

55. The Necessitous Local Preachers' Fund (NLPF)

The 2023 Conference received a report detailing the current status of the NLPF and the steps necessary to reactivate the fund. The Conference (resolution 44/2) removed the existing trustees and replaced them with four new trustees, one of whom is ex officio as a member of the Connexional Team and confirmed (Resolution 44/3) that the Ministries Committee shall be responsible for administration of the Fund in place of the Leaders of Worship and Preachers Trust.

Resolution 44/4 directed the new trustees of the NLPF, in consultation with the Law & Polity Committee "to propose amendments to modernise and clarify the terms and powers of the Trust Deed and to report to the 2024 Conference."

Since the 2023 Conference, the Trustees have committed substantial time and effort to investigating the necessary changes to the Trust Deed, including meeting seven times online. Initially, the work was in consultation with the Conference Officer for Legal and Constitutional Practice, subsequently in consultation with TMCP.

The Trustees drew up outline requirements for updating the Trust Deed, and also drafted updated operating procedures for implementation when the updated Trust Deed is in place.

TMCP advised that the advice of the Charity Commission would be required as the NLPF was not formally constituted with a new Trust Deed at the time of merger of the three previous charities in the 1940s. The trustees (with the support of TMCP) have since been liaising with the Charity Commission on the content of the new Scheme, which will be known as the Local Preachers' and Worship Leaders' Benevolent Fund. As its name indicates, the new Scheme includes provision for the needs of worship leaders.

As directed by the Conference, the trustees are now consulting with the Law and Polity Committee regarding the terms of the new Scheme; they are also taking external legal advice on the Scheme's detailed provisions before asking the Charity Commission to authorise it.

Under the terms of the existing Trust Deed dated 5 June 1882, the Conference has the power to appoint the trustees of NLPF. The trustees wish to bring the following names to the Conference for appointment as additional trustees with immediate effect: David Greet, the Revd Patricia Olivent-Hayes. The trustees also request that the Conference delegates its powers of appointment of trustees under the existing Trust Deed to the Connexional Council to enable more trustees to be appointed before the next meeting of the Conference if required.

The provisions of the existing Trust Deed are unclear as to whether the Conference's approval is required to the terms of the new Scheme. For the avoidance of doubt, therefore, and to enable the Scheme to be finalised and submitted to the Charity Commission without undue delay, the trustees request that the Conference delegates to the Connexional Council all and any powers of approval the Conference may have relating to the proposed Scheme.

David Greet

David Greet is a local preacher, hospital chaplain and former Chair of the Leaders of Worship and Preachers Trust (LWPT), during the time when the LWPT administered the NLPF. David brings a knowledge, history and personal experience of distributing the NLPF in the past, and has seen its benevolence used to make a real difference to individuals, their families and their wider church family.

The Revd Patricia Olivent-Hayes

Having served in active ministry in the Methodist Church for almost 30 years and now being involved in pastoral work and preaching as a supernumerary in the Loughborough Circuit, Pat Olivent-Hayes

brings many years of experience to be able to contribute to the assessment of applications and the making of grants from the NLPF to appropriate applicants.

*****RESOLUTIONS**

55/1. The Conference received the Report.

**55/2. The Conference appointed the following people as trustees of the Necessitous Local Preachers' Fund with immediate effect:
David Greet, the Revd Patricia Olivent-Hayes.**

55/3. The Conference delegated to the Connexional Council its powers of appointment of trustees of the Necessitous Local Preachers' Fund to enable more trustees to be appointed before the 2026 Conference if required.

55/4. The Conference delegated to the Connexional Council its powers of approval (if any) of the proposed Charity Commission Scheme relating to the Necessitous Local Preachers' Fund.