Presbyteral and Representative Sessions

Assembling in
Nottingham

Presbyteral Session
Thursday 28 June at 14:15

Representative Session
Saturday 30 June at 14:15

By direction of the Conference, this Agenda has been sent by post to each member of the Representative Session. Representatives must bring the Agenda with them to the Conference. The Secretaries cannot supply additional copies. Representatives may wish to bring copies of Singing the Faith and The Methodist Worship Book but, increasingly, services of worship and hymns are being printed or projected on screen. The President and Vice-President confidently appeal to all representatives to join, so far as they possibly can, in all the devotions of the Conference. Chaplains will be available throughout the Conference.
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Conference Rules of Procedure

The rules governing the procedures of the Conference are set out in the following Standing Orders.

130 Introductory.
The rules of debate comprising the clauses of Standing Order 131 shall regulate the proceedings of the Conference, except that since much of the business of the Conference may be conducted in the form of conversations clauses (3) and (9) to (14) shall apply only when a formal resolution is under consideration.

131 Rules of Debate.
(1) In this Standing Order ‘the President’ means the person presiding for the time being over the Conference in accordance with the provisions of clause 28 of the Deed of Union.
(1A) Any member who wishes to speak shall catch the President’s eye but shall not proceed further until called upon by the President.
(2) Every speaker shall address the President.
(3) No member may speak more than once on the same question without leave of the Conference, except in the exercise of a right of reply under clause (18) below. For this purpose an amendment or procedural motion raises a fresh question.
(4) (a) Subject to sub-clause (b) below every resolution or amendment shall be circulated beforehand in writing in the Agenda, or by other form of official report, or by notice of motion.
(b) Sub-clause (a) does not apply:
   (i) to procedural motions under clause (11) below or resolutions to extend sittings of the Conference beyond the time already determined;
   (ii) to resolutions submitted by the Law and Polity Sub-committee under clause (25) below;
   (iii) to business taken in closed session;
   (iv) to further amendments moved after a resolution has already been amended;
   (v) where the Conference has dispensed with circulation under clause (19)(a) (ii) below or Standing Order 129(4)(b) or 129A or otherwise;
   (vi) if the President judges it necessary for the effective conclusion of a debate to admit a resolution or amendment without prior notice.
(c) Where sub-clause (b) applies, except by virtue of head (i), the resolution or amendment shall be produced in writing when proposed, and immediately handed to the Secretary.
(5) Every resolution or amendment, except a resolution moved on behalf of a body authorised to report to the Conference, requires to be seconded in order to be submitted to the Conference. With the same exception, all movers and seconds of resolutions or amendments must be members of the Conference.
(6) Persons presenting reports may speak to the resolutions in them and may give information on any development of major importance which has arisen since publication. Otherwise reports circulated in the Agenda or otherwise shall be presented without
introductory speeches.

(7) When a resolution or amendment has been duly submitted it may not be withdrawn without the leave of the Conference.

(8) The seconder of a resolution or amendment may reserve the right to speak.

(9) (a) Any amendment of the terms of a resolution may be proposed if it is relevant to the subject-matter of the resolution, unless the same result could be achieved by the rejection of the resolution.

(b) If an amendment is carried the resolution as amended becomes the substantive motion, and as such may itself be amended under this clause.

(c) When an amendment has been duly submitted no other amendment may be moved until it has been disposed of, but any member may give notice of a proposed amendment and may state whether it is to be moved in any event or if not in what circumstances.

(10) A resolution may be disposed of by adoption (with or without amendment), rejection or withdrawal. Until it has been so disposed of no other resolution may be submitted except a procedural motion.

(11) The following are procedural motions, which may be adopted by the Conference at any time:

(i) that the vote be now taken;

(ii) that the question be not put;

(iii) that the question be referred to the Methodist Council or a committee;

(iv) that the debate be adjourned;

(v) that the Conference adjourn.

(12) If a resolution and amendment are before the Conference:

(i) a motion that the vote be now taken relates only to the amendment;

(ii) a motion that the question be referred or that the debate be adjourned relates to both;

(iii) a person moving that the question be not put must state whether that motion relates to both or only to the amendment.

(13) A motion that the vote be now taken requires a majority of two thirds and shall be voted upon without discussion, but the President shall not be bound to put it to the vote if of the opinion that there has not been adequate opportunity for necessary debate.

(14) A motion that the question be not put may be discussed concurrently with the question to which it relates.

(15) A motion that the debate be adjourned may specify the time of resumption or be a motion for adjournment to a time to be resolved upon later.

(16) A motion for the adjournment of the Conference shall specify the time of resumption.

(17) (a) Subject to any Standing Order relating specifically to particular forms of report a report contained in the Agenda or in a document supplemental to the Agenda shall be dealt with as a whole or as to each part by a resolution in one of the following forms:

(i) that it be referred back to the reporting body or referred to the Methodist Council or a committee;

(ii) that it be received;

(iii) that it be adopted.
(b) A resolution in any of these forms may contain or be accompanied by directions as to the publication or study of or any other action in relation to the report or (where appropriate) that no action be taken.

(c) Except as provided in (d) below or expressed in the resolution itself, no such resolution imports any endorsement by the Conference of any statement, opinion or recommendation in the report.

(d) By adopting a report the Conference endorses its recommendations or conclusions but not (without so stating) any reasons given for them.

(e) The Conference may qualify or limit any such adoption but shall not alter the text of any report except:

(i) to rectify any manifest factual error; or

(ii) to amend the terms of any passage which it is asked to endorse (whether expressly or by the operation of (d) above).

(f) The Conference may on a single motion deal en bloc with more than one resolution attached to a report, or with the resolutions to more than one report, but whenever:

(i) an amendment is proposed to any such resolution; or

(ii) there is a procedural motion under clause (11) above which in its original form or by a proposed amendment relates to less than all the matters before the Conference;

any matters which require to be put separately shall be so put.

(18) (a) When a vote falls to be taken, whether or not by the adoption of a motion under clause (11)(i) above, the following persons have a right to speak, and if more than one in the following order:

(i) the seconder of the resolution or amendment to be put, if he or she has reserved the right to speak and has not already exercised that right;

(ii) the mover of the substantive resolution, unless the question to be put is an amendment to which he or she has already spoken;

(iii) if the question to be put is an amendment, the mover of the amendment.

(b) The person entitled to speak last under sub-clause (a) above may deal only with questions or arguments put during the debate.

(c) Before putting the question the President shall call the Conference to order and read the resolution or amendment to be put. Except on a point of order no member shall speak after the question has been put until the vote has been taken.

(19) (a) Subject to sub-clause (b) below, no decision of the current meeting of the Conference may be rescinded except by substantive resolution, and no such resolution shall be adopted unless either:

(i) it is submitted on behalf of the Law and Polity Sub-Committee under clause (25) below; or

(ii) it is moved upon notice in writing previously given and officially circulated (unless by a majority of two thirds the Conference has dispensed with notice) and obtains a majority of two thirds.

For the purposes of this sub-clause a resolution rescinds a previous resolution if, and only
if, it is expressed to do so, or it directly reverses the previous resolution, or the President rules that in substance it is inconsistent with the intention of the Conference in adopting the previous resolution.

(b) Any resolution which, on the advice of the financial committee given in accordance with Standing Order 136A, would result in amendment of the provisions of the connexional budget for the Methodist Church Fund proposed under Standing Order 212(2) shall, if moved after the budget has been adopted, require a majority of two thirds, and, if carried, shall have the effect of amending the Conference’s resolution on the budget without the operation of sub-clause (a) above.

(20) A resolution to suspend a rule of debate or other provision within the Conference rules of procedure, as contained in Standing Orders 122, 130, 131, 132, 133, 134(3) and (4), 134A, 136(2C) and 136A(3) requires a majority of two thirds.

(21) The President shall call to order any speaker who departs from the question or violates the courtesies of debate.

(22) Any member may raise a point of order on the ground that the rules of debate or regulations of the Conference have been violated. The speaker then addressing the Conference shall give way until the point of order has been decided. The President decides all questions of order.

(23) (a) The following interventions in the ordinary course of business may occur, but only for substantial cause and by leave of the President:

(i) a member who thinks himself or herself misrepresented may interrupt the speaker to correct the misrepresentation;
(ii) a member may interrupt the speaker or intervene at the end of a speech to ask of the speaker a question of fact immediately connected with what is being or has been said;
(iii) brief information on uncontested matters of fact germane to the business of the Conference may be given between speeches or between items of business.

(b) A member permitted to intervene under this clause must not enter into argument nor speak to the merits of the question.

(24) Questions which relate to the rights and privileges of the Conference or of individual members, or to the order of business, have precedence.

(25) The Conference may at any time entertain without notice any resolution moved on behalf of the Conference Sub-Committee of the Committee on Methodist Law and Polity which arises out of an earlier resolution of the current meeting of the Conference, in that or an earlier session, and which seeks:

(i) to make consequential provisions; or
(ii) to amend the earlier resolution for the purpose only of –
clarification, or
reconciliation with the requirements of the law or of Methodist polity, or
the avoidance of unintended results, or
the better achievement of the intention of the Conference, or
the correction of factual error, or
any other purpose considered by the Conference to be within the scope of the functions of the Law and Polity Committee; or
(iii) to rescind the earlier resolution on the ground of illegality, irregularity or impossibility or any other ground considered by the Conference to be within the scope of the above functions.

(25A) The Conference may also entertain any resolution contained in the report of the Committee on Methodist Law and Polity which arises out of a resolution of an earlier Conference and which seeks:
(i) to amend the earlier resolution for a purpose within head (ii) of clause (25) above; or
(ii) to rescind the earlier resolution on a ground within head (iii) of clause (25) above.

(26) The response of the Conference shall not normally be conveyed by clapping.

132 Notices of Motion.
(1) Subject to Standing Order 131(4) any two members may upon notice of motion complying with this Standing Order bring before the Conference any lawful resolution within the competence of the Conference.
(1A) Every notice of motion shall be handed to the Secretary in written form and signed by the following persons:
(i) where the proposal is to amend a resolution and those responsible for presenting that business to the Conference are prepared to accept it, the proposer and seconder of the motion;
(ii) where such a proposal to amend is not accepted by those responsible, the proposer and seconder and four other persons;
(iii) in all other cases, the proposer and seconder and eight other persons.
(2) Only on matters of urgency, so judged by the President after consultation with the Vice-President, shall notices of motion in the Representative Session be accepted after 4:30pm on the third day of the session, except that a notice of motion proposing to amend a resolution circulated or materially altered on or after the first day of the session shall be accepted if lodged before the close of business on the day before the resolution is to be dealt with.

133 Memorials.
(1) The Conference may adopt, with or without amendment, or reject any reply proposed by the Memorials Committee or (if Standing Order 134(4) applies) by its convener.
(2) In relation to any one or more memorials to which replies have been proposed by the committee any two members of the Conference may, on notice of motion submitted on the first day of the relevant session, move that instead of dealing with the committee's proposed reply in the ordinary course of business the Conference shall debate a resolution based on the relevant memorials, and if such a motion is carried the President, Vice-President and Secretary of the Conference shall make arrangements accordingly.
(3) If there is a debate pursuant to Standing Order 138(5) or clause (2) above any resolution or amended resolution then adopted by the Conference is its reply to the relevant memorials.

(4) Subject to clause (5) below the Conference shall reply to every memorial, although it is open to the Conference as its interim reply to refer the memorial to the Methodist Council or a committee for consideration and report. Rejection of a proposal that a memorial be declined is not itself a reply. It is the responsibility of the convener of the committee to ensure that if the Conference rejects the proposed reply of the committee under clause (1) above or fails to adopt any resolution under clause (3) above consideration of the matter is not closed until a reply has been adopted.

(5) The committee may recommend that the Conference instead of replying to a memorial refer the questions raised to Synods and/or to Circuit Meetings for consideration or action without itself expressing a judgment on the substance of the issue. In such a case, the committee shall recommend whether Synods and Circuit Meetings are to report their conclusions to the Conference and, if so, a timetable for such report.

134 District Resolutions.
(1) Resolutions and reports submitted under Standing Order 419(2) in due time shall be printed in the Agenda. If a report is included the cost of printing shall be a charge on the District.

(2) [revoked]

(3) Such resolutions shall be moved and seconded in the Conference by representatives of the District and shall, subject to any recommendation from the Business Committee, be debated.

(4) If it appears likely to the Business Committee that the Conference will not, in the time available, be able to debate all such resolutions adequately, it may recommend to the Conference that one or more of such resolutions be dealt with instead as memorials. If the Conference adopts such a recommendation, the convener of the Memorials Committee shall, after such consultation as he or she thinks appropriate, frame a proposed reply, which shall be printed for the Conference in an order paper.

134A En Bloc Business.
(1)(a) The Business Committee shall consider, taking into account the recommendations of the Memorials Committee made under Standing Order 138(5A), which resolutions to which sub-clause (b) of this Standing Order applies are unlikely to become provisional resolutions or to give rise to opposition or debate or to require amendment other than within sub-clause (e) below. It shall, no later than the opening of the Representative Session, table a list of such resolutions with notice of its intention to invite the Conference in due course to adopt all such resolutions en bloc.

(b) This clause applies to all resolutions in the Agenda or otherwise circulated before the opening of the Conference except those for the confirmation of provisional resolutions, or for the adoption or confirmation of special resolutions under Standing Order 126, and except resolutions relating to Conference Statements under Standing Order 129.
(c) Subject to sub-clause (e) below any resolution, including any recommended reply to a
memorial, which becomes the subject of an amending notice of motion shall be removed
from the list. In addition, by giving notice to the Secretary of the Conference in writing before
the close of business on the third day of the Representative Session, any six members of
the Conference may, without proposing an amendment, require any item or items, except
a recommended reply to a memorial, to be removed from the list. The Business Committee
itself shall be free at any time before the resolutions are moved to remove any item or items
from the list.
(d) The resolutions remaining in the list shall not earlier than the fourth day of the
Representative Session be moved en bloc and voted upon without discussion.
(e) A need to make minor corrections to the text of any resolution on the list shall not
necessitate its removal, and it may be moved under sub-clause (d) above as corrected. The
Business Committee shall decide all questions as to the application of this sub-clause.
(2) The Business Committee may also advise, in the exercise of its functions under Standing
Order 136(2A)(c), that such resolutions based upon the recommendations of reference
groups as it considers appropriate for such procedure should also be moved en bloc and
voted upon without discussion. Sub-clause (1) c) shall apply to the removal of any resolution
from that procedure, provided the notice is duly given before the close of business on the day
upon which such advice is circulated to the Conference.

135 Closed Sessions.
(1) The Conference may at any time meet in closed session and shall do so when hearing any
appeal arising out of any charge within Part II.
(2) [revoked]
(3) During any closed session other than one for the hearing of an appeal within Part II no
one may be present except members of the Conference entitled to vote on the business
under consideration and any other persons or classes of persons whom the Conference may
for the time being resolve to admit.

136 Conference Business Committee.
(1) There shall be a Business Committee for the Representative Session of the Conference,
consisting of:
   (i) an ex-President or ex-Vice-President, appointed by the previous Conference upon
   the nomination of the Methodist Council to serve for a period of three years, who
   shall chair the committee and who shall, whether or not a member in any other
capacity, be a member of the Conference during the period of appointment; and
   (ii) three ministerial and three lay members of the Conference elected in
   accordance with clause (1A) or appointed under clause (1C).
The Secretary and assistant secretary of the Conference shall be in attendance but without
a vote and a connexional Treasurer and the connexional Press Officer shall attend as
consultants when required.
(1A) Where there will be a vacancy in the elected membership of the committee for the
next Conference, an election shall be held after nomination by members of the current Conference. Each nomination shall be signed by a proposer and seconder. It shall contain the District and Circuit in which the person being nominated is stationed or is a member, current appointment or current offices within the church, age, occupation, and any other relevant information (up to fifteen words). No member shall nominate more than one person. In electing such members, the Conference shall consider the composition of the committee with regard to age, sex and ethnic origin. The election shall be by single transferable vote and the chair of the Business Committee or his or her representative shall be the returning officer. The returning officer shall declare the persons elected to serve, together with two persons in each category as reserves in the event of any person who received a higher number of votes, or a continuing member under clause (1B), not being a member of the next Conference or not being able or willing to attend. Such reserves shall serve for the period for which the person originally elected would have served and shall not be eligible for immediate re-election. (1B) Committee members shall be elected for three years and shall not be eligible for immediate re-election. If an elected member is not a member of or is unable to attend the next ensuing or one of the subsequent Conferences the appointment shall lapse and the vacancy shall be filled in accordance with clause (1A) or (1C). (1C) If it becomes clear during the course of the connexional year that there will be a vacancy on the committee which cannot be filled in accordance with the above provisions, the Methodist Council shall have the power to appoint a member from amongst the members of the next Conference. Such appointment shall be for that Conference only. (2) The committee shall meet before and during the sessions of the Conference as may be necessary and shall have the following responsibilities:

(i) to draw up the order of business in the Conference and to allocate time to each item;
(ii) to recommend to the Conference which notices of motion should be debated in the Conference and at what time, and which should be dealt with in some other way, and for what reason;
(iii) to review at the end of each day the business allocated to the day but not completed and to advise the Conference how it should be dealt with;
(iv) to recommend to the President and Vice-President items of business for which they might invite members of the Conference to indicate to the committee in advance a wish to speak, and to offer advice to the President and Vice-President so as to enable a representative range of views to be heard in any such debates;
(v) to identify matters which are appropriate to be dealt with through any of the processes set out in clause (2A) below and to make the necessary arrangements, including assigning the members of the Conference to such groups as may be required.

(2A) (a) The committee may arrange for matters of general concern, not being dealt with in the formal business of the Conference, to be discussed in workshops or similar groups and
shall advise the Conference on the procedure by which any issues raised in those discussions may be taken forward.

(b) The committee may identify items of Conference business which, because of the detail involved or the complexity of the issues, can profitably be explored in depth in hearings or group discussion before being debated in full Conference, and may advise the Conference whether, and if so how, the results of such exploration are to be reported.

(c) The committee may advise that certain items in the business of the Conference be dealt with in reference groups, with the expectation that the recommendations of such groups will be dealt with by the Conference en bloc under Standing Order 134A(2).

(2B) The committee may recommend that the Conference deal with any business by referring the questions raised to Synods and/or to Circuit Meetings for consideration or action without itself expressing a judgment on the substance of the issue. In such a case, the committee shall recommend whether Synods and Circuit Meetings are to report their conclusions to the Conference and, if so, a timetable for such reports.

(2C) The committee shall arrange for the budget for the Methodist Church Fund proposed by the Methodist Council under Standing Order 212(2) to be presented and considered not later than the fourth day of the Representative Session. The formal resolution for its adoption, and the consequent resolution as to the allocation to the respective Districts of the assessments, shall be moved on the final day of the Representative Session.

(3) All recommendations of the committee shall be reported daily to the Conference for approval or amendment. The person presiding shall have the power to limit the length of any debate on procedural questions arising from the committee’s report.

136A Financial Committee.

(1) The Methodist Council, with a view to the discharge of its functions under Standing Orders 211(3)(vii) and 212(2) during the periods of the Conference, shall appoint a financial committee annually, consisting of the lead connexional Treasurer or his or her representative, the Connexional Secretary responsible for central services, three other members of the council who are also members of the Conference, together with such other members of the Connexional Team in an advisory capacity as the council may decide.

(2) The committee shall meet before and during the sessions of the Conference as necessary, shall identify all resolutions in the Agenda or otherwise circulated to the Conference which would have financial implications, other than those for which provision has already been made in the budget, and shall notify the Conference accordingly.

(3) In relation to all such resolutions which, if adopted, would result in increased costs the committee shall advise the Conference, prior to any debate or vote upon them,

   (i) whether, if adopted, the costs can be accommodated within the Council’s proposed budget;
   (ii) if not, what additional resources are estimated to be required to carry them out, and the timescale within which the work might be started and completed;
   (iii) whether the cost of the proposal, if adopted, should be substituted for some other item of expenditure, or treated as an addition, and, in the latter case, the
source of the additional funds required;
(iv) if there are several such proposals before the committee, what priority should
be given to each.
The committee’s advice shall, except in emergencies, be conveyed to the Conference in writing.

122 Provisional Resolutions.
(1) If the Conference judges that any resolution which it has adopted is of such significance
that it ought to be considered by the Synods and confirmed before coming into effect it may
declare that it shall be a provisional resolution. If the resolution is being dealt with as shared
business under clause 24(c) of the Deed of Union, such a declaration by the Conference in
either of the sessions dealing with the business shall be effective.
(2) Notice shall be given of any motion for such a declaration either by means of a notice
of motion which complies with Standing Order 132 or by the inclusion of a resolution to
that effect in the report upon that business contained in the Agenda. Where notice is given
before the adoption of the substantive resolution to which it relates the motion shall not be
considered by the Conference until after such adoption.
(3) Provisional resolutions shall be submitted to the Synods of the home Districts and to
the Law and Polity Committee, each of which may approve, disapprove or approve with
amendments. Provisional resolutions shall be submitted for confirmation to the next annual
meeting of the Conference with a report of the opinions of the Synods and the Law and Polity
Committee, and shall take effect only if then confirmed.
(4) The Conference may direct that the whole or some specified part of the text of any
report leading to the adoption of a provisional resolution be submitted with it to the Synods.
Unless it does so the Secretary of the Conference shall ensure that a brief summary of the
arguments for and against the resolution and of the implications of adopting or declining it is
prepared for the same purpose. The resolution and the above text or summary, as the case
may be, shall be distributed by the district officers to all members of the Synod before its
meeting. The district Policy Committee may arrange for such consultation within the District
as it thinks fit before the Synod expresses its judgment.
(5) Provisional resolutions submitted to the Synods under clause (3) above shall be dealt with
in their Representative Sessions and, if falling within one or more of the categories defined
in heads (i), (ii) and (iii) of sub-clause 24(c) of the Deed of Union and dealt with under that
clause, also in their Presbyteral Sessions.
(6) On receiving the reports of the Synods and the Law and Polity Committee upon a provisional
resolution the Conference may confirm it unamended or may decline to confirm it, or may
confirm it with amendments, and in the last event may, by the procedure of clauses (1) and (2)
above, declare that the resolution as so amended shall itself be a provisional resolution.

NOTE: Throughout this Agenda, in amendments to the Deed of Union, Model Trusts and
Standing Orders, matter to be deleted is usually shown thus and matter to be inserted thus.
The surrounding text is printed to show the context of the proposed amendments, where this
is not otherwise plain.
1. Election and Induction of the President and Vice-President of the Methodist Conference

1. THE ELECTION AND DECLARATION

After a brief explanation of the procedure to be followed, the Secretary of the Conference moves the resolution for the election of the President.

***RESOLUTION

1/1. The Conference elects the Reverend Michaela Anne Youngson to be the President of the Conference.

A standing vote is taken.

The President says:

I declare that the Reverend Michaela Anne Youngson has been duly elected to be the President of the Conference.

The Conference is invited to sit.

The Secretary moves the resolution for the election of the Vice-President.

***RESOLUTION

1/2. The Conference elects Mr Balachandren Muthuvaloe Gnanapragasam to be the Vice-President of the Conference.

A standing vote is taken.

The Vice-President says:

I declare that Mr Balachandren Muthuvaloe Gnanapragasam has been duly elected to be the Vice-President of the Conference.

2. THE INDUCTION

The President and Vice-President enter together.

The Conference is invited to sit.

The Ex-President says:

Michaela and Bala, the Conference has elected you to the offices of President and Vice-President. In its sessions you are to preside over its worship, its conferring and its taking of decisions. You will be its representatives, embodying its authority and acting on its behalf as authorised by the Deed of Union and Standing Orders. You
are called to share with others in the oversight and leadership of the Church. You are called to a ministry of visitation in the Districts and Circuits and with partners across the world, to encourage the Methodist people in their calling and strengthen the bonds that connect them with each other. In all this you are to exercise, in collaboration, the particular gifts God has given you as a presbyter and a lay person in the Church.

In the presence of God and of this Conference we therefore ask you: do you trust that God who has called you into his service has now called you to this ministry and will give you the grace to undertake it?

The President and Vice-President respond:

I do so trust.

The Ex-Vice-President says:

Michaela and Bala, will you endeavour to hold before the Church a vision of its calling to proclaim and respond to the grace and love of God in worship, mission and service?

They respond:

I will, God being my helper.

The Ex-President says:

Will you work with all who are in leadership of the Church in equipping God’s people to fulfil their calling?

They respond:

I will, God being my helper.

The Ex-Vice-President says:

Will you work with ecumenical partners in pursuing the greater unity of Christ’s Church and in the encouraging of a common witness to God’s reconciling love?

They respond:

I will, God being my helper.
1. Election and Induction of the President and Vice-President of the Methodist Conference

The Ex-President addresses her successor:

Michaela, will you be faithful in living out your calling as a presbyter in the service of this Conference and all the Methodist people?

Will you work with the Vice-President to offer a ministry that affirms and encourages the gifts of all God’s people?

The President replies:

I will, God being my helper.

The Ex-Vice-President addresses her successor:

Bala, will you faithfully exercise the gifts God has given you in the service of this Conference and all the Methodist people?

Will you work with the President to offer a ministry that affirms and encourages the gifts of all God’s people?

The Vice-President replies:

I will, God being my helper.

3. THE PRAYERS

The Ex-Vice-President says:

Let us pray.

Gracious God, in Jesus Christ you have called your Church to be a sign of and witness to your kingdom in the world, and through the gifts of the Holy Spirit you guide and inspire it.

We give you thanks for these your servants now called to the offices of President and Vice-President of the Conference. We bless you for the ways in which you have led them to this moment and for the gifts with which you have inspired them.

Send your Holy Spirit upon them that they may build up your people in love and service, to the glory of your name. We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.
1. Election and Induction of the President and Vice-President of the Methodist Conference

4. THE GIVING OF SYMBOLS AND GIFTS

The Ex-President invests the President with the Presidential Cross and hands to her John Wesley’s Bible.

The Ex-Vice-President invests the Vice-President with the Vice-Presidential Cross and hands to him a first edition copy of John and Charles Wesley’s Hymns and Sacred Songs.

Each in turn then briefly expresses the thanks of the Conference to her/his predecessor and presents her with a replica of the Presidential/Vice-Presidential Cross.

A hymn is sung and the Conference continues its business.
2. First Report of the Conference Business Committee

1. **Membership of the Conference Business Committee**
   The Conference Business Committee for 2018 comprises the Revd Rosemarie E G Clarke, Mr Stephen H Cooper, Deacon Jennifer A J Jones, Mrs Anna Malnutt, the Revd Stephen J Radford, Mr David S Walton (Chair) and Mr Frank Watson. The Revd Rosemarie Clarke and Deacon Jenny Jones have been appointed to serve the Business Committee for the 2018 Conference by the Methodist Council under the provisions of Standing Order 136(1C).

2. **Summary of the Committee’s work during the year**
   In addition to the Committee’s general responsibilities, the Committee spent significant time considering the recommendations of the Accessibility to the Conference Working Group. As directed, the Committee presented its report to the Council, which sets out its recommendations to the Conference elsewhere in the Agenda.

3. **Meetings and reports**
   - The Business Committee will meet on Saturday 30 June at the close of business, following the Scrutineers’ briefing.
   - The Scrutineers are asked to meet for a briefing on Saturday 30 June immediately at the close of business.
   - The Business Committee will report each day in the Order Paper. It will indicate any variations to the outline schedule printed in the Agenda.

4. **Length of speeches**
   It is recommended that presenters of business have four minutes and speakers three minutes. In exceptional circumstances, with the approval of the President and Vice-President, these allocations may be changed.

5. **Use of time**
   5.1 Members of the Conference will want to ensure that their time is spent wisely and effectively. To this end, the Business Committee will endeavour to ensure that as far as possible, business follows the schedule published. As well as those who visit the Conference for particular debates, increasing numbers of people watch its proceedings on the internet, especially items on specific matters of interest, and rely on the published schedule being observed. Therefore, without wishing to
deny opportunity to speak or to curtail debate unhelpfully, the Business Committee strongly urges members of the Conference to maintain the discipline of keeping to its schedule. It is unfair to have to foreshorten business scheduled for later in the week because earlier items have overrun.

5.2 With this in mind, the Business Committee asks that:

- speeches are not made unnecessarily when it is evident that the outcome is clear;
- representatives refrain from making speeches or comments that have already been made and from repeating what has been said and heard;
- the Conference focuses on reaching decisions with the minimum necessary debate that does the subject justice.

5.3 The Committee asks members of the Conference to bear in mind that web streaming enables a wider audience for Conference debates; representatives are therefore asked to consider their contributions to debates in the light of that. The Committee asks representatives not to address directly those watching proceedings via the internet, in the same way that those watching in the public gallery would not be addressed. This helps to remind members of the Conference of the particular responsibilities that they carry as voting members.

6. Notices of Motion

Standing Order 132 reads as follows:

132 Notices of Motion. (1) Subject to Standing Order 131(4) any two members may upon notice of motion complying with this Standing Order bring before the Conference any lawful resolution within the competence of the Conference.

(1A) Every notice of motion shall be handed to the Secretary in written form and signed by the following persons:

(i) where the proposal is to amend a resolution and those responsible for presenting that business to the Conference are prepared to accept it, the proposer and seconder of the motion;

(ii) where such a proposal to amend is not accepted by those responsible, the proposer and seconder and four other persons;

(iii) in all other cases, the proposer and seconder and eight other persons.

(2) Only on matters of urgency, so judged by the President after consultation with the Vice-President, shall notices of motion in the Representative Session be accepted after 4.30 pm on the third day of the session, except that a notice of motion proposing to amend a resolution circulated or materially altered on or after the first day of the session shall be accepted if lodged before the close of business on the day before the resolution is to be dealt with.
2. First Report of the Conference Business Committee

6.1 The 2013 Conference agreed that it should be mandatory for proposers of Notices of Motion to complete a ‘Submission of a Notice of Motion’ form, including information about budgetary implications. The form is available to download from the website, and from the Conference Office (email conferenceoffice@methodistchurch.org.uk) prior to the Conference or the Help Desk at the Conference.

6.2 In order that Notices of Motion which are unrelated to existing Agenda business can be dealt with effectively and efficiently by the Conference, proposers are requested to ensure that they include sufficient but succinct information to ensure that all Conference members may understand what is being proposed and why. This will enable members to reflect on the merit of these Notices of Motion beforehand and speakers to focus on key issues.

6.3 In enabling Conference members to submit Notices of Motion related to business scheduled for the afternoon and evening of Saturday 30 June, the Business Committee requests that these be submitted either (1) by post to Jane Bates at Methodist Church House to arrive not later than Thursday 28 June or (2) by email to batesj@methodistchurch.org.uk to arrive not later than Friday 29 June at 2.00pm. The Committee has determined that it will only require the names (which will be printed on the Order Paper) of a proposer and a seconder to be supplied at this stage: the four further signatories, should the Notice of Motion be resisted by the proposer of the resolution (as per SO 132(1A)(ii)), may therefore be acquired after arrival at the Conference on Saturday 30 June but must be handed to the Record Office by 1.00pm on that day.

6.4 Further, for the Business Committee to prepare the business to be conducted on Monday 2 July, members of the Conference who wish to submit Notices of Motion relating to the business to be taken on Monday, or amended replies to any Memorials to be taken with it, are requested to hand them to the Record Office by 12.30pm on Sunday 1 July.

6.5 Similarly, Notices of Motion relating to items of business to be taken on Tuesday 3 July should be submitted by 12.30pm on Monday. This, and the deadlines in the previous paragraphs, will enable the Business Committee to prepare full and informed Order Papers for the smooth transaction of business.

6.6 Having set out in the preceding paragraphs the proposed timings for Notices of Motion in general, the Business Committee wishes to make provision for dealing with any which impact the connexional budget and proposes a specific timetable to that end. Its purpose is to ensure that the Conference is able to take decisions about the budget when all the relevant information is to hand and to avoid the pitfall of making choices or judgements based on partial information. It is therefore recommended that:
2. First Report of the Conference Business Committee

- The budget will be presented on Saturday evening.
- Any Notices of Motion proposing amendments to the budget shall be submitted by 12.30pm on Monday through the usual channels.
- The Conference Financial Committee will consider the implications of the proposed amendments at the close of Monday’s session and present a report in Tuesday’s Order Paper.
- The Conference will then consider Notices of Motion and memorials which impact the budget on Tuesday morning and will engage in discussion of the budget at that point.
- The budget will then be formally confirmed and adopted on Thursday morning.

In summary, the deadlines for submitting Notices of Motion are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Relating to</th>
<th>Submit by</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Saturday’s business</td>
<td>Friday 2.00pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monday’s business</td>
<td>Sunday 12.30pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tuesday’s business</td>
<td>Monday 12.30pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday/Thursday’s business</td>
<td>Monday 4.30pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unrelated to business</td>
<td>Monday 4.30pm</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6.7 Those proposing a Notice of Motion should consult with those presenting the business to ascertain whether the Notice of Motion will be accepted or resisted. Lists of those responsible for presenting each item of business are available from the Record Office or the Chair of the Business Committee.

6.8 The 2011 Conference approved the principle of enabling those Notices of Motion that do not relate to business already in the Agenda to be prioritised, by means of a ballot, should time not permit all such Notices of Motion to be considered. Should such a ballot be required, it will be held on Tuesday 3 July. Any such Notices of Motion which are not considered during the Conference will be dealt with as in the next paragraph.

6.9 The Business Committee may recommend that a particular Notice of Motion is not considered by the Conference but is referred to the Methodist Council in the coming year. The Council is required to report back to the following Conference its judgement on that Notice of Motion.

6.10 In order for the Business Committee to test, on the floor of the Conference, its own judgements about which Notices of Motion to refer to the Council without debate, on Wednesday 4 July the Chair of the Business Committee will move that the Conference adopts that section of the Committee’s report (which will be printed on the day’s
Order Paper) which lists those Notices of Motion recommended to be referred to the Council. The Conference will be able to amend the list without the need of a written Notice of Motion.

7. Memorials
It is anticipated that all memorials will be dealt with during the Conference, ie taken with existing business to which they relate, debated separately or the replies adopted en bloc, based on the recommendations of the Memorials Committee.

8. Nominations
All nominees for President-Designate, Vice-President-Designate and Conference-elected representatives are to be photographed and their details displayed on a screen. The arrangements for this will be notified on Saturday’s Order Paper at the Conference.

Nominations for designation of President and Vice-President of the Conference of 2019 must be placed in ballot boxes by 5.30pm on Monday 2 July. They will be displayed on Tuesday; voting will at close at 6.00pm on Tuesday; the results will be announced on Wednesday morning.

Nominations for Conference-elected representatives: you are asked to follow strictly the instructions on the nomination form. Please ensure that you seek the consent of persons nominated and complete the forms fully and clearly for display. Nomination forms must be placed in the ballot boxes by 2.00pm on Tuesday 3 July; voting will close at 5.00pm on Wednesday; the results will be announced on Thursday morning.

This year, of the three Conference-elected representatives to serve from 2019 to 2021, one will be diaconal and two will be lay, thus fulfilling SO 103(2A).

Nominations for Conference Business Committee members: you are asked to follow strictly the instructions on the nomination form. Please ensure that you seek the consent of persons nominated and complete the forms fully and clearly for display. The election timetable will be the same as for Conference-elected representatives, as above. It should be noted that election to the Business Committee does not carry a right to membership of succeeding Conferences.

This year, two Business Committee members, both ministers, are required to be elected and may serve for the three years 2019-2021.

In summary, the deadlines for nominations and elections are as follows:
2. First Report of the Conference Business Committee

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Election</th>
<th>Nominations close</th>
<th>Voting closes</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>President of the Conference</td>
<td>Monday 5.30pm</td>
<td>Tuesday 6.00pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vice-President of the Conference</td>
<td>Monday 5.30pm</td>
<td>Tuesday 6.00pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conference-elected representatives</td>
<td>Tuesday 2.00pm</td>
<td>Wednesday 5.00pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conference Business Committee: Representative Session</td>
<td>Tuesday 2.00pm</td>
<td>Wednesday 5.00pm</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

9. **Provisional legislation**

Under Standing Order 122, any two members, by Notice of Motion, may propose that an item agreed by the Conference be referred to the Synods as a **provisional resolution** before being proposed for final adoption by the Conference next year.

10. **Letter-writing**

Any member of the Conference requesting that a letter be sent on behalf of the Conference should note the following criteria and procedure:

a. The Conference writes automatically to those who have served in ordained ministry for 70 or more years, and those celebrating the twenty-fifth, fiftieth or sixtieth anniversaries of their ordinations; their names to be prepared in advance.

b. The Conference will write, for a specific reason, to those who have a direct link with the Conference, or represent the World Church, or have an ecumenical relationship with the Methodist Church, or have a claim to achievements that are outstanding in the life of the Church or on its behalf.

c. The letter-writer, with consultation as necessary, will be the appropriate person to give guidance to Conference members as to whether a proposed letter is within the criteria.

d. Requests for letters to be sent must be submitted on a standard form, giving all the required details, to the Help Desk, who will receive them on behalf of the letter-writer. Forms are available from the Help Desk.

e. The recipients of letters will be listed in the Daily Record for the information of the Conference.

