,000 staff and through them, a relationship with families and the wider school community, it is reasonable to assume a reach of our schools of about 100,000 people, week in, week out. Some people say, ‘For us, this is our church’; through international boarding, the influence of this ‘church’ spreads more widely than might be imagined. Although our schools are not the setting for evangelism in its narrow sense, they are informed by the Christian narrative which is supported by the increasing emphasis on ethos in both MAST and MIST. The schools create almost 90 Methodist communities through which Christian human values and an awareness of the gospel perspective infuse the lives of children and adults and reaches out, through them, into local communities.

***RESOLUTIONS


21/21. The Conference directs the Methodist Schools Committee to develop a schools’ educational strategy for the Church, reporting to the Conference in 2020.

SECTION Q
EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION COMMITTEE - STANDING ORDER CHANGES

1.0 Background

1.1 Since 2015, the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Committee has had the responsibility for making nominations to the Council for persons to fulfil SO 102(1)(i)(g) and 210(1)(ix) and analysing and monitoring the impact of both these Standing Orders. The 2017 Conference affirmed the EDI Committee’s recommendation to amend SO 102(1)(i)(g) as follows:

Six persons representing the concerns of racial justice, equality, diversity and inclusion, at least two of whom shall represent the concerns of racial justice and at least two of whom shall be under the age of 26 at the date fixed for the commencement of the Conference.
1.2 SO 210(1)(ix) is the equivalent SO for the Council and currently reads:

two representatives, not being members of the Connexional Team, representing the concerns of racial justice;

2.0 Considerations

2.1 The rationale for amending SO 210(1)(ix) is the same as that for the amendment to SO 102(1)(i)(g). Though not formally designated as such, the appointment of two persons representing the concerns of racial justice could be seen as a ‘positive action’ initiative under the Equality Act 2010. In practice, apart from since 2016, only individuals who are Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) have served in these roles and their presence has helped to ensure the diversity of the representatives at the Methodist Council.

2.2 At the time of its inception this may have been seen as a good start in beginning to tackle the thorny issue of diversity and inclusion at the Methodist Council. However, the EDI Committee now believes that this sole focus on ethnicity skews the ethnicity data for the Methodist Council hiding the challenges it faces with regard to inclusivity.

2.3 In reaching its conclusion the EDI Committee considered the following information: apart from since the 2016 Council, over the past twelve years most of those representing the concerns of racial justice at the Methodist Council came from the same pool of people. So to some extent if this was a positive action initiative then the impact for BAME individuals has been limited. Also, the focus on racial justice as a connexional process may have inadvertently hindered some Districts from identifying BAME individuals through the process for nominated district representatives.

2.4 The EDI Committee concludes that rather than the current focus on targeting single protected characteristics, the focus needs to shift to the wider question of; what needs to change so that the Methodist Council becomes diverse and inclusive and hence truly representative of the Church’s composition? The EDI Committee will continue to support the Methodist Council in progressing this.

2.5 SO 417/(2), which pertains to the district representatives to the Conference reads as follows:

Subject to clause (2B) below the election shall be made by the Synod by ballot vote after nomination. In electing such representatives members of the Synod shall have regard for the composition of the membership of the District as a whole with regard to age, sex and ethnic origin.
21. Methodist Council, part 3

The EDI Committee recommends that the SO relating to the Council is brought into line with this and that a similar amendment should be made to SO 210(1)(iv) and (2)(a) to encourage Districts to have regard to age, sex and ethnic origin when nominating representatives to the Council.

2.6 In recommending these amendments, the EDI Committee is signalling that the issue of diversity and inclusion at the Council is a mainstream issue rather than an issue that is only pertinent for protected groups.

***RESOLUTIONS


21/23. The Conference amends Standing Order 210(1)(iv) as follows:

one representative of each home District, being either a lay person or a minister (other than a district Chair), appointed nominated in accordance with clause (2)(a) below;

21/24. The Conference amends Standing Order 210(1)(ix) as follows:

two representatives, not being members of the Connexional Team, representing the concerns of racial justice equality, diversity and inclusion;

21/25. The Conference amends Standing Order 210(2)(a) as follows:

The persons appointed under head (iv) of clause (1) above shall be nominated by their respective Synods for a period of four years, having regard to age, sex and ethnic origin, and being in each case a person who would be entitled under Standing Order 417(1) to be a representative of that District to the Conference...

SECTION R
THE UNFINISHED AGENDA

The 2017 Conference received a report from the Council on ‘The Unfinished Agenda – Racial Justice and Inclusion in the Methodist Church’. The Conference directed the Council to request the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Committee to consult with the Belonging Together Ministers’ Group, the Fellowships Sub-Committee of the Ministries Committee and the World Church Relationships office in order to develop and implement measurable and time-bound plans that will increase participation and inclusion, and to report to the 2018 Conference on how the plans are progressing (Resolution 27/9(b), Daily Record 6/12/1).

The Council received a report from the EDI Committee, and heard that it has met and reflected on this. Unfortunately, the work has been delayed, partly due to the post of EDI Adviser being vacant for a number of months (due to staff changes in the Connexional Team...
as well as a concern to ensure that the role had been properly reviewed and reflected on before it was advertised).

The Council is aware that these issues need to be addressed in dialogue with other areas of ongoing work, such as the work to develop a connexional vocations and ministry strategy and the work arising from the Larger than Circuit process in respect of development of a programme of identification, encouragement and mentoring for potential candidates for appointment as a District Chair, bearing in mind the need to increase gender and ethnic diversity among the District Chairs. It is also noted that there are helpful resources produced by other Churches and Conferences, which could be adapted.

The committee identified some key questions for consideration in a wider context, including:

- What might we reasonably believe to be God’s design in bringing together in the Methodist Church in Britain today preachers and members of such diverse cultural and ethnic backgrounds?
- What might prevent people from diverse backgrounds from exercising leadership through engagement with the Church’s committees and governance structures?
- What can be learned from examples of good practice in the life of the Church with regard to inclusion and participation (eg 3Generate)?

The committee proposes to hold a symposium in the 2018/2019 connexional year to consider these questions. The symposium should include representation from the Belonging Together Ministers’ Group, the Fellowships Sub-Committee of the Ministries Committee and 3Generate.

The Council will receive details of the symposium in October 2018. A report from the symposium, with any resulting proposals to increase participation and inclusion within the life of the Methodist Church, will be brought to a subsequent meeting of the Council.

***RESOLUTION


SECTION S
REVIEW OF THE SAFEGUARDING COMMITTEE

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Further to the report of the Past Cases Review (Courage, Cost and Hope, 2015), the Past Cases Review Implementation Group advised the Council and the Conference
in matters relating to the implementation of the recommendations made by the Review. The 2017 Conference directed the Council to review the terms of reference and membership of the Safeguarding Committee with the aim of ensuring that the Committee is best placed to support the ongoing work of ensuring a safer Church for all. (Resolution 22/3, 2017 Conference)

This followed up on one of the concluding paragraphs in the report of the Past Cases Review Implementation Group that suggested that, as the work of the Implementation Group was concluded, the Safeguarding Committee should be charged with monitoring progress:

_The Implementation Group suggests that the Safeguarding Committee should now be the body charged with monitoring the progress made by the senior leadership of the Church in enabling the contribution of the whole Church to making us a safer space. The Implementation Group suggests that at this point of transition and development in the task of safeguarding, it would be helpful to review the terms of reference and the current membership of the Safeguarding Committee; to ensure it is best placed to take up this role of thinking strategically and proactively about our safeguarding practice and upholding our commitment to continue to listen and learn as a Church._ (paragraph 3.2, report 22 to the 2017 Conference)

### 2.0 The Safeguarding Committee

2.1 The Safeguarding Committee was formerly the Safeguarding Advisory Panel and, after a review, was renamed with amended terms of reference in 2015.

2.2 Standing Order 232 sets out the role and responsibilities of the Committee.

### 3.0 The Review

3.1 The current Safeguarding Committee gives directions and offers guidance in situations relating to safeguarding concerns and procedures (SO 236) and risk assessments (SO 237).

3.2 The Committee has conducted a review, taking into account the recommendations of the Past Cases Review and the work of the Implementation Group. The Committee has identified a need to include a clearer focus on advocacy and to become more proactive, enabling strategic thinking to take place. The membership of the Committee will need to develop in order to accommodate this new focus.

3.3 The Committee proposes that the following terms of reference are added to the existing ones, in order to fulfil the gaps which have been identified in the Committee’s terms of reference:
1. To address the strategic direction of safeguarding within the Church with a focus on promoting effective safeguarding practice and upholding a commitment to continue to listen and learn as a Church.

2. To oversee effective safe recruitment and implementation of safer space training programmes.

3. To identify any further work that should be undertaken in relation to the recommendations from the Past Cases Review.

4. To develop relationships with statutory agencies to further understanding and joint working in respect of safeguarding matters.

5. To continue to develop effective working relationships with sister Churches in order to work together where practicable.

6. To make recommendations to the Methodist Council on any matters relevant to achieving the above.

4.0 Membership of the Committee

4.1 The current membership of the Safeguarding Committee comprises a chair and up to eighteen other persons, including:

(i) at least ten people with experience in safeguarding matters and the consideration of disclosures, and

(ii) at least five people who, by virtue of seniority, experience or office held, will in the judgment of the Council command wide respect.

4.2 Those who serve on the Committee under head (ii) are usually former District Chairs, Presidents or Vice-Presidents, and those who serve under head (i) are members of the Methodist Church who have a professional knowledge or experience of safeguarding matters.

4.3 It is proposed that the Committee’s membership should be broadened to take account of a wider focus in safeguarding work, particularly in the area of vulnerable adults and to provide an independent voice from the professional world of safeguarding.

4.4 The proposals are summarised as follows:

1. ‘Senior persons’ will have similar criteria as for the Committee’s chair (as set
out below). They will be members of the Methodist Church and understand its operations and processes.

2. There will be a six-year term of office for committee members.

3. When the Committee is at full strength there will be enough members to operate safeguarding panels across the year (made up of a minimum of three members).

4. The age balance in the committee membership will be borne in mind when appointing new members.

5. Greater scrutiny into the work of the Committee will be provided by two advisory persons from external bodies (ie Action for Children and Methodist Homes) to assist the committee in ensuring greater quality assurance in its work and ensure consistency in standards. These persons will not be members of the Committee.

6. A small advisory group of six persons from external bodies will meet twice a year, to assist the Methodist Church in assessing its safeguarding work.

4.5 It is proposed that the appointment process mirrors that for the Committee Chair (as set out in section 5 below).

5.0 The Chair of the Committee

5.1 The following are the main criteria required of the chair:

- In-depth knowledge, professionalism and confidence in dealing with people within the church
- Awareness of the strategy of the wider Church
- Quality of leadership and experience in chairing committees
- Confidence in relating to the different church bodies
- Experience across church processes, especially in relation to stationing
- Experience of pastoral supervision and use of external supervision
- Ability to present the Committee’s Report to the Methodist Council and the Conference
- Willingness to attend the Methodist Council when requested
- Experience of committees, and with leverage in Methodism
- Ability to inspire confidence from the secretariat and the Safeguarding Committee
- Ability to work flexibly with a commitment to average 4/5 days per month
- Experience of media exposure

5.2 It is hoped that the Chair will have had some prior experience of the Committee, and that the term of office of the chair is four years. It is proposed that the Chair should work with a deputy chair and that the Chair and Deputy Chair should share the chairing of appeal panels.
RESOLUTIONS

21/27. The Conference receives the Report.

21/28. The Conference amends Standing Order 232 as follows:

232 Safeguarding Committee.

(1) The Methodist Council shall annually appoint a Safeguarding Committee of persons consisting of:-

(i) a chair who shall be appointed for four years; and up to eighteen other persons, to be known as the Safeguarding Committee, with the functions set out in clause (2) below. The members of the committee shall all be members of the Methodist Church and shall include:

(ii) up to 18 people who shall be appointed for six years who shall include at least ten persons having with relevant experience in safeguarding matters and the consideration of disclosures, and (ii) at least five persons who, by virtue of seniority, their relevant experience or office held, will in the judgment of the council command wide respect.

(1 Ai) The safeguarding officer and such other persons as deemed appropriate by the committee shall be able to attend as advisers and shall not be voting members.

(2) The functions of the Safeguarding Committee shall be:

(i) to (v) [no change]

(vi) to promote effective safeguarding practice and safe recruitment across the connexion;

(vii) to make recommendations to the Methodist Council in response to developments in safeguarding practice and to concerns raised by the Committee in fulfilling its functions;

(viii) to ensure the sharing of information and close working relationships with statutory authorities and other denominations.

SECTION T
REPLACEMENT PROJECTS - INVESTMENT PROPERTY

1. The Council noted that the levy on proceeds of sale is not currently payable on “land held as an investment” as defined by SO 908.
908 Interpretation – Investment Property. In this Part ‘land held as an investment’ means land which is church property but which either is let or for other reasons is not used for any of the purposes specified in heads (b) to (m) of paragraph 13 of the Model Trusts (in this Part called ‘Methodist trust purposes’) and which in either event has not at any time while it has been church property been used for Methodist trust purposes.

2. In practice it is very rare for any property owned by a Methodist body on the Model Trusts to have not been used for some purpose of the Model Trusts at some point in its history. Whilst it is possible that some managing trustees will have purchased property purely to provide an income the majority of applications for the exemption from the levy for investment property is church buildings or land that have been converted to provide an income eg shops built underneath.

3. The investment property or land is still held on the Model Trusts, the managing trustees are still part of the Connexion and the income from the property is being used for the purposes of the Methodist Church. It is not clear why property that has been purchased for or converted in order to provide income for the Local Church, Circuit or District should be exempt from the levy. Consideration of this point does not appear to have been explored within any report to the Conference previously.

4. The narrow definition of investment property causes a great deal of confusion and frustration for managing trustees who think their property is clearly investment property but will often not meet the definition of SO 908. The definition of “land held as an investment” only provides a definition for the purposes of seeking an exemption from the levy, there is no other reference to it within Standing Orders. Given the frustration this causes and the lack of a clear reason as to why property that has been purchased as an investment should be excluded from the levy, the Council recommends that this exemption is removed and that SO 908 is revoked.

Standing Order Amendment

5. Standing Order 973 states that where replacement projects are classified, there shall be no levy paid (or it will only be paid on the surplus). However, the Standing Order makes no reference to the Council adopting criteria for replacement projects which has now been the policy for a number of years. It is suggested that reference to the Council adopting a policy would be helpful to managing trustees. The following SO amendment is therefore proposed.

973 Replacement Projects

.....
(1A) The Methodist Council shall adopt criteria for the classification of replacement projects.

***RESOLUTIONS


21/30. The Conference revokes SO 908.

21/31. The Conference amends SO 973 as set out above.

SECTION U

LEGAL AND PROPERTY SUPPORT FOR MANAGING TRUSTEES

The Council received a report from the working party which, in response to Memorials 26-29 of the 2016 Conference, has considered the way in which the provision of legal and property support for managing trustees could be improved.

The Council and the Board of TMCP accepted the recommendations of the working party and the Council therefore directed the Strategy and Resources Committee and invited the Executive of the Board of the Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes to oversee their implementation as soon as possible. The full report of the working party is attached below as Appendix 1.

In considering this matter, and noting the urgency of it, the Council wished to ask the Conference to express its thanks to all those who carry the weighty responsibility, in Local Churches, Circuits and Districts, of managing trusteeship of our properties, as well as those who support them in the Connexional Team and TMCP.

***RESOLUTION

21/32. The Conference receives the Report.

APPENDIX 1

Legal and Property Support for Managing Trustees Working Party: report to the Council

1.0 Introduction

1.1 The 2016 Conference received four memorials (M26 – M29) relating to the work
of the Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes (TMCP) and the level of support and advice available to managing trustees (see Appendix I). In response, and recognising the need to be faithful in the use of the resources of the whole Connexion, the Conference directed the Methodist Council and invited the Board of TMCP to appoint a joint working party to:

(a) Clarify the extent of the application of SO 931(3) and the role and responsibility of the custodian trustee under the Methodist Church Act 1939 and charity law.
(b) Clarify the need for SO 931(3) in its current form and where appropriate suggest amendments.
(c) Assess what steps are necessary to ensure that the Connexional Team has available to it an appropriate level of resource so as to fulfil the terms of SO 931(3).
(d) Clarify the requirements placed upon Managing Trustees in respect of disposals and contracts and identify ways to speed up transactions, taking into account the views of the Law and Polity Committee on the role of the custodian.
(e) Clarify and define respective areas of responsibility so as to resource the mission and ministry of the whole Connexion most effectively.
(f) Establish a full review of the needs of Managing Trustees in terms of property and legal advice and consider the benefit of professional legal services being provided by the Connexional Team.

1.2 The working party consists of Mrs Susan R Howdle (Chair, appointed by the Conference), Mr Graham Danbury (appointed by the Board of TMCP), the Revd Jennifer M Dyer (appointed by the Council), the Revd Richard W Oldroyd (appointed by the Council) and Mr G Alan Pimlott (appointed by the Board of TMCP).

1.3 The working party has met 11 times, once residentially. It was keenly aware of the need to consult widely in order to build an accurate picture of the support needs of managing trustees in Local Churches and Circuits across the Connexion. The working party met with a sample of District Property Secretaries (DPSs), the Chair of the Board of TMCP, the TMCP Executive, members of TMCP staff, members of the Connexional Team and officers of the Conference and a number of ecumenical partners. It also consulted electronically with all DPSs and District Chairs.

1.4 The working party has also sought to take into account the views and issues raised by memorials to the 2016 Conference (see Appendix I) and previous Conferences. With regard specifically to experiences of working with TMCP, the working party undertook a consultation with DPSs and it also approached a number of solicitors who were suggested by Superintendents as having experience of working with TMCP. The working party chose to undertake focused consultation rather than inviting general
comment, in order to ensure a balance of views based on recent experience although where, in a few instances, managing trustees chose to make contact with the working party their views were taken into consideration. The results of this consultation exercise are detailed in Section 6.

1.5 In addition, the working party contacted a sample of District Chairs to gather information about legal costs currently being incurred by managing trustees (with a view to ensuring that any proposed alternative model offers better value for money). However, for a variety of reasons (including the range of ways in which such information is held) this consultation did not produce sufficient helpful data.

1.6 The working party has approached its task in light of its understanding that the work of managing trustees is a vital element of the mission of the Methodist Church. The triennial statistical returns considered by the 2017 Conference highlight some of the challenges facing the Methodist Church in Britain today and they form part of the context for this report. These challenges include a declining number of members; church properties that are old, underused and in a poor state of repair; and the difficulty of finding suitable volunteers for committees and stewardship roles. In response to these challenges and the promptings of the Spirit, the Methodist Council has chosen to reaffirm *Our Calling* as the primary strategic driver for the whole Church. In seeking to ensure that all areas of the Church’s life are aligned with this aim, it is recognised that “the life, witness, service and wellbeing of the Methodist Church is experienced and made a reality at the level of Circuits and Districts” (MC/18/1, A7). The working party hopes that its recommendations will enable managing trustees in Local Churches, Circuits and Districts across the Connexion to live out our common calling to serve the present age through the use of the Church’s resources.

2.0 History

2.1 Because of the issues raised by some of the memorials to the 2016 Conference and previous Conferences, it is important to offer at the outset an outline of the complex history of the development of TMCP and its legal and operational links to the Church, before exploring the current landscape and the challenges which it offers.

The history of TMCP

2.2 From the early days of Methodism, as societies were established and preaching places built, it was necessary to safeguard their use for Methodist purposes. The appropriate legal mechanism was to settle them upon trust, and ever since then – in common with many other charities – the legal structure upon which property is held for Methodist purposes is by means of trusts. However, the form in which this has
been expressed has evolved gradually over the years.

2.3 The chapels themselves (in each of the various branches of Methodism up to 1932) were generally held upon what became known as Model Deeds which regulated such matters as the appointment of trustees and the doctrines to be preached there. However, there were often moneys given for all sorts of other charitable purposes connected with Methodism, at whatever level, which could be lost inadvertently by the death of original trustees, or squandered because there were not people who were capable of giving the appropriate amount of time and care to carrying out those charitable purposes. (That was not a problem unique to the Church.)

2.4 In 1863, therefore, the Wesleyan Methodist Conference resolved to create the Board of Trustees for Wesleyan Methodist Church Purposes, who would be a group of trustees to be appointed by and to report to the Conference, so providing the necessary continuity and skills to ensure that the particular trust’s purposes were properly and effectively carried out. It was entirely a matter of choice for the creator of the trust whether to use this machinery or not. But there was no provision at that stage that the most important church assets – the title to the local chapel (or circuit property) itself and any associated funds – should be held by the Board. They continued to be held by the trustees locally. In 1911, the Board became registered as a corporation, enabling it to hold property in its own name so providing for its own continuity of title without having to renew the trust periodically, and allowing the use of a common seal for the execution of documents.

2.5 Meanwhile, in 1914, following the creation of the United Methodist Church, that church set up a similar body, the Trustees for United Methodist Church Purposes, which was duly incorporated in 1915. There was no equivalent Primitive Methodist body.

2.6 The next significant milestone came as a result of Methodist Union in 1932. Further legislation to embody the post-Union position as to the respective Boards was thought necessary, and so the Methodist Church Act 1939 was enacted.

2.7 The Methodist Church Act 1939 is of great significance because its provisions still apply and it is generally only able to be amended by resort to Parliament. (Although it, like other legislation such as the Methodist Church Act 1976, below, is a private Act of Parliament, it would still require the appropriate parliamentary process to be followed.) The Act amalgamated the two (Wesleyan and United Methodist) Boards into the newly created corporate body, the Board of Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes (TMCP), still to be based in Manchester as the Wesleyan Board had been since its inception. Importantly, it also enabled the Board to exercise powers given to custodian trustees by the Public Trustee Act 1906, enabling a split between holding
the title to trust property and the management of it. (This will be explored further below.)

2.8 Although there was still no general requirement for local trustees to avail themselves of the services of the Board, there was a pattern of their doing so in increasing numbers in relation to their funds. However, so far as holding the legal title to the property itself, that still remained with the trustees locally.

2.9 The most significant change therefore came with the provision in the Methodist Church Act 1976 by which the legal title to all Methodist trust property held on the previous Model Deeds (now to be replaced by the Model Trusts) and also the title to certain other specified Methodist properties was automatically vested in TMCP as custodian trustee, to hold on behalf of the relevant managing trustees. The managing trustees are, in relation to local church and circuit property respectively, the Church Council and the Circuit Meeting. (This division of custodian and managing trusteeship applies also to property held for district and wider connexional purposes, but this report focuses principally on the local and circuit situation, as that is where the principal issues of concern have been raised.)

2.10 One main impetus behind this change, and the one most relevant to this report, was to simplify the situation as to property holding. First, it provided for ease of dealing with the legal title where property was acquired or sold, as this could be done under the seal of the Board of TMCP rather than requiring the signatures of a long list of local/circuit trustees (and indeed it permitted the ‘transfer’ of property within Methodism eg between Local Church and Circuit without the need for a formal conveyance at all); and secondly, no longer did the local or circuit trust have to be legally renewed as a whole periodically as people died or became unable or unwilling to act, because the managing trustees were simply to be defined by reference to their membership of a meeting. This relates to another main impetus behind the change: the trust system had been criticised for the ‘dual control’ of the Local Church by the trustees’ and the leaders’ meetings and this was now replaced by a unified body (the Church Council) which has authority and oversight over the whole of the church’s life.

3.0 Current structure

TMCP’s legal status today

3.1 TMCP is therefore the custodian trustee by virtue of the 1976 Act of almost all Methodist land, and also of model trust moneys as required by Standing Orders (eg proceeds of sale, money raised for the development of property and legacies of a general nature). It should be remembered that this applies to property other than that in the Isle of Man and the Channel Islands, where there is indeed custodian
trusteeship but it is exercised by boards which are separately created under the relevant jurisdictions of those territories, not by TMCP.

3.2 There are other properties and funds over which TMCP also exercises custodian trustee functions not because this was required by the 1976 Act but because those creating the particular trust have so determined (eg Westminster College Oxford Trust Ltd).

3.3 Besides having the custodian trusteeship function, TMCP continues, as from its origins, to be the trustee of a number of other more specific trusts, by the choice of those who created the trust. In these instances this property is generally held by the Board not simply as a custodian trustee, but as a ‘full’ trustee with all the powers and discretions accorded to trustees in the exercise of their duties under the general rules of trust law (eg the Osborne Trusts for the maintenance and building of chapels in the historic county of Essex). In recent years, the Board’s policy has been to devolve decision-making where possible to the relevant Districts for decisions on grant-making in the context of the District’s mission strategy, and for discretionary grants to persons in need to relevant District Chairs. Some of its funds from these trusts have also been freed up for use in funding feasibility studies for projects in conjunction with the Property Development Committee (see 4.2 below).

3.4 Finally, because TMCP has ‘corporate’ status, it has been found useful as a vehicle beyond trusteeship as such, where certain legal functions need to be vested in a corporate person, rather than a group of individuals. One example of this can be seen generally on Methodist connexional publications (such as the back cover of the Conference Agenda), where the copyright is stated to be held by TMCP, although in practice actual permission to reproduce from such publications has been delegated to the Methodist Council. TMCP is also currently the data controller for most data held in the Connexion for the purposes of data protection legislation.

3.5 The scale of TMCP’s activity today can be seen from its annual reports to the Conference. Thus, for the year ended 31 August 2016, it reported in 2017 that its custodian trusteeship extended to upwards of 5,000 properties held on the Model Trusts, and to funds held in 6,696 separate trusts (to the value of over £340 million). In addition it held approximately £5.5 million of funds of which it was ‘full’ trustee. More recent information can be found in the latest TMCP report elsewhere in the Conference Agenda.

3.6 The funding model for TMCP has several main income streams. Working on the figures for the year ended August 2017: first, some funding comes from TMCP’s own investment income (£52,670). Then, in recognition of the work that is done on behalf of the Connexional Team under SO 931(3) as explained below (3.31), a contribution is made from the Methodist Church Fund which reflects 35% of the salary costs of
the legal team at TMCP (£163,845). The largest source of income (£682,559) is the management charge which is levied upon all the funds which are held by TMCP as custodian trustee on behalf of managing trustees – this is a charge of 0.2%.

3.7 After taking into account recognised gains on investments the result was a net deficit of £117,243. There has been a net deficit in most of the recent years, and the Board’s policy has been to cover this by the transfer of up to £130,000 per annum from reserves. This reflects the Board’s policy of adopting a deficit budget in view of the fact that there are funds held over and above the agreed reserves level.

What is the relationship of TMCP to the Conference?

3.8 TMCP as a corporate body is a separate entity, distinct from the Methodist Church, and is responsible for its own actions. The Board, although reporting annually to the Conference, is not directly answerable to it. However, all members of the Board must be members of the Methodist Church, and the Conference has various powers under the 1939 Act (eg to change the body's name), and in particular it appoints the members of the Board.

3.9 Normally these vacancies are filled on the nomination of the remaining Board members, but there are powers for the Conference to appoint additional members. However the basic requirement is that there shall be equal numbers of ministers and lay people, and the minimum number of Board members is six. The Conference has currently set the total number of members at 16.

3.10 Once appointed a person continues to be a member of the Board unless any of the conditions set out in section 5 of the 1939 Act occurs. These are if a member shall:

- die
- become bankrupt
- make an assignment for the benefit of his or her creditors
- refuse or be unfit to act or be incapable of acting as a member of the Board
- reside for twelve months outside of the United Kingdom
- cease to be a member of the Methodist Church
- by notice in writing sent or delivered to the Secretary of the Conference state his or her desire to resign from the Board

Although appointments are therefore theoretically for life, a policy of voluntary phased retirements from the Board has been in effect for a number of years and is readily and consistently adhered to. In accordance with its regular governance review, skills shortages are identified on the basis of a skills audit, and recruitment is via advertisement and interview.
What does it mean to be a custodian trustee?

3.11 As explained above, TMCP has power under the 1939 Act to act as custodian trustee, and by virtue of the 1976 Act is actually the custodian trustee of almost all Methodist land and of model trust moneys (see 3.1).

3.12 Custodian trusteeship is not a concept invented by the Church, but is a means of dealing with property which originates in the Public Trustee Act 1906. Section 10 of the Methodist Church Act 1939 enabled the Board of TMCP to hold property as a custodian trustee, and enacted that section 4(2) of the Public Trustee Act 1906, which provides for the respective roles of the managing trustees and the custodian where property is held by a custodian trustee, should apply here. The relevant provisions of s. 4(2) may be summarised as follows:

i. Management, and the exercise of all powers and discretions under the trust, are matters for the managing trustees (s.4(2)(b));

ii. The custodian trustee must concur in and perform all acts necessary to enable the managing trustees to carry out their role under (i) above unless that would involve the custodian in a breach of trust or personal liability (s.4(2)(d));

iii. All receipts or payments of trust money are to be made to or by the custodian trustee, except that the custodian may allow the managing trustees to receive and spend income (s.4(2)(e)). [At the date when model trust property vested in TMCP under the 1976 Act, TMCP exercised this power so as to permit and direct that future income should be received by the managing trustees.]

Section 4(2)(b) and (d) are therefore the key provisions for the purposes of this report.

3.13 Local and circuit property and the connexional context

Having explored the development of TMCP, this report now turns to the other strand of development. From the very beginnings, local and circuit property activity has been seen as an aspect of being ‘in connexion’ with the wider life of the Connexion – hence the reference to the ‘Model’ provisions upon which trusts for chapels were to be established, in 2.3 above.

3.14 Books can be (and have been!) written about the various ways in which this connexional principle has been expressed in the area of property holding and use, so this account merely draws brief attention to the earlier period, before focusing more particularly on recent developments which can be seen as having a direct bearing on the issues addressed in this report.
3.15 It was during the nineteenth century that each of the various strands of Methodism identified the need for some form of connexional ‘Chapel Committee’ and ‘General Chapel Fund’ to deal with ‘Chapel Affairs.’ It would seem that a main driving force behind this was the increasing incidence of debts incurred by local trustees in becoming involved in ambitious building schemes, often beyond their means. The requirements for local trustees to comply with a wide range of Conference resolutions and to seek approval for many property schemes (eg structural alterations, property developments, acquisitions and sales) meant that the functions of the respective connexional committees and their officers became of increasing significance.

3.16 In 1932, these various activities relating to Chapel Affairs came together under the aegis of the now united Chapel Committee, based in Manchester, and that connexional function continued under various names (eg the Department for Chapel Affairs, the Property Division). Besides the required oversight of various transactions, there was increasingly also a focus on offering support and guidance on a wide range of property matters to people having local and circuit responsibilities.

3.17 The general connexional restructuring of the 1990s resulted in the staff then working in the Property Division (either employed by the board of that division or, in the case of ministers, stationed by the Conference as Secretaries) becoming part of the now unified Connexional Team under the aegis of the Methodist Council and its Property Committee, with effect from 1996. They continued to be located in Manchester, and soon that part of the Connexional Team’s functions became known as the Resourcing Mission Office (RMO). This was to express the understanding that property oversight (whilst still vital) was one aspect of a broader concern for enabling the Methodist Church to use its resources for mission – people, money and buildings – in a coordinated way. So, for example, there was the bringing together of the handling of applications for grants for property and personnel, and the offering of resources to encourage Local Churches to review and develop their church life and engagement in mission activity.

3.18 Finally, in the ‘Team Focus’ process more radical steps were taken. The Conference in 2011 (having the previous year referred the matter back for further consideration) agreed to the proposal that the RMO based in Manchester should come to an end. It was said that to delineate one particular area of the Team’s activity as resourcing the mission of the Church did not reflect the centrality of mission in all aspects of the Team’s work.

3.19 More pragmatically, it was also prompted by another significant development. This report refers above to the wide range of activity by local and circuit trustee bodies which required approval of their schemes by those exercising connexional property responsibilities. In 2009, the responsibility for giving final consent for projects to
proceed was largely devolved to the Districts, thus reducing the level of connexional involvement. The objective was to enable these decisions to be taken by those nearer to the area concerned, with better local knowledge and a sense of how any such project fitted in to the mission strategy of the District. This led to a far greater workload and responsibility upon the District Property Secretary (DPS), in signifying consent on behalf of the District. It was accompanied by the introduction of the interactive consents website, so that the processes for applying for and receiving district consent were all required to be carried out online.

3.20 The intention, so far as staffing was concerned, was to retain in Manchester the continuing property-related Connexional Team work said to be most closely related to that of TMCP (principally, the functions related to Conservation and Listed Buildings, and administration of the files and records retained in Manchester), whilst other property functions would be carried out by Connexional Team staff in London, within the Support Services Cluster. It was anticipated that a new post of Connexional Property Coordinator would facilitate the exchange of information and best practice, and offer some support to DPSs in their now very significant responsibility, as well as playing a part in the oversight of the various connexional properties. Other aspects of what was previously dealt with in Manchester would be integrated into the staffing structures at Methodist Church House, such as dealing with the whole area of grant-making.

3.21 As events have turned out, the level of property-related staffing which has been provided at Methodist Church House has been very low, and in terms of employees is limited currently to the Facilities and Property Coordinator. Attempts to make any further appointments having been largely unsuccessful, use has been made of some part-time consultancy.

The relationship between connexional staff and TMCP

3.22 Although the above account deals with the developments of TMCP and the connexional property functions separately, it is important to stress that from the outset there was a close relationship between the two. For many years, those who were appointed by the Conference to hold connexional office as Secretaries were always members of the Board of TMCP.

3.23 Furthermore, for many years, Standing Orders provided that the relevant connexional property body, eg the board of the Property Division, was required to provide any administrative services required by TMCP. In effect that meant that the staff of TMCP were employed by (or in the case of ministers, their stipends were the responsibility of) the Property Division, to perform the functions of TMCP. In the restructuring of the 1990s, as mentioned above, the responsibility for their employment (along with that for all the other divisions) transferred to the Methodist Council.
3.24 However, renewed emphasis on the legal responsibility of trustee boards generally to ensure proper oversight of the activities of the organisation and its staffing led to an agreement with the Methodist Council for a transfer of undertaking in 1999, so that the staff employed on TMCP work, for which the TMCP Board was ultimately legally responsible, were to be employed henceforth by TMCP itself, and that is the current position.

3.25 Besides the directly property-related functions of connexional staff, however, it is important to stress the major, and still developing, significance of all the governance and compliance requirements laid upon the Church at all levels. Over recent years the role of the Conference Officer for Legal and Constitutional Practice (first created in 2003 and located now in the Conference Office) has therefore greatly increased in scale and responsibility, both in ensuring that actions and decisions by or on behalf of the Conference are properly arrived at and acted upon and in offering advice, support and guidance to those seeking it across a wide range of subjects.

3.26 This obviously means that there will be areas of considerable overlap between that officer’s work and the work of TMCP. There are two particular aspects of this which will be dealt with further below: decisions about property transactions which involve questions of connexional ‘policy’ (see 7.8) and the operation of SO 930(3) and 931(3) (as referred to in the working party’s terms of reference) to which this report now turns.

The operation of SO 930(3) and 931(3)

3.27 As described above, managing trustees have for many years been required to seek authorisation for a wide variety of property transactions and projects (eg structural alterations) – at an earlier date, from the connexional property authority, but in most cases now from the District. The consent-giving body is concerned with the ‘substance’ of what is proposed, looking at it, for example, from the perspective of its relationship to the mission of the Local Church and Circuit and the district development plan, and from the point of view of financial feasibility. That is something different from what the custodian trustee is concerned with, if it is a transaction which involves that body, such as a sale which will require the custodian trustee to execute the necessary documents as the legal title-holder.

SO 930(3) spells this out: “Consent under this Standing Order is consent to the substance of the transaction. It does not exempt managing trustees from complying with any proper requirements as to form or procedure imposed by the law or the custodian trustees, or arising under other Standing Orders or the Model Trusts, whether those requirements arise before or after consent is given under this Standing Order.”
3.28 This is the provision which reflects TMCP’s role as a custodian trustee under the Public Trustee Act as explained above. The custodian trustee is not concerned with the substance of the transaction but with ensuring that the transaction is not going to be in breach of the law (either the general law, such as the charity law requirement to obtain the best price on sale, or Methodist rules as expressed in the Model Trusts and Standing Orders which are binding on the trustees) and that it will not incur liability for the Board of TMCP.

3.29 A quite separate provision is **SO 931(3)**: “All contracts relating to property, conveyances, leasehold agreements, sharing agreements, deeds and declarations of every kind shall be forwarded in draft to the Connexional Team for inspection and approval before being signed.”

3.30 The origin of this provision dates back at least 70 years and is another example of the connexional supervision of local trustees. It can be seen to be very broad, and indeed its ambit is not entirely clear, particularly in the phrase “contracts relating to property.” For instance, it is thought that whilst major building contracts would be included, demolition contracts would not.

3.31 At first sight this provision does not appear to be connected to TMCP at all, as the scrutiny is to be carried out by the Connexional Team. However, over the years, in many cases the document in question was being inspected in any case by the legal officer of TMCP as part of the process leading up to the custodian trustee being a party to the final form of transaction. An agreement was therefore reached that the function under SO 931(3) would in effect be delegated to TMCP to exercise, not as custodian trustee but on behalf of the Connexional Team. Although the question of formalising this agreement by way of, say, a service level agreement was raised, this was not taken forward, but arrangements were put in place for a financial contribution from the Methodist Council.

3.32 Finally, it should be mentioned that, as explained above, although the custodian trusteeship of Methodist property in the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man does not lie with TMCP, but with their own custodian trustee bodies, they are still subject to SO 931(3) and therefore in many transactions find themselves dealing with two separate bodies.

4.0 **Recent and ongoing developments**

4.1 Before outlining the resources currently available to managing trustees and some areas of concern, it is helpful first to note a number of significant developments that have taken place since the working party was appointed.
4.2 The Property Development Committee (PDC) was established by the Council in April 2016 (MC/16/51 and MC/16/91). Broadly speaking, the PDC is concerned primarily with the development of connexional strategy relating to property, while this working party was asked to address the support needs of managing trustees, which cover a wide range of matters, including the development of their property in line with any such strategy. Careful work has been undertaken to ensure work is not duplicated, but nevertheless, there has inevitably been some significant overlap. In particular, when considering the needs of managing trustees, the working party has borne in mind that the PDC, according to its terms of reference, will “be available to provide advice to any Methodist body of trustees on the development of property under their management.” However, the focus of the PDC so far has been on particularly high-profile developments and/or those that may generate a significant income stream (in part due to a lack of resource to deal with more ‘ordinary’ queries).

4.3 The Methodist Council in October 2017 directed the PDC to draft Articles of Association for establishing a wholly owned trading subsidiary company for undertaking property development on behalf of the PDC and the Council (Resolution 89/2). Work has since been underway to scope the remit of this company.

4.4 Work is underway to formulate a connexional property strategy, the key principles of which were agreed by the Methodist Council in October 2017 (MC/17/88).

4.5 Over recent months, TMCP, the Conference Officer for Legal and Constitutional Practice and members of the Connexional Team have invested significant energy in appointing a panel of firms of solicitors with prior experience of working with Methodist Local Churches, Circuits and Districts and/or with relevant experience of working with charities on a wide range of legal issues. Managing trustees will be encouraged (but not required) to use these firms when they require the services of solicitors. Through appropriate training and the building up of significant experience of Methodist practice, it is hoped that the panel will minimise some of the issues noted in this report caused by gaps in understanding. Good communication is needed to ensure that managing trustees are aware of the panel, and the working party notes that it has not been possible to appoint firms for work outside England and Wales.

4.6 These developments are still relatively new and the extent of their impact on the support needs of managing trustees is not yet fully apparent. The conclusions and recommendations in Section 8 must be read in light of this.

4.7 The working party also noted that certain changes to the Connexional Team are in the process of taking place, but it is understood that any changes in relation to property functions have awaited the production of this report.
4.8 Since the working party was appointed in 2016, there have been developments in TMCP’s practices. Further information and guidance on a wide range of areas have been added to the website (which was, after considerable work, relaunched in 2016), including guidance recently issued around data protection. A ‘Matter Management System’ is in the process of development, which will allow TMCP to collate and search all documents relating to a specific case. This will make it easier for TMCP staff to answer queries relating to one another’s cases, to set parameters and to monitor the length of time it takes to complete a particular transaction. TMCP believes that this will result, for managing trustees, in a reduction in delays. The working party notes that, at present, the Matter Management System is intended to be internal to TMCP. It has suggested that it would be helpful if managing trustees and their solicitors could be given access to view their case online, in order to monitor progress.

5.0 Existing resources available to managing trustees

5.1 Managing trustees (in particular Church Councils and Circuit Meetings) require support with a wide range of circumstances and transactions. To take just a few examples among many, these might include managing trustees who are:

- exploring the continuing use of a church building whose congregation has ceased to meet for worship but which provides a home for a number of community groups;
- seeking how best to reserve the use of a church car park for those meeting in the church;
- responding to a number of serious concerns raised by a quinquennial inspection.

The following is a list of some of the resources currently available to managing trustees seeking support.

5.2 District Property Secretaries: The working party was highly impressed by the dedication and commitment of DPSs. However, it is widely acknowledged that many of them feel severely overworked and under-resourced. Some noted that they would have preferred to have retired some time ago, but that it had not been possible to find a suitable replacement. There is significant variation in provision between Districts (in terms of the role the DPS is expected to fulfil and whether the post is paid or voluntary). So, for example, some DPSs have considerable technical property knowledge, whilst others do not; some would appear to be more active in exploring the mission context of what they are being asked to consent to than others. The PDC has already suggested that the role of the DPS should be clarified and that the Conference could adopt certain minimum standards for skills and capacity, as has been done for District Safeguarding Officers. This requires careful consideration, especially in light of the existing challenge of recruiting suitable volunteers.
5.3 TMCP website: TMCP’s website (www.tmcp.org.uk), which was recently relaunched, is generally found to be helpful and contains a significant number of useful guidance notes and application forms. The working party’s conversations did reveal one or two minor issues. More significant is the point that trustees are not always aware of their need to have recourse to the site.

5.4 Property Handbook: The Property Handbook is no longer available in hard copy and is only accessible online via the Methodist Church website: www.methodist.org.uk/for-ministers-and-office-holders/property/handbook (so that portions can be updated regularly). However, as the handbook is divided into a number of independent sections, it is very difficult to search for an answer to a particular query – in this sense, it is not really a ‘handbook.’ A search function (recently added during the redevelopment of the website) only applies to the titles of documents, and not the words they contain. The working party believes that one coherent and systematic handbook of Methodist property policy and guidelines is needed.

5.5 Property Matters is a quarterly electronic newsletter from the Connexional Facilities and Property Coordinator and is currently received in electronic form by approximately 7,000 individuals, but only by those who sign up to receive it. It provides a range of useful current information and news, obtained from various contributors including TMCP. Matters covered include new sources of funding, important building issues and legal matters affecting managing trustees.

5.6 Property Development Committee: Although intended potentially as a resource for all managing trustees (see 4.2 above), currently, the PDC only has capacity to deal with complex and high-profile schemes and not more ‘routine’ enquiries.

5.7 A number of posts within the Connexional Team relate to legal and property support for managing trustees, including the Conference Officer for Legal and Constitutional Practice, the Governance Adviser, the Conservation Officer, the Facilities and Property Coordinator and those supporting the functions of the consents website. In addition, in recent months, use has been made of a number of part-time consultants with expertise beyond Methodism. Currently, the capacity to offer support is inevitably very limited.

5.8 The working party noted that other independent initiatives have developed in order to fill gaps in the existing support structure. One example is Transforming Churches and Communities (TCC), an independent charity that emerged from the Manchester and Salford Methodist Mission and that is accountable to the Manchester and Stockport District Synod. TCC has assisted churches with project management, grant applications and circuit reviews (alongside district officers), but does not give professional advice. While these initiatives have provided valuable assistance, the
working party believes that managing trustees should be able to access the full range of support they need through connexional structures, paid for by the assessment and through connexional levies, rather than having to pay twice.

**6.0 Feedback and reflections on TMCP**

6.1 Before proceeding to more general areas of concern for managing trustees, because of the context in which this working party was established it was thought appropriate to focus at this point more specifically on the work of TMCP. As previously mentioned, the working party sought responses from DPSs and solicitors, and received some responses from managing trustees and circuit officers, regarding working with TMCP. Their responses, particularly regarding operational issues within TMCP, have been carefully considered and are presented in some detail here in response to the tenor of the memorials to the 2016 Conference (see Appendix I) and previous Conferences.

6.2 Feedback from District Property Secretaries

6.2.1 The working party wrote to all the DPSs. By and large, DPSs were very positive about and supportive of TMCP. Many DPSs believe that where difficulties arise between TMCP and managing trustees, the fault lies with the managing trustees, or their solicitors.

6.2.2 Most of the DPSs had signed a letter to the Secretary of the Conference in May 2016, expressing concern about the memorials that gave rise to the setting up of this working party. In the letter they said:

> As individuals we are in touch and dealing with TMCP on an almost daily basis. Being in that position enables us to make comment from a more consistent approach than, for example, someone who only has an isolated experience or two. We all want to express our support for TMCP and the people there who make up the team. They have a difficult job to do and our overall experience is that it is done in a professional, courteous and timely manner....

> As we discussed the situation there was one consistent comment that emerged concerning the delay that churches and Circuits were claiming to be experiencing “because of TMCP”. When we have investigated the delay, in the vast majority of cases it had been caused because no reply had been received to queries raised by TMCP to solicitors, surveyors, churches, Circuits etc. In some cases we know that churches and Circuits had employed solicitors and surveyors who were not aware of Methodist procedures or even the requirements of Charity regulations. This has resulted in much time being spent by TMCP in “training” professional people in the correct way of proceeding...
6.2.3 One DPS did mention “a degree of pedanticism which can be very frustrating, time wasting and costly,” and another passed on the view of one church: “that they found TMCP very difficult, having little interest or knowledge to guide the managing trustees through a project of this nature, and they felt their own legal bill was greater than necessary as a consequence.” However, such views were very definitely in a minority among the DPSs.

6.2.4 One DPS wrote to the working party at length about a project which he described as a “classic what-not-to-do project,” in which managing trustees with little experience of property matters had been badly let down by their solicitors, and TMCP had given support that was “well above the level which should be expected or required.” In this example, the managing trustees’ solicitors had not sent the documentation to TMCP until it was ready for sealing. Any solicitors with experience of working with TMCP would have known that this would not work. When TMCP examined the documentation, they found that the transaction could result in an unintended business tenancy with security of tenure (contrary to Methodist policy), in rights of way across church property and in other unquantified obligations entered into without due thought for the consequences for the church. In the view of the DPS, the generous and competent support of TMCP had potentially saved the church from serious legal problems. Nevertheless, the outcome cannot be regarded as an unqualified success from the point of view of the managing trustees because their solicitors’ fees amounted to £22,000 for a £40,000 transaction.

6.3 Feedback from solicitors

6.3.1 The working party spoke to or received emails from five solicitors, who were referred to the working party by Superintendents. It was made clear in asking Superintendents to suggest solicitors that the working party was not looking particularly for solicitors who had bad experiences to relate, but simply solicitors who worked regularly with TMCP. The solicitors’ comments were mixed. Indeed, three out of the five used the word ‘mixed’ to describe their experience of working with TMCP. On the positive side, the solicitors spoke of TMCP staff as professional and competent and with excellent technical ability. One commented that the guidance notes are helpful and clear.

6.3.2 On the negative side, the following general comments were made: One solicitor said that the experience one has depends on whom at TMCP one is dealing with, and another spoke of dealing with someone at TMCP who was young and inexperienced. One commented that sometimes TMCP staff can be very efficient and proceed with a matter fairly quickly but that on other occasions they can appear, without intending it, to be obstructive and unhelpful.

6.3.3 Frustration with response times to letters and emails featured in four out of the five
responses. One solicitor commented that the main problem is that TMCP works to different timescales from the ones she is used to in commercial practice. She said that she would often send an email hoping for a response the same day, or at least within two or three working days. Instead she would get a standard form response the following morning, and then a substantive response perhaps three weeks later. By that point the transaction would have moved on. Another solicitor said that at the beginning of a transaction he will advise the client how long it is likely to take to complete. If he has advised that it will take eight weeks it is frustrating if TMCP takes four weeks to respond and then raise significant requisitions. He suggested that it would help if TMCP staff said when first contacted how long it will take them to respond and whether they are likely to be raising requisitions.

6.3.4 There were a number of comments on what might be called proportionality. Solicitors said that delays can be caused by TMCP going through documents with a fine-toothed comb, “over-egging the pudding and doing a Rolls Royce job when a Ford Mondeo would be fine.” One solicitor commented that TMCP staff raise issues which a solicitor in private practice would not consider pragmatic or cost effective to deal with.

6.3.5 There was also comment on working practices, some of which were described by one solicitor as “archaic”. These would include the generic email address (legal@tmcp.org.uk), whereas most solicitors will have individual email addresses; the absence of direct line telephone numbers; the practice of distributing emails the following morning (except in cases of urgency) and at that point sending the standard form response; and the preference of some TMCP staff for emailing letters as attachments rather than simply replying to the email.

6.4 Feedback from managing trustees or circuit officers

6.4.1 Some of these made contact with the working party themselves or contacted the working party at the suggestion of their Chair. In general, the working party were cautious about receiving these contributions, especially if the events happened some time ago. The working party also tended to give more weight to contributions from managing trustees or circuit officers who had legal or property qualifications.

6.4.2 One person said that TMCP’s staff are always helpful and courteous, but substantially overworked and that this can lead to delays. He commented particularly that it can be frustrating if lengthy delays result in a Qualified Surveyor’s Report having to be renewed at the Circuit’s expense. He also described one transaction that had fallen through after three and half years, leaving the managing trustees with costs of £7,000.

6.4.3 Another commented that managing trustees can find it difficult to get a surveyor or solicitor who can correctly anticipate what changes TMCP will want to make to the
documents. As a result, he said, the surveyors and solicitors stop trying so hard and just leave it to TMCP to do the work.

6.4.4 One commented that it is hard to justify the Local Church paying directly for its own local solicitors and surveyors and contributing to the connexional costs of legal services, including TMCP. This leads to Local Churches feeling that they are paying twice for the same transaction.

6.5 Consultation with TMCP staff

6.5.1 The working party met and consulted by email with TMCP senior staff on a number of occasions and wishes to express its gratitude for the considerable expenditure of time and effort in answering its questions so fully. The following points that arose from those conversations are relevant to the material in this section.

6.5.2 It was clear from the working party’s discussions with TMCP legal staff that they have a lot of difficulty with the fact that standard conveyancing transactions are often dealt with not by a ‘solicitor’ as such but by conveyancing clerks following standard form procedures dictated by a computer-based management system. Such employees do not necessarily have an understanding of custodian trusteeship, charity law, nor of the idiosyncrasies of Methodist processes. It is of course not necessarily the fault of the managing trustees that they have someone acting for them who lacks this specialist knowledge. The Local Church or Circuit may have gone to the firm that has acted satisfactorily for them in the past, but in any large or medium-sized firm each matter will be delegated to a member of staff who has space in their workload, and the appropriate level of expertise and experience in the eyes of the firm for the matter in question.

6.5.3 Even when the person acting is a qualified solicitor, they may lack TMCP’s specialist knowledge or approach the matter with a different mindset. TMCP commented that external solicitors are used to considering a transaction wholly from a commercial viewpoint and often do not take into account that charities have a fiduciary duty when they deal with their assets meaning that while a risk may be acceptable to a commercial company this is not always the case for the Church.

6.5.4 On the specific question of response times, TMCP was proud of the progress that has been made in recent years in improving these. They felt that complaints about delays generally related to historic instances when the staffing problems of a few years ago caused significant difficulties. The latest figures for post (mail and emails) dealt with by the legal staff from February 2017 to January 2018 demonstrate that, in all during that time, 17,956 items of post were received and 17,667 dealt with. Average monthly response times varied from 7 days (presumably working days) in May...
2017 to 12 days in December 2017, with an overall average of 9 days. This would presumably include some items dealt with the same day or the next day in cases of urgency and other items processed after several weeks.

6.5.5 On the question of working practices, TMCP is evidently aware of some of the issues raised and is considering some changes in procedure (for instance, the possible introduction of pseudo-personal email addresses). The working party understands that work is in progress on some points, such as the inclusion of substantive replies in emails rather than separate letters, and more tailored automatic responses.

6.6 Some reflections on the responses

6.6.1 Regarding delays: Managing trustees and their solicitors are apt to accuse TMCP of delays, whereas DPSs are more inclined to attribute delays or the perception of them to incompetence on the part of solicitors and ignorance on the part of managing trustees. TMCP staff, for their part, feel that claims of delays are out-of-date or unfounded. There will be a number of factors at play, including unrealistic expectations and differences of mind-set. Another factor is that when people talk about ‘delays’ they are not always talking about response times. If managing trustees and their solicitors believe that they are close to completing a matter and the response from TMCP then requires amendment of the documents and raises a number of requisitions, this will be experienced by clients and solicitors on both sides as TMCP causing a delay, even if the response time itself was reasonable.

6.6.2 Comments were also made about difficulty or delays resulting from the need for many documents to be sealed and signed by two TMCP Board members. This is a requirement of the 1939 Act and the procedure cannot be changed without amending the Act. In practice this has not caused significant delays because staff and Board members have put themselves out to obtain or be available to provide the necessary signatures. In addition, TMCP is pursuing the possibility of using electronic signatures if this becomes possible by a change of Land Registry rules. The working party would suggest that availability of Board members to sign documents in Manchester should continue to be one of the factors taken into account in the selection of new Board members.

6.6.3 Regarding proportionality: This was another point on which the working party found it difficult to reconcile the contributions from different sources. There were accounts by DPSs of transactions in which the solicitors had failed to spot significant legal dangers, and there were accounts by solicitors of TMCP pursuing minor points which the solicitors considered disproportionately expensive. The working party was not sure whether it was listening to contrasting stories, in some of which TMCP had saved the day and in some of which their intervention was over-the-top, or whether it was
listening to very much the same story told from two different perspectives. Once again, different perspectives and mindsets were at work. Solicitors (and surveyors) will be seeking to work in their clients’ interests and will have an eye on costs. TMCP staff are working in the interests of the Church, and will have an eye on charity law and the higher fiduciary duty placed on charity trustees. They are required to ensure that they are not concurring in a breach of trust by managing trustees. The working party did however feel that there was sometimes a question mark over the breadth of TMCP’s interpretation of the term ‘breach of trust.’

6.6.4 Regarding workload: It is clear that TMCP staff work hard and process a large quantity of material. Evidently there is a greater degree of legal work being done in the Church than was the case, say, a generation ago, in spite of the fact that the Church now has fewer buildings and fewer people. In part the increase in work will be due to the increase in the complexity of projects, particularly as Local Churches and Circuits try to dispose of buildings in such a way as to enable them to continue to be used by local communities. However, the working party also considered the possibility that the increase in workload is partly due to TMCP’s very thorough degree of engagement.

Finance department

6.7 So far, the focus has been on the legal work of TMCP. Equally important is the work of the Finance staff, handling large amounts of funds. The working party wished to note the frequent affirmation in consultation responses of the Finance staff at TMCP, whose work is experienced as consistently efficient and high-quality.

7.0 General areas of concern

7.1 Turning now from operational matters in TMCP, the following general areas of concern were noted from the working party’s research and consultations and from memorials to the Conference. Some relate directly to the day-to-day experience of managing trustees (such as the difficulty of knowing where to turn when seeking technical support or exploring possibilities). Others relate to Methodist processes and structures (such as the consents process and the question of where policy is most appropriately developed). Still others relate to the outworking of these processes and the issues that can arise because of overlap and duplication of work. Where an area of concern is already being addressed, this is noted in the text.

7.2 Avenues for trustees seeking support: There is no doubt that many managing trustees over the years sought the assistance of connexional expertise when they had problems or decisions to make about their property, and they would ‘approach Manchester’ when seeking to have a creative, exploratory conversation about their options (eg regarding the disposal of a church building). They often still do so by
making contact with TMCP, but this is not the role of TMCP. The PDC will “be available to provide advice to any Methodist body of trustees on the development of property under their management,” but does not have the capacity to make itself available to all Local Churches and Circuits for these exploratory conversations. DPSs provide invaluable support, but each necessarily has specific and limited areas of knowledge and expertise.

7.3 The working party has identified the need for a single, clear point of contact (a ‘one-stop shop’) for all initial queries relating to property development. But this also applies to property matters of all kinds. From this point of contact, whether they are seeking an exploratory conversation or more routine technical support (which may be about a building itself or about legal issues), managing trustees should be put in contact with the appropriate body or member of staff.

7.4 An area which the working party has not covered in detail in this report but which is very much part of the picture of the challenges presented to managing trustees is that of dealing with the significant number of Methodist properties which are listed buildings or in conservation areas. Matters relating to listed buildings can be immensely complex and cause significant stress for managing trustees, not least because of the inevitable delays. However, the working party’s consultations suggested that the guidance and support available from the Conservation Officer and the role of the Listed Buildings Advisory Committee work well and are well-received. This is not to minimise the burden of work laid upon managing trustees and DPSs in this situation.

7.5 Gaps in understanding: There are two recurring issues:

7.5.1 There is a lack of understanding among managing trustees themselves as to the nature of managing trusteeship; some members of Church Councils are not even aware that they are managing trustees and others do not make use of helpful resources, eg the guidance available on TMCP’s website, because they are unaware of TMCP’s existence and role.

7.5.2 There is also a lack of understanding among solicitors and surveyors with regard to the role of the custodian trustee and charity law let alone Methodist policy and practice (see 6.5.2). In conversation with ecumenical partners, it has become clear that this issue is by no means exclusive to Methodism. In relation to legal transactions it is hoped that this will be at least partially addressed by the panel of solicitors – see 4.5. However, a similar problem is often encountered in seeking the necessary Qualified Surveyor’s Report from a professional who is not accustomed to charity law requirements on sales and leases as to achieving best price.
7.6 Guidance/advice: Under current arrangements, TMCP staff are able to offer guidance, but not legal advice, ie they cannot act on behalf of managing trustees as their solicitors. The working party noted that there are ecumenical partners that have made the complex arrangements necessary for advice to be given and some work undertaken in-house, through obtaining the necessary waiver from their professional body. This is thereby saving local managing trustees money that they would otherwise spend on solicitors.

7.7 However, although currently TMCP can only offer guidance, that guidance is often interpreted as ‘advice’ by managing trustees. This is explored further below in 7.14.

7.8 Questions around Methodist ‘policy’: In conversations with TMCP and the Conference Office a recurring theme was that, in exercising its functions, TMCP would always defer to those concerned with the making and application of ‘policy’ (in practice the Conference Officer for Legal and Constitutional Practice) in deciding whether to concur with a transaction, provided that there was no legal obstacle to doing so. This has proved to be quite a difficult concept to define. Where the Conference has declared its mind by enacting a provision in the Model Trusts or Standing Orders, then that is clear and able to be ascertained and is binding upon the managing trustees under para 21 of the Model Trusts (for instance, the parameters for granting permission to another Christian church to use the premises for worship under Model Trust para 14(2A)). But there is a lack of consistency as to which property related matters have been adopted as policy and placed into Standing Orders and which have not, eg Standing Orders make provision about the sale of alcohol on Methodist property but there has not been a policy enacted on Sunday trading.

7.9 Since the closure of the RMO, steps have been taken to try to ensure that matters which might have been good practice or recommended by the RMO have at least been adopted as policy by the Methodist Council. Similar questions have now begun to arise as the PDC has sought to develop an overall connexional strategy about disposal or retention of buildings. But how do managing trustees find out about these decisions, and what is their status?

7.10 In practice, most of the individual ‘policy’ questions which are referred by TMCP are about the interpretation of an existing provision (such as whether a property is an investment property for the purposes of SO 908). The working party notes that one area which may have created considerable work in the past, the application of the rules as to ‘replacement projects’ for the purposes of SO 973, has now been addressed by clarifying those rules. But generally policy questions are obviously time-consuming and a potential cause of delay because of the limited resources available. Still less is there the time in the Conference Office to develop and fully disseminate all the relevant information, with clear guidance as to what is binding and what a matter of best practice.
7.11 A lack of resource within the Conference Office relative to the volume of work: this partly relates to the point just made about policy issues, but arises in many other ways too, for instance the overseeing of training opportunities for managing trustees. The working party noted that some of the training materials currently available on the website date back to the days of the RMO and may be out of date. The working party trusts that this lack of resourcing is being addressed, at least in part, by those reviewing the Team structures.

7.12 Issues experienced in the consents process: A great deal of work has been put by connexional staff into making the consents website easy to use, and ‘glitches’ are regularly removed. The main problem that remains is that many of those in Local Churches who seek to use it are not used to operating online, and find it a steep learning curve. It was assumed when the consents website was introduced that this would be a passing phase and that managing trustees more adept in working online would in due course take over, but this has not always proved to be the case. Staff in the Connexional Team and TMCP are willing to guide managing trustees through the process the first time, but what they are finding is that in many cases a given church officer will only need to apply for consent once in his or her time, and therefore a high proportion of users are using the site for the first and only time.

7.13 Issues relating to SOs 930(3) and 931(3): Currently, TMCP exercises both functions, the former as the custodian trustee and the latter on behalf of the Connexional Team (see 3.31 above). However, it is often unclear (to managing trustees and, it seems at times, to TMCP) which role they are inhabiting at any given moment. The working party thought that there was a need to re-emphasise here the limits of the scope within which TMCP can and should operate under SO 930(3) as a custodian trustee. The wording of s.4(2)(d) of the 1906 Public Trustee Act (para 3.12 above) is clear: the custodian trustee must concur in and perform all acts necessary to enable the managing trustees to carry out their functions unless that would in itself involve the custodian in a breach of trust or personal liability.

7.14 This lack of clarity can lead to difficulties for managing trustees, if guidance given under SO 931(3) in looking at a contract is perceived as being from the custodian trustee. It is found to be helpful when TMCP makes clear the role in which guidance is offered and the consequences if it is not followed (ie whether this would lead to the custodian being unable to concur in the transaction). If the delegation is to be retained, it may help to include a footnote in CPD explaining that the work of SO 931(3) is delegated to TMCP.

7.15 There is a broader question, as to the scope of SO 931(3) itself. This is potentially very wide (see 3.29-3.31) and indeed its precise ambit is not entirely clear or rational (nor always punctiliously observed). For instance it covers the very common situation
of the grant of a one-off licence for use of the property, but not a major contract for the demolition of the property.

7.16 The wording of SO 931(3) is ambiguous not only as to scope, but also as to what exactly is the meaning of ‘approval’. Does this refer only to the legal soundness of a contract, or to whether the transaction itself makes good sense within the mission of the Methodist Church? How much discretion should managing trustees have?

7.17 Duplication of work and delays: Because of a lack of clarity with regard to the division of responsibilities between TMCP and the Connexional Team, and TMCP’s desire to provide help and support, managing trustees sometimes find themselves having the same conversation twice, with TMCP and the Conference Office, sometimes unbeknown to the other body. This situation is exacerbated by the two teams being in two separate physical locations. Besides duplication, there are inevitable delays when the two entities are each required to perform their particular responsibilities (for instance where a policy interpretation is required).

7.18 Funding for TMCP: As explained above, TMCP does not currently recoup its costs. The Methodist Council contributes 35% of the staff costs of the legal team including pensions, but not overhead, administration or management costs (or one-off costs, such as the installation of the Matter Management System). However, the Council is not directly involved in determining the level of legal staffing required; those involved in formulating the budget for the Conference Office receive notice of the amount thought to be required. This raises issues regarding transparency and accountability.

8.0 Conclusions and recommendations

8.1 The working party was not asked to prepare further replies to individual memorials to the Conference; however, it has sought to address the concerns they raised. The working party also decided not to structure its conclusions and recommendations according to its terms of reference, but has ensured that all the points raised have been considered.

Support needs of managing trustees

8.2 The working party believes that the RMO provided a good and helpful service and that its loss has been keenly felt since its closure. Arrangements that were intended to replicate the functions of the RMO following its closure were not fully implemented. The working party does not wish to re-establish the RMO in its previous form, but has identified the need for a ‘one-stop shop’ suited to the current requirements of the Church. What this might entail is spelt out further in the following paragraphs.
8.3 Managing trustees are in urgent need of support and training, because of a number of converging factors, including: churches in which a diminishing number of already over-burdened volunteers are required to take on roles for which they do not feel fully equipped; a lack of awareness of the nature of managing trusteeship; increasingly complex property issues and a lack of understanding of Methodist policy and practice among solicitors and surveyors. The closure of the RMO without a like-for-like replacement has exacerbated these needs.

8.4 The working party wishes strongly to affirm TMCP for ‘stepping into the breach’ following the closure of the RMO and the willingness of TMCP staff to offer help and support to managing trustees. This has resulted in some very helpful developments, such as the TMCP website. However, at times, it has inevitably had the potential for confusion and the duplication of work.

8.5 The working party wishes to commend the care and dedication of DPSs across the Connexion. Staff within the Conference Office and other members of the Connexional Team in London and Manchester have also done all they can to support managing trustees. However, in both cases, resources have been severely limited, and managing trustees are therefore not receiving all the support they need.

8.6 The working party believes that there is a recognition that a greater level of staffing is required within the Connexional Team (and particularly in the Conference Office) to reflect more fully the scope of its responsibilities in relation to the property functions of the Church. The following recommendations are offered to assist current thinking regarding the configuration of the Connexional Team. They do not remove the need for managing trustees to obtain proper professional advice on technical property matters where appropriate (in the same way as they are expected to do for legal matters).

8.7 Recommendation 1: Within any revised Team structure, there should be one clear point of contact for initial enquiries regarding property support; this would include enquiries as to legal aspects. This should be clearly signposted on the Methodist Church website. This postholder should have responsibility for directing queries to the appropriate place (whether TMCP or the Connexional Team) and for keeping track of conversations and developments.

8.8 Recommendation 2: Within any revised Team structure, there should be at least one postholder with the necessary experience and expertise to hold initial and open-ended conversations with managing trustees regarding their options. This postholder could also produce a series of publications giving examples of innovative solutions and good practice to inspire managing trustees. This work would need to be undertaken, where appropriate, in conjunction with the PDC.
8.9 Recommendation 3: The initial point of contact within the Connexional Team should also be able to direct managing trustees to sources of technical property and legal support, which may include a combination of

- members of connexionally-employed staff;
- connexionally-funded consultants;
- where professional services are required, panels of connexionally approved solicitors and surveyors with the necessary expertise (see below).

8.10 Recommendation 4: Within the connexional central services budget, funds should therefore be made available to provide increased support for technical property and legal functions, particularly within the Conference Office.

8.11 Recommendation 5: In addition to the developing panel of solicitors, work should be undertaken to seek to establish a similar panel of surveyors with knowledge of Methodist practice. (This would certainly assist with the problem mentioned above in relation to Qualified Surveyors’ Reports, and has the potential to be of much wider benefit in providing the technical support where this could not appropriately be provided via the Connexional Team. There may be some useful cooperation to be developed here with Methodist-related bodies already involved in using such professionals, such as the Methodist Ministers’ Housing Society.)

8.12 Recommendation 6: Greater provision of information should be made more clearly available for managing trustees through the Methodist Church’s website. Some material might appropriately be moved, by agreement, from TMCP’s website to the Methodist Church’s website (for the avoidance of confusion), with clear links in appropriate areas to the TMCP website. Besides this general information, all Methodist property policy should in due course be gathered together in a single, coherent handbook (which can be readily searched) clearly indicating what is guidance or good practice and what is policy that must be adhered to.

8.13 Recommendation 7: Up-to-date training for managing trustees should be developed within the Connexional Team. Some resources and initiatives have already been developed by Local Churches, Circuits and Districts; there is a need to avoid duplication and ensure consistency.

8.14 The working party notes the PDC has already suggested that the role of the DPS should be clarified and that the Conference could adopt certain minimum standards for skills and capacity, as has been done for District Safeguarding Officers (see MC/17/88). In this, careful consideration would need to be given to the difficulty currently experienced in recruiting suitable volunteers. Recommendation 8: Further thought should be given as a matter of urgency by the Methodist Council to the support and funding available for DPSs.
Recommendations concerning TMCP

Underlying legal structure

8.15 The working party is not proposing that the Church seek to amend the relevant Methodist Church Acts. It wishes to affirm the concept of custodian trusteeship within the life of the Church embodied in the 1976 Act, as the rationale behind its adoption as the norm for model trust property remains compelling.

8.16 The working party acknowledges that under the 1939 Act, TMCP is an autonomous body whose Board members, once appointed, hold office for life (subject to certain conditions). The working party has no doubt, however, that its mission “to support and strengthen the Methodist Church” lies at the heart of what it does, and is evidenced by its annual reports to the Conference. The working party is also assured that the present, very readily embraced, policy of voluntary phased retirements from the Board mitigates effectively the theoretical life tenure of Board members.

Funding model

8.17 The working party believes that the aspect of TMCP’s current funding model which is based on a levy of funds (rather than a charge per transaction) is a positive expression of connexionalism and should be affirmed. Alternative models have been considered; however, the working party believes that under the current system, bodies with fewer financial resources are supported by those with more, in keeping with the mutual interdependence of a connexional Church.

8.18 However, the working party believes that the aspect of funding via the Methodist Council’s financial contribution to TMCP’s costs and the way in which this is calculated should be far more transparent. Recommendation 9: The Methodist Council’s financial contribution should be based on the work required by the service level agreement (introduced below) and revisited on a regular basis. If TMCP feels that it requires more (or less) legal staffing in order to complete the work required, negotiations must be held between the Council and the TMCP Board. The working party recognises that this might lead to a risk that TMCP might feel the need to increase the management charge to replace any reduction in the contribution, with an impact on local managing trustees; however, this would no doubt be taken into account during the negotiation process.

Service level agreement

8.19 There is a lack of clarity with regard to the division of responsibilities between the Connexional Team and TMCP, leading to some confusion and delay for managing
trustees. Among the possible ways forward, the working party considered the complete withdrawal of the delegation of responsibilities under SO 931(3) from TMCP, so that all legal and property support would be held within the Connexional Team, with TMCP fulfilling only the responsibilities of the custodian trustee. However, the working party felt that this would be unwise, due to the level of upheaval this would cause (and resulting loss of expertise); current developments within TMCP (such as the Matter Management System) that should improve operational practice; the potential difficulty of recruiting suitable staff within the necessary budget in London (if a single team was to be based at Methodist Church House); and duplication of work (as TMCP would still need to check upon the matters on which the custodian trustee requires to be satisfied). Instead, the working party recommends increased clarity as to the breadth of this delegation (see Recommendations 13 and 14) and accountability through a service level agreement (SLA). It believes that this is both urgent and significant.

8.20 Recommendation 10: Urgent work should be undertaken to establish, within the first six months of the forthcoming connexional year, a service level agreement and (if appropriate) an accompanying operational level agreement between the Methodist Council and TMCP increasing accountability and clarifying the boundaries of TMCP’s work. This should include Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and a process for regular review. If the terms of the agreements are not met by TMCP, the Council may choose to withdraw the delegation of all responsibilities under SO 931(3).

Working practices

8.21 The working party believe that it would be of benefit to all for TMCP legal staff to adopt a slightly lighter touch in reviewing transactions and documentation, having an eye when requiring amendments or raising requisitions to the degree to which costs will be increased or delays lengthened and the balance against benefit achieved or risk avoided. It is hoped that the introduction of the panel of solicitors will go a long way to achieving this, if it enables TMCP to take more of a back seat in transactions, reducing duplication of work. However, the working party anticipates that it may take a while to get to that point, as individual panel solicitors learn TMCP’s approach and TMCP come to trust their judgement over a period of time.

8.22 Recommendation 11: The service level agreement should clarify the ‘light-touch’ approach required: under SO 930(3), as custodian trustee, TMCP is required to check whether entering into the transaction would involve an actual breach of trust and whether an appropriate indemnity clause is included. Under SO 931(3), on behalf of the Connexional Team, TMCP should be required to check the legal soundness of contracts, but conversations regarding detailed choices and the ‘missional sense’ of the transaction should be held elsewhere. The service level agreement should ensure
that the level of scrutiny involved is not disproportionate to the cost and risk involved.

8.23 The working party believes that some modification of TMCP’s practical arrangements would be of benefit. In particular, individual email addresses and direct line telephone numbers are standard in private legal practice, and would aid communication. In some respects, the working party believes that improvements could be made to TMCP’s processes, which it felt are overly dependent on particular individuals, generate too much paper and can be inefficient. The Matter Management System should go some way to addressing this.

8.24 Recommendation 12: The working party recommends that TMCP be requested to address these specific points relating to working practices as soon as possible.

The scope of SO 931(3)

8.25 The working party believes that a number of the problems giving rise to this report stem from the scope of SO 931(3) and a lack of clarity in current arrangements, and that steps need to be taken to address these problems. Currently, its scope is very wide (“All contracts relating to property, conveyances, leasehold agreements, sharing agreements, deeds and declarations of every kind...”) and does not necessarily ensure that the right documents receive the right level of scrutiny. Some documents are preparatory to a transaction to which TMCP will need to be a party as custodian trustee; others are not.

8.26 Recommendation 13: It is proposed that the requirement as to which documents need detailed connexional scrutiny should be reviewed by the Methodist Council in conjunction with the Law and Polity Committee with a view to producing a full list of such documents. It is recommended that an amendment to the wording of SO 931(3) then be brought to the Conference of 2019, preferably in a form that refers to items which appear on a list approved from time to time by the Council and made clearly available on the Methodist Church’s website, rather than spelling out the list explicitly in the Standing Order, so as to enable it to be amended more easily when necessary.

8.27 Consideration will be needed as to the most appropriate way for this connexional scrutiny to be given. However, where the relevant documentation forms or may form part of a transaction to which TMCP would be a party as custodian trustee, it seems sensible for the exercise of scrutiny under SO 931(3) to continue to be delegated to TMCP for the reasons outlined in 8.19.

8.28 The working party gave consideration to whether the practice under the current form of SO 931(3) whereby TMCP has sight of licences to occupy land should continue. Strictly, as TMCP is not a party to a licence (as it does not create a legal interest
in land), if the proposed delegation was limited to where TMCP will be involved as custodian trustee, this scrutiny would not continue. However, because of the risk of managing trustees inadvertently creating legally-binding leases, it is suggested that licences should still continue to be seen by TMCP.

8.29 Recommendation 14: Delegation of the exercise of SO 931(3) to TMCP should apply only to those contracts that TMCP is required to see as custodian trustee, together with licences as referred to in 8.28. Approval of other contracts from within the list described in Recommendation 13 should be undertaken by the Connexional Team (with the option to delegate approval of individual contracts to TMCP if desired). This arrangement should be made clear in the service level agreement.

Appendix I – Memorials M26 – M29 (2016)

M26 TMCP

The Nottingham and Derby District Synod, Representative Session (Present: 127; Voting: unanimous) is aware that following memorial M22 (2015) conversations have been taking place between TMCP and the Connexional Team, which it trusts will lead to a positive outcome. Nevertheless, the Synod wishes to record the continuing difficulties reported by most of its Circuits in matters involving TMCP. The concerns are as follows:

1. Delays: The Synod is aware that TMCP’s personnel have high workloads and cannot always respond swiftly. Nevertheless, slow response times are a concern because they can lead to the loss of transactions, or to churches or Circuits failing to respond in a timely fashion to legal claims. The Synod believes that TMCP needs either:

   (a) more staff; or

   (b) to reduce its workload by having less active involvement in matters on which the church or Circuit’s own solicitors are acting.

2. Amendments: TMCP frequently say that they cannot give advice, only guidance, and therefore that churches and Circuits need to instruct their own solicitors. However, it is the experience of churches, Circuits and their solicitors that the guidance often takes the form of making a great many amendments to documents drafted by the solicitors. This is so even when the solicitors have many years of experience of working with TMCP. Clearly, if the documentation does not comply with Methodist polity or charity law, then it does need to be corrected. However, churches, Circuits and their solicitors report that some of the amendments are minor, or cosmetic, or make no substantive change, or contradict amendments made by other TMCP staff. The approach contributes to delays, and the duplication of work adds to the expense. The Synod believes that TMCP needs either:
(a) to be constituted so as to undertake the legal work themselves; or

(b) to supply their required clauses at the outset and then have less active involvement in the details of the transaction.

3. Accountability: The Synod notes that, when acting as the custodian trustee, the Board and staff of TMCP have no direct accountability to the Conference. The Synod believes that this is unhelpful. In other cases where Methodist-related organisations have no accountability to the Conference (such as Methodist Insurance plc), churches and Circuits can choose to take their business elsewhere if dissatisfied. This is not true of TMCP. The Synod does however note that, in most of the instances that cause difficulties, TMCP is not acting purely as custodian trustee but is fulfilling the role of the Connexional Team under Standing Order 931(3), which provides that: “All contracts relating to property, conveyances, leasehold agreements, sharing agreements, deeds and declarations of every kind shall be forwarded in draft to the Connexional Team for inspection and approval before being signed.” The Synod therefore asks that both:

(a) the Law and Polity Committee look at whether the Board of TMCP can be made accountable to the Conference; and

(b) the Connexional Team make workable arrangements, through TMCP or otherwise, for the inspection and approval of documentation under SO 931(3).

Reply

The Conference thanks the Nottingham and Derby District Synod for its memorial which raises important points about the level of support and advice available to Managing Trustees. The memorial further touches on a more fundamental question of the use of the resources of the whole Connexion in respect of the use of property for mission as well as focusing the attention of the Conference on the role and function of the custodian trustee.

Some of the points raised in the memorial have been the subject of conversations which were initiated as a result of memorial M22 to the 2015 Conference which directed the Methodist Council to enter into discussions with the Board and Chief Executive of TMCP in order to find ways to continue to improve the service provided to the Connexion. (The Chair of the Board and the Chief Executive have been part of these conversations with the Secretary of the Conference and the Conference Officer for Legal and Constitutional Practice.) Careful monitoring of case work undertaken by direction of the Board shows that overall response times by TMCP staff have improved and this is due in no small part to the commitment of TMCP staff for which the Conference wishes to express its gratitude. Other generic issues of how the whole Connexion can better realise the missional opportunities offered by a large and diverse range of properties have been considered by the Methodist Council when it
established a new Property Development Committee.

As this work has progressed it has become clear that some of the changes brought about by the Team Focus process have resulted in a much more limited provision of property advice from the Connexional Team to Managing Trustees. This has resulted in a lack of clarity for Managing Trustees when they are seeking advice on a range of property-related matters. Early, clear and coherent advice on planning, legal and technical matters is essential if Trustees are to be supported. Whilst there is an effective and dedicated group of District Property Secretaries willing to share experiences, this is reliant on volunteer posts and does not enable the provision of a strategic approach to the significant missional assets of the whole Connexion. The absence of a comprehensive property support function has resulted in a lack of clarity on which body is responsible for the formation of policy. This, when coupled with the functions undertaken by TMCP on behalf of the Connexional Team in order to fulfil the provisions of SO 931(3) can all too easily and all too often result in staff of TMCP needing to seek a ruling on policy from officers of the Conference and the Council. In some cases, and in seeking to support particular schemes, staff in both the Team and TMCP find themselves being called upon to offer advice on areas of work that would benefit from clearer policy decisions. Such a combination of tasks contributes to confusion for Managing Trustees and a lack of clarity for both staff at TMCP and within the Connexional Team.

The Conference reminds the Synod that the TMCP Board is accountable to the Conference via the annual report which the Board submits to the Conference. Furthermore, it is the Conference which appoints members of the Board, each of whom is required to be either a member of the Methodist Church or a minister in Full Connexion with the Conference.

In recognition of the need to be faithful in the use of the resources of the whole Connexion, the Conference accepts the need to review the role of TMCP, directing the Methodist Council and inviting the Board of TMCP to consider the points raised in the memorial by appointing a joint working party to:

(a) Clarify the extent of the application of SO 931(3) and the role and responsibility of the custodian trustee under the Methodist Church Act 1939 and charity law.

(b) Clarify the need for SO 931(3) in its current form and where appropriate suggest amendments.

(c) Assess what steps are necessary to ensure that the Connexional Team has available to it an appropriate level of resource so as to fulfil the terms of SO 931(3).

(d) Clarify the requirements placed upon Managing Trustees in respect of disposals and contracts and identify ways to speed up transactions, taking into account the views of the Law and Polity Committee on the role of the custodian.
(e) Clarify and define respective areas of responsibility so as to resource the mission and ministry of the whole Connexion most effectively.

(f) Establish a full review of the needs of Managing Trustees in terms of property and legal advice and consider the benefit of professional legal services being provided by the Connexional Team.

The Conference further directs the Methodist Council to bring a report on the progress of this work to the 2017 Conference and delegates to the Council responsibility for appointing two members of the working party. The Conference invites the Board of TMCP to appoint two members of the working party.

The Conference appoints Mrs Susan R Howdle to chair the proposed working group.

Reasoned Statement Susan Howdle is a past Vice-President of the Conference, and a former member of the TMCP board.

M27 TMCP

The Ceredigion (2/10) Circuit Meeting (Present: 16; Voting: unanimous) notes the length of time that is taken for responses to queries and enquiries made to the Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes (TMCP) regarding property.

The Circuit therefore – acknowledging the independence of TMCP – requests that the Conference uses its influence and resources to encourage TMCP to make its processes and response times quicker, so as to allow Local Churches and Circuits to more fully be discipleship movements shaped for mission.

Reply

The Conference thanks the Ceredigion Circuit Meeting for its memorial.

The Conference is aware that in recent years the Board of TMCP has overseen a number of reviews to ensure that its processes and response times provide the highest and most timely level of support to Managing Trustees. There are occasions when staff are required to deal with a high volume of work on time scales beyond their control.

The point raised in the memorial has been the subject of conversations which were initiated as a result of Memorial M22 of the 2015 Conference which directed the Methodist Council to enter into discussions with the Board and Chief Executive of TMCP in order to find ways to continue to improve the service provided to the Connexion.
Whilst this work is ongoing, the Conference is of the opinion that a more fundamental review of the way that Managing Trustees are supported in respect of the care and development of property is now required. As such, the Conference accepts the memorial and directs the Methodist Council to consider it as part of the work directed in the response to M26.

M28 TMCP

The Nottingham (Trent Valley) (22/4) Circuit Meeting (Present: 42; Voting: unanimous) is concerned to hear from its officers of continued delays in property matters caused by apparent excessive delays in communication within TMCP and between TMCP and the Circuit. However, it understands from the reply to Memorial M22 (2015), that “The Conference has no power to direct either the Board or staff of the Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes (TMCP) either in terms of budget provision or operational matters.” It therefore sees little point in drawing to the attention of the Conference the fact that Circuits continue to be hampered in their mission by the failure of the Board of TMCP to address such systemic problems which, from conversations across the Connexion, it believes to be far from isolated incidents.

