

Contents

Introduction	
From the District Chairs	5
District Vision	6
District Goals	7
District Theme: Woven	8
District Council	
District Council Report	12
Chair' Nomination Committee	13
Chairs' Responsibilities	14
Human Resources Group	17
Authorised Ministries Commission (AMC)	
Authorised Ministries Commission Report	20
Continuing Development in Ministry (CDiM) and Ministerial	21
Candidates Committee	22
Supervision	23
District Probationers Committee	24
Early Years in Ministry	25
Local Preachers and Worship Leaders	26
District Sabbaticals Advisory Group	27
Stationing	28
Discipleship and Congregational Development	
Safeguarding	30
Learning and Development	33
Youth and Children's Work	35
Social Responsibility Commission (SRC)	37
London HIV Chaplaincy	39
District Reconciliation Group (DRG)	42

Contents

Finance and Property

District Finance Report	44
District Accounts	45
District Budget	46
Circuit Assessments	50
District Advance Fund	51
Property Advisory Group	54







he last year has been one of extraordinary challenges, with many heartbreaks alongside significant opportunities for the Methodist people to show God's love in action in a broken world. As the world locked down in various ways this has had a huge impact on our communities, our churches and our members. The workload of ministry, lay and ordained, has increased; the number of funerals, the need to find ways to offer worship online and to maintain contact with those excluded by modern technology, as well as supporting the usual range of social projects offered by churches, have all contributed to a significant busy-ness and for some people exhaustion. Yet also within the mix has been an opportunity to do things differently, to not spend time travelling, to consider what a future church might look like. Over a year on from the first UK national lockdown, we are beginning to see the world opening up, the possibility of being regularly together, perhaps even to sing together again one day.

We have travelled through an extended Lenten season, in which the wilderness horizon has been beyond our limited sight. Yet, as with the promise of Easter, the horizons of God's grace come into view and we begin to see a way ahead. The reflections on what all of this means for our church and for God's world will continue beyond this season and we pray that the Holy Spirit will inspire us to see through holy eyes what it means to be the Body of Christ and to serve this present age.

As the prophets of old oversaw the rebuilding of the Temple after the exiles returned from Babylon, we look to rebuild our church communities. The new Temple was not the same as the old and our church, like the communities in which we serve, is going to be changed. Our challenge is to draw on the resources of God's grace, to hold on to the example of Christ's self-giving love and to be open to the possibility of the Holy Spirit breathing new life into us, not for our own sake but for a world in need of healing and good news.

Every blessing

Michaela Youngson, Jongi Zhile and Nigel Cowgill

Chairs of the London District of the Methodist Church

District Vision

The London District of the Methodist Church currently comprises some 18,000 members, 211 ministers, 234 churches, 34 circuits and their projects, together with a number of educational institutions.

We are a diverse group of people originating from many different countries and communities, who find ourselves worshipping and witnessing together in urban, suburban and more rural areas.

We have come together in the belief that we are better together and our intention is to contribute to the wellbeing of each other, of this global city and its surrounding areas; and of the wider Methodist Church.

As the people, churches and projects of the London District of the Methodist Church, our mission is:

'To share the good news of Jesus Christ throughout Greater London and the surrounding areas, and to improve the wellbeing of people and their communities.'

by:

- Engaging pastorally and prophetically with the communities in which our churches are located and with the wider region
- Equipping and developing faithful and fruitful disciples and congregations
- Equipping and developing faithful and fruitful preachers and ordained ministers

Our ways of working include:

- Engaging in theological reflection and prayerful discernment which will help us to fully understand our mission
- Building quality relationships across our Circuits, with wider Methodism and with ecumenical, interfaith and community groups
- Building quality relationships with civic and political authorities in the area covered by the District
- Seeking to communicate effectively and work collaboratively
- Living and working creatively with diversity and difference
- Deploying the resources over which we have stewardship, effectively and flexibly
- Developing and sharing best practice

District Priorities

As adopted by Synod in April 2014

- To develop lay leadership—in breadth, depth, numbers and confidence
- To ensure that every minister and local preacher is engaged in an intentional review and development of their ministry
- To increase participation in social and civic action, by identifying and sharing good practice and promoting networks of practitioners—rooting such engagement in our Methodist identity

These goals are by no means exhaustive or embrace the range of activities carried out in the name of the District. Their purpose is to help focus the major developmental work that is key to the next phase of the District's life as it seeks to support the ministry and mission of local churches, circuits and engage with London as a global city.



District Theme: Woven

Woven centres on the power of storytelling to transform and renew us in our lifelong discipleship as followers of Christ. Sharing our stories is how we live, laugh, cry and connect authentically with the communities around us and it's how we see depth in our relationships.

The vision of Woven is:

- To see increased confidence and ownership of the beautiful weaving of our stories into God's story
- For God's story and our faith journeys to be shared confidently within and beyond, our church walls regularly and more widely

As a planning team, we entered the year with a lot of positive expectations of how the Woven Project would equip and inspire members of the London District to share their stories of faith with friends, family, their church communities, work colleagues and strangers. However, as we have all experienced, 2020 was a year like no other.

We made difficult decisions to either cancel or reschedule some of the activities planned for 2020 following the advice of our event and project partners. Events for 2020 that were affected include:

- The Story Project (16 May 2020) Cancelled
- Trip to Epworth (26 September 2020) Cancelled
- The Pilgrimage to the Holy Land (16 23 March 2021) Cancelled
- The London District Weekend Away (10 12 July 2020) Rescheduled to July 2021

Faith at Work video series - Placed on hold

ACHIEVEMENTS

As God's people, we had to be creative with how we served. We have since acquired new ways to connect with one another and with God, and some of these form part of our achievements for 2020.



Keeping the Faith: Connecting with God and Others during Lockdown

We invited ten London Methodists to share their stories of faith, strength and connection during the lockdown as part of our YouTube Video series, 'Keeping the Faith: Connecting with God and Others during lockdown'. It was inspiring to hear how digital technology platforms such as WhatsApp, Zoom and YouTube enabled people to stay connected. The stories shared have now been recorded on DVD and transcribed into a booklet for wider circulation.



Tell It - Poetry Night

'Tell It', a poetry night for young adults to share testimonies of conversion and stories of their Christian in everyday life, initially scheduled as a physical event was held virtually on Zoom. The evening attracted about 35 young adults and included performances from Phoebe Parkin, the current Methodist Youth President (2020 – 2021).



Christmas Card Competition

We also invited Methodists of all ages, across the whole of London to design the front cover of our Christmas card for 2020. Reiss (11) from the Wembley Circuit delighted judges with the winning image depicting a sleeping baby Jesus with Mary and Joseph watching over him. As his prize, Reiss' name was printed at the

back of the card and he was given a £25 gift voucher as well as his own pack of printed cards.



We were especially pleased to have received over 3,700 print orders for 'Watching and Waiting', the 2020 Advent Course. The course was written primarily for churches and circuits within the District to journey through the season of Advent together. However, 'Watching and Waiting' attracted interest from the wider UK Methodist churches and from other church denominations including the Church of Scotland and the Roman Catholic Church. Participant and group leader comments received include the following:

'It stimulated discussion in my group.'

'Thank you for preparing such a comprehensive course ... It was easy to follow and encouraged very helpful discussions and reflections.'

'Brilliant course - I shared it with 12 people virtually. We are a catholic parish and found the material uplifting and very thought provoking. Everyone attended was very positive about the content, I really liked song/praise suggestions for each week.'



God's Story. Your Story. Every Story Radio Series

The stories of nine London Methodists created some inspiring ripples on the airwaves as part of 'God's Story. Your Story. Every Story', a seven-part series on Premier Christian Radio. The stories shared covered a variety of themes including

faith and politics, healing, repentance and forgiveness.