11. **En bloc items**

The Business Committee proposes that the items of business listed below be voted **en bloc**. Under the terms of SO 134A, if Notices of Motion are received about items in the **en bloc** list those items will automatically be removed from the list. In addition, by giving notice to the Assistant Secretary of the Conference, any six members of the Conference may, without proposing an amendment, require that an item be removed from the list and debated. Such notice must be given before the close of business on Monday 2 July (SO 134A(1)(c)).
The preliminary list of proposed _en bloc_ business is as follows:
The Trustees for the Bailiwick of Guernsey Methodist Church Purposes
The Trustees for Jersey Methodist Church Purposes
Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes
Methodist Diaconal Order General Report
Managing Trustees of Central Hall Westminster
New Room Bristol
Relief and Extension Fund for Methodism in Scotland
Central Finance Board
Referred Memorials and Notices of Motion
Stationing Committee
Action for Children
Fernley Hartley Trust
Methodist Council general report sections
Ecumenical Report
Joint Covenant Advocacy and Monitoring Group
Methodist Schools appointments

***RESOLUTION

SECTION A
GENERAL REPORT

The Methodist Council is charged under SO 211(2) with responsibility to keep in constant review the life of the Methodist Church, to study its work and witness throughout the Connexion, to indicate what changes are necessary or what steps could be taken to make the work of the Church more effective, to give spiritual leadership to the Church and to report annually to the Conference, bringing to the notice of the Conference matters to which it believes the Conference ought to give urgent attention.

The full range of papers presented to the Council and the outcomes of the Council’s deliberations on them are available on the Methodist Church website at www.methodist.org.uk/council

The report to the Conference is presented in three parts, this one in volume 1 of the Agenda and parts two and three in volume 2 of the Agenda. The business conducted by the Council at its meetings in October and January is reported here; and the business conducted at its meeting in April is reported in parts two and three.

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:

- noted the workplan for the Connexional Team and for other bodies for 2017/2018;
- appointed connexional committees, trusts and representatives for the year 2017/2018;
- received reports from a number of committees and trustee bodies;
- approved the revised list of authorisations and delegations;
- received regular reports from the Strategy and Resources Committee of the Council;
- received reports from the Connexional Team at each meeting;
- on behalf of the Conference, appointed the Revd Dr Vincent M Jambawo and the Revd Peter E Barber to the Council;
- approved the principle of the sale of Sidwell Street Methodist Church under Model Trust 20;
agreed to recommend to the Conference that, pursuant to SO 315, Deacon Ruth M Richey be appointed Deputy Warden of the Methodist Diaconal Order for a period of five years from 1 September 2018;

encouraged the Property Development Committee to continue exploring potential developments for the North Bank Estate and Oxford Place, Leeds;

directed the Property Development Committee to draft Memorandum and Articles of Association for establishing a wholly owned trading subsidiary company for undertaking property development on behalf of the committee;

amended the policy on Sunday trading to allow such trading within the curtilage of Model Trust property, following consideration of an application by three members of the Property Development Committee, and directed the committee to produce an application form and criteria to be applied in such situations;

requested the preparation of a new Memorandum of Understanding with All We Can;

on behalf of the Conference, appointed Mrs Barbara Easton, Mrs Lesley Brookbanks and the Revd Sally Ratcliffe to the Methodist Academies and Schools Trust;

on behalf of the Conference, appointed Mr Thomas Cadman to the Wesley Trust;

adopted the reports concerning Ecumenical Partnerships, Sharing Agreements and Ecumenical Areas;

delegated the oversight of the Auxiliary Special Purposes Fund to the Connexional Allowances Committee;

revised the appointment of the Network Committee as the connexional trustee for 24 Somerset Road, Birmingham, and appointed the Property Development Committee to fulfil the role of connexional trustee;

revised the appointment of the Network Committee as the connexional trustee for the North Bank Estate and appointed the Property Development Committee to fulfil the role of connexional trustee;

approved the recommendations of the Heritage Committee for the relocation of artefacts from the former Wesley College Bristol;

approved criteria and method of approval for recognised heritage site status, directing the Heritage Committee to implement the scheme;

amended the reporting timeline for the working group considering the Methodist Diaconal Order as a religious order, noting that it will report to the Council prior to its presentation at the 2019 Conference;

adopted the renominations by the Governors for the appointment of Mrs Barbara Easton and Mr Robert Cowie as Trustees for Methodist Independent Schools Trust for a period of three years concluding 31 August 2020;

confirmed that Mr Andrew Paul and Capital Cranfield Pension Trustees Limited, represented by Ms Ingrid Kirby, have been appointed as directors of the Methodist Lay Employees Pension Trust Limited for a period of three years from 1 September 2016;

approved the list of partner organisations as compiled by the Global Relationships Strategic Oversight Sub-Committee;
directed that a record of all visits and work supporting the strategy for global relationships be retained and overseen by the Connexional Secretary;
- adopted the policy for connexional grants towards Mission and Ministry in Britain;
- approved the updated Risk Management policy;
- adopted the Corporate Risk Register, keeping it under review;
- co-opted the Revd Andrew Letby to the Ministerial Candidates’ Selection Committee;
- adopted the City Centre list, agreed the process for changes to the list, and recommended a rota for review;
- noted with thanks the grants to the Methodist Church from the Joseph Rank Trust, totalling £556,500 in 2017;
- approved the change of the name of the Joint Safeguarding Working Group to the Anglican-Methodist Safeguarding Group, rescinded the group’s terms of reference and appointed the Methodist members of the group;
- approved, on behalf of the Conference, a revised list of overseas Conferences and Churches to be invited to the 2018 Conference;
- appointed the Revd Rosemarie E G Clarke and Deacon Jennifer A J Jones to the Conference Business Committee (Representative Session) for the 2018 Conference under the terms of SO 136(1C);
- under the terms of SO 803(1)(c), delegated its responsibility for considering requests to depart from the approved accommodation guidelines for manses to the Manses Group appointed by the Ministries Committee;
- adopted a process for identifying a nominee as Chair of the Council;
- noted, on behalf of the Conference, a change in the membership of the Stationing Committee whereby the Revd Canon Helen D Cameron is now representing the East Midlands stationing region, in place of the Revd Bruce Thompson;
- directed that the redevelopment of Camden Town Methodist Church should proceed, with a budget of no more than £8m + VAT, subject to satisfactory resolution of the planning conditions and further directed that the redevelopment should be financed from connexional funds.

1.2 Other business

The Council received annual reports from:

- the Methodist Heritage Committee;
- the Property Development Committee;
- the Connexional Manse Trustees;
- the Global Relationships Strategic Oversight Sub-Committee;
- the Connexional Grants Committee.
3. Methodist Council, part 1

The Council also:

- engaged in discussions following the presentation of the Statistics for Mission to the 2017 Conference, considering how Our Calling may be reaffirmed and used as a basis for the shaping of connexional priorities, the structure of the Connexional Team and the support of the Church as a whole in its task of mission.

***RESOLUTION


SECTION B
THE NETWORK COMMITTEE

Introduction

1. The Network Committee was set up as a result of the implementation of the Fruitful Field report and is appointed annually by the Methodist Council. It is required to report to the Council and work collaboratively with the Ministries Committee and the Strategy and Resources Committee (SRC) in developing and maintaining the learning and training of lay people and ministers and the pursuit of scholarship, research and innovation throughout the Connexion. The committee has brought a number of reports to the SRC and the Methodist Council over the past years concerned primarily with the responsibility of the Network Committee for the Discipleship and Ministries Learning Network (DMLN) under SO 32A3 and in particular with regard to the management and development of a number of key assets.

2. The committee has had broadly three main areas of work:

First it holds the managing trusteeship of those centres designated by the 2012 Conference in section J of the Fruitful Field Project Report as “income generating”;

Secondly it is responsible for reviewing and monitoring the terms of all agreements reached between the Council and any training institutions with which the Council has agreements (for the definition of “training institution” see SO 007(iii)) and;

Thirdly it works in collaboration with the Ministries Committee to ensure the implementation of connexional policy as regards learning, training and development.

3. Much of the work of the Network Committee is now undertaken in other places. The Council now recommends to the Conference that this committee be dissolved and its remaining work distributed among the relevant existing committees.
3. Methodist Council, part 1

The work of the committee

4. **Managing trusteeship**: the managing trusteeship for Methodist International Centre (MIC), MIC Ltd, 24 Somerset Road Birmingham (Frances Young House), and the North Bank Estate has now been delegated to the Property Development Committee.

5. **Review and monitoring of training institutions relationships**: The Ministries Committee has the responsibility for “developing and supporting the Church’s structures and resources for learning, training, scholarship, research and development” (SO 32A1(2) (iii)). The summary of the report of the Training Review Group (TRG) presented to the 2017 Conference (Agenda pp 459-461) noted “the need for continuing the conversation about how the content and pattern of training reflects more clearly our understanding of ministry in all its forms.” The natural setting for such a conversation would be the Ministries Committee. It would seem sensible therefore that the Ministries Committee holds the relationship with those places decreed as “centres of the network” and should be responsible for the development of another of the recommendations of the TRG to which the Council responded warmly, that of, “the need for further investments in creating Methodist theologians for the future”.

6. **Oversight of the implementation of connexional training, learning and development**: this responsibility also has a clear overlap with the tasks of the Ministries Committee and with the work of the SRC with regard to SO 213(2B) to “advise and assist the council in fulfilling the council’s responsibilities for the strategic oversight and use of resources with regard to personnel, finance and physical assets” and also SO 213(5A) to “exercise oversight of the general work of the Connexional Team, and report thereon to the council and Conference as appropriate.”

Conclusion

7. Given that the tasks for which the Network Committee was established either are, or now can be, dealt with elsewhere, the Council recommends to the Conference that this committee be disbanded and its work re-allocated as set out in this report. It should also be noted that the SRC was of the view that the committee should not be disbanded immediately but at an appropriate time, as there is still some work to be done with the Ministries Committee.

***RESOLUTIONS


SECTION C
ACCESSIBILITY TO THE CONFERENCE

Background

Further to decisions of the Conference in 2015 (specifically notice of motion 2015/108), the Council established a working party to bring recommendations to address issues of accessibility to the Conference. The working party was asked to include within its remit questions not just about logistical arrangements, but to consider how people can engage with the Conference, regardless of their experience, ability or confidence.

The Council considered the working party’s 16 recommendations at its meeting in April 2017 and concluded that these recommendations needed to be considered in detail by the Conference Business Committee before the Conference could be asked to consider any matters of principle.

The Council received a report from the Business Committee at its meeting in January 2018, and now reports the following summary to the Conference, listing each recommendation and the proposed action to be taken in respect of each. The recommendations are shown in italics, with the proposed action shown in ordinary type below it.

Recommendation 1:

That recommendations from the 2015 report continue to be implemented:

- Strengthening of pre-Conference district briefings.
- Making reports available as early as possible.
- Commending the use of the cover sheet for reports to assist with the large volume of reading.
- Priority for first-time speakers.
- Variety in the format of debates – referred to the Business Committee for consideration as to how best to use, eg, workshops, hearings etc. Clarity of the purpose of the alternative formats.
- Districts to ensure that the decisions and outcomes of the Conference are disseminated to circuits and churches.

The Council felt that the content of this recommendation is already being implemented. The reintroduction of a Conference Business Digest was felt to be helpful in support of the dissemination of the decisions and outcomes of the Conference, particularly if it can be distributed quickly after the close of the Conference.
Recommendation 2:
Greater attention be given to enabling members of the Conference to identify office holders by publicising who they are.

The Council felt that this should be done by means of the Conference Handbook.

Recommendation 3:
A ‘Glossary of Terms used in the Methodist Church’ be compiled.

There is already a long list of terminology in use by some committees, but it is not a simple process to adapt it since there are, for example, some acronyms which apply to several different things. The Conference Office ensures, through the scrutiny process, in the case of the Conference Agenda and associated documents, that acronyms are always spelled out the first time they are used with the abbreviation in brackets. The Council felt that the issue is as much to do with how speakers use the acronyms as the text of the reports themselves, and that speakers therefore need to be discouraged from speaking in acronyms or jargon. The Council noted that members of the Committee had agreed to look at the list which already exists to assess whether it would be helpful to make it more widely available or whether it could be adapted for this purpose.

Recommendation 4:
Stricter control of en bloc and 200-series Notices of Motion is exercised.

The Business Committee and the Council wished to put to the Conference that the number of signatures required to remove an item from the en bloc list should be the same number as that required to submit a notice of motion about new business. The Council therefore recommends to the Conference that Standing Order 134A(1)(c) be amended to require a reasoned statement supported by twenty signatures to remove an item of business from its en bloc list. The Business Committee and the Council wish to emphasise that items of business which are dealt with en bloc are no less important than any of the other business which is before the Conference.

The Council gave careful consideration to the 200-series notices of motion (ie those which do not directly relate to items of business contained within the Conference Agenda), and what ‘stricter control’ might mean. The Council noted that a number of such notices of motion could have come before the Conference as memorials, as often they do not represent new or urgent matters. In the light of this, the Council recommends to the Conference that the Conference Business Committee be directed to develop criteria by which it can be agreed whether or not notices of motion might be dismissed as impermissible. The Council also recommends to the Conference that there should be an increase in the number of signatures required for a notice of motion not related to business in the Conference Agenda to twenty. The Council was also concerned about the impact of notices of motion on the workplan of
the Connexional Team, particularly in respect of staff time and the costs to the connexional budget.

**Recommendation 5:**
President and Vice-President exercise stricter control of speakers in debates, encouraging restraint, and that the Conference Business Committee explores use of ‘planned debates’ in major debates on controversial subjects and ways of enabling ‘comment from the floor’ without the need to speak from the front.

The Council felt that the President and Vice-President are free to exercise control of debates as is appropriate. Standing Order 136(2)(iv) already allows for the use of ‘planned debates’ and the Business Committee can explore their use where it might be felt to be appropriate. ‘Comments from the floor’ can have the effect of making the business less accessible, for reasons of audibility and visibility and the Council declined to take this further.

**The following three recommendations were considered together, and the Council does not wish to pursue them.**

**Recommendation 6:**
President and Vice-President each offer one set-piece address or sermon at the Conference – one at the Opening of the Conference, and one on the Sunday morning.

**Recommendation 8:**
Wednesday service of Holy Communion be discontinued, and that there be an early morning communion on the Wednesday (as on other days).

**Recommendation 14:**
The Conference be scheduled as follows:
- Saturday – 10:30 start
- Sunday as at present
- Monday and Tuesday – 09:00-19:00
- Wednesday – 09:00-17:00

The Council discussed these three recommendations together. It was confirmed that finishing on the Wednesday evening would not make a significant impact on the costs of the Conference, because of the numbers of people who would still need accommodation on the Wednesday night. Although these recommendations were made with lay working people in mind, the Council did not feel that it represented enough of a change balanced against the amount of change that it would mean for the functioning of the Conference. There would clearly be timetabling issues as a result of this, not least the deadlines for notices of motion (which, it could be argued, would make the decision-making process less accessible). The Council also felt that the Conference needs proper time available to it to confer on the more
difficult and sensitive issues. The Council noted the effect that this, and particularly the later finish times on Monday and Tuesday, would have on those working in the Record Office and all the volunteers who support the Conference in various ways. The Council would not wish to see the end of the Wednesday communion service, and was particularly concerned that there should be an opportunity for the Representative Session to engage in an act of remembrance, which is included within the communion service.

The Council was not minded to pursue these recommendations, and felt that such changes should only be considered within the context of a more over-arching review of the governance and oversight processes of the Church.

**Recommendation 7:**
*Guidance regarding morning and evening prayers is strictly observed by those preparing and leading them (and that they should only be led by those who are already at the Conference).*

The Committee noted that practice in this respect has improved, and that the shorter pattern of evening prayers has been appreciated.

**Recommendation 9:**
*Arrangements for continuous prayer within the Conference day be encouraged and be implemented through the chaplaincy team, with the President and Vice-President being encouraged to pause for moments of prayer or silence as appropriate.*

The Committee felt that the President and Vice-President do this in appropriate ways.

**Recommendation 10:**
*Present pattern of Sunday worship and ordination services be retained until further notice.*

There was no action to be taken in relation to this recommendation.

**Recommendation 11:**
*Making venue and accommodation as accessible as possible.*

These concerns are being taken up by the Conference Planning Executive.

**Recommendation 12:**
*Following up and implementing guidance on providing for special needs.*

These concerns are being taken up by the Conference Planning Executive.

**Recommendation 13:**
*Use of technology and electronic voting be explored and implemented as far as possible.*
The Council noted that when electronic voting was trialled for a day at the 2011 Conference, it was expensive (around £2500 for a day’s rental) and slow to use. However, some feedback indicated that there were those who felt more able to vote in the way they wished when their vote was not seen. The Council was unsure whether the software would only be used for those votes that require counting, which would have meant, for example, that it would not have been used very much at all at the 2017 Conference. The Council felt that electronic voting, by its very nature, changes the nature of the Conference’s conferring as it moves from votes to ballots. The concern was raised that members of the Conference need to be accountable to one another, and live with those with whom they disagree. The Business Committee felt that it should, through its reporting, address the issue of representatives not feeling able to vote in the way in which they wish to vote. The Committee will explore the cost of hiring electronic voting systems and discuss the matter further.

**Recommendation 15:**
*Participation of fellowships of national origin be encouraged within Districts.*

This is being done.

**Recommendation 16:**
*Reduction in size of the Conference – phased reduction to 250 in 2020 and then 220 in 2023.*

The Conference reviews its membership every five years. When this was last done two years ago, the conclusion was reached that, although in terms of the church’s membership it should be cut by 100, the present size was appropriate to aid representation and participation. The review also noted that it is proportionally the same size as it was in 1933. The Council felt that this recommendation was being suggested for cost-cutting reasons, but was unclear as to whether it would save enough money to be worthwhile. The Council felt that the broader question about the necessary size of the Conference in order to be fully representative was more important. If the Conference is significantly smaller, it becomes less accessible. The Council did not therefore wish to pursue this recommendation.

***RESOLUTIONS***

3/5. **The Conference adopts the Report.**

3/6. **The Conference amends Standing Order 134A(1)(c) as follows:**

(c) Subject to sub-clause (e) below any resolution, including any recommended reply to a memorial, which becomes the subject of an amending notice of motion shall be removed from the list. In addition, by giving notice to the Secretary of
the Conference in writing before the close of business on the third day of the Representative Session, any six twenty members of the Conference may, with a reasoned statement but without proposing an amendment, require any item or items, except a recommended reply to a memorial, to be removed from the list. The Business Committee itself shall be free at any time before the resolutions are moved to remove any item or items from the list.

3/7. The Conference directs the Conference Business Committee to develop criteria by which it can be agreed whether or not notices of motion might be dismissed as impermissible.

3/8. The Conference amends Standing Order 132(1A)(iii) as follows:

(1A) Every notice of motion shall be handed to the Secretary in written form and signed by the following persons:

(i) where the proposal is to amend a resolution and those responsible for presenting that business to the Conference are prepared to accept it, the proposer and seconder of the motion;

(ii) where such a proposal to amend is not accepted by those responsible, the proposer and seconder and four other persons;

(iii) in all other cases, the proposer and seconder and eighteen other persons.

3/9. The Conference directs the Conference Business Committee and the Conference Financial Committee to review the procedure for assessing the impact of notices of motion on the Connexional Team workplan and the budget.

SECTION D
DISTRICT REVIEWS

1. Introduction

1.1 The 2016 Conference directed the Council to bring a process for implementing the creation of District Commissions and the nomination of those to be appointed by the Conference as District Commissioners to the 2017 Conference. The Conference directed that such a commission would be convened when a new Chair is being sought, or the present Chair is exploring the possibility with the District of a reinitation, or a District (or group of Districts) wishes to engage in the process of reflection or review. It would oversee and undertake a thorough review of the life of the District, set in its wider connexional and ecumenical context.
1.2 The Methodist Council in April 2017 considered proposals for a District Commission process as envisaged in Resolution 15/7 (2016). However, the Council expressed significant concerns that this process seemed overly complex and that, instead of helpfully ‘holding up a mirror’ to the life of the District, it would prove to be a burden.

1.3 The Council also considered information about the Church of England’s newly-developed peer review process for dioceses. This more ‘light-touch’ approach was favourably received, acknowledging that it would need ‘shaping’ for the Methodist context. Following group discussions, the Council agreed to recommend that work should proceed along the lines of a peer review process.

1.4 The 2017 Conference therefore directed the Council to undertake work to establish a peer review process for Districts and report on progress to the 2018 Conference (Resolution 27/19).

1.5 One of the overarching themes from the feedback was the need for flexibility. It was proposed that ‘broad parameters’ should be developed, within which Districts would take the lead in developing the review process as appropriate for the context with regard to timing, the number of people involved, the level of ecumenical involvement etc. However, there will need to be some support from the Connexional Team at various stages in the process, so that there is not too much burden placed on Districts and on volunteers. Some broad parameters are proposed below, based on the conversations of the Council in April 2017. If adopted, these will come into effect no later than September 2019, recognising that some reviews could take place as part of a pilot process during the course of 2018.

2. **Proposed outline**

2.1 Each District shall undertake a review every three to five years.

2.2 The Secretary of the Conference shall have oversight of District Reviews taking place across the Connexion and shall ensure that one takes place in each District at least every five years. A representative of the Secretary of the Conference will attend the review meeting, not to facilitate the conversation, but to feed in any points of learning from a connexional perspective. If the District wishes them to, they will also act as note-taker and draft the report following the meeting.

2.3 The District Policy Committee (DPC) shall take the lead in the organisation of the review process, including setting a date for the meeting and arranging a venue. Costs incurred (other than the expenses of members of the Connexional Team) will be covered by the District.
3. Indicative structure

3.1 There will be a named person within the Connexional Team (but not a full-time role), whose role will be, on behalf of the Secretary of the Conference, to ensure that the reviews are taking place in accordance with the outline above (but with appropriate flexibility for each context). The officer will hold a log of the reviews, and keep a copy of each report (which will remain confidential). The officer will attend review meetings, and act as note-taker if required. The officer will ensure that the reviewers are provided with appropriate support and training.

3.2 The officer will be provided with administrative support to assist with the preparation and sending out of documentation, to work with each District in the setting of review dates, and maintenance of the review log.

3.3 There will be a pool of reviewers appointed by the Council, who will need to be trained. No more than three reviewers will be identified from outside the District being reviewed, based on initial feedback from the District concerned as to the skills and experience that they would find most helpful.

3.4 It is suggested that the review would normally need to happen in the connexional year prior to the year in which a Chair’s reinvitation/nomination process needs to be undertaken, to enable the review to inform that process.

3.5 At the beginning of that connexional year, a briefing pack will be sent to the Synod Secretary, which will include a pro forma asking the District to consider the following:

- When is the District Chair’s current term of service due to finish? Is this the most appropriate timing for a review, to ensure it can inform the reinvitation/nomination process, without impinging upon it?
- It is suggested that those involved in the review process meet for one day and discuss papers and feedback circulated in advance. With regard to who should be present at this meeting:
  - Would it be helpful to involve a trained, external facilitator (eg a member of DMLN staff from another District/region)?
  - Who should be involved from the life of the District?
  - What is the appropriate level of ecumenical involvement?
  - Which ‘peers’ could helpfully be involved? Neighbouring Districts will provide a helpful perspective, as will ‘contrasting’ Districts – for instance, a large, predominantly urban District might find it helpful to invite the Chair of a smaller, predominantly rural District to join the process.
  - Is the group suitably diverse and representative of the District?
3. Methodist Council, part 1

- Are there people in the group willing to ask critical questions?

- What documents could helpfully be circulated to the review group in advance?
  Suggested documents include:
  - The District Development Plan (SO 962);
  - The District’s statement of needs and opportunities formulated when a District Chair was last appointed (SO 423);
  - Figures from the most recent triennial statistical returns;
  - Financial records;
  - Papers and minutes from the previous Synod;
  - A list of questions to be explored at the meeting.

- Are there conversations that need to take place in advance of the meeting with people who will not be present but who might inform the work of the review group?

3.6 The responses to these questions will enable the Team to appoint the reviewers, and to begin to set up a timetable for the process, including a date for the review meeting.

3.7 The following questions are suggested for consideration by those undertaking the review:

- Of the paperwork, what comes as a surprise? What reflects your experience?
- What appears to be the state of the work of God in the District?
- How can the Methodist Church participate most fully in the work of God in this place?
- How do the answers to these questions compare to the District’s Development Plan (SO 962)? Are there aspects of the plan that need to be revised? Are these successes to be celebrated, or challenges to be acknowledged?
- In light of Our Calling:
  - What are the District’s strengths? Where are the areas of numerical and spiritual growth?
  - Where are the challenges?
  - What is unique or unusual about the context in this District? How is the Methodist Church in this place responding – and being called to respond?
  - Which areas of the life of the District are energising – and which are draining?
  - What does the District need in order to respond as it feels called? Are there things it needs to ‘let go’?

- How do Circuits relate to the District?
- What learning might be available from other Districts?
3.8 The Secretary of the Conference shall receive a copy of the review report (which need not be long) on a confidential basis. The District Policy Committee shall decide how to take forward the recommendations contained within the report, and how widely it is helpful for the report to be shared.

4. Conclusion

The Council agreed to recommend an outline District Review process, as set out above, to the Conference and directed the Connexional Team to ensure that the process is regularly reviewed as part of the ongoing work to support the development of district mission plans.

***RESOLUTIONS


3/11. The Conference directs that a District Review process be established as set out in the Report.

3/12. The Conference directs the Council to ensure that the District Review process has appropriate links to ongoing work to support the development of district mission plans.

SECTION E
SAFEGUARDING RESOURCE AND STRUCTURE

1. The 2017 Conference received a report concerning the supervision of District Safeguarding Officers (DSOs). The Conference directed as follows:

   The Conference directed the Council to proceed with producing detailed and costed proposals for professional supervision of District Safeguarding Officers based on the approach to supervision as set out in paragraphs 3.0 – 8.12 of the report.

2. In response to this, an Independent Safeguarding Consultant, was commissioned to prepare a report outlining proposals for professional supervision of District Safeguarding Officers. The Safeguarding Committee, the District Chairs and the Strategy and Resources Committee were consulted as part of this process, and the Council presents the following recommendations to the Conference.

   Safeguarding reports to the 2017 Conference

3. The report from the Past Cases Review Implementation Group showed the considerable work that has been done to progress the Past Cases Review and implement the lessons...
from it. The review of individual cases is almost complete and has required temporary resource to finish that work.

4. The report from the working group reviewing Covenants of Care – now to be called Safeguarding Contracts – recommended changes for these arrangements to ensure they do not drift leaving both perpetrators or alleged perpetrators, and victims/survivors, with uncertainty. Implementing an annual review will require additional connexional safeguarding team time to keep track of the contracts as well as capacity for the commissioning of more risk assessments.

5. Two further reports specifically focused on the work of District Safeguarding Officers (DSOs) who are pivotal in ensuring the quality of safeguarding work on the ground. One set out a method for calculating the number of hours of DSO time needed in any one District, and the Conference adopted that method.

6. The second of these reports described a standardised approach to the provision of casework supervision for the DSOs. While those working in DSO roles are eminently able and qualified, the report provided very clear reasons why they should have access to professional casework supervision, as do safeguarding professionals in other organisations, to provide support, challenge and reflection in making what are sometimes very difficult judgments. Currently District Chairs provide line management and many have indicated that they do not feel qualified to provide proper casework supervision. Ad hoc advice can be sought from the Safeguarding Team but the team is not resourced to offer systematic casework supervision.

7. The Council therefore proposes changes to the Safeguarding Team specifically for the provision of casework supervision for DSOs but also recommends that further consideration is given to accommodate the increasing impact of other demands.

**Provision of Casework Supervision from Connexional Safeguarding Team (CST)**

8. The Council proposes that the connexional Safeguarding Team (CST) takes on all the professional casework supervision of the DSOs.

9. It further proposes that each member of the CST will supervise all the DSOs for a collection of Districts (probably grouped into four to begin with, thereby developing ‘area’ teams of DSOs).

10. The rationale for this recommendation is that:

   - It focuses ownership of safeguarding within the Connexion with a clear line of accountability through to the Secretary of the Conference.
• It allows the CST to formalise much of what they are already doing informally, reducing duplication or competing advice.
• It brings safeguarding support closer to the Circuits and will assist with safeguarding in recruitment locally.
• The team members are full time and therefore contactable outside of formal casework supervision meetings, and able to support and advise as cases unfold and develop.
• The model supports consistency and standardisation of approach as members of the CST can check their practice and thresholds with each other and the Safeguarding Adviser.
• It supports standardised record-keeping.
• It supports team working for DSOs in the areas, building peer to peer support and cover for sickness or holidays.
• It enables better management of DSO casework workloads with the area team being able to share the load more equitably.
• The area team approach facilitates joint work, where there is a particularly complex case.
• The model provides the opportunity for area-based training and continuous professional development for DSOs and encourages a learning culture in the work.
• The additional capacity being proposed will allow for some quality audit work to be undertaken across areas.

11. The Safeguarding Adviser will provide casework supervision to the members of the CST, and therefore be in a position to comprehensively overview safeguarding quality across the Church.

12. The employment responsibility for DSOs will remain with the line manager (generally the District Chair) on behalf of the District. Casework supervision will be distinguished from the employer’s legal responsibilities for the DSO. To ensure the necessary role clarity it is proposed that a standard agreement is used setting out the different responsibilities and accountabilities between the Casework Supervisor, District Chair/line manager and DSO.

13. Professional casework judgements will be overseen by the Casework Supervisor. In the event of a dispute about appropriate actions the Casework Supervisor will refer to the Connexional Safeguarding Adviser who will discuss the matter with the Assistant Secretary of the Conference and agree the best way forward with the District Chair.

Changes to Connexional Safeguarding Team

14. These proposals, both to strengthen safeguarding in the organisation, and specifically for the provision of casework supervision, involve significant change to the structure and job roles of the CST.
15. There are 25 DSOs in total with varying hours and geographical spread. It is proposed they are grouped into four areas, each one with about six DSOs, and each with a Casework Supervisor who will oversee all the safeguarding work within that area. In order to bring this support closer to the Districts it is proposed that the Casework Supervisors are themselves located in the areas.

16. They will also retain a lead role as part of the Connexional Safeguarding Team, including:

- Supporting the development of policy and procedures
- Provision of training
- Work with survivors
- DBS blemish management

17. Some of this work, particularly the casework elements, will be accommodated by the proposed increase in the Casework Supervisor establishment to four posts.

18. However, a new type of role is needed to address aspects of this work, and it is proposed that a Policy and Training Officer post is developed, which will include the provision of legal expertise.

19. The recommendations pertaining to changes to the Safeguarding Team will be found within the existing staffing budget of the Connexional Team.

***RESOLUTIONS


3/14. The Conference adopts the proposals for the casework supervision of District Safeguarding Officers as set out in the Report and directs the Methodist Council to oversee the implementation and review of proposals as part of the Council’s general responsibilities.

SECTION F

TAX JUSTICE AND ETHICAL INVESTMENT

Executive summary

In response to a memorial to the Methodist Conference in 2015, the Joint Advisory Committee on the Ethics of Investment (JACEI) has undertaken work on ethical investment and tax justice, meeting with other denominations and organisations working in this field. As a result JACEI has agreed a draft position statement on tax justice, and consequently the Central Finance Board will be producing a policy statement later this year which will shape its
ethical investment practice. The Methodist Church is a leader in ethical investment, and this report outlines in greater detail for the Methodist Council the work undertaken and the issues faced when trying to ensure that our church investments contribute to tax justice.

1.0 Introduction

1.1 In 2015 the Methodist Conference, in its reply to a memorial (M30) on tax justice, recognised “that by taking measures to avoid paying tax which is owed companies and private individuals deprive countries of financial resources needed to meet their educational, health, social and other needs”. The Methodist Conference directed “the Methodist Council to ensure the Connexional Team continues to work with Joint Advisory Committee on the Ethics of Investment (JACEI), the Central Finance Board (CFB), the Joint Public Issues Team (JPIT) and the Methodist Tax Justice Network (MTJN) for at least the next three years, as resources allow, and direct[ed] the Methodist Council to review progress in this area of work in early 2018 and to report to the Conference of that year.”

1.2 In taking this work forward JACEI has worked with the Central Finance Board (CFB) and the Connexional Team through the Joint Public Issues Team (JPIT). This report provides an account of the steps that JACEI has undertaken to approach the question of taxation and engagement with investments as required by the Memorial.

2.0 Definitions

2.1 It is clear from different groups who have been consulted that there are a variety of views as to the meaning of the terms “tax evasion” and “tax avoidance”. This paper uses the definitions set out below from the OECD glossary of terms.

Tax Evasion is “A term that is difficult to define but which is generally used to mean illegal arrangements where liability to tax is hidden or ignored, ie the taxpayer pays

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1 The Central Finance Board of the Methodist Church (CFB) is the investment agency of the Methodist Church. It is the job of the CFB to manage the funds of the Methodist Church and obtain good returns on their investments whilst making sure that the investments are in line with the moral and ethical teaching of the Church. The Joint Advisory Committee on Ethical Investment (JACEI) advises the CFB of ethical considerations relating to investment, and reports to the Conference commenting on the performance of the CFB in managing the funds under its control according to an ethical stance which is in accordance with the aims of the Methodist Church. JACEI comprises 11 persons, the Chair, and ten other individuals, half of whom are appointed by the Methodist Council, and half appointed by the CFB. The Joint Public Issues Team works on behalf of the Connexional Team to support the work of JACEI and conducts research on the implication of economic policy (including in the area of taxation) on various groups. The Methodist Tax Justice Network (MTJN) has played an important part in bringing the question of tax justice to the forefront of the Methodist Church as well as providing a continued engagement with the theological issues surrounding tax.
less tax than he is legally obligated to pay by hiding income or information from the tax authorities."

Tax Avoidance is “A term that is difficult to define but which is generally used to describe the arrangement of a taxpayer’s affairs that is intended to reduce his tax liability and that although the arrangement could be strictly legal it is usually in contradiction with the intent of the law it purports to follow.” (Emphasis added)

2.2 Mechanisms such as Gift Aid or Patent Box, although they reduce tax liability are not considered avoidance when used appropriately, as the intention of the law is to reduce tax liability in order to encourage behaviours of which the Government approves.

3.0 Position of the Methodist Church on taxation

3.1 The Methodist Church recognises, as detailed in the reports it has received at the Conference, that institutions and individuals have a responsibility to obey not just the letter but the spirit of the law on taxation. This responsibility applies with particular gravity to the Church itself, given its role in building a more just society.

3.2 The Methodist Church has received two reports that are particularly relevant to the question of taxation: Ethics of Wealth Creation (1990) and Of Equal Value: Poverty and Inequality in the UK (2011). In both the Ethics of Wealth Creation and Of Equal Value the importance of tax in creating a just society is highlighted. Tax is used for state investment in key services, as well as redistributed in benefits to the least well off. Taxation when used properly should enable everyone to share justly in the developing national wealth. Taxation is a contribution to the common good.

3.3 In Of Equal Value the Methodist Church recognises the importance of integrity in its own financial affairs when speaking out on issues of government cuts. This can be seen to apply more broadly to questions of social justice and inequality. If the Church fails to fulfil its moral and legal duty to pay tax then its ability to speak out on behalf of the poorest in society will be compromised.

3.4 The position of the Methodist Church on taxation, as represented in these two reports, can be summarised as follows. The state has a legitimate expectation that people will pay the taxes they owe. Such taxation fairly paid can contribute to a more just, relational society. Therefore, the Church expects people to pay the taxes they owe. The Church also expects companies to be transparent around their corporate tax affairs and to pay what they owe.

2 Corporate tax affairs incorporate all aspects of liabilities to the state and are not restricted to Corporation Tax.
4.0 Summary of progress

4.1 Since the 2015 Memorial to the Conference, JACEI has undertaken a broad range of work on the issues surrounding tax justice. There has been detailed discussion of the ethical and theological questions involved in tax along with research undertaken to understand the options and levels of efficacy of different policy responses. This work has been necessary to build the foundations of an ethical investment engagement policy on tax justice.

4.2 The strategies and legal arrangements used by companies to reduce their tax liabilities, and as a result to avoid tax, are highly complex. Given the amount of money at stake, highly specialised professionals are employed to manage or to provide advice on corporate tax management, a part of which may be the establishment of tax avoidance structures. This makes the engagement with companies about tax justice a complicated, often highly technical exercise. After consultation with other church partners, and having observed the work that a number of other groups are doing in this area, it has become apparent that a solution to the technical difficulties of such work is to focus on transparency of tax reporting. Transparency and exposure to scrutiny is likely to lead to better tax policy given the opprobrium held for those who practice tax avoidance.

4.3 A roundtable discussion concerning tax policies and future steps was arranged by JPIT with representatives from the Church of England Ethical Investment Advisory Group, the Quakers, Christian Aid, the Methodist Tax Justice Network and CFB. This meeting was valuable in bringing together the expertise and experience of various partners.

4.4 Currently, the Church of England is working through the ecumenical Church Investors Group (CIG) in conjunction with Principles for Responsible Investment (PRI) to deal with questions of taxation. They have selected two sectors of priority for engagement: technology and healthcare. The PRI has identified fifty companies of particular concern to engage with, and the CIG has begun engaging with those that they are invested in collectively.

4.5 The Quakers have chosen to engage with a number of companies by writing to them to ask questions about their tax strategy and governance arrangements. They have used the Fair Tax Mark as a basis to assess the responses they have received and to consider further engagement in future. The Quakers have written to those companies they are invested in which are accredited by the Fair Tax Mark to express their appreciation of that fact.

4.6 Christian Aid, Oxfam and ActionAid have jointly produced a report, Getting to Good: Towards Responsible Corporate Tax Behaviour, describing what a responsible tax policy for a company would look like. They have used this report as a means of engaging
companies in their position as campaigners. They have focused in particular on those companies that have been in the spotlight for poor tax arrangements and who are keen to have a more ethical tax policy. The report points out that ethical tax behaviour benefits companies as well as the countries in which they operate.

5.0 Next steps

5.1 Following these engagements, JACEI agreed a draft position paper and consequently the CFB will be producing a policy statement later this year which will shape its ethical investment practice. These will both be published on the CFB website.

5.2 It would not be feasible for CFB’s investor engagement to make technical determinations around the intentions of individual financial structures within companies. Rather it would be more fruitful to encourage transparent tax compliance and to focus on how a company manages its tax affairs.

