

The Governance Board
APPENDIX TO THE MINUTES:
Resolutions from Committee Reports
approved by the Governance Board at its meeting on 7th April 2022

Property Board

1. The Governance Board received the report.
2. The Governance Board directed that the current practice of allocation of 15% of the income from the Property Board Loan Fund be allocated to the Chapel Fund and that 15% be allocated to the Church Development Fund ceases on the basis that it is only reallocating funds within the same accounts available for this work.
3. The Governance Board directed that the Property Board may only in exceptional circumstances consider provision of 'open-ended' bridging facilities to Societies due to the high risk associated with these arrangements.
4. The Governance Board directed that the Property Board may extend the loan term available from 5 years to 7 years and in exceptional circumstances for amount in excess of £100k to 10 years subject to repayment capacity being demonstrated.
5. The Governance Board directed that Societies provide requested returns within the specified timeframes to ensure accuracy of information.
6. The Governance Board re-appointed the General Secretary of the Methodist Church in Ireland as the holder of the Register of Deeds and Documents.
7. The Governance Board directed that the funds held by the Property Board are amalgamated into a single account and management of the funds are transferred to the Connexional Finance Team with the future requirement for one Treasurer for these funds on behalf of the Property Board.
8. The Governance Board once again expressed its thanks to the Trustees of the Joseph Rank Trust for their ongoing generous financial support for the work of the Methodist Church in Ireland.
9. The Governance Board appointed the Board as follows:
Board Membership 2022 – 2023:
The President, Lay Leader and Secretary of Conference, General Secretary of the Home Mission Department*,
Officers of The Property Board:
Rev Thomas Clarke, Chair*; Rev Ken Connor, Secretary*; Mr Paul Cummings, Lay Treasurer*; Rev Andrew Kingston, Ministerial Treasurer*,
District Representatives:
North Western – Rev John Beacom, Mr Tony Foster
Southern – Rev Greg Alexander, Mr Ross Hinds
North Eastern – Rev Sam Campbell, Mr Clem McKee*
Ms Elizabeth Curry
Property Board Plans Committee:
Mr Clem McKee, Convener*; Rev Ken Connor, Secretary; Mr John Hutchinson, Rev Thomas Clarke, Mr Simon Kinghan
*Denotes membership of the Property Board Executive Committee
10. **Thanks**
The Governance Board on behalf of the Conference recorded its appreciation to Mr Keith Irvine for his service to the Property Board, first as Treasurer, and then as Chair, and directed that an expression of thanks be included in the record of the Conference.

Board of Education

1. The Governance Board received the report.
2. The Governance Board appointed the Board for year 2022-2023 Connexional year as follows:
The President, the Lay Leader, the Secretary of Conference, the President Designate,
The Officers of the Board:

General Secretary and Convener of the Northern Executive: Dr Anita Gracie

Ministerial Treasurer and Convener of the Southern Executive: Rev Nigel D Mackey

Lay Treasurer: Mr J Kenneth Twyble

The General Secretary of the Irish Methodist Youth and Children's Team: Ms Gillian Gilmore

Elected by Conference:

Rev Andrew Dougherty, Mr Stephen Orr, Mr Charles Payne, Ms S Rosemary Rainey, Dr Ian Taylor, Rev Alan G Wardlow, Ms Linda Magowan, Rev Michael Spence and Ms Daphne Wood

3. The Governance Board endorsed the following appointments as representatives to the Transferor Representatives' Council: Dr Anita Gracie, Ms S Rosemary Rainey, Mr J Kenneth Twyble.
4. The Governance Board re-appointed Ms S Rosemary Rainey to the Education Authority (NI).
5. The Governance Board re-appointed Mr J Kenneth Twyble to the Controlled Schools' Support Council.
6. Nominations: The Governance Board directed the Board of Education to nominate representatives of the Methodist Church in Ireland on the Boards of Governors/Management of Schools or any succeeding bodies. The appointment of Transferor Representatives shall continue to be made as heretofore.
7. Ulster Royal Schools: The Governance Board re-appointed the following representatives of the Methodist Church on the Protestant Local Boards for the coming year:
 - Local Board of Armagh: Mr Henry McMullan
 - Local Board of Tyrone: Ms Susan McQueen
 - Local Board of Fermanagh: Mr Peter M.C. Little.
8. The Governance Board re-appointed Ms Daphne Wood as Methodist Observer on the Church of Ireland Board of Education.
9. The Governance Board appointed Mr Stuart Blytheman and Mr David Lee as the Representatives of the Methodist Church on the Secondary Education Committee for Protestant Schools in the Republic of Ireland.
10. The Governance Board strongly recommends that each Society observes an Education Sunday annually. It is suggested that the 11th September 2022 or an appropriate Sunday be observed as Education Sunday. Full resources based for the use of ministers and local preachers are available and posted on the Irish Methodist website by following the link: www.educationsunday2022.
11. The Governance Board support the movement of schools in certain areas, where it is the desire of the parents, governors and the school leadership, towards seeking integrated status as Controlled Integrated or Jointly Managed Church Schools.
12. The Governance Board acknowledges the dedication and commitment of the teaching workforce in schools and colleges throughout Ireland and asks churches to pray regularly for the staff and leadership teams in their local schools.
13. The Governance Board acknowledges and thanks the dedicated service of Methodist School Governors.

Inter-Church Relations Committee

1. The Governance Board received the report.
2. The Governance Board appointed the following as representatives:
 - Churches Together in Britain and Ireland - Four Nations Forum: The General Secretary.
 - Irish Council of Churches: to be appointed by the General Secretary in consultation with the Convener.
 - Irish Inter-Church Meeting: The General Secretary
3. The Governance Board on behalf of the Conference recorded its thanks to Dr Nicola Brady for her creative and inspired work as General Secretary of the Irish Council of Churches and General Secretary of the Irish Inter-Church Meeting. It wishes her every blessing in her new position as General Secretary of Churches Together in Britain and Ireland.

Statutory Trustees

1. The Governance Board adopted the report.
2. The Governance Board re-appointed Rev Dr Heather ME Morris as the Secretary of the Trustees and Registrar of Deeds and Documents
3. The Governance Board re-appointed Mr Thomas H Millar as Chair of the Standing Committee of the Trustees
4. The Governance Board appointed Ms Joan Doherty, Ms Catherine McIlroy, Mr Steve Taylor, and

Revs Brian B Anderson, Robin WD Waugh and Dr Sahr J Yambasu as Trustees

5. The Governance Board appointed the members of the Standing Committee for the year 2022-2023 as follows: Rev John D Alderdice, Rev T H Samuel McGuffin, Rev Thomas R McKnight, Rev Heather M E Morris, Rev Jeremy Nicoll, Rev Ruth E Patterson, Rev Stephen F Skuce, Ms Hazel Baird, Ms Irene Dickson, John Clarke, Douglas Edmondson, Hal Hosford, David Hopley, Ivor Moffitt, Thomas H Millar, Rory O'Ferrall.
(The Secretary of the Trustees is ex-officio Secretary of any committee)
6. The Governance Board directed that the income from the Foundation of the Ministers' Sons' Fund for the coming year be paid to the Ministers' Children's Fund, designated for payment to Wesley College Dublin for Boarder Foundationers.
7. The Governance Board commends the scheme for Gift Aid donations in Northern Ireland and the Scheme for Tax Relief for donations to eligible charities in the Republic of Ireland to those of our people who are in a position to make such donations.
8. The Governance Board adopted the following additions and amendments to Appendix 4 of the Manual of Laws:

~~Duties of the Treasurers~~

~~18. The Treasurer or Treasurers of the Trustees shall receive all monies payable to the Trustees and shall cause the capital monies so received to be lodged in such bank or banks as may be determined by the Trustees. All cheques on the bank accounts of the Trustees shall be signed by the Treasurer and/or such other nominated Trustee or Trustees as the Standing Committee of the Trustees may from time to time determine.~~

Contracts Not Under Seal

~~20. Pursuant to Section 17 of the Act, the Treasurer or Treasurers of the a Trustee nominated by the Standing Committee and the Secretary (if a Trustee) or any one of them are hereby appointed to make, on behalf of the Trustees any contract which may be made under the Act, otherwise than under Seal.~~

Prison & Healthcare Chaplaincy

1. The Governance Board received the report.
2. The Governance Board on behalf of the Conference affirms the valuable contribution made by all chaplains, paid and voluntary, especially through the ongoing challenges of Covid. In particular, we acknowledge and record the long service of Rev Dr Lee Glenny and Rev Leslie Spence who retired in 2021 and 2022 respectively having served as NI prison chaplains and as Committee members for many years.
3. The Governance Board on behalf of the Conference expressed continued gratitude to the Joseph Rank Trust, Donegall Square Trust, MWI, Victoria Homes Trust and other donors for their generous financial support.
4. The Governance Board appointed the Committee as follows:
Rev Kenneth Connor, Rev Derek J Johnston (Secretary), Rev Peter K Morris, Rev John C Wonnacott, Mr Kevin Devlin, Ms Brenda Duncan, Ms Joan Parkinson, Mr Philip Larragy, Mr John Warren (Chair)

Ministry of Healing

1. The Governance Board re-appointed Rev Mark Durrell as Chair.
2. The Governance Board re-appointed Rev Mark Durrell as is representative on the Churches' Council for Health and Healing in Ireland.
3. The Governance Board re-appointed Dr Chris Mathison as Secretary to the Committee.
4. The Governance Board designates Sunday 5th February 2023 as Ministry of Healing Sunday.
5. The Governance Board appointed the following members of the Ministry of Healing Committee for the ensuing year:
The President, the Lay Leader, Secretary of Conference, Rev Mark Durrell (Chair), Dr Chris Mathison (Secretary), Mr Tom Kerr, Mr Neilson Wylie, Ms Hazel Baird, Ms Patricia Lindsay, Rev Mark Forsyth, Rev Alan Conly, and Rev Colin Duncan.
Entitled to attend; The ex-President of Conference, the President Designate, the Lay Leader Designate.
6. The Governance Board received "Framework for Practice of the Ministry of Healing in MCI"
(Appendix C, below)
7. The Governance Board received "The Christian Healing Ministry" and requests that it's guidance be followed as Circuits exercise a healing ministry. (Appendix D, below)

Appendix C

A Framework for Practice of the Ministry of Healing in the Methodist Church in Ireland

INTRODUCTION

Healing was central to the earthly ministry of Jesus. It was a sign of God's kingdom, bringing renewal and wholeness of life to those who turned to God in their need. Jesus sent out his disciples with the commission to "proclaim the kingdom of God and to heal" (Luke 9.2).

Jesus' commission to heal was not just for His immediate followers but for succeeding generations of Christians. The apostle Paul writes of "gifts of healing" being available to Christians (1 Corinthians 12: 28). James says that those who are sick should call for the elders of the church to pray over them for healing (James 5.14).

A ministry of healing should be an integral part of the mission of every Methodist circuit in Ireland. This ministry will often take place within the wider context of a prayer ministry.

The Ministry of Healing Committee has developed this framework in consultation with the Ministries Team, to support and guide ministers and circuit executives in the development of a healing ministry to their members and community.