The Circuit Meeting further understands that the members of the Trust board are appointed for life by the Trust itself, reflecting the model of trusteeship for Local Churches which was rejected as unfit for purpose around 40 years ago, and that the Trust Deed of TMCP dates from 1939.

It therefore requests the Conference to direct the Law and Polity Committee to make a preliminary assessment of the feasibility of a radical reformation of the relationship between the Conference and the custodian trustees of Model Trust property so that those Trustees are accountable to the Conference for the performance of their duties.

Reply

The Conference adopts the same reply as to M27.

M29 TMCP

The Southend and Leigh (34/10) Circuit Meeting (Present: 43; Voting: 39 for, 0 against) wishes to raise the problem of the delays in dealing with TMCP, and require and request additional resources for TMCP and to bring control of TMCP into the Connexional Team.

Further, we would request that TMCP look at its working practices, to speed up dealing with cases, maybe by having individual email addresses and contact numbers for case workers, and embedding their replies into emails rather than emailing a written letter. A phone conference with a case worker could prevent the elongated toing and froing of emailed
letters, with long delays between the replies, and speed the whole process up.

Reply

The Conference adopts the same reply as to M27.
1. Introduction
The Methodist Ministers’ Housing Society’s story continues to be one of extraordinary big-heartedness and far-reaching vision. 1948 was special. This was when the Society was formed and it follows that this year, we are celebrating our 70th anniversary. We have a number of exciting things planned – a special edition of our newsletter Roof’n’Roots and the commissioning of a clock to name but two.

Since our early days, we have helped thousands of retired Methodist ministers and their families by providing them with houses in their retirement. We are blessed with significant capital assets and we wish to continue using them well.

2. Our situation today
We know that Christian ministry is changing, so too life in 21st-century Britain, and we recognise the need for significant change ourselves in response to the many consequential challenges we face. The Society is expanding its services. A new strategic plan for 2017-2022, put together after much prayer, discussion and research, was launched in September 2017. We are continuing to provide quality homes at a rent that balances affordability for ministers with the financial stability of the Society. We are also offering financial options to ministers who own their own homes or who have the ability to buy their own home in readiness for retirement. We have set up a small scheme whereby we can take an equity share in a minister’s house. Additionally, we are expanding the well-being support presently given to ministers, with a particular focus on helping them remain mobile and independent for as long as possible. Our new strategic plan gives us the scope to consider other options in pursuit of our vision and in fulfilment of our mission.

3. Housing provision from September 2016 to August 2017
In addition to caring for those already housed by the Society, 16 new ministerial residents were accepted from those who were granted permission to become supernumerary by the Conference. Thirteen of them were ‘housed’ during the year to 31 August 2017 with the remainder ‘housed’ in the months following. Of those 16, one retired for medical reasons. The Society also housed 2 further applicants who had become supernumeraries in earlier years and it permitted the transfer of 14 applicants from amongst its existing ministerial residents, to housing more suitable to their needs.

The Society continues to promote the use of its own portfolio of properties, for reasons of good stewardship, but it will purchase properties for those who have
medical or other valid reasons for requiring a property of a certain type in a particular area.

As at 31 August 2017, the Society had 932 properties; 777 occupied by presbyters and deacons and their spouses, or widows/widowers, 118 let to market tenants and 37 empty, mainly pending refurbishment or decisions on sales or letting. It is important to report that all of the properties let on the open market remain available at all times to ministers. The revenue generated from our market rental portfolio forms an important income stream.

4. **Rent and finances for 2016-17**
   The Society was able to hold the annual increase in rent for ministerial residents to the modest level of 1.3% and accordingly the Society’s rent was £3,048. This increase matched the percentage increase in the Retail Price Increase (RPI) in January 2016 compared with the previous year. The annual rent is significantly lower than average market rents in the UK.

   In the year to 31 August 2017, rental income from ministerial residents amounted to £2.392million. A further £0.983million of income was generated from market-rate tenants and interest on deposits. When all other income related to legacies, bequests, donations and profits on the sale of properties was accounted for, the Society achieved a surplus in the year to 31 August 2017. Surpluses in any given year are put to good use in subsequent years and form an important enabling part of strategic planning. The Society’s total funds were £82.929million; Board members and staff are conscious of their stewardship responsibilities in relation to all the Society’s assets. The Society’s financial statements for 2016-17 are available for examination on our website.

5. **Decent Homes Programme**
   The Society remains committed to the Decent Homes Programme. In the year to August 2017, £189K was spent on kitchen replacements, £387K on bathroom refurbishments, £195K on boiler replacements, £134K on new windows/doors replacements, £140K on driveway improvements and £66K on rewiring.

   The programme continues in 2017-18 with a budget of £1.032 million allocated to it.

6. **Repairs and maintenance**
   Minor repairs are undertaken by local contractors in close consultation with ministerial residents and in accordance with the Society’s policies. In 2013, the Society entered into a three-year contract with British Gas for the repair and maintenance of gas and electrical installations for all its properties in England, Scotland and Wales. This contract with British Gas ended on 31 August 2016 but a
five-year extension was negotiated under a Memorandum of Understanding. Annual contracts are signed and there is the ability to break the arrangement at the end of any given year. The operational performance of our contractors is being monitored under KPIs agreed by the Board.

7. Board membership
At present, the Board has nine members who offer their experience and knowledge in pursuing good governance outcomes for the Society. The Society experienced the death of its Chair, Debbie Faulkner, in September 2017 and then the death of Board member, the Revd Alan Ashton, in December 2017. Each death had a profound effect on many people connected to the Society. We thank God for their lives and, in particular, for their contributions to the well-being of the Society.

8. Staff
The staff team, 13 strong at present, is well equipped to serve the best interests of the Society’s beneficiaries. The Senior Management Team is committed to providing excellent leadership and management at every level. Day-to-day work is aligned to the core values of the Society, which are stated simply as follows:

“We have a Christian distinctiveness of which we are proud and it underpins who we are and what we do. Our concern is to show high standards of care in all we do and to be professional both as individuals and as an organisation.”

9. Conclusion
The Society has Acts 4:34 as its vision statement: ‘...there was not a single person in need among them’. We are striving to reach that ideal. It is our privilege as a Society to be able to fulfil our mission of meeting the housing and housing-related needs of retired ministers of limited means, and their spouses, and their widows or widowers, and to offer support with their wellbeing. We can do this because of the amazing generosity of members of the Methodist community who have supported the Society from its early days to this day. In this our 70th anniversary year, we are again reminded of the wonderful provision and care of God, acting through his faithful people.

***RESOLUTION

22/1. The Conference receives the Report.
## 23. Methodist Ministers’ Pension Scheme (MMPS)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contact name and details</th>
<th>Meena Tooray – Pensions Manager <a href="mailto:tooraym@methodistchurch.org.uk">tooraym@methodistchurch.org.uk</a></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Resolutions</td>
<td>23/1. The Conference receives the Report.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>23/2. The Conference approves the Schedule of Contributions and directs that this be signed on its behalf by the chair of the Strategy and Resources Committee.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>23/3. The Conference notes the increases to pensions in payment from 1 September 2018.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>23/4. The Conference re-appoints Mr Ronald Calver and Mr John Wyatt from 1 September 2018 for a further three-year term.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>23/5. The Conference notes the retirement of Mr Colin Pearson and appoints Mr Andrew Gibbs as a Director of Methodist Ministers’ Pension Trust Limited from 1 September 2018.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>23/6. The Conference notes the retirement of the Revd Andrew Walker and appoints the Revd John Illsley as a Member Nominated Director of Methodist Ministers’ Pension Trust Limited from 1 September 2018.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>23/7. The Conference notes the retirement of the Revd Michael Fielding and appoints Mrs Ruth Edmundson as a Member Nominated Director of Methodist Ministers’ Pension Trust Limited to replace him from 1 September 2018.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Summary of content and impact

| Subject and aims | ● To update the Conference on several developments regarding the Methodist Ministers’ Pension Scheme. |
Main points

- The triennial valuation has been concluded and the Trustee has discussed and agreed the basis for the assumptions with the Finance Sub-Committee (FSC) of the Strategy and Resources Committee (SRC).
- The MMPS is showing a surplus in the Scheme at this valuation which means that the Pension Reserve Fund (PRF) contributions and the shortfall contributions from the Circuits could cease. There has been an increase in the cost of providing future service benefits but, because the shortfall contributions are no longer required, circuit contributions could reduce from 26.9% to 22.2% of standard stipend from 1 September 2018. However, the Methodist Council recommends that the contribution rates remain unchanged.
- Appointment and Re-appointment of the Trustee Directors of MMPS.
- Pension increases to be implemented for MMPS benefits from 1 September 2018.

Consultations

The Methodist Council

Impact

The surplus will be retained in the Scheme as a buffer against future adverse experience.

MMPS Actuarial Valuation

Introduction

1. The valuation results for MMPS have been based on the actuarial basis which has been agreed between the Trustee and the Finance Sub-Committee (FSC) of the Strategy and Resources Committee (SRC).

2. It has been agreed that the Methodist Council, on behalf of the Conference, makes the decisions required on scheme funding issues.

3. The actuarial valuation is essentially a planning exercise. The output is a level of contributions that is considered likely to be sufficient to meet the future liabilities of the Scheme and, where a shortfall exists, the contributions that are required to meet the funding target.

4. The technical provisions of the Scheme (the past service liabilities) are derived by projecting forward benefit cash flows, for up to 60 years or so, and discounting these to
the valuation date with an allowance for anticipated investment returns that is believed to be prudent. This is different from an economic valuation or the price that would need to be paid to secure the liabilities with a third party, both of which would result in higher values.

5. The results of the valuation have revealed an improvement in the funding position from a shortfall of £40.0m in 2014 to a surplus of £19.6m in 2017. This means that shortfall contributions of:

- £1m pa from the Pension Reserve Fund; and
- 9.8% of stipends from Circuits

agreed after the 2014 valuation are no longer required. However, there was an increase in the total (Circuits plus members) required future service contribution rate from 26.4% of standard stipend in 2014 to 31.5% of standard stipend on the agreed basis for 2017. The increase in the future service contribution rate is mainly due to the fall in bond yields.

6. The required Church future service contribution rate would increase from 17.1% to 22.2% of the standard stipend if the member contribution rate was maintained at the current rate of 9.3% of the standard stipend. However, as the 9.8% of stipend shortfall contributions are no longer required, the required Church contribution rate of 22.2% represents a reduction of 4.7% compared to the 26.9% currently being paid.

7. However, the Council has no desire to make any changes to the contribution rates currently being paid by either the Church or members as this would run the risk of reducing contribution rates now only to increase them again in the future. Therefore, the Methodist Council recommends to the Conference that the Church contribution continues at the rate of 26.9% of standard stipend.

The employer covenant

8. As part of the consideration of the preliminary valuation results, the Trustee must have regard to the strength of the covenant of the Methodist Church. Whilst there is not a conventional employment relationship for Methodist ministers, for Scheme funding purposes there must ultimately be an “employer” who stands behind the Scheme and makes the required contributions. For the purpose of scheme funding, the Conference is the employer of the Scheme.

9. The strength of the covenant of the Methodist Church helps determine how prudent the actuarial assumptions need to be.
10. The covenant of the Methodist Church has currently been assessed by the Trustee as strong. However, the Trustee is also conscious of the declining membership of the Church and will keep under review the impact this may have on the future of the Church and hence the Church’s covenant to the Scheme.

Prudent assumptions

11. Funding assumptions need to be made about the likely course of events.

12. The regulations require that the assumptions overall are chosen prudently. By prudent, the regulations require assumptions which, if the Scheme continues on an ongoing basis, are more likely to overstate than understate the amount of money actually required to meet the cost of the benefits.

13. In particular, the Pensions Regulator expects prudent assumptions to be used for the discount rate assumptions and mortality assumptions to be based on prudent principles.

Assumptions

14. The valuation results have been produced using a set of actuarial assumptions, which the Trustee Board has agreed with the FSC. These are summarised below and are provided in more detail in the Statement of Funding Principles agreed by the Trustee and approved by the Methodist Council, which is attached to this paper:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assumption</th>
<th>Agreed basis for 2017 valuation</th>
<th>Changes from 2014 valuation basis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Non-pensioner discount rate</td>
<td>Bank of England gilt curve plus 2.0% pa for 3 years linearly reducing over the following 17 years to 1.0% pa in 20 years' time</td>
<td>Updated to reflect current market conditions and current investment strategy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pensioner discount rate</td>
<td>Bank of England gilt curve plus 1.0% pa throughout</td>
<td>Updated to reflect current market conditions and current investment strategy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CPI inflation</td>
<td>0.75% below the Bank of England RPI inflation curve</td>
<td>Updated to reflect current market conditions and expectations for the future</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
23. Methodist Ministers’ Pension Scheme (MMPS)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stipend increases</th>
<th>CPI + 0.5%</th>
<th>Updated to reflect current market conditions and recent experience</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pension increases</td>
<td>As guaranteed in the Rules, based on CPI increases</td>
<td>Updated to reflect current market conditions and change to CPI pension increases</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commutation</td>
<td>An allowance for members to commute 15% of their pensions for a lump sum</td>
<td>No change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mortality</td>
<td>Most up to date tables and improvement factors</td>
<td>Updated to use the most up to date tables and to reflect Scheme experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expenses</td>
<td>2.7% pa</td>
<td>An increase from 2.3% pa to reflect Scheme experience</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Assets

15. The assets of the Scheme had a market value of £469.3m as at 31 August 2017. On the valuation basis the Scheme was 104.4% funded as at 1 September 2017.

Results

16. The table below sets out the results of the actuarial valuation together with the 2014 results for comparison purposes:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2017</th>
<th>2014</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Technical provisions (liabilities)</td>
<td>£449.7m</td>
<td>£424.0m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Market value of assets</td>
<td>£469.3m</td>
<td>£384.0m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Past service surplus/(shortfall)</td>
<td>£19.6m</td>
<td>(£40.0m)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funding ratio</td>
<td>104.4%</td>
<td>90.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total future service contribution rate (% standard stipend)</td>
<td>31.5%</td>
<td>26.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Change in funding position

17. The valuation carried out as at 1 September 2014 revealed a shortfall of £40.0m. The position has improved, as there is now a surplus of £19.6m. The graph below shows
the main factors contributing to the change in funding position over the three years to 1 September 2017:

18. Although the change in yields significantly increased the value placed on the liabilities under the Scheme, this was offset by a combination of the better than expected investment return, the change from RPI to CPI linked pension increases, the change in assumptions and the lower than expected stipend and pension increases over the intervalution period.
23. Methodist Ministers’ Pension Scheme (MMPS)

Membership

19. The membership profile as at 31 August 2017 is shown in the table below together with the figures as at 31 August 2014 for comparison purposes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>31 August 2017</th>
<th>31 August 2014</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Active</td>
<td>1,370</td>
<td>1,518</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deferred</td>
<td>301</td>
<td>306</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pensioners</td>
<td>2,654</td>
<td>2,646</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>4,325</td>
<td>4,470</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Recovery plan

20. The valuation results have revealed a surplus of £19.6m and therefore a recovery plan is not required. The Trustee and the FSC agreed to retain this surplus in the Scheme as a buffer against future adverse experience.

Contributions

21. The Methodist Council recommends that:

- The Church contribution continues at 26.9% of standard stipends to cover the cost of future service benefits and include a margin against future adverse experience.
- The member contribution rate remains unchanged at 9.3% of standard stipend.

22. The Methodist Council recommends that the Conference agree the Schedule of Contributions which is attached, and authorises these to be signed on its behalf.

Solvency position

23. The Scheme Actuary also reviewed the position if the Scheme had been discontinued on the valuation date with all members treated as having left service and the Scheme assets used to buy immediate and deferred annuities from an insurance company.

24. The solvency estimate provides an indication of the extent to which the Trustee is reliant on the Church to stand behind the Scheme.

25. The solvency position as at 1 September 2017 is set out below, together with the position at 1 September 2014:
26. Following consultation with members, the 2016 Conference recommended that, with effect from 1 September 2018, the Scheme’s pension increases are linked to the rise in the Consumer Price Index (CPI). The Trustee agreed this change and the Rules of the Scheme provide for an annual increase in pensions in payment on 1 September each year in line with the annual rise in the inflation index as published in the preceding January. The increase is subject to a maximum of 5% on pensions earned in respect of pensionable service before 1 September 2006 and a maximum of 2.5% on pensions earned for pensionable service completed after 31 August 2006.

27. The increase in the CPI in the year to January 2018 is 3.0%.

28. The pre 1 September 2006 pensions will therefore increase by 3.0% and the post 1 September 2006 pensions by 2.5%. This will be applied from 1 September 2018 to pensions in payment which commenced on or before 31 August 2017 and to ill health pensions which commenced on or before 1 September 2017.

Composition of Methodist Ministers’ Pension Trust Limited (MMPTL), the Trustee of the Methodist Ministers Pension Scheme

29. Mr Ronald Calver and Mr John Wyatt are retiring Directors and are recommended for re-appointment by the Methodist Council.

30. Mr Colin Pearson is retiring as a Director of MMPTL. The Methodist Council recommends to the Conference that Mr Andrew Gibbs be appointed as a Director of the Methodist Ministers Pension Trust Limited as his replacement. Mr Gibbs will be appointed to the Board from 1 September 2018.

31. The Conference is asked to note the Member Nominated Director retirements of the Revd Michael Fielding and the Revd Andrew Walker on 31 August 2018.

32. The Revd John Illsley has been elected as a Director of MMPTL by the active members of the Scheme in place of the Revd Andrew Walker. The Revd John Illsley will be appointed to the Board for a three-year term from 1 September 2018.

33. Mrs Ruth Edmundson has been elected as a Director of MMPTL by the retired members of the Scheme in place of the Revd Michael Fielding. Mrs Edmundson will be appointed
to the Board for a three-year term commencing 1 September 2018.

The Trustee Board would like to extend their thanks to:

- Mr Walker and Mr Fielding for their service to the Scheme; and
- Mr Pearson for serving 26 years as a director of MMPL. The financial environment has changed significantly during this time and the Board is very grateful for the benefit of his experience and good counsel throughout his period of service.

34. From 1 September 2018, the full list of directors of Methodist Ministers’ Pension Trust Limited will be:

Capital Cranfield Pension Trustees Limited (represented by Ms Ingrid Kirby), Mr Ronald Calver, Mr Graham Danbury, Mr Andrew Paul, Mr Andrew Gibbs, Mr John Wyatt, the Revd Dr Stuart Bell, the Revd Michael Giles, the Revd John Illsley and Mrs Ruth Edmundson.

***RESOLUTIONS

23/1. The Conference receives the Report.

23/2. The Conference approves the Schedule of Contributions and directs that this be signed on its behalf by the chair of the Strategy and Resources Committee.

23/3. The Conference notes the increases to pensions in payment from 1 September 2018.

23/4. The Conference re-appoints Mr Ronald Calver and Mr John Wyatt from 1 September 2018 for a further three-year term.

23/5. The Conference notes the retirement of Mr Colin Pearson and appoints Mr Andrew Gibbs as a Director of Methodist Ministers’ Pension Trust from 1 September 2018.

23/6. The Conference notes the retirement of the Revd Andrew Walker and appoints the Revd John Illsley as a Member Nominated Director of Methodist Ministers’ Pension Trust Limited from 1 September 2018.

23/7. The Conference notes the retirement of the Revd Michael Fielding and appoints Mrs Ruth Edmundson as a Member Nominated Director of Methodist Ministers’ Pension Trust Limited to replace him from 1 September 2018.
APPENDIX

METHODIST MINISTERS’ PENSION SCHEME

Statement of Funding Principles

1. Status

This statement was agreed by the Trustee on 8 March 2018 for the purposes of the actuarial valuation as at 1 September 2017 after obtaining the advice of Diana Simon, the actuary to the Scheme and after consulting with the Finance Sub Committee of the Strategy and Resources Committee (SRC) of the Methodist Church. This Statement of Funding Principles replaces the previous Statement (signed by the Trustee on 5 March 2015 and by the Methodist Council on 11 April 2015) to reflect changes agreed between the Trustee and the SRC.

2. The statutory funding objective

This statement sets out the Trustee’s policy for ensuring that the statutory funding objective is met. The statutory funding objective is defined in section 222 of the Pensions Act 2004, which states that every scheme must have sufficient and appropriate assets to cover its technical provisions.

3. Funding objectives in addition to the statutory funding objective

None

4. Calculation of the technical provisions

4.1 Technical provisions

The technical provisions are the amount that will be needed to pay the Scheme benefits, as set out in the Scheme’s Rules, that relate to service up to the valuation date, if the assumptions made are borne out in practice. The assumptions used to calculate the technical provisions are intended to provide a prudent estimate of the future experience of the Scheme, with a modest allowance for the future potential investment returns above the gilt yield from continued investment in more risky assets. There is an underlying assumption that the Scheme will continue as a going concern with benefits being met from the Scheme as they fall due.
4.2 Method

The actuarial method to be used in the calculation of the technical provisions is the Projected Unit Method.

4.3 Investment strategy

The choice of the discount rates needs to have regard to the investment strategy of the Scheme. The 1 September 2017 investment strategy for the Scheme, together with the strategy scheduled to apply from June 2018 is set out in the Scheme’s Statement of Investment Principles and is reproduced in Appendix 1.

4.4 Assumptions

The discount rate assumptions are determined in light of the strategic asset target weighting for each asset class, having regard to anticipated future changes in investment strategy.

Details of the actual economic assumptions to be used to calculate the technical provisions at the valuation date are set out in Appendix 2. The assumptions vary depending upon when the expected payment is made, ie they are “term dependent”. Details of the demographic assumptions at the valuation date are set out in Appendix 3.

The following principles are to be applied to determine the economic assumptions:

- **Discount rate:** The discount rate used to value the liabilities both in the period to retirement and after retirement is determined with reference to the fixed interest gilt curve at the valuation date with adjustment to allow for the expected outperformance over gilts allowing for the Scheme’s investment strategy. For the 1 September 2017 valuation, the outperformance allowance has been set as:

  - 2% pa for 3 years linearly reducing over the following 17 years to 1% pa in 20 years’ time for actives and deferred pensioners; and
  - 1% pa throughout for pensioners.

The outperformance premiums are determined as a prudent allowance for the outperformance of the assets relative to the return available on gilts. The premiums will be determined having regard to the Scheme’s investment strategy, the strength of the covenant of the Methodist Church and market conditions at the time of the valuation. The premiums will be reviewed at each valuation.
23. Methodist Ministers’ Pension Scheme (MMPS)

- **RPI inflation**: The Retail Prices Index (RPI) inflation assumption is determined with reference to the Bank of England inflation curve at the valuation date.

- **CPI inflation**: The Consumer Prices Index (CPI) Inflation assumption is derived from the RPI assumption by making an appropriate adjustment to reflect the differences between RPI and CPI. The difference between the long term assumption for RPI and CPI inflation may vary over time to reflect changing views of long term structural differences between the calculation of RPI and CPI inflation at the date subsequent calculations are carried out. The CPI assumption at 1 September 2017 is derived by deducting 0.75% pa from the RPI assumption.

- **Pension increases in payment – main Scheme pensions**: Pensions in payment are assumed to increase annually by the rate of CPI inflation capped at 5% pa for benefits accrued prior to 31 August 2006 and capped at 2.5% pa for benefits accrued on or after 1 September 2006. The increases are derived from the price inflation assumption, allowing for the maximum and minimum annual increases and for inflation to vary from year to year.

- **Pension increases in payment – AVC pensions**: Pensions in payment are assumed to increase annually by the rate of RPI inflation capped at 5% pa for benefits accrued prior to 31 August 2006 and capped at 2.5% pa for benefits accrued on or after 1 September 2006. The increases are derived from the price inflation assumption, allowing for the maximum and minimum annual increases and for inflation to vary from year to year.

- **Deferred pension increases**: Deferred pensions are assumed to increase at the rate of CPI inflation capped at 5% pa over the period of deferment for service prior to 6 April 2009 and with a 2.5% pa cap for service from 6 April 2009. The increases are derived from the price inflation assumption, allowing for the maximum and minimum annual increases and for inflation to vary from year to year.

- **Stipend increases**: Stipends are assumed to increase at the rate of CPI inflation plus a stipend increase adjustment. This adjustment is 0.5% pa at 1 September 2017 and will be reviewed at each valuation.

The demographic and procedural assumptions to be adopted are as follows:

- **Mortality**: Standard published tables of mortality that are considered appropriate for the Scheme as a whole. These tables allow for expected future improvements in longevity. Sample rates and the details of the tables are included in Appendix 3 to this statement. The mortality assumptions will be reviewed at each valuation.
23. Methodist Ministers’ Pension Scheme (MMPS)

- **New entrants:** The valuation method assumes that the membership of the Scheme remains stable. It assumes that people who leave the Scheme are replaced by new joiners, such that the age and sex profile of the membership remains broadly unchanged.

- **Leaving service:** The withdrawal assumption is determined with reference to Scheme experience. For the 1 September 2017 valuation, no allowance has been made for withdrawals from service prior to Normal Pension Dates.

- **Retirement:** Allowance is made for retirements before Normal Pension Dates and for members retiring in ill health by means of age related scales. Sample rates are included in Appendix 3. This assumption will be reviewed at each valuation.

- **Age difference of dependants:** Allowance is made for an age differential between the member and their spouse.

- **Percentage with spouse benefits at death:** An allowance is made for members with spouse benefits at death.

- **Commutation:** Allowance is made for members to commute part of their pensions at retirement for a lump sum. This allowance is 15% of main Scheme pensions at 1 September 2017. This allowance will be reviewed at each valuation.

- **Management expenses:** Allowance is made for the expected expenses of the Scheme. This allowance is summarised in Appendix 3 and will be reviewed at each valuation.

5. **Covenant of the Methodist Church**

The method and assumptions used to calculate the technical provisions at the 1 September 2017 valuation assume a continuation of the covenant of the Methodist Church as strong. If this changes significantly the Trustee would wish to review the method and assumptions.

6. **Church contributions**

The contributions payable by the Circuits are assessed by calculating the cost of future benefit accrual using the same assumptions as for the technical provisions, plus an estimate of the expenses (excluding investment-related expenses) including the Pension Protection Fund levy, reduced by the contributions made by members and adjusted having consideration to the Scheme’s funding position relative to the technical provisions.
There are no arrangements currently in place for persons other than the Church or members of the Scheme to contribute to the Scheme.

7. **Policy on discretionary increases and funding strategy**

Pensions may be increased from time to time once in payment by an amount over and above the guaranteed rate of increases set out in the Rules, having regard to the financial position of the Scheme, at the discretion of the Trustee after consultation with the actuary and with the consent of Conference.

Advance provision is not to be made for any discretionary increases for the purpose of calculating the technical provisions. If discretionary increases to benefits are to be made, and the cost cannot be met from a funding surplus, the Trustee’s current policy would be to request immediate additional contributions to meet the cost of such increases.

8. **Period within which and manner in which a failure to meet the statutory funding objective is to be rectified**

The Trustee and the Methodist Council have agreed that any funding shortfalls identified at an actuarial valuation should be eliminated by the payment of additional contributions over a recovery period. The level and period over which these additional contributions are to be paid will be agreed between the Trustee and the Conference. In determining the recovery period at any particular valuation the Trustee’s principles are to take into account the following factors:

- the Rules of the Scheme;
- the size of the funding shortfall;
- the business plans of the Methodist Church;
- the Trustee’s assessment of the financial covenant of the Methodist Church; and
- any contingent security offered by the Methodist Church.

The assumptions to be used in these calculations will be those set out above for calculating the technical provisions except that they may also take account of some of the expected investment out-performance of Scheme assets over the discount rates used to calculate the technical provisions, as agreed by the Trustee and the Methodist Council, depending upon the circumstances at the time.

9. **Surplus assets**

If a valuation reveals a funding surplus, the Trustee and the Methodist Council will consider:
retaining part or all of the surplus within the Scheme as a margin against future adverse experience

- adjusting Church and/or member contributions
- improving benefits
- amending the investment strategy to invest in assets with a lower expected return but less volatility.

10. Policy on reduction of cash equivalent transfer values (CETVs)

The Trustee will ask the actuary to advise them at each valuation of the extent to which assets are sufficient to provide CETVs for all non pensioners without adversely affecting the security of the benefits of other members and beneficiaries. Where coverage is less than 100% of benefits in excess of the first priority slice (broadly those benefits which would be provided were the Scheme to be admitted to the Pension Protection Fund), the Trustee may consider whether CETVs should be reduced as permitted under legislation, after obtaining actuarial advice as to the appropriate extent.

If at any other time, after obtaining advice from the actuary, the Trustee is of the opinion that the payment of CETVs at a previously agreed level may adversely affect the security of the benefits of other members and beneficiaries, the Trustee will commission a report from the actuary and will use the above criterion to decide whether, and to what extent, CETVs should be reduced.

11. Payments to the Methodist Church

Payments to the Methodist Church are not permitted under the rules of the Scheme unless the Scheme is being wound up and all of the benefits have been provided for.

12. Frequency of valuations and circumstances for extra valuations

This actuarial valuation under Part 3 of the Pensions Act 2004 is being carried out as at the effective date of 1 September 2017 and subsequent valuations will, in normal circumstances, be carried out every three years thereafter. An actuarial report on developments affecting the Scheme’s funding level will be obtained as at each intermediate anniversary of that date.

The Trustee may call for a full actuarial valuation instead of an actuarial report when, after considering the actuary’s advice, they are of the opinion that events have made it unsafe to continue to rely on the results of the previous valuation as the basis for future contributions. However, the Trustee will consult the Methodist Council before doing so.
13. Interaction with investment strategy

The assets that most closely match the Scheme’s liabilities are derivative instruments and index-linked and fixed-interest gilts of appropriate term compared to the liabilities. The Scheme is partly invested in assets such as equities that are expected, although not guaranteed, to produce a higher return than gilts over the long term. The Scheme has a significant mis-matched position of its assets and liabilities. The SRC has confirmed that it is comfortable with this position which is supported by the strong covenant of the Church. The Trustee understands that this mis-matched position could lead to a volatile funding position. The Trustee further understands that investing in equities is expected to reduce the contributions required from the Church in the long run.

An allowance for part of the extra return expected from equity investment has been taken into account in setting the Scheme’s technical provisions. If this extra return is not achieved, any resulting shortfall will ultimately need to be met by increased contributions from the Church. Both the Church and the Trustee appreciates that the contributions required can be volatile.

The Trustee regularly reviews the Scheme’s investment strategy taking into account the funding position and liability profile. The Trustee will consult fully with the Methodist Council before any changes are made to the investment strategy.

14. Risks

The Trustee and the Church recognise that there are a number of risks inherent in the funding plan and that additional funding may be required at future valuations if the experience of the Scheme is not in line with the assumptions made. In addition to the investment risk detailed above, there is also longevity risk. Future improvements in life expectancy may be greater than anticipated. In setting the Scheme’s funding target, mortality assumptions are made based on wider population statistics and adjusted to make some allowance for Scheme experience and future improvements in longevity. The mortality assumptions are reviewed at each formal triennial actuarial valuation.

This statement has been agreed by the Methodist Council on behalf of Conference:
Signed on behalf of the Methodist Council

Name:
Position:
Date:
This statement was agreed by the Trustee at their meeting on 8 March 2018:
Signed on behalf of the Trustee of the Methodist Ministers’ Pension Scheme

Name:
Position: Trustee
Date:

This statement has been agreed by the Trustee after obtaining actuarial advice from the Scheme Actuary:

Signed:
Name: Diana Simon, FIA
Position: Actuary to the Methodist Ministers’ Pension Scheme
Date:
APPENDIX 1

Current investment strategy of the Methodist Ministers’ Pension Scheme

The table below summarises the 1 September 2017 benchmark asset allocation together with the benchmark that is scheduled to apply with effect from June 2018:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Benchmark asset allocation</th>
<th>Long term benchmark %</th>
<th>June 2018 benchmark %</th>
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<td>Equity investment</td>
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<td>Bond investment</td>
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**APPENDIX 2**  
Economic assumptions as at the valuation date

The annualised forward rates used for assessing the technical provisions as at 1 September 2017 are summarised below (figures shown as % pa).

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<tr>
<th>Year after valuation date</th>
<th>Non-pensioner discount rate</th>
<th>Pensioner discount rate</th>
<th>Stipend increases</th>
<th>Deferred pension increases (pre 6 Apr 09)</th>
<th>Deferred pension increases (post 5 Apr 09)</th>
<th>Pension increases Main Scheme (pre 1 Sep 06)</th>
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<td>Stipend increases</td>
<td>Deferred pension increases (pre 6 Apr 09)</td>
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<td>Pension increases Main Scheme (pre 1 Sep 06)</td>
<td>Pension increases Main Scheme (post 31 Aug 06)</td>
<td>Pension increases AVCs (pre 1 Sep 06)</td>
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<td>Beyond 40 years</td>
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APPENDIX 3

Demographic assumptions as at the valuation date
Illustrative death rates

Mortality prior to retirement: probability of death within one year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age x</th>
<th>Male death rate (q_x) DML08</th>
<th>Female death rate (q_x) DFL08</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>0.000333</td>
<td>0.000156</td>
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<tr>
<td>25</td>
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<td>30</td>
<td>0.000445</td>
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<td>40</td>
<td>0.000867</td>
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<td>0.001589</td>
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<tr>
<td>55</td>
<td>0.003424</td>
<td>0.002659</td>
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<tr>
<td>60</td>
<td>0.005970</td>
<td>0.004538</td>
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<tr>
<td>65</td>
<td>0.010924</td>
<td>0.007895</td>
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</table>

Mortality in retirement (normal health): probability of death within one year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age X</th>
<th>Male pensioner death rate (q_x)</th>
<th>Female pensioner death rate (q_x)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>60</td>
<td>0.003857</td>
<td>0.004214</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65</td>
<td>0.005849</td>
<td>0.005496</td>
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<tr>
<td>70</td>
<td>0.009637</td>
<td>0.008350</td>
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<tr>
<td>75</td>
<td>0.017602</td>
<td>0.014593</td>
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<tr>
<td>80</td>
<td>0.033409</td>
<td>0.027642</td>
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<tr>
<td>85</td>
<td>0.068165</td>
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<td>0.140059</td>
<td>0.116431</td>
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<tr>
<td>95</td>
<td>0.259499</td>
<td>0.205765</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100</td>
<td>0.371290</td>
<td>0.310661</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>105</td>
<td>0.462316</td>
<td>0.410359</td>
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</table>
Life expectancy implied by the tables for a person currently aged 65 is 23.4 years for a male and 24.8 years for a female. Life expectancy implied by the tables for a person currently aged 45 at age 65 is 25.0 years for a male and 26.6 years for a female.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age X</th>
<th>Male dependants death rate ($q_x$)</th>
<th>Female dependants death rate ($q_x$)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SAPS S2 series light tables with CMI 2016 projections, with a long term rate of improvement in mortality rates of 1.5% pa, with a scaling factor of 95%</td>
<td>SAPS S2 series light tables with CMI 2016 projections, with a long term rate of improvement in mortality rates of 1.5% pa, with a scaling factor of 87.5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>60</td>
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<td>0.003881</td>
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<tr>
<td>65</td>
<td>0.005557</td>
<td>0.005062</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70</td>
<td>0.009155</td>
<td>0.007691</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75</td>
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<tr>
<td>80</td>
<td>0.031739</td>
<td>0.025460</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>85</td>
<td>0.064757</td>
<td>0.052590</td>
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<td>0.189520</td>
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<tr>
<td>100</td>
<td>0.352725</td>
<td>0.286136</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>105</td>
<td>0.439200</td>
<td>0.377962</td>
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</table>

**Illustrative retirement rates**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Age X</th>
<th>Probability of retiring within one year</th>
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<tr>
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<td>Normal health $R_x$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NPD - 35</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NPD - 25</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NPD - 15</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NPD - 5</td>
<td>0</td>
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<td>NPD - 4</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NPD - 3</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NPD - 2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NPD - 1</td>
<td>0.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NPD</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
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</table>
**Age difference of dependants**

Actual age difference is used for pensioners where the data is available. Where the data is unknown, and for all active and deferred members, male members are assumed to be, on average, two years older than their spouses or civil partners and female members two years younger than their spouses or civil partners.

**Percentage of members with spouse/dependant benefits**

- **Actives and deferreds:** 85% of male members and 75% of female members are assumed to have spouse/dependants benefits at retirement or earlier death.

- **Pensioners:** Based on actual marital/dependency status, where known, otherwise the same proportions as above.

**Commutation**

Active and deferred members commute 15% of their main Scheme benefits on retirement for a lump sum.

**Normal Pension Date (NPD)**

As defined in the Rules of the Scheme for pensionable service prior to 1 September 2013, NPD is the 31 August in the calendar year of attaining age 65. For pensionable service from 1 September 2013, NPD is the 31 August in the calendar year of attaining the male State Pension Age (SPA). The male SPA has been taken as age 65 rising to age 66 by October 2020, rising to age 67 by 2028 and rising to age 68 by 2046. It is possible that the Government will bring forward the rise to age 68 but no allowance has been made for this in the calculations because the changes are just proposals at this stage.

**Expenses**

An allowance of 2.7% of Stipends.
METHODIST MINISTERS’ PENSION SCHEME

Schedule of Contributions for the period 1 September 2018 to 31 August 2023

The schedule of contributions signed by the Trustee on 11 July 2015 has been reviewed and revised by the Trustee to satisfy the requirements of Section 227 of the Pensions Act 2004, after obtaining the advice of Diana Simon, the Scheme Actuary and after obtaining the agreement of the Conference of the Methodist Church.

It covers contributions to the Scheme from all persons responsible for providing a Current Member’s remuneration.

1. **Employer contributions**

   In respect of future accrual of benefits and the provision of death in service benefits and the expenses of administering the Scheme persons responsible for providing a Current Member’s remuneration will pay the following:

   - 26.9% of Stipends, from 1 September 2018

   These contributions are to be paid to the Scheme on or before the 19th day of the calendar month following that to which the contributions relate.

2. **Expenses**

   These contributions include a contribution of 2.7% of Stipends to meet the expenses of the Scheme including an annual provision of 0.5% of Stipends for payment of regulatory fees including the Pension Protection Fund levy.

3. **Augmentation payments**

   In respect of any augmentations granted, the relevant persons responsible for providing a Current Member’s remuneration will pay additional amounts to cover the costs of benefit augmentations within one month of the later of the date of granting the augmentation and the date on which the Trustee receives the details of the costs from the Scheme Actuary.

4. **Contributions by active members**

   Current Members who are not temporarily absent from service in accordance with Rule B17 pay contributions at the rate of 9.3% of Stipends.

   These contributions are to be deducted from pay by the person responsible for providing
a Current Member’s remuneration and paid to the Scheme on or before the 19th day of
the calendar month following deduction.

Current Members who are temporarily absent from service pay contributions to the
Scheme on the basis agreed by the Trustee. Such Current Members will ensure that the
Trustee receives the contributions payable by him/her within 19 days of the end of the
month to which the contributions relate.

These amounts do not include members’ Additional Voluntary Contributions.

5. Definition of Stipend

The definition of Stipend is the minimum stipend determined from time to time by the
Conference.

Signed on behalf of the Trustee of the Methodist Ministers’ Pension Scheme

Name ...............................................................................................................................................

Position ...........................................................................................................................................

Date ..................................................................................................................................................

Signed on behalf of the Methodist Conference

Name ...............................................................................................................................................

Position ...........................................................................................................................................

Date ..................................................................................................................................................
24. Connexional Central Services Budget for three years commencing with 2018/19

Contact name and details

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tim Swindell</td>
<td>Connexional Treasurer <a href="mailto:tim.swindell@methodist.org.uk">tim.swindell@methodist.org.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doug Swanney</td>
<td>Connexional Secretary <a href="mailto:swanneyd@methodistchurch.org.uk">swanneyd@methodistchurch.org.uk</a></td>
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Resolution


Summary of content

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject and aims</th>
<th>Details</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Main points</td>
<td>● Methodist Church Fund (MCF) income</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>● Use of funds against reserves levels, particularly the Connexional Priority Fund (CPF)</td>
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<td>● Salary/stipend increases</td>
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<td>● Shaping the Team to support <em>Our Calling</em></td>
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<tr>
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<td>● Pension scheme valuations</td>
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<td>● Summary of changes by cluster/office</td>
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<th>Background context and relevant documents</th>
<th>Details</th>
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<th>Consultations</th>
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<td></td>
<td>The Finance Sub-committee, the Strategy and Resources Committee (SRC) and the Council have all scrutinised and recommended the budget contained within the report for 2018/2019.</td>
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The Connexional Central Services Budget for three years commencing with 2018/2019

1. Introduction

1.1 The calling of the Methodist Church is to respond to the gospel of God’s love in Christ and to live out its discipleship in worship and mission. It does this through:

- Worship
- Learning and caring
- Service
- Evangelism

1.2 The use of all Methodist funds must be demonstrably to fulfil this calling. Although it represents only a portion of that total, the Connexional Central Services Budget (CCSB)
represents the planned use of connexionally-held funds over the next three years in supporting the Church to live out its calling.

1.3 The Council has previously agreed that the draft budget should not feature a deficit against the Methodist Church Fund (MCF). After several years of surpluses the Finance Sub-committee and the SRC indicated that they would consider a draft budget which included plans to utilise some of the resultant excess reserves if they were directed towards specific pieces of work. However, it still expects the Team’s core functions to be performed within a balanced MCF budget.

Table 1: Overall income and expenditure

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Income</th>
<th>2016/17 (ACT) £000</th>
<th>2017/18 (BUD) £000</th>
<th>2018/19 (BUD) £000</th>
<th>2019/20 (BUD) £000</th>
<th>2020/21 (BUD) £000</th>
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<tr>
<td>MCF Assessment</td>
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<td>Property Levies</td>
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<td>7,500</td>
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<td><strong>36,564</strong></td>
<td><strong>37,228</strong></td>
<td><strong>37,247</strong></td>
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<td>6,900</td>
<td>8,206</td>
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<td>Stipends</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>MCF Management Levy</td>
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<td>1,702</td>
<td>1,754</td>
<td>1,682</td>
<td>1,672</td>
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<td>Mission Partners</td>
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<td>Cost of Sales</td>
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<td>346</td>
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<td>Other Staff Costs</td>
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<td><strong>Expenditure Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>42,308</strong></td>
<td><strong>41,262</strong></td>
<td><strong>42,731</strong></td>
<td><strong>42,554</strong></td>
<td><strong>42,878</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Net Surplus/(Deficit)</strong></td>
<td><strong>14,392</strong></td>
<td>(4,698)</td>
<td>(5,503)</td>
<td>(5,307)</td>
<td>(5,650)</td>
</tr>
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</table>
24. Connexional Central Services Budget for three years commencing with 2018/19

2. Income - Methodist Church Fund (MCF) Assessment

2.1 The 2016 Conference agreed that the total assessment will increase by 1% per annum for the three years commencing 2017-18. It did this on the basis that around 80% of the increase would be used to cover additional costs relating to providing ordained ministry in the Island Districts. This means that the total level of the MCF assessment was effectively frozen in year one, with small increases in years two and three.

2.2 Within this draft the forecast budget for 2020/2021 falls beyond the three years that has been set. A nil increase to the MCF assessment in 2020/2021 has therefore been assumed within these figures; not because that is necessarily the expectation, but rather to provide clarity and transparency without assuming any future increases.

2.3 The overall MCF assessment income shown in Schedule 1 falls in 2018/2019, before beginning to increase. This reflects the ending of the Computers for Ministry scheme, which has meant a levy on Circuits being included in these numbers. This line also includes the sabbatical fund levy and the safeguarding assessment which funds DBS checks on ministers.

2.4 Both the Strategy and Resources Committee (SRC) and its Finance Sub-committee (FSC) noted the challenge presented by an increase in assessment of 1% compared with inflation levels closer to 3%. Apart from the agreed budget increases to salaries and stipends, the draft budget does not cater speculatively for inflation within discretionary expenditure given the difficulty of predicting it and the length of time between preparing the budget and its implementation. Essentially the historical underspend against salary costs is treated as providing sufficient buffer against inflationary costs on other items.

Table 2: The Methodist Church Fund

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Income</th>
<th>2016/17 ACT (£000)</th>
<th>2017/18 BUD (£000)</th>
<th>2018/19 BUD (£000)</th>
<th>2019/20 BUD (£000)</th>
<th>2020/21 BUD (£000)</th>
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<td><strong>17,224</strong></td>
<td><strong>17,607</strong></td>
<td><strong>17,677</strong></td>
<td><strong>17,673</strong></td>
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3. Ensuring that the Team is best equipped to support the Church in fulfilling its calling

3.1 At its meeting in January 2018 the Council agreed to some structural re-shaping of the Connexional Team in order for it to support more effectively the wider Connexion in fulfilling its calling and in response to the Training Review. The implementation of these changes is complete in some areas and well underway in others, but given that much of the detailed work on this was still in process at the time of writing, the budget is based on the existing Team structure. The only significant change is presentational - the oversight of authorised ministries and initial ministerial training moved to the Conference Office in April 2018 so the relevant cost centres have been moved to this new location within the budget.

3.2 The parameters of the re-structuring are such that they must be made within the existing budget. This means that the cost of any new posts created must not exceed those being discontinued.

3.3 In addition, the budget assumes that all redundancy and associated costs of these changes will be incurred prior to 31 August 2018 and hence there is no allowance for them within this budget. However, in order to ensure the effectiveness of this change management process, two fixed term contract posts have been created and filled – one focused on HR and the other on project/change management. Provision is made for both posts for the full duration of 2018/2019 and is contained within the Development and Personnel budget, cost centre 440.

4. Connexional grants budget

4.1 Over the last few years the Council has adopted target reserves levels for the World
Mission Fund (WMF), Epworth Fund, Mission in Britain Fund (MiBF), the Connexional Priority Fund (CPF) and the Fund for Property (FfP). It has agreed in each case to release additional amounts from each of these in order to reduce balances down to the target levels within three/five years. The budgets for connexional grants from each will continue to reflect this. In order to provide greater clarity, the fund balance information this year shows the value of properties held within each fund separately. This indicates that the operation of these reserves levels needs to follow an increasingly sophisticated model. Whilst properties held within particular funds are illiquid in the short term, it is appropriate that consideration is given periodically whether each property should be retained, disposed of, or used it in other ways in order to fulfil the objectives of the fund. The SRC has already recognised this by agreeing that the future use of Asbury House in Birmingham, an asset of the WMF, be evaluated over the coming year. The FSC has recommended that a further review of the reserves policies be carried out later in 2018.

4.2 It is likely that grant-making budgets from both the MiBF and FfP will begin to reduce significantly from 2018/19 as the fund balances approach the agreed reserves levels of both. Although less progress has been made on utilising the excess reserves of the WMF, the Global Relationships Strategic Oversight Sub-committee and World Church Relationships staff are working to design a number of innovative approaches to building and maintaining overseas relationships. More detail is provided later within this budget narrative.

5. **Use of Connexional Priority Fund (CPF)**

5.1 The net income to the CPF in 2016/2017 was £8.7 million against a budget of £5m, boosting the disbursements to the Pension Reserve Fund, District Advance Funds and the MCF. Despite increased grant-making the balance of the fund thus increased by £880k to stand at £11.1m against a reserves policy level of £5 million. Of this £6.1 million held in excess of the reserves policy, around £1.94 million has been designated as follows. £500,000 for *Thy Kingdom Come* (previously allocated under a ‘One Mission’ heading), £500,000 for the ONE Intern programme and £940,000 remains of the £1 million designated for the Property Development Committee (PDC). The ONE Intern programme is expected to continue, so the budget will reflect this as an ongoing cost of approximately £200,000 per annum against the CPF.

5.2 The SRC has determined that £150,000 of the PDC money be used to fund obtaining planning permission for the conversion of the Methodist property at Oxford Place, Leeds, into an hotel with those costs largely incurred during the 2017/2018 year. In addition, consultancy work and commissioning professional studies to assist local trustees on specific sites is likely to cost £150k during 2017/2018, leaving overall around £640,000 designated to the PDC at the year-end.
5.3 As the Conference is aware work is currently underway to establish a connexional property strategy. Part of this will include ways in which local trustees will be supported on an ongoing basis. Given that CPF income is derived from a levy on local property sales, re-cycling it to provide professional advice on the future use and development of property seems an appropriate use of the fund. Although detailed work has not yet been undertaken, an initial estimate would be an annual budget from the CPF of up to £500,000. The exact detail will depend on the property strategy that is adopted and also the implementation of the recommendations of the working party reviewing the provision of legal and property support for managing trustees. However, it is intended that this money supports the provision of advice to managing trustees; not posts within the Connexional Team.

5.4 Discussions at both the Connexional Leaders’ Forum and the Council have been supportive of making greater use of reserves to support Districts and Circuits as they seek to plan more effectively to engage with Our Calling. £1 million per annum has therefore been ring-fenced within this budget to be utilised for that in ways that will be determined by the SRC and the Council as work progresses.

5.5 The costs of VentureFX and the Methodist Church’s contribution to the Fresh Expressions organisation are both currently met from the CPF. As the current projects reach their conclusions the amount allocated to VentureFX will decline steeply in year three of the budget, whilst funding to the ecumenical Fresh Expressions Ltd is part of ongoing discussions. Significant support for such work is increasing, however, within the Discipleship and Ministries cluster budget via the Pioneer Pathway at Cliff College, and events such as the relIMAGINE conference.

6. Stipend increases

The Connexional Central Services Budget covers the stipend, National Insurance and pension costs of a significant number of ministers. Using the formula agreed by the Conference, the Connexional Allowances Committee (CAC) has calculated that the level of increase in the standard stipend from 1 September 2018 should be 2.55%. This is reflected within the budgets. Although the final outcome of the latest triennial valuation of the Methodist Ministers’ Pension Scheme (MMPS) is not yet finalised, the budget assumes no change to ‘employer’ contributions within the life of this budget. The Finance Subcommittee understands from the trustee board that this is an appropriate assumption.

7. Salary increases

7.1 Increases in salary effective from 1 September 2017 will have been for the first time determined under the new arrangements that are related to individual performance against agreed targets over the previous year, with no blanket cost of living increase.
7.2 The Pay and Remuneration Sub-committee has considered input based on the 2017 Hays survey and held conversation with the Connexional Secretary. Accordingly, the SRC accepted its recommendation that the total lay salary pot be based on an average increase of 2.9% (excluding those on frozen salaries) from 1 September 2018, and increases of 1.5% per annum in years two and three. Both the FSC and SRC raised concerns about the ability of the Council to remain an attractive employer if average salary increases do not keep pace with inflation. It is expected that further staffing efficiencies will need to be reflected in the 2019 budget round.

8. Changes to supervision of District Safeguarding Officers (DSOs)

The 2017 Conference received a report (Paper 34) relating to the professional supervision of DSOs. It resolved that the Council would proceed with producing detailed and costed proposals, which the Council approved at its meeting in January 2018. Implementation of this will proceed over the next few months, but since the costs will be met from within the overall existing headcount and budget, the staffing changes are not reflected in the budget.

9. Pension valuations

The statutory triennial valuations of both connexional defined benefit pension schemes have been undertaken as at 1 September 2017. The Council has addressed the impact of the outcome on the Pension and Assurance Scheme for Lay Employees of the Methodist Church (PASLEMC) as the principal employer. It has made recommendations to the Conference elsewhere in this Agenda relating to the outcome of the valuation of the Methodist Ministers’ Pension Scheme (MMPS).

10. Funding the One Programme Participants (OPPs) from the Epworth Fund

The 2013 Conference resolved (24/6) to fund the cost of the OPPs from the Epworth Fund for a period of five years, commencing 2013/2014. It agreed that the budget would be £100k per annum at 2013 costs, to be increased annually in line with wage inflation. An evaluation of the ONE Programme is being undertaken during 2017/2018. The three years of the draft budget includes provision for this to be continued, recognising that the funding may be extended further, potentially from an alternative fund, subject to the outcome of the evaluation.

***RESOLUTION

24. Connexional Central Services Budget for three years commencing with 2018/19

The Conference Office

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>Initial Ministerial Learning</td>
<td>£150</td>
<td>£343</td>
<td>£575</td>
<td>£575</td>
<td>£575</td>
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<tr>
<td>234</td>
<td>Further Ministerial Development</td>
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<td>£90</td>
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<td>641</td>
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<td>£18</td>
<td>£27</td>
<td>£27</td>
<td>£27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Income | £606 | £708 | £922 | £853 | £858 |

Expenditure

| 100    | Secretary of the Conference        | (95)            | (122)           | (119)           | (123)           | (126)           |
| 233    | Initial Ministerial Learning        | (1,443)         | (1,597)         | (1,559)         | (1,559)         | (1,559)         |
| 234    | Further Ministerial Development    | (261)           | (371)           | (393)           | (393)           | (393)           |
| 235    | Ministry Development                | (194)           | (213)           | (78)            | (78)            | (78)            |
| 421    | Discretionary Payments to Ministers | (6)             | £0              | £102            | £102            | £103            |
| 441    | Safeguarding                        | (403)           | (473)           | (460)           | (475)           | (490)           |
| 443    | Equality and Diversity              | (97)            | (93)            | (78)            | (79)            | (80)            |
| 460    | Past Cases Review                   | (0)             | £0              | £0              | £0              | £0              |
| 600    | The Conference Office               | (595)           | (731)           | (1,063)         | (1,020)         | (1,034)         |
| 610    | Law and Polity                      | (209)           | (282)           | (337)           | (340)           | (342)           |
| 620    | Faith and Order                     | (17)            | (35)            | (36)            | (36)            | (36)            |
| 625    | Ministerial Oversight               | (108)           | (111)           | (65)            | (65)            | (65)            |
| 630    | Methodist Council                   | (109)           | (142)           | (126)           | (127)           | (128)           |
| 631    | Conference                          | (583)           | (476)           | (540)           | (546)           | (549)           |
| 634    | President & Vice President          | (51)            | (71)            | (81)            | (84)            | (86)            |
| 635    | Chairs of District                  | (1,181)         | (1,161)         | (1,263)         | (1,295)         | (1,327)         |
| 640    | Ecumenical                          | (211)           | (231)           | (186)           | (179)           | (181)           |
| 641    | Methodist Ecumenical Office Rome    | (15)            | (27)            | (38)            | (38)            | (38)            |

Total Expenditure | £(5,577) | £(6,134) | £(6,524) | £(6,538) | £(6,615) |

Net expenditure | £(4,972) | £(5,427) | £(5,603) | £(5,685) | £(5,757) |
Ministerial Grants – CC 420 and CC 421

The cost of four stipends have been budgeted for ministers suspended or on recuperative years from cost centres 420 and 421. There is an additional sum of £50,000 budgeted under 421 for the provision of housing costs for such cases. It should be noted that the current connexional year has seen a significant increase in the number of ministers either suspended or on recuperative years. It is hoped that this will not continue next year particularly in respect of recuperative years as the parameters are being tightened by the Connexional Wellbeing Adviser and the Assistant Secretary of the Conference. However the cost to the MCF of suspended ministers and ministers on recuperative years is provided for in Standing Orders and is not therefore a matter over which the Connexional Team has control. If the number of ministers were to be greater than four in any of the forthcoming years then these costs would represent an overspend to be paid from reserves.

The Conference Office – CC 600

It will be noted that the salary and stipend costs of the Conference Office have increased significantly. This is due to two posts that are currently held by ministers potentially being filled by lay people from 2018/19 onwards. There are two ministerial and one lay posts that have moved from cost centre 235 into the Conference Office budget with a further ministerial post moving from 232 into 600. The Secretary of the Faith and Order Committee has also been budgeted on a full-time basis for 2019/2020.

The Director of Supervision as a half time stipend plus contribution towards housing costs is also now budgeted for under cost centre 600.

The £130,000 as agreed by the Conference for the roll out of supervision is budgeted to come from the Fund for Training under Other Professional Fees with £75,000 of income from the Allchurches Trust Ltd Methodist grant towards this work. The District Chairs’ supervision cost of £35,000 is budgeted for separately under 635.

The Conference – CC 631

Each year the costs of the Conference are shown differently in the budget due to the way each venue charges for different elements of the Conference. The budgeted costs for 2017/2018 of £460,000 are relatively low as a result of keen prices being offered by the Nottingham venue. For the three Conferences commencing with 2019 total costs will return to more normal levels around £525,000 per annum.

Law and Polity CC 610

The only significant increase to this cost centre is an additional £50k for legal compliance
work that continues to grow and is largely outside of our control. The external legal fees line has remained at £120,000. As with previous years, the budgeted legal fees do not include any significant legal claim. This line includes the contribution made to the Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes (TMCP) for the 35% of legal staff costs.

**Discipleship and Ministries**

The cluster’s support of ministries, and in particular accredited ministry has been transferred to the Conference Office and as such the majority of the amounts in cost centres 233, 234 and 235 have moved into the Conference Office. The work set in train by the Council will see changes and additions to the cluster’s work in the year ahead.

Key outcomes from the Training Review have been built into this budget following the agreement of the SRC and the Council. The number of staff located in regional teams will be reduced overall, with 1.0 FTE allocated per district, managed by a team of coordinators. The budget will flex to support new areas of work in Evangelism and Growth, enabling both staff and additional resources to focus on this priority. A grant made to Thy Kingdom Come last year will be supported by increased staff time this year. Where staff are ordained it is considered prudent to allow for a lay salary in the year subsequent to that reinvitation.

<table>
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<th>CC</th>
<th>Cost Centre</th>
<th>2016/2017 (ACT) £000</th>
<th>2017/2018 (BUD) £000</th>
<th>2018/2019 (BUD) £000</th>
<th>2019/2020 (BUD) £000</th>
<th>2020/2021 (BUD) £000</th>
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### 24. Connexional Central Services Budget for three years commencing with 2018/19

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<td>(682)</td>
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<td>(121)</td>
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| Expenditure total | **(5,901)** | **(5,851)** | **(6,428)** | **(6,390)** | **(5,908)** |

The investment in the **ONE Programme** has increased. The One Programme Participant scheme (within CC 220) (OPPS) will continue, with 10 places funded from the Epworth Fund across the Connexion, enabling churches and Circuits to bid to host a young person. This year the programme will be evaluated by an external consultant, and money has been
allowed in the budget for this. The ONE Intern initiative (Within CC 200), piloted this year with 7 places, will expand to 10 places for 2018/2019. This, funded from the CPF, will offer young adults a year of vocational discernment and spiritual growth whilst working and gaining invaluable experience in their chosen career as an employee in a professional workplace. These workplaces include the House of Lords, Action for Children, the Central Finance Board. Places will expand in 2018 with the addition of Universities UK, All We Can, and St George’s House, Windsor. The initiative is undergoing ongoing evaluation and some budget is allocated in 2018/2019 to undergo a more robust evaluation of the entire programme and its processes.

**Children and youth (CC 220):** 3Generate continues as a major success and growth story and an increase in income to £100k has been allowed to reflect the increase in ticket sales anticipated to 1,200 places this year, marked with a corresponding increase in expenditure. The total delivery cost of 3Generate is in the order of £311,000. It is proposed within the budget that the Families Ministry Officer, which has been funded from the Education and Youth fund until 31 August 2018 will continue, funded from the MCF; this is to recognise the importance of intergenerational work within the life of the Church.

**Education (CC 356):** the SRC has agreed to increase support of Methodist schools, making available c£90,000 per annum for three years. This is specifically to enable the Methodist Academies and Schools Trust (MAST) to fulfil its obligations to Methodist State Funded Schools as per SO 342. The intention is that this should be provided from a combination of the Methodist Independent Schools Trust, Westminster College Oxford Trust and the Southlands Methodist Trust. Discussions are ongoing with each set of trustees, but a corresponding amount of income has been included within the draft budget – it should be noted that this is not guaranteed at this time. This will particularly ensure that our schools are able to deliver a high quality of educational opportunity with a strongly framed Methodist emphasis.

The Designated Training Fund (DTF) is fed by the income generating centres MIC Ltd and the Guy Chester Centre, and assumes a combined income from the two of £1.3 million per annum. This is now spent in cost centres pertaining to both Discipleship and Ministries and the Conference Office. The aim is to keep this fund balance at zero, with expenditure matching income. In Discipleship and Ministries the DTF money is spent on supporting work at Cliff College and work to support Higher Education grants. There are other assets which may be realised as income via this Fund in the years ahead, notably the redevelopment of Camden Town Methodist Church.

**VentureFX (CC 261):** The budget for 2018/2019 is £292,000, declining gradually to £141,000 in 2020/2021. This saving is mostly accounted for by the reduction in the number of VentureFX projects that continue beyond their initial phase of connexional funding. It has been assumed that the role of coordinator will continue as part of a full-time role and that
each of the current VentureFX pioneers will continue on the current basis until the end of the ten-year lifetime of their project.

**Support Services**

The budget for the majority of Support Services cost centres continues as per current plans but from 2018/2019 will be altered to be shown as two distinct teams; Finance and Resources, and HR and Development, with the following main exceptions:

Casual staffing budgets have been removed in both Financial Services and Administration. This reflects the conversion of a temporary post to permanent within the Gift Aid Bureau last year, plus recognition that with historical underspends on staff costs it is not appropriate to budget for any temporary staffing.

<table>
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<th>2017/2018 (BUD) £000</th>
<th>2018/2019 (BUD) £000</th>
<th>2019/2020 (BUD) £000</th>
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**Expenditure**

| 355| Resourcing Mission                        | (42)                  | (91)                 | (95)                 | (96)                 | (98)                 |
| 400| Support Services                          | (99)                  | (126)                | (99)                 | (101)                | (102)                |
| 409| Bureau Services                           | (275)                 | (240)                | (241)                | (238)                | (242)                |
| 410| Financial Services                        | (944)                 | (921)                | (933)                | (926)                | (942)                |
| 430| Administration                            | (1,186)               | (1,286)              | (1,367)              | (1,289)              | (1,296)              |
| 431| Information Technology                    | (515)                 | (656)                | (695)                | (667)                | (640)                |
| 432| Executive Support                         | (240)                 | (223)                | (213)                | (213)                | (214)                |
| 440| Development & Personnel                   | (883)                 | (958)                | (1,031)              | (935)                | (941)                |
| 442| Database Administration                    | (87)                  | (80)                 | 0                    | 0                    | 0                    |
Administration (CC 430) includes an amount of £50,000 per annum, from the current 2017/2018 year onwards to support Data Protection work within the Team. In 2018/2019, this is doubled to £100,000 in anticipation of work on a digital filing/archiving solution that is being explored during 2017/2018.

Information Technology (CC 431) has entirely subsumed Database Administration (CC 442), adding approximately £80k to its annual budget. Exceptional provision is made for a substantial renewal of firewall and security software in 2018/2019.

As noted above, the Development and Personnel (CC 440) budget for 2018/2019 includes two temporary staff to support restructuring within the whole Team. Without this, the budget would be slightly reduced thanks to tighter controls on committee costs and a clearer understanding of fees paid from the MCF for ministers from outside the EU to obtain work permits. With the picture post-Brexit unknown, there is a chance that these fees will increase in 2019/2020.

In parallel with this budget, the Council received a report from the Management Committee of Methodist Church House outlining options for future major works required on the building. Although the Council has agreed to one option, the budget has been prepared based on the current situation since a detailed capital project budget will now be required which will require time in the months to come.

Property Support: During the course of the next connexional year, the Council will be considering proposals for a connexional property strategy, with associated questions about how the Team will support the wider connexion with regard to property. The decisions of the Council relating to the recommendations of the working party reviewing the provision of legal and property support for managing trustees are also being taken forward within the current budget, any further resources required will be discussed with TMCP and the SRC. Existing posts and work are included within cost centres 355, 461 and 470, which have been budgeted as per the existing staffing since any additional resource will need to be provided by reducing headcount and budget elsewhere within the Team. The management of this work relocated to the Conference Office in April, but that change is not yet reflected in the budget layout.
Mission and Advocacy

The budget for the cluster (as with others) has been prepared largely on the basis of ‘business as usual’. As already stated, organisational changes are being discussed as part of the wider Connexional Team picture. These are likely to result in some adjustments between cost centres in due course, but we are confident that this can be done within the overall totals shown.

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Publishing and Communications (CC 305/311)

Sales revenues from Singing the Faith are starting to decline slowly, having held up remarkably well in recent years. Some growth is assumed in other sales, balancing this out overall.

While there is upward pressure on print and paper costs (the latter in particular have risen sharply), we have achieved some economies by negotiation with existing contractors or
moving to alternative printers, such as printing of the *connexion* magazine, which has been moved resulting in a cost reduction.

The new website was successfully launched in December 2017. Future costs for IT-related expenditure include the maintenance of the site, licence costs for other key software such as Dotmailer, and costs associated with new project management and proofing systems.

**Engagement (CC 310, 319, 320)**
Spikes in the Heritage income line relate to a biennial conference.

On the expenditure side, the needs of archiving remain a considerable concern and we are largely reliant on volunteers in this area. Some provision has been made (codes 310-4441 and 4670) for licensing Digital Asset Management software which will enable us both to have a central repository for new photographic images (which are acquired all the time and used, inter alia, by Publishing) and to begin dealing with historic images held on various media. In the meantime, we also have the continuing costs associated with archives and storage at John Rylands University and the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS).

Costs associated with Fundraising include the publishing both of *One Mission Matters* and JMA materials. Work is in hand on revamping the latter and some costs associated with that are allowed for in the budget. The future of *One Mission Matters* will be reviewed in the context of overall changes to Engagement in order better to support mission engagement and education.

**World Church (Global) Relationships (CC 325/6)**
Costs under Fund 700 (Methodist Church Fund) are primarily staff salaries and overheads, including travel. The overseas travel budget covers costs beyond those purely related to WCR staff and is always under pressure. We will continue to monitor this closely.

Revenues (donations and legacies) shown for Fund 766 (World Mission Fund) are hard to predict and a cautious approach has been taken, assuming continuing decline in these revenue streams.

There are some substantial new lines of work included under Fund 766, agreed in principle by the Global Relationships Strategic Oversight Subcommittee (GRSOSC) and with a view to drawing down the currently high reserves on this fund in line with the agreed reserves policy. The increases include additional budget for the Nationals in Mission Appointments (NMA) programme and for Strategic and Leadership Training (SALT) for our overseas partners. Budget allocations for new work include:

- A substantial commitment (line 766-325-4315) to capacity building work in association with All We Can and the continuing support of those churches with whom this will engage. The cost is budgeted to be £115,000 in year one rising to £270,000 by the third year of the budget.
24. Connexional Central Services Budget for three years commencing with 2018/19

- Funding set aside (also under the same code) for major investments in projects brought forward by Partner Churches with an aim to achieving financial self-sufficiency, such as commercial property developments. More work is being done on the details of this proposal, for review by GRSOSC.
- Funding for an increased number of PhD students coming from Partner Churches.
- Provision for costs associated with locating some staff overseas or contributing to overseas office costs of other organisations with whom we might work in some regions (potentially including UMC).
- Contribution to the European Methodist Council for a support staff role.
- Costs for beginning to address the World Church Relationships archival material still held in the basement at MCH. This cannot be lodged with a library without major preparatory work, and digitisation would be highly desirable. Costs have been included under 766-325-4670 for a feasibility study and some urgent conservation in the first two years of the budget, and a further £1 million in year 3 when a major project might commence. That will require further cost benefit justification in due course.

Other areas

Provision continues to be made under the M and A budgets for a small level of spend supporting inter faith work (£15,000 annually) and for support for the Methodist Modern Art Collection (MMAC). While various possible developments have been discussed with the MMAC Management Committee, no provision has been made in the budget for additional resourcing, eg a development officer. The future home for the collection is under discussion and this will need to be taken forward by the new Chair of the committee. Any costs associated with that are outside of the provisions made in this budget.

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Office of the Connexional Secretary

The World Methodist Council (CC 111) contains the budget to enable members of the Council appointed by the Conference to participate in the work of the Council. The Council meets twice during the quinquennium but the costs are evened out year on year. The Council meets in Korea in July 2018.

The Connexional Secretary’s budget (CC 120) contains costs relating to the postholder including provision for the extensive travel undertaken as part of the role both in the UK and around the world. 50% of this budget line is made of the two contingency amounts that are held, £25k from the MCF for the work of the Team and £100,000 from the Epworth Fund that is used at the discretion of the Secretary of the Conference and the Connexional Secretary for supporting emergencies that arise in the wider Connexion.

Methodist Diaconal Order (MDO) (CC 250)

Contained with the budget are both the expenditure of the MDO from its own funds as well as the support the Order receives from the MCF.

The stipends and associated costs (travel etc) of the Warden and the Deputy Warden as well as costs of administrative support are met from the MCF. MDO income into this cost centre reflects costs of activities that are met from its own funds as determined by the Order.

The MDO is working on reserve policies and planned draw down of funds over the next three to five years.
### Fund Table

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25. Connexional Central Services Budget 2018/2019  
– District Allocations

| Contact name and details | Tim Swindell  
Connexional Treasurer  
tim.swindell@methodist.org.uk |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|
| Resolution               | 25/1. The Conference adopts the district allocations  
of the assessment to the Methodist Church Fund (MCF) as set out in the Report. |

### Summary of content

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<th>Subject and aims</th>
<th>The Council’s recommendations regarding the district assessment figures for adoption by the Conference.</th>
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### Summary of impact

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</tr>
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<td>35</td>
<td>London</td>
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<td>9,087</td>
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<td>South East</td>
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<td>4,080</td>
<td>5,812</td>
<td>749,633</td>
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<td><strong>76,080</strong></td>
<td><strong>104,325</strong></td>
<td><strong>13,475,843</strong></td>
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</table>
25. Connexional Central Services Budget 2018/2019
- District Allocations

***RESOLUTION

25/1. The Conference adopts the district allocations of the assessment to the Methodist Church Fund (MCF) as set out in the Report.
Contact name and details
Pamela Lavender, Chair of the Stationing Committee
pamelajlavender@gmail.com

1. Introduction

1.1 The Stationing Committee wishes to express its grateful thanks to all those who have given many hours of work to this important task.

1.2 The Chair of the Stationing Matching Group, the Revd Stephen Poxon, has guided the stationing matching process prayerfully and with wisdom and good humour as the Stationing Matching Group has faced increasingly challenging circumstances as outlined below in Section 2.

1.3 The imbalance between the number of available circuit appointments and the number of presbyters available for stationing to circuit appointments continues to be a major concern and is likely to remain as a concern in the future.

1.4 The Committee wishes to commend the work of Circuits and Districts that have reconfigured in order to facilitate effective mission and ministry and the sharing of resources across the Connexion and would encourage others to continue to engage in these conversations.

1.5 As a result of reconfigurations this year has seen a high number of appointments in the matching process which needed to be filled with some urgency, which has presented a significant challenge.

1.6 The Stationing Committee encourages Districts and Circuits to continue to review the wisdom and efficacy of very small Circuits, and the demands as well as benefits of very large circuit structures.

1.7 The continued collaboration between those involved in diaconal and presbyteral stationing has been welcomed and is known to be beneficial. There is a continued development in such collaborative practice to promote coherent use of the resources of both orders of ministry.

2. Report of the Stationing Matching Group

2.1 Following the review of the Stationing Matching process last year the Stationing Committee gave approval to there being three categories of circuit appointments this year. The Regional Stationing Groups were asked to meet together prior to the first meeting of the Stationing Matching Group (SMG 1) and identify which of their appointments were ‘Must Fill’, ‘Need to Fill’ or ‘Hope to Fill’ against the paper sent...
out outlining the criteria under each of the categories.

2.2 At the beginning of SMG 1 in early November, the following were agreed by the meeting:

- Must Fill 45
- Need to Fill 75
- Hope to Fill 21

The gap between the number of circuit profiles and presbyteral profiles has continued to widen this year and we began SMG 1 with 141 circuit profiles and 96 from presbyters. However, 11 presbyters were either not available or had withdrawn by the time the process of matching began.

2.3 SMG 1 began by matching the Must Fill appointments and although every effort was made to make a match a few remained unfilled at the close of the process. 83 matches were made and 79% were agreed by Circuits and presbyters.

2.4 We met for SMG 2 at the beginning of December and began by seeking to match the remaining 14 Must Fill appointments. At this point in the process a few more presbyters became available but also a few additional profiles from Circuits appeared. We managed to make 22 matches 77% of which were successful.

2.5 At the beginning of SMG 3, which is a full morning meeting in MCH, it looked as if it would not be a long meeting as we only had 8 ministers available for matching but the needs of some of these and the needs of the circuits meant that it took all the allotted time. There were 7 Must Fill appointments still to fill but we were not able to make any matches for them. Of the 6 matches made, one was declined.

2.6 As the Stationing Action Group took over the process there were 55 appointments available, of which 7 were Must Fill, 2 of them new ones added after SMG 1.

2.7 The initial reflection of the Chairs was that having the categories (of Must Fill, Need to Fill, Hope to Fill) helped to focus on the deeper needs across the Connexion but the categorisation needs to be tightened up, perhaps with only two categories. It became evident that different regions had approached the task of identifying Need to Fill appointments in diverse ways and so the criteria will also need to be revisited. This is work that needs to continue to bring some further proposals to the Stationing Committee later in this year.
3. **Report of the Initial Stationing Sub-Committee**

3.1 The Initial Stationing Sub-Committee met on 3-4 January 2018 to match 26 presbyteral probationers and four prospective ‘recognised and regarded’ presbyters to appointments.

3.2 All appointments had been previously agreed by a scrutiny panel as suitable for those in their first station in the Methodist Church in Britain (MCB). This year the scrutiny panel asked Circuits to submit separate profiles of appointments suitable for ministers from other Conferences and Churches. The initial response was disappointing, but a small number of profiles were converted after SMG 1. This reflects the committee’s general determination to ensure that we only match ministers from other Conferences and Churches with Circuits that are prepared for the additional challenges of welcoming someone whose initial training and/or previous experience has not been in the MCB.

3.3 All appointments that had been accepted as suitable for probationers were filled, as the number of accepted profiles matched the number of probationers and ministers available. This included those with very limited deployability. Three of the four prospective ‘recognised and regarded’ presbyters were also matched to appointments.


4.1 The Stationing Action Group (convened by the Revd Graham Thompson) commenced its work on 5 February 2018 and will continue through to the Conference. At the beginning of the process there were 55 available appointments (of which 7 had been identified as Must Fill), including 12 superintendencies. 10 presbyters (not all of whom have been available to be matched for a variety of reasons) had still to agree an appointment.

4.2 Since then 10 presbyters, a transferring presbyter and one appointment have been added into the mix. Two appointments have been removed from the list and two presbyters offering part-time ministry have withdrawn.

4.3 In February six matches were made of which four were agreed. In March five matches were made and these included two matches following further decisions about initial stationing. All were agreed. In April seven matches were made and we await the outcomes of these visits.

4.4 Following submission of a reasoned statement, requests to withdraw 14 circuit profiles were agreed, as at the end of March.
4.5 If all the matches made in April are confirmed there will still be 24 appointments remaining, of which 6 are for Superintendents and 4 have been identified as Must Fill. Once again, we are likely to have a number of unfilled appointments at the end of the year.

4.6 The Must Fill appointments continue to be the focus of activity as we seek to fulfil the commitment made by the Stationing Committee to fill those stations which have been identified and agreed as being of significance to the future mission and ministry of the Connexion.

5. **Report on diaconal stationing**

5.1 It was anticipated that after the re-invitation process had been completed, 20 deacons would be available for stationing for September 2018. This included five probationer deacons going into circuit appointments for the first time; two deacons (including a probationer) married to presbyters; one deacon married to a stationed deacon and therefore with limited deplorability, and one deacon who had curtailed their appointment on pastoral grounds.

5.2 At the beginning of the stationing process 16 circuit profiles had been received with a further 4 profiles received prior to the main matching meeting of the Diaconal Stationing Sub-Committee (DSSC).

5.3 At the time of writing 18 of the 20 deacons available for stationing have been matched with appointments and 18 of the circuit appointments have been filled.

5.4 During the course of the year three deacons were stationed by the action of the President. Two of these were stationed part time to assist with an ongoing full-time appointment following a curtailment and the third was to enable and assist a Circuit seeking to support their local community following a major tragedy and living with pain and loss.

6. **Code of Practice**

6.1 The prime change to this year’s Code of Practice is the additional Appendix concerning giving and receiving feedback within the stationing process.

6.2 A date has been inserted (by 14 October) for Regional Stationing Groups to identify critical appointments for submission to a scrutiny panel of the Stationing Committee prior to the first Stationing Matching Group meeting.

6.3 The suggested questions used in the consultation process have been reworded.
6.4 There is greater clarity concerning the withdrawal of profiles during the stationing process.

6.5 The fact is more clearly stated that diaconal appointments are confirmed by the Warden of the Diaconal Order only after all visits of both ordained and probationer deacons have taken place.

7. 

Projections

Number of Methodist presbyters and probationers in the active work

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Connexional Year</th>
<th>Actual</th>
<th>Estimate</th>
<th>Estimate</th>
<th>Estimate</th>
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<td>Resignations</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other Losses</td>
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<td>TOTAL LOSSES</td>
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<tr>
<td>END OF YEAR</td>
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Number of Methodist deacons and probationers in the active work

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<th>Estimate</th>
<th>Estimate</th>
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<tr>
<td>Retirements</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>END OF YEAR</td>
<td>134</td>
<td>134</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>129</td>
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8. **Moving forward**

8.1 In the light of the challenges and opportunities described in this report, the Stationing Committee continues to review the stationing process in order to help in the stationing of presbyters and deacons not just to those places where they are needed but where they are needed most.

8.2 The Stationing Committee looks forward to continuing to work collaboratively with the Ministries Committee to discern what the Spirit is saying to the Church at this time regarding the use of its resources; and with the Faith and Order Committee to ensure that processes and protocols are embedded within the theology of the Church. Immediately, that means that the Committee is called carefully to help shape and then implement policies which enable the deployment of our ordained ministers in ways that best serve the mission of the Church. More broadly, the Committee recognises that it is called with others to examine the nature of presbyteral and diaconal ministry in a changing Church and a changing world. Such an examination should include a consideration of how we best foster vocations and nurture leadership potential in a diverse range of people so that those whom the Spirit is calling to ordained ministry might hear the call of God at each stage of their pilgrimage and be enabled to respond by using their gifts effectively in God’s service.

***RESOLUTIONS***

26/1. The Conference adopts the Report.
Progress towards fulfilling the group’s task

1. The Task Group wishes to share with members of the Conference and, through the Conference, the Methodist people, its progress in the tasks which it was set by the resolutions of the Conference in 2016. These were the preparation of “a new Statement of the judgment of the Conference on marriage and relationships” under Standing Order 129, and the “revisiting” and “consideration” of the definition of marriage, as required by the resolutions of the Conference in 2016. The group has made considerable progress towards fulfilling that task, but, with great regret, has to report that it cannot bring a draft text of a new Statement to the Conference in 2018 as stipulated in those resolutions. We shall explain below the reasons for this delay. We shall also recommend a revised process and timetable which will enable the Conference to agree a new Statement on these matters in 2020, as originally intended, after a period of consultation with the Church. Finally, we shall indicate some of the group’s developing insights into marriage and relationships, and set out some preliminary issues about which it wishes to raise awareness and asks the Conference to explore through a series of workshops.

2. In 2016, the Conference adopted Resolutions 29/7, 29/8 and 29/9 in the following form (Daily Record 6/14/1 and 6/14/2):
   
   29/7 The Conference directed that a new Statement of the judgment of the Conference on marriage and relationships shall be prepared and that, as part of the process, the definition of marriage should be revisited.
   
   29/8 The Conference appointed a new task group, which shall include people with expert knowledge of matters of Faith and Order and marriage and relationships, to update the Statement and to oversee the process of

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1 A draft Statement of the judgment of the Conference under Standing Order 129 has to be presented to the Conference in one year, then sent to the Connexion for study and response, before being brought back to the Conference, in its original or some revised form, in a subsequent year for adoption.
consulting with the Methodist people on the definition of marriage.

29/9. The Conference directed that the new task group shall report to the 2018 Conference with a draft text of a new statement which shall include:

a) consideration of all relevant Reports produced and Resolutions passed by the Conference... (sc. as set out in paragraph 3.5.1 of the 2016 report);

b) consideration of the definition of marriage, including the matters raised throughout section 3 of ... (sc. the 2016) report.

3. The task group was duly set up and consists of six ordained and two lay people. As its members, we have sought to recognise the diversity of experience and range of views and beliefs amongst Methodists about the matters remitted to us. We have acknowledged the particular experiences represented amongst us in the group, and the views that informed us as we began our journey. We are all committed followers of Jesus Christ and members of the Methodist Church. We had never worked together before and had to learn to know and trust one another as we worked together. In that, we have followed the “model statement on Living with Contradictory Convictions” set out in the report to the 2016 Conference as guidelines for how to conduct our discussions.

4. It is important to stress at the outset that the group was not charged with producing another report, but a new Statement, and, potentially, a revised Definition of Marriage. The Definition that the task group is charged with revisiting is that found in Standing Order 011A, particularly the first sentence of Clause (1): “The Methodist Church believes that marriage is a gift of God and that it is God’s intention that a marriage should be a life-long union in body, mind and spirit of one man and one woman.” The latter part of that sentence (“a life-long union.... one man and one woman”) repeats a phrase from the 1936 Conference Statement on Marriage and the Family, which in turn echoed a phrase found displayed in some marriage Registry Offices prior to the passing of the Marriage (Same-Sex Couples) Act 2013 that “According to the laws of this country, marriage is a life-long union of one man with one woman”. The Statement that the task group is charged with revising and updating is the one adopted by the 1992 Conference entitled A Christian Understanding of Family Life, the Single Person and Marriage. That Statement predates the discussions of Human Sexuality which led to the resolutions on those matters adopted by the 1993 Conference (which can be found in Volume 2, Book VII, Section C, Part 11 of The Constitutional Practice and Discipline of the Methodist Church on page 801 of the 2017 edition, available at www.methodist.org.uk/for-ministers-and-office-holders/governance/cpd).

5. The group was quickly seized of the importance and magnitude of its task. It recognised that whereas the God whose gracious love creates, shapes and orders the world is unchanging, the social, legal, scientific and other understandings of the current age, in which we seek to live in obedient response to that love as individuals and in community, are changing rapidly. The group’s remit includes preparing a revised and
updated formal Statement of the Conference’s judgment on marriage and relationships in general (including issues of cohabitation, serial-monogamy, polyamory, bisexuality and transgenderism, to name but a few), and not just on the possibility of the Church including same-sex marriage in its understanding of marriage (as the law has done in the civic sphere). This means that the group’s task is great while its timetable is short.