PLANS

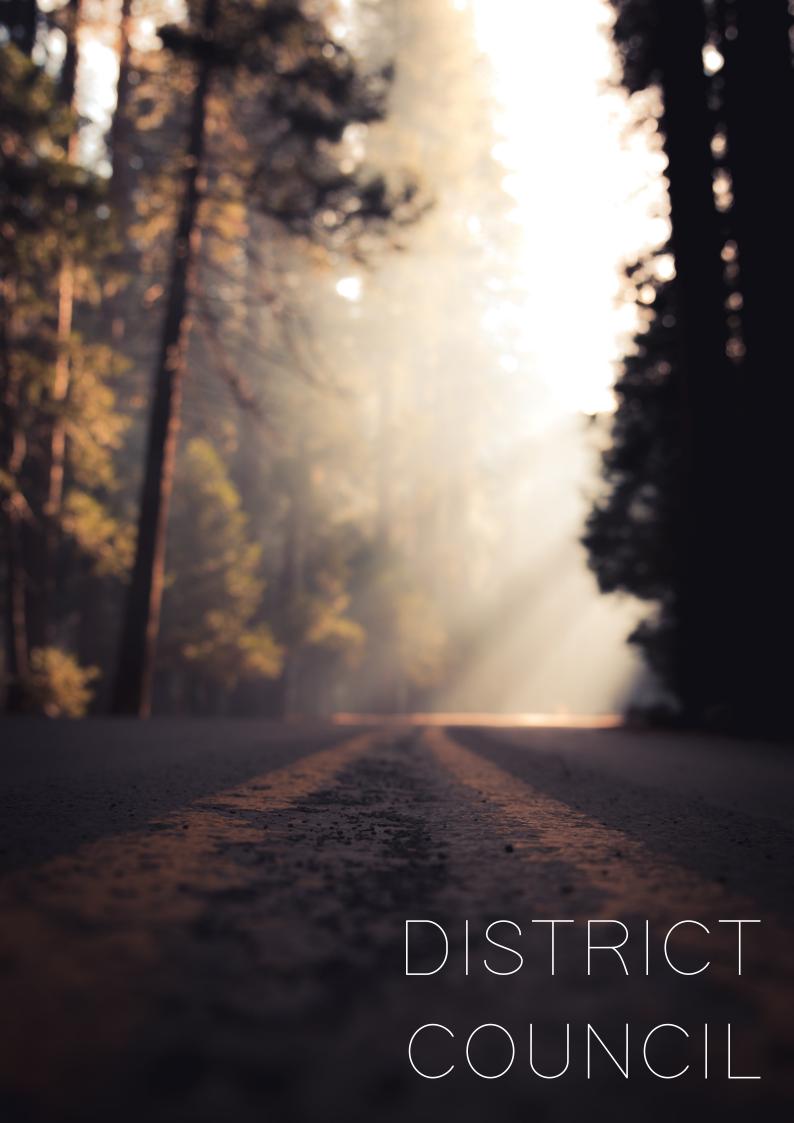
Other activities in the pipeline for this year include:

- Woven A Lent Course: a six-session course for 2021
- Tell It Again: the second instalment of our poetry night for young adults. This second instalment will feature a guest artist appearance
- Woven into Mark: an exploration of Mark's Gospel through the eyes of our children and youth. This activity forms part of the Bible Month (held in May)
- Tour of Wesley's Chapel: a virtual online gathering to explore specific aspects of the history of Methodism.

To access any of the activities mentioned above, please visit methodistlondon.org.uk/ woven

Fola Oyeleye

Project Coordinator



District Council

The Council is the London District's Policy committee which seeks to think strategically about the life and mission of the whole District. It co-ordinates the work of the Commissions and is responsible for the continuity of District business between Synods. Its membership comprises representatives of Superintendents, Circuit Stewards and other relevant groups. The seventeen members meet five times a year under the leadership of the District Chairs.

ACHIEVEMENTS

A physical Autumn Synod was impossible this year, but a virtual service of celebration and reflection was held from Central Hall which included welcomes and necessary business. Our Spring Synod will also need to be virtual.

Mindful that many Circuits and churches are severely affected by cash flow problems and loss of income due to Covid 19, the Council approved two proposals for related financial support. One enables Circuits to apply, with appropriate information, for assistance from funds generously provided by other Circuits. The other offers Covid Grants for Circuits to support them and their churches in meeting their expenses for items such as sanitization and facilitating online services.

As ever, there have been personnel changes on the Council. We have welcomed Revd. Ros Hollingsworth and George Noi-Lartey as new Council members and expressed our gratitude to Revd. Dr. Andy Lyons and Revd. Vicci Davidson who have stepped down. Hilary Porter completed her term as the Representative of the Circuit Stewards in the West and a successor is being sought. She is the newly appointed Council Secretary as successor to Graham Russell, who so expertly undertook his responsibilities over his six year term of office. He will remain on the Council as District Representative to the Methodist Council.

The Council has continued to fulfil its remit of overseeing the formal consents, authorisations and approvals required for the on-going work of the District.

PLANS

We are delighted that the Methodist Council has recommended the appointment of Revd. Michaela Youngson as Assistant Secretary of the Conference and Connexional Ecumenical Officer, although we will miss her greatly. The recommendation (to be confirmed by Conference) will necessitate a District Review and plans are already in hand to begin the process of what will be a substantial undertaking.

More immediately, the Council will be addressing the interim arrangements for leadership of the District from September 2021 until the Review has been completed.

The Council is currently exploring offering vaccination advocacy in the District and entering into a twelve month, co-funding project with Premier Radio.

Hilary Porter

District Council Secretary

Chairs' Nomination Committee

There has not been a formal meeting of Chairs Nomination Committee this year but will be convened at the start of the Connexional year 21/22.

Denise Tomlinson

Convenor of the Chairs' Nomination Committee

Chairs' Responsibilities Sept 2020 - Feb 2021 & May 2021 onwards

2021 onwards	35/28	Blackheath & Crystal Palace
	35/42	Bromley
	35/41	Croydon
	35/30	Lesnes Abbey
Revd Nigel Cowgill	35/06	Lambeth
Discipleship and Congregational Development	38/43	Orpington & Chislehurst
	38/40	Purley
	35/07	Southwark & Deptford
	35/39	Sutton
	35/03	Westminster
	35/05	Battersea & Wandle Valley
	35/04	Chelsea, Hammersmith & Fulham
	35/24	Ealing Trinity
	35/13	Harlesden
David Balisha ala Varragan	35/36	Harrow & Hillingdon
Revd Michaela Youngson	35/38	Kingston Upon Thames
Social Responsibility Commission	35/12	London Mission North West
COMMISSION	35/14	Notting Hill
	35/25	Richmond & Hounslow
	35/37	Teddington
	35/23	Wembley
	35/26	Wimbledon
	35/31	Barking, Dagenham & Ilford
	35/35	Barnet & Queensbury
	35/01	City Road
	35/34	Enfield
Payd Dr Jangi 7ibla	35/33	Forest
Revd Dr Jongi Zihle	35/10	Hackney & Stoke Newington
Authorised Ministries Commission	35/11	Islington & Camden Mission
Commission	35/22	New River
	35/20	Newham
	35/32	Romford
	35/09	Tower Hamlets
	35/02	West London Mission

Chairs' Responsibilities Feb - Apr 2021

(During Revd Nigel Cowgill's sabbatical)

	35/05	Battersea & Wandle Valley
	35/04	Chelsea, Hammersmith & Fulham
	35/24	Ealing Trinity
	35/13	Harlesden
	35/36	Harrow & Hillingdon
	35/38	Kingston Upon Thames
Revd Michaela Youngson	35/06	Lambeth
Discipleship and Congregational	35/12	London Mission North West
Development	35/14	Notting Hill
Social Responsibility	35/25	Richmond & Hounslow
Commission	35/07	Southwark & Deptford
	35/39	Sutton
	35/37	Teddington
	35/23	Wembley
	35/03	Westminster
	35/26	Wimbledon
	35/31	Barking, Dagenham & Ilford
	35/35	Barnet & Queensbury
	35/28	Blackheath & Crystal Palace
	35/42	Bromley
	35/01	City Road
	35/41	Croydon
	35/34	Enfield
Revd Dr Jongi Zihle	35/33	Forest
Authorised Ministries	35/10	Hackney & Stoke Newington
Commission	35/11	Islington & Camden Mission
	35/22	New River
	35/20	Newham
	38/43	Orpington & Chislehurst
	38/40	Purley
	35/32	Romford
	35/09	Tower Hamlets
	35/02	West London Mission
	Lond	on District Annual Report 2020 - 2021 15

Chairs' Responsibilities from Sept 2021

	35/05	Battersea & Wandle Valley
	35/28	Blackheath & Crystal Palace
	35/42	Bromley
	35/04	Chelsea, Hammersmith & Fulham
	35/41	Croydon
	35/24	Ealing Trinity
Revd Nigel Cowgill	35/38	Kingston Upon Thames
Discipleship and Congregational	35/06	Lambeth
Development	35/30	Lesnes Abbey
Social Responsibility Commis-	38/43	Orpington & Chislehurst
sion	38/40	Purley
	35/25	Richmond & Hounslow
	35/07	Southwark & Deptford
	35/39	Sutton
	35/37	Teddington
	35/03	Westminster
	35/26	Wimbledon
	35/31	Barking, Dagenham & Ilford
	35/35	Barnet & Queensbury
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	35/12	London Mission North West
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	35/20	Newham
	35/14	Notting Hill
	35/32	Romford
	35/09	Tower Hamlets
	35/23	Wembley

Human Resources Group

The District HR Group provides advice to the District, Circuits and local churches on all lay employment matters. It is an advisory group only and does not negate the wish of churches and circuits to seek employment advice from other HR specialists or employment lawyers.

ACHIEVEMENTS

The District HR group has continued to provide advice to churches and circuits in the District on various employment issues. Matters had ranged from recruitment and non-complex behaviour/management/relationship issues to complex employee relations and change management issues.

While churches and circuits have continued to seek advice from the group on recruitment issues, especially with the design and quality checking of role profiles, the group's input to the recruitment and selection process has extended to approval of recruitment documentation pre and post appointment. This is because the Chair of the Group also acts as the Secretary/Convenor of the Lay Employment Sub Committee.

