

Handbook for Ministers from other Churches and Conferences serving in the Methodist Church in Britain and for Circuits receiving them

2025/2026



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EXPLANATION OF TERMS

- CEFR = Common European Framework of Reference
- CPD = Constitutional Practice and Discipline of the Methodist Church
- CoS = Certificate of Sponsorship
- EDI = Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
- UK ENIC = The UK National Information Centre for the recognition and evaluation of international qualifications and skills
- FC = Full Connexion
- HMRC = His Majesty's Customs and Revenue. This is the UK Government department responsible for taxation
- HR = Human Resources team at MCB
- IELTS = International English Language Testing System
- MCB = Methodist Church in Britain. There are two orders of ministry in the MCB: presbyters and deacons. In the MCB, when the term 'minister' is used, it includes lay and ordained ministry
- MOCC = Ministers from Other Churches and Conferences. These have one of the following statuses with the Methodist Church in Britain:
 - 'Recognised and Regarded' (most have this status in their first appointment)
 - 'Full Connexion'
- MPH = Methodist Publishing House
- MWB = Methodist Worship Book
- RR = Recognised and Regarded
- TMCP = Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes

You will find relevant weblinks throughout this handbook. Hold down the 'ctrl' key and click on the link to be taken to the webpage.

INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. This handbook brings together information to enable MOCCs and Circuits to understand their respective responsibilities in this process.
- 1.2. Initial appointments normally last for five years. However, the Conference stations ordained ministers to Circuits on an annual basis. If any changes are proposed to an initial appointment, these must be fully discussed with the MOCC in advance.
- 1.3. It should be noted that the MCB includes a broad range of contexts.

THE PROCESS AFTER STATIONING

- 1.4. The stationing of MOCC ministers takes place at the Initial Stationing Subcommittee in February each year.
- 1.5. After the Initial Stationing Subcommittee has made matches between MOCC ministers and Circuits, the MOCC and the Circuit will receive the information. Both the MOCC and the Circuit will be sent the respective profiles: the MOCC receives the Circuit profile, the Circuit receives the MOCC profile.
- 1.6. A Circuit steward contacts the MOCC to arrange a date and time for them to visit either in person or by video call. This is 'direct stationing' so it is not expected that either the Circuit or the MOCC will wish to challenge this match – though if there are very clear reasons why something will not work, either party are asked to contact the Ministerial Coordinator for the Oversight of Ordained Ministries at Methodist Church House immediately.
- 1.7. Shortly after the visit, the MOCC will receive a letter of understanding from the Circuit, which they will need to sign and return. A copy of the signed letter of understanding should be emailed to the Human Resources (HR) team at immigration@methodistchurch.org.uk
- 1.8. If necessary, the HR Team will initiate the immigration process. MOCCs who need to submit a visa application (mainly Minister of Religion (T2)) sponsored by the Methodist Church in Great Britain must demonstrate proficiency in English including good reading, writing, speaking and listening skills. The HR team at Methodist Church House will contact the MOCC to provide details about the options available for demonstrating their English language proficiency as part of the application process. If a Minister of Religion visa is not required, but an individual is on a time-limited visa, the HR team must conduct an online right to work check. This check will confirm the MOCC's immigration status through the Home Office online checking service and determine whether they have the legal right to work in the UK in a Minister of Religion appointment. Please be aware that the formal visa application process can only begin after the Methodist Conference has approved the appointment.
- 1.9. The recommendation of the appointment is put to the Methodist Conference, which is held at the end of June and start of July. Conference has the responsibility to agree to the status as RR or FC, and to agree to the appointment. If the MOCC is accepted to be received into Full Connexion, they will need to attend the Methodist Conference service. Information will be sent regarding this.
- 1.10. Arrangements are made between the MOCC and the Circuit regarding the date when they can move into the manse. This is usually in August. Those on a Minister of Religion visa can only arrive two weeks before the appointment starts on 1st September (under the terms of the visa).

HANDBOOK FOR MINISTERS OF OTHER CONFERENCES AND CHURCHES

4.1 WELCOME

- The British Methodist Church rejoices in its relationships with its partner churches around the world – partnerships that are often steeped in long relationships which stretch back through history.
- For many years, ordained ministers have felt a call to serve in another country or another church, perhaps in order to enrich their experience to benefit their home church, perhaps because they want to explore a particular element of ministry that is possible in a different place.
- Partnership is two-way. Methodist presbyters and deacons from Britain are currently serving in many areas of the world and presbyters and deacons of several different denominations and from many different countries are serving the Methodist Church of Britain.
- The British Methodist Church is a very diverse plural church. Having presbyters and deacons within the Connexion who have experiences from many cultures and traditions greatly enriches the church of today in Britain. So you are most welcome and you will be supported through your ministry here.

4.2 THE METHODIST CHURCH IN BRITAIN – HISTORY

- Many MOCCs come from Methodist churches and will therefore be very well aware of this history. However, we also welcome MOCCs from other denominations who may find this summary helpful.
- The Methodist website is a very useful place to discover a range of information about MCB: [The Methodist Church in Britain](#)
- Methodism began not as a church, but as a movement among ordinary people.
- John and Charles Wesley, who were brothers, and priests in the Church of England throughout their lives, developed their methodical approach to Christian faith with like-minded students in Oxford, which earned them the nick-name 'Methodist'.
- The movement was characterised by a concern for personal and social holiness, by Arminian inclusive theology, by a concern for perfection and a rigour in the living of a Christian life. The Wesleys and their communities developed small groups where people could learn their faith and be accountable to one another.
- From the outset, Methodism was a wide-ranging movement. John Wesley travelled the length and breadth of Britain as well as travelling to America and Europe. In the century following his death, overseas work really took off and missionaries travelled long distances to take their message all over the world. Often they were surprised to discover the faith they found in other

countries. Methodist churches developed across the world along with schools, universities, clinics and other organisations.

- Methodist Churches in other parts of the world which were established by missionaries from Britain are now all autonomous – operating in an equal partnership with the MCB.

4.3 THE METHODIST CHURCH IN BRITAIN – TODAY

- The MCB is a Connexion which includes all of England, Scotland, Wales, the Isle of Man, the Channel Islands, Shetland, Malta and Gibraltar.
- MCB is part of the World Methodist Council, which brings together the global Methodist and Wesleyan family of churches. More information is available here: [World Methodist Council - The Methodist Church](#)
- Many Methodists from around the world come to the UK at different times and for different lengths of time. There are now several national fellowships and language congregations in Britain who work to encourage and support Methodists from a particular national background, and particularly to help them become involved in the life of the British Methodist Church. Some have formal structures and chaplains, others operate in less formal structures. Many MOCCs have found it helpful to be involved in the national fellowship from their home country (where there is one).
- The MCB has two equal and distinctive ordained orders of ministry: presbyters and deacons. Presbyters are ordained to a ministry of word, sacrament and pastoral responsibility. Deacons are ordained to a ministry of witness, service, proclamation and prayer, and they are members of a religious order with a rule of life.
- The British Connexion is organised into 24 Districts, each of which is served by a District Chair, who is a presbyter. In the London District there are two District chairs. Some Districts are currently in the process of combining to create a larger District. The Districts come together to make larger regions within which they operate for some activities, such as stationing and training. Each District contains several Circuits. Each Circuit is served by a superintendent (a presbyter), and other presbyters and deacons who are appointed to that Circuit. They are often collectively called the 'Circuit staff', and this term can also include employed lay people who have specific roles within the Circuit. Together they serve the churches which are within the geographical boundaries of that Circuit.
- The Methodist Church has had a long history of being an advocate for social justice and challenging injustice. Work on gender justice was first brought to the Wesleyan Conference in 1928, and the first women presbyters were ordained in 1974, a year before the passing of the Sex Discrimination Act (1975). Work on racial justice was brought to the Conference in 1962, long before the Government's introduction of the Race Relations Act (1976). These are just a few examples. Underpinning all this work is our firm belief that all are created in God's image and all are one in Christ Jesus.
Following on from those years of work, as a Church we have made significant progress across all protected characteristics as stated under the

Equalities Act 2010 and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI). However, today the issue of race, sexuality, gender and disability discrimination is still a major challenge for the Church, and in becoming an “Inclusive Church” there will need to be a significant transformation, which will include organisational, structural and cultural changes.

At the heart of these changes, the Council has recognised that EDI must move beyond being “one of many priorities competing for scarce resources and finance”, to being viewed as an essential and integral part of the Church’s life. A way to facilitate this is to embed the themes of EDI across the Connexion. We have a new Justice Dignity and Solidarity (JDS) Strategy that identifies how we will do this. Further information can be found here: [The Inclusive Methodist Church](#)

- **Legislative Framework**

It is against the law in Britain to discriminate against someone because of:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

The above are called protected characteristics.

- The Equality Act 2010 states that discrimination occurs when a person treats another less favourably than they treat, or would treat, others because of a protected characteristic.
- The intention of the Methodist Church to value every human being as part of God’s creation goes beyond any legislative demands or rules and is more about the diversity of identities among the human family, and about our capacity as Christians to live together in graceful relationship as people who are all beloved by God.
- The decisions made by the Methodist Conference can be seen on the Methodist website. These give you an idea of the central issues in a particular year: [The Methodist Conference](#)

- **Structures**

	Meets in	Presided over / chaired by	Frequency
Connexion	Conference	President	Annual
Diaconate	Convocation	Warden of the Order	Annual
District	Synod (presbyteral and	District Chair	Representative Synod – twice a year

	representative sessions)		Presbyteral Synod – annual
Circuit	Circuit Meeting	superintendent	At least twice a year, but usually meets more often
Church	Church Council	Presbyter in pastoral charge (delegated by the superintendent)	Three to four times a year

4.4 PEOPLE YOU WILL MEET

- **Superintendent.** This presbyter has pastoral charge of churches as well as overseeing the work of the Circuit. They are responsible for the policy, operation and care of the Circuit. Their formal role is “*to enable the relevant courts, officers and ministers to fulfil their specific responsibilities under standing orders and to ensure that they do so*” [Standing Order 520]. They can also be the supervisor for some of the Circuit staff but are increasingly less likely to be so with that role given to another accredited supervisor. (See section 4.7 for information about supervision). (See section 4.9 for information about standing orders).
- **Other Methodist presbyters and deacons.** Circuit staff teams vary greatly in size, but most Circuits have a team of presbyters and deacons who work collaboratively to serve the churches and their communities. Staff teams meet regularly together in staff meetings, at least monthly, though some meet more frequently. Meetings are for fellowship, shared support, prayer and study as well as business.
- **Circuit stewards.** This team of voluntary lay people is appointed by the Circuit meeting to offer leadership to the Circuit. They have responsibilities in the stationing, support and care of the presbyters and deacons as well as setting Circuit policy jointly with the presbyters and deacons. One or more of these will be responsible for all matters to do with the manses. They, with the presbyters, deacons and lay workers (as appropriate), form the Circuit leadership team. This is the meeting which enacts the decisions of the Circuit meeting as well as setting the agenda and policy for the Circuit.
- **Church stewards.** Each church has a team of stewards appointed by the Church Council who are volunteers. They have a role to oversee the work of the church including provision for worship. They often meet regularly with the presbyter in pastoral charge in planning and preparing for worship.
- **Other office holders in church and Circuit.** Circuits have a Circuit meeting secretary, a treasurer and a property steward. Churches have a church council secretary, a treasurer, a pastoral secretary and a property secretary. In the majority of cases, these are volunteers. In smaller churches, some of these roles are combined with that of church stewards. The **pastoral secretary** is a key person to meet when you start your ministry because they hold a list of the church community and can tell you which people are in immediate need of a pastoral visit and which need regular care. The list will contain: **members**, who are people who have been confirmed and received

into membership of the church; and **adherents**, who are people who are in regular contact with the church who have chosen not to become members or who might be considering becoming members.