6. The group has worked with commitment since the 2016 Conference. It has met nine times between September 2016 and March 2018, with some of those meetings being residential. It has also engaged in a lot of thinking, praying, research and writing in between its meetings (including four weeks of one minister’s sabbatical). But in that period, there has been a change of Chair due to unforeseen circumstances, several bouts of significant ill-health among its members, and significant disruption caused by four of its members changing station.

7. Nevertheless, the group has made considerable progress. In October 2017, it informed the Methodist Council that it hoped to be able to bring substantial material to the 2018 Conference, but did not know at that stage how much. It therefore identified a twin-track approach as to how to bring its work to the Conference and how the consultation beyond might proceed. The first was based on the assumption that a draft Statement would be brought, as required, in 2018. The second addressed the situation should the group not be able to present a draft Statement in 2018, and is the basis of what is proposed below.

8. By January 2018 the task group had identified the broad outline of what it wished to propose. It had worked towards producing both a brief draft Statement and a longer report exploring some of the issues lying behind it; and it was in conversation with the Faith and Order Committee about both. It therefore informed the Council that it was now hoping to follow the track of bringing a draft Statement to the 2018 Conference.

9. Sadly, that is what the group is now unable to do. The delay is partly due to the reasons outlined in paragraph 6 above. It is also partly due to inherent difficulties in the task that the group has been set. The task group is aware that many people are looking, as a matter of urgency, for the Conference to decide one way or another how the Methodist Church should respond in its life and worship to the changes in the legal definition of marriage, which now include the possibility of same-sex marriage as well as heterosexual marriage. If such questions are primarily seen in practical terms, decisions about them are often dealt with by a report containing recommendations. As with all matters of policy, such recommendations should be based on prayerful discernment; careful reading, interpretation and application of the Scriptures; and rigorous thinking. At the same time, they are grounded in an agreed framework of the Methodist Church’s theological understanding and teaching ("our doctrines").
10. Changes to that framework, however, are not dealt with through a report with recommendations, but through a Statement of the Conference under Standing Order 129 such as the current task group is directed to prepare. Such Statements set out the formal judgment of the Conference on a major and wide-ranging issue of faith and practice. They have the highest degree of authority in the Methodist Church. They are relatively rare, and are intended to last for at least ten years, and to be able to stand alongside the formal statements of other Churches (even if offering different understandings and perspectives) and withstand the highest level of theological scrutiny. Yet such documents are by their very nature long, and often cannot be made easily accessible to the majority of the Methodist people. This is demonstrated by the difficulty (documented in Conference reports over the last 20 years) in using the 1992 Statement on “Family Life, the Single Person and Marriage” to develop many resources for teaching, study and exploration on those issues as a whole, or to provide guidance requested by the Conference on ‘Cohabitation’ in particular (a topic now remitted to the current task group).

11. The task group recognises that many people, representing a wide spectrum of opinions, are concentrating their attention on the issue of same-sex marriage. There often appears to be an underlying assumption that the Conference already has an adequate definition of and statement about marriage from a Christian perspective as it applies to heterosexual couples in the twenty-first century; and that the decision to be made is essentially one of policy as to whether that understanding can and should include the possibility of it being applied to same-sex couples, or must necessarily exclude them. Yet it is implicit in previous reports to the Conference (not least, that of 2016) that for a number of reasons the 1992 Statement, while containing much that is still relevant and helpful, is no longer adequately guiding the thinking and practice of the Methodist people even in so far as it applies to heterosexual couples. This has also become the conviction of the current task group, which is agreed in principle that the whole of the Methodist Church’s understanding and practice with regards to marriage and other significant personal relationships needs to be re-examined and, where necessary, re-stated. Some of the issues involved in this are set out below.

A proposed way of proceeding

12. The task group is presenting this interim report to the Conference of 2018. It will make a presentation to the Conference in plenary session about the direction of its thinking, and

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2 A major example of such a Statement on faith and practice is that adopted by the Conference of 1999 on “The Nature of the Christian Church in Methodist Practice and Experience” entitled “Called to Love and Praise”.

then consult the members of the Conference in a series of workshops about their views on particular issues arising in that work.

13. During the 2018/2019 connexional year, the task group will work to complete the draft Statement, working with the Faith and Order Committee to ensure that it is rigorous, and will present it to the 2019 Conference. The main resolution before the 2019 Conference will be to the effect that the draft Statement be commended to the Connexion for study, discussion and response.

14. The Conference will also be asked to direct that the consultation period for study, discussion and response be from the end of the 2019 Conference to the end of January 2020. This would require bodies that are due to respond formally to arrange their times of meetings and agendas to make this possible. It would allow time for there to be consultation with the Faith and Order Committee and for any revisions to the draft Statement to be made, before final submission of the Statement to the 2020 Conference (the same time as that in the process set out by the 2016 Conference). This will require the 2019 Conference to suspend SO 129(3) in respect of this item of business so as to enable the Conference to vote on the Statement in 2020 as opposed to the Conference in the next year but one, that is 2021.

15. If, however, the Conference were to wish to retain a two-year consultation period, that period would be between the end of the 2019 Conference and January 2021, allowing time for any revisions to the draft Statement to be made and scrutinised by the Faith and Order Committee before final submission of the Statement to the 2021 Conference.

**Some preliminary issues**

16. In this section we are not presenting a draft Statement under Standing Order 129, or even a formal, fully documented and rigorously argued report that sets out any of our potential recommendations. Instead, we wish to indicate briefly the general direction of our task group’s explorations, and to raise with the Conference and the wider Connexion some important issues which will shape our final conclusions.

17. As we have worked, we have tried to be open and transparent with each other in dealing with the range of opinions held amongst us and within the Connexion as a whole about the issues before us. The following are but a few headlines. What sets the definitions

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4 For example, Districts may wish to devote part of their autumn synod meetings to the draft Statement.
5 SO 129(3) requires the Conference to give directions as to “the form and duration of such study and discussion, the timing and consideration of any such response and the year in which the matter shall next be brought before Conference, being at earliest the next year but one. The Conference may at any time vary those directions.”
of concepts like ‘marriage’ and ‘relationships’ for our Church: the state and the law; or philosophers, social anthropologists and other thinkers and opinion-formers; or divine revelation and Christian faith; or some combination of these or other factors? What do we have to say about these things in the light of contemporary scientific and social-scientific understandings? What do we have to say as a Church about what it is to be a human being? How do people best relate to each other? How do we best form primary social groups (such as families) today? What is it to be a gendered being, and what do we understand gender to be? What is it to be a sexual being and what do we understand sex to be? How is our sexuality best accepted as a gift of God, and best expressed to the glory of God? What roles do forms of cohabitation, other alternative forms of relationship, and marriage best play in all this? Does it make a difference whether any of them involve sexual intimacy or not? What is best if the relationships are heterosexual? What is best if they are same-sex? What is best if people see themselves as bisexual, or transgender? How do changing understandings of gender identity affect our understanding of others?

18. We recognise and value the considerable energies already spent by many Methodists in coming to understand differing perspectives on these topics. We became aware that for some the Church’s current exclusion of same-sex marriage and general reticence about sexual relationships (both same-sex and heterosexual) and cohabitation are experienced as very demeaning and excluding. At the same time, some who cherish the traditional views and practices taught by the Church feel that their efforts in keeping to them are demeaned by suggestions that fresh understandings might be brought alongside them, and fear that they might be excluded by particular potential developments.

19. In dealing with these things, we have discovered how important it is to have guidelines for how to conduct our discussions. We have come to value highly the ‘model statement on Living with Contradictory Convictions’ set out in the report of the previous task group to the 2016 Conference. We recommend it to everyone seeking to share in this process of discerning God’s will. We continue to respect the integrity of differing opinions and to “learn from one another as we travel together as fellow pilgrims” (as the report of the previous task group to the 2016 Conference put it).

20. We have therefore paid particular attention to how our Church might share in the process of discernment and develop a corporate vision of God’s will for personal relationships in general, and marriage in particular. Methodists have often sought to bring together insights from ‘the Scriptures’, ‘the Church’s traditions’, ‘reason’ (including developing scientific and theological understandings), and ‘experience’ (personal and social). But central to all the discussions over recent decades about the issues remitted to our task group has been the engagement with the Scriptures. Thus, the report of the Working Party on Marriage and Civil Partnerships to the 2014 Conference stated that, as would be expected and hoped, the largest single issue raised in its process of
consultation was the importance of the Bible in the Church’s decision-making. It noted that the variety of views expressed suggested that the current argument in the Church is not over biblical authority as such, but, rather, scriptural interpretation and application. It also suggested that the range of responses to its consultation were a vivid illustration of how the various types of view that had been outlined in the Faith and Order Committee’s report to the 1998 Conference, *A Lamp to my Feet and a Light to my Path*\(^6\) interact in practice. That report indicated a range of ways in which Methodists use what is written in the Bible as a source for what they believe.

21. The 1998 Conference, however, did not choose to affirm only one of those ways of using Scripture as being correct. Nor has any subsequent Conference. So where a variety of views about the interpretation and use of the Bible, each of which the Conference has affirmed, lead to different or even contradictory conclusions about matters of belief or practice, the Conference has a difficult task in finding its way forward. This is the case in the issues before us now. As a task group, we have come to see that we can only proceed humbly, carefully, prayerfully, and in constant engagement with the Scriptures as we confer together to attempt to see how the principles of God’s love might be embodied today. In the material that we propose bringing to the 2019 Conference, we shall say more about biblical texts and insights that relate to marriage and relationships in general, including same-sex relationships.

22. For example, many people (as demonstrated in the consultation reported in the 2014 report) refer to Genesis 2:24 as providing a definition of marriage: “Therefore a man leaves his father and his mother and clings to his wife, and they become one flesh.”\(^7\) Care, though, needs to be taken that we do not simply take our contemporary understandings of marriage and read them back uncritically into the biblical narratives.

23. We have been fascinated to see how understandings of marriage have changed through the centuries. Methodist statements and liturgies about marriage have always seen it as a gift of God, and an institution in which God’s love can be identified, accepted thankfully, dedicated to God and received again overflowing with blessing. Within that framework, they have moved over the years from seeing its purpose as being mainly about procreation, or the control of powerful sexual instincts and emotions, to being mainly about companionship and mutual support.\(^8\) In doing so, the same biblical texts

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8. The shifts are most noticeable in the sections of the authorised marriage services which are actually headed “The Declaration of Purpose” in the 1975 Methodist Service Book. The emphasis on procreation and the control of sexual instincts is found in services inherited or adapted from the Church of England’s Book of Common Prayer. The shifts had already begun in the 1936 Methodist Book of Offices (following Methodist Union).
have been read and interpreted in different ways to support those understandings. This developing nature of Christian understanding and practice means that we need to be in a constant, reflective and sensitive dialogue with the Scriptures.

24. The task group also recognises that the term ‘marriage’ has covered a wide diversity of practices and meanings not just in the Church, but more generally through time and across cultures. In Britain, the Marriage Act 1753 (‘Lord Hardwicke’s Act’) led to the assumption that the Christian understanding of marriage and that of the state and wider society were co-terminous. That assumption still implicitly affects the way many Methodists think of marriage today. But over the years across wider society, marriage has generally come to have more of a shared legal and civic meaning, rather than a religious meaning (although, for a significant minority, a religious aspect to marriage is still important). Partially, at least, a gap has opened up between the two, as shown most explicitly by the Marriage Act 2013, which created a category of legal and civic marriage for same-sex couples, irrespective of the traditional teaching of the Churches.

25. That, in turn, has made us look carefully at whether there is a distinctively Christian way of understanding and practising marriage and other significant forms of personal relationship. To put the point theologically about just one aspect of this, what do we think God is doing when people come to be married, and when we conduct a wedding service and offer the couple support as they seek to work out and live out its implications afterwards?

26. That in turn raises the question of what status any guidance has that the Church offers to people concerning their practice or conduct in marriage or other forms of personal relationship. The most obvious example here is that in its 1993 Resolutions, the Conference formally reaffirmed an aspect of what it understood to be the traditional teaching of the Church about marriage and other relationships, namely that there should be “chastity for all outside marriage and fidelity within it”. Whilst the focus of discussion since 1993 about the application of that resolution has tended to be on homosexual relationships, the first phrase of it in particular (‘chastity for all outside marriage’) refers to human sexuality in general, and to all forms of sexual relationship, not least heterosexual ones.

27. One possibility is that pronouncements by the Conference of this type are intended to be statements of disciplinary standards for its members, officers, and ministers. The 2006 Conference adopted a resolution that stated that the 1993 Resolutions on Human Sexuality are part of ‘our discipline’. This resolution was the outcome of a report that indicated that ‘our discipline’ is ‘binding upon all within the Church’ unless only certain officers and institutions are specifically mentioned in particular standing orders or resolutions of the Conference. Yet monitoring and regulating such discipline across all in the Church would be highly problematic.
28. Another possibility is that such resolutions are expected to have little or no effect on how people behave, or, at most, will be matters of private aspiration and conscience. It has been argued that, in making pronouncements such as the one quoted above, the Conference has put before all church members (lay and ordained) the responsibility of examining their aspirations and practice in the light of the 1993 Resolutions. In other words, the onus is on each member in his or her conscience to reflect on whether their behaviour fits within them.

29. As a task group, however, we are minded to see them in a stronger light, as more than private aspirations. They are in this sense teaching about how gospel values apply in particular contexts and situations. That is why in paragraph 17 above we phrased questions in terms of what we believe to be ‘best’.

30. With these contemporary questions about marriage and other significant forms of personal relationship in mind, we believe that the Church can provide afresh, spiritual and ethical insights into marriage. While recognising the importance of the legal and civic side to marriage (in which the Church has historically declared marriages to have been effected under the law of the land and registered them accordingly), we are exploring the possibility of offering an emphasis on the qualities of holy relating.

31. We have therefore been looking at what the Scriptures teach about holy relating and in particular at the biblical understanding of divine and human love. We have applied this not just to marriage, but also to other significant relationships. Against this criterion, we are able to evaluate issues of casual sex, cohabitation, heterosexual marriage, and same-sex marriage and relationships. We have come to see that the key aspect in all relationships is the Christ-like quality of the way in which people relate. We are minded to offer a vision for all significant relationships that they will be built on self-giving love, commitment, fidelity and loyalty, honesty, mutual respect, equality (including gender equality), and the desire for the flourishing of the other and self. It is through that self-giving rather than through self-seeking that the ‘self’ flourishes and begins to experience ‘life in all its fullness’.

32. We are therefore wanting to offer to everyone, whether they are Christian or not, the Methodist Church’s vision of marriage. In summary, such marriage is a socially recognised deepening of committed relating, which usually has a sexual dimension. It is primarily about companionship rather than sex, procreation or economics (although at times these latter aspects are not insignificant). Its purposes are for the honouring of God through the flourishing of the person, the couple, the family and the wider social group. It bears the hall-marks of Christ-like relating. It is, above all, part of God’s creative ordering of the universe, through which God’s grace and love may be experienced and shared.

33. This brings us to the particular issues about which we would like the Conference to confer in workshops. They interlink, but the main emphasis is distinct in each.
A. Sexual intimacy and cohabitation

What guidance, if any, should the Church offer on expressions of sexual intimacy within marriage and outside marriage? Are such matters purely the concern of the people involved, or do wider society and the Church (speaking as Christ’s body in the name of God) also have a legitimate view? If so, should any guidance only be offered in negative terms (e.g., “you shall not be violent, abuse or exploit”), or can more positive ways of speaking about holy, Christ-like relating be found?

Similarly, what guidance, if any, should the Church offer on cohabitation and other forms of personal relationship (whether or not they involve sexual intimacy)? Are they to be seen as alternatives to marriage, complementary to it, or even as legitimate preparation for it?

How can the Church live out its beliefs in these areas through such means as liturgies, pastoral support, and renewed teaching and guidance?

B. Marriage under the law and in the Church

What should the relationship be between civic or legal marriage, on the one hand; and marriage as understood more deeply by the Church, on the other? In some other countries, the marriage service of the Church can only take place when a marriage under the law of the land has already been contracted and registered.

Would decoupling the civic ceremony and the church service in the UK strengthen or weaken the Church’s understanding and practice of marriage, and its standing in and influence on society? Would it enable the Church to put the emphasis more on the quality of the relationships being developed, and on the spirituality of the union rather than on its social nature as a marker of status?

If so, how in these circumstances should we preach and offer the gospel? Should the Church welcome everyone, whether or not a member, who enquires about a marriage service in any of its places of worship? Should it look for an openness to God in them, not necessarily a developed understanding of the Christian faith? Should the Church, as part of the vision of marriage it offers, also look for and encourage the qualities of holy relating in every couple? Is the marriage service an act of worship in which the people representing the Church and the couple concerned thank God for the blessings of God’s grace and the love from each other that they had already received; commit themselves in faith to accept and return that love in every way they can through the changing circumstances of life; return the blessing to God in the form of thanks and praise; and receive their relationship again from God, recognised, transformed and overflowing with blessing?
C. Heterosexual marriage and same-sex marriage
How might the Church manage the practical implications should it choose not to affirm same-sex marriage as part of its understanding and practice of marriage? Are there tensions between the 1993 resolutions (particularly that on chastity and fidelity) on the one hand, and, on the other, the current ‘exception’ or ‘conscience’ clauses which do not prevent Methodists entering civic same-sex marriages? If so, how might they be resolved?

Similarly, how might the Church manage the practical implications should it choose to affirm same-sex marriage as part of its understanding and practice of marriage? Should there be ‘exception’ or ‘conscience clauses’ for ministers who do not wish to conduct such services (as there are for those who do not wish to conduct marriages for divorcees)? Should there be ‘exception’ or ‘conscience clauses’ for Local Churches who do not want same-sex marriage services to be conducted in them, or would principles of connexionalism and equality mean that any Local Church that wishes to conduct heterosexual marriages should also be required to be open to conduct same-sex marriages?

34. We are on a challenging journey in which we have experienced, and sometimes been surprised by, joy. What we have set out in this interim report shows the trajectory of our work, but is not exhaustive of all that we have done. We have tried to indicate some of our developing insights into marriage and relationships, and some of the issues with which we are grappling in order to fulfil the large and important task that the Conference has remitted to us. We will listen very carefully to the views expressed in the workshops. We shall then work in conjunction with the Faith and Order Committee and bring the fruits of all our reflections to the 2019 Conference.

***RESOLUTIONS

27/1. The Conference receives the Report.

27/2. The Conference adopts the proposed way of proceeding and timetable set out in paragraphs 12, 13 and 14 in the Report, and directs Districts and Circuits to ensure that appropriate arrangements are made for the relevant church bodies to fulfil them.
28. Ecumenical Report

| Contact name and details | The Revd Neil A Stubbens  
Connexional Ecumenical Officer  
StubbensN@methodistchurch.org.uk |
<table>
<thead>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Subject and aims</td>
<td>An update to the Ecumenical Reports received by the Conference in 2016 and 2017, the first of which outlined the scope of the Methodist Church’s ecumenical relationships.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Introduction

1.1. As the Methodist Church reaffirms *Our Calling*, it is appropriate to remember the vision statement for ecumenical work, *Our Ecumenical Calling: Making a difference together in the twenty-first century*; it was adopted by the Methodist Council and received (and slightly amended) by the Conference in 2009\(^1\). Like *Priorities for the Methodist Church*, it talks of ‘partnership’, in particular of “living in ecumenical partnership”. The forms of partnership, as well as the partners, are many and varied: worshipping with other Christians in the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity and on various occasions when visiting other places; learning and caring with other Christians as we engage together in Lent Groups and support the bereaved; serving with other Christians through foodbanks; sharing in evangelism with other Christians through *Thy Kingdom Come* and Hope 2018.

1.2. This report offers examples of ecumenical activities and activities carried out ecumenically that relate to, interact with, and resource those in local, circuit, and district contexts.

2. The World Council of Churches (WCC)

2.1. The WCC’s Conference on World Mission and Evangelism took place in Arusha, Tanzania in March. Organised by the WCC’s Commission on World Mission and Evangelism, it was on the theme ‘Moving in the Spirit: Called to transforming discipleship’. One of its features was the integration of worship into the conference. The Methodist Church sent five representatives and they are sharing the experience and stories they heard in various ways. The documents relating to the conference are available on the WCC’s website, including the Arusha Call to Discipleship\(^2\). There is a fuller report elsewhere in the *Agenda*.

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1. [http://www.methodist.org.uk/media/3039/ec-vision-our-ecumenical-calling.pdf](http://www.methodist.org.uk/media/3039/ec-vision-our-ecumenical-calling.pdf)  
2.2. The material for next year’s Week of Prayer for Christian Unity has been produced by the Churches in Indonesia; its title is *Justice and Only Justice you shall Pursue* (Deuteronomy 16:18-20) and explores the call to be one amidst a world of injustice.

3. **The Conference of European Churches (CEC)**

3.1. The 15th General Assembly of CEC took place from 31 May to 6 June in Novi Sad, Serbia. The theme was, “You shall be my witnesses” (Acts 1:8) and amidst the current ecumenical challenges in Europe, the Assembly explored the Christian values of witness, justice, and hospitality. The Methodist Church sent two representatives and, by the time of the Methodist Conference, it is hoped that reports of the Assembly will be available.

4. **The Churches’ Commission for Migrants in Europe (CCME)**

4.1. The CCME mission statement says that it “serves the churches in their commitment to promote the vision of an inclusive community through advocating for an adequate policy for migrants, refugees and minority groups at European and national level”. The Joint Public Issues Team has included CCME resources in its work, including a collection of theological reflections on migration. The triennial General Assembly of CCME met in June 2017 and agreed the work priorities for 2018-2020 to be Safe Passage, Europe and International Refugee Protection, Europe and International Migration, Upholding the Dignity of Persons, Addressing Discrimination, and Uniting in Diversity.

5. **Churches Together in Britain and Ireland (CTBI)**

5.1. This past year, CTBI has provided, as usual, resources for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity (*That All May Be Free*, which was adapted from material prepared by Churches in the Caribbean) and Lent (*40 Stories of Hope* for which CTBI partnered with Hope). Resources for Racial Justice Sunday (11 February 2018) were produced by both the United Reformed Church (on the theme ‘Staying Power’) and the Roman Catholic Church in England and Wales (on the theme ‘Belonging: All are welcome’).

5.2. CTBI’s Inter Faith Theological Advisory Group has completed a study guide *Christian Witness in a Multi-Religious World*, which is a document from the WCC, the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, and the World Evangelical Alliance.

6. **Scotland**

6.1. Action of Churches Together in Scotland (ACTS) has been reviewed by the Theos think tank and the Trustees and Members’ Meeting have started to engage with the report as they seek to discern possible ways forward.
7. **England**

7.1. Churches Together in England (CTE) now has 48 member Churches and its unity and diversity will be marks of the 2018 Forum in September, which has the theme, “I am with you always” – together in God’s mission. The Revd Ruth Gee is the Moderator. The Methodist Church is sending 12 representatives.

7.2. Theos has carried out a review of CTE, and the CTE Board and Enabling Group have engaged with it as they seek to discern the role of the national ecumenical instrument for England for the next five to ten years.

8. **The Free Churches Group (FCG)**

8.1. The work of the Free Churches Group continues to be focused on supporting the Churches’ work in education, and healthcare and prison chaplaincy.

9. **Wales**

9.1. One of the continuing emphases in Cytûn’s work is Europe: it hosted the annual meeting of the national ecumenical councils of Europe in Cardiff last year, its Wales and Europe Working Party has published an initial report, and Cytûn plans to work closely with CEC throughout this year.

10. **The Methodist-Anglican Panel for Unity in Mission (MAPUM)**

10.1. MAPUM continues to consider items relating to the covenant with the Church of England (including, in the last year, ‘Mission and Ministry in Covenant’), A New Framework for Local Unity in Mission, and local ecumenical partnerships. It has also discussed aspects of ecumenical hospitality, some of the issues about ‘intermediate’ ecumenical bodies in England, and details of ongoing ecumenical legislation in the Church of England.

11. **The Methodist-United Reformed Church Liaison Group (MURCLG)**

11.1. The Liaison Group has made available new guidelines on services of welcome and induction and hopes to publish four brief papers to increase mutual understanding, especially of those in single congregation local ecumenical partnerships involving both Churches. The Group has also spent a significant amount of time on producing a constitution for ecumenical areas involving the two Churches.
12. The British Methodist-Roman Catholic Dialogue Commission

12.1. This past year, the Commission has focused on the worship and praise of God; it has considered Roman Catholic and Methodist perspectives on liturgy, prayer, traditions of spirituality, and fresh expressions. To mark the end of the current five-year period of dialogue, the Commission is preparing a report that it is hoped will help to promote mutual understanding among Methodists and Roman Catholics and inspire others of both Churches to share together in various ways, including dialogue.

13. Methodist Ecumenical Office, Rome (MEOR)

13.1. The varied work of the Office continues to develop. Last October marked the 50th anniversary of the Joint International Commission for Dialogue between the World Methodist Council (WMC) and the Roman Catholic Church. The MEOR Stakeholders’ Forum met in Rome, as did the WMC Steering Committee, and they were joined by the current members of the Commission and the President of the Italian Methodist Church at an audience with Pope Francis.

13.2. The appointment of another One Programme intern has, again, been a significant enhancement to the Office.

14. District Ecumenical Officers (DEOs)

14.1. In place of the annual Anglican-Methodist Ecumenical Officers’ consultation, a good number of the District Ecumenical Officers attended a conference on ‘Responding to the Reformation’ last October; the papers have been published in the ecumenical journal One in Christ. In the spring meeting, attention was focused on the role of ecumenical instruments and other bodies in Britain and beyond.

***RESOLUTION

28/1. The Conference receives the Report.
Contact name and details

| John Weaving |
| Director of Finance and Company Secretary |
| Methodist Independent Schools Trust |
| jweaving@methodistschools.org.uk |

Resolutions

| The resolutions in the report enable the Conference to: |
| ● appoint Trustees of Methodist Independent Schools Trust (MIST) and governors of Ashville College, Kingswood School and Rydal Penrhos School. |
| ● appoint Trustee of Methodist Academies and Schools Trust (MAST). |

Methodist Independent Schools Trust

Appointment of Trustees to MIST and Governors to Associated Schools

Trustees of Methodist Independent Schools Trust are appointed by the Conference, normally for a three-year term. Nominations are made by the Trust, Chairs of Governors and the Methodist Council.

Under the Schemes relating to the administration of Ashville College, Kingswood School and Rydal Penrhos School, the Conference is responsible for the appointment of governors to their governing bodies. Governors are nominated by the governing bodies and/or the Methodist Independent Schools Trust and are initially appointed for a period of three years. They may be re-appointed for a further period.

***RESOLUTIONS

Methodist Independent Schools Trust

29/1. The Conference adopts the nomination by the Council of the Revd Stephen Burgess as a Trustee of the Methodist Independent Schools Trust, for a period of two years concluding 31 August 2020.

29/2. The Conference adopts the nomination by the Trustees of Dr Neil Tunnicliffe as a Trustee of the Methodist Independent Schools Trust for a period of three years concluding 31 August 2021.

29/3. The Conference adopts a nomination by the Chairs of Governors of Mr Nick Buckland OBE as a Trustee of Methodist Independent Schools Trust for a period of three years concluding 31 August 2021.
Ashville College

29/4. The Conference adopts the re-nominations by the Governors of Mr Peter Lee, Ms Sue Jacklin, Mr Jeremy Henderson as Governors of Ashville College for a period of three years concluding 31 August 2021.

Kingswood School

29/5. The Conference adopts the re-nominations by the Governors of Mr Simon Crowther, Mr Tim Westbrook, Mr Robert Sandry, Mr Tony Raper, Mr David Quine, Ms Katie Pillinger, Ms Barbara Pendle, Mr Peter Freeman, Ms Susan Cook, Mr Colin Burns, Mr Paul Baines, Mr Robert Joliffe as Governors of Kingswood School for a period of three years concluding 31 August 2021.

29/6. The Conference adopts the nominations by the Governors of Mrs Helen Bools and Mr Tim Lindsay as Governors of Kingswood School for a period of three years concluding 31 August 2021.

Rydal Penrhos School

29/7. The Conference adopts the re-nominations by the Governors for the appointment of Mr Ralph Dransfield, the Revd Dr Stephen Wigley and Mrs Anne Watson as Governors of Rydal Penrhos School for a period of three years concluding 31 August 2021.

29/8. The Conference adopts the re-nominations by the Governors for the appointment of Mr Iwan Williams, Mr Julian Barnes, Mr Paul Burgess, Mrs Nicola Rutherford, Mr John Waszek, Mr John Payne, Dr Nigel Bickerton, Mr Steve Scarff and Mrs Christine Lunt as Governors of Rydal Penrhos School for a period of five years concluding 31 August 2023.

Reasoned Statements

Methodist Independent Schools Trust

The Revd Stephen Burgess
Ministry has included 20 years as a School Chaplain. Former District Chair of York and Hull District.

Dr Neil Tunnicliffe
Former governor at a Methodist School. Experienced leader who has worked on high profile projects (Sports Council, Rugby Football Union) and directs his own consulting practice. Committed Christian.
Mr Nick Buckland OBE
A wide range of high profile public and voluntary sector board roles and is Chair of Governors at St Petroc’s School and a Governor at Shebbear College. The Articles of the Trust provide for three Chairs of Governors Trustees and Nick Buckland is nominated to fill the position vacated by Mr Mike Saltmarsh.

Kingswood School

Mrs Helen Bools
A parent of two previous Kingswood students. A retired Consultant Orthodontist, with experience of strategic management, training and examiner roles in hospitals and professional medical societies. Chair of the Kingswood Compliance and Safeguarding Committee.

Mr Tim Lindsay
An Old Kingswoodian and the son and father of Old Kingswoodians. Previously Chair of the Kingswood Association. Now CEO of a creative education charity and prestigious global advertising and design awards show and non-executive chairman of an advertising micro-network.

***RESOLUTIONS

Methodist Academies and Schools Trust

29/9. The Conference adopts the nomination by the Methodist Council of the Revd Sally Ratcliffe as a Trustee of the Methodist Academies and Schools Trust, for a period of three years concluding 31 August 2021.

Reasoned Statements

The Revd Sally Ratcliffe
Worked as a primary school teacher for 14 years, teaching in Foundation Stage, KS1 and KS2 before coming to ministry. School Governor and former Literacy Consultant.
30. Safeguarding Committee

| Contact name and details | The Revd Alison F Tomlin  
| Chair of the Committee  
| alison.tomlin@methodist.org.uk |
| Resolution | 30/1. The Conference receives the Report. |

Summary of content and impact

| Subject and aims | To update the Conference on safeguarding developments since the 2017 Conference. |
| Main points |  
| Oversight  
| Safeguarding casework and development work  
| Training  
| District Safeguarding Officers (DSOs)  
| Ecumenical working  
| Developing survivors’ work |

1. **Oversight**

The last year has seen the Connexional Safeguarding Team and the Safeguarding Committee follow through the key decisions of the 2017 Conference, move towards completion of all past case reviews (PCR) and undertake the necessary preliminary work to restructure the team in order to be able to deliver the new professional casework supervision structure for District Safeguarding Officers.

1.1 The work of safeguarding is now subject to a strategic work plan that is reviewed by the Safeguarding Committee annually in order to guide work and set priorities. This report highlights some of the key areas by way of update to the Conference.

1.2 The Safeguarding Committee meets twice a year and has a further training event in order to update on practice developments. This assists with the work that is undertaken through safeguarding panels which consider risk assessments for those with blemished DBS checks and those where serious safeguarding allegation have been made.

1.3 The chair of the committee is stepping down at the end of this connexional year. Due to the increased activity in safeguarding and desire to deal with cases in as timely manner as possible the committee will now have a deputy chair as well. The Council has appointed the Revd Henry Lewis as chair of the committee, and the Revd Anne Brown will be joining the committee and become the deputy.
1.4 Last year’s report to the Conference reported that “There has been no reduction in society’s on-going exposure to safeguarding matters whether they relate to past cases or current allegations and convictions of abuse. The more recent allegations arising from the world of football clubs have caused many to wonder which organisation might be next in revealing unsafe practices and behaviours from the past or in the present. The exposure of past allegations of abuse in football resembled much of the experience of the Methodist Church in revealing and then dealing with past cases. At the same time, last year has seen our colleagues in other churches, particularly Catholic and Church of England, answering questions about a series of (sometimes high profile) cases of clergy abuse. We have to assume that the Methodist Church cannot be immune to such a case or cases arising from our work, either from the past or in the present. Indeed, we have dealt with a number of cases that have gone to court and resulted in convictions this year but have generally only received local press coverage. Therefore, we cannot afford to reduce our efforts to take full advantage of the learning from our PCR and understand the steps we need to take now in order to continue to make our churches the safest environments and most nurturing places for members and users alike.”

This is reported in full very deliberately as it could have been written just as accurately for this year. Abuse in football has continued to be in the news with criminal convictions and we have now added the worlds of (Hollywood) filmmaking, theatre and most recently international development charities to the list of those institutions and organisations who find their activities, past records and current policies under the media and public spotlight.

1.5 Our colleagues in partner churches have been exposed in public hearings conducted by the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse and there are increasing calls from various quarters, not least groups representing victims and survivors of abuse in churches, for external inspection and regulation of safeguarding practices across the churches.

2. Safeguarding casework and development work

2.1 Annual statistics and the first 6 months of 2017/2018

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<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PCR cases open at 31 August</td>
<td>565</td>
<td>318</td>
<td>168</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PCR cases closed during this period</td>
<td>168</td>
<td>208</td>
<td>99</td>
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30. Safeguarding Committee

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>30 August 2016</th>
<th>20 August 2017</th>
<th>2016–2017 Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>DBS cases open at 31 August</strong></td>
<td>30</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>DBS cases closed during this period</strong></td>
<td>106</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non DBS cases open at 31 August 2016</td>
<td>362</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non DBS cases closed during this period</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post PCR cases open at 31 August 2016</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post PCR cases closed during this period</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Cases that related to past issues but have been received since the end of the PCR reporting period have been re-classified as Post PCR during this connexional year.

* there was an audit of open DBS cases during at the later end of 2015/2016 which resulted in a higher number of closures and decrease in open cases.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Risk assessments during connexional year</th>
<th>Sep 2015 – Aug 2016</th>
<th>Sep 2016 – Aug 2017</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of panels commissioned and held</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcome</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Appeals</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Appeals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not cleared</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restrictions on role and safeguarding contract</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cleared with conditions</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resigned from role</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
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</table>

2.3 The new provider for criminal records checks, Due Diligence Checking, began work on 1 January 2018 following a competitive procurement process and the transfer from the Churches’ Agency for Safeguarding has progressed well with minimum disruption as all checks have now moved online.

2.4 Significant work has been undertaken over the last year to review the remainder of the past cases referrals in order to be able to complete this piece of work. With the assistance of additional sessional time drawn from DSOs and members of District Safeguarding Groups it is pleasing to report that we are on target to finish the case work enquiries this connexional year. Learning continues to be gathered from this work and we will be further assessing this work in order to provide a greater statistical analysis of the overall picture of what has been uncovered in due course.
2.5 The 2017 Conference approved the introduction of safeguarding contracts to replace covenants of care and we have now introduced new procedures for undertaking safeguarding risk assessments. A new pool of approved risk assessors has been recruited for all connexionally commissioned risk assessments who will adopt consistent standards and approaches. At the same time we have introduced measures to reduce delays in the assessment process as much as possible in order to assist all parties in dealing with matters as efficiently and effectively as is reasonable.

3. **Safeguarding training**

3.1 The Leadership Module has been completely revised and launched as a new Advanced Module course incorporating some online learning and role specific reflections. Safeguarding and Learning Network colleagues have taken a lead in the production of this material.

3.2 A similar approach is underway to produce a learning module for those who volunteer to sit on monitoring and support groups of those on safeguarding contracts.

3.3 Discussions with mission partners have continued during the year and a number of areas are being addressed to increase the preparation for mission partners before they undertake their placement and how they are supported when they are out of the country seeking to apply good safeguarding practice in cultures and legal systems sometimes very different to our British institutions.

3.4 Work has also begun to address improving the selection process and support for ministers from other countries and conferences who come to Britain in order that they are fully conversant with our safeguarding processes.

4. **District Safeguarding Officers (DSOs)**

4.1 The 2017 Conference adopted a formula to be used by all Districts in calculating the number of hours required for DSO work in order adequately to cover safeguarding demands. The feedback from using this has been overwhelmingly positive in giving districts a mechanism to look at current and future demands. In most cases it has resulted in increases in hours allocated either in this year or planned for next. The formula will enable Districts to revisit this calculation and enable resourcing to be kept under review.

4.2 The 2017 Conference also instructed that proposals should be taken to the Strategy and Resources Committee in order to introduce a professional casework supervision structure for all DSOs. This has been achieved and a new structure is being planned in order for implementation from September onwards. In order to deliver this there
will be four supervising case workers in the connexional safeguarding team and a Planning and Development post working to a Safeguarding Director.

4.3 This year’s annual safeguarding conference for DSOs and members of District Safeguarding Groups involved other safeguarding officers in the Church and took a focus of external partnerships, following up last year’s conference led by the Revd Helen Cameron on ‘what does apology mean in the life of the Church for survivors and victims of abuse?’ This very helpfully kept this theme as a common focus as we reflected on the progress of safeguarding within the Church and how we share that with outside agencies and demonstrate our competence.

5. Ecumenical working

5.1 Our shared safeguarding forum, the Joint Safeguarding Reference Group has been reviewed and renamed the Anglican Methodist Safeguarding Group with a refreshed terms of reference to reflect a greater regional focus and more thematic approach to shared conversations. Communication and liaison between the two safeguarding advisers has continued very effectively.

5.2 Support to the Christian Forum for Safeguarding has continued as has input into the URC past cases review and recruitment of their adviser post. Requests for information and learning from our past Cases Review have also been followed up with the Salvation Army, Society of Friends and United Synagogues.

6. Developing survivors’ work

6.1 Taking a survivor focus has now become part of all our safeguarding practice

6.2 The Methodist Survivors’ Reference Group has met during the year and been able to begin the process of establishing trust and confidence so that it can further help guide the Church in its safeguarding work and develop more informed practice towards those hurt by members of the Church. We are very grateful to all those who assist with this learning and work bringing their insights, personal stories and strategic challenges to the way we work.

6.3 We continue to offer support to individuals in a range of ways including individual casework, independent professional counselling and formal responses.

***RESOLUTION

30/1. The Conference receives the Report.
31. Faith and Order Committee Report

Contact name and details

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<tr>
<td>The Revd Dr Nicola Price-Tebbutt</td>
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<tr>
<td>Secretary of the Faith and Order Committee</td>
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<tr>
<td><a href="mailto:price-tebbuttn@methodistchurch.org.uk">price-tebbuttn@methodistchurch.org.uk</a></td>
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The Work of the Faith and Order Committee 2017/2018

1. The Faith and Order Committee is appointed by, and accountable to, the Methodist Conference. On behalf of the Conference, it helps to ensure that what the Methodist Church says and does is true to its self-understanding, mission and purpose. It therefore seeks to encourage a deepening of theological understanding, engagement with the Methodist tradition, and shared critical reflection in order to help discern Methodist perspectives and responses in all aspects of the Church’s life.

2. The remit of the Faith and Order Committee is contained within Standing Order 330. It is directed, for example, to encourage reflection on the theological implications of all the work undertaken by the Connexional Team, to undertake specific tasks of theological scrutiny, and to stimulate theological reflection and study throughout the Church. The Committee seeks to fulfil its responsibilities by offering theological consultation for work being conducted throughout the Connexion and theological
scrutiny for the work of the Conference and the Connexional Team. The Committee drafts, scrutinises and comments on reports from its own members or from other parts of the Methodist Church, makes recommendations to the Council and the Conference, offers advice on issues related to the faith and order of the Methodist Church, and reports to the Conference. Its roles in offering encouragement and in undertaking scrutiny sit alongside each other, and the Committee continues to give particular attention to how it might best help to stimulate, resource and encourage theological reflection throughout the Church.

3. In this report, the Committee outlines the main areas in which it has been working during the present connexional year and indicates the main items which it intends to bring to the Conference in 2019.

4. **Ways of working**

4.1. The Committee has met four times since the 2017 Conference: in October for a 24-hour residential meeting; in January for a day meeting (in part, jointly with the Ministries Committee), in March for a day meeting, and jointly with the Church of England’s Faith and Order Commission in May. The Faith and Order Executive is appointed to make some decisions on behalf of the Committee between meetings.

4.2. The Worship and Liturgy Sub-Committee meets according to need, and utilises electronic ways of working.

4.3. All reports, questions and communication to the Committee should be sent in the first instance to the Secretary of the Committee. The Committee has agreed a protocol for Faith and Order representation and consultation. As a general principle no one speaks on behalf of the Faith and Order Committee, except for the Secretary, unless they are specifically authorised to do so. Whilst those representing the Faith and Order Committee on other bodies cannot act on behalf of the Committee they shall endeavour to: articulate faith and order perspectives and highlight questions and concerns as appropriate; encourage a shared engagement in theological reflection; liaise with the Secretary of the Faith and Order Committee; and make reports or raise issues with the Committee as required.

4.4. The Committee continues to explore how it might best work with others in order to seek to stimulate theological reflection and study throughout the Church (SO 330(3)). It welcomes opportunities for collaboration and would encourage the creation of more opportunities for Methodists to confer theologically together within our oversight structures.
4.5. The appointment of the Faith and Order Committee is the responsibility of the Methodist Conference. The Committee expresses its thanks to the Revd Dr Martin Wellings who will be retiring as a member of the Committee at the end of this connexional year.

5. **Responses required by previous Conferences**

5.1. The Faith and Order Committee has been working on responses to specific Conference resolutions, and draws the attention of the Conference to the following:

5.2. **Ministry in the Methodist Church**
The 2014 Conference directed the Faith and Order Committee in consultation with the Ministries Committee “to undertake work on the theology and nature of lay and ordained ministry in the Methodist Church in Britain” and bring a report with any recommendations to the 2018 Conference. This work, along with other work relating to ministry is brought to the 2018 Conference in a separate report.

5.3. **Mission and Ministry in Covenant**
*Mission and Ministry in Covenant*, the report produced by the faith and order bodies of the Methodist Church and the Church of England on oversight and ministry, has already been made public. It was discussed at the Church of England’s General Synod in February, and is brought for debate, but not decision, as a separate report.

5.4. **Response to The Call to Holiness: From Glory to Glory (2016)**

5.5. **Alternative liturgical resource for Baptism** *(Memorial 25, 2016)*
The 2016 Conference directed the Faith and Order Committee to “produce some alternative baptism resources in accessible language that adhere to the structure of the authorised texts and thus retain the Methodist emphasis on prevenient grace.” This resource has now been produced and approved by the Faith and Order Committee. An alternative service for the baptism of young children will be available on the *Additional Methodist Liturgies* page of the Methodist website at [www.methodist.org.uk/our-faith/worship/additional-methodist-liturgies/](http://www.methodist.org.uk/our-faith/worship/additional-methodist-liturgies/)
5.6. **Holy Communion Mediated Through Social Media**

5.6.1. The 2011 Conference instructed the Faith and Order Committee to establish a group to discuss the issues related to “the practice of celebrating Holy Communion with dispersed communities via live, interactive media such as the Internet or video-conferencing”, including the question of whether “such a form of Holy Communion is acceptable within our discipline and practice.”

5.6.2. The 2015 Conference received the report *Holy Communion Mediated through Social Media* as an interim report and directed that further work be undertaken, including the involvement of those set out in the original response, and that a fuller report be presented to the Conference no later than 2018. In response the Faith and Order Committee has conferred with those with whom it had not previously consulted, undertaken further research, and engaged in further exploration of the relevant issues and questions.

5.6.3. It is clear that a wide range of theological questions is provoked not least in a continually changing digital context, and different social media platforms raise different issues. These questions relate to many aspects of online life and Christian experience and warrant further exploration and conversation. Many Christians, including Methodists, are engaged in creatively exploring these questions, and theological thinking is continually evolving. The Faith and Order Committee wishes to encourage Methodist engagement in these conversations and, in the light of this, has carefully considered whether a fuller report to the Conference is the best way to stimulate such theological thinking and enable theological exploration of new experiences, insights and technological developments. Rather than seeking to offer any Methodist view on these broad issues at this point, the Committee therefore notes that there are a range of resources and events, including online groups and forums, to help Christians reflect on these matters. It invites Methodists to engage with these and encourages theological exploration. The Committee will arrange the revising and updating of the list of resources available on the website, and will consider whether and how it can helpfully offer some opportunities for Methodists to confer together about such matters.

5.6.4. The Faith and Order Committee has given particular attention to the question of whether a “form of remote communion” in which a presbyter “in one location would be permitted to preside over a celebration of Holy Communion with a gathered group of fellowshipping believers consisting of groups or individuals residing in disparate locations who provide their own elements to be blessed by the person presiding.”

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1 Memorial 13, 2011 Conference
This involves consideration of our theology of the sacrament of Holy Communion and our theology of ministry. The Committee noted that the questions relating to the sacrament of Holy Communion potentially lead to a significant re-imagining of sacramental theology and that this is not something the Methodist Church should undertake on its own. The original memorial expressly asked for the group undertaking the work to include “representation from the Joint Implementation Commission or the Faith and Order Commission of the Church of England ... and from the United Reformed Church, in order to assist in the ecumenical exploration of the issue and any potential impact on the Anglican-Methodist Covenant of any potential outcomes proposed.” In the light of conversations with ecumenical partners, the Faith and Order Committee affirms the importance of together exploring such questions and coming to a shared understanding before the Methodist Church could consider whether any significant changes in policy and practice were appropriate. 

5.6.5. Consideration has also been given to exploration of these issues in other Methodist churches, particularly the discussions in the United Methodist Church. A report of their formal conversation and a collection of different views can be found on their website here: http://www.umc.org/what-we-believe/what-is-the-united-methodist-view-of-online-communion. The consensus from this 2013 formal conversation emphasised that “for the sake of unity in the Body of Christ, the establishment of unprecedented sacramental-like practices should be worked through in conversation with ecumenical partners”, that the teaching document This Holy Mystery does not support online Holy Communion and that engaging in such practice endangered intercommunion agreements with ecumenical partners. In 2013 the Council of Bishops agreed a moratorium on all online sacramental practices and, although this has not been universally observed, it was subsequently extended and is understood still to be in effect.

5.6.6. In the light of both further reflection and conversations with ecumenical partners, the Faith and Order Committee therefore re-affirms the recommendation of the Committee’s 2015 interim report that “the Conference adopt the policy that presbyters and other persons authorised to preside at the sacrament of the Lord’s Supper may not be permitted to use electronic means of communication, such as the internet or video-conferencing, in order to invite those not physically present at the celebration of the sacrament to participate by using their own communion bread and wine.” The Committee will keep this matter on its agenda and give consideration to the contribution it might helpfully make in stimulating theological thinking in this area.

6. Scrutiny and consultancy work

6.1. The Committee has engaged with various issues, projects and Council papers, providing specific responses to paperwork, continuing involvement in the support of
working groups, or commentary on the development of reports. Where appropriate, specific responses have been sent directly to the authors of reports, or to those providing the lead in relevant areas of work.

6.2. Under SO 330(10) the Faith and Order Committee has a specific role in scrutinising all matters directly concerning the faith and order of the Church presented to the Conference by other bodies. Such scrutiny requires consultation with the full Committee, and often some collaborative working, and the Committee is therefore grateful for early conversations to establish effective and constructive ways of working and reflecting as the work develops.

6.3. The Committee continues to reflect on how it might best support members of the Connexional Team, and those undertaking work (individuals and working parties) on behalf of the Methodist Council and the Conference, to think about how their work might be theologically resourced and what it means to reflect theologically in the context of the Methodist Church in Britain.

6.4. The Committee continues to consider how it might best work with others in order to fulfil its remit under SO 330(3) to “seek to stimulate theological reflection and study throughout the Church”, and will continue to give this attention during the next connexional year.

7. Work being brought to the 2019 Conference
The Faith and Order Committee’s report to the 2019 Conference will include the following pieces of work:

- The Theology and Ecclesiology Underpinning the Diaconate (including the Liturgical Role of Deacons)
- Theology of Safeguarding
- Revision of guidelines in relation to Exorcism

***RESOLUTIONS

31/1. The Conference receives the Report.

31/2. The Conference adopts the policy that presbyters and other persons authorised to preside at the sacrament of the Lord’s Supper are not permitted to use electronic means of communication, such as the internet or video-conferencing, in order to invite those not physically present with the presiding minister to receive the elements.
## 32. Ministry in the Methodist Church

| Contact name and details                  | The Revd Dr Nicola Price-Tebbutt  
|                                         | Secretary of the Faith and Order Committee  
|                                         | price-tebbuttn@methodistchurch.org.uk |
|                                         | 32/3. The Conference, pursuant to Standing Order 129 (2) and (3): |
|                                         | (i) commends the draft Conference Statement 'Ministry in the Methodist Church' to the Connexion for study, discussion and response;  
|                                         | (ii) directs the Secretary of the Conference to ensure that the draft Statement is made widely available for study and discussion.  
|                                         | (iii) invites Districts, Circuits and Local Churches to send comments on the draft Statement to the Secretary of the Faith and Order Committee to arrive not later than 1 February 2020.  
|                                         | 32/5. The Conference directs the Secretary of the Conference to oversee joint work by the Faith and Order, Ministries, and Stationing committees to explore the aspects of changing patterns of ministry identified in paragraphs 2.3 to 2.6 of this report (particularly revisiting Releasing Ministers for Ministry, itinerancy and stationing, local pastoral ministry, and employed lay ministry) and to report on such joint work to the 2020 Conference. |
|                                         | 32/6. The Conference directs the Ministries Committee to continue to give attention to pioneer ministry and to ensure that there is a gathering of learning and opportunities for collaborative reflection on questions of practice, policy and theology. |
|                                         | 32/7. The Conference directs the Faith and Order Committee to explore theological and ecclesiological aspects of the nature of leadership in the Methodist Church and report to the 2020 Conference.
Part A:

1. The 2014 Conference directed the Faith and Order Committee in consultation with the Ministries Committee to undertake work on the “theology and nature of lay and ordained ministry in the Methodist Church” (Resolution 35/2, 2014) and bring a final report no later than the 2018 Conference. This report comprises three parts:

   1.1. Part A is a general report and introduction to the work;
   1.2. Part B is a draft Statement on Ministry in the Methodist Church, presented for consideration as a draft Conference Statement under SO 129;
   1.3. Part C has three purposes:

      1.3.1. It highlights areas which may require further consideration but are not, or not solely, questions of faith and order and are therefore for other bodies in the life of the Church to explore. Whilst the Faith and Order Committee can resource and contribute to any further explorations, it is not within its remit to decide matters of policy;
      1.3.2. It identifies areas where further theological work will be reported to a later Conference as it flows from, rather than forming part of, the draft Conference Statement. Some of these areas the Conference has already asked the Faith and Order Committee to consider, others have emerged from this piece of work;
      1.3.3. It offers some reflections that emerge from the work which it may be helpful for the Conference to receive but do not appropriately form part of the draft Conference Statement.

2. This report is also the response to the following Conference directions to the Faith and Order Committee:

   2.1. Resolution 2/3 from 2011. The Conference directed the Ministries Committee in consultation with the Faith and Order Committee to consider the issues raised in the section of the General Secretary’s report entitled “Patterns of ministry: discipleship and mission” and “a fluid ‘mixed economy’”;
   2.2. Resolution 35/5 from 2012. The Conference directed the Faith and Order Committee in consultation with the Ministries Committee to consider the ways in which the Methodist Church can promote further hospitality, collaboration and mutuality between our orders of ministry;
   2.3. Response to Memorial 8, 2014. The Conference directed the Faith and Order Committee “to ensure that a review of the role and responsibilities of church stewards and other forms of lay leadership is included in the review of ministry in the Methodist Church”;
2.4 Response to Memorials 2 and 3, 2017. The Conference directed the Faith and Order Committee to ensure that, as part of the work on ministry, it considers the issues raised in the light of the acknowledgement that current practice does not fully reflect the flexible patterns of ministry envisaged in the Releasing Ministers for Ministry report.

3. In the changed and changing contexts in which the British Methodist Church is situated, a variety of factors indicate a need for a new Statement on ministry. Reflection on the Church’s role in contemporary British society and changing patterns of work and social life, the declining membership in many traditional churches, pressures on stationing, increased lay employment for roles within the Church, explorations of fresh ways of being church and engagement with new communities, and a sense of there being ‘too much to do’ impact on patterns of ministry. The Ministries Committee and the Faith and Order Committee have acknowledged that there are a number of wide ranging questions about ministry in the Methodist Church which need addressing. These arise from many areas of the Church’s life including: the work of the Ministries Committee on local pastoral ministry and Pioneer Pathways; questions regarding stationing, itinerancy and the nature and availability of presbyteral and diaconal appointments; as part of ecumenical conversations, particularly with regards to episcopacy; and the work on the theology and ecclesiology underpinning the diaconate.

4. Although the Methodist Church has engaged in much rich theological thinking with regards to ministry over the years, the Conference Statements and reports in which this is contained are not always well known or easily accessed. The new Statement (Part B of this report) sets out the Methodist Church’s understanding of ministry. It provides a framework for the Methodist people to participate in discerning our continuing response to God and engage theologically with opportunities and challenges that arise, and it encourages reflection on how we encourage each other to share in God’s mission in the varied contexts in which we live and work.

5. A Statement on ministry, or a report of the Faith and Order Committee, cannot provide specific responses to all of the issues that arise, nor would it be appropriate for it to do so. Some are a matter of policy and therefore for other bodies in the life of the Church to decide. Some are for Local Churches, Circuits and Districts to work out in their particular contexts. It is hoped that the new Statement will help resource such conversations and decision-making and encourage engagement with our shared theology and our corporate wisdom and experience. Part C of this report offers some further reflection on particular issues, indicating where this is best taken forward by another body. As theology and policy inform and shape each other, where appropriate it is suggested that this is done in dialogue with the Faith and Order Committee.

1 The Methodist Church, 2014, Faith and Order Committee report, 2.2
6. Conference Statements express our corporate understanding and wisdom and are intended to last for a considerable period of time. Part B of this report is therefore intended, if adopted by the Conference under SO 129, to be a considered Statement of the judgment of the Conference on ‘Ministry in the Methodist Church’ with a view to standing as such for several years (SO 129(1)). As thinking, and practice, in relation to some of the issues that prompted this Statement may continue to develop, it would not be appropriate for this to form part of the Statement itself. Part B therefore sets out the Methodist Church’s theological principles, and Part C offers further theological reflection (or highlights where it is needed) on particular aspects of the Church’s ministry. The Faith and Order Committee therefore proposes that Part B be dealt with as a draft Conference Statement and commended to the Connexion for study, discussion and response (Resolution 32/2). If the resolution is agreed then there will be a minimum of two years for study, discussion and response.

7. The Faith and Order Committee has met and corresponded with a variety of people, and adopted different means of consultation, in the preparation of this report. Such consultation has included workshops at the 2016 Conference, interviews, reflection days, group consultations and meetings with Church officers and other committees. A variety of people and groups have had the opportunity to comment on drafts of the report. Such a dialogical model of working was intentional, reflecting the theological process involved.

***RESOLUTION


Part B:

The Church of Christ, in every age beset by change but Spirit-led, must claim and test its heritage and keep on rising from the dead.

...  

We have no mission but to serve in full obedience to our Lord: to care for all, without reserve, and spread his liberating Word.

Fred Pratt Green (1903-2000)
1. The background and purpose of the Statement

1.1. In the early part of the 21st century, the British Methodist Church is encountering and exploring many questions about the form and nature of the ministry it undertakes. Such questions provide an opportunity for it to reflect on how, as a particular portion of the people of God, it discerns and responds to God’s call in changed and changing contexts. New situations and patterns of relating, the plethora of conversations about ministry in different areas of the Church’s life, and the diversity of views and experiences led to the recognition of a need for a new Statement on ministry. This Statement, therefore, sets out the British Methodist Church’s understanding of ministry.

1.2. Any understanding of ministry begins with an understanding of, and response to, God. Methodists are part of a people called by God to love and praise God for the sake of the world. This is explored further in section two and forms the foundation of this Statement. Section three notes our changing context, remembering that the Methodist story is one of change as, through God’s grace, we seek to find new ways to express and celebrate God’s love for all. The Methodist Church continues to affirm that the ministry of the whole people of God is central to its understanding of ministry (section 4). As part of the universal Church and mindful of their call to spread scriptural holiness, the Methodist people shape their life together in order to share in God’s mission (section 5) and to ensure that they stay true to God’s purposes (section 6). Section seven considers how we release and support people for particular ministries and leads to the invitation to all Methodists to engage with the thinking in this report within their own contexts as they participate in discerning our continuing response to God.

1.3. Conference Statements express our corporate understanding and wisdom and are intended to last for a considerable period of time. It is hoped that this Statement will help the Methodist people, and others, to think more clearly about the nature and purpose of ministry and how we corporately and personally respond to God’s call. Drawing on previous Conference Statements and reports, insights from the Methodist and wider Christian tradition, Scripture, and past and current experience, this Statement reflects a conversation between these different voices, thus modelling a process of theological discernment through conferring. It is a reference point for the Methodist people and it provides a framework and resource for exploring the particular questions about ministry that arise from time to time in different and changing contexts. Furthermore, it encourages reflection on how we engage with Scripture and tradition in the light of our experience and applied reason as we continue to seek to live faithfully in response to God’s call.
1.4. The themes of remembering, rearticulating and re-visioning have shaped this work. Building on the corporate wisdom of the Methodist people across the years, this Statement helps the Methodist Church to remember its previous theological thinking about ministry by drawing attention to those aspects that remain central to its shared understanding. In a new context, and in the light of experience, elements of this understanding are rearticulated or expanded, or areas of Methodist theology and practice that may require further consideration are highlighted. Any re-visioning can only begin from this point and will form part of the continuing reflection on ministry and the Methodist Church’s response to God.

1.5. There are several significant and foundational documents that the Methodist people are particularly encouraged to ‘remember’. Of particular importance are Clause 4 of the Deed of Union which sets out the doctrinal standards of the Methodist Church and Called to Love and Praise (1999), the Methodist Church’s key ecclesiological Statement. In addition, there are a number of reports, adopted by the Conference, which have continuing theological significance. Methodist theology exists within the context of the universal Church and, whilst there is a wealth of theological thinking from which we draw and to which we contribute, of particular note are the World Council of Churches convergence texts Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry (1982) and The Church: Towards a Common Vision (2013), and our joint work in relation to the Anglican-Methodist Covenant².

1.6. All human communities develop their own language and the language we use is shaped by our history, experience and dialogue with others. Some of our theological language comes from Scripture, some from tradition and some from contemporary society. Readers will come from different perspectives and backgrounds and understand theological language in different ways. Some terms will be familiar and we may therefore bring assumptions about what they mean; some terms may be new or feel obscure. Yet theological language is part of our striving for a deeper relationship with, and a better understanding of, God, and the terms we use have developed through dialogue and discernment. Theological language provides important insights and conveys shared wisdom. It says something about our identity as part of the people of God and is shaped by our particular history as well as by that of the wider Church. Christians from different traditions and Methodists from different cultural contexts sometimes use theological terms in different ways. Although different Churches use similar

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² See An Anglican-Methodist Covenant (2003) and the work of the Joint Implementation Commission www.anglican-methodist.org.uk/jic
words to describe particular ministries they do not always mean the same thing.

1.7. The Bible is a key source for all Christian theology. In this Statement, the Bible has been read primarily to discern and articulate its great theme of God’s self-giving love in creation, in the person and work of Christ and in the hope that is set before us. Our understanding of ministry is situated within this story, and the key biblical images of the people of God and the Body of Christ are used to emphasise the priority of a corporate understanding of ministry over one that is focused on individual roles and gifts. Discussion of Christian ministry often concentrates on particular New Testament words and phrases, whether indicating particular roles or more general patterns of behaviour towards God or one another, and such discussions take place in several of those previous Methodist documents on which this Statement is built. It is rarely possible to translate these words, or to define the roles to which they point, with sufficient precision. For example, the words conventionally translated ‘ministry’ and ‘minister’ are used and understood in a variety of ways. They do not refer to one clearly defined concept but to a pattern of response to God. Our language of ministry is related to the way in which the New Testament talks about the service and ministry of Jesus and the way in which the witness and service of the Church flow from that. It is clear that the language and patterns of ministry in the New Testament are varied and fluid. Ministry is thus a dynamic term and we draw on a variety of words and metaphors to help convey its meaning. Whilst we see in the New Testament a variety of forms of ministry existing at different times and places, as “the Holy Spirit continued to lead the Church in life, worship and mission, certain elements from this early variety were further developed and became settled into a more universal pattern of ministry.”3 In the second and third centuries, a threefold pattern of bishop, presbyter and deacon became established as the pattern of ordained ministry throughout the Church. The Methodist Church claims continuity with this pattern of ministry within the ministry of the universal Church. Over time, the practical exercise of these ministries has undergone some considerable change, and in some communities the continuing functions have been differently distributed according to structures other than the threefold pattern. Part of the purpose of this Statement is to express how Methodists understand ministry.

2. Understanding ministry
Our understanding of ministry flows from the understanding that first we are a people called by God. What we believe about the nature of God and our response to God’s call will shape the way in which our ministry is understood and expressed.

3 1982, World Council of Churches, Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry, ¶19
2.1. **Beginning with God**

We know God primarily through God’s actions in human history. God is the source of all that is and everything, therefore, starts with God and God’s love for the world.

2.1.1. God’s outgoing all-embracing love for the whole of creation (God’s mission) began with the act of creation itself.\(^4\) As part of the creative act, God created humanity in God’s likeness to be in a loving relationship with God, others and the whole of creation and to be a sign of God’s faithful care for the whole universe. Through God’s revelation as Father, Son and Holy Spirit Christians have a Trinitarian understanding of God, believing that God’s being is a relationship of self-giving love.

2.1.2. The mission of God is focused in a new way in Jesus. We understand that “In the death and resurrection of Jesus, Christians saw both the completion of God’s mission and the decisive evidence that God reigns – in and through the love which allowed itself to be crucified for the sake of the world.”\(^5\) Through and in Jesus, God’s kingdom (the sovereign presence and activity of God\(^6\)) is established, although it is still to come in all its fullness. God offers us love, forgiveness, acceptance and new life in Christ.

2.1.3. Christians recall and summarise their understanding of God and God’s relationship with creation when they gather for the Lord’s Supper in their prayers of thanksgiving. For example, Methodists declare:

> We praise you, gracious Father, our Maker and Sustainer. You created the heavens and the earth and formed us in your own image. Though we sinned against you, your love for us was constant, And you sent your Son Jesus Christ to be the Saviour of the world.

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4 The Methodist Church, 1999, *Called to Love and Praise*, 2.1.2.
5 The Methodist Church, 1999, *Called to Love and Praise*, 2.1.4
6 The Methodist Church, 1999, *Called to Love and Praise*, 2.1.3
Sharing our human nature,
he was born of Mary
and baptized in the Jordan.
He proclaimed your kingdom, by word and deed,
and was put to death upon the cross.
You raised him from the dead;
you exalted him in glory;
And through him you have sent your Holy Spirit,
calling us to be your people,
a community of faith.7

2.2. **Called to be God’s people**

Christians therefore believe that they are called to be God’s people, and they understand this in multiple ways.

2.2.1. The concept of ‘the people of God’ has been significant throughout the history of God’s people. According to the Hebrew Scriptures, the people of Israel are called into being as a covenant people, the people of God, with a vocation to worship the one God, to live together justly in God’s name and to be a sign of this one God before the nations. The people of Israel experience God as liberator, lawgiver and source of renewal and hope. In the New Testament, texts relating to the people of God are recalled and applied to the ministry of Jesus and the life of the early Church. The vision of the Church as ‘the Body of Christ’ is another way of expressing this understanding. Through baptism, all Christians are united with Christ in his death and resurrection and are brought into a new relationship with each other, becoming a community that expresses God’s purpose for the entire human community.

2.2.2. Among Christian Churches there is consensus that:

“In a broken world God calls the whole of humanity to become God’s people. For this purpose God chose Israel and then spoke in a unique and decisive way in Jesus Christ, God’s Son. Jesus made his own the nature, condition and cause of the whole human race, giving himself as a sacrifice for all. Jesus’ life of service, his death and resurrection, are the foundation of a new community which is built up continually by the good news of the Gospel and the gifts of the sacraments. The Holy Spirit unites in a single body those who follow Jesus Christ and sends them

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as witnesses into the world. Belonging to the Church means living in communion with God through Jesus Christ in the Holy Spirit.  

2.2.3. The Church is a community called into being by God to participate in God’s mission, witness to divine grace, and proclaim the kingdom of God as Jesus did. From God’s “reign and mission, exemplified in and established by Jesus”, the Church derives its existence and purpose and thus discerns its calling. God’s mission does not belong to the Church but the Church participates in it and witnesses to God’s love through loving, suffering and service in our broken world. The Church is a sign, foretaste and instrument of God’s kingdom. In this imperfect human community, the presence of the Holy Spirit makes such witness possible.

2.3. **Called for a purpose**

God’s people are called to be set apart to love and praise God so that the world may believe. This double dynamic of turning to God and turning to the world is central to understanding ministry.

2.3.1. God’s people are called to be set apart to love and praise God. Peter 2, for example, draws on a range of Old Testament references to describe the Church as ‘a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation,’ all of which are rooted in and directed towards God. Similarly, Paul can say ‘we are the temple of the living God’ (2 Corinthians 6:16). The Church offers worship to the glory and praise of God, joyfully proclaiming God’s wonderful acts and celebrating God’s eternally loving nature. It consists of those who respond to God’s undeserved, abundant love in thanksgiving and joy. Through worship, fellowship and the work of the Holy Spirit Christians grow more Christ-like and participate in the life of God. Only if it remains a worshipping community will the Church live and speak the Gospel and serve Christ and its neighbours.

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8 World Council of Churches, 1982, *Baptism Eucharist and Ministry*, M§1
9 The Methodist Church, 1999, *Called to Love and Praise*, 2.1.1, 2.1.7
10 The Methodist Church, 1999, *Called to Love and Praise*, 2.1.8
11 The Methodist Church, 1999, *Called to Love and Praise*, 2.1.10 and see 1.4.3
12 The Methodist Church, 1999, *Called to Love and Praise*, 1.4.1
14 The Methodist Church, 1999, *Called to Love and Praise*, 3.2.7
2.3.2. In response to God’s call, God’s people are called to be set apart for the sake of the world, so that the world may know and experience God’s love and that all things may be reconciled to God. Amongst Christians, it is common understanding that “the Church belongs to God and does not exist for itself. It is by its very nature missionary, called and sent to witness in its own life to that communion which God intends for all humanity and for all creation in the kingdom”\(^\text{15}\) In the language of John’s Gospel, Christians are not ‘of the world’ (in that the source and foundation of their life is in God) but they are still ‘in the world,’ still a part of God’s creation, wrestling with its complexities, practicalities and imperfections and longing for the kingdom to come. Guided and equipped by the Holy Spirit, members of the Church participate in Jesus’ ministry of suffering and service, manifesting God’s grace and inviting hope in the God who has poured out his life for the life of the world.\(^\text{16}\)

2.3.3. In the Scriptures this calling is expressed in terms of covenant. The idea of the covenant has been significant in Methodist thinking. For example in the annual Covenant Service Methodists remember that:

“No God made a covenant with the people of Israel, calling them to be a holy nation, chosen to bear witness to his steadfast love by finding delight in the law. The covenant was renewed in Jesus Christ our Lord, in his life, work, death and resurrection. In him all people may be set free from sin and its power, and united in love and obedience. In this covenant God promises us new life in Christ. For our part we promise to live no longer for ourselves but for God.”\(^\text{17}\)

Understandings of the covenant emphasise both grace and obedience. In the light of this, and with its distinctive emphases on “God’s grace and on holiness, commitment and social action” Methodism firmly places itself in the covenant tradition.\(^\text{18}\) The annual Covenant Service provides an opportunity to remember God’s generous, abundant love and that our response to this is rooted in thanksgiving.

2.3.4. The Methodist Church understands that its particular call is to spread

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16 The Methodist Church, 1999, *Called to Love and Praise*, 2.1.7
18 The Methodist Church, 1999, *Called to Love and Praise*, 2.2.9
scriptural holiness. Holiness has been a distinctive emphasis of Methodism from its inception. It is understood as a Christ-like characteristic that brings freedom from evil thoughts and actions. It is both the goal of Christian living and an experience possible, through God’s gift, for ordinary Christians (and not just the select few). It is both a gift and an aspiration. Holiness is personal but never individualistic: John Wesley was clear “the gospel of Christ knows no religion but social: no holiness but social holiness.” Following John Wesley’s example, Methodists were to preach God’s love and call people to new life: holiness is a blessing available to all.

2.4. **Responding to God’s call**

God’s call to be set apart for the sake of the world forms the foundation of our understanding of ministry. Those who believe God’s self-revelation in Jesus and accept Jesus as their Saviour become part of Christ’s Church. In responding to the grace of God, they share in God’s mission.

2.4.1. There are different ways of expressing this double dynamic of being set apart for the sake of the world and different ways in which people come to their understanding of ministry. It is rooted in our understanding of baptism for, as Methodists are reminded in the Ordination Services: “All Christians are called through their Baptism and by the hearing of God’s word to ministry and service among the whole people of God and in the life of the world.” In common with the majority of Christian traditions, Methodism sees in baptism a sacrament of God’s grace and our response to it. We understand that those who are baptized are embraced by the love of God, incorporated into Christ and enfolded into the body of God’s people. Commitment to Christ “can truly be realized only in full participation in the worship, witness and service of the Christian community.” The baptized participate in fulfilling the mission of the Church “through the witness of their lives and, when possible, through the open proclamation of the good news of Jesus Christ.”

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19 Clause 4 of the *Deed of Union* states that the Methodist Church “ever remembers that in the providence of God Methodism was raised up to spread scriptural holiness through the land by the proclamation of the evangelical faith and declares its unfaltering resolve to be true to its divinely appointed mission.”

20 John Wesley quoted in The Methodist Church, 1999, *Called to Love and Praise*, 4.3.9


22 The Methodist Church, 1999, *Called to Love and Praise*, 4.4.3

23 The Methodist Church, 1999, *Called to Love and Praise*, 4.4.8

The word ‘discipleship’ is an important way of expressing that living out of Christian faith to which Christians are called. In the 1982 convergence document, *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry*, Churches agreed that:

“Living in this communion with God, all members of the Church are called to confess their faith and to give account of their hope. They are to identify with the joys and sufferings of all people as they seek to witness in caring love. The members of Christ’s body are to struggle with the oppressed towards that freedom and dignity promised with the coming of the Kingdom. This mission needs to be carried out in varying political, social and cultural contexts. In order to fulfil this mission faithfully, they will seek relevant forms of witness and service in each situation. In so doing they bring to the world a foretaste of the joy and glory of God’s Kingdom.”

2.4.2. The relationship of love at the heart of God is a characteristic of the community of God’s people. The 2013 convergence text, *The Church Towards a Common Vision*, draws on the biblical notion of *koinonia* (communion, participation, fellowship, sharing) as central to a common understanding of the life and unity of the Church. The Methodist Church has affirmed that “Christian believing and living are essentially societary in nature. This is true both for individuals and local church communities.” The way in which we discern and exercise our response to God’s calling is always corporate and communal. Christians are called to share in God’s mission in the power of the Holy Spirit and in company with other Christians, remembering, always, that it is at God’s invitation and initiative.

2.4.3. Ministry embraces the witness and service to which the whole people of God are called, whether as individuals, as a local community, or as the universal Church. Whilst ‘ministry’ or ‘ministries’ can also refer to the particular institutional forms which this service takes, ministry is fundamentally about the participation of the whole Church in the life of Christ. All members of the Church, therefore, share in ministry, but the discernment and exercise of ministry is never an individualistic enterprise. The ministry of the Church is exercised as Christians

27 The Methodist Church, 1999, *Called to Love and Praise*, 4.4.2
together respond to God’s call and discover and use the gifts which the Holy Spirit has given them.  

2.4.4. Methodists understand that:

“Christ offered himself as a servant or minister and opened the way to God for us (his priestly ministry). All Christians are called to continue Christ’s ministry by serving in the Church and in the world.”

Jesus, crucified, risen and ascended has a continuing ministry in which those who are called to be Christ’s body have a part. As God sent Jesus, so disciples of Jesus are sent into the world, called to be “a prophetic people, bearing witness to God’s word; a priestly people, offering the sacrifice of a life lived in discipleship; and a royal people, serving as instruments for the establishment of God’s reign.” It is a constant challenge to the Church to consider how the teaching, sanctifying and governing ministry of Christ is continued in and through the Church. In some of Paul’s writings this is spoken of in terms of how we are transformed to live out the ‘mind of Christ’ (1 Corinthians 2:14-16; Romans 12:1-2; Philippians 2:5). Ministry is both a sharing in Christ’s service to the world and a service to Christ in the world.

2.4.5. For the sake of this ministry of the whole body, all are equipped with gifts (Romans 12:3-8; 1 Corinthians 12:4-31), “for the benefit of the whole body in its disciplined life, and for its service to the whole world”. All members of the Church participate in the ministry of Christ by proclaiming the kingdom of God in different ways at different times, but sharing in God’s mission is essentially a corporate endeavour and rooted in the interdependence of all Christians as the Body of Christ. The gifts bestowed by the Holy Spirit to each and every member of the Body of Christ are for the common good of the whole of God’s people and for the sake of the kingdom.

2.5. Ministry is the ministry of the whole people of God

Any reflection on ministry is therefore rooted in an understanding of the ministry of the whole people of God as the primary and normative ministry of the

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29 The Methodist Church, A Catechism for the use of the people called Methodists, 45
30 The Methodist Church, A Catechism for the use of the people called Methodists, 44
31 John 20:21
33 The Methodist Church, A Catechism for the use of the people called Methodists, 44
Church. This has been a particular emphasis in Methodist theology, as noted in our response to the World Council of Churches document *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry*:

“[W]e believe that future discussion of ministry must be given much greater prominence to the vocation of the whole people of God... We believe that an expression of the apostolic faith today must concentrate on the calling of the whole people of God, must include a charge to the people to be what they are, and, if necessary, a charge to the ordained to enable this to be so.”

The people of God are together called and set apart. Within each portion of the people of God some are further set apart within the body (usually through ordination) to enable the Church to fulfil its calling, but all participate in the ministry of the Church.

2.6. This section has explored how the Methodist Church, as part of the universal Church called into being by God through Jesus Christ, believes that it has a particular call to spread scriptural holiness, to share the good news of God’s love and salvation for all. For this purpose, the Holy Spirit guides the Church and gives to its members diverse and complementary gifts so that they may support and encourage one another and engage in witness and service in the world. All of God’s people have gifts to be used for the sake of the whole Church for the sake of the world. As the Methodist Church continues to discern how it is to live out its calling in a changed and changing world, all members are called to re-discover, with the help of the community, their gifts and the tasks which they are to undertake. Circuits and Local Churches are the settings in which we consider ways of supporting each other in this endeavour and together responding to God's call.

3. A changed and changing context

3.1. Human societies are constantly changing, sometimes slowly, sometimes rapidly and sometimes dramatically. Likewise, patterns of church life and the relationship of the Church to the culture in which it is situated evolve and alter. In changing situations and contexts, the Methodist Church continues to develop and, through the guidance of the Holy Spirit, seeks to discern new ways of responding.

3.2. At the beginning of the 21st century, the British Methodist Church’s context is one
of variety, fluidity and uncertainty. Within the living memory of many Methodists, there have been some significant changes in British society. Whilst it is not possible to offer any adequate exploration of these here, for the purposes of illustration it is noted that these include:

3.2.1. Changes in working and social life from defined social roles and a higher instance of lifelong professions and jobs, to increased social and geographical mobility and flexibility in work across a career. Whilst many can remember highly routinised patterns of social life with Sunday observance, restricted shopping and licensing hours and routine meal times, much more is now available on demand with increased choice (or the illusion of choice) in many areas of life, and expectations of and greater flexibility of social provision around individual lifestyles and needs;

3.2.2. Changes in religious belief and practice as British society has shifted from positions defined in relation to a nominal Christianity to an increased relativism and lack of shared meta-narrative or belief in its possibility or desirability. Increased access to information (particularly electronically) and emphasis on individual choice and personal spirituality contribute to this. At the same time there is a lack of general theological literacy and many both within and beyond the Church perceive theology as a specialist, and even irrelevant, subject. Often religion and spirituality are now considered and approached within a consumerist framework;

3.2.3. Changes in the multi-cultural context. Whereas communities of other faiths have always been present they tended to be in defined locations, but British society now comprises dispersed communities of many faiths and those who profess no faith. Secularism and faith co-exist and Christianity is often regarded as one particular belief-system amongst many. In other parts of the world, the Church is growing, and Christians are addressing many of the same questions in very different contexts. As the geographical centre of Christianity is changing, so is the worldwide Church. In Britain many Methodist churches offer hospitality to congregations from other churches, which provides opportunities for exploring new ways of being church and different ways of worshipping, as well as taking seriously the different experiences of ministry;

3.2.4. Changes in the Church’s place in British public life as its influence and moral authority has diminished. Where there is interest in spiritual experience there is frequently a disinclination for formal religious
involvement on an ongoing basis. A loss of confidence in the Church is partly around questions of belief, partly due to an increased mistrust of public institutions, and partly about the behaviour of the institution and hurt and pain that have been experienced. In a culture in which the authority of traditional organisations is questioned, a church that is perceived to tell people what to think or how to behave is unwelcome.

3.3. Beginning as a movement within the Church of England to becoming a Church established by an Act of Parliament, the British Methodist Church itself has experienced many changes and has sought to respond to the activity of God in a changing culture and society:

3.3.1. The British Methodist Church has experienced a shift from being a mainstream institution with a stable membership and organisational structure to becoming a marginal organisation in a constantly changing society. The Church is facing a sharp decline in numbers and anxiety about reducing resources. With changed understandings of community and belonging and patterns of relating, different ways of worshipping, serving and sharing in fellowship have developed. There have been increased questions about a denominational identity that was previously taken for granted when there were stable communities of Methodists who had been formed in British Methodist culture and practice. The Methodist Church moved from a predominantly residential model of full time training for ordained ministers to developing a number of models of training as it has tried to respond to its developing context. It continues to give serious consideration to the ways in which those selected for ordained ministry are encouraged to deepen and broaden their sense of identity as Methodists in leadership roles within the Church. At the same time, many professional lay leaders, such as children and youth workers or community workers, are likely not to have been trained in a Methodist environment. British Methodists today come from a variety of backgrounds, some from other Christian Churches or from Methodist Churches in different cultures, resulting in varied experience and understanding of Methodism. The British Methodist Church is more culturally diverse than it has been in previous generations and it continues to affirm and seeks to strengthen its relationships of mutuality and interdependence.36

3.3.2. As the British Methodist Church has sought to respond to God’s call

36 The Methodist Church, 2017, The Gift of Connexionalism
and share in God’s mission in an ever-changing world there have been many developments and changes in the way in which it has engaged in ministry. It has taken organisational risks as it has tried different ways of expressing and expanding its understanding of mission and ministry in varied contexts and in response to different pressures and challenges. It has encouraged new ways of corporately responding to God’s call, for example through nurturing and resourcing ministries that emerge for particular times such as the work of industrial chaplains or, more recently, pioneer ministers. Patterns of ministry have changed, with emphasis on collaborative and team ministry. It has been willing to try new ways of being, equipping people for particular roles for periods of time and seeking to discern how its resources are best employed.

3.4. The changed ecumenical context is also significant as the organic unity that, half a century ago, was hoped for has not yet been realised. Interest in receptive ecumenism has grown, with its understanding that through learning from other traditions and receiving gifts and understandings from them our identities authentically deepen and we are drawn into closer relationship. New Churches continue to come into being, adding to the diversity of the ecumenical context and the plethora of ecumenical partnerships. As part of the exploration of this broader landscape, time is given to working for common understanding and the mutual recognition of ministries. This and the greater mobility of Christians between different Churches highlights that words that are commonly used, such as ‘minister’, can mean slightly (or sometimes very) different things and thus require reflection on how we use and understand such terms. This is complex when a ministry in one church often cannot be equated with a ministry in another, although our tendency is to try and do so.

3.5. Whilst God’s fundamental call remains the same, our particular response in a changing and complex world can be challenging to work out together. At times, the complexity of the contexts and the different position in which we find ourselves might feel daunting and overwhelming but the same God who continues to call us, equips us and inspires us. Throughout their history, the Methodist people have sought to respond to God in new situations in creative ways. Diversity of experience and understanding brings a richness of gifts, insights and perspectives to the Methodist Church today. The changed and changing contexts bring opportunities to share in and express God’s mission in new ways and prompt us to assess that which is fundamental to our understanding of ministry and that which needs to be rearticulated or re- visioned. Discerning how we thus continue to respond to God’s call is a task for the whole Church and one which we all share.
4. The ministry of the whole people of God

4.1. The British Methodist Church has affirmed that the ministry of the whole community of Christians in the world shapes and determines all other ministries, rejoicing in the commitment of Christian people in the world and recognising that “some situations are brutalising and others fulfilling.” Such an understanding requires the Methodist people to pay close and prayerful attention to the changing contexts in which we live and work. Belonging to the Church involves supporting and encouraging each other, engaging in corporate discernment and making oneself accountable to other members of the community of faith. Although all members of the Body of Christ are given particular gifts and engage in specific tasks, ministry is always corporate and belongs to the whole Church. Ministry is therefore primarily about the witness of the whole people of God in the world. It is never merely an individual endeavour but always exercised as part of the Body of Christ.

4.2. The common priesthood of the faithful

In Methodism this has traditionally been expressed through the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers. Priesthood incorporates the activities of drawing near to God, worshipping, offering and undertaking a representative role between God and humanity. It implies a turning towards God in worship and a turning towards the world in service. The two movements can be embodied and expressed in many different activities, but both are always necessary. Jesus is the unique priest of the new covenant instituted by his sacrifice for the sake of all people. Through God’s grace and actions in Jesus, those who believe share in the “privilege and responsibility of direct access to God” and are called to pray for all, “to express by their lives the fact that they have been named a ‘royal priesthood’, offering themselves as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God (Romans 12:1)”.

In the New Testament, understandings of priesthood relate to “the priesthood of the body of believers, rather than the priesthood of every believer, ... which stresses the inter-dependence of believers.” The Methodist Church therefore believes:

“that no priesthood exists which belongs exclusively to a particular order or class of persons but in the exercise of its corporate life and worship special
qualifications for the discharge of special duties are required and thus the principle of representative selection is recognised.”