Lockdown has meant that more and more churches and circuits have had to re-appraise their financial position and their mission. These have given cause to re-assess their lay employment resource for their fit to deliver revised circuit/church mission. The HR Group has supported this thinking and proposed changes with purposeful advice and continues to assist churches and circuits to think through their change management processes where these may affect the employment of lay people.

Churches and circuits have become more aware of their obligation as employers and the HR Group's advice and support has been sought in a variety of employee relations cases which continues to increase in both quantity and complexity. Many churches/circuits have had to make challenging and difficult decisions regarding their lay employees during the lockdown. And there is deep intent and necessary rigour to ensure that processes are followed that are not just legal and satisfactory to the needs of the church/circuit but are also sensitive to the lay employees involved. The HR group has endeavoured, as best it can, to support and guide churches and circuits to healthy and effective solutions.

PLANS

It is clear that churches and circuits have learning and development needs in the area of lay employment. Due to time and resource demands, it is difficult for the HR group to deliver relevant briefing sessions/workshops. However conversations continue with the

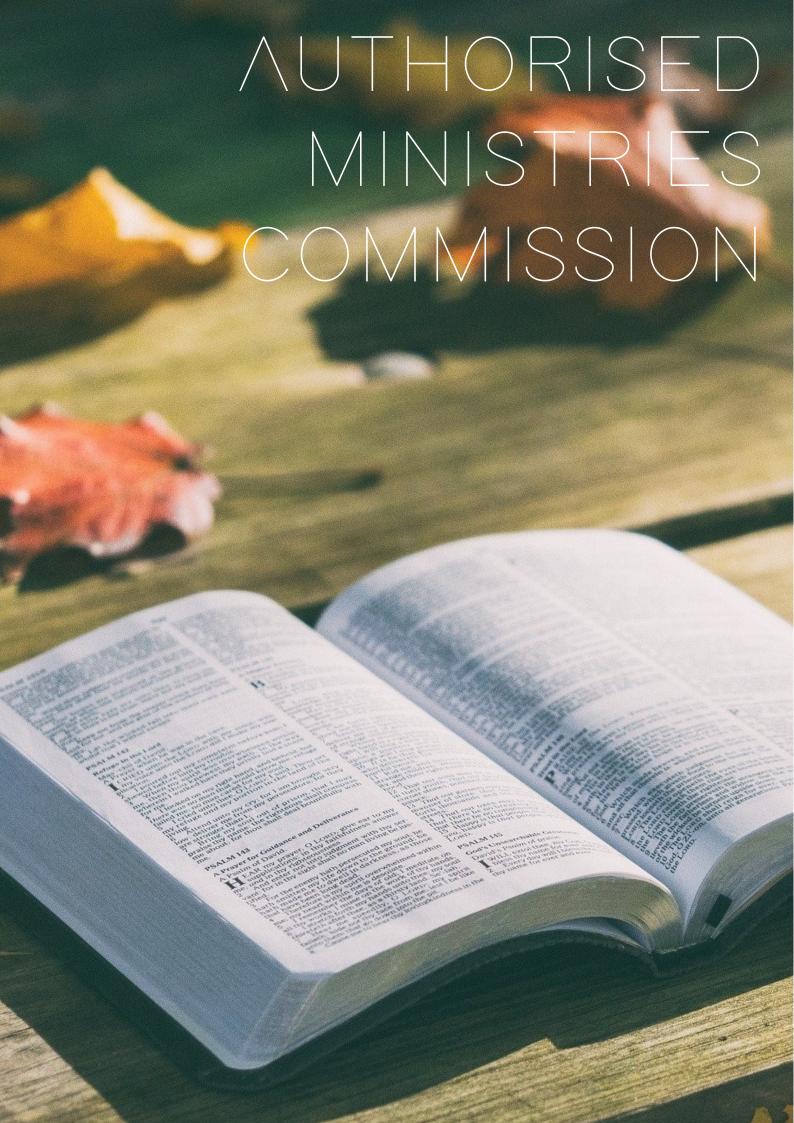
Chairs about the best way to equip and support ministers/circuit stewards to engage in a pastoral but risk-free management of lay employees.

The HR group will continue to provide churches and circuits with effective support and advice in all areas of the lay employment journey for which the group's intervention is sought. The Methodist Church website has a rich resource of materials which churches and circuits are encouraged to access and use, especially in the area of recruitment and selection.

For churches and circuits requiring assistance with any employment-related issues, the HR group can be contacted through the Chair – Janet Arthur. Her contact details can be obtained from the District office.

Janet Arthur

Chair, District HR Group



Authorised Ministries Commission (AMC)

The Authorised Ministries Commission (AMC) exists to share the good news of Jesus Christ through Greater London and surrounding areas, and to improve the wellbeing of people and their communities by equipping and developing faithful and fruitful preachers and ordained ministers.

The AMC oversees the work done by the various groups that comprise the commission (Ministerial Sabbaticals, Ministerial Development, Local Preacher Training, Probationers oversight, Early Years in Ministry, and the District Ministers' Retreat).

Our goal is to ensure that every minister and Local Preacher is engaged in an intentional review and development of their ministry (primarily through programmes of Ministerial Development, supervision training and continued Local Preacher development).

ONGOING WORK

The Authorised Ministries Commission has only met once since our report last year, due to Covid restrictions, though we have received email updates. The work of the individual groups has continued, and our grateful thanks goes to those who have worked so hard under very difficult situations. For instance, the Probationers, and the Candidates Committees have both functioned virtually.

Local Preaching

It should be noted that the Faith and Worship training course has ended and the very final date for submission of work for assessment was 31 March 2021. This applies in all situations with the exception of Local Preaches training in foreign languages, as the Worship and Preaching course is only available in English.

Stationing:

All vacancies within the London District have been filled for this year, and all ministers seeking new stations have been matched.

I ask the District Synod to acknowledge all the hard work that is being done by the various groups that comprise the AMC. I take this opportunity to thank all those involved in these groups for their hard work during the year.

Revd Timothy Bradshaw

Chair and Convenor of the AMC

Continuing Development in Ministry (CDiM) and Ministerial **Development Review (MDR)**

Funding continues to be available for ministers and lay people seeking to attend courses and other events to enable their Continuing Development. In the last Connexional year, due to lockdown, I have only received applications for PhD studies. Applications received before lockdown are now on hold. In previous years, requests have covered a wide range of opportunities including, but not limited to retreats, day conferences, PHD studies and short courses.

The District normally contributes a grant of one third towards the fees for a recognised course or training package run by an academic institution or professional body. It is hoped that circuits will also consider contributing one third towards the cost, or two thirds if the course has been identified as a need via the MDR process.

The Representative Synod in March 2013 agreed that each circuit should budget at least £100 per annum for each minister to further their continuing development in ministry.

Guidance and application forms for CDiM can be found on the London District website.

The Authorised Ministries Committee (AMC) has applied for a grant from the District Advance Fund (DAF) to support the increased number of grant requests for ministerial further training.

PLANS

With the support of James Pickin of the Learning Network we are aiming to run three CDiM days, each connexional year, with two of these events in partnership with the Susanna Wesley Foundation.

Revd Faith Nyota

Ministerial Development Officer

Candidates Committee

The role of the Candidates Committee is to meet with candidates for Presbyteral and Diaconal ministry. Using Connexional criteria and processes, the committee seeks to discern God's calling on the candidate's life and whether they can be recommended to enter pre-ordination training.

UPDATE FROM 2019/20:

Following the nationwide lockdown in March 2020 due to the global pandemic, the final stages of the candidating process at Connexional level were completed via an online interview process. The Connexional Office worked very hard to make this transfer at great speed. The two candidates from the London District who went forward were recommended for initial training.

ACHIEVEMENTS

This year the District Candidates' Committee used an online Zoom format to meet with four candidates - three for Presbyteral ministry and one for Diaconal ministry - on 16 January 2021. All four of these candidates were recommended to go forward to the Connexional committee which will be held from 22 - 26 March 2021,

The Committee welcomed another new member this year and will say goodbye to several long-standing members: two presbyters as they move on to other areas of the connexion and lay members as their time on the Committee draws to an end.

All parts of the Candidating process, namely the Candidates evening (with Superintendents), a Candidates Committee training evening and a preparation evening for the day of the District Candidates Committee, were held online this year. I would like to offer my sincere thanks to the members of the District Admin Team for their time and skill in hosting these meetings as well as the day of the Committee, for which there was meticulous planning.

PLANS

One person has already indicated that they are considering candidating in 2021/22.

Revd Dr Eleanor Jackson

Candidates' Committee Secretary

Supervision

The District has now all the superintendents trained in supervision (with only two needing to return for the next call-back) and ministers in the district were prepared for supervision during the 28th of May 2020, at a morning and an afternoon session and again on the 15th of June 2020. Consequently, the Supervision Implementation Plan is being rolled out and we're currently matching ministers who need to be supervised by external/alternate supervisors.

