



Methodist Church House  
25 Tavistock Place  
London WC1H 9SF

+44 (0) 20 7486 5502  
[enquiries@methodistchurch.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@methodistchurch.org.uk)  
[methodist.org.uk](http://methodist.org.uk)

Registered charity no 1132208

**To:** All District, Circuit and Church Treasurers (via email)  
**Cc:** All Ministers and Probationers Stationed in the Active Work (via Signpost for Ministry)

### **FINANCE NEWSLETTER**

Dear Friends,

We are distributing the link to this newsletter by e-mail to all District, Circuit and Church Treasurers and posting it on Signpost for Ministry for all ministers. Please feel free to forward this newsletter to others who you think may find it useful.

We are always happy to receive feedback on the newsletter and if you have items that you feel will be of interest across the Connexion, we can consider these for inclusion in future editions.

Yours faithfully,

Matt Tattersall  
Executive Director of Finance & Resources

## FINANCE NEWSLETTER – FEBRUARY 2026

### Stipend 2026/27

The Resourcing Committee is recommending that the standard stipend for 2026/27 is increased by 4.5% to £33,420 when rounded.

### Computers for Ministry 2026/27

It is recommended that the Computers for Ministry (CfM) Allowance for 2026/27 will be £223 to be paid with the October 2026 stipend. It is payable to all ministers except those whose computing facilities are provided at their place of work. The allowance is non-pensionable and subject to tax and National Insurance.

Student ministers entering training are eligible to receive a grant equal to four times the annual CfM Allowance. They will then be eligible to receive the annual allowance once they begin ministry.

### District Assessment 2026/27

The Connexional Council is recommending that the MCF District Assessment is increased by 1.1% in 2026/27. This includes a reduction of 3 percentage points in light of the difficulties some churches and circuits are having in paying their Assessment, then uplifted by 4.1% to reflect the impact of inflation.

It should be noted that the Assessment formula adjusts for relative staffing levels in each district. As a result, the actual change in Assessment in each district varies accordingly.

### Recruitment to the Audit & Risk Assurance Committee (ARAC)

We will shortly be recruiting for two new members to join the ARAC. The advert should go live w/c 2 February with a deadline of 28 February. The advert will appear on the website at [Volunteer Roles](#). We are particularly keen to recruit one member with a background in IT/Digital/Cyber Security and one member with a good understanding of the workings of the Church (e.g. a minister or lay employee). If you are interested, please look out for the advert. Alternatively, please forward the details to anyone else you think may be able to serve on this important governance committee that supports the Connexion.

### Treasurers' Handbook and New Finance webpages

You may be aware of the range of handbooks that are produced by the Connexional Team to support people in various roles in the life of the Church (e.g. the Circuit Stewards Handbook). The latest handbook is for treasurers. It is particularly focussed on church treasurers and deliberately aimed at those who may be less experienced in accounts. However, it also does contain material relevant to circuits and districts.

In addition to the handbook, the Finance pages on the website are undergoing a refresh. The new pages will be providing guidance and support for treasurers. However, this does mean that some pages will look different and some will have moved elsewhere on the website. Before the new webpages and the handbook are published in February 2026, there will be a communication via Signpost for Ministry and on the website to explain the changes. When the new pages are launched, please refer to [www.methodist.org.uk/finance](http://www.methodist.org.uk/finance) to see the updates and new pages.

### Year-end accounts

All accounts and annual reports produced by charitable bodies have to comply with the Charity Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP). This gives guidance on the financial accounting and reporting requirements of charitable entities. The SORP has been updated with the new requirements coming into effect for the 2026/27 connexional year. As we reported in our last newsletter, we have been reviewing the Standard Form of Accounts (SfOA) on the website to ensure they are compliant and more user friendly.



The calling of the Methodist Church is to respond to the gospel of God's love in Christ and to live out its discipleship in worship and mission

The new SFoA forms will be published in June 2026 in preparation for the 2025/26 year end and will be compliant with the current SORP. We will then publish revised forms in time for the 2026/27 year end that comply with the new SORP. Further information about the changes to the SORP and the impact on church accounts will be published later in the year.

### **Pension Reserve Fund**

Refunds of the generous donations to the Pension Reserve Fund have been processed following the decision by the Conference to return the monies received. Whilst the majority of the donations have now been refunded, we have a number still to be returned.

If your church, circuit or district made a donation, and you have not yet received the refund, please contact us via [financeadmin@methodistchurch.org.uk](mailto:financeadmin@methodistchurch.org.uk) to provide the bank account details we should use to process the refund.

### **Central Finance Board (CFB)**

Further updates on progress in resolving issues from the new system implemented by the CFB can be found in Appendix 1 of this newsletter.

### **Payroll & Stipends**

The Connexional Team are aware of the issues many treasurers have experienced with the new deposit fund system of the CFB. This has led to some circuits failing to make their contributions to cover the reimbursement of payroll and stipend costs. Once CFB have released the next version of the system and clearer management information becomes available, we kindly ask that reimbursement is made as soon as possible.