DEVELOPING A HEALING MINISTRY –

WHO SHOULD BE INVOLVED?

Those who are likely to offer or respond to a request to lead a healing ministry should:

- already be actively engaged in the prayer life of the church.
- feel a passion for this aspect of Jesus' ministry.
- have a gifting or feel called in this area.
- their ministry should be fully supported by the church council and circuit executive.
- be appropriately prepared, trained and supported.

This is Jesus' ministry:

- those involved in the ministry of healing are not "super Christians".
- it is through His power that healing takes place.
- the one who exercises the ministry is simply a conduit of Jesus' healing love.

The development of any ministry on a Circuit requires local leadership.

The circuit minister with their Circuit Executive should always have oversight of the ministry of healing, in order to fulfil their duty of care to those engaged in the ministry and those receiving it.

MODELS OF HEALING MINISTRY

Healing Ministry can be offered in many differing ways, at different levels of engagement and in different settings.

MCI does not espouse any one particular model for the ministry of healing. The way the ministry is exercised will be influenced by:

- the leading of the Holy Spirit.
- the gifting/experience of those involved.
- the church/ community context.

INDIRECT MINISTRY

Indirect Ministry is exercised on occasions where corporate prayer is made in response to requests for healing, but where there is no face-to-face ministry with the person e.g.:

- intercessory prayer meetings.
- prayer groups.
- prayer cells.
- prayer chains.
- church services.

Everyone participating in Indirect Healing Ministry should read the MCI guidelines on the ministry of healing. No specific training is required.

PERSONAL MINISTRY

- involves face-to-face contact with the individual seeking prayer for healing.
- may involve the laying on of hands and/or anointing with oil.
- most often takes place in a worship service when people are invited to come forward for healing ministry.

In some of the Methodist mission churches a regular service for healing and wholeness is open to the whole community and people of all faiths and none.

SPECIAL GIFTING

Special gifting may include a calling to deliverance ministry. This ministry, however, is not necessarily a part of a special gifting in healing. Deliverance Ministry is a particular calling and ministry, and not all can claim this. Such spiritual gifting requires experience, training, and evidence of the gifting. Still, when the people providing the ministry realise that they are out of their depth, they should refer the individual to an appropriate source of exorcism ministry. We recommend the MCI Ministry of Healing Committee as the first point of contact (*see Note on Special Gifting, below, for further information).

POINTS TO NOTE

Prayer cover and leadership oversight are particularly important for all aspects of healing ministry, but especially for those exercising a deliverance ministry.

Those receiving healing ministry often need inner healing. People may be deeply wounded in ways that are not obvious. In such situations the Evil one can distort the individual's perception of themselves or of God. Ministry here is often to speak Truth into the situation; Jesus says, "you will know the truth and truth will set you free".

In any healing ministry involving face to face contact, it is important to listen carefully to the recipient as well as the prompting of the Holy Spirit.

TRAINING

MCI expects that everyone involved in the ministry of healing should have training and practice appropriate to the level at which they are ministering.

All those involved in Personal Ministry should have training:

- During ministerial formation; all students in training should be prepared for the ministry of healing or its oversight.
- It is the responsibility of the Ministries Team to provide appropriate training.
- The Ministries Team provides a one-day training programme for lay persons within a rolling programme of learning and development.
- The Ministry of Healing Committee can signpost those interested to other training courses and online training programmes.

PARTNERSHIPS TO DELIVER THE FRAMEWORK

The Ministry of Healing Committee will be a resource for developing healing ministries within the Connexion. However, the committee recognises that it will need to expand its membership and address training needs within the committee. The Ministries Team is central to ensuring that foundational training in the ministry of healing is included in the formation for ordination so that an appropriate level of oversight can be provided at circuit level and that training is available for everyone called to this ministry.

External training providers are currently being used, mostly by lay members, to develop their competence in the ministry of healing.

District Superintendents have a role in promoting mission in their Districts; their support and encouragement will help to make the ministry of healing more widely available.

Circuits are, of course, key to making the ministry of healing available to all; it is at circuit level that Christ is proclaimed to a needy world. There is need for an effective communication exercise with circuit ministers and leaders.

ACTION PLAN

1. Create a web-site page listing circuits which offer healing ministry within a regular worship service or holds a regular healing service.
2. Liaise with Ministries Team re the formation for ordination, and other learning and development training.
3. Review the capacity and capability of the MOH Committee.
4. Identify development needs of Committee members.
5. Liaise with potential partners for training input and practice experience.
6. Seek approval of Framework at Conference.

7. Offer district-based information seminar(s) for lay and ministerial colleagues who wish to develop their healing ministry.
8. Refresh “The Christian Healing Ministry” document.

* Special Gifting

A small number of people across the broad spectrum of healing ministries have a specific, God-given, spiritual gift of healing (e.g., 1 Cor. 12:8). Like any spiritual gifting, it is not to be used for personal gain or aggrandisement but rather for the 'common good' (1 Cor. 12:7). The need for deliverance ministry, however, can be present at any time in any personal healing ministry. Anyone with special gifting in this area should exercise it with humility and openness to the prompting of the Holy Spirit on the recipient's needs. Engaging in deliverance ministry where it is not appropriate can greatly distress the recipient.

Furthermore, it is essential to recognise that some people presenting for healing ministry with medical or emotional symptoms may have underlying spiritual issues that can cause or exacerbate the physical and mental. For instance, people engaging in some aspect of demonic practice, perhaps out of curiosity or in earnest, are at risk of demonic influence. Examples of such influence include séance, Ouija boards, consulting mediums, tarot cards, practising body/table lifting, using cocaine, LSD, hallucinogenic drugs etc.

Appendix D

The Christian Healing Ministry

INTRODUCTION – THE BIBLE AND HEALING

The Church's involvement in the ministry of healing has a theological framework. It springs from what we believe about God and God's will and purposes for humankind.

Christians believe that God's will for His human creation is wholeness in body, mind and spirit. It follows that healing, however generated, is a positive experience that frees us from anything that interferes with wholeness. The human body has marvellous self-healing properties, resistance, resilience and immunity. When these fail, intervention is necessary.

Human pain and suffering are a reality of the world in which we live – a result of human sin, and not the will of the God who declared creation to be good. *[Genesis 1:31]*

Healing was central to the ministry of Jesus when He was on earth:

- A large percentage of His miracles involved healing.
- He commissioned His disciples to proclaim the Kingdom of God, and to heal. *[Luke 9:2]*

Jesus' commission was for succeeding generations of Christians:

- Paul writes of “gifts of healing”. *[1 Corinthians 12:28]*
- James writes that the sick should call for the elders of the church to pray over them for healing. *[James 5:14]*

Healing and the Church

During the first three centuries of the Christian era physical healings by miraculous means were not uncommon. They were acknowledged by contemporary church leaders:

- Seen as evidence of the presence of the Holy Spirit in the Church.
- The Church was young.
- Personal and corporate faith were strong – stimulated by the ever-present threat of persecution and martyrdom.

Towards the end of this period the expectation of divine intervention in healing diminished:

- Christian belief and practice became established and respectable.
- Faith weakened
- Emerging medical science was seen as God's new way of healing and the Church became involved in this.

However, reports of miraculous healings continued:

- Where individual and corporate faith were strong.
- Where there was an expectation that God could and did heal.
- Where there was a conviction that Christ's call to His followers to heal the sick was still in force.

Throughout much of the twentieth century up to the present day, there has been a resurgence of interest in the spiritual dimension of healing. Many denominations and congregations now exercise a healing ministry. We believe that the healing of diseases and the pursuit of wholeness is God's will for humankind.

In the Methodist Church in Ireland, the Psychological and Spiritual Healing Committee was established in 1938 – which evolved into the Ministry of Healing Committee in 1977.

The Churches' Council for Health and Healing in Ireland is an inter-church group that provides encouragement, support and guidance. The Methodist Church in Ireland is represented on the Council by some members of the Ministry of Healing Committee.

The Healing Ministry and Medical Knowledge Today

The majority of Christians who are rediscovering this spiritual dimension of healing see it as complementary to, rather than an alternative to the work of the medical professionals. We encourage those with health concerns to seek the guidance of medical professionals. At times there seems to have been an uneasy relationship between the church and the emerging scientific developments in medicine, though the church has had a major input into the establishing of hospitals and other caring institutions.

We acknowledge that all healing is of God – a conviction we share with many in the medical world. What we have been discovering as the twentieth century progressed is that Christians and Christian communities have a spiritual resource, largely unused for centuries, with which to combat disease and promote wholeness of body and mind as well as of spirit. We have come to recognise that Christ's call to His followers to preach, teach and heal has never been withdrawn. Therefore, we can make a contribution, where appropriate, alongside the work of the medical practitioners.

Involvement in the ministry of healing requires that we be aware of, and avoid two extremes:

1. Whilst we acknowledge that most illnesses are cured by medical intervention we need to avoid saying, or believing, that it alone can bring about healing. That would place limits on God – and there is much credible evidence to suggest that people have been cured miraculously.
2. We must avoid encouraging total reliance on the ministry of healing when medical treatment can be of help.

The Basis for a Healing Ministry Today

We must acknowledge that there are many unanswered questions in respect of illness and recovery from it, or not, as the case may be. One reservation often expressed is the fear of disappointment for those to whom they minister. Mental stress and spiritual questioning may result if a cure does not happen. **A proper understanding of the healing ministry** is important:

- Its purpose is not to cure but bring healing – although, by God's grace, a cure may sometimes happen.
- Its purpose is to bring wholeness through restoration and healing of our relationship with God, with others and within ourselves.
- Many testify that although God did not cure them, He did heal by blessing them with composure, peace and resilience in the face of continuing illness.
- Bearing illness with dignity, by God's grace and through the ministry of healing, can be a witness to others in society.
- The fruit of the Spirit often grows when facing the testing winds of difficulty, including illness.
- The fruit of the Spirit may also grow in persons exercising a healing ministry.

It is important to stress the fact that **it is Christ who is the healer**.

- The healing ministry is best exercised by a congregation in Christ's name.
- The prayers of God's people create an environment in which they can be answered.
- Those who minister are instruments in the hands of Christ.
- They are not professionals but should feel a calling to the ministry of healing, and receive training.
- They should be commissioned by the local church.
- As with all gifts, those with the gift of healing should exercise it with wisdom, love and humility.

Practical suggestions about the Ministry in the Local Church

Ideally, the healing ministry should be offered within the context of the normal worship and pastoral life of each congregation according to what best suits the local situation:

- In Sunday Worship services.
- By Prayer Teams before or after a service.
- Mid-week meetings.
- Designated Healing Services.
- In hospitals, nursing, residential and private homes.
- The Church Council or Circuit Executive should oversee the ministry.
- Clear information and explanation should be given on each occasion to avoid uncertainty or embarrassment to the congregation and those seeking ministry.