4.3. **Sharing in ministry together**
In all areas of church life, Methodists are therefore encouraged to reflect on how we identify, nurture and encourage people’s gifts and on how we support and hold each other accountable in our discernment in relation to ministry. Our affirmation of the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers means that our primary understanding of ministry is that it is corporate. Ministry is essentially not only about individual vocation but the response of the whole faith community. How we resource, support and encourage each other as we share in God’s mission in the world in a wide range of different contexts and roles is an ongoing challenge.

4.3.1. Discerning the particular tasks, and ways of being, that God is calling us to in the world is a corporate task and individual responses to God’s call are shaped within this context. There can sometimes be a tension when an individual feels called to a particular role or activity but this is either not affirmed by the Church or the Church discerns that an individual’s gifts could be better used in different ways for the sake of the ministry of the whole Body of Christ. We remember that gifts are bestowed on individuals for the common good of the whole people of God and for the sake of the kingdom (see 2.4.5 above). Discerning how gifts are to be employed and expressed is therefore not just a matter for an individual, although the flourishing and wholeness of all people is desired. Similarly, within the context of the Covenant Service, we are reminded that it “is not just a one-to-one transaction between individuals and God, but the act of the whole faith community.”

“Christ has many services to be done; some are easy, others are difficult; some bring honour, others bring reproach; some are suitable to our natural inclinations and material interests, others are contrary to both; in some we may please Christ and please ourselves; in others we cannot please Christ except by denying ourselves. Yet the power to do all these things is given to us in Christ, who strengthens us.”

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42 Clause 4 of the Deed of Union
43 Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes, *The Methodist Worship Book*, pp.281-282
44 Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes, *The Methodist Worship Book*, p.288
4.3.2. All have a part to play. We participate in responding to God’s call in that we have a share in ministry by virtue of belonging to the priesthood of all believers and only within that context do we explore our individual role. Therefore we always share in ministry, even when it does not feel as if we have a specific role to play, because we participate in the whole. It is this understanding that is encapsulated in the words of the Methodist Covenant Service: “let me be employed for you or laid aside for you.”

Whoever we are, whether a child or someone living with dementia, a supernumerary or someone new to the church or community, someone full of energy and new ideas or someone unsure of whether they have anything to offer, all contribute to and participate in the ministry of the whole people of God. This is remembered and expressed in the fellowship of the Local Church and in the ways in which people’s gifts are recognised, encouraged and employed in its life and witness.

4.3.3. The Circuit is the primary church unit in British Methodism, “in which Local Churches express and experience their interconnexion in the Body of Christ, for purposes of mission, mutual encouragement and help.” For many Methodists, however, the Local Church is the primary place for the celebration, exploration and encouragement of the variety of ways in which Christians engage in witness and service in response to God’s call. For some this is through their paid employment or voluntary work, for others it is through their relationships and roles in their families or the communities of which they are a part. In 1988 the Methodist Conference “believed it would be valuable if churches could recognise in informal ways the many and various ministries which the Church needs and needs to be released.” The “ministries which the Church needs” are not primarily about people undertaking tasks in an ecclesial context but the ways in which the people of God are called to share in God’s mission in the world. Local Churches can affirm, celebrate and learn more about the ways in which their members are engaging in worship, witness and service and together discover new opportunities and ways of doing so. This poses both a challenge and an opportunity to re-engage in reflection on ministry and vocation in ways that focus on the understanding of the ministry of the whole people of God in the world.

4.3.4. The main ways in which members of the Church support each other in

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45 Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes, *The Methodist Worship Book*, p.290
46 The Methodist Church, 1999, *Called to Love and Praise*, 4.7.4
47 The Methodist Church, 2017, *The Constitutional Practice and Discipline of the Methodist Church*, SO500
48 The Methodist Church, 1988, *The Ministry of the People of God*, 062
responding to God’s call are through worship, prayer and fellowship. There are many opportunities in the many different contexts of Methodist Local Churches for people to share in conversation, prayer and reflection on the ways in which they are participating in the kingdom of God in the world and engaging in witness and service. The Methodist people are encouraged to seize and create such opportunities so that we may help each other recognise and celebrate our gifts, discern and fulfil our calling, and resource and sustain our witness in sometimes difficult or challenging or mundane contexts.

4.3.5. The ministry of all Christians within the corporate life of the Church is also important. By their various gifts the members of the Church contribute to its life and witness, but for its work and well-being it also needs people to be available in different ways. Some are set apart to enable the whole Church to fulfil its calling, some undertake particular roles, and some are appointed to specific tasks at certain times. Whilst particular ministries in the life of the Church require specific gifts, sometimes members of the Church are required to undertake tasks to which they may not feel particularly called or gifted on behalf of the whole community.

4.3.6. The class meeting is a part of the Methodist tradition that merits rediscovery and new engagement. In parts of the early Methodist movement the class meeting was vital to enable growth in holiness as it was a place where Christians were held accountable for, and supported in, their faith and ministry. Now this happens in different ways and in various forms of meetings. Aspects of the class meeting, including the role of class leader, have now dispersed into other roles and areas of church life but it warrants new exploration in our changed and changing context. Class meetings have been places of affirmation, challenge, accountability, encouragement and support as people are helped to know themselves before God and as part of the Christian community. Emphasising the rootedness of Christian living in daily life, in 1999 the Methodist Church was clear that “there is little doubt that the Church is poorer [for their decline].” 49 Although there are other ways in which Methodists support each other and hold each other accountable for their faith and ministry, in a changed and changing context rediscovery of the Class Meeting offers rich potential for the Methodist people. Each Local Church is invited to explore and discern new ways of enabling support.

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49 The Methodist Church, 1999, Called to Love and Praise, 4.3.5
and a mutual holding to account.

5. Order

5.1. The Methodist Church comprises a rich diversity of people called by God and seeking to respond to God’s call. As in any group of people, there are shared principles about how we conduct our life together, but our way of being and working together also expresses and reveals our identity as the Body of Christ. Church order refers to how we live together as a portion of God’s people. It is recognised that:

“Though the churches are agreed in their general understanding of the calling of the people of God, they differ in their understanding of how the life of the Church is to be ordered. In particular, there are differences concerning the place and forms of the ordained ministry. As they engage in the effort to over-come these differences, the churches need to work from the perspective of the calling of the whole people of God. A common answer needs to be found to the following question: How, according to the will of God and under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, is the life of the Church to be understood and ordered, so that the Gospel may be spread and the community built up in love.”

5.2. The Methodist Church began as a movement within the Church of England. It was made up of a ‘connexion’ of ‘societies’ which supplemented involvement in the parish church, providing a disciplined framework for worship and spiritual development. Travelling preachers to these societies were also said to be ‘in connexion’ with John Wesley. Over the years, Methodism grew into an independent organisation with its own identity and structures, developing from a connexion of societies into various churches with some in 1932 becoming the Methodist Church in Britain. This change from society to church has affected the way in which the Methodist people organise themselves and how they relate to each other, as well as shaping its identity, self-understanding, call and ministry.

5.3. The Methodist Church is also a human organisation. It is an institution established by an Act of Parliament and is in some ways accountable to the State. It has the same obligations and responsibilities as any other organisation (for example concerning safeguarding, health and safety and employment among others), to be carried out wisely, efficiently and with integrity. The Church is the Body of Christ incarnate in a particular culture, part of that culture and yet called to live in response to God. Called into being by God the Church exists to witness

50 World Council of Churches, 1982, Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry, M§6
51 The Methodist Church, 1999, Called to Love and Praise, 4.2.1
to the love and grace of God and share in God’s mission. As an organisation, it is ordered to fulfil this calling above all, and its structures, processes and ways of working help to reveal the kingdom of God.

5.4. The way in which the Methodist Church is ordered reflects both its understanding of itself as part of the universal Church and its particular history. The Methodist Church understands that it should be structured for mission (see 2.1.1), able to respond pragmatically as needs emerge and new opportunities arise, and yet, as part of the universal Church of God, it also shares common understandings about the nature, order and ministry of the Church. The tension between enabling pragmatic effectiveness for mission in a specific context at a particular time in history and upholding and expressing those things which are perceived to be of the essence of the very existence of the life of the Church is present in all Churches, but a particular feature of Methodist experience and history. The way in which we are ordered reflects our call, and shapes and enables our ministry.

5.4.1. From its beginnings, Methodism was structured to encourage growth in holiness. Methodists, grouped in societies and held together in connexion, maintained a common discipline in prayer, worship, fellowship, the study of Scripture and social action. Class meetings came into being to encourage people to grow in their life with God, expressing a corporate concern for justice and integrity in daily life. It is noted that the Methodist Church has not adequately responded to its own question:

“Methodist origins invite the question whether the Church’s structures help its members to grow in holiness. If the class meeting has largely gone, what has taken its place?”

Methodism has always understood that growth in holiness can happen if there is a disciplined approach to our spiritual life and our life together.

5.4.2. The connexional principle which “witnesses to a mutuality and interdependence which derive from the participation of all Christians through Christ in the very life of God” has always been intrinsic to Methodism. Methodists understand themselves as all related to each

52 The Methodist Church, 2000, Our Calling
53 The Methodist Church, 1999, Called to Love and Praise, 4.7.1
54 The Methodist Church, 1999, Called to Love and Praise, 4.7.10
55 The Methodist Church, 1999, Called to Love and Praise, 4.6.1 and see The Methodist Church, 2017, The Gift of Connexionalism
other at every level of the Church. No Local Church (or other Methodist group) is an autonomous unit complete in itself but is linked to others in the Connexion and dependent on the whole. Just as Wesley’s preachers were itinerant, available to be sent where needed, so Methodism’s ordained ministers are at the disposal of the whole Connexion. Connexionalism helps point up priorities of mission and service in all parts of the Methodist Church, whilst giving Circuits and Districts the greatest possible degrees of autonomy to engage in God’s mission in their local context in the best possible way. Connexionalism shapes the Methodist understanding of authority and governance. At each level, authority is given to bodies that represent and serve local Christian communities, with the Church’s presbyters having a “principal and directing part” in the structures of decision-making, but it is the whole people of God who make decisions through the Church’s relevant bodies. Supreme authority resides in the Conference. A Church that is ordered according to the connexional principle pays attention to the mission priorities not just in each area of its life but across a range of contexts, and deploys its resources where they are most needed.

5.4.3. This ordering emerged from the ‘missionary’ situation of the 18th century, a pragmatic response to enable the effective witness of the Church in the world. Thus there has been a continuing emphasis on deploying resources according to the missionary needs of the Church and Methodism has been pragmatic in its approach to questions of church structure. The Methodist Church has, at different times, adapted its structures to respond to new situations and opportunities, and regards this flexibility in itself as an important principle alongside underlying principles of interdependence and relatedness and small-group fellowship and discipline.

5.5. Just as the ministry of the whole people of God is representative of the continuing ministry of Jesus Christ, so the pattern of representation is replicated within the life of the Church. The ordained have a distinct representative role, which is explored further in section 7.4, but those who are appointed to offices, roles and specific tasks also represent the Body of Christ in particular ways. They become accountable to the Church, through the appointing body, in a new way. Local Churches, Circuits and Districts are encouraged to reflect on how

56 The Methodist Church, 1999, *Called to Love and Praise*, 4.6.2
57 Clause 4 of *The Deed of Union*
58 The Methodist Church, 1999, *Called to Love and Praise*, 4.7.11
they resource, support and hold to account those whom they appoint to offices and roles in the life of the Church, identifying ways in which they might both offer to and receive from the shared wisdom of the Methodist Church as it seeks to participate in God’s mission.

6. Oversight

6.1. Oversight is the function of ensuring that the Church is true to its calling. It involves “the process of reflecting on experience in order to discern the presence and activity of God in the world.”659 It has always been necessary to the life of the Church, and a key feature of that oversight is ensuring the continuity of the Church in apostolic faith and mission. In the Methodist Church that continuity is located in the Conference.

6.2. Oversight is a rich concept. The Greek word *episkope*, from which it is translated, is used in the Bible to describe God visiting people and ‘keeping an eye’ on what is happening. For many years, the Methodist Church in Britain has thought of oversight as being expressed through ‘governance, management and leadership.’660 Although it is acknowledged that oversight is not defined solely in these terms, in many contexts they have dominated thinking, leading, in some cases, to the development of a rather narrow and functional understanding of oversight. The limitations of this framework are increasingly recognised, and in recent Anglican-Methodist conversations the need for a broader understanding was re-emphasised:

“Oversight is more than governance, leadership and management. It includes the preservation of the integrity of the community in continuity with the apostolic faith and mission through the work of corporate bodies and individuals in teaching, preaching, encouraging, making judgements, evangelising and offering pastoral care.”661

In the 2013 World Council of Churches’ convergence document, *The Church Towards a Common Vision*, the ministry of oversight is described as a “ministry of coordination” so that the diversity of gifts given by the Holy Spirit “may enrich the whole Church, its unity and mission.”662

59 The Methodist Church, 2005, *The Nature of Oversight*, p. 1
60 The Methodist Church, 2005, *The Nature of Oversight*, 1.8-1.13
6.3. The Methodist Church exercises a corporate and connexional form of oversight. As connexionalism expresses the consciousness that Christians are bound together at all levels of the Church, oversight is thus exercised corporately through the Conference and by designated individuals on behalf of the Conference. All who exercise oversight in the Methodist Church derive their authority from the Conference.

6.4. Churches affirm that the ministry of oversight, as all ministry in the Church, needs to be exercised in personal, collegial and communal ways.63

"It should be personal because the presence of Christ among his people can most effectively be pointed to by the persons ordained to proclaim the Gospel and to call the community to serve the Lord in unity of life and witness. It should also be collegial, for there is need for a college of ordained ministers sharing in the common task of representing the concerns of the community. Finally, the intimate relationship between the ordained ministry and the community should find expression in a communal dimension where the exercise of the ordained ministry is rooted in the life of the community and requires the community’s effective participation in the discovery of God’s will and the guidance of the Spirit."64

6.5. In order to hold the Methodist Church to its calling in its daily decision-making at every level of the Church’s life, individuals are appointed to a variety of offices in order to exercise particular kinds of oversight, for example in Circuits ministers and local preachers build up the Church through preaching and teaching, ministers and circuit stewards provide leadership, and Superintendents have oversight of all the ministers and probationers stationed in the Circuit.65 In each District the Chair exercises oversight of the character and fidelity of the presbyters and presbyteral probationers, and is responsible to the Conference for the observance of Methodist order and discipline.66 Oversight is also exercised corporately, for example in District Synods or Circuit Meetings or Church Councils. In Methodist understanding, oversight is shared, even when exercised by individuals as they would usually collaborate with, be accountable to and be appointed by others, deriving their authority from the Conference.

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64 World Council of Churches, 1982, Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry, M26
65 The Methodist Church and the Church of England, 2017, Mission and Ministry in Covenant; The Methodist Church, 2017, The Constitutional Practice and Discipline of the Methodist Church, S0700(9)
66 Standing Order 424
6.6. Those who are ordained and in Full Connexion share a collegial responsibility for embodying, exercising and sharing with others the oversight of the Conference. Presbyters exercise a particular ministry of oversight within the life of the Church, having “a principal and directing part” in the shared duties of being “stewards in the household of God and shepherds of [God’s] flock.”67 They usually exercise oversight in Christian communities “offering leadership and vision, and ensuring that decisions are made according to Methodist practice.”68 This ministry is shared and comes to mature fruition69 when it is exercised in collaboration with deacons and lay people.

7. **Releasing and supporting ministries**

7.1. As members of the Church, we all share in its ministry (section 4 above).70 The Methodist Church recognises that: “Whether or not their calling is recognized by some form of commissioning, all Christians share in the service to which the Church is called.”71 Methodists are invited to support, encourage and pray for each other as we together seek to respond to God’s call and share in God’s mission.

7.2. **The ministry of Christians within the Church**

As part of this some people are appointed to specific tasks for a period of time; sometimes these are particular roles or offices within the Church and sometimes they are roles undertaken on behalf of the Church in the wider community. Such ministries are important for the wellbeing of the Body of Christ and to enable the Church to witness to God’s love, proclaim the Gospel and engage in Christ’s ministry of service in the world. In order to help the Church fulfil its calling, some are set apart through ordination to ensure that it fulfils this purpose. (The place and role of the ordained in the life of the Church is considered in section 7.4 below.)

7.2.1. The Methodist Church appoints people to specific roles and offices in different ways and there is different language used to describe the ways in which they are supported and affirmed in their ministries. Local Churches, Circuits and Districts appoint people to offices and roles and authorise others to perform particular tasks on their behalf. Lay workers, Pastoral Visitors, Workers with Children and Young People,

67 Clause 4 of the Deed of Union
68 The Methodist Church, 2002, What is a Presbyter? 12
69 The Methodist Church, 2002, What is a Presbyter? 7
70 See section 4: The Ministry of the Whole People of God
71 The Methodist Church, The Methodist Catechism, p.22
Worship Leaders and Class Leaders are also ‘commissioned’ within the context of an act of worship, whilst the ministry of others is sometimes publicly recognised in other ways. The question of which ministries are formally acknowledged in an act of public worship, and why, is a matter for ongoing reflection in each local context. As the Methodist Church is a connexional Church, it is appropriate that those exercising particular oversight responsibilities are authorised and recognised by and for the whole Connexion and not just within a particular community. Within Methodist ecclesiology Local Churches do not, therefore, appoint their own preachers, deacons or presbyters (see further 7.3.1 and sections 7.4 and 7.5).

7.2.2. Underlying the different terms and ways in which Local Churches, Circuits and Districts authorise people to undertake particular ministries, several key features can be identified: there is a call by God to the particular role that is recognised and affirmed by the Church; the person is appropriately selected and appointed to the role; there is a public invocation of the Holy Spirit for the ministry; they are resourced and supported; and they are held accountable in fulfilling the role. Although, in practice, not all of these elements are always present, it is important for Local Churches, Circuits and Districts to give attention to each aspect as, from time to time, they consider how they share in God’s mission as part of the Methodist Church and seek to respond to changing contexts and the new patterns of ministry that emerge.

7.2.3. All Methodists contribute to the life and ministry of the Methodist Church. Whilst some roles involve public recognition and affirmation, and others do not, all contributions are valuable, although people may not always feel valued. Those who are appointed to offices and roles that the Church has identified as necessary in the life of the Church undertake ministries that are recognised in particular ways, but Local Churches, Circuits and Districts can give attention to considering other ways in which people who contribute to the Church’s ministry are affirmed, supported, resourced and celebrated.

7.3. Ministries recognised across the Connexion
The Methodist Church holds to the connexional principle and its structures therefore express the interdependence of all Local Churches. Local Churches, Circuits, and Districts have the necessary degrees of authority to enable them to share in God’s mission in the most appropriate way in a particular community. This authority is “vested at each level in bodies which both represent and
serve the local Christian communities.⁷² From time to time, it may need to be limited in the light of the needs of the whole Church.⁷³ It pertains to the life of a connexional Church that for some ministries there needs to be some common practice and regularity, although the particular ways in which these ministries are undertaken and expressed may vary in different contexts (for example, Worship Leaders, Pastoral Visitors, Church and Circuit Stewards). Thus, there are some offices that are regarded as essential for the life of the Church and others that are recognised throughout the Methodist Church even if they are only taken up in some Local Churches, Circuits and Districts.

7.3.1. Local Preachers have an important place within Methodist tradition. They are admitted as Local Preachers through a public religious service arranged by the relevant Circuit, and during the service they receive a letter and Bible signed by the President of the Conference. These signify their connexional significance. Local preaching is a life-long ministry and Local Preachers are recognised as such in all contexts in the British Methodist Church.

7.3.2. The ministries that the Methodist Church believes it needs to fulfil its calling, or which are recognised throughout the Methodist Church, are usually identified within The Constitutional Practice and Discipline of the Methodist Church. There is common understanding about their nature and purpose (even if there is some variety in the way in which such offices are undertaken in different contexts). As times change some roles and offices exist only for a relatively short period, some develop and alter, and some persist. God raises people up for particular things at particular times. Local Churches, Circuits, Districts and the whole Connexion from time to time consider what particular ministries they need as they seek to respond to God’s call and share in God’s mission. The Methodist Church as a whole also considers in which areas of its life there needs to be some commonality of practice for the sake of its witness.

7.3.3. With the exception of ordained ministers and Local Preachers (see 7.2.1 above), those who undertake ministries in or on behalf of the Methodist Church do so in particular contexts and for a period of time. (Most appointments within the Methodist Church are made on an annual basis.) However the public recognition of their ministry happens,

⁷² The Methodist Church, 1999, Called to Love and Praise, 4.6.6
⁷³ The Methodist Church, 1999, Called to Love and Praise, 4.6.2
it is within a local, circuit or district context and is not automatically transferable from one place to another within the Methodist Church. Whilst the Methodist Church might offer training, resources and learning opportunities to help ensure that people are appropriately equipped and resourced for particular roles (and sometimes require this as part of the discernment process), successful completion of training and appointment to a role is always within a particular context and does not automatically ‘qualify’ someone for a similar role elsewhere. In other contexts people take with them their gifts, training and experience but may be called or needed to share in the ministry of the Church in other ways. This is an important part of our understanding of the ministry of the whole people of God. Each part of the Church discerns how to best use the gifts given by the Holy Spirit in the life and witness of the Church as it shares in God’s mission.

7.4. **Ordained ministry in the Methodist Church**

7.4.1. Starting from, and rooted in, its conviction that the whole people of God share in Christ’s continuing ministry to the world,\(^\text{74}\) the Methodist Church shares the view of the wider Church that:

“In order to fulfil its mission, the Church needs persons who are publicly and continually responsible for pointing to its fundamental dependence on Jesus Christ, and thereby provide, within a multiplicity of gifts, a focus of its unity. The ministry of such persons, who since very early times have been ordained, is constitutive for the life and witness of the Church ... Their presence reminds the community of the divine initiative, and of the dependence of the Church on Jesus Christ, who is the source of its mission and the foundation of its unity. They serve to build up the community in Christ and to strengthen its witness. In them the Church seeks an example of holiness and loving concern.”\(^\text{75}\)

The Methodist Church considers its ordained ministries to be ministries of the universal Church. If its understanding of ministry begins with the calling of the whole people of God then ordained ministry “exists as representative of the total ministry of the Church.”\(^\text{76}\) From within the whole people of God, therefore, some are set apart in ordination to represent Christ to his people and represent the people of God before

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\(^{74}\) The Methodist Church, 1974, *Ordination*, 6, 7  
\(^{75}\) World Council of Churches, 1982, *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry*, M§§8, 12  
\(^{76}\) The Methodist Church, 1985, *British Methodist Response to the Lima Text*, 4.3
7.4.2. **Patterns of ordained ministry in the Methodist Church**

7.4.2.1. Its particular history has played a significant part in shaping the pattern of ordained ministry within the Methodist Church. The early Methodist preachers, described by John Wesley as ‘extraordinary messengers’, emerged within the pattern of ministry in the Church of England which took for granted the three-fold order of bishops, priests and deacons. Preachers (some of whom were ‘travelling’ and some local, depending on their circumstances) were ‘in connexion’ with Wesley and this relationship gave them their status in the Methodist movement. Their calling was principally to preach and stir local clergy to greater effectiveness. The move from extraordinary messengers and travelling preachers, to (in some places) pastoral ministry, to the two orders of ministry (the presbyterate and the diaconate) in the Methodist Church in Britain today, has been complex and diverse, leading to continuing creative tensions in articulating the role of the ordained in a changed and changing Church. Nevertheless, the Methodist Church affirms the need for an ordained ministry, seeing it as a gift of God and essential to the being of the Church.\(^{77}\) Much of British Methodism’s understanding of ordained ministry is consonant with that of other Churches.

7.4.2.2. Although almost all Christian communities have a formal structure of ministry, some believe that the threefold ministry of bishop, presbyter and deacon “is a sign of continuing faithfulness to the Gospel and is vital to the apostolic continuity of the Church as a whole” whilst others “do not view faithfulness to the Gospel as closely bound to succession in ministry.”\(^{78}\) The Methodist Church agrees that the episcopal, presbyteral and diaconal functions need to be exercised by the Church but does not hold that the threefold order of bishop, presbyter and deacon is essential to the ministry of the Church. Whilst the threefold ministry is a sign of the orderly transmission of apostolic faith and mission, and thus

\(^{77}\) The Methodist Church, 1985, *British Methodist Response to the Lima Text*, 2.1.2 and 2.4.0; 1960 *Ordination in the Methodist Church*, p.103; 1974, *Ordination*, 5

\(^{78}\) World Council of Churches, 2013, *The Church Towards a Common Vision*, §47
a sign (though not a guarantee) of apostolic continuity in the Church, we believe that faithfulness to the Gospel may be preserved in other ways (see 1.7 above). The Methodist Conference has expressed a willingness to receive the historic episcopate in order to advance the cause of visible unity, providing that it is acknowledged that the Methodist Church has been and is part of the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church, and it is accepted that different interpretations of the precise significance of the sign exist. The World Council of Churches convergence text, Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry, only affirmed that the threefold ministry “may serve today as an expression of the unity we seek and also as a means for achieving it.”

7.4.2.3. The Methodist Church has two orders of ministry: presbyters and deacons. Their ministry is interdependent with all other forms of ministry within the whole people of God. Each requires the other and ordained ministers can only fulfil their calling in and for the Body of Christ. Many aspects of their particular ministries (see 7.4.4 and 7.4.5 below) are normally exercised in a variety of ways by a large number of Christians, both in the world and in the church, and they can therefore be understood only within the context of focusing, expressing and enabling the ministry of the whole people of God:

“In their office the calling of the whole Church is focused and represented, and it is their responsibility as representative persons to lead the people to share with them in that calling. In this sense they are the sign of the presence and ministry of Christ in the Church, and through the Church to the world.”

This understanding that ministers are the sign of the presence and ministry of Christ is expressed, for example, when

80 World Council of Churches, 1982, Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry, section on Ministry, §22
81 The Methodist Church, 2002, What is a Presbyter? 2
82 The Methodist Church, The Ministry of the People of God, 1988, 059, 065; The Methodist Diaconal Order, 1993, 10.13
83 The Methodist Church, 1974, Ordination, 14.
presbyters and deacons are welcomed to the appointments to which they are stationed by the Conference. Within the context of worship they are asked to affirm that they will “hold before” the people aspects of God’s call to the whole Body of Christ including “the story of God’s love and mercy and, above all, the Gospel of our Saviour Jesus Christ” and “God’s commitment to human community”. Presbyters also affirm that they will hold before the people “God’s call to holy living” and deacons “God’s call to serve the needs of others.”

7.4.2.4. In the British Methodist Church ordination is linked inseparably with ‘reception into Full Connexion’. The Methodist Conference receives into Full Connexion with itself those who are called to exercise their ministry through the Methodist Church in particular. When they are received into Full Connexion, ministers enter a covenant relationship with the Conference. At the heart of this mutual relationship, made possible through God’s grace, both the ministers and the Conference have appropriate privileges and responsibilities:

“Under the will of God the ministers are accountable to the Conference for the exercise of their ministry and for the execution of the Conference’s vision and will. At the same time they are accounted for by the Conference in that the Conference is committed to deploying them all appropriately and to providing them with the resources and support necessary for them to fulfil their ministry.”

7.4.3. The nature of ordination in the Methodist Church

7.4.3.1. Methodists formally set apart certain individuals as presbyters or deacons by the liturgical means of ordination to the appropriate order of ministry, in conjunction with the juridical act of reception into ‘Full Connexion’ with the Conference. The Methodist Church sets apart as presbyters and deacons those individuals in whom it discerns evidence of God’s call to such ministry and a measure of the necessary gifts and graces.

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84 Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes, *The Methodist Worship Book*, pp.358-361
85 The Methodist Church, 1960, *Ordination in the Methodist Church*
86 The Methodist Church, 2002, *Releasing Ministers for Ministry*, 4.2
87 The Methodist Church, 2002, *Releasing Ministers for Ministry*, 4.2
Insofar as the agency of the Church is concerned, ordination can be looked upon as a special form of commissioning, whereby the Church selects and appoints certain individuals to the office of presbyter or deacon and authorises them to undertake the work associated with that office. As in all aspects of ministry, however, the agency of the Church in ordination is dependent upon the primary agency of the Holy Spirit, who alone calls men and women into ministry and service, bestowing upon them appropriate gifts and graces.

7.4.3.2. The Methodist understanding of the nature of ordination is contained in the liturgical rites found in *The Methodist Worship Book* (1999), authorised by the Conference for use at Methodist ordination services. These liturgical rites have their origin in John Wesley’s *Sunday Service of the Methodists* (1784/6), adapted from the 1662 Book of Common Prayer and intended for use by Methodists in North America and Britain. However, their present shape and form owe a great deal to the twentieth-century liturgical movement, which has strongly influenced ordination rites among all the Churches that practice ordination. This is significant because it has led to a deepening convergence among Christians in understanding the nature of ordination.

7.4.3.3. The essential features of a Methodist ordination service are an ordination prayer and the imposition of hands by an ordained presbyter (normally the President or a Past President of the Conference) on behalf of the Conference. The practice of laying hands on the head of each person to be ordained is an ancient feature originating in the Church of the New Testament, where it was used to denote and direct the focus of an accompanying prayer. In the case of a Methodist ordination service, the prayer accompanying the imposition of hands is: “Father, send the Holy Spirit upon N for the office and work of a Presbyter [or Deacon] in your Church.”

7.4.3.4. The precise form of the ordination prayer is significant because

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88 Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes, *The Methodist Worship Book*, p.306 (presbyters) and p.321 (deacons)
it affirms that the primary agent involved in setting apart women and men as presbyters or deacons is the Holy Spirit. Whatever effect ordination has upon the recipient (beyond the constitutional change that takes place in assuming an office), occurs through the person and work of the Holy Spirit in the Church. In faith and confidence, Christians believe that the invocation of the Holy Spirit to bestow the gifts and graces needed to exercise the office and work of a presbyter or deacon is effective because God listens and responds to the prayer of the Church. An ordination service represents the culmination of a long process in which the Church first discerns and tests the call of candidates, shapes and forms their ministerial development, and finally presents them before God, ready to receive the gift and grace of the Holy Spirit in order to fulfil their vocation to ministry. At all stages, the Church seeks to discern and respond to the will of the Holy Spirit and therefore can, with confidence, call on the Spirit at the moment of ordination.

7.4.3.5. As heirs of the Reformation heritage, Methodists reserve the term 'sacrament' exclusively to describe baptism and the Lord’s Supper, believing them to have been instituted by Christ himself. In these sacraments material things (water, bread and wine) and human actions (pouring water, sharing bread and wine) become means of grace, effective signs of the faithfulness of God and the work of the Holy Spirit. Methodists also believe that the saving work of God is more generally expressed through the created order and human life, so that all the means of grace (whether instituted by Christ or developed in response to fresh contexts) have a sacramental quality. Methodists affirm that ordination is an effective sign by which the grace of God is given and received in faith for the office and work of a presbyter or deacon in the Church. In other words, because of the faithfulness of God in response to the prayer of the Church, ordination contains and confers the grace it signifies. It is therefore appropriate to say that ordination, by its very nature, is sacramental.

7.4.3.6. Methodists do not attempt to describe the real interior effects of ordination in terms other than reception of the Holy Spirit for the office and work of the ministry to which a person has been set apart. Nevertheless, certain affirmations follow from this. By ordination, a person is irrevocably called and set
apart as a presbyter or deacon because God does not rescind God’s call upon the life of an individual. Such a special call shapes the whole of a person’s life, thereby establishing a new and permanent relationship with Christ and his Church, and a permanent orientation within the baptismal state to serve God and the people of God as a presbyter or deacon. For this reason, Methodist polity asserts that a person may not be ordained more than once to the same order of ministry.

7.4.3.7. That the ordination prayer holds together the ‘office’ and ‘work’ of a presbyter or deacon overcomes the false separation of ‘being’ a minister and ‘doing’ the work of a minister. Ordination is not to be thought of as a temporary commission in order to fulfil certain ministerial functions for a period of time. Ministers do not cease to be such when they no longer undertake the normal work of a presbyter or deacon as a result of incapacity, becoming supernumerary or else taking up some form of secular employment. Equally, ‘being’ a minister necessarily involves a lifelong commitment to undertake the ‘work’ of a presbyter or deacon insofar as they remain able.

7.4.4. Methodist Presbyters

7.4.4.1. Methodist Presbyters are ministers of the Word and Sacraments in the Church of God. Through ordination and reception into Full Connexion they are authorised by the Conference:

“to be public people who represent God-in-Christ and the community of the Church (particularly the Methodist Church and its Conference) in the world, and the world and the community of the Church in Christ before God, as they seek to serve the needs of the Kingdom in the power of the Spirit.”

They share a collegial responsibility for embodying, exercising and sharing with others the Conference’s oversight of the Church both as it gathers in Christian community and as it disperses in the world for worship and mission. They have authority to preach the Word and administer the Sacraments.
32. Ministry in the Methodist Church

7.4.4.2. Although Methodist presbyters are not understood to be an exclusive order with a priestly character of their own\(^91\), the Methodist Church shares with others the idea of representative ministry which relates ordination both to the priesthood of Christ, and to the priesthood of baptized believers. It further holds that presbyters represent the holy, catholic and the apostolic nature of the Church.\(^92\) In its response to *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry*, the Methodist Church acknowledges the need of the Church for people who are “called and set apart for leadership in pastoral care, preaching, and intercessory prayer, and for presidency at the sacraments.”\(^93\)

7.4.4.3. The Methodist Church shares the Protestant understanding that presbyters have the authority and responsibility to preach the word, preside at the sacraments, and administer our discipline. The ministry of Methodist presbyters has been summarised and characterised under three headings: it is a ministry of word (including preaching, evangelism, apologetic, theological and prophetic interpretation, teaching and the articulation of faith and human experience); sacrament (including presiding at acts of celebration and devotion, especially baptism (and, in the wider sense of sacramental acts, confirmation) and eucharist; and pastoral responsibility (including oversight, direction, discipline, order and pastoral care).\(^94\) Virtually none of the individual activities is exclusive to presbyters. Nevertheless, the combination of the ministries of word, sacrament and pastoral responsibility is exclusive to and definitive of the presbyter: “Moreover the very fact these ministries are combined imparts a distinctive nature to each of them.”\(^95\)

7.4.4.4. Within the ordination service, those whom God has called into the Order of Presbyters are reminded that:

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91 Clause 4 of the *Deed of Union*
93 The Methodist Church, 1985, *British Methodist Response to the Lima Text*, 4.3.2
94 The Methodist Church, 2002, *What is a Presbyter?* 6
95 The Methodist Church, 2002, *What is a Presbyter?* 8
“In his name you are
to preach by word and deed the Gospel of God’s grace;
to declare God’s forgiveness of sins to all who are penitent;
to baptize, to confirm
and to preside at the celebration of the sacrament of Christ’s
body and blood;
to lead God’s people in worship, prayer and service;
to minister Christ’s love and compassion;
to serve others, in whom you serve the Lord himself.”

7.4.5. **Methodist Deacons**

7.4.5.1. Methodist Deacons are ordained to the diaconate in the Church of God and become members of the Methodist Diaconal Order. They are:

“... a ‘focus’ for the servant ministry of Christ; through their ministry of caring, the incarnate servant Christ is revealed. They are a ‘focus’ for the servant ministry of the Church, making visible God’s calling to the Church to be a servant in the world. Their servant ministry challenges the Church to respond to this calling. Part of their role is to interpret to the Church the needs and aspirations of the world. Deacons and deaconesses offer Methodism and the wider Church the discipline, spirituality and commitment to community that is part of working out their personal vocation in the context of being a religious order.”

7.4.5.2. Within the ordination service, those whom God has called into the Order of Deacons are reminded that:

“In his name you are
to assist God’s people in worship and prayer;
to hold before them the needs and concerns of the world;
to minister Christ’s love and compassion;
to visit and support the sick and the suffering;
to seek out the lost and the lonely;
and to help those you serve to offer their lives to God.”

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96 Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes, *The Methodist Worship Book*, p.302
7.4.6. Although differences in understandings about ordained ministry continue and present significant challenges on the path to unity, the Methodist Church “looks for the day when, in communion with the whole Church, such ministries are recognized and exercised in common.”

8. Concluding comment

This Statement sets out the Methodist Church’s understanding of ministry. It provides a framework for the Methodist people to participate in discerning our continuing response to God and engage theology with opportunities and challenges that arise, and it encourages reflection on how we encourage each other to share in God’s mission in the varied contexts in which we live and work.

Eternal God,
the light of the minds that know you,
the joy of the hearts that love you,
and the strength of the wills that serve you:
grant us so to know you that we may truly love you,
so to love you that we may truly serve you,
whose service is perfect freedom;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.
Augustine of Hippo (430)

***RESOLUTIONS


32/3. The Conference, pursuant to Standing Order 129 (2) and (3):

(i) commends the draft Conference Statement ‘Ministry in the Methodist Church to the Connexion for study, discussion and response;
(ii) directs the Secretary of the Conference to ensure that the draft Statement is made widely available for study and discussion.
(iii) invites Districts, Circuits and Local Churches to send comments on the draft Statement to the Secretary of the Faith and Order Committee to arrive not later than 1 February 2020.

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99 Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes, *Methodist Worship Book*, p.298
Part C: Ministry in the Methodist Church

1. Introduction

1.1. This report forms a further part of the response to the 2014 Conference direction that the Faith and Order Committee, in consultation with the Ministries Committee, undertake work on the “theology and nature of lay and ordained ministry in the Methodist Church.” It addresses aspects of the work which do not appropriately belong in a Conference Statement but, nonetheless, are important for the Conference to consider. It therefore begins to build on the theology articulated in the draft Statement to help progress the Methodist Church’s engagement with some of the particular questions and challenges with regards to ministry that it is facing in a changed and changing context. This report, therefore, has three purposes:

- It highlights areas which may require further consideration but are not, or not solely, questions of faith and order and are therefore for other bodies in the life of the Church to explore. Whilst the Faith and Order Committee can resource and contribute to any further explorations, it is not within its remit to decide matters of policy;

- It identifies areas where further theological work will be reported to a later Conference as it flows from, rather than forming part of, the draft Conference Statement. Some of these areas the Conference has already asked the Faith and Order Committee to consider, others have emerged from this piece of work;

- It offers some reflections that emerge from the work which it may be helpful for the Conference to receive but do not appropriately form part of the draft Conference Statement.

1.2. During the consultation process related to this work, three particular tensions have been identified that shape the Methodist Church in Britain’s theology and practice of ministry. Acknowledging these tensions helps to set in context some of the questions that the Methodist Church is currently considering and on which there are different perspectives, particularly those identified in section 2 below. The tensions are:

1.2.1. The tension that is an intrinsic part of connexionalism between the level of authority that is appropriately given to Local Churches, Circuits and Districts in order that they may respond to local calls of mission and
service, and the needs of the whole Church to enable the Methodist Church to be effective in its witness and mission. There is need for a vision for the whole Methodist Church and for us to hold some things in common, but also a need to start ‘where people are’ and with the issues that people are facing in local contexts;

1.2.2. The continuing tension in our theological view of ordained ministry, within the common understanding expressed in the draft Statement. This was evident in some of the differences that existed in the churches that came together when the *Deed of Union* was formed, and different approaches to understanding the roles of lay and ordained persist;

1.2.3. The tension between Methodism’s origins as a movement, and its current status and structures as an institution established by an Act of Parliament. Although we are a Church, and thus ordered accordingly, the working out of how we organise our life together continues to be shaped, in part, by this dynamic.

2. **Aspects of the work on ministry requiring further reflection**

2.1. The Methodist Church is facing a number of challenges and opportunities which impact on the way in which ministry is exercised in Local Churches, Circuits and Districts (see Part B, section 3). The imbalance between the number of available circuit appointments and the number of presbyters available for stationing to circuit appointments is a major concern. In addition, the variety of expectations in the size of appointments described in the stationing profiles has been noted. During the consultation in relation to the *Ministry in the Methodist Church* report, it became evident that a substantial number of presbyters identify significant constraints on their geographical availability. This, and imbalances in circuit finances, means that there are some areas where it is difficult to provide and resource the ordained ministry that is needed.

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101 The Methodist Church, 1999, *Called to Love and Praise*, §4.6.2 “How is this ‘connexional principle’ effected? First, at all levels of the church, the structures of fellowship, consultation, government and oversight express the interdependence of all churches, and help to point up, at all levels, necessary priorities in mission and service. Second, alongside this, as the natural corollary of connexionalism, local churches, Circuits and Districts exercise the greatest possible degree of autonomy. This is necessary if they are to express their own cultural identity and to respond to local calls of mission and service in an appropriate way. But their dependence on the larger whole is also necessary for their own continuing vitality and well-being. Such local autonomy may also need to be limited from time to time in the light of the needs of the whole Church.”

102 The Methodist Conference, 2017, report from the Stationing Committee, §1.3 and 2.2

103 The Methodist Conference, 2017, report from the Stationing Committee, §1.3
Some Circuits have sought to respond to this challenge by developing different patterns of ministry. Alongside this, engagement with new communities through fresh expressions and pioneer ministry, and engagement with language and culturally-specific congregations and fellowships, has seen the development of Christian communities often led by local preachers and lay officers. As Circuits explore different patterns of ministry and face the challenges of finding people with both the appropriate gifts and time to undertake various roles, ministers frequently have to take responsibility for ensuring that a variety of functions are fulfilled. Lay employees now undertake what the Conference has noted to be “an unprecedented variety of ministries in our Church,”¹⁰⁴ and, building on conversations about local pastoral ministry, some Circuits have appointed people as local lay pastors (see 2.5.1 below).

2.2. The development of new roles and different patterns of ministry raises questions that have persisted for a number of years. In the light of this, and flowing from the work on ministry in the Methodist Church, there are five particular areas which warrant further reflection and exploration.

2.3. **Revisiting Releasing Ministers for Ministry**

2.3.1. In response to a request to “reopen recruitment for presbyters who before 1999 would have been called ministers in local appointment,”¹⁰⁵ the 2017 Conference acknowledged that current practice with regards to the deployment and stationing of ministers does not fully reflect the flexible patterns of ministry envisaged in the 2002 *Releasing Ministers for Ministry* report. As a consequence of that report, the 2002 Conference affirmed the proposal that there be one category of presbyteral ministry which contains all presbyters in Full Connexion and that a single, transparent discipline of stationing be developed. It was envisaged that, within the stationing process, some Circuits would offer appointments that might be full-time or part-time, stipendiary or self-supporting, and that presbyters would similarly state what type of arrangement they were seeking. In practice, the appointments offered by Circuits and sought by ministers within the stationing processes are usually full-time and stipendiary. The 2017 Conference directed the Faith and Order Committee to consider these issues¹⁰⁶ as part of its work on ministry.

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¹⁰⁵ The Methodist Conference, 2017, Memorial 2
¹⁰⁶ The Methodist Conference, 2017, Memorial 3
2.3.2. There continue to be Methodists who believe that they are called to presbyteral or diaconal ministry at a time when there are particular reasons for them not to move away from the area in which they are living. Those reasons might be personal circumstance, family need, an identified missional need, or the needs of or their involvement in a particular ethnic or language group. There are also presbyters and deacons who may need to be in a particular place for a period of time for similar reasons. Some ministers seek appointments that are less than full-time, sometimes combining a circuit appointment with another appointment either within or outside of the control of the Methodist Church. Some feel called to exercise ministry through pioneering, chaplaincy, theological education, or work within a secular context. Whilst there are some opportunities for undertaking such ministries as part of a circuit appointment, these are not common. There is therefore a need to establish why what was envisaged in the Releasing Ministers for Ministry report has not materialised, particularly within the stationing process, and why some subsequent policy decisions have not been adhered to.

2.3.3. In order that it can be reported to the Conference the extent to which the proposals in Releasing Ministers for Ministry are still appropriate nearly two decades on and therefore how they will be implemented, revised or replaced, and to enable further recommendations to be brought, the practical, theological and policy aspects of a number of areas require further exploration. These include:

- Appropriately responding to ministers who feel called to exercise ministry in a specific context in the light of the needs of the whole Methodist Church, noting that fresh expressions, the pioneer pathway and the needs of particular cultural and language groups have emphasised the contextual nature of some individuals’ gifts and vocation;

- Questions about second and subsequent appointments for ministers who were known as Ministers in Local Appointments (MLAs) or have, more recently, declared during the candidating process that they have limited deployability;

- Issues in relation to self-supporting ministry, including the perception

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107 The Methodist Conference, 2017, reply to Memorial 2
108 It would be helpful to further consider the recommendations in the 2008 Stationing Review Group report and subsequent work (including the 2009 Taking Forward the Stationing Review Group’s Report).
that self-supporting ministers (and MLAs) are somehow ‘second-class’ ministers;

- The number of ministers with limited geographical deployability, whether for a period of time or on an ongoing basis;

- The nature, availability and understanding of part-time appointments, the reasons why they are both offered and sought, and how ministers are matched with these appointments;

- The number of ministers who seek permission to live in their own homes;

- Appropriately supporting ministers returning to circuit ministry from appointments not in the control of the Church, from periods without appointment, and from appointments abroad;

- The number of supernumeraries who undertake some part-time work in a Circuit (paid or unpaid);

- The variety of appointments that may be available and within the control of the Methodist Church but are not brought within the stationing process.

2.3.4. Some joint work by the Faith and Order, Ministries and Stationing committees on these and other related issues is now needed to help the Methodist Church respond to the opportunities and challenges it encounters in a changed and changing context, particularly with regards to the appropriate deployment of ministers.

### 2.4. Stationing and itinerancy

2.4.1. As indicated in section 2.1, there are persisting questions about the potential dissonance between the Methodist Church’s understanding of itinerancy and experiences of the stationing process. In practice many ministers are not available to be stationed anywhere within the Connexion (see 2.3.2) and this has prompted questions about the role and place of itinerancy in the Methodist Church today.

2.4.2. The experiences of the Stationing Committee, with regards to the stationing of presbyters, indicate that there is more possibility than sometimes appears of a greater level of geographical deployability when presbyters respond to the challenge of fulfilling a particular need. It is also acknowledged that there always has been a body of presbyters
who have exercised ministry solely within one District or a particular geographical area, whether through pastoral or missional need or because that is how the stationing process has worked. Yet, there is a tension not just between the place, nature and number of appointments available in any one year and the availability, gifts and number of presbyters, but also between the needs of particular contexts in the Connexion and the resources available to support an appointment.

2.4.3. The difference between the number of appointments and the number of presbyters available to fill them further draws attention to the roles and functions that presbyters in circuit appointments are expected to fulfil (whether explicit, implicit or by default). The 2008 report of the Stationing Review Group noted some of the variety of factors that lead to “minister-dependence” and encouraged further consideration of a variety of issues relating to the practical shape of presbyteral and diaconal ministry. Drawing on the understanding of ordained ministry outlined in the draft Statement (Part B, 7.4), such consideration may help the whole Connexion to identify where and how ministers are best deployed and to discern the criteria for deployment. It could also help Circuits to give attention to the nature and shape of presbyteral and diaconal appointments in relation to other forms, and potential patterns, of ministry.

2.4.4. In the light of these questions and challenges, there are aspects of both itinerancy and stationing that warrant further consideration. A review of the principles of itinerancy and the ways in which these are expressed, including its relationship to geographical deployability and its continuing relevance in relation to our understanding of ordained ministry, would be timely.

2.4.5. Itinerancy, which relates to travelling from place to place and exercising ministry in a variety of different contexts, should be distinguished from stationing which is the process by which the Methodist Church deploys its ministers. All ministers are annually stationed by the Conference. Through being in a relationship of Full Connexion with the Conference, ministers are accountable to the Conference and engage in shared discernment about where their gifts are best used. The Conference is responsible for deploying ministers appropriately and for resourcing and supporting them in their ministry (see Part B, section 7.4.2.4). Itinerancy

109 The Methodist Conference, 2008, Stationing Review Group
and stationing are interrelated and one cannot be considered without the other, therefore some further reflection on aspects of the stationing process is also necessary. Some of this already forms part of the continuing work of the Stationing Committee and some more focused work by the Stationing, Ministries and Faith and Order committees will be beneficial.

2.5. Local pastoral ministry

2.5.1. The development, over more than two decades, of local pastoral ministry in a variety of contexts across the Connexion challenges the Methodist Church to give attention to the different models and understandings of what is taking place. Local pastoral ministry, now commonly referred to as ‘local lay ministry,’ refers to the ministry of people who are authorised by a Local Church or Circuit to engage in pastoral ministry and mission with a local congregation for a specified period of time. The shape of these roles varies in different places, and different titles are used (including ‘Local Pastoral Minister,’ ‘Local Lay Pastor’ and sometimes the more generic ‘Lay Worker’). The Ministries Committee has provisionally identified those undertaking such roles as fulfilling the ‘function’ of being a focused, recognised and consistent presence in a particular community or context. Whilst this function is exercised in many churches by the presbyter in pastoral charge, when ordained resources are spread thinly it is sometimes fulfilled through lay pastoral ministry. Such ministry has developed out of need but with little theological reflection or collective view regarding the questions and challenges that arise. It is recommended that the Faith and Order, Ministries and Stationing committees now address these to help the Methodist Church come to a shared understanding about the nature and practice of local pastoral ministry. This work should take into consideration the theology expressed in the draft Statement on ministry (Part B, and particularly section 7.3), the work already undertaken by the Ministries Committee, and the experiences of those who have developed such patterns of ministry in different parts of the Connexion.

2.5.2. The work already undertaken by the Ministries Committee responded to the 2011 General Secretary’s Report which drew on the concept of ‘a pastor for every church.’\textsuperscript{110} This work identified a need for some consideration and clarification of the following:

\textsuperscript{110} A concept articulated by the Revd Nigel Collinson during his presidential year, 1996/1997
• the theological, relational and operational issues of local pastoral ministry with ordained circuit colleagues;
• the appropriate place of sacramental ministry within changing patterns of ministry and in the light of our understanding of the nature of ordination (see Part B, section 7.4.3);
• models of local ministry in other churches from which we can learn;
• existing examples of locally coordinated ministry within the life of the Church, and the variety of forms of local pastoral ministry.

2.5.3. As a result of this work:

• Resources have been produced to help support those exercising local lay pastoral ministries and these are available on the website at www.methodist.org.uk/supportinglocalministry;
• There was consideration of the question of whether those in these roles should be ‘connexionally authorised’ and whether there should be clearer expectations of what such a role entails and how accountability is exercised. Whilst the language of ‘connexional authorisation’ is misleading (see Part B, section 7.3) there continue to be questions about whether such a role should now be recognised as an office in the Methodist Church and about appropriate structures of oversight and accountability.

2.5.4. In many places people are undertaking local pastoral ministry roles (whether paid or on a voluntary basis). Given these developments, and some assumptions that are now being made, there is a clear need to address questions of theology, ecclesiology, policy and practice. Is there a clearly identifiable role with common features and a core purpose? If so, is it appropriate for this to be a connexionally recognised office? How are people in such roles selected, trained, resourced, supported, supervised and held to account, and how is it determined how long they should serve? What gifts and graces should be demonstrated? How is the representative character of such authorised lay ministry to be understood and expressed, including through appropriate mechanisms of accountability? How do those in such roles relate to the presbyter in pastoral charge and to lay officers? How is oversight of such roles exercised, and how do they share in oversight in local contexts? How is the tension between contextual needs and shared common understanding and practice resolved in relation to this particular ministry?

2.5.5. There are also questions that need exploring around ‘employed lay
ministry.’ This is now widespread in the Connexion in a variety of forms and there is, as yet, little theological work about how we understand it. It raises different questions from those of the ministry in which all the baptised share, not least about the relationship between work and vocation, the differences between employment and ministry, and the expectations (with regard to faith and membership of the Methodist Church) of those employed to undertake roles in the life of the Church. There are differences between the selection, support, resourcing and structures of accountability of those who are lay employees and those who voluntarily undertake specific roles and offices in the life of the Methodist Church. If there is to be further work on local pastoral ministry then this provides an opportunity for such exploration.

2.5.6. The draft Statement on ministry in the Methodist Church encourages a rediscovery of Class Meetings (Part B, section 4.3.6), and there are related questions about how, over time, the role of the Class Leader has been dispersed, with the functions now usually being fulfilled by those in other offices. Class Leaders traditionally exercised considerable pastoral and spiritual leadership in collaboration with the presbyter with pastoral charge of a Local Church. As many local lay pastors fulfil similar functions, it would seem helpful that this is explored as part of the work.

2.6. Different patterns of ministry have often developed through shared work with our ecumenical partners. Any exploration of the areas identified in this section would be incomplete without some consideration of similar developments in other churches and the shared ministry that we do, or could, offer in different contexts.

2.7. A thorough exploration of the questions of theology, practice and policy in relation to the areas identified above requires some collaborative working between the Faith and Order, Ministries and Stationing committees. It is therefore recommended that the Secretary of the Conference oversees a piece of joint work by these committees to explore the areas identified in paragraphs 2.3 – 2.6 and bring any recommendations to the Conference of 2020 (see Resolution 32/5 below).

2.8. **Pioneer ministry**

2.8.1. Across the Connexion there are a number of people, lay and ordained, in roles that have pioneering as the main focus of ministry. A pioneer is someone who can imagine new possibilities and has the ability to bring them into being, seeking to connect with those who are not engaged in the
life of the Church to help them encounter God and explore what it might mean for them to be a disciple of Jesus Christ. They are creative and resourceful, community oriented and kingdom focused. The development of the pioneer pathway has helped to identify, release and support those who are suitable for such work, recognising that there is a significant diversity of context, experience and approach among those involved.

2.8.2. During the consultation in relation to ministry in the Methodist Church the following areas for further consideration emerged:

- There are questions to be explored about how pioneer ministry relates to other forms of ministry, including presbyteral and diaconal ministry and some forms of local pastoral ministry;
- There are questions about whether the ‘true’ pioneers are those who help to develop new Christian communities and then stay and help to sustain them, or those who go for a while and then come back to the ‘established’ church community, possibly to be sent somewhere new. Is a pioneer always a pioneer?
- There is a tension between the need for creative flexibility and legitimate accountability, and questions of where and how that is best held;
- There is significant diversity of context, experience and approach among those involved in the world of pioneering and fresh expressions. Some are pioneers because of generic gifts and skills, some are pioneers because they feel a particular call to a particular community;
- There is a continuing question about whether pioneers should be authorised and, if so, by whom. Some would find it helpful for Pioneer to be an office in the life of the Methodist Church whilst others fear that it would ‘domesticate’ something that has a helpful degree of flexibility in relating to other areas of the Church’s life;
- Questions of how pioneers are most effectively identified, supported, resourced, supervised and held to account require further exploration;
- The current stationing process has the ability to station ministers to such appointments where they are offered, but the availability of such appointments is inconsistent and unpredictable. A more intentional approach may be called for.

2.8.3. There is a question to be addressed as to what kind of work is needed next, recognising a tension between those who would want to explore developing an office of ‘Pioneer’ in the life of the Church, and those who
would want there to be further space to see how pioneering ministry and fresh expressions develop. Many fresh expressions and new Christian communities are still relatively young and there has not yet been sufficient time to see how they mature and develop in relation to the Methodist Church. In many cases it is too early to tell what impact and role fresh expressions have in the life of the Church, including issues about whether such communities are sustainable and what kind of ministry they require on an ongoing basis. As pioneer ministry and fresh expressions of church continue to evolve, some robust reflection on learning would be helpful (and this needs more time to acquire) before any questions about creating an office of Pioneer are further explored. It is not, therefore, proposed that a more focused piece of work is undertaken at this point, but it is recommended that the Ministries Committee continues to give attention to pioneer ministry both to build on what has been developed so far and to ensure that there is a gathering of learning and opportunities for collaborative reflection (including with ecumenical partners) on questions of practice, policy and theology (see Resolution 32/6 below).

2.9. **Chaplaincy**

2.9.1. Chaplaincy is an established and important aspect of the ministry of the Methodist Church, and has been since its beginnings. Today there are many different kinds of chaplaincies in a range of contexts, for example in hospitals and hospices; prisons; universities, colleges and schools; in a wide variety of workplaces; and within particular communities. They can be full-time or part-time, voluntary or paid, short-term or long-term, and are undertaken by lay or ordained. Indeed, full-time ordained chaplains are in the minority. Whether they are appointed by the Local Church, Circuit or District, chaplains are always sent, supported by and accountable to the Church. Chaplains usually engage with people who have little or no contact with the Church, sometimes at a time of particular need, and they often work in secular institutions and in ecumenical or multi-faith contexts.

2.9.2. Some of the questions that arise about other forms of ministry, for example pioneers and local pastoral ministry, have also arisen with regards to chaplaincy from time to time. It may be helpful for those exploring such questions to reflect on the history, practice and variety of chaplaincy in the Methodist Church to help us remember how the Church has responded, and continues to respond, to changing needs and to different and new communities, and how it engages in a form of ministry which is shaped by particular contexts and therefore requires a
degree of flexibility in how it is both exercised and overseen. Whilst the range and variety of chaplaincies have changed over time, and chaplains are appointed by and accountable to the Church in different ways, it is a form of ministry about which there is some common understanding. The history and continuing experiences of Methodist chaplains therefore both illustrate and navigate the tensions identified in section 1.2 and reflection on this aspect of ministry in the Methodist Church may provide some helpful resources when considering some of the questions identified above.

2.10. **Leadership and oversight**

2.10.1. In recent years, and particularly since the report *Leadership in the Methodist Church* (2002), a variety of reports have been received by the Conference which discuss various aspects of leadership in the Methodist Church. The use of the term ‘leadership’ has become more commonplace in the changed and changing contexts indicated in the draft Statement (Part B, section 3), but the Methodist Church has not yet undertaken much (theological) reflection on how the term is employed. Perceptions and expressions of leadership are culturally conditioned and in the course of producing this report, it has been noted that various (and sometimes contrasting) understandings and models of leadership are employed, or assumed, without consideration of how these relate to our understanding of the Church and its ministry, nor to oversight. In order to help the Methodist Church as it continues to reflect on aspects and models of leadership, some shared understanding of what is meant by ‘leadership’ would be useful. Some theological reflection on ‘understanding leadership in a Methodist context’ would be a positive contribution to resourcing conversations and provide a framework and some common reference points for those who are addressing the variety of questions that exist with regard to leadership.

2.10.2. It will be important for such work to include the following:

- A review of theological work that has already been undertaken by different groups in the Methodist Church in relation to leadership;
- Engagement with and theological reflection on contemporary thinking and models of leadership in social science and business disciplines;
- Consideration of similar work done by ecumenical partners; and
- A methodology that offers a theological critique of the models of leadership being offered to and in the Church.
2.10.3. It is therefore recommended that the Faith and Order Committee produces a report that will provide a theological and ecclesiological framework to help resource those who are exploring and seeking to address questions of leadership in the Methodist Church today (see Resolution 32/7 below).

3. Progress of work previously directed by the Conference

3.1. The theology and ecclesiology underpinning the diaconate

3.1.1. The 2013 Conference directed the Faith and Order Committee, in consultation with the Methodist Diaconal Order (MDO), to undertake work on the theology and ecclesiology underpinning the diaconate in Methodism, its place within the British Connexion and its place within the universal Church (Resolution 44/11). Within the universal Church, deacons in the Methodist Church in Britain are currently in the distinctive position of belonging to both an order of ministry and a religious order. Within ecumenical conversations, and as the MDO has evolved and the Church’s understanding of the diaconate has developed, the Methodist Church in Britain has been challenged to reflect on how it understands and undertakes its diaconal ministry, and how that ministry is focused in those it sets apart as deacons through ordination. A number of factors prompted the 2013 Conference direction and the work was welcomed by the MDO, some members of which had long been calling for such work to take place.

3.1.2. In 2016 the Conference received the report The Theology and Ecclesiology Underpinning the Diaconate – Interim Report. The report sets out some biblical and historical understandings of the diaconate within the universal Church, reviews recent ecumenical developments and conversations, offers an account of the story of the MDO and the diaconate within the British Methodist Church, and reflects on current experience. It is intended to be read alongside the 1993 report, The Methodist Diaconal Order, and these two reports provide the foundational thinking for a British Methodist theology and ecclesiology underpinning the diaconate.

111 See the Conference reports 2013, The Methodist Council, section 11; and 2016, The Theology and Ecclesiology Underpinning the Diaconate – Interim Report, 1.4 and 3.6
112 Much of this summary paragraph is drawn from the 2016 Conference report The Theology and Ecclesiology Underpinning the Diaconate – Interim Report, 1.3
3.1.3. The *Interim Report* highlighted a number of areas needing further exploration. One fundamental question that had persisted across the years was that of the relationship between the religious order and the order of ministry. The Conference has previously noted that British Methodism makes a contribution to the wider Church as its deacons focus and represent servant ministry “as much through being members of a religious order as being part of an order of ministry in Full Connexion with the Conference,”\(^{113}\) yet it has struggled to articulate this contribution in theological and ecclesiological terms.\(^{114}\) To further explore this relationship the Conference agreed that further consideration needed to be given to the nature of the MDO and directed the Methodist Council (with the MDO and the Faith and Order Committee) to consider “whether the religious order should be opened to receive into membership Methodists who are lay or ordained to presbyteral ministry” and “to consider whether those whom it ordains to the diaconal order of ministry continue to be required also to become members of the religious order.”\(^{115}\) Once the Methodist Council has considered these questions and there is sufficient clarity about both the nature and purpose of the MDO in a changed and changing context and whether it will continue to be a requirement that all ordained to the diaconal order of ministry are also members of the religious order, then the further reflection on the theology and ecclesiology underpinning the diaconate will be able to take place. It is hoped that all pieces of work will be completed so as to enable a report to be brought to the 2019 Conference.

### 3.2. The liturgical role of deacons

3.2.1. In 2012, the Conference directed the Faith and Order Committee to explore with the MDO and the Ministries Committee the liturgical role of deacons within the Methodist Church and, if appropriate, find ways of affirming that. Following some initial work and consultation, it was felt appropriate that this work should be embraced within the work on the theology and ecclesiology underpinning the diaconate.

3.2.2. The Faith and Order Committee, the Ministries Committee and the MDO have considered various aspects of the liturgical role of deacons, more recently focusing on the ministry of proclamation. A final report on the

\(^{113}\) The Methodist Conference, 2004, *What is a Deacon?*, 7.1


\(^{115}\) The 2016 Conference Resolutions 33/2 and 33/3
liturgical role of deacons will therefore be included as part of that report in 2019.

3.3. **Church stewards and lay leadership**

3.3.1. In 2014 the Conference directed the Faith and Order Committee to ensure that a review of the role and responsibilities of church stewards and other forms of lay leadership is included in the review of ministry in the Methodist Church.

3.3.2. As part of this reflection, the following points were noted:

- In Local Churches and Circuits leadership is expressed in a diversity of ways, for example through church and circuit stewards working with the minister(s) or through leadership teams (and such teams can be differently comprised, sometimes including other key office-holders or lay employees);
- The role of church and circuit stewards differs in different contexts, for example in some places there are also vestry stewards, and in Circuits of different sizes, circuit stewards have very different kinds of roles and workloads. Ecumenical partners have different understandings of ministry, and leadership in local churches takes different forms (see paragraph 3.4 of Part B). URC Elders, for example, are not equivalent to church stewards, not least because theirs is a lifelong call to ministry. Attention therefore needs to be paid to different understandings of call and to the different roles and functions undertaken by those who occupy positions of leadership in ecumenical contexts, particularly single congregation LEPs;
- There has been an increased emphasis on team and collaborative ministry with many different examples of how teams are comprised and of patterns of working;
- Many of the questions that emerge focus on how people are selected, resourced and supported in these roles.

3.3.3. The diversity of patterns of leadership in Local Churches and Circuits is needed because local contexts differ. Given the variety in the size and shape of Local Churches and Circuits, and that these continue to change, patterns of leadership appropriate to the local context will continue to evolve. Our current Standing Orders allow for sufficient flexibility and it is suggested that any further reflection in this area would most appropriately be taken forward in local contexts where reflection on how those in these posts are resourced, equipped and supported is to
be encouraged. However, such ministry is expressed in the local church or circuit context, it should be in keeping with the understanding of ministry expressed in the draft Statement and with our Standing Orders. There is a need for increased awareness of our existing polity which is often more flexible than is sometimes assumed.

***RESOLUTIONS


32/5. The Conference directs the Secretary of the Conference to oversee joint work by the Faith and Order, Ministries, and Stationing committees to explore the aspects of changing patterns of ministry identified in paragraphs 2.3 to 2.6 of this report (particularly revisiting Releasing Ministers for Ministry, itinerancy and stationing, local pastoral ministry, and employed lay ministry) and to report on such joint work to the 2020 Conference.

32/6. The Conference directs the Ministries Committee to continue to give attention to pioneer ministry and to ensure that there is a gathering of learning and opportunities for collaborative reflection on questions of practice, policy and theology.

32/7. The Conference directs the Faith and Order Committee to explore theological and ecclesiological aspects of the nature of leadership in the Methodist Church and report to the 2020 Conference.
33. Faith and Order Committee Report: The Mission and Ministry in Covenant Proposals

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|--------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Resolutions              | 33/1. The Conference receives the Report.  
33/2. The Conference directs the Faith and Order Committee to undertake further work on the issues identified in paragraph 6 of Part A of this report and bring its response to the 2019 Conference. |

Summary of content and impact

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<th>Subject and aims</th>
<th>To provide an update on the work relating to the Mission and Ministry in Covenant proposals in order for the Conference to discuss the Mission and Ministry in Covenant report.</th>
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| Main points      | Part A: Update on the work relating to the Mission and Ministry in Covenant report and identification of further work  
Part B: The Mission and Ministry in Covenant report |
| Background context and relevant documents (with function) | An Anglican-Methodist Covenant (2001)  
The reports of the Joint Implementation Commission:  
   
   *In the Spirit of the Covenant* (2005)  
   *Living God’s Covenant* (2007)  
   *Embracing the Covenant* (2008)  
   *Moving Forward in Covenant* (2011)  
   *The Challenge of the Covenant* (2013)  
   *The Challenge of the Covenant* (2014)  

All of these reports are available at: www.anglican-methodist.org.uk/jic/
PART A

Faith and Order Committee Report: The *Mission and Ministry in Covenant Proposals*

1. Introduction

1.1. *Mission and Ministry in Covenant* is a report by the faith and order bodies of the Methodist Church\(^1\) and the Church of England in response to resolutions of the 2014 Conference and the 2014 General Synod. It thus outlines proposals for bringing the Methodist Church and the Church of England into communion with one another and enabling interchangeability of their presbyteral ministries.

1.2. As these proposals are debated, it is important that they are considered in the context of the covenant relationship between our two churches and the work associated with that, particularly the work of the Joint Implementation Commission (JIC) and the decisions and commitments that the Conference has already made. The Covenant between the Church of England and the Methodist Church was signed in 2003. Ten years later, when reviewing its work, the JIC commented that the lack of progress on removing the obstacles to interchangeability of ministry “seriously questions the integrity of the commitments which our churches have made in the Covenant”.\(^2\) It challenged both churches to take “one bold initiative each in order to open the locked door which blocks the way forward together”\(^3\), a challenge which was taken up as both churches endorsed the recommendation that these proposals be developed and directed the faith and order bodies to undertake the work.

1.3. As members of the Conference prepare to debate the proposals contained in *Mission and Ministry in Covenant*, the first part of this report provides a brief note on the background including the development of the proposals, and then comments on three of the questions that have emerged from the reception of *Mission and Ministry in Covenant* so far:

- What difference will the proposals make?
- Are the proposals consistent with Methodist theology?
- How have ecumenical partners responded?

The third question includes a report of the debate of these proposals at the General Synod in February. Finally, the report explains why further work is being recommended before the proposals come before the Conference for decision. The

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1 In this report the Methodist Church of Great Britain is referred to as ‘the Methodist Church’.
3 Paragraphs 15 and 20 and 46
Mission and Ministry in Covenant report comprises the second part of this report.

2. **Background and development of the proposals**

2.1. The Covenant between the Church of England and the Methodist Church is based on the 2001 *Common Statement*, which arose from Formal Conversations between the two churches that began more than 20 years ago. That, in turn, was 25 years after the narrow defeat of proposals for union between our two churches at the General Synod in 1972, proposals that had been worked on since the 1950s.

2.2. Following an initial statement, the 2003 Covenant included seven ‘Affirmations’ and six ‘Commitments’ (quoted in full at paragraphs 7 and 8 of Mission and Ministry in Covenant). The first Commitment says:

“We commit ourselves, as a priority, to work to overcome the remaining obstacles to the organic unity of our two churches, on the way to the full visible unity of Christ’s Church. In particular, we look forward to the time when the fuller visible unity of our churches makes possible a united, interchangeable ministry.”

2.3. The Covenant as signed in 2003 was therefore not intended to be a settled destination for our two churches, but rather, as the accompanying *Common Statement* says in its opening paragraph, “a major stepping-stone on the way towards organic unity,” with other steps on the journey still lying ahead. The same Commitment identified “a united, interchangeable ministry” as the next key stage on our churches’ journey towards visible unity by a series of agreed stages, to which both have pledged themselves. It would however remain at this next stage a relationship between two different churches, one Methodist and the other Anglican.

2.4. The JIC was set up following the signing of the Covenant and it undertook substantial work in exploring the question of how to move to the next stage of the journey. In the final report from its second Quinquennium it strongly affirmed both the goal of visible unity between our churches and the need to focus on interchangeability of ministry as the next stage. *Mission and Ministry in Covenant* follows on from the substantial work of the JIC in these areas and presents for the first time to both churches proposals that would make possible an interchangeable ministry. If the proposals were to be adopted then a new chapter in the covenant relationship would begin: two churches,

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4 See 2001, An Anglican-Methodist Covenant
6 2001, An Anglican-Methodist Covenant: Common Statement, §1
7 JIC, 2013, The Challenge of the Covenant: Uniting in Mission and Holiness, especially chapters 8-11
still distinct from one another, but in a relationship of communion that renews the momentum towards the common goal of the full visible unity of Christ’s Church.

2.5. The implications of not proceeding with the proposals, or a modified version of them, would be serious. Such a decision would raise the question of whether we can still look forward to the time when the fuller visible unity of our churches makes possible a united, interchangeable ministry and, if not, what kind of unity are we committed to pursuing? Therefore, consideration by the Methodist Conference and the General Synod of Mission and Ministry in Covenant places us at a crossroads in the covenant relationship.

2.6. Mission and Ministry in Covenant is being brought to the Conference for debate because it is the response to the 2014 Conference’s endorsement of Recommendation 1 of the Final Report from the JIC and direction to the Faith and Order Committee to undertake the necessary work to bring forward the stated proposals.8 Recommendation 1 of the Final Report from the JIC read as follows:

“that the Faith and Order Commission of the Church of England and the Faith and Order Committee of the Methodist Church work together to bring forward proposals for

(i) the Methodist Church to consider afresh expressing the Conference’s ministry of oversight in a personal form of connexional, episcopal ministry and the Church of England to recognise that ministry in the Methodist Church as a sign of continuity in faith, worship and mission in a church that is in the apostolic succession;

(ii) the Church of England and the Methodist Church to address the question of reconciling, with integrity, the existing presbyteral and diaconal ministries of our two churches, which would lead to the interchangeability of ministries.”9

2.7. A Joint Subgroup set up in 2015 by the Faith and Order Committee of the Methodist Church and the Faith and Order Commission of the Church of England worked closely within the parameters that had been set by the Conference and the General Synod in 2014. This can be seen in the structure of the report itself: of the two central chapters of Mission and Ministry in Covenant, chapter 2 addresses part (i) of the JIC recommendation, whilst chapter 3 addresses part (ii) of the recommendation.

2.8. The Joint Subgroup recognised that the JIC had already undertaken significant work and uncovered much common ground, and that its reports had been received by the

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8 The Methodist Conference, 2014, Resolution 21/3
9 On why it was decided not to address diaconal ministries at this point, see Mission and Ministry in Covenant, paragraph 15.
Methodist Conference and commended to the Methodist people for study. Similarly, the Common Statement of the Covenant itself provided a theological base from which to work. The Joint Subgroup therefore sought to build on this body of work as well as drawing on previous decisions and theological thinking in both churches. Although inevitably some things have been revisited as they needed further exploration, the Covenant and the work of the JIC therefore provide the foundation for the proposals, and the JIC reports offer more detailed reflection on some of the topics covered in *Mission and Ministry in Covenant*. These can all be found on the website ‘An Anglican-Methodist Covenant’ at: www.anglican-methodist.org.uk/jic/. The Joint Subgroup reported regularly to the faith and order bodies of the two churches between 2015 and summer 2017, when it concluded its work and *Mission and Ministry in Covenant* was published.

2.9. The proposals seek both to articulate common ground and to honour differences. The work of the Joint Subgroup involved conversations that helped to deepen understanding of why Methodists and Anglicans cherish their respective traditions. We order ourselves in different ways, reflecting an understanding and experience of God that is deeply held and to be treasured. The proposed new relationship is not about each partner becoming more like the other, but about discovering ways of being in a closer relationship with integrity, grace and generosity. *Mission and Ministry in Covenant* seeks to offer a way of enabling this relationship in a manner that is congruent with the teaching and polity of both churches.

2.10. *Mission and Ministry in Covenant* begins (following the Preface) with a brief summary of its content, at paragraphs 1-6. The summary will help those coming fresh to the document to have a sense of the whole before they start to get to grips with the detail. At the heart of the proposals are the two interrelated actions that the Methodist Church and the Church of England are asked to take, as set out in paragraphs 10-11:

The first step would be that they each make, in terms appropriate to their own tradition and polity, a formal declaration of the new stage in their relationship that is being realised. For the Church of England, this would be expressed by saying that the Methodist Church should become one of those churches with which it is ‘in communion’ ...

The second step would be that they make the following two formal, public commitments, beyond those made in the 2003 Covenant:

a) to share the ministry of the historic episcopate as a sign of the apostolicity of the Church of God;
b) to welcome all presbyters/priests serving in either church as eligible to serve in both churches.

3. **What difference will the proposals make?**

3.1. Acceptance of the proposals would be a profound sign of reconciliation. The generosity asked of both churches would speak powerfully of a desire for the flourishing in unity and mission of the whole Church of God, and not first and foremost the entrenchment of our own institutions.

3.2. For the Church of England, they would mean welcoming all Methodist presbyters as eligible to serve in the Church of England. Were the proposals to come into effect, the majority of Methodist presbyters would for some time have been ordained by a President of the Conference (or by their representative), and not by a bishop. Given the Church of England’s historic insistence on episcopal ordination as necessary for ordained ministry within the Church of England, this is a significant challenge for the Church of England. The case for doing this is set out in chapter 3 of *Mission and Ministry in Covenant*, at paragraphs 54–73. *Mission and Ministry in Covenant* argues that these would be developments that are faithful to Anglican ecclesiology and polity, but members of the Conference should not underestimate their profound significance for the Church of England and the challenge that they represent.

3.3. For members of both churches the impact of the proposals is likely to be felt most directly in the new possibilities they would create for sharing in ministry and mission in local contexts. A significant motivation for this work was the desire to transform the mission dynamic of our churches through helping to release time and energy for worship and mission. A priest/presbyter exercising ministry in both churches at the same time would powerfully express the new relationship of communion between our two churches and could become a catalyst for local Christian communities to discover new ways of worshipping and witnessing together. This might mean Methodist presbyters also receiving Permission to Officiate or being licensed as a Non-Stipendiary Minister in order to work closely with the Parishes serving the same communities as their Circuits, with reciprocal arrangements for Anglican clergy; or it could mean the creation of joint appointments. It is this form of ‘interchangeability’, rather than stipendiary /itinerant ministers moving between churches in their full-time appointments, that has the clearest potential to transform relations between Parishes and Circuits in mission. The proposals are enabling proposals, seeking to make things possible rather than prescribing how things should be.

3.4. The contexts where the impact of this could be greatest are likely to include those where there are serious challenges in sustaining a Christian presence. Some of these would be urban areas, perhaps particularly those where there are high levels of
deprivation, but there is also a general relevance here for rural ministry. *A Discipling Presence*, produced by the Methodist and United Reformed Churches in 2017 and *Released for Mission: Growing the Rural Church*, a Church of England report published in 2015, both point to the importance of ecumenical cooperation for the life and mission of the rural church.\(^10\)

3.5. Whilst such cooperation is already possible and practised in many rural contexts, priests/presbyters exercising ministry in both churches at the same time could build on that in new ways. These would include helping one another to maintain a reliable pattern of public worship in the communities they serve, fostering imaginative initiatives in mission, and enabling strategic decisions to be made about which communities will be the particular focus for ministers serving overlapping geographical areas. Indeed, the ability to deploy presbyters/priests to serve ‘multi-church groups’ of both Anglican and Methodist churches could release ministers for more sustained presence in and deeper engagement with specific communities.

3.6. Some, but not all, of what is envisaged under ‘interchangeability’ is already possible. As well as meaning that, for the first time, a Methodist presbyter could be appointed to an office in the Church of England (for example, Team Vicar, Honorary Assistant Curate, Incumbent), the proposals of *Mission and Ministry in Covenant* would enable priests/presbyters to serve in one another’s churches without requiring any additional institutional structures and leading to more flexibility in deploying and sharing in ministry for both churches. It will rest on a deeper level of recognition and reconciliation of ministries in the context of a relationship of ecclesial communion.

4. **Do the proposals fit with Methodist theology?**

4.1. For Methodists, the challenge to “consider afresh expressing the Conference’s ministry of oversight in a personal form of connexional, episcopal ministry” is one that the church has wrestled with for a number of years and it is a subject on which there is a variety of deeply held views. If the proposals were to be adopted, then it would mean a permanent change in our formal doctrine of ministry to include bishops as well as presbyters and deacons as ordained ministers: the ordaining of the presbyteral President of the Conference as a bishop by bishops recognised by the Church of England (and at least some other episcopally ordered churches) as belonging in the historic episcopate; and the reception by the whole church of the episcopal ministry of Presidents and, in due course, past-Presidents.

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4.2. The case for doing this is set out in chapter two of *Mission and Ministry in Covenant* at paragraphs 21 to 44. It affirms that the idea developed by the JIC of a ‘President-bishop’ would be the most appropriate way for the Methodist Church to receive the sign of the historic episcopate as it fits with the theology and self-understanding of the Methodist Church, and in particular the centrality of the Conference for episkope. At the same time, it can be accepted by Anglicans as an instance of the historic episcopate “locally adapted in the methods of its administration to the varying needs of the nations and peoples called of God into the unity of His Church”. Although the Methodist Church has considered a variety of potential models across the years, the faith and order bodies found the three theological premises for this model the most compelling (see paragraph 38 of *Mission and Ministry in Covenant*).

4.3. *Mission and Ministry in Covenant* notes that the Methodist Conference has already accepted that the historic episcopate is “a sign, though not a guarantee, of the continuity and unity of the Church”, although it does not accept that the historic episcopate is essential for the faithful exercise of ministry. As long ago as 1985, the Faith and Order Committee concluded that accepting the historic episcopate would not violate Methodist doctrinal standards and the Conference stated that it would be “a valuable sign of apostolicity”. In 2000, the Conference expressed a willingness to receive the historic episcopate as a sign of the Methodist Church’s continuity with the Church universal and for the sake of greater visible unity, provided that partner churches acknowledge that the Methodist Church has been and is part of the one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church and accept that different interpretations of the sign exist. The proposals in *Mission and Ministry in Covenant* rely on these decisions.

4.4. By receiving the sign of the historic episcopate, the Methodist Church would not be committing itself to having bishops that will exercise an episcopal ministry in exactly the same way as bishops in the Church of England. Reflection on the experience and practice of episcopacy in other parts of world Methodism reveals a variety of expressions of episcopal ministry. Many, but not all, Methodist churches express this ministry primarily through their bishops, although the office is understood and functions differently in the different branches of Methodism. Nor is it necessary for Methodists to subscribe to a particular theology of the episcopate. The proposed office of President-bishop is a means of receiving the historic episcopate and exercising an episcopal ministry in a way that is compatible with Methodist theology and polity.

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11 From resolution 11 of the 1888 Lambeth Conference, whose four points subsequently became known as the ‘Lambeth Quadrilateral’; see www.anglicancommunion.org/resources/document-library/lambeth-conference/1888/resolution-11?author=Lambeth+Conference&year=1888

12 See paragraph 27 of Mission and Ministry in Covenant

5. **Ecumenical consultation and reception of the proposals**

5.1. The Methodist Church in Britain relates directly to three Anglican churches: the Church of England, the Church in Wales and the Scottish Episcopal Church. The faith and order bodies of the Church of England and the Methodist Church have been attentive to communication with the Church in Wales and the Scottish Episcopal Church throughout the process of preparing *Mission and Ministry in Covenant*.

5.2. A consultation was then held in December for representatives of the four churches. Representatives from the Church in Wales and the Scottish Episcopal Church expressed support for our churches in taking forward the proposals, and a number of ways in which the proposals might link into developments in their own relations with the Methodist Church were reviewed. It was agreed that further consultation and conversation would be important were the Conference to adopt the proposals.

5.3. The chairs of the faith and order bodies have written to their closest counterparts in the Baptist Union of Great Britain, the Catholic Bishops’ Conference of England and Wales, and the United Reformed Church. Formal responses from all three have been received and no indication has been given that adopting the proposals of *Mission and Ministry in Covenant* would have a negative impact on relations with these churches or constitute an obstacle to further unity with them.

5.4. The debate at the General Synod

On Friday 9 February 2018, the General Synod debated *Mission and Ministry in Covenant*. The tone of the debate was generally warm and positive, and appreciation was expressed for the addresses given by the Revd Ruth Gee (a former President of the Conference) and the Revd Gareth Powell (the Secretary of the Conference) to the Synod. After a debate that lasted nearly an hour and a half, the General Synod passed the following motion:

That this Synod:

(a) welcome the report Mission and Ministry in Covenant (GS 2086), produced by the faith and order bodies of the Church of England and the Methodist Church in response to resolutions passed by the General Synod and the Methodist Conference in 2014;

(b) call on the Faith and Order Commission to report back to the Synod at the next group of sessions on work carried out jointly with the Methodist Church to address the areas for further reflection outlined at paragraphs 26-29 of the covering note.
from the Faith and Order Commission to GS 2086\(^\text{14}\);  

(c) invite the Faith and Order Commission, in consultation with the Methodist Church, to explore and elucidate further the relationship between episcopal ordination and eucharistic presidency, as this touches on the full visible unity of our two churches; and  

(d) affirm its confident hope that any outstanding issues between our churches may be resolved quickly and satisfactorily and look forward to the day when, on the basis of work already completed and accepted, our ministries will be fully reconciled.  