### **Allowances above stipend**

Circuits and Districts are not able to approve local allowances for ministers over and above stipend. Where there are special circumstances requiring the payment of a local allowance, these should be submitted to the Resourcing Committee for consideration. Payment of local allowances should not form part of stationing conversations unless the allowances in question have already been approved by the Resourcing Committee. If a departing minister is paid a local allowance, it should not be assumed that the incoming minister is automatically eligible for that same allowance, a new approval is required from the Resourcing Committee. There remain a number of historic local allowances being paid and these will continue until the end of the minister's current appointment.

Should any circuit or district believe a new local allowance is required from September 2026, applications should be made through the Connexional Team at [ministerial.grants@methodistchurch.org.uk](mailto:ministerial.grants@methodistchurch.org.uk).

The deadline for submitting a request is 30<sup>th</sup> April.

### **Statistics for Mission**

We had hoped that this year's Statistics for Mission could be entered in the new system but with the delays, we have decided to use the old system for this year. The old system has been configured so that information from the October count can be entered in. [Click here to enter in your stats](#). **The deadline for entering the information is Monday, 16 February 2026.** We apologise for the shorter than normal notice for this.

**NOTE** - We are aware that some closed churches have reappeared under Statistics for Mission due to a syncing error with the system. If there are closed churches that have reappeared, [please fill in this form](#) and it will be processed in the new year.



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### Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme (LPWGS)

The government has announced that the LPWGS (Listed Place of Worship Grant Scheme) **will close at midnight on 31 March 2026** (or earlier if the money runs out). If you were planning on submitting an application for a grant, we urge to apply as soon as possible. More details about the process and timings for the closure of the fund can be [found here](#).

It was also announced that the LPWGS fund will be replaced with the Places of Worship Renewal Fund, which will be delivered by Historic England and will focus on repair and conservation work for places of worship only in England. [Click here](#) to read the report. If you have any further questions or would like support in submitting an application for a grant to the LPWGS before it closes, please contact the Connexional Conservation Officer on [conservation@methodistchurch.org.uk](mailto:conservation@methodistchurch.org.uk) or visit the [Conservation and Listed Buildings](#) page for more information.

### Association of Church Accountants and Treasurers (ACAT)

Connexional funds are used to pay a block subscription so that every Methodist Church, Circuit and District can have free membership of ACAT. If you have not yet signed up, please find more details at [ACAT Membership](#). Details of forthcoming events can be found at [Home - ACAT](#).

### Contacting the Finance Team

The contact details for Finance team can be found on the Finance page of the Methodist Church website at: [Contact the Finance Office - The Methodist Church](#).

Particular contacts are as follows:

For the Ministers payroll and benefits please e-mail [stipends@methodistchurch.org.uk](mailto:stipends@methodistchurch.org.uk)

For the lay payroll please e-mail [payrollbureau@methodistchurch.org.uk](mailto:payrollbureau@methodistchurch.org.uk)

For ministerial grants please email [ministerial.grants@methodistchurch.org.uk](mailto:ministerial.grants@methodistchurch.org.uk)

For the Gift Aid bureau please email [giftaid@methodistchurch.org.uk](mailto:giftaid@methodistchurch.org.uk)

If you don't know who you need to contact, please email [finance@methodistchurch.org.uk](mailto:finance@methodistchurch.org.uk)



## APPENDIX 1



Methodist Church House  
25 Tavistock Place  
London  
WC1H 9SF

0207 496 3600  
[admin@cfbmethodistchurch.org.uk](mailto:admin@cfbmethodistchurch.org.uk)  
[www.cfbmethodistchurch.org.uk](http://www.cfbmethodistchurch.org.uk)

Dear Finance colleague

Thank you for your continued patience and engagement as we progress the improvement work on the CFB Deposit Fund online portal. Since our previous update in November, we have remained in constant contact with our portal provider to ensure that the issues raised are not only resolved but that the wider user experience is strengthened in a way that better reflects the needs of the Church. We recognise the disruption that many of you have experienced and we remain committed to delivering improved functionality of the portal as well as a smoother service overall.

Since December, several requested improvements have been completed whilst others have moved into development or testing. We have also added some further requests for improvement following feedback from yourselves. Updates where available are set out below. You will note that our two highest priority issues, narratives and read only access, are lacking a definitive release date. The team are working through some elements of this development work that impact their ability to provide a specific date for completion and we want to ensure that when we do confirm timings, they are both realistic and achievable to avoid further changes or disappointment down the line. Please be reassured that advancing these items remains an absolute priority and we are actively working with the development team to achieve clarity as soon as possible. We will provide further updates as soon as we are able to.