5.3 Hallmarks of best practice in this area are a meaningful published tax policy that indicates that the ethical and social implications of taxations are recognised, and that a tax is understood as more than a legal commitment to be minimised. Other areas are transparency around how tax is managed, how much tax is paid and in which jurisdictions. The CFB will continue to work collaboratively with others, such as the CIG in the engagement with companies.

6.0 Conclusion

6.1 The Methodist Church has a clear longstanding position on the importance of tax in building the just society our faith asks us to join in creating. JACEI acknowledges the work of the Methodist Tax Justice Network and others for raising this issue of tax justice and engaging with JACEI and the Connexional Team. It is increasingly clear that, while most companies and individuals pay tax with integrity, some go to extraordinary lengths to reduce or eliminate the contribution they make.

6.2 The policy paper to be produced by CFB later this year will enable it to engage with companies around tax justice specifically around tax transparency, enabling the Methodist Church to make a contribution to increasing awareness and raising expectations around the fair payment of tax.

***RESOLUTIONS


SECTION H
THE TERM OF OFFICE OF THE CHAIR OF THE COUNCIL

In considering the process by which it wished to bring a nomination to the Conference as the next Chair of the Council, the Council reviewed the length of the term of office of its Chair. The Council noted that the present formally-appointed role of the Chair of the Council was introduced following the 2005 Review of the Council, and took effect from 2006. Prior to that, the Council had been chaired by the current President or Vice-President. At the time of the last review, therefore, the Council had been accustomed to having a chair for only one year at a time. Three years was introduced as a means of increasing the sense of continuity, whilst also limiting the potential power that could be held in one person. However, the Council now wishes to increase the term of office to four years, bringing it into line with the length of the term of service for those who are representatives of Districts, District Chairs, the representatives of the Strategy and Resources Committee, the representative of the Ministries Committee, the representatives of the Children and Youth Assembly and the representatives of the concerns of racial justice.

***RESOLUTIONS


3/18. The Conference amends SO 210(2)(d) as follows:

(d) The chair of the council shall be appointed upon nomination by the council for a period of four three-years, subject to Standing Order 316, and shall not be eligible for reappointment. He or she shall be chosen from amongst those persons, not being members of the Connexional Team, who took office as President or Vice-President during any of the five Conferences preceding the appointing Conference.
1. The Presbyteral Session proceeds for much of its business by way of conversation. Under Clause 23(m) of the Deed of Union the Presbyteral Session may discuss any subject in the Agenda of the Representative Session or any subject within the jurisdiction of the Conference and communicate its views thereon to the Representative Session by resolution or otherwise.

2. Members of the Presbyteral Session of the Conference may submit Notices of Motion for the Conference to consider (see below for the procedures). They may also ask that the Session be able to confer from a presbyteral perspective about particular items in the published Agenda of the Conference. All such requests will be considered by the Business Committee and time found for them where possible.

3. So far the following report has been identified by the Committee:

   ● Mission and Ministry in Covenant

   In addition the Presbyteral Session will be invited to consider the presbyteral role in officiating at marriage services, and the nature of pastoral responsibility. The Session will also be invited to engage in some theological reflection in the area of fresh expressions.

4. The Presbyteral Session of the Conference will meet in closed session at 9:35am on Friday 29 June, and this is expected to last for no longer than one hour. During this time the Vice-President will lead a session for those presbyters who are not voting members of the Session reflecting on ‘A Year of Laughter and Lament’.

5. The Presbyteral Session defines by resolution who may normally be present at closed sessions. Attendance when it sits as a court of appeal is governed by Standing Order 1145(7).

The Conference is reminded of a distinction made in Section G of the Law and Polity Committee report to the 2008 Conference entitled Attendance at the Closed Session of the Ministerial Session of the Conference. There is a difference between the Conference’s conferring on general questions of policy and principle on the one hand, and its decision-making on particular cases to do with identifiable individuals on the other. Because of the need for confidentiality and for other legal reasons, the latter needs to be dealt with in closed session, and only those who will bear the responsibility...
4. Report of the Presbyteral Session Business Committee

for the decisions that are made should hear or otherwise receive the information about the cases concerned. This means that those presbyters who are not members of the Representative Session of the Conference, but are attending the Presbyteral Session of the Conference with the permission of a Presbyteral Session of a Synod and at their own expense are not able to be present in the closed sessions of the Presbyteral Session of the Conference: in other words, they do not participate in the decision-making in those closed sessions, nor do they hear the information that is shared within them.

At an appropriate point Resolution 5/3 will therefore be moved.

6. Details about candidates, probationers, those proposed for transfer and other permissions and authorisations will be made available to voting members of the Conference. Information regarding candidates is confidential to those who are present in the closed session and the booklet of details will be collected in at the end of that closed session. If there are any questions regarding particular cases, please contact Ian Jacobs (jacobsi@methodistchurch.org.uk) as soon as possible in advance in order that any necessary information can be collated in time for this item of business.

7. The Record

For the sake of accuracy it is desirable that the Presbyteral Session delegates to the Representative Session the responsibility for adopting the Record of its Session, thus allowing time for members to check its details.

At an appropriate point Resolution 5/4 will therefore be moved.

8. Notices of Motion

The procedure for the submission of Notices of Motion is set out in SO 132, which can be found in the Rules of Procedure, printed at the beginning of Volume One. The deadline for submission of Notices of Motion is 17.15 on Thursday 28 June; however it would assist in the planning of the Session if Notices of Motion could be submitted to the Assistant Secretary by 16.00 on Wednesday 27 June.

***RESOLUTION

4/1. The Conference adopts the Report.
A. **Future Conferences**

The Methodist Council is required to print annually the plan for the locations of future meetings of the Conference. The venue is shown where known.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Dates</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2019</td>
<td>Birmingham</td>
<td>(27 June – 4 July)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2020</td>
<td>Telford</td>
<td>(25 June – 2 July)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

***RESOLUTION

5/1. **The Conference adopts the Report.**

B. **Associate Members**

***RESOLUTION

5/2. **The Conference invites the following Conferences, Churches and Christian bodies to appoint associate members of the Conference in 2019:**

The Church of England  
The United Reformed Church  
The Baptist Union of Great Britain  
The Church in Wales  
The New Testament Church of God  
The Salvation Army

**Europe**

Opera per le Chiese Evangeliche Metodiste in Italia  
UMC Germany Central Conference  
UMC Central and Southern Central Conference  
UMC Northern Europe and Eurasia Central Conference  
Igreja Evangélica Metodista Portuguesa

**Africa**

Methodist Church Ghana  
Presbyterian Church in Cameroon  
Methodist Church Kenya  
Eglise Méthodiste du Togo  
Methodist Church in Zimbabwe
**Americas**
Iglesia Metodista de Puerto Rico
Iglesia Metodista de Chile
Iglesia Evangélica Metodista de Nicaragua
Iglesia Evangélica Metodista Argentina
Methodist Church in the Caribbean and the Americas

**Asia/Pacific**
The Methodist Church, Upper Myanmar
The Church of North India
Gereja Methodist Indonesia
The United Church of Christ in Japan
The Methodist Church of New Zealand

**C. Presbyteral Session**

1. The Presbyteral Session defines by resolution who may normally be present at closed sessions. Attendance when it sits as a court of appeal is governed by Standing Order 024A(4).

2. For the sake of accuracy, it is desirable that the Presbyteral Session delegates to the Representative Session the responsibility for adopting the Record of its Sessions, thus allowing time for members to check its details.

*****RESOLUTIONS***

**5/3.** (Presbyteral Session) The Presbyteral Session of the Conference resolves that whenever it goes into closed session its membership, except when Standing Order 1145(7) applies, or the Conference otherwise resolves, shall be confined to presbyters who are entitled to vote on the business under consideration, with the Conference Officer for Legal and Constitutional Practice and Secretary of the Faith and Order Committee in attendance as appropriate.

**5/4.** (Presbyteral Session) The Presbyteral Session of the Conference delegates to the Representative Session the adoption of the printed and written portions of the Daily Record for both days of its meeting.

**5/5.** (Presbyteral Session) The Conference directs that the total time available for the Presbyteral Session of the Conference of 2019 shall not be less than eight hours.
5/6. (Presbyteral Session) The Conference invites the Vice-President of the Conference of 2018/2019 to attend the Presbyteral Session of the 2019 Conference, apart from any closed sessions, with the right to speak but without a vote.

5/7. In accordance with Standing Order 105(1A) the Conference directs that the following Districts shall each elect at least one deacon to be a member of the Conference of 2019:


Reserves: Yorkshire West, Nottingham and Derby, East Anglia
Special Resolution submitted by the Conference of 2017 to the Methodist Council under Standing Order 126(1)(c)

Under Standing Order 126, special resolutions of the Conference require to be confirmed the following year after appropriate consultation before they can become effective. For the purpose of consultation, they are either referred to the Methodist Council (unless moved on the Council’s behalf, in which case they are referred to the Law and Polity Committee) or dealt with as provisional legislation under Standing Order 122 and submitted to the Synods and the Law and Polity Committee.

The bodies consulted may approve or disapprove the resolution but may not amend it.

The 2017 Conference referred one such resolution to the Methodist Council, for the Council to vote on. The background information and proposed amendments to the Standing Orders, Model Trusts or Deed of Union are set out below.

ONWARDS FROM THE SUPREME COURT

The Law and Polity Committee reported the following to the Conference:

The background

1. In 2013, in the case of *The President of the Methodist Conference v Preston*, the Supreme Court held that ministers of the Methodist Church stationed in appointments within the Church are not employees. There is no appeal from a decision of the Supreme Court, but as the Committee stated in its report to the 2014 Conference it does not follow that if we wish that position to continue we can safely sit back and do nothing. It might be changed by Parliament or by a fresh challenge in the courts. We cannot, as a Church, do anything to prevent parliamentary legislation or, until it is mooted, to avoid or mitigate it, but we can and should consider what can be done to strengthen our defences against a renewed challenge in the courts.

2. The Committee does not suggest that such a challenge is imminent. If we take care not to dismantle the features of our polity on which the Supreme Court relied we should be safe against any attempt to overturn *Preston*, at least in relation to circuit appointments, for some years. But not for ever. Cases were decided in 1984 and 1986 which in their day seemed equally decisive authorities against ministerial employment, but less than
30 years later, in *Preston*, the Employment Appeal Tribunal and the Court of Appeal were in favour of overruling them and it was far from certain, in prospect, that the Supreme Court would not agree. The pace of change tends to accelerate rather than slow down. And the likelihood is that no preventive action will be taken until it is too late unless the nettle is grasped before the subject slides out of the consciousness of the Connexion.

3. Moreover the need to address the issues raised by the *Preston* case has alerted the Committee to the fact that our constitutional documents nowhere set out the legal status of the Methodist Church. Although there can be no doubt that it is, in law, an unincorporated association, the rights and duties of the members of such bodies are usually defined by contract and if, as the Committee believes, that is not so in our case, we need to make that clearer.

4. That consideration is of particular importance in the light of the ground on which the Supreme Court decided *Preston*. Whether a person who does work for another is an employee is usually argued and decided on the footing that there is a contract between them and that the issue is whether it is one of employment or is of another kind, for example one for services supplied by a self-employed person. In the case of *Preston*, however, the Church argued, and the court accepted, more radically, that there is no contract at all.

**A recommendation**

5. How should the points made in paragraphs 3 and 4 inform our approach to the issue raised in paragraphs 1 and 2? The Committee believes that there are two pointers to an answer in the leading judgment handed down in *Preston*. In the first place, we read at one point that “[t]he question whether an arrangement is a legally binding contract depends upon the intentions of the parties.” Secondly, it is stated elsewhere that “the disciplinary scheme [of the Methodist Church] is the same for ministers and lay members” and that “the ministry is not a distinct order or class.”

6. Taking up the first of these points, all law students in England and Wales learn that the requirements for a contract are offer, acceptance, consideration (or seal) and intention to create legal relations. We cannot prevent a court or tribunal from finding offer, acceptance and what lawyers count as consideration (in this instance ministerial service on the one hand and stipend and accommodation on the other), but intention to create legal relations remains necessary and is entirely in our own hands.

7. Turning to the second point, the fact that the ordained ministry is not a distinct order or class reminds us that in law the basic relationship in the Methodist Church, as in any unincorporated association, is that of membership.
8. If the subject is approached from first principles, therefore, it can be seen that the issue whether there is a contract with ministers involves two successive questions: (i) when persons become members of the Methodist Church do they and the Church intend thereby to enter into a legally binding contract and (ii), if not, does that situation change when a member becomes a minister? If the answer to both questions is unassailably negative, as we should be able to ensure, then we should be able to hold the line for as long as the Church itself wishes, unless Parliament intervenes.

9. In addition to being the most fundamental in terms of legal analysis, that approach has two further advantages. The first is that in addition to dealing with the ministerial employment issue it forestalls any attempted litigation against the Church for breach of contract by members as such, the possibility of which it is, in the present climate of opinion, by no means fanciful to foresee. The second is that the primary denial of intention to create legal relations comes at the stage of entry into membership, which is likely to be uncontroversial.

A caveat

10. Although this recommendation seeks to ensure that the absence of any contractual relationship with members or ministers, as such, remains secure the Committee wishes to emphasise that that is very far from excluding the law of the land altogether from the affairs of the Church. On the contrary, there are important areas of church life in which it is of the utmost importance to be aware of and comply with legal requirements. All Methodist property and all Methodist funds are held on charitable trust, and Circuit Meetings, Church Councils, treasurers and others are subject to the law of trusts and to charity law when acting as trustees. The Church and its officers and trustees also have legal obligations to exercise due care for the safety and welfare of others, for example to persons on Methodist premises and to children and vulnerable adults in their care.

Implementation

11. What the Committee envisages is that our constitutional provisions about entry into membership should make it clear that becoming a member is a covenantal expression of commitment to Christian discipleship within the Methodist Church and of acceptance of its discipline, but is not intended on either side to create legal relations, and that those about reception into Full Connexion should establish that what is involved is entry into wider responsibilities and authority within the Church, in addition to those already exercised by virtue of membership and existing offices, but not the creation of a new legal relationship. Draft amendments to the Deed of Union and Standing Orders to that effect are shown below.
12. It would need to be clear that these provisions were not just adopted by the Conference and published in *The Constitutional Practice and Discipline of the Methodist Church* (CPD) but known to and accepted by candidates for reception into membership or Full Connexion. That, however, is a matter not for legislation but for guidance and direction from those involved in the processes of preparation for membership and candidacy for the ministry, who are giving the subject their attention.

13. In preparing this report the Committee has consulted the Faith and Order Committee and has taken its comments into account.

**Incidental points**

14. Some thought needs to be given, if that has not already been done (the Committee is not aware of any), to how we mark the admission into membership of persons received into Full Connexion directly from the ministry of other communions.

15. Making it clear that the basic relationships of membership and ministry are not contractual will sharpen the need to clarify the status of other relationships and, if they are to be contractual, the consequences of that. For example Standing Order 690(2)(c) expressly requires that where a person within that Standing Order worships in a Local Church, or seeks to become involved in its life, he or she must agree to “enter into a written contract” setting out certain terms. If that is to remain its implications need to be explored.

16. The amendments we recommend would apply directly only to persons coming newly into membership or Full Connexion. They are not, however, intended to change what we maintain (and in the case of ministers have established) to be the existing position. Consideration therefore needs to be given to whether, and if so how, that position is to be brought to the attention of existing members.

17. The amendments below are framed by reference to the law of England and Wales. Consultations, similar to those required by Standing Order 919A in the case of amendments to the Model Trusts, will be required to ensure that they have the intended effect elsewhere, and are if necessary modified to that end.

**Amendments to the Deed of Union**

**9 Privileges and Duties of Membership.** *(a)* It is the privilege and duty of members of the Methodist Church to avail themselves of the two sacraments, namely baptism and the Lord’s Supper. As membership of the Methodist Church also involves fellowship it is the duty of all members of the Methodist Church to seek to cultivate this in every possible way. The weekly class meeting has from the beginning proved to be the most effective means of maintaining
among Methodists true fellowship in Christian experience. All members of the Methodist Church shall have their names entered on a class book, shall be placed under the pastoral care of a class leader or pastoral visitor and shall receive an annual ticket of membership.

(b) The privileges and duties of membership, as set out in sub-clause (a) above and appearing from Standing Orders, are commitments by each member to Christian discipleship within the Methodist Church, and to acceptance of its discipline, and by the Church to provision of the means by which that discipleship may be fully expressed, including pastoral care and oversight. Membership is therefore a covenant relationship between the member and the Church, freely entered into by the grace of God, but entry into membership has never been, and is not, intended on the part of either party to create, and does not create, a contract or other legal relations.

The Methodist Council approved the Resolution.

***RESOLUTION

6/1. The Conference confirms the amendments to the Deed of Union as set out above.
The following appointed Trustees, together with the Chair of the Channel Islands District and Superintendent Minister of the Bailiwick of Guernsey Circuit (the Revd Dr David Hinchliffe), served during the year together with the newly appointed Mrs Wendy Le Tissier:

Mrs M Lewis (Secretary), Mrs E Male, Mrs Claire Teed, Messrs C Falla, K Le Parmentier and J Sharratt.

1 No transactions have been entered into this year.

2 The term of office for Mrs M Lewis as a Trustee, expires at the beginning of 2018 and we welcome, in her place, the appointment made by the Channel Islands Synod of Mrs Wendy Le Tissier.

3 The Trustees continue to exercise their responsibilities according to The Methodist Church (Bailiwick of Guernsey) Law, 1987.

***RESOLUTION

7/1. The Conference receives the Report.
The appointed Trustees, together with the Chair of the Channel Islands District (the Revd Dr David Hinchliffe) and the Superintendent of the Jersey Circuit (the Revd Graeme Halls) are:

Mr R J L Le Maistre, Mrs S Edwards, Mr D Speight, Mrs L Wheeler and Miss M A Lee (Secretary).

1. On 27 January 2017, the Trustees sold “Les Frères Chapel”, cottage and land to The National Trust for Jersey.

2. On 26 May 2017, the Trustees acquired “Sundora”, No. 4 St Mary’s Village from Mr R E Le Jéhan for use as a manse.

3. The Trustees were pleased to note the care and maintenance of Methodist Church property in the Island and expressed their appreciation to those concerned.

4. The Trustees are discharging their duties under The Methodist (Jersey) Church Law, 1986.

***RESOLUTION

8/1. The Conference receives the Report.
9. All We Can – Methodist Relief and Development

| Contact name and details | Maurice Adams  
Chief Executive, All We Can  
020 7467 5132  
info@allwecan.org.uk |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Subject and aims</td>
<td>This report summarises the activities and achievements of All We Can in the financial year 2016/17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resolution</td>
<td>9/1. The Conference receives the Report.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Main points</td>
<td>In 2016/17, working to end humanitarian suffering caused by poverty and emergencies, All We Can significantly increased the impact of its efforts in two primary areas of implementation:</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>● 922,507 people being provided with long-term support through 22 local development partner organisations in 10 countries, and</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>● 71,887 people receiving emergency assistance including food, medicine and shelter through 15 humanitarian partner organisations in 10 countries.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>A total increase on last year of 406,690 men, women and children who were provided with assistance to survive and thrive.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Background context and relevant documents</td>
<td>Full version of All We Can Trustees’ Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31 August 2017 or 2016/17 Review card pack – both available from the All We Can office or website at allwecan.org.uk/review</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Our vision and approach

Our vision: Every person’s potential fulfilled.

Our mission: All We Can helps find solutions to poverty by engaging with local people and organisations in some of the world’s poorest communities to end the suffering caused by inequality and injustice. To do this we:

- Support and strengthen local partners – organisations, churches, emerging initiatives and inspiring individuals that share our vision and values – to implement effective and sustainable solutions with some of the world’s poorest and least served communities
● Respond to humanitarian crises with emergency relief and help communities to be better prepared for disasters
● Engage in global education to inform, challenge and motivate people to take a stance against poverty and injustice.

In all that it does, All We Can is mindful of its role as the Methodist relief and development agency and an integral part of the Church, acting through its international relief and development work and public engagement.

**Achievements**
This year, we have seen a significant increase in the number of individuals benefitting directly or indirectly from our development work in our priority countries, with the total figure rising from 579,821 in 2015/16, to 922,507 in 2016/17. This increase is a result of existing partner organisations growing the reach of their own programmes and the entrance of new partners. In total, we worked with 22 partner organisations and churches across 10 countries in Sub-Saharan Africa and Asia.

Two local organisations in Malawi and Sierra Leone have transitioned from purely emergency relief partners into development partners, and four development partners in Burundi, Ethiopia and Uganda are responding to the famine crisis in their target areas in order to preserve development gains achieved over time.

This is consistent with our desire to work more closely with local partners along the entire intervention spectrum from relief, recovery and development; supporting target communities to become resilient to prevailing hazards and thereby preserving and protecting lives, assets and wealth created in development programming. The increasing number of development partners involved in emergency relief underscores the fact that All We Can works in poor and vulnerable countries and in marginalised communities.

**Meaningful partnership**
In line with our mission to support our partners to achieve their mission, our partners now have clear strategies that we have helped them to develop. Because we do not promote a project and grant centred partnership approach that can lead to dependency, we will support our partners based on the pursuit of their strategy. Additionally, we have invested in services to support our partners to conduct comprehensive organisation assessments to help them identify capacity gaps that we can jointly work to strengthen over the course of our relationship. It is important that organisations and churches are well managed and not just that their worthy projects are funded.

Our partners are implementing programmes across ten development sectors with all of them having an agricultural and/or livelihoods component, which is critical for poverty eradication and wealth creation. The majority of partners have a focus on education (44%), health (56%)...
9. All We Can – Methodist Relief and Development

and water, sanitation and hygiene – WASH (44%) and all partners have diverse intervention activities with communities recognising the multifaceted nature of poverty. Target groups are the poorest, marginalised groups in society, in keeping with All We Can’s mission, including the elderly, people with disabilities, people living with HIV, widows and children, and those forcibly displaced from their homes ensuring that no one is left behind.

We have been in partnership with about a third of our local partner churches and organisations for more than 10 years, and over half for between 5-10 years. For the past five years, we have invested time and resources in developing new partnerships in new countries. This demonstrates our commitment to walking in partnership with local organisations for the long term. For example, we have worked with some of our Nepali partners for over 14 years and they are now in a position to sustain themselves and continue positively affecting communities without All We Can support. Next year, we will end our programmes in Nepal and in Burundi and therefore this year we have been undertaking activities to prepare seven partners in those countries for this exit. In the same vein, we undertook robust scoping exercises for new partners in Malawi and Zimbabwe, resulting in taking on four new partners in each country, with the view to commencing activities with them in the next year.

Because we believe our partnership approach requires mutual accountability, we collected feedback from our partners on the quality of our relationship with them. We achieved an average score of 8.21 out of 10 on partner’s perspective of their relationship with All We Can in the categories of (i) Shared vision and values (ii) Competence (iii) Integrity (iv) Interdependence and (v) Open communication, with the latter receiving the highest score of 8.47.

On the issue of funding received from All We Can, partners scored an average of 9.11 for relevance, 7.95 for flexibility and 8.26 for timeliness. 88% of our partners liked our

![Percentage of local NGOs supported by All We Can per sector of intervention](chart.png)
organisational development and partnership approach the most, in addition to our support for vulnerable people and a preference to working in remote, hard to reach areas where most donors do not go. Partners also identified challenges, for example, where there had been staff changes at All We Can and where a decision had been made to exit from the partnership over the next few years.

**Capacity development**
All We Can supported 93.75% partners to develop their strategic plans, with the remainder due to develop new strategies in the coming year. 69% have developed organisation development plans following comprehensive organisation assessment processes. These plans will help focus our capacity development efforts over the next few years and enable our partners to implement their services within the communities. Just under 44% of partners have indicated that they have already achieved more than 50% of their strategic objectives.

We have provided a wide range of capacity development support to partners including the development of organisational policies such as administration and finance policies and risk management plans. In addition to this, we have supported partner resources acquisition efforts through assistance with proposal development and linking them with other donors.

Our work can be with local organisations or churches. Because they are different in many ways, All We Can has developed a relevant approach for each of them. Church CAN (Community Action for Neighbours) is specifically designed to help churches fulfil their mission to ‘love their neighbour’. This year, having supported the Methodist Church of Uganda to develop their strategic plan, we proceeded to support strategic pillars related to their social action and institutional strengthening ambitions. We supported the development of a financial management policy and requisite systems and funded the recruitment and salaries

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![What local NGOs liked the most about their partnership with All We Can](image)

- **Support to vulnerable people**
- **Working in remote areas**
- **Organisational development support received**
- **Partnership approach**
of a qualified accountant and programmes manager to prepare them to receive funding and
grow their capacity to implement development programmes. The church implemented both
agricultural based livelihood development programmes and augmented this with food and
nutrition relief in response to the drought that affected East Africa.

We have also collaborated with the Methodist Church in Britain (MCB) in a ‘church capacity
development initiative’ focusing on the Methodist Church in Sierra Leone.

The Methodist Church in Zimbabwe received organisation development support for a church
renewal intervention, and we visited the Methodist Church of Southern Africa in Lesotho
and the Church of North India for initial scoping activities. We continued to work with the
Methodist Church in Haiti to strengthen their health programme, focusing on frequent mobile
clinics in areas that do not have permanent clinics but where need for health provision was
exacerbated by Hurricane Harvey. In addition, we worked with the Presbyterian Church of
Cameroon, which is the MCB partner in that country. Our support focused on helping the
church to develop a business plan for a project that will enable the church to sustain itself
using internally generated resources.

**Humanitarian aid**

2016/17 saw several large-scale emergencies that were matched by generous public, and
particularly Methodist, support, resulting in 71,887 affected people being helped by All We
Can compared with 7,883 last year. Our largest response in early 2017 was to East Africa
and Yemen, where widespread food insecurity, as a result of drought, entrenched economic
crises and protracted civil conflicts affected more than 38 million people. Food aid provided
immediate hunger relief while, seed distribution ensured that families were able to recover
their livelihoods. Meanwhile, training on climate change adaption will help to mitigate the
impact of future droughts making communities more resilient in the future. In Haiti, our initial
emergency response of emergency shelter, safe water and mobile health clinics, was followed
with training on how to construct structures more resistant to earthquakes. Next year, we will
be supporting our partner in Haiti to build permanent homes that act as hurricane shelters
for up to 145 persons. Ten of our partners supported 65,608 people, primarily with food aid
and nutrition services. Although smaller in scale, Hurricane Matthew in Haiti, which occurred
in October 2016 affecting 3.2 million people, also necessitated an All We Can response due
to the high levels of vulnerability and lack of coping mechanisms among communities still
recovering from the devastating earthquake of 2010.

As well as responding to new emergencies in 2016/17, All We Can continues to monitor the
progress of emergency responses funded in previous years, which our partners continue to
implement. At the end of last year, we supported 1,306 extremely vulnerable refugees living
in informal settlements in Lebanon with improved shelters and concluded support to 1,388
refugees in Jordan where our partners provided healthcare, food aid and livelihoods and
education opportunities.
In Ecuador, the ACT Alliance Earthquake response was completed in May 2017, with All We Can assisting 632 people with food, water, shelter and psychosocial support. In Sierra Leone, although Ebola is no longer a public health concern, the impact is still being felt and our partner has been able to support a further 200 Ebola survivors, through remaining funds, with micro-enterprise grants, seeds and educational assistance to children orphaned by Ebola.

**Public engagement**

All We Can once again used its annual church appeals and activities to create resources that were designed to educate and inform local churches and supporters across the country on development and relief issues, as well as inspire support. This year, in depth materials and church resources were created for our appeals at Harvest, Christmas, and for the first time in a number of years, Lent. Harvest 2016 focused on water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) provision in Uganda, particularly highlighting the educational benefits for schools within poor communities. Our Extraordinary Gifts Christmas appeal included church resources and examples of development activities from across our portfolio of work, demonstrating the breadth of development activity that All We Can supports, and is required, in the poor communities our partners serve.

All We Can’s Lent resources in 2017 focused on the work of our partners with widows in rural Cameroon. The resources were designed to engage churches and individuals in a deeper piece of education and theological reflection on the needs within this community as well as broader issues of justice and compassion. The resources included contributions from high profile Methodists and other well-known Christian contributors, providing daily content across the entire 40 days of Lent. This was a significant investment for the organisation but resulted in high levels of engagement across the country, with over 10,000 resources distributed and feedback from supporters very positive.

**Part of the Methodist family**

As an integral part of Methodist Church in Britain, All We Can plays a specific and discrete role in the Church’s mission. It functions within the Church’s calling of service (“to be a good neighbour to those in need and to challenge injustice”) and its priority of acting in the world and in the Church, through its outworking of support to community development and action for justice, especially among the most deprived and poor.

All We Can has evolved from the vision and action of Methodists since this movement began in 1938. We are the Methodist relief and development organisation of the Church. In 2018, All We Can will be commemorating the 80th anniversary of the start of this story. We will continue to collaborate as part of the Methodist Church in Britain and globally, by engaging with more than eighteen different groups such as committees and ministry teams. We have developed partnerships with others in the global Methodist family and beyond, and
collaborate in ways that enhance our global impact. We are committed to effectiveness, innovation and achieving our organisational mission and doing so hand in hand with our Methodist family.

**Future plans**
All We Can exists to support its partners. Our plans will always focus on the success of those with whom we collaborate. We are motivated to strengthen our relational and partner focused approach because of feedback we receive from local organisations:

We have five priorities this coming year, with the overall objective of consolidating our resources to strengthen our growth.

1. Enlarging the capacity of our partners for greater impact of long-term change.
2. Increasing income and ensuring financial sustainability to achieve the strategy.
3. Enhancing the communication of our message, our approach and our achievements.
4. Developing our global education and public engagement.
5. Becoming even more efficient in the management of our resources.

The practical compassion of Methodists, which inspired the All We Can movement, is the same compassion that enables this work to continue today.

**Financial review**
We are very grateful to our many supporters, partners, volunteers, funders, staff, advisers and trustees who have made this year’s achievements possible. We record particular thanks to those who financially supported the organisation. Total income increased by £623k (26%) to £3,040k (2016: £2,416k), which was driven by a large increase in donations of £616k (49%). Total expenditure increased by 9% to £3,175k (2016: £2,905k), of which 82.6% (2016: 82.3%) was spent on charitable activities.

***RESOLUTION***

9/1. The Conference receives the Report.
Statement of financial activities for the year ended 31 August 2017

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Note</th>
<th>Unrestricted</th>
<th>Restricted</th>
<th>2017 Total</th>
<th>Unrestricted</th>
<th>Restricted</th>
<th>2016 Total</th>
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<td>£</td>
<td>£</td>
<td>£</td>
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<td>Income from:</td>
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<td><strong>1,076,876</strong></td>
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<td>Expenditure on:</td>
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<td>552,280</td>
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<td>Charitable activities</td>
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<td>Development</td>
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<td>291,123</td>
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<td><strong>Total expenditure on charitable activities</strong></td>
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<td><strong>1,711,833</strong></td>
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<td><strong>837,084</strong></td>
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<td>Net gains/(losses) on investments</td>
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<td>41,121</td>
<td>84,234</td>
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<tr>
<td>Net income/(expenditure)</td>
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<td>165,869</td>
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<td>(403,306)</td>
<td>(831)</td>
<td>(404,137)</td>
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<td>82,796</td>
<td>(82,796)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Net movement in funds</td>
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<td></td>
<td>(177,530)</td>
<td>83,073</td>
<td>(94,457)</td>
<td>(403,306)</td>
<td>(831)</td>
<td>(404,137)</td>
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<td><strong>1,528,541</strong></td>
<td><strong>19,287</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,547,828</strong></td>
</tr>
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</table>
1. Membership

The Methodist Diaconal Order (MDO) currently has a complement of 259 members. Of these:

- 127 are in the active work (including 10 probationer deacons)
- 118 are supernumerary deacons
- 9 are student deacons
- 5 are deacons who hold ‘without appointment’ status

In addition, there are 2 authorised deacons in the active work and 1 supernumerary associate deacon. The MDO also has 27 people who are ‘Associates’ of the Order and a number of ‘Friends’ who commit themselves to support the Order through prayer and advocacy.

Since the 2017 Convocation 8 members have died, 5 new full members were received by ordination into the diaconate, 4 accepted candidates and 7 members had permission to sit down.

At the time of writing the processes of the Ministerial Candidates’ Selection Committee, the Ministerial Candidates’ and Probationers’ Oversight Committee and the Conference Diaconal Committee (CDC) are incomplete, and so the numbers of those who will be recommended to the Conference as candidates, for ordination and permission to sit down are not yet fully known.

2. MDO Deputy Warden

Following a period of discernment Deacon Richard Goldstraw sought to step down from his appointment as Deputy Warden of the Order and to take up a circuit appointment. During the autumn a discernment group met to identify through prayer, consultation and conversation a deacon to recommend to the Methodist Council for direct stationing as the Deputy Warden. In its January meeting the Methodist Council accepted the recommendation of Deacon Ruth Richey who will serve as the Deputy Warden of the Methodist Diaconal Order for 5 years from September 2018. The MDO is grateful to both Richard and Ruth for their willingness to serve and to the Methodist Council and all who actively supported the process of discernment by their membership of the discernment group or in other ways.
3. The Methodist Council Working Group on the MDO as a Religious Order, and Faith and Order work on Ministry in the Methodist Church

Members of the Order continue to seek to engage fully with the questions and opportunities raised in relation to the nature and understanding of the MDO as both a religious order and an order of ministry.

4. Stationing

During the stationing matching process 19 deacons were matched for stationing to appointments for September 2018 by the Methodist Conference. This includes 5 who will become new first year probationers.

The Order throughout the year continues to visit and share in conversations about potential future diaconal appointments with Circuits and Churches as they seek to discern how they are being called at this time and in their context, to join in the work of God in service to the world.

5. World Diakonia

In July 2017 four members of the Order travelled to Chicago to participate in the Assembly of the World Diakonia Federation, where over 400 diaconal ministers, deacons and diaconal orders from 28 countries gathered together. The purpose of gathering was not only to celebrate a common calling to a ministry focused on the servanthood of Christ but also to be open to being shaken by the wind of God’s Spirit, so to ‘create community, rock the foundations, face the chaos, explore the unknown, find a new perspective, nourish hope and to be scattered to serve’. This was a joyful, challenging and hopeful event, which sought to remind and encourage the call of the whole Church to be a witness of God for all of creation through loving and deliberate service throughout the world.

6. The Convocation

By the time the Conference meets, as part of the discipline of the Order, members will have met at the annual Convocation to give thanks for those who “are no longer part of our earthly fellowship”, to rejoice with those who were ordained at the 2017 Conference and those who will be recommended to the Conference for ordination in 2018, to greet those who became diaconal students and pray for those who are ‘sitting down’.

The Convocation will have received and benefitted from the presence and ministry of the President and Vice-President of the Methodist Conference alongside that of the
Secretary of the Conference and other guests. It will have hosted and shared fellowship with a number of deacons from other Churches from within the UK and Europe and with Methodist deacons from the Nigeria and Southern African Methodist Churches and United Methodist Church of the USA.

At the end of the Convocation members will have rededicated themselves to the calling and ministry of a deacon in Christ’s Church which includes living by the MDO rule, lifelong service and prayer and the discipline of direct stationing and itinerancy.

***RESOLUTION

10/1. The Conference receives the Report.

10/2. The Conference resolves that the Convocation of the Methodist Diaconal Order shall meet at the Hayes Conference Centre from Tuesday 7 May until Friday 10 May 2019.
11. 3Generate 2017 – Methodist Children and Youth Assembly

| Contact name and details | Michael Pryke  
| Youth President  
youthpresident@methodistchurch.org.uk |
| Action required | Decision |
b) The Conference directs the Methodist Council to consider how it can support the ‘Year of Testimony’ during the connexional year of 2019/2020. |
| | 11/3. a) The Conference urges each Local Church to meet with their local MP to build a relationship and explore concerns, and directs the Council to provide resources to support this.  
b) The Conference challenges every District to commit to one creative action to challenge a particular issue of injustice and to share this with the wider Connexion. |

Summary of content

| Subject and aims | A summary of 3Generate 2017 – The Methodist Children and Youth Assembly. |
| Main points | ● Attendance and representation of 3Generate  
● Overview of the event  
● Result of elections held at 3Generate  
● Hearing the voice of young people  
● Resolutions set before the Conference |

Change

1. The Methodist Children and Youth Assembly, 3Generate, is both an engagement process and an event for children and young people aged 8-23. Since 2010, the 3Generate event has grown significantly and as a result undergone substantial change. The most notable change, aside from the increase in numbers attending, this year was the invitation to
leaders to attend *in loco parentis* with their groups. Provision was made in many Districts to enable those without formal groups to become part of a more established group. The event moved to a different venue; Pontins in Southport.

**Membership**

2. In total 943 delegates attended the 2017 event supported by 138 volunteers, 32 staff (of whom 27 were members of the Discipleship and Ministries Learning Network), 9 ONE Programme Participants (OPPs) and 10 Elected Youth Representatives. Adding group leaders to this number resulted in the total number of people being on site at 1,234, making this the largest 3Generate in its history.

### #WonderfullyProphetic

3. This year’s theme was ‘wonderfully prophetic’. This theme enabled the programme to focus on how children and young people can use their voice and lives to be agents of change.

**Overview of the programme**

4. With the move into a new venue, 3Generate was able to change and expand. To this end it was decided to use a venue-based system instead of dividing the assembly into age-specific areas for the majority of the event. Most sessions were suitable for all ages but with some sessions tailored to specific age groups.

5. One exception to this way of programming was Generate Young Adults. This was developed specifically for those between the ages of 18-23, although those in this age bracket could still be part of the rest of the programme across the site. Sessions included: discussions around authentic online communities, a jazz café, creative worship, prayers and sessions looking at their next steps in life. Throughout the event the 18-23s consistently expressed a desire to explore more deeply issues of mental health, in particular how the Church could engage in the issue and how best to help and support people.