In public worship, the ministry of healing may be exercised in a number of ways; they are not necessarily mutually exclusive:

- Names may be placed in a prayer book or box and then used in prayer - that these persons may know God's blessing and healing in their lives.
- Use of names in a public setting should always be at the person's request or with their permission. This should also apply where members of the congregation may request prayer for someone by name.
- Invitation for individuals to receive ministry at the communion rail or prayer stations which should be set up to be visible.
- Individuals should have the opportunity to share their prayer need to the team member(s) and be encouraged to do so.
- Prayer may be received on behalf of someone else as well as personally.
- Prayer ministry is not intended to offer counselling. If this is needed, then other arrangements should be made.
- Ministry may include the laying on of hands, e.g. on the head or shoulders, or anointing with oil on the forehead – both scriptural means of grace. Individuals seeking ministry should be asked for permission before proceeding.

Where ministry is exercised **outside of the church** context:

- Permission to conduct prayer ministry should be obtained from the relevant authorities.
- Should be conducted sensitively where it cannot be done in private.
- Two persons, at least, should be involved.
- Should be ministering with the knowledge of, and prayerful support of the local church.

Safeguarding:

Appropriate measures should be in place to protect both those seeking ministry and those exercising it.

- Ideally, two persons - one male and one female – should minister to each person.
- Information shared is confidential, except where it relates to the abuse of children or vulnerable adults. This must be reported to the relevant person or authorities.
- Prayer teams should meet for prayer before and after ministry.

Becoming Involved

If you would like to become involved in prayer ministry or organise a healing service and would like help or advice, please contact the Ministry of Healing Committee.

Jesus said:

I have come that you may have life, and have it to the full.

John 10:10

Some Resources:

There are no hard and fast rules as how to conduct a healing service but the Ministry of Healing Committee recommends:

1. "An Order of Service for Healing and Wholeness" (2011)

2. "An Order of Service for Healing and Wholeness" (Methodist Worship 1999)
3. "Healing the Hurts" (2005)

Connexional Safeguarding Board

1. The Governance Board received the report.
2. The Governance Board appointed Mr Lindsay Conway as Chair of the Connexional Safeguarding Board.
3. The Governance Board re-appointed Mr Nicholas A Blair as Connexional Safeguarding Officer.
4. The Governance Board appointed the Connexional Safeguarding Board as follows: Mr Lindsay Conway (Convener & Chair); Cathy Bell; Nicholas Blair; Chris Boucher; Laura Ewing; Gillian Gilmore; Stephen Gray; Rev Stephen Hancock; Corinne Kingston; Rev Paul Maxwell; Grace McGurk; Gail Mercer; Kathryn Montgomery; Sandy Mutch.
Ex Officio Members: Rev Philip Agnew; Rev Andrew Dougherty; Rev Dr Stephen Skuce.
5. The Governance Board directed that everyone who works, with children, young people or vulnerable adults under the auspices of MCI, must be vetted within their respective jurisdiction through MCI, at least once every three years.
6. The Governance Board directed that everyone who works with children, young people or vulnerable adults under the auspices of MCI, must attend training provided by MCI, at least once every three years.
7. The Governance Board on behalf of the Conference acknowledges, with thanks, the contribution to Safeguarding that IMYC provides in lieu of administrative support.

Covenant Council

1. The Governance Board received the Report of the Covenant Council
2. The Governance Board re-appointed Rev Dr Heather Morris as Co-Chair of the Covenant Council.
3. The Governance Board appointed its representatives to the Covenant Council for the coming year as follows:
Rev Dr Heather Morris (Co-Chair)
Rev Andrew Dougherty
Ms Gillian Kingston
Rev Dr Janet Unsworth

Dublin Central Mission

1. The Governance Board received the report
2. The Governance Board appointed the Board of Directors of Dublin Central Mission DAC, incorporating the Mission Committee:
Rev Dr Laurence A M Graham (Superintendent of the Mission and Chairman of the Board) (7),
Ms Geraldine Coffey (Company Secretary)(6),
Mr Varghese Arangathuparambil (13), Mr Perry Chitombo (6), Mr Stuart Ferguson(0), Mr Trevor Holmes (4), Mr Ian Johnston (0), Mr John Kingston (0), Ms Anne-Marie O'Grady(0), Mr John Parsons(9), and Mr Robert Wolfe(4), with power to co-opt within the terms of the Articles of Association.

Ms Suzanne Corcoran is the Chief Executive Officer Dublin Central Mission DAC and Ms Karena O'Sullivan is the Finance Director.

North West Methodist Mission

1. The Governance Board received the report.
2. The Governance Board noted the Membership of the NWMM Board which is as follows:
Rev Dr Stephen Skuce (NW District Superintendent and Superintendent of the NWMM)
Ms Tracy Hegarty (Vice Chair), Ms Joan Doherty (Secretary), Mr Mark Johnston (Treasurer),
Mr John Gibson, Ms Jane Given, Ms Marion Hamilton, Dr Peter Leeson, Ms Janice McCandless, Ms Lena Wray, Ms Maureen Young, Mr Joe Lusby.

Newtownabbey Methodist Mission

1. The Governance Board received the report
2. The Governance Board appointed the Mission Council as follows:
 Superintendent of the Mission: Rev Karen Spence, Ms Pat Jamison & Ms Pauline Stewart (Society Stewards), Ms Alison Wilson (Treasurer), Ms Catherine McFerran (Council Secretary), Mr James Blair (Property Steward), Elected members: Ms Carmen Bailie, Ms Anna Blair, Mr Ray Cahoon, Ms Marie King, Ms Phyllis McElhinney, Ms Grace McGurk, Mr Sandy Mutch, Mr David Smyth, Ms Bethany Stephens
 Retired Minister assisting: Rev Ivan McElhinney

Belfast Central Mission

1. The Governance Board received the report.
2. The Governance Board noted that the members of Belfast Central Mission Ltd are as follows:
 Rev David Campton (Superintendent), Ms Margaret Adams, Mr Rowan Black, Mr Alan Cavan, Rev Barry Forde, Dr David Gallagher, Mr David Gault, Rev Emily Hyland, Rev Andrew Irvine, Ms Eileen Jamison, Mr Glenn Massey, Ms Helen McHugh, Rev June Parke, Dr Ian Taylor, Ms Maureen Swinton, Ms Maureen Weir.
 The following have been appointed by the Members according to the Articles of Association of Belfast Central Mission to be Directors:
 Mr Rowan Black (Chair), Rev David Campton (Superintendent), Mr Paul Clarke, Ms Margaret Copeland, Ms Jo Dwyer, Mr Doug Edmondson (Treasurer), Mr David Ferguson, Dr David Gallagher (Minutes Secretary), Mr Bill Halliday, Ms Shelagh McCaughan, Mr Gordon Robinson, Rev Stephen Sheerin.

East Belfast Mission

1. The Governance Board received the report [*circulated via email after the meeting*].
2. The following are nominated as Directors for appointment according to the Articles of Association of East Belfast Mission:
 Rev Brian B Anderson (Superintendent of the Mission), Mr Stephen Curragh, Mr Derek Wylie, Mrs Naomi Hardon, Mrs Linda Hopley, Mr Daniel Jackson, Mr Brian Maxwell, Mrs Gail Mercer, Mr Jamie Watson.
 Mr Iain Colville.

Irish Methodist Minister's Retirement Fund

1. The Governance Board received the report.
2. The Governance Board received the report of the Retirement Benefits Scheme.
3. The Governance Board received the report of the Minister's Disability Fund.
4. The Governance Board approved the levels of minimum income in relation to the Augmentation Fund.
5. The Governance Board refers to the Stipends and Allowances Board the determining of any question relating to special allowances.
6. The Governance Board approved the reprinting of the paragraphs in the Minutes of Conference and the Manual of Laws with any necessary changes.
7. The Governance Board re-appointed Mr Desmond Mitchell as Lay Treasurer.

Methodist Minister's Children's Fund

1. The Governance Board received the report.
2. The Governance Board approved the level of grants/allowances as stated.
3. The Governance Board re-appointed Rev Colin Milligan as Secretary and Ministerial Treasurer.
4. The Governance Board re-appointed Mr Stephen Knox as Lay Treasurer.

Methodist Minister's Medical Fund

1. The Governance Board received the report

2. The Governance Board directed that the paragraphs in the Minutes of Conference be reprinted with all the necessary changes
3. The Governance Board re-appointed the Rev Harold M. Agnew as Secretary and Ministerial Treasurer
4. The Governance Board re-appointed Mr David McCartney as the Lay Treasurer of the Ministers Medical fund

Work of God Reports

The Governance Board noted the District Work of God reports from the Southern, North Western, and North Eastern Districts.

Connexional Team

1. The Governance Board received the report
2. The Governance Board appointed Rev John Alderdice as Convener of the Connexional Team.
3. The Governance Board appointed the Officers, Boards, Committees and Teams as detailed in the Resolutions from IMYC, Home Mission, MWI, CDB, WDR, WMP and the Ministries Team.
4. The Conference grants authorisation to the following Local Preachers to preside at the Lord's Supper for the 2022-2023 Connexional year:
 - Mr Simon Kilpatrick in Urban Junction
 - Mr Norman Henry on the Castlederg Circuit
 - Mr John McConnell on the Lisbellaw, Tempo and Maguiresbridge Circuit

Irish Methodist Youth & Children

1. The Connexional Team received the report.
2. The Governance Board endorsed continued involvement in Youth Link.
The following are to act as representatives: Ms Gillian Gilmore, _____ and _____.
3. The Governance Board re-appointed Ms Gillian Gilmore as General Secretary.
4. The Governance Board re-appointed Rev Fiona McCrea as Chair of the Connexional Youth & Children's Advisory Group.
5. The Governance Board directed that all circuits/churches consult with IMYC when considering employing a youth worker, children's worker or family worker.
6. Safeguarding
The Connexional Team noted the Governance Board's direction that:
 - a) everyone who works, with children, young people or vulnerable adults under the auspices of MCI, must be vetted within their respective jurisdiction through MCI, at least once every three years.
 - b) everyone who works with children, young people or vulnerable adults under the auspices of MCI, must attend training provided by MCI, at least once every three years.
7. Training and Development
The Governance Board strongly recommends to Circuits that all those who work with children or young people undertake a comprehensive programme of training.
Current training opportunities are made available through IMYC's social media and emailed to all those on their database. Anyone wishing to be included in these emails can fill in the form at <https://irishmethodist.org/imyc>
Training is also available on request by contacting IMYC at imyc@irishmethodist.org
8. The Governance Board on behalf of Conference recorded its thanks to Amy Anderson and Leanne Hill, and directed that the tributes be included in the record of the Conference.

Methodist Child Care Society

1. The Governance Board received the report.
2. The Governance Board re-appointed Rev David Sweeney as Ministerial Treasurer/Secretary of the Methodist Child Care Society.
3. The Governance Board re-appointed Ms Margaret Copeland as Lay Treasurer of the Methodist Child Care Society.

4. The Governance Board approved the printing of the paragraphs relating to the Methodist Child Care Society in the Conference record.
5. The Governance Board directed that a copy of the Rules of the Society shall accompany the first payment to beneficiaries.
6. The Governance Board directed that an annual review shall be made concerning the circumstances of every family receiving benefit and the completed forms be returned to the Lay Treasurer as soon as possible after receipt.
7. The Governance Board directed that Circuits shall have an annual collection for the funds of the Society and that the monies collected shall be sent to the Lay Treasurer not later than the 15th January.
8. The Governance Board directed that Circuits shall give serious consideration to the Gift Aid Scheme in Northern Ireland and the Tax Relief Scheme in the Republic of Ireland for their financial contributions.