Portal Improvements		
Issue	Improvement Request	Update
Narratives	Transfers should show the investor portfolio name and reason for transfer. Transferee should see transferor's portfolio name and reason for transfer.	Highest priority. Narratives likely to be available on portal initially, and able to be downloaded into a spreadsheet, with narratives on PDF statements following at a later date.
Read only access	Requirement for read only access for non-authorised signatories.	High priority alongside narratives. Development is underway.
Transfer Dealing via portal	Transfer instructions via portal. Investors within CFB Fund should be able to transfer to any investor within the same fund. There should be an option for the sender to input a reference- which will show to the receiving party along with the name of the sending party (both parties should see who has sent/received payment and Ref).	We are in the process of refining the system guidelines that need to sit around this to ensure that monies are transferred to the correct accounts. We will be able to provide a firmer timeline once these are established.
Terms and Conditions	T&C's should be built into login process. Users should be required to accept T&C's in order to use portal.	Complete. Users are required to accept the T&C's upon first log in, rather than via email prior to receiving log in details.
Transaction descriptions	Change all references to Subscription/Redemption to Deposit/Withdrawal	Complete. Terminology on both the portal and statements refers to Deposits and Withdrawals.

Transaction descriptions when submitting instructions	When submitting a deposit/withdrawal request (which are referred to as such on the main menu), the terminology switches to subscriptions and redemptions and you have to pick between cash and shares- which is not relevant to CFB Fund. All transactions should be cash and all references to shares to be removed.	Complete. Terminology refers to Deposit and Withdrawals rather than Redemptions and Subscriptions. The only option available when requesting a withdrawal is now cash. References to units and price have been removed.
References to Units/Price	There should be no reference to Units/Price.	Underway. Units and Price values have been removed from screens/reports. Headings referring to these are currently still in place but will be removed in due course.
Amount Type	Currently offers Cash/Shares. There should only be a cash option.	Complete. Within the Deposits/Withdrawals Request screen, the only option now available is Cash.
Subscription	Propose to remove this function on portal. Deposits are placed upon receipt of funds not upon receipt of instruction from portal. Functionality causes confusion for investors.	
Distinguishing between accounts	Portal to be updated to always show Portfolio name instead of Entity name.	
Transfer contract notes	Transfer contract notes should be displayed on the portal.	The prioritisation of this is dependent upon the narratives being made available as well as read only access.
Ability to view bank details	A drop down to be made available to allow user to select bank account, thereby confirming that the details are as expected.	This is a longer term piece of development. Expected release date to be confirmed but anticipating second half of 2026.
Changes to standing orders	Ability to instruct changes to standing orders via the portal rather than submitting a form.	This is a longer term piece of development. Expected release date to be confirmed but anticipating second half of 2026.

We will continue to issue clear updates as each element progresses, and we will notify you when new features are ready to be deployed.

#### **Reminder of Key Changes Effective from 1 January 2026**

As outlined in previous communications, several changes came into effect at the start of the year:

- We ask that you refrain from using the over-the-counter service to deposit cash and cheques into your Deposit Fund account. Cheques can be posted to our PO Box address. Any deposits made

over the counter will continue to be accepted for the time being whilst we formalise the closure of the account that facilitates this service, however we ask that Treasurers start to use other means of making deposits in preparation for the full closure of this service which will take place later this year.

- We are aware that Treasurers have been working hard to redirect regular congregational donations to bank accounts rather than CFB Deposit Fund accounts and we thank you for your efforts. We are still receiving a large number of regular deposits from individuals and while we will continue to accept these for the time being, we will not be able to provide details regarding the names of these donors going forward. We understand that this may affect record keeping and gift aid claims for some churches. We will still assist with ad hoc queries where you require clarification regarding specific transactions.

### **Additional Resource for Treasurers**

We appreciate that high street banks do not always make life easy for churches and charities in particular and that the changes we have made to the CFB Deposit Fund are requiring Treasurers to reassess their banking arrangements. To that end we have partnered with **Saltbox** to provide additional support to Treasurers with their financial arrangements, including helping to identify charity-specific services at high street banks and making changes to existing banking arrangements, whether that involves signing up to online banking, amending standing orders, or potentially changing banks entirely. Initially founded to provide Christian support and encouragement for local faith groups, Saltbox has evolved into a leading provider of support services for those who require it.

Should you wish to access this service, please send an email to [cfb@saltbox.org.uk](mailto:cfb@saltbox.org.uk) detailing your name, the name of your church/circuit/district, a contact telephone number, and your availability for an initial telephone call. A member of the team will then contact you to discuss your needs in more detail. If you would like to learn more about Saltbox, please visit their website – [www.saltbox.org.uk](http://www.saltbox.org.uk).

### **Account References**

To ensure the team can process deposits, withdrawal requests and other instructions as efficiently as possible, please quote your new account number. This begins with a 'P' and is followed by six digits. It is particularly important that deposits include the 'P' number in the payment reference. If you do not know your account number, please email [admin@cfbmethodistchurch.org.uk](mailto:admin@cfbmethodistchurch.org.uk) with the subject heading "Account Number Request", providing your old account number, and we will be able to confirm the new number for you. We will be ceasing use of the old account references in due course but we will give you plenty of notice before this happens.

We know the transition to the new portal has continued to be challenging, and we continue to be grateful for your honesty, patience, and partnership throughout this process. Your feedback continues to shape the changes being delivered, and we remain wholly committed to improving the system, restoring confidence, and supporting you in your role.

Thank you again for your continued support.



Sarah Bourgein  
Head of Discretionary Services  
[sarah.bourgein@cfbmethodistchurch.org.uk](mailto:sarah.bourgein@cfbmethodistchurch.org.uk)