



CONNEXION



A (safe) Place for All

**The magazine of
Christ Church Methodist, Addiscombe
SEPTEMBER 2021**

**Minister: Revd Soon Cheol Choi 020 8654 5481
114 Lower Addiscombe Road, Croydon CRO 6AD**

www.christchurchmeth.org.uk

*Part of the Croydon Methodist Circuit and a member of
Churches Together in Addiscombe*

WORSHIP

SEPTEMBER		
Sunday 11.00am	5	CLIMATE SUNDAY All Age Worship on Zoom/in Church – Revd Pam Clews
Sunday 11.00am	12	EDUCATION SUNDAY All Age Worship on Zoom/in Church – Revd Choi
Sunday 11.00am 5.00pm	19	PEACE SUNDAY All Age Worship on Zoom/ in Church - Mrs Ann Atkins Café Worship in church or on Zoom
Sunday 11.00am	26	Holy Communion on Zoom/in Church – Revd Choi

Christ Church worship takes place at **11.00am** on Sundays in Church or via Zoom – the links are on the email sending out the weekly Keeping in Touch sheet. Don't forget you can listen to previous services via the Christ Church website and also view 'special' services: <https://www.christchurchmeth.org.uk/worshi/sunday-worship>

Christ Church Sunday worship is recorded and CDs are available. If you would like to receive a weekly CD, please contact Adrian Pickett.

Cafe Worship on Sunday 19 September at 5.00pm – in church or via Zoom. The link will be sent out by email by Wendy Thompson. If you don't receive it, please contact her.

Also on Sunday mornings, **Early prayers** are held weekly at 9.00am for half an hour on Zoom. If you would like to join in, please contact Mary Salter.

Croydon Food Bank – Next Collection

There will be an opportunity to make a donation to the Food Bank on Saturday 11 September between 10.30am and 12 noon at Christ Church.
Thank you, Sue

Welcome to the September edition. We hope you enjoy reading the magazine. Any suggestions to Fiona please, *Please note that any opinions expressed in articles are personal to the authors and may not be endorsed by the editors.*

COPY DEADLINE FOR OCTOBER by **Sunday 19 September** either by email to ccmamagazine@hotmail.com or by phone to Fiona. .Thanks as always to all contributors.

Editorial team

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From the circuit stewards

Revd Nadine Wilkinson and Revd Choi are coming towards the end of year 4 of their current appointments to the Croydon Circuit and as many of you will be aware Revd Choi has indicated his intention to retire from the Methodist ministry in August 2022 and Revd Wilkinson has indicated that she is not seeking re-invitation.

The Circuit, through the Circuit Invitation Committee is therefore in the process of preparing profiles to enter stationing for new presbyters for appointment from September 2022 and the circuit stewards are liaising with the leadership teams of the churches involved.

Additionally, following prayerful consideration Bennie Harms has decided to retire at the end of August 2022. Bennie has been a valued member of the Circuit’s staff for more than nine years and has held several roles during this time. We are grateful for Bennie’s current ministry alongside Revd Choi in the role of Lay Pastor for Addington and Shirley Methodist churches and his preaching ministry throughout the Circuit.

We hold Bennie, Choi and Nadine in our prayers as they begin their final year of ministry in this Circuit and commit to supporting them in every way we can.

Worshipping safely at Christ Church: *Update*

It has been good to see more members of the congregation gradually returning to worship onsite at Christ Church, as well as others continuing to worship on Zoom, by phone, via the website or by CD. We hope that over the next few weeks more people will be comfortable attending worship at church. There are however, no plans to end Zoom worship.

We have had a booking system in place up to now to ensure we can accommodate those attending worship at Christ Church in a safe socially distanced way. We have now decided that we can do this without the need to book in advance.

There will be a few changes in September as more groups return to church. Key points to note are as follows:

- Safety stewards will meet you on arrival at church and sign you in (as we need to have a record of who attends and contact details for NHS Test and Trace)
- We are now allowed to sing in church but ask that you wear a face mask while you are in the building, unless you are exempt.
- Seating will continue to be socially distanced but we will put more chairs in the church during the month and make it clear which are available to be used.
- We ask that you leave the building promptly after the service and wait until you are outside to have conversations with other members of the congregation. Please do not hang around in the Fellowship Hall as this has limited ventilation.
- Junior Church and YPF will meet at church from September (apart from the 2nd Sunday of the month which will be all-age worship).
- The 4th Sunday of the month will continue to be a service of Holy Communion and will be brought round to the congregation.
- Morning worship in September will continue to start at 11 a.m. with music from around 10.45. In October we will be reverting back to a 10.30 a.m. worship start.