The original motion had consisted only of parts (a) and (b), parts (c) and (d) were added following amendments that had been proposed.

6. **Further work**

6.1. In proposing the model of President-Bishop as the way of the Methodist Church receiving a sign of the historic episcopate it was recognised that it cannot entirely be prescribed how its expression will develop. The faith and order bodies acknowledge a tension in discerning what it is appropriate to work through at this point and what is a matter of ongoing discernment and movement of the Spirit. How the receiving of the sign of the historic episcopate might shape the life of the Methodist Church and deepen its witness cannot entirely be predicted. In forming these proposals the faith and order bodies therefore sought to work through some fundamental principles whilst leaving space for the expression of the sign in the Methodist Church to develop.

6.2. A diversity of views has been expressed about *Mission and Ministry in Covenant* and it is clear that there are areas where there is scope for refining and clarifying the proposals set out in that report. These have emerged from conversations in the 2017 Conference workshops, discussions at the House of Bishops, decisions of the February General Synod, and general feedback and response. Three areas for further work can be identified.

6.3. The first of these concerns the journey towards unity, on which the report comments especially in chapter 1, at paragraphs 10-13. The proposed relationship of communion is a significant step on this journey but are both churches clear about how the steps they are being asked to take by the report relate to the goal of what the first Commitment of the Covenant calls “the organic unity of our two churches, on the way to the full visible unity of Christ’s Church”? What do we mean by ‘organic unity’, what might it look like for the Church of England and the Methodist Church, and

\(^{14}\) A copy can be found at: www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2018-01/GS%202086%20-%20Mission%20and%20Ministry%20in%20Covenant.pdf
are we still committed to seeking it? Would the proposals release new energy and understanding for moving towards a deeper unity in mission between our churches, or could they encourage a kind of complacency in which we settle for what we have? And how might they draw other churches with us ‘on the way to the full visible unity of Christ’s Church’? For some, confidence that accepting the proposals will indeed form part of a journey towards the goal of visible unity for our churches is crucial in determining whether or not these proposals should be adopted.

6.4. The second area concerns how the historic episcopate will be shared by the Methodist Church. The model of ‘President-bishop’ proposed by the JIC and affirmed in Mission and Ministry in Covenant would lead to a practice of episcopacy that looked and felt different from that of the Church of England, but it is clear that many would find helpful further clarity about what a ‘President-bishop’ would look like. How would the episcopal orders of Presidents and past-Presidents of Conference be expressed in ministry and recognised by others within the Methodist Church? How will the ministry of a President-bishop relate to the ministry of the Vice-President? Some further reflection, particularly on the continuing episcopal ministry of past-Presidents, would be welcome.

6.5. The third area concerns the working out of interchangeability, including further exploration of issues that are flagged in chapter 4 of the report at paragraphs 84-89 and 94. These include training, induction and support for those who may serve in a church other than the one in which they were ordained; the formal dimensions of recognising and regarding a Church of England priest as a presbyter admitted into Full Connexion with the Conference (or an equivalent process), with associated questions about discipline and accountability; and what kind of action, including liturgical action, might mark the new relationship between a Methodist presbyter and the diocesan bishop or an Anglican priest and the Conference and its President?

6.6. Further work on all three areas can build on treatment in reports from the JIC, and on relevant discussion that took place within the Joint Subgroup as it prepared the text of Mission and Ministry in Covenant and the faith and order bodies of the two churches. With regard to the second and third areas in particular, until the legislative framework for the proposals begins to take shape in both churches at the direction of the General Synod and the Methodist Conference, there will be limits as to how much can confidently be stated. While this further work will therefore require careful attention and consultation, there has already been reflection on these matters and it need not take a long time. A joint working group has already been appointed to consider these matters and directed by the General Synod of February 2018, and its Terms of Reference make provision for it to also consider any work that the Conference also directs.

PART B

Part B of this report comprises the Mission and Ministry in Covenant report which follows.
Preface
This report has been prepared for the Conference of the Methodist Church in Great Britain and for the Church of England General Synod. We write as the co-Chairs of the drafting group which was asked to undertake this task by the faith and order bodies of our two churches. Those bodies have agreed that it should now be released prior to consideration by the Conference and General Synod.

The main proposals, if implemented, will enable an interchange of presbyteral ministries between our churches that has not been possible since the parting of the ways between Anglicans and Methodists in the late eighteenth century. We believe that these proposals on episcopal ministry and on the reconciliation of presbyteral ministries are congruent with the teaching and polity of our two churches and that they can now be commended to the churches for acceptance. We also believe that accepting the proposals made here will enable a new depth of communion between our churches and enhance our common mission, to the glory of God.

We are grateful to the members of the drafting group for their work in preparing this text. We have been conscious in our work that Anglicans and Methodists will approach it with to some extent different perspectives, priorities and concerns. It might have been simpler to have written parallel versions, but the drafting group has remained committed to the production of a single report for both churches. Inevitably, this means that the content of certain sections will be more relevant or accessible to some readers than others. Reading ecumenical reports – like all effort directed towards deepening relations among Christians – requires qualities of empathy and patience.

We are convinced that now is the time for this welcome step, which is the fruit of many years of careful work and study, and we warmly commend the report for prayerful reading in the churches.

The Rt Revd Jonathan Baker                          The Revd Dr Neil Richardson

15 We gratefully acknowledge that we are building on foundations established by others, including the reports of the Joint Implementation Commission for the Anglican-Methodist Covenant in England and internationally the Anglican-Methodist International Commission (AMIC), 1996, Sharing in The Apostolic Communion (Lake Junaluska, NC: World Methodist Council), and the Anglican-Methodist International Commission for Unity in Mission (AMICUM), 2014, Into All the World: Being and Becoming Apostolic Churches (London: Anglican Consultative Council).
MISSION AND MINISTRY IN COVENANT

SUMMARY

1. The Church of England and the Methodist Church in Great Britain\textsuperscript{16} have travelled a long way together in their relationship since the eighteenth century, and especially so in recent years. The Anglican-Methodist Covenant of 2003 is the principal theological foundation of this report, which builds directly on the affirmations and commitments with regard to church, ministry and oversight made by our two churches when it was signed. In their debates on the final report from the Joint Implementation Commission for the Covenant in 2014, the Church of England’s General Synod and the Conference of the Methodist Church approved the following recommendation:

that the Faith and Order Commission of the Church of England and the Faith and Order Committee of the Methodist Church work together to bring forward proposals for:

i) the Methodist Church to consider afresh expressing the Conference’s ministry of oversight in a personal form of connexional, episcopal ministry and the Church of England to recognise that ministry in the Methodist Church as a sign of continuity in faith, worship and mission in a church that is in the apostolic succession;

ii) the Church of England and the Methodist Church to address the question of reconciling, with integrity, the existing presbyteral and diaconal ministries of our two churches, which would lead to the interchangeability of ministries.

2. Responding to this decision by the General Synod and the Conference, the report proposes that our churches are now ready to take a new step towards full visible unity in a relationship of communion with one another, sustaining shared commitments regarding episcopal and presbyteral ministries. Such a relationship of communion between two churches does not mean structural unity, or an end to our distinctive forms of church polity. It establishes a framework at national level that enables new and creative initiatives in mission and ministry to be taken, where this is the desire of people from both our churches.

3. The report consists of four main chapters. The first chapter sets the context for the proposals of the chapters that follow by showing how they are grounded both in the 2003 Covenant commitments our churches have made and in their common calling to share in the mission of God. It outlines two interrelated and inseparable actions that our churches could take in order to respond to the recommendations of the final report of the Joint Implementation Commission (JIC), which were accepted by both churches in

\textsuperscript{16} In the remainder of the report, the Methodist Church in Great Britain is generally referred to as ‘the Methodist Church’.
2014. First, they would make a formal declaration of a new stage in their relationship. Second, they would undertake two formal, public commitments, beyond those made in the 2003 Covenant:

a) to share the ministry of the historic episcopate as a sign of the apostolicity of the Church of God;

b) to welcome all presbyters / priests serving in either church as eligible to serve in both churches.

4. The second chapter considers the first of these two commitments, addressing in particular the question of what it would mean for the Methodist Church to express the Conference’s ministry of oversight in a personal form of connexional, episcopal ministry in such a way that the Methodist Church can be recognised by Anglican churches as sharing in the historic episcopate. It affirms that the idea developed by the JIC of a ‘President-bishop’ can be accepted by Anglicans as an instance of the historic episcopate ‘locally adapted in the methods of its administration to the varying needs of the nations and peoples called of God into the unity of His Church’. At the same time, it also fits with the distinctive theology and self-understanding of the Methodist Church, and in particular the centrality of the Conference for episkope.

5. The third chapter focuses on the second commitment, to welcome all presbyters / priests serving in either church as eligible to serve in both churches. It explores the substantial common ground between our two churches regarding the ministry of presbyters / priests, acknowledging that the difference in terminology reflects some differences in understanding. It then turns to the particular question of how the Church of England could offer such a welcome to all Methodist presbyters, given its historic commitment to the norm of episcopal ordination for all priests. It draws on the well-established concept of ‘anomaly’ in Anglican ecumenical thinking, to describe something that churches may have to bear together for a limited time on their journey to unity. It emphasises that this aspect of the report’s proposals rests on the recognition already given by the Church of England to the Methodist Church’s ordained ministries and to its exercise of oversight, and on the significance for the whole Methodist Church – including all its presbyters – of receiving the historic episcopate and entering into communion as a church with the Church of England.

6. Finally, the fourth chapter gives a brief overview of legislative changes needed to put the report’s proposals into effect. It identifies some areas where work might usefully be commissioned for completion prior to full implementation of these proposals. It offers a

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set of recommendations that might be adopted by both churches at the point where the
proposals are finally agreed. It also sets out a provisional timetable for how the proposals
it contains might be taken through the requisite processes of approval in our churches.

1. UNITY, MISSION AND THE ANGLICAN-METHODIST COVENANT

7. The Anglican-Methodist Covenant of 2003 includes the following affirmations:

1) We affirm one another’s churches as true churches belonging to the One, Holy,
Catholic and Apostolic Church of Jesus Christ and as truly participating in the
apostolic mission of the whole people of God.

2) We affirm that in both our churches the word of God is authentically preached, and
the sacraments of Baptism and the Eucharist are duly administered and celebrated.

3) We affirm that both our churches confess in word and life the apostolic faith
revealed in the Holy Scriptures and set forth in the ecumenical Creeds.

4) We affirm that one another’s ordained and lay ministries are given by God as
instruments of God’s grace, to build up the people of God in faith, hope and love, for
the ministry of word, sacrament and pastoral care and to share in God’s mission in
the world.

5) We affirm that one another’s ordained ministries possess both the inward call of the
Holy Spirit and Christ’s commission given through the Church.

6) We affirm that both our churches embody the conciliar, connexional nature of the
Church and that communal, collegial and personal oversight (episkope) is exercised
within them in various forms.

7) We affirm that there already exists a basis for agreement on the principles of
episcopal oversight as a visible sign and instrument of the communion of the
Church in time and space.

Four affirmations (1, 2, 4 and 7) relate closely to the proposals of the present report:
they include the affirmations of each other’s churches and ministries, lay and ordained,
and of a basis for an agreement on the principles of episcopal oversight.

8. In signing the Covenant, our two churches also made the following commitments to one
another:

1) We commit ourselves, as a priority, to work to overcome the remaining obstacles to
the organic unity of our two churches, on the way to the full visible unity of Christ’s
Church. In particular, we look forward to the time when the fuller visible unity of our
churches makes possible a united, interchangeable ministry.

2) We commit ourselves to realise more deeply our common life and mission and to
share the distinctive contributions of our traditions, taking steps to bring about
closer collaboration in all areas of witness and service in our needy world.
3) We commit ourselves to continue to welcome each other’s baptised members to participate in the fellowship, worship and mission of our churches.
4) We commit ourselves to encourage forms of eucharistic sharing, including eucharistic hospitality, in accordance with the rules of our respective churches.
5) We commit ourselves to listen to each other and to take account of each other’s concerns, especially in areas that affect our relationship as churches.
6) We commit ourselves to continue to develop structures of joint or shared communal, collegial and personal oversight, including shared consultation and decision-making, on the way to a fully united ministry of oversight.

For the purposes of this present report, two commitments (1 and 6) are especially relevant: the commitments ‘to work to overcome the remaining obstacles to the organic unity of our two churches’ and ‘to continue to develop structures of joint or shared communal, collegial and personal oversight’.

9. Since the signing of the Covenant much work has been done, especially by the Joint Implementation Commission (JIC). This led, in 2014, to the annual Conference of the Methodist Church and the November sessions of the General Synod of the Church of England approving the three major recommendations of the final report of the JIC, The Challenge of the Covenant. One recommendation (the first) in particular, gives rise to this present report:

that the Faith and Order Commission of the Church of England and the Faith and Order Committee of the Methodist Church work together to bring forward proposals for

i) the Methodist Church to consider afresh expressing the Conference’s ministry of oversight in a personal form of connexional, episcopal ministry and the Church of England to recognise that ministry in the Methodist Church as a sign of continuity in faith, worship and mission in a church that is in the apostolic succession;
ii) the Church of England and the Methodist Church to address the question of reconciling, with integrity, the existing presbyteral and diaconal ministries of our two churches, which would lead to the interchangeability of ministries.

10. In responding to this recommendation, the present report proposes that our churches are ready to move to a new stage in the search for full visible unity, beyond what was established by the Covenant in 2003. This would involve our churches taking two

interrelated and inseparable steps. The first step would be that they each make, in terms appropriate to their own tradition and polity, a formal declaration of the new stage in their relationship that is being realised. For the Church of England, this would be expressed by saying that the Methodist Church should become one of those churches with which it is ‘in communion’. All baptized Christians have communion with one another in the one Lord Jesus Christ, and recent studies on the doctrine of the church have found rich resources in the New Testament and patristic treatment of communion (koinonia in Greek). For Anglicans, however, being in communion as churches – within the Anglican Communion, first and foremost, but also with non-Anglican churches as is proposed here – signifies a profound level of mutual belonging and trust, which in turn makes possible particular forms of cooperation and exchange.

11. The second step would be that they make the following two formal, public commitments, beyond those made in the 2003 Covenant:

   a) to share the ministry of the historic episcopate as a sign of the apostolicity of the Church of God;
   b) to welcome all presbyters / priests serving in either church as eligible to serve in both churches.

12. While acknowledging that this second step would involve significant changes for both our churches and poses particular challenges for each of them, it needs to be remembered that the two parts of it are parts of a whole, with both parts being inseparable from the first step, which is a new relationship of communion between our churches. Neither the declaration about ecclesial relations nor the two commitments about episcopal and presbyteral ministry can be made in isolation. The attention given to the ordained ministries of presbyters / priests and bishops in the report presupposes the ecumenical consensus of the past 50 years that ordained ministries must be understood in relation to the ministry of all the baptized in the service of God’s mission. The context for the close attention in this report to matters of episcopal and presbyteral ministry is concern for growth towards the goal of visible unity between our churches, for the sake of fuller and more faithful participation in the mission of God in which the ministries of all can flourish, lay as well as ordained.

13. The affirmations and commitments of the Covenant continue to guide our work. First among the commitments is the desire for unity between our churches. The proposals contained in this report stem from this commitment to overcome remaining divisions. These proposals seek to provide a framework for enabling ‘a united, interchangeable ministry’ (Commitment 1). This marks a further stage on our journey together. We believe that our churches have moved to a position of agreement where the realisation of a united ministry is both possible and necessary. The mutual recognition of each other’s presbyteral ministers and the sharing of their ministry would be both the fruit of the
relationship of communion established through the proposals set out here and a visible sign of our unity.

14. Accepting this framework would require different accompanying actions from our churches. In each case, these will involve significant developments in historic polity and self-understanding, and assurance will need to be given that these can be faithful to our callings. In particular, the Methodist Church will need to find a way to receive the ministry of the historic episcopate, while the Church of England will need to find a way to enable Methodist presbyters not ordained by a bishop within the historic episcopate to exercise ordained ministry within the Church of England by invitation.

15. Two further matters are worth noting in terms of the wider context for these proposals. First, the recommendation from *The Challenge of the Covenant* quoted above (paragraph 9) refers to the interchangeability of diaconal as well as presbyteral ministries. The work of the JIC included conversations that identified points of convergence and divergence in the understanding of diaconal ministry held in our two churches.20 The view of the faith and order bodies is that any proposals regarding diaconal ministries must await continuing dialogue among all the churches concerning the nature of diaconal ministry and is therefore beyond the scope of this present report. It is further noted that the 2014 report of the Anglican-Methodist International Commission for Unity in Mission (AMICUM) found that a ‘common understanding of the diaconate is not an essential requirement for the churches to enter into communion’.21

16. Interchangeability of presbyteral ministries cannot be separated from interchangeability of ministries of oversight. This would find particular expression through participation in one another’s services for the ordination of bishops. There is an important precedent here in the Porvoo Communion of Churches, of which the Church of England is a member, where interchangeability between Anglican and Lutheran churches includes episcopal and presbyteral (but not diaconal) ministries.22

17. Second, it is useful to locate the proposals contained in this report within the broader sphere of relations with other churches. Both the Church of England and the Methodist Church belong to worldwide families: namely, the Anglican Communion and the World Methodist Council, respectively. Anglicans and Methodists have close relations, though in different ways, with the Church in Wales, the Scottish Episcopal Church and the Church of Ireland. The Methodist Church and the Church in Wales are two of the five ‘Covenanted Churches in Wales’. In Scotland, the Scottish Episcopal Church, the Synod of the Scotland District of the Methodist Church and the National Synod of

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22 See http://www.porvoocommunion.org/.
Scotland of the United Reformed Church have a formal partnership which expresses their commitment to work for ever-closer co-operation in serving Christ. In Ireland, the Anglican and Methodist churches are in a covenant relationship and have already implemented the interchangeability of presbyteral ministry.

18. More widely, both the Anglican Communion and the World Methodist Council have a long-standing theological dialogue and deepening relationship with the Roman Catholic Church, as well as other world communions. We believe that the proposals contained in this report are fully consistent with agreements made in those dialogues, and moreover that their implementation could do much to revitalise the movement towards greater visible unity, not only in Anglican-Methodist relations internationally, but in other ecumenical partnerships as well. Nearer home, both the Church of England and the Methodist Church in Britain have been enriched by the presence and contribution in Britain of people formed in their faith in Anglican, Methodist or other Christian traditions from many different parts of the world. Sharing the gospel in a country whose ethnic and cultural diversity continues to grow presents particular challenges. Likewise, the global situation of poverty and violence makes it urgent for Christians to speak and act together. All this indicates that deepening relationships of communion on the way to the full visible unity of the Church are essential for the effective proclamation of the gospel that the world might believe.

19. Commitment to making the changes required to enter this new stage in our relationship (set out in paragraphs 10–12) would be costly. As will become clear on reading through the subsequent chapters of this report, that cost would be significant in terms of resources for both our churches: staff time, sessions at the Conference and General Synod with all the preparation and financial expenditure they require, and consultations and meetings involving other church bodies. The work would be likely to last an absolute minimum of two years from the point of first consideration by the Conference and General Synod to completion and implementation, and more likely longer. It is therefore only responsible to ask: is it worth it? Whilst our commitment to the Covenant relationship and to honouring the promises our two churches have made to one another is a strong reason for being prepared to give the required resources to this work, these proposals also stem from our commitment to sharing in God’s mission, to witness and to evangelism. Three major reasons might be given for this claim, each of which could be articulated at much greater length than is attempted here.

a) First, our churches are committed to growing together towards ‘the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God’ (Ephesians 4:13). The Church is called to be visibly one, so that its unity in Christ may be realised and the world may believe. There is therefore a gospel imperative to consider and respond to any serious opportunity to move towards full visible unity. This report claims that our churches now have such an opportunity to move further towards that goal.
b) Second, we are committed to a gospel of reconciliation and to witnessing in our lives, our communities and our institutions to the power and the joy of that gospel. Even if many outside our churches take for granted or shrug their shoulders at our long-standing divisions, that is no reason for us to perpetuate them. Our separation is a wound in the Body of Christ for which our two churches share responsibility in both the past and the present. What kind of prayerful repentance, restoration and costly reconciliation is God calling us to engage in? The Methodist Church is unique in being a church which began as a movement within the Church of England. Entering into a relationship of ecclesial communion after more than two centuries of separation would be a powerful act of healing and reconciliation.

c) A third reason for this development is to seek to transform the mission dynamic in our communities. Cooperation and working together should enable a more effective witness – just as Paul and Apollos needed to be partners, not rivals, if the church at Corinth was to flourish (1 Corinthians 3). Yet in our present context, Christians in this country sharing in worship, witness and evangelism across denominations are likely to encounter formal limits to what they can do together, which can consume time and energy in ways that seem a distraction from the real work of the Church. The proposals in this report seek to enable the releasing of time and energy for worship and mission.

20. The issues and challenges involved in contemporary Christian mission go beyond the Church of England and the Methodist Church, but our two churches have the opportunity to give a lead in developing an effective partnership in mission which might similarly inspire and engage others. The hope would be that the proposals of this report can become a catalyst for wider change and renewal and open up new ways of sustaining a hopeful, growing Christian presence in numerous communities.

2. ‘TO SHARE THE MINISTRY OF THE HISTORIC EPISCOPATE’

21. As set out in the Introduction, the framework proposed by this report comprises a joint declaration by the Church of England and the Methodist Church of being in communion as churches and the making of two further commitments under the Covenant:

a) to share the ministry of the historic episcopate as a sign of the apostolicity of the Church of God;

b) to welcome all presbyters / priests serving in either church as eligible to serve in both churches.

This chapter focuses on the first of these, and in particular its implications for the Methodist Church. While the first part outlines some of the central issues, the second part proposes a way forward for the Methodist Church in receiving the ministry of the historic episcopate.
The significance of the historic episcopate

22. Both churches maintain a strong sense of continuity in apostolic faith and mission, in the case of the Church of England through its bishops in succession to the apostles, and in the case of the Methodist Church through the corporate oversight (episkope) down the years of its Conference as the body which has ordained ministers. The Church of England is a church ordered within the historic episcopate, with bishops ordained ‘to be shepherds of Christ’s flock and guardians of the faith of the apostles, proclaiming the gospel of God’s kingdom and leading his people in mission’.23 Despite this obvious difference in the way in which the Church of England and the Methodist Church have sought to maintain their continuity in the apostolic faith and mission, the JIC found that ‘the Covenant is premised on agreement in principle about the historic episcopate’.24

23. It is worth noting three characteristics of the historic episcopate as understood by Anglicans. First, it is personal: ‘The historic episcopate is a particular expression of personal episkope. There is no substitute for person-to-person pastoral ministry – with all its risks and vulnerability’.25 Second, it is historic: ‘It is an expression of the visible historical continuity of the Church today with the Church of the apostles’, even though ‘it is not dependent on a hypothetical unbroken chain of hands on heads’.26 Third, it is received. The historic episcopate cannot be created de novo; a church cannot simply bring it into existence by and for itself, although it may have different expressions in different contexts. All our churches are debtors to the wider Church, the Church catholic, and our highest aspiration is simply ‘to do what the Church does’, not ‘our own thing’.27

24. Anglican ecumenical documents have repeatedly emphasised that the historic episcopate is not essential to being a true church.28 So why, then, is it necessary for the Methodist Church to receive it as an integral part of the framework that enables the interchangeability of presbyteral ministries with the Church of England? The answer is to be found in the ecumenical strategy of the Anglican Communion as this was

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24 JIC, 2011, Moving Forward in Covenant, para 40.
articulated in the Lambeth Quadrilateral in 1888. Ever since, Anglicans have consistently maintained that establishing a relationship of communion with other churches rests on the presence of four elements: the Scriptures, the historic creeds, the sacraments of baptism and the Lord’s Supper, and the historic episcopate ‘locally adapted in the methods of its administration to the varying needs of the nations and peoples called of God into the Unity of His Church’. It is this last element that has proved so difficult in Anglican-Methodist relations in the past. Nevertheless, the flexibility with which this element is stated, together with ecumenical developments in the understanding of the nature of the Church in recent years, means that receiving the historic episcopate need no longer constitute an insuperable obstacle between Anglicans and Methodists.

25. The Methodist Church is ordered with the Methodist Conference as the corporate body exercising episkope as a sign of continuity in the apostolic communion. Continuity in the apostolic faith and mission is maintained in the Methodist Connexion as all local Methodist churches are grouped together in Circuits and Districts, bound together in a single unit of oversight under the Conference. The Methodist Church has, on several occasions, stated that it is willing to receive the sign of the historic episcopate (see paragraphs 27–29 below). As a result of the work of the JIC, the Methodist Church has agreed to ‘consider afresh expressing the Conference’s ministry of oversight in a personal form of connexional, episcopal ministry’ and the Church of England has agreed to consider how it might ‘recognise that ministry in the Methodist Church as a sign of continuity in faith, worship and mission in a church that is in the apostolic succession’.

26. The proposals contained in this present report offer a way for the Methodist Church to receive the historic episcopate as a sign of its apostolicity (that is to say, its continuity in the apostolic tradition) without compromising its polity and ecclesiology. The affirmations contained in the Anglican-Methodist Covenant and restated in Embracing the Covenant (2008) make it clear that receiving the historic episcopate would not affect the status of the Methodist Church as such for it is already a church in the apostolic tradition:

In the Covenant we have affirmed one another’s churches as ‘true churches belonging to the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church of Jesus Christ and as truly participating in the apostolic mission...’. We have affirmed that ‘in both our churches the word of God is authentically preached and the sacraments of Baptism and the Eucharist are duly administered and celebrated’. We have affirmed that both our churches ‘confess in word and life the apostolic faith revealed in the Holy Scriptures and set forth in

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29 The Lambeth Conference of 1888, Resolution 11(d).
the ecumenical Creeds’. We have gone on to affirm the authenticity of one another’s ordained and lay ministries as bearing Christ’s commission and the authenticity of the ministries of oversight in both our churches. In our covenant relationship, our unity is already expressed in many forms of shared ministry and mission.32

Methodists and Anglicans have affirmed that apostolic tradition in the Church means:

Continuity in the permanent characteristics of the Church of the apostles: witness to the apostolic faith, proclamation and fresh interpretation of the gospel, celebration of baptism and the eucharist, the transmission of ministerial responsibility, communion in prayer, love, joy, and suffering, service to the sick and needy, unity among the local churches and sharing the gifts which the Lord has given to each.33

27. The Methodist Church, in its formal statement on the nature of the Church, Called to Love and Praise (1999), accepts the ecumenical consensus in the landmark Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry (WCC, 1982) that the historic episcopate is ‘a sign, though not a guarantee, of the continuity and unity of the Church’.34 At the same time, the Methodist Church does not accept that the historic episcopate is essential for the faithful exercise of ministry.35

28. It is a principle of Methodist ecumenical strategy that ‘Methodists rule out no development compatible with our ethos which strengthens the unity and effectiveness in mission of the Church’.36 Furthermore, Methodists have repeatedly expressed their willingness to receive the historic episcopate as a sign of Methodism’s continuity with the Church universal, membership of which it cherishes,37 and for the sake of greater visible unity. As long ago as 1985, the Methodist Conference concluded that ‘the acceptance of the historic episcopate would not violate our doctrinal standards’. Furthermore, the historic episcopate would be ‘a valuable sign of apostolicity’.38

29. The JIC, in its 2013 report, noted that the Conference statement Episcopé and Episcopacy (2000) confirms the Methodist Church’s willingness ‘to receive the sign of episcopacy’ on the understanding that ‘partner churches acknowledge that the
Methodist Church has been and is part of the one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church, and accept that different interpretations of the sign exist’ – an acknowledgement that the Church of England has made in the affirmations of the Methodist Covenant. The JIC also noted that ‘the Methodist Church expects to engage in dialogue to clarify the nature and the benefits of the gift’ and that ‘the Methodist Church insists that all ministries, including those of oversight, are exercised within the ministry of the whole people of God and at its service, rather than in isolation from it and in supremacy over it’.39

30. By receiving the sign of the historic episcopate, the Methodist Church would not be committing itself to having bishops that will exercise an episcopal ministry in exactly the same way as bishops in the Church of England. Significant differences, in fact, exist within the Anglican Communion about the exercise of episcopal ministry and how the office of bishop fits into wider church polity. Thus the Methodist Church may wish to consider how Anglican bishops in Wales, Scotland, Ireland, and elsewhere exercise their episcopal ministry and how these relate to governance structures. Reflection on the experience and practice of episcopacy in other parts of world Methodism reveals a variety of expressions of episcopal ministry. Many, but not all, Methodist churches express this ministry primarily through their bishops, although the office is understood and functions differently in the different branches of Methodism.40 Nor is it necessary for Methodists to subscribe to a particular theology of the episcopate. Different theologies of the episcopate exist among Anglicans and in other churches that are in communion with the Church of England, notably the Nordic and Baltic Lutheran members of the Porvoo Communion of Churches, where teaching that there is one order of ministry only, not three, would be common, and where there were significant changes to the form of the episcopacy at and after the Reformation.

**Episcopacy and connexionalism**

31. Historically, the Methodist Church has exercised a corporate and connexional form of episkope (the New Testament word for ‘oversight’). If the Methodist Church is to receive the sign of the historic episcopate ‘locally adapted’ to its particular context, it is necessary to consider how the reception of the historic episcopate relates to the connexional polity of the Methodist Church. Much of this territory has already been carefully explored by the JIC.41

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32. The connexional principle is fundamental to Methodist ecclesiology. It enshrines ‘a vital truth about the nature of the Church’ and ‘witnesses to a mutuality and interdependence which derive from the participation of all Christians through Christ in the very life of God’. The whole Methodist community, consisting of Local Churches grouped in Circuits, is bound together in the Connexion, a visible expression of the living communion that should always characterise the Church of Christ. Connexionalism expresses a consciousness that Christians are bound together in the Church spiritually, sacramentally, pastorally and constitutionally at all levels. Therefore, oversight is exercised corporately by ministers and lay people on behalf and with the authority of the annual Conference. All who exercise oversight in the Methodist Church, whether corporately in District Synods and Circuit meetings or individually (eg by District Chairs and Superintendents) derive their authority from the Conference.

33. The annual Conference, which consists of lay and ordained representatives, exercises oversight in various ways including: teaching the faith with authority and adjudicating on doctrinal matters; determining the practice and discipline of the Methodist Church and exercising pastoral discipline throughout the Connexion; deploying ministers and certain lay officers within the Methodist Church; and determining who are to be ordained presbyters and deacons.

34. In *Episkopé and Episcopacy* (2000), the Methodist Conference adopted the principle that ‘the Methodist Church is a connexional Church and all episkope should be exercised within this context’. While oversight in the Methodist Church is exercised corporately through the Conference, oversight is also exercised by certain individuals on behalf of the Conference. Those individuals then preach, teach, make judgements, encourage, evangelise and offer pastoral care within the parameters set by the Conference. It is also individuals who must gain an overview of the life and work of the Church in order to be able to hold the Church on course in its daily decision-making at every level of the Church’s life.

35. For this purpose, certain individuals (both lay and ordained) are appointed to a variety of offices in order to exercise particular kinds of oversight. In Circuits, ministers and local preachers build up the Church through preaching and teaching; ministers and circuit stewards provide leadership. The President of the Conference, District Chairs and Superintendents, who are necessarily presbyters, exercise a particular ministry of personal oversight as they preside over bodies of the Church. The Vice-President of the Conference (lay person or deacon) and the Secretary of the Conference (presbyter) in

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different ways exercise a personal and representative form of oversight on behalf of the Conference. However, it is the office of the President of the Conference which most fully represents the oversight of the Conference.

36. The President of the Conference presides at the Conference Eucharist, presides at the Presbyteral Session of the Conference and ordains those recommended for ordination by the Conference. The President and the Vice-President of the Conference preside over sessions of the Conference and ‘act as the representative embodiment of its authority’ in their respective ways.\(^46\) They exercise a collaborative ministry and play a significant part in the oversight of the Church, developing prophetic vision, offering encouragement and support and strengthening the bonds of the Connexional through their ministry of visitation.\(^47\) The President has various specific powers, rights and duties including the right, if requested to do so, ‘to visit any circuit, inquire into its affairs and to take any steps judged beneficial’,\(^48\) the duty to receive any application by a presbyter or deacon to resign\(^49\) and the responsibility to act as the Secretary of the Conference or as a District Chair should there be a casual vacancy in either of these offices until they are filled.\(^50\)

A Challenge for the Methodist Church: A President-bishop

37. After taking account of the Methodist Church’s consideration of possible alternative models,\(^51\) the JIC proposed that the most appropriate way for the Methodist Church to receive the sign of the historic episcopate would be through the ordination of President-bishops.\(^52\) That would mean that the presbyter inducted as President of the Conference would always also be ordained as a bishop on taking up an office that includes the ordination of presbyters and deacons. The proposals contained in this present report are based on this same idea of a President-bishop.

38. The appropriateness of a President-bishop rests on three theological premises:

a) the Methodist Church constitutes a single unit of oversight (see paragraph 25);
b) the Conference exercises oversight over the Methodist Church;
c) the President of the Conference exercises a personal, connexional and representative form of oversight on behalf of Conference and presides over the ordination of ministers, thus ensuring continuity in the apostolic faith and mission.

46 Methodist Standing Order 110(1).
47 Methodist Standing Orders 110(2) and 110(3).
48 Methodist Standing Order 111(2).
49 Methodist Standing Order 760.
50 Clauses 31(h) and 42(c) of the Deed of Union.
52 JIC, 2008, *Embracing the Covenant*. 
As noted above (paragraphs 35–36), no other officeholder in the Methodist Church represents the Conference in the same way or exercises such a broad range of responsibilities on its behalf.

39. As members of the Methodist Church and the Church of England have worked together to understand better the office and ministry of a bishop within the structures of oversight in our respective churches, a number of important principles regarding oversight and episcopacy have been identified from both Anglican and Methodist ecumenical documents and from consideration of expressions of episcopacy in other Methodist and Anglican churches. A summary is given below with brief comments on how these principles might relate to the current proposal of a President-bishop for the Methodist Church:

a) oversight has always been necessary to the life of the Church and a key feature of that oversight is ensuring the continuity of the Church in the apostolic faith and mission. In the Methodist Church that continuity is located in the Conference. However, a key reason for ordaining bishops in the Church universal is to be a clearer and more visible sign of that continuity. This involves the focusing and representing of the continuity of the Church through the ministry of particular individuals chosen for that purpose.

b) the ministry of oversight can provide a link between the local church and the universal church. Throughout the history of the church, bishops and others exercising a ministry of oversight have met to take counsel together. In the Anglican Communion this happens at a number of levels with bishops meeting together collegially at provincial level and, through the Lambeth Conference, at world level.

c) oversight is and should be exercised communally, collegially and personally. The Methodist Church has perhaps emphasised the communal aspects of oversight at the expense of the personal for fear of giving too much power to individuals. However, it is nevertheless the case that the personal exercise of episkope in teaching, preaching, encouraging, making judgements, evangelising and offering pastoral care is present in the Methodist Church, albeit, in collaboration with others and within the parameters set by the Conference.

d) where oversight is personal it should be exercised constitutionally. The constitutional exercise of oversight requires a clear articulation of the nature and extent of the authority given to individuals in relation to that exercised by bodies such as the Conference. This may be an area in which the Church of England can learn from the thinking and practice of the Methodist Church.

e) where oversight is personal it should be exercised collaboratively and collegially wherever possible. Oversight, in one form or another, is exercised by both lay and ordained people at every level of the life of the Church. Where oversight is invested in ordained ministers it is to be exercised as collaboratively as possible and always for the building up of the Church. For example, Methodist presbyters exercise their particular responsibilities in conjunction with the appropriate circuit bodies and lay officers and ministers stationed to the same Circuit are encouraged to meet together weekly ‘in order to take counsel together respecting the affairs of the Circuit’.55

f) oversight is more than governance, leadership and management. It includes the preservation of the integrity of the community in continuity with the apostolic faith and mission through the work of corporate bodies and individuals in teaching, preaching, encouraging, making judgements, evangelising and offering pastoral care.

g) significant personal oversight is exercised by a range of people, both lay and ordained, at all levels of church life. In the Methodist Church the representative ministry of the Vice-President (who is usually a lay person and may be a deacon) is an important and visible expression of this principle at the connexional level.

40. The proposed office of President-bishop is a means of receiving the historic episcopate and exercising an episcopal ministry in a way that is compatible with Methodist polity and recognisable to the Church of England. Alongside the President-bishop, the office of Vice-President would continue to maintain the Methodist emphasis on collaboration between lay and ordained in the ministry of the people of God. (Although the office of Vice-President is open to lay people and deacons, the majority of Vice-Presidents have been lay.)

41. It is proposed that the Methodist Church would receive the historic episcopate by electing one of its presbyters in Full Connexion specifically to the office of President-bishop. Upon election, the President-bishop would be ordained to the office of bishop by bishops of partner churches whose orders are recognised by both churches. There is an ancient requirement, stemming from the Council of Nicaea, that a new bishop is ordained by at least three bishops. It would be fitting for the first President-bishop to be ordained by at least three such bishops.

42. Consistent with the aims and objectives of establishing an interchangeable ministry, the President-bishop (or a past President who is a bishop) would then be required without exception to preside at all subsequent ordination services in the Methodist Church. This

54 Methodist Standing Order 520.
55 Methodist Standing Order 523(1).
56 Canon 4 of the Canons of the Council of Nicaea, 325.
requirement would need to be included in Methodist Standing Orders.

43. The length of office held by a President-bishop would be subject to a decision of the Conference. For the time being, the office of President-bishop will continue to be an annual appointment as it currently is for a President. However, after leaving office, a President-bishop would continue to exercise a permanent episcopal ministry in the Methodist Church in conjunction with serving on the stations or in some other appointment. In this way, a President-bishop as such will continue in a permanent relationship with the Conference, exercising a permanent episcopal ministry. The Methodist Church should seek to develop and formalise in its Standing Orders the ways in which President-bishops may continue to exercise an episcopal ministry. This episcopal ministry would include representing the President-bishop from time to time on those occasions where Methodist polity specifies that the President shall preside. Obviously, this may include presiding at ordination services.

44. It is proposed that the Methodist Church appoint a President-bishop in the following way.

(i) The current process of nominating and electing presbyters to the office of President of the Conference could be replaced by a method of nomination and election to the office of President-bishop which will take account of the fact that these will continue to exercise an episcopal ministry beyond the specified period in office.

(ii) In year 1, following election to that office, at the Conference, the President-bishop will be ordained to the episcopate by at least three bishops in the historic episcopate at an appropriate venue using an authorised Methodist liturgy prepared in consultation with ecumenical partners. The Secretary and Vice-President of the Conference will participate in the ordination in a way equivalent to their present roles at an ordination service.

(iii) In year 1, the President-bishop will preside at the ordination of all those probationer presbyters and deacons whom the Conference accepts to be received into Full Connexion and ordained.

(iv) From year 2, the President-bishop, assisted by at least two bishops recognised by both churches within the historic episcopate, will preside at the ordination of his or her successor elected by the Conference. In year 3, the President-bishop, the ex-President who has been ordained to the episcopate and one or more bishops from partner churches within the historic episcopate, will preside. In subsequent years, those who have previously been ordained to the episcopate will participate in the ordination of a President-bishop and preside at the ordination of probationer presbyters and deacons at the invitation of the President-bishop.

(v) From an early stage, the practice should be established of reciprocal invitations between the Methodist Church and the Church of England for participation in their services of ordination to the episcopate. Such participation is a powerful sign of our two churches sharing together in the historic episcopate and of their relationship of
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communion with one another.

(vi) Past Presidents of the Conference, whether ordained to the episcopate or not, and past Vice-Presidents will continue to participate by invitation in other forms of connexional oversight such as the chairing of connexional committees and working groups.

(vii) The President-bishop, Vice-President and Secretary of the Conference will continue to collaborate in their respective roles as specified in Standing Orders.

(viii) Those ordained to the episcopate remain members of the body of past Presidents and Vice Presidents. Their role would be to focus and represent the historic continuity of the Church within, beyond and for the Methodist Church, but not to exercise a distinct corporate oversight function.

3. ‘TO WELCOME ALL PRESBYTERS / PRIESTS’

45. The previous chapter set out a way forward by which our two churches can fulfil the first of the two additional commitments it is proposed that they make, along with the declaration of being in communion as churches:

a) to share the ministry of the historic episcopate as a sign of the apostolicity of the Church of God.

In this chapter, the focus shifts to the second of the two commitments, inseparable from the first and from the declaration of being in communion:

b) to welcome all presbyters / priests serving in either church as eligible to serve in both churches.

It begins by affirming on the basis of established ecumenical agreements that although there is a difference in characteristic terms used by our two churches – presbyter and priest – there is a strong common understanding of this ministry. It then outlines some of the particular issues that are raised for our churches by this second commitment, and outlines a way forward to enable the interchangeability of presbyteral ministries between our churches in the context of an ecclesial relationship of communion in which we share the ministry of the historic episcopate.

Convergence behind the different language

46. Theological work over 50 years on the nature and role of the ordained ministry has shown a convergence in understanding between the Church of England and the Methodist Church (and indeed other ecumenical partners), and has supported the two churches in moving towards visible unity. Alongside that convergence between our churches, differences of emphasis and approach remain within our churches, and these
need to be borne in mind when seeking to evaluate the extent of our agreement.

47. The Common Statement supporting the 2003 Covenant was resting on firm foundations established over the past half-century when it concluded that: ‘The Church of England’s understanding of ministerial priesthood is thus of a pastoral, preaching, teaching, and sacramental ministry ... A priest in the Church of England is a person called and ordained to the same ministry of word and sacrament as is exercised by ministers in Methodism’.57

48. Within each of our churches there are differences of theological understanding about, for example, the sacramental character conferred by ordination and different orders of ministry. Contrasting approaches to the practice of lay presidency at the eucharist also raise some questions for continuing discussion, addressed in the work of the JIC and given careful consideration as part of the process of preparing the current report.58 Neither of these matters, however, detracts from the substantial convergence on the theology of presbyteral ministry described in this section.

49. The doctrinal standards of the two churches present their theological understanding of the presbyterate in somewhat different terms.59 This was an area that received significant attention in the Common Statement underpinning the signing of the Anglican-Methodist Covenant in 2003. It emphasised that our churches share a common intention: ‘in ordination the intention of both our churches is to ordain to the presbyterate of the whole Church of Christ’ (Anglican-Methodist Covenant, §148). A shared ‘intention’ in setting apart certain individuals ‘for the office and work of a presbyter’ provides a helpful starting point for theological dialogue in understanding the nature of this office and work.60 However, while both churches use the term ‘presbyter’ for this ministry, in the Church of England, presbyters are more usually called priests. Does this difference of language reflect an underlying difference in theology?

59 The doctrinal standards of the two churches are described briefly in An Anglican-Methodist Covenant, §§103–107. Anglicans and Methodists ground their belief and teaching on the Holy Scriptures and the ecumenical creeds. ‘Both churches also have secondary, historic formularies’ (§103). ‘Subordinate to these authorities are various recent statements of a doctrinal nature that have been endorsed in various ways in the Church of England’ (§107). In the Methodist Church, ‘In addition to the doctrinal clause of the Deed of Union, there are other statements of a doctrinal nature: the Catechism of 1986 and the reports on faith and order authorised by the Conference ....’ (§108).
60 Even so, a shared ‘intention’ in celebrating the sacraments of the Church quickly unravels if, in the course of dialogue, it transpires that the separated churches have incompatible views of what they think is happening. On the other hand, declaring a shared intention suggests a definite commitment to articulating a common understanding and a consequential willingness to receive fresh theological insights from one another.
50. The Common Statement sought to express agreement on the priesthood of the ordained ministry on the grounds that a representative (presbyteral) ministry is related both to the priesthood of Christ and to the priesthood of baptized believers, and they clearly cannot be separated without dividing Christ and his Body, the Church (§149). It refers to documents from the Church of England that relate the use of the term ‘priest’ for presbyters both to the priesthood of Christ and to the common or corporate priesthood of the whole Church ‘in a particular way’ (§152). While the Methodist Church’s Deed of Union (1932) refers to ‘the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers’, the 1960 Conference Statement on ordination says this:

... the doctrine of the ‘priesthood of all believers’ is that we share, as believers, in the priesthood of our great High Priest, Jesus Christ ... the doctrine does not mean that every Christian has the right to exercise every function and administer both sacraments.61

51. Each church can then give the other substantial assurance on particular points of concern for the other regarding the theology of the presbyterate. In avoiding the term ‘priests’ for presbyters, the Methodist Church is not implying the functional equivalence of all Christians or diminishing its teaching about the high responsibilities that pertain to presbyteral ministry with what the Deed of Union describes as its ‘principal and directing part in these great duties’ [of stewarding and shepherding the flock].62 In using the term ‘priests’ for presbyters, the Church of England is not implying that their ministry is separate and independent from the priesthood which is common to all the Lord’s people.

52. Other ecumenical dialogues illustrate a similar convergence on this matter. The Common Statement’s treatment of ‘The Presbyterate’ (§§148-56) drew on existing ecumenical agreements to which the Church of England was committed. These included not only those arising from dialogue with Protestant churches (such as the Reuilly Common Statement, cited at §152), but also texts on ordained ministry from the first phase of the Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission, affirmed by the General Synod as ‘consonant in substance with the faith of the Church of England’. Similarly, Synthesis Together in Holiness: 40 years of Methodist and Roman Catholic Dialogue (2010) notes that ‘despite obvious outward differences, Methodists and Catholics have a large measure of common understanding on ministry’; they ‘affirm together the priesthood of the whole Church’, recognising that ‘within the apostolic service of the whole community there has been, from the beginning, a ministry uniquely called and empowered to build up the body of Christ in love’.63

53. Since the Common Statement was published (2001), the Anglican understanding

62 Clause 4 of the Deed of Union.
63 Synthesis, 114 and 116.
of priesthood has continued to be a subject for careful consideration in ecumenical
dialogue, perhaps most notably in the *Cyprus Statement* of the International Commission
for Anglican-Orthodox Theological Dialogue (2006). This text strongly affirms the
relationship of priesthood to the church community on the one hand and to the ‘priestly
mission’ of Christ on the other, in both Anglican and Orthodox traditions:

It is not an authority or a power above the community, nor a function or office
parallel to or outside it... Christian priesthood involves participation in Christ’s own
priestly mission. It is the personal gift of the Holy Spirit to the newly-ordained that
enables this participation... It is a permanent order of service only in union with the
Church and by its discerning authority.64

The priesthood of the ordained is not therefore the property ‘of a particular order or
class of persons’, but rather something that, as the *Cyprus Statement* says, ‘belongs
to the eucharistic community’: ‘The people of God, gathered together in eucharistic
communion, constitutes the basis for ordained priestly ministry.’65

**A Challenge for the Church of England: ‘Welcoming All Presbyters / Priests’**

54. Episcopal ordination is a canonical requirement for serving as an ordained minister in
the Church of England. Presbyters who have not been ordained by a bishop recognised
as sharing in the historic episcopate are not at present eligible to serve in the Church
of England. The current proposals, however, hinge on each church welcoming all
presbyters / priests serving in the other church as eligible to serve, including in the case
of the Church of England those Methodist presbyters in full connexion when the new
relationship begins and therefore ordained prior to the Methodist Church’s reception
of the historic episcopate. How can this be compatible with Anglican theology and
polity? This second section of the chapter explores some of the relevant background
and explains how what is being proposed provides a context for ‘a fresh creative act
of reconciliation which acknowledges the manifold yet unified activity of the Holy Spirit
throughout the ages’ in our two churches.66

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64 International Commission for Anglican – Orthodox Theological Dialogue (ICAOTD), 2006, *The Church
of the Triune God: The Cyprus Statement*, VI.20–22, available at http://www.anglicancommunion.org/media/103818/The-Church-of-the-Triune-God.pdf.. A key earlier ecumenical text for Anglicans in
this area is the Anglican – Roman Catholic International Commission (ARCIC) I Statement from 1973,

65 ICAOTD, *Church of the Triune God*, VI.17.

text available at http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/chrstuni/meth-council-docs/
55. It was already recognised at the 1920 Lambeth Conference that wherever non-episcopal
churches are ready to respond with Anglican churches to God’s call to visible unity, those
Anglican churches ‘might be faced with the necessity of providing for the contingency
that many ministers who at the time of the union were working in the non-episcopal
Communion, would remain after the union without episcopal ordination.’67 The desire of
both our churches to grow in visible unity today confronts us with a comparable situation.
Establishing a new relationship of communion between our churches must mean a new
relationship of all ordained ministers in each church with the other church – both those
currently serving and those ordained in the future.

56. Nearly 80 years later, the 1998 Lambeth Conference summarised the rich tradition of
Anglican ecumenism in the following terms (resolution IV.1):

This Conference: a. reaffirms the Anglican commitment to the full, visible unity of
the Church as the goal of the Ecumenical Movement; b. encourages the further
explication of the characteristics which belong to the full, visible unity of the
Church (described variously as the goal, the marks, or the portrait of visible unity);
and c. recognises that the process of moving towards full, visible unity may entail
temporary anomalies, and believes that some anomalies may be bearable when
there is an agreed goal of visible unity, but that there should always be an impetus
towards their resolution and, thus, towards the removal of the principal anomaly of
disunity.

57. This use of the term ‘anomaly’ has become familiar in Anglican ecumenism, but it is
easy for it to be misheard and indeed misused, which is why the wording of the 1998
resolution as a whole is important. Whilst it would be inappropriate to use the term
‘anomaly’ regarding anyone’s ordination, it has become a way of referring to temporary
situations in the life of the church that stand in some degree of tension with abiding
ecclesiological principles. All our churches in fact live with anomalies of this kind,
with the principal, distorting anomaly that lies at the root of so many others being our
disunity. Tangible steps to overcome this primary anomaly will inevitably tend to generate
secondary, limited anomalies as churches take concrete steps to overcome that disunity
and draw closer to one another and closer to Christ. Such limited anomalies are willingly
‘borne’ or carried by those churches as part of their shared journey towards unity.

58. This is not at all a matter of an end justifying certain means. Rather the hope of
a growing visible unity before the return of Christ gives a rationale for accepting
temporary periods of reorientation along the way, accepting the necessarily anomalous
experience which that will involve. The journey towards the unity of the church we

confess in the creed can never be a direct or straightforward one for churches that have developed and grown in separation from one another. There may therefore be a need for churches moving deeper into unity with one another to be ready to endure certain temporary anomalies in their arrangements as part of the journey towards unity, without abandoning the norms with regard to which anomalies can be identified. In this case, accepting that the journey involves bearing a particular anomaly on the part of the Church of England affirms that there is no intention to undermine or dilute the Church of England’s commitment to the Anglican norm, shared with the Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches, of episcopal ordination. What is proposed serves to maintain the Church of England’s commitment to the ordering of its ordained ministry, ordained in the historic episcopate.

59. What is described in Anglican ecumenism as bearing an anomaly may also be understood as an application of the gift of the Spirit by which the church is called to live, namely her mission to further the unity which Christ wills. This may be said to allow her to set aside the strict application of its laws for especially compelling reasons better to serve God’s purposes. Among these purposes is that unity of Christians which Christ wills. When such flexibility is applied, the underlying principle remains intact but a greater purpose is made possible. This has some similarities to the practice known to the Eastern Churches as oikonomia, though it differs in important respects. It cannot be used to change matters of dogma, nor can it be invoked to create what does not exist, and it requires some recognition of what is already present and has been accomplished. All of this parallels, without being precisely the same as, the concept of ‘anomaly’ as this has evolved in Anglican ecumenical theology, and thereby suggests that the thinking outlined in this section is one that other churches may also be able to recognise as a faithful response to the prayer of Christ that we should be one, that the world may believe.

60. Within this long-standing framework of international Anglican ecumenism, the question for the Church of England might be phrased in the following terms: can one crucial element of the proposals in this report – welcoming all Methodist presbyters as eligible to serve, including those not episcopally ordained, at the point where the Church of England and the Methodist Church enter into a new relationship of communion with one another as churches – be properly described as an anomaly that can be borne together on this journey towards unity, rather than the giving up of a long-standing principle? The situation envisaged would certainly meet the two basic, general criteria set out in the 1998 Lambeth resolution: the anomaly would be temporary only, and the primary motivation for carrying it for a limited period would be the unity for which Christ prayed. Two other criteria, however, are also relevant here. The first is the recognition of what

is already present, and the second is the effect of becoming an episcopally ordered church.

61. First, then, the Church of England already recognises the ordained ministries of the Methodist Church and its means of oversight, which include the provision made for the ordination of its presbyters. This is made abundantly clear in the affirmations of the 2003 Covenant:

1) We affirm one another’s churches as true churches belonging to the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church of Jesus Christ and as truly participating in the apostolic mission of the whole people of God.
2) We affirm that in both our churches the word of God is authentically preached, and the sacraments of Baptism and the Eucharist are duly administered and celebrated.
3) We affirm that both our churches confess in word and life the apostolic faith revealed in the Holy Scriptures and set forth in the ecumenical Creeds.
4) We affirm that one another’s ordained and lay ministries are given by God as instruments of God’s grace, to build up the people of God in faith, hope and love, for the ministry of word, sacrament and pastoral care and to share in God’s mission in the world.
5) We affirm that one another’s ordained ministries possess both the inward call of the Holy Spirit and Christ’s commission given through the Church.
6) We affirm that both our churches embody the conciliar, connexional nature of the Church and that communal, collegial and personal oversight (episkope) is exercised within them in various forms.
7) We affirm that there already exists a basis for agreement on the principles of episcopal oversight as a visible sign and instrument of the communion of the Church in time and space.

62. It has become an accepted part of the Church of England’s theology and practice that underpinning any recognition of ministers from another church is a recognition of that other church, as part of the one church of God – hence the importance of the first of the Covenant affirmations. This principle underpins the 2014 document from the Church of England’s Faith and Order Commission, Recognition by the Church of England of Orders Conferred in Other Churches (https://www.churchofengland.org/about-us/work-other-churches/faith-and-order-commission.aspx). Formal recognition by the Church of England of churches outside the Anglican Communion is given neither automatically nor indeed frequently. Because ordained ministry is integral to the life of the church, such mutual recognition as churches is inseparable from mutual recognition of ministries, as the affirmations of the Covenant that follow the first make clear.

63. Nor is the Church of England doing something novel or unwarranted in terms of Anglican tradition by affirming that the ordained and lay ministries of a non-episcopal church
such as the Methodist Church ‘are given by God as instruments of God’s grace.’ While a variety of ecclesiological views regarding episcopacy was expressed in Anglicanism in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, one that has a reasonable claim to continuing respect would be that of Richard Hooker. Hooker is very clear that the power to ordain is ‘ordinarily’ reserved to bishops, but he also allows that there can also be an ‘extraordinary kind of vocation’, where

the exigence of necessity doth constrain to leave the usual ways of the church, which otherwise we would willingly keep; where the church must needs have some ordained, and neither hath nor can have possibly a bishop to ordain; in case of such necessity the ordinary institution of God hath given oftentimes, and may give, place. And therefore we are not simply without exception to urge a lineal descent of power from the apostles by continued succession of bishops in every effectual ordination.69

Although it is not the language he uses, it might be said that Hooker considers non-episcopal ordination as an anomaly, certainly, but as one that has been and can be carried on its journey through history by the church of God, because non-episcopal ordinations may be recognised in appropriate circumstances as ‘effectual’.

64. Apostolicity affirms the continuity with the apostles of the Church’s faith and life, its sacraments, ministry, oversight, and mission.70 To recognise the apostolicity of another church – as the Church of England and the Methodist Church have done in the first of the Covenant affirmations – entails a recognition of its ministry as also apostolic, in continuity with the apostles. While the Church of England places a specific value on the historic episcopate as a sign of apostolic continuity, the British Methodist Church has sustained a commitment to expressing its apostolic continuity as a church through the distinctive role of the Conference (see eg paragraphs 22 and 25 in the previous chapter). All ministers are ordained by the President of the Conference on behalf of the whole Conference or by a presbyter to whom the President has deputed this responsibility. They are also received into Full Connexion, whereby they enter into a covenant relationship with the Conference. In this relationship they accept a common discipline of stationing and collegially exercise pastoral responsibility for the Church on behalf of the Conference in the contexts to which they are sent ‘working in collaboration with others, in the courts of the church and individually, who bear proper responsibilities in those situations’.71

It is the Conference that recommends ministers for ordination and stations them to a

70 Porvoo Common Statement, §§36–40.
71 Standing Order 740
particular Methodist circuit. The pervasive idea of ‘connexion’ in Methodist ecclesiology is relevant here: every part bound to every other part within the one church. Hence the observation in the recent report from the Anglican-Methodist International Commission for Unity in Mission, that ‘The orderly transmission of ordained ministry takes place in Methodism under the discipline of the Conference, while for Anglicans, “the historic episcopate” plays a key role.’

65. The second critical point to be considered in evaluating this aspect of the proposals on the part of the Church of England is the effect of the Methodist Church becoming an episcopally ordered church, with which the Church of England is in communion. The anomaly here is not in the first place that an Anglican church accepts the ministry of presbyters not ordained episcopally, but that a church participating in the historic episcopate, with which an Anglican church may therefore come to be in communion, includes ministers who have not been ordained episcopally. That anomaly is, however, intrinsic to the process of any non-episcopal church responding to Anglicanism’s distinctive call to Christian unity, and any Anglicans who would like to avoid it altogether must consider whether they truly desire the unity of non-episcopal churches with their own. As articulated in the historic ‘Appeal to all Christian People’ of the 1920 Lambeth Conference, an essential strand of Anglicanism’s contribution to the ecumenical movement has been to commend to non-episcopal churches the historic episcopate and the ‘well-being’ for the church that they believe flows from it. The more deeply Anglicans value the historic episcopate, therefore, the more greatly they should rejoice when a non-episcopal church is ready to consider receiving it with them, and the more highly they should value the effect on that church of becoming episcopally ordered.

66. Those who believe that the ministry of the historic episcopate is given by God for the flourishing and well-being of the church will expect the fruits of this ministry to grow throughout the life of the churches where it is exercised, including its ordained ministers. Under the proposals of this report, each church would receive presbyters / priests from the other, whenever they had been ordained, as those exercising their ministry in a church with which their church is in communion, under the authority of a bishop with whom their bishops are in communion. These relational, ecclesial bonds are crucial in limiting the anomaly and making it one that can be borne on the shared journey towards unity without damage to ecclesial norms. Such bonds need to find appropriate liturgical and sacramental expression in the way that a new relationship between our churches is inaugurated and, following that, how each church welcome presbyters / priests from the other to contribute to its ministry. Some brief comments on this area are included in chapter 4 below (paragraphs 93–94).

67. For those who share such an understanding of the historic episcopate as a gift for the flourishing of the church, it is especially important to see the action of a church in receiving this ministry as something that affects the whole life of that church, as all in the church come into relationship with the bishop, who is now established in relationship with others who share the historic episcopate, in the present and the past. This is therefore something that affects all clergy, whenever they were ordained: they now exercise their ministry in a relationship of ecclesial communion – including sacramental communion – with the bishop, or, as Methodism might express it, full connexion. Church of England bishops, in welcoming all Methodist presbyters as eligible to serve under their authority, would do so on the basis of recognising them as the presbyters of another bishop, who also shares in the historic episcopate and with whom they are in communion.

68. The relationship between apostolicity and the historic episcopate should also be mentioned in this context. Where two churches agree, as is proposed here, ‘to share the ministry of the historic episcopate as a sign of the apostolicity of the Church of God’, mutual affirmation of one another as apostolic churches and of one another’s ministries as in continuity with the apostles is strengthened and enriched. Each church can consider the other’s presbyters / priests as exercising their ministry in the context of eucharistic communion with a bishop in the historic episcopate, who is in communion with their bishops. Their ministry is shaped and marked by such episcopal ministry as a sign of the apostolicity of the Church of God. In ecumenical dialogues, Anglicans have emphasised the weight that rests on mutual recognition and collegiality between bishops in affirming and sustaining the reality of communion between their churches.\(^73\)

69. These two factors – recognition of the fruitfulness of ministries already being exercised, and the effect of a church becoming ordered in the historic episcopate – have been crucial for occasions in the past when Anglican churches have chosen to bear temporary anomalies of this kind for the sake of growing into deeper unity with other churches.\(^74\) Two of the most important precedents concern the formation of the Church of South India (CSI) in 1947 and then of the Church of North India (CNI) in 1970 from both Anglican and non-episcopal churches. In the case of the CSI, it was decided to accept the orders of all those ministering in the participant churches at the point of the new united church coming into existence, with certain limitations put in place in terms of where ministers would actually serve. In the case of the CNI, the issue was handled somewhat differently. There was an inaugural service involving mutual laying on of hands, in which bishops prayed for ordained ministers from non-episcopal churches. The

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\(^74\) For an overview of relevant developments, see Will Adam, 2015, ‘Squaring the Circle: Anglicans and the Recognition of Holy Orders’, *One in Christ* vol 49 (2), pp 254–269.
Act of Unification was considered thereafter as equivalent to episcopal ordination for the purposes of holding office in the Church of England.

70. A similar approach to that of the formation of the CNI was integral to the Anglican – Methodist scheme that foundered in the General Synod in 1972. It became one of the most debated and indeed distrusted aspects of it, and the JIC did not regard this as a viable path to seek to follow again. Moreover, it is not an approach that has commended itself to subsequent effective initiatives in church unity involving Angliicans.

71. The formation of what has come to be called the Porvoo Communion of Churches offers the most direct precedent for the Church of England for what is proposed in this report. The heart of the agreement, accepted by the Church of England synodically and by the Nordic and Baltic Churches, is to be found in its understanding of episcopacy in the service of the apostolicity of the Churches, separately endorsed in the House of Bishops’ Occasional Paper, Apostolicity and Succession, which clarifies the relation between the apostolicity and continuity of the Church and its sign in the historical succession of bishops. Although all the Lutheran churches concerned had at the time of the agreement bishops who ordained their pastors, it was accepted that the historic succession of bishops had not been maintained in all cases. Indeed, the office of bishop in historic succession had only been introduced into the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Latvia in 1920 (which had previously been led by ‘General Superintendents’) and into the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Lithuania in 1976. Moreover, in Latvia and Estonia, those elected to the office of bishop from the late 1930s to the late 1960s were unable to receive consecration as bishops for political reasons. While it was agreed that pastors who had been ordained by those not holding episcopal office would not be eligible to serve in Anglican churches within the Porvoo Communion, no restrictions applied in relation to breaks in the succession of bishops, or where ordaining bishops had been elected but not consecrated. Lutheran churches joining the Communion, however, committed themselves to ensuring that all future ordinations of bishops would include laying on of hands from bishops recognised by all churches in the Porvoo Communion as being in historic succession.

72. In recognizing the orders of Lutheran ministers in cases where it was not clear that the minister of ordination shared in the historic episcopate, without requiring conditional ordination or some kind of analogous action, the Church of England was doing something it had not done before, and following the precedent of the CSI rather than the

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76 House of Bishops, Apostolicity and Succession, 1994, GS Misc 432.
CNI. It accepted that temporary anomalies here could be borne as part of the journey towards fuller unity in Christ. The legal basis for this recognition lay in the authority of the General Synod and of the Archbishops.

73. While other parallels could be reviewed (not least the Anglican – Lutheran agreements in the USA and Canada), the closest precedent from the Anglican Communion for the current proposals is the situation in Ireland, where the Church of Ireland is now in communion with the Methodist Church with interchangeability of presbyteral ministries, including Methodist presbyters ordained prior to the Methodist Church’s reception of the historic episcopate. While the proposals under consideration would break new ground for the Church of England, they would not constitute an innovation within the Anglican Communion.\textsuperscript{78} The specific kind of limited, temporary anomaly being considered in this section has been borne on the journey towards unity by other churches within the Communion, with which the Church of England remains in communion, in prayerful expectation of the work of the Holy Spirit to supply whatever may be lacking in our churches. As expressed by an Anglican commentator on the agreement in Ireland, ‘The period of anomaly is not mere pragmatism – it is a moment of grace.’\textsuperscript{79}

4. FROM COVENANT TO COMMUNION

74. The final chapter of this report addresses a number of areas in terms of tasks that potentially lie ahead for our churches in moving from covenant to communion. First, it surveys the legislation that might be required in each church in order to bring particular changes into effect. Second, it starts to identify questions that, while not critical for the early stages in that timetable, ought to begin to be addressed well before full implementation. Third, it suggests a number of recommendations for adoption by our churches at the point of full implementation. Finally, it sets out a provisional timetable for the acceptance of the proposals made in the preceding chapters and offers some brief commentary on that.

Outline of legislation for the Church of England

75. Significant legal changes would be needed in order for presbyters ordained in the Methodist Church prior to the introduction of the historic episcopate to become eligible to exercise ordained ministry in the Church of England. The Act of Uniformity of 1662 and the Ordinal annexed to it require episcopal ordination of every person ‘admitted to any

\textsuperscript{78} This judgment is confirmed by the positive response to the draft version of this report received from the Inter Anglican Standing Committee on Unity, Faith and Order.

parsonage, vicarage, benefice or other ecclesiastical promotion or dignity whatsoever...” This requirement has been consistently maintained by the Church of England and other Anglican churches since the 17th century.

76. The immediate background to the 1662 Act of Uniformity was the national trauma caused by the English Civil Wars and the upheaval in parishes caused by the Commonwealth. As its title suggests, the Act of Uniformity, modelled on earlier Acts of Uniformity enacted in 1549, 1552 and 1559, was intended to establish ecclesiastical and liturgical discipline. Since then it has been a means by which the unity of the Church of England has been preserved amidst theological diversity. Nevertheless, it is proposed that the Church of England, in response to the Methodist Church receiving the historic episcopate, introduce legislation that would in effect dispense Methodist presbyters for a limited period from the requirement to have received episcopal ordination in order to serve by invitation in the Church of England.

77. In terms of canon law in the Church of England, the General Synod would be asked to introduce the following provisions in order to implement the framework outlined in this report:

(a) a declaration or agreement establishing a relationship of communion between the Church of England and the Methodist Church (such as was used to initiate the Porvoo Communion of Churches) alongside the making of the two new commitments from both churches to be inaugurated upon the Methodist Church receiving the historic episcopate by the means proposed herein;
(b) a Measure containing the legislation to enable that relationship of communion and its accompanying commitments to be brought into effect.

The proposed Measure would need to cover (at least) two areas. First, it would permit presbyters in Full Connexion with the Methodist Conference at the time at which the relationship of communion is established and all presbyters subsequently ordained in the Methodist Church to be eligible to serve in the Church of England. Second, the Measure would therefore also need to make provision enabling bishops of the Church of England to participate in the consecration of a President-bishop on the first occasion, as the relationship of communion is established.

78. The most effective way to achieve this outcome would be for the Measure to include a deeming provision under which presbyters ordained in the Methodist Church would be treated for all legal purposes on the same basis as clerks in holy orders of the Church of England. There is a partial precedent for this in the Overseas and Other Clergy (Ministry and Ordination) Measure 1967, Section 1, which makes provision under which the Archbishop can grant permission to officiate in his province to an ‘overseas clergyman’, ie a priest or deacon ordained by a bishop of a Church outside the British Isles which
is in communion with the Church of England. Where a permission is granted under the section, the priest or deacon will possess ‘all such rights and advantages and be subject to all such duties and liabilities as he would have possessed and been subject to if he had been ordained by the bishop of a diocese in the province of Canterbury or York’. Such an approach would not require amendment of the 1662 Act itself, which would remain unamended and in force, or of other related Canons. It would however require an amending canon to overcome provisions in the Canons which duplicate the provisions in the 1662 Act and which re-enact provisions which were formerly contained in the Act.

79. Second, ecclesiastical law currently permits bishops of the Church of England to lay on hands at ordinations or consecrations in other churches only where ‘that Church is an episcopal Church with which the Church of England has established intercommunion’ (Canon B 43.5). This would not apply in the case of the first ordination of a President-bishop. So far as the ecclesiastical law is concerned, the Methodist Church would only become an ‘episcopal church’ after receiving the historic episcopate and the President-bishop commencing an episcopal ministry. Moreover, it is intended that such an ordination would itself be an action that would inaugurate the relationship of being in communion (equivalent to ‘intercommunion’ in the language of Canon B 43).

80. Finally, it should be emphasised that the interchangeability of presbyters / priests would be at the invitation of the appropriate authority. In the case of Church of England parishes, incumbents, patrons, bishops and parish representatives as applicable have sufficient existing powers to regulate such invitations, for instance under the Patronage (Benefices) Measure 1986.

81. Legislation of the kind envisaged by the proposals in this report would constitute Article 7 business on the basis that it was ‘provision touching doctrinal formulae or the services or ceremonies of the Church of England or the administration of the Sacraments or sacred rites thereof’. It would also be Article 8 business as it would provide for ‘a permanent and substantial change of relationship between the Church of England and another Christian body being a body a substantial number of whose members reside in Great Britain’. Hence time for Article 7 references to the Convocations, House of Laity and House of Bishops, and for an Article 8 reference to the Dioceses, have been built into the indicative timetable. Some thought would need to be given in due course to the issue of special majorities which the General Synod can require under Article 8(1B).

81 See Article 8(1) of the Constitution of the General Synod.
Outline of legislation for the Methodist Church

82. Receiving the historic episcopate in the Methodist Church would require some changes to the doctrinal standards in clause 4 of the Deed of Union. In 1981 the Faith and Order Committee concluded that the doctrinal standards would not be violated by acceptance of the historic episcopate, and a further report, adopted by the Conference in 1982, set out the reasoning behind that conclusion. However, amendments to clause 4 confirmed in 2012 now specifically refer to presbyters and deacons (in place of the more general ‘ministers’), making it necessary that there should also be reference to bishops. In that context the Church’s understanding of the office must also be clarified for the reassurance of both the Methodist people and ecumenical partners.

83. Amendments to other clauses in the Deed of Union and to Standing Orders will also be necessary. Amendments to clause 4 should however be kept to a minimum and be restricted to matters which are intended to be invariable. Any changes to clause 4 involve special legislation that requires a 75% majority at the Conference followed by widespread consultation throughout the Connexion and confirmation by a 75% majority at the Conference two years later. Other changes to the Deed (and any changes to Standing Orders which the Conference might deem to be sufficiently significant) require a similar majority in two successive Conferences with intervening consultation.

Areas to be addressed between adoption and implementation

84. If this report receives a positive response from the churches, a number of subjects might be identified where it could be advisable to commission some joint further work by relevant church bodies or by specially established groups, for completion before full implementation of the proposals. These would include: practical arrangements for interchangeability; sharing in oversight; and liturgy to express changed relationships.

85. On the first, while it is not possible to anticipate every scenario, there are at least two ways in which interchangeability might become a reality. The first is for a presbyter / priest holding an appointment in the church in which they were ordained also to be given permission to exercise presbyteral ministry in the other church, while continuing to hold their current appointment. The second is for a presbyter / priest holding an appointment in the church in which they were ordained to lay that down and take up an appointment to serve as a presbyter / priest in the other church.

86. In the first scenario, a priest / presbyter may assist in their local Circuit or parish, thus exercising ministry in both churches at the same time. This is likely to foster relationships.

82 Statements and Reports of the Methodist Church on Faith and Order vol. 1, pp181ff.
of fellowship not only between presbyters but also between the congregations that they serve, and to act as a catalyst, perhaps, for energising local mission.

87. With regard to the second scenario, legislation along the lines set out above should provide a suitable framework for this to happen in the case of Methodist presbyers taking up full-time appointments in the Church of England. The Methodist Church is encouraged to consider making additional provision as a result of being in communion with the Church of England to facilitate the stationing of Anglican clergy as itinerant ministers.

88. Careful thought will be needed about a range of issues in seeking to make these various possibilities a reality. For instance, presbyers / priests from one church will be placing themselves under the discipline and authority of the other for the ministry they exercise there. At the same time, they will continue to be subject to the discipline and authority of the church which ordained them, and whose presbyter / priest they will still be. Practical matters regarding ‘terms and conditions’ will also need to be reviewed in the case of the second scenario here.

89. All presbyers / priests serving in one church who seek to serve in the other will clearly require appropriate induction, continuing training, oversight and support. There is also a potential opportunity to encourage all presbyers / priests to gain a better understanding of one another’s ministries in our two churches, and to become more aware of the possibilities for serving in and with both churches.

90. Suitable ways of expressing and enabling ecclesial collegiality and sharing in oversight will need to be identified in due course in order for the developments advocated here to take root in the life of our churches. This is a second area to which it is recommended that attention be given before full implementation of the proposals. Episcopates will continue to be separate in that they will serve churches that are institutionally distinct, but as those churches become more deeply committed to being in communion through the integrated sharing and exchange of ministers, so their episcopates will need to meet and to share in oversight together. Thus, the Church of England has regular meetings of bishops with the bishops of the Old Catholic Church and of the Porvoo Communion of Churches, and the Methodist Church has regular consultations with the bishops of the United Methodist Church in the USA and several European countries. Such meetings are consultative and therefore do not have the authority to take decisions that would be binding on participants, but they are important in discerning the shared mission of the churches concerned and considering how churches can together respond to the challenges they face.

91. A commitment to sharing in oversight is not all that is needed if the new relationship between our churches proposed in this report is to flourish, but it is a necessary condition. The experience of the Anglican churches in North America since entering into
communion with Lutheran churches which share the same territory bears this out. If the exchange of ministries is to become something that truly contributes to the vitality of the Church in mission, then it needs the support of those entrusted with ministries of oversight at every level, and their willingness to communicate and cooperate with one another. Challenges will emerge that need patience and determination if they are to be tackled, and each church will need the help of the other to do that.

92. Transforming the dynamics of mission in England was mentioned earlier (paragraph 19 above) as a major reason for supporting the proposals in this report. If accepted, they will help to create exciting new possibilities for unity in mission. Making those possibilities a reality will depend, of course, on energy at the local level but also on wise, supportive, shared oversight at regional and national / connexional levels. Without that local energy is likely to become frustrated. Even where there is local engagement in abundance, lack of support, indifference or neglect by leaders, due to lack of consultation, can be fatal to new initiatives. Leadership in mission is a key strand in current Anglican thinking about the nature of episcopacy, and that will require a committed, imaginative approach to shared oversight.

93. The third area that we wish to highlight in this section is the development of liturgy to express changed relationships. This would certainly need to include plans for a service to inaugurate the new relationship of communion between our churches. This should take place not only after final approval for relevant decisions by the General Synod and the Conference, but also after the episcopal ordination of the President of the Conference. It would be appropriate that such a service be eucharistic, and that the tasks of presiding at the eucharist be shared by bishops from both churches. It would also be desirable that participation in the service be as full and as representative as possible. Recognition of the changed relationship of presbyters / priests from one church towards the other church should be included within the liturgy.

94. Attention should also be given to the question of what kind of liturgical provision might be used to mark the beginning of the ministry of a Methodist presbyter in the Church of England, or of an Anglican priest in the Methodist Church, either alongside a current ministry in the church in which they were ordained or as their primary appointment. Simply completing the necessary paper work is not adequate to the nature of the church as an ordered community of relationships. The point of the formalities is to enable a new relationship to come into being between the ordained minister and another church, and it would be right to affirm that before God in a public service. In the case of the Church of England, it would be fitting for the licensing bishop to officiate, and for the service to be eucharistic, in order to express the fullness of the bishop’s ministry as chief pastor, whose oversight of the church is being received by the presbyter. In the case of the Methodist Church, there would be an important role for the Superintendent Minister, and in due course this might also be considered as a context where the episcopal ministry of
past-President bishops could appropriately be exercised.

**Recommendations to be adopted at implementation**

95. If they agree in due course to implement these proposals, our two churches are invited to consider formally implementing the following recommendations:

(a) invite each other’s bishops to participate in the laying on of hands at the ordination of bishops as a sign of the unity and continuity of the Church, and to seek other ways in which bishops from one church may be able to exercise episcopal ministry in the other, by invitation and in accordance with any regulations which may from time to time be in force;
(b) work towards a common understanding of diaconal ministry that will in due course enable the interchangeability of deacons;
(c) consult with one another regarding developments in our understanding of the ministry of all the baptized, including lay as well as ordained ministry;
(d) encourage regular consultation and collaboration among members of our churches at all levels, and facilitate learning and exchange of ideas and information on theological, pastoral, and mission matters;
(e) identify practical ways in which those responsible for oversight in each church may benefit from regular consultation with those responsible for oversight in the other, particularly with regard to situations where there are significant opportunities for shared mission and evangelism;
(f) establish a Joint Commission to nurture our growth in communion, to coordinate the implementation of the Declaration of Communion, and report to the decision-making bodies of both our churches and;
(g) continue to work together for the full visible unity of the whole Church of God.

**A provisional timetable for adoption and implementation of proposals by General Synod and the Conference**

96. In order for these proposals to be adopted and implemented there are various steps to be taken by both Churches. Each Church would embark on a process of discernment, leading to decisions by the Conference of the Methodist Church and the General Synod of the Church of England. If the proposals are adopted then there would be further essential steps for proceeding with the changes envisaged by the proposals, including changes to law and polity.

97. For the Methodist Church it is anticipated that these proposals could be brought to the Conference of 2018 for debate and decision. If they are adopted then a two-year process of consultation about any changes to Clause 4 of the Deed of Union begins, during which Church Councils, Circuit Meetings and District Synods will vote on the
deferred special resolution. The final decisions on the changes to the Deed of Union would then be made by the Conference of 2020. For the Church of England, a first debate at Synod would include consideration of outline proposals for legislation. As well as proceeding through the normal Synodical process for legislation, these proposals would be likely to be deemed to require reference to dioceses under Article 8, as well as approval from the House of Bishops under Article 7. Attention would need to be given to enabling completion of this process within the current Quinquennium of General Synod, which concludes in July 2020.

Conclusion

98. At the end of this report, it is appropriate to emphasise that, if its proposals are accepted, that will not be the end of the journey towards unity for the Church of England and the Methodist Church. That is in part because it cannot be predicted what further steps may unfold on our churches’ shared journey of missionary discipleship as they go forward in communion with one another. It is also because the prayer of Christ for the unity of his Church cannot be satisfied by two churches only. That prayer is a prayer for the whole Church, for all who know him, to be one in him. We share in that prayer not just because we are hopeful about the future of ecumenical relations, but because it is the prayer of Jesus Christ.

99. ‘Now to him who by the power at work within us is able to accomplish abundantly far more than all we can ask or imagine, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen’ (Ephesians 3:20-21).

***RESOLUTIONS

33/1. The Conference receives the Report.

33/2. The Conference directs the Faith and Order Committee to undertake further work on the issues identified in paragraph 6 of Part A of this report and bring its response to the 2019 Conference.
34. Connexional Allowances Committee – care of supernumerary ministers and their dependants

| Contact name and details | John A Bell  
Chair of the Committee  
johnabell@supanet.com |
|--------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Resolutions              | 34/1. The Conference receives the Report.  
34/2. The Conference adopts the recommendations contained in section 6.  
34/3. The Conference adopts the Report as its further reply to Memorial M9 (2016). |

Summary of content

<table>
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<th>Subject and aims</th>
<th>Response to Memorial 2016/M9 and Notice of Motion 2017/207, as directed by the Conference, on the care of supernumerary ministers and their dependants.</th>
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| Main point       | 1. The origins of the report and the process followed.  
2. Important factors and background information.  
3. Understanding the meaning of the covenant relationship.  
4. Understanding the meaning of marriage vows.  
5. MHA’s position  
6. Ways forward to address the issues raised. |
| Background context and relevant documents | Memorial 2016/M9 (see Appendix 2) and Notice of Motion 2017/207 (see Appendix 3).  
References in the CAC’s reports to the Conferences of 2015 and 2016. |
| Consultations    | Methodist Ministers’ Housing Society, the Methodist Ministers’ Pension Scheme, the Conference Office, the Wellbeing Officer, MHA and TMCP. |

Summary of impact

| Financial | Potential modest impact on the Fund for the Support of Presbyters and Deacons (FSPD) and the Aspinall Robinson Trust (for deacons). |
1. Origins and process

1.1 The Connexional Allowances Committee (CAC) has become increasingly aware of the financial, housing and general welfare needs of supernumerary ministers (and their spouses), widows and widowers as it deals with a wide variety of requests for support from the funds at its disposal, mainly the Fund for the Support of Presbyters and Deacons (FSPD). Whilst the FSPD’s objects have been widened in recent years to give assistance to active and student ministers, its original purpose, as evident from its earlier designation – the Auxiliary Fund of the Ministers’ Retirement Fund – was to support ministers and their dependants in retirement.

1.2 In its reports to the 2015 and 2016 Conferences, the Committee recognised that, in addressing the holistic nature of the needs, it would be helpful to encourage some joined-up thinking between the various bodies with related responsibilities and began conversations with the Methodist Ministers’ Housing Society (MMHS).

1.3 The Conference of 2016 adopted the reply to a Memorial (M9) entitled ‘Support for ministers or their partners requiring care’ which directed the Connexional Allowances Committee (CAC) to explore the matters raised in the Memorial with a group including the MMHS, the Methodist Ministers’ Pension Scheme (MMPS) and the Conference Office, and to report back to the 2018 Conference: see Appendix 2.

1.4 Whilst the Committee was pursuing its work, the 2017 Conference adopted a Notice of Motion (number 207) entitled ‘Supernumeraries and care costs’ which further developed Memorial 2016/M9 (which came from the same source) and specifically ‘strongly encouraged’ MHA to engage with the Committee to ‘enable financial provision for married couples to remain together’: see Appendix 3.

1.5 The group comprising representatives from the CAC, MMHS, MMPS and the Conference Office co-opted the Connexional Wellbeing Officer and met twice to...
discuss the issues raised by the Memorial and Notice of Motion and engaged in other face-to-face and email exchanges in order to prepare its response. Further conversations and exchanges were held between the CAC and the leadership of MHA. The Committee (the CAC) presents this report on behalf of all the parties involved in the work.

1.6 Contact was also made with the Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes (TMCP), which holds a variety of trusts for many Methodist purposes, some of which relate to this subject. The Chair of the Committee also happens to be a member of the TMCP Board and facilitated the conversations.

1.7 As mentioned above, it is evident that the Memorial and the Notice of Motion arose from the same source and were significantly influenced by a particular set of circumstances. The Committee appreciates the pastoral support given, the proper concerns which are reflected and welcomes the opportunity to respond. However, there is no indication, either in the Memorial or from calls on the funds available to the Committee, that the circumstances are widespread or that the Church faces a crisis of financing care for supernumeraries.