Irish Methodist World Development & Relief

1. The Connexional Team received the report.
2. The Governance Board, on the advice of the Connexional Team, reminds all Methodists of the directive to share at least 1% of post-tax income for the work of World Development & Relief.
3. The Governance Board, on the advice of the Connexional Team, encourages Methodists to use the Gift Aid scheme in Northern Ireland and the Charities Tax Relief scheme in the Republic of Ireland.
4. The Governance Board, on the advice of the Connexional Team, recommends that each congregation hold a special Sunday service, using the prepared WDR service material in conjunction with their 1% Appeal.
5. The Governance Board approved the following amendments to the Manual of Laws:
 - 19.01** The Governance Board, on the advice of the Connexional Team shall annually appoint a Committee on World Development and Relief, ~~to promote throughout the Church the study of the problem of world poverty. to support the Church in learning about, understanding and responding effectively to world poverty and injustice for the transformation of the world.~~
 - 19.03** The Committee shall administer a fund for World Development & Relief. It shall receive such a percentage of the annual Connexional Comprehensive Assessment as may from time to time be determined by the Governance Board.
It shall work ~~through and in closest~~ consultation with World Mission Partnership ~~and the Methodist Relief and Development Fund,~~ and shall report to the Governance Board each year on its allocations of all sums received.
 - 19.04** ~~A Secretary for World Development and Relief shall be appointed in each Circuit or Society.~~
6. The Governance Board, on the advice of the Connexional Team, directed that a proportion of income, determined by the committee is allocated to Christian Aid Ireland and All We Can.
7. The Governance Board appointed the Committee as follows:
 - Convener: Rev. Paul Maxwell
 - Treasurers: MCI Finance
 - Members: Mrs Beth Hand (recording secretary), Rev. Andrew Robinson, Mr Patrick Mercer, Rev. Edem Dzunu, Ms Pat Jamison, Mrs Lynne Barr, Mr Anton Scheele, _____ .
 - Ex officio: Rev. Laurence Graham (World Mission Partnership)
 - Advisors: Ms Sheila Donaghy, Mrs Laura Kerr (World Development Communications), Mr Tim Dunwoody (World Development Officer)

World Mission Partnership

1. The Connexional Team received the report.
2. The Governance Board, on the advice of the Connexional Team, approved the dates for Mission Advocacy as being 12th -19th February 2023.
3. The Governance Board on the advice of the Connexional Team requests Circuits to make plans for special services and advocacy at least once per year.
4. The Governance Board, on behalf of the Conference, recorded its appreciation of:
 - a) The Global Relationships team, London
 - b) The committees appointed by WMP

- c) The Circuit World Mission Secretaries and District World Mission Champions
 - d) The Ministerial and Lay Treasurers
 - e) The World Mission and Development Office staff.
5. The Governance Board requests that greetings be sent to those serving from Ireland as Mission Partners and Associates with the World Church: Barry and Gillian Sloan and family, Melissa Newell and Stephen McCann, James and Hazel Farmer and family.
 6. The Governance Board recorded its appreciation of the work of MWI and JMA. for their contributions to the General Fund and commends these funds for support.
 7. The Governance Board requests Circuits to submit their financial contributions and schedules to WMP not later than 1st December each year.
 8. The Governance Board re-appointed:
Rev Laurence A.M. Graham as General Secretary of Irish Methodist World Mission Partnership.
 9. The Governance Board re-appointed:
Rev Sahr J Yambasu as Ministerial Treasurer of Irish Methodist World Mission Partnership.
 10. The Governance Board re-appointed:
Mr Ian Patterson as Lay Treasurer of Irish Methodist World Mission Partnership.
 11. The Governance Board re-appointed:
Rev Laurence A M Graham and Rev Sahr J Yambasu as representatives to Global Relationships, London.
 12. The Governance Board approved the following amendments to the Manual of Laws:
17.06 The Governance Board, on the advice of the Connexional Team shall appoint annually a World Mission Partnership Committee, consisting of the World Mission Partnership officers, the World Mission Secretary of Methodist Women in Ireland, a representative appointed by the World Development and Relief Committee together with one additional minister and ~~three~~ four additional laypersons, of whom at least two shall be women. World Mission Partnership staff shall also attend, as required.

Church Development Board

1. The Connexional Team received the report.

Methodist Home Mission

1. The Connexional Team received the report.
2. The Governance Board wholeheartedly supports the Connexional Team's encouragement to members to prioritise prayer by developing rhythms of prayer for their local church, as well as promoting and attending District and Connexional prayer gatherings throughout the year.
3. The Governance Board, on the advice of the Connexional Team expressed thanks:
 - to all those who have made special donations and bequests to the Department.
 - to members of congregations who have made contributions though Gift Aid and Income Tax rebates.
 - to all those who voluntarily engage in and support Mission projects around Ireland.
 - the Joseph Rank Trust for their generous support to the Irish Methodist Church
4. The Connexional Team resolves that in cases of vacancies in Stations and rearrangement of Circuits, the Officers of the Fund shall have authority to adjust the grants to the Circuits concerned.
5. The Connexional Team directs that in all cases where major repairs and/or improvements are contemplated in respect of Trust property, application be made for such grants as may be available from the Local Authority.
6. Home Mission Collections, Accounts and Applications for Grants
The Governance Board, on advice of the Connexional Team, directed:
 - that all collections and subscriptions for the Fund shall, immediately on their receipt by the Circuit Treasurer or Superintendent, be forwarded to Methodist Home Mission, Edgehill House, 9 Lennoxvale, Belfast BT9 5BY and that cheques should be made payable to 'Methodist Home Mission Fund'. Online payment options can be provided by emailing mhm@irishmethodist.org.
 - that Sunday 20th November 2022 be observed as Home Mission Sunday and that as far as possible the Home Mission resources prepared for that Sunday be made known and available to Societies at least one week in advance.

- that all Circuits arrange Home Mission services with speakers from another Circuit, and or even a different District if possible.
 - that Circuit Accounts for Home Missions be closed by the 13th January 2023 and that Schedules and remittances be forwarded to: Methodist Home Mission, Edgehill House, 9 Lennoxvale, Belfast BT9 5BY.
 - that all applications for grants for the year 2023 be sent to the relevant District Superintendent not later than 5th September 2021.
 - That applications follow the guidelines provided by the Department and are accompanied by a full set of Circuit accounts and a detailed budget for 2023, showing how any grant will be used.
7. The Connexional Team directed that the Church Development Board Executive audits the Home Mission Accounts on behalf of the Church.
 8. The Governance Board re-appointed:
Rev Mark Forsyth as General Secretary and Ministerial Treasurer of the Home Mission Department
 9. The Governance Board re-appointed:
Mr Simon Kilpatrick as Lay Treasurer of the Home Mission Department

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE CONNEXIONAL TEAM

The Governance Board approved that from the 1 July 2022 the current two circuits of Woodvale, Shankill and Glencairn, and North Belfast (Jennymount and Joanmount) be realigned into one circuit called, “Belfast North.”

The Governance Board approved that from 1 July 2022 the current five circuits that comprise the nine societies of Sydenham, EBM, Knock, Dundonald, Braniel, Glenburn, Cregagh, Mountpottinger and Bloomfield be realigned into one circuit called “Belfast East.”

The Governance Board noted and recorded the amalgamation of the Lisburn and Dromore Circuit with the Donard Circuit, now known as the **Lagan Valley and South Down Circuit** (including Ballynahinch, Broomhedge, Donard, Dromore, Magheragall, Priesthill, Seymour Street and Trinity).

Sadly the Alternating Ministry Scheme between the Presbyterian Church and ourselves has ended. While the Scheme has finished the Mission Partnership Forum which is the body who oversaw the AMS will continue to meet in the next Connexional year to discern its purpose and how the two denominations can confer well on matters of mutual interest related to mission.

Methodist Women in Ireland

The Connexional Team received the report.

1. The Governance Board appointed the Central Forum as follows:

General Executive:

MWI President: Ms Olive Rowe

Past President: Ms Joan Strong

General Secretary: Ms Moira McMurray

Secretary Designate: _____

General Treasurer: Mrs Barbara Fennell

Treasurer Designate: _____

World Mission Secretary: Ms Elizabeth McWatters

World Federation Officer: Ms Wanda Hogan

Helen Kim Memorial Scholar: Ms Heidi Hogan

Southern District Vice-President: Ms Wanda Hogan

North Western Vice-President: Ms Maeve Wilson

North Eastern Vice-President: _____

Together with:

District Secretaries: Ms Barbara Fennell, Ms Carmel Irwin, Ms Pam Dzunu.

District Treasurers: Ms Barbara Bryan, Ms Heather Gandola, Ms Maureen Young, Ms Janice Walker.

District Mission Secretaries/World Federation Representatives: Ms Heidi Hogan, Ms Ruth Wilson, _____ .

World Federation Unit Correspondent: Ms Moira McMurray
 Representative to Women's Link: Ms Elizabeth McWatters
 Representative to Women in Faith: Ms Liz Carville
 Representative to Women's Forum: _____
 Representative to National Women's Council Ireland: Ms Sue Maxwell
 Representatives to other Committees/Bodies outside the Methodist Church in Ireland (to be appointed)

Ministries Team

1. The Connexional Team received the report.
2. The Governance Board re-appointed Rev Dr Janet Unsworth as the Director of the Ministries Team (Principal of Edgehill Theological College).
3. The Connexional Team noted that until the Northern Ireland Charity Commission confirms the merger of the Edgehill Theological College Charity into the Trustees of the Methodist Church in Ireland Charity for purposes of the legal requirements of the Methodist College Act (Northern Ireland) 1928, the Governance Board of the Methodist Church in Ireland will constitute the Board of Governors of Edgehill College.
4. The Governance Board agrees the reviewed and /or revised Ministries Policies and Procedures listed below. These will be reported published on the MCI Teams Application. (Appendix A, below)
 - Local Preachers' Nomination, Appointment and Review Policy
 - Ordained Ministers Applications to Serve and Transfer
 - Ordained Ministry Context Based Formation Protocols
 - Ordained Ministers Retirement Policy
 - Ordained Ministers Sabbaticals Policy
5. The Governance Board agreed the necessary editorial modifications due to changes in structures and nomenclature in the Ministries Policies and Procedures listed below. These will be reported to Conference, and published on the MCI Teams Application.
 - Authorisations to Preside Policy
 - Continuing Ministry Development Policy
 - Ministry Development and Further Study Policy
 - Ordained Ministry Agreed Expectations
 - Ordained Ministry Candidating Procedure
 - Ordained Ministers Death Policy
 - Ordained Ministers Disciplinary Policy
 - Ordained Ministry by Married Couples
 - Ordained Ministers Parental Leave Policy
 - Ordained Ministers Resignation and Reinstatement Policy
 - Ordained Ministers Separated Appointments
 - Ordained Ministers Serving as Mission Partners
 - Ordained Ministers Special Applications Policy
 - Ordained Ministry Time Wisdom
 - Revision of Guidance for Ministers from Overseas
6. The Governance Board adopted the revised version of Chapter 6 of the Manual of Laws as set out in Appendix B, below.
7. The Governance Board appointed Ms Laura Griffith as Connexional Co-ordinator for Local Preachers and expressed its thanks to Rev Mervyn Ewing for his period of service.
8. The Governance Board approved the Connexional Team request that the following tribute be recorded by the Conference.