The Connexional Interim Supervision Policy continues to be developed and rolled out within our church and the research and report of the implementation will be received at Conference later this year, whereupon when all the recommendations are agreed, it will become formal policy and will be referred to as the Reflective Supervision Policy of the Methodist Church in Britain.

It is wonderful that such strides have been achieved with our supervision implementation policy as a church and we are extremely grateful to all Presbyters and Deacons for embracing this vital collegial work of supporting, affirming and encouraging each other as we watch over one another in love.

The next phase will be to ensure that all lay people who are in roles that have significant pastoral responsibility are also offered supervision and the Connexional supervision directorate will be training more supervisors to provide for this vital support. As details are forwarded, circuits will be informed accordingly.

A great many thanks to the District team for the wonderful preparatory work and digital support they've provided in the trainings.

Revd Dr Jongikaya Zihle

District Chair

District Probationers Committee

PROBATIONER MINISTERS

A year ago we were looking forward to celebrating with our four second year probationers as they navigated the final stages of probation and moved on Reception into Full Connexion and Ordination. As Conference was held virtually, each ordinand was offered the opportunity to be received into full connexion during an online act of worship at the start of Conference, and their ordination was delayed until an appropriate date later in the year. At the time of writing those ordinations are scheduled for June 2021 but are still shrouded in uncertainty.

Three of our District probationers chose this route, the fourth preferring to delay both Reception into Full Connexion and Ordination, hoping that both could be included in face to face acts of worship.

The District Testimony Service will be held online on the evening of May 23rd. Details of how to join the service will be posted in the Weekly Update and on the District Website. Please do put the date in your diary. We continue to hold the class of 2020 in our prayers.

Meanwhile, we welcomed three new probationer ministers to the London District: two presbyters and one deacon. Though it has not been possible to run the normal programme of support group meetings and times of retreat, the group has met a number of times online. They have engaged in some learning about the District and have been able to support one another as a peer group and sometimes with ministers in Early Years of ministry.

The three met with members of the District Probationers Committee in November to discuss how they were settling in and the committee itself met virtually. As well as navigating this different way of 'being committee', we all had to learn about using new competencies and associated revised paperwork. This was all achieved thanks to the dedication and flexibility of the committee members, and of the probationer ministers themselves along with their superintendents and circuit leadership teams.

Looking ahead, we anticipate the arrival of more probationers in September, and a renewed programme of discerning and learning together.

Revd Andrew Letby

Secretary – District Probationers Committee

Early Years in Ministry

The role involves supporting the development of Deacons, and Presbyters who are in their 3rd-5th year of ministry. During the lockdown, this has been through holding Zoom and telephone conversations with individual ministers as requested. In October we Invited Revd Ermal Kirby to help us reflect on the Methodist Way of Life.

We have also held other sessions jointly with the Probationers group.

PLANS

- Continue working closely with the District Probationers Secretary to ensure identified learning and development needs of those in the group have been achieved.
- Affirming and encouraging good and healthy working patterns and the wellbeing of those who have recently been received into full connexion.
- Supporting Deacons and Presbyters in their early years of ministry by being an external "friend" and colleague to listen to and share experiences and monitoring self-care in the transition from the requirements and accountability of being a probationer to the requirements of being in Full Connexion.

Revd Faith Nyota

Secretary – Early Years in Ministry

Local Preachers and Worship Leaders

The role of a District Local Preachers' Secretary involves advocating for local preachers and worship leaders within the District and supporting local preachers' meetings in their role as communities of fellowship and learning.

ACHIEVEMENTS

Since the beginning of the first lockdown in March 2020, most local preachers and worship leaders will have had fewer opportunities to preach and lead worship in the usual way. Some moved quickly to leading or sharing in leading worship online, with lots more of us following since. Many of us have learned useful new skills in the process.

For preachers and worship leaders in training, a new, third version of the Worship: Leading & Preaching course (known at WLP 3.0) was introduced in September 2020. In the early months only newly registered students were enrolled on WLP 3.0, but since the beginning of 2021 existing students have been able to transfer with their tutor's agreement. While much of the content of the study modules is unchanged, WLP 3.0 introduces new and different arrangements for preparing and submitting portfolio work, which may help to remove some of the significant obstacles currently encountered by students and their tutors as they work through the course.

It was unfortunate that no continuing development events for local preachers and worship leaders could take place during 2020, mainly because of the pandemic. I am delighted to say however that the Learning Network has arranged an online gathering for preachers and worship leaders on 27 March, an event which included elements of training and of sharing best practice. We intend that further continuing development events will follow over the course of the year. Induction training events for those wishing to be tutors and mentors for WLP students are also planned, with the first taking place on 10 April.

PLANS

Over the next 18 months I look forward to:

- Continuing to build relationships with local preachers' and worship leaders' meetings around the District, resuming my visits when circumstances permit (or online if appropriate).
- continuing to develop the learning and development aspects of my role in liaison with the Learning Network.

Janet Tweedale

District Local Preachers and Leaders of Worship Secretary

District Sabbaticals Advisory Group

The membership of the District Sabbatical Advisory Group consists of lay and ordained people.

The Group was unable to meet physically this year because of the pandemic but were able to communicate and make decisions via email throughout the year. Recommendations were submitted to the Spring and Autumn meetings of Synod via the District Council for approval.

The purpose of the DSAG is to receive, review and, where appropriate, advise on the content of prospectuses submitted by presbyters/deacons who are planning a sabbatical.

A Sabbatical is an opportunity for ministers to reflect on their ministry and also to enjoy time away from normal duties and be refreshed spiritually, physically and mentally by their experiences. It is also an opportunity for circuits to reflect on how they 'deploy' their staff and best use their varied gifts and graces. It is anticipated that the planning for this will often take at least twelve months with preparations at Local, Circuit, District, Connexional and often wider levels.

ACHIEVEMENTS

Last Connexional year was a challenging one for most of our presbyters and deacons as original prospectuses approved were not achievable and prospectuses had to be resubmitted. Some sought to defer rather than cancel their original programme.

During the last Connexional year 13 ministers took a sabbatical. This number declined in the current year to 10 ministers who will be taking a sabbatical. In addition six presbyters brought forward from 2019/20, a further four deferred from 2020/21 and three are to be deferred to 2021/22.

A number of ministers taking their sabbaticals in the next Connexional year have already sought advice and are well into the necessary planning.

Presbyters/Deacons are mandated to share (for five minutes) their plans at their respective circuit meetings before and after their Sabbaticals in order for Circuits to take an interest.

As a group we continue to encourage those taking a sabbatical to share their experiences in the form of a report at the end of a sabbatical. We are happy to report that there has been an improvement in this area and whilst such information is valuable to the circuit, it is also useful to those going on sabbatical.

PLANS

As a group we are always looking to develop strategies in order to be as helpful and supportive as possible to those preparing for a sabbatical.

Mrs Nellie Showers

District Sabbaticals Advisory Group Convenor/Secretary

Stationing

The stationing of ministers into circuit appointments offers challenges in any year and this last year has of course presented a unique context. Stationing matching had to take place via electronic media which no one would consider ideal, however the same prayerful care was taken in discerning the most appropriate matches for circuits and ministers. 'Visits' to circuits were also done in virtual spaces and the Chairs of District are grateful for the care taken by circuit teams in ensuring that presbyters and deacons could gain some sense of the context that they were being matched to. Thanks are also due to the patience of those making visits and the trust that they and their families have shown as they prepare to move in 2021.

At the start of the stationing matching process in November, 101 presbyteral appointments were vacant across the Connexion, and 86 presbyters available. The London District Chairs have managed to fill all the appointments across the District that were sought by circuits. We are delighted that we will welcome six Presbyters and two Deacons into appointments.

As noted in previous reports, we can no longer take it for granted that when a minister's appointment comes to an end, they will be immediately replaced by another minister. The challenge for circuits continues as we ask them to consider what kind of ministry they need to support their mission - which may be specialist lay ministry, diaconal ministry or presbyteral ministry. Circuits need to give careful consideration to the possibility of accepting probationer ministers or ministers from other conferences and churches around the world.

Those responsible for stationing in the life of the church are working hard to be as fair as possible in the deployment of ministers to those situations that are most in need.

Training for circuits and ministers who may be involved in stationing for 2021 will take place on:

- Wednesday 21st April from 6pm
- Thursday 29th April from 2pm

Please hold in prayer, the many circuits across our Methodist Connexion which carry vacancies in this coming year; pray for more people to be called into ministry and for all those within the life of our churches to recognise we, both lay and ordained, have ministries to fulfil as members of the body of Christ.

Revd Michaela Youngson

District Chair





Safeguarding

The District Safeguarding Group works to provide support and direction to safeguarding policy and practice across the District. The group meets regularly and are called to use their extensive knowledge and support the District Safeguarding Officer (DSO) and where appropriate, circuits and individual churches. Our overall aim is to make sure that London District churches are safe spaces for all.

ACHIEVEMENTS

The group have spent some time giving consideration to the 2018-2019 Strategic Plan, with a view to adapting it and ensuring it's useful as a long-term projection of the District's work within safeguarding. The revised plan now covers a 5 year period and was approved by the group in September 2020.