2. Important factors and general background information

2.1 In the UK in general, there is increasing life expectancy and, in older age, dependency which contributes to special housing needs and increasing expense. Ministers and their spouses are no exception. The days when many people died shortly after retirement are long gone and have crucially driven the state retirement age upwards. Thus, the normal age at which the state pension may be claimed is increasing, thereby also influencing the age at which ministers may choose to retire.

2.2 From various records held at Methodist Church House (and it is recognised that these numbers change) it is known that there are 1,930 supernumerary ministers and 720 widows or widowers, giving a total of 2,650. Of these it is known that about 780 occupy MMHS properties, estimated that 1,100 or so occupy their own homes, and that about 750 live in rented accommodation, residential homes, or with family members or friends.

2.3 The terms and conditions of the MMPS are well defined and are the responsibility of the MMPS Board of Trustees. MMPS reports to the Conference every year and from time to time brings recommendations to change the contribution rates and benefits.

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8 There is a small but increasing number of ministers married to each other, or in partnership, which reduces the overall demand for retirement housing.
At present the Church contributes 26.9% and the minister 9.3%\(^9\) of standard stipend to the scheme: where N is the number of years’ service (maximum of 40) pensions are based on N/80ths of standard stipend (until 2010, it was N/70ths), irrespective of whether, when active, the minister was in receipt of an allowance above stipend. Widows and widowers receive 50% of the pension.

2.4 It is noted that, whilst a minister’s pension is based on a percentage of standard stipend at the point of becoming supernumerary, the stipend level is predicated on the tax-free provision of a manse during active ministry, and the value of that element of total remuneration is not reflected in the minister’s pension. The Committee is aware, from previous studies and reviews, that some ministers would rather be responsible for owning their own homes and be paid a higher stipend, but such a move would have huge consequences for the finances of the Church and MMPS.

2.5 Some ministers have accrued pensions from previous employment prior to their entry into ministry but many have not. Some have spouses who are employed, contribute to a scheme and receive a pension in retirement. Some have accumulated income from other sources. All in all, it is evident that financial circumstances of ministers at the point of becoming supernumerary, and their need for housing, to which we now turn, vary widely.

2.6 Many ministers are able to make provision for their retirement home whilst they are in active ministry. It is noted that, in recent years, conflicting advice has been offered to student ministers at the start of training who own their home (albeit usually with a mortgage), whether to retain and let it or to sell it. In a few cases the former choice has led to difficult financial circumstances when long-term tenants did not materialise. Those who do retain a property do not necessarily retire there but they do have the financial means to purchase another property when the time comes.

2.7 MMHS was established to provide homes, on becoming supernumerary, for ministers and their spouses and widows and widowers who were not in a position to purchase their own. A stock of houses has been built up over the years (now 900+, but fluid as properties are bought and sold to meet emerging needs) across the UK. In 2017/2018, the maximum purchase price for a newly-acquired property is £220,000 and this figure is reviewed from time to time to reflect prices in the housing market. A standard rent is charged, irrespective of the specification of the house or its location: in 2017/2018, it is £3,120 per year and considerably below market rates for comparable properties, especially in regions where rents are higher. This offers affordable housing to all ministerial residents.

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9 Ministers may make additional variable contributions (AVCs) to their pension scheme, but very few do so.
2.8 MMHS’s policy is to provide a house for any minister on becoming supernumerary who has served at least 10 years in active full-time ministry and fulfils a means-tested requirement based on capital held and household income. Ministers choose from MMHS’s portfolio of available properties. There are occasions when MMHS will buy and add to their stock, for example, if a minister has a specific need to live in an area where MMHS does not own a property. A minister with some financial means is expected to take an equity share in MMHS’s property, according to set requirements, and, in effect, the minister becomes a part-owner. The minister shares the proceeds proportionally on moving out or on eventual sale or disposal.

2.9 MMHS is very supportive of the needs of older ministers and their dependants who are in failing health and need to move nearer to family and support networks, sometimes very quickly indeed, and in such circumstances will make a property purchase. MMHS is also very focused on supporting the wellbeing of ministers in the key areas of their mobility and independence. Physical ageing can present considerable challenges and MMHS aspires to be the ‘go to’ place for advice and recommendations as well as provide well thought through practical assistance.

2.10 Where a minister, spouse or other dependent household member has special needs at the point of the minister’s retirement, for example through incapacity or long-term debilitating illness, and needs a house of a particular specification, such as a bungalow, or in a very specific location, perhaps related to dependency on medical or other support, which requires a purchase price higher than the MMHS maximum, arrangements can be made to top-up the amount from either or both of the FSPD and a trust held by TMCP. In such cases, MMHS, FSPD and TMCP enter into formal shared equity arrangements.

2.11 It is noted that, while a minister is in the active work, the Circuit (or employing body) not only provides a manse but also pays Council Tax and water rates/charges. On becoming supernumerary, whether in their own home or an MMHS property, ministers are responsible for these payments, and if they own their home, for its insurance also.

2.12 The FSPD is available for various purposes as set out in SO 364(1). In this context it mainly provides (1) grants to supernumerary ministers, widows and widowers to meet emergency, or unexpected financial needs which may relate, for example, to general health and well-being or repairs and maintenance of their own property, (2) grants towards residential and nursing care, (3) small annual grants to help with such things as garden maintenance and (4) grants to MMHS, or ministers who own their homes, to cover costs of adaptation to the property to accommodate incapacity of any household member (these are available at the point of becoming supernumerary as well as afterwards). The Committee, which acts as the trustee of the FSPD, acts as
generously as possible and encourages application for its funds. It is recognised that there is sometimes a reluctance to ask for supplementary grants and the Committee does call upon active ministers (particularly District Chairs, the MDO Warden and circuit Superintendents), as part of their pastoral support, to encourage their retired colleagues to benefit from the Fund\(^\text{10}\). The total amounts distributed are reported in the Committee’s annual report to the Conference.

2.13 The Committee does not enter into any permanent or long-term agreements to supplement the annual income of supernumeraries, widows and widowers from the funds at their disposal\(^\text{11}\) and does not envisage doing so. Inevitably, however, some whose income in retirement (pensions from the state, the Church and others, if any) is barely sufficient to cover their needs seek and are offered grants from the FSPD more frequently than others and grants may be given towards residential care on application annually. The Committee is committed to ensuring that those in genuine need are never declined.

2.14 This section has essentially applied to ministers becoming supernumerary at around the normal age in normal circumstances. A small number (currently less than ten per year) retire early on grounds of ill-health. The MMPS and MMHS have established arrangements to cover such an eventuality and the Committee uses the FSPD to offer further financial assistance on a case by case basis according the circumstances and specific needs, not least during the period before the state pension is payable.

2.15 It is noted that there is an increasing trend towards ministers, upon ‘sitting down’ (ie being granted the formal approval of the Conference to become a supernumerary), resuming, sometimes after a short break, in part-time (or even full-time) ministry to fill temporary gaps arising from a shortage of active ministers stationed to a Circuit. Such arrangements usually involve remuneration which supplements their income. The line in the sand between active ministry and being supernumerary is becoming increasingly blurred as the demand for the services of supernumerary ministers grows. The number of candidates for ministry is now considerably less than the number of ministers retiring each year,

2.16 It is noted that supernumerary presbyters may also receive a fee for preaching (including the celebration of Holy Communion), currently at £25 per service. This does not apply to supernumerary deacons. For a period of time – often many years – it is an

\(^{10}\) Based on the figure of 2650 retired ministers, widows and widowers, spread (albeit unevenly) over 368 circuits (October 2016 figure quoted in the Statistics for Mission report to the 2017 Conference), there is an average of between 7 and 8 per circuit and it will increase as the figures move in different directions. The amount of pastoral support per circuit must not be underestimated.

\(^{11}\) It is noted that TMCP has a similar policy.
additional source of income for presbyters. The Committee is undertaking a separate project to review this practice and will present its report to the 2019 Conference.

3. The support of ministers and the covenant relationship

3.1 Both Memorial M9 and Notice of Motion 207 make reference to the covenant relationship between ministers and the Church, and infer a level of lifetime support for ministers by the Church which is beyond what is meant. The covenant is not intended to mean that there can be an open-ended commitment to meet all needs in all circumstances.

3.2 An understanding of the covenant relationship is set out in Appendix 1. This outlines what the Church is responsible for providing both in active ministry and retirement, and states clearly that the covenant is not a contract.

3.3 The Committee therefore makes the observation that the Church, represented by the various participant bodies involved in responding to the Memorial and Notice of Motion, will always make its best efforts, acting as generously as possible, to meet the needs of supernumeraries-retired ministers, but that unconditional guarantees are not appropriate and cannot be given.

4. The question of marriage vows

4.1 The Committee would wish to challenge the inference in Memorial M9 that if a couple are compelled to live separately, they “find that their marriage vows, to be together to the end of their lives, have been effectively broken”. Only a very literal reading of the words in the marriage service would claim that the promises are kept only as long as the couple remain under the same roof.

4.2 There are many reasons why a married couple might live in separate dwellings for periods of time. Some ministerial couples may occupy different manses for the duration of appointments as they respond to their vocation and the needs of the Church. Lay people in many walks of life spend increasing amounts of time away from home – perhaps living in one place and working somewhere distant Monday to Friday. Such arrangements are not incompatible with the vows made at marriage. The Methodist Church speaks of marriage as “a mixture of dependence and independence, of being together and living apart”. Fidelity is greater and more than physical proximity or distance.

12 We are indebted to the Revd Dr Jonathan Hustler for preparing this.

13 Conference Statement, 1992 'A Christian understanding of family life, the single person and marriage'.
4.3 One of the factors that has shaped the developing understanding of marriage is the increased longevity in Western society (mentioned in paragraph 2.1). It is not uncommon for married couples to spend the last months or years of their lives in separate accommodation for the sake of the health and well-being of one or the other or both. Such arrangements may involve difficult decisions and the need for pastoral counsel and support. However much it may be desirable for both partners to remain under the same roof, it is submitted that it would be pastorally inappropriate to deny one partner the best accessible care if it is available in a different place. Also, it is only possible for both to share the same accommodation if it can be found in an appropriate location and the needs of the more able partner are not unduly compromised.

4.4 As with the undertaking given in paragraph 3.3, the participant bodies which have contributed to this response will always make their best efforts to meet the desirable outcomes for retired ministers and their spouses.

5. **Response from MHA**

5.1 As a result of the conversations between the Committee and MHA, a response (below) was prepared by the Chair of the MHA Board, setting out MHA’s position, particularly to address the requests made in Notice of Motion 207.

5.2 “MHA was created by the Methodist Church to serve the needs of older people. During the course of 75 years it has done this for all sections of the community and furthered the mission of the Church to care for all, inspired by Christian concern. This has only been possible due to the help and generosity offered by members of the Methodist Church, in many different ways, and MHA places a high value on its relationship with the Church. At all times MHA seeks to support those needing care in later life, taking into consideration their spiritual well-being and personal circumstances. We are always happy to discuss options and creative partnerships to provide care and support for those who are married and wish to be accommodated together.”

5.3 It is clear that MHA’s policy is to offer care for all, that it is grateful for the generosity of the Methodist people and its relationship with the whole Church, and that it will do what it can to accommodate couples wishing to remain together in residential care: but that does not mean that there is a ‘quid pro quo’ which gives preferential treatment to Methodists\(^\text{14}\) or Methodist ministers or that enabling couples to remain together is practical in every situation. MHA, like MMHS and CAC, treats each request and case on its own merits.

\(^{14}\) It is understood that the original designation, which might have been ‘Homes for Aged Methodists’, was declined precisely so as to open the offer to all.
5.4 The observation is made that people do not give to charities generally with any expectation of benefiting from them personally in the future. They choose those to donate to and do so out of generosity and a commitment to the objectives of the charities and the causes they support.

6. **Ways forward**

6.1 This section gives responses to the four specific requests for action contained in the Memorial M915 and adds some further statements of position and commitment from the bodies represented in the discussions led by the CAC.

6.2 In response to point (a), it is virtually impossible to make such an assessment (of the number of presbyters and deacons for which the scenarios described might apply “over the next few years”) without detailed research into personal circumstances and, in any event, there are too many variables and unknowns. Any assessment made could prove too inaccurate to be useful. Rather, the Committee recommends that the commitments outlined below are a much more practical way forward, dealing with need as it arises, acknowledging that the numbers will slowly increase as people continue to live longer. The evidence of the requests made of the FSPD for financial support would indicate that it is not a large number: the Committee’s main report elsewhere in this Agenda reveals that 15 grants, totalling £67,295, were made in 2016-17 for residential and nursing care. None were declined.

6.3 In response to point (b), the Committee’s judgement is that the current practices, enhanced as outlined below, will indeed be sufficient.

6.4 In response to point (c), and in the light of the above comments, the Committee is as confident as it can be that cost implications can be met from existing sources. The FSPD’s annual income comfortably covers its expenditure on grants and experience indicates that the Methodist people continue to regard it with generous heart. There are also TMCP trusts which can be used in certain circumstances.

6.5 In response to point (d), the Committee resists the request to find the means “so that presbyters and deacons who are married or in a civil partnership can be assured of being able to live together until death finally separates them”. As has been argued in sections 3 and 4, although we fully appreciate the objective or wish as wholly worthy and desirable, we challenge the two main premises on which it is based and repeat that it cannot be unconditionally delivered in every situation.

6.6 Before outlining statements of position and commitment, the Committee wishes to

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15 Reprinted in Appendix 2: these were listed (a) to (d) on page 14 of the Memorials booklet for 2016.
34. Connexional Allowances Committee – care of supernumerary ministers and their dependants

record some important principles relating to funding housing, support and (especially residential) care in retirement.

6.7 First, it follows from the comments about the covenant relationship that the element of personal responsibility for one’s own future is emphasised, and that, from an early stage, ministers and their spouses may begin to make plans and choices as far as they are able. For many ministers whose spouses pursue their own careers, the idea that the Church needs to provide is an anachronism. We have come a long way from the days of the stereotypical male who entered ministry in his early 20s and whose wife was expected to become an unpaid helper/adjunct to his ministry. That is not to say that such a model is unappreciated today, but that it is very unusual.

6.8 Secondly, candidates for ministry (being on average older than in previous generations) may own a property when they enter training, as mentioned in paragraph 2.6. The Committee makes an observation and a recommendation on the matter. The observation is that the decision to retain the property and let it, mindful of the hazards it may bring, is for the student minister to make as part of accepting personal responsibility for the future. The recommendation is therefore that it is not appropriate for the Church to offer advice, but if it were to do so, then such advice must be consistent: there is evidence that advice given hitherto has not been.

6.9 Thirdly, the Committee suggests that there is a hierarchy of sources of funds and resources on which ministers (as it applies to Methodist lay people and the population generally, and ministers should not be an exception) draw in retirement. They are (1) self and spouse, including the Church pension (2) state benefits, noting that local authorities have statutory duties (3) other family members where they are able and (4) the Church and other charities. Moreover, whilst there may be knowledge of what (4) offers, it should not be invoked until (1) to (3) are exhausted. It is recognised that there can be a reluctance to seek some state benefits, but ministers have properly made their contributions to state funds (through NI and tax) during their working lives and can feel at ease in seeking benefits to which they are entitled.

6.10 So to statements of position and commitment from the various bodies. As paragraph 1.2 outlined, the Committee had identified the need to work with the other bodies and therefore welcomed the general thrust of Memorial M9 and Notice of Motion 207 that cooperation should be more explicit. The fact of holding meetings, conversations and exchanges in the course of preparing this report has achieved a new beginning of joined-up thinking and working to which the participants are wholly committed, bilaterally or multilaterally. This will be invoked not least in the complex cases and

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16 As the qualification for MMHS property is 10 years’ ministry, this should be taken into account if a candidate for ministry owns a property but can offer less than 10 years.
situations which the Memorial and Notice of Motion addressed, but we underline that each is different and needs to be evaluated on its own merits.\(^{17}\)

6.11 MMHS is not only committed to ensuring that all ministers who need provision of a home on retirement are found one but to ensuring that, through physical adaptation and pastoral support, ministers and their spouses, and widows and widowers are enabled to remain in their home for as long as possible. The Committee fully endorses MMHS’s view that independent living in one’s own home should be sustained until it is impractical to do so.

6.12 MMPS will continue to provide ministers’ pensions according to its policies of contributions and benefits. The Committee will continue to ensure that standard stipends, on which the initial pension is based, keep pace with general inflation in the UK. It is noted that the Conference approved in 2015 that, in addition to the FSPD funding removal costs at the point of retirement, the Fund will also offer a relocation grant as it does when ministers move in the active work.

6.13 MHA’s commitment was stated in section 5.

6.14 The Committee (the CAC itself) will commit to being as generous as possible in offering grants towards the annual costs of residential and nursing care.\(^{18}\) For some years the amount was set at £3,000 per year and was increased in 2014 to £4,800. This is per person:\(^{19}\) if both minister and spouse require such care, £9,600 may be paid. Whilst it is not a decision for the Conference as such, the Committee indicates that from September 2018, the figure will be increased to £6,000 per person per year (ie £500 per month), granted from the FSPD.

6.15 In commending existing preparation and training courses, the need to ensure that the Church offers or makes available sound guidance at every stage, from candidating for ministry to retirement and after, is underlined. It is suggested that part of the pastoral support, mentioned in paragraph 2.11, offered by active ministers (and especially District Chairs, the MDO Warden and Superintendents) is to ensure\(^{20}\) that retired colleagues (and widows and widowers) are aware of their statutory rights to benefits.

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17 The example given in paragraph 2.9 attests to this.
18 It is recognised that there are levels of care support, in outline as follows: after independent living and perhaps supported living with family there is sheltered accommodation (owned or rented), residential (with different levels of support) and nursing care, and finally care in terminal illness.
19 MHA’s experience is that costs of residential care are primarily based on numbers of people rather than amount of space or numbers of rooms occupied.
20 It is not suggested that ministers always provide the advice – they may call on lay people who have specialist knowledge especially in the area of state benefit entitlements.
and the availability of the Church’s benevolent funds. The origin of the Memorial and Notice of Motion evince such concern.

6.16 The Committee, with its partner bodies, has considered the issues raised by Memorial 2016/M9 and Notice of Motion 2017/207 very thoroughly and has offered a positive but realistic set of responses which we believe will serve the Church well for the foreseeable future in its care for supernumerary ministers and their dependants. We urge the Conference to adopt the report and the recommendations within it.

***RESOLUTIONS

34/1. The Conference receives the Report.

34/2. The Conference adopts the recommendations contained in section 6.

34/3. The Conference adopts the report as its further reply to Memorial M9 (2016).

Appendix 1

The support of ministers and the covenant relationship

(Note: this Appendix is prepared for the sole purpose of informing the response to the Memorial and Notice of Motion and focuses on the specific issues raised in them: it is not a full and formal statement of the Church’s understanding of the covenant relationship.)

The covenant relationship between Methodist ministers and the Conference is set out in Standing Orders 700 and 701 (for presbyters and deacons respectively). Those SOs aver that “by receiving persons into Full Connexion as Methodist [ministers] the Conference enters into a covenant relationship with them in which they are held accountable by the Church in respect of their ministry and Christian discipleship, and are accounted for by the Church in respect of their deployment and the support they require for their ministry.” (SO 700/1 (2)).

The SO makes clear that some ministers are engaged in the active work, whether in circuit or other appointments, and that others (those without appointment and supernumeraries) exercise a different sort of ministry, but are nonetheless still expected to offer help within the life and on behalf of the Methodist Church and to be appropriately supported in that.

In broad terms, the support that ministers require for their ministry whilst in the active work has been identified as:

1. A manse which serves both as a home and as a base for the work of ministry. There
has been a general rule adopted that this requirement does not apply to those who (for whatever reason) are offering less than half of what would be full-time in the work of ministry.

2. A stipend, which is an allowance to cover the costs of living.
3. The repayment of all reasonable expenses.
4. An assurance that the Church will endeavour to ensure that appropriate support will be offered if and when the minister is unable to engage in the work of ministry (to which end the Methodist Ministers' Housing Society, the Methodist Ministers’ Pension Scheme, and the Fund for the Support of Presbyters and Deacons (and its predecessors) were brought into being).

These provisions are designed to ensure that ministers are able to exercise their ministry free from anxiety about money and the necessity of earning other income. That is not to say that the level of stipend has ever been set to liberate ministers from all financial worry: those of an earlier generation will tell of the challenge of eking out the stipend until the first day of the next quarter. Stipends are set at a modest level in the context of the covenant relationship: the ministry for which those in Full Connexion are accountable to the Church includes the appropriate use of the Church’s resources. The Church’s ministers remember that the Church’s resources consist of the freewill offerings of members and others over many decades (and any income generated from the use of those offerings) and that those offerings were made for the promotion of the mission of the Church.

The covenant relationship continues through and beyond the retirement of the minister. Those who are supernumeraries are expected to continue to offer what they can in the Circuits to which they are stationed and to be accountable through the Presbyteral Session of the Synod or the Diaconal Convocation for the way in which they live out their vocation. The Church remains accountable for the provision of adequate support, which has been understood as:

1. Ensuring that the minister and her/his spouse (and that spouse if widowed) has somewhere to live.
2. A pension which is enhanced if the minister takes early retirement on grounds of ill-health.
3. The repayment of all reasonable expenses.
4. The provision of pastoral care through which any case of hardship can be identified and if possible remedied.

Those who are without appointment or in appointments outside the control of the Church will usually be in a position to provide for themselves or to have provided from another agency much of the support offered to those in appointments within the Church. However, the expectation always remains that they can and in most cases will receive the support of the Church when an appointment comes to its end or their circumstances change.
A covenant (as SO 700/701 makes clear in its proposed 2018 revision) is not a contract. The Christian understanding of Covenant is founded on Israel’s experience of God’s unmerited and faithful call to a life of obedience and witness, renewed through God’s love made known to us in Christ who calls his disciples into a relationship of mutual love. John 15 (which is used in the Covenant service) with its image of the vine and the branches is one expression of this relationship as Jesus urges the disciples to abide in his love. The image emphasises that the branches are individually and corporately part of the vine within an organic relationship. Therefore, the covenant relationship between the Conference and its ministers is subsumed within this organic relationship with Christ. Hence it is not an exchange of services for remuneration nor even a set of agreed obligations (as if the Church were an employing institution of which the minister is not already an integral member); it is a relational expression of mutual engagement in the life of the Church in which loving care for each other and the appropriate stewardship of resources are both aspects of living together to God’s praise and glory.

Appendix 2

M9 (2016) Support for ministers or their partners requiring care

The York and Hull District Synod, Representative Session (Present: 120; Voting: 83 for, 18 against) draws the attention of the Conference to the needs of presbyters and deacons facing difficult care issues for either themselves or their partners. Specifically, they may face the following two situations:

• presbyters and deacons may have served as itinerant ministers for a significant part of their lives and have no property of their own but are now in need of additional care. In many cases, being in Full Connexion with the Conference, they were assured support for their lifetime, so have either not purchased property or were advised to sell or not acquire property. As such, due to the fact that local authority funding is also insufficient, they now have insufficient resources to meet the full cost of nursing or residential care provision.

• presbyters and deacons may be at a key moment in their lives and find that their marriage vows, to be together to the end of their lives, have been effectively broken due to the illness or impairment of one of the couple. This is due to the fact that the other member of the couple does not meet the eligibility criteria for local authority funding either for residential or nursing care. Because they have insufficient resources, there is inadequate provision for them to be looked after together.

The York and Hull District Synod therefore asks the Conference to direct the Methodist Council to take the following actions:

(a) To make an assessment as to the number of presbyters and deacons for which the above two scenarios are likely to occur within the next few years.
34. Connexional Allowances Committee – care of supernumerary ministers and their dependants

(b) To assess whether the current practices for ministers who have been unable to purchase property or to set aside sufficient pension reserves are sufficient and allow for a home once they are unable to adequately look after themselves.

(c) To assess the likely cost implications of providing the additional support ministers in this situation might need.

(d) To draw together the expertise of all possible funding bodies, such as TMCP, Fund for the Support of Presbyters and Deacons, Methodist Ministers’ Housing Society and MHA, to assess and make necessary plans to cover any revealed shortfalls in provision, so that presbyters and deacons who are married or in a civil partnership can be assured of being able to live together until death finally separates them.

Reply

The Conference thanks the York and Hull District Synod for raising these important matters which are becoming increasingly pertinent due to factors such as increased life expectancy.

A starting point for consideration of this matter is that local authorities have a statutory duty to provide appropriate residential or related care to those who need it, within a means tested framework. Such an assessment framework will take into account the financial position of an individual minister and their partner, including whether they have assets such as housing and savings. Individuals are not barred from receiving care because they have little or no assets. That said, due to the specific care needs of an individual and local authority funding arrangements, it is possible that a couple may be separated as provision may not be available to the partner who is not in need.

Turning to the request to make an assessment about the number of presbyters and deacons who may need residential or related care within the next few years, it is difficult to estimate the likely numbers (due to variables such as health, family history of illness and lifestyle factors), other than to say in broad terms that it is likely that support needs may increase in line with trends experienced in wider society. Therefore, it is equally difficult to identify the likely cost implications of providing support, or to give assurances that financial arrangements will be in place which ensure that couples may be able to live together until death finally separates them.

However, the Conference recognises the importance of these matters to presbyters and deacons, and therefore directs the Connexional Allowances Committee to explore them further with other interested parties, including the Methodist Ministers’ Housing Society (MMHS), Methodist Ministers’ Pension Scheme (MMPS) and the Conference Office, and to report back to the 2018 Conference.
Appendix 3

Notice of Motion 2017/207: Supernumeraries and care costs

Last year the York and Hull District sent a memorial to the Conference (2016/M9) about the support of ministers or their partners requiring care. The District thanks the Conference for its reply in which it directed the Connexional Allowances Committee to explore this with interested parties and report back to the 2018 conference. The York and Hull District notes the Connexional Allowances Committee’s response to the reply in paragraph 3.8 on page 114.

The Conference clarifies that the memorial was raised with great concern that couples are not split up when only one of them meets the local authority criteria for nursing or residential provision. Whilst this is not just of concern for ministerial couples, but for all couples, Christian or not, supernumerary ministers have very often followed connexional encouragement not to acquire property during their ministry as part of the covenant relationship with the Methodist Church, understanding that they would be looked after for their entire lives. This agreement (not to acquire property) is no longer required of those now entering ministry, but it affects many supernumeraries.

The Conference believes that it should be a priority for the Connexion to honour marriage by enabling couples to live together when the housing provision provided by MMHS is no longer sufficient. The Conference notes that whilst local authorities do make provision for those who need care, there is, as the MHA report notes on page 96, a shortfall which is unaffordable for ministers who have no property to sell, and can be £200 per week or more, particularly when they wish to choose a Methodist home.

The Conference notes that many Methodist couples have spent their ministry in encouraging their churches to support MHA and often, naturally, prefer to be cared for in a Christian environment. The Conference therefore requests that MHA explore ways to respond to a growing need to receive couples into their care when one partner may not be eligible for local authority support, and also to plan to be able to offer shared accommodation in one room at a lower rate especially when one partner is able to relieve pressure on the facilities by providing a more caring role.

The Conference therefore strongly encourages MHA to engage with the Connexional Allowances Committee’s discussions on enabling financial provision for married couples to remain together. It further encourages those involved in these matters in the name of the Church to campaign for a way to keep married couples together until death.

The Conference adopted the Motion.
## Contact name and details

| The Revd Dr Nicola Price-Tebbutt |
| Secretary of the Faith and Order Committee |
| price-tebbuttn@methodistchurch.org.uk |

## Resolutions

| 35/1. | The Conference adopts the Report as its response to *The Call to Holiness: From Glory to Glory*. |
| 35/2. | The Conference commends *The Call to Holiness: From Glory to Glory* to the Methodist people for study and discussion. |

## Summary of content and impact

### Subject and aims

The report comprises a response to *The Call to Holiness: From Glory to Glory* which is the tenth report of the Joint International Commission for Dialogue between The World Methodist Council and The Roman Catholic Church.

### Background context and relevant documents (with function)

A copy of *The Call to Holiness: From Glory to Glory* is available here: worldmethodistconference.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/The-Call-to-Holiness-Final-copy-28062016.pdf. It is the substantive report to which this report responds, and is commended to the Methodist people for study and discussion.

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**A response to the report of the Joint International Commission for Dialogue Between The World Methodist Council and the Roman Catholic Church:**  
*The Call to Holiness: From Glory to Glory*

### 1. Introduction and background

1.1. *The Call to Holiness: From Glory to Glory* (2016) begins and ends with passages of scripture, framing an exploration of God’s call to holiness for both individuals and communities. Held between these scriptures, the text of the report starts:

“The story of Zacchaeus in Luke’s Gospel illustrates beautifully how a loving God graciously calls all people to respond to an invitation to holy living in a familial relationship with God. From a Christian perspective, such a relationship is made
possible by the life, death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus Christ and by the
life-giving power of the Holy Spirit. Catholics and Methodists describe the Christian
response to this invitation in similar terms of growth in grace and holiness through
an ever-deepening relationship with Jesus Christ (Denver, §55)\(^1\). This agreement
concerning the Christian life ... is encapsulated in the evocative idea of “the call to
holiness” (Houston, §§1-2).

1.2. The Call to Holiness: From Glory to Glory (known and referenced as the ‘Houston’
report) investigates, consolidates and develops how Catholics and Methodists
understand “the nature and effect of divine grace upon the human person and
the implications for the Christian life” (Houston, §4). As grace and holiness
are central to Christian life, short biographies of the lives of “exemplary figures”
(Houston, Preface) from the Catholic and Methodist traditions are included as they
offer practical examples of holy living. The Call to Holiness seeks not just to offer
theological reflection on a vital topic, but to stimulate and encourage the very growth
in holiness of which it speaks. Emphasising the importance of the spiritual dimension
of dialogue and reminding us that it “is never solely an intellectual exercise, but
always involves personal encounter”, the dialogue took place in the context of shared
prayer and “led to a deepening experience of the real, but imperfect, communion that
already exists between Methodists and Catholics through our baptism into the body
of Christ” (Houston, §9).

1.3. The Call to Holiness: From Glory to Glory is the tenth report of the Commission,
following:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Durban</td>
<td>Encountering Christ the Saviour: Church and Sacraments, 2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seoul</td>
<td>The Grace Given You in Christ: Catholics and Methodists Reflect Further on the Church, 2006</td>
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<tr>
<td>Brighton</td>
<td>Speaking the Truth in Love: Teaching Authority among Catholics and Methodists, 2001</td>
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<tr>
<td>Singapore</td>
<td>The Apostolic Tradition, 1991</td>
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<td>Nairobi</td>
<td>Towards a Statement on the Church, 1986</td>
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<td>Dublin</td>
<td>Growth in Understanding, 1976</td>
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<td>Denver</td>
<td>The Denver Report, 1971</td>
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1.4. Each report investigates historically divisive issues in Christian doctrine in order to

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\(^1\) The previous reports of the Commission are known by their place of publication which was the location
in which the World Methodist Council was meeting at the time of the report’s approval. The Call to
Holiness: From Glory to Glory is therefore known as the Houston report.
identify the degree of convergence between Catholics and Methodists and identifies areas where further dialogue is necessary. All have been published for study and can be found on the World Methodist Council website here: worldmethodistcouncil.org/resources/ecumenical-dialogues/. In 2011, the Commission produced a synthesis text, Together to Holiness: 40 Years of Methodist and Roman Catholic Dialogue. This provides a helpful overview of the dialogue between 1967 and 2006, but does not replace the original reports. The Call to Holiness builds on the theological foundations laid in these previous reports.

2. Structure and content

2.1. The Call to Holiness: From Glory to Glory fulfils the intention set out in the conclusion to the Durban report (2011) and explores the “whole question of the experience of salvation and the response of the believer to the gift of God’s grace. Catholics and Methodists have different emphases in the way they speak about this, which seem to underpin a number of other matters upon which they often diverge” (Durban, §197). The idea of ‘the call to holiness’ is central in the theology and practice of both churches. As the Commission notes:

“For Catholics, this idea echoes the teaching of the Second Vatican Council concerning ‘The Universal Call to Holiness in the Church’ (LG, Chapter 5); for Methodists, it is consistent with the historical mission of Methodism ‘to spread scriptural holiness over the land’” (Houston, §2).3

2.2. The Introduction sets out two important concepts underpinning the idea of holiness. Firstly, the call to holiness “is relational, dynamic, and holistic: it relates to the God who calls and the people, individually and corporately, who respond to God’s call in their particular historical and cultural context” (Houston, §3). These are characteristics that have been given particular attention in many contextual theologies, and they resonate with John Wesley’s understanding of social holiness. Secondly, the call to holiness “is also a call to unity in the Church” (Houston, §5). Holiness and unity belong together such that the pursuit of one involves the pursuit of the other. The survey and encouragement of the Dialogue itself, in the final chapter, is therefore relevant, for “the text notes that each step towards greater communion in faith should translate into fruitful engagement in terms of common prayer, joint witness and mission, a renewed commitment to reconciliation, and a deepening of relationship in the Lord” (Houston, §12).

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2 ‘Large Minutes’ (1763), WJW 10:845
3 The reference LG refers to Lumen Gentium which can be accessed here: http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_const_19641121_lumen-gentium_en.html
2.3. These ideas are explored through five chapters, divided into three sections. The first section, comprising Chapters One and Two, “outlines a shared Christian anthropology and understanding of the nature and effect of divine grace and holiness in relation to the human person” (Houston, §7). The second section, comprising Chapters Three and Four, explores particular elements of holy living in the communion of saints. Chapter Three focuses on what it means to be called by God to holy living in the Church and the world: “consideration of the saving work of Christ is inseparable from ecclesiology, since the experience of grace and holiness is always oriented towards the formation of relationships in the Church and the transformation of the world” (Houston, §10). The eschatological effect of grace and “what this means for a communion among saints which transcends death” (Houston, §11) is the subject of Chapter Four. The final section, Chapter Five, returns to the theme of holiness and unity, reflecting on the progress of the Dialogue and offering a summary of the document so as to encourage local churches to reflect together on its contents.

3. Chapter One. The Mystery of Being Human: Created by God and Re-created in Christ for being in Communion with God

3.1. The first chapter establishes a base for all that is to follow in its articulation of a shared Christian anthropology. Beginning with the theological understanding that humanity is created by and for God in the image and likeness of God, human beings find their identity in relation to God, one another and the world. It is stressed that, as far as the call to holiness is concerned, human relationality finds expression not just in individual interpersonal relationships but also “in the realms of economics, politics, and culture” (Houston, §18). Human beings occupy a unique position within the created order and thus have a special responsibility to care for creation, but they have to respect their creaturely limitations. This means that “the relationship with God is essential for the human person, as the one absolute dimension from which every other dimension takes its point of reference” (Houston, §20).

3.2. Human beings, constituted body and soul, are created with the freedom to accept communion with God or not. As a result of sin, humanity is estranged from God and creation:

“Revelation declares that the whole of this history is marked by the original fault freely committed by the first parents of the human species ... Indeed, this is the world as we encounter it, marked by goodness but also stained by human beings repeatedly turning away from or distorting their relationship with God, others and creation” (Houston, §27).

This reality “resonates with human experience” (Houston, §29).
3.3. The image of God in human beings is marred but not destroyed. God did not abandon human beings; on the contrary the “incarnation of the eternal Word and the sending of the Spirit overcome the human estrangement from God, creation, and self” (Houston, §33). The distorted image is made a new creation in the image of Christ: it is “affirmed, renewed, and elevated” (§§34-35). In Christ “the true vocation of every human being is revealed” (§38), “the full meaning of humanity’s present existential situation can be found” (§39), and “human freedom attains its goal – freedom in the Spirit” (§40). As a result of this “human existence receives a new and deeper meaning: the whole creation is restored. The human being, as ‘co-creator’, is called to participate in this work of re-creation of the whole universe” (§41).

3.4. There is much to be welcomed and affirmed in this chapter which captures the high degree of theological convergence between Methodists and Catholics. Some British Methodists today may use different language when talking about sin, but this may be due more to developments in contemporary theological thinking than a reflection of a particularly Methodist theological approach. Some further attention could usefully be given to the treatment of the image of God in humankind in the hymns of Charles Wesley, where the image is understood as consisting in responsively creative love. Indeed, more generally, the theology of Charles Wesley, and particularly that contained within his hymns, is a resource that is under-used in this report. Further engagement with this may bring additional richness to the reflection on holiness and also draw out some of the differences in the theologies of John and Charles Wesley in relation to the topics considered.

4. **Chapter 2. God’s Work of Re-creating Humankind**

4.1. Chapter Two explores the grace of God in the person and work of Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit and the nature and effect of divine grace in its personal and corporate aspects, emphasising that God’s grace supplies all that we need from the beginning to the end. Grace is “not an abstract idea but is saving love revealed in the person and work of Jesus Christ” (Houston, §46). We are reminded that the work of Christ “leads to the fulfilment of God’s purpose for the whole created order and not just for humankind” (§48), a point that can frequently be overlooked in our daily life and practice. The continuing presence and activity of the Holy Spirit “makes the grace of Christ present and active, drawing people into a deepening relationship of communion or fellowship with God and with one another” (§51). Grace is then described in terms of three aspects of God’s saving love and call to holiness: grace which enables, grace which justifies and grace which sanctifies.

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4 The prayer for perfect love is often made in terms of a prayer for the retrieval or recreation of the image, as, for example, in “love thine image, love impart, stamp it on our face and heart”, no. 522 in *A Collection of Hymns for the People Called Methodist* (1780) and no. 522 in *Wesleyan Methodist Hymn Book*, (1877)
4.2. These reflections on grace are helpful and to be welcomed. We note that British Methodist theology continues to place much emphasis upon ‘prevenient’ grace, God’s grace which is extended to us before we can make any response to it. For example, in the service of Baptism, the promises now come after the baptism has taken place. Before the baptism the following prayer is said:

“N and N,
for you Jesus Christ came into the world;
for you he lived and showed God’s love;
for you he suffered death on the Cross;
for you he triumphed over death,
rising to newness of life;
for you he prays at God’s right hand:
all this for you,
before you could know anything of it.
In your Baptism,
the word of Scripture is fulfilled:
‘We love, because God first loved us.’”

4.3. It is important to note some differences in understanding of perfection in love and holiness (Houston, §§73-77), including the Methodist understanding of ‘Christian perfection,’ and more could have been said here. Not only are there some distinctions to be made between Catholic and Methodist understandings (for example, it is noted that Methodists do not accept the Catholic doctrine of purgatory), but there are differences in the ways in which Methodists themselves understand and experience it. A more complex picture emerges when we consider the continuing areas of debate including the way in which John Wesley’s own thinking developed and the disagreement between John and Charles Wesley on aspects of this topic, and the less than wholehearted embracing of John Wesley’s teaching on perfect love (not least by some of those given as exemplars of holiness in this text). Nonetheless, neither these differences within Methodist understanding, nor difference of emphasis between Catholics and Methodists, should undermine the “substantial agreement concerning Christian perfection” outlined in the document (Houston, §76).

4.4. The final two sections of the chapter investigate issues which have long been contentious between Catholics and Methodists. The first of these relates to the question of the merit accruing from good works of mercy and piety. The language of ‘merit’ itself is an unfamiliar concept within British Methodist theology and there is

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5 Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes, 1999, *The Methodist Worship Book*, The Baptism of those who are able to answer for themselves, and of Young Children, pp.67-68
much assumed in this which British Methodists would not share.

4.5. Yet, whilst Methodists continue to rely on the sufficiency of God’s saving action in Christ, reflection on the nature and content of prayers offered by Methodists is pertinent. The Commission notes that: “Nevertheless, the bonds of love between Christians lead Methodists to believe that the prayers of the faithful are mutually beneficial... The efficacy of such [intercessory] prayers stems from the belief that God responds graciously and mercifully to interceding by the Church...” (Houston, §85). It continues: “Some Methodists would further accept that prayers of the departed saints and the prayers of the saints on earth may also be mutually beneficial, albeit in ways that cannot be identified precisely in terms of their salvific effect” (§86). The Commission illustrates the latter comment by suggesting that “authorised liturgies in a number of Methodist churches make provision for a general prayer of intercession for the faithful departed” (§86). In the British Methodist Church such prayers speak of remembering them, giving thanks for them, or learning from their example; and the *Methodist Worship Book* includes prayers which specifically intercede for the departed, such as the following prayer from Funeral Service:

> “Father of all, we pray for those whom we love, but see no longer. Grant them your peace; let light perpetual shine upon them; and in your loving wisdom and almighty power work in them the good purpose of your perfect will; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.”

4.6. The second contentious topic is that of ‘assurance of faith and salvation’, which has always been a key part of Methodist theology. It is one of the ‘four alls’ which British Methodism continues to proclaim: all need to be saved, all may be saved, all may know themselves saved (assurance) and all may be saved to the uttermost. Sometimes perceived by Catholics as “a presumptuous assertion based on subjective experience” (Houston, §90), it is recognised that “the difference is one of emphasis” (§90) and such assurance “is not seen as the certainty of possession, but as the reliability of a relationship which is founded in God’s love” (§92). It does not guarantee final salvation as it is still possible for a person to fall from grace. The British Methodist Church continues to hold in tension the universality of God’s

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7 Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes, 1999, *The Methodist Worship Book*, p.458; and see also p.459 20A.
8 See *A Catechism for the use of the people called Methodists*, §68.
persistent love and the freedom of human beings to reject that love eternally.”9 Whilst the “spirit of Christ leads us to long that, in the end, everyone will be saved”, and our experience of God’s grace assures us that God “will use every means” to persuade people to turn to God, we understand that God revealed will not violate human freedom: “Were he to do so, he would not be the God revealed to us on the cross.”10

5. **Chapter 3. God’s Holy People: The Saints Below**

5.1. The third chapter reflects on the nature of the visible Church on earth as a holy community. Catholics and Methodists affirm the social nature of holy living, leading to the conclusion that “it is this belonging together as Christ’s body that characterises the communal practice of holy living for Methodists and Catholics. We are called to be holy together, as Church” (Houston, §94).

5.2. It has already been established that both churches “agree that the Church’s structures must effectively serve both the holiness of its members and the mission of the Church” (Seoul, §101), but the Commission acknowledges in its reflection on the holiness of the Church that there continue to be some important differences in understanding about the nature of the Church, not least the question of whether the church itself is sinful. Catholics “emphasise that the Church as an eschatologically present reality in the world is without sin, even though its individual members may be sinful” (Houston, §97), whereas Methodists are “reluctant to claim that the Church is sinless” and emphasise that the structures can themselves be affected by sin (§98). Although these contrasting emphases are found to not be mutually exclusive, “they have implications for the way that Methodists and Catholics respectively speak of the Church, its institutional forms, and the possibility and limitations of authoritative discernment” (§99).

5.3. The theme of pilgrimage running throughout the report comes to the foreground as the Commission explores the Church as “a Holy People”: “The holiness of the Church is that of a people on the road, on pilgrimage, and so has the quality of both a present reality through the presence of the risen Jesus, who walks with us, and of a promise of holiness towards which disciples travel, step by step” (Houston, §96). Catholics and Methodists agree that the Church is “the sacramental and missionary means of grace for the world” (§104) and a substantial part of the chapter is given to exploring the ecclesial practices of the church which nurture the holy living and mission of God’s people (§104). It is established that the “life of holiness for the

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9 The Methodist Church, 1992, *Methodist Doctrine and the Preaching of Universalism*, Conclusion. (Faith and Order Statements, Volume 2)

10 The Methodist Church, 1992, *Methodist Doctrine and the Preaching of Universalism*, Conclusion. (Faith and Order Statements, Volume 2)
Christian is fundamentally a walking with the risen Christ” (Houston, §93), and the chapter has some important insights to offer about how faith is formed, insights which warrant further reflection among Methodists.

5.4. In the Church “Christians meet Christ in ways consistent with our human existence as embodied and social beings” (Houston, §105), so grace is mediated through all the senses as God invites people into a deepening relationship with God and one another: “Liturgies and worship practices, and especially the sacraments and preaching, are public ecclesial ways of nurturing holy living in the world” (§106). Discussion of the role of the sacraments in fostering holy living amongst the people of God reveals points of both convergence and divergence between Catholic and Methodist theology.

5.5. Most acts of worship in the British Methodist Church would include prayers of confession and general absolution, but the comment that “For Catholics and Methodists, rites of self-examination, repentance, and reconciliation are intended to be core practices of a pilgrim people” (§113) may overstate the experience of many British Methodists who might prefer ‘practices’ over ‘rites.’ There are questions about the extent to which the class meeting can be compared with the confessional. Class meetings were marked by “an emphasis on fellowship, discipline, and a rootedness of Christian living in daily life” and such discipline in this form is understood as distinctive from that practised by most other Christians.11 Few British Methodists today are faced with the weekly discipline of accountability that characterised the early class meeting, although there is some recognition of the importance of recovering some form of such accountability as part of daily life.

5.6. Shared practices in holy living have always been key in Methodism, and there is much interest in contemporary British Methodism in encouraging engagement with these to enable growth in discipleship. The practices considered in this chapter (as well as worship) include the reading and study of scriptures (§§116-118), engaging in issues of social justice (§121), and giving time to prayer (§122). All are vital elements of British Methodist tradition and practice, which would also emphasise the importance of fellowship alongside study in small groups.

5.7. The Commission draws attention to a number of devotional practices that “raise questions and even some alarm” (§123) for Methodists. Whilst embodied holiness is a helpful concept some British Methodists continue to have concerns about some of the practices themselves (such as the “emphasis on certain bodily gestures, the use and veneration of images, the blessing of inanimate objects, and specific

11 The Methodist Church, 1999, Called to Love and Praise, §§4.3.5 and 4.3.6
devotions regarding Mary, the saints, the veneration of relics, and adoration of the Eucharist” (§123)). There are significant differences in individual views and practice in relation to these in the British Methodist Church. Whilst some continue to have deep concerns, not all would feel the “discomfort” referred to and indeed find aspects of some of these practices helpful in their own spiritual lives, including the use of candles and religious art (for example items in the Methodist Church Collection of Modern Christian Art, and icons).

5.8. Chapter Three ends with a brief consideration of ‘holy dying’ (§§132-135). This is an important short section which merits further consideration, especially given its place within human experience, its importance for pastoral work, and its resonance with contemporary attitudes and discussions in British society. The following affirmation is both welcome and relevant to conversations in wider British society:

“Catholics and Methodists believe that holy dying is part of holy living, and that the people of God witness to the Gospel in the manner of their dying... The possibility of seeking a ‘good death’ in the hope of the resurrection to eternal life is a powerful witness to the Gospel in the face of contemporary social trends where the end of life is regarded as a negative experience to be hastened” (§132).

6. Chapter 4. God’s Holy People: The Saints Above

6.1. The final core chapter explores “the transition of the Christian from death to eternal life, and to the final consummation of all things in Christ at the end of time” (Houston, §137). Focusing on the ‘saints above’, it is offered as another element of the walk with Christ. Its contribution is valuable, being the first report in international theological dialogue to explore the final destiny of Christians beyond this life and offering reflections on a key part of Christian hope. The Commission recognises that the subject matter:

“must be approached with humble Christian faith and due reticence, recognising that words, concepts, and images are inadequate to express the mystery of God’s love and life beyond the grave. In the presence of mystery, it is better to say less rather than to attempt to speculate” (Houston, §137).

6.2. The common profession of the ecumenical creeds that affirm the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting (Houston, §141) expresses a shared Christian hope, but theological differences between Methodists and Catholics remain. All the baptised make up the communion of saints and both Methodists and Catholics recognise in this communion “the exemplary presence of divine grace in specific persons whose words and holy living ... testify to the transforming action of the Spirit” (Houston, §142). “This ‘cloud of
witnesses’ transcends ecclesiastical divisions” (Singapore, §66). There is agreement that the “bonds of love continue to exist between the living and the departed” (Houston, §143). Physical death is attributed a positive meaning, completing the dying with Christ that began with baptism and anticipating the fulfilment of the promise of resurrection (Houston, §144). There is shared belief that “God’s creative power will reunite body and soul at the general resurrection after the pattern of Jesus Christ” (Houston, §146), and that “God’s particular judgement at the point of death determines a person’s final destiny” (§150).

6.3. A significant difference is that of “an intermediate state” (§140) and the destiny of Christians who have not attained perfection in love by the time of death. The Catholic doctrine of purgatory (which envisages a process of purification following death) is one for which Protestants in general have found no biblical basis. Similarly, the practice of praying for those still being purified was rejected by the Reformers, but the Commission notes that the twentieth century has witnessed “a growing interest in prayer for the departed in response to pastoral needs created by a huge number of distant deaths caused by warfare” (Houston, §155). As a result it concludes that there are indications that Methodists may increasingly be open to this practice. This may be the case for some British Methodists, but others continue to have significant concerns about the practice.

6.4. Another difference concerns the intercession of saints. Whilst “Methodists and Catholics honour the saints above as witnesses to holiness and exemplars of holy living” (Houston, §156), for Catholics saints are also intercessors “because of the bonds of love that exist between all the members of the Church and Christ” (§157). Methodists have generally been resistant to the idea that the saints above are intercessors “lest the absolute uniqueness of Christ as sole mediator be compromised” (§158). The particular intercessory role attributed to Mary is considered, and the doctrine of the Assumption is examined in relation to grace and holiness. Despite Methodism’s concerns about the doctrine of the Assumption itself, there are some points of convergence and there is a renewed devotional interest in Mary amongst some Methodists (although probably not in an intercessory capacity).

7. Chapter 5. Growing in Holiness Together: Openings for Common Witness, Devotion and Service

7.1. The final chapter begins with a short reflection on how far Catholics and Methodists have travelled on their shared journey throughout the whole dialogue and looks at the key role of the relationship between holiness and unity in the dialogue:

“readers are invited to ponder the relationship between holiness and unity, and to make a connection between the pursuit of holiness and the taking of steps towards
reconciliation between our two communions based on our shared understanding of what binds us together” (Houston, §176).

7.2. The goal of the dialogue is stated as “full communion in faith, mission and sacramental life” (Houston, §§171, 176, 185). The Commission recalls how, at each stage of the dialogue more convergence was found than had been expected, and notes that each convergence is a valuable step towards the common goal and a stimulus for further conversation (§176). Differences have led to deeper understanding and rather than being experienced as “dead ends” they reveal “areas where further work is necessary” (§170). These reflections are followed by a summary of the agreements and continuing divergences between Methodists and Catholics as established in the previous chapters.

7.3. The report is helpful in recognising that the reception of the Dialogue reports has not been as full as might have been wished. The Commission is aware:

“that our dialogue reports are not well known among Catholics and Methodists, and that the consensus and convergences these texts have registered have not had the transformative effect on our relations for which we had hoped” (§173).

This lack of widespread reception of the thinking and insights in dialogue reports in the life of the churches is identified as one obstacle to preventing a closer move towards unity. The matter is an important one, and it is appreciated that the Commission brings it to our attention. Indeed, the question of reception is relevant not only to reports in ecumenical dialogue, but also to reports received or adopted by the British Methodist Conference. How are church members enabled to engage with the valuable theological thinking that such reports contain? The summary and the questions offered by the Commission in this report are an attempt to begin to address this question, and the resource is welcomed. There are ways in which these materials could be further adapted so as to be appropriately engaging for a wide range of people in local congregations. Members of the British Methodist Church are encouraged, with their Roman Catholic sisters and brothers, to explore such possibilities; for example, by considering the questions in the final chapter of The Call to Holiness, by sharing their own faith journeys and experiences of growth in holiness, or by learning more about each other’s devotional practices. Yet the question of reception within our two communities remains as a challenge to be taken up by Catholics and Methodists alike.

8. Appendix. Resources for Prayer and Meditation

8.1. The Commission is clear from the beginning of the report that the spiritual dimension must not be overlooked, neither in the dialogue itself nor with regards to reflection
on the call to holiness. Although it recognises that much time was absorbed in theological conversation, still “dialogue is never solely an intellectual exercise, but always involves personal encounter” (Houston, Preface). Each day of the Commission’s discussions took place in the context of shared prayer.

8.2. The importance of the spiritual dimension of both the call to holiness and ecumenical conversation is reinforced at the close of the report. The Commission provides, in the Appendix, a variety of resources from both traditions for personal and joint prayer and reflection. These are a helpful and interesting collection and their inclusion is appreciated, not least for what it signifies about the importance of sharing in prayer on our walk with Christ.

9. **Practical Examples of Holy Living**

9.1. An unusual and welcome feature of this report is the inclusion of short biographies which provide practical examples of holy living. Each of the main chapters concludes by giving a brief account of the life of a Methodist and a Catholic who have been recognised as responding to the call to holiness, for example two of the Methodists included are Phoebe Worrall Palmer and Donald Soper. These accounts are intended to be illustrative, to help readers to see and understand holiness in tangible terms. It is a strength of the report, helping it to be more accessible and of interest to a wider readership. It resonates, for British Methodists, particularly with an appreciation of the place of personal testimony in the nurture and witness of faith, and encourages the exploration of deepening the quest for holiness in daily life.

9.2. More space and attention could have been given to this aspect of the report. The stories themselves are helpful, but rather short, and the reader is left wondering how these particular people were chosen. The opportunity for engaging in further theological reflection in respect of the stories was not taken in this report, but could be a helpful addition in the future. Read together, there are many similarities in the particular narratives, and some fuller detail about the lives of the individuals included would provide a more rounded, complex, but rich, resource. More detailed biographies may reveal a sometimes less palatable picture of the individual concerned, and yet reveal more of their human frailty and offer further insight into the call to holiness in the mess, chaos, detail and complexity of life.

10. **Conclusion**

The Methodist Church in Britain warmly welcomes this report, which is helpful, insightful, thorough, and full of generosity and imagination. It is a rich resource for promoting reflection on the call to holiness and makes a significant contribution to our shared pilgrimage. It shows the level of convergence between Methodists and Catholics on the matters discussed, and identifies differences in order to
indicate where dialogue is still necessary. It is a report of great merit, not least for the continuing journey towards unity, and we are thus challenged to consider the question of how we enable a greater level of engagement with its contents in our local churches. *The Call to Holiness: From Glory to Glory* is a document that both stimulates theological conversation and encourages reflection on our response to the call to holiness in our walk with Christ. The Commission reminds us that “Holiness is not primarily about success in being good, but rather about being open in all the brokenness and giftedness of human life to God’s transforming grace” (Houston, §111).

Finish then thy new creation,
Pure and sinless let us be;
Let us see thy great salvation
Perfectly restored in thee;
Changed from glory into glory,
Till in heaven we take our place,
Till we cast our crowns before thee,
Lost in wonder, love and praise.

Charles Wesley (1707-1788)\(^\text{12}\)

***RESOLUTIONS***

35/1. The Conference adopts the Report as its response to *The Call to Holiness: From Glory to Glory*.

35/2. The Conference commends *The Call to Holiness: From Glory to Glory* to the Methodist people for study and discussion.

\(^{12}\) First published in Charles Wesley, *Hymns for ‘Those that Seek and Those that have Redemption in the Blood of Jesus Christ*, (London: Strahan, 1747), no.9; and quoted by the Commission at the end of the Introduction to this report (Houston, §13)
### 36. Pension Reserve Fund

| Contact name and details | The Revd Tim Swindell  
|                          | Lead Connexional Treasurer  
|                          | tim.swindell@methodist.org.uk |

| Resolutions | 36/1. The Conference directs that no further payments be made from the Pension Reserve Fund to the Methodist Ministers’ Pension Scheme until further notice. |
|            | 36/2. The Conference re-states unequivocally that the Pension Reserve Fund exists to support both the Methodist Ministers’ Pension Scheme (MMPS) and the Pension and Assurance Scheme for Lay Employees of the Methodist Church (PASLEMC) as the need arises, that they will be given equal consideration as the need arises and as permitted by charity law or the Charity Commission, and that no change will be made to either the use of the fund or the way in which income from the Connexional Priority Fund levy is calculated without first being satisfied that appropriate consultation has been undertaken with both Trustee Boards. |
|            | 36/3. The Conference delegates to the Methodist Council authority to utilise the Pension Reserve Fund as part of the recovery plan arising from the 2017 valuation of the Pension and Assurance Scheme for Lay Employees of the Methodist Church. |
|            | 36/4. The Conference directs that the Pension Reserve Fund shall cover the past service liabilities and any further deficit arising from increasing future service contribution rates for the period 1 September 2017 to 31 August 2019 of all participating employers as permitted by charity law or the Charity Commission within the Pension and Assurance Scheme for Lay Employees of the Methodist Church. |
Summary of content

Subject and aims

The Pension Reserve Fund (PRF) was established by the Conference of 2009 to support both the Methodist Ministers’ Pension Scheme (MMPS) and the Pension and Assurance Scheme for Lay Employees of the Methodist Church (PASLEMC). This paper seeks to update the Conference’s commitment to the PRF and to address its potential use.

Main points

- Background to the PRF
- Support for the MMPS and proposal to cancel planned payments
- Support for the PASLEMC and potential use in relation to the 2017 valuation

Background context and relevant documents

2009 Conference report 31 ‘MMPS’
2012 Conference report 31 ‘MMPS’

1.0 Introduction

1.1 The Pension Reserve Fund (PRF) is a designated fund held under the managing trusteeship of the Methodist Council. It was established by the 2009 Conference (resolution 31/3) in order to provide support to both the Methodist Ministers’ Pension Scheme (MMPS) and the Pension and Assurance Scheme for Lay Employees of the Methodist Church (PASLEMC).

1.2 The Conference determined in SO 974(1)(iA) that income to the PRF would be derived from the net proceeds of the Connexional Priority Fund (CPF) levy on the proceeds of the disposal of Model Trust property, and that it would receive 45% of these net proceeds until determined otherwise.

1.3 As at 31 August 2017 the balance of the PRF was £27.5m.

2.0 Use of the PRF to support the Methodist Ministers’ Pension Scheme (MMPS)

2.1 In 2012 the Conference agreed that part of the past service deficit of £58.4m arising from the valuation at 31 August 2011 would be met by a payment of £10m into the MMPS to be spread equally over ten years on commencing on 1 September 2012.

2.2 As is reported elsewhere in the Conference Agenda, the most recent valuation of the MMPS has revealed a substantial improvement in the funding position of the
scheme. The Finance Sub-committee (FSC) of the Strategy and Resources Committee has within its terms of reference to act on behalf of the ‘employer’ for both the MMPS and PASLEMC. In its discussions with the Trustee Board, the FSC has agreed that although the funding position has improved, there should be no reduction at this stage in the levels of contributions paid by either members or bodies, mainly Circuits, paying employer contributions. The FSC has reiterated the Church’s commitment to retaining the MMPS as a defined benefit scheme as an expression of the covenant relationship between ministers and the Conference. Given the potential economic upheaval that will accompany the UK’s exit from the European Union, and the continuing age profile of the MMPS membership it recommends that contributions remain at the current levels until the next valuation.

2.3 The MMPS Board has welcomed this move, but has indicated that it is content for the remaining two/three payments from the PRF to now be cancelled. Since the commitment to make ten payments was made by the 2012 Conference (Resolution 31/2), it is for the Conference to agree to ceasing those payments.

3.0 Use of the PRF to support the PASLEMC

3.1 In establishing the PRF, the Conference clearly indicated that it would be available to support both connexional defined-benefit schemes and this is clearly stated in SO 974(1)(iA). In 2015 the PRF duly made a payment of £448k as settlement of the past service deficit in the PASLEMC at that point.

3.2 As part of the 2017 valuation the PASLEMC Trustee Board followed current best practice by commissioning an external review of the ‘employer covenant’ with the scheme. As a multi-employer scheme this was relatively complex, but the advisers determined that the Methodist Council and the Central Finance Board were key as between them they are responsible for the vast majority of the liabilities.

3.3 One of the outputs of this external review was to highlight that the statutory expectations on the Trustee Board from The Pensions Regulator are significantly higher than they were in 2009. As a result it recommended that the Trustee Board should seek an updated commitment from the Conference that the PRF is available to support both schemes and that no changes will be made to either the mechanism by which the income level is determined, nor the use of the fund without prior consultation with both Trustee Boards. The view of the FSC is that there would be no intention by the Church to alter either of these parameters without first consulting with both Boards. However, it recognises the requirement on them to fulfil their fiduciary duties to the schemes and their members and to be able to demonstrate to The Pensions Regulator that they have engaged with the relevant employers and
obtained current commitments regarding the ‘employer covenant’. The Council now therefore asks the Conference to re-assert this position.

3.4 One final area where further clarity would be helpful relates to the use of the PRF in covering the shortfall liability for each employer that is a part of the PASLEMC. The Methodist Council is the managing trustee body for the PRF which is held as a designated fund within its consolidated accounts. There has therefore been some ambiguity regarding its use to back all of the scheme employers since this was not considered when the fund was established by the 2009 Conference. Advice has been obtained confirming that there may be some legal impediment to this, however the FSC now proposes that the Conference be asked to state explicitly that the PRF will cover the past service liabilities of the PASLEMC with regard to all employers; not just the Council and those which are consolidated into its accounts.

4.0 2017 PASLEMC valuation

4.1 The 2017 valuation has resulted in both a substantial past service deficit within the PASLEMC totalling £3.547m and also an increase in the future service contribution rate required above that currently paid by both employers and members.

4.2 Various options for making good this deficit are being fully explored, none of which include increasing contribution levels. Within the range of options available it is possible that some input will be required from the PRF, either as a lump sum or over several years. The employer has a statutory duty to agree with the Trustee Board a recovery plan with respect to the deficit and to lodge this with The Pensions Regulator within fifteen months of the valuation date; ie 30 November 2018. It is anticipated that final proposals will be brought to the Methodist Council at its meeting in October 2018. In anticipation of this potential requirement, the Council asks the Conference to agree in principle to the use of the PRF and delegates authority to the Council accordingly.

***RESOLUTIONS

36/1. The Conference directs that no further payments be made from the Pension Reserve Fund to the Methodist Ministers’ Pension Scheme until further notice.

36/2. The Conference re-states unequivocally that the Pension Reserve Fund exists to support both the Methodist Ministers’ Pension Scheme (MMPS) and the Pension and Assurance Scheme for Lay Employees of the Methodist Church (PASLEMC) as the need arises, that they will be given equal consideration as the need arises and as permitted by charity law or the Charity Commission, and that no change
will be made to either the use of the fund or the way in which income from the Connexional Priority Fund levy is calculated without first being satisfied that appropriate consultation has been undertaken with both Trustee Boards.

36/3. The Conference delegates to the Methodist Council authority to utilise the Pension Reserve Fund as part of the recovery plan arising from the 2017 valuation of the Pension and Assurance Scheme for Lay Employees of the Methodist Church.

36/4. The Conference directs that the Pension Reserve Fund shall cover the past service liabilities and any further deficit arising from increasing future service contribution rates for the period 1 September 2017 to 31 August 2019 of all participating employers as permitted by charity law or the Charity Commission within the Pension and Assurance Scheme for Lay Employees of the Methodist Church.
Contact name and details

The Revd Dr Janet Corlett
Vice-Moderator of the Commission on World Mission and Evangelism
director@slm-bermondsey.org.uk

Resolution

37/1. The Conference receives the Report.

Summary of content and impact

Subject and aims

To inform the Methodist Conference and enable the whole Church to benefit from the resources and outcomes from this historic Mission Conference

Main points

1. Introduction
2. Highlights
2.1 Mission from the Margins
2.2 Authentic Discipleship
3. Application and challenge

Background context and relevant documents (with function)

1. History of the World Mission Conference
Held roughly every 10 years since Edinburgh 1910, ecumenical mission conferences have been significant in changing the way churches understand mission and how they work together. See ‘Ecumenical Missiology: Changing landscapes and new conceptions in mission’ (Regnum, 2016) for an in-depth history.

2. Resources
2.1 Pre-conference publications
‘Fostering a Spirituality that can Transform Mission’
105:209-225
www.oikoumene.org/en/mission2018/resources
1. **Introduction**
   Over one thousand Christians gathered in Arusha, Tanzania from 8-13 March 2018 for the WCC Conference on World Mission and Evangelism. At times there was an overwhelming sense of participating in a foretaste of heaven – with people of every tribe and nation praising God together, eating together and sharing their stories. The Arusha Conference became the biggest global ecumenical gathering of missionary disciples since the historic World Missionary Conference in Edinburgh in 1910, with 1,024 participants. It was a truly ecumenical conference – with an African rhythm – and significant participation from the ‘missing generation’. Participation of younger delegates was very actively enabled by the Stewards’ Programme and the pre-meeting of indigenous youth and Global Ecumenical Theological Institute (GETI).

2. **Highlights**

2.1 **Mission from the Margins**
   The theme of ‘Mission from the Margins’ has been growing in importance since the publication of ‘Together Towards Life’ (TTL), the WCC Affirmation on Mission and Evangelism. The conference heard the voices of those who are often marginalised – recognising the need of the ‘centre’ to be challenged by Christ who chooses to work on the margins of wealth, power and status. A young Fijian woman, Adi Mariana Waqa, gave the key-note message for the ‘Mission from the Margins’ plenary. She said: “we are here, we exist, see us, hear us, we are integral to Christ’s Church. We are poor, we...
are blind, we are captives, we are unfavoured, but we refuse to be invisible anymore, for we are Christ’s beloved, we have agency for we live and walk in the Spirit, and we too are bearers of Christ’s hope and we too are agents for transforming the world!”

2.2 Authentic Discipleship

Pre-conference documents were prepared by Commission Working Groups on Evangelism and Missional Formation. It was recognised that every Christian is called to be good news and to share good news – and that an emphasis on discipleship formation that is holistic automatically empowers evangelism. “To recover the integrity of evangelism in today’s diverse global village, it is necessary to disown the model of evangelism as conquest … [promoting openness, partnership and dialogue] then we can redraw the boundary lines of religious differences, so that they become way markers to peace, not battle lines for violence.” (Report from Evangelism Working Group ‘Being Disciples Means Sharing Good News’ – available on the web).

The conference also discovered that there was a more natural convergence and unity of denominations when discussing discipleship (of all believers) as opposed to the intractable differences around patterns of ministry, ordination, sacraments, church structure, etc.

3. Application and challenge

3.1 What priority do we give to discipleship formation and spiritual growth in local congregations and in the training of ministers?

3.2 How do we understand ‘mission from the margins’? Would we be more effective in mission if we moved ourselves from the centre?

3.3 Can we move from patronage to true partnership in mission – and what would that look like? What could we learn from the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania – that has grown from 0.5 million to 6.5 million members since the 1960s when it became ‘self-governing, self-sustaining and self-propagating’?

3.4 Stated objectives in Arusha included enabling the conference to be a living community of transforming discipleship – and to experience transformative spiritual empowerment. This was enabled by giving high priority to the spiritual life of the conference – allowing an openness and expectancy that God would move us in the Spirit. Those who had been sceptical in the planning process recognised and affirmed that the greater time given to worship was highly appreciated by delegates and strengthened the conference to face potentially divisive issues with grace.

***RESOLUTION

37/1. The Conference receives the Report.
### Contact name and details

The Revd Dr Keith Davies, Chair of the Board  
kjs.davies63@btopenworld.com  
Mrs Anne Goodman, Chief Executive  
goodmana@tmcp.methodist.org.uk

### Subject and aims

This report provides a summary of the service and work undertaken by the Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes (TMCP) in its role as Custodian Trustee and in support of Managing Trustees across the Connexion.

### Resolutions

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Resolution</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>38/1.</td>
<td>The Conference receives the Report.</td>
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<tr>
<td>38/2.</td>
<td>The Conference appoints the Revd Paul H Davis and Ms Alethea Siow as members of the Board of the Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes.</td>
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<tr>
<td>38/3.</td>
<td>The Conference hereby directs that the bequest from the residuary estate of the late Derek George Phillips shall be held by the Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes (the ‘Board’) upon trust to apply the same as to both capital and income for providing grants to viable Methodist projects for property and mission purposes.</td>
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### Main points

In the year ended 31 August 2017 TMCP:

- Helped and supported Managing Trustees:
  - providing up to date and comprehensive guidance through its website, Finance and Legal Teams.
  - in their work to generate property income and release funds for mission.
  - completing non-residential leases, shorthold tenancies and licences.
  - by processing £42.3m of property proceeds received.
  - by processing £46.8m in payment requests.
  - administering 6,331 trusts.
Worked closely with the Connexional Team to:

- provide new comprehensive guidance on the new Data Protection Regulations.
- develop a panel of solicitors for Managing Trustees.
- outline practical issues arising in the application and interpretation of Standing Orders.

| Background context and relevant documents | A full copy of the Trustees Report and Accounts for the year ended 31 August 2017 is available from TMCP’s website: www.tmcp.org.uk/about/publications |

PART A: GENERAL REPORT

Section 1: Building a sustainable future together

The purpose of the Board (TMCP) is to serve the Methodist Church in the advancement of the Christian faith in accordance with its doctrinal standards and discipline, and any charitable purpose of the Methodist Church or Church organisation.

**Our mission is to serve the Methodist Church**

Our mission is to support and strengthen the Methodist Church, both by providing practical support to Managing Trustees and by working closely and effectively with our colleagues in the Connexional Team.

We aim at all times to:

- Work within an ethical and Christian framework.
- Act with integrity and patience.
- Listen carefully and communicate effectively.
- Value and nurture the talents of those within the organisation.
- Continue to assist Managing Trustees as much as we can through guidance and training.

We are here to provide a service and to ensure that all processes with which we are involved are clearly outlined.
Our vision and goals

Our mission is at the heart of what we do and forms the basis of our vision and goals. Our people are our most valuable resource and we deeply value our connexional relationships. We work closely with Managing Trustees, the Connexional Team, District Property Secretaries and members across the Connexion in their various property and finance roles for church, Circuit and District. In partnership we want to focus on and measure the outcomes of our involvement in this work. We recognise the valuable work of our partners across the Connexion and appreciate that this is often done in a voluntary capacity and with limited resources.

Our vision is:

- to continue to fulfil our principal duty to act as custodian trustee of all properties held on model trusts of the Methodist Church Act 1976 and to show how this provides a meaningful and necessary role in the life of the Church and help it to achieve its mission;
- to provide a comprehensive role as the corporate body of the Church;
- to continue with our specific areas of specialism such as sharing agreements, trusts, data protection and burial grounds;
- to ensure that the TMCP team is utilised in any appropriate area where it can bring a quantifiable benefit and avoid duplication of costs across the Church, while still maintaining clarity and a clear understanding of its role within the Connexion.
Our goals are to:

- To fulfil our responsibility to Managing Trustees through guidance and training.
- To provide appropriate and adequate assistance to the Methodist Connexion.

To ensure that resources match the need now and on an ongoing basis, we have committed our resources including our people, their expertise and our systems to the service of the Church. Examples of the systems we provide to support Managing Trustees include:

- The Trust Information System (TIS), which provides statements, balances and other trust information to those for whom TMCP holds funds as Custodian Trustee.
- Our website which provides comprehensive guidance on money and property issues for Managing Trustees and their advisers.
- Continuous investment in our staff and systems with the aim to provide a more effective and efficient service. To achieve this we monitor closely the outcomes of our service to Managing Trustees.
- We continue to improve our methods of internal review and also employ the services of an Internal Auditing firm to perform annually at least 20 days of auditing of our core services. There is also an annual review of policies and procedures to ensure compliance with best practice and current legislation.

In partnership, we hope to help and support Managing Trustees across the Connexion to build a sustainable future.

**Structure**

The Board is a corporate body and was incorporated by the Methodist Church Act 1939. Our governing documents are this Act, our Trust Deed of 1939 and the Methodist Church Act 1976.

The Board meets at least three times a year and is served by three committees; the Executive, Audit and Investment committees. Much of our work is discharged through these committees and by our staff throughout the year.

Our staff comprises three teams including finance, legal and administration. They have considerable experience and wide ranging skills. Our team has many years of combined professional and practical experience in their relevant areas. We are committed to their ongoing training and development and over the past year they have attended training courses on areas such as Property Law, Money Laundering, Charity Law updates and Data Protection. We wish to record our grateful thanks to our staff for their hard work, expertise and dedicated commitment to our mission and to the Church we serve.
Board members
Our Board members are members of the Methodist Church and appointed by the Conference on the nomination of the Board. Nominations are assessed in terms of experience, skills and expertise. Many of our Board members also undertake the role of Managing Trustees in local Methodist churches around the Connexion. The members of the Board during the year to 31 August 2017 were:

The Revd Rosemarie Clarke  The Revd Dr Keith Davies (Chair)  The Revd Doreen C Hare  The Revd Jennifer A Impey  The Revd Stephanie J Jenner (appointed 29/6/17)  The Revd Gillian M Newton  The Revd Kenneth Street
Mr John Bell  Mr Graham Danbury  Mr Ralph Dransfield  Dr Ian Harrison  Mr John Jefferson  Mr David Moore (retired 29/06/17)  Mr Malcolm Pearson  Mr G Alan Pimlott  Mr Ian C White (appointed 29/6/17)

A skills audit is performed annually by the Chair in consultation with all Board members. In addition to regular meetings the Board members also meet to review strategy and key developments.

Working together with Managing Trustees
TMCP are the custodian trustees for all property held on the Model Trusts of the Methodist Church Act 1976, except for that in the Channel Islands or the Isle of Man which are held by their own boards of trustees. This includes nearly all of the property held by the 4410 or so Local Churches, 375 Circuits and 31 Districts. This amounts to approximately 5000 church buildings, 1950 manses and 77 investment properties.

Over the past year we have worked with a large number of Managing Trustees involving many different properties from nearly all 375 Circuits.

This work has generated over 20,000 items of correspondence, including letters, emails and notifications from the online property consents website.

The Board is also custodian of the funds held in 6,331 trusts, a small number of which are under the direct management of the Board and discretionary grants are given from these in accordance with the terms of the trusts. These funds are held for Methodist purposes for Managing Trustees who may be local Church Councils, Circuit Meetings or other bodies of trustees.

In the past year we have reviewed all our guidance to ensure we provide a high calibre, accessible, easy to use and up-to-date suite of reference materials and template documents. This is available via our website and we have introduced a great deal of new guidance.
It is important to distinguish our role as custodian trustees from that of Managing Trustees:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TMCP as Custodian Trustee:</th>
<th>Role of Managing Trustees:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>● We hold legal title.</td>
<td>● Are responsible for the day to day management of the property</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● We have a duty to ensure Managing Trustees do not act in breach of trust.</td>
<td>● Exercise power or discretion in respect of the property</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● We do not get involved in the day-to-day management.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

The activities of the Board for 2016/2017 include, but are not limited, to:

- effecting all sales, purchases and leases of property by Church bodies and checking legal documents before signature by Managing Trustees;
- investing funds received from sales or bequests and transmitting funds for purchases or to meet the cost of projects as instructed by Managing Trustees;
- fulfilling any other duties or responsibilities required of, or appropriate for, the corporate body acting on behalf of the Methodist Church.

**Working together with the Methodist Council**

We undertake work on behalf of the Methodist Council, and in recognition of this work, the Methodist Council makes an agreed annual contribution towards the staff costs of the Legal Team.

**Connexional Property Development Committee**

We continue to support the work of this committee by providing representation from the Board and also attendance from the Chief Executive at these meetings. TMCP recognises the distinct advantages of this collaborative way of working.

**TMCP as a corporate body**

TMCP continues to take advantage of its unique position as a body corporate in a number of ways and is always looking for other cost saving opportunities for the Church. For example, in this role we are able to hold the copyright for publications on behalf of the Church under the direction of the Methodist Council, including *Singing the Faith* and works held in the Art Collection. In addition, we assist Managing Trustees across the different legal jurisdictions of the United Kingdom in relation to their letting of residential property. We are registered, on behalf of Managing Trustees, as landlord for the Scottish Landlord Register and also for the Rent Smart Wales scheme. In England, a different type of scheme operates. However, in our role it is possible for us to offer guidance to Managing Trustees in relation to the scheme relevant to them.
Connexional Joint Working Party for Legal and Property Support
TMCP is committed to supporting this initiative and engaged with the Working Party as requested. This has included furnishing the group with information in respect of processes, policies and ways of working and facilitating joint meetings with our Executive committee members, Chief Executive and Legal Manager. We are looking forward to the publication of the Working Party’s findings and to embracing any recommendations that arise out of the review.

Working together with the Connexional Team
We work in partnership with the Connexional Team, including the Conference Office, the Connexional Secretary, and Support Services, including the Consents Team and the Conservation Team.

Panel of solicitors
In partnership with the Conference Office and the Connexional Team’s Procurement Officer, we have developed and completed a tendering process of a panel of solicitors for use by Managing Trustees. After a thorough selection process, five firms have been selected for the panel. The firms are all experts in charity law and are able to provide a wide range of legal advice to Managing Trustees in most technical areas, including, property, charity and employment law. TMCP and the Connexional Team see this as a key development and have consequently invested a great deal of time and resources in its formation.

Data protection
With the Connexional Team, we formed a joint working party on data protection. Together we have undertaken a comprehensive review of data protection in light of the introduction of the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) – which, at the time of writing this report, is due to come into force on 25 May 2018.

This has led to the Connexional Team becoming a data controller for the Information Commissioner’s Office (ICO), to cover those data processing activities which fall outside TMCP’s registration including Safeguarding, Complaints and Discipline, as well as those areas for which they are solely responsible.

TMCP will continue to act as the Data Controller for all churches, Circuits and Districts who are deemed to be Data Processors, ie those who deal with data/information on behalf of the Methodist Church. This will continue to be the position after the introduction of the GDPR, with the exception of the areas now covered by the Connexional Team registration.

Consents Liaison Group
TMCP takes an active part in referring issues that come to our attention in respect of the Consents system. This group comprises members of TMCP and the Connexional Team and
meets regularly to discuss technical and practical matters regarding the Consents database and website application.

**Conservation Team**
The connexional Conservation Team is based in our offices and we enjoy a good relationship with the team as we are in daily contact with them about properties across the Connexion.

**Working together with the Central Finance Board**
The Finance team work closely with colleagues in the Central Finance Board (CFB) and the Connexional Team in relation to the investment of funds on behalf of Managing Trustees. In addition, in recognition of the close working relationship Anne Goodman (Chief Executive), acting as a representative of TMCP, continues to be a member of CFB’s Council and also currently chairs their Audit Committee. It is an exciting time for CFB while it continues to implement its development strategies and TMCP welcomes the collaborative approach of its Board and staff team.

**Section 2: Outcome-focused**
We closely monitor the service we provide to Managing Trustees. This includes the volume of incoming and outgoing correspondence to identify turnaround times. Whilst incoming correspondence continues to rise, we have been able to achieve an average response time of 8.3 days (2015/2016: 9.2 days). Many matters are dealt with quicker than this, but the more complex matters push the average response time up. In 2015/2016 we received approximately 19,000 items of correspondence and this increased to over 20,000 items in 2016/2017.

We are looking at how to monitor our work in a variety of ways to ensure that our systems and processes are as efficient and effective as possible. Whilst we understand that turnaround times are important we also want to focus on outcomes for Managing Trustees to maximise the way we can help and facilitate them in their ongoing mission.

We are developing Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and a matter management system to provide sufficient data to measure our performance against these KPIs.

We would encourage those interested to review our website in order to understand the breadth of the work of the team. However, in summary:

**The Finance Team** supports the Board’s role as custodian trustee by planning and performing all financial operations relating to the receipts and payments of Model Trust monies as well as the investment of funds on behalf of Managing Trustees.

Some of the highlights of activities undertaken during the last connexional year are as follows:
The Trust Information System, an online system which TMCP developed in 2014, provides online access to trust statements, balances and other information. There were 2,631 users during 2016/2017 (2,269 in 2015/2016).

The Legal team continues to help Managing Trustees across the Connexion to secure income from their property to fund mission including granting non-residential leases, residential

### Outcomes - money £m

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2016-17</th>
<th>2015-16</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Investments sold</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>8.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investments purchased</td>
<td>8.5</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Payment requests processed</td>
<td>46.8</td>
<td>53.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Property proceeds received</td>
<td>42.3</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Outcomes - Property Transactions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2015-16</th>
<th>2016-17</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sales</td>
<td></td>
<td>111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purchases</td>
<td>14</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leases</td>
<td></td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AST</td>
<td></td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Licences</td>
<td></td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Major Development</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>14</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
tenancies and entering into licences and one-off booking forms. During the connexional year 2016/2017, they have also assisted Managing Trustees with guidance on new major redevelopment projects, property sales and purchases of new property as well as trust matters, bequests, ecumenical issues and other queries.

In the year 2016/2017, the Legal team has assisted Managing Trustees in relation to the following transactions:

**Section 3: Resources and Investment**

It has been the ongoing policy of the Board to drawdown £100,000 each year from reserves to cover its running costs and not pass on to Managing Trustees the full running costs of our organisation. In recognition of a desire to continue to cap the recharging of its costs to the Connexion, in 2016/2017 the Board increased this draw-down to £130k. The Board hopes to be able to continue this policy for the foreseeable future. Since 2015 the Board has committed over £90k to invest in infrastructure projects including upgrades to our IT systems and the development of our website. We are committing further investment for a proposed matter management system.

**Section 4: The Future**

Working together remains at the heart of what we do. TMCP values the close relationships it has with the Connexional Team, District Property Secretaries, District Chairs etc, and sees these relationships as crucial in helping Managing Trustees in their day to day management of the property and assets they are responsible for.

The provision of comprehensive guidance on data protection is a good example of this joint working and we hope that it will be possible to work together on many more similar projects. The sharing of our joint expertise offers substantial cost savings for Managing Trustees across the Connexion. In relation to the changes in the data protection legislation it will not be necessary for Managing Trustees to pay for external training or guidance because detailed and easy to use resources will be provided on our website. We will be adding a training video to our website on the changes to the data protection regulations and intend to develop this resource with further videos over the coming year. Legal team members will be providing a detailed presentation to District Chairs on the changes to the data protection regulations. Further guidance and training are being developed which will be specific to the needs of the Methodist Church. We wish to thank all staff involved who have put in considerable time and expertise to progress this additional work.

In collaboration with the Conference Office, the development of the panel of solicitors offers Managing Trustees the opportunity to instruct solicitors who will work closely with us to ensure legal transactions proceed more quickly and more cost-effectively.

Our website continues to be developed and there are many guidance and focus notes being
updated regularly which Managing Trustees will find helpful. We have introduced a news hub to provide updates on any changes in relation to the law or processes relating to money or property. Subscribers to our website receive automatic updates. Have you subscribed? If not, you can do so by adding your email address on the link on our website’s homepage. It is simple to do and can be found if you scroll down our website’s homepage at www.tmcp.org.uk/

We are also in the final stages of our project to develop key performance indicators and a matter management system. This project has involved reviewing our existing systems and identifying the most appropriate ways of capturing data to monitor the services we provide. This will ensure that we achieve the efficiencies we want to deliver to Managing Trustees.