- Café Worship will return to the building in September, but also continue on Zoom.

- We politely ask if you have Covid symptoms, or have recently been in close contact with someone who has tested positive, that you follow government rules regarding quarantine and take a lateral flow test/PCR test as required.

- If you have the misfortune to test positive for Covid the week after attending worship at Christ Church it would be appreciated if you could let a Church Steward know .

If you have any concerns about the safety arrangements, please contact one of the Church Stewards.

The Church Stewards



*See weekly Keeping in Touch sheet
for updates or email me.*

*The Zoom link will be on the
Keeping in Touch sheet*

**SUNDAY 19 SEPTEMBER 2021
at 5pm AT CHURCH AND ON ZOOM**

Yes, we are having our first hybrid Cafe Worship
so that everyone can be part of it.

All are welcome for an informal hour of worship and fellowship

At the end of July 2021 Lindsey Macfarlane left the Croydon Circuit to move to Wales. I would like to thank Lindsey and the family for their numerous contributions to Cafe Worship, both leading and attending. Lindsey in particular took on a lot of work when Chris Scott became unwell and sadly died. It has been a blessing to have worship and fellowship with the Macfarlane family regularly and now that we have discovered zoom we look forward to seeing them again virtually sometimes.

Wendy Thompson

OUR MINISTER'S LETTER

Dear friends,

During my sabbatical, I spent quite a lot of time gardening, particularly at the beginning, in March, when travelling was very limited. What I learned from the garden was 'life endures'. I was amazed to see 'life' from the trees and plants which looked dead. They had survived cold weather and unusual snow over the winter. And now, I enjoy their blossoming, and am assured of hope in God's creation.

As we know, we had an unprecedented time over the last eighteen months and saw many lives being lost because of Covid-19 and so many people struggling to cope with daily life. But, thankfully this garden gave me a new hope and challenged me to get on with the work I have been entrusted with. Actually, I cannot deny that Covid-19 has brought us serious questions about life and living: Where, and how can we find joy under social distancing and physically cut-off from our communities? How much of life can we live meaningfully over the internet, through zoom or on the phone?

These were, and still are, the questions we all are trying hard to sort out. But, these questions seem to remind us that life is not lived in isolation, as an individual. We are all closely bound up with our neighbours and our families, and are responsible for each other's health and wellbeing, whether you like it or not. Over the last eighteen months, we have experienced the importance of that connectedness in many ways, which might have led to some sorts of sacrifice. What we've learned from this pandemic is that no one is an island, everyone is a part of the whole. Everyone's sacrifice, big or small, can make a difference. And now, as its results, we see things getting back to 'normal'. We have opened our church for worship, and more and more people are coming to church with confidence, as well as cautiousness. But, 'Back to normal', in a sense, doesn't sound positive. I'd rather like to suggest 'Let's not

go backward, let us, instead, move forward to a new future'. As we re-open the door, which allows us back in, we can now go out through that door into our community and beyond. This must be the time for us to think about our mission in this post-lockdown season.

Now, as I have come back from sabbatical, I'd like to take this opportunity to give thanks to all of you who have worked hard in various ways to cover up my absence, caring for each other, supporting the online worship, maintaining the church building and finance, and so on. I am really grateful for your commitment and faithfulness, and feeling much more closeness and deeper belonging among us.

Every blessing to you all.
Rev. SC Choi.

CHURCH FAMILY NEWS

The months of July and August have sped by and here we are in September. We remember in our prayers all those returning full time (or joining for the first time) schools, colleges and universities, that they will benefit from physical contact with their teachers and friends.

For those with birthdays in September, Revd and Sarah Choi, Daphne and Wendy to mention a few – very best wishes. For those planning holidays in September, have a wonderful time away.

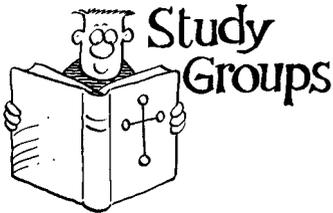
And for all of us, we pray that the coming month and the first of the Methodist Year will be a healthy and happy one for you.

Janet Houghton writes from Cambridge:-

“Thank you very much to all those lovely friends at Christ Church who sent special cards and good wishes for my 90th birthday. Although spent in hospital, it was very memorable. Thank you also for “get well” cards and good wishes. I am at a Nursing Home until the beginning of September.

“Do you remember the day our Church Service was televised? On that day, Rev John Chamberlaine and I were asked to attend a service at Camberwell Mission taken by Sonia Hicks, who was applying for candidature for the Methodist Ministry. There was no doubt about it – she was eminently suitable. I am pleased to say that Rev Sonia Hicks is this year’s President of the Methodist Conference.”