The DSO is pleased to welcome Karen Stapley to the District in the capacity of Assistant District Safeguarding Officer (ADSO). Karen will be working closely with our circuits and churches supporting them in completing their safeguarding audits, ensuring they are fully compliant with various policies and guidance from within the District and from the wider connexion. The essential aim for safeguarding audits is to raise standards, ensure a consistent approach and fully embed safeguarding practices into every church.

The DSO continues to explore new ways to disseminate information and resources to our churches and circuits. Including the use of the Weekly Update and the gradual re-vamp of the safeguarding pages of the District website, the following have been put in place:

Safer Spotlight Podcast

The DSO is working closely with James Pickin of the Learning Network to produce a

monthly topical podcast focusing on a range of issues and the wider safeguarding implications of each. Each episode will be designed to provide a 'snapshot' of safeguarding themes in order to raise awareness and inspire interest; as well as including, where appropriate, guest speakers.

Brunch with Becky

As a way of maintaining existing lines of communication and developing new relationships with those in our churches and circuits who are responsible for safeguarding, the DSO now hosts a Zoom session entitled 'Brunch with Becky'. Initially hosted once a week during the height of the pandemic, the session now takes place on the last Thursday of every month. These meetings act as a drop-in style session for attendees to discuss local concerns/ themes and the DSO to verbally share updates where available. Feedback from attendees has been positive, appreciating the opportunity to communicate as well as network with peers.

The pandemic put an end to the schedule of Advanced Module training, which was set to take place within a number of circuits; and the decision was made at connexion level to review the training and provide a suitable online version for both the Foundation and the Advanced Module. Much work and diligence has been given to the formation of the new courses and in order to run the Foundation Module at circuit level, trainers were required to undertake a 'Train the Trainer' session organised at Connexional level. We are pleased to say that the District has now been permitted to fulfil future Train the Trainer sessions.

To address the safeguarding needs of remote working, the DSO created a policy document entitled 'Working Online Safely: Guidance for communicating and working safely with people online'. Zoom sessions were also held on the same concept, to explore how people within the church can continue to work effectively but safely; particularly in relation to working with young people and within the world of safeguarding.

The DSO has further created additional training opportunities through the use of two themed forums per year. The forums will be open to all those with an interest/role in the theme; and where possible, will be recorded to provide a useful resource for those unable to attend. The forums for the Connexional year 2020-21 will concentrate on:

- DBS checks (this forum was held in November 2020) and
- Safeguarding Audits (held in March 2021)

PLANS

Advanced Module

London has been invited to be one of only a few Districts to pilot the new material for the Advanced Module. Trainers are in the process of being trained to facilitate these sessions, which, for the online version, be a two part process:

- Participants are offered three weeks to complete e-learning using the Theology-X platform
- Participants then meet for a gathered session via Zoom to fully embed their learning

The first gathered session is due to be held in April 2021, with participants providing feedback to the connexion for amendments where appropriate. The DSO then hopes to begin roll out for the Advanced Module.

Safeguarding Audits

The District plans to begin the auditing process in April 2021. The safeguarding audits follow a tri-annual process:

Year 1

- Circuits to complete a 'Full Audit' using a newly developed auditing tool
- ADSO to review 'Full Audits' and prioritise circuits for meetings to be held in three waves
- ADSO meets with circuits to review evidence provided, offer support and guidance on improving standards

Years 2 and 3

- Circuits to complete a 'Review Audit', to reflect upon the year's work, identify areas for development and to highlight areas they have improved upon
- ADSO to evaluate 'Review Audits' and prioritise circuits for meetings to be held in three waves
- ADSO meets with circuits to review evidence provided, offer support and guidance on improving standards

Becky Skinner

District Safeguarding Officer



The Learning Network

The role of the Learning Network is to equip and resource the Church through a wide range of contextually relevant learning and development opportunities. Priorities for learning and development are established through the regional Learning & Development Forum with the aim to support circuits to be places of lifelong learning and sharing, so as to encourage and inspire Methodist people in all aspects of Our Calling. This work takes three strands:

- Church and circuit wide work: This is bespoke and at the request of churches and circuits.
- District wide work: This includes provision District wide, such as line management training.
- Connexional work: These are pieces of work that the team are involved in which enhance the Learning Network offer to the District.

ACHIEVEMENTS

The team were joined by James Pickin in August 2020 as the Regional Leaning and Development Coordinator. Over the last year we have achieved a lot as a team, despite the pandemic. Some particular achievements have been:

- Beginning our learning and development monthly newsletters that give an overview of our training. Recent mailings have an open rate of 60% and a click through rate of 21% which is in line with other District mailings. You can sign up here: Newsletter | London Methodist Learning Hub
- Running our first online Hearts and Minds panel event entitled 'Lockdown, Disability and the Church' which set a great precedent for future panel events.

- We have continued to support candidates going through the candidating process, running five candidate support groups.
- Continuing to run our Pioneer Community of Practice, supporting pioneers across the District.
- Running another Encounter programme to give space for people to explore their calling.
- Running two specific training events on line management, with specific training on how to line manage employees when working from home.
- Along with District staff, starting the Safer Spotlight a podcast focusing on different areas of safeguarding and drawing on best practice to help churches become safer spaces.

PLANS

There are quite a few plans to develop our offer to the District to ensure we are addressing wider learning needs. These include:

- Hosting development events as part of the District's Continual Development in Ministry offer.
- Hosting development events for worship leaders and local preachers, as well as bolstering our support to tutors and mentors through training. We will also be working with the wider connexion to provide helpful support to circuits who do not have tutors.
- Delivering a series of events and learning opportunities during Bible Month as well as signposting to other Connexional events.
- Honing and developing our annual calendar of District-wide Learning and Development events to be able to give advanced notice to circuits to allow for better planning.

James Pickin

Learning and Development Coordinator



Youth and Children's Work

To provide support, guidance, encouragement, resources and advice to all those involved in Children's, Youth, Families and Young Adult Ministry. It also falls within the remit of Youth and Children's Work to create training programs, workshops, webinars, and other appropriate opportunities for development.

ACHIEVEMENTS:

To support churches across the District during the pandemic, resources suitable for online children's and youth groups have been regularly collated and distributed. These resources include bible studies, useful websites, online training, games, crafts, YouTube videos, prayers, and devotionals.

Prior to the pandemic, Parrallel Equipping Days and CORE Skills Training were arranged at both District level and with churches and circuits individually. During the course of the pandemic it has been possible to adapt and deliver a number of these courses online including:

- A 4-part webinar series on the Core Skills in Youth and Children's Work.
- A 2-part webinar series on the Core skills for Family Ministry
- The Teenage Brain
- Recruiting and Keeping Volunteers
- **Building Sustainable Youth Ministry**
- **Understanding Knife Crime**
- Pornography and Young People
- **Developing Youth Participation**

In partnership with other divisions of the connexion the following webinars have also been delivered, allowing a more joined up approach to youth, children's and families work:

- 'So what now? Discussing what my church does next' (alongside the Learning Network
- 'How to be an Intergenerational Church' (alongside The Well)
- 'Digital Church Planting' (alongside the Evangelism and Growth Team)

3Generate 365 - This online engagement, facilitated through an app and through the delivery of 'Tune in' events online, gives children and young people the opportunity to have their voices heard. As District ambassador for 3Generate365 I am now producing resource material for leaders to hold their own tune in events.

FUTURE PLANS:

To craft and deliver more Parallel Equipping Webinars to include:

- Working with additional needs children and young people,
- Running effective small groups,
- Working multiculturally
- Detached youth work.

To raise the profile, value and importance of youth, children's, family and young adult ministry to the future of the Methodist Church, starting with encouraging churches to build sustainable youth and children's ministries, that the whole church gets behind and encourage churches to support the people on the 'front line' better.

Brian Smith

Youth and Children's Coordinator

Social Responsibility Commission

The Social Responsibility Commission (SRC) seeks to advise the District on policy and priorities for Methodist Social Responsibility involvement in London; to co-ordinate and advocate that involvement and to encourage theological reflection on its nature and significance as an expression of Christian discipleship.

ACHIEVEMENTS

A proposal was submitted to the Community Land Trust (CLT) to use property to provide homes at affordable rates and enable working class people to pay a fraction of the commercial rate. Park Lane Methodist Church is willing to pilot the project; however, there are charity law issues and complexities around charging rent at less than the commercial rate. These drawbacks and their wider implications are being explored by the Connexion and Charity Commission.

The SRC have been actively encouraging churches within the District to be a sanctuary for vulnerable people. We can be a district of sanctuary if at least six circuits have three churches that commit to working towards being a place of sanctuary.

PLANS

The SRC have recently accepted Anthony Boateng as Acting Convenor and await his position to be confirmed by Synod. The SRC acknowledges and thanks Revd Paul Timmis for his interim work as the previous Acting Convenor of the Commission.