- **Safeguarding officers.** Each church and Circuit has an appointed safeguarding officer. They ensure that all office holders have received the necessary training and Disclosure Barring Service (DBS) checks. These are the equivalent of police clearance checks. These officers will provide access to training where needed. They will also know if there are any safeguarding contracts in that particular church or Circuit. For more information, please speak to the safeguarding officers in the church, Circuit and District, and look at the Methodist Church website here: [Safeguarding](#)
- **District Chair.** This is a presbyter who oversees the work and mission of a District. They may be present at the welcome service at the start of your appointment, and will also meet you at other District gatherings and synods. They have the role of pastoral care and oversight for all of the presbyters and deacons in the District.
- **Lay workers.** (may be called various alternative titles to define their specific role). Many Circuits employ lay people on full-time or part-time contracts to carry out particular functions in one or more churches or across the Circuit as a whole. Some will be paid for this work. Others choose not to be paid. The roles are various but include: youth work, families' work, children's work, pastoral work, administration, chaplaincy, community outreach, property development. They often are part of the Circuit staff team.
- **Local Lay-Pastors.** In 2021, the Methodist Conference established the office of Local Lay-Pastor. This recognised, celebrated and affirmed the ministry of many lay people who, in similar roles, had responded to God's call to serve in this way. The recognition of this role as an office in the life of the church provides an opportunity to support, equip and develop many gifted lay people as part of the ministry of the whole people of God who serve in local contexts. Local Lay-Pastors are part of the ministry of Circuits and provide a recognised presence among a congregation or gathered community and in the wider community. They care for, enable, lead and represent a relevant local church or churches, and represent the wider Church to the relevant local church(es). More information can be found here: [Local Lay-Pastors](#)
- **Pioneers.** In many areas there are people developing new forms of ministry among people who generally are not currently involved in traditional churches. More information can be found here: [Are you called to Pioneer a new Christian community? - The Methodist Church](#)

4.5 THE CALENDAR – NOTABLE DATES

Not all of these dates will be relevant in every church or Circuit and there will be other events that are specific to a particular location. These, though, give an overview of the events you may encounter.

August	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Three days induction event for MOCC ministers
September	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Start of the connexional year • Welcome service for newly arriving ministers

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Circuit meeting • Representative session of the District Synod (it is a requirement for all ordained ministers to attend all meetings of the Synod. You need to request a dispensation from the District Chair if you have a good reason why you are unable to attend). • MOCC induction safeguarding training 24-hour event (or early October)
October	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Church Councils • Church pastoral committee meetings • Harvest festivals (these could be any time between September and November). They can involve Saturday events, suppers and Sunday lunches as well as a festival Sunday morning service. Local churches determine their own pattern for these events. • Schools' half term holiday • '3Generate' meets – this is the national Methodist youth event. There is more information here: 3Generate
November	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All Souls' and All Saints' days • Date for submission of church statistics • Remembrance Sunday (nearest to 11^h November) • Visit by Ministerial Coordinator for the Oversight of Ordained Ministry to MOCC and their Circuit (or in December)
December	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advent services – Many churches have Advent ring liturgies • Christmas – carol services, nativity services, Christingle services, midnight communion on Christmas Eve in some churches, Christmas morning services
January	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Watchnight – some churches have a service on 31 December at midnight to look back at the last year, to look forward to the new one, and rededicate themselves to their discipleship • Covenant services – usually early in January, but some churches hold them in September. See liturgy in Methodist Worship book, page 281 • 'Week of prayer for Christian Unity'. Usually around 18-25 January. Groups of local churches of different denominations may meet together as 'Churches Together' and plan a united service during this week. There may also be shared services, discussions or Bible studies through this week. Further information can be found here: Week of Prayer for Christian Unity World Council of Churches.
February	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schools' half term holiday (this may be in early March)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Circuit meetings may happen here • Church Councils may happen here
March	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ash Wednesday services – where they are held • Lent events – these vary from church to church. Some hold ecumenical groups through Lent, some have a series of studies in one church. • Lent liturgies – some churches place an object around a large cross each Sunday in Lent with a liturgy • Presbyteral District Synod (or April) • MOCC retreat • Induction for Circuits receiving a MOCC minister (or April)
April	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Holy Week and Easter. Many churches have services on Maundy Thursday and Good Friday, and often some of these are ecumenical. Some churches also hold services throughout Holy Week. • Representative District Synod • Between Easter and Pentecost is a good time to offer confirmation classes • Ministerial Development Review – this usually takes place in the Spring. Your superintendent minister will be in touch with you about this. • General Church Meetings (or March or May)
May	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First week of May – Convocation of the Methodist Diaconal Order. More information about the Diaconal Order can be found here: The Diaconal Order • Wesley Day – some churches have events to mark this on 24 May • Aldersgate Sunday – Sunday before 24 May (there are readings in the lectionary relating to this – see under ‘worship’ below).
June	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • End of June and start of July – The Methodist Conference meets. Reception into Full Connexion and ordination services take place during the Conference. You can attend if you are an appointed representative from your District or you can be a visitor at your own expense (but you need to inform your District secretary if you wish to do this). You can read more about the Conference here: The Methodist Conference
July	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MOCC end-of-year gathering – with families
August	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Newly arriving MOCC’s induction

4.6 THE INDUCTION YEAR

- Officers from the Connexional Team are there to provide support throughout your ministry in MCB. This is particularly focused in the first year, which is a year of induction. **It is essential that you attend these events.** Invitations will be sent to you for each one. All (apart from the Circuit visits and online events) are held at Cliff College, see: [Directions – Cliff College](#). Your travel expenses, accommodation and all meals are paid for by the Connexion (you will be sent a travel expense claim form). If you wish to travel by train, the nearest mainline station is Chesterfield. If you let us know the time of your train, we can arrange a taxi to take you to Cliff College from the stations (we will try to arrange for taxis to be shared). It is Connexional policy that public transport should be used as much as possible or, if driving is the only option, we try to share cars where we can.
- **August 26-28, 2025 – induction for ministers, their spouses and children at Cliff College.** This is over 48 hours to help you prepare, and to enable you to meet others who are starting their ministry in the MCB at the same time. Some of the elements of this induction will happen all together with ministers, spouses and children. Other elements will be run separately for children and for spouses so that they also have a chance to consider what this move means for them. This means that you and your families have the opportunity to build supportive friendships from the beginning.
- **September 22-23 2025 – safeguarding training for ministers only at Cliff College.** Safeguarding is so important in the life of the church that you need to be aware of the issues and policies early in your ministry, especially as things differ between countries. This event gives you the foundation level of training specially tailored to your needs. **Once you have done this foundation training, you will need to book in for the advanced module training in your District as soon as you can.** See your Circuit safeguarding officer for information.
- **October 14, 2025 10am-12.00pm – Tax information session held on Zoom.** It is not obligatory for you to attend this but it can be helpful to learn about the tax requirements for ministers and the records you need to keep. The Zoom link will be provided nearer the time.
- **November or December – visits to the MOCC minister’s circuit from Ministerial Coordinator for the Oversight of Ordained Ministries.** These visits are an informal opportunity to reflect on the first months of your ministry in MCB. They involve meeting separately with the MOCC, the superintendent and the Circuit steward as well as all meeting together. It is a safe space where you can share any joys or concerns. The dates will be arranged by consultation with you and your superintendent minister.
- **March 2-4, 2026 – MOCC retreat for ministers only at Cliff College.** A 48-hour space for the MOCC ministers to take time out to reflect on the first six months of their ministry and to share any issues. It will be led by MOCCs who joined the MCB a few years ago, along with the Ministerial Coordinator for the Oversight of Ordained Ministries.
- **July 29-30, 2026 – end of year gathering for ministers, their spouses and children at Cliff College.** A 24-hour time of celebration. This is for the

MOCC ministers and their families to celebrate their first year and talk through any further issues.

4.7 SUPPORT

- **Reflective Supervision.** In the MCB, all ministers are engaged in reflective supervision. This offers an opportunity to reflect carefully on the joys and concerns of ministerial life. Their supervisor is a named and trained person, accredited under the Supervision Policy (2021-26). For ordained ministers, supervision consists of at least nine hours dedicated time a year (six sessions of one-and-a-half hours or nine of one hour). Agreed records are kept of each meeting and shared with the minister in oversight or a nominated third party. MOCC ministers receive the same amount of supervision as other presbyters and deacons. You will receive more detailed information about supervision as part of the induction and when you first meet your supervisor. An introductory video can be found here (please click on this link) [About supervision \(methodist.org.uk\)](https://www.methodist.org.uk/about-supervision)
- **Mentoring.** Your superintendent, or another named presbyter or deacon, will be available to you to help you adjust to ministry in MCB in the early weeks of your appointment.
- **MDR – Ministerial Development Review.** This is an annual process for all ordained ministers. Each year, the ordained minister works with two others to reflect on very particular aspects of their ministry. Together, the trio identify questions to ask and identify people whose feedback they would like to receive to inform their conversations. These can be members of congregations, other ordained ministers, Circuit officers, ecumenical colleagues or other people who have a connection with that part of the minister's work. One of the trio, the lay-contributor, contacts the identified people and receives their feedback. The three meet again to consider the feedback and identify areas of development as a result. These may become the objectives for the following year. Your superintendent will contact you to arrange the meetings for this each year. There is a process of reporting between MDR and supervision. Note that some Districts have slightly different processes of MDR.

You can find out more about it by watching the information videos at the bottom of this website page [Ministerial Development Review](#)

- **CDIM – Continuing Development in Ministry.** Each ordained minister is encouraged to continue developing throughout their ministry. The Learning Network in each region has various courses available. For further information, see here: [Learning and Development](#)
- **Learning Network.** The role of the Learning Network is to equip and resource the Church through a wide range of contextually relevant learning and development opportunities across the Connexion, in Districts and regions. See [About the Learning Network](#) for more information.
- **Other courses.** Different institutions also run online courses on various subjects as well as day and residential courses. See the links below:
 - [Cliff College](#)

- [Wesley House Cambridge](#)
- [Sarum College](#)
- [The Queen's Foundation](#)

Other ordained ministers in the Circuit will be able to advise on their experience of this. Your Circuit and District can advise you about accessing funding for such courses.