Please phone/send any family news to Fiona Assaly: 020 8654 1296 or bingham144@hotmail.com. We want to make sure our prayers are offered for all our friends. Do remember the prayer chain – contact me if you would like to include anyone on the prayer chain but remember to ask their (or a family member’s) permission first.



EMMAUS GROUP - THE FUTURE

Emmaus group have been meeting on church premises on Tuesday evenings for some time and continued on zoom during the pandemic. Those who attend have now decided on a new way forward.

The name Emmaus will not be continued as we felt that it did not adequately describe what the group meets for. We are all thankful to Fiona and others who have organised or led Emmaus group in the past.

Going forward there will be two options for anyone interested in studying the bible and Christianity to attend. Rev Pam Clews will be leading a group on Friday mornings on church premises (details opposite). Thank you to Pam for agreeing to arrange and lead these meetings.

I will arrange occasional evening bible study courses on zoom, the first of which will be weekly in the evening during Advent 2021 – details will follow nearer the time.

Wendy Thompson

ENCOUNTERING GOD IN THE BIBLE

A new monthly reflective Bible study group called Encountering God in the Bible will start on Friday September 24th in the Blue Room at the rear of the church. It will begin at 10.30 and finish by 12 noon.

The last months have been challenging to say the least. First we had to deal with Brexit, followed swiftly by the pandemic and all that it brought with it. This year has seen the rise in issues caused by climate change and the dreadful situation in Afghanistan and Haiti. The Church has not escaped this trauma and we face a time of change and hopefully opportunity and development. I hear from some people that they are feeling weary and are not sure what's around the corner and many are asking the question where is God in all of this?

This Bible study will offer the opportunity to be together, to spend time thinking about what God is saying to us through the Bible and to give us time and space just to be for a while. You don't need to have any previous knowledge or experience to attend, or even to be sure about your faith. You may have questions and this group will offer a safe space in which to ask them.

**Further dates for the diary –
15th October and 19th November 2021.**

I look forward to exploring the bible with you.

God Bless
Pam Clews

Our Return

.....

Choi is back,
It's been a while,
Since we have seen,
His warming smile.



People are returning,
To the Church,
And Zoom is resting
On the perch.

Some prefer the Zoom effect,
But being with people, I elect,
Singing is at last allowed,
But muffled by a facial shroud.

Only when PPE is gone,
Can we truly praise the Son,
Sing his praises open mouthed,
Join in hymns and sing out loud!

Now that Choi, he has returned,
A restful 'Sabbatical' he had earned,
He's rested and revised his plusses and noughts,
And ready to share his collected thoughts.

Bob Horne
August 20th 2021

Macmillan Annual Coffee Morning



The annual coffee morning for Macmillan Cancer Support won't be taking place again this year but you are invited to make a donation to

this very worthy cause. Every penny or pound has an impact; for example £236 could pay for a Macmillan nurse for a day helping people living with cancer and their families receive essential medical, practical and emotional support.

It would be good if I could send all the money off as one sum so if you would like to donate then you can either give me cash, a cheque or via online banking by the end of September. *(Please email me for my bank details if this is your preference).*

Many thanks

Mary Salter





The Methodist Church in Britain and All We Can have launched a joint appeal in response to the powerful earthquake that struck Haiti's Southern Peninsula, on August 14.

The onset of tropical cyclone Grace has impeded relief efforts with many thousands of people having lost family and friends. The death toll is still climbing and casualties are overwhelming limited local medical provision. We've been speaking with our networks, friends and partners in Haiti, and across the region, since the quake struck, understanding the situation and needs. Our local approach – working through partners already there, allows for an agile response.

As the Methodist Church in Britain and All We Can stand together to bring hope, we invite you to stand with those affected in Haiti. Please give, and join us in praying for the early response.

With heartfelt thanks,

**Graeme Hodge
Chief Executive**

HOPE OVERFLOWS

Hope overflows
In a dry land
Where butterflies dance
In the cascading water
That runs and fills up
The buckets of a community.



A stream of hope
Captured to quench
Sustain
And grow.
In this dry land
Water is drawn up
To bring sprouts of ambition.

The dance of butterflies
Beckons hope in.
For in this dry land they grow hope.
Hope will not disappoint us.

*Originally published by All We Can, and reproduced here
with permission for the Season of Creation 2021*

The fall of Kabul and the desperate scramble to safety reminds me of the following:-

A Story from an Old Man about an Old Man

I was seven in 1939 when the war against Germany started, and I was 34 when I married a beautiful German girl called Heidi. Chance, drama and luck, or, perhaps, something spiritual through the years, has been waiting around strange corners for her and for me. From Heidi's family I learned the following story.