The SRC is both a proactive and reactive commission, and with this in mind, will spend the next 18 months seeking to act upon the following priority areas:

- Current and post Covid issues unemployment, poverty and debt, health and wellbeing and domestic violence
- The ongoing impact of Brexit refugees, resettlement, inclusion into the community
- Affordable homes further work with the CLT
- Racial justice/diversity

The commission is now in the process of putting together a workplan allowing us to address the issues important to London Methodists in a timely way, with the degree of thoroughness, care and concern necessary.

We have worked towards becoming a District of Sanctuary and whilst there is much work still to be done, a number of circuits are in the process of becoming Circuits of Sanctuary which will assist with us reaching this goal.

The SRC aims to build relationships and partnerships with other organisations - both ecumenical and Methodist in nature - that are also involved with various areas of social responsibility.

We are also very keen on identifying and empowering young people within our District to play a role in our work.

Anthony Boateng

Acting SRC Convenor

London HIV Chaplaincy

Our work is concerned with restoring the health and wellbeing of HIV+ people who have experienced rejection for daring to ask questions, highlight abusive attitudes and who have been stigmatized for refusing to accept a passive role as victims by faith groups and families.

Thus we:

- Provide individual holistic support to HIV+ clients who have had that demeaning experience and help them to restore health, wellbeing and meaning to their lives
- Enable people living with HIV in London to negotiate the complex contemporary reality of living with the virus, thus enabling them to make decisions that are appropriate and of benefit to themselves
- Help some clients, through one to one meetings, to begin to regain their sense of self-worth and to re-engage socially with their peers and families
- Respond to healthcare professionals who see that our clients' experiences can lead them to become indifferent to the life-threatening risks of not adhering to their medication regimes
- Provide book groups as one way of meeting some of these goals
- Constantly look for ways to feedback the issues we identify to faith communities and their leaders

THE YEAR SO FAR...

It has been a very difficult year for everyone and the HIV Chaplaincy has had to find new ways of doing things. Most of what we do with clients means meeting with them face-toface. Obviously for most of the past twelve months we have not been able to do this. So with a heavy heart the trustees decided to furlough the Chaplain during the first and second lockdowns. This decision was not taken lightly. Once the lockdowns were lifted clients were eager to meet with the Chaplain again, socially distancing, and to resume the Reading Groups, albeit many just in a group of two.

Most people in the country have found the third lockdown much more difficult to cope with and our clients are no exception. Thankfully we were able to manage the third lockdown differently. We did not furlough the Chaplain this time which has meant that he has been able to use social media and the telephone to respond to clients.

Covid-19 has affected clients in many ways. Many have lost their private spaces. One client who lived at home with his mother would shut himself away in his bedroom; however his mother would barge into his room several times a day and pray over him that God would heal him of his gayness. Another client in lockdown would ring the chaplain regularly early in the morning whilst on a walk. Their partner noticed the change in behaviour. They used the client's telephone to call the chaplain and told him that their partner did not need a therapist or counsellor. They were not especially abusive, it was simply the reaction of many a person to a partner having intellectual or spiritual needs that they don't understand. Normally the client would have met the chaplain face-to-face and chatted and the problem with the partner would not have arisen.

Covid-19 has also challenged the provision of private spaces around London where the chaplain could meet with clients without others listening in and intruding into conversations. This has made our commitment to the clients all the more necessary.

Older clients have reported to us an increasing feeling of being alienated from societal values and standards of judgement. They also reported a difficulty in raising and maintaining their own questions in the face of dismissal and even contempt from younger people living with HIV. This in itself is an important lesson. The issues that older people need to explore are not necessarily the same as those of younger people even if they share certain common 'identity markers' (sexuality, gender or skin colour). Indeed for some older gay men the greatest sense of alienation arises from what they describe as a sense of having 'missed the bus' when faced with liberation movements who orient themselves to perceptions of age, body image, sexual activity or relational patterns that do not chime with them. At the very least they question or criticise the values that older clients may have. This would be true for any other identity marker that one may wish to choose. It was in direct response to this that we founded a Reading Group solely for older people to be both a safe space, and an opportunity for exploration.

Clients were eager to re-start the Reading Groups after each lockdown, albeit socially distancing and in smaller groups of six. The aim of each group is to provide a space where clients can 'name the un-nameable' and be believed. The groups enable clients to have the possibility of re-engaging with life, manage their addiction problems better, and for several clients, the waking of an intellectual hunger to think and know for themselves.

We gave a comprehensive breakdown of the numbers of clients in our report to the District in 2020, those statistics still stand and we continue to work with in excess of 360 clients. But this brings us on to a key issue that we often have to deal with: statistics. Faith bodies often ask us how many of our clients are from their particular institution, but this is not a straightforward question. When someone comes through the door of our churches with a problem do we ask them 'which church are you from, are you Methodist?' No! If we were to ask that question we would be putting a barrier between them and us immediately. We are there to meet/address their needs. Hopefully we would treat them seriously. So, if in the Chaplaincy we were to ask that question of our clients, we would be putting a barrier between the client and ourselves as well. The Chaplaincy's task is to listen, support and enable the client to become alive again after the abusive treatment

they have received at the hands of their faith institution. Often this is a long process over a long period of time. Our clients need to build up their confidence in themselves again.

OTHER CHALLENGES:

- Brexit a number of our European clients left the UK feeling unwanted and those who are still here are still anxious about their status in the UK. How can we welcome these sisters and brothers into our communities?
- **Engaging with faith leaders and congregations -** we accept that there are some people in our churches who support our work wholeheartedly, but how can we work together to address those faith leaders and congregations who are still stigmatising/abusing people living with HIV and are not prepared to walk the journey with them?

On both these issues, we would welcome hearing from you via Steve Penrose's contact details which can be found either in the District Directory or in the Minutes of the Methodist Conference.

Finally, the London HIV Chaplaincy are deeply grateful to, and commend the London District for having the generosity, courage, and humility, in accepting the trustworthiness of the Chaplaincy, to fund us as we attempt to care for our clients and to put right a violation of trust.

Phil Schneider (Chaplain)

Steve Penrose (Trustee Secretary)

District Reconciliation Group

Each District in the Methodist Church is required to convene a group who are prepared and trained to offer resource and support for the work of reconciliation across the Circuits. The London District Reconciliation Group (DRG) are able to provide independent listeners, or to signpost individuals to other support that may be available and more appropriate. We are keen to support individuals, Circuits and churches where there may be a need and a desire for reconciliation.

The DRG meet to share in training and to offer oversight to one another in our ongoing work.

ACHIEVEMENTS

Building on the work of last year of defining what we as a group can provide and how we might be of best service to Circuits, we as a District are taking part in a Connexional pilot project. We are working more closely with "Place for hope" (http:// www.placeforhope.org.uk); an organisation specialising in mediation and reconciliation work in faith communities. This work will feed into the Connexional review of our complaint and discipline processes.

PLANS

In our work with "Place for hope" we will be looking to better resource our District for both mediation and reconciliation work. There will be some training offered as we seek to support this work across the Circuits in finding new mediators and reconciliation practitioners.

Many thanks to all the members of the group for their ongoing commitment and work.

Revd Dan Haylett

Reconciliation Group Convenor



District Finance Report

A summary of the accounts for the year ended 31 August 2020 are set out on the following pages. They are an abridged version of the full audited accounts. Copies of the full version of the audited accounts will be emailed to all Circuit Treasurers and Superintendents. They will be available at Synod in April and are now available on the Charity Commission website.

The full Trustee Report and Accounts have been further aligned this year with the Charity reporting requirements FRS102. This is further explained in the full report and accounts along with the comparative figures of 2018-19 accounts where relevant.

The District General Fund (non-designated) operated with a surplus of £28,890 for the year. The principle reasons for the surplus was the decrease in expenditure on travel, meeting and training due to the pandemic. .

The District own two manses and these were revalued in 2017-18 accounts. As there has been little change in value since that time the only impact on the Manse Value Fund is the depreciation of the buildings.

The Benevolent Fund continues to provide the support needed by ministerial staff in special circumstances. In the year, grants were made of £2,100 and interest income earned was £127. The fund held £11,775 at end of year.

New grants awarded from the District Advance Fund (DAF) amounted to £734,763, of which £306,721 was paid in the 2019-20 year and £428,042 was transferred to Liabilities for payment in future years. DAF grants of £978,137 are held for expected payments in future years after reclaiming £92,650 granted in previous years. These monies were unclaimed as the need was no longer there.

The Jean Richardson Endowment Fund exists to assist exchange visits between UK and Overseas youth organizations. The net income, including a revaluation loss of £790, was £141. No grants were made.

Trust Fund 20520 - East End Mission - remains under the management of the District Trustees, for the benefit of the Tower Hamlets Circuit, who received grants of £37,642.

Other funds shown relate to District projects funded by the DAF, the Connexion and contributions. They cover youth enablement, training, chaplaincy, and the District Mission theme of Woven.

At the year-end, the finances were adequate for the continued progress and development of District activities.