- **Cohort.** The induction year means you will get to know other MOCCs starting their ministry in Britain at the same time as you. These bonds can become quite strong and you are encouraged to pray for each other. It can be helpful to share experiences and issues. Often, the group choose to set up a WhatsApp group to keep in touch, and can set up regular Zoom calls with each other in order to provide support.
- **Ministries team and the Conference Office.** in the Connexional Team. These teams are available to support you. Together we are responsible for all aspects of ministry. The Ministerial Coordinator for the Oversight of Ordained Ministry (Revd Dr Claire Potter) is the person you will have most contact with, but you will encounter other members of the team at other times.
- **Connexional Wellbeing team.** There are various areas of specific support and advice that are available including the **Churches' Ministerial Counselling Service**. For more information please see this section of the website: [Mental Health and Wellbeing for ministers - The Methodist Church](#)

4.8 IMMIGRATION SUPPORT

- The Human Resources (HR) team at MCH provides support for all immigration matters.
- The HR team are not immigration advisors: however, immigration services and advice will be sought from an Immigration Advisor who represents the MCB.
- If you do not already have the legal right to work in the UK, you will need either permission to enter or to remain in the UK. Immigration routes may vary; while some MOCCs may apply for another visa route (e.g. UK Ancestry visa), most will usually be eligible to apply under the Minister of Religion visa (T2).
- To obtain this, the Methodist Church will issue a Certificate of Sponsorship (CoS), enabling an application to be made for an initial three-year visa.
- Non-UK ministers from non-listed English-speaking countries must prove their knowledge of the English language to obtain their visas. This can be accomplished by either:
 - Having an academic qualification that was taught in English and recognised by [Ecctis](#) as being equivalent to a UK bachelor's degree, master's degree or PhD, or

- Passing an approved [English Language test](#) (IELTS) with at least CEFR level B2 in reading, writing, speaking and listening
- The MCB requires proof of English language to be obtained as part of your application process. We will not invite you to a discernment panel unless you can provide proof of your English knowledge in the form of an IELTS Test Report Form or English Language Proficiency Statement and Academic Qualification Level Statement. The MCB will fund the cost of one English test. After the expiration of the Minister of Religion (leave to enter) visa, the visa process is repeated for a further two years. As part of our record-keeping duties, HR will retain your information and assist in the renewal of your visa.
- The cost of the visa application will be borne by the Methodist Church Fund. This includes the visa that enables the MOCC to serve the MCB, along with up to three additional dependents (i.e., a total of four persons). Dependent children are defined as those under 18 years of age.
- The cost of obtaining Indefinite Leave to Remain (Settlement) while the MOCC has RR status, may be covered by MCB if the MOCC is stationed for a further period and it is considered the most cost-effective way for the minister to continue serving the MCB. However, the full UK citizenship (if applicable) cost will typically not be covered and any related expenses would need to be borne by the MOCC.
- In cases where MOCCs are in Full Connexion, the costs of Indefinite Leave to Remain or naturalisation can be covered by MCB and will be assessed on a case-by-case basis.
- Migrant workers will need to undergo a [Tuberculosis \(TB\) test](#) if coming to the UK for six months or more. The test must be conducted at a clinic approved by the Home Office. The TB certificate is valid for six months from the date of your x-ray and must be include with the UK visa application.
- In addition, the UK Government charges an annual Immigration Health Surcharge fee for the use of the National Health Service (NHS) by all migrant workers until they have been granted settlement status. This fee will be part of the visa application process and will be paid by the Methodist Church Fund for the MOCC and up to three additional dependents.
- Throughout the time a MOCC's visa is sponsored by the MCB, both the MOCC and the Circuit must ensure that the HR Team are informed immediately of any changes to a MOCC's personal circumstances, UK residential address, personal email address, telephone number (mobile and/or landline), UK work address and telephone number, or any absence from the manse for any period of time. HR is required to inform UK Visas and Immigration within ten days of any change as part of the sponsorship licence.
- The Circuit and the MOCC must also notify HR immediately if any contact is made by the Home Office regarding the alteration or revocation of the visa.
- **Manual and Online Right to Work check.** The HR team will request a copy of your original right to work documents (i.e. passport) and share code

to help the MCB comply with immigration rules and to protect the MCB sponsorship licence. This confirms your right to work and your identity for those individuals on a time-limited visa.

The following documents need to be checked and copied (in a format that cannot be altered, such as a photocopy or a PDF scan):

- a copy of your passport (copy needs to be verified)
- a copy of your UK entry visa sticker and/or landing date stamp inside the passport. If you did not receive an ink-dated stamp in your passport when entering the UK, you must send other evidence of your arrival in the UK, such as a boarding pass or travel ticket.
- all other documents in their entirety such as a visa approval letter

A document can only be verified by the Superintendent, District Chair or a member of the HR or Ministries team.

Additional guidance will be provided regarding the Online Right to Work check and the actions necessary to get up a UKVI account.

Maintaining accurate records is essential for Right to Work compliance. The HR team must keep clear, high- quality copies or scans of each document provided. These copies will be stored securely for the duration of the individual's appointment.

4.9 CONSTITUTIONAL PRACTICE AND DISCIPLINE (CPD)

- You will receive a copy of this each year from your Circuit. It is also available to be downloaded from the Methodist Church website here: [CPD](#)
- CPD contains information about Methodist doctrine, laws, policies and processes and is a very helpful resource. It is worth spending a little time noticing the different sections within CPD.
- In the material below, when relevant, a standing order number is listed by the item. The standing orders are the rules or regulations made by the Methodist Conference and they are all found in CPD.

4.10 WORSHIP – GENERAL

- **The Preaching Plan.** If you have come from a Methodist Church, you may be aware of the preaching plan. This is a calendar of the Sundays in a three-month period, and shows which presbyter or local preacher is designated to lead worship in each church in a Circuit on each Sunday. This is a vital document in the life of the Circuit.
 - It is the superintendent's responsibility to produce the plan each quarter.
 - It is usually available at least a month before the first date on the plan.
 - You will be asked to submit your dates, so you need to plan worship with the churches you are responsible for very well in advance.

- You are asked to indicate when you would like to preach in the churches where you are in pastoral charge, and which of these services are to be communion, all-age or other forms of worship.
 - Presbyters usually find it best to do this in conjunction with the stewards and leaders of the churches (at their regular meetings) to make sure that the plan fits their usual pattern of worship.
 - You can also block Sundays for your holiday or if you have been invited to preach elsewhere.
 - As presbyters, it is expected that you will be available to preach two or three times, as required, on any Sunday apart from the five holiday Sundays you have each year or any other free Sundays as designated by the Circuit.
 - Once your name is on the plan, you are expected to honour that appointment, unless there are exceptional circumstances.
 - Before you start the appointment, your Circuit may send you a copy of the plan so you can see how it works.
- **Responsibilities.** When your name is on the plan, that does not mean that you have to take every element of that service, but it is your responsibility to oversee the worship and ensure that it is an act of worship properly held according to Methodist doctrinal standards. Some churches have worship groups and worship leaders who regularly lead certain sections of the worship. Working with them can be enormously creative and supportive. Some MOCC ministers find it a shock to discover that they are responsible for the whole act of worship, so please be prepared for this.
 - **Timing.** Services in British Methodist churches vary in length, but they are generally around an hour long. Special occasions and services of Holy Communion are often longer. In multi-cultural congregations, service lengths can also vary. Please ask the stewards in the churches to tell you their usual pattern of worship and their expectations. Congregations will want you to be 'you' in your style of leading worship, not to be constrained by their expectations, and yet a sensitivity and understanding of each church's traditions is very valuable. If the church and the MOCC both understand why they each have certain views and ways of operating, then creative collaboration can result.
 - **Church information.** Churches often provide a document giving information about their worship for people who are preaching there for the first time, or you may be referred to that church's website for this information.

4.11 SPECIAL SERVICES

- Each church has its own particular traditions regarding special services. These might include anniversary services for particular church groups, watchnight services at the new year, All Souls' services, church anniversary services and many others. In your early meetings with the church stewards, ask them to go through the church calendar for the year and explain their expectations and traditions so that you can plan these collaboratively.

- There are a number of national specially designated services, some of which local churches will include in their calendar. There is information about these here: [Special Sundays](#)
- Early in your ministry in Britain you are likely to encounter two particular special services that most churches will expect you to lead:
 - Harvest festivals – usually held in September or October. These can take many forms so it is best to consult with the church stewards.
 - Remembrance Sunday – the Sunday after 11 November. There are a lot of resources available to help you with this. See this page of the website: [Remembrance Sunday - The Methodist Church](#)
 - You may be invited to share with other clergy in a civic service at a local war memorial, as well as leading services in church.
 - Many people will choose to wear a small paper poppy for that day and the days leading up to this. You will find these on sale around all local communities, sold by the Royal British Legion for charitable purposes.
 - At 11am on that Sunday, the tradition is to hold a two-minute silence in order to remember all those who have died in war. It is likely that, as the leader of worship, you will be the person to start and end that silence. Often, these words from a poem called *For the Fallen* by Laurence Binyon are used at the end of the silence:

*They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old;
Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.
At the going down of the sun and in the morning
We will remember them.
(all repeat 'We will remember them').*

4.12 WORSHIP RESOURCES

- Hymns and songs
 - ***Singing the Faith***. This is the authorised hymn book for the British Methodist Church. But not all churches will have it. Some are using *Hymns and Psalms*, which was the previous hymn book. Some churches have produced their own books of songs or use another publication. Ask the churches which books they usually use, and make sure you have a copy. Further information is available here: [Singing the Faith Plus](#). **This website is also an invaluable resource for preparing all aspects of worship.**
 - Choosing hymns is usually the responsibility of the preacher for any service, but, where there are worship groups, some of the songs and hymns may be chosen by them. The *Singing the Faith plus* website (link above) provides suggested hymns related to the lectionary readings for each Sunday.

- **Methodist Worship Book (MWB).** Most churches will have copies of this. It is well worth getting a copy because it is a rich resource of liturgies, prayers and services on special occasions. You can purchase it on the Methodist Publishing website here [Methodist Church Worship and Liturgy](#) or you can probably borrow a copy from one of the churches.
- At the back of MWB you will find the lectionary readings. Though you are not compelled to follow the lectionary each Sunday, most preachers do so – because it is a good discipline and because the lectionary readings are often used in work with children and young people so this is a way of connecting their work with the worship. The MWB contains a variety of communion liturgies and collects, as well as liturgies for the covenant service, funerals, weddings, baptisms and confirmations as well as various commissioning and dedication services.
- **Bibles.** Many churches have Bibles available to the congregation so they can follow the readings. It is worth checking which version of the Bible is in the church so that you know if the reading will differ from the Bible you may use when preparing worship. The same applies if you are leading Bible study groups. You can, though, request that readings come from a particular translation.
- **Screens and projectors.** Increasing numbers of Methodist churches have screens on which they project elements of the service, such as songs, readings, and notices. This varies hugely depending on the equipment and on the people who are available to operate it. The scope it provides is enormous – making video clips and internet resources possible as part of worship. However, please take time to understand what is possible in each church before being too ambitious.
- **Copyright.** If you wish to project any material or reproduce any material in paper form, or to play recorded music in public, you first need to check the copyright. Most churches buy a copyright licence and some also buy a performing rights licence to cover this. The licence number needs to be quoted on the material produced. Someone in the church is usually responsible for making an annual report on the use of material. There is further information here: [Copyright Guidance](#)
- **Microphones.** Most, but not all, churches have some form of microphone system. Even if you are able to project your voice very effectively, it is important to use the microphone because some people rely on it in order to hear you through the ‘loop system’ which links into hearing aids for people who are hard of hearing. Ask stewards to explain the system to you before the service and make sure you know whether they are controlling it or whether you need to do so.
- **Roots.** This is a magazine providing worship support information based on the lectionary. It contains useful reflections on the readings, prayers and other resources. A companion magazine provides material for children and young people. Some Circuits provide this for all presbyters and local preachers. See [ROOTS](#)

4.13 CHILDREN

- Churches vary enormously regarding children in worship. Where there are children, sometimes they start in worship with the rest of the church and then leave after 15-20 minutes for their own lessons and activities (sometimes called 'junior church' or their own local name) elsewhere in the church building. Usually, before the children leave, the preacher or someone else leads an all-age conversation or activity related to the theme of the service and/or the theme the children will be exploring before they leave the service.
- In other churches, the children start in their own activities and then come into the service towards the end, when they often tell and show the congregation what they have been doing.
- Children are always welcome in Methodist churches and many churches have designated spaces with toys and books where children can go, even if there is no organised junior church.
- It is important to value all who work with children and young people in churches. This can be done informally but there is also a formal annual dedication liturgy in the MWB, page 347, for this purpose. You might also choose to meet with the leaders and teachers on a regular basis in order to support their work and develop it together.