6. There were 8 venues across the site. An overview of what took place in each venue is below.

6.1. **Creative Venue** In this venue, children and young people had the opportunity to express themselves creatively. Activities involved making jewellery, painting stones, small canvases and t-shirts and Christmas decorations. As well as that, a digital graffiti wall captured the thoughts of the children and young people. In this venue, they were given free rein to express creatively issues and ideas. Many things were discussed including the desire for Methodist venues to be environmentally friendly.
and a recognition that there is sometimes a huge age gap between younger and older generations in churches. These creative expressions were captured in various ways. For example participants created a giant cross made out of the recycled containers that their food was delivered in during the weekend, demonstrating how recycling has been a key issue for 3Generate for a number of years. Continuing this theme every delegate was given a water bottle made out of recycled materials, this was presented on the Sunday service to remind children and young people to be a prophetic voice and to stand up for things they care about, in this case to use fewer plastic bottles.

6.2. **Engage Venue** This was the biggest venue in size where several musical artists performed: Vassie, Urban Praise Project and a Bluecoats show was held there on the Saturday night. During the day TED Talks were held with the titles ‘One church, one world, eating monkey for Jesus’, ‘President Trump – why my cousin voted for him’, ‘Being a good neighbour when your neighbourhood has been destroyed: making sense of God in disasters’ and ‘You’ll never know how amazing you are if you’re always trying to fit in’. There were also workshops exploring mental health, sharing testimonies, and marriage and relationships. Some of the things discussed in the marriage and relationships workshop included a need for more conversations about healthy relationships and Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender+ matters. There were differences in opinions regarding a re-definition of marriage. The desire to talk more about our faith stories was expressed in the sharing testimonies workshop.

6.3. **Explore Venue** This venue saw gospel worship, a comedy workshop, a drama group and Messy Science. During the Messy Science session, conversations centred around peace, how to work together as a church community, and worship styles that bring us closer to God. There was also an Open Space session where young people could bring any topic and discuss it. The majority were concerned about: ‘mental health’, ‘should we follow the Bible word for word?’, ‘creating links with other churches around the world’, ‘is Sunday sacred?’, ‘the environment’, ‘why do we go to church?’, ‘do you feel your voice is heard?’ During this session young people were asked to write on tablecloths their thoughts and opinions around these topics. They said: “We go to church to be heard, to worship God and to share God’s word”; that the “Church is to lend its voice, show compassion to others and be just in how we treat other faiths” and young people also wanted their churches to “Lobby UK leaders to make social justice important.”

6.4. **Agents of Change** Two marquees were erected just outside the main venue, in which workshops were facilitated by the Joint Public Issues Team (JPIT) and All We Can with contributions from Methodist Women in Britain (MWiB) and Action for Children. Within this venue there were various workshops held as well as a rolling
programme that included a re-creation of a Zimbabwean village where children and young people were invited to sit and think about what it would be like to live in this situation and offer prayers for those who do. There was also a giant inflatable globe where young people could place sticky notes on to countries and situations they wanted to pray for. Children and young people could also vote for the issues that they would like JPIT to work on. Terrorism was the topic which received the most votes. There was a late-night chat show and a silent disco. Young people also pledged to do one of 100 things to change the world, the most popular of these were to pray for those in need, reading about justice in the Bible and to use fewer plastic bottles. In addition, origami peace cranes (these were originally made by a girl from Hiroshima who died from leukaemia due to the dropping of the atomic bomb) were made and sent to the Secretary of State for Defence as a way of supporting JPIT’s campaign against nuclear weapons. They were also hung in the window of Methodist Church House following 3Generate.

6.5. **Voice Venue** Four ‘3:Voice’ sessions were held in this venue throughout the day. A technique called World Café was used for these sessions as a means of hearing the voices of young people. This style involves people sitting around a table (set out to make it feel as though you are in a café) and conversing about a question relating to a particular subject while being facilitated by someone, after about 15 minutes people changed tables and discussed a different question, which also related to the subject. The facilitator noted down everything said and the children and young people were also encouraged to write on the tablecloths. The comments from the children and young people were captured by 4 large graphic recordings which can be viewed at www.methodist.org.uk/our-work/our-work-in-britain/3generate/agents-of-change/manifestos-and-resources/.

The topics discussed in these sessions were:

- **Minding the Gap:** How can we create peace in today’s world? Within this session young people expressed their desire for people to be nicer towards each other and wanted to tell the grown-ups to stop arguing in church. They also wanted to be valued, supported and to seek: inner (personal) peace, community peace, church peace and world peace and also to have dialogue and promote understanding around this.

- **Good Neighbours:** Is it possible to love others and ourselves? This session had several crossover points with the session about peace, as young people wanted everyone not to be mean to others even if people were mean to them. Several suggestions as what to do around this were suggested, such as adults helping young people and giving them a role. They also wanted to value ‘all’ their neighbours especially the homeless and immigrants. Finally, young people
suggested that the Church needs to bring positive good news stories to the world as a way to counteract negativity.

- Reinventing Church: What would the perfect church look like? This session was the largest in terms of numbers showing how important this topic is to young people. Young people wanted to be treated as equals irrespective of their age and to be given responsibilities and opportunities within church services. They were also keen to see different styles of services as well as better (more modern) equipment.

- Thriving Today: What will help us, and our faith, to grow when times are difficult? In this session children and young people brought up how much they valued the range of views and beliefs expressed in the Church. They also valued the amount of support given to them and praying with others. To develop this further young people asked to be equipped to share faith and answer difficult questions, they wanted to try things and be allowed to make mistakes and they wanted to both share and hear faith stories about how they and others struggled.

6.6. Still Space Venue: This provided a gentler, more contemplative, alternative to the other venues and activities. The programme included mindful movement, Bible meditation, and quieter, reflective worship. This venue provided the ideal place to host the ‘Safe Haven’ – a silent space for those who needed to take time out, which was particularly helpful for those with additional needs. One of the sessions held in this venue was called ‘3:Voice Creative’ where children and young people were encouraged to write or draw on tablecloths expressing their views and opinions about church and other issues.

Elections

7. The following young people were elected as 3Generate representatives at the 2017 event:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Name</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Youth President 2018/2019</td>
<td>Jasmine Yeboah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Representatives to the Methodist Conference</td>
<td>Ruth Hall, Kira Barfoot and Liberty Dane</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Representative to the Methodist Council</td>
<td>Roxanne Bromley</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Representatives to the British Youth Council</td>
<td>Callum Bentley, Grace Burnett and Alysha Wilson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ecumenical Representative</td>
<td>Jack Key</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
8. These youth representatives, along with the previously elected Gemma Curtis, Jasmine Roberts, Roxanne Bainbridge and Samuel Ebden, combine to form the Youth President’s Advisory Group (as set out in SO 250(9)).

9. The group meets three times a year to develop the work of hearing and representing the voice of children and young people in a variety of contexts. The 3Generate representatives also visit churches, and attend circuit and district events where possible.

**Resolutions**

10. The Youth President’s Advisory Group met subsequent to 3Generate to process the material gathered at the event and with the help and advice of the Chair of Chairs formed this into the resolutions.

11. Children and young people of the Methodist Church feel strongly about the issue of justice and social action, therefore support from the Church in resourcing thinking and acting for justice is an essential part of our faith, our heritage and Our Calling. However, 3Generate feels that too few people engage with issues of justice in this country and around the world. To tackle this, 3Generate would like to challenge the Methodist Church to work for justice inter-generationally. Firstly, they would like to challenge every church to get to know their MP so that they can raise issues of justice with her or him. Secondly, 3Generate challenges every District to show their passion for justice through committing to take a single action to challenge injustice – for example bringing people who work in foodbanks together to discuss the End Hunger campaign or dedicating a synod to exploring an issue of justice – and sharing the good news stories with others around the Connexion.

12. Another area that 3Generate feels strongly about is that testimony should play a greater role in the life of the whole Church. In this regard, 3Generate members recognise how important it is for all Christians to speak of our faith, to talk of God and to share stories as a means of deepening our faith and sharing it with others.

***RESOLUTIONS***

**11/1.** The Conference receives the Report.

**11/2.**


b) The Conference directs the Methodist Council to consider how it can support the ‘Year of Testimony’ during the connexional year of 2019/2020.
11/3. a) The Conference urges each Local Church to meet with their local MP to build a relationship and explore concerns, and directs the Council to provide resources to support this.

b) The Conference challenges every District to commit to one creative action to challenge a particular issue of injustice and to share this with the wider Connexion.
12. Unified Statement of Connexional Finances

Contact name and details

| The Revd Timothy A Swindell  
| Connexional Treasurer  
| Tim.Swindell@methodist.org.uk |

Resolution

| 12/1. The Conference receives the Report as the Unified Statement of Connexional Finances required by SO 360. |

Summary of content

Subject and aims

| Summary extracts of the full consolidated accounts of the Methodist Church for 2016/2017 which were adopted by the Methodist Council and are presented to the Conference as the unified statement of connexional finances required by Standing Order 360. |

Main points

| These accounts consolidate figures for a wide variety of Methodist activities and entities. |

Background context and relevant documents

| When the Methodist Church was registered with the Charity Commission it was agreed that the accounts of the registered charity would be those of the Methodist Council. The full consolidated accounts were presented to the Council and adopted by the Council under SO 212(1). They are available for scrutiny on the Methodist Church website and in printed form from the Finance and Resources Team at Methodist Church House.  
| Under SO 360 the Council is required to present to the Conference a “unified statement of connexional finances ... so as to give an overall view of those moneys and other assets for which the council is responsible”.  
| This Report consists of extracts from the full consolidated accounts which provide a summary of them to meet that requirement. It is submitted to the Conference as the trustee body of the registered charity. |

1. **Link to the financial statements**  
The accounts can be viewed online at: www.methodist.org.uk/trusteesreport
2. **Strategic objectives, aims and purposes of the Methodist Church in Great Britain**

The activities covered in these accounts fall within the work of the Methodist Church. The strategic objectives of the Methodist Church are directly linked to its aims. They are:

- Worship – to increase awareness of God’s presence and to celebrate God’s love;
- Learning and Caring – to help people to learn and grow as Christians, through mutual support and care;
- Service – to be a good neighbour to people in need and to challenge injustice; and
- Evangelism – to make more followers of Jesus Christ.

3. **Public benefit requirement**

The trustees of the Methodist Church had due regard to the public benefit guidance published by the Charity Commission in compliance with its duties under section 17 of the Charities Act 2011. This guidance sets out two key principles:

- the organisation must have an identifiable benefit.
- the benefit must be to the public or a section of the public.

The Church exists, inter alia, to:

- increase awareness of God’s presence and to celebrate God’s love;
- help people to learn and grow as Christians, through mutual support and care; and
- be a good neighbour to people in need and challenge injustice.

The trustees consider that for these reasons the charity meets these public benefit requirements.

4. **Organisation of the work**

In 2016/17 the Methodist Church, in response to its calling and in pursuit of the strategic objectives (worship, learning and caring, service and evangelism), organised its work in the following key areas:

- equipping the Church to engage with society;
- formation, training, development and resourcing;
- empowering the ministry of overseas partners; and
- advocacy and education.

5. **Financial review**

The activities covered in these consolidated financial statements are those under the oversight of the Methodist Council. The Methodist Church in Great Britain is the registered charity and the Charity Commission has agreed that these financial statements can properly serve as the financial statements of the charity.
The total income for the year was £46 million, an increase of 7% compared to the previous year (2016: £43 million). Total expenditure increased by 4% to £48 million (2016: £46 million). At the end of the year, the Church recorded a net surplus of £16 million (2016: £14 million), an increase of 15%. The surplus includes net investment gains before other recognised gains and losses of £18 million (2016: £17 million).

The “other recognised gains and losses” for the year included a gain of £9 million (2016: £12 million loss) from actuarial revaluations on the Pension and Assurance Scheme for Lay Employees of the Methodist Church. This was caused by changes in the assumptions used to value the Scheme’s liabilities, the result of changes in market conditions and resulting in an overall increase in the Scheme’s deficit.
6. Incoming resources
Total income increased by 7% this year mainly due to a 24% increase in property levies compared to the previous year. There was also a 9% increase in income from donations and legacies. These increases were partially offset by a 15% decrease in investment income, resulting both from the planned use of reserves and a substantial direct investment in one property.

The value of investments held on behalf of the Council increased to £181 million (2016: £167 million). A detailed analysis of the income is provided in Notes 2-6 of the financial statements.

7. Resources expended
Total expenditure increased by 4% to £48 million (2016: £46 million). Of this, £39 million (82%) was spent directly on charitable activities. This includes all amounts spent in furtherance of our mission including grants and direct programme activities. A detailed analysis of expenditure by activity is presented in Notes 7-8 of the financial statements.

8. Investments
The total value of funds held at 31 August 2017 was £273 million (2016: £248 million). Restricted reserves were £190 million (2016: £182 million), including endowment reserves of £19 million (2016: £17 million). Unrestricted reserves were £82 million (2016: £66 million restated). A detailed breakdown of the funds is set out in Notes 19-25 of the financial statements.

As at 31 August 2017, the Church held fixed asset investments with a fair value of £167 million (2016: £153 million restated). The Investment Committee regularly reviews the investment portfolio and performs an annual review of the investment policy. The Church’s investment objective is to seek an optimal return from income and capital combined. The Investment Committee is satisfied with the overall performance of the investment portfolio against agreed benchmarks.
### 12. Unified Statement of Connexional Finances

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## 12. Unified Statement of Connexional Finances

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<td>2,376</td>
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<td>38,117</td>
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<td>1,361</td>
<td>16,061</td>
<td>5,695</td>
<td>6,852</td>
<td>1,425</td>
<td>13,972</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>153</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>946</td>
<td>(1,131)</td>
<td>185</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1,514</td>
<td>16,061</td>
<td>6,641</td>
<td>5,721</td>
<td>1,610</td>
<td>13,972</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-</td>
<td>8,707</td>
<td>(12,226)</td>
<td>(115)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(12,341)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1,514</td>
<td>24,823</td>
<td>(5,585)</td>
<td>5,606</td>
<td>1,610</td>
<td>1,631</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17,446</td>
<td>248,011</td>
<td>71,921</td>
<td>158,623</td>
<td>15,836</td>
<td>246,380</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18,960</td>
<td>272,834</td>
<td>66,336</td>
<td>164,229</td>
<td>17,446</td>
<td>248,011</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## 12. Unified Statement of Connexional Finances

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>£000</td>
<td>£000</td>
<td>£000</td>
<td>£000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Fixed assets

- **Intangible Assets**: 13c
  - 178
  - 171
  - 176
  - 171
- **Tangible fixed assets**: 13a,b
  - 96,210
  - 93,101
  - 88,853
  - 85,931
- **Investments**: 14a,b
  - 181,424
  - 166,509
  - 158,694
  - 151,022

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2017</th>
<th>2016</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>277,812</td>
<td>259,781</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>247,723</td>
<td>237,124</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Current assets

- **Stocks**: 17
  - 119
  - 145
  - 103
  - 145
- **Debtors**: 15
  - 6,112
  - 7,133
  - 5,215
  - 6,378
- **Short term deposits**: 24,133
  - 20,518
  - 21,456
  - 16,810
- **Cash at bank and in hand**: 6,612
  - 1,349
  - 2,049
  - 1,078

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2017</th>
<th>2016</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>36,976</td>
<td>29,145</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>28,823</td>
<td>24,411</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Creditors

- **Amounts falling due within one year**: 16a
  - (20,751)
  - (15,964)
  - (18,578)
  - (14,323)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2017</th>
<th>2016</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>16,225</td>
<td>13,181</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10,245</td>
<td>10,088</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>294,037</th>
<th>272,962</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>257,968</td>
<td>247,212</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Net current assets

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2017</th>
<th>2016</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>284,561</td>
<td>266,619</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>252,201</td>
<td>240,871</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Net assets excluding pension liability

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2017</th>
<th>2016</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>28</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Defined benefit pension scheme liability

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2017</th>
<th>2016</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11,727</td>
<td>18,608</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11,727</td>
<td>18,608</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2017</th>
<th>2016</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>272,834</td>
<td>248,011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>240,474</td>
<td>222,263</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### The funds of the charity:

#### Unrestricted funds

- **General funds**: 45,440
  - 42,895
  - 44,710
  - 42,675
- **Designated funds**: 46,543
  - 39,776
  - 46,543
  - 39,776
- **Defined benefit pension scheme liability**: 28
  - (9,610)
  - (16,335)
  - (9,610)
  - (16,335)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2017</th>
<th>2016</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>82,373</td>
<td>66,336</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>81,643</td>
<td>66,116</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Restricted funds

- **20a,b, 24**: 171,501
  - 164,229
  - 139,871
  - 138,701
- **Endowment funds**: 18,960
  - 17,446
  - 18,960
  - 17,446

### Total funds

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2017</th>
<th>2016</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>272,834</td>
<td>248,011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>240,474</td>
<td>222,263</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
11. Accounting estimates and judgments: defined benefit pension schemes

The Methodist Council participates in three main pension schemes: the Methodist Ministers’ Pension Scheme (MMPS); the Pensions and Assurance Scheme for Lay Employees of the Methodist Church (PASLEMC); and the Superannuation Scheme for Lay Mission Partners of the Methodist Church (SSMP).

The PASLEMC scheme is treated as a group plan for accounting purposes, with the Methodist Council as the sponsoring employer with legal responsibility for the plan. There is no contractual arrangement or stated policy for charging the net defined benefit cost of the plan as a whole to individual group entities and therefore the Council has recognised the entire net defined benefit cost and the relevant net defined benefit liability in its individual financial statements. Participation in a group pension plan is a related party transaction. The Council’s policy is to recognise the contributions paid to the Scheme by other group employers as a credit in the Statement of Financial Activities.

The pension assets and liabilities in respect of the PASLEMC and SSMP schemes are recorded in line with FRS 102, with scheme valuations undertaken by independent actuaries. FRS 102 measures the value of pension assets and liabilities at the balance sheet date and determines the benefits accrued in the year and the interest on assets and liabilities. Current service costs, together with the net interest cost for the year, are allocated to relevant expenditure headings within the SOFA. The MMPS scheme assets and liabilities are excluded.

Scheme assets are measured at fair value at the balance sheet date. Scheme liabilities are measured on an actuarial basis at the balance sheet date using the projected unit method and discounted at a rate equivalent to the current rate of return on a high quality corporate bond of equivalent term to the scheme liabilities. The change in value of assets and liabilities arising from asset valuation, changes in benefits, actuarial assumptions, or change in the level of deficit attributable to members is recognised in the consolidated statement of financial activities within actuarial gains/losses on defined benefit pension schemes. The resulting defined benefit asset or liability is presented separately on the face of the balance sheet.

The MMPS is also a group scheme as all of the participating entities, mainly the Circuits and the Council, are under the common control of the Conference. However the Council has adopted a different accounting policy for this Scheme. For the MMPS, costs equal to the contributions paid are recognised in the accounts as they fall due. Pension costs are allocated to activities and between funds according to an employee’s normal job function.
12. Statement of trustees' responsibilities

The law applicable to charities in England and Wales requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and the group and of the income and expenditure of the charity for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the trustees are required to:

a) select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
b) observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;
c) make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
d) state whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and
e) prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in business.

The trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011, the Charity (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 and the provisions of the trust deed. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and the group and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

The trustees are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the charity and financial information included on the charity’s website. Legislation in the United Kingdom governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

Auditor

A resolution proposing the re-appointment of RSM UK Audit LLP as auditor to the charity was approved by the Methodist Council.

RSM UK Audit LLP has indicated its willingness to continue in office.

***RESOLUTION

12/1. The Conference receives the Report as the Unified Statement of Connexional Finances required by SO 360.
Independent Auditor’s Report to the Trustees of The Methodist Church in Great Britain

Opinion on financial statements
We have audited the financial statements of The Methodist Church in Great Britain (the ‘charity’) and its subsidiaries (the ‘group’) for the year ended 31 August 2017 which comprise the Consolidated Statement of Financial Activities, the Connexional (‘parent charity’) Statement of Financial Activities, the Consolidated and parent charity Balance Sheets, the Consolidated and parent charity Cash Flow Statements and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including FRS 102 “The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland” (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion the financial statements:
- give a true and fair view of the state of the group’s and charity’s affairs as at 31 August 2017 and of their incoming resources and application of resources for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011.

Basis for opinion
We have been appointed as auditors under section 151 of the Charities Act 2011 and report in accordance with regulations made under section 154 of that Act.

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (‘ISAs (UK)’) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor’s responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the group and parent charity in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC’s Ethical Standard and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern
We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the ISAs (UK) require us to report to you where:

- the trustees’ use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is not appropriate; or
- the trustees have not disclosed in the financial statements any identified material
uncertainties that may cast significant doubt about the group’s or parent charity’s ability to continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting for a period of at least twelve months from the date when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Other information
The trustees are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the Consolidated Report and Financial Statements other than the financial statements and our auditor’s report thereon. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact. We have nothing to report in this regard.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception
We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters where the Charities Act 2011 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- the information given in the Trustees’ Report is inconsistent in any material respect with the financial statements; or
- sufficient accounting records have not been kept by the parent charity; or
- the parent charity financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

Responsibilities of trustees
As explained more fully in the Statement of Trustees’ Responsibilities set out on page 25, the trustees are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are responsible for assessing the group’s and parent charity’s ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to liquidate the group or parent charity or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.
**Auditor’s responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements**

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor’s report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is provided on the Financial Reporting Council’s website at www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of our auditor’s report.

This report is made solely to the charity’s trustees as a body, in accordance with the Charities Act 2011. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charity’s trustees those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor’s report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charity and the charity’s trustees as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

RSM UK Audit LLP  
Statutory Auditor  
Chartered Accountants  
St Philips Point  
Temple Row, Birmingham  
West Midlands B2 5AF

Date: 19th February, 2018

RSM UK Audit LLP is eligible to act as an auditor in terms of section 1212 of the Companies Act 2006.
13. Connexional Allowances Committee

| Contact name and details | John A Bell  
Chair of the Connexional Allowances Committee  
johnabell@supanet.com |
|--------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|
| Resolutions              | 13/1. The Conference receives the Report.  
13/2. The Conference adopts the Report and recommendations in sections 1, 2 and 3.  
13/3. The Conference adopts the Report in section 4 and the recommendations in paragraphs 4.28 to 4.35.  
13/4. The Conference adopts the Report in section 5 and the recommendations in paragraphs 5.27 to 5.36. |

Summary of content

| Subject and aims | The Report covers the Committee’s customary portfolio of topics related to stipends, allowances and other financial provisions, grants made and its other activities.  
It also reports on and makes recommendations in respect of special projects recently undertaken, as detailed, per section, below. |
|------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Main points      | Section 1 covers stipends, allowances above stipend and other allowances, fees, rates and expenses for 2018/2019.  
Section 2 reports on the funds and trusts managed by the Committee.  
Section 3 summarises other work and activities in which the Committee has been and will be involved.  
Section 4 is the report and recommendations of the working group to review the university funding for children of ministers stationed in the Channel Islands, the Isle of Man, Gibraltar and Malta.  
Section 5 contains the recommendations on allowances above stipend, fees for occasional services and other payments. |
Background context and relevant documents

The Committee’s reports to the Conference of 2015 (Agenda pp 446-474) and 2016 (Agenda pp 115-127) on allowances above stipend and other ministerial payments relate to section 5.

Summary of impact

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standing Orders</th>
<th>None</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Financial</strong></td>
<td>Paragraphs 1.3 and 1.4, on stipends and allowances above stipend, impact Circuits and other employing bodies, though the figures have been published in advance for budget purposes. Paragraph 1.18, on the sabbatical levy: there will be a small cost increase for Circuits and other employing bodies of £40 per minister from September 2019. Paragraph 1.19, pending decisions on the sabbaticals review, there may be a further increase in the levy. Paragraph 1.21, on computing provision for student ministers: if the Computers in Ministry Fund is unable to meet this cost in total, the Methodist Church Fund will be required to contribute the balance. Paragraph 1.29, on the Living Wage, may impact the finances in some churches, Circuits and Districts. Paragraph 4.30, on ministers’ children’s university maintenance funding, the costs will be met from the Fund for the Support of Presbyters and Deacons (FSPD). Paragraph 4.31, on ministers’ children’s travel to university, based on knowledge of their ages, the cost to the Methodist Church Fund (MCF) will be not greater than £2,000 per year from 2018/2019 to 2021-2022. Paragraph 5.29, on the superintendents’ allowance above stipend, there will be an increase of 2.5% of stipend in every Circuit from 2019. Paragraph 5.30, on senior posts in the Connexional Team, there will be a saving of 5% of stipend per post as and when the reduction applies as from 2019. Paragraph 5.31, on the President’s allowance above stipend, there will be a 5% stipend increase as from 2019.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Connexional Allowances Committee’s report to the 2018 Conference covers the customary update on stipends and allowances, includes progress reports on other work and activities in which the Committee has engaged, and is presented with the approval of the Methodist Council.

The report is divided into 5 sections, as follows.

2. Report on funds and trusts within the Committee’s remit.
3. Other matters of report from the Committee.
4. Report and recommendations relating to university funding for the children of ministers stationed in the Channel Islands, the Isle of Man, Gibraltar and Malta.
5. Report and recommendations on allowances above stipend, fees for occasional services and other payments to ministers.

The report and recommendations, in response to Memorial 2016/M9 and Notice of Motion 2017/207, relating to the financial support, housing and care for retired ministers and their dependants, is published separately in the Conference Agenda and will be dealt with as part of the Committee’s business.

The Committee’s new recommendations this year are highlighted in the text.

1. **RECOMMENDATIONS FOR STIPENDS AND ALLOWANCES 2018/2019**

1.1 The Committee makes the following recommendations, taking into account past resolutions of the Conference on stipends and allowances and data available from HM Government.
13. Connexional Allowances Committee

### Standard stipend

1.2 The resolutions of the 2012 Conference fixed the stipend increase formula for the period until 31 August and the 2015 Conference affirmed that this formula should continue to be used for a further three years until 31 August 2018. There being no reason to change, it is recommended that the formula be retained for a further three years from 1 September 2018.

1.3 Using the index numbers published in October 2017, the Consumer Price Index (CPI) movement for the period September 2016 to September 2017 was +3.0% and the Average Weekly Earnings Index (AWEI) movement for the period July 2016 to July 2017 was +2.1%; the average of these is 2.55%. In accordance with the recommendation on the stipend review formula affirmed by the 2015 Conference and recommended in paragraph 1.2, the annual standard stipend for the year beginning 1 September 2018 is therefore increased by 2.55% to £24,168 (rounding up to the next highest figure divisible by 12, to give a monthly stipend of exactly £2,014).

### Additional allowances

1.4 The following allowances are applied for ministers for 2018/2019:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Allowance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The President of the Conference</td>
<td>Any existing allowance, or 25% of standard stipend, whichever is the greater</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Secretary of the Conference</td>
<td>30% of standard stipend</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Separated District Chair</td>
<td>25% of standard stipend</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warden of the Methodist Diaconal Order</td>
<td>25% of standard stipend</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Synod Secretary (where applicable)</td>
<td>5% of standard stipend</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Superintendent</td>
<td>7 ½ % of standard stipend</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal of a training institution</td>
<td>25% of standard stipend</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff member of a training institution</td>
<td>20% of standard stipend</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connexional Team Secretary¹</td>
<td>30% of standard stipend</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other ministers serving in the Connexional Team or stationed to appointments within the control of the Methodist Council</td>
<td>20% of standard stipend</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹ This category currently comprises the Assistant Secretary of the Conference and the Connexional Secretary (when the post is held by a minister).
The above result in the following allowances for 2018/2019:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>£</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The President of the Conference</td>
<td>6,042</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Secretary of the Conference</td>
<td>7,251</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Separated District Chair</td>
<td>6,042</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warden of the Methodist Diaconal Order</td>
<td>6,042</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Synod Secretary (where applicable)</td>
<td>1,209</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Superintendent</td>
<td>1,813</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal of a training institution</td>
<td>6,042</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff member of a training institution</td>
<td>4,834</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connexional Team Secretary</td>
<td>7,251</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other ministers serving the Connexional Team or stationed to appointments within the control of the Methodist Council</td>
<td>4,834</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1.5 The 2016 Conference agreed that the Synod Secretary’s allowance be gradually withdrawn. It is retained by existing incumbents until their appointment ceases but does not apply to new appointments.

1.6 In addition to the above allowances related to roles, the Committee affirms that the allowances and other financial provisions agreed by the 2016 Conference based on location continue to apply. These include an additional allowance of 16% of stipend for all ministers stationed in the Shetland Islands, the Scilly Isles, the Isle of Man and the Channel Islands.

1.7 The Committee advises that the provision made in its report to the 2016 Conference (page 50, paragraph 20) in respect of the Malta appointment which was invoked during the year 2016/2017, following the Brexit referendum and consequent fall in the £ sterling against the euro, remains in place. The minister’s stipend, paid in £ sterling, was adjusted accordingly and will continue to be kept under review.

**Relocation allowance**

1.8 The Committee recommends that the maximum allowance payable by the receiving Circuit (or other responsible body) to ministers upon moving manse remains at £600 and, in the case of two ministers sharing the same manse, it is one payment of £800. It is clarified that this payment is in addition to the full cost of travel and removals, as defined in SO 528.
1.9 The Committee affirms the decision of the 2015 Conference, to the effect that this relocation allowance shall also apply to ministers (in appointments in the control of the Church) upon becoming supernumeraries. The costs shall be met from the Fund for the Support of Presbyters and Deacons (FSPD), as are their removal costs already. It is affirmed that this provision made be invoked once only, in situations (increasingly) where supernumerary ministers move and continue in active work before final retirement.

1.10 The Committee affirms that this provision applies to the widows or widowers of ministers who die in service upon their removal to their new home, in addition to the payment of their removal costs.

**Travel allowances**

1.11 The Committee continues to recommend that the maximum rates as prescribed by HMRC’s ‘approved mileage allowance payment scheme’ (AMAP) be observed. If alternative mileage rates exceeding those allowed by the appropriate tax authority are paid locally then it is necessary for this income to be declared to the tax authority and it will give rise to a tax liability on the individual concerned. It is emphasised that this should be regarded as a personal liability – involving the individual and HMRC – and not require handling by the Church’s officers, centrally or locally. Any changes to HMRC approved rates will be considered by the Committee and presented to the Conference for approval before implementation, so as to avoid unexpected cost increases mid-year.

1.12 The Committee continues to remind the Methodist Church of our commitment to reducing our carbon footprint, and wishes to encourage people to use public transport and share cars wherever possible.

1.13 The following travel expense rates will apply to ministers, supernumeraries, lay employees in churches, Circuits and Districts and lay volunteers:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Car: up to 10,000 miles</th>
<th>45p per mile</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>over 10,000 miles</td>
<td>25p per mile</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motorcycle</td>
<td>24p per mile</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bicycle</td>
<td>20p per mile</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additional passenger rate</td>
<td>5p per mile</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1.14 The Committee recommends that the travel allowance (taxable) for ministers during a time of sickness remains at £315 for each complete period of three months. It is
further clarified that this grant applies during periods of recuperation from ill health for up to one year.

Sabbatical expenses and levy

1.15 In the light of the Ministries Committee’s review of the sabbaticals system and consequent report (presented in the Council’s report to the Conference), the Committee was grateful to be consulted and kept in touch with its progress and proposals so that any financial impact could be assessed. The Committee accordingly brought forward its own review of sabbatical finances (promised to the Conference to be in 2018/2019) rather than conduct two reviews in successive years and brings recommendations this year.

1.16 Since its inception, the financial model for the sabbaticals system has comprised an annual levy on the Circuit or employing body, per minister, in order to pay reasonable expenses incurred by ministers on sabbaticals up to a certain maximum level. In 2000, the maximum expense level was set at £600 and remained so until 2011. The levy had become £60 by 2008. Over the years, because not all ministers took sabbaticals at the specified intervals and not all required the full £600, the balance in the Sabbatical Fund built up, reaching a maximum at the end of August 2011 of £653,325. The average annual amount paid out in expenses between 2009 and 2012 was £84,000 – at the time enough to cover 7 years’ expenses.

1.17 Since 2011, the Conference has approved recommendations to waive the levy for a period and to increase the maximum expense level to meet inflationary costs (to £700 in 2011/2012, £800 in 2013/2014 and £1,000 in 2015/2016) until the balance in the Fund was at the level of about one year’s expenses. Circuits and employing bodies enjoyed a period of 5 years from September 2011 until August 2016 without paying the levy: it was reinstated at £50 in 2016/2017 and at £60 in 2017/2018, though the £50 level was mistakenly retained, resulting in a shortfall of £13,000 to the Fund. The Fund balance as at August 2017 has decreased to the level of one year’s expenses and the levy needs to be increased to meet the expense levels on an annual basis.

1.18 The Committee therefore recommends that the annual levy is retained at £60 per minister for 2018/2019 and increased to £100 as from September 2019, and the maximum expense level retained at £1,000. This ratio is exactly the same as the £60/£600 in place until 2011, and the increase in both amounts reflects very closely the RPI increase over the period from 2,000 to 2017. It is envisaged that both levy and expense levels will be sustained until 2021/2022, unless the adoption of the Ministries Committee’s recommendations requires earlier adjustment in the light of their financial demands.
1.19 At the time of submission of its report, the Committee understood that the Ministries Committee’s review would be presented for approval to the Methodist Council before proceeding to the Conference. The Committee gave its best estimates of the likely financial consequences of the Ministries Committee’s recommendations and indicated their funding options, by means of a further increase in the levy and/or a short-term subsidy from the Methodist Church Fund.

**Computers in Ministry scheme**

1.20 Following the adoption by the 2017 Conference\(^2\) of a revised Computers in Ministry scheme offering financial support to ministers, the Committee recommends that the allowance of £156 per year then agreed be increased to £161 for the year 2018/2019. Fulfilling the Conference resolution that the Committee publish the figure annually (and by implication review it), it is recommended that this allowance is increased by the same CPI figure as is used in the stipend adjustment formula, and rounded up to the nearest pound, each year.

1.21 In brief, the revised scheme comprises an annual allowance to all ministers eligible to receive it (i.e. excluding those whose computing facilities are provided at their place of work) paid with their October stipend, but not pensionable. Further, each year, ministers stationed as probationers will receive a grant of four times the annual amount payable (at the same time) in addition to the annual amount, to enable them to be equipped with computing facilities at the beginning of their active ministry. Subsequent to the Conference decisions in 2017, in consultation with the Connexional Team, the Committee now recommends that, from September 2018, this initial financial provision be brought forward to the point when the student minister begins training and that it be offered to those already in training commencing their second or third year (though they may elect to wait until the year of probationer stationing). There will be provision for reclaiming this allowance in whole or part in the event that ministerial training is not completed. The Ministries Committee agreed that the Computers in Ministry Fund may be used as far as possible to meet this need with the back-up of the Methodist Church Fund if necessary.

**Initial grants and loans to ministers**

1.22 In accordance with SO 804(2) in respect of loans and grants to ministers appointed “for the first time to a station in the home work” the Committee recommends that

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\(^2\) See 2017 Conference Agenda section 14, pages 106-107, paragraphs 1.17 to 1.21 and Notice of Motion 2017/101 which amended the resolutions.
the maximum loan available amount continues to be set at £6,000, interest-free, repayable over a maximum of 5 years (ie £100 per month).

1.23 The 2015 Conference agreed to the Committee’s recommendation that, as from September 2016, a maximum flat-rate means-tested initial grant be set at the level of £3,000. It is further clarified that this is instead of, and not additional to, the relocation allowance which applies to subsequent moves (as per section 1.7). Therefore, receiving Circuits do not pay the relocation allowance to ministers in their initial appointment (though they do pay the travel and removal costs as per SO 528(2)).

1.24 During their active ministry, loans may be made to ministers but only in the most extreme and exceptional personal and financial circumstances. It is recommended that the same policy is used, ie a maximum of £6,000 repayable interest-free over a maximum of 5 years, unless there are specific reasons to offer a greater amount for a short period of time.

1.25 All loans and grants under this heading are means-tested and made from the Methodist Church Fund and loan repayments are deducted from monthly stipend at source.

Preaching fees and expenses for supernumeraries

1.26 In accordance with the decisions of the Conference, supernumerary presbyters should be offered a minimum preaching fee and travel expenses. The Committee recommends that the fee remain at £25 until 31 August 2019 and that the standard travel expenses, summarised above, apply. Circuits are reminded that it is their responsibility to pay these fees and expenses, even if and when churches assist with the preaching plan preparation: the church is only responsible for payment when the supernumerary presbyter preaches at the church by specific invitation, typically for a special occasion.

1.27 The Committee is aware of the wider project to review the role and ministry of supernumerary ministers, including its enquiry about the presbyters’ preaching fee. We undertake to review the principle and amount of the preaching fee when that report is published and adopted, noting that the 2017 Conference declined a Notice of Motion (2017/102) to increase it to £30 in the meantime.

Marriage registration fees

1.28 The Committee reported to the 2011 Conference that there are moves in Marriage Registration Districts to reduce the administrative costs of paying fees to ministers
conducting marriages³. Currently all ministers who do so receive a fee of £2 per marriage and thousands of cheques for very small amounts of money (all for £2 or multiples thereof) are prepared and posted. In the event that Registration Districts request the churches to nominate a central point for collection of payments, the Committee continues to recommend that (1) all local marriage fees be increased by a modest amount to cover the £2 payment to the minister and (2) that the Fund for the Support of Presbyters and Deacons (FSPD) be the nominated recipient of the aggregated fee payments from the Registration Districts.

Lay employees recommended hourly rates

1.29 The Committee advises that the latest Living Wage rates, published in November 2017 by the Living Wage Foundation (LWF), are **£10.20 per hour for London and £8.75 for all other regions**. The LWF figures will always be adopted as the Methodist Church’s recommendations. Methodist employing bodies are reminded of the resolutions of the 2010 Conference (Agenda pp 153-154) regarding the mandatory implementation of these rates.