The Connexion places on record its thanks and deep appreciation to Rev Mervyn Ewing who has faithfully served the Connexion as Ministerial Secretary of the Local Preachers Committee for 12 years. During this time Mervyn has been a constant advocate for the recognition and development of the ministry of Local Preachers. He has provided strategic leadership in guiding the Local Preachers' Committee through a number of important developments, including the transition to the new MCI District structure. His wisdom in terms of progression regarding training and development of local preachers, has been invaluable. We are grateful to him for his wise counsel and faithful leadership.

9. The Governance Board appointed the Connexional Local Preachers Committee as follows: The Lay Leader of the Conference, The Connexional Local Preachers' Co-ordinator, A member of staff of the Ministries Team, The District Local Preachers' Co-ordinators.
10. The Governance Board appointed the Ministries Learning and Development Committee for the Connexional Year 2022-23:
 Chairperson: Mr Mike Anderson
 The Director of the Ministries Team: Rev Dr Janet Unsworth
 The Learning and Development Officer: Ms Grace McGurk
 The Connexional Local Preachers' Co-ordinator: Ms Laura Griffith
 The Vice-chairperson of the Ministries Policies and Procedures Committee: _____
 Up to six other members:
 Dr Ian Taylor
 Ms Shirley Alexander
 Ms Norma Gallagher
 Rev Alison Gallagher
 Rev Jordan Litchfield
11. The Governance Board appointed the Ministries Policies and Procedures Committee for the Connexional Year 2022-23:
 Chairperson: Rev Robin Waugh
 Vice-chairperson: _____
 The Director of the Ministries Team: Rev Dr Janet Unsworth
 The Secretary of Conference: Rev Dr Heather Morris
 The Ministerial Psychological Assessor: Rev Alan Lorimer
 The Connexional Local Preachers' Co-ordinator: Ms Laura Griffith
 A District Superintendent: Rev Philip Agnew
 Up to four other members:
 Ms Norma Gallagher
 Rev Alison Gallagher
 Mr Stephen Alford
 Rev Alan Wardlow

Appendix A

Methodist Church in Ireland

Policy and Procedures relating to the Nomination, Appointment and Review of Local Preachers - April 2022

1. Introduction, Purpose and Scope

This policy outlines the procedure to be followed for the nomination, appointment and review of Local Preachers.

This policy replaced the legislation set out in Chapter 6 of the Manual of Laws of the Methodist Church in Ireland (2019).

The key features of this policy and the procedures involved are set out below. All supplementary materials referenced are available on the MCI website - <https://irishmethodist.org/ministries-local-preachers> .

2. Responsibility

This policy is managed by the Ministries Policies and Procedures Committee of the Methodist Church in Ireland.

3. Nomination and appointment

3.1 When an individual believes that God is calling her/him to become a local preacher and wants to test this call he/she will first have a conversation with her/his local minister.

3.2 The local minister will then speak with the Superintendent minister, who will work together with the local minister, other ministers and local preachers on the circuit, as far as possible, to assist and support the individual in preparing for this important role in the Methodist Church in Ireland.

3.3 The Superintendent minister is responsible for presenting the local preacher applicants to the Local Preachers' Meeting or the Circuit Executive, persons who:

- a. are able to give an account of their journey of faith and call to preach;
- b. can give account of genuine faithfulness;

- c. have the ability to express themselves with sufficient readiness and clarity;
- d. are committed to completing the training required by Conference in the time allocated.

3.4 The Local Preachers' Meeting or Circuit Executive will observe the applicant using the pro-forma questions – see <https://irishmethodist.org/ministries-local-preachers>. If satisfied that the applicant is suitable and is able to fulfil the MCI Expectations for applicants to become a Local Preacher in Training, it shall recommend that the applicant be received as such.

3.5 The Superintendent should inform the Connexional Local Preachers' Co-ordinator of the applicant's name and should also email the Ministries Team Office at ministries@irishmethodist.org for the link to the electronic application form. A reference copy of the Application Form, as well as details of the Methodist Local Preachers' Course is available on the MCI website:

- <https://irishmethodist.org/ministries-local-preachers>

3.6 Once the Circuit Executive has agreed to support the applicant in their training to be a Local Preacher, the applicant should complete the Application Form online and arrange to submit the supporting documentation detailed within the Application Form to the Ministries Team office. This application and documentation will then be shared with the Connexional Local Preachers' Co-ordinator.

3.7 The Connexional Local Preachers' Co-ordinator in consultation with the Ministries Team shall:

- a. examine the application form and confirm, or not, the recommendation of the Circuit Executive.
- b. assess any application for accreditation of prior learning.
- c. assess any application for experience in the leading of worship and preaching.
- d. decide on the training pathway for individuals, considering b) and c).

3.8 Local Preachers in Training are required to undertake the Methodist Local Preachers' Course as agreed by the Governance Board and reported to the Conference of the Methodist Church in Ireland.

3.9 The period in training shall normally be not less than one year and not more than four years. During this time the Circuit Superintendent should ensure that there are opportunities for the Local Preacher in Training to gain practical experience and that their training pathway is being fulfilled. The Circuit Superintendent should also liaise with the Connexional Local Preachers' Co-ordinator, the District Local Preachers' Co-ordinator and the Ministries Team throughout this period of training.

3.10 When all elements of the training pathway are completed, the Connexional Local Preachers' Co-ordinator will inform the Circuit Superintendent. If the Circuit Superintendent has not previously heard the Local Preacher in Training lead worship and preach, she / he should arrange to do so on at least one occasion and should also ask the local minister to provide a report to the Local Preachers' Meeting or Circuit Executive. The Superintendent Minister will then arrange an interview for the Local Preacher in Training at the Local Preachers' Meeting and / or the Circuit Executive. The interview will be conducted by the Superintendent Minister, or under her/his direction, using the pro-forma set of questions relating to the following:

- a. Training journey
- b. Call to preach
- c. Willingness to serve God with the Methodist Church.
- d. Willingness to submit to the discipline of the Methodist Church.

3.11 The Local Preachers' Meeting or Circuit Executive will observe the applicant using the pro-forma questions. If satisfied, by a two-thirds majority of those present and voting, that the applicant has completed their training satisfactorily and is able to fulfil the MCI Expectations for those becoming Fully Accredited Preachers, the Circuit Executive shall recommend to the Connexional Local Preachers' Committee that the candidate be received as a 'fully accredited' Local Preacher. The Superintendent Minister shall then forward to the Connexional Local Preachers' Co-ordinator the outcome of the Circuit Executive's vote.

3.12 The Connexional Local Preachers' Committee shall examine all the documentation and, if satisfied, shall issue a Certificate of Accreditation, to be presented at a service locally.

3.13 The names of 'fully accredited' Local Preachers accepted during that Connexional year shall be recorded in the ensuing Minutes of Conference.

3.14 If an applicant has not completed their training pathway by the end of the four-year period, he/she may apply through the Local Preacher's Meeting to the Circuit Executive to extend their training period. If there is no Local Preachers' meeting, the request should come to the Circuit Executive directly. The Local Preacher in Training should explain why the requirements of training have not been met. The extension will be on the recommendation of the Circuit Local Preachers' Meeting and / or approved by the Circuit Executive. Only in

exceptional circumstances, and with the consent of the Connexional Local Preachers' Committee, shall the total period in training exceed 8 years. If after this extended period requirements are still not completed, he/she shall no longer be regarded as a Local Preacher in Training.

4. Yearly Review

4.1 The local ordained minister should hear individual local preachers conduct a service of worship on at least one occasion within the previous twelve months and be content with the outcomes.

4.2 The local minister should conduct an informal interview with the local preacher. If necessary, the informal interview can be conducted by another ordained minister. A list of suggested questions are available on the MCI website and can be downloaded - <https://irishmethodist.org/ministries-local-preachers> .

4.3 Having been satisfied with the interview, the conduct of the service and the requirements set out in the Manual of Laws 6A.05, the Circuit minister will make a verbal report to the March Circuit Executive stating that the fully accredited Local Preacher has successfully completed the review. The Circuit Executive Secretary will then inform the District Local Preachers' Co-ordinators and the Connexional Local Preachers' Co-ordinator

5. Ten Yearly Review

The District Superintendent shall facilitate a 10-year Review Process for all fully accredited local preachers. The role of the District Superintendent is to facilitate the process of Review by providing support and guidance to Local Preachers and, in conjunction with the District Local Preachers' Co-ordinator, to ensure that reviews are undertaken and completed within the required timeframe. A proforma which includes suggested questions is available on the MCI website <https://irishmethodist.org/ministries-local-preachers> .

6. Policy Review

This Policy was first adopted in July 2021 and revised in April 2022. It is intended to further review and update this Policy by July 2024. Revised versions of the Policy shall be agreed by the Governance Board, reported to Conference, and published on the MCI Teams Application.

Related Policies

Methodist Church in Ireland

Applications to serve with or transfer to the Ordained Ministry of the Methodist Church in Ireland - April 2022

1. Introduction, Purpose and Scope

The Methodist Church in Ireland welcomes applications from ordained ministers of other Methodist Churches and other Christian denominations to serve with or transfer into the ordained ministry of the Methodist Church in Ireland.

This policy replaces the legislation set out in 5D.15-17 in the Manual of Laws of the Methodist Church in Ireland (2019).

The key features of this policy and the procedures involved are set out below.

2. Responsibility

This policy is managed by the Ministries Policies and Procedures Committee (MPPC).

3. Key Features of this Policy

3.1 An applicant who is accepted by conference shall be recognised and regarded as being in Full Connexion with the Methodist Church in Ireland. This means they share fully in the privileges and responsibilities of Ordained Ministry in the Methodist Church in Ireland and they are subject to the disciplines of the church as set out by Conference. Additionally, they are fully accountable to the Conference regarding their conduct and general vocation.

3.2 Ordained Ministers of the Methodist Church in Britain are automatically recognised and regarded as being in Full Connexion with the Methodist Church in Ireland and so there is no restriction on their length of service with the Methodist Church in Ireland. However, they still need to follow the application and discernment procedure as set out below.

3.3 For Ordained Ministers of other churches, temporary recognition is granted for a maximum of five years, after which an application must be made to transfer to the Methodist Church in Ireland. Such applications can only be granted when an applicant has been granted permanent residency by the appropriate authorities in either the United Kingdom or the Republic of Ireland.

3.4 Ordained ministers of other churches seeking to permanently transfer to the Methodist Church in Ireland shall normally first apply for temporary recognition as set out below. If, for stated reasons, the applicant is seeking immediate transfer to MCI the following additional regulation shall apply:

3.4.1 An ordained minister seeking permanent transfer to MCI who has not previously been recognised on a temporary basis, if accepted by Conference, shall be regarded as being on probation for a period of two years prior to being received into Full Connexion. Paragraph 3.3 also continues to apply, meaning that a minister must remain on probation until they have permanent residence.