By 1944, thinking people in Germany knew that the war was lost. Heidi was due to be born and her mother decided to take herself and the family out of the deadly, terrible bombing of Berlin. Pregnant mother, and her two daughters, moved east to safety in Neisse (now Poland). Heidi was born, so now mother had three daughters to look after. Soon Neisse became as dangerous as Berlin had been, with Russian tanks and guns advancing towards them. Heidi's dad, an officer in the army, arrived to take the family to relatives, living in a safer place, miles north of Berlin. All of Neisse were preparing to leave, and desperately quickly, too.

On the packed platform of the railway station, father, mother, baby Heidi and her two sisters, waited for the train, the last train, to take them to safety. The booming of the Russian guns was getting very close. Everyone knew that this train was their last chance of safety. When it arrived all the glass in its windows had been smashed by the blanket bombing raids around Berlin, so everyone rushed aboard through the windows as well as in through the doors. Father scrambled in and pulled his daughters and the baby in, but

mother just could not manage to pull herself up and in. In seconds there was not an inch anywhere for even one more to sit or stand inside. It was a desperate train keen to make a last exit back to Berlin, away from the noisy and deadly Russian bombs and guns. But Heidi's mother was still standing on the platform in tears. The open window was high above her and she, exhausted from trying to climb, had lost her chance to get in.

In the frightened silence of the carriage there was fidgeting. An old man began to struggle to his feet calling louder and louder to the solid crush around him, "I've got to get out -out! I can't sit here and see a family split up like this! Please let that mother come in and have my seat. Will you allow this?" The packed in people, both those standing and sitting, solid in silence, began to nod in agreement. The old man struggled up and squeezed and squeezed his way to the window, and out. Then he let Heidi's mother climb on him a bit, while others pulled from above and somehow they got Mother in. "I couldn't see a family split" he repeated again and again, as the train pulled away. It is not hard to imagine him standing on the platform with other abandoned people, watching his last chance of escape moving away down the line to safety.

OK, this happened a long time ago but the details and anguish in Kabul, with planes this time, mirror many of the details of our story, cruelties in front of our TV cameras, dragging on and on.

What about that old man? What he did in his compassion has enabled our family to stay together to this day, reminding us to fill our prayers with thankfulness.

Rex

SUPERINTENDENT'S LETTER

Dear friends,

After a very long year affected by Covid-19, I hope that it has been possible for you to enjoy time with family and friends this summer. I hope you may also have had the opportunity to relax and enjoy a change of scenery on holiday.

September marks the beginning of the new connexional year and presents several opportunities to connect with friends across the Circuit and further afield.

We were not able to have a Circuit celebration of MHA Sunday in June as we had hoped. Instead, we are invited to gather alongside residents and staff at Hall Grange for a service of Holy Communion at 3.00 pm on Sunday 5 September to celebrate the work of MHA. Alongside participating in worship, you will be able to look around the Wilderness (https://www.mha.org.uk/news/latest-news/news_archive/reclaiming-wilderness/). Envelopes will also be available for you to make a donation to support MHA.

We are delighted to be able to gather on Sunday 26 September when Downsview will host a Circuit social and service. We can gather from 4.30 pm to share fellowship before worship at 6.00 pm. Our service will include space for thanksgiving and remembrance because so much has happened since we last gathered for such worship.

The Season of Creation (1 September – 4 October) will enable us to connect with our neighbours, past, present and future, as well as all of God's creation. This year's Season of Creation has particular resonance as it takes place in the run-up to the COP26 UN Climate Change Conference in Glasgow beginning on 31 October. Resources for the Season of Creation are available via

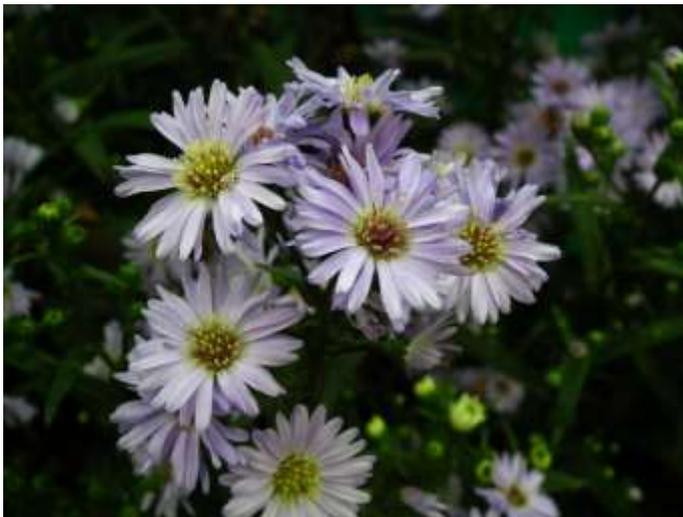
the following link:

http://www.jointpublicissues.org.uk/creation/?utm_source=JPIT&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=12593881_Newsletter%20August%202021&dm_i=1MV9,7HX11,WSYHYM,UHORP,1. More resources have been prepared by Phoebe Parkin, the Youth President for 2020/21 under the heading "God's world, our home" (<https://www.methodist.org.uk/our-work/children-youth-family-ministry/young-adults-explore-calling-grow-in-faith/agents-of-change/gods-world-our-home/>). I encourage you to make use of these excellent resources.