4.14 HOLY COMMUNION

- The British Methodist Church has an open communion table. All who are baptised are invited to receive bread and wine and that includes children. Usually, a church makes sure that parents or others have the opportunity to talk with their children about communion before they receive it, or a special session of the junior church might be held on the subject.
- A clear and open invitation should be made at every communion service along with the invitation for people to come forward for a blessing if they do not wish to receive.
- Further information can be found in MWB, page 114-116.
- Churches usually have communion stewards who prepare the table and direct how people come forward to receive. It is a good idea to meet with them early in your ministry in a church to talk through how you would like to operate. For example: do you want most of the bread cut up in advance, do you like to receive before or after the rest of the congregation, do stewards usually help administer communion, does the church usually receive 'table by table' or continuously, or in another way?
- It is good practice for those distributing communion to use hand sanitiser beforehand. Please ask a church if this can be provided.
- If the church is in a Local Ecumenical Partnership, you may find that alternative methods of administering communion are used.
- Increasingly, churches are using gluten-free bread so that everyone is included. Wine is always non-alcoholic. In most Methodist churches it is

served in small individual glasses. Most churches will also have a chalice available.

- There is a period of discernment about celebrating communion 'virtually'. Information about this can be found here: [Holy Communion and Online Worship](#)

4.15 PASTORAL VISITING

- Presbyters and Deacons in the MCB both exercise pastoral care as a core element of their vocation. However, there is a great **variety** in how this is done.
- Some meet people in their manses, at churches or in other public locations. Others visit people in their **homes** because that is where people are most at ease, where they can share something of their stories and where trust can more readily be built up. When a presbyter or deacon visits, it can give people a real sense of being valued and noticed.
- **Crises.** It is a great privilege and vitally important to visit people at a time of crisis, when there is a clear need – such as illness, trauma or bereavement, though sensitivity is always needed to ensure your presence is appropriate at that time.
- **Non-crises.** It is important also to try to make time for visiting when there is no crisis because this is when people might feel able to explore their questions about faith and the church with you.
- **Record-keeping.** Pastoral conversations are confidential. However, all presbyters and deacons are encouraged to keep a record of their visits. It is helpful to keep a notebook for this purpose and note the date, time, name and address of the person visited along with a brief summary of the conversation. This is a helpful way to remember names, and it can provide a safeguard for the presbyter or deacon.
- You may also have opportunity to visit your members in their places of **work** or to visit other parts of the community such as schools, charities, offices, or social projects.
- Churches appoint a **pastoral secretary** and a team of **pastoral visitors** or class leaders (the name 'pastoral visitor' is most commonly used) [Standing Order 630 and 631], who form the Pastoral Committee [Standing Order 644]. These people share the pastoral care of the congregation, including church members and those on the community roll. You need to meet with them at least once a year to review the membership of the church and any pastoral need. The provision of fellowship or study groups is part of the responsibility of the pastoral committee.

4.16 CHURCH MEMBERS [Standing Order 050]

- Each church has a list of members and those on the community roll. It is important to keep this list up to date. Usually, the pastoral secretary will help with this. Members cannot be taken off the list without their permission, though, if they do not respond despite all reasonable attempts to contact

them, an ultimatum may need to be given, that their name will be taken off if they have not responded by a certain date.

- It is good practice to offer membership classes every year. People are far more likely to consider becoming a member if it is offered or suggested to them. There are various published resources for running membership classes available, and many presbyters and deacons produce their own course using material from various sources. Other colleagues in a Circuit can advise.
- People become church members through confirmation and reception into membership (see *Methodist Worship Book*, pages 60-61 and page 97).
- Members can be transferred between churches when a minister sends a letter of transfer to the minister of another church.
- Each year, your Circuit will give you enough membership cards for each member of the churches you are responsible for. Please write the name of each member on one of these and sign them, and their pastoral visitor also signs them. The presbyter usually gives the cards for the members in each pastoral group to the pastoral visitor for that group and they take the cards to the members. Many presbyters choose to do this during the Covenant service which can be a good time also to rededicate the pastoral visitors (see *MWB*, page 344). Please note that some churches have their own membership cards, especially if they are local ecumenical partnerships.

4.17 FUNERALS

- When you start your ministry, it is a good idea to make contact with the funeral directors in the area to introduce yourself.
- It is also very useful to visit the local crematoria before you are asked to take a funeral. Make an appointment and the staff will show you around and explain about the systems for that place. These will include how the curtains are operated (often there is a button to push in the pulpit at the right time), and also the music system. Some crematoria have doors rather than curtains or another method of removing the coffin from sight at the point of the committal.
- You could be called on to take any funeral, whether the deceased person was a Christian or not. If you have not had prior contact with the family, the first contact usually comes through the funeral director.
- Some funerals are held in churches, others at crematoria or cemeteries, or a combination. So, for example, some families choose to meet at the crematorium first for the committal and then go to a church for a service of thanksgiving. Others start in the church and end with the committal at the crematorium.
- It is really important to spend time with the family or next of kin if that is at all possible, so that you make sure the service is as they wish it to be. Please ask them if they want the curtains closing at the point of committal. For some people this is an important point of closure, but others much prefer to be able to leave the chapel with the coffin still in view. Your time with them also

gives them an opportunity to talk about the person who has died, and helps you to get a sense of who they were.

- Funerals are very varied, often depending on the cultural background of the person who has died. Some involve a great deal of participation from other people. Others will be taken entirely by the ordained minister. The cultural background will also determine the expected length of the service, whether there is viewing during the service and whether the mourners fill the grave in at the end of a burial.
- **Scattering or burial of ashes.** Sometime after a cremation, a family may ask for a service during which the ashes from the cremation are either scattered or buried. This can be days, months or even years later. There is a liturgy for this in the *Methodist Worship Book*, page 497. You will need to adapt this according to the context. These services frequently take place at the crematorium in a garden of remembrance, but they could be in another location that was special to the person who has died. The service is usually fairly brief but nonetheless meaningful, and it is important to try to work with the family in constructing a service as they want it to be.
- **Fees.** You are able to charge a fee for any funeral you conduct. Circuits often have a policy to set these fees. There is a standard fee for the leader of a funeral at the crematorium. If the funeral is in church, you may need to arrange for fees to be charged for the organist and others involved. Your fees are yours to keep, but you will need to declare them for tax, so make sure you keep clear records. Often when the funeral is of a church member, everyone involved waives their fees, but please make yourself aware of your Circuit's policy, and check with the organist, stewards and flower arrangers.

4.18 BAPTISMS [Standing Order 010A]

- When you receive a request for a baptism, the first thing to do is visit the family. Even if they are not a church-going family, this is an opportunity for you to discuss God's grace with them and for them to experience the love and hospitality of God through the church. It also enables the church to maintain contact with them.
- If it is possible, it is best to hold baptisms during the usual morning service in a church because this enables the congregation to make their promises and to take those promises seriously. Baptism services can be held outside of this time, usually if there are too many baptism requests for them to be included in the morning service, or if there are specific family circumstances. In these cases, try to ensure that at least one church member is present in order to make the promises.
- The *Methodist Worship Book* contains different liturgies when the person being baptised is able to answer for themselves and when they are not. (See pages 62, 76, 88 in MWB).
- If an adult asks for baptism, usually this would be followed immediately by confirmation and reception into church membership. (See page 76 in MWB).

4.19 MARRIAGES [Standing Order 011A and 011B]

- When you are asked to conduct a marriage for the first time in a church in MCB, ask a colleague to talk you through the process because it may differ from the process in your home church. It may be helpful to attend a wedding they are conducting, if possible.
- In Britain, presbyters and deacons can act as 'authorised persons' to register marriages. Some churches choose to authorise certain lay people as well as, or instead of, the presbyter or deacon. The authorisation is a legal process which enables the authorised person to carry out the legal elements of the marriage. When you arrive, or even before you arrive, your Church Council is likely to have passed a resolution about who should be the authorised person and you will then need to complete a form which you can find [here](#). When you have completed the form and returned it to the Registrar General, you will then receive a letter confirming your appointment. This is your legal authority to conduct weddings and should be kept in a safe place. We strongly recommend you consult with your forthcoming Superintendent in MCB when filling out the form to ensure that the relevant sections are completed.
- The British Methodist Conference of 2021 agreed the proposals found in a wide-ranging report on human relating, called God in Love Unites Us. Among other decisions was the agreement that same-sex marriages may take place in Methodist churches and led by Methodist ministers or alternative authorised persons. This has made marriage available to couples who have previously been unable to marry in a church, which is a major step forward in the intention to improve inclusivity throughout the British Methodist Church. Further details can be found here: [Marriage and Relationships](#).
- In that section of the website, there is guidance available for Methodist Church Councils to consider whether to apply to register their buildings for same-sex marriages.
- It is the personal conviction of each minister to decide if they wish to register to be the authorised person for same sex marriages. If a minister does not, for reasons of conscience, wish to conduct a same sex marriage or a mixed sex marriage but the church is registered, then the minister must find an appropriate authorised person to officiate at the marriage.
- The Conference is aware that these decisions could cause challenges for some MOCCs. Therefore, the Conference has:
 - directed that the Global Relationships Committee engage in conversation with those partner churches who have permitted presbyters and deacons to serve as RR about the expectations on them and the provisions made for them to act only within their conscience.
 - made clear that reasons of conscience permit an MOCC to decline to act in a way that means that she or he can no longer be in good standing with her or his own church.
- When you are asked to take a marriage, there are two key areas to consider: the pastoral and the legal.

○ **Pastoral**

- When a couple approaches you for marriage, we suggest you have an initial meeting with them without any commitment to marry them. This enables you to get to know them, their circumstances and their reason for requesting a church wedding. If either of them has been divorced you will need to see evidence of this (certificate) and you may wish to have a pastoral conversation about this in relation to their proposed marriage. We recommend a conversation with your superintendent in these matters as they can be quite challenging. You can say to the couple that you need to consult with your superintendent before you can agree to marry them.
- The Methodist Church in Britain does not require any person subject to its discipline to officiate at or participate in the marriage of a particular couple, should it be contrary to the dictates of his or her conscience to do so.
- Once agreement has been reached to marry a couple, arrange a series of meetings in which you can help them to prepare for their marriage.
- Together, you can then create a ceremony which reflects the characters of the couple, and the people and the things that are important to them. There are agreed liturgies on the Methodist website, which ensure that all the requirements of the law are fulfilled. A wedding has to include the wording of the legal declarations, and the traditional form of the vows. It is also helpful to use the prologue wording, as this marks out a church wedding from a civil ceremony. Also see MWB, Section 9 (page 367 onwards).
- In your meetings with the couple, help them to articulate why a Christian marriage is important to them. Also explain the elements of the service to them, and design the service to meet their requests within the context of a Christian act of worship. Some couples may request pieces of music or readings/poetry which may not be appropriate for such an act of worship and this needs to be discussed thoroughly with the couple.
- Couples may wish to find ways to include their family, especially if they already have children. Some may also want the opportunity to remember those who cannot attend the wedding, especially family members who have died. This can be difficult to merge into a wedding celebration, but lighting a candle to 'symbolise those who have lit up our lives, and whose light lives on in our hearts' can be helpful.
- In addition to the above, it will also be your responsibility to help the church council to set the fees, including any charges for the minister, church, stewarding team, musician/organist and flowers. There are no statutory charges to be considered, but being clear about how much a wedding will cost is important to share with a couple when they approach you for marriage.