3.5 At conference each year those being received into Full Connexion with the Methodist Church in Ireland will publicly declare their commitment to serve Christ through the Methodist Church in Ireland, and the Conference members will pray for them.

3.6 The Ministries Policies and Procedures Committee has the flexibility to amend this procedure when considering individual applications. The reasons for deviating from the normal process must form part of the report on an application that is brought to Conference.

4. Application and Discernment Procedure

Ordained ministers of other churches seeking temporary recognition (up to five years) as ministers of the Methodist Church in Ireland or those wishing to transfer to the Methodist Church in Ireland shall make their application to the Conference through the Ministries Policies and Procedures Committee Chair. The Chair shall refer the application to the Ministries Policies and Procedures Committee.

The Ministries Policies and Procedures Committee shall consider an application on its individual merits and shall normally deploy the following procedure:

- An applicant shall notify the chair of the MPPC or the General Secretary of the Methodist Church in Ireland and have an initial conversation about their intention to serve with or transfer to the ordained ministry of the MCI.
- The Chair/ Vice-Chair of the MPPC will set up a small group of 3 people, normally involving Chair/ Vice-Chair of the MPPC, a member of the MPPC and a District Superintendent in order to meet with the applicant and assess the suitability of the application. The panel will advise as to whether they think it suitable for the applicant to continue with the process. If, for stated reasons, they do not think it would be suitable for them to continue, they will still be welcome to proceed through the next steps if they wish to.
- The applicant will complete the appropriate application form.
- An applicant shall notify the appropriate authority or official(s) of her/his Church of her/his intention and action and shall produce acceptable evidence that this has been done.
- The General Secretary of the Methodist Church in Ireland shall make enquiries from the appropriate authority or official(s) in the Church concerning the ordination and good standing of the applicant. Further enquiries shall include the work, witness, qualifications, suitability, and any other issues as may be considered appropriate.
- The applicant shall attend a Ministerial Selection Panel (MSP) meeting, in person, where they shall participate in:
 - an interview conducted by the Ministerial Psychological Assessor.
 - an interview conducted by two members of the MSP focussing on call, spirituality and theological understanding.
 - an interview conducted by two members of the MSP focussing on gifts, graces and suitability for ordained ministry in MCI.
 - an interview before the entire MSP.

The outcome and recommendation of the Ministerial Selection Panel shall be reported to the Ministries Policies and Procedures Committee.

The Ministries Policies and Procedures Committee shall report on the recommendation to Conference. If accepted, the applicant is eligible for stationing in the following Connexional year.

5. Policy Review

This Policy was first adopted in July 2020, then reviewed and updated in April 2022. It is intended to further review and update as necessary by July 2024. Revised versions of the Policy shall be agreed by the Governance Board, reported to Conference, and published on the MCI Teams Application.

6. Related Policies

- OM Guidelines and Funding Arrangements for Ministers of other Conferences and Churches coming to work in Ireland

Methodist Church in Ireland

Policy and Procedures relating to Context-based Formation for Ordained Ministry - April 2022

1. Introduction, Purpose and Scope

This policy outlines the procedure to be followed for the context-based formation for those accepted as candidates for ordained ministry.

The key features of this policy and the procedures involved are set out below. All supplementary materials referenced are available on the MCI website - <https://irishmethodist.org/ministries-ordained-ministry>

2. Responsibility

This policy is managed by the Ministries Policies and Procedures Committee of the Methodist Church in Ireland.

3. The Model

Context-based Formation is the model of preparation for ordained ministry which has been adopted by the Methodist Church in Ireland. With the Agreed Expectations for Ordinands in the Methodist Church in Ireland as its core, the programme is designed to enable those offering for ordained ministry a unique opportunity to combine theology with practice, and with formation for the role to which God is calling them. They will learn 'on the job' in placement settings (a local church or mission context), as well as in study, tutorials or lectures within the formation community setting (college), thinking all the time about how to integrate their experiences.

The aim is that ordained ministers in training will develop in their character, knowledge and ministry practice in the context or setting of the formation community, placement and study. Although, there may be more emphasis on a particular "stream" at particular points in training, each of these three must be reflected in the three settings.



4. What elements are there in the Formation Process?

During Context-based Formation, the Ordained Minister in Training will normally:

- a) Be involved in the Formation Community Programme;
- b) Be engaged in Ministry Practice:
 - In Years 1 and 2 of Formation, the Ministry practice setting will normally take place in 2 Placement contexts:
 - Placement 1 – normally a church setting over two years
 - Placement 2 – normally a short-term (4-6 week) complementary placement undertaken in other environments to develop experience of ministry in a range of settings.
 - In Years 3 and 4 of Formation, the Ministry practice setting will normally be a Stationed context
- c) Undertake a Study Programme in one of the three possible Study Pathways;
- d) Undertake a compulsory two years Post-Ordination training programme (Years 5 and 6).
- e) Participate in other conferences and training events at different points throughout the year.

5. What do Years 1 and 2 look like?

During teaching blocks, those training on a full-time basis should normally expect to spend:

- two to three days a week in practical ministry
- two days a week in study, including the formation community programme as organised by the Ministries Team

- one to two days of private study, preparation and assignment-writing. They will also:
- participate in residential formation and teaching blocks / weekends
- participate in other conferences and training events

The ministry practice component of formation varies according to the setting. However, it will normally involve participation in helping to lead Sunday worship, and a focussed role in the life of the church context, overseen by an experienced supervisor who will be supported in this role by the Ministries Team.

Each Ordained Minister in Training has their own study pathway which will consist of courses and opportunities for study appropriate to their own needs and prior learning. All students will undertake a range of courses which will include developing understanding and practice in worship and preaching, theological reflection, ministry and leadership, teamwork and self-understanding, listening skills, Biblical interpretation, pastoral skills, mission and evangelism. Those new to theological study will work towards a validated qualification with an appropriate collaborative partner institution. Theology Graduates may study for a higher degree. Validation depends on the programme of study followed.

Outside of teaching blocks, and aside from holidays, Ordained Ministers in Training will focus on their ministry practice setting on a full-time basis, with one day for private study per week. While there will be an opportunity for further experience in their Placement 1 setting, there will also be at least one complementary placement in another environment to develop experience of a range of ministry settings (Placement 2).

During Year 2 the Ordained Minister in Training would normally be part of the stationing cycle. This assessment is made at the end of Year 1.

6. What do Years 3 and 4 look like?

This phase of the formation process takes place in a stationed setting as Probationary Ministers. Probationers work under the authority of their Circuit Superintendent, supported by the District Superintendent. The Circuit Superintendent, in consultation with the Director of the Ministries Team, is responsible for ensuring that they fulfil their formation and circuit responsibilities.

In addition to their circuit work those engaged in the full-time formation stream will need to: • participate in formation days as required (this will not be more than 12 days per year).

- give at least one day per week of private study, preparation and assignment-writing.
- participate in other conferences and training events as required.

The stipend level set by conference reflects the fact that probationers are not giving all their time to circuit ministry.

The ministry practice component of formation will vary according to the stationed setting. However, it will normally involve a ministry leadership role, overseen by an experienced supervisor who will be supported by the Ministries Team.

Each Ordained Minister in Training will continue to undertake courses appropriate to their pathway. During Year 4 an assessment is made with a Diploma level student as to whether they should advance to Degree level. Ordination will normally take place at the end of Year 4 of the Context-based Formation Process. In order to be ordained, an Ordained Minister in Training should normally have reached at least a Diploma level of Theological Education, (or equivalent).

During each year of probation, the ordained ministers in training shall be formally assessed on their conduct of worship by the District Superintendent. On at least one occasion, this assessment should be conducted by at least five other ordained ministers or accredited local preachers.

Annual reports on the circuit work of a probationer and a report on the conduct of worship shall be submitted by the Circuit Superintendent to the District Superintendent for consideration by the District Advisory Committee. These reports shall be forwarded to the Director of the Ministries Team for consideration by for the Ministries Policies and Procedures Committee who will report to the Ministerial Session of Conference.

On the grounds of deprivation, a circuit may apply for a probationer to be given dispensation to preside at services of Holy Communion within their own circuit. Such an application should be fully considered by the Circuit Executive in conjunction with the District Superintendent. The application is made in writing to the Stationing Committee via the District Superintendent. Circuit Superintendents should preside at services of Holy Communion assisted by the probationer at least twice in each Connexional year.

7. Reception into Full Connexion and Ordination

Normally during the fourth year of the formation process an ordained minister in training shall be prepared for reception into Full Connexion and Ordination:

- a) as noted above, they shall be formally assessed on their conduct of worship by the District

Superintendent. On at least one occasion, this assessment should be conducted by at least five other ordained ministers or accredited local preachers.

b) shall be interviewed by a group comprising of at least five members District Advisory Committee, including the District Superintendent. The interview shall explore the probationer's knowledge of Methodist theology (as reflected in Wesley's Sermons and Notes on the New Testament) and the practice of ordained ministry and application of Christian faith to the contemporary world. If the performance is deemed to be satisfactory the District Advisory Committee shall recommend the probationer for admission into Full Connexion. (No mark shall be recorded.)

c) shall attend an Ordinands' retreat organised by the Director of the Ministries Team

d) during the period of Conference, shall participate in a reflective conversation about the formation process and call to ordained ministry in the presence of the President of the Conference and a selected number of senior ministers.

e) shall be required to avow before the Ministerial and Representative Sessions of Conference her/his belief in Methodist doctrine and discipline.

f) if all reports are satisfactory, shall be received into Full Connexion during the Representative Session and, in the Ordination Service, be set apart to the work of the ordained ministry by the imposition of hands and by receiving a copy of the Holy Scriptures.

g) shall have her/his name entered in the Journal (and Minutes of Conference) and the date of the beginning of ministry recorded as determined by Conference.

8. Post Ordination Years 5 and 6

For a period of two years after ordination, ministers shall be required to participate in a development programme as set out by the Ministries Team. The focus of this programme shall be on support for ministry, pastoral supervision, the development of further skills, and personal management.

9. Procedures relating to progress of students and probationers in the Formation Process

Oversight of Formation Progress

The Ministries Policies and Procedures Committee has formal responsibility to monitor the progress of each formation student and probationer with the following remit:

- To receive reports on students and probationers and, where necessary, recommend a course of action.
- To formally address, where necessary, serious disciplinary issues regarding students and probationers.
- To recommend, based on the Church's agreed expectations, continuance or discontinuance in formation or probation.