1.30 The Committee reminds the whole Church of the resolution of the 2015 Conference that the implementation of the Living Wage is now mandatory in all but the most extreme and exceptional circumstances, and that all outstanding exceptions be reviewed by the appropriate District Policy Committee. It is noted that, in July 2017, the Methodist Council announced that it had been accredited by the Living Wage Foundation as a living wage employer of the 220 staff for which it is directly responsible.

1.31 Further updated figures, expected to be announced by LWF in November 2018, will be published on the Methodist Church website, and can also be accessed on the LWF website: guidance on implementation timing was given in the Committee’s Report to the 2012 Conference (Agenda p 130).

2. REPORT ON FUNDS AND TRUSTS WITHIN THE COMMITTEE’S REMIT

2.1 The Committee acts as the Trustees for six funds or trusts which are available to ministers, and may, in some cases, be used to give financial assistance to dependent close family members as well as themselves. During the year 2017/2018, the Methodist Council agreed that the Committee also act as the Trustees for the Auxiliary (Special Purposes) Fund which offers financial support to the spouses of ministers in the event of marriage breakdown. The seven funds and trusts are:

³ It is understood that this arrangement does not apply in Scotland, but the substance of the proposal is not thereby invalidated.
13. Connexional Allowances Committee

- The Fund for the Support of Presbyters and Deacons (FSPD), previously known as the Auxiliary Fund (of the ministers’ Retirement Fund)
- The Methodist Ministers’ Children’s Relief Association (MMCRA)
- The Methodist Ministers’ Children’s Fund (MMCF, otherwise known as the Trinity Hall Trust – THT)
- The Methodist Medical Benevolent Fund (MMBF)
- The Benevolent Fund – Deaconesses (BFD)
- The Aspinall Robinson Trust (ART)
- The Auxiliary (Special Purposes) Fund (ASPF)

The Fund for the Support of Presbyters and Deacons

2.2 The objects of the FSPD, ie the purposes for which its resources may be used, were widened by the decision of the 2011 Conference to amend SO 364(1). This has continued to prove a helpful move in enabling the Committee to offer financial support to those in need in a variety of circumstances.

2.3 While the Church continues to be immensely grateful for the generosity of donations to the FSPD, for some years there has been less emphasis on advocacy as its resources were regarded as more than adequate for its purposes. However, in the light of demands and the widening of its objects, the Committee continues the active advocacy of the fund within the Church and is always grateful to receive donations.

Methodist Ministers’ Children’s Fund (Trinity Hall Trust)

2.4 Agreed as from September 2016, the maximum annual grant is £300 per child per year. In view of the positive annual balance of income over expenditure in the Fund, the Committee also proposes to increase the maximum qualifying household income level from 1.5 to 2 times standard stipend as from September 2018. This will particularly benefit households in which both parents are ministers.

Analysis of grants from funds and trusts

2.5 The Committee promised, in response to a question at the 2010 Conference, to give summary information on the pattern of grant-making in its report to the Conference each year. We are pleased to do this, as below, for 2016-17.

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4 Any differences between the grant expenditure totals given in this Report and the audited accounts of the funds arise from exceptional cases when grants are refunded when they are no longer needed or payments are incorrectly allocated between accounts or retrospective transfers are made between funds when grants are incorrectly allocated.
2.6 Fund for the Support of Presbyters and Deacons

The FSPD is by far the largest of the funds and receives substantial income from donations and legacies as well as investments. It is used in a wide variety of ways in pursuit of its objects and in 2016/2017 made grants amounting to £438,520. In summary, these were distributed as follows, giving the number of grants in each category in brackets:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nature of grants</th>
<th>Total amount (£)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grants to active ministers and following death in service</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grants to ministers with impairment and manse adaptations (12)</td>
<td>43,892</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grants to ministers for acute financial emergencies (19)</td>
<td>21,687</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grants to widows and widowers following a minister’s death in service ()</td>
<td>nil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grants to retired ministers, widows and widowers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grants for nursing and residential care (15)</td>
<td>67,295</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Removal costs and relocation grants on retirement</td>
<td>96,338</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christmas gifts to widows and widowers (725) and other small grants</td>
<td>37,592</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grants for own property costs and general financial support (44)</td>
<td>56,043</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grants to MMHS for property acquisitions and special adaptations</td>
<td>115,673</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>438,520</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It should be noted that the amounts related to ministers with impairment (which can involve major alterations to manses), emergency requests and property can vary significantly from year to year. The increase in the amount of grants to active ministers reflects the widened scope of the FSPD’s remit, as in SO 364(1), and mentioned above.

Trinity Hall Trust

2.7 In 2016/2017, £14,074 was paid in grants to 28 ministers to help fund costs of educational activities for their children, an average of £503 per grant. The table below shows the pattern of grant amounts, noting that most were for £600 or less, but remembering that the maximum was £300 per child.

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5 The working group acknowledges that some courses, such as medicine, dentistry, veterinary science and architecture normally last longer.
Methodist Ministers' Children’s Relief Association (MMCRA)

2.8 In 2016/2017 the MMCRA made grants amounting to £10,168 to 20 ministers and dependants to give financial help mainly to support the care of adult dependent children. However, it must be noted that, as the bulk of the grants made from the fund which applied to 2015/2016 were not paid until September 2016, these are recorded in the 2016/2017 accounts. This fund provides limited support from its income which relies wholly on the collections made at District Synods and the Committee continues to encourage Synods to remember the fund’s need and to be generous. The Committee advises that the income from 23 District Synods of £8,024 in 2016/2017 was slightly less than the £8,135 in 2015/2016.

Methodist Medical Benevolent Fund (MMBF)

2.9 The MMBF made 21 grants of varying amounts totalling £16,556, an average of £788, and paid a further £30,126 to the Churches’ Ministerial Counselling Service and other service providers to offer 81 ministers support through various forms of counselling, an average of £372 per minister. Again, this fund provides support from within its income, derived mainly from investment, and it is used wherever the need is related to physical and mental health conditions. The Committee wishes the Conference to note again the sustained level of expenditure on counselling and related support for an increasing number of ministers, including while they are students and probationers.

Benevolent Fund – Deaconesses

2.10 In 2016/2017, several small grants were made for benevolent purposes, amounting to £2,012 in total.

Aspinall Robinson Trust

2.11 In 2016/2017, 5 grants were made, for various purposes, amounting to £12,400 in total. The Committee asks the Conference to note that the Benevolent Fund – Deaconesses and the Aspinall Robinson Trust are always used when the beneficiary...
is a deacon or the dependant of a deacon, as their objects and purposes mirror those of the FSPD.

**Auxiliary (Special Purposes) Fund**

2.12 In 2016/2017, two grants were made amounting to £34,776 in total. This fund provides for proportions of an annual stipend to be paid to the spouse when a minister's marriage breaks down (or for specific expenditure to be reimbursed if the stipend is not requested) and therefore the amounts incurred depend on the time in the year. The fund is well endowed to cater for all probable needs.

### 3. OTHER MATTERS OF REPORT FROM THE COMMITTEE

3.1 The Committee continues to engage in reviews of several topics for which it has responsibility, and is grateful for the support of the Connexional Team staff, especially in the Finance, Development and Personnel, Discipleship and Ministries teams and the Conference Office, in all that they do.

3.2 During the year 2016/2017, discussions were held with HMRC and the Church’s advisers on taxation to ensure that policies and procedures related to allowances and grants are properly aligned with current HMRC regulations and guidelines. It is imperative that the Church is fully compliant in these matters and that their implementation is consistently achieved throughout the Connexion. The changes and clarifications required were communicated through the Quarterly Letter to ministers and circuit stewards and the standard grant application forms were amended as necessary. It is noted that this does not affect decisions to offer allowances or grants, but applies only to their treatment for tax purposes.

3.3 The Committee keeps a record, for its own guidance and purposes, setting out the policies and precedents for dealing with the wide variety of these special requests for financial assistance. This enables the Committee always to be consistent and fair in the application of criteria for assessing need. The Committee is also called upon from time to time to advise on the interpretation of Standing Orders related to circuits’ financial obligations and provisions for ministers in a rich variety of circumstances.

3.4 During the year, the Committee has reviewed the Reserves positions on the funds for which it is responsible and confirmed that they comply with the guidance and policy set out by the Connexion.

3.5 The Committee gratefully acknowledges a grant of £30,000 from a trust managed by TMCP to cover the Christmas gifts to ministers’ widows and widowers.
3.6 The 2016 Conference agreed (1) in resolution 6/7, to review the matter of university funding for children of ministers stationed in the Channel Islands, the Isle of Man, Gibraltar and Malta, (2) in resolution 6/8, to direct the Methodist Council to report on the reciprocal state contribution and benefit arrangements between the UK and the same jurisdictions and (3) in resolution 6/9, to direct the Methodist Council to review the matter of public sector employment arrangements, as they affect ministers’ spouses, in the same jurisdictions. The recommendations deriving from (1) are given in section 4 of the Committee’s Report. One of those recommendations relates to the wider issues raised by (2) and (3) on which, at the time of writing, work had still to begin, awaiting the allocation of resources by the Methodist Council.

3.7 The Committee was grateful for and has responded to Memorial M9 (2016) (Conference 2016, from the York and Hull District Synod) in respect of discussions with other bodies about the long-term challenges facing the whole Church in making financial (ie pensions and grants), housing and care provisions for ministers and their dependants into increasingly older age. This is a prominent and nationwide issue from which the Church is not immune. The Committee’s Chair met with representatives from the Methodist Ministers’ Pension Scheme (MMPS), the Methodist Ministers’ Housing Society (MMHS) and the Conference Office during the year 2016/2017 and as a result of the adoption of Notice of Motion 2017/207 is including Methodist Homes (MHA) in ongoing discussions. The outcome of the review, with recommendations, is provided elsewhere in the Conference Agenda.

3.8 The 2017 Conference referred recommendation 10 within paragraph 16 of the Methodist Council Report Section P (2017 Agenda item 27 relating to the Ministries Committee, resolution 27/12) to the Committee. The subject was the financial arrangements applying to ministers of other Conferences and Churches (MOCCs) who transfer to the Methodist Church in Britain. The Committee prepared its response and submitted it to the Conference Office in November 2017.

3.9 The Committee expressed its gratitude to Ms Maureen Sebanakitta, former Director of Financial Operations in the Connexional Team, whose service to the Committee was hugely appreciated over many years. Several successful projects, not least the transfer to a monthly payroll for all ministers and the Church’s compliance with HMRC regulations (mentioned above), were largely achieved as a result of Maureen’s commitment, diligence and attention to detail. The Committee wished her well as she moved on in her career.

4 UNIVERSITY COSTS AND FUNDING FOR CHILDREN OF MINISTERS STATIONED WITHIN THE METHODIST CHURCH OF BRITAIN BUT OUTSIDE THE UNITED KINGDOM

4.1 In this section, the Committee submits the report of the working group as presented to it. As the report reveals, the situation in Wales is different from that in England.
13. Connexional Allowances Committee

– there are advantages and disadvantages – but the working group judged that consideration of Wales was outside its immediate remit and that the numbers of ministers affected (58 in the Wales Synod and Synod Cymru), and therefore the financial consequences, are significantly greater. The Committee brings this observation to the attention of the Conference for further direction as it wishes.

**Origin and purpose of review and definitions**

4.2 The Connexional Allowances Committee’s Report to the 2016 Conference, Agenda section 6, relating to allowances above stipend, recommended that “The Conference directs the Council to establish a working group to review the matter of university funding for the children of ministers stationed in the Channel Islands, the Isle of Man, Gibraltar and Malta and make appropriate recommendations.” Resolution 6/7, on page 57, was adopted.

4.3 The Report contained the following paragraph (number 26 on page 51), by way of explanation. “The Committee raises three other issues which have become apparent within the last year or so and which require further investigation. First, university students in the Channel Islands (CI) are not eligible for UK government student loans, and some universities are seeking to charge international fees to CI residents. This puts ministers’ children who happen to become 18 years old whilst their minister parent is stationed in the CI at a huge disadvantage. Indeed, it may profoundly impact the willingness of some ministers to be stationed in the islands. The Committee itself does not believe that the funds at its disposal (such as the FSPD) may be used for this purpose.”

4.4 The Council duly established a working group (see paper MC/16/99) comprising Mr John A Bell, Chair of the Connexional Allowances Committee, the Revd Christopher R D Foxon, a supernumerary minister in the Strathclyde Circuit (in Scotland) and the Revd Anthony J D Morling, a minister stationed in the Jersey Circuit, with direction to undertake wide consultation and research to ensure that all the elements referred to in the Conference resolution are covered in any recommendations.

4.5 The working group first met in March 2017, and again in October 2017. We are grateful to several people who provided the group with information relating to the various jurisdictions within and outside the UK.

4.6 This review is primarily focused on the Channel Islands, the Isle of Man, Gibraltar and Malta (where the appointment alternates between a minister from the Methodist Church and the Church of Scotland). It is noted that the other islands, including Shetland, are within the UK, but it is also recognised that university funding arrangements differ between England, Scotland and Wales.
4.7 The Committee’s Report to the 2016 Conference addressed several other dimensions of the financial challenges faced by ministers (and their families) stationed in the more remote locations, both within and outside the UK. In adopting all the related resolutions in Agenda section 6, the Conference implicitly agreed to their underlying premise stated in paragraph 15 (page 49), as follows: “It is imperative that the Church ensures that ministers willing to be stationed in these places are not disadvantaged, financially or otherwise, by their commitment to itinerancy: moreover, there is an impact on their families too.”

Important qualifications

4.8 The working group emphasises that the information used in this report derives from official published sources and applies in normal circumstances for standard 3-year (4-year in Scotland) undergraduate courses for dependant students, ie 18-21 year-olds who live with parents. It is used as a basis to determine a recommended policy for the Church and must not be taken as an authoritative answer to any individual case or course. To quote the relevant website about residency qualifications, fees and maintenance grants: “decisions are taken on a case-by-case basis.”

4.9 Whether the Conference adopts the working group’s resolutions or not, it is imperative that any minister stationed to these five Circuits who has children who may reach university entrance age during the likely period of their appointment (including any extensions beyond the initial five years) ascertains as much information as possible beforehand, in the light of the policies prevailing at the time. This may apply when a child is as young as 8 years, and if that child is the eldest, it may affect younger ones too. A difficulty arises if a minister who has not expressed a preference for an appointment in these Circuits is invited to one of them during the intense and short period of matching: there is little time for thorough research of the implications. If a minister does express such a preference, then at least there is more time to do this.

Numbers of ministers

4.10 Using the numbers in the Minutes of the Conference 2016, and counting ministers, ie presbyters and deacons, in Full Connexion plus those Recognised and Regarded in appointments within the control of the Church, there are 11 in the Channel Islands.

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6 The working group acknowledges that some courses, such as medicine, dentistry, veterinary science and architecture normally last longer.

7 There are two Circuits in the Channel Islands and one each in the Isle of Man, Gibraltar and Malta.

8 Therefore excluding ministers in appointments outside the control of the Church, those Without Appointment (WA), those of other Churches who are authorised to serve as presbyters or deacons (AP and AD) and supernumeraries.

9 It is noted that there are two supernumerary ministers who live in Alderney, in the Guernsey Circuit, and there has been a deacon stationed in Alderney in recent years.
(5 in Guernsey, 1 in Sark in the Guernsey Circuit and 5 in Jersey), 5 in the Isle of Man
and 1 each in Gibraltar and Malta. There are 18 in mainland Scotland, 3 in Shetland,
58 in Wales (in Synod Cymru and the Wales Synod) and approximately 1,450 in
England.

4.11 The working party has specifically focused on ministers in Full Connexion plus those
Recognised and Regarded who are stationed by the Conference to appointments
within its control. Those in the other categories as summarised in the footnote either
have chosen to live and sometimes work where they do, or already live in these
Circuits and continue to be the responsibility of another Church or have chosen to
retire to these locations.

Summary of university costs and funding in the UK

4.12 First, the working party makes no judgement or comments on the merits and demerits,
rights and wrongs, differences between nations or politics of university funding in
these Isles. We accept the policies and regulations as they are at the time of writing.

4.13 The two elements of cost in attending university are the tuition fees and the living, or
maintenance, costs. Funding to meet these is variously a combination of grants and
loans in addition to personal contributions by the student and/or family. In assessing
eligibility for grants and/or loans there is usually a prior residence qualification period
and the working party’s survey of the published regulations indicates that, where
families may have moved between nations and territories in the years prior to the child
seeking access to university, cases are judged on an individual basis. The working
group did not regard the associated system of loan repayment after graduation, based
on subsequent earnings, to be relevant to its remit but acknowledges that, after three
years, a graduate in England who has been wholly dependent on loans to cover fees
and maintenance costs is highly likely to have debts of over £50,000.

4.14 In 2017/2018, virtually all English and Scottish universities have adopted the
maximum annual tuition fee of £9,250\(^{10}\) and those in Wales of £9,000\(^{11}\). It is hard to
find any which do not charge this maximum. As is outlined below, not all students are
required to pay the full fee amount in Scotland and Wales.

4.15 As it is the current substantial amount of the fee, in addition to the maintenance

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\(^{10}\) The working party has not included attendance at universities in Northern Ireland separately: the policies
for those living in England, Scotland and Wales are the same as for English universities.

\(^{11}\) The working party used the *Good University Guide 2018*, published as a supplement to *The Sunday Times*
newspaper edition of 24 September 2017, as a general source of information about university
fees.
costs, which causes the major challenge for ministers with children in the five Circuits, it is helpful to sketch out how they have evolved. Tuition fees of a maximum of £1000 per year were introduced throughout the UK in 1998, then, in England the maximum increased to £3,000 in 2006, to £3,225 in 2009, to £9,000 in 2012 and to £9,250 in 2017. In 1999, maintenance grants were replaced by a system of loans. However, following the devolution of certain powers to Scotland and Wales in 1999, those nations adopted policies different from England and more favourable to students fulfilling residence qualifications.

Summary of policies and regulations in different nations and jurisdictions

4.16 This section summarises policies and regulations, as published and understood, in the different places, noting that it matters where the student lives and where the university (uni) is located. The first table below deals with students who live in England, Wales and Scotland, and the second with those who live in Jersey, Guernsey and Alderney and the Isle of Man. Separate comments are given relating to Sark, Gibraltar and Malta.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Living in</th>
<th>England</th>
<th>Wales</th>
<th>Scotland</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Residence period before start of course: minimum qualification</td>
<td>3 years in the UK, Channel Islands or Isle of Man, but resident in England by 31 August.</td>
<td>3 years in the UK, Channel Islands or Isle of Man, but resident in Wales by 31 August.</td>
<td>3 years in the UK, Channel Islands or Isle of Man, but resident in Scotland by 31 August.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuition fees and funding</td>
<td>Maximum of £9,250 for English and Scottish universities, £9,000 for Welsh. No grants available. Loans are available.</td>
<td>Maximum of £9,000 for Welsh, of which £4,954 can be a grant and £4,046 a loan; £9,250 for English and Scottish, of which £4,954 can be a grant and £4,296 a loan.</td>
<td>Maximum fee of £1,820 (the rest is grant), but mostly a 100% grant. Maximum of £9,250 and £9,000 for English and Welsh: loans are available.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

12 This is one of the factors which seems subject to interpretation. It is possible that the residency in the nation must be before the course begins, rather than 31 August. However, it is noted that, as ministers would normally move in August, the requirement would be satisfied in any event.

13 As footnote 11.

14 It is understood that 31 August is the deadline in Scotland.
13. Connexional Allowances Committee

| Maintenance costs and funding | Means-tested loan according to whether university is in London or nor and whether student lives at home or not. Maxima are: Live at home £7,097 Uni not London, live away £8,430 Uni in London, live away £11,002 | Policy is as England, but amounts differ. Live at home £5,358 Uni not in London, live away £6,922 Uni in London, live away £9,697 | Means-tested loan of maximum £5,750, minimum £4,750, and bursaries available of up to £1,875. No difference for London or living at home. |
| Are fees and loans honoured if residence changes to a different jurisdiction during course? | It is thought so. | It is thought so. | Yes |

4.17 The policies in Jersey\(^1\) and Guernsey are different, but Alderney adopts the same policies as Guernsey. A separate paragraph covers the island of Sark. It must be noted that a few universities treat students from the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man as international and impose a higher level of fees. Jersey will offer a higher grant, as shown, for a fee of £10,750, but the other jurisdictions do not. Moreover, international fees are largely much higher than that – most in the £14,000 to £18,000 region – and can exceed £30,000 per year.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Living in</th>
<th>Jersey</th>
<th>Guernsey/Alderney</th>
<th>Isle of Man</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Access to UK student loans from national bodies(^2)</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residence before start of course: minimum qualification</td>
<td>5 years in Jersey before 31 August of the year when course starts.</td>
<td>3 years in the UK, the Channel Islands or the Isle of Man.</td>
<td>4 years in the Isle of Man.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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15 It is noted, since this report was drafted, that there is a review being undertaken of university funding by the States of Jersey. It is understood that, if proposals are accepted, they will have a favourable outcome.

16 There are separate bodies in England, Wales and Scotland which administer the student grant loan schemes.
### 13. Connexional Allowances Committee

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tuition fees and funding</th>
<th>Means-tested grant of up to £7,750 for a £9,250 course, and £9,250 for a £10,750 course. Student must pay £1,500 towards fees.</th>
<th>Means-tested grant of up to £9,250.</th>
<th>Means-tested grant of up to £6,750 for a £9,250 course. Student must pay £2,500 towards fees.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Top-up loan towards fees shortfall</td>
<td>Means-tested of up to £1,500, from NatWest Jersey. Repayment begins 12 months after end of course and must be fully repaid within 5 years, irrespective of earnings.</td>
<td>Not required, as the grant can be for the total fee amount.</td>
<td>Means-tested loan of up to £2,500 from the Isle of Man Department of Education. Repayment begins 12 months after end of course and the rules are similar to the English scheme.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintenance costs and funding</td>
<td>Means-tested grant of up to £6,000.</td>
<td>Means-tested grant of up to £6,508 for non-London university and £7,923 for London.</td>
<td>Means-tested grant of up to £5,200 for non-London university and £5,700 for London.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Top-up loans for maintenance costs</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are fees and loans honoured if residence changes to a different jurisdiction during the course?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No: the student must continue to be a permanent resident of the Isle of Man.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other financial support</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Travel costs to UK: £462 to London and southern universities and £576 to others.</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.18 The island of Sark provides free schooling up to the age of 15 years, and therefore the education of children undertaking GCSEs and beyond must be funded privately. There is no funding whatsoever, either through grants or loans, for higher education.

4.19 Gibraltar is a British Overseas Territory. Its government will offer scholarships to students studying at British universities. No further general information was readily available.
4.20 Malta is an independent country within the EU. Tuition fees in English and Welsh universities apply, though a Maltese student (or any from an EU country other than England and Wales) studying at a Scottish university is eligible for free tuition as are Scottish residents. There is a University of Malta which offers free tuition to Maltese students. No further general information was readily available.

Key principles and issues in considering any recommendations

4.21 Taking England as the norm – where 93% of ministers are stationed – and accepting that Scotland and Wales are more generous than England, it is important that, in considering any assistance to ministers and children in the Channel Islands, the Isle of Man, Gibraltar and Malta, it does not bestow an unfair advantage over those in England. Even if financial support can be afforded, the Church must uphold principles of fairness and justice within the whole connexional context.

4.22 The funding schemes in England, Wales and Scotland, albeit with elements of means-testing, are predicated on a financial relationship between the respective funding bodies and the student, not the parents. Graduating with a debt in excess of £50,000 may not be a happy outcome, but it is between the funders and the student and any risk of non-repayment rests with the UK government. In the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man, taking the available loan into account, tuition fees are covered more generously than in England and Wales, but there is a significant shortfall in funding maintenance costs and, as there are no top-up loans available (as the second table illustrates), the student has no recourse to any other funding and the burden falls on the family.

4.23 Whilst there is a facility to offer loans to ministers from the Methodist Church Fund, with monthly repayments deducted from stipend at source over an agreed period not longer than 5 years, the working party does not believe that loans could be made to ministers’ children, not least as there would be no guarantee of repayment. Moreover, it seems to be unfair to offer loans to support the children of ministers stationed outside the UK and not to those within.

4.24 The working party believes that the current system, if ministers acquaint themselves with the information, must have an adverse impact on their willingness to be stationed in the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man. As paragraph 4.8 highlighted, this constraint may last for several years and affects, for obvious reasons, ministers in the middle age band. In the particular case of Sark, the working party suggests that it would be inadvisable to station a minister with children in that appointment, in view of the financial disadvantages of doing so.
4.25 In the cases of Gibraltar and Malta, in view of the working party’s limited knowledge, we would suggest that, when the next time comes to fill those appointments, the prevailing system of UK university funding for students from those places is researched if it is likely that a minister with children is stationed in either.

4.26 The working party has been mindful throughout its deliberations that the Methodist Church is a Connexion and upholds the principle of an itinerant ministry. However, in making the suggestions in the above paragraphs with regard to Sark, Gibraltar and Malta, we suggest that in certain extreme circumstances it is not always 100% achievable.

4.27 The major challenges relate to the fulfilling of itinerancy in the larger Channel Islands and the Isle of Man and recommendations are given below.

**Recommendations**

4.28 In framing recommendations, the working party distinguished between (1) the financial needs of ministers already stationed, or who will be stationed up to and including September 2019, in Jersey, Guernsey and the Isle of Man who have children of or approaching university age within the period of their invitation or possible extension and (2) those to be stationed in 2020 and afterwards. We have suggested 2019 as the cut-off for the first group because any new appointments in 2018 will be matched long before this report reaches the Conference and preparatory work will also have started on the 2019 stationing cycle. Any minister in the second group who has children can still make informed decisions about whether to accept invitations to these places from 2020 onwards.

4.29 It is evident that the main financial barrier, as summarised in the second table and highlighted in paragraph 4.22, is topping-up maintenance costs to enable university education to be accessible. Taking the figure of £8,430 as the standard maximum loan for a student not at a London university and living away from home, the shortfall for Jersey is £2,430, for Guernsey £1,922 and for the Isle of Man £3,230. The comparable figures for a London university are £5,002, £3,079 and £5,302.

4.30 The working party recommends that an annual grant, subject to the same means-testing as the grant from the funding body, is made from the FSPD to enable the shortfall in maintenance costs at a university outside London to be met. That does not preclude attendance at a university in London but it must be the student’s or family’s decision to fund the cost difference. The grounds for using the FSPD are that the burden of finding the shortfall currently falls on the minister’s household which can place them in acute financial need and a loan offered to the minister does not seem fair.
4.31 Further, the working party recommends that the Methodist Church Fund offers a grant to ministers’ student children from Jersey and the Isle of Man, comparable to that offered in Guernsey (as per the second table), to cover travel costs to and from the UK. It is recommended that this be £500 per year to include any students entering university until 2019, for a maximum of three years.

4.32 It is underlined the recommendations in paragraphs 4.30 and 4.31 are brought as interim measures to assist ministers already stationed or to be stationed up to 2019 in Jersey, Guernsey and the Isle of Man and are not regarded as a longer-term or permanent solution.

4.33 Based on UK university funding arrangements at the time of writing – and accepting that these may change – the working party expresses concerns about the long-term viability of stationing ministers with children in any of the five Circuits in the Channel Islands, the Isle of Man, Gibraltar and Malta, and recommends that the Stationing Committee reviews how the principle of ministerial itinerancy can be realistically sustained in the long term in the light of the practical and financial constraints the working party has exposed.

4.34 The Connexional Allowances Committee has already commissioned a broader review of the total practical and financial consequences for ministers stationed in these Circuits and their families – spouses and children – as indicated in its report to and adopted by the 2016 Conference (resolutions 6/8 and 6/9 on Agenda page 57). This review awaits the allocation of resources by the Methodist Council. It is recommended that, to pursue the recommendation in paragraph 4.33, the Stationing Committee engages with this review as the matter of university funding for ministers’ children is but one element in a bigger and complex picture.

4.35 In order to meet the deadline of 2020 as set out in paragraph 4.28, it is imperative that the project outlined in paragraphs 4.33 and 4.34 reports to the Conference of 2019 so that ministers stationed in the future in the five Circuits are under no illusions as to the consequences, both positive and negative, for them and their families.

5. ALLOWANCES ABOVE STIPEND, FEES FOR OCCASIONAL SERVICES AND OTHER PAYMENTS TO MINISTERS

History

5.1 The last major review of ministerial remuneration was reported to the 2002
Conference\textsuperscript{17} and although certain important adjustments have been made since then, the framework of allowances above stipend and fees for occasional services which that Conference affirmed and agreed has remained in place. Indeed, the only significant change to the former was to increase the superintendent’s allowance from 5\% to 7.5\% reasoning that it was “to reflect the increased responsibility carried by circuit superintendents arising from issues such as safeguarding policies.”

5.2 During the mid-2000s, there were significant structural changes to the connexional leadership and Team which demanded a rather too hurried response from the Connexional Allowances Committee resulting in the universal adoption of a 20\% allowance above stipend for all “other ministers serving in the Connexional Team or stationed to appointments within the control of the Methodist Council” and “staff members of a training institution”: this wording was introduced in 2008 and remains today. Prior to that, the 20\% allowance was reserved for those in posts known as ‘Connexional Secretary’ which was not the same as its current namesake which is closer to but not the same as what were then Co-ordinating Secretaries (paid a 30\% allowance).

5.3 In 2010/2011, the Shadow Ministries Committee, as it then was, set up an Allowances Review Group (ARG) to begin a review of various aspects of ministerial remuneration, including allowances above stipend and fees for occasional services, with a view to reporting to the 2012 Conference. The ARG brought recommendations to the Methodist Council in March 2012 which were received but referred back to the Connexional Allowances Committee by the 2012 Conference\textsuperscript{18} for ‘further work to provide a substantial justification and rationale for allowances above stipend and for the treatment of fees, informed from theological and economic perspectives’, consulting as necessary and bring proposals at a future date.

5.4 Meanwhile, two Memorials (M11 and M12) were received by the 2012 Conference\textsuperscript{19}. The first, M11, “requests that a policy be established across the Connexion whereby any monies received by ministers as a resulting of conducting occasional services, such as those of marriage and funerals, be remitted to the Circuit” and the second, M12, stated “that, [as] there is no theological justification for responsibility allowances for some ministers, asks for their abolition across the Connexion.” Both Memorials noted the Connexional Allowances Committee’s report to the Council in March 2012. The Conference resolved that the replies were contained in the Committee’s report (as mentioned in paragraph 6.3) and that the Committee would bring a further report on both topics in 2013.

\textsuperscript{17} Conference 2002 Agenda section 48 pp 515-540.
\textsuperscript{18} Conference 2012 Agenda section 13 pp 130-132.
\textsuperscript{19} Conference 2012 Agenda section 59 pp 776-777. Both were submitted by the Scotland Synod.
5.5 The Committee continued its work, gaining the Council’s approval to delay its report from 2013 to 2014, not least as the Supreme Court judgment was awaited in the legal case regarding the employment status of Methodist ministers which was received in May 2013. The Committee’s report, presented to the April 2014 meeting of the Council, considered (1) the concept of a stipend and noted the references to it in the legal judgment, (2) detailed arguments for and against allowances above stipend (including why they were introduced) and how fees might be treated and (3) drew up a list of alternative resolutions for decision. The Committee also became aware that its proposals have precipitated widespread discussion and certain concerns across the Connexion, which highlighted the extreme variation of views, some expressed with some vehemence, on issues of ministerial remuneration.

5.6 The Council agreed that the whole matter be referred back to the Committee, with the request to bring a proposal to its October 2014 meeting to conduct a consultation of ministers and lay people. An electronic survey was duly undertaken in November-December 2014 and the results were reported to the Council in its meetings in January and April 2015 and presented to the 2015 Conference in the Committee’s report. Whilst the survey revealed differences of opinion, there were strong preferences to retain policies for (1) a framework of allowances above stipend and (2) ministers retaining fees from occasional services and other payments. However, despite some input from the Faith and Order Committee, there was still some anxiety that the theological underpinning of stipends, allowances above stipend and fees had not been thoroughly justified and understood.

5.7 The 2015 Conference adopted resolutions (1) to enable the Committee to bring some amendments to allowances above stipend in certain circumstances in 2016, (2) to commission a thorough-going review by the Faith and Order Committee of the theological underpinning of stipends etc to report to the 2017 Conference and (3) to state a policy on fees and other payments. The details of (1), summarised in paragraph 5.8, and (3), in paragraphs 5.13 and 5.14, are the first step in consolidating agreed Conference policies on ministerial remuneration. The Committee took the view that the complete review of allowances above stipend first required the outcome of the Faith and Order Committee’s review due to be received at the 2017 Conference.

5.8 The 2016 Conference adopted the Committee’s recommendations related to (1) allowances above stipend for Synod Secretaries, (2) approval by the Committee for all local allowances above stipend, not just those >10%, (3) allowances above stipend in the islands and remote locations, (4) allowances above stipend in and around London

20 Conference 2015 Agenda section 46 pp 446-475. The survey results are given in detail.
21 Conference 2016 Agenda section 6 pp 44-58.
and (5) allowances above stipend in Scotland. Those agreed by the 2016 Conference are summarised in paragraphs 5.15 to 5.17.

5.9 The Committee received the report of the Faith and Order Committee and incorporated it into its own report to the 2017 Conference\(^\text{22}\) with its own reflections.

5.10 The Committee’s interpretation of the Faith and Order Committee’s theological principles is that, on balance, the justification for allowances above stipend is not proven\(^\text{23}\), but that custom and practice has bequeathed a legacy that some ministerial posts carrying extra accountabilities – as understood in the secular world of work – warrant such an allowance. The implication is that the Conference, in the name of the whole Church, must decide how that balance falls.

5.11 The Faith and Order Committee report did not explore any underpinning theological principles specifically relating to fees for occasional services and other payments and made no comment on the justification for ministers retaining, returning or sharing them.

5.12 It has been a long, time-consuming and tortuous journey to reach this point and the Conference is therefore urged to take the final decisions as recommended as a basis for ministerial remuneration for the foreseeable future.

**Policy decisions agreed by the Conferences of 2015 and 2016**

5.13 The 2015 Conference adopted the following resolutions:

- That ministers continue to retain any funeral and wedding fees which they are given or claim and that they may return or disburse them as they wish\(^\text{24}\).
- That, taking into account local custom and practice, ministers continue to determine whether to claim or waive funeral and wedding fees\(^\text{25}\).
- That ministers continue to retain fees and payments for teaching, chaplaincy and other activities\(^\text{26}\).
- That the attention of Circuits is drawn to SO 802(3) and SO 802(5) and that they be positively enforced\(^\text{27}\).

\(^{22}\) Conference 2017 Agenda section 14 pp 115-128.

\(^{23}\) The Faith and Order Committee intimated that financial need should be a stronger determinant of an allowance above stipend rather than greater accountability.

\(^{24}\) Conference 2015 Agenda section 46 p 468.

\(^{25}\) Conference 2015 Agenda section 46 p 470.

\(^{26}\) Conference 2015 Agenda section 46 p 471.

\(^{27}\) Conference 2015 Agenda section 46 p 473.
5.14 Whilst acknowledging that the case can be made for pooling funeral and wedding fees (as is the Church of England practice) and that there is a wide spectrum of opinion in the Church on the matter, the Committee brings no amendment to these resolutions at this point in time, but emphasises the importance of observing the above SOs as a means of monitoring and managing time spent and income generated from such activities within reasonable limits.

5.15 The 2016 Conference adopted the following resolutions:

- That the 5% allowance above stipend for Synod Secretaries be discontinued28.
- That the Connexional Allowances Committee considers all requests for local discretionary allowances above stipend, not just those above 10%29.
- That the arrangement whereby ministers stationed in the Inverness and North of Scotland Mission Circuits may claim the costs of the twice-yearly visit to ‘the mainland’ be discontinued30.

5.16 The 2016 Conference also adopted six resolutions relating to ministerial remuneration and other provisions in the Channel Islands, the Isle of Man, the Shetland Islands, the Isles of Scilly, Gibraltar and Malta, including the funding of additional allowances and expenses from the Methodist Church Fund31.

5.17 The 2016 Conference also accepted the Committee’s reasoning, as set out in its report to the 2015 Conference32 and summarised in 2016, with respect to any allowance above stipend for appointments in and around London, but as the policy was not amended, there was no need for a formal resolution. The policy remains that there is no ‘London allowance’ as such.

**Working towards recommendations on allowances above stipend**

5.18 The 2017 Conference (1) received the report of the Faith and Order Committee, (2) directed that any responses to the report and its consequences for ministerial remuneration be forwarded to the Chair of the Connexional Allowances Committee by 30 November 2017 and (3) directed the Committee to bring any revised policy

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28 Conference 2016 Agenda section 6 pp 48 and 57. This was effective for new post-holders from September 2016, but ministers already in post would retain the allowance until their term of office ceased.

29 Conference 2016 Agenda section 6 pp 48-49 and 55-57. This was effective from September 2017 for new and renewed (ie re-invited) appointments.

30 Conference 2016 Agenda section 6 pp 53-54 and 57. This was effective from September 2017 for new and renewed (ie re-invited) appointments.

31 Conference 2016 Agenda section 6 pp 49-52 and 57 for full details.

recommendations on ministerial remuneration to the 2018 Conference\textsuperscript{33}.

5.19 The Committee reports that a single response was received in relation to (2) in the above paragraph, perhaps indicating that there is no more to be said or added!

5.20 The Committee reminds the Conference of its earlier work on seeking to understand the justification for allowances above stipend, which drew mainly on statements made in the 2002 report to the Conference. There were four elements, as follows:

1) \textit{To reflect additional or extra responsibilities}. The implication is that these are above what may be termed normal circuit ministerial responsibilities and refer to those posts listed in the Committee’s annual report to the Conference.