○ Legal

- When you arrive at your new appointment you should receive a key to the safe in which registers are kept. There is no longer a legal requirement for churches to keep registers and so there may or may not be registers in the safe. If there are, these can often be useful for enquiries about family history. There should also be in the safe, baptism and confirmation registers. There may be a book to record marriages in the safe but this has no legal standing. It simply provides a record of marriages conducted at the church and should be completed after every marriage.
- When a couple approach the church for a marriage, there are a number of legalities which need to be completed.
- The legal paperwork for marriages is now by Marriage Schedule. Your superintendent or colleague will take you through this process to familiarise you with it. There will also be an authorised person handbook in the safe for guidance.
- The legal processes are different in Scotland than they are in England and Wales.
- **England and Wales**
 - The couple will need to book an appointment for a notice of marriage from their local Registrar (usually where they pay council tax). They will need to take two forms of identity, and where appropriate, proof of divorce, or proof of their immigration status. The Registrar will undertake all the legal checks to ensure the couple are able to be married, and will issue a marriage schedule (there is a cost for this). The couple need to give this marriage schedule to you. This gives you the legal permission to conduct their marriage.
 - The marriage schedule is the document which is signed during the wedding ceremony by witnesses. It is usual to have two witnesses but is possible to have up to six people.
 - It is the authorised person's responsibility to make sure that all the details on the Marriage Schedule are accurate.
 - It is also the responsibility of the authorised person to ensure that the schedule is returned to the Registrar of the District in which the Church is located (this could be different from the issuing Registrar). You have 21 days to return the schedule, otherwise a significant fine could be issued.
 - The couple will need to contact the Registrar after three weeks in order for their certificates to be issued.
 - There should only be one copy of the Marriage Schedule which is why you will want to keep evidence of marriages in the record book in the church safe. If such a book is not

available in any particular church, one can be purchased by the church from Methodist Publishing House (MPH).

- When you meet with a couple to discuss this process with them, it is helpful to highlight that they will be asked if they want any parental details on their marriage certificate. They are able to have step-parents listed, or to leave this section blank. This can be an emotive thing for people to consider, so being prepared for the question will be helpful.

▪ **Scotland**

- The Marriage (Scotland) Act 1977 is the main legislation regulating marriage with The Marriage (Scotland) Act 2002. It extends the availability of civil marriages to 'approved places' in addition to register offices and any other place used, in exceptional circumstances.
- Religious marriages in Scotland have never been restricted by location. Marriages can either be conducted by authorised celebrants (usually, but not always, a minister of religion) or by an authorised registrar. 'Minister of religion' means any recognised church leader authorised to conduct a wedding, not necessarily an ordained minister.
- The couple will need to complete a Marriage Notice form, between three months and one month before the wedding, and collect the marriage schedule. They then need to return the signed marriage schedule within three days of the marriage.
- You can see more here: [Marriage in Scotland](#).
- If you are stationed to Scotland, it is advisable to consult your superintendent minister on the particular legalities of marriages in Scotland.

4.20 SAFEGUARDING

- In developing and implementing our Safeguarding policy, the Methodist Church is guided by the gospel, human rights and international and national law.
- The Church fully supports the personal dignity and rights of all children, young people and adults, as enshrined in the Human Rights Act 1998 and the 1989 United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.
- The Church recognises that safeguarding work is undertaken within a British legislative and associated government guidance framework which sets out a range of safeguarding duties and responsibilities.
- The Methodist Church is committed to safeguarding as an integral part of its life and ministry.

- Safeguarding is about the action the Church takes to promote a safer culture. This means we will:
 - **promote** the welfare of children, young people and adults
 - work to **prevent** abuse from occurring
 - seek to **protect** and respond well to those who have been abused
- We will take care to identify where a person may pose a risk to others and offer support to them whilst taking steps to mitigate such risks.
- The Methodist Church affirms that safeguarding is a shared responsibility. Everyone associated with the Church who comes into contact with children, young people and adults has a role to play. This is supported with consistent policies promoting good practice across the whole Church.
- The Church and its individual members undertake to take all appropriate steps to maintain a safer environment for all. It will practise fully and positively Christ's ministry towards children, young people and adults who are vulnerable and respond sensitively and compassionately to their needs to help keep them safe from harm.
- It is essential that you familiarise yourself with the Methodist safeguarding procedures which can be found here: [Policies, Procedures, Posters and Leaflets - The Methodist Church](#)
- Ask your superintendent if there are any safeguarding issues in churches that you should be aware of.
- As a presbyter or deacon working in the MCB, you will be required to undertake two levels of safeguarding training – the Foundation and the Advanced Module. We have also prepared a bespoke programme for you and your cohort of MOCCs in order for you to be able to raise specific queries. This covers the Foundation module. You will need to undertake the Advanced Module in your District after you have attended the bespoke programme.
- Once you have arrived in your new church, the District Safeguarding Officer may contact you to introduce themselves and be available to answer any questions. We encourage you to contact the District safeguarding officer yourself soon after you arrive, if you do not hear from him/her. We hope that this will enable you to feel supported and assured that advice and guidance is readily available for you to undertake your work with confidence and professionalism.
- 'Disclosure and Barring Service' (DBS) checks need to be carried out for many roles in the life of the church, including all presbyters and deacons. Many presbyters and deacons are verifiers for these checks, which involves checking people's documents and completing an online form. You may or may not need to be a verifier in the churches you are responsible for. If you do, speak to your superintendent or Circuit safeguarding officer who can help you register for this role.
- As part of the application and visa application processes, we will request a Police Record Certificate or Criminal Record Certificate from you. Copies of these will be shared with the safeguarding casework supervisor or District safeguarding officer and the HR team. After you arrive in your appointment, you will be required to complete a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)

application. Please speak to your superintendent to make sure this is done at the appropriate time. If you are already residing in the UK, you will be required to complete an Enhanced DBS check before you start your appointment.

- You should also be aware of the safer recruitment policy which applies to anyone who is asked to take on any role in the life of the Methodist church. This website gives more information: [Safer Recruitment - The Methodist Church](#)
- When in doubt about any safeguarding related matter, speak to the District safeguarding officer.

4.21 CHAIRING MEETINGS

- **Church Council.** Local churches are required to meet in Church Council [Standing Order 603, 610 and 502]. The superintendent minister will give you the authority to chair the Church Council in the churches for which you have pastoral responsibility. Book VII (at the end of CPD) gives guidance for Church Council agendas. Spend some time with the stewards and the Church Council secretary in advance to plan each particular agenda together. Then you can enable the Church Council to focus on the areas of particular importance at any one time.
- Only members of the Church Council may vote, but non-members may attend unless the Church Council deems any items may be 'closed business'
- **General Church Meeting.** This is an annual meeting of the whole church community where they can discuss the policies and direction of travel of the church, including its financial affairs, and elect the church stewards and representatives. All who are members of that church are entitled to vote. [Standing Orders 620-623].
- **Other committees.** Churches which have fewer than 49 members may choose not to have a separate Pastoral Committee but instead the Church Council itself carries out its work. The Church Council can also choose to set up other committees to guide its work, though decisions are the responsibility of the Church Council who are the trustees of the Church. Examples of other committees are: stewards, property/finance, mission, social responsibility, youth work, and a worship consultation. Apart from the Church Council, the presbyter or deacon is not required to chair all the meetings of the church and some choose not to, because they then feel more able to contribute to the meetings.

4.22 VISITING CHURCH GROUPS

- Many churches have groups of some form. These may be house groups, fellowship groups, sports or social groups, groups that come together around an issue (such as a foodbank, debt support or support for homeless people), children's and young people's groups, uniformed organisations

(Scouts, Guides, Boys Brigade, Girls Brigade), carer and toddler groups, women's groups, men's groups, fellowship groups from a particular country or many others. Some will be comprised entirely of church members. Others will be gatherings of a range of people in the local area.

- Groups will vary in terms of how much contact they want to have with the presbyter or deacon. Some groups will make a formal request for you to speak to them regularly. Others will have no expectations at all. However, one way of really seeing and understanding the work of the church, and its wider mission, is to visit these groups. Make an arrangement with the leader and join in. You do not need to be there at all of their meetings, but occasional visits are very much appreciated.

4.23 LOCAL COMMUNITIES

- Methodist churches are located in communities and seek to serve them. There are endless possibilities for building contact with the local area. Just walking around the area will show you where people gather, what institutions there are and how they relate together.
- You will soon find your way into the local hospitals when visiting church members, but when you are there, you could contact the hospital chaplains to see what it is like working there.
- If this matches your gifts and graces, you could write to the headteacher of the local schools and offer to lead an assembly or help in another way in the school.
- You can notice what the main businesses of the area are – which will vary enormously depending on the sort of area in which you are stationed.
- Or perhaps there are charities operating locally and you can get to know the people running those.

4.24 SOCIAL MEDIA

- It is understandable that you will want to share your experiences in the UK with friends and family around the world, but please take care, especially when you are sharing photographs of other people. Not everyone wishes their picture to be shared. In particular, please make sure you have the permission of parents/guardians before sharing photographs of any children.
- The Methodist Church has issued guidelines in regard to social media. Please make yourself aware of these as soon as possible. You can see them here: [Social media guidelines - The Methodist Church](#)

4.25 ECUMENISM

- The Methodist Church has relationships with other Christian churches and, in some areas, works very closely with particular denominations. There is information here: [Relationships with other denominations.](#)

- Many areas in Britain operate local gatherings of different churches. This may be formally through a 'Churches Together' group or a regular clergy meeting, or it may be much more informal.
- Several of the local church leaders may be present at your welcome service, and most are open to an invitation to meet and talk. These may become strong, supportive colleagues.
- The Methodist Church is in a formal covenant relationship with the Church of England.

4.26 INTERFAITH

- In many areas of the country, Methodists have connections with people of other faiths. These opportunities vary depending on the area you are in. Many relationships have led to strong support and collaboration on local issues, demonstrating a clear message of dialogue in the local area. For more information about interfaith relationships please see here: [Inter Faith Relations](#).

4.27 STATISTICS FOR MISSION

- Every year, each church is required to report various statistics about each church community to the Connexion. This is done on an online form. It is useful to look at this for previous years, to give you a picture of the history of each church.
- You will be given login details in order to provide this information. If you are not given this, please ask your superintendent about it.
- Often the presbyter or deacon takes responsibility for completing the form, but sometimes that is delegated to someone else in the church.
- It is worth looking at the guidance here: [Statistics for Mission](#) well in advance so that you know what information you need to gather. For example, keep a note of all funerals you take because these need to be reported even if they are not held on the church premises.

4.28 PROPERTY

- Many churches have property stewards who take charge of the maintenance of the church building. It is really helpful if you get to know these people. They will be able to tell you about any concerns or plans there are for the future regarding the church property. There is an annual property schedule to be completed for each church. Information about this can be found here: [Schedules and Forms](#).

4.29 CHURCH/CIRCUIT FINANCE

- The Church Council are the managing trustees for the local church and the Circuit Meeting are the managing trustees for the Circuit.

- Managing trustees are responsible for managing the financial resources of the church, ensuring transparency in all financial transactions and oversight, and exercising due diligence and good stewardship of the church's financial resources.
- Local churches should each have an appointed treasurer. Early in your ministry, arrange to meet with this person and ask them to go through the church accounts with you, particularly in advance of your first Church Council meeting.
- Where there is no local person able or willing to hold this role, churches frequently employ or contract with an accountant, but there still needs to be a church member who is the responsible person to present the accounts and the budget to the Church Council.
- Please see here: [Standard Form of Accounts](#) for further information about managing a church's finances.