A formal record of the progress of each student and probationer will be ratified by the Ministries Policies and Procedures Committee and included in its recommendations to the Ministerial Session of Conference. Leave from the Formation Process

a) An ordained minister in training who can satisfy the Ministries Policies and Procedures Committee of her/his intention to complete their formation training and in due course enter full work, may, on compassionate or compelling domestic grounds, apply for exemption from or deferment or suspension of stationing for probation to the Conference, which may grant or refuse the application. An ordained minister in training shall not during any deferment or suspension of probation be at any cost to the Connexion except as provided in clause (b) below.

b) The names of probationers granted exemption, deferment or suspension shall, in the list of stations, be printed in the Circuit in which they reside as "without pastoral charge" and they shall be expected to give such help to the Circuit as they are able and in appropriate cases shall be entitled to remuneration by decision of the Circuit Executive.

c) Students who fail to complete their training and ministerial probation shall withdraw from training for the ordained ministry. If subsequently they apply for reinstatement by the Conference, the training received, and the years of probation travelled when they withdrew shall be taken into account. Any subsequent application to the Conference for reinstatement will be discerned and assessed by the Ministries Policies and Procedures Committee.

10. Financial Arrangements for Context Based Formation

If undertaking the Context-based Formation Process full-time, the Ordained Minister in Training receives a taxable living allowance in Years 1 and 2. They will also receive reasonable expenses related to their placement as per the Placement Handbook.

When stationed as a probationary stipendiary minister in Years 3 and 4, the Ordained Minister in Training receives a Probationer Stipend and other ministerial allowances.

The rates of stipends and allowances are set down by the Stipends and Allowances Board of the Methodist Church in Ireland and approved by Conference. University fees for accredited courses undertaken by those in the formation process will be covered by the Ministerial Training Fund.

11. What does a Part-Time Training Route look like?

If a candidate wishes to follow a part-time route for their Context-based Formation, this will be discussed as part of the Selection Process and agreed by the Ministries Policies and Procedures Committee. Part-time Context-based Formation will be possible and will be facilitated. It is likely that this route will take longer than the usual full-time “four years to ordination” route.

If a candidate is already employed as a lay-worker in a local circuit and wishes to continue in that employment during Context-based Formation, a suitable pathway will be discussed with the Ministries Policies and Procedures Committee.

The minimum requirement for Stationing will normally be the completion of a Study Programme at Certificate level and appropriate engagement with the Ministry Formation Programme and Placement experience.

Overview of Context-based Formation Pathways

YEAR	Formation Community Setting	Ministry Practice Setting	Study Setting		
			Pathway 1	Pathway 2	Pathway 3
1	Formation Programme	Year-Round Placement	Certificate Programme	Master's level Programme	Bespoke Programme
2	Formation Programme	Year-Round Placement	Certificate Programme	Master's level Programme	Bespoke Programme
3	Formation Programme	Stationed Setting	Diploma Programme	Master's level Programme	Bespoke Programme
4	Formation Programme	Stationed Setting	Diploma Programme	Bespoke Programme	Bespoke Programme
5	Formation Programme	Stationed Setting	Bespoke Programme ¹	Bespoke Programme	Bespoke Programme
6	Formation Programme	Stationed Setting	Bespoke Programme ¹	Bespoke Programme	Bespoke Programme

12. Policy Review

Context-based Formation was first adopted by the Methodist Conference in 2019. This Policy was updated in April 2022. It is intended to further review and update this Policy by July 2024. Revised versions of the Policy shall be agreed by the Governance Board, reported to Conference, and published on the MCI Teams Application.

Related Policies

- OM Agreed Expectations for Ordinands within the Methodist Church in Ireland
- OM Policy and Procedures relating to Candidature for Ordained Ministry
- OM Disciplinary & Grievance Procedures for Formation Students within the Methodist Church in Ireland (in preparation)

Methodist Church in Ireland

Ordained Ministers Retirement Policy - April 2022

1. Introduction, Purpose and Scope

This policy outlines the procedure to be followed when a minister is giving notice of their intention to retire. This policy replaces the legislation set out in 5K in the Manual of Laws of the Methodist Church in Ireland (2019).

The key features of this policy and the procedures involved are set out below.

2. Responsibility

This policy is managed by the Ministries Policies and Procedures Committee.

3. Retirement and Continued Service in Retirement

3.1 Ordained ministers seeking permission to retire at the ensuing Conference shall submit their application in writing to the Superintendent of the District and to the Secretary of the Irish Methodist Ministers Retirement Fund before 30th September. If in the interval between this date and the Conference an ordained minister is compelled to seek permission to retire, he/she shall convey her/his request immediately, in writing, to the Superintendent of the District.

3.2 The minimum age for retirement shall normally be as determined by the terms of the church's pension scheme. The Conference may permit an ordained minister below the retirement age for special reasons. An ordained minister shall not normally be stationed after the age of seventy.

3.3 A resolution for each minister retiring will be prepared and printed in the Conference Agenda and, after approval, inserted in the Minutes of Conference.

3.4 Retired ministers with their consent, and by arrangement with the Circuit Executives of the Circuits concerned, may take charge of stations where the work is suitable. They shall act under the direction of the Superintendent of the Circuit. All such arrangements shall be subject to the control of the Conference.

3.5 When ordained ministers retire and undertake work on dependent Circuits, the Officers of the Home Mission Department, with the sanction of the General Committee, may make a grant towards the removal expenses from the Circuits in which they were last stationed to those in which they have undertaken work. Retired ministers not so employed shall be at liberty to choose their own places of residence.

3.6 When retired ministers are requested to conduct services, they shall be remunerated according to the directions of the Conference as determined from time to time.

3.7 Retired ministers continue to be subject to the discipline of the Conference and shall report annually to their District Superintendent concerning their belief in our doctrines, and satisfactorily answer the usual questions regarding character.

3.8 Retired ministers connected with the Irish Conference, residing in Great Britain, shall report to the Synods of the Districts in which they reside. The British Conference has arranged that retired ministers connected with that Conference, residing in Ireland, shall report to the Superintendent of the District in which they reside.

3.9 Retired ministers residing outside the United Kingdom or the Republic of Ireland are required to furnish annually to the Superintendents of Districts under which their names are printed in the Minutes of Conference, the usual statements respecting solvency, and belief in Methodist doctrines, also a certificate of good standing, from the ministers of the circuits with which they are connected.

4. Policy Review

This Policy was first adopted in July 2021. The policy was reviewed in April 2022. It is intended to update and review further this Policy by July 2023. Revised versions of the Policy shall be agreed by the Governance Board, reported to Conference, and published on the MCI Teams Application.

5. Related Policies

- Retired Benefits Scheme

Methodist Church in Ireland

Policy and Procedures relating to the Sabbaticals for Ordained Ministers - April 2022

1. Introduction, Purpose and Scope

The Methodist Church in Ireland is committed to the ongoing development of its ordained ministers. One mechanism for ongoing development is the provision of Sabbaticals for ordained ministers, whether Full-time Stipendiary, Part-time Stipendiary or Non-Stipendiary.

The key outcomes of a Sabbatical could be:

- The renewal or clarification of sense of call.
- The development of an aspect of ministry.
- An opportunity to visit and learn from another church context.
- An opportunity to carry out a piece of research.

In addition, sabbaticals are opportunities for ordained ministers to focus on their wellbeing and invest time in hobbies, travel, family time and family visits.

This policy replaces the legislation set out in 5H.1-11 in the Manual of Laws of the Methodist Church in Ireland (2019).

The key features of this policy and the procedures involved are set out below.

2. Responsibility

This policy is managed by the Ministries Policies and Procedures Committee of the Methodist Church in Ireland.

3. Key Features of this Policy

The length of the Sabbatical shall be three months, which may normally be taken on completion of the tenth and each seventh year of travel following.

The Ministries Policies and Procedures Committee may for good reason approve the taking of Sabbaticals one year earlier or later. Sabbaticals may not be taken in the first year of a new appointment and special permission shall be required for any greater departure from the normal dates.

It is the responsibility of the ordained minister making an application for a sabbatical to ensure the correct procedure is followed and that all necessary arrangements are in place.

During a sabbatical the ordained minister remains stationed in their current appointment and continues to receive their stipend and taxable allowances.

No travel / mileage claims relating to the sabbatical shall be made. A grant based on 2.4% of the upper stipend is available to assist with sabbatical expenses. The minister must notify the Ministries Team office one month prior to the start date of the sabbatical, in order for the payment to be authorised.

A further grant of up to £500 is available from the World Mission Partnership for ministers planning to spend time on sabbatical with a partner church. For more details WMP should be contacted directly. When an ordained minister is planning a sabbatical, their Circuit shall set up a support group who shall:

- ensure arrangements are in place to cover the work of the circuit;
- to provide support in the preparation and execution of the programme; and
- to ensure that the fruits of the programme are properly shared.

It shall include representatives of the Circuit (or other body responsible for the payment of stipend), and where relevant the participant's partner. The participant shall be a member but shall not chair it. The participant's Circuit Executive shall appoint the chairperson and convener. In the case of separated appointments, the chairperson and convener shall be appointed by the relevant Church Department. The Sabbatical Support Group will report to the relevant Circuit Executive or appropriate Church Department. Ministries Team staff are also available to discuss sabbatical plans with ordained ministers.

4. Application Procedure

Prior to applying for sabbatical leave the ordained minister should consult with their District Superintendent and Circuit Executive.

An application should normally be made one year in advance of proposed dates. The link for the electronic application form is available from the Ministries Team Office at ministries@irishmethodist.org.

The application form will require the following information:

- a. the dates of release and return,
- b. the programme (see 'Further Resources' below),
- c. arrangements for covering the absence agreed with the District Superintendent and Circuit Executive.
- d. arrangements for the pastoral support of the participant's partner and dependants.

On approval of the application by the Ministries Policies and Procedures Committee, the Ministries will advise the applicant, the District Superintendent and the Circuit steward that the sabbatical can proceed. If for any reason arrangements for the sabbatical should change the applicant is responsible for informing the Ministries Policies and Procedures Committee, the District Superintendent and Circuit Executive of the proposed changes.

On completion of the sabbatical the ordained minister must submit a one to two A4 page report on their sabbatical experiences and the key outcomes for their ministry to the Ministries Policies and Procedures Committee and to the District Superintendent.

5. Policy Review

This Policy was first adopted in July 2020 and updated in April 2022. It is intended to further review and update this Policy by July 2024. Revised versions of the Policy shall be agreed by the Governance Board, reported to Conference, and published on the MCI Teams Application.

6. Related Policies

- Ministry Development and Further Study Grants Policy 7.

Other Resources

It is up to the ordained minister to decide the content of the Sabbatical. However, the clear objective is continued development in ministry, the content is expected to reflect this.

Useful web sites:

<https://www.soulshpherd.org/sabbatical-guide-pastors/>

<https://ministryadvice.com/pastoral-sabbatical/>

<https://alban.org/archive/the-need-for-clergy-renewal/>

<https://faithandleadership.com/clergy-renewal-experiment>

Material on the website of the Methodist Church in Britain may also be useful background reading:

www.methodist.org.uk/for-ministers-and-office-holders/ministry/sabbaticals/

Appendix B – Manual of Laws Chapter 6

Revised version of Chapter 6 of the Manual of Laws

CHAPTER 6

LOCAL PREACHERS

6A Local Preachers

6A.01 A Local Preacher is a member of the Church, recognised as qualified and called to preach the Gospel, though not “separated” from her/his ordinary business.

6A.02 A Committee shall be appointed annually by the Governance Board. It shall ensure that proper processes and procedures are followed in relation to training, accreditation and development of Local Preachers.