2) \textit{To acknowledge the special circumstances pertaining to the post}. This is not very different from the first but is administered as a local discretionary allowance rather than one defined in the list of posts in the Committee’s annual report to the Conference.

3) \textit{To compensate for loss of wedding and funeral fees}. This is discussed in paragraphs 5.21 to 5.23 below.

4) \textit{To help with entertaining costs}. This is to blur and confuse allowances and expenses: it is clear that any such legitimate costs be reimbursed as expenses by the appropriate body or fund and not be taxable.

5.21 The 2002 review observed that income from funeral and wedding fees in the year of the survey, 1998/1999, was less than had been imagined, and there has been a general reduction since, especially in wedding fees. The results of the survey conducted by the Committee in 2014 were published in its report to the 2015 Conference\textsuperscript{34}, in addition to its reflections on the principles and practices evidenced from comments received.

5.22 In round numbers, the survey revealed that 80\% of ministers received funeral fees totalling less than 5\% of the annual stipend at the time and 23\% received none. As for wedding fees, 57\% of ministers received none and 90\% less than 1.5\% of annual stipend. The Committee therefore suggests that allowances above stipend cannot be justified on grounds of compensation for fees, such is the general level of and variation in them. Moreover, if this was the case in times past, it does not justify variable allowances above stipend – there is no correlation between the income from such payments and the appointment to which a minister was subsequently appointed.

\textsuperscript{33} Conference 2017 Agenda section 14 pp 127-128.

\textsuperscript{34} Conference 2015 Agenda section 46 pp 464-472, including data about income from other payments.
The Committee concludes that the only bases for an allowance above stipend are the first and second reasons in paragraph 5.20, ie extra responsibilities or special circumstances. The latter group are overseen by the Committee’s role highlighted in the second point in paragraph 5.15 and will be considered in the light of the special circumstances which prevail.

Retain or abolish allowances above stipend?

5.23 Before making recommendations on the future structure of allowances above stipend, and bearing in mind the observations made in paragraph 5.10 above, the Committee rehearses the case for their abolition but does not recommend it. We suggest that the balance falls in favour of retaining a structure similar to the current one.

5.24 The Committee’s report to the Methodist Council in April 2014 explored the nature of stipend especially in the light of the judgment of the Supreme Court. We made the following statement: “It is commonly understood that a stipend is a regular allowance paid to those in occupations such as the clergy to give them a reasonable standard of living, free them from basic financial concerns and pre-empt any need to seek other paid employment. In the Methodist Church, it is set connexionally and accompanied by the provision of a manse in an appropriate location so as to support the principle and freedom of connexional stationing and ensure consistency throughout the Church.” We added that the judgment of the Supreme Court included the statement “Neither the stipend nor the manse are regarded by the Methodist Church as the consideration for the services of its ministers. They regard them as a method of providing material support to the minister without which he or she could not serve God.”

5.25 The report of the Faith and Order Committee in 2017 explored theological considerations, the critical importance of the covenant relationship and historic practices and underlined these principles, noting that the stipend applies equally to presbyters and deacons, that it is given irrespective of the particular tasks ministers undertake and that it is counter-cultural. It concluded35 “In the Church’s work, we cannot hold that value rests in relation to the level of remuneration one receives, but we must instead seek to understand what it is to be freed in grace for mission, and to engage in appropriate support in order that those receiving stipends feel they have that freedom to live and work for God’s kingdom’. But it also made the observation36 ‘When making decisions about stipends, allowances and fees we begin from a place where there is already a structure of allowances in place and where there have been previous decisions and debates on all of these issues.”

35 Conference 2017 Agenda section 14 p 126 paragraph 4.8.2.
36 Conference 2017 Agenda section 14 p 126 paragraph 4.8.1.
5.26 The Faith and Order Committee also touched on the principle of need being a determinant of allowances above stipend, to reflect variation in costs of living in different places, rather than greater accountability in the role\(^{37}\). Indeed, the Connexional Allowances Committee had explored this as an alternative in its report to the Council in March 2014. Its conclusion then was that it would be a monumental administrative task to design, implement and maintain a needs-based stipend structure and dismissed it: it is still of that view.

**Recommendations on allowances above stipend**

5.27 The Committee therefore makes the following recommendations in respect of allowances above stipend for the posts listed in its annual report to the Conference. We sustain the thrust of the arguments of our predecessors in respect of the general structure and the percentage amounts, but recommend some adjustments and additions in the light of the evolution of roles and accountabilities within the whole Church.

5.28 It was observed in paragraph 5.1 that the superintendent’s allowance was increased in 2002 from 5% to 7.5% of standard stipend. Noting the Committee’s observation in its 2016 report to the Conference\(^{38}\), in the light of the widespread increase in the size of Circuits arising from mergers and the greater demands upon superintendents, not least as a result of the Complaints and Discipline system and the devolution of property matters, *it is recommended that the superintendent’s allowance above stipend be increased from 7.5% to 10% as from 1 September 2019.*

5.29 The present allowance above stipend for the most accountable posts in the Connexional Team, the Secretary of the Conference, the Assistant Secretary of the Conference, the Connexional Secretary (if a minister) and the Officer for Legal and Constitutional Practice (if a minister) is a legacy derived from the days of a Conference Office/Secretariat and separately accountable Co-ordinating Secretaries. Pending the review of all allowances above stipend, these allowances were retained when the present structure was introduced. *The Committee recommends that, as the Secretary of the Conference carries the ultimate accountability, that post retains the 30% allowance, but the three posts which report in receive a 25% allowance.* It is recommended that the existing allowance will be retained until the term of appointment ends and that the 25% applies to any new appointments from 1 September 2019.

5.30 *It is recommended that the allowance above stipend for the President of the Conference be increased from 25% to 30% from September 2019,* thereby

\(^{37}\) Conference 2017 Agenda section 14 pp 125-126 paragraph 4.7.9.

\(^{38}\) Conference 2016 Agenda section 6 p 48 paragraph 7.
acknowledging that this role shares equally in the leadership of the Church alongside the Secretary of the Conference.

5.31 As was acknowledged in paragraph 5.2, the Committee is of the view that not all of the posts held by “other ministers serving the Connexional Team or stationed to appointments within the control of the Methodist Council” and “staff members of a training institution” can justify the 20% allowance above stipend, and therefore it is recommended that the allowance for those with lesser accountabilities be reduced to 10% or 0%. It is recommended that those in post will retain their allowance until their term of appointment ends, that the 10% or 0% allowance will apply to all new appointments in that category as from 1 September 2019, and that decisions as to which posts will fall in the 20%, 10% and 0% categories be made by the Remuneration Committee, which is a sub-group of the Methodist Council, augmented for this purpose by the attendance of the Connexional Secretary.

5.32 In response to recent enquiries from Circuits and Districts with respect to remuneration for shared roles, the Committee has hitherto advised that local arrangements should prevail until this review is completed. There are two sets of circumstances, viz (1) the role is shared between two or more full-time ministers, with some division of responsibilities, and (2) the role is shared between two or more part-time ministers who carry the full range of responsibilities but each only part of the time. The Committee recommends in (1) that any allowance above stipend (each minister receiving a full standard stipend) is shared proportionately between the two or more ministers and in (2) that each minister receives the full allowance above stipend, but based on the actual stipend received for the number of hours worked\(^\text{39}\).

5.33 There has never been a defined allowance above stipend for ministers stationed as the non-separated District Chairs in the Channel Islands, the Isle of Man and the Shetland Islands\(^\text{40}\), though those in post have, at times, been in receipt of a local allowance in addition to the superintendent’s allowance (when it applied). The Committee recommends that, as the situations in the three locations are each unique, this arrangement continues and that these posts are regarded as within group 2) in paragraph 5.20, viz special circumstances pertaining to the post.

5.34 The oversight arrangements in Synod Cymru are unique, unusual but practical, there being a separated Chair who also acts as the overall superintendent of a single

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39 This principle applies in any situation where a minister works part-time in a role: any allowance above stipend is applied as a % to the actual stipend received, not the full-time equivalent figure.

40 The Channel Islands comprises two Circuits which have churches on four islands (Jersey, Guernsey, Alderney and Sark); the Isle of Man is a single Circuit on one island; the Chair of the Scotland District is also the Chair of the Shetland District which is a single Circuit covering the main cluster of isles (Mainland, Yell and Unst) and Fair Isle, with governance set out in SO 427.
Circuit covering the whole of Wales. However, there are also de facto posts equivalent to superintendents held by both ministers (some of other Churches) and lay people. The Committee recommends that the Chair’s allowance above stipend is 25%, as usual, but that the additional superintendent’s allowance is not appropriate for the post-holder. It is recommended that this arrangement is implemented when the current post-holder’s invitation is next reviewed. Further, it is recommended that, under the terms of group 2) in paragraph 5.20, the Committee determines the allowances payable to the de facto superintendent roles.

5.35 The Committee has considered the question of allowances above stipend for ministers stationed or appointed to the posts of Deputy or Assistant District Chairs or Deputy Wardens of the MDO and concluded, from current available evidence, that policies, practices and arrangements are so variable that it is impractical and unhelpful to define a structure for all circumstances. Moreover, none of these posts have formally defined common roles and responsibilities in Standing Orders. Districts may have one or more Deputy or Assistant Chairs; many are already superintendent ministers; the roles they fulfil may be very different between Districts; in at least one District there are three, specifically stationed as such, who are deliberately not superintendents. The Committee therefore recommends that any application to offer an allowance above stipend for any of these roles also be regarded as within group 2) in paragraph 5.20, viz special circumstances pertaining to the post.

5.36 The Committee recommends that all the listed allowances not mentioned remain the same, viz the Secretary of the Conference, separated District Chairs, the Warden of the MDO and Principals41 of training institutions. In presenting all these recommendations, the Committee believes that a fairer and more equitable distribution of allowances above stipend is achieved to reflect the evolving burdens of accountability within the whole Church.

Fees for occasional services in Scotland

5.37 In its report to the 2016 Conference42, the Committee agreed to review the situation in Scotland with respect to fees for occasional services in the light of submissions made to both the Council and the Conference on behalf of the whole of Scotland highlighting that the practice of the Church of Scotland in observing its legal obligation not to take fees for funerals and weddings effectively denies (or at best, limits) the Methodist Church’s freedom to do so.

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41 This category comprises the Senior Methodist Tutor (or Principal if a Methodist) at the Queens Foundation Birmingham and the Principal of Cliff College.

42 Conference 2016 Agenda section 6 p 54 paragraph 40.
5.38 Scotland District representatives to the Council and the Conference had indicated that this situation might constitute a case for a general ‘Scotland allowance’ to compensate for lack of fees for occasional services. However, it can be argued that this is offset by other financial advantages of living in Scotland, such as free NHS prescriptions and, for ministers’ children, free university tuition.

5.39 In the light of the evidence on income derived from such fees – that 23% of ministers gained none from funerals and 57% none from weddings across the Connexion – in the 2014 survey, the Committee does not believe that there is a case to offer a general compensatory allowance in Scotland. The 25 active ministers in Scotland may be located in one geography but the survey suggested that there are perhaps 300 others in England and Wales who gain no such income. If the Committee were to admit a Scotland allowance, it would not be a helpful precedent.

***RESOLUTIONS

13/1. The Conference receives the Report.

13/2. The Conference adopts the Report and the recommendations contained in sections 1, 2 and 3.

13/3. The Conference adopts the Report in section 4 and the recommendations in paragraphs 4.28 to 4.35.

13/4. The Conference adopts the Report in section 5 and the recommendations in paragraphs 5.27 to 5.36.

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43 In addition, in response to a question at the 2017 Conference, the Chair of the Committee indicated that any additional income tax burden arising from the decisions of the Scottish Parliament would be taken into account in determining ministerial stipends in Scotland, including Shetland.
SECTION A
GENERAL REPORT

The Committee is charged under Standing Orders with the scrutiny of all new legislation which is proposed to the Conference in order to ensure its coherence with existing usage and Methodist polity. Various members of the Committee undertake this task and have commented upon all the proposals submitted to the Committee by the Methodist Council and other bodies. The Committee also seeks to ensure that Standing Orders comply with any changes in legislation or case law.

The 2017 Conference directed the Committee to undertake several pieces of work and to bring Standing Order amendments to the Conference in 2018.

There were no special resolutions referred to the Committee by the 2017 Conference. The special resolution to amend paragraph 9 of the Deed of Union was referred to the Council and is reported on elsewhere in the Agenda (item 6); the Standing Order changes are dealt with in Section C of this report.

The clarification of the governance and oversight arrangements for fresh expressions continues as the workload of both the Law and Polity Committee and the Faith and Order Committee has not enabled this work to be given the priority it might otherwise have had.

The Committee has now obtained Counsel’s opinion on the ability to amend paragraph 14(2A) of the Model Trusts which has been necessary in order to respond to Memorial M32(2016) regarding the use of church buildings by other churches. The opinion does appear to provide scope for the length of a licence giving permission to other churches for worship to increase from 12 months. However, such an amendment to the Model Trusts and ensuring that the licence does not become a lease with additional legal implications needs careful consideration. The Committee will therefore bring any proposed amendments to the Model Trusts to the Conference in 2019.

The Committee continues to work closely with the Safeguarding Committee on the interpretation and application of the Standing Orders adopted in 2017 and to remove any unintended consequences of the use of the term “safeguarding contract” referred to in Section 69.
The Committee continues to work on the appropriate Standing Order to enable Circuits to be able to seek repayment of costs incurred due to the unreasonable condition a manse has been left in by a minister.

The Committee continues to review Standing Orders and policy proposals to ensure consistency with legislation and new legislation which this year has focused on the EU Data Protection Regulations. The Committee is assisted in this task by the Church’s membership of the Churches’ Legislation Advisory Service, of which the Conference Officer for Legal and Constitutional Practice serves as a Governor.

The Committee appointed the Law and Polity Conference Subcommittee under Standing Order 338(6) as follows: the Secretary of the Conference, the Conference Officer for Legal and Constitutional Practice, the Revds Jennifer M Dyer and Julian M Pursehouse, Miss Elizabeth H Ovey and Mr David S Walton (Chair).

***RESOLUTION

14/1. The Conference receives the General Report.

SECTION B
MINOR AMENDMENTS TO CPD

As usual the Committee submits a list of corrections to The Constitutional Practice and Discipline of the Methodist Church consequent upon decisions already taken by the Conference, or to remedy minor errors and omissions.

***RESOLUTION

14/2. The Conference, by way of minor and consequential corrections, amends Standing Orders as follows:

210 Methodist Council
(2) (b) The persons appointed under heads (iii), and (vi), (vii) and to (ix) of clause (1) above shall each be nominated for a period of four years by the body concerned.

(bA) The persons appointed under head (viii) of clause (1) above shall each be nominated for a period of two years by the Methodist Children and Youth Assembly

1131 (5) (iv) if the respondent does not fall within any of the preceding heads is a member or office-holder who does not fall within any of the preceding paragraphs, the committee must include three such lay members.
SECTION C
ONWARDS FROM THE SUPREME COURT

Report

The Committee has given further attention to the amendments to Standing Orders 700(2) and 701(2) adopted by resolution 9/6 of the 2017 Conference (Agenda page 83, Daily Record 5/20/3), to come into effect upon confirmation of resolution 9/5 amending the Deed of Union. After considering some views received from Counsel the Committee has decided, if 2017 resolution 9/5 is confirmed, to bring a resolution amending resolution 9/6 under Standing Order 132(25A) on the ground that the amended form of resolution 9/6 will better achieve the intention of the Conference. If the amending resolution is not passed, resolution 9/6 will automatically take effect in the form in which it was passed by the 2017 Conference upon the confirmation of resolution 9/5. (If resolution 9/5 is not confirmed, resolution 9/6 will not take effect and so the Committee will not move the amending resolution.) In the interests of clarity the clauses in question are printed below with the current wording in ordinary roman type, the 2017 amendments in bold italic and the further amendments now proposed in strikethrough and underlined bold italic.

Amendments to Standing Orders

Standing Order 700

(2) By receiving persons into Full Connexion as Methodist presbyters 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. That covenant relationship arises within their existing relationship with the Church as members, which continues, and neither entry into it nor service within it has ever created or is intended to create, a contract or other legal contractual relations.

Standing Order 701

(2) By receiving persons into Full Connexion as Methodist deacons the Conference enters into a covenant relationship with them in which they are held accountable by the Church in respect of their diaconal ministry and Christian discipleship, and are accounted for by the Church in respect of their deployment and the support they require for their ministry. That covenant relationship arises within their existing relationship with the Church as members, which continues, and neither entry into it nor service within it has ever created or is intended to create, a contract or other legal contractual relations.
***RESOLUTION

14/3.   The Conference receives the Report.

14/4.   The Conference amends resolution 9/6 as adopted by the 2017 Conference so that the amendments to Standing Orders 700 and 701 for which it provides are in the form set out above.

SECTION D
THE WESLEY TRUST AND SCHOOLS COMMITTEE

Report

The 2017 Conference directed the Law and Polity Committee to consider whether amendments were required to Standing Orders following the establishment of the Methodist Schools Committee and development of the Wesley Trust as the multi-academy provider for Methodist primary schools that choose to convert to an academy.

A new Standing Order is proposed to recognise the establishment of the Wesley Trust and the Conference’s right to appoint the directors.

The Law and Polity Committee does not consider it necessary to make any amendments to Standing Order 342 this year given that the role of the Methodist Council in overseeing Methodist state funded schools has not changed. The role of the Methodist Academies and Schools Trust and the Wesley Trust will be clarified within a footnote to SO 342.

A new Standing Order is also proposed for the establishment of the Schools Committee as set out below.

Amendment to Standing Orders

243 The Wesley Trust

The Methodist Conference shall exercise its powers contained in the articles of the Wesley Trust. Under the articles the Conference appoints up to twelve directors nominated by the members of the company.

343A Methodist Schools Committee

The Methodist Council shall annually appoint the Methodist Schools Committee which shall:

(i) encourage collaboration and the sharing of resources between all the bodies
**Committee on Methodist Law and Polity (1)**

**Conference Agenda**

- responsible for undertaking the Council’s responsibilities under Standing Orders 342 and 343;

- (ii) encourage the development of all the above bodies’ and Methodist schools’ understanding of the Methodist ethos;

- (iii) report annually to the Methodist Conference through the Methodist Council on behalf of all the bodies responsible for undertaking the Council’s responsibilities in respect of schools.

***RESOLUTIONS***

14/5. The Conference receives the Report.


**SECTION E**

**PROPERTY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

**Report**

The Methodist Council established and adopted terms of reference for the Property Development Committee in April 2016 (amending the terms of reference in October 2016). The Law and Polity Committee therefore proposes a new Section to *The Constitutional Practice and Discipline of the Methodist Church* with Standing Orders for the Property Development Committee.

***RESOLUTIONS***

14/7. The Conference receives the Report.

14/8. The Conference adopts Standing Order 990, 991 and 992 as follows:

**Section 99 Property Development Committee**

990 Status and Purposes. (1) The Methodist Council shall annually appoint a Property Development Committee, which shall report to the council through its Strategy and Resources Committee.

(2) The committee shall work collaboratively with the council and the Strategy and
Resources Committee in developing, maintaining and implementing a connexional property strategy, that is to say a strategy for the use and, where appropriate, the disposal of Methodist land and for the use of the proceeds of such disposals. In this Section the word ‘property’ is used in that context.

(3) The connexional property strategy shall express the mission imperative of the Methodist Church and ensure that its property resources are used so as to give maximum effect to their value and to missional opportunities.

991 Terms of Reference. (1) In furtherance of the purposes set out in Standing Order 990 the committee shall:
   (i) develop and propose to the council policies for the use of Methodist property;
   (ii) exercise such trustee or managing trustee responsibilities as may be delegated to it by the council;
   (iii) identify funding sources for the development of Methodist property from across the range of Methodist investments and financial resources and from external sources;
   (iv) review the terms of all agreements proposed or reached between the council and any person, body or institution for the use and development of property and monitor the fulfilment of those terms;
   (v) review and monitor the use of all property held by bodies reporting to the council, advising the council on the effectiveness of current and proposed uses of property held by such bodies;
   (vi) be alert to ecumenical, multi-partner opportunities for property development;
   (vii) provide advice to any Methodist trustees who request it regarding any proposed development, disposal or mortgage of trust property;
   (viii) undertake such other tasks as the council may delegate to it in respect of property and the financial management of property.

(2) The consent of the Strategy and Resources Committee shall be required for the disposal or mortgage of any Model Trust property for which the Property Development Committee has any delegated managing trustee responsibilities.

(3) The committee shall make an annual report to the Strategy and Resources Committee on all financial matters relating to property for which the Property Development Committee has any delegated managing trustee responsibilities.

992 Membership. (1) The voting members of the committee shall comprise up to fourteen persons, namely:
   (i) a chairperson, who shall be a member of the Methodist Church;
   (ii) a connexional treasurer, chosen by the connexional treasurers;
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(iii) the Secretary of the Conference, or his or her delegate appointed under Standing Order 114(1E);
(iv) three district Property Secretaries;
(v) a representative of the Board of the Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes;
(vi) up to seven others.

(2) The persons appointed under heads (iv) and (vi) of clause (1) above shall include persons who together have expertise in at least the following areas: mission and evangelisation, surveying, property management, conservation architecture, funding of property developments, legal issues relating to property and planning.

(3) Subject to any phasing in at the outset and to any departure from loss of eligibility initial appointments under heads (i), (iv), (v) and (vi) of clause (1) above shall be for a period of three years, with power to re-appoint once for a further period of up to three years.

(4) The council, in making appointments to the committee, and the committee, in bringing any nominations to the council, shall have regard to the considerations set out in Standing Order 203(4).

(5) The conference officer for legal and constitutional practice and a member of the staff of the Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes shall attend as advisers.

(6) The committee shall be convened by a member of the Connexional Team responsible for property, who shall be a non-voting member

SECTION F
JOINT ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON THE ETHICS OF INVESTMENT

Report

The Conference annually receives a report from the Joint Advisory Committee on the Ethics of Investment. It has been noted that this committee is not established within Standing Orders and the Law and Polity Committee has therefore been working with the Committee in order to bring the proposed Standing Order set out below.

231A Joint Advisory Committee on the Ethics of Investment

(1) There shall be a Joint Advisory Committee on the Ethics of Investment, appointed annually in accordance with clause (2) below.

(2) The committee shall consist of eleven persons and shall comprise:
(i) a chair appointed by the Methodist Council, who shall be a Chair of District;
(ii) five other persons appointed by the Methodist Council;
(iii) five persons appointed by the Central Finance Board.

(3) The committee shall meet as frequently as need be, but in any event at least once a year.

(4) The committee shall be responsible for advising the Central Finance Board on ethical aspects of its investments and proposed investments and shall report annually to the Conference.

***RESOLUTION


14/10. The Conference adopts Standing Order 231A as set out in this Report.

SECTION G
PAST CASES REVIEW – RECORD AND MONITORING - PART 11

Report

The Conference will recall that the Past Cases Review report recommended that a system be established to monitor the implementation of decisions of Discipline Committees (and where appropriate Complaints Teams) and that their implementation be recorded. The Law and Polity Committee along with the Complaints and Discipline subcommittee has discussed this recommendation at some length over the past three years. Discipline Committees are relatively rare and the responsibility for implementing the decisions rest with the relevant District Chair, Superintendent and depending on the circumstances, the officers of the Conference.

Complaints Teams are appointed more frequently, but the only courses of action open to a Complaints Team under Standing Order 1124 that are capable of being monitored as to their implementation are rulings, advice and directions. Other courses open to a Team are referrals to alternative procedures or for charges to be heard by a Discipline Committee. It is for the resulting committee or other relevant person or body to monitor implementation of the outcome of alternative procedures or a referral for charges, if implementation is required. The officers of the Conference have a role in ensuring that the referrals made by a Complaints Team to an alternative procedure are made and dealt with according to Standing Orders.

When rulings or directions are made or advice is given, it has to be for the relevant District Chair or Superintendent and the parties themselves to monitor implementation. Any of them
could bring a further complaint if a decision of a Complaints Team is not implemented or followed.

The report of a Complaints Team is already given to the local complaints officer where rulings, advice or directions are made or given under SO 1124(16)(a). The relevant District Chair and Superintendent are informed of a decision by a Complaints Team and at every stage of the complaints and discipline process under SO 1104(8). The Complaints and Discipline sub-committee has noted that it might assist District Chairs and Superintendents in seeking to implement and thereafter monitor decisions of a Complaints Team if they are consulted at the time the Complaints Team is considering the course to follow under Standing Order 1124. A proposed amendment to Standing Order 1124(12) to provide for this is set out below. This amendment should help to ensure that the advice, ruling or direction by a Complaints Team is feasible for the relevant District Chair or Superintendent to implement and monitor. It is therefore proposed that SO 1124(12) is amended to include consultation with the District Chair and Superintendent.

**Amendment to Standing Order**

**1124 (12)** Any ruling made, directions given or advice issued by the complaints team must be formulated in consultation with the relevant connexional Team member and the relevant District Chair and Superintendent. The complaints team may also direct that such public notice is given of the direction, ruling or advice as the team considers appropriate and helpful.

*****RESOLUTIONS***

14/11. The Conference receives the Report.

14/12 The Conference amends SO 1124(12) as set out in the Report.
1. General report

1.1 MHA provides high-quality care and support to over 17,800 residents and scheme members across England, Scotland and Wales through its care homes, retirement living schemes and community-based Live at Home schemes. Through its charitable work, it provides chaplains in all homes and retirement living schemes, music therapy for people living with dementia in its specialist care homes and many of the services provided through Live at Home.

1.2 It was been a year of change at MHA, with the Chair, Graham Smith, leaving after many years of service with the Board. He was succeeded by John Robinson, who was brought up in the Methodist Church and continues to be a practising Christian. We said farewell to Adrian Bagg as CEO and welcomed his successor, Sam Monaghan, in February 2018. Sam is actively involved in his local Methodist church and comes to MHA with a strong track record of executive leadership in the charity sector.

1.3 After 16 years the Revd Dr Keith Albans left as Director of Chaplaincy and Spirituality. Keith’s contribution was fundamental to the success of MHA’s development in the opening decades of the 21st century, not least in supporting the transition of chaplaincy from a voluntary activity to fully employed ministry. All residents and staff in MHA facilities with care have a dedicated chaplain to serve them. Keith handed on his responsibilities to the Revd Dr Chris Swift, who comes to MHA after 20 years of chaplaincy in the NHS.

1.4 This year is MHA’s 75th anniversary and several activities are taking place to affirm the continuing importance of our relationship with the Methodist Church. These include the distribution of a letter from the CEO to all Methodist ministers along with materials to support the celebration of Methodist Homes Sunday. A Service of Thanksgiving for MHA’s contribution to the care of older people will also be held in Derby Cathedral on Saturday 13 October 2018. Tickets can be booked at www.mha.org.uk/75 years.

1.5 In April 2018 we were delighted to extend to all staff employed by MHA the pay level advised by the Living Wage Foundation. This is a major achievement set against a challenging financial context for all organisations operating in the care sector and reflects MHA’s commitment to be an ethical employer and employer of choice in social care.
1.6 Other notable successes for the year include:

- The MHA Chaplaincy Team winning the 3rd Sector Care Award for creative and innovative ways to achieve excellence in End of Life Care
- The number of MHA schemes judged to be “Good” and “Outstanding” by the independent regulator, the Care Quality Commission, rose to 87%, with Willersley House Care Home near Hull achieving “Outstanding” in all five areas of assessment, becoming one of just eight homes in England to receive this accolade; whilst The Martins Care Home in Bury St Edmunds was also rated overall as “Outstanding”
- Two new homes opened during the year: Montpellier Manor in Stainton, Middlesbrough, and Oak Manor in Shefford, bringing the total number of MHA homes to 90
- The Starr Hills Care Home in Lytham was featured in Radio 2’s Christmas Day breakfast programme with staff and residents taking part; whilst MHA’s Music Therapy Service and Torrwood Care Home resident, Paul Mosby, featured in BBC Radio 4’s documentary series ‘The Untold’
- In Hampshire eight new ‘Live at Home’ schemes opened with the support of the County Council. This means that all areas of Hampshire are now covered by the service
- Residents moved into new retirement living facilities at Nethanvale in Auchlochan and at Maidment Court in Poole
- The President of the Conference made an official visit to our care home at Claybourne

1.7 During the year MHA extended its mission to provide chaplaincy and spiritual care to older people with the introduction of chaplains to the four homes previously operated by the Silk Healthcare Group. MHA employs the highest number of chaplains outside the public sector.

1.8 Live at Home schemes now serve over 10,300 older people across the UK and more schemes are being added every month. MHA’s ‘Live at Home’ schemes were the theme of a Radio 4 appeal which featured scheme member, Annie Ashby, talking about its positive impact on her life.

1.9 Since 2016 the number of music therapists working with MHA has increased by 20% and their work continues to grow. Our Lead Music Therapist, Ming Hung Hsu, was awarded his PhD during the year based on research into the therapeutic impact of the service.

1.10 Methodist Homes Sunday in 2017 raised over £190,000, for which we offer grateful thanks. This year the official date for the Sunday is 10 June although it can be moved to suit local needs. Our theme for worship is ‘Full of Years’ and a range of materials is available to download from our website (www.mha.org.uk).
1.11 In addition to its 7,000 members of staff, MHA benefits from the contribution of over 5,000 volunteers. These volunteers add a vital dimension to the work of MHA supporting all elements of our operation, including chaplaincy. Many volunteers come from Methodist congregations and help us retain our links with the Church.

1.12 We believe that MHA has a unique approach to care and that this can make a valuable contribution to the debate about social care in the UK. Addressing the needs of the whole person; enabling the expression of spirituality, and providing pastoral care to older people, relatives and staff as a community, are at the core of this approach. Communicating this more widely is an important priority for the Board and MHA shares aspects of its work across a range of media platforms. During the year over 1.7 million people saw our posts on social media and MHA provided expert consultancy for an award-winning dementia storyline in ITV’s Emmerdale.

1.13 MHA held a number of events in Methodist churches across England to provide supporters with direct updates about our work, including music therapy and chaplaincy. One of the key priorities of our new CEO, Sam Monaghan, is to establish a stronger partnership with the Church and he has already met with Secretary of the Methodist Conference to explore how this will be progressed.

1.14 The latest audited accounts are available on request from our website or from Epworth House. Our latest Annual Impact Statement, which tells the story of MHA’s activities, is also available on the website or from Epworth House.

1.15 During the year our Director of Care Homes, Carol Artis, announced her retirement. Carol served on the Leadership Team for 13 years overseeing significant enhancement of both the quality and efficiency of our homes and she leaves with the best wishes of her colleagues.

1.16 The Trustees who oversee the work of the charity continue to offer excellent advice and guidance, sharing between them considerable expertise across the range of MHA’s activities. The focus of MHA’s holistic approach to care is at the root of their willingness to serve as Board members and they bring a range of spiritual and belief commitments to the role.

2. Church appointment to the Boards of MHA

2.1 Through our Governance Committee we continue to strengthen the Charity’s Board with new members bringing wide experience, particularly around marketing and social care. In accordance with SO 241, we ask the Conference to continue to recognise Dr David Hall as the Church’s nominated Board member. David was first appointed to this role in 2015.
**RESOLUTIONS**

**15/1.** The Conference receives the General Report of Methodist Homes.

**15/2.** The Conference, in exercising its power under Standing Order 241, nominates David Hall to the Board of MHA.
1. Introduction

1.1. Action for Children launched a five-year strategy so that we could better respond to the challenges of meeting the needs of children, young people and families who need our help. We are pleased to share with the Methodist Conference the good progress we have made, and ask for your prayers of thanksgiving for our work.

1.2. After four years as Chief Executive, we said farewell to Sir Tony Hawkhead in February 2018. During his time, he inspired staff with his leadership, and facilitated changes that have laid the foundation for the charity to remain a viable organisation. He launched our five-year strategy, acquired the 4Children nurseries, and forged meaningful external partnerships. Julie Bentley has been appointed as our new Chief Executive from 1 August. Carol Iddon, our Managing Director of Children’s Services, will be our Acting Chief Executive until then.

2. By teaming up with the Methodist Church

2.1. In the past year, we have received remarkable support from the Methodist Church, and thank each person that supported us with their time and substance. We are deeply grateful for the strong and inspiring relationship we have the Methodist Church.

2.2. We thank the Revd Canon Gareth Powell for his continuous support and for playing a huge part in our annual Stephenson Awards as one of the judges. We would like to thank Jill Baker, the Vice-President of the Conference 2017/2018, for visiting our services in Scotland and bringing great encouragement to our staff. We also had the privilege of participating in Methodist events, such as 3Generate 2017, where we ran workshops and a market stall.

2.3. In 2017/2018, donations directly generated from local church fundraising and memorials totalled about £1.3m. Methodists contributed in other ways, for instance, taking part in national events like marathons and leaving legacy gifts. Furthermore, several churches kindly allowed us to use their premises to deliver vital services, and volunteers helped us in our work with children, young people and families. In September 2017, two ONE Programme interns started one-year placements, bringing valuable skills and insight.

2.4. We will continue to strengthen our partnership with the Methodist Church and find...
new opportunities to work together, especially sharing our expertise and engaging young people through 3Generate and schools. Next year, we will celebrate our 150th anniversary, and we have started discussing how to celebrate it with the Church.

3. **By still doing what works for children**

3.1. We currently support more than 370,000 children, young people and families. This includes all who have attended at least one session, been seen by a staff member, received advice from us or used any of our 529 services. We are proud to have made such an impact, but we know that there are still a significant number of children and families who need our help.

3.2. While developing our five-year strategy, we identified new areas of support for children and young people that we wanted to develop. These areas include providing mental health support, expanding our work on giving children a safe and loving home through permanency, including residential support, fostering and adoption, as well as looking at our commercial activity with our nurseries.

**Mental health services**

3.3. Mental health services for children and young people are in crisis. We have been very fortunate to gain some financial support from Royal Mail to launch a new programme working in schools called, the Blues Programme. This programme is an evidence-based support package working with young people aged from 15 to 18. We are working in schools in High Wycombe, Worcester and Cardiff. We are also delivering in pupil referral units (PRU), grammar schools and sixth form colleges. Plans are also underway to deliver the programme in a special school, and in schools in Glasgow, Northern Ireland, and the Western Isles.

3.4. We have also received funding from House of Fraser to pilot having a specialist mental health worker in three of our services. This role has two primary functions. In the first place, to support, advise and train our staff in mental health awareness. Secondly, to be on hand to offer direct support to young people with mental health issues. Our ambition is to have a mental health worker assigned to every service, if this pilot is successful.

**Residential care and permanency services**

3.5. Last year, we met with several authorities who had identified that it is difficult to find good, high quality residential provision for children and young people with complex and challenging needs. Since then, we have grown our residential provision in England by acquiring three homes and a successful bid to run seven children’s
home in the Midlands. In addition, we have re-purposed another service to provide residential care for children with complex needs, including disability. This will bring our residential portfolio in the Midlands to 11 children’s homes.

3.6. We are also developing our fostering and adoption services and working on our strategy to offer local authorities a permanency offer. This will build on our current placement options and will include our residential provision. Permanency support is about providing a range of options to meet a child’s needs and help them to remain in a secure and stable placement, minimising the number of placement moves and reducing their level of trauma.

Nurseries

3.7. We have continued to develop our nurseries, creating a bespoke brand, ‘Spring by Action for Children’. We developed this brand in partnership with parents. The number of nurseries has increased to 41 and more are planned for this year.

3.8. The Methodist Church has been very supportive in several areas of our work. For instance, by providing expert assistance in planning our capital development for our Headlands School, Penarth and supporting a tender for a children’s centre contract in Bath by providing us with accommodation. Our Acting Chief Executive has also spoken at a joint meeting of trustees and principals of the Methodist Independent Schools Trust to discuss how we can forge stronger relationships between the two organisations.

4. By seeking justice through our policy and campaigns work

4.1. We have continued to raise awareness and persuade the Government to tackle the challenges that disadvantage children, young people and their families. We have conducted intensive research to provide compelling evidence to highlight issues that need urgent attention and action. Some of our work over the last year included:

4.1.1. Revolving Door report: An estimated 140,000 children have needs too great for schools, health or other universal services to meet on their own, and are ineligible for statutory social care support. Without the early help that they need, they may eventually reach crisis point.

4.1.2. Crisis in funding: Turning the Tide report: We have been working with The Children’s Society and National Children’s Bureau to highlight the growing crisis in funding for children’s social care. This report shows the significantly lower spending on children and young people’s services, and the potential impact.
4.1.3. **The Next Chapter: Young People and Parenthood report**: It highlights the challenges young parents, particularly aged between 20-25 face. We found that they face difficulties with continuing education, financial hardship, poor mental health, etc. This can impact on their children too. Our report offers the Government some recommendations.

4.2. We are proud to be the Jo Cox Commission on Loneliness partner for children and families. Working collaboratively across Action for Children and externally, we have inspired thousands of people to get involved in tackling loneliness, through ‘Chat and Play’ sessions; launching the ‘It starts with hello’ report about the impact; and, developing various resources to help practitioners, young people and families (all on our website).

4.3. In the coming months, we will focus on our campaign to help give every child the best start in life. Sadly, Government spending on services – such as children’s centres – has fallen by nearly 50%, and support for the youngest children in our country is disappearing. We want to persuade the Government to take urgent action.

4.4. We are grateful to the many Methodists who have been loyal campaigners, and we would like to invite more people to sign up. For information visit: actionforchildren.org.uk/how-to-help/support-our-campaigns.

5. **By building new faith partnerships**

5.1. Our partnership with the Methodist Church and other faith organisations has been testament to the value of engaging faith communities. Over the last year, we have engaged more closely with the Baptist Union, the Redeemed Christian Church of God and the United Reformed Church. They have been instrumental in helping us raise awareness of our work through their communication channels.