George Kulasingham

District Treasurer

Consolidated Financial Activity (Sept 2019 – August 2020)

	2019-20	2018-19
Income		
Assessments from Circuits	1,510,625	1,434,245
deduct: Payment to Methodist Church Fund	1,235,853	1,179,514
District Assessments	274,772	254,731
Donations	0	221
Contributions from Circuit Advance Funds	464,801	613,522
Total from Circuits	739,573	686,474
Contribution from Connexion to cost of Chair	123,825	123,734
Interest on deposits and investment income	59,643	71,648
Other Income (e.g. Rent, Grants, training)	58,206	40,230
grants (incl trfs from DAf & General fund)	320,000	160,494
Total Income	1,301,247	1,264,580
Expenditure		
Grants and Donations committed in year	651,344	759,204
Salaries and associated costs	377,254	339,185
Property Costs (incl. Ins., C tax, utilities etc.)	51,975	47,228
Office Expenses (Admin., tel. travel etc.)	20,580	21,358
Synods, Commissions, Committees, Conference, etc.	7,066	18,614
Depreciation (now incl. of manse buildings)	20,130	22,615
Training	13,495	85,342
Other Expenditure	42,058	40,833
Audit& Accountancy fees	8,946	8,520
Manse loan interest		
Total expenditure	1,192,848	1,342,899
Net income	108,399	-78,319
Gains/(losses) on disposal of Manse		
Gains/(losses) on revaln fixed assets		
Gains/(losses): on investment assets	(7,533)	64,617
Net	100,8666	-13,702
Fund Balances from last year	5,002,924	5,016,626
Total Fund Carried Forward	5,103,790	5,016,626

Balance Sheet (as at 31 August 2020)

	2019	-2020	2018-	2019
Fixed Assets				
Manse & Property (Depreciating)	1,724,611		1,744,304	
Investments with TMCP	1,695,682		1,703,215	
	3,420,293	3,420,293	3,447,519	3,447,519
Current Assets				
Cash in Bank and in hand	173,534		87,548	
Central Finance Board Deposits	264,871		180,333	
TMCP interest accounts	2,204,903		1,792,572	
Loans from the District	0		610,000	
Debtors and Prepayments	13,610		12,555	
	2,656,918	2,656,918	2,683,008	2,683,008
Current Liabilities				
Creditors (due in under 1 year)	25,283		48,668	
Grants payable (within 1 year)	740,732		793,885	
	766,015	766,015	842,553	842,553
Long Term Liabilities				
Grants Payable after 1 year	207,405	207,405	285,050	285,050
Net Assets		5,103,790		5,002,924

Balance Sheet (as at 31 August 2020)

Fund Balances and Movements		Opening Balance	Incoming Resources	Resources Expended	Gains on revaluation	Disposal of manse	Closing Balance	
		£	£	£	£		£	
Unrestricted Funds	Unrestricted Funds							
General Fund (excluding manse fund)	U	133,004	401,186	(372,296)			161,894	
Designated Funds								
London District Advance Fund (incl. loan to circuit)	D	249,804	477,872	(546,795)			180,881	
Manse Value Fund	D	1,,742,958		(19,100)			1,723,858	
Manse Refurbishment Fund	D	142,582	1,227	(2851)			143,524	
District Training Personnel & Facilities	D	16,605	431	(4,681)			16,605	
District Youth Enablement	D	4,801	50,000	(43,987)			4,801	
London District Chaplaincy	D	459	39,760	(37,893)			2,326	
London Crs cont learning	D	(423)					(423)	
Growing London Leaders	D	6,745					6,745	
District Focus/Moving Stories	D	43,017	24,000	(27,520)			39,497	
University Chaplaincy	D	3,612					3,612	
Proclaim	D	4,431		(35)			4,396	
CSS Advanced Level Training	D	1,425	11,000	(7,570)			4,855	
Emergency fund	D	4,211	-	(2,762)			1,449	
3 Generate Coaches	D		7000	(6,500)			500	
Media & interfaith project	D		12,000	(6,025)			5,975	
New Community Church	D		9,000	(3,674)			5326	
Covid 19 Support	D		200,000	(48,612)			151,388	
Total Designated (excluding DAF)		1,970,423	354,418	(208,644)	-		2,116,197	
Total Unrestricted and Designated		2,353,231	1,233,476	(1,127,735)	-		2,458,972	
Restricted Funds								
London District Pastoral & Benevolent Fund	R	13,748	127	(2,100)	-		11,775	
Tower Hamlets - Sale-Land Stepney East End Mss	R	2,570,464	41,583	(41,583)	(6,743)		2,570,464	
Worship & Local Preacher Resources Centre	R	143	-	-	-		143	
London Regional Network (incl. deferred Income)	R	528			-		528	
Grenfell Tower Fund	R	(92)			-		(92)	
Inter Circuit Support	R		25,000	(21,300)			3,700	
Total Restricted Funds		2,584,791	66,710	(64,983)	(6,743)		2,579,775	
Endowment Fund								
Jean Richardson Bursary	Е	64,902	1,061	(130)	(790)		65,043	
Total Fu	nds	5,002,924	1,301,247	(1,192,848)	(7,533)	-	5,103,790	

General Fund Budget – unrestricted non-designated (September 2021 – August 2022)

London District of the Methodist Church Budget 2021-22

London District of the Methodist Church Budget 2	021-22	 	
	Actual 19-20	Budget 2020-21	Draft budget 2021-22
	£	£	£
Income			
Income from assessments on circuits	1,510,624.75	1,545,740.0 0	1,545,740.0 0
<u>Less</u> Assessment to Connexion		<u> </u>	
Methodist Church Fund payments	1,235,852.80	1,296,412.0 0	1,352,693.0 0
Net Income from circuits	274,771.95	249,328.00	193,047.00
<u>Add</u> Other Income			
Other income	15.00		
CFB interest receivable	2,574.43	1,200.00	1,200.00
DAF grants paid through district	0		
Total Other Income	2,589.43	1,200.00	1,200.00
Less Operating Expenses General and Governance			
Audit fees	8,520.00	8,800.00	9,100.00
Bank Fees	74	85	114
Consultancy	0		
Ecumenical grants	3,650.19	10,500	5,220
Hospitality& gifts	713.06	2,004	2024
Meeting facilities (Non commission)	2751.92	2,256	2,465
Miscellaneous CCLB License	312.08	350 229	355 237
Methodist recorder subscription		235	250
·			392
Minutes of conference & cpd	240.65	530	626
Travel	249.65	756	020
Total General and Governance	16,270.90	25,745	20,784
Chairs Expenses	2,874.68	7,596	9,350
Commission, synods, methodist conference			
etc Authorised Ministries Commission	3,712.37	3,792	4,726
Social Responsibility Commission	213.42	504.00	756.00

General Fund Budget (September 2021 – August 2022) continued

Superintendents' meetings	1,096.43	1,800.00	1,120.00
Methodist Conference	0	1,000.00	302.00
Synods	2,041.74	3,852.00	4,011.00
Total Commission, synods, methodist	7,063.96	10,916.00	10,916.00
conference etc	,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,	1	
Finance expenses	378.84	412.00	418.00
•			
Office Expenses	14,806.00	12,786.00	17,251.00
Property costs			
Manse costs	24,603.77	29,454	26,434
Office rent costs	2 227 00	2.452	2 520
District Training room annual cost	3,327.09	3,452	3,530
Office rent	23,580.72	24,300.00	25,017.00
Total office rent	26,907.81	28,547.00	28,547.00
Total Property costs	51,511.58	57,206.00	54,981.00
Total Treporty costs	02,022.00	1	0.,002.00
Safeguarding costs	2,275.68	4,402.00	4,791.00
Salaries & Associated costs	147,985.30	152,136.00	162,858.00
Training costs			
CDIM	4,868.83		
Staff training - non project	435.00	1,000.00	1,000.00
Chairs' training		1,000.00	1,000.00
Total training costs	5,303.83	2,000.00	2,000.00
Total Operating Expenses	248,471.00	273,231.00	291,843.00
Net Profit / -Loss	28,890.00	-22,703.00	-90,301.00
<u>Less</u> Depreciation		2,000.00	2,000.00
Net Cash surplus/deficit		-20,703.00	-88,301.00
<u>Less</u> Capital Costs		4,000.00	4,000.00
Cash surplus / -required		-24,703.00	-92,301.00