We continue to encourage applications to be made in respect of the discretionary funds for which we have responsibility. The protocols and details of how to apply are on our website. Alternatively please contact the Revd Doreen Hare for further information.

TMCP is committed to serving Managing Trustees as they discern their calling to use their assets as effectively as possible. By working together we can offer support to enable them to build a sustainable future for their societies by securing the right buildings and assets for their needs now and in the future. We look forward to serving you and working with you in the coming year.

***RESOLUTION

38/1. The Conference receives the General Report of the Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes.

PART B

Membership of the Board

The Board is required to report to the Conference if any members have resigned, died, become bankrupt or made an assignment with their creditors, resided outside the United Kingdom for more than twelve months, refused or become unfit to act or ceased to be members of the Methodist Church so that new appointments can be made by the Conference on the nomination of the remaining members of the Board.
Changes in office

1. Resignations

The Revd Kenneth Street has resigned as a member of the TMCP Board with effect from October 2017.

The Revd Stephanie Jenner has indicated her intention to resign as a member of the Board prior to the Conference 2018 and will be contacting the Secretary of the Conference accordingly.

Mr G Alan Pimlott has also indicated his intention to resign as a member of the Board prior to the 2018 Conference, and will be contacting the Secretary of the Conference accordingly.

2. Board Membership as at 28 February 2018

The Revd Rosemarie Clarke
The Revd Dr Keith Davies (Chair)
The Revd Doreen C Hare
The Revd Jennifer A Impey
The Revd Stephanie J Jenner
The Revd Gill Newton
Mr John Bell
Mr Graham Danbury
Mr Ralph Dransfield
Dr Ian Harrison
Mr John Jefferson
Mr Malcolm Pearson
Mr G Alan Pimlott
Mr Ian White

3. Nominations for appointment to the Board

Further to Section 4(3) of the Methodist Church Act 1939, the Board nominates:
The Revd Paul H Davis
Ms Alethea Siow

Paul Davis is the Chair of the Lancashire District.

Alethea Siow is a solicitor and a Circuit Steward of the West London Mission Circuit, a director of the West London Mission Housing Association and a member of the connexional Property Development Committee.

***RESOLUTION

38/2. The Conference appoints the Revd Paul H Davis and Ms Alethea Siow as members of the Board of the Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes.
PART C

Declarations under the Methodist Church Trust Deed 1939
From time to time property is bequeathed to the Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes where no express or special trusts are declared by the legatee or where those terms are uncertain or are wishes only. In such cases clause 2 of the Trust Deed of 1939 adopted by the Conference further to Section 11 of the 1939 Act empowers the Conference to declare the trusts upon which the Board is to hold the property.

Derek George Phillips Deceased
Derek George Phillips, by his Will bequeathed:

“To the Trustees for METHODIST CHURCH PURPOSES of Central Buildings Oldham Street Manchester M1 1JQ the sum of One Hundred Thousand Pounds (£100,000) with the recommendation that it be invested in the Central Finance Board Mixed Fund Units and that the income arising therefore be paid in The General Fund account of Wesley Memorial Church New Hall Street Oxford” (Bequest 1)

“MY TRUSTEES shall hold my Residuary Estate upon trust for OXFAM of 274 Banbury Road Oxford OX2 7DZ and the Trustees for METHODIST CHURCH PURPOSES in equal shares absolutely” (Bequest 2)

With Bequest 2, the Board has received an interim distribution of £1,700,000. The Board agreed at its meeting on 28 February 2018 that the share of the residue of the estate left to TMCP should be held upon trust by the Board with the capital and income used in providing grants to viable Methodist projects.

As no special or express trusts have been declared, the Conference, pursuant to clause 2 of the Trust Deed of 1939 adopted by the Conference further to Section 11 of the Methodist Church Act 1939, need to declare the trusts upon which the Board may hold Bequest 2.

***RESOLUTION

38/3. The Conference hereby directs that the bequest from the residuary estate of the late Derek George Phillips shall be held by the Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes (the ‘Board’) upon trust to apply the same as to both capital and income for providing grants to viable Methodist projects for property and mission purposes.
Introduction
This report from the Managing Trustees gives an overview of the varied activities and events that have been part of the life of the Methodist Central Hall Westminster during 2017/2018. The church and the conference centre reach out to a vast number of residents and workers in London and the South East, as well as to over 9,000 visitors from all over the UK and from 60 different countries around the world.

Ministry of the church
The team ministry has continued to thrive with the leadership of the Revd Dr Martyn Atkins as Superintendent Minister. The ministers are loyally supported by church officers and other volunteers in carrying out a diverse range of tasks. The key focus and meeting point for the congregation is Sunday morning worship, where visitors join a gathered community of regular worshippers each week. Mid-week worship and Bible and fellowship groups offer opportunities for a deepening of discipleship in an atmosphere of hospitable welcome. Membership now stands at around 450, originating from almost every point of the globe, giving rise to the vision statement: “A global Christian family following Jesus at the heart of London”.

The pastoral work of the church is led by Deacon Kina Saunders, who has coordinated care for church members and those in our extended church family alike. Work amongst children and young people continues to flourish. All-age worship services are a welcome feature of Sunday morning worship. ‘The Sanctuary’, a creative contemporary worship service for young adults, meets on Thursdays and includes members who have volunteered to assist at a winter night shelter run by Westminster Churches Together. The Revd Tony Miles continues his valuable work in broadcasting, in both Christian and mainstream media.

Our healing ministry, under the leadership of the Revd Peter Edwards, continues to be an important part of the life at Central Hall and is valued by the many who attend. As well as regular monthly services, an annual healing conference is held at the hall, as is an annual conference by Westminster Women.

The Trust and church work closely to support the St Vincent’s Family Project, which meets within the hall premises, as do the mental health and Parkinson’s disease drop-in projects. The church is also involved in various local projects, including the Westminster Churches Winter Night Shelter, ‘the Passage’ (a charity helping homeless people), Westminster Food Bank, ‘the Gate’ (the Westminster Crisis Pregnancy Centre) and a project involved in visiting and befriending refugees received into the UK.
Chaplaincy continues to play an important part of the work, with Martyn Atkins sustaining and creating pastoral links with members and workers in the Palace of Westminster, Tony Miles as Media Chaplain and Kina Saunders as Chaplain to the St Vincent’s Family Project.

A key role for the church at Methodist Central Hall is acting as a facilitator for events led by a whole range of different ministries and charities. Thus the building is used to serve the London District, the Connexion and the wider Christian community. One example is the hosting of an annual carol service for broadcast. Central Hall also served as a venue for the BBC’s Songs of Praise and for Gospel Choir of the Year.

Although Westminster City Council rejected the application to locate outside the hall a sculpture of the Homeless Jesus by internationally renowned sculptor Timothy Schmalz, the hall’s identification with the homeless has been followed through with the installation of a smaller prototype version of the sculpture in the entrance of Central Hall. The sculpture was dedicated as part of the Good Friday Procession of Witness shared with the congregations of Westminster Abbey, Westminster Cathedral and The Passage charity.

**The conference centre**

Mr Paul Southern, Managing Director, leads the conference centre team working tirelessly to market the facilities of Central Hall, which forms the largest conference venue in Central London, with over 25 rooms. The year ending August 2017 was very successful, with record turnover of over £7.5 million from events and the café. The Company was able to contribute over £1 million for the Trustees to maintain and develop the building and support the ministry at Central Hall.

The conference centre team is working to develop links with new markets and to maintain standards as a world-class conference and events centre, demonstrating a welcome that reflects our Methodist identity to all who use the building. Together with our onsite production partner, we have invested heavily in making Central Hall one of the most technically capable venues in the UK. A new three-year contract was finalised with the BBC for the New Year’s Eve concert.

The range of events that takes place at the hall continues to be exciting, with particular highlights:

- CBS’s production of *The Late Late Show with James Corden* televised in the US
- The FIFA Interactive World Cup
- The PiXL Club: a not-for-profit partnership of over 2,500 schools who come together to share best practice and raise standards
- Government bodies such as the Department of Health, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and the Home Office
- Corporate clients including Thompson Reuters, *the Financial Times* and Network Rail
● Charitable events at discounted rates with Blind Aid, the London Marathon and MacMillan Cancer Support

All events are judged against ethical criteria and proposed events have been rejected from organisations promoting violence, alcohol, tobacco or other subjects conflicting with Methodist principles and/or Standing Orders. Central Hall and our onsite partners have been London Living Wage employers since 2013. We have extended our ethical approach to environmental issues and have attained Gold level for green tourism, with the ability to calculate the carbon footprint for each event and then give the client a choice of ways to offset it. There is also an internal target that all bulbs in the building will be low energy LEDs by the end of 2018.

The building
The building continues to be in good order. Maintaining a building of the status and complexity of Central Hall is a constant challenge and the Trustees are committed to an effective and efficient programme of maintenance and refurbishment. A ten-year schedule of maintenance works has been developed along with a £1.2 million refurbishment programme that will involve the upgrade of client areas throughout the building. The last year has seen the replacement of 900 chairs in the meeting and conference areas. The old chairs have been donated to other Methodist Church halls throughout the country. The Martin Turner Suite was created in recognition of the former Superintendent Minister of Central Hall. The rotunda areas around the Great Hall have been repaired and decorated. All 165 radiators in the building have been replaced, along with much of the pipe work.

The future
The Sunday congregation continues to flourish and the community engagement of the church demonstrates the Methodist commitment to an outward-oriented mission, with God’s love at its heart. The business is in a much stronger position than in recent years, with many clients returning and new clients being added, with some booking two and three years in advance.

The Trustees ensure that both church and company operate within their means financially. A percentage of any surplus on Trust income is passed to the ‘Centenary Fund’ which is to be developed for social needs. The contract between the Trust and the company has been renewed for a further 20-year period from 2019.

***RESOLUTIONS

39/1. The Conference adopts the Report.

39/2. The Conference appoints the following Managing Trustees of the Conference Property at Central Hall Westminster:
# The Revd Michaela Youngson (Chair of the Managing Trustees and Convener – ex officio), the Revd Dr Martyn Atkins (Superintendent, Westminster Circuit– ex officio),

Mr Nevil Tomlinson (Treasurer to the Trustees), Mr David Morgan (Secretary to the Trustees), * Mrs Ama Ackah-Yensu, # Mr Kojo Amoah-Arko, Mr Joe Anoom, * # the Revd Anthony D Miles, * Ms Genevieve Patnelli, * Ms Grace Sangmuah, # Mr Ian Serjeant, the Revd Graham Thompson, # Ms Helen Tudor, # the Revd Jason Vinyard.

* Indicates the people nominated by the Westminster Circuit Meeting.
# Indicates Trustees who have served for six years or more

**Reasoned Statements for Trustees who have exceeded six years of service**

**The Revd Michaela Youngson** is a Chair of the London District.

**Mr Kojo Amoah-Arko** – Chartered Accountant – provides valued financial input

**The Revd Anthony D Miles** – minister in the Westminster Circuit – good overview of many areas of the Hall’s activity.

**Mr Ian Serjeant** - Chartered Town Planner and member of the Institute of Historic Building Conservation.

**Ms Helen Tudor** - recruitment consultant, member of the congregation since 1981, Sunday school teacher.

**The Revd Jason Vinyard** – Methodist minister, formerly in building industry – member of Hall Fabric Committee.
1. Legal

1.1 The fund is governed by a Deed of Trust registered in the books of the Lords and Council and Session at Edinburgh on 4 November 1869. The Deed narrates resolutions of the Conference of 1869 as to the raising, administration and purposes of the Fund. (See Standing Order 476 for further information.)

The purposes of the said Relief and Extension Fund for Methodism in Scotland should be as follows:

1. The liquidation of debts yet remaining on Methodist churches, chapels or manses in Scotland or debts that may yet be contracted with the sanction of the connexional property committee,
2. The purchase or erection of new or additional places of worship and of sites for such objects, and
3. The acquisition of manses or investment of money to meet house rents thus making provision for the residences of ordained ministers where at present only probationers are stationed and from time to time in other places as occasion may arise.

2. Administration

2.1 The means of Aid is by way of Grants and/or interest free loans but no funds can be allocated unless the Project requires approval under the Methodist Church Property Consents Procedure, sanctioned and approved by the District Consents Panel and, where appropriate, the Connexional Conservation Officer. Where a grant has been made, it remains refundable if the property is subsequently sold.

2.2 The present Trustees are:
Official: the Revd Dr David P Easton – Synod Chair; the Revd Dr Helen E Jenkins – Presbyteral Synod Secretary; the Revd Allan Y Loudon – District Ministerial Property Secretary, and the Revd Nicholas B Baker – District Home Mission.
Non-Official: Dr Alan J Hayes, Mr David A Easson, Mr Edward A L Wallace (General Secretary and Treasurer) and Miss Maureen G Anderson.
The General Committee consists of the Trustees, General Treasurer, the District Lay Property Secretary – Mr Phillip A Haggis, the superintendent ministers of every Circuit and Mrs Margaret Brown, Mrs Jenny Easson and Mr Peter Mills as the present Synod-nominated lay members.

3. **Financial**

3.1 The incoming resources of the Fund for the year ended 31 December 2017 was £38,012 (2016 £18,016). The increase over the previous year was mainly due to grant repayments from the proceeds of sale of grant-aided properties.

3.2 The net of incoming resources for the year after deducting grants paid and expenses was an increase of £32,802 (2016 decrease £46,483). The increase over the previous year was mainly due to the completion of only two small projects amounting to aid of only £4,773.

3.3 During the year, aid totalling £30,872 was considered by the General Committee.

3.4 Grants previously approved paid out totalling £1,911 (2016 £21,500).

3.5 Grants approved and paid out this year totalled £1,404 (2016 £14,000).

3.6 Loans previously approved paid out totalling £637 (2016 £20,500).

3.7 Loans approved and paid out this year totalled £468 (2016 £8,000)

3.8 The General Fund balance at 31 December 2016 (£9,119.61) was allocated to the Loan Account as agreed by Synod and consented to by the 2017 Conference.

3.9 Investments in the CFB Mixed Managed Fund have been stated in the accounts under review at 31 December 2017 market value £224,599 (2016 £209,722). There was an unrealised gain of £14,878 (2016 gain of £19,709). The accumulated unrealised gain at 31 December 2017 was £167,291 (2016 £152,413).

3.10 Balances at 31 December 2017 were General Fund £12,168 (2016 £9,120), Grant Fund £45,437 (2016 £30,117) and Loan Account £19,252 (2016 £4,818), outstanding loans at 31 December 2017 amounted to £31,961 (2016 £37,302). The overall Fund balance at 31 December 2017 was £301,456 (2016 £262,896).

4. **Grants**

4.1 The following grant, approved in a previous year, has been paid:

   Inverness Circuit Manse: £1,911
4.2 Grants approved and paid during the year:
City of Edinburgh Methodist Church – Leith: £1,404

4.3 The following grants have been considered by the General Committee and approved in principle but not paid during the year:
Stirling Methodist Church: £6,750
Dunbar Historic Circuit Church: £3,000
Woodlands Methodist Church: £6,000
Kilsyth Methodist Church: £5,250

5. Loans

5.1 The following loan approved in a previous year has been paid:
Inverness Circuit Manse: £637

5.2 Loans approved and paid during the year:
City of Edinburgh Methodist Church – Leith: £468

5.3 The following loans have been considered by the General Committee, approved in principle but not paid during the year:
Stirling Methodist Church: £2,250
Dunbar Historic Circuit Church: £1,000
Woodlands Methodist Church: £3,000
Kilsyth Methodist Church: £1,750

6. General

6.1 In 2016, after undertaking a review of the methodology surrounding the allocation of circuit subscriptions (which replaced the previous subscription and annual church collection scheme at their request), it was proposed by the Trustees and agreed by the General Committee that future calculations would be based on circuit membership and number of model trust properties in the District.

After due consideration of the General Committee, Notice of Subscriptions for the connexional year 2017/2018 were despatched to Circuit Treasurers on 16 March 2017 using the new methodology with an overall increase in the total subscriptions collected of 1.6%.

6.2 Loan instalments are collected half-yearly in May and November.

6.3 Although, in the event it did not again materialise this year, the General Committee proposes that if there are insufficient immediate funds to satisfy approved
applications for Aid, then up to £10,000 would be transferred from the Capital Fund to meet that need from the sale of Units in the Investment Trust held on behalf of the Fund by TMCP.

6.4 After consideration by the Trustees, a proposal in respect of the allocation of the General Fund balance (£12,168.26) as at 31 December 2017 to be allocated to the Grant Fund was put to the General Committee. This proposal will be put to Synod for acceptance but requires the consent of the Conference.

***RESOLUTIONS

40/1. The Conference receives the Report.

40/2. The Conference approves the actions proposed in paragraph 6.4 of the Report.
**Joint Covenant Advocacy and Monitoring Group**

**Contact names and details**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mr David Walton</td>
<td><a href="mailto:dswalton@gmx.com">dswalton@gmx.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Rt Revd Paul Bayes</td>
<td>Co-Chairs of the Joint Covenant Advocacy and Monitoring Group</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Resolution**

41/1. The Conference receives the Report.

**Subject and aims**

To report on the work of the Group during the past year.

1. The Joint Covenant Advocacy and Monitoring Group (JCAMG) recognises that for the Church of England and the Methodist Church of Great Britain to move forward in covenant a number of developments are necessary, each of which requires courage and imagination and none of which is sufficient on its own. Some key questions are addressed in the proposals set out in *Mission and Ministry in Covenant* (published by the Faith and Order Commission of the Church of England and the Faith and Order Committee of the Methodist Church on 27 June 2017). The passage of these proposals as they are considered by the two churches has dominated the attention of JCAMG over the last year.

2. JCAMG has met twice in the last year, carrying out its mandate of helping both churches grow deeper into the covenant relationship they share under God. The focus given by the proposals from *Mission and Ministry in Covenant* (MMIC) has provided a clear shape for its work of making explicit the shared commitment to mission and unity for the sake of God’s kingdom. This work has been done in a spirit of honesty and openness, rooted in a spiritual attitude of trust in God that seeks to engage positively with the realities of church life and takes seriously the ecumenical climate abroad in both churches.

**The work of the faith and order bodies**

3. The joint work of the Faith and Order Commission of the Church of England and the Faith and Order Committee of the Methodist Church is much appreciated by JCAMG and JCAMG has both noted and sought to support their efforts to aid understanding of MMIC within both churches. The Faith and Order Commission provided a covering note to introduce the report to the General Synod in February¹ and the Faith and Order Committee has provided an update on the work relating to the *Mission and Ministry in Covenant* report and identification of further work in Section A of its report to the Methodist Conference (report 33).

General Synod

4. The General Synod met in February. The debate on MMIC was preceded by addresses by the Revd Ruth Gee (President of the Methodist Conference 2013/2014) and the Revd Gareth Powell (Secretary of the Methodist Conference), which were received with great warmth.

5. A motion was put to Synod to welcome the report and to commend further reflection, and therefore to endorse the direction of travel of the work done in the light of the Covenant. It was passed with two amendments by large majorities in each house. The motion passed was:

That this Synod:

a. welcome the report Mission and Ministry in Covenant (GS 2086), produced by the faith and order bodies of the Church of England and the Methodist Church in response to resolutions passed by the General Synod and the Methodist Conference in 2014;

b. call on the Faith and Order Commission to report back to the Synod at the next group of sessions on work carried out jointly with the Methodist Church to address the areas for further reflection outlined at paragraphs 26-29 of the covering note from the Faith and Order Commission to GS 2086;

c. invite the Faith and Order Commission, in consultation with the Methodist Church, to explore and elucidate further the relationship between episcopal ordination and eucharistic presidency, as this touches on the full visible unity of our two churches; and

d. affirm its confident hope that any outstanding issues between our churches may be resolved quickly and satisfactorily and look forward to the day when, on the basis of work already completed and accepted, our ministries will be fully reconciled.

The votes cast were:

- House of Bishops: 35 in favour; 2 against; 0 recorded abstentions.
- House of Clergy: 131 in favour; 23 against; 13 recorded abstentions.
- House of Laity: 124 in favour; 34 against; 11 recorded abstentions

Covenant champions and website

6. JCAMG is grateful to the Methodist-Anglican Panel for Unity in Mission (MAPUM) for its work and especially in the recruiting of 11 Covenant Champions. They have begun their work and are known to be addressing meetings of interested parties. Their work could be very important in the period of further reflection.
7. One task that needs further attention is the gathering of useful stories that illustrate the benefits of interchangeability of ministry. Plans are afoot to gather them through cooperative work coordinated by the National Ecumenical Officers of the two churches.

8. These stories will be posted on the Covenant website, which JCAMG notes with pleasure has become active and is an extremely useful resource, as it presents in one place all the relevant information about this stage in relations between the Church of England and the Methodist Church of Great Britain.

The Revd Neil Stubbens

9. JACMG is extremely grateful for immense work, undertaken with competence and attention to detail, of the Revd Neil Stubbens, who has served as Methodist Co-Secretary to this Group and to MAPUM. In September he will be taking up new ministerial duties, and JCAMG wishes him well and is glad to take this opportunity to record its appreciation of his very significant contribution to developments under the Covenant.

***RESOLUTION

41/1. The Conference receives the Report.
Summary statement of change in unit holders’ net assets
Year to 28 February 2018

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CFB Funds</th>
<th>Net Assets at 28/2/2017</th>
<th>Net Creations/ Cancellations</th>
<th>Change in Net Assets</th>
<th>Net Assets at 28/2/2018</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>£’000s</td>
<td>£’000s</td>
<td>£’000s</td>
<td>£’000s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UK Equity Fund</td>
<td>391,907</td>
<td>(454)</td>
<td>6,482</td>
<td>397,935</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overseas Fund</td>
<td>188,561</td>
<td>(8,776)</td>
<td>11,498</td>
<td>191,283</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gilt Fund</td>
<td>26,201</td>
<td>(14,298)</td>
<td>(320)</td>
<td>11,583</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corporate Bond Fund</td>
<td>105,930</td>
<td>(2,757)</td>
<td>(2,909)</td>
<td>100,264</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short Fixed Interest Fund</td>
<td>18,808</td>
<td>(559)</td>
<td>(395)</td>
<td>17,854</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inflation Linked Fund</td>
<td>23,633</td>
<td>(2,210)</td>
<td>(282)</td>
<td>21,141</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Property Fund</td>
<td>20,753</td>
<td>1,406</td>
<td>1,119</td>
<td>23,278</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deposit Fund</td>
<td>369,797</td>
<td>803</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>370,600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less: CFB Deposit Fund balances held in other CFB funds</td>
<td>(8,361)</td>
<td>2,161</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>(6,200)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1,137,229</td>
<td>(24,684)</td>
<td>15,193</td>
<td>1,127,738</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Review of the year ended 28 February 2018

Introduction
I started my statement last year with a quote from a financial publication that reported how religious organisations are leading the fight with corporations over climate change. That was a prophetic comment as our work on climate change has intensified even further this year. This follows a notice of motion at the 2017 Methodist Conference that asked the Joint Advisory Committee on the Ethics of Investment to examine how the extractive industry is preparing for its commitments under the Paris climate accord. To support the Committee’s response the ethics team at the Central Finance Board (CFB) has undertaken groundbreaking work examining the modelling of climate change and identifying scenarios that the world needs to meet to deliver the promises made at Paris. The team is working towards the Conference’s requirement to disinvest from any extractive company whose business plan is not aligned with Paris by 2020. It is market-leading work and I am proud of the professional and diligent way that the CFB has approached this challenge. It once again emphasises that faith investors in the investment world remain at the heart of this work.
In his CEO’s report, David Palmer describes the numerous projects that the team members have taken on over the last 12 months. Their work is only half finished and another year of investment and endeavour lies ahead. I must thank them once again for their support and unflinching commitment. We are facing several challenges – but the Central Finance Board has never been so well placed to meet them.

**Our financial position**

Last year I reflected on how a deferral in costs and a strong investment market had generated surpluses for the Central Finance Board. These surpluses have helped the Council make a substantial investment in the infrastructure of the business. In his CEO’s report, David describes the operations review that is ongoing. We are automating our processes and improving the speed of our client reporting. The Central Finance Board as a statutory body is not regulated but we seek to manage ourselves as though we were. This investment enables us to keep up with a number of regulatory changes and also relieves considerable pressure on the operations team.

We continue to see attrition from our major clients, the Methodist pension schemes, as their Trustees seek to reduce the long-term investment risk in the schemes’ assets by using a liability driven investment approach (LDI). These LDI solutions are offered by third parties and over the last two years we have seen approximately £75m leave our management in favour of this alternative investment approach. This is a trend that we expect to continue in the year ahead.

Whilst the assets managed by the Central Finance Board saw some attrition, Epworth’s Affirmative Deposit fund proved to be attractive to external charity investors, with over £30m of money from new investors during the year. This included housing associations and other faith groups.

The overall financial position of the Central Finance Board remained stable over the year. Good investment markets meant that the combined assets under management of the Central Finance Board and Epworth at the year end stood at a record £1.4bln. Despite the costs of the operations project, a small trading surplus was recorded.

In 2018/2019 we expect our surpluses to be reduced as the second half of the operations project is delivered and we have other substantial increased costs. Following a European directive we are now bearing the cost of investment research that we receive from other investment houses. We are also improving our controls this year through the engagement of an independent internal auditor.

At the time of writing this report a financial challenge that we face is a potential deficit in the lay pension scheme (PASLEMC). We are the second largest employer in this defined benefit scheme and we are working with the Connexional Team on a funding plan for this past service deficit.
Our long-term plan to improve the financial position of the Central Finance Board remains to grow the assets in our regulated subsidiary, Epworth Investment Management. David will report more on this but I am pleased to advise that substantial progress has been made over the last year as we build an investment offering based on Christian ethics for the whole charity community.

**Personnel**
I am pleased to report that the vacancies we were carrying were filled during the year and that we have increased our management team through the recruitment of a compliance officer and a head of business development. Until the operations review is completed, we will continue to have pressure on our operations team around fund dealing days and I remain grateful to them for all the extra work that they put in when the rest of the office has left for home in the evening. I hope that I will be reporting next year that these pressures have been removed by the success of our operations review.

**Council membership**
We have added to our experienced Executive this year with appointments of the Revd Anne Ellis and Morwenna Williams to the Council. Their scrutiny of the activities of the Central Finance Board has made an immediate impact and I look forward to working with them for many years to come. Regrettably I have to advise that Graham Boyd stepped down from Council during the year due to other work commitments. Graham’s investment knowledge and background in further education made him a valuable contributor to the Council and I will miss his insightful presence.

John Sandford
Chair

**Chief Executive Officer’s report**

**Ethical review of the year**
The greatest joy in my first full year at the Central Finance Board (CFB) has come from the work of our ethics team. Christian ethics have always lain at the heart of the investment team but their passion and commitment has brought rewards far beyond investment returns. In the last few months the work of the team has been dominated by the need to meet the request of the 2017 Methodist Conference to consider the grounds for disinvesting from companies in the extractive sector by 2020. The groundwork for this critical piece of work has been laid by a comprehensive study of the academic research that models the impact of the use of various fuel types on global temperatures. A core “scenario” has been identified and the team’s next steps are to assess how extractive companies impact upon this scenario. This work will use 5 key criteria that have been agreed with the Joint Advisory Committee on the Ethics of Investment. There have been 33 examples of direct contact with the senior executives of companies in the last year. Through our collaborative engagements through a number of faith and industry groups this number rises to in excess of 400.
I commend to you the annual report of the Joint Advisory Committee on the Ethics of Investment elsewhere in the Conference Agenda. Amongst the activity I would highlight is:

**Human Rights.** We have challenged a number of sectors on their modern slavery polices. This includes the telecom sector on the use of child labour in Africa’s cobalt mines, house builders on health and safety conditions in the quarries that produce the granite for their fitted kitchens and supermarkets on the abuse of cheap labour in their fast car wash sites.

**Farm, nutrition and animal welfare.** We believe that we are the first institutional investor to introduce a policy that looks at farm related animal risk, antibiotic resistance in the livestock production sector and fair trade issues.

**Water Risk.** We continue to lead engagement on water risk for the Church Investors Group.

One feature of our work continues to be our voting record at general meetings where we have actively voted against board committees that support excessive executive pay, lack of boardroom diversity or ignore their lower paid. We voted against over half of shareholder resolutions seeking to approve executive remuneration:

**CFB: Voting record on shareholder resolutions**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>For</th>
<th>Oppose</th>
<th>Abstain</th>
<th>% Against or abstain</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Auditors</td>
<td>376</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Directors</td>
<td>2080</td>
<td>383</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>15.86%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remuneration</td>
<td>386</td>
<td>389</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>50.19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Executive Pay Scheme (UK)</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>34.38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shareholder Capital (Europe)</td>
<td>396</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>18.52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1632</td>
<td>175</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>10.58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>4891</strong></td>
<td><strong>1050</strong></td>
<td><strong>28</strong></td>
<td><strong>18.06%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Investment review of the year**

It has been another extraordinary year for investment markets. The long period of falling interest rates has finally come to an end as central banks increased their key lending rates in both the USA and the UK. For the gilt market this has signalled the end of a bull run that started several decades ago. For the stock market this would also normally signal tougher times ahead but the world’s economic growth has been sustained by the package of tax cuts brought in by the current administration in the USA. The substantial cuts to both corporate and individual tax rates led to another surge of support to the US stock market. Further help
has come from a tax change that encourages the repatriation of capital by major international US corporations. Initially these measures led to some wage improvement but the likely longer term beneficiaries are shareholders through share buy-backs and dividends. This fiscal stimulus has happened while the federal reserve board is concerned about inflationary pressures and is using monetary policy to calm the economy. This tension between fiscal and monetary policy will make for a more uncertain investment environment as Trump starts to think about the prospects for his re-election.

The UK has been dominated by progress – or lack thereof – on the Brexit negotiations. The UK is showing modest economic growth but is lagging behind the rest of the G8. Uncertainty over future access to international markets and labour has affected both corporate and consumer spending. The UK stock market initially benefited from the sell off in sterling after the Brexit referendum. To maintain this equilibrium the next few months must bring clarity on the UK’s access to international markets.

The performance of the CFB funds has had a mixed year. Our approach to company analysis in the UK equity market has seen a sustained period of outperformance. In contrast our third party managers in overseas equities have been more cautious in strong markets. We are currently reviewing an approach to international equities that would replicate our successful methodology in the UK. Our fixed interest funds were held back by our caution on UK interest rates several years ago.

**CFB Funds: Investment performance to 28.2.2018**

*All figures annualised after fees and extracted from independent data provided by Portfolio Evaluation Limited.*

Summary investment performance to 28.2.18

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fund size</th>
<th>One year</th>
<th>Three years</th>
<th>Five Years</th>
<th>Ten Years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CFB UK Equity Fund</td>
<td>£397.94m Fund</td>
<td>4.99</td>
<td>5.71</td>
<td>7.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benchmark</td>
<td>4.40</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>7.36</td>
<td>6.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excess return</td>
<td>0.59</td>
<td>0.71</td>
<td>0.18</td>
<td>0.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CFB Overseas Equity Fund</td>
<td>£191.28m Fund</td>
<td>7.32</td>
<td>12.80</td>
<td>12.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benchmark</td>
<td>8.14</td>
<td>13.85</td>
<td>13.38</td>
<td>10.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excess return</td>
<td>-0.82</td>
<td>-1.05</td>
<td>-0.45</td>
<td>-0.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fund</td>
<td>Amount</td>
<td>Fund Return</td>
<td>Benchmark Return</td>
<td>Excess Return</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------</td>
<td>---------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CFB Gilt Fund</strong></td>
<td>£11.58m</td>
<td>-1.30</td>
<td>3.09</td>
<td>3.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-1.22</td>
<td>3.40</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-0.08</td>
<td>-0.31</td>
<td>-0.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CFB Inflation Linked Fund</strong></td>
<td>£21.14m</td>
<td>-0.93</td>
<td>6.97</td>
<td>6.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-1.22</td>
<td>7.48</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.29</td>
<td>-0.51</td>
<td>-0.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CFB Short Fixed Income Fund</strong></td>
<td>£17.85m</td>
<td>-1.34</td>
<td>1.59</td>
<td>1.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-1.51</td>
<td>1.65</td>
<td>1.76</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.17</td>
<td>-0.06</td>
<td>-0.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CFB Corporate Bond Fund</strong></td>
<td>£100.26m</td>
<td>-0.39</td>
<td>3.04</td>
<td>4.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.18</td>
<td>3.48</td>
<td>4.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-0.57</td>
<td>-0.44</td>
<td>-0.48</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Central Finance Board conference on the ethics of investment
One of the highlights of the last year was the first client conference hosted by the CFB on investment and ethics. We will only improve our own engagement with companies by hearing about the issues that are of concern to the broader audience within Methodism. We hope to repeat this event with a northerly location later this year.

Epworth Investment Management
The sales and compliance resources that we invested in during 2017 will be largely focused on Epworth Investment Management (Epworth). This subsidiary currently provides investment management services to the Church and Charity sector through a range of common investment funds and a common deposit fund, branded “the Affirmative Funds”. Our mission statement includes commitments to construct portfolios which are consistent with the moral stance and teachings of the Christian faith and to be a Christian witness in the investment community.

We remain committed to our vision of Epworth providing investment solutions that are driven by our Christian ethical approach. However, we need to expand our investment proposition so that we can offer our target markets a complete investment solution. By the end of this year we hope to have a broader range of funds that will use the new Charity Authorised Investment Fund structure. Epworth’s existing Common Investment Funds are likely to convert to this new structure.
A major project during the last year has been the migration of the investment management relationships for the Methodist pension schemes from the Central Finance Board to Epworth Investment Management Limited. This is because the pension schemes decided to transfer the investment management of the pension schemes and associated AVC schemes to a regulated investment manager. I am grateful to the trustees of these schemes for their assistance and understanding during this migration.

**Our operating platform**
The CFB has combined third party and manual systems to value our Funds and record their day to day positions for a number of years. With settlement periods shortening and a desire to maintain standards in line with regulated firms, the Council identified the need to increase automation and the “straight through processing” functionality of our operating platform. We therefore engaged a firm of technology and finance consultants at the start of this year and asked them to identify solutions within a restricted budget to improve the robustness and scalability of our systems. Their early work focused on the demands of a new European Directive, MiFID II, that significantly increased our trade monitoring and client reporting standards. I am pleased to report that, unlike many firms in the City, we were compliant at the MiFID II implementation date in early January. Our consultants are now concentrating on improving the connectivity of our existing systems to automate the book of records for both client and investment purposes.

The final stages of this project are likely to see us out-sourcing some of the activities that the CFB has previously undertaken internally, including the unit pricing and accounting for the regulated funds. We hope that this will ease the work burden on the operating team who continue to impress me with their hard work and dedication.

**Looking forward to 2018/2019**
2018/2019 is the second year of a five year plan that the Council adopted last year. We have managed to get many of the building blocks in place that should enable Epworth to grow, and thus protect the CFB from any further attrition from our pension scheme clients. Our purpose remains to serve Methodism; to deliver low cost investment solutions that invest in line with the ethical stance of the Church. To ensure that we can continue to do this, the charity business in Epworth needs to grow. I hope that in a year’s time I will be reporting on a successful year for Epworth and a stable future for the CFB.

David Palmer
Chief Executive
**Investment Performance External Assessment**  
(Source: Portfolio Evaluation, except where stated) 28 February 2018

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Index</th>
<th>1 year to 28.02.18</th>
<th>5 years to 28.02.18</th>
<th>10 years to 28.02.18</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% p.a.</td>
<td>% p.a.</td>
<td>% p.a.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Equity</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CFB UK Equity Fund</td>
<td>+5.0</td>
<td>+7.5</td>
<td>+6.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FTSE All Share Index</td>
<td>+4.4</td>
<td>+7.3</td>
<td>+6.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CFB proprietary ethical Index</td>
<td>+4.4</td>
<td>+7.4</td>
<td>+6.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FTSE All Share Index (traditional ethical adjustment)</td>
<td>+5.5</td>
<td>+7.1</td>
<td>+6.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CFB Overseas Fund</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FTSE All World ex UK Index</td>
<td>+7.3</td>
<td>+12.9</td>
<td>+10.4</td>
</tr>
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<td>FTSE All World ex UK Index</td>
<td>+8.1</td>
<td>+13.4</td>
<td>+10.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CFB Managed Equity Fund¹</td>
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<td>+8.4</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managed Equity Fund Composite Index</td>
<td>+5.0</td>
<td>+8.2</td>
<td>+7.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managed Equity Fund Composite Index (using CFB proprietary UK Index)</td>
<td>+5.0</td>
<td>+8.3</td>
<td>+7.2</td>
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<td>Managed Equity Fund Composite Index (using traditional UK ethical adjustment)</td>
<td>+5.9</td>
<td>+8.1</td>
<td>+6.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CFB Managed Mixed Fund²</td>
<td>+5.1</td>
<td>+7.9</td>
<td>+7.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managed Mixed Composite Index</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managed Mixed Composite Index (using CFB proprietary UK Index)</td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managed Mixed Composite Index (using traditional UK ethical adjustment)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Fixed Interest</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>CFB Managed Fixed Interest Fund¹</td>
<td>-1.2</td>
<td>+2.8</td>
<td>+4.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managed Fixed Interest Composite</td>
<td>-1.1</td>
<td>+3.1</td>
<td>+4.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CFB Short Fixed Interest Fund</td>
<td>-1.3</td>
<td>+1.7</td>
<td>+4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short Gilt Composite Index</td>
<td>-1.5</td>
<td>+1.8</td>
<td>+3.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CFB Gilt Fund</td>
<td>-1.3</td>
<td>+3.7</td>
<td>+5.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FTSE All Stock Gilt Index</td>
<td>-1.2</td>
<td>+4.1</td>
<td>+5.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CFB Corporate Bond Fund¹</td>
<td>-0.2</td>
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<td>+6.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corporate Bond Composite Index</td>
<td>+0.2</td>
<td>+4.7</td>
<td>+5.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Inflation Linked</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CFB Inflation Linked Fund</td>
<td>-0.9</td>
<td>+6.8</td>
<td>+7.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FTSE All Stock Index Linked Index (gilt only)</td>
<td>-1.2</td>
<td>+7.3</td>
<td>+7.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Property</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CFB Property Fund¹⁻³</td>
<td>+11.8</td>
<td>+11.7</td>
<td>+4.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IPD All Balanced Funds Index⁻³</td>
<td>+10.2</td>
<td>+10.3</td>
<td>+3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cash (AERs)</strong></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>CFB Deposit Fund¹</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Week LIBID</td>
<td>+0.2</td>
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<td>+0.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹ Source: CFB ² Source: IPD ³ Performance to 31 December 2018
42. Central Finance Board

***RESOLUTIONS

42/1. The Conference adopts the Report of the Central Finance Board.

42/2. The Conference elects the following persons to the Central Finance Board for the period of one year from 1 September 2018:

Dr Keith Aldred, Ruby Beech, Graham Boyd, Ralph Dransfield, Caroline Edwards, the Revd Anne Ellis, Ashley France, John Gibbon, Anne Goodman, Alan Groves, Frank Guaschi, David Haslam, Sue Haworth, Peter Hobbs, the Revd Dr Peter Howson, the Revd R Andrew Laird, Theophilus Mensah, Nick Moore, the Revd Leslie Newton, John O’Brien, Colin Pearson, the Revd Jennifer Potter, Martin Rees, John Sandford, Gordon Slater, Andrew Slim, the Revd Eleanor Smith, Anthea Sully, the Revd Graham Thompson, Geoffrey Wilcox, Morwenna Williams, Terry Wynn.
1. The Authorisations Committee has reviewed applications from Circuits to authorise those who are not ordained as presbyters to preside at services of Holy Communion. Careful consideration was given to applications using the established criteria.

2. The Committee considered a total of 76 new applications (including renewals after three years): 25 presbyteral probationers, 1 deacon and 50 lay people. Seventy-one authorisations are recommended to the Conference. One diaconal application was recommended due to exceptional circumstances. The Committee declined to recommend four lay applications on the grounds of not meeting the deprivation figure and/or not making best use of existing resources.

3. It is clear to the Committee that the pattern of authorisation applications has been changing over the last thirty years. While the numbers vary considerably from year to year, the overall trends are clear. Some aspects of figures shown in the attached chart are entirely expected considering the statistics for mission with which we are familiar. The overall trend of a decline in membership is apparent. However, as the overall number of authorisation applications has declined there has been a notable change in the proportion of authorisations issued for probationers and lay people. At the end of the 1980s the number of authorisations for probationers was consistently greater than those for lay people; now the reverse is true.

4. It is the task of this Committee to implement the policy of the Conference and not to set it. In the light of the changes outlined above and the reply to Memorial M16 in 2016, the Committee feels that we now need clearer direction with regard to the situation of lay employees who lead pastoral care within congregations. A Conference Statement in 1996 stated that authorisations are granted for a Circuit as a whole, and are not related to any pastoral relationship between the person with an authorisation and particular congregations. The reply to Memorial M10 in 2016 reiterated this principle. While recognising that among many Methodist people there would seem to be a natural link between who presides at communion and who has responsibility for leading in pastoral care, the current position is that this cannot be used as grounds to strengthen any application. There is now some uncertainty about whether it is ever appropriate for a person named as a lay employee with pastoral care of congregations to be given an authorisation. Up to now, this has not been an active consideration within the Committee’s work, and indeed, there are already a number of situations where lay workers who lead pastoral care within a congregation also hold an authorisation; some of these are long-standing. The Committee sought clarification from the Districts as to
the number of individuals in this situation and it is a total of six. Given the changing patterns of authorisation applications we believe it would be helpful to clarify the position in this regard, and to include a statement about this within the criteria.

5. The Committee again had the opportunity to consider applications made under the missional criterion approved by the 2012 Conference and is grateful to the Revd Ian Bell from Venture FX for attending the meeting to discuss the current situation. It was recognised that the situation of certain missional congregations is such that different criteria need to be applied when granting authorisations. However, the Committee again felt that the missional criteria are not sufficiently clear to allow for a proper consideration of these matters. Furthermore, in discussion regarding the reply to M10 (2016), it became obvious that clarification was needed about the position of employed Lay Pioneers in significant pastoral roles.

6. The Committee was extremely grateful for the input of Mr Bell and agreed to seek the permission of the Conference to consult with the Connexional Team members with responsibility for Fresh Expressions in the case of future applications under missional criteria.

7. The Committee considered two applications made under this criterion, and it was decided to approve one on cultural isolation grounds and that further conversation was needed with the District making the other. A member of the Committee with significant experience of Fresh Expressions agreed to lead this process.

8. This year the Committee made a revision to the application form for a probationer presbyter regarding the signature on behalf of the Connexional Team which can introduce unnecessary delay into the process. The Committee trusts oversight tutors to complete the stationing profiles and felt it was unnecessary for members of the Connexional Team to express an opinion on probationers. The form therefore now states that “The stationing profile of the probationer presbyter will indicate whether he/she is a suitable person to preside at the Lord’s Supper.” This will require a small change to SO (011(2)(b) as follows:

SO 011(2) (b) Persons nominated for authorisation to preside at the Lord’s Supper shall be members in the Circuit, or deacons or probationers appointed or expected to be appointed to it. The district Policy Committee shall be provided with information as to the suitability of all persons so nominated, and shall make its recommendations to the Synod. Such information shall be provided by the Circuit Meeting in the case of members in the Circuit, by the appropriate member of the Connexional Team Oversight Committee in the case of presbyteral probationers, and by the Warden of the Methodist Diaconal Order in the case of deacons and diaconal probationers.
9. The Committee seeks the approval of the Conference for the addition of the following paragraph to the current criteria in CPD Book VI, Part 3, *Authorising Persons other than Presbyters to Preside at the Lord’s Supper*:

> **4A Authorisations are granted for someone to assist across a Circuit, except in the case of the missional criteria outlined above. They are not related to the relationship of pastoral care which any individual has with particular congregations. While it is possible for an application to be made for someone who carries pastoral responsibilities for congregations within a Circuit, such relationship is not part of our criteria and does not strengthen an application in any way. In circumstances where the committee judges that such an arrangement might lead to a blurring of the distinctions between particular callings and ministries, the Authorisations Committee may decline to recommend an authorisation for a given named individual even when the other criteria are met.**

10. The Committee approved the updating of the application forms and they are available for the authorisation of probationer presbyters, deacons, lay persons, missional applications and renewals after the three-year term. These will be available to District Chairs in October. Applications need to be considered by Circuit Meetings, District Policy Committees and Synods before submission.

11. In the case of applications for authorisations for deacons, these should only be submitted following a thorough consultation with the Warden of the Methodist Diaconal Order and on the basis that the Circuit will make every effort to train a lay person to take up the role the following year.

12. All applications for consideration in 2019 should be submitted to the Conference Office by Friday 12 April 2019. The Committee will meet at the end of April 2019 to consider the applications received.

13. Authorisations, when granted, are for one year and their scope is limited to the Circuit in which the person resides. If the District Policy Committee is satisfied that the person authorised remains suitable and the circumstances of the Circuit have not changed, it may on the application of the Circuit Meeting recommend a renewal of the authorisation for a second or third year, and the Authorisations Committee supports any such recommendation without further investigation (see lists B and C below).

14. The Committee is planning to gather information about the current situation with regard to deprivation, given changes which have taken place on the ground, with particular reference to larger Circuits and Fresh Expressions. On this basis the Committee will continue work on the review of the current criteria for deprivation.
15. The Committee welcomes informal consultations with any Circuit considering making an application for an authorisation.

***RESOLUTIONS

43/1. The Conference receives the Report.

43/2. The Conference amends SO 011(2)(b) as set out in paragraph 8 of the Report.

43/3. The Conference adds the following paragraph to the current criteria: CPD Book VI, Part 3, Authorising Persons other than Presbyters to Preside at the Lord’s Supper:

4A Authorisations are granted for someone to assist across a Circuit, except in the case of the missional criteria outlined above. They are not related to the relationship of pastoral care which any individual has with particular congregations. While it is possible for an application to be made for someone who carries pastoral responsibilities for congregations within a Circuit, such relationship is not part of our criteria and does not strengthen an application in any way. In circumstances where the committee judges that such an arrangement might lead to a blurring of the distinctions between particular callings and ministries, the Authorisations Committee may decline to recommend an authorisation for a given named individual even when the other criteria are met.

43/4. The Conference directs the Authorisations Committee to seek the advice of the Connexional Team member responsible for Fresh Expressions when considering applications made under missional criteria.
***RESOLUTION

43/5. The Conference authorises the following persons to preside at the Lord’s Supper for the year commencing 1 September 2018 in accordance with the provisions of SO 011:

AUTORISATIONS TO BE PRESENTED TO THE 2018 CONFERENCE

Key: P = Probationer presbyter
      D = Deacon
      L = Lay person
      M = Approved under missional criterion

LIST A – New applications for authorisations for three years

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Circuit no</th>
<th>Circuit name</th>
<th>Application</th>
<th>Cat</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1/1</td>
<td>Cymru</td>
<td>Jonathan Miller</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/9</td>
<td>Cardiff</td>
<td>Alun Hughes</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/9</td>
<td>Cardiff</td>
<td>Alexis Mahoney</td>
<td>P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/16</td>
<td>Mid Glamorgan Mission</td>
<td>Eileen Gardiner</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/16</td>
<td>Mid Glamorgan Mission</td>
<td>Philip J Osborne</td>
<td>P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/25</td>
<td>Welshpool Bro Hafren</td>
<td>John Harbron</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/25</td>
<td>Welshpool Bro Hafren</td>
<td>Jennifer Thomas</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5/6</td>
<td>Birmingham (West) and Oldbury</td>
<td>Michael Hall</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/7</td>
<td>Kirkby Stephen, Appleby and Tebay</td>
<td>Andrew J Sterling</td>
<td>P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/13</td>
<td>Kendal</td>
<td>Marc D Jackson</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/14</td>
<td>South Lakes</td>
<td>John Biggs</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/14</td>
<td>South Lakes</td>
<td>Brenda Horrocks</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/16</td>
<td>South West Cumbria United Area</td>
<td>Zena Smith</td>
<td>P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/22</td>
<td>North Staffordshire</td>
<td>Joy R Ventom</td>
<td>P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/24</td>
<td>Staffordshire Moorlands</td>
<td>Lynne Bradbury</td>
<td>L</td>
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<td>12/3</td>
<td>Falmouth and Gwennap</td>
<td>Gerald Triggs</td>
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<td>12/5</td>
<td>Newquay, Perranporth and St Agnes</td>
<td>Clare J Anderson</td>
<td>P</td>
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<td>12/5</td>
<td>Newquay, Perranporth and St Agnes</td>
<td>Michael Fairhead</td>
<td>L</td>
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<td>12/5</td>
<td>Newquay, Perranporth and St Agnes</td>
<td>Miranda Knight</td>
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<tr>
<td>12/7</td>
<td>St Austell</td>
<td>John Keast</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Committee Member</td>
<td>Type</td>
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<td>-------</td>
<td>---------------------------------</td>
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<td>12/8</td>
<td>Bodmin, Padstow and Wadebridge</td>
<td>Roderick Harrison</td>
<td>L</td>
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<tr>
<td>12/12</td>
<td>St Ives (Fore Street)</td>
<td>W Rodney Orr</td>
<td>L</td>
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<tr>
<td>12/14</td>
<td>Lizard and Mount’s Bay</td>
<td>William T Reed</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13/3</td>
<td>Stockton</td>
<td>Sheila Hargreaves</td>
<td>L</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Stockton</td>
<td>A Keith Robinson</td>
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<td>Norfolk Broads</td>
<td>Shaun Cushion</td>
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<td>18/13</td>
<td>Sankey Valley</td>
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<td>Altrincham</td>
<td>Shirley Blinston</td>
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<td>Oldham and Saddleworth</td>
<td>Natalie Hackett</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Graham Radcliffe</td>
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<tr>
<td>22/14</td>
<td>Mid Derbyshire</td>
<td>Keith Bryan</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>John P Malnutt</td>
<td>P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Oxford</td>
<td>Paul G Carter</td>
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<tr>
<td>23/7</td>
<td>Leicester (Trinity)</td>
<td>D Jervis Yovan</td>
<td>P</td>
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<td>23/9</td>
<td>Leicester (West)</td>
<td>Judith Lincoln</td>
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<td>23/10</td>
<td>Loughborough</td>
<td>Calvin Cheung</td>
<td>P (M)</td>
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<tr>
<td>23/11</td>
<td>Hinckley</td>
<td>Judith Cooke</td>
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<tr>
<td>23/12</td>
<td>Melton Mowbray</td>
<td>Michael Thompson</td>
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<td>23/29</td>
<td>Vale of Aylesbury</td>
<td>Arthur Sara</td>
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<tr>
<td>24/11</td>
<td>Bude and Holsworthy</td>
<td>Muriel Hodges</td>
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<td>24/11</td>
<td>Bude and Holsworthy</td>
<td>Clive Smale</td>
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<td>24/20</td>
<td>Ilfracombe and Barnstable</td>
<td>Martin Reardon</td>
<td>L</td>
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<td>25/1</td>
<td>Sheffield</td>
<td>Melissa Quinn</td>
<td>L</td>
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<td>25/11</td>
<td>Bolsover and Stavely</td>
<td>Kevin Laming</td>
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<td>Doncaster</td>
<td>Susanna Brookes</td>
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<td>Christine Ogley</td>
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<td>26/8</td>
<td>Dorset South and West</td>
<td>Pam Woodland</td>
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<td>26/10</td>
<td>Christchurch and Wimborne</td>
<td>Phillip Dixon</td>
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<td>26/11</td>
<td>Isle of Wight</td>
<td>Maralyne Hollingshead</td>
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<td>Isle of Wight</td>
<td>Marian Izzard</td>
<td>L</td>
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<tr>
<td>27/2</td>
<td>Leeds (North and East)</td>
<td>Rebecca Stennett</td>
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### List B – Renewals after one year for applications granted in 2017

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<th>Circuit no</th>
<th>Circuit name</th>
<th>Application</th>
<th>Cat</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2/9</td>
<td>Cardiff</td>
<td>Anne (Alana) Lawrence</td>
<td>P</td>
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<tr>
<td>2/18</td>
<td>Neath Port Talbot</td>
<td>Clement Raymond</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/20</td>
<td>South West Wales</td>
<td>Ian D Ledgard</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/14</td>
<td>South Lakes</td>
<td>Brenda Horrocks</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/16</td>
<td>South West Cumbria United Area</td>
<td>Sophie Carnaby</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/16</td>
<td>South West Cumbria United Area</td>
<td>Hayley Edmondson</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/1</td>
<td>Chester and Delamere Forest</td>
<td>David Bintliff</td>
<td>P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/15</td>
<td>Stoke-on-Trent North</td>
<td>Paul Owen</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12/1</td>
<td>Camborne, Redruth and Hayle</td>
<td>Brian Thornton</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12/7</td>
<td>St Austell</td>
<td>J Paul Parker</td>
<td>P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12/11</td>
<td>St Ives</td>
<td>Kenneth Basset</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12/11</td>
<td>St Ives</td>
<td>R J Lester Scott</td>
<td>L</td>
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<tr>
<td>12/19</td>
<td>Liskeard and Looe</td>
<td>David Nicholls</td>
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### 43. Authorisations Committee

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Constituency</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<td>Castle Eden</td>
<td>John G Kidd</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13/17</td>
<td>Barnard Castle and Teesdale</td>
<td>William Bartle</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14/1</td>
<td>Norwich</td>
<td>Mary Sachikonye</td>
<td>P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15/1</td>
<td>Isle of Man</td>
<td>Andrew G Fishburne</td>
<td>P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21/10</td>
<td>Chorley and Leyland</td>
<td>Tony Simpson</td>
<td>P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21/16</td>
<td>North Lancashire</td>
<td>Emma Holroyd</td>
<td>P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22/3</td>
<td>Nottingham (East)</td>
<td>Tim Nash</td>
<td>L (M)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22/13</td>
<td>Borders Mission</td>
<td>Nicola A Briggs</td>
<td>P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22/13</td>
<td>Borders Mission</td>
<td>David Hopkinson</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22/13</td>
<td>Borders Mission</td>
<td>Harold Smith</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22/28</td>
<td>South Derbyshire</td>
<td>Joyce Greenwood</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23/5</td>
<td>Banbury</td>
<td>Hazel Stagg</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23/7</td>
<td>Leicester (Trinity)</td>
<td>Jo Kay</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23/7</td>
<td>Leicester (Trinity)</td>
<td>Sue Moore</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23/11</td>
<td>Hinckley</td>
<td>Neville Spark</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23/19</td>
<td>Kettering and Corby</td>
<td>Maureen Ownsworth</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23/19</td>
<td>Kettering and Corby</td>
<td>Philip Rice</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23/19</td>
<td>Kettering and Corby</td>
<td>Kate Horrix</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24/10</td>
<td>South Devon</td>
<td>Rachel A Mitchell</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24/11</td>
<td>Bude and Holsworthy</td>
<td>Courtney Drew</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24/11</td>
<td>Bude and Holsworthy</td>
<td>Michael Reeves</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24/16</td>
<td>Tiverton and Wellington</td>
<td>Anne Browse</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24/16</td>
<td>Tiverton and Wellington</td>
<td>Hilary Young</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24/20</td>
<td>Ilfracombe and Barnstaple</td>
<td>Sylvia Edwards</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24/22</td>
<td>South Molton and Ringsash</td>
<td>Gloria Manning</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24/22</td>
<td>South Molton and Ringsash</td>
<td>Arthur Mildon</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24/23</td>
<td>Torridge</td>
<td>Elsie Potter</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24/24</td>
<td>West Devon</td>
<td>Daisy Bray</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24/24</td>
<td>West Devon</td>
<td>Barry Searle</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24/25</td>
<td>West Somerset</td>
<td>Margaret Lintern</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24/27</td>
<td>Ringsash</td>
<td>Colin Rice</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25/15</td>
<td>Barnsley</td>
<td>Claire E Rawlinson</td>
<td>P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25/17</td>
<td>Rotherham and Dearne Valley</td>
<td>Wayne Ashton</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26/4</td>
<td>Basingstoke and Reading</td>
<td>Terry Rowell</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26/4</td>
<td>Basingstoke and Reading</td>
<td>Sarah Whithorn</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### 43. Authorisations Committee

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Circuit no</th>
<th>Circuit name</th>
<th>Application</th>
<th>Cat</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>26/5</td>
<td>Yeovil and Blackmore Vale</td>
<td>Jennifer Gardner</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26/6</td>
<td>Meon Valley</td>
<td>Rosie Banks</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27/32</td>
<td>Bradford North</td>
<td>Stuart Ayrton</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27/36</td>
<td>North Kirklees and Morley</td>
<td>Raymond F P Borrett</td>
<td>P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28/3</td>
<td>Shropshire and Marches</td>
<td>Shalome MacNeill Cooper</td>
<td>P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28/3</td>
<td>Shropshire and Marches</td>
<td>Sue Matthews</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28/3</td>
<td>Shropshire and Marches</td>
<td>Jacob Molyneux</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28/14</td>
<td>Gornal and Sedgley</td>
<td>William Caldwell</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29/26</td>
<td>Nidd Valley</td>
<td>Grace R Cauldwell</td>
<td>P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32/1</td>
<td>Lerwick and Walls</td>
<td>David M Lees</td>
<td>P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34/4</td>
<td>South Bedfordshire</td>
<td>Martin Wallis</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34/7</td>
<td>Tendring</td>
<td>Christine P Preece</td>
<td>P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34/9</td>
<td>Chelmsford</td>
<td>Esther A Hume</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34/9</td>
<td>Chelmsford</td>
<td>Sue Johnson</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34/9</td>
<td>Chelmsford</td>
<td>Gillian Songer</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34/14</td>
<td>West Hertfordshire and Borders</td>
<td>Mmasape Zihle</td>
<td>P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35/28</td>
<td>Blackheath and Crystal Palace</td>
<td>Alberta Konadu-Yiadom</td>
<td>P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35/31</td>
<td>Barking, Dagenham and Ilford</td>
<td>Kido Baek</td>
<td>P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36/2</td>
<td>Berkshire Surrey Borders</td>
<td>Sharon M Gardner</td>
<td>P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36/18</td>
<td>Weald of Kent</td>
<td>Richard Cannam</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**LIST C – Renewals after two years initially granted in 2016**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Circuit no</th>
<th>Circuit name</th>
<th>Application</th>
<th>Cat</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1/1</td>
<td>Cymru (Bathafarn)</td>
<td>Elizabeth Jones</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/1</td>
<td>Cymru (Glanau Maelor)</td>
<td>Philip Davies</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/1</td>
<td>Cymru (Glanau Maelor)</td>
<td>Goronwy Ellis</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/1</td>
<td>Cymru (Glanau Maelor)</td>
<td>Maryl Rees</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/1</td>
<td>Cymru (Glanau Meirion a Dyfi)</td>
<td>Eluned Williams</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/1</td>
<td>Cymru (Powys)</td>
<td>John Ellis</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/1</td>
<td>Cymru (Powys)</td>
<td>Tom Ellis</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/3</td>
<td>Bangor and Holyhead</td>
<td>Howard Jackson</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/3</td>
<td>Bangor and Holyhead</td>
<td>Royce Warner</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5/13</td>
<td>Mid-Warwickshire</td>
<td>Trevor Pethick</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6/5  Wigan                              Jim Whelan  L
9/4  Whitehaven                        David Andrews L
9/4  Whitehaven                        Alan Moore   L
9/7  Kirkby Stephen, Appleby and Tebay  David Askew L
9/7  Kirkby Stephen, Appleby and Tebay  Wilf Capstick L
9/7  Kirkby Stephen, Appleby and Tebay  Donald Marston L
9/14 South Lakes                      John Biggs   L
9/16 South West Cumbria United Area    Bob Mantle   L
9/16 South West Cumbria United Area    Janet Ladds  L
12/1 Camborne-Redruth and Hayle        Marquis Honeychurch L
12/3 Falmouth and Gwennap             Mike Ely     L
12/3 Falmouth and Gwennap             Jenny Lockwood L
12/5 Newquay, Perranporth and St Agnes Christine Roberts L
12/7 St Austell                       Sheila Allen  L
12/7 St Austell                       Bernard Goudge L
12/7 St Austell                       Mary Lightfoot L
12/7 St Austell                       Tony Warren   L
12/8 Bodmin, Padstow and Wadebridge   Anita Baker   L
12/8 Bodmin, Padstow and Wadebridge   Val Sterling  L
12/8 Bodmin, Padstow and Wadebridge   Myra Williams L
12/20 Camelford and Week St Mary      Glenton Brown L
12/20 Camelford and Week St Mary      Robin Heywood L
12/20 Camelford and Week St Mary      Brian Parkman L
15/1 Isle of Man                      Nicholas Owen L
17/6 East Lincolnshire                Deryck Hand   L
17/6 East Lincolnshire                Keith Locke   L
17/6 East Lincolnshire                Roger Maidens L
22/14 Mid Derbyshire                  John Moorley  L
22/14 Mid Derbyshire                  Valerie Rollisson L
23/12 Melton Mowbray                  Jenny Oliver  L
23/14 Rugby and Daventry              Christine Herrington L
23/28 Amersham                        John Poston   L
23/28 Amersham                        Pamela A Sitford L
24/20 Ilfracombe and Barnstaple       Geoffrey Harding L
24/20 Ilfracombe and Barnstaple       Brenda Prentice L
24/23 Torridge                        David Ley    L
| 25/1  | Sheffield       | Keith Blinston | L |
| 25/14 | Doncaster       | Sue Pickering  | L |
| 25/17 | Rotherham and Dearne Valley | Anne Holmes | L |
| 26/2  | Winchester, Eastleigh and Romsey | Fay Spencer | L |
| 26/4  | Basingstoke and Reading | Patricia Jose | L |
| 26/5  | Yeovil and Blackmore Vale | Margaret Whitford | L |
| 26/11 | Isle of Wight  | Margaret Potts | L |
| 26/11 | Isle of Wight  | John Wells     | L |
| 27/18 | Skipton and Grassington | Jane Jolly | L |
| 35/28 | Blackheath and Crystal Palace | Alberta Konadu-Yiadom | P |
| 36/21 | North Kent      | Bart Woodhouse | L (M) |
Below appears a list of Memorials and Notices of Motion from previous Conferences which have not yet received a final reply or are not reported on elsewhere in the Agenda. In October 2017 the Methodist Council received, as part of the work plan for the Connexional Team, a list of items generated by the 2017 Conference as well as a list of outstanding items. The Council welcomed the proposals made in it for the prioritisation of the work. (See Council paper MC/17/83.)

In the final column of the list below, under the heading Current Situation, a report is given on how the items of business have been dealt with at this Conference, or what recommendations are being made about how they are dealt with in the future.

**Memorials from the 2015 Conference**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MEMORIALS</th>
<th>Work to be undertaken by (eg committee or cluster)</th>
<th>Deadline for report to the Conference</th>
<th>Current Situation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>M19: Management of listed buildings</td>
<td>Methodist Council</td>
<td>2016</td>
<td>The Council proposes that the points raised within this Memorial are addressed as an overall property strategy is developed.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Memorials from the 2016 Conference**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MEMORIALS</th>
<th>Work to be undertaken by (eg committee or cluster)</th>
<th>Deadline for report to the Conference</th>
<th>Current Situation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>M22: Systems for recording safeguarding cases</td>
<td>Methodist Council</td>
<td>2018</td>
<td>The Council has identified a set of principles to be followed, as well as areas that require further testing. Further work is underway and a fully costed plan will be brought to the Council in 2019. [See MC/18/61.]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M32: Use of church buildings by other churches</td>
<td>Methodist Council, in consultation with the Law and Polity Committee</td>
<td>2018</td>
<td>See update in the report of the Committee on Methodist Law and Polity (1). The Committee will bring any proposed amendments to the Model Trusts to the Conference in 2019.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Memorials from the 2017 Conference

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MEMORIALS</th>
<th>Work to be undertaken by (eg committee or cluster)</th>
<th>Deadline for report to the Conference</th>
<th>Current Situation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>M4: Candidating for ministers seeking to move from presbyter to deacon or vice versa</td>
<td>Ministerial Candidates’ and Probationers’ Oversight Committee in consultation with the Faith and Order Committee</td>
<td>2019</td>
<td>Ongoing work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M6: Serving another denomination</td>
<td>Ministries Committee</td>
<td>2019</td>
<td>Ongoing work.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notices of Motion from previous Conferences referred for report to the Conference

| NM 109 (2013) Diaconal membership | Methodist Council | No later than 2015 | Work yet to be completed; referred to the work which is underway regarding the theological and ecclesiological underpinning of the diaconate. |

***RESOLUTION

44/1.  The Conference adopts the Report.
45. Permissions to Serve

1. **PRESBYTERS OFFERING AS CANDIDATES FOR THE DIACONATE**
   No case

2. **TRANSFER TO OTHER CONFERENCES AND DENOMINATIONS**
   No case

3. **TRANSFER TO THE METHODIST CHURCH IN IRELAND**
   No case

4. **PERMISSION TO SERVE ABROAD**
   See the draft of the stations

5. **PERMISSION TO RESIDE ABROAD**
   See the draft of the stations

6. **PERMISSION TO SERVE ANOTHER CHURCH (under Standing Order 735)**
   See the draft of the stations

***RESOLUTION (Presbyteral Session)***

45/1. The Conference adopts the Report.
SECTION H
QUINQUENNIAL SURVEYS

The Property Development Committee identified the need for quinquennial survey reports (building surveys undertaken every five years) to be sent to the District Property Secretaries. No such requirement is currently set out in Standing Orders but it is considered helpful for District Property Secretaries to see these reports that are undertaken of local church and circuit property every five years. Receiving copies of the reports will help to ensure managing trustees are acting upon the recommendations made.

The Property Development Committee also noted that there is no requirement within Standing Orders for quinquennial reports for connexional or conference property. It is considered prudent for all managing trustees to undertake such surveys and therefore a new Standing Order containing this requirement is proposed.

Amendment to Standing Orders

953 Local Property. In relation to local property the Circuit Meeting shall also:

(i), (ii) [unchanged];
(iii) send to the district property secretaries such originals, copies or summaries of the above schedules as may be directed by the Connexional Team, together with any quinquennial report on local property obtained since the last such return and a report on matters requiring special attention, especially where work recommended by the quinquennial inspections has not been undertaken.

954 Circuit Property. In relation to circuit property the Circuit Meeting shall also ensure that either the meeting itself or officers or committees appointed for the purpose:

(i) – (ix) [unchanged];
(x) send to the district property secretaries annually any quinquennial report on circuit property obtained since the last such return.

***RESOLUTIONS

46/1. The Conference receives the Report.
46/2. The Conference amends Standing Orders 953 and 954 as set out in the Report.

46/3. The Conference adopts a new Standing Order 96A0 as set out below.

Section 96A Connexional and Conference Property

96A0 Quinquennial Reports. (1) All connexional and conference trustees shall, subject to clause (2) below, arrange for an inspection, which shall include an inspection for timber decay, at least once every five years of all property of which they are trustees by professionally qualified persons, who shall report on their inspection to the relevant connexional or conference trustees. The trustees shall ensure that every inspector engaged to carry out an inspection under this clause complies with the requirements set out in Standing Order 952(3). They shall also ensure that any further investigatory inspections shown to be necessary in the initial inspection report are carried out.

(2) Clause (1) above shall not apply to Methodist premises which are no longer required for any purpose within heads (b) to (o) of paragraph 13 of the Model Trusts and are demised on a full repairing lease for a term of 10 years or more.

SECTION I
DATA PROTECTION

The Methodist Council received a report at its meeting in April 2018 detailing the requirements of the General Data Protection Regulation being introduced on 25 May 2018. The Council agreed to the principle of managing trustees being required to comply with or adopt data protection policies or procedures that the Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes as the data controller produce. This requirement of managing trustees is necessary in light of the additional requirements within the Regulation for data controllers and data processors to be able to demonstrate accountability.

Amendment to Standing Orders

019 Data Protection. (1) [unchanged]

(2) [unchanged]

(3) In England and Wales, and in Scotland, any such body may shall be registered separately by giving the required notification directly to with the relevant authority (the Information Commissioner’s Office (‘ICO’)), and shall do so if and only if inclusion within the notification registration by the Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes (‘the Board’) is not sufficiently comprehensive for its purposes. Every such body which is thus registered directly with the Commissioner ICO shall notify the Board in writing of that fact and of the reasons why
**46. Committee on Methodist Law and Polity (2)**

*separate registration has been necessary.* Every such body which has not so notified the Board will be registered under *included within* the Board’s notification *registration*. In other jurisdictions, any such body must register separately with the appropriate authority as required by the relevant legislation.

(4) The *Every* Synod, Circuit Meeting, *and* Church Council or other responsible authority of each body registered under *included within* the Board’s notification *registration shall adopt and comply with such data protection policies and procedures as the Board may properly require as data controller and shall indemnify the Board, as data controller, against the consequences of any breach of the Data Protection legislation, regulations or orders, *clause (1) above or of this clause* committed by any officer (ministerial or lay), meeting or committee of that body or by any other person or persons holding data relating to its affairs.

***RESOLUTIONS***


46/5. The Conference amends Standing Order 019 as set out in the Report.

**SECTION J
REPETITIVE COMPLAINTS**

The Law and Polity sub-committee that keeps under review the complaints and discipline process has noted that there are occasions when a complainant makes repeated complaints of a similar nature against the same or different people. Such repeated complaints can absorb a significant amount of time of the Connexional Complaints Panel members and the relevant Connexional Team member. Repeated complaints cannot be dealt with under the existing persistent complainant procedures within Standing Order 1155 as this only addresses persistent complaints about the Part 11 process. A new Standing Order is therefore set out below in order to address repeated complaints more effectively.

*** RESOLUTIONS ***


46/7. The Conference adopts a new Standing Order 1155A as set out below.

**1155A Repetitive Complainants. (1) In this Standing Order:**

(i) “a repeated complaint” means a complaint which is the same or substantially
similar to another complaint made by the same complainant against the same person or a different person or persons in respect of which consideration is being given or has been given in accordance with this Part;

(ii) “a multiple complainant” means a person who makes or has made two or more repeated complaints;

(iii) “a repetitive complainant” means a multiple complainant in respect of whom it has been decided in accordance with the provisions of this Standing Order that any future complaint by him or her should be dealt with immediately by a team convened from the connexional Complaints Panel, which would be required before taking any further steps to consider whether in all the circumstances of the case, including the apparent merits of the particular complaint, that complaint should or should not be allowed to proceed;

(iv) “the referee” means the person to whom a matter has been referred under clause (4) below.

(2) This Standing Order shall apply when the relevant connexional Team member is aware or is informed that a person is or may be a multiple complainant.

(3) Any person receiving a complaint which he or she believes may be a repeated complaint shall, before taking any steps in respect of such complaint, inform the relevant connexional Team member of the details of the complaint and the grounds on which he or she believes it to be a repeated complaint.

(4) If the relevant connexional Team member considers that the complainant may be a multiple complainant he or she may refer the matter to a person falling within Standing Order 231(3) for consideration whether the complainant should be declared to be a repetitive complainant.

(5) (a) The relevant connexional Team member makes a reference under clause (4) above by writing to the referee setting out the reasons for which the reference is being made and supplying him or her with the relevant documents.

(b) If the relevant connexional Team member refers a matter to a referee, he or she must inform the complainant that the reference had been made and what would be the effect if the complainant is declared to be a repetitive complainant. A copy of the reference must be sent to the complainant, together with a list of the documents supplied. The relevant connexional Team member must also state that he or she will not in future communicate further with the complainant in relation to the complaints made while the referee is considering his or her decision.

(c) The relevant connexional Team member must further inform the complainant that if he or she wishes to make representations to the referee, those representations must be sent in writing to the relevant connexional Team
member within 14 days from the day on which the complainant is so informed.

(d) The relevant connexional Team member must pass any representations received to the referee, who must not make a decision until the time for making representations has expired.

(6) The referee must consider the documentary material supplied to him or her and decide whether there is such a risk that the complainant will make repeated complaints that fairness requires that all future complaints by the complainant should be considered at a connexional level by a team which is aware of the history of the complainant as respects the complaints and discipline process. The referee must record his or her decision in writing, giving reasons, and send the record to the relevant connexional Team member for safe custody.

(7) The relevant connexional Team member must inform the complainant of the decision of the referee. If the decision is that the complainant should be declared a repetitive complainant, the relevant connexional Team member must also inform the Chair of District and the Superintendent or other person who is the local complaints officer of the Circuit in which the complainant is stationed or a member or with which he or she (if not a member of the Methodist Church) appears to have the closest connection.

(8) Any person who becomes aware that a repetitive complainant is making a complaint under this Part must take all necessary steps to ensure that the complaint is dealt with in accordance with the provisions of this Standing Order.

(9) No appeal lies against a decision that a complainant is a repetitive complainant.

SECTION K
TRANSFERRING MINISTERS

The 2017 Conference received a report from the Ministries Committee and adopted its recommendation that sought to provide clarity as to the requirements for a minister who is seeking to transfer between churches. Where Standing Order amendments are required, the proposed amendments have been set out below and other recommendations contained within the report shall be addressed through guidance or footnotes to Standing Orders.

a) The report recommended that there should be a requirement for any applicant applying to transfer between churches to have engaged in preliminary conversations with senior people in their own Conference/Church prior to making their application.

b) The report also recommended that a minister who has already undergone a discernment process to become Recognised and Regarded need not repeat that process but should nevertheless be subject to the requirements of the Ministerial Candidates Selection Committee.
The necessary Standing Order amendments and new Standing Orders are set out below:

730 Ministerial Transfer between Churches

(4) **Subject to clause (5A) below** the Team member shall also:

(i) [unchanged]
(ii) appoint and obtain a report from a connexional assessor, who shall meet the applicant and make such other enquiries as to the applicant’s effectiveness in ministry as he or she thinks fit;
(iii) **obtain a ‘fitness to minister’ assessment covering both physical and psychological wellbeing conducted by a provider of occupational health services.**

(5A) **The results of this assessment shall be disclosed to the Ministerial Candidates Selection Committee only after it has made its recommendation. The medical committee of the Methodist Council shall be consulted if the recommendation of the ‘fitness’ assessor contradicts a ‘recommended’ or ‘conditionally recommended’ report from the committee.**

(5B) **In the case of an applicant who is recognised and regarded as a presbyter or a deacon under clause 43(b), 44(b), 45(a) or 45A(a) of the Deed of Union the requirements of clauses (4) and (5) above shall apply only to the extent determined by the Ministerial Candidates Selection Committee.**
(6) The application shall be considered by the Ministerial Candidates Selection Committee, meeting specially, if necessary, for the purpose. Clauses (1) to (9) of Standing Order 713 shall apply with any necessary modifications and, in particular, substituting ‘applicant’ for ‘candidate’ throughout, adapting clause (3) in the light of clause 5(iii) above, and adapting clause (9) as set out in clause (7) below.

d) The report recommended a ‘cap’ should be agreed each year by the Stationing Committee on the number of ministers being stationed who are seeking to transfer from other conferences or churches. Appropriate Standing Order amendments are set out below:-

322 Stationing

[...]
(4) The committee shall, [...] It shall keep under review the stationing code of practice and it shall determine the number of stations available to ministers of other Conferences and Churches not already serving the Church.

e) The report recommended that the date for receiving applications for transfers under SO 730(2) and for applications in respect of recognised and regarded status under Standing Order 732(3), should be set annually by the Ministerial Candidates Selection Committee rather than being fixed at 15 January. The Standing Order amendments are set out below:-

730 Ministerial Transfer between Churches

[...]

(2) (a) Persons ordained to the ministry of word and sacraments in other conferences or other Christian churches, [...] as accepted candidates for presbytery ministry shall apply in writing before the 15th January to the President, by the date annually determined by the Ministerial Candidates Selection Committee, and the President or the Vice-President on his or her behalf shall arrange for the application to be considered as set out in the following clauses.

(b) Ordained deacons of other conferences or Christian churches, [...] as accepted candidates for diaconal ministry shall apply in writing before the 15th January to the President, by the date annually determined by the Ministerial Candidates Selection Committee, and the President or the Vice-President on his or her behalf shall arrange for the application to be considered as set out in the following clauses.

732 Persons Recognised and Regarded as Presbyters or Deacons

[...]

(3)(d) All such applications shall be made in the case of ministers to the Secretary of the Conference, and in the case of deacons to the Warden of the Methodist Diaconal Order and the Secretary of the Conference, and in either case by the date annually determined
by the Ministerial Candidates Selection Committee under Standing Order 730(2)(a) or (b), as applicable. The Secretary shall ensure that the applications are assessed by the same connexional bodies as deal with those offering for reception into Full Connexion by transfer, and according to similar criteria, and shall bring them to the Presbyteral Session of the Conference or the Conference Diaconal Committee, as the case may be, with recommendations.

***RESOLUTIONS


1. Special Reports

1.1 Candidates accepted at previous Conferences and given permission to delay entry into training

(a) Those given permission to defer by a further year
   Philip Cotton
   Ruth Arce Rosales
(b) Those given permission to enter into training
   No case

1.2 Candidates to be accepted at this Conference and to be given permission to delay entry into training
   No case

1.3 Candidates to be accepted at this Conference and to be given permission to transfer to another Conference
   No case

1.4 Candidates conditionally accepted at previous Conferences

(a) Those judged to have fulfilled the condition and therefore to be accepted as candidates
   No case
(b) Those judged to have failed to fulfil the condition and thereby not to be accepted as candidates
   No case
(c) Those still to fulfil the condition
   No case

1.5 Changes in expected date of Reception into Full Connexion

(a) To an earlier date
   No case
(b) To a later date
   Susan Barbara Taylor (from 2020 to 2021)
   Penelope Jane Thorne (from 2018 to 2021)
   Laurent Robert Vernet (from 2019 to 2020)
1.6 Deferment or suspension under SO 726

(a) Student presbyters
   No case
(b) Probationers
   No case

1.7 Withdrawals under SO 727

(a) Candidates
   Peter Williams
(b) Student presbyters
   Rebekah Mary Blyth
   Simon Young
(c) Probationers
   Alison Mares

1.8 Transfer to other Conferences or Churches
   No case

1.9 Reinstatements under SO 761

(a) Student presbyters
   No case
(b) Probationers
   No case

1.10 Discipline
    Lindsey Philpot

1.11 Discontinuance under SO 031(4)
    No case

***RESOLUTION (Presbyteral Session)

47/1. The Conference adopts the special reports of the Ministerial Candidates and Probationers Oversight Committee.
2. **CANDIDATES FOR PRESBYTERAL MINISTRY**

***RESOLUTION (Presbyteral Session)***

47/2. The Conference resolves to recommend to the Representative Session for training those persons whose names have been duly presented to it.

***RESOLUTION (Representative Session)***

47/3. The Conference resolves by a Standing Vote that it accepts for training unconditionally or conditionally as the case may be the candidates for presbyteral ministry recommended by the Presbyteral Session whose names are recorded in the Daily Record for that Session.

3. **PREACHERS RECOMMENDED FOR CONTINUANCE ON TRIAL**

*In the following lists:*

* = change from the lists approved by the 2017 Conference

+ = candidates accepted by the 2017 Conference

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Surname</th>
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<tr>
<td>Akam</td>
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<td>David Jonathan</td>
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<tr>
<td>+ Bondzi-Simpson</td>
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<td>2021</td>
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<td>Raymond Frederick Paul</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<td>Phillip Anthony</td>
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<td>+ Koffie-Williams</td>
<td>Doreen Eugenia Abioseh</td>
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<td>Yovan</td>
<td>Jervis Daniel</td>
<td>2020</td>
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<tr>
<td>Zihle</td>
<td>Mmasape Temana</td>
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***RESOLUTION (Presbyteral Session)

47/4. The Conference adopts the report on preachers recommended for continuance on trial.

4. Preachers on trial presented to the Conference for reception into Full Connexion in 2018

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<td>Farai</td>
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<td>McAloon</td>
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Ndoho                        Nancy Nazi
Nzegwu                       Charity
Obong-Oshotse                Greg
Pullan                       Jill
Sandy                        Christopher Lindon Alusine
Schofield                    John Charles
Shallow                      Helen
Shorley                      Kim
Simms                        Timothy Paul
Speirs                       David John
Sutherby                     Christine
Valentine                    Lorna Elizabeth
Yi                           Yang Sun

***RESOLUTION (Presbyteral Session)

47/5. The Conference resolves by a Standing Vote that it judges that those persons whose names are printed in the Agenda have duly completed their training and probation and thereby it recommends them to the Representative Session as fit to be received into Full Connexion with the Conference as presbyters and, if not already ordained, to be ordained.

***RESOLUTION (Representative Session)

47/6. The Conference resolves by a Standing Vote that those persons whose names have been read to the Conference and are printed in the Agenda and Daily Record be now received into Full Connexion with the Conference as presbyters, and that those not already ordained, be ordained by prayer and the laying on of hands on the afternoon of this day, 1 July 2018, at:

The Parish Church of St John the Evangelist, Derby
The Parish Church of St Mary and All Saints, Chesterfield
Barnbygate Methodist Church
St Oswald’s Church, Ashbourne
The Chapel, Repton School
Chapel of St Cuthbert, Worksop College
1. Summary

This paper reports on the progress the Joint Advisory Committee on the Ethics of Investment (JACEI) has made in responding to the following memorials to the 2017 Conference.

**M32 Investment in fossil fuels**

The Central Scotland (31/9) Circuit Meeting (Present: 12; Voting: 10 for, 0 against) requests that the Methodist Council oversees a process with a view to issuing advice that the Methodist Church divests all of its investments in fossil fuel industries (coal, gas, oil) by the 2022 Conference and seeks to invest a significant and growing proportion of its overall investment portfolio in renewable energy and infrastructure investments that will reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

**Reply**

The Conference thanks the Central Scotland Circuit Meeting for its memorial.

The Conference has examined the question of Methodist investment in fossil fuels over a number of years, most recently in 2014 and 2015.

The Conference Statement, *Hope in God’s Future* (2009), was not specific on the question of disinvestment from fossil fuels, but the increasing urgency of the situation in recent years has made the ethical questions raised by different fuels more critical. The Conference has acknowledged that a need for a radical change in our reliance on fossil fuels is increasingly urgent. If we are to limit warming to well below 2 °C, nations need to reduce emissions dramatically.