5.2. We have plans in place to build on our relationships with faith groups, and explore the opportunities available for collaboration. We would welcome the support of District Chairs and local Methodist ministers in forging new relationships at every level.

6. **By being positive about the future**

6.1. We are positive and excited about the future as we continue to transform so that we can take bolder decisions to ensure that any child who needs help gets help. We know we can count on the support of the Methodist Church, and ask for your prayers for the continuing success of our work.
***RESOLUTIONS


16/2. The Conference notes that the trustees of Action for Children for the current year are:

Chair: John O’Brien (2012), Vice-Chair: Kate Guthrie (2014)

Methodist Church Appointee: Dr Daleep S Mukarji (2014)

17. Fernley Hartley Trust

| Contact name and details | The Revd Mark Rowland  
Secretary of the Fernley Hartley Trust  
mark.rowland@methodist.org.uk |

**About the Trust**

The Fernley Hartley Trust organises an annual lecture on a theological topic related to Methodism. The lecture is often given in partnership with an academic department or other organisation to help with publicity and attendance. We are seeking to expand our work to include disseminating the lecture more widely and can now hold other lectures in addition to the main Fernley Hartley lecture. The trust aims to produce resources related to the lectures that might be suitable for Local Churches and other groups to engage with the issues and topics raised.

**Lectures**

The 2017 lecture was delivered at The Queen’s Foundation by the Revd Dr Nicola Price-Tebbutt and was entitled “Methodism and experience: the role of personal narrative in shaping the Church’s theology”.

The 2018 lecture will be delivered during the Oxford Institute for Methodist Studies at Wesley Memorial Church, Oxford on Friday 17 August 2018 at 5pm by Dr Dion Forster.

**Appointment of trustees**

The trustees notify the Conference of the resignation of Dr Peter Briggs and that the six-year term of office of Professor Esther Reed came to an end in 2017. Dr Briggs served the trust as treasurer and the trustees notify the Conference that they have appointed the Revd Dr Philip Luscombe as the trust’s new treasurer. They submit the following names for appointment as new trustees:

**Ali Stacey-Chapman**
Ali Stacey-Chapman is a Pioneer Missioner in the Derby Circuit. She has previously worked as an Urban Missioner in London and has been local preaching for 10 years.

**Anthea Sully**
Anthea Sully is Chief Executive of White Ribbon UK and national coordinator for the Ecumenical Forum of European Christian Women. She was formerly Coordinating Secretary for Public Life and Social Justice in the Connexional Team.
The full list of trustees will then be as follows:

The Revd Dr Jane V Craske (Chair), the Revd Dr George Bailey, Dr Jill Barber, Professor David Clough, the Revd Dr Philip Luscombe (Treasurer), the Revd Mark Rowland (Secretary), Ali Stacey-Chapman, Anthea Sully.

***RESOLUTIONS

17/1. The Conference receives the Report.

Chair’s Report
This year, the main concentration of time and resource has been on one particular issue; climate change. The 2017 Methodist Conference requested JACEI (through the Methodist Council) to examine the pace of change in the extractives sector, and actively to consider disinvestment criteria and timescales required to disinvest from oil and gas companies whose business plans were not aligned with the Paris Agreement on climate change.

JACEI dedicates considerable time at every meeting to climate change; however this has increased considerably in 2017/2018 in order to escalate the work so as to respond to the Conference request. To that end, an additional meeting was held in February 2018 to review progress to date and to agree the next stage of analysis. I wish to thank my colleagues at the Central Finance Board of the Methodist Church (CFB) for their enormous efforts at a time when resources were already hard pressed. The Conference is directed to the supplementary report we have published this year (Climate change and fossil fuels: an update) which provides more detail on our work and advice on climate change investment matters.

The intense focus means, necessarily, that there has been less time for other matters. This is disappointing and a consequence of the focused effort needed to respond in detail to the case for climate disinvestment based on examining a large number of scenarios and then applying them to a portfolio of extractive stocks. This attention to the supply of fossil fuels diverted resources from assessing companies which demand their intense use and which are therefore responsible for significant carbon emissions.

Despite this focus, JACEI is proud to have concluded some important work during the year in other areas. The CFB became the first faith investor to adopt a policy on farm animal welfare, and I commend both the Position Paper and Policy Statement to readers. A revised and completely updated Corporate Governance Policy was approved, replacing a suite of older policies on voting and governance. For the first time, the process whereby companies are screened for inclusion in CFB portfolios, and the basis on which engagement may take place, was set down in a high-level Screening and Engagement Policy.

Work is now well advanced on a Position Paper and Policy Statement on Tax, which I know will be of great interest to the wider Church as it continues to press for tax justice.

Engagement with business to address concerns and raise standards is at the heart of how the CFB manages money on behalf of the Church. Owing to the concentration of time on
climate, some areas of engagement have had to be reduced. Nevertheless, the Report outlines some areas of new or continuing engagement that have taken place, such as water risk (on behalf of the Church Investors Group), human rights in Burma/Myanmar, child labour in the overseas granite industry and on fair trade.

The CFB joined a new initiative focused on UK workplace practices as society’s concerns around vulnerable, low-paid work intensified. Elsewhere, collaboratively, we joined global investors in supporting efforts to reduce the use of antibiotics in the food chain, to engage with supermarkets on modern slavery closer to home, and continued our long-term dialogue with infant formula companies.

There is much in this report that we trust will continue to enthuse and encourage the Conference. JACEI members are tasked with providing oversight and input on a range of very complex ethical dilemmas affecting social justice. They continue to do this with intellectual rigour and good humour. I would like to thank all my colleagues on JACEI for their time and commitment to this important work.

Executive Summary

Climate change summary
The Committee has committed considerable time in responding to the 2017 Conference Memorials and amended response via the Notice of Motion, including agreeing an assessment methodology and implementation timeline. A report of our detailed work in response to this is contained in a supplementary report (Climate change and fossil fuels: an update). During 2017/2018 JACEI reviewed and oversaw several CFB climate initiatives including the annual portfolio footprint exercise, engagement with the G7 and G20, engagement with companies such as Carnival and Total and a review of key carbon transition literature.

Policy development

Approved and amended policies
The Committee recommended ethical investment policies on Farm Animal Welfare and Corporate Governance during the year which were approved by CFB Council and subsequently published on the website. JACEI also recommended a high-level Screening and Engagement Policy which was approved by CFB Council. The Policy on Military Exposure was amended and approved.

Policy development
Work commenced during the year on two new ethical investment policies: Tax and Fixed Income Investments. These will be progressed during 2018.
Other ethical investment work

Mining and Faith Reflections Initiative (MFRI)
The Committee supports the CFB’s continued engagement with the Mining and Faith Reflections Initiative, together with connexional representatives, which brings together senior church leaders and mining executives in dialogue. A mini-day of reflection was held in 2017.

Extractive industries
The Committee reviewed CFB activity which included meetings with several major oil and mining companies on their environmental and social performance. CFB engaged with Centrica in respect of its minority interest in a fracking concession.

Nestlé and breast milk substitutes
The Committee noted the CFB was the only investor to be invited to a ground-breaking conference with infant nutrition NGOs to look at how Nestlé supports the first 1,000 days of life. The Committee has maintained its strong support of the FTSE4Good process and continues to review CFB dialogue with Nestlé and other infant nutrition companies.

Food, nutrition and farm animal welfare
The Committee welcomed engagement by CFB on a range of issues including management of farm animal related risk, antibiotic resistance in the livestock production sector and fair trade issues.

Environment
The Committee welcomed CFB scoping the issue of plastic production and waste as an emerging issue of concern.

Employment and labour
The Committee welcomed CFB joining a new collaborative initiative, the Workplace Disclosure Initiative (WDI) and noted continuing efforts to work with Share Action in support of the Living Wage.

Water risk
The Committee reviews collaborative engagement with global companies on water risk, which CFB has led for the second year on behalf of the Church Investors Group (CIG).

Human rights
The Committee reviewed significant engagement with companies over a number of human rights related issues, including cobalt mining, modern slavery in supermarket car washes, sourcing of granite overseas in the construction industry, and human rights in Burma/Myanmar. JACEI advised that there was no longer an ethical bar to investment in Total SA as the company has transformed its approach to human rights over the past two decades.
CFB voting and executive remuneration
The collaborative CIG voting template is supported by CFB. A robust approach to executive remuneration continues with CFB opposing executive pay proposals where these are deemed excessive. The Committee reviews CFB voting activity and welcomes the increasing emphasis placed on climate change and diversity laggards as part of the collaborative CIG voting policy.

The UK Stewardship Code
CFB has maintained its accreditation as a Tier I signatory to the UK Stewardship Code by the Financial Reporting Council.

Principles of Responsible Investment (PRI)
The Committee commended CFB for once again achieving the highest score (A+) for strategy and governance as part of the annual reporting cycle.

Church Investors Group (CIG)
The Committee commends the continued strength of collaborative effort via the 59 member CIG. The CFB Chief Investment Officer was elected Vice-Chair of the CIG during the year.

CFB ethical review
The Committee’s responsibility to the Conference includes a resolution that CFB Funds are managed in support of an ethical stance which is in accordance with the aims of the Methodist Church. It does this by regularly reviewing CFB performance across a range of reports and reviews which are set out in this Report.

Governance

Role, function and membership of the committee
The Committee’s Terms of Reference, and current membership are set out in the attached appendix. Proposals on Standing Orders can be found in the report of the Law and Polity Committee (Item 14).

For more detail on the issues contained within this Summary Report, and other matters considered by JACEI, we recommend referring to the full 2018 Annual Report to Conference, the Supplementary Report on Climate Change along with all Position Papers and CFB Policy Statements. These will be made available on both the CFB website www.cfbmethodistchurch.org.uk and the Methodist Church website www.methodist.org.uk/jacei.

Conclusion
The Committee judges that the CFB has managed the funds under its control in support of an ethical stance which is in accordance with the aims of the Methodist Church.

In arriving at this conclusion the Committee scrutinised compliance with CFB ethical policies through the:
• voting record of the CFB;
• ethically excluded lists of UK and European companies;
• monthly ethics meeting minutes of the CFB;
• company engagement record of the CFB;
• Trucost and Vigeo-EIRIS reviews of the CFB UK portfolio carbon footprint;
• participation of the CFB in the Institutional Investors Group on Climate Change (IIGCC);
• CDP (formerly the Carbon Disclosure Project); the Principles of Responsible Investment (PRI);
• Access to Medicines Index (ATMI); Access to Nutrition Index (ATNI);
• Business Benchmark on Farm Animal Welfare (BBFAW);
• the Workplace Disclosure Initiative (WDI) and the Extractives Industry Transparency Scheme (EITI);
• collaboration with Wespath Benefits and Investments (the United Methodist Church pension, benefits and investment agency) and participation in the CIG.

***RESOLUTION

18/1. The Conference receives the report of the Joint Advisory Committee on the Ethics of Investment for the year to 31 March 2018.

APPENDIX

Governance: Role, Function and Membership of the Committee

Terms of Reference
The Joint Advisory Committee on the Ethics of Investment (JACEI) was established in 1983 by a Resolution of the Methodist Conference to provide a mechanism for the Methodist Church to tackle ethical dilemmas associated with investment and to report annually to the Conference. Its Terms of Reference, which were last revised in 2001, are as follows:

The Joint Advisory Committee of the Ethics of Investment shall have a Chair appointed by the Methodist Council. The Committee shall have five members appointed by the Central Finance Board of the Methodist Church (CFB) and five members appointed by the Methodist Council.

The function of the Committee shall be:

• to advise the CFB of ethical considerations relating to investment, it being accepted that the CFB legally has responsibility for making the final decision on the purchase or disposal of any share;
• to make public where appropriate any ethical policy of the CFB and in particular any investment decision taken on ethical grounds and any other advice the Committee may provide on ethical matters relating to investment;
• to report to the Conference on the workings of the Committee and in particular to comment on the performance of the CFB in managing the funds under its control.
according to an ethical stance which is in accordance with the aims of the Methodist Church.

The Committee expects to review and update its Terms of Reference during 2018.

**SRI reporting requirements**

In July 2000 regulations came into force obliging pension funds to consider their policy, if any, on socially responsible investment (SRI). In April 2005 similar requirements were extended to charities under the SORP guidelines. The UK Stewardship Code, published in July 2010, provides further clarity on reporting by investors. The CFB is investment manager to large pension funds that use the JACEI Conference Report as part of their assessment of CFB compliance with their SRI policies. The report should therefore enable trustee bodies to assess clearly whether the CFB has operated in a way consistent with the aims of the Methodist Church.

The CFB has been a signatory to the **UK Stewardship Code** since its inception in 2012, and its latest Statement of disclosure is available at www.cfbmethodistchurch.org.uk.

The CFB is rated a Tier I Signatory to the Code by the Financial Reporting Council (FRC).

**JACEI agendas**

JACEI receives at each meeting:

- the CFB work-plan;
- one or two major items for debate, usually Position Papers and Policy Statements either previously agreed by the Committee or requested by the CFB;
- other significant matters for discussion (including climate change and extractive industries as standing items);
- CFB engagement, including company notes and briefings;
- a CFB ethical performance review including the CEO Report, voting summary reports, ethical exclusions and a note of any disinvestment on ethical grounds;
- significant collaborative engagement work.

The Committee should:

- hold four meetings a year (in 2017/2018 five meetings took place in June, September, December February and March);
- have its own identity with an address located at Methodist Church House;
- advise the CFB in relation to current Methodist Church policy;
- examine all aspects of a company’s operations rather than simply focus on one particular issue;
- take responsibility, where appropriate, for making public any ethical policy of the CFB and in particular any investment decision taken on ethical grounds; and
• seek ways to make the advice provided by the Committee available to the wider Methodist Church.

Committee members are empowered to:

• contact the Secretary between meetings about issues of concern to them and to
• email their comments on position papers or other matters if unable to attend a particular meeting.

The Committee receives and reviews the CFB work plan at every meeting, which sets medium-term policy priorities.

The Committee revised its way of working during 2017/2018 following a strategy day held in February 2017. In order to maximise its use of time, routine items of business are now reported via a CEO Report to JACEI, which the Committee receives and reviews.

Committee membership
The Revd Dr Stephen Wigley is Chair of the Committee. He assumed the role of Chair on 1 July 2016.

The JACEI Chair is independent, nominated from among the membership of the District Chairs, and appointed by the Methodist Council.

Members nominated by the Methodist Council are:

• The Revd Dr Sheryl Anderson (from 1 July 2017)
• Professor Brian Gennery
• Ms Alison Jackson
• Ms Rachel Lampard
• Mr Chris Moorhouse

Nominated by the Central Finance Board (CFB) are:

• Dr Keith Aldred
• Mr Stephen Beer
• Mr Alan Emery
• Mr John Sandford
• Mr Terry Wynn

The Revd Dr John Stephens attended as a representative of the Trustees of the Methodist Church in Ireland until 12 March 2018, and is succeeded by Mr David Hopley.
In attendance from time to time to facilitate the workings of the Committee were: Mr David Palmer, Mr Christophe Borysiewicz, Mr Miles Askew, Mr Matthew Jones, Mr Matthew Richards, Mr Steve Hucklesby and Ms Sophie Leake.

The Special Advisor to the CFB, Mr Bill Seddon, also attends.

Ms Ashma Ponniah is the JACEI Minutes Secretary.

Mr Neville White is the CFB Ethical Consultant and JACEI Secretary. The Secretary can be contacted at: neville.white@cfbmethodistchurch.org.uk

The Committee has a reciprocal arrangement with the Church of England Ethical Investment Advisory Group (EIAG) whereby representatives of JACEI and the EIAG attend as observers of each other’s meetings and exchange minutes.

Mr Adam Matthews (Secretary to the EIAG) and Mr Stephen Barrie attended JACEI meetings in this capacity during the year. Mr Stephen Beer attended meetings of the EIAG.

Mr Richard Nunn, Chair of the United Reformed Church Ministers’ Pension Trust Ltd attends JACEI as an observer.

*Enquiries about the Committee’s work are encouraged, with letters to be addressed to the Committee’s Chair c/o 25 Marylebone Road, London NW1 5JR, or by email to: jaceichair@methodistchurch.org.uk.*

The CFB may be contacted through Mr Christophe Borysiewicz at 9 Bonhill Street, London EC2A 4PE Telephone: 020 7 496 3630 or email Christophe.borysiewicz@cfbmethodistchurch.org.uk
The New Room has seen a step change in its operation, as it seeks to maximise its potential as a place of pilgrimage, delight, worship, exploration, nourishment, community building and spiritual growth.

The new building, now open in the Horsefair Courtyard, has some snags still to be resolved and the final cost has not yet been established, but is likely to be around £2.3m (original contract £2.058m). It has been widely praised and has transformed the New Room aesthetically and functionally. We can now offer state of the art museum and library space, meeting rooms for education and training, a cafe and delightful atrium, associated shop, office accommodation for staff and up to date toilet facilities, as well as the incomparable chapel itself. Charles Wesley’s House at 4 Charles Street has been refurbished too as part of the overall project. The scale of activity both at and instigated from the New Room since last summer has been remarkable, and media interest continues to be keen. Increasingly, the staff are developing productive partnerships with other organisations, such as the Bristol Record Office, the District and local Circuit, Wellspring Healthy Living Centre and Second Step, a mental health charity. Monthly folk concerts are well-attended and the weekly lunchtime community choir has proved popular.

The challenge now is to ensure that what has been achieved can be expanded and sustained beyond the point at which the ongoing financial support from Heritage Lottery Fund ends – February 2020. The current income from the museum needs to treble, while that of the cafe, the shop and the events/room rental needs to double. Whether this can be achieved in the timescale remains to be seen. We will seek additional grants including those which support particular initiatives involving “hard to reach” groups. We call on Methodism to recognise not only the New Room’s worldwide significance but also its proven potential for mission and to respond with appropriate ongoing financial support.

The current New Room staff are funded in the following ways:
- Director (full time) - Connexion; David Worthington
- Assistant Manager (part time) - Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF); Elizabeth Worthington
- Education Officer (full time) - 50% HLF and 50% Bristol District; Mandy Briggs
- Community Engagement Officer (part-time) - HLF; Lucie Connors
- Visitor Services Officer (full time) - HLF; Louise Wratten
- Collections Manager (part time) - HLF; Kate Rogers
- Cafe Manager (full time) - New Room; Ewa Kozdeba
- Assistant Cafe Manager (full time) - New Room; Niamh Archbold

The senior staff member, previously called the Manager, has been renamed Director and,
though accountable to the Trustees, is accorded wider executive powers, being trusted to run the New Room in accordance with its aims and ethos.

New volunteers continue to be recruited: a significant number of overseas students among them. They all undergo a training programme which includes safeguarding training and input about the Wesleys and Methodism. Work with schools is expanding and brings in a modest income as well as raising awareness with teachers and pupils about Wesley, Methodism and other issues such as slavery and abolition in Bristol. The New Room enjoys a positive relationship with the Bristol and West Midlands region of the Learning and Development Network and often hosts events with them, especially book launches and talks.

The cafe has established itself as a delightful space in which to relax, promoting Fairtrade products and developing speciality snacks with great customer service. There is scope to encourage more events to take place with in-house catering, especially in the early evening. We are still facing some reluctance of casual or occasional visitors to visit the museum, for which there is an entrance fee. Previously, one could visit the Preachers’ Rooms without charge, though donations were expected. The exceptional quality of the museum is attested by all who experience it, and many plan a return visit, as they have not allowed enough time to do it justice.

Overall visitor numbers since we opened the new facilities have remained higher than ever previously recorded and it is expected that in the first year of opening some 36,000 visitors will be welcomed. The Friday lunchtime communion service continues to grow with a good number of regulars, and many groups schedule their visit in order to play an active part in it. To do so provides a highly valued spiritual experience.

It has become clear that our system of governance, which had only been slightly tweaked over decades, is no longer appropriate. Our Chair, the Revd A Ward Jones, the Warden, Gary Best and our Manager (now recognised as Director), David Worthington have worked diligently to devise a system much better suited to overseeing a complex enterprise relying on a varied team of staff and volunteers. This has been adopted by the Board of Trustees and will come into force from September 2018, subject to the Conference’s approval. The addition of the Secretary of the Conference or his/her nominated substitute as an ex-officio Trustee would provide a strong wider connexional link, and says a great deal about the significance that British Methodism now accords to mission through heritage.

Gary Best, in his roles as Warden, historian, author and the person who developed the concept of the new museum in the Preachers’ Rooms, has been key in the transformation of the New Room. Along with the Manager, David Worthington, he has devoted an enormous amount of time and energy over the years of the Horsefair Project, and now needs to moderate his input. He will remain in a capacity for which he is eminently fitted: that of Historical Consultant. The Trustees recognise that the name of Warden failed to describe Gary’s role. From September 2018 the name and the role will be discontinued. The role of Chair of the Trustees requires a
person of faith and foresight, preferably living in the vicinity, with proven leadership skills and
the ability to steer and champion the New Room through the next few years.

A number of Trustees who have served faithfully for years will be stepping down at the end of
this connexional year, though some will continue to be involved with the New Room in other
voluntary capacities. The following will be leaving: David Bainbridge, Jennifer Carpenter, Philip
Carter, Mike Culshaw, Stephen Duckworth, Martin Hunt, Jong-Sin Lee, Peter Knowles and Bob
Wood. We are particularly grateful to Peter Knowles, who, as Treasurer, has coped with the
vastly increased scale and complexity of our finances, and nonetheless has agreed to serve
as Assistant Treasurer, dealing with day-to-day transactions.

SUMMARY OF FINANCIAL STATEMENTS – YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2017

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<th>General Fund (Unrestricted)</th>
<th>Designated Funds (unrestricted)</th>
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***RESOLUTIONS

19/1. The Conference adopts the Report.

19/2. The Conference amends Standing Order 220 as follows:

(i) [deleted] the Secretary of the Conference;

19/3. The Conference appoints the following as the Managing Trustees of the New Room for 2018/19:

Chair - Mr John Savage

(i) The Secretary of the Conference or her/his nominated substitute.

(ii) The Chair of the Bristol District – the Revd Dr Jonathan Pye.

(iii) The Superintendent of the Bristol and South Gloucestershire Circuit – the Revd David Alderman.

(iv) Mrs Jane Allin, Mr Gary Best, the Revd Josette Crane, Mr Geoffrey Gollop (Treasurer), Mr John Hirst, the Revd A Ward Jones, Mrs Linda Jones (Secretary), Mrs Rachel Newton, Mr Niall Philips, Mr. Michael Rose, Mrs. Aroona Smith, Ms Anne Topping, the Revd David Weeks, the Revd Steven Wild.

Reasoned Statements:

The Revd Josette Crane undertook a placement at the New Room during her training and is currently “Without Appointment” and resident in the Bristol District. She brings her experience of serving as a trustee of Dorothy House Hospice.

Mrs Rachel Newton is trained in drama and has performed in the role of Susanna Wesley. She has contributed to the furnishing of Charles Wesley House and to activities there. She has previously served as a New Room Trustee.

Mr Niall Philips is the architect who fronted the Horsefair scheme.

Mr John Savage is a lay canon of Bristol Cathedral and a member of its governing body. He has recently retired after serving for 13 years as chair of the University Hospitals Bristol NHS Foundation Trust.

Ms Anne Topping brings a wide range of experience, including earlier consultancy to the New Room.
The Revd Steve Wild is Chair of the Cornwall District and a former President of the Conference. He has a passion for mission through heritage and serves on the Listed Buildings Advisory Committee.
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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

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 (eg, 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 (eg, 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 (e.g. 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
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.
Contact name and details

The Revd Ruth M Gee
Chair of the Council
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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
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 useable 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; i.e. 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% (4,496 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

21/2. The Conference appoints Mrs Jill Baker as Chair of the Council for 2018-2022. [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.
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’) set up by the Conference regional grouping of Districts. 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:

(vii) 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:

(vA) 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 it 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
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 O
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.

4. 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 involvedconnexionally 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. 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’ theological 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 2007, there has been a basic pattern

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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.
● 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.
21. Methodist Council, part 3

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.”
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.

(1Ai) 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
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
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 (e.g. 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 (e.g. 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.
<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</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>and directs that this be signed on its behalf by the chair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>of the Strategy and Resources Committee.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>23/3. The Conference notes the increases to pensions in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>payment from 1 September 2018.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>23/4. The Conference re-appoints Mr Ronald Calver and Mr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>John Wyatt from 1 September 2018 for a further three-year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>term.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>23/5. The Conference notes the retirement of Mr Colin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pearson and appoints Mr Andrew Gibbs as a Director of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Methodist Ministers’ Pension Trust Limited from 1 September</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2018.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>23/6. The Conference notes the retirement of the Revd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Andrew Walker and appoints the Revd John Illsley as a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Member Nominated Director of Methodist Ministers’ Pension</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Trust Limited from 1 September 2018.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>23/7. The Conference notes the retirement of the Revd Michael</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fielding and appoints Mrs Ruth Edmundson as a Member</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nominated Director of Methodist Ministers’ Pension Trust</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>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.
23. Methodist Ministers’ Pension Scheme (MMPS)

### 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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Consultations</th>
<th>The Methodist Council</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

### Impact

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Impact</th>
<th>The surplus will be retained in the Scheme as a buffer against future adverse experience.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

### 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:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2017</th>
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<td>Shortfall</td>
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<td>£138.4m</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>73.5%</td>
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**Increase in pensions in payment**

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.
23. Methodist Ministers’ Pension Scheme (MMPS)

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.
**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>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Benchmark asset allocation</th>
<th>Long term benchmark %</th>
<th>June 2018 benchmark %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Equity investment</td>
<td>56.0</td>
<td>56.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bond investment</td>
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<td>Property investment</td>
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<td>10.0</td>
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<td>Liability Driven Investment (&quot;LDI&quot;)</td>
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<td>Cash</td>
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</table>
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).

<table>
<thead>
<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>
<th>Pension increases Main Scheme (post 31 Aug 06)</th>
<th>Pension increases AVCs (pre 1 Sep 06)</th>
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<td>Non-pensioner discount rate</td>
<td>Pensioner discount rate</td>
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<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>
<td>Pension increases AVCs (post 31 Aug 06)</td>
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<td>Beyond 40 years</td>
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</table>
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)</th>
<th>Female death rate (q_x)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DML08</td>
<td>DFL08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>0.000333</td>
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<td>50</td>
<td>0.002063</td>
<td>0.001589</td>
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<td>55</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></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 100%</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>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60</td>
<td>0.003857</td>
<td>0.004214</td>
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<tr>
<td>65</td>
<td>0.005849</td>
<td>0.005496</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<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>
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<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 ($q_x$) 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%</th>
<th>Female dependants death rate ($q_x$) 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%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<td>0.005062</td>
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<tr>
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<td>0.007691</td>
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<td>90</td>
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<td>95</td>
<td>0.246524</td>
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<td>100</td>
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<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>Normal health $R_x$</th>
<th>Ill health $I_x$</th>
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<td>0.002</td>
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<td>NPD - 25</td>
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<td>NPD - 15</td>
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<td>NPD - 5</td>
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<tr>
<td>NPD - 4</td>
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<td>NPD - 3</td>
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<td>NPD - 2</td>
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<td>NPD - 1</td>
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<td>0.01</td>
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<tr>
<td>NPD</td>
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<td>0</td>
</tr>
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</table>

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

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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<tbody>
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<td>1,754</td>
<td>1,682</td>
<td>1,672</td>
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<td>572</td>
<td>590</td>
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<td>Facilities</td>
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<td>540</td>
<td>549</td>
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<td>Cost of Sales</td>
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<td>Insurance</td>
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<td><strong>42,554</strong></td>
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</table>

| Net Surplus/(Deficit)      | 14,392              | (4,698)             | (5,503)             | (5,307)             | (5,650)             |
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>
<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>17,607</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 relMAGINE 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>
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<tr>
<th>CC</th>
<th>Cost Centre</th>
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### Total Income

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<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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### Expenditure

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<th>2019/2020 (BUD) £000</th>
<th>2020/2021 (BUD) £000</th>
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<td>(119)</td>
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<td>(1,559)</td>
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### Total Expenditure

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<th>2018/2019 (BUD) £000</th>
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### Net expenditure

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<td>(5,603)</td>
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</table>
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.

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

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<tr>
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<th>2019</th>
<th>2020</th>
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**Expenditure**

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<tr>
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<td>(374)</td>
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<td>(175)</td>
<td>(173)</td>
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<td>(181)</td>
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<td>(678)</td>
<td>(573)</td>
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<td>(301)</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Frances Young House</td>
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<td>(156)</td>
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**Expenditure total**

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<th>2019</th>
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<tr>
<td>(5,901)</td>
<td>(5,851)</td>
<td>(6,428)</td>
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**D&M net expenditure**

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<th>2020</th>
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<th>2022</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(4,602)</td>
<td>(4,744)</td>
<td>(5,080)</td>
<td>(5,037)</td>
<td>(4,554)</td>
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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>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tr>
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<td>419</td>
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<tr>
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<td>125</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>461</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Income £000</th>
<th>Expenditure</th>
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<tr>
<td>Support Services</td>
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<tr>
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24. Connexional Central Services Budget for three years commencing with 2018/19

<table>
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<tbody>
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<td>450</td>
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<td>(571)</td>
<td>(522)</td>
<td>(529)</td>
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<td>(13)</td>
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<tr>
<td>455</td>
<td>Connexional Manses</td>
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<tr>
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<td>(88)</td>
<td>(101)</td>
<td>(102)</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Support Services in Manchester</td>
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<td>(118)</td>
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<td>(187)</td>
<td>(188)</td>
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<td><strong>Total Expenditure</strong></td>
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<td>(5,831)</td>
<td>(5,864)</td>
<td>(5,611)</td>
<td>(5,629)</td>
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<td><strong>Net expenditure</strong></td>
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<td>(4,434)</td>
<td>(4,821)</td>
<td>(4,876)</td>
<td>(4,608)</td>
<td>(4,613)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<td>330</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total Income</strong></td>
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<td><strong>596</strong></td>
<td><strong>598</strong></td>
<td><strong>587</strong></td>
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<table>
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<td>305 Communications &amp; Campaigns</td>
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<tr>
<td>310 Methodist Heritage</td>
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<td>311 Publications</td>
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<td>315 Modern Christian Art</td>
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<td>319 Engagement &amp; Marketing</td>
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<td>320 Fundraising</td>
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<tr>
<td>326 World Church Relationships</td>
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<td>327 One Mission</td>
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<tr>
<td>330 Public Issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>370 Interfaith Relations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Expenditure</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Net expenditure | (1,883) | (2,155) | (2,121) | (2,157) | (2,183) |

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

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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 |
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**Summary of content**

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**Summary of impact**

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## MCF assessment calculation 2018/2019

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25/1. The Conference adopts the district allocations of the assessment to the Methodist Church Fund (MCF) as set out in the Report.
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. Report of the Stationing Action Group

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

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<tr>
<td>Other Losses</td>
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<td>TOTAL LOSSES</td>
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<td>New Probationers</td>
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Number of Methodist deacons and probationers in the active work

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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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6 *Statements and Reports of the Methodist Church on Faith and Order*, vol. 2, pp 644-667.
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.
Introduction

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. 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.

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.

The World Council of Churches (WCC)

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. There is a fuller report elsewhere in the Agenda.

1 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.
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 Radcliffe 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.
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 case-work 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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<tr>
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<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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</tbody>
</table>
*DBS cases open at 31 August | 30 |
| DBS cases closed during this period | 20 |
| 50 |

*DBS cases closed during this period | 106 |
| 125 |
| 54 |

Non DBS cases open at 31 August 2016 | 362 |
| 68 |
| 86 |

Non DBS cases closed during this period | 37 |
| 85 |
| 52 |

Post PCR cases open at 31 August 2016 | 48 |
| 20 |
| 23 |

Post PCR cases closed during this period | 10 |
| 38 |
| 20 |

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.

| Risk assessments during connexional year | Sep 2015 – Aug 2016 | Sep 2016 – Aug 2017 |
| Number of panels commissioned and held | 18 | 22 |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcome</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Appeals</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Appeals</th>
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<tr>
<td>Not cleared</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Restrictions on role and safeguarding contract</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
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<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Resigned from role</td>
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<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.***
Contact name and details

The Revd Dr Nicola Price-Tebbutt
Secretary of the Faith and Order Committee
price-tebbuttn@methodistchurch.org.uk

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
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physically present with the presiding minister
to receive the elements.

Summary of content

Subject and aims
To provide a report on the work of the Faith and Order Committee

Main points
- The work of the Faith and Order Committee 2017/2018
- Ways of working
- Responses required by previous Conferences
- Scrutiny and consultation work
- Work being brought to the 2019 Conference

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)**
The proposed response from the Methodist Church to *The Call to Holiness: From Glory to Glory (2016)* is brought as a separate report. *The Call to Holiness* is the tenth report from the Joint International Commission for dialogue between the World Methodist Council and the Roman Catholic Church and it can be accessed here: http://worldmethodistconference.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/The-Call-to-Holiness-Final-copy-28062016.pdf

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/
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.
### Contact name and details

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Revd Dr Nicola Price-Tebbutt</th>
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<tbody>
<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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### Resolutions

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Resolution</th>
<th>Text</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>32/1</td>
<td>The Conference receives Part A of the Report.</td>
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<tr>
<td>32/2</td>
<td>The Conference receives Part B of the Report.</td>
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<tr>
<td>32/3</td>
<td>The Conference, pursuant to Standing Order 129 (2) and (3):</td>
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<td></td>
<td>(i) commends the draft Conference Statement ‘Ministry in the Methodist Church’ to the Connexion for study, discussion and response;</td>
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<td>(ii) directs the Secretary of the Conference to ensure that the draft Statement is made widely available for study and discussion.</td>
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<td>(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.</td>
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<td>32/4</td>
<td>The Conference receives part C of the Report.</td>
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<td>32/5</td>
<td>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.</td>
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<tr>
<td>32/6</td>
<td>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.</td>
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<td>32/7</td>
<td>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.</td>
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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.

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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 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.” 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.

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. 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.”

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.8

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.9 From God’s “reign and mission, exemplified in and established by Jesus”10, 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.11 The Church is a sign, foretaste and instrument of God’s kingdom.12 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. 1 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,13 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.14

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”\(^{15}\) 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.\(^{16}\)

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:

“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.”\(^{17}\)

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.\(^{18}\) 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
32. Ministry in the Methodist Church

Scriptural holiness.\textsuperscript{19} 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.”\textsuperscript{20} 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.”\textsuperscript{21} 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.\textsuperscript{22} Commitment to Christ “can truly be realized only in full participation in the worship, witness and service of the Christian community.”\textsuperscript{23} 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.”\textsuperscript{24}

\textsuperscript{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.”

\textsuperscript{20} John Wesley quoted in The Methodist Church, 1999, *Called to Love and Praise*, 4.3.9


\textsuperscript{22} The Methodist Church, 1999, *Called to Love and Praise*, 4.4.3

\textsuperscript{23} The Methodist Church, 1999, *Called to Love and Praise*, 4.4.8

\textsuperscript{24} World Council of Churches, 2013, *The Church Towards a Common Vision*, §25
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

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27 The Methodist Church, 1999, *Called to Love and Praise*, 4.4.2
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 church.
32. Ministry in the Methodist 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

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34 Methodist Conference Agenda, 1990, *the Ministry of the People of God in the World*, pp.539
35 The Methodist Church, 1985, *British Methodist Response to the Lima Text*, 2.4.0
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

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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

37 “The ministry of the people of God in the world is both the primary and the normative ministry of the Church.” Methodist Conference Agenda, 1990, the Ministry of the People of God in the World, pp.539
38 Methodist Conference Agenda, 1990, the Ministry of the People of God in the World, p.560, Resolution 2
39 The Methodist Church, A Catechism for the use of the people called Methodists, p.22
40 World Council of Churches, 2013, The Church Towards a Common Vision, §18
41 The Methodist Church, 1999, Called to Love and Praise, 4.5.3
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.”45 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,46 “in which Local Churches express and experience their interconnexion in the Body of Christ, for purposes of mission, mutual encouragement and help.”47 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.”48 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

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

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

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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.\textsuperscript{52} 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,\textsuperscript{53} 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?”\textsuperscript{54}

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”\textsuperscript{55} has always been intrinsic to Methodism. Methodists understand themselves as all related to each

\textsuperscript{52} The Methodist Church, 2000, \textit{Our Calling}
\textsuperscript{53} The Methodist Church, 1999, \textit{Called to Love and Praise}, 4.7.1
\textsuperscript{54} The Methodist Church, 1999, \textit{Called to Love and Praise}, 4.7.10
\textsuperscript{55} The Methodist Church, 1999, \textit{Called to Love and Praise}, 4.6.1 and see The Methodist Church, 2017, \textit{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.”\(^{59}\) 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.’\(^{60}\) 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.”\(^{61}\)

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.”\(^{62}\)

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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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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 fruition 69 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,

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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
Ministry in the Methodist Church

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."\textsuperscript{72} From time to time, it may need to be limited in the light of the needs of the whole Church.\textsuperscript{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 \textit{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,

\textsuperscript{72} The Methodist Church, 1999, \textit{Called to Love and Praise}, 4.6.6
\textsuperscript{73} The Methodist Church, 1999, \textit{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,\textsuperscript{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.”\textsuperscript{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.”\textsuperscript{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

\textsuperscript{74} The Methodist Church, 1974, *Ordination*, 6, 7

\textsuperscript{75} World Council of Churches, 1982, *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry*, M§§8, 12

\textsuperscript{76} The Methodist Church, 1985, *British Methodist Response to the Lima Text*, 4.3
the world.

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. 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.” 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...
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.²⁹ 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.”³⁰

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 other³¹ 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.³²

“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.”³³

This understanding that ministers are the sign of the presence and ministry of Christ is expressed, for example, when

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³¹ The Methodist Church, 2002, *What is a Presbyter?* 2
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.