Circuit Assessments 2021 - 2022

Circuit	Circuit name	Circuit	MCF	District	Quarterly	
number	5	assessments		expenses	payments	
		2021-22			,	
		100%	87.51%			
		£	£	£	£	
1	City Road	46,356.00	40,566.61	5,789.39	11,589.00	
2	West London Mission	43,164.00	37,773.26	5,390.74	10,791.00	
3	Westminster	43,716.00	38,256.32	5,459.68	10,929.00	
4	Chelsea, Hammersmith and Fulham	21,924.00	19,185.92	2,738.08	5,481.00	
5	Battersea & Wandle Valley	59,324.00	51,915.04	7,408.96	14,831.00	
6	Lambeth	65,248.00	57,099.20	8,148.80	16,312.00	
7	Southwark & Deptford	102,064.00	89,317.26	12,746.74	25,516.00	
9	Tower Hamlets	17,624.00	15,422.94	2,201.06	4,406.00	
10	Hackney & Stoke Newington	43,824.00	38,350.83	5,473.17	10,956.00	
11	Islington & Camden Mission	16,924.00	14,810.37	2,113.63	4,231.00	
12	London Mission North West	30,844.00	26,991.90	3,852.10	7,711.00	
13	Harlesden	18,424.00	16,123.03	2,300.97	4,606.00	
14	Notting Hill	8,724.00	7,634.46	1,089.54	2,181.00	
17	Clapham (merged with Lambeth)					
20	Newham	33,024.00	28,899.64	4,124.36	8,256.00	
22	New River	94,424.00	82,631.41	11,792.59	23,606.00	
23	Wembley	33,104.00	28,969.65	4,134.35	8,276.00	
24	Ealing Trinity	45,036.00	39,411.47	5,624.53	11,259.00	
25	Richmond & Hounslow	33,424.00	29,249.69	4,174.31	8,356.00	
26	Wimbledon	24,724.00	21,636.23	3,087.77	6,181.00	
28	Blackheath & Crystal Palace	47,024.00	41,151.19	5,872.81	11,756.00	
30	Lesnes Abbey	45,724.00	40,013.54	5,710.46	11,431.00	
31	Barking, Dagenham & Ilford	47,756.00	41,791.77	5,964.23	11,939.00	
32	Romford	49,624.00	43,426.47	6,197.53	12,406.00	
33	Forest	82,724.00	72,392.62	10,331.38	20,681.00	
34	Enfield	65,924.00	57,690.77	8,233.23	16,481.00	
35	Barnet & Queensbury	46,424.00	40,626.12	5,797.88	11,606.00	
36	Harrow & Hillingdon	90,524.00	79,218.48	11,305.52	22,631.00	
37	Teddington	24,624.00	21,548.72	3,075.28	6,156.00	
38	Kingston upon Thames	34,616.00	30,292.82	4,323.18	8,654.00	
39	Sutton	61,464.00	53,787.78	7,676.22	15,366.00	
40	Purley	25,424.00	22,248.80	3,175.20	6,356.00	
41	Croydon	65,324.00	57,165.70	8,158.30	16,331.00	
42	Bromley	28,124.00	24,611.60	3,512.40	7,031.00	
43	Orpington & Chislehurst	48,544.00	42,481.35	6,062.65	12,136.00	
	Total from Circuits	1,545,740.00	1,352,692.96	193,047.04	386,435.00	

District Advance Fund

The purpose of the District Advance Fund of the London District is to support missional and outward looking, creative projects amongst our churches and circuits. Grants approved by the committee meet the criteria which are set out in a policy document on the District website. These may include grants for personnel, training, equipment and property. Funding for the District Advance Fund comes from a levy on circuit model trust funds and from the London Mission Fund.

The total of Grants awarded 2019 – 2020 was £734,733. These are summarised by category as follows:

Category	Total Amount
General	£101,470.00
Ministry	£499,406.00
Project	£133,857.00
Total	£734,733.00

The total payments of grants made during 2018 – 2019 including those approved in previous years was £667,593

As in previous years, the grants were awarded to a diverse and inspiring range of projects. These are a few examples:

- £20,000 to the Barking, Dagenham and Ilford circuit to support the work of the children's music school at Goodmayes Methodist Church.
- £29,106 to the Richmond and Hounslow circuit towards a community worker.
- £200,000 for the London District to create a 'Covid-19 fund' to assist circuits dealing with the effects of the pandemic.

The next page details of DAF grants awarded by the London DAF committee between September 1st 2019 and August 31st 2020.

Our thanks go to all committee members who have kept the important work of DAF running through these difficult times.

Revd Richard Grocott

Secretary of the London DAF Committee

District Advance Fund Grants Agreed (Sept 2019 - Aug

Date		_			
agreed	Grant to	Purpose	DAF £	LMF £	Yrs
October 2019	Barking, Dagenham & Ilford (31)	Goodmayes MC / Children's Music School	£20,000		3
October 2019	Wembley (23)	Ealing Rd MC - Hall roof replacement and main church roof repair	£20,000		1
October 2019	Chelsea, Hammersmith & Fulham (04)	Fulham Methodist Church – Volunteer Com. Coordinator		£28,000	
October 2019	Richmond & Hounslow (25)	Barnes Methodist Church – Building Project		£20,000	
October 2019	City Road (01)	Wesley's Chapel – One Day Conference		£4,815	
October 2019	Harrow & Hillingdon (36)	Northwood Methodist Church – Children & Family Worker		£12,000	
October 2019	Purley (40)	Warlingham Methodist Church – Youth Worker		£25,000	
January 2020	Battersea & Wandle Valley (28)	Staffing Resource - Administrator	£44000		3
January 2020	Battersea & Wandle Valley (28)	Renovation work - to decorate two office spaces	£3470		1
January 2020	Richmond & Hounslow (25)	Community Worker	£29,106		3
January 2020	London District	District Media & Interfaith Consultant	£25,000		2
January 2020	Chelsea, Hammersmith & Fulham (04)	Roof repair	£20,000		1
January 2020	Richmond & Hounslow (25)	Roehampton Methodist Church - 'Securing the Vision'	£12,300		1
January 2020	District	New Church project		£37,500	
May 2020	Hackney & Stoke Newington (10)	Circuit Administrator	£36,000		3
May 2020	London District	CDIM grant	£25,000		3
May 2020	Harrow & Hillingdon (36)	Property manager	£15,000		3
May 2020	Croydon (41)	Parchmore Road MC, Community Development Manager	£58,857		3
May 2020	Croydon (41)	South Norwood MC Repairs & Refurbishment	£10,000		1
May 2020	London District	Youth & Children's Co-ordinator	£104,000		2

District Advance Fund Grants Agreed (Sept 2019 - Aug 2020)

May 2020	Croydon (41)	South Norwood MC Repairs & Refurbishment	£10,000		1
May 2020	London District	Youth & Children's Co-ordinator	£104,000		2
May 2020	Croydon (41)	Parchmore Methodist Church – Community Development Manager		£1,143	
July 2020	Southwark & Deptford	AV system	£12,000		1
July 2020	West London Mission (02)	Pre-application design for King's Cross church redevelopment	£10,000		1
July 2020	Romford (32)	Collier Row Diaconal Appointment	£90,000		3
July 2020	London District	COVID-19 fund	£200,000		1
*DAF: District Advance Fund * LMF: London Mission Fund		TOTAL:	£734,733	£128,458	

Property Advisory Group

With the onset of the pandemic hitting within the first quarter of 2020, the closure of church buildings and the locking-down of life as we knew it affected the way we addressed the needs of church property.

Making buildings safe in terms of how we shared them with others and how we addressed moving around them to ensure all remained COVID safe became the priority. The application of using Risk Assessments prior to reopening the doors for worship services or other hirers, and remaining socially distanced, became the new normal. The government update given in February 2021 laying out the roadmap out of lockdown enabled hope of a return to life unrestricted from 21 June, yet in the months leading up to that date we are still engaged to wait on and interpret to what extent church worship can be reinstated in its buildings as government guidance is published.

Whilst the lockdown brought us to reengage how the church as a body of people could yet continue in its calling and purpose in spite of the restricted access to its buildings, it also highlighted the valued role church buildings play in facilitating gatherings of people for a number of varied reasons. Some ambitious proposals are in the planning phase and some are ironing out final legal or funding issues before launching ahead.

THE PROPERTY ADVISORY GROUP (PAG)

At its meeting in November 2020, the Property Advisory Group (PAG) made the decision to meet more regularly to enable momentum in developing ways to assist Circuits. They are currently working on establishing areas identified as important to Churches and Circuits, and are updating the property pages of the District website to ensure basic current queries are met - eg where to find the latest Covid guidance from the Connexion or the Government; or provide access to a Risk Assessment form.

A number of successful and well-attended property briefings held via Zoom over the summer replaced the yearly Property Day. These briefings addressed more pertinently, the requirements of church trustees in looking after the safety of all with respect to the operation of their buildings in a COVID environment.

PROPERTY CONSENTS ACTIVITY

Despite the pandemic, the creation of 81 new property projects over 2020 remained consistent with the average range of new projects created over the previous four years. The renewal of leases and the instigation of new rentals as the mainstay of Church/Circuits property activity gave reason to this steadiness. Nearly 10% of projects created in 2020 were abandoned in year, and only 5% of projects started in 2020 were recorded as "finished". This is not a true reflection of projects started and finished, but more the representation of those who return to the online site and record a project as finished. For projects such as leasing and ongoing rentals, this step may seem superfluous.

FUTURE PLANS

The Property Advisory Group aim to become more widely known in the District as a resource to offer guidance or signposting for Circuits/Churches considering development. With the success of the property briefing sessions held over the summer, the PAG would like to consider ways to facilitate safe forums for sounding out bold ideas and sharing best practice, as well as a Property Seminar for the later end of 2021.

Kathleen Henriques-Brown

District Property Development Officer