4.30 RELATING TO SEVERAL CHURCHES

- It is most likely that you have been appointed to two or more churches. If you are in a very rural area, you could have several small chapels.
- It is not easy always to know how to prioritise the needs of one church over the needs of another. Where you can plan – such as for worship, meetings and visits – try to do this fairly. So, for example, if you are in one church on Easter Sunday one year, try to be in one of the other churches for Easter Sunday the following year.
- Often the fact that churches share a presbyter means that they will work more closely together and may at times have shared worship services.

4.31 DAYS OFF AND HOLIDAY (See Part 3 of Book VII of CPD)

- Presbyters and deacons who are in full time ministry in the MCB are usually expected to carry out their ministry within six days per week, and where possible no more than two sessions per day. A session is a morning, afternoon or evening. You may find it easier to think of it as 12 sessions a week which as usually spread over six days. No one is counting hours worked because ministry is about a way of life rather than a 'job'. There is flexibility and ministers are trusted to develop their own patterns, so this is just to give you an indication. There are times when it is unavoidable to be busy in a morning, afternoon and evening in the same day, but there are other times when there is more space. The important thing is to know within yourself when you need space and to make sure you have time for all aspects of your life.
- In consultation with your superintendent, please identify which day (Monday to Saturday) you want to designate as your rest day each week. The Circuit and church community will be asked not to contact you on that day unless in an emergency. There will be times when you need to work on this day, but you are then encouraged to take a different rest day in that week.

- Please see part three of book seven of CPD where there is guidance about ministers' holidays. Every presbyter and deacon is entitled to 35 days holiday each year plus the equivalent of statutory public holidays. This holiday amount includes five Sundays, two of which should be consecutive. When deciding on your holiday dates, please consult with your superintendent who will want to ensure that there is adequate ordained ministerial cover in the Circuit. Also, please try to arrange your holiday dates well in advance (at least four months in advance) so that they can be built into the preaching plan and other arrangements.
- In addition to holiday entitlement, all presbyters and deacons are also entitled to three consecutive 'quarter days' in each three months. These are for study, retreat or reflection, preferably away from the manse. Again, it is important that you arrange these dates well in advance and in consultation with your superintendent.
- Please remember to inform the HR Team in advance about any absence (even occasional days) from your manse if MCB is sponsoring your visa. The sponsoring body must be able to account for the whereabouts any of the ministers they are sponsoring, if requested by the Home Office.

4.32 SABBATICALS

- Each presbyter and deacon is required to take a sabbatical of three consecutive months in every seventh year of their ministry. Your years are counted from the time you begin your ministry with MCB.
- This period has to be arranged in negotiation with your Circuit. It should always include one major festival (Christmas, Easter or Pentecost). It is not always helpful to take a sabbatical in the first or last year of an appointment so there is flexibility with the timing. It may be better, for example, to take it in the eighth year.
- The District Sabbaticals Committee will ask you about your intentions for your sabbatical and they have to approve your plans, which should be submitted well in advance.
- You will need to appoint a support group to help you plan your sabbatical and to arrange for suitable care for the churches and your other responsibilities while you are absent. For more information please see: [Sabbaticals](#).

4.33 PERSONAL FINANCE

- Please see the document at Appendix C at the end of this handbook for information about the financial arrangements for MOCCs.
- You need to open a bank account as soon as possible. It can be a difficult process when you have not had an address in the UK for very long. Ask a Circuit steward for their help in identifying a suitable bank locally. There are various online banks which are sometimes prepared to open accounts even if you have not been resident in the UK for long. Eventually, though, it is a good idea to open an account with a high street bank. It is worth researching this before you start your appointment.

- When you take up your appointment, you will also receive a financial handbook from the Connexional Executive Director of Finance & Resources.
- You will be required to complete a tax return each year. It is wise to seek help with this from an accountant. There are firms which specialise in clergy tax affairs and your colleagues in the Circuit may suggest some, or you can find them online. You can choose to complete your tax return yourself. See this website for information: [File your Self Assessment tax return online - GOV.UK](#)

Appendix D contains a checklist to help you with your tax return and there will be a meeting as part of your induction to advise you regarding tax.

- It is important to keep notes of all expenses which are reimbursed, with receipts. Also keep a log book in your car and make a note of the number of miles for each journey on Circuit and church business as well as the purpose of the journey. You have to be able to account for each claim you make for expenses. Your Circuit treasurer can advise you on the way this is done in your Circuit.
- Various things can be claimed against tax, such as use of the manse for meetings and hospitality, books, clerical clothing and worship resources. You are also required to declare additional fees received such as for weddings or funerals.
- You will need a National Insurance number (NI). This Government website gives you information about this [Who can apply for a National Insurance number - GOV.UK](#)

4.34 COMMUNICATION

- English is the most common language spoken in the UK, however, there are other official languages such as Welsh which is spoken in Wales, In Scotland some Scottish people speak Scottish Gaelic and, in Northern Ireland, a number of people will speak Irish Gaelic.
- However, regionally there is a richness of other languages. In London, it is said that there are over three hundred different languages spoken. Common languages spoken in major cities across the UK include Polish, Mandarin, Cantonese, Korean, a wide range of African languages, Spanish and Portuguese in both their European and Latin American forms, various Caribbean languages and Indian and Pakistani languages such as Urdu, Bengali, Gujarati, and Punjabi.
- Language in the UK can be further complicated by the use of local or regional words and phrases. Learning local words is a good way to break down communication barriers and to build relationships. An example that you are likely to hear very often is when someone says 'I'll just put the kettle on'. This means they are going to make a cup of tea or coffee. This is said so frequently that it can be easy to forget that its meaning might not be obvious to everyone. You will encounter many idioms and expressions that might be new to you. It is best to be open and honest and ask people to explain if there is anything you do not understand.

4.35 EXPECTATIONS

- The appointment that you have been matched with has been identified because it was the best match for your skills, interests and experience as expressed in your profile.
- Some Circuits will have long experience of receiving ministers from other conferences and churches. For others, this will be the first time.
- Members of your Circuit leadership team will have been to a preparation and induction consultation several months before you arrive. They will have taken what they learned back to the Circuits. They will have helped to prepare others in the Circuit, including people in the churches for which you will have responsibility. They will have copies of this handbook. You can see the material that is written specifically to them in section 5 of this handbook.
- The churches will be expecting to welcome a new presbyter or deacon and will treat you as they would any arriving presbyter or deacon: with respect and a genuine excitement to see what you will bring.
- They will also be aware that, for you, this is not only a new context for ministry, but also a new denomination or a new country. Some may have a better idea of what that is like for you than others. So you may encounter some misunderstanding and concern about how easy it will be to communicate across cultures. We have found in the past that some members of church communities are fearful about how to deal with difference. Most will work well with you to celebrate all that you bring and to develop good relationships. However, it is helpful to be aware of potential fears. This is where pastoral visiting can do so much to help – in building trusting and open relationships.
- Accent can be a major hurdle for some church members. Please remember that you have been appointed as yourself. The MCB wants to celebrate your culture with you. You do not need to try to become something different. But if you have come from another country, your accent may not be one that church communities have encountered before. They may therefore need help (in the early days of your ministry with them) in ‘tuning in’ to your accent and your way of speaking. You can help with this by being open about it, by asking someone to help you to know which particular elements of your accent are hard to understand, by slowing down a little more than usual when you are preaching or leading worship, or by putting the main points you are making up on a screen or on a sheet of paper for the congregation. Always remember that this is a two-way process. You may also need to help church members to know what elements of their accents you find it hard to understand, and for them to find ways to communicate clearly. Often this issue is one of fear of the unknown, and once everyone can be open and honest, the problem disappears.
- One of the major differences you may encounter is in relation to the place of ministers in society. While clergy are generally treated with respect, it may not be expressed as deference. Also, the MCB may be less hierarchical in its structure than you are used to. These things can lead to clashes of expectation. Again, honest conversations are often the solution.

- It might be helpful to find a way to share your culture and tradition with the churches fairly early in your appointment so that everyone can understand you better and celebrate all that you bring. Some churches have held 'cultural evenings' specifically focused on their new MOCC's home culture, where they can find out about traditions, songs, dances, food, dress and other elements.
- You may encounter some unspoken expectations about what a presbyter or deacon 'does' in MCB. These may or may not be fair or realistic. But if there is something you do not understand or you find challenging, the best thing to do is to ask someone to explain. You can go to your supervisor, your superintendent (if that is a different person to your supervisor), stewards in the churches, other ordained colleagues or Circuit stewards.
- It is impossible to foresee every possible thing you will encounter – but with an open honesty, a willingness to share and to listen and to develop relationships between you and the people you encounter, most expectations can be dealt with positively.

4.36 YOUR IMMEDIATE LOCAL NEEDS

- **Schools.** The Circuit to which you are appointed will help you if you have children arriving with you who need to start school in Britain. Education is provided by the state for all children up to the age of 16 and all children have to attend primary and secondary education up to the age of 16 (apart from those who are registered to be home schooled). This Government website will help you to register your children for schools: [School admissions: Choosing schools - GOV.UK](#)
- There are sometimes difficulties in registering for school because it depends on you being resident in the UK, so it is worth enquiring about schools as soon as you know where you have been stationed. Most schools require students to wear a particular uniform and the school will give information on what is needed and where it can be purchased. Schools also often run second-hand uniform schemes.
- It can be challenging for older children wanting to access further or higher education where costs may arise. Information can be found here: [Student finance - GOV.UK](#)
- **Doctors, dentists, opticians, hospitals.** Medical care is provided through the National Health Service, to which you will have access. Once you have moved into the manse, you will need to register with a local doctor (called a GP: 'General Practitioner'). The Circuit will tell you where the nearest doctor can be found. Once registered, you can make appointments to see the doctor free of charge. Hospitals are also free of charge for the majority of procedures. Note that there is a fee for residents from overseas, but this will be paid for you by the Connexion for those whose visas MCB are sponsoring. Dentists and opticians are found in most local communities. There are some discounts available but there is likely to be a charge for these services. Again, ask the local church members for their advice. For all medical matters, the National Health Service (NHS) website is worth consulting: [The NHS website](#)

- **Shops.** Local church members are likely to take you on a tour of the area soon after you arrive. They will show you where to find a supermarket for food shopping, and other shops, including post offices and libraries. They will see this as an important part of their hospitality and welcome offered to you. If no one offers to do this, then please do ask someone.
- **Transport**
 - The public transport network in Britain is fairly comprehensive but this depends on where you have been stationed. In some very rural areas, a car will be almost essential for you to carry out your ministry because buses and trains are so infrequent. However, in some cities, it is easier to get about by public transport than by driving. Local church members will be able to advise on this.
 - If you drive, you may need to transfer your driving licence from your home country. See this website for further information [Exchange a foreign driving licence - GOV.UK](#)
 - Please be aware that there can be delays in applying for a new licence in the UK. Some licences are transferred without further process, and some are valid for a year. However, you may then need to take a driving test in the UK. In recent years there have also been delays in the booking of tests, so it is worth planning ahead as much as possible.
 - Because of these possible delays before you can start driving in Britain, members of churches may need to give you lifts for the first few months. This may feel a little constraining, but it can be a very helpful way to find your way around as well as establishing good relationships.