I pray that we may be blessed and inspired to encourage each other to connect in fresh ways during the beginning of the new connexional year.

God bless,

Sten



Memories of being

Youth Hostel Wardens for a week



Harlech Beach

In 1970, Carl and I were on a cycle trip to North Wales staying at Youth Hostels each night. When we arrived at Llanbedr – near Harlech with its impressive castle – we recognised the Warden. We knew his father – the Warden at Salisbury.

Chatting about holidays, the Warden and his wife said they could only get away if they could find someone to take over. We offered to take over for just over a week the next month. Nothing official was needed in those days and I do not think that even the YHA needed to be consulted.

We cycled back to Croydon, staying at different hostels each day and three weeks later, were on our way back. Most hostellers booked breakfast and quite a few evening meals. They washed up and did other duties – sweeping the dormitories or tidying the common room. The hostellers had to be out by 10.00am and the hostel reopened at 5.00pm – lights out by 10.30pm.

One day in the very Welsh speaking area, when we were in the butchers shop, all the customers spoke Welsh. We bought the meat, sausages and bacon for the hostel and noticed some ox tongue (something we both love) so we got some for ourselves. When we got back, we put the goods for the hostellers in the fridge and left the tongue on the table (very well wrapped) to

enjoy when we had made a drink. When we got back to our sitting room, the wrapping of the tongue was on the floor while the hostel cat looked at us with a self-satisfied look. It was bread and cheese for us!

An old school friend, Helen, was living in Birmingham with her husband Roget and children Alison (our bridesmaid), Caroline and Andrew. We suggested they might come over for the weekend, paying normal hostel fees. They contacted us suggesting they could bring some colleagues, 15 in all. The hostel had plenty of room.

It was a great weekend – walking on the mountain paths, going to the area by car to make sure we were back by 4.30. The Sunday was wet so Helen and friends stayed in the hostel until after lunch – scrambled eggs or beans on toast at packed lunch price. There were two Swiss girls who did not realise that there were no trains in North Wales on a Sunday. They were going to Chester with the others by car.

When the wardens returned refreshed, we had good takings for them before cycling back home. We thoroughly enjoyed the experience.

Sheila Szzvanowski



Conference

Business Digest

A report for local churches about the business of the 2021 Methodist Conference held in Birmingham and online: Presbyteral Session 24-25 June; Representative Session 26 June – 1 July.
www.methodist.org.uk/conference2021

Election and Induction of the President and Vice-President

On Saturday 26 June the Revd Sonia Hicks was elected and inducted as President of the Conference and Barbara Easton as Vice-President. In her Conference address, Mrs Hicks focused on her theme for the year, "God's Table: An Invitation for All", reflecting on the racism and marginalisation she and her family have experienced and how the Church can respond to injustice and division in society today. The Vice-President, Barbara Easton, drew on her experience as a quilter to address the Conference on a range of issues including on diversity, the environment and ecumenical relations.

Reception into Full Connexion

During Conference worship, 22 presbyters and three deacons were received into Full Connexion on Sunday 27 June, along with four presbyters by transfer and one presbyter by reinstatement. Later that day, ordination services took place in five churches in the vicinity of Birmingham. The Conference rejoiced

that those ordinands who had been received into Full Connexion online at the 2020 Conference were ordained in six venues across the Connexion on the preceding weekend.

Education strategy

The Revd Dr Roger Walton introduced the report, 'Transforming Lives: A Schools' Educational Strategy for the Methodist Church', which outlines the strategy for Methodist schools for the next ten years.

The Conference:

- Affirmed those who work and volunteer to support education;
- Urged Circuits to audit local schools regularly as part of their mission;
- Encouraged Districts to appoint District Education Officers;
- Invited young people to consider education as avocation and Circuits to support them;
- Encourages Circuits and churches to recruit governors for local schools;
- Asked Circuits and Districts to sponsor new Methodist schools where appropriate.