In 2014, the Conference directed the Methodist Council through JACEI to undertake a review of the Central Finance Board (CFB)’s climate change policy with specific reference to the oil, gas and coal extraction sectors but stated that this should be “without prejudice to a specific commitment to disinvest”. The report to the Methodist Conference of 2015 stated: “The JACEI advice on specific fuels should be regularly reviewed against internationally agreed action that is considered necessary to limit global warming to two degrees and in due course prioritise other fossil fuels as necessary.”
In 2015 the Conference rejected the request in a memorial which called for total disinvestment from oil and gas companies by the end of 2018. The CFB continues to evaluate companies for investment on a case-by-case basis using the guidance of JACEI and CFB policies.

The CFB invests Methodist money in accordance with ethical investment policies, whilst seeking to achieve above average returns for the Church and other clients. Following advice from JACEI, the CFB implements its investment approach to climate change according to three policies, which are available on the CFB website: Climate Change (2009), Implications for the Electricity Generation Industry (2013) and Implications for different fuels (2015). Together these policies set a framework for lowering the carbon footprint of CFB’s portfolio, focusing engagement on companies with the greatest intensity of carbon emissions, and considering whether companies’ business models imply a low probability of meeting emission reduction targets. CFB policies on climate change have also led to almost twenty companies in the coal, oil and gas, and electricity sectors being excluded from investment, including disinvestment from six shareholdings.

The CFB reports that, as an investor, it is in a position to engage on both the investment and ethical imperative for action on climate change. Working with the Church Investors Group it has encouraged companies to provide a more comprehensive disclosure of their carbon emissions and it takes emissions disclosure into account when it votes at company AGMs. As a founder member of the ‘Aiming for A’ investor coalition, the CFB co-filed shareholder resolutions at the AGMs of BP, Shell, Anglo American, and Rio Tinto, which were overwhelmingly passed. The resolutions required companies to show how they will transition to a low carbon world and investors are now engaging with the results.

The CFB is also a founder member of the Transition Pathway Initiative (TPI), which helps asset owners assess companies’ own emissions, including how expected future performance compares to targets and pledges made as part of the Paris Agreement. This additional tool will better enable the CFB to determine how quickly companies are transitioning and which companies merit further intensive engagement, or even disinvestment or exclusion.

Oil and gas companies, particularly those focused on gas which is an important fuel needed for a realistic transition to a low carbon world, merit different treatment to coal companies. CFB policies recognise the differences and also distinguish between companies which align their business investment plans to be consistent with a scenario of well below 2 °C and those many which do not.

Investor engagement with oil and gas companies has helped bring about some changes in behaviour but many investment plans are still predicated on average temperatures
Climate change and fossil fuels: an update

rising above 2 °C. Given the urgency of action required for transition to low carbon economies confirmed by the Paris COP21, pressure to set a timescale for successful engagement or even disinvestment is understandable.

The Conference acknowledges that CFB retains responsibility for investment decisions, including on the merits of renewable or infrastructure investments, with implications for portfolio risk and return. Ethical choices need to be made in the context of the fiduciary responsibilities of the underlying Methodist investing organisations, including the pension schemes for ministers and lay employees. For example, the exclusion of all oil and gas companies would lead to total ethical exclusions forming 27% of the FTSE All Share index, compared to the current 15%. The removal of fossil fuel companies from a portfolio by a specific date raises questions of investment risk on which key stakeholders (such as the pension fund trustees) would need to be consulted.

The Conference therefore affirms the ethical basis of this memorial, which is that if engagement with companies that are heavily dependent on the extraction of fossil fuels does not lead to business models compatible with the ambition of the Paris agreement, disinvestment will ultimately be the response.

However, the Conference does not at this time accept the specific request in the memorial as it could be argued that there is further work to do on the ethical and investment questions related to fossil fuels before final decisions can be taken on disinvestment.

Therefore, the Conference asks the Methodist Council to request JACEI to:

a) examine the pace of change in the extractive industries sector;

b) in the light of the increasing urgency for more global action, continue actively to consider disinvestment criteria, timescales, and consultation processes required to disinvest from oil and gas companies that fail to comply with the ethical basis outlined above;

c) report to the Conference in 2018, with the expectation that if any such company in which the Church invests has not aligned their business investment plans with the Paris Agreement target of a global temperature rise well below 2 degrees, there would be a recommendation that the Church disinvest from such a company by the 2020 Conference.

M33 The Scotland District Synod, Representative Session (Present: 56; Voting: 45 for, 3 against)

This memorial was received with the same text as M32, with the exception of replacing “(coal, gas, oil)” with “(coal, gas, oil, industrial peat)”. The Conference adopted the same reply.
M34 Investment in fossil fuels

The Bristol District Synod, Representative Session (Present: 72; Voting: 67 for, 0 against)

requests that the Methodist Conference instructs the Methodist Council to ensure that the Methodist Church entirely divests from fossil fuel industries (coal, gas and oil) by the 2022 Conference, and seeks to invest a significant and growing proportion of its portfolio in renewable energy and infrastructure investments that will urgently reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Reply

The Conference adopted the same reply as to M32.

M35 Investment in fossil fuels

The Stratford and Evesham (5/15) Circuit Meeting (Present: 24; Voting: 23 for, 1 against) welcomes the Transition Pathway Initiative on global warming supported, among others, by the Methodist Finance Board and the Church of England, but fears that its targets in relation to timing and holding temperature increase to 1.5 degrees are seriously insufficient. It further fears that fossil fuel companies are an increasingly risky investment. It therefore requests that the Methodist Council oversees a process, in company with the Joint Advisory Committee on the Ethics of Investment (JACEI), with a view to issuing robust advice that the Methodist Church entirely divest from fossil fuel industries (coal, gas and oil) by the 2020 Conference, and seeks to invest a significant and growing proportion of its portfolio in renewable energy and infrastructure investments that will urgently reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Reply

The Conference adopted the same reply as to M32.

M36 The Birmingham District Synod, Representative Session (Present: 114; Voting: 73 for, 23 against)

This memorial was received with the same text as M35. The Conference adopted the same reply as to M32.

The Committee and the Central Finance Board (CFB) have reviewed the outlook for the fossil fuel sector. They have developed a methodology for assessing companies in the light of a future where temperature rises are limited to “well below 2 °C”. The next steps are to test and implement this methodology, engaging with companies as this is done, to
assess the extent to which company investment plans are aligned with this objective.

2. **Response to Memorial 32 (2017)**

As set out above, the 2017 Conference considered five Memorials expressing deepening concern about climate change and the role of the fossil fuel industry. It acknowledged that considerable work had been done by JACEI and the CFB over many years to address this important issue. It recognised the CFB’s responsibility to make investment decisions. The Conference asked the Committee to accelerate the pace of further work analysing the fossil fuel sector.

The Conference affirmed that “if engagement with companies that are heavily dependent on the extraction of fossil fuels does not lead to business models compatible with the ambition of the Paris agreement, disinvestment will ultimately be the response.”

The Conference stated that there was further work to be undertaken on the ethical and investment questions before further disinvestments could be considered.

3. **Climate change and investment**

For over ten years the Committee has advised the CFB on climate change and investment, and has been encouraged by the urgent priority which CFB has given to this work.

Three ethical policies have shaped CFB’s ethical investment activity over the issue:

- The first, adopted in 2009, was based around the Conference Statement, *Hope in God’s Future* and commits the CFB to targeting a below average carbon footprint in its portfolios.
- *Implications for the Electricity Generation Industry*, was adopted in 2013 and led to companies being excluded from investment.
- *Implications for different fuels*, was adopted in 2015 and focused on companies producing fuels that were significant emitters or which were solely focused on finding new carbon assets.

The Committee reviews and encourages the CFB’s engagement with companies on climate change issues, which includes extensive interaction and, at times, the co-filing of shareholder resolutions pressing companies for more action, (only possible when the CFB holds shares in the relevant companies). CFB voting at company Annual General Meetings is also influenced by a company’s disclosure of carbon emissions and progress, or otherwise, in transitioning to a low carbon world.
The CFB also works with other investor groups on this issue, including the Church Investors Group, the Institutional Investors Group on Climate Change, and the Transition Pathway Initiative.

The Committee has advised the CFB on the exclusion of almost twenty companies as a result of its climate change policies, including a number of disinvestments. It continues to monitor the application of these policies to CFB-managed investments.

4. Scenarios

One of the challenges arising from the Conference’s direction has been to understand what it means in practice to achieve the Paris Agreement objective of a world where temperature rises are limited to “well below 2 °C”. There is no consensus understanding of what a “well below 2 °C” world will look like; let alone what a transition to this world would mean for the future of various extractive industries. This understanding is vital if JACEI is to advise the CFB on whether business investment plans are aligned with the Paris Agreement objective or not, but unfortunately no detailed blueprint exists.

Therefore, the Committee examined the limited available research into scenarios which could help it understand a “well below 2 °C” future. It should be noted that scenarios give only a picture of what the future may be like and are highly sensitive to the assumptions underpinning them.

The Committee has identified a small number of scenarios which are most relevant. It has found particularly useful a report by the International Energy Agency (IEA) and the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) which outlines scenarios where there is a 66% probability that the average temperature rise will be limited to +2 °C. The IEA/IRENA projections are not necessarily reliant on extensive adoption of commercially unproven technology such as Carbon Capture and Storage or on technology which extracts carbon from the atmosphere.

The report recognises that there would have to be an energy transition to low carbon energy sources “of exceptional scope, depth, and speed” with increasing energy efficiency too. Fossil fuels remain “an important part of the energy system” but coal use would decline rapidly, natural gas “would continue to play an important role in the energy transition”, and oil use would fall as it was replaced by other energy sources “but its substitution is challenging in several sectors, such as petrochemicals”. IRENA believes that in 2050 “oil demand would be at 45% of today’s level”. Of note is that the IEA believes that “Investment in new oil supply will be needed as the decline in currently producing fields is greater than the [projected] decline in demand.”
5. **A methodology for assessing fossil fuel companies**

The CFB has developed a methodology for assessing the extent to which fossil fuel companies' business investment plans are aligned with the Paris Agreement objective.

The first step was to construct a timeline to 2100, using relevant scenarios to determine what developments in energy production will need to take place by certain times. The aim was to see company investment plans within this context. It is acknowledged that in a dynamic market economy it is possible that some more efficient companies could be expanding production of fossil fuels even while the global level of production is falling, consistent with a “well below 2°C” scenario.

The CFB and the Committee will examine fossil fuel companies on the following basis:

- **Current asset mix** – the mix between different types of fuel.
- **Capital expenditure on exploration, development, and production** – estimates of what capital expenditure sits inside and outside a ‘+2°C budget’ and company spending on specific projects.
- **Climate strategy and governance** – management’s commitment to addressing climate change, including public statements and representations to governments.
- **Positive transition steps** – investment in projects likely to facilitate the transition to a low carbon economy, including renewable energy investment.
- **Decreasing direct emissions** – a fossil fuel company which takes climate change seriously will also be taking action to reduce its own emissions.

The Committee has advised the CFB that it should apply its methodology initially to fossil fuel companies in which CFB funds directly hold shares. These will be held within UK equity portfolios and the European portion of the Overseas Fund. Later, other companies across global markets can be considered. An initial assessment of companies will be followed by engagement and re-evaluation. The Committee will be fully involved. The Committee has kept in mind the statements in the Conference direction that “**Ethical choices need to be made in the context of the fiduciary responsibilities of the underlying Methodist investing organisations**”, which include the Ministers and Lay Employees pension schemes and TMCP. The Conference also stated that “**the removal of fossil fuel companies from a portfolio by a specific date raises questions of investment risk on which key stakeholders (such as pension fund trustees) would need to be consulted.**”

6. **Implications for the wider Methodist Church**

The research around scenarios highlights the need for energy efficiency and reduced reliance on gas for heating. There are potential implications for management of the operational property assets of the Church.
7. Implications for JACEI and the CFB

The Committee believes it is important to highlight that undertaking this work at an accelerated pace, as requested by the Conference, has had the following implications for ethical investment work:

● **Resources**
  The CFB has diverted significant resources to this project, at the expense of other activities including ethical investment research in other areas. It should also be noted that the CFB undertook this work during an operations review, and while preparing for new financial regulations. The Committee commends to the Conference the extensive work of the CFB investment team on this project during this short time frame.

● **Focus**
  This project has required the Committee to focus further on the supply of fossil fuels. It has been unable therefore to devote as much attention as it would have on companies with significant consumption of fossil fuels. Without more action in this area, the outlook for climate change is grim.

8. Conclusion

The Committee notes that the debate around climate change is evolving with new data, new projections, actions by government and companies, and new technological developments and innovations. A major event will be the publication of the IPCC’s *Special report on the impacts of global warming of 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels and related global greenhouse gas emission pathways*. This will prompt a new range of projections. The Committee and the CFB will continue to keep up to date with developments as they assess fossil fuel companies.

The task given to the Committee and CFB by the Conference is a significant one, but so is the urgency and scale of the challenge confronting our world. Both the Committee and the CFB are committed to using ethical investment to help the transition to a low carbon future. As is stated in *Hope in God’s Future*:

“We cannot, therefore, countenance a future in which God has abandoned the project of creation and redemption, in which climate change destroys all that God has established or in which human irresponsibility overwhelms God’s ability to bring redemption to creation. The basis for Christian responses to climate change is hope in the realisation of the reign of God over a renewed creation.”
***RESOLUTIONS

48/1. The Conference receives the Report.

48/2. The Conference directs the Methodist Council to request that the Joint Advisory Committee on the Ethics of Investment provides a report to the Conference in 2020 on the progress made in implementing the methodology described.
1. Recommendations of the Ministerial Candidates’ Selection Committee acting as a Transfer Committee

The report of the Appeals Committee on applicants who have appealed against the recommendations of the committee under Standing Order 730(10) (see also SO 730(14)):

William Edmund Davis*

[* Once the report of the Appeals Committee has been heard, the applicant named above will be moved into one of the following categories.]

Report on cases where there have been medical objections:

No case

Applicants for transfer recommended by a 75% majority or more in the Ministerial Candidates’ Selection Committee to be transferred to the jurisdiction of this Conference under SO 730:

Jimione Kaci (Methodist Church in Fiji)
Adam Nyawo (The Methodist Church in Zimbabwe)
Romeo Regardo Pedro (The Methodist Church of Southern Africa)
Robert Llewelyn Roberts (The United Methodist Church)

Applicants for transfer as a probationer recommended by a 75% majority or more in the Ministerial Candidates’ Selection Committee to be transferred to the jurisdiction of this Conference under SO 730:

No case

Applicants for transfer recommended by a 75% majority or more in the Ministerial Candidates’ Selection Committee to proceed to initial training and probation:

Wendy Walker (The Methodist Church of Southern Africa)

Applicants for transfer recommended by a 75% majority or more in the Ministerial Candidates’ Selection Committee to proceed to probation prior to Reception into Full Connexion:

No case
Applicants for transfer recommended by a 75% majority or more in the Ministerial Candidates’ Selection Committee to be received on transfer upon fulfilment of stated condition:

*No case*

Applicants not recommended for transfer:

Noreen Sherry Anne Daley (The Methodist Church in the Caribbean and the Americas)

Former presbyters and deacons of other Churches applying to be received into Full Connexion (under Standing Order 731):

(a) Those recommended
*No case*

(b) Those recommended upon fulfilment of stated conditions
*No case*

(c) Those not recommended
*No case*

Applicants recommended to be recognised and regarded as presbyters in Full Connexion with the Conference under Standing Order 732:

Bruce James Anderson (The Methodist Church of New Zealand)
Charles Aaron Ekuban (The Methodist Church in Ghana)
Francis Mitiiri (The Methodist Church in Kenya)
Eroni Vulavata Kaibau Moce (Methodist Church in Fiji)

2. **TRANSFER FROM THE METHODIST CHURCH IN IRELAND**

*No case*

3. **RECOMMENDATIONS FOR REINSTATEMENTS TO FULL CONNEXION**

*No case*

4. **RECOMMENDATIONS FOR REINSTATEMENTS AS LOCAL PREACHERS**

Nicholas Cutts
Helen Reah
49. Presbyteral transfers and reinstatements

***RESOLUTIONS (Presbyteral Session)

49/1. The Conference adopts the Report.

49/2. The Conference resolves by a Standing Vote that those persons whom the Conference has duly adjudged as fit to be received by transfer or reinstatement as the case may be as presbyters be now presented to the Representative Session to be received into Full Connexion with the Conference, and if not already ordained, to be ordained by prayer and the laying on of hands.

49/3. The Conference resolves that the following are fit to be reinstated as local preachers and pursuant to SO 761(14) directs the relevant Circuit Meetings to reinstate them:

Nicholas Cutts (Cheshire South Circuit)
Helen Reah (Sheffield Circuit)
50. Designations for Appointment of District Chairs

***RESOLUTIONS

50/1. The Conference designates for appointment the Revd Richard M Andrew as Chair for the Darlington District for a period of six years from 1 September 2018.

50/2. The Conference designates for appointment the Revd Helen R Kirk as Chair for the Chester and Stoke-on-Trent District for a period of six years from 1 September 2019.

50/3. The Conference designates for appointment the Revd Kerry W Tankard as Chair for the Yorkshire West District for a period of six years from 1 September 2019.

The following resolutions require a majority of 75%.

50/4. The Conference designates for appointment the Revd Paul H Davis as Chair for the Lancashire District for a further period of three years from 1 September 2019.

50/5. The Conference designates for appointment the Revd Ian Howarth as Chair for the Birmingham District for a further period of three years from 1 September 2019.

50/6. The Conference designates for appointment the Revd Dr Jennifer A Hurd as Chair for Synod Cymru for a further period of five years from 1 September 2019.

50/7. The Conference designates for appointment the Revd Steven J Wild as Chair for the Cornwall District for a further period of three years from 1 September 2019.

Reasoned Statements

The Revd Richard M Andrew

After a period of working in industry and training at Cambridge, Richard Andrew served in the Sheffield Ecclesall Circuit (1995-2002) and was the Director of the York Institute for Community Theology (2002-2013) before joining the Connexional Team as the Director of Learning and Development Pathways (2013 -present).

Throughout his various roles, Richard has been appreciated for the way in which he has inspired ‘big picture’ thinking and navigated significant change with pastoral sensitivity. He is particularly committed to nurturing vocations among all people, and has a track record of developing ways to support both lay and ordained disciples through vocational exploration. His passion for encouraging participation has played a significant role in the successful development of 3Generate over recent years. Richard’s ability to offer strategic and
intentional leadership over a broad range of ministry areas will be particularly welcomed in the Darlington District, and is a gift to the whole Connexion.

Along with his experience of collaborative leadership in a variety of Methodist contexts, Richard has worked in ecumenical and public contexts, and offers a confident voice to represent and rearticulate Methodist charisms for a wide audience.

Richard brings to the post a depth of spirituality, a breadth of theological reflection, a passion for the Gospel and a timely challenge to the church to know who we are, and to pursue meaningful ministry with the resources we have.

The Synod recommends to the Conference that the Revd Richard M Andrew is appointed to serve as Chair for the Darlington District for a period of six years from 1 September 2018.

The Revd Helen R Kirk
Helen Kirk is the Superintendent of the Vale of Aylesbury Circuit. She entered circuit ministry in 1997 and was ordained in 1999. She served in the Chester and Stoke-on-Trent District for 17 years until 2014, serving at various times on the Education and Youth Committee, the District Policy Committee and the Candidates’ Committee, as Probationers’ Secretary, and as Deputy Chair. She will return to a District where she is already known and respected and has already demonstrated a capacity to work in many different roles.

In addition to her experience as a circuit minister and district officer, Helen brings to the role of Chair the ability to tell stories of faith in a way that challenges and inspires churches and circuits. She has the theological wisdom, pastoral sensitivity, candour and humility to enable her to work with others in the leadership of the District, to question embedded assumptions, and to build on what has been achieved in recent years.

The Synod recommends to the Conference that the Revd Helen R Kirk is appointed to serve as Chair for the Chester and Stoke-on-Trent District for a period of six years from 1 September 2019.

The Revd Kerry W Tankard
Kerry Tankard has wide experience of different forms of ministry, from rural to suburban and town centre, as well as ecumenical and interfaith experience. He began his presbyteral ministry in Ashton-under-Lyne in 1999, moving to Peterborough in 2004 and since 2013 has been serving as Superintendent in the High Peak Circuit.

Kerry studied for a BA at Wesley College, Bristol and whilst in Peterborough, completed his MA in Systematic and Philosophical Theology. He has also undergone the supervision training with a view to act as an alternate supervisor in his current District. He has been a member of the Faith and Order network.
Kerry has an enthusiastic and encouraging manner, an ability to communicate and is committed to a godly way of living. His ministry is sustained by a pattern of disciplined prayer, reading and reflection.

Kerry comes to the role with a sense of vocation and willingness to learn. He seeks to build confidence in faith so that people can engage effectively in their communities. He is a collaborative worker and will bring many gifts and insights to the future of the Yorkshire West District.

The Synod recommends to the Conference that the Revd Kerry W Tankard is appointed to serve as Chair for the Yorkshire West District for a period of six years from 1 September 2019.

**The Revd Paul H Davis**

Paul Davis has been Chair of the Lancashire District since 2013. Paul is widely recognised for his diligence, strong work ethic and tireless efforts for the good of the District. Paul has a deep knowledge of the District, as well as an immense knowledge and understanding of Methodism and the wider Connexion, which is helpful to the District. He is highly visible across the District as a whole, and people welcome his willingness to be involved in the life of the Circuits. Paul has also developed excellent relationships with ecumenical colleagues and members of the wider community.

Paul is a good listener, who is able to analyse situations and suggest solutions and options to what may initially appear intransigent issues. He can communicate at all levels, giving appropriate advice, guidance and direction. Paul is a very able preacher and communicator of God’s word. Paul helps Circuits to recognise their potential to develop mission, giving strategic advice and encouragement, and supporting them as they seek to restructure in the light of decreasing human and financial resources. Paul recognises the gifts and skills of people, both lay and ordained, and encourages them to develop them. Paul’s pastoral ministry for those in the District is also very much appreciated at all levels.

The Synod recommends to the Conference that the Revd Paul H Davis is appointed to serve as Chair for the Lancashire District for a further period of three years from 1 September 2019.

**The Revd Ian Howarth**

Ian Howarth has been Chair of the Birmingham District since 2013. His ministry is valued and held in high regard throughout the District. He is a consultative and approachable leader who has his own ideas but is willing to listen and discuss with others to determine the right course. Ian’s musical skills and talents and his willingness to share them are widely acknowledged and appreciated. His preaching is helpful, challenging, relevant and inspiring and his pastoral care is widely appreciated. His commitment to outreach is demonstrated by
50. Designations for Appointment of District Chairs

The Church Without Walls initiative and the Zimbabwean and Cameroonian fellowships, along with the two district projects, Jazz Church and the New Inclusive Church.

Ecumenically Ian is involved with Churches Together in Birmingham and in Worcester, supporting the work of all denominations and building relationships with other clergy. He makes a good contribution to interfaith work by his visible presence.

The Synod recommends to the Conference that the Revd Ian Howarth is appointed to serve as Chair for the Birmingham District for a further period of three years from 1 September 2019.

The Revd Dr Jennifer A Hurd

Jennie Hurd has been Chair of Synod Cymru since 2013. She has a quiet and unassuming presence which enables a very effective ministry to flourish. Her leadership style is widely appreciated and recognised as being caring and sympathetic but also firm and fair. Irrespective of any potential changes in the configuration of the Welsh Synods, Synod Cymru wishes to be led by Jennie, who would provide continuity and stability. Jennie has raised the profile of Wales, not merely the Synod, and brought the Synod to a position where it is highly respected within the Connexion and other denominations. Jennie’s actions and leadership have made ordinary members appreciate and value what it is to be part of a connexional Church. Jennie’s commitment to the development of Synod Cymru is evidenced by the recent review of the Synod and the Circuit which she has led. Jennie’s commitment to outreach and mission has been evidenced in the programme adopted by the Synod entitled “Developing Our Calling”.

The Synod recommends to the Conference that the Revd Dr Jennifer A Hurd is appointed to serve as Chair for Synod Cymru for a further period of five years from 1 September 2019.

The Revd Steven J Wild

Steve Wild has been Chair of the Cornwall District since 2008. Steve’s leadership to Methodism in Cornwall is widely appreciated, including his support for Methodist heritage initiatives, enthusiastic ecumenical work and regular radio broadcasts. His leadership of worship is well-received and felt to be inspiring; Spirit-led; relaxed; enthusiastic; connecting well with all ages; sincere; spontaneous; uplifting; prayerful; and encouraging.

Steve is committed to outreach, and is gifted as an evangelist in a variety of settings. He has undertaken some excellent ecumenical work. The Synod strongly believes that the Chair’s emphasis on and encouragement for local mission initiatives, the furthering of ecumenical projects and the District restructuring programme, would all benefit from Steve’s continued ministry.
The Synod recommends to the Conference that the Revd Steven J Wild is appointed to serve as Chair for the Cornwall District for a further period of three years from 1 September 2019.
***RESOLUTIONS

51/1. The Conference appoints the Strategy and Resources Committee of the Council in accordance with Standing Order 213:
(i) Professor Peter D Howdle (Chair)
(iiA) Ms Janet Arthur, Mrs Anne Bolton, Mr Robert J Harrison, the Revd Susan Keegan Von Allmen, Professor David Matthews, the Revd Dr Ruth Midcalf, the Revd Michael D Parker
(ii) The Revd Timothy A Swindell, Mr Edward Awty (Connexional Treasurers)
(iii) deleted
(iv) Mrs Helen Woodall (Chair of the Connexional Grants Committee)
(v) The Revd Dr Andrew D Wood (Chair or Deputy Chair of the Ministries Committee)
(vi) The Revd Loraine N Mellor (District Chair)
(vii) The Secretary, Assistant Secretary, the Conference Officer for Legal and Constitutional Practice, the Connexional Secretary (non-voting): the Revds Canon Gareth J Powell, Dr Jonathan R Hustler, Mrs Louise C Wilkins, Mr Doug Swanney.
Other members of the senior management group of the Connexional Team may attend as the business of the Committee shall require. Staff so invited to attend shall have the right to speak but not vote.

51/2. The Conference appoints the panel for the nomination of District Chairs:
The Revds Anne E Brown, Richard J Byass, David P Easton, John Hellyer, Christine Jones, Marian J Jones, Nichola G Jones, Derrick R Lander, Paul Nzakahayo, Keith A Reed, Daniel P Reed, D Paul C Smith, Dr Elizabeth A Smith, Graham Thompson, Alison F Tomlin, Martin H Turner, Dr Martin Wellings, Dr Andrew D Wood, Michaela A Youngson
Deacons Josephine F A Critchley, Julie A Hudson, Jane S Middleton
Ms Jane Allin, Ms Janet Arthur, Mrs Christine Bellamy, Mrs Sue Chastney, Ms Evelyn de Graft, Prof Peter D Howdle, Miss Marion Mear, Mr Malcolm Pearson, Mr Noel Rajaratnam, Mr David Ridley, Mrs Caroline Stead, Dr Malcolm Stevenson, Mr David S Walton, Mrs Rosemary Wass, Mrs Louise C Wilkins, Mrs Ruth Wilton, Mrs Helen Woodall, Mr Rob Wylie
with the Secretary of the Conference as convener.

51/3. The Conference appoints the panel for Connexional Discipline, Pastoral and Appeal Committees and persons with associated functions:
Connexional Complaints Officer: Professor Diane Rowland; Mr Joseph Anoom (deputy); Mr David Booth (deputy); the Revd James A Booth (deputy).

Chairs: Mr Stephen Allinson, Mr Graham Danbury, Mr Robert Gaitskell, Mrs Susan R Howdle, Ms Jane McIvor, Sir Alastair Norris, Miss Elizabeth Ovey.
Advocates: Mr Stephen Allinson, Mr Joseph Anoom, Mr John Birtwell, Mr Adrian Turner, the Revd Stuart Wild.

Conveners:
Discipline, Appeals and Pastoral: The Revd C Mary Austin, the Revd Andrew Cordy, Ms Ruby Beech, Mr David Kendrew, Mrs Shelagh Morgan, the Revds Ian S Rutherford, Sharon Willimott, Ian Yates.


Deacons Eunice Attwood, Kate Barrett, Denise Creed, Sue Culver, Jane Middleton, Myrtle Poxon, Marion Sharp, Rowland H Wilkinson.

Mrs Jane Allison, Mr Donald B Appleyard, Ms Ruby Beech, Mr John A Bell, Mr Simon Birks, Mrs Stella Bristow, Mrs Teresa Broadbent, Miss Joan Charlesworth, Mr Dudley Coates, Mr John Connor, Mr Colin Cradock, Mr Andrew Cross, Ms Gillian Dascombe, Mr Brian Davies, Mr Peter Dawe, Prof Peter Howdle, Mrs Sophie Kumi, Mrs Judy Jarvis, Dr Mary Jefferson, Mr David Kendrew, Mrs Ann Leck, Mrs Helen R Letley, Dr Edmund I Marshall, Mr Leon A Murray, Mrs Nwabueze Nwokolo, Mrs Sonia J O’Connor, Mrs Margaret Parker, Mrs Ruth Pickles, Mr Timothy Ratcliffe, Mrs Jean Schroeder, Mr Stephen Schroeder, Dr Alan Thomson, Mr Brian Thornton, Mr David Walton, Mrs Rosemary Wass, Mr Ivan Weekes, Sister Eluned Williams.

51/4. The Conference appoints the panel for Connexional Complaints Teams:

Deacons Myrtle Poxon, Stephen F Roe, Deborah L Wilde.
Miss Maureen Anderson, Mr Graham Arthurs, Ms Trudie Awuku, Miss Joan Ball, Mr Peter Binks, Mr John Birtwell, Ms Juliette Burton, Mr David M Chandler, Mr Leo Cheng, Mr Peter Dawe, Mrs Eve DeGraft, Mr David Djaba, the Revd David R Ellis, Dr John Jefferson, Mr G David Kendall, Mr David Kendrew, Mr Chris Kitchin, Miss Kathryn Larrad, Mr Robert Lawe, Mr David Laycock, Mrs Ann Leck, Ms Betty Maynard, Mrs Nwabueze Nwokolo, Mrs Jean Schroeder, Mr Stephen Schroeder, Mr John Scott, Mr Ray Warren, Mr Graham Wilson.

51/5. The Conference appoints the Ministerial Candidates’ Selection Committee:


Miss Victoria Aggasild, Ms E Jane Allin, Mr Rob Cooper, Ms Sarah Dixon. Mrs Janet Dobinson, Mrs Glena Griffin, Mrs Elaine M Grout, Ms Sylvia Hart, Mr Phil Langdale, Mrs Jane Lloyd, Mrs Dorothy Lumley, Mrs Grace Penn-Timity, Mr Alfred Philpott, Mrs Catherine Roots, Mrs Maxine Scott, Mr Michael Sharpe, Dr Rachel Starr, Mrs Karen Stefanyszyn, Mrs Anne Vautrey, Mrs Denise Tomlinson, Dr Margaret Williams.

The Warden of the Methodist Diaconal Order has the right to attend but not to vote.

51/6. The Conference appoints oversight tutors [in accordance with Standing Order 321(5)(b)]:
Where more than one oversight tutor is appointed for the same institution one shall be identified as having oversight responsibility. In the following list, that person is identified by an asterisk.

51/7. **The Conference appoints the Faith and Order Committee:**
The Secretary of the Conference: The Revd Canon Gareth J Powell.

The Secretary of the Committee: The Revd Dr Nicola V Price-Tebbutt.

Deacon Eunice Attwood, the Revd Dr David M Chapman, Prof Beverley Clack, the
Revd Dr Keith Davies, the Revd Dr Jonathan Dean, Prof Tom Greggs, the Revd Gary
P Hall, the Revd Dr David J Hart, Mrs Susan R Howdle, the Revd Carole Irwin, the
Revd Prof Teddy Kalongo, the Revd Dr Jane Leach, Prof Judith Lieu (Chair), the Revd
Dr Michael Long, Deacon Karen McBride, the Revd Mark Rowland, the Revd Dr
Jennifer H Smith, the Revd Simon C Sutcliffe, the Revd Kerry W Tankard.

51/8. **The Conference appoints the Stationing Committee under Standing Order 322:**
(i) Lay Chair: Mrs Pamela Lavender
(ii) The Secretary and Assistant Secretary of the Conference: The Revds Canon
Gareth J Powell and Dr Jonathan R Hustler
(iii) Seven district Chairs and seven district Lay Stationing Representatives:
South-East  The Revd Nigel Cowgill
           Ms Jenny Jackson
South-West  The Revd Dr David Hinchliffe
           Mrs Biddy Bishop
Wales/Midlands  The Revd Ian Howarth
              Mrs Val Mayers
Yorkshire  The Revd Gillian M Newton
           Mrs Beverley Duffy
East Midlands  The Revd Canon Helen D Cameron
             Ms M Frances Hopwood
North-West  The Revd Dr Sheryl M Anderson
           Mr Iain S A Henderson
North/Scotland  The Revd Stephen J Lindridge
               Mr Bill Offler
(iv) No more than two Team members with responsibility for presbyteral and
diaconal selection; and for the stationing of probationers: The Revd Dr Claire Potter
(v) **deleted**
(vi) **deleted**
(vii) The chair of the Stationing Advisory Committee: The Revd Dr Jennifer A Hurd
(viii) The Warden or deputy Warden of the Methodist Diaconal Order: Deacon Karen
       McBride
(ix) The chair and a lay member of the Diaconal Stationing Sub-committee: The Revd
     Peter E Barber; Mrs Biddy Bishop
(x) The chair of the group responsible on behalf of the Stationing Committee
     for overseeing the matching of particular presbyters to appointments: The Revd
51/9. The Conference appoints representatives to ecumenical bodies as follows:

(a) Churches Together in Britain and Ireland (CTBI): Annual General Meeting
Mr Michael P King

(b) Churches Together in Britain and Ireland: Senior Representatives’ Forum
Mr Michael P King; the Revd Ruth M Gee

(c) Churches Together in England (CTE): Enabling Group
The Revd Dr Jonathan H Pye, the Revd Ruth M Gee

(d) Churches Together in England Forum (17-19 September 2018):
The Revds Steven Cooper, Dr Jonathan H Pye; Deacon Melanie Beaver; Ms Gracie Burnett, Berenice Dalrymple, Ruth E Hall, Marcia Tull, Jasmine F Yeboah; Mr Jack Key, Mr Michael Pryke; a lay vacancy; the Revd Ruth M Gee

(e) Action of Churches Together in Scotland (ACTS): Members’ Meeting:
The Revd Dr David P Easton; Mr Alan Henderson
Alternate: The Revd T Alan Anderson

(f) Cytûn (Churches Together in Wales): Enabling Group
The Revd Dr Jennifer A Hurd
Proxies: The Revds Dr Ian D Morris, Philip A Poynor.

51/10. The Conference appoints the lay persons nominated by the Synod to the General Committee of the Relief and Extension Fund for Methodism in Scotland and notes the membership of the Committee as otherwise provided for in Standing Order 476(1)(i), (ii) and (iii) as follows:

(i) The Revds Dr David P Easton, Dr Helen Jenkins, Allan Y Loudon and Nicholas B Baker – Official Trustees.

(ii) Miss Maureen G Anderson, Mr David A Easson, Dr Alan J Hayes and Mr Edward A L Wallace – Non Official Trustees.


(iv) Mr Phillip Haggis - District Lay Property Secretary, Mrs Margaret Brown, Mrs Jennifer H Easson, Mr Peter A Mills - Lay persons nominated by Scotland Synod.

51/11. The Conference appoints the Audit Committee:
Mrs Sarah Atwell-King, Mr Adrian Burton, Mr Alan Kershaw (Chair), Mrs Susan M Mortimer.

51/12. The Conference appoints the Methodist Council of 2018:
The ex officio members specified in Standing Order 201, and:
51. Committee Appointments

(i) The chair of the Council: Mrs E Jill Baker

(iiA) The Assistant Secretary of the Conference: The Revd Dr Jonathan R Hustler

(iiB) The Conference Officer for Legal and Constitutional Practice: Mrs Louise C Wilkins

(ii) The lead Connexional Treasurer: The Revd Timothy A Swindell

(iii) Four District Chairs: The Revds Dr Jennifer A Hurd, Rachel E Parkinson, Dr Andrew D Wood, Dr Jongikaya Zihle

(iv) Thirty District representatives:
Mrs Janet Baker, Mr Tim Baker, Mrs Carole Burgess, the Revd Linda J Catlow, the Revd Rory J Daiglish, Ms Sue Draper, the Revd Mark Dunn-Wilson, Mrs Aileen Fox, the Revd Dr Andrew M Fox, the Revd Novette Headley, the Revd Beverly Hollings, the Revd Philip J Jackson, the Revd Dr Vincent Jambawo, Mrs Carolyn Lawrence, Mrs Heather Lovelady, Deacon Jonathan Miller, Professor Ken Mortimer, the Revd Mary M Patterson, the Revd Malcolm Peacock, the Revd Gareth P Phillips, Mr Peter Prescott, Mrs Anne Pryke, the Revd Sally A Ratcliffe, Mr Graham Russell, the Revd Peter D Sheasby, the Revd David Shirtliff, the Revd Billy Slatter, Mrs Sue Snowden, Miss Margaret Webber, Mr Richard Wills

(v) The Connexional Secretary: Mr Doug Swanney

(vi) The Chair and two members of the SRC: Professor Peter Howdle, to be confirmed

(viA) The Chair or Deputy Chair of the Ministries Committee: the Revd Dr Andrew D Wood

(vii) A representative of the Diaconal Order: Deacon Karen McBride

(viii) Two representatives of the Youth Assembly: Ms Roxanne Bromley, Ms Gemma Curtis

(ix) Two representatives of concerns of racial justice: names to follow

(x) Up to four Conference-appointed persons.

51/13. The Conference directs that in accordance with Standing Order 210(2)(a) the Districts shall be represented on the Methodist Council of 2019 as follows:

By a presbyter or deacon:
Cymru, Birmingham, Bolton and Rochdale, Cumbria, Chester and Stoke-on-Trent, Cornwall, Darlington, Manchester and Stockport, Lancashire, Northampton, Plymouth and Exeter, Southampton, Scotland, Shetland, Bedfordshire Essex Hertfordshire, South East.

By a lay person:
Wales, Bristol, Channel Islands, East Anglia, Isle of Man, Lincolnshire, Liverpool, Newcastle-on-Tyne, Nottingham and Derby, Sheffield, Yorkshire West, Wolverhampton and Shrewsbury, Yorkshire North and East, London.
51/14. The Conference appoints the following officers of the 2019 Conference:

Representative Session
Journal Secretary: The Revd Jennifer M Dyer
Record Secretary: to be confirmed
Convener of the Memorials Committee: Mr Martin Harker

Presbytery Session
Record Secretary: The Revd Jennifer M Dyer
Assistant Record Secretary: The Revd Rosemarie E G Clarke

51/15. The Conference appoints the following officers of the Conference Diaconal Committee:

Recording Officer: name to follow
Reporting Officer: name to follow

51/16. The Conference appoints the Ministries Committee:
Mrs Jill Baker, Mr Peter Baffoe, Ms Gill M Dascombe (Deputy Chair), the Revd Christine M Dutton, the Revd Dr Jonathan R Hustler (Convener), Deacon Michelle L Legumi, the Revd Dr Andrew J Lunn, Mr Andrew Maisey, the Revd David A Markay, Deacon Angela Shereni, Mrs Karen Stefanyszyn, the Revd Caroline A Weaver, the Revd Dr Andrew D Wood (Chair).

51/17. The Conference appoints the Trustees of Epworth Old Rectory:
Mrs Sarah Friswell (Chair), Mr John Purdy (Secretary), the Revd Stuart Gunson (Treasurer), Ms Sarah Braisdell, Mrs Jenny Carpenter, Mr Barry Clarke, Mrs Linda Crossley, Professor William Gibson, Mr Roger Kuhnel, the Revd Angela Long, Mr Doug Swanney.

World Methodist Council Trustees:
Bishop Ivan Abrahams, the Revd Dr John Beyers, the Revd Dr Fred Day, Mr Kirby Hickey, Archbishop Michael Kehinde Steven.

51/18. The Conference appoints the following persons as Directors of Westminster College Oxford Trust Ltd for a three-year period from 1 September 2018:
Mrs Anne Bolton.

51/19. The Conference reappoints Dr Cliff Marshall and the Revd Dr Martin Wellings as Directors of Westminster College Oxford Trust Ltd for a further three year period from 1 September 2018, and resolves, under Article 36 of the Articles of Association of Westminster College Oxford Trust Ltd, that a period of one year’s non-service upon the Board should not be required in relation to these reappointments.
Details of New Nominations (underlined above):

Sarah Atwell-King  Qualified accountant with 30 years experience, actively involved in church and Circuit in Rutland and as a local preacher.

Trudie Awuku  A retired primary school teacher who has had experience in dealing with conflict in her previous role as a class teacher, between children and between parents; she has also undertaken a course in conflict resolution. A church steward and pastoral leader at Wesley’s Chapel, previously a member of Wesley’s Chapel Board of Trustees and the senior circuit steward.

Anne Bolton  Professional experience in finance, property, education and human resources, including as a Bursar at independent schools for 24 years. She is actively involved in the life of her Local Church.

Roxanne Bromley  Nominated to the Council by 3Generate.

Juliette Burton  a retired primary school teacher, has served as a steward, pastoral leader and church council member in her church. She brings long experience in Methodism and a heart for bringing reconciliation in dispute situations.

Peter Dawe  a member of the connexional complaints panel and feels called also to serve on discipline and pastoral committees within the complaints and discipline process of the Church.

Edson Dube  Superintendent of the Leicester (Trinity) Circuit, formerly a District Chair in Zimbabwe. A member of the ‘Belonging Together Ministers Group’, he offers his experience to the complaints panel.

Christine Dutton  A presbyter in the Chester and Delamere Forest Circuit whose postgraduate work is on Fresh Expressions.

Ruth Gee  Nominated by the Council as Connexional Ecumenical Officer in the Connexional Team from 1 September 2018.

Mark Hammond  A presbyter in the West Hertfordshire and Borders Circuit and formerly a member of the Ministries Committee.

Julie Hudson  a deacon serving in the Sankey Valley Circuit, a member of the Ministerial Candidates’ Selection Committee and the District Probationers’ Committee.
51. Committee Appointments

David Jebb a superintendent minister with considerable experience of complaints work at circuit level. He feels called to bring that experience to the service of the Church at connexional level.

Elizabeth Kent A presbyter and Director of the Wesley Study Centre.

Robert Lawe Has worked for the Methodist Church for many years in communications, brings experience and a clear understanding of confidentiality in dealing with sensitive issues, and safeguarding, as well as deep knowledge of Methodism.

Jane Lloyd A member and local preacher in the Wolds and Trent Circuit; one of the connexional assessors for Faith and Worship, and a member of the moderating panel for Worship: Leading and Preaching, and District Tutor in the Lincolnshire District; professional experience of managing a team of business advisers.

Andrew Lunn Chair of the Manchester and Stockport District.

Andrew Maisey A local preacher in the Witney and Faringdon Circuit. He is District Local Preachers’ Tutor for the Northampton District where he has also served on the District Candidates’ Committee.

David Markay A presbyter of the United Methodist Church serving in the Sheffield Circuit. He has been probationers’ secretary for the Sheffield District.

Cliff Marshall A Methodist in Abingdon, served until retirement as a longstanding and respected member of staff at Westminster, both before and after the merger with Oxford Brookes, specialising in initial teacher education.

David Matthews A retired consultant physician and Professor of Diabetes Medicine in the University of Oxford; extensive experience as a charity trustee and of university and health service administration; a local preacher.

Betty Maynard Long experience in local Methodism, having served as a church steward, church council member and pastoral leader. A retired teacher, who has also worked in HR and administration involving some complaints issues. she will bring this wide experience to the work of the complaints panel.

Ruth Midcalf A presbyter in the Basingstoke and Reading Circuit, with a
background in academic administration and teaching as well as experience as a Director of Operations of a small charity.

Shelagh Morgan  A synod secretary with wide experience of Methodism who brings excellent administrative skills to the work of convener and reporting officer.

Susan Mortimer  A chartered accountant and serving in the Local Church in Swansea.

Malcolm Peacock  Nominated to the Council by the Bedfordshire, Essex and Hertfordshire District.

Claire Potter  Nominated by the Council as the Ministerial Coordinator for the Oversight of Ordained Ministries in the Connexional Team

Catherine Roots  A member and steward of Trinity Methodist Church, Leighton Buzzard, she has served as a circuit steward, local coordinator for Street Pastors and circuit safeguarding trainer. Synod Secretary for the Bedfordshire, Essex and Hertfordshire District.

Graham Russell  Nominated to the Council by the London District.

Angela Shereni  A deacon serving in the North Fylde Circuit, and a member of the Ministerial Candidates’ Selection Committee.

Billy Slatter  Nominated to the Council by the South East District

Sue Snowden  Nominated to the Council by the Bolton and Rochdale District

Karen Stefanyszyn  Co-chair of the Ministerial Candidates’ Selection Committee, a leadership coach, focusing on leadership development according to Christian principles.

Tina Swire  Superintendent of the Northampton Circuit, brings experience from the United Church of Canada as well as the Methodist Church in Britain. She has been a supervisor and mentor for probationer ministers.

Kerry Tankard  Superintendent of the High Peak Circuit and has experience of being a Local Preachers’ Tutor and Training Coordinator for the Manchester and Stockport District. He is a member of the Faith and Order Network and was previously part of its biblical working group. He has
an interest in systematic theology, and in encouraging Methodist theological thinking.

Caroline Weaver  A presbyter in the North Bedfordshire Circuit, a member of the Ministerial Candidates’ and Probationers’ Oversight Committee.

Margaret Webber  Nominated to the Council by the Wales Synod.

Martin Wellings  Superintendent of the Oxford Circuit, and a leading Methodist historian and theologian.

Timothy Woolley  Superintendent of the Hinckley Circuit, has previously been a Ministry Development Officer in the Connexional Team. An adjunct lecturer at Cliff College, a tutor for the Methodist e-academy and a part-time tutor for Oxford University Department of Continuing Education.

Jongikaya Zihle  Nominated to the Council by the Chairs’ Meeting.
The Revd Ruth M Gee
Ruth Gee has served as Chair of the Methodist Council since 2015. Ruth has brought to the role of Chair of the Council her wide connexional experience as President of the Conference and District Chair, along with a clear understanding of the Council’s role in the life of the Church. She has chaired the meetings of the Council sensitively and with clarity paying particular attention to ensuring that all members of the Council feel they can participate in the work of the Council. She has worked to ensure that the work of the Council is carefully and rigorously planned, placing the mission of the Church at its centre. The prayer life of the Council has been important to her and in that she has nurtured the Council reflecting without hesitation that it is more than a business meeting. Ruth has enabled the Council to understand afresh its responsibilities in oversight and pastoral responsibility. She has been willing to take the Chair’s responsibility as appropriate between meetings, and has presented the very wide range of the Council’s business to the Conference ably and with understanding. In all of this Ruth has offered unfailing support and wisdom to the Secretariat and senior members of the Connexional Team. At every turn of time in the chair Ruth has held before the Council and the wider Connexion the challenge of what it is to be the body of Christ.

***RESOLUTION

52/1. The Conference thanks the Revd Ruth M Gee for her service to the Church as Chair of the Methodist Council, and wishes her well in her future life and ministry.
PRESBYTERS BECOMING SUPERNUMERARY OR RETURNING TO THE ACTIVE WORK

1. **Recommended to return to the active work**
   Harold Stuteley

2. **Permission to become supernumerary granted during the year**
   *No case*
   *Those marked * were granted permission on grounds of ill health under Standing Order 790(2).*

3. **Presbyters requesting permission to become supernumerary**
   *The figure in brackets indicates the number of years of status as a presbyter of the person concerned (with any former years of status as a deacon added with the prefix D).*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Years of Status</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Years of Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Margaret J Adams</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>Carol M Hamilton-Foyn</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isobel E Akers</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>Laura C Hardy</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linda M Atkin</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>Doreen C Hare</td>
<td>38</td>
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<tr>
<td>Keith Bamford</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>Philip Harrison</td>
<td>38</td>
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<tr>
<td>Linda Bandelier</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>Christine J Hey</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Richard H Barley</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>Graham W Hindle</td>
<td>33</td>
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<tr>
<td>lan C Bell</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>Philip C Hoar</td>
<td>43</td>
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<tr>
<td>Clifford W Bellamy</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>Helen Hoe</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inderjit S Bhogal</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>Nicholas R Holt</td>
<td>36</td>
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<tr>
<td>Barry Bishop</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Keith Hopper</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alan J Bolton</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>* Christine M Jewitt</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amanda J Boon</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>Kavula J John</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geoffrey C Boxer</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>Graham R Kent</td>
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<tr>
<td>Derick Chambers</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>R Andrew Laird</td>
<td>16</td>
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<tr>
<td>Philip A Clarke</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>* Jong Sin Lee</td>
<td>9</td>
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<tr>
<td>Susan B Conroy</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>J Peter F Levitt</td>
<td>38</td>
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<tr>
<td>Margaret Crawshaw</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>Philip Luscombe</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patricia M Creamer</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>* Robert C Manning</td>
<td>22</td>
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<tr>
<td>* Joseph Daley</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>Stephen R Mares</td>
<td>41</td>
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<tr>
<td>Judy M Davies</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>John R Marriott</td>
<td>12</td>
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<tr>
<td>Philip R Dew</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>David P Martin</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lan T Farnsworth</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>* Graham J Miles</td>
<td>29</td>
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<td>David M Firth</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>Andrew J Mumford</td>
<td>4</td>
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<td>John Fisher</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>David Musgrave</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robert Gee</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>Jonathan R Musselwhite</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M Kenneth George</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>Lindsay Neal</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christopher R Gray</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>Hayford Ofori-Attah</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Susan Greenhart</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Sandra E Osgerby</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
53. Presbyters and Deacons Becoming Supernumerary or Returning to the Active Work

* Jacqueline J Owen (18)  Doreen M Sparey-Delacassa (18)
Celia M Phillips (25)  Timothy J Thorpe (26)
Jennifer M Potter (16)  Palo Tshume (11)
Hazel Ratcliffe (18)  Ian H Wales (42)
Eleanor M E Reddington (39)  F Lawrence Wallace (25)
John J Richey (13)  Seija Wallace (15)
Philip J Richter (43)  Stephen H Ward (12)
Andrew M Roberts (27)  Robert O Whorton (39)
* Mary V B Shannahan (15)  Jane M Willcock (17)
Judith A Smart (42)  * Hugh-John Wilson (8)
Susan M Smith (13)  Paul J Worsnop (21)
Ian Souter (38)  Nicholas S Young (30)

All applications are made under Standing Order 790(1), except those marked * who are applying on grounds of ill health under Standing Order 790(2) and those marked + who are applying on compassionate grounds under Standing Order 790(3).

***RESOLUTIONS

53/1. (Presbyteral Session)
The Conference receives the Report.

53/2. (Presbyteral Session)
The Conference recommends to the Representative Session that the presbyters listed above be permitted to become supernumerary on the grounds shown.

53/3. (Representative Session)
The Conference permits those presbyters whose names have been recommended by the Presbyteral Session to become supernumerary.

53/4. (Representative Session)
The Conference permits the following presbyter to return to the active work: Harold Stuteley

DEACONS BECOMING SUPERNUMERARY OR RETURNING TO THE ACTIVE WORK

1. Recommended to return to the active work
   No case

2. Permission to become supernumerary granted during the year
   * Gwynneth J Bamford
Those marked * were granted permission on grounds of ill health under Standing Order 790(2).

3. Deacons requesting permission to become supernumerary
   Vivienne Gray
   Stephen J Peck
   Lynne Sylvester-Tonge

   All applications are made under Standing Order 790(1), except those marked * who are applying on grounds of ill health under Standing Order 790(2).

***RESOLUTIONS

53/5. (Representative Session)
   The Conference permits those deacons whose names have been recommended by the Conference Diaconal Committee to become supernumerary.
The Conference Diaconal Committee ("the Committee") met during the Convocation of the Methodist Diaconal Order on 11 May 2018. The Vice-President took the Chair.

1. **Deacons who have died**

The Committee approved the obituaries of Brenda Fuller, Susan Mary Jackson, Linda Judith Ireland, Joan Mary Stockley, Greta Marion Wainwright and Helen Merle Wilde.

2. **Candidates**

2.1 The Committee recommended, with the required majority, acceptance by the Representative Session of the following candidates to proceed immediately into pre-ordination training:

   Alison Hyde  
   Kim Louise Gabbattis  
   Marcianne Uwimana  
   Sarah Jane Rigby  
   Tessa Joanne Bennett

2.2 The Committee recommended, with the required majority, acceptance by the Representative Session of the following candidate to proceed to training upon the fulfilment of certain conditions:

   *No case*

2.2 The Committee noted the following deacons recommended by the Ministerial Candidates’ Selection Committee for training for presbyteral ministry upon transfer from diaconal ministry:

   *No case*

2.3 The Committee noted the following accepted diaconal candidates recommended by the Ministerial Candidates’ Selection Committee for training for presbyteral ministry:

   *No case*

3. **Transfer**

The Committee adopted the recommendation by a 75% majority or more of the Ministerial Candidates’ Selection Committee acting as Transfer Committee that the following applicants should be transferred to the jurisdiction of this Conference, as a probationer:

   *No case*
4. **Training and probation**

The Committee adopted the following special reports of the Ministerial Candidates’ and Probationers’ Oversight Committee:

4.1 Candidates accepted at previous Conferences and given permission to delay entry into training:
*No case*

4.2 Candidates accepted at this Conference and to be given permission to delay entry into training:
*No case*

4.3 Candidates accepted at this Conference and to be given permission to transfer to another Conference:
*No case*

4.4 Candidates conditionally accepted at previous Conferences:

   (a) Those judged to have fulfilled the condition and therefore to be accepted as candidates
       *No case*

   (b) Those judged to have failed to fulfil the condition and thereby not to be accepted as candidates
       *No case*

   (c) Those still to fulfil the condition
       *No case*

4.5 Changes in expected date of Reception into Full Connexion:

   (a) To an earlier date
       *No case*

   (b) To a later date
       *No case*

4.6 Special cases:
*No case*

4.7 Deferred entry into probation:
*No case*
4.8 Withdrawals under SO 727:
(a) Candidates
   No case
(b) Student deacons
   No case
(c) Probationers
   No case

4.9 Transfer to other Conferences or Churches:
   No case

4.10 Reinstatements under SO 761:
   No case

4.11 Discipline:
   No case

4.12 The Committee noted, pursuant to SO 031, that the following students and
probationers had been discontinued:
   No case

In the following lists:
* = change from the lists approved by the 2017 Conference
+ = candidates accepted by the 2017 Conference

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Surname</th>
<th>First name(s)</th>
<th>Due to be received into Full Connexion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brown</td>
<td>Corinne Anne</td>
<td>2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+ Goddard</td>
<td>Caroline Michelle</td>
<td>2021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hassall</td>
<td>Shirley Dianne</td>
<td>2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Johnson</td>
<td>Katherine Jane</td>
<td>2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+ Lunn</td>
<td>Helen</td>
<td>2022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parnell</td>
<td>Jennifer</td>
<td>2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perrott</td>
<td>Nigel George</td>
<td>2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rop</td>
<td>Bryanell Elizabeth</td>
<td>2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+ Sam</td>
<td>Theresa Effuah</td>
<td>2022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+ Snowball</td>
<td>Helen</td>
<td>2021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spinks</td>
<td>Rebekah Joy</td>
<td>2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stoddart</td>
<td>Judith Elizabeth</td>
<td>2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stoner</td>
<td>Robert Austin</td>
<td>2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wheadon</td>
<td>Sally Anne</td>
<td>2020</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5. **Ordinands**

The Committee recommended to the Representative Session of the Conference that the following are fit to be received into Full Connexion with the Conference as deacons, and, if not already ordained, to be ordained and to be received into full membership of the Methodist Diaconal Order:

Linda Brown  
Jacqueline Abigail Patricia Onike Esama-John  
Elizabeth Harfleet  
Sarah Louise Wickett  
Jacqueline Linda Wright

6. **Permission to serve abroad**

Angleena J Keizer

7. **Permission to reside abroad**

Harriet P Bacon  
Gordon H Wallace

8. **Deacons becoming supernumerary**

(a) The Committee recommended to the Representative Session that the following deacons be permitted to become supernumerary:  
Vivienne Gray  
Stephen J Peck  
Lynne Sylvester-Tonge

(b) Permissions granted during the year:  
During the year, the President permitted the following deacon to become supernumerary on health grounds:  
Gwynneth J Bamford

See the Presbyters and Deacons Becoming Supernumerary or Returning to the Active Work section of the Agenda for the resolution to be presented to the Representative Session.

9. **Resignations**

The Committee noted that the President had given permission for the following deacons to resign:  
No case
10. **Annual Inquiry**

The Warden of the Order gave to the President on behalf of the Convocation the assurances as to the character and discipline of the deacons and diaconal probationers required by Standing Order 183.

***RESOLUTIONS***

54/1. The Conference receives the Report.

54/2. The Conference resolves, by a Standing Vote, that it accepts for training, unconditionally or conditionally as the case may be, the candidates for ministry recommended by the Diaconal Committee whose names are recorded in the report of that Committee.

54/3. The Conference adopts the report on diaconal students and probationers recommended for continuance in training or on probation as set out in section 4.

54/4. The Conference resolves by a Standing Vote that those persons whose names have been read to the Conference and are printed in the Agenda be now received into Full Connexion with the Conference as deacons, and, if not already ordained, to be ordained by prayer and the laying on of hands and to be received into full membership of the Methodist Diaconal Order on the afternoon of this day, the 1st day of July, at Southwell Minster.
## PRESBYTERS TO BE RECOGNISED AND REGARDED AS PRESBYTERS OF THE METHODIST CHURCH

The names of persons to be recognised and regarded as Presbyters in Full Connexion are printed below and may be amended in the Order Paper at the Conference in order to incorporate any changes consequent upon the decisions of the Stationing Committee.

### (1) Presbyters of the Irish Conference

*Under Clause 43 of the Deed of Union all presbyters admitted into Full Connexion with the Conference of the Methodist Church in Ireland are automatically recognised and regarded as presbyters in Full Connexion with the Conference of the Methodist Church in Britain, irrespective of whether they are stationed by the latter Conference (although they only come under the rules and discipline of the Conference when stationed by it). Their names are printed in the Minutes of the Conference.*

### (2) Presbyters of other autonomous Methodist Conferences

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Conference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>P Kofi Amissah</td>
<td>2/9</td>
<td>Methodist Church Ghana</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P Ruffin Binda</td>
<td>18/13</td>
<td>Methodist Church of Southern Africa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mucharutya Chisvo</td>
<td>5/6</td>
<td>Methodist Church Zimbabwe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William Davis</td>
<td>28/1</td>
<td>Methodist Church Ghana</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zdzislaw G Hendzel</td>
<td>24/16</td>
<td>Methodist Church of Southern Africa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japhet K Kabilu</td>
<td>29/14</td>
<td>Methodist Church Kenya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jimione Kaci</td>
<td>28/9</td>
<td>Methodist Church Fiji</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Josefa R Mairara</td>
<td>26/FC</td>
<td>Methodist Church Fiji</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J Scott Manning</td>
<td>19/19</td>
<td>Methodist Church of Southern Africa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David A Markay</td>
<td>35/7</td>
<td>United Methodist Church</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kristin C Markay</td>
<td>35/6</td>
<td>United Methodist Church</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gary J Molver</td>
<td>5/16</td>
<td>Methodist Church of Southern Africa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michael Moon</td>
<td>34/10</td>
<td>Methodist Church in Korea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rachel Muthoni</td>
<td>29/33</td>
<td>Methodist Church Kenya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ung Soon Nguang</td>
<td>35/39</td>
<td>Methodist Church Malaysia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adam Nyawo</td>
<td>35/25</td>
<td>Methodist Church Zimbabwe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Henry Chilemeze Ohakah</td>
<td>25/1</td>
<td>Methodist Church Nigeria</td>
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<tr>
<td>Romeo R Pedro</td>
<td>23/13</td>
<td>Methodist Church of Southern Africa</td>
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<tr>
<td>Robert L Roberts</td>
<td>14/1</td>
<td>United Methodist Church</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cleopas Sibanda</td>
<td>5/1</td>
<td>Methodist Church Zimbabwe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robert Zachar</td>
<td>26/21</td>
<td>United Methodist Church</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**RESOLUTION**

55/1. **By a Standing Vote, the Conference welcomes those presbyters to be appointed to the stations, whose names are listed in the Agenda as amended by the Order Paper circulated to the Conference, as ministers of other autonomous Methodist Conferences who, by virtue of clause 44 of the Deed of Union, will thereby be recognised and regarded as presbyters of the Methodist Church admitted into Full Connexion.**

(3) **Presbyters of other communions applying to be recognised and regarded**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Robert J Birnie</td>
<td>26/FC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Noreen S Daley-Lee</td>
<td>36/21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rachel L Frank</td>
<td>5/1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Robert J Kasema</td>
<td>23/9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David Kent</td>
<td>27/35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Krystyna H Kwarcia</td>
<td>19/1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chellaian Lawrence</td>
<td>35/5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mark R Mander</td>
<td>26/FC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Debora K Marschner</td>
<td>25/1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michael A Ogwuche</td>
<td>18/17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John C Peet</td>
<td>27/31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lansford H Penn-Timity</td>
<td>29/32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Douglas S Rix</td>
<td>24/8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Israel Selvanayagam</td>
<td>5/15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teddy Siwila</td>
<td>28/1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J Martin Whitehead</td>
<td>6/4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alex Yesudas</td>
<td>21/15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**RESOLUTION**

55/2. **By a Standing Vote, the Conference, by virtue of clause 45 of the Deed of Union, declares that the persons whose names are printed for this purpose in the Agenda as amended by the Order Paper circulated to the Conference, shall be recognised and regarded during the period of their appointment to the stations for the next ensuing year as presbyters of the Methodist Church admitted into Full Connexion.**
55. Presbyters and Deacons from other Churches

DEACONS OF OTHER CHURCHES TO BE RECOGNISED AND REGARDED AS DEACONS OF THE METHODIST CHURCH

No case

PRESBYTERS AND DEACONS OF OTHER COMMUNIONS TO BE AUTHORISED TO SERVE THE METHODIST CHURCH

The names of presbyters and deacons to be authorised to serve are printed in the draft of the stations circulated to the Conference, which may be amended via the changes to the stations distributed to the Conference while it is in session.

***RESOLUTION

55/3. The Conference resolves that the persons whose names are printed for this purpose in the draft of the stations as amended by the changes to the stations circulated to the Conference, be authorised to serve the Methodist Church as presbyter or deacon as the case may be for the next ensuing year by virtue of Standing Order 733(1) and that each person so authorised shall reside for the purposes of the stations in the Circuit under which his or her name is listed.

PRESBYTERS AND DEACONS OF OTHER COMMUNIONS APPLYING TO BE ASSOCIATE PRESBYTERS OR DEACONS OF THE METHODIST CHURCH

The names of presbyters and deacons of other communions to be granted the status of associate presbyter or associate deacon as the case may be are printed in the draft of the stations circulated to the Conference, and may be amended in the changes to the stations distributed to the Conference whilst it is in session.

***RESOLUTIONS

55/4. The Conference resolves that the persons whose names are printed for this purpose in the draft of the stations as amended by the changes to the stations circulated to the Conference, be granted the status of associate presbyter for the next ensuing year by virtue of Standing Order 733A(1) in the Circuit whose number appears against his or her name so listed.

55/5. The Conference resolves that the persons whose names are printed for this purpose in the draft of the stations as amended by the changes to the stations circulated to the Conference, be granted the status of associate deacon for
the next ensuing year by virtue of Standing Order 733A(1) in the Circuit whose number appears against his or her name so listed.
Members of the Conference 2018

1. The Revd Loraine N Mellor Retiring President (Deed of Union 14(2)(i))
2. Mrs E Jill Baker Retiring Vice-President “
3. The Revd Canon Gareth J Powell Secretary of the Conference “
4. The Revd Dr Roger L Walton Ex-President (DU 14(2)(ii))
5. Ms Rachel J Lampard Ex-Vice-President
6. The Revd Michaela A Youngson President-Designate (DU 14(2)(iii))
7. Mr Bala Gnanapragasam Vice-President-Designate

Conference Secretariat and other Officers (DU 14(2)(iv) SO 101)

8. The Revd Dr Jonathan R Hustler Assistant Secretary
9. to be confirmed Record Secretary
10. The Revd Jennifer M Dyer Journal Secretary
11. Mr Martin Harker Secretary of the Memorials Committee
12. Mr David S Walton Chair of the Business Committee SO 136(1)(i)
13. Mrs Louise C Wilkins Conference Officer for Legal and Constitutional Practice

The Chair of each Home District (DU 14(2)(v))

14. The Revd Dr Jennifer A Hurd Synod Cymru
15. The Revd Dr Stephen D Wigley Wales Synod
16. The Revd Ian Howarth Birmingham
17. The Revd Paul Martin Bolton and Rochdale
18. The Revd Dr Jonathan H Pye Bristol
19. The Revd Richard J Teal Cumbria
20. The Revd David Hinchliffe Channel Islands
21. The Revd Peter E Barber Chester and Stoke-on-Trent
22. The Revd Steven J Wild Cornwall
The Revd Ruth M Gee Darlington dual qualification
23. The Revd Julian M Pursehouse East Anglia
24. The Revd Richard Hall Isle of Man
25. The Revd Bruce D Thompson Lincolnshire
26. The Revd Dr Sheryl M Anderson Liverpool
27. The Revd Dr Andrew J Lunn Manchester and Stockport
28. The Revd Stephen J Lindridge Newcastle upon Tyne
29. The Revd Paul H Davis Lancashire
The Revd Loraine N Mellor Nottingham and Derby dual qualification
30. The Revd Helen D Cameron Northampton
31. The Revd Graham Thompson Plymouth and Exeter
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Name and Title</th>
<th>Location/Qualification</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>The Revd Gillian M Newton</td>
<td>Sheffield</td>
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<tr>
<td>33</td>
<td>The Revd Dr Andrew D Wood</td>
<td>Southampton</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Revd Dr Roger L Walton</td>
<td>Yorkshire West dual qualification</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td>The Revd Rachel E Parkinson</td>
<td>Wolverhampton and Shrewsbury</td>
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<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>The Revd Leslie M Newton</td>
<td>Yorkshire North and East</td>
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<td>36</td>
<td>The Revd David P Easton</td>
<td>Scotland</td>
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<td>The Revd David P Easton</td>
<td>Shetland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37</td>
<td>The Revd Dr David M Chapman</td>
<td>Bedfordshire, Essex and Hertfordshire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38</td>
<td>The Revd Nigel Cowgill</td>
<td>London</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Revd Michaela A Youngson</td>
<td>London dual qualification</td>
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<tr>
<td>39</td>
<td>The Revd Jongikaya Zihle</td>
<td>London</td>
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<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td>The Revd John Hellyer</td>
<td>South-East</td>
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**Warden of the Methodist Diaconal Order (DU (14)(2)(vi))**

<table>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>41</td>
<td>DeaconKaren McBride</td>
<td>The Warden</td>
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**Representatives from the Irish Conference**

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Number</th>
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<tr>
<td>42</td>
<td>The Revd William A Davison</td>
<td>(President, Methodist Conference in Ireland)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(DU14(2)(vii))</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43</td>
<td>The Revd Dr Thomas McKnight</td>
<td>(Secretary, Methodist Conference in Ireland)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44</td>
<td>Mrs Nicky Hazley</td>
<td>(DU 14(3))</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45</td>
<td>Mrs Lynda Neilands</td>
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**Representatives of United Methodist Church (DU 14(3))**

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Number</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>46</td>
<td>Bishop Rosemarie Wenner</td>
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<tr>
<td>47</td>
<td>Ms Daphne Creasman</td>
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**Conference-elected Representatives (DU 14(2)(ix) (DU 14(5) SO 103)**

**Retiring in 2018**

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Number</th>
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<tr>
<td>48</td>
<td>Ms Rachel Allison</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49</td>
<td>Deacon Eunice Attwood</td>
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<tr>
<td>50</td>
<td>Mr John Cooper</td>
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**Retiring in 2019**

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<th>Number</th>
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<tr>
<td>51</td>
<td>The Revd Dr Jane V Craske</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>52</td>
<td>Dr Stephen Leah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>53</td>
<td>The Revd Elaine M Lindridge</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Members of the Conference 2018

**Retiring in 2020**
- Mrs Ruby Beech
- The Revd David M Goodall
- The Revd Kenneth G Howcroft

**Representatives of Connexional and Other Bodies (SO 102)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position/Role</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>57</td>
<td>The Revd Ruth M Gee</td>
<td>The Chair of the Methodist Council (i)(a)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>58</td>
<td>The Revd Timothy A Swindell</td>
<td>Lead Connexional Treasurer (i)(b)</td>
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<tr>
<td>59</td>
<td>Prof Peter D Howdle</td>
<td>Chair, Strategy and Resources Committee (i)(c)</td>
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<tr>
<td>60</td>
<td>Mr Doug Swanney</td>
<td>Connexional Secretary (i)(d)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>61</td>
<td>The Revd Richard Rowe</td>
<td>Forces Chaplain (i)(e)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>62</td>
<td>The Revd John D Howard</td>
<td>Overseas Service (i)(f)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>63</td>
<td>Mrs Sharon Harbottle</td>
<td>Overseas Service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>64</td>
<td>The Revd Musi Losaba</td>
<td>Appointed by Partner Churches (DU 14(4)(d))</td>
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<tr>
<td>65</td>
<td>Mrs Muriel Smith</td>
<td>Appointed by Partner Churches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>66</td>
<td>The Revd Dr Nicola V Price-Tebbutt</td>
<td>Law and Polity representative (ii)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>67</td>
<td>Miss Elizabeth H Ovey</td>
<td>Law and Polity representative (iii)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>68</td>
<td>Mrs Pamela Lavender</td>
<td>Stationing Committee Representative (iv)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>69</td>
<td>Ms Whitney K Addow</td>
<td>concerns of equality, diversity and inclusion (i)(g)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70</td>
<td>Mr Aaron Barnes</td>
<td>concerns of equality, diversity and inclusion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>71</td>
<td>The Revd Delyth A Liddell</td>
<td>concerns of equality, diversity and inclusion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>72</td>
<td>The Revd Daniel M Mwailu</td>
<td>concerns of equality, diversity and inclusion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>73</td>
<td>The Revd Stephen J Poxon</td>
<td>concerns of equality, diversity and inclusion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>74</td>
<td>Ms Jasmine F Yeboah</td>
<td>concerns of equality, diversity and inclusion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75</td>
<td>Ms Gillian Womersley</td>
<td>representative Methodist Women in Britain (vii)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>76</td>
<td>Mr Michael Pryke</td>
<td>Youth President (5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>77</td>
<td>Ms Kira Barfoot</td>
<td>Youth Assembly</td>
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<tr>
<td>78</td>
<td>Ms Liberty Dane</td>
<td>Youth Assembly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>79</td>
<td>Ms Ruth Hall</td>
<td>Youth Assembly</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Synod Cymru**
- The Revd R Martin Evans-Jones
- Deacon Jonathan Miller
- Mrs Alison Woodbridge
- Mr R Arfon Williams

**Wales Synod**
- The Revd Rosemarie E G Clarke
- The Revd Nicholas A Oborski

**Birmingham**
- The Revd Inderjit S Bhogal
- The Revd Dr Jonathan Dean
Members of the Conference 2018

Bolton and Rochdale

94 The Revd Mark Rowland
95 Deacon Marilyn O S Slowe
96 Mr John Cowan
97 Mrs Jean Hamilton
98 Mr Robert Lewin-Jones
99 Ms Sandie Smith
100 Ms Caroline Warrey

Bolton and Rochdale

101 The Revd Darren A Garfield
102 The Revd Gillian Sharp
103 Mrs Gillian M Dascombe
104 Mrs Leonie R O’Donoghue
105 Mr Joshua Orme

Bristol

106 The Revd Carol A Chaplin
107 The Revd Naomi Cooke
108 The Revd Rachael M Wilson
109 Ms Jenny Cornell
110 Mrs Janet Day
111 Mrs Emma J Mills
112 Ms Dorothy North
113 Mr David S Pendle

Cumbria

114 The Revd Philip J Jackson
115 The Revd Stephen J Radford
116 Deacon Deborah D E Buckley
117 Mrs Judith James
118 Mrs Janice Rusling

Channel Islands

119 The Revd Karen A V Le Mouton
120 Mr Paul Curtis

Chester and Stoke-on-Trent

121 The Revd Anthony J Clowes
122 The Revd Ashley R Cooper
123 The Revd Simon C Sutcliffe
124 Dr B Jill Barber
125 Mrs Ruth E Pickles
126 Mrs Heather J Staniland
127 Dr Geoffrey J Dickinson
128 Mr Ian C White

Cornwall

129 The Revd Simon J Clarke
130 The Revd Mark F Pengelly
131 The Revd Johanna C Smart
132 Mrs Biddy Bishop
133 Mrs Sheridan Pengelly
134 Mr Giles Richards

Darlington

135 The Revd Beverly Hollings
136 The Revd Janice M Trimble
137 Deacon Annette Sharp
138 Mrs Anne Offer
139 Mr James Patterson
140 Mrs Susan Smith

East Anglia

141 The Revd Catherine Dixon
142 The Revd Jacquie P Evans
143 The Revd Peter G Rayson
144 Deacon Ian H Murray
145 Mrs Susan Eldridge
146 Mr Chris Finbow
147 Mrs Jane Green
148 Mrs Hazel Miles
Members of the Conference 2018

Isle of Man
149 The Revd Stephen P Ingrouille
150 Mr Gareth Moore

Lincolnshire
151 The Revd Ann L Lett
152 The Revd Eleanor J Smith
153 Mrs Sue Brumpton
154 Mrs Elizabeth Hudson
155 Mr Michael May

Liverpool
156 The Revd Rachel D Deigh
157 The Revd Paul H Wilson
158 Deacon Filippus den Uil
159 Mr Stephen Cooper
160 Mr Ralph Dransfield
161 Mrs Heather Lovelady

Manchester and Stockport
162 The Revd Rodney Hill
163 The Revd Ian S Rutherford
164 The Revd Kerry W Tankard
165 Mr Matt Collins
166 Mrs Angela Doyle
167 Mr David James
168 Miss Rachel Lowe
169 Miss Arielle Lufakalyo

Newcastle-upon-Tyne
170 The Revd Stuart Earl
171 The Revd Lynda Coulthard
172 The Revd Dr Elizabeth A Kent
173 Deacon Tracey J Hume
174 Mrs Christine Armstrong
175 Mr Christopher Horton
176 Mr Cameron Hume
177 Mr Andrew Lowe
178 Mr Adam Wilkinson

Lancashire
179 The Revd Katharine J Bland
180 The Revd Janet I Pybon
181 The Revd Sally A Ratcliffe
182 Deacon Josephine F A Critchley
183 Mrs Shirley Crook
184 Mrs Carolyn Hothersall
185 Miss June Littlemore
186 Mr John Spencer

Nottingham and Derby
187 The Revd Dr Moira J Biggins
188 The Revd Andrew J Chislett-McDonald
189 The Revd Paul J Worsnop
190 Deacon Jennifer A J Jones
191 Mr Tim Annan
192 Mr John D Heard
193 Mrs Judith Neal
194 Miss Jasmine J Roberts
195 Mrs Tracy J Shaw

Northampton
196 The Revd Edson Dube
197 The Revd Alan J Bolton
198 The Revd Andrew W Fyall
199 The Revd Jane E Gaffney
200 The Revd Jill Marsh
201 Miss Dorothy Hutchinson
202 Mr Philip Jones
203 Mrs Pedzisai G Katsande
204 Mrs Ann Leck
205 Mrs Roberta Lunt
206 Dr Margaret Williams
Plymouth and Exeter

207 The Revd Elizabeth J Singleton
208 The Revd D Paul C Smith
209 The Revd Philip P Wagstaff
210 Ms Anne Browse
211 Mr David A Clitheroe
212 Mrs Carolyn Lawrence
213 Mr Frank Watson
214 Mrs Jacqui Watson

Sheffield

215 The Revd Karen Beecham
216 The Revd Julie Minns
217 The Revd Margaret Mwailu
218 Dr Katrin Hackett
219 Dr Anne Hollows
220 Mr Thomas Hunt
221 Mrs Anna Malnutt

Southampton

222 The Revd Andrew P De Ville
223 The Revd Gareth L Hill
224 The Revd David W Hookins
225 The Revd Dr Ruth Midcalf
226 Deacon Maria A Howard
227 Mr Rodney Betts
228 Mrs Sandy Coates
229 Mrs Christine Hatton
230 Mrs Mary Ludlow
231 Mrs Kathleen Phillips

Yorkshire West

232 The Revd Christine Hawke
233 The Revd Dr Barbara Glasson
234 The Revd Ruth Crompton
235 The Revd Barry Owen
236 The Revd Naomi Kaiga
237 Mr John Watmough

238 Dr John Hargreaves
239 Mrs Caroline Stead
240 Mr Michael Noble
241 Mr Joseph Santry
242 Mrs Anne Vautrey

Wolverhampton and Shrewsbury

243 The Revd Christopher J Collins
244 The Revd Nathan S Falla
245 The Revd Rachel J Wood
246 Mrs Beatrice M Cloke
247 Miss Jacqueline Hill
248 Mr Peter Mills
249 Ms Andrea Sheppick
250 Mr Keith Walton

Yorkshire North and East

251 The Revd Keith R Albans
252 The Revd Iain M Ballard
253 The Revd M Ruth Parry
254 The Revd Julia Skitt
255 Deacon Denise A Creed
256 Mrs Jacqueline Gaitley
257 Mrs Laura Gallery
258 Mr Alister McClure
259 Ms Amy Shepherd
260 Mrs Christine Sumpner

Scotland and Shetland

261 The Revd Nick Baker
262 The Revd Dr Helen E Jenkins
263 The Revd Mary M Patterson
264 Mrs Sue M Marshall-Jennings
265 Mr Roger P Randle
266 Mrs Clarice Spaine

Bedfordshire, Essex and Hertfordshire

267 The Revd Andrew J L Hollins
Members of the Conference 2018

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>London</th>
<th>South East</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>268</td>
<td>The Revd Vindra L Maraj-Ogden</td>
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<tr>
<td>269</td>
<td>The Revd Thomas J Osborne</td>
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<tr>
<td>270</td>
<td>Miss Alison Baalham</td>
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<td>271</td>
<td>Mr James Masterson</td>
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<td>272</td>
<td>Mr Keith Norman</td>
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<tr>
<td>273</td>
<td>Mr Steve Rogers</td>
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<tr>
<td>274</td>
<td>Mrs Catherine Roots</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>London</th>
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</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>275</td>
<td>The Revd Rachel A Bending</td>
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<tr>
<td>276</td>
<td>The Revd William Davis</td>
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<tr>
<td>277</td>
<td>The Revd Eleanor G Jackson</td>
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<td>278</td>
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<td>The Revd Anthony D Miles</td>
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<td>280</td>
<td>The Revd Faith M Nyota</td>
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<td>The Revd Elizabeth O Osei</td>
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<td>The Revd R Stephen J Penrose</td>
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<td>Ms Nancy Adusei</td>
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<td>Mr Anthony Boateng</td>
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<td>286</td>
<td>Mr Clement Cofie</td>
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<tr>
<td>287</td>
<td>Mr Gerry Davis</td>
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</table>

**Associate Members**

(a) Ecumenical

| 307 | The Revd Canon Dr Michael Booker | The Church of England |
| 308 | The Revd Tim Meadows            | The United Reformed Church |
| 309 | The Revd Rick Preston           | The Baptist Union of Great Britain |
| 310 | The Revd Dr J M Ainsley Griffiths | The Church in Wales |
| 311 | The Revd E David Edwards        | The New Testament Church of God |
| 312 | Major David Edwards             | The Salvation Army |

(b) Overseas

**Europe**

| 313 | Deaconess Alessandra Trotta    | OPCEMI |
| 314 | The Revd Christhard Rüdiger    | German Central Conference |
| 315 | The Revd Eduardo Conde de Almeida | Igreja Evangelica Metodista Portuguesa |

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position/Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>316</td>
<td>Mr Ulrich Bachmann</td>
<td>UMC Central and Southern Europe Central Conference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>317</td>
<td>The Revd Volodymyr Prokip</td>
<td>UMC Northern Europe &amp; Eurasia Central Conference</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Africa</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>318</td>
<td>The Revd Dr Kponjesu Hounsa</td>
<td>Eglise Protestante Méthodiste du Bénin</td>
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<td>319</td>
<td>The Revd Próspero-David Sharpe</td>
<td>Iglesia Metodista de Guinea Ecuatorial</td>
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<td>Presiding Bishop Hannah Faal-Heim</td>
<td>Methodist Church The Gambia</td>
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<tr>
<td>321</td>
<td>The Rt Revd Dr Michael Akinwale</td>
<td>Methodist Church Nigeria</td>
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<td><strong>Americas</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>322</td>
<td>The Revd Juan de Dios Peña</td>
<td>Iglesia Evangélica Metodista en El Salvador</td>
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<tr>
<td>323</td>
<td>Bishop Silvio Cevallos</td>
<td>Iglesia Evangélica Metodista Unida del Ecuador</td>
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<td>The Revd Luis Caicedo Guayara</td>
<td>Iglesia Metodista de Colombia</td>
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<td>325</td>
<td>Bishop Luiz Vergilio Batista da Rosa</td>
<td>Methodist Church in Brazil</td>
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<td><strong>Asia-Pacific</strong></td>
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<td>326</td>
<td>The Revd Tim Lam</td>
<td>The Methodist Church, Hong Kong</td>
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<td>327</td>
<td>The Rt Revd Ravikumar J Niranjan</td>
<td>Church of South India</td>
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<tr>
<td>328</td>
<td>The Revd Emmanuel Lorraine</td>
<td>Church of Pakistan</td>
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<tr>
<td>329</td>
<td>Mr Tavita Moala</td>
<td>Methodist Church in Samoa</td>
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<tr>
<td>330</td>
<td>The Revd Burabeti Tabe</td>
<td>The United Church in the Solomon Islands</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Presbyters attending at their own expense

The Revd J Neil Adams
The Revd Gillian R Baalham
The Revd Andrew M Baker
The Revd Ian C Bell
The Revd Stuart A Bell
The Revd Catherine H Bird
The Revd Richard J Byass
The Revd Patricia Christopher
The Revd Robert C Cotton
The Revd J Trevor Dixon
The Revd Margaret F Doughty
The Revd Graham M Edwards
The Revd Simon C Edwards
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