4.37 MANSE

- Your manse is the **home** given to you and your family for the duration of the appointment. See CPD Book VII part 2 for the guidelines about manses. Circuits know that they should respect that this is your home, but Circuit stewards will, on occasions, need access if there is necessary maintenance or an inspection which needs to be carried out.
- Many presbyters and deacons choose to use the manse for some church meetings, perhaps particularly the sorts of meetings that are held for consultation, Bible study or fellowship. You are not required to use the manse for these purposes and such meetings can happen in churches. But many presbyters and deacons find it helps develop good relationships if they have offered hospitality in this way. If you have a young family, meetings in the manse can make it easier so that you do need to arrange additional childcare.
- **Telephone and broadband.** One Circuit steward will be appointed to be your first point of contact for any issues relating to your manse. They will liaise with you over the setting up of the telephone and broadband. The Circuit pay for these facilities and there will be an arrangement for you to make a contribution for your personal calls and personal use of broadband. If you need a mobile phone in order to carry out your ministry, your Circuit

may have an arrangement for you to claim some of the costs of this from the Circuit.

- **Council tax.** This is a tax which pays for local services such as rubbish collection and maintenance of roads. Circuits pay this for all presbyters and deacons and you will not have to take any action. However, please note that in some areas, additional collection of garden rubbish may need to be paid for separately.
- **Utilities.** You are responsible for paying for gas and electricity supplies in the manse, but water is paid for by the Circuit. Please ask the Circuit stewards for advice about gas and electricity suppliers. It is important to make these arrangements as soon as possible so that the account is in your name. Often utility bills are required when you need to prove your name and address.
- **Insurance.** The manse itself is insured by the Circuit. You will need to set up insurance to cover your personal possessions (called 'Contents Insurance'). There are many companies who offer this. It is worth asking for several quotes and making a comparison. You could also ask local people which company they recommend.
- **Furniture provided.** [Standing Order 803]. Manses in the MCB have to be provided with carpets or other floor covering, curtains, lampshades and light fittings, fixed fires (where fitted), study furniture, cooker and kitchen cupboards, as well as a lawn mower. There is a recognition that MOCC ministers may or may not arrive with their own furniture. Circuits are often very generous in providing essential furniture for you if needed. There is also financial assistance available in the form of an interest-free loan (see section on Finance in Appendix C).
- **Email address.** An email address is provided for all presbyters and deacons. Soon after ministers have been matched with an appointment this email address will be set up for you and you will receive information about it. It will be in the form: firstname.surname@methodist.org.uk. There is information about this here: [Methodist Ministers' email - The Methodist Church](#)

4.38 THE FUTURE AFTER THIS APPOINTMENT

- If you are RR, your 'status' with the MCB depends on you being stationed to an appointment. The usual length of an appointment is five years.
- Before the end of your third year, you need to decide whether you intend to return to your home church at the end of the appointment or whether you would like to stay in MCB.
- **If you would like to stay:**
 - You need to apply either to extend your RR status (continuing your temporary transfer) or apply to be received into Full Connexion (permanent transfer). You need this to be decided before you can start the reinvitation process to stay in your Circuit appointment or to go into stationing to be matched with another appointment in MCB. Reinvitation

and stationing processes start in the August before the start of your fifth year.

- Applications for extending RR or being received into Full Connexion need to be made between 1 May and 31 August at the end of your third year (note that a Connexional year runs from 1 September to 31 August).
- Reports are requested from your superintendent and your Chair of District. Your home church is also consulted and no extension or change of status would be agreed without your home church's permission and support.
- You are then invited to meet a panel to discern this next step with you.
- You need to be aware that if it is determined that your RR status should not be continued or that your application for Full Connexion is not accepted, you can complete the term of your current appointment but not continue in ministry in MCB beyond that term.
- It is hoped that this does not sound too limiting. These processes are intended to be fair both to you and to your home church. All ordained ministers in MCB undergo a review process at the end of each appointment and it is a useful time for all to consider how things are going, and to continue discerning God's calling.

4.39 THANK YOU

- Your ministry in MCB is valued and respected. The MCB are very grateful for the enormous journey you have travelled to undertake this ministry. The gifts, experience and insight you bring will enrich the MCB and open many eyes and hearts. **Thank you.**



*Then let the servant church arise
A caring church that longs to be
A partner in Christ's sacrifice
And clothed in Christ's humanity*

From the hymn:
The Church of Christ in every age
by Fred Pratt Green

HANDBOOK FOR CIRCUITS

5.1 WELCOME AND HOSPITALITY

- Circuits will have been preparing for the arrival of their new MOCC minister from the moment they prepared the profile for the appointment, sometimes a year before their arrival. At that point, Circuit and church stewards, the other presbyters and deacons in the Circuit and others are likely to have held conversations about the new colleagues who they would like in the team for the following Connexional year. Therefore, they have already noted the **great value** that MOCCs can bring to the British church – such as experiences of young and growing Methodist and other churches both in Britain and around the world, experiences of inter-cultural dialogue, a variety of forms of worship and approach, a fresh perspective on discipleship and collaboration. All of that needs to be brought into the welcome offered to the MOCC and their family.
- **Sharing information.** Please be clear with the MOCC about the information the Circuit and churches will be sharing about them before their arrival and where it will be shared. The Circuit may wish to ask them to write a short biography and provide a photo to go in Circuit magazines or on the Circuit website in advance.
- **Welcome services.** These are arranged in the same way as for all newly arriving presbyters and deacons, but be aware that MOCCs may not know what is expected of them or what is likely to happen at the service. It is therefore helpful if someone goes through the service in advance with the new MOCC. Their family will also need to know that they too are welcomed in this service. It is also helpful for them to know who else might be present, especially any civic and ecumenical guests.
- **Initial hospitality.** This can be tricky to get right. It is easy either to do too much or to do too little, so MOCCs can either feel swamped or abandoned! The way to avoid that is to have several conversations in advance with them (by telephone or video call if possible and not just by email), so that you can be clear about what they might need when they move in. Meals and practical help are usually welcome for anyone newly arriving in an area, but you could go the extra mile and see if the meals can show some echo of home for them. Try to put yourself in the shoes of this person or family and think about what you would find helpful.
- **Ongoing hospitality.** It can be helpful for the MOCC if there are regular offers of meals or walks or chats in coffee shops so that they can have informal places to get to know people and to get to know the area. Some Circuits identify a few people to form a support group so the MOCC is not overwhelmed with meeting many new people all at once.
- **Remember the family.** Children in particular may have little context for this new experience, and are facing the prospect of starting school in an unfamiliar place and possibly operating not in their mother tongue. If you can, invite a family with similar aged children to walk alongside them in the first days. MOCCs' spouses/partners may also need particular support (see section 5.8 below). Are there particular people who can care specifically for the MOCC's spouse/partner?

- **Welcome pack.** Please provide a welcome pack for the MOCC and their family. This might include welcome letters to the children, information about each church and their patterns of worship, local maps and contact information. It is very helpful if photos can be provided of the leaders in the church and Circuit, along with a note of their name and role.
- **Try to think of all the things anyone needs to know when arriving in a new area and then add a little more.** Libraries and post offices, dentists, opticians, supermarkets, banks, train stations and bus routes may all need a certain amount of introduction. But please be sensitive. Your MOCC may have a lot of experience of the UK or may have none. They may also choose to explore all these things for themselves. It is best to work out in conjunction with them what would be most helpful.
- **Hobbies and interests.** MOCCs may want to explore these for themselves in their new context, but they may also need a little help in making contacts. Please encourage them to pursue their hobbies so that they do have time for relaxation.
- See Appendix A for a sample support calendar. Each Circuit is likely to need to adapt this to their own situation.

5.2 DIARY

- It is never too early to start a diary for the new MOCC and their family. It is best if you can set this up electronically so that they can see it too. The elements of the induction are essential so please put those dates in early. (See section 4.6 of this handbook). Also, you can add in the District and Circuit dates such as synods, the welcome service, circuit meetings, preachers' meetings, CLT and staff meetings, and keep on adding in other dates as things are arranged.
- Also, ask the MOCC if they have an idea about any holiday dates in their first year. It may be possible before they arrive, for them to agree with their superintendent which day will be their rest day, so this too could be added to the diary to prevent meetings being arranged on that day.
- Try to leave church meetings until October, not September. It is better if they can have informal meetings with stewards/leaders before formal meetings begin.

5.3 BOOKS

- Many MOCC ministers arrive with only the basic necessities they need. For some, this is all they will bring. For others, other belongings will arrive later, sometimes many months later if the goods are coming by shipping container.
- This means that MOCC ministers often only have limited supplies of books available when they start their ministry.
- It is worth asking them about this in advance to see if they need help with the provision of some books.

- Often when ministers are retiring, they have to reduce the size of their personal library. It may well be that a minister is retiring in your District just before a MOCC minister is arriving. If it is possible for you to link them up so that books could be donated from a supernumerary to a MOCC that could be beneficial to everyone. We have a number of books offered connexionally each year and we are beginning a scheme to make these available to MOCCs who need them. Please contact ministryoffers@methodistchurch.org.uk if this would be helpful.

5.4 HEALTH

- The newly arriving MOCC and their family may not know how the NHS works and what they are entitled to. Even if they do, they will need advice on which doctors' practice it is best to register with, and help with registering.
- They may need help in understanding how to make appointments and the importance of keeping these on time.
- They may need to know when it is appropriate to make an appointment with a doctor and when it is better to ask advice of a pharmacist.
- They may not know how dentists and opticians operate, including what is available on the NHS and what is not.
- In this handbook, MOCCs are directed to various government websites, but they may need help in interpreting what they are reading.
- After an initial introduction and perhaps visiting the doctors' surgery with the MOCC and their family, you will not be able to foresee everything that might happen. In any case, the MOCC and their family may want medical matters to be kept private. So it is better at that stage to offer them a person to contact if they have any concerns or want any help with medical matters.

5.5 EDUCATION

- If the MOCC has school age children, please ask them at a very early stage if they need help registering their children into a school. This can be very worrying for many families.
- It is hard to register for a school before you have moved into a manse, and some MOCCs will not have knowledge of the education system, expectations or requirements in Britain.
- Please offer to help them obtain the necessary school uniforms, and find out if the school has a second-hand uniform scheme.
- If there is anyone in your Circuit involved in the school system in your locality, who is prepared to help, then please make sure the family know they can call on that person.
- If MOCCs have children wanting to access further or higher education, they may need help in navigating the fee structure or applying for financial support.

5.6 FINANCE

- This handbook gives the MOCC information about their stipend, tax, grants and loans and other financial matters.
- In addition, following the Conference, the MOCCs receive a finance pack including the relevant forms they need to complete and reiterating key information. Please check with the MOCC that they have completed these forms, otherwise there may be delays in the receiving of their stipend and grants.
- It is important when Circuit treasurers are presenting budgets, not to make a MOCC feel they cause additional costs to the Circuit.
- Circuits are responsible for paying the removal costs of the MOCCs from port of entry to the manse. Quotes will be submitted to and approved by the Connexion but with the final invoice for the 'port of entry to manse' cost invoiced direct to the Circuit. Circuits should be aware that these costs can be higher than a simple removal on the UK mainland depending on both the scale and nature of the removal. The Finance Department will notify the Circuits of the costs once the quotes have been accepted.
- The MOCCs may need help in the early weeks to manage their finances, though please be sensitive because these are private matters. Examples:

- **Setting up bank accounts.** Many MOCCs find setting up bank accounts a real problem. There is no consistency between banks, or even consistency between branches of the same bank. Some online-only banks that operate internationally can be a solution, but it would be helpful to do some research before the MOCC arrives and be prepared to support them as they navigate what can be a very frustrating process. Unfortunately, the Connexion cannot solve this problem nationally because different banks have different arrangements and will treat people differently depending on their country of origin.