The Conference also agreed to:

- maintain and extend Methodist engagement with schools;
- pursue educational excellence;
- develop a confident Methodist ethos and working together with local partnerships including local heritage sites;
- prioritise areas of need.

Methodist Church House

The Conference received a report from the Methodist Council, which updated the Conference on the work that had

been undertaken so far in relation to Methodist Church House. It heard that, in the light of the significant change of circumstances since the decision had been made to rebuild Methodist Church House, the Council had agreed to discontinue the proposed redevelopment. Instead, the Council now recommended that Methodist Church House be sold, with the proceeds of the sale used for alternative office accommodation for the Connexional Team in London. Under the terms of the required Charity Commission Scheme for the Centenary Hall Trust, the Conference confirmed the decision to sell Methodist Church House.

Deliverance Ministry

The Conference adopted interim guidelines for deliverance ministry, brought by the Methodist Council and the Faith and Order Committee. The Faith and Order Committee is undertaking some further theological reflection on deliverance ministry which will be presented to the 2022 Conference. The guidelines include the safeguards that such ministry should only be undertaken within a liturgical framework, should never be undertaken by only one person, should not be used for people under 18 years old, and should not be used in an attempt to change a recipient's sexual orientation or gender identity.

The Conference appointed a Connexional Panel on Deliverance Ministry which will have, amongst other things, oversight of this ministry, training materials, appointing of practitioners. The Panel will also act

as an advisory body for deliverance ministry in the Methodist Church, particularly for District Chairs who will be the point of contact for those recommended for training. Feedback on the guidance is being sought: guidancefeedback@methodistchurch.org.uk

Climate Change and Fossil Fuels

The Joint Advisory Committee on the Ethics of Investment (JACEI) reported to the Conference on the further work undertaken in respect of investment in fossil fuels. In the light of this further work, JACEI has advised the Central Finance Board to disinvest from a number of companies, which are believed not to be aligned with the Paris Agreement goals.

Holy Communion and online worship

The Conference agreed to adopt a three year period of active discernment on the issue of Holy Communion and online worship, during which churches will be encouraged "with reverence and joy, to a time of discernment, both experiencing and reflecting upon what it might mean to celebrate the Lord's Supper online and to use this as an opportunity to discuss the issues raised in our churches thereby deepening our understanding of our life together."

In adopting the proposed period of discernment (beginning on 1 September 2021), the Conference commended the report to Districts and Circuits for study and reflection, and invited feedback.

Reflective Supervision

The Conference adopted the Reflective Supervision Policy for ordained ministers in the active work and those in designated lay roles within the Methodist Church. A review of the implementation of the policy, including its extension to relevant lay roles, is to be brought to the Conference of 2026. The Conference thanked the Revd Dr Jane Leach, making her final report as Connexional Director of Supervision, for her work in this area.

Ministry in the Methodist Church

After a period of consultation and feedback on the draft Statement, the Conference adopted Ministry in the Methodist Church as a considered Statement of the judgment of the Conference.

Alongside the formal Statement, the Changing Patterns of Ministry report considered the life of the Church in respect of the context of ministry, for those who are lay and ordained, and some of the practical considerations and challenges connected with that.

The Conference adopted the recommendation that the office of Local Lay-Pastor be established with the Ministries Committee directed to establish details of the scope of the role, its training and licensing. The Conference also adopted a new understanding of itinerancy as a characteristic of ministry in the Methodist Church, directing that this be brought to the attention of all candidates and probationers. Some aspects of stationing matching process will also be reviewed and to ensure

there is a clear process for enabling some presbyters to serve in local, pioneer and specific cultural or language appointments.

The Ministries Committee is to produce a resource detailing guidance for “good endings” to help manage Church relationships when appointments end.

Budget

In presenting the budget, the Connexional Treasurer, the Revd Tim Swindell and the Director of Finance and Resources, Matt Tattersall, told the Conference that there is a deficit in the pension scheme and a fall in income over the previous year which has led the budget to be further revised. Mr Swindell told the Conference that “The Church is full of tired people and we all need them to recover. We are right to be ambitious but we don’t have limitless people or resources.”

The Conference adopted a resolution asking for churches, Circuits and Districts to give, according to their ability, towards a target of 15% of their reserves to address the pension deficit. It adopted a budget which is based on a reduction in the District Assessment of 1% in 2021/2022.

Oversight and Trusteeship

The Conference reaffirmed the Our Calling vision statement, which was launched 21 years ago, and adopted it as the primary strategic driver for the Church’s work.

The Conference adopted resolutions that raise the minimum size of a local church to 12 members from six with churches being asked to examine creative ways of working with other local churches so they are not overburdened with matters of trusteeship; and directed that work continues towards the creation of a Connexional Council as the connexional trustee body, and to replace the Methodist Council and Strategy and Resources Committee.