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.”88 The intention in a Methodist ordination service is to ordain into the presbyterate or diaconate of the one holy catholic and apostolic 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.

89 The Methodist Church, 1974, Ordination, 5
90 The Methodist Church, 2002, Releasing Ministers for Ministry, 4.4
7.4.4.2. Although Methodist presbyters are not understood to be an exclusive order with a priestly character of their own, 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. 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.”

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). 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.”

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.”96

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.”97

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.”98

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 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.

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.

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.” \(^{100}\) 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

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100 Resolution 35/2, 2014
service, and the needs of the whole Church to enable the Methodist Church to be effective in its witness and mission.\textsuperscript{101} 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 \textit{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.\textsuperscript{102} In addition, the variety of expectations in the size of appointments described in the stationing profiles has been noted.\textsuperscript{103} During the consultation in relation to the \textit{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.

\textsuperscript{101} The Methodist Church, 1999, \textit{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.”

\textsuperscript{102} The Methodist Conference, 2017, report from the Stationing Committee, §1.3 and 2.2

\textsuperscript{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,” 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,” 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 issues as part of its work on ministry.

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 presbytery 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.\textsuperscript{107} 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.\textsuperscript{108}

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

\textsuperscript{107} The Methodist Conference, 2017, reply to Memorial 2
\textsuperscript{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.\textsuperscript{109} 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 itineracy 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

\textsuperscript{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.’ This work identified a need for some consideration and clarification of the following:

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, 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.


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
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.
## Contact name and details
The Revd Dr Nicola Price-Tebbutt  
Secretary of the Faith and Order Committee  
price-tebbuttn@methodistchurch.org.uk

## Resolutions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Resolution</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>33/1</td>
<td>The Conference receives the Report.</td>
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<tr>
<td>33/2</td>
<td>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.</td>
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## Summary of content and impact

### Subject and aims
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.

### 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)
  - *Embracing the Covenant* (2008)
  - *Moving Forward in Covenant* (2011)

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 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”. It challenged both churches to take “one bold initiative each in order to open the locked door which blocks the way forward together”, 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. 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.”

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”.11 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”,12 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.13 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
(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

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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 as 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.
MISSION AND MINISTRY IN COVENANT
Report from The Faith and Order bodies of the Church of England and the Methodist Church

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

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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. 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’.

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.

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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21 AMICUM, 2014, Into All the World, p 52.
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’. 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’.

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’. 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’. 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’.

24. Anglican ecumenical documents have repeatedly emphasised that the historic episcopate is not essential to being a true church. 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
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

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

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34 The Methodist Conference, 1985, British Methodist Response to the Lima Text, para 4.3.4 and 1999, Called to Love and Praise, para 4.6.9.
37 See Clause 4 of the Deed of Union.
38 Methodist Conference, 1985, British Methodist Response to the Lima Text, para 4.3.4.
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


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 (e.g. 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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44 JIC, 2008, Embracing the Covenant, p104.
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. 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 Connexion through their ministry of visitation. 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’, the duty to receive any application by a presbyter or deacon to resign 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.

A Challenge for the Methodist Church: A President-bishop

37. After taking account of the Methodist Church’s consideration of possible alternative models, 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. 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.
33. Faith and Order Committee Report:
The Mission and Ministry in Covenant Proposals

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.53 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’.

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
(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’.  


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.  


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 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

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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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⁶⁵ ICAOTD, *Church of the Triune God*, VI.17.

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.’\textsuperscript{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

68 See Will Adam, Legal Flexibility and the Mission of the Church: Dispensation and Economy in Ecclesiastical Law (Farnham: Ashgate, 2011).
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).

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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 Anglicans.

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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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. 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.’

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

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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).

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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...

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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 presbyters 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, presbyters / 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 presbyters / 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 presbyters / 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
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.
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

Subject and aims

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.

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

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1 It is noted that there is a separate fund, the Aspinall Robinson Trust, which may be used to offer financial support to deacons and their dependants. Its objects mirror those of the FSPD and like the FSPD, it is managed by the Connexional Allowances Committee. Throughout this report, wherever mention is made of the FSPD, it is taken to include the provision of the Aspinall Robinson Trust for deacons.

2 2015 Agenda section 46, page 446, paragraph 3.11.


4 It is noted that SO 364(1) specifically mentions that the FSPD may make grants to MMHS.


6 Notice of Motion 2017/207.

7 The group comprised John Bell (CAC), Mairi Johnstone and Sharon Green (MMHS), Meena Tooray (MMPS), the Revd Dr Jonathan Hustler (Conference Office) and Linda Robotham (Wellbeing Officer).
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 friends8.

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.

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% 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.

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. 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 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

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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.

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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 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.
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\(^{16}\): 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\textsuperscript{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\textsuperscript{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\textsuperscript{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\textsuperscript{20} that retired colleagues (and widows and widowers) are aware of their statutory rights to benefits

\textsuperscript{17} The example given in paragraph 2.9 attests to this.

\textsuperscript{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.

\textsuperscript{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.

\textsuperscript{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.
(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.
### Resolutions

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<td>35/2.</td>
<td>The Conference commends <em>The Call to Holiness: From Glory to Glory</em> to the Methodist people for study and discussion.</td>
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### 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. |
|------------------| 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). 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:

- Durban: *Encountering Christ the Saviour: Church and Sacraments, 2011*
- Seoul: *The Grace Given You in Christ: Catholics and Methodists Reflect Further on the Church, 2006*
- Brighton: *Speaking the Truth in Love: Teaching Authority among Catholics and Methodists, 2001*
- Singapore: *The Apostolic Tradition, 1991*
- Nairobi: *Towards a Statement on the Church, 1986*
- Dublin: *Growth in Understanding, 1976*
- Denver: *The Denver Report, 1971*

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).

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).

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.

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

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;6 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;
elt 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.”7

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.8 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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6 Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes, 1999, The Methodist Worship Book. See, for examples, pages 36, 166, 177, 188-9, and 214
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

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11 The Methodist Church, 1999, Call 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
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)\(^{12}\)

***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.

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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)
| 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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject and aims</th>
<th>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.</th>
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</table>
| 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  
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<td>Resolution</td>
<td>37/1. The Conference receives the Report.</td>
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**Summary of content and impact**

**Subject and aims**

A report on the World Council of Churches (WCC) Conference on World Mission and Evangelism,  
‘Moving in the Spirit: called to transforming discipleship’  
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.
## 38. Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes (TMCP)

| **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 |
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<tr>
<td><strong>Subject and aims</strong></td>
<td>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.</td>
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</table>
| **Resolutions** | 38/1. The Conference receives the Report.  
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.  
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. |
| **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. |
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 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 Trustee 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>
<td></td>
</tr>
</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 - Property Transactions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>2015-16</th>
<th>2016-17</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sales</td>
<td>111</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purchases</td>
<td>14</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leases</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AST</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Licences</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Major</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development</td>
<td></td>
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</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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Revd Rosemarie Clarke</th>
<th>Mr John Bell</th>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Mr G Alan Pimlott</td>
<td>Mr Ian White</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

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 £1.2million 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.
**Contact name and details**  
Edward A L Wallace  
General Secretary and non-official trustee

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Resolutions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>40/1. The Conference receives the Report.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40/2. The Conference approves the actions proposed in paragraph 6.4 of the Report.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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.
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.
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 £’000s</th>
<th>Net Creations/ Cancellations £’000s</th>
<th>Change in Net Assets £’000s</th>
<th>Net Assets at 28/2/2018 £’000s</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<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</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</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>
</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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fund</th>
<th>£11.58m</th>
<th>Fund</th>
<th>-1.30</th>
<th>3.09</th>
<th>3.71</th>
<th>5.35</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Benchmark</td>
<td>-1.22</td>
<td>3.40</td>
<td>4.13</td>
<td>5.49</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excess return</td>
<td>-0.08</td>
<td>-0.31</td>
<td>-0.42</td>
<td>-0.14</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fund</th>
<th>£21.14m</th>
<th>Fund</th>
<th>-0.93</th>
<th>6.97</th>
<th>6.80</th>
<th>7.50</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Benchmark</td>
<td>-1.22</td>
<td>7.48</td>
<td>7.25</td>
<td>7.69</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excess return</td>
<td>0.29</td>
<td>-0.51</td>
<td>-0.45</td>
<td>-0.19</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fund</th>
<th>£17.85m</th>
<th>Fund</th>
<th>-1.34</th>
<th>1.59</th>
<th>1.66</th>
<th>3.96</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Benchmark</td>
<td>-1.51</td>
<td>1.65</td>
<td>1.76</td>
<td>3.88</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excess return</td>
<td>0.17</td>
<td>-0.06</td>
<td>-0.10</td>
<td>0.08</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fund</th>
<th>£100.26m</th>
<th>Fund</th>
<th>-0.39</th>
<th>3.04</th>
<th>4.28</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Benchmark</td>
<td>0.18</td>
<td>3.48</td>
<td>4.76</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excess return</td>
<td>-0.57</td>
<td>-0.44</td>
<td>-0.48</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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>%</td>
<td>% p.a.</td>
<td>% p.a.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Equity**

- **CFB UK Equity Fund**
  - +5.0
  - +7.5
  - +6.6
- **FTSE All Share Index**
  - +4.4
  - +7.3
  - +6.6
- **CFB proprietary ethical Index**
  - +4.4
  - +7.4
  - +6.6
- **FTSE All Share Index (traditional ethical adjustment)**
  - +5.5
  - +7.1
  - +6.2
- **CFB Overseas Fund**
  - +7.3
  - +12.9
  - +10.4
- **FTSE All World ex UK Index**
  - +8.1
  - +13.4
  - +10.6
- **CFB Managed Equity Fund**
  - +5.5
  - +8.4
  - +7.2
- **Managed Equity Fund Composite Index**
  - +5.0
  - +8.2
  - +7.3
- **Managed Equity Fund Composite Index (using CFB proprietary UK Index)**
  - +5.0
  - +8.3
  - +7.2
- **Managed Equity Fund Composite Index (using traditional UK ethical adjustment)**
  - +5.9
  - +8.1
  - +6.9
- **CFB Managed Mixed Fund**
  - +5.1
  - +7.9
  - +7.1
- **Managed Mixed Composite Index**
  - Not currently available
- **Managed Mixed Composite Index (using CFB proprietary UK Index)**
  - Not currently available
- **Managed Mixed Composite Index (using traditional UK ethical adjustment)**
  - Not currently available

**Fixed Interest**

- **CFB Managed Fixed Interest Fund**
  - -1.2
  - +2.8
  - +4.8
- **Managed Fixed Interest Composite**
  - -1.1
  - +3.1
  - +4.8
- **CFB Short Fixed Interest Fund**
  - -1.3
  - +1.7
  - +4.0
- **Short Gilt Composite Index**
  - -1.5
  - +1.8
  - +3.9
- **CFB Gilt Fund**
  - -1.3
  - +3.7
  - +5.4
- **FTSE All Stock Gilt Index**
  - -1.2
  - +4.1
  - +5.5
- **CFB Corporate Bond Fund**
  - -0.2
  - +4.4
  - +6.3
- **Corporate Bond Composite Index**
  - +0.2
  - +4.7
  - +5.7

**Inflation Linked**

- **CFB Inflation Linked Fund**
  - -0.9
  - +6.8
  - +7.5
- **FTSE All Stock Index Linked Index (gilt only)**
  - -1.2
  - +7.3
  - +7.7

**Property**

- **CFB Property Fund**
  - +11.8
  - +11.7
  - +4.4
- **IPD All Balanced Funds Index**
  - +10.2
  - +10.3
  - +3.8

**Cash (AERs)**

- **CFB Deposit Fund**
  - +0.3
  - +0.6
  - +1.3
- **1 Week LIBID**
  - +0.2
  - +0.3
  - +0.7

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1 Source: CFB  
2 Source: IPD  
3 Performance to 31 December 2018
***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.
Lay and Probationer Authorisations 1987–2017

- Lay
- Probationers
- Expon. (Lay)
- Expon. (Probationers)
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:

_AUTHORISATIONS 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>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12/3</td>
<td>Falmouth and Gwennap</td>
<td>Gerald Triggs</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12/5</td>
<td>Newquay, Perranporth and St Agnes</td>
<td>Clare J Anderson</td>
<td>P</td>
</tr>
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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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<tr>
<td>12/5</td>
<td>Newquay, Perranporth and St Agnes</td>
<td>Miranda Knight</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12/7</td>
<td>St Austell</td>
<td>John Keast</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date/Week</td>
<td>Area/Place</td>
<td>Member Name</td>
<td>Membership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>--------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12/8</td>
<td>Bodmin, Padstow and Wadebridge</td>
<td>Roderick Harrison</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12/12</td>
<td>St Ives (Fore Street)</td>
<td>W Rodney Orr</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<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>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13/3</td>
<td>Stockton</td>
<td>A Keith Robinson</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14/10</td>
<td>Norfolk Broads</td>
<td>Shaun Cushion</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18/13</td>
<td>Sankey Valley</td>
<td>Sian Williams</td>
<td>P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19/8</td>
<td>Altrincham</td>
<td>Shirley Blinston</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19/11</td>
<td>Oldham and Saddleworth</td>
<td>Natalie Hackett</td>
<td>P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19/11</td>
<td>Oldham and Saddleworth</td>
<td>Graham Radcliffe</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22/14</td>
<td>Mid Derbyshire</td>
<td>Keith Bryan</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22/14</td>
<td>Mid Derbyshire</td>
<td>John P Malnutt</td>
<td>P</td>
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<tr>
<td>23/1</td>
<td>Oxford</td>
<td>Paul G Carter</td>
<td>P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23/7</td>
<td>Leicester (Trinity)</td>
<td>D Jervis Yovan</td>
<td>P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23/9</td>
<td>Leicester (West)</td>
<td>Judith Lincoln</td>
<td>P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<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>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23/12</td>
<td>Melton Mowbray</td>
<td>Michael Thompson</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23/29</td>
<td>Vale of Aylesbury</td>
<td>Arthur Sara</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24/11</td>
<td>Bude and Holsworthy</td>
<td>Muriel Hodges</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24/11</td>
<td>Bude and Holsworthy</td>
<td>Clive Smale</td>
<td>L</td>
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<tr>
<td>24/20</td>
<td>Ilfracombe and Barnstaple</td>
<td>Martin Reardon</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25/1</td>
<td>Sheffield</td>
<td>Melissa Quinn</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25/11</td>
<td>Bolsover and Stavely</td>
<td>Kevin Laming</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25/14</td>
<td>Doncaster</td>
<td>Susanna Brookes</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25/14</td>
<td>Doncaster</td>
<td>Christine Ogley</td>
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<tr>
<td>25/14</td>
<td>Doncaster</td>
<td>Barry Parker</td>
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<tr>
<td>25/14</td>
<td>Doncaster</td>
<td>Steven Willimott</td>
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<td>Barnsley</td>
<td>Ben Scrivens</td>
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<tr>
<td>26/8</td>
<td>Dorset South and West</td>
<td>Pam Woodland</td>
<td>L</td>
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<tr>
<td>26/10</td>
<td>Christchurch and Wimborne</td>
<td>Phillip Dixon</td>
<td>P</td>
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<tr>
<td>26/11</td>
<td>Isle of Wight</td>
<td>Maralyn Hollingshead</td>
<td>L</td>
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<td>26/11</td>
<td>Isle of Wight</td>
<td>Marian Izzard</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27/2</td>
<td>Leeds (North and East)</td>
<td>Rebecca Stennett</td>
<td>P</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
28/1  Wolverhampton  Samantha Hagerman  P
28/3  Shropshire and Marches  Ruth Downes  L
28/5  Vale of Stour  Josephine Soon  P
28/13 Dudley and Netherton  William J Jones  L
28/13 Dudley and Netherton  Peter Roberts  L
29/32 South Holderness  Thomas J Parker  P
31/2  Strathclyde  Susan B Taylor  P
34/1 North Bedfordshire  Dalwyn R Attwell  P
34/4 South Bedfordshire  Colin Quine  L
34/10 Southend and Leigh  Steve Mayo  L
34/15 North Hertfordshire  Christine Warren  L
35/12 London Mission (North West)  Esther Akam  P
35/22 New River  Matthew Lunn  P
35/36 Harrow And Hillingdon  Kenneth P Kingston  P
36/6 Wey Valley  Sydney S Ekundayo Lake  P
36/25 South Kent  Joy P Brumwell  L
36/25 South Kent  Hugh Burnham  L

**LIST B – Renewals after one year for applications granted in 2017**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Circuit no</th>
<th>Circuit name</th>
<th>Application</th>
<th>Cat</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2/9</td>
<td>Cardiff</td>
<td>Anne (Alana) Lawrence</td>
<td>P</td>
</tr>
<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 Bintliiff</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>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12/19</td>
<td>Liskeard and Looe</td>
<td>David Nicholls</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reference</td>
<td>Position</td>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Role</td>
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<tr>
<td>13/4</td>
<td>Castle Eden</td>
<td>John G Kidd</td>
<td>L</td>
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<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>
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<tr>
<td>15/1</td>
<td>Isle of Man</td>
<td>Andrew G Fishburne</td>
<td>P</td>
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<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>
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<tr>
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<td>Hinckley</td>
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<td>23/19</td>
<td>Kettering and Corby</td>
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<td>23/19</td>
<td>Kettering and Corby</td>
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<td>Kettering and Corby</td>
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<td>South Devon</td>
<td>Rachel A Mitchell</td>
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<td>24/11</td>
<td>Bude and Holsworthy</td>
<td>Courtney Drew</td>
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<td>Bude and Holsworthy</td>
<td>Michael Reeves</td>
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<td>24/16</td>
<td>Tiverton and Wellington</td>
<td>Anne Browse</td>
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<td>Tiverton and Wellington</td>
<td>Hilary Young</td>
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<td>Sylvia Edwards</td>
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<td>South Molton and Ringsash</td>
<td>Gloria Manning</td>
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<td>Ringsash</td>
<td>Colin Rice</td>
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<td>25/15</td>
<td>Barnsley</td>
<td>Claire E Rawlinson</td>
<td>P</td>
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<tr>
<td>25/17</td>
<td>Rotherham and Dearne Valley</td>
<td>Wayne Ashton</td>
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<tr>
<td>26/4</td>
<td>Basingstoke and Reading</td>
<td>Terry Rowell</td>
<td>L</td>
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<tr>
<td>26/4</td>
<td>Basingstoke and Reading</td>
<td>Sarah Whithorn</td>
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Authorisations Committee

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Circuit Name</th>
<th>Application</th>
<th>Cat</th>
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</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>
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<tr>
<td>32/1</td>
<td>Lerwick and Walls</td>
<td>David M Lees</td>
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<tr>
<td>34/4</td>
<td>South Bedfordshire</td>
<td>Martin Wallis</td>
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<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>
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<tr>
<td>34/9</td>
<td>Chelmsford</td>
<td>Sue Johnson</td>
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<td>34/9</td>
<td>Chelmsford</td>
<td>Gillian Songer</td>
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<tr>
<td>34/14</td>
<td>West Hertfordshire and Borders</td>
<td>Mmasape Zihle</td>
<td>P</td>
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<tr>
<td>35/28</td>
<td>Blackheath and Crystal Palace</td>
<td>Alberta Konadu-Yiadom</td>
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<tr>
<td>35/31</td>
<td>Barking, Dagenham and Ilford</td>
<td>Kido Baek</td>
<td>P</td>
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<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>
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**LIST C – Renewals after two years initially granted in 2016**

<table>
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<th>Circuit no</th>
<th>Circuit name</th>
<th>Application</th>
<th>Cat</th>
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</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 (Glannau Maelor)</td>
<td>Philip Davies</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/1</td>
<td>Cymru (Glannau Maelor)</td>
<td>Goronwy Ellis</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/1</td>
<td>Cymru (Glannau Maelor)</td>
<td>Maryl Rees</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/1</td>
<td>Cymru (Glannau 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>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Role</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
<td>------</td>
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<tr>
<td>6/5</td>
<td>Wigan</td>
<td>Jim Whelan</td>
<td>L</td>
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<tr>
<td>9/4</td>
<td>Whitehaven</td>
<td>David Andrews</td>
<td>L</td>
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<tr>
<td>9/4</td>
<td>Whitehaven</td>
<td>Alan Moore</td>
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<tr>
<td>9/7</td>
<td>Kirkby Stephen, Appleby and Tebay</td>
<td>David Askew</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/7</td>
<td>Kirkby Stephen, Appleby and Tebay</td>
<td>Wilf Capstick</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/7</td>
<td>Kirkby Stephen, Appleby and Tebay</td>
<td>Donald Marston</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/14</td>
<td>South Lakes</td>
<td>John Biggs</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/16</td>
<td>South West Cumbria United Area</td>
<td>Bob Mantle</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/16</td>
<td>South West Cumbria United Area</td>
<td>Janet Ladds</td>
<td>L</td>
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<tr>
<td>12/1</td>
<td>Camborne-Redruth and Hayle</td>
<td>Marquis Honeychurch</td>
<td>L</td>
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<tr>
<td>12/3</td>
<td>Falmouth and Gwennap</td>
<td>Mike Ely</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12/3</td>
<td>Falmouth and Gwennap</td>
<td>Jenny Lockwood</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12/5</td>
<td>Newquay, Perranporth and St Agnes</td>
<td>Christine Roberts</td>
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<tr>
<td>12/7</td>
<td>St Austell</td>
<td>Sheila Allen</td>
<td>L</td>
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<tr>
<td>12/7</td>
<td>St Austell</td>
<td>Bernard Goudge</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12/7</td>
<td>St Austell</td>
<td>Mary Lightfoot</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12/7</td>
<td>St Austell</td>
<td>Tony Warren</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12/8</td>
<td>Bodmin, Padstow and Wadebridge</td>
<td>Anita Baker</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12/8</td>
<td>Bodmin, Padstow and Wadebridge</td>
<td>Val Sterling</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12/8</td>
<td>Bodmin, Padstow and Wadebridge</td>
<td>Myra Williams</td>
<td>L</td>
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<td>12/20</td>
<td>Camelford and Week St Mary</td>
<td>Glenton Brown</td>
<td>L</td>
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<td>12/20</td>
<td>Camelford and Week St Mary</td>
<td>Robin Heywood</td>
<td>L</td>
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<tr>
<td>12/20</td>
<td>Camelford and Week St Mary</td>
<td>Brian Parkman</td>
<td>L</td>
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<tr>
<td>15/1</td>
<td>Isle of Man</td>
<td>Nicholas Owen</td>
<td>L</td>
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<tr>
<td>17/6</td>
<td>East Lincolnshire</td>
<td>Deryck Hand</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17/6</td>
<td>East Lincolnshire</td>
<td>Keith Locke</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17/6</td>
<td>East Lincolnshire</td>
<td>Roger Maidens</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22/14</td>
<td>Mid Derbyshire</td>
<td>John Moorley</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22/14</td>
<td>Mid Derbyshire</td>
<td>Valerie Rolliisson</td>
<td>L</td>
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<tr>
<td>23/12</td>
<td>Melton Mowbray</td>
<td>Jenny Oliver</td>
<td>L</td>
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<tr>
<td>23/14</td>
<td>Rugby and Daventry</td>
<td>Christine Herrington</td>
<td>L</td>
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<tr>
<td>23/28</td>
<td>Amersham</td>
<td>John Poston</td>
<td>L</td>
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<td>Amersham</td>
<td>Pamela A Sitford</td>
<td>L</td>
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<tr>
<td>24/20</td>
<td>Ilfracombe and Barnstaple</td>
<td>Geoffrey Harding</td>
<td>L</td>
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<td>Brenda Prentice</td>
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<td>24/23</td>
<td>Torridge</td>
<td>David Ley</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Area</td>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Title</td>
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<td>25/1</td>
<td>Sheffield</td>
<td>Keith Blinston</td>
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<tr>
<td>25/14</td>
<td>Doncaster</td>
<td>Sue Pickering</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25/17</td>
<td>Rotherham and Dearne Valley</td>
<td>Anne Holmes</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26/2</td>
<td>Winchester, Eastleigh and Romsey</td>
<td>Fay Spencer</td>
<td>L</td>
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<td>26/4</td>
<td>Basingstoke and Reading</td>
<td>Patricia Jose</td>
<td>L</td>
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<tr>
<td>26/5</td>
<td>Yeovil and Blackmore Vale</td>
<td>Margaret Whitford</td>
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<td>26/11</td>
<td>Isle of Wight</td>
<td>Margaret Potts</td>
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<td>26/11</td>
<td>Isle of Wight</td>
<td>John Wells</td>
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<tr>
<td>27/18</td>
<td>Skipton and Grassington</td>
<td>Jane Jolly</td>
<td>L</td>
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<tr>
<td>35/28</td>
<td>Blackheath and Crystal Palace</td>
<td>Alberta Konadu-Yiadom</td>
<td>P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36/21</td>
<td>North Kent</td>
<td>Bart Woodhouse</td>
<td>L (M)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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**

<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) | 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.
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
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 appropriate Connexional Team member responsible for presbyteral or diaconal candidates shall obtain:

(i) particulars of the applicant’s ordination, if any, and ministry or service to date;
(ii) references from two referees nominated by the applicant, one of whom shall be a lay person;

(iiA) evidence that before applying under clause (2) above the applicant held a conversation or conversations about the proposed application with the appropriate senior officer in his or her conference or church, and of their content and outcome;
(iii) reports by a responsible representative of the applicant’s existing denomination and by a Methodist presbyter or deacon who knows the applicant, neither being one of the referees in (ii) above;

    c) The Ministries Committee recommended that clarity was provided in Standing Orders as to the requirements for a psychological assessment when a minister is transferring between churches and the implications of the assessments. The necessary Standing Order amendments are set out below:-

730 Ministerial Transfer between Churches

[...]

(5) **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 presbyteral 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>
<th>First name(s)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Akam</td>
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<td>2020</td>
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<td>Clare</td>
<td>2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Dalwyn Ronald</td>
<td>2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Kido</td>
<td>2019</td>
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<td>Balsdon</td>
<td>Daniel James</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bintliff</td>
<td>David Jonathan</td>
<td>2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+ Bondzi-Simpson</td>
<td>Georgina Felicia Tutuaa</td>
<td>2021</td>
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<tr>
<td>Borrett</td>
<td>Raymond Frederick Paul</td>
<td>2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Briggs</td>
<td>Nicola Ann</td>
<td>2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broadbent-Kelly</td>
<td>Donna Marie</td>
<td>2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+ Brooks</td>
<td>Elisabeth Karen</td>
<td>2022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broughton</td>
<td>Timothy Charles</td>
<td>2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+ Carrick</td>
<td>Mark</td>
<td>2022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carter</td>
<td>Paul Graham</td>
<td>2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cauldwell</td>
<td>Grace</td>
<td>2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>2021</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cheung</td>
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<td>2020</td>
</tr>
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<td>Jason</td>
<td>2021</td>
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<td>Darling</td>
<td>Tracey Anne</td>
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<tr>
<td>+ Delves</td>
<td>Ria Vanessa</td>
<td>2022</td>
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<td>Phillip Anthony</td>
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<td>2021</td>
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<td>Natalie Jade</td>
<td>2020</td>
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<td>Sarah Jane</td>
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<td>Anne</td>
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<td>+ Leather</td>
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<td>Lunn</td>
<td>Matthew</td>
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<td>Mahoney</td>
<td>Alexis Jack</td>
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<td>Scrivens</td>
<td>Benjamin</td>
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<td>Shanganya</td>
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<td>Sheard</td>
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<td>Simpson</td>
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<td>Singh</td>
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<td>Smith</td>
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<tr>
<td>Soon</td>
<td>Josephine Ah Moi</td>
<td>2020</td>
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<td>2020</td>
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<td>Williams</td>
<td>Karen Sian</td>
<td>2020</td>
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<td>Wills</td>
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<td>2020</td>
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<tr>
<td>+ Wright</td>
<td>Rebecca Helen</td>
<td>2021</td>
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<tr>
<td>Yovan</td>
<td>Jervis Daniel</td>
<td>2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zihle</td>
<td>Mmasape Temana</td>
<td>2019</td>
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</table>
***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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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Surname</th>
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<td>Deborah Lee</td>
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<td>Connor</td>
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<td>Liam Benjamin</td>
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<td>Drost</td>
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<td>Dunstan</td>
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<td>Fox</td>
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<td>Christopher Andrew</td>
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<td>Madenyika</td>
<td>Charity Dambudzo</td>
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<tr>
<td>Makin</td>
<td>Angela Louise</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mapamula</td>
<td>Farai</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McAlloon</td>
<td>David</td>
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47. Ministerial Candidates’ and Probationers’ Oversight Committee

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
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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.”
48. Climate change and fossil fuels: an update

***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.
49. Presbyteral transfers and reinstatements

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
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.
51. Committee Appointments

***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
Stephen J Poxon

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 Beaven;
   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.
(iii) The Superintendent Ministers of every Circuit in the District (not otherwise
    appointed): the Revds Andrew M Baker, John T Beadle, Dr John McNeill and
    Edward J Sykes.
(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:
(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 Daigleaye, 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-Foyin</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>
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<tr>
<td>Richard H Barley</td>
<td>(16)</td>
<td>Graham W Hindle</td>
<td>(33)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ian 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>
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<td>Inderjit S Bhogal</td>
<td>(42)</td>
<td>Nicholas R Holt</td>
<td>(36)</td>
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<td>Barry Bishop</td>
<td>(15)</td>
<td>Keith Hopper</td>
<td>(22)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Alan J Bolton</td>
<td>(25)</td>
<td>* Christine M Jewitt</td>
<td>(17)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Amanda J Boon</td>
<td>(14)</td>
<td>Kavula J John</td>
<td>(19)</td>
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<td>Geoffrey C Boxer</td>
<td>(36)</td>
<td>Graham R Kent</td>
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<td>Derick Chambers</td>
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<td>R Andrew Laird</td>
<td>(16)</td>
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<td>Philip A Clarke</td>
<td>(40)</td>
<td>* Jong Sin Lee</td>
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<td>Susan B Conroy</td>
<td>(20)</td>
<td>J Peter F Levitt</td>
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<td>Margaret Crawshaw</td>
<td>(18)</td>
<td>Philip Luscombe</td>
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<td>Patricia M Creamer</td>
<td>(43)</td>
<td>* Robert C Manning</td>
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<td>* Joseph Daley</td>
<td>(26)</td>
<td>Stephen R Mares</td>
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<td>Judy M Davies</td>
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<td>John R Marriott</td>
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<td>Philip R Dew</td>
<td>(23)</td>
<td>David P Martin</td>
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<td>Ian T Farnsworth</td>
<td>(20)</td>
<td>* Graham J Miles</td>
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<td>David M Firth</td>
<td>(35)</td>
<td>Andrew J Mumford</td>
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<td>John Fisher</td>
<td>(12)</td>
<td>David Musgrave</td>
<td>(10)</td>
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<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*
54. Report to the Representative Session of business conducted by the Conference Diaconal Committee

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

* = 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***


54/2. *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>
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<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>
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<tr>
<td>Japhet K Kabilu</td>
<td>29/14</td>
<td>Methodist Church Kenya</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jimione Kaci</td>
<td>28/9</td>
<td>Methodist Church Fiji</td>
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<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>
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<tr>
<td>Gary J Molver</td>
<td>5/16</td>
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<td>Michael Moon</td>
<td>34/10</td>
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<td>Rachel Muthoni</td>
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<td>Ung Soon Nguang</td>
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<td>Adam Nyawo</td>
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<tr>
<td>Henry Chilemeze Ohakah</td>
<td>25/1</td>
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<td>Romeo R Pedro</td>
<td>23/13</td>
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<td>Robert L Roberts</td>
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<td>Cleopas Sibanda</td>
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<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

Robert J Birnie 26/FC
Noreen S Daley-Lee 36/21
Rachel L Frank 5/1
Robert J Kasema 23/9
David Kent 27/35
Krystyna H Kwarcia 19/1
Chellaian Lawrence 35/5
Mark R Mander 26/FC
Debora K Marschner 25/1
Michael A Ogwuche 18/17
John C Peet 27/31
Lansford H Penn-Timity 29/32
Douglas S Rix 24/8
Israel Selvanayagam 5/15
Teddy Siwila 28/1
J Martin Whitehead 6/4
Alex Yesudas 21/15

***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.
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
23. The Revd Ruth M Gee Darlington dual qualification
24. The Revd Julian M Pursehouse East Anglia
25. The Revd Richard Hall Isle of Man
26. The Revd Bruce D Thompson Lincolnshire
27. The Revd Dr Sheryl M Anderson Liverpool
28. The Revd Dr Andrew J Lunn Manchester and Stockport
29. The Revd Stephen J Lindridge Newcastle upon Tyne
30. The Revd Paul H Davis Lancashire
31. The Revd Loraine N Mellor Nottingham and Derby dual qualification
32. The Revd Helen D Cameron Northampton
33. The Revd Graham Thompson Plymouth and Exeter
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Place</th>
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<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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<td>The Revd Dr Roger L Walton</td>
<td>Yorkshire West dual qualification</td>
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<td>35</td>
<td>The Revd Rachel E Parkinson</td>
<td>Wolverhampton and Shrewsbury</td>
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<tr>
<td>36</td>
<td>The Revd Leslie M Newton</td>
<td>Yorkshire North and East</td>
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<td>The Revd David P Easton</td>
<td>Scotland</td>
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<tr>
<td>38</td>
<td>The Revd David M Chapman</td>
<td>Bedfordshire, Essex and Hertfordshire</td>
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<tr>
<td>39</td>
<td>The Revd Michaela A Youngson</td>
<td>London dual qualification</td>
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<td>40</td>
<td>The Revd Rachel E Parkinson</td>
<td>London</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41</td>
<td>The Revd John Hellyer</td>
<td>South-East</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Warden of the Methodist Diaconal Order (DU (14)(2)(vi))**

41 Deacon Karen McBride

**Representatives from the Irish Conference**

42 The Revd William A Davison (President, Methodist Conference in Ireland) (DU14(2)(vii))
43 The Revd Dr Thomas McKnight (Secretary, Methodist Conference in Ireland) (DU 14(3))
44 Mrs Nicky Hazley
45 Mrs Lynda Neilands

**Representatives of United Methodist Church (DU 14(3))**

46 Bishop Rosemarie Wenner
47 Ms Daphne Creasman

**Conference-elected Representatives (DU 14(2)(ix) (DU 14(5) SO 103)**

**Retiring in 2018**

48 Ms Rachel Allison
49 Deacon Eunice Attwood
50 Mr John Cooper

**Retiring in 2019**

51 The Revd Dr Jane V Craske
52 Dr Stephen Leah
53 The Revd Elaine M Lindridge
### Members of the Conference 2018

**Retiring in 2020**

54 Mrs Ruby Beech  
55 The Revd David M Goodall  
56 The Revd Kenneth G Howcroft  

**Representatives of Connexional and Other Bodies (SO 102)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Role / Committee</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>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>59</td>
<td>Prof Peter D Howdle</td>
<td>Chair, Strategy and Resources Committee (i)(c)</td>
</tr>
<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>
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<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>
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<tr>
<td>66</td>
<td>The Revd Dr Nicola V Price-Tebbutt</td>
<td>Faith and Order 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>
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<tr>
<td>72</td>
<td>The Revd Daniel M Mwailu</td>
<td>concerns of equality, diversity and inclusion</td>
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<td>73</td>
<td>The Revd Stephen J Poxon</td>
<td>concerns of equality, diversity and inclusion</td>
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<tr>
<td>74</td>
<td>Ms Jasmine F Yeboah</td>
<td>concerns of equality, diversity and inclusion</td>
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<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>
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<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>
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<td>79</td>
<td>Ms Ruth Hall</td>
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<td>The Revd R Martin Evans-Jones</td>
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<td>Deacon Jonathan Miller</td>
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<td>82</td>
<td>Mrs Alison Woodbridge</td>
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<td>Mr R Arfon Williams</td>
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<td>84</td>
<td>The Revd Rosemarie E G Clarke</td>
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<td>85</td>
<td>The Revd Nicholas A Oborski</td>
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### Synod Cymru

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Role / Committee</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>86</td>
<td>The Revd Beverley Ramsden</td>
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<td>87</td>
<td>Deacon John Brobbey</td>
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<td>89</td>
<td>Mr Martin Rees</td>
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<tr>
<td>90</td>
<td>Miss Emily Roe</td>
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<tr>
<td>91</td>
<td>Dr Jean Ware</td>
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</table>

### Wales Synod

<table>
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<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Role / Committee</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>92</td>
<td>The Revd Inderjit S Bhogal</td>
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<tr>
<td>93</td>
<td>The Revd Dr Jonathan Dean</td>
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### Birmingham

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<th>No.</th>
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<th>Role / Committee</th>
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<tr>
<td>94</td>
<td>The Revd Mark Rowland</td>
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<td>95</td>
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<td>Ms Sandie Smith</td>
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<td>Ms Caroline Warrey</td>
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<td>The Revd Darren A Garfield</td>
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<td>Mrs Gillian M Dascombe</td>
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<td>Mrs Leonie R O'Donoghue</td>
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<td>Mr Joshua Orme</td>
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<td>106</td>
<td>The Revd Carol A Chaplin</td>
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<td>The Revd Naomi Cooke</td>
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<td>Ms Jenny Cornell</td>
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<td>The Revd Karen A V Le Mouton</td>
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<td>The Revd Beverly Hollings</td>
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<td>Mrs Susan Eldridge</td>
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<td>146</td>
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| 315  | The Revd Eduardo Conde de Almeida  | Igreja Evangelica Metodista Portuguesa |</p>
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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
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The Revd Professor W Peter Stephens
The Revd Roger Stubbings

The Revd Peter G Sulston
The Revd Judy M Turner-Smith
The Revd Lily P Twist
The Revd Ian H Wales
The Revd Denise M Williams
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