It shall be constituted as follows:

The Lay Leader of the Conference,

~~The Ministerial and Lay Secretaries of the Committee,~~

The Connexional Local Preachers’ Co-ordinator.

A member of the staff of the Ministries Team

The District Secretaries Co-ordinators for Local Preachers.

6A.03 Each District shall have a forum open to all Local Preachers, both accredited and in training. The purpose of the forum is to facilitate prayer and support for this ministry, organise training and development opportunities, and to gather information to feed back to the Connexional Committee and to ~~Board of Ministry~~ the Ministries Learning and Development Committee.

6A.04 Regulations regarding nomination, ~~and appointment~~ **and review** of Local Preachers are set out in protocols prepared by the ~~Connexional Local Preachers Committee~~ Ministries Policies and Procedures Committee in consultation with the Connexional Local Preachers’ Committee, approved by the Governance Board and reported to Conference. Any amendments to the protocols shall be approved by the Governance Board and reported to Conference.

6A.05 Each Local Preacher is required to:

(a) ~~attend~~ frequently attend fellowship meetings of the Church and the Lord’s Supper.

(b) affirm annually that he/she continues to believe and preach our doctrines and to observe the discipline of the Church.

At the District Ministerial Synod, Circuit Superintendents shall be asked to confirm that the Local Preachers on their Circuits have affirmed that they continue to believe and preach our doctrines and observe the discipline of the Methodist Church in Ireland and that this has been noted by the March Circuit Executive.

6A.06 Each Local Preacher who has not retired is required to:

(a) commit to 15 hours of further learning or training per year.

(b) ~~undergo a Review every 10 years.~~ take part in the annual and ten-yearly review process.

6A.07 If the Local Preacher is unwilling to make the affirmation required by paragraph 6A.05 above her/his name will be removed from the Circuit Preaching Plan and the Connexional list of Local Preachers. In a case where the Local Preacher makes the affirmation but the Circuit Executive has reason to doubt her/him, the matter shall be reported to the District Superintendent who shall then arrange to convene a District Disciplinary Committee.

6A.08 If a Local Preacher behaves in a manner considered by the Circuit Executive to be inappropriate or a charge is made against a Local Preacher, he/she will be subject to the Disciplinary Procedures set out below in section 6C.

- 6A.09** When a Local Preacher has resigned because he/she has been unable to subscribe to Methodist doctrine and discipline and seeks to be reinstated as a Local Preacher he/she shall:
- make application through the Superintendent Minister to the Circuit Executive. Such application shall not be made until two years have elapsed from her/his re-admission to membership of the Methodist Church, or if membership has not ceased, until two years from the date of her/his resignation.
 - be examined at the Circuit Executive. Re-instatement shall require a two-thirds majority of those present and voting in favour of the application.
- 6A.10** When a Local Preacher has been asked to resign, or been removed, due to behaviour thought to be inappropriate for anyone called to be a preacher of the Gospel, and seeks to be re-instated he/she shall:
- make application through the Superintendent Minister to the Circuit Executive. Such application shall not be made until five years have elapsed from her/his re-admission to Membership of the Methodist Church, or if membership has not ceased, until five years from the date of her/his resignation or removal.
 - have her/his application for re-instatement referred to the District Disciplinary Committee, the report from which shall be considered before the application proceeds to the Circuit Executive.
 - be examined at the Circuit Executive. Re-instatement shall require a two-thirds majority of those present and voting in favour of the application.
- 6A.11** No person who has been suspended or expelled from the Ministry shall be employed as a Local Preacher without the consent of the Conference.
- 6A.12** A Local Preacher removing from one Circuit to another shall, on production of her/his Certificate of Accreditation as a Local Preacher, together with a letter from the Superintendent Minister stating that he/she is in good standing, be placed on the plan of the latter Circuit.
- 6A.13** Circuit and Society Treasurers shall be responsible for the payment of travelling expenses to all Local Preachers who conduct services on their Circuits, as outlined in the Minutes of Conference.
District Secretaries District Local Preachers' Co-ordinators
- 6A.14** The District Superintendent, in consultation with the District Advisory Committee, shall appoint a Local Preacher as ~~District Secretary~~ District Local Preachers' Co-ordinator, who shall collect information concerning the work of Local Preachers on the District. ~~District Secretaries~~ District Co-ordinators for Local Preachers shall keep a list of all Local Preachers on their Districts. ~~They shall be responsible for arranging the appointments on the District for Local Preachers' Sunday.~~
- 6A.15** ~~District Local Preachers' Secretaries~~ District Local Preachers' Co-ordinators shall forward their reports to the ~~Lay Secretary of the Local Preachers' Committee~~ Connexional Local Preachers' Co-ordinator.
- 6A.16** The statistical returns shall show as active Local Preachers all those who are able and willing to take appointments.
- 6A.17** The third Sunday in September shall be recognised as the Sunday designated for Celebration and Affirmation of the ministry of Local Preachers. A Circuit service of Celebration and Affirmation shall be arranged on each Circuit. The order and form of this service should follow the guidance provided by the Connexional Committee. Local Preachers' Sunday, on which as far as possible worship shall be led by Local Preachers.
- 6A.18** The District Superintendent shall facilitate the 10-year Review Process for all Local Preachers, as defined in the 'Policy and Procedures relating to the Nomination, Appointment and Review of Local Preachers' 'Regulations and Guidelines for Local Preachers' published annually in the Minutes of Conference published on the MCI Teams Application. The role of the District Superintendent is to facilitate the process of Review by providing support and guidance to Local Preachers and, in conjunction with the District Local Preachers' Secretary Co-ordinator, to ensure that reviews are undertaken and completed within the required timeframe.

Ministries Policies and Procedures Committee

- 6A.19** The Ministries Policies and Procedures Committee as set out in Chapter 4 of the Manual of Laws is responsible for the drafting of new and reviewing of existing policies relating to Local Preachers. Each policy sets out key features and responsibilities. Amendments shall be agreed by the Governance Board of the Methodist Church in Ireland and reported to the Conference. The following policy ~~and procedures~~ is currently in operation:
- Nomination, and Appointment and Review of Local Preachers ~~including the course of training.~~
 - Local Preachers Annual Review Policy

Resolutions from Associated Bodies

The resolutions from the 'Associated Bodies' which follow are held in a separate section in the book of reports. These bodies are not part of the charity which is the Methodist Church in Ireland, but are entities for whom MCI has a reporting or appointing responsibility.

Wesley College

1. The Governance Board received the report of the Governors.
2. The Governance Board re-appointed Rev Nigel Mackey as Chaplain of the College.
3. The Governance Board appointed Mr Jonathan Lew as Honorary Treasurer.
4. The Governance Board appointed Grant Thornton as auditors.
5. The Governance Board appointed as Governors of the College the following:
The President of the Methodist Church in Ireland, The Principal of the College Mr Christopher Woods, Rev Jeremy Nicoll, Rev Stephen Taylor, Rev Alan Wardlow, Rev Paul Maxwell, Mr Jason Campbell, Mr Rob Corbet, Ms Jean Delaney, Mr David English, Mr Simon Grier, Ms Gillian Kingston, Mr Jonathan Lew, Mr Alwin McAdoo, Ms Amanda McConnell, Ms Jennifer Moulton, Mr Clive Moutray, Mr Roy Parker, Mr Jonathan Parkes, Ms Joy Winterbotham.

Methodist College, Belfast

1. The Governance Board received the report.
2. The Governance Board re-appointed Rev Emily Hyland as Honorary Chaplain to the College
3. The Governance Board appointed the following as a new Trustee Governor: Ms Edith Shaw.
4. The Governance Board re-appointed the following as Trustee Governors who retire by rotation but are eligible for re-election: Dr Gillian Luney; Mr Mark McElhinney and Rev Dr Janet Unsworth.

Gurteen College

1. The Governance Board received the report.
2. The Governance Board appointed Mr Robert Armitage as Treasurer of the College
3. The Governance Board noted the appointment of IFAC as Auditors
4. The Governance Board appointed as Governors of the College the following:
Mr Robert Armitage, Ms Margaret Berry, Mr Denis Duggan, Mr Jim Dwyer, Rev Steven Foster, Mr Clifford Guest, Mr Joe Healy, Mr Roy Kingston (Chairperson), Ms Bridget Lynch, Dr Finola McCoy, Rev Paul Maxwell, Ms Caitriona Murphy, Mr Alan Ralph and Ms Julie Roche
5. The following are Trustees: Mr John Armitage, Ms Lucy Bateman, Mr James Bennett (Chairperson), Mr Robert Davis, Rev Laurence Graham, Rev Andrew Kingston, Mr Alan McCormack, Rev Denis Maguire, Mr Billy Nicholson, Rev John Parkin, Mr Douglas Rowe, Mr Robin Smyth, Mr Gordon Nicholson

Eastwell Residential Home

1. The Governance Board received the report of the Governors.
2. The Governance Board noted that the Governing Body of the Eastwell Residential Home has appointed the Committee as follows:
Chairman: Mr David Lee
Hon. Secretary: Ms Roisin Whiting
Treasurer: Mr Charles Richards
Chairperson of the Ladies Committee: Ms Yvonne Seville
Representing the Annual General Meeting: Rev Andrew Kingston, Ms Iris Beatty
Representing the Dublin Societies:
Centenary, Leeson Park: Ms Gillian Hinds
Rathgar: Ms Wendy Moore
Dun Laoghaire: Ms Joan Harris
Sandymount: Mr Steven ffearry-Smyrl

Clontarf: Ms Yvonne Seville
Dublin Central Mission: Ms Margaret Boles
Dundrum: Ms Margaret Payne
Sutton: Ms Margaret Thornes
Blackrock and Bray: Ms Heather Gandola

3. The Governance Board appointed the following to serve on the Governing Body: Rev Andrew Dougherty, Rev Stephen Taylor

Methodist Historical Society of Ireland

1. The Governance Board received the report.
2. The Governance Board noted that the Methodist Historical Society Ireland has appointed the Committee for the ensuing year as follows:
Rev Ian D Henderson, President; Dr Fergus O’Ferrall, Vice-President; Ms Jennifer Stutt, Secretary and Associate Archivist; Rev Robin P Roddie, Archivist; Mr Derek Reid, Ms Trudy Reid, Treasurers; Rev Dr Stephen F Skuce, Editor; Rev John D. Alderdice; Rev Colin D Gracie; Rev Brian D Griffin; Rev Dr E T I Mawhinney; Rev S Kenneth Todd; Ms Margaret Clarke; Dr Fiona D McKelvey Mr Steven C. Smyrl, Dr Brian Turner, Dr Shelagh B Waddington, Ms Maureen Weir and Mr J R Wesley Weir.
3. The Governance Board noted with appreciation the work of the Society and recommends that every Society contribute to the funds of the Methodist Historical Society of Ireland.
4. The Governance Board encourages Methodists to join the Society.
5. The Governance Board directed that all documents no longer in current use, including printouts from electronic records, be lodged with a competent authority for safekeeping and future reference. For this purpose, it recommends the archives of the Methodist Historical Society of Ireland.