Work to review the constitution of the Conference and its ways of working will carry on in the coming year with a report coming before the 2022 Conference. A Task Group for Regional and District Structure Planning will be set up with the aim of reconfiguring the district structure more appropriately.

Marriage and Relationships

A report on marriage and relationships, 'God in Love Unites Us', was received by the Conference in 2019 and the District Synods were asked to consider the provisional resolutions and report back to the 2021 Conference. The Conference received a report on the results of the Synod votes (which showed that 29 out of the 30 Synods confirmed support for the provisional resolutions) and on the range of views expressed in the Synods and by ecumenical and overseas partners. The Conference confirmed provisional resolutions on the principles or qualities of good relating, understanding of cohabitation and same sex marriages conducted on

Methodist premises or by Methodist office-holders.

The Theology of Safeguarding

The Conference adopted The Theology of Safeguarding and commended it for study and reflection throughout the Connexion. The report explores the theological roots of safeguarding, how theological thinking is used, the failure to challenge inappropriate and unacceptable behaviour, how churches can welcome people who have experienced abuse, grappling with power and forgiveness and change. It also explores spiritual abuse and the trauma of abuse and acknowledges how the Methodist Church has cause to repent, seek forgiveness and take responsibility for past actions.

Notices of Motion

The Conference expressed its concern and support for campaigns in the following areas:

- Changes to the social care system and the work led by Methodist Homes (MHA) to #FixCareForAll;
- The situation in Myanmar;
- The recent cuts to the foreign aid budget;
- The change to the immigration rules, particularly as they impact refugees;
- Climate justice as we approach the COP26 climate change conference in November.

All We Can

In the All We Can report to the Conference, the Methodist Relief and Development charity detailed its work.

Since September 2019 All We Can has had a transformational and measurable impact upon the lives of 2,139, 475 people and has partnered 22 local organisations in six countries. Due to the overwhelming impact of COVID-19 on All We Can's local partners, a significant portion of the charity's workload was spent responding to this ongoing emergency situation. All We Can's long term development partners and other local organisations were supported to pivot their programmes to assist communities in coping with the impact of COVID-19.

Methodist Ministers' Housing Society

The Conference received a report from the Methodist Ministers' Housing Society, which set out the activities of the Society in the last year. The Conference asked that collaborative conversations take place to consider how the covenant relationship between the Church and its supernumeraries and their widowed spouses can be expressed fully and appropriately in the housing of supernumeraries, and to bring recommendations to the Council.

Methodist Women in Britain

The Conference received a presentation from Methodist Women in Britain, which marked the tenth anniversary since the group was established. They shared the highlights of their work over the past ten years.

3Generate

3Generate, the annual Children and Youth Assembly of the Methodist Church took a different form in 2020

and became 3Generate365, a year-round process of engagement with children and young people in their local setting to enable them to listen to God, discern what God is saying, deepen their faith and be confident in being evangelists sharing their faith with others. The Conference reaffirmed the importance of hearing the voices of children and young people in discerning future direction, and directed that there is such consultation when revising strategic policies.

Strategy for Justice, Dignity and Solidarity

The Conference adopted a far-reaching Strategy for Justice, Dignity and Solidarity, which will see "a profound change in the culture, practices and attitudes of the Methodist Church". As it is rolled out, the strategy will support Methodists with issues of equality, diversity and inclusion, with the aim of becoming a Church in which God's unconditional love is expressed in word and actions and where all people are able to play their part.

The strategy's recommendations include a celebration of the richness of the Church's diversity and opportunities to learn more of, and to be changed by, God through encounter with each other across the Church.

Comprehensive training on topics of racism, gender, disability and LGBT+ awareness will be mandatory for anyone in a leadership role. The strategy will also introduce moves to ensure that the leadership of the

Church reflects the diversity of its membership. A series of structures, processes and practices will be put in place to ensure that people are treated with justice and dignity and that the discipline of the Methodist Church is upheld in the face of discrimination; preventing, challenging and redressing all behaviours which are discriminatory or belittling.

Ecumenical Matters

The Ecumenical report to the Methodist Conference detailed how the global pandemic has seen already existing good relationships with ecumenical partners, in most cases, grow stronger as we have continued to share experience and expertise in support of one another. The Revd Helen Cameron has served as Moderator elect of the Free Churches Group from April 2021 and will become Moderator in April 2022.

The Conference received the report of the Joint Covenant Advocacy and Monitoring Group, which proposed that a new, successor, group be established, to be named Life in Covenant. The Conference approved the terms of reference for the new group and appointed the Revd Ruth Gee as its Methodist co-Chair.

Memorials

Memorials are messages from Circuit Meetings and District Synods to the Conference. They play a vital part in enabling the Conference to hear and to respond to concerns from across the Connexion. This year, the

Conference considered and replied to 44 memorials on topics including marriage and relationships, online communion, oversight and trusteeship, local preachers' training, finances and the pandemic, fossil fuels, and equality, diversity and inclusion.

Israel Palestine

In response to four memorials which were received on the subject of the Kairos Palestine statement 'Cry for Hope', the Conference commended the document for study, whilst acknowledging the complexity of the situation. The Conference also adopted the reply to memorials presented to the 2020 Conference, and which were referred to the Methodist Council for full consideration.

Conversion Therapy

The Conference received a memorial calling for a ban on Conversion Therapy in any form. The Conference agreed to support and adopt the 'Memorandum of Understanding on Conversion Therapy in the UK' definition of conversion therapy, to call on all Methodists to refuse to offer or participate in offering conversion therapy in any form. The Conference directed the Methodist Council to consider, draft and publish a policy on 'Conversion Therapy', called on the UK Government to ban the practice without further delay, and to consider further the most appropriate way in which to engage with HM Government on this issue.

President and Vice-President designated for 2022-2023

The Conference designated the Revd Graham Thompson to be President and Anthony Boateng to be Vice-President of the Methodist Conference 2022/2023.

Appointments

The Conference made a number of appointments and reappointments, including:

The Revd Michaela Youngson as Assistant Secretary

of the Conference for a period of six years from 1 September 2021; The Revd Dr Janet Corlett as Chair for the Isle of Man District from 1 September 2021; the Revd Daniel Haylett as Chair for the Plymouth and Exeter District from 1 September 2022; the Revd Novette Headley as Chair for the Birmingham District from 1 September 2022.

Future dates of the Conference

The Methodist Conference will meet in Telford from 23-30 June 2022.



An update from Catherine Porter just before her return to Japan

Dear Friends,

Thank you so much for your prayers and support during the time I've spent in this country. After watching, praying and waiting over the last months, I'm travelling back to Osaka in Japan on 16 September.

When I get to Japan, I will need to spend some time in isolation. Thankfully, I have now been double-vaccinated. After isolation, I need to get my car road-worthy again. After that, I can be re-united with my harp, and start working towards the outreach concerts scheduled for November.

I need to find somewhere to live. I'm praying for somewhere I can practise my harp. I need disabled access, as I can't move the harp up and down steps alone. Finding a place like this has been a challenge over the years. Please could you pray with me for this?

As I move into another time of transition, I am both thankful for the year I have had here and looking forward to the time ahead. I am thankful for the study I have been able to do: two ten-week online courses at All Nations and also a weekly short-course concerning member care for mission partners. I am thankful for my time as Chaplain at Moorlands College. I'm thankful for local church and for chances to fellowship with new and old friends. I'm thankful for times to not do very much and to gaze at Bournemouth's beautiful sea.

A few weeks ago, I had the chance to go to All Nations Christian College in person. They were running a course called 'Arts for a Better Future' about engaging with culture, identifying Kingdom goals and using appropriate art forms to speak into those. This year, the course was focussing on Japan and I had an invitation to join and help out. I was blessed to be able to share about Japan with the students. I was also blessed to hear and see the amazing things that people were doing with art around the UK! It was an inspiring time for me.

It's hard to leave the UK: I've had a great time and the road ahead in covid-times is marked by uncertainty. I feel assured that it is right to move forward though. So, I will step out and see how God will lead me. I don't know what's to come, but He certainly does. I know that He is good.

Every Blessing,
Catherine

Weekly Services and Meetings at Christ Church <i>(We hope that meetings/groups will be back at Church soon)</i>			
09.15	Holy Communion (2 nd Sun)		
09.30	Time for quiet prayer (3 rd Sun)		
10.10	Songs for Worship (2 nd Sun)		
10.30	Morning Service (Parade 2 nd Sun)		
10.30	Holy Communion (4 th Sun)		
10.30	Junior Church / Youth Fellowship		
10.30	Crèche		
17.00	Cafe Worship (3 rd Sun)		
Monday			
09.30	0-5 Stay & Play		
18.00	Monday Club (monthly, 3 rd Monday)		
Tuesday			
19.00	Rangers (fortnightly)		
19.30	Emmaus Bible Study Group		
Wednesday			
18.30	Guides		
Thursday			
09.30	0-5 Stay & Play		
18.45	Brownies		
Minister		Revd Soon Cheol Choi	8654 5481
Church Stewards			
Sunday morning services only → Sunday morning services only → Sunday morning services only →			
Room Bookings			