All of this may mean that MOCCs do not have a bank account set up in time to receive their first stipend so the Circuit treasurer may need to help them make other arrangements. Typically in this situation, Circuits pay an advance that is then recouped through stipends the following month. Please contact the Payroll team at Methodist Church House via stipends@methodistchurch.org.uk if you wish to put such an arrangement in place, though note that this is only for exceptional circumstances.

- **Understanding the usual cost for standard items.** This ensures that MOCCs are not paying too much for items.
- **Expenses.** Help MOCCs to work with your Circuit's system for the repayment of expenses. Especially encourage them to keep clear records of their expenses and to make sure they have receipts. Help them to know what they can and cannot claim. It is important MOCCs are helped to understand this at the outset of the appointment.
- **Self-assessment.** MOCCs may choose to use an accountant to help with their tax assessment, but it might help them if someone in the Circuit explains to them how complex this can be for clergy, and to ensure that they take responsibility for completing the tax assessment each year. For

example, they need to keep a record of the refreshments they offer in the manse, the cost of furnishings, computer equipment, mileage claims, books and stationery.

- **Cascade.** Make sure MOCCs have login details and know how to use this (for payslips and tax forms). The Payroll team at Methodist Church House will provide the login details and advice if needed, but they may need the Circuit to request this specifically. Please contact stipends@methodistchurch.org.uk.

5.7 DRIVING

- If the MOCC is arriving from outside Britain, transferring a driving licence can be complex and can take time. Some licences are easily transferred. Other international licences can be used for a year and then a UK licence has to be applied for. Therefore, the MOCC may have to stop driving for a while.
- In the last few years there have been delays in getting appointments for theory and practical driving tests, so this might need some careful management.
- Is there someone in the Circuit who could offer to help with this? This help may mean driving the MOCC and their family to places in the early (or later) days of the appointment, and it may mean helping them with the whole process of applying to transfer their licence and buy a car.
- Please remember that this does not only affect the MOCC, but their family (if appropriate) may also need to travel – to school, to job interviews, to shops and other places. Is there someone they can call on if they need help with this in the early weeks?

5.8 SUPPORT FOR SPOUSE/PARTNER AND FAMILY

- When they arrive in August, often within a very short space of time, the MOCC is busy and is often out of the manse.
- This can be hard for their spouse/partner, who may either have chosen not to look for work, or may not yet have found work in their field. They may find that their experience and qualifications are not recognised or valued in Britain, leaving them disappointed and disillusioned. They can feel very isolated at this time.
- If there are people who could invite the MOCC's spouse/partner to be part of a fellowship group or house group, or just to be invited to go out with a group of friends, that could really help.
- Care is needed around the expectations churches have of the MOCC's spouse/partner. They may or may not choose to be part of one or more churches, and they are also free to choose what sort of involvement they want to have. Please be aware that these expectations may be very different in their home church.
- It can be hard to get this balance right – to make sure they feel welcomed without feeling swamped by other people's expectations. The key is to

ensure that the spouse/partner has two or three people they can talk to about any of these concerns, and to help them find their own way.

- Equally, it can be difficult for children of the MOCC. They may be in churches where they find they are the only children and there may be expectations that they will therefore reinvigorate a Junior Church. But please remember that these children may have just been through an enormous cultural shift and are processing a great deal of new information very quickly. They need to feel cared about, noticed and valued as themselves. Anything you can do to help the churches understand this would be very valuable.

5.9 WORKING FROM HOME AND WORKING PATTERNS

- The MOCC may have come from a church with a very different way of working from that which they will encounter in the MCB. It can be hard to have so much freedom to organise your own time, to decide your own priorities and, largely, not to be answerable to anyone.
- When your home is also your workplace, the temptation is either to work too little or to work too much, because you can never leave your working environment. This is a difficulty for any presbyter or deacon, but it can be a particular challenge for MOCCs from churches with different systems. This level of freedom may not be something they expect. Other presbyters and deacons are probably the best people to help with this, particularly the superintendent and the MOCC's supervisor.

5.10 MANSE

- **Furnishing.** As soon as you have been informed of a match for your appointment, and you have had an initial conversation with the MOCC, it is worth exploring their intentions regarding furniture. Most will bring only their personal possessions with them, perhaps with some other items arriving later. However, some choose to bring all of their furniture. This is usually the case for those who have transferred from another denomination within Britain. Remember that most are initially here for a five-year appointment on a 'temporary' transfer as an RR and therefore they will not want to bring everything with them. In these cases, the Circuit is asked to help with providing more furniture. It is best to do this in conjunction with the MOCC and their family (if appropriate). Circuit budgets may be tight so they need to understand that furniture is unlikely to be purchased new but will be of good quality. However, MOCCs still need to be consulted about the items they feel they will need. Please try not to make decisions 'for' the MOCC and their family if you can avoid it. They are eligible for grants and a loan, so can provide some items for themselves (See Appendix C).
- **Maintenance.** MOCCs need to know the processes they should follow if there are any maintenance issues with the manse they live in, just as any other presbyter or deacon does. If your Circuit operates with one designated Circuit steward or manse steward for each manse, please make sure the MOCC has the contact details for that person and knows when they can contact them. You may need to explain to the MOCC what they are responsible for and what the Circuit is responsible for as concerns the manse and the garden. Please do not assume they will know that they

cannot sublet any rooms or that the garden is their responsibility (as examples).

- **Utilities.** This handbook explains to the MOCCs that they arrange for gas and electricity supplies to the manse but that water is paid for by the Circuit.
 - However, it is likely they will need help in discovering the most cost effective supplier and in moving bills over to their name.
 - Please walk them through this as part of your initial induction, and explain how to read meters, what to do in an emergency, any servicing contracts that the Circuit has set up and how to interpret utility bills.
 - It is important for utilities to be set up in the name of the MOCC as soon as possible. They often need them to prove their name and address when setting up bank accounts.
 - Please note that some MOCC ministers might not be familiar with central heating. Please make sure that they know that radiators can be adjusted individually. They might need advice about keeping bills lower by turning off radiators in rooms that they are not using, and monitoring the heating level with the thermostat.

5.11 SELF AND CULTURAL IDENTITY

- Having an understanding of self is an important factor for well-being, and self-esteem. Also, a clear cultural identity helps individuals construct a clear personal identity. Please try to find ways to celebrate the culture of your new minister and find out what they might want to share with churches, Circuits and colleagues.
- The following are often described as key components of culture:
 - shared meanings
 - shared understanding
 - rituals
 - cuisine
 - dialect and accents
 - politics
 - social norms
- Culture is important as it provides a mechanism for a sense of belonging and security and, when challenged or not acknowledged, can lead to a sense of exclusion or intolerance. Please find ways of celebrating all that your new minister is bringing with them. Often in the first year, circuits ask their MOCC to run a 'cultural evening' so that their culture can be celebrated and better understood. This might include customs, food, dress, music and other aspects. They should only be asked to do this if they are comfortable to do so.

5.12 THE INCLUSIVE METHODIST CHURCH

- In your welcome and support for your new MOCC minister, please remember the commitment of the Methodist Church to justice, dignity and solidarity.

- There are many resources available here [The Inclusive Methodist Church](#)

5.13 UNDERSTANDING AND USING CPD

- This is discussed with MOCC ministers as part of the induction, but once the MOCC arrives in their Circuit, they may need some guidance to find the immediate information they need within CPD, and to interpret it. Please make sure that their copy of CPD is provided for them as soon as possible.

5.14 PREACHING PLAN

- It is likely that the Circuit will make the first plan containing the name of the newly arriving MOCC before the MOCC can have much input to it. Please take care to ensure that they are taking services in the churches they are appointed to often enough to become known. In the first quarter, the Circuit may decide it is better for them to be mainly planned to lead worship in those churches, rather than preaching around the Circuit.
- Please also consider giving them a slightly 'lighter load' in the first quarter as they get used to their new environment.
- Please also liaise with them regarding some holiday in their first quarter. This is their choice. We strongly suggest they should take one week of holiday (and therefore one Sunday when they are not planned to lead worship) in the first quarter, but we also need to recognise that some choose to 'save' their holiday weeks so that they can have a significant block of time in the summer in order to visit their family in various parts of the world.

5.15 FIRSTS

- MOCCS will also need more frequent mentoring at the start of the appointment to enable them to reflect on their early experiences, and to offer practical advice. This is provided by the superintendent or the minister in oversight (if not the superintendent).
- Most MOCCs have considerable experience of ministry so need to be treated differently from the way a Circuit may treat a probationer presbyter or deacon. They may not need the same level of support at the first experience of every element of ministry.
- The support they need is in understanding cultural differences and the traditions of British Methodism. This might be, for example, in funeral customs in Britain compared to other parts of the world (though these are diverse in Britain too), or the way meetings are usually conducted in MCB churches. In all cases it is best to offer help rather than impose it. Think through all the first encounters they will have in the early weeks and months of their ministry in MCB and see what support they would like in those instances. (For example customs around harvest festivals and Remembrance).
- It might be helpful for the MOCC to have a Circuit steward or another presbyter or deacon sitting in the back row of a Church Council just in case they need support (and to reflect with them afterwards), rather than

someone coming in and taking over the chair for the meeting. Once a relationship is established with the MOCC, these things can be easily worked out together.

5.16 STATISTICS FOR MISSION

- Please help the MOCC set up their login details for the online suite. Then please help them to understand how to complete the online form and to note the date by when the information is required. There is support and information available here: [Statistics for Mission - The Methodist Church](#)

5.17 CONNEXIONAL SUPPORT FOR CIRCUITS

- **Induction**
 - The Circuit superintendent and a member of the Circuit leadership team of Circuits receiving MOCCs are requested to attend an online induction day on **3 April 2025 10.30am to 3.30pm**.
 - Together, we will think through the issues and expectations that MOCCs may have and those they may face. We will discuss practicalities, theological preparation and potential challenges.
 - This is an ideal time to ask questions that your Circuit may have about preparing well to receive your new minister.
 - This induction will resource you so that you can support and prepare the churches who will be receiving the new minister in September. It is essential they are helped to prepare well. Section 5.20 below gives you some guidance about running preparation sessions with members of the churches.
- **Immigration Sponsorship Duties.** MOCCs can hold various types of visas, most commonly the Minister of Religion (T2) visa, which is sponsored by the MCB. This process is administered by the Connexional Human Resources (HR) team, which keep track of these visas, assists with queries and visa renewals.
- **Manual Right to Work Check and Record Keeping.** To ensure compliance with immigration rules and to protect the MCB sponsorship licence, the HR team will request a certified copy of the MOCC's original right to work documents. For individuals holding a time-limited visa, a follow-up online right to work will be conducted.

Upon arriving in the UK, the following documents for the MOCC and their families should be obtained, checked and copied (in a format that cannot be altered, such as a photocopy or a pdf scan). The legible copy must then be verified. The required documents include:

- A copy of the *passport, which must include any page showing the expiry date, nationality, date of birth, signature, biometric details, and photograph. Typically, this will be the 'bio-data' page of the passport. A copy of this must be verified by a Superintendent or a District Chair.

- Copies of the *UK entry visa and/or landing date stamp inside the passport, indicating that the holder is entitled to be in the UK and to undertake the work in question.
- All other documents in their entirety such as a visa approval letter.
- If you are concerned about the validity of any presented documents or stamps, please contact the HR team immediately.

A document can only be verified by the superintendent, District chair, and a member of the HR or Ministries team.

*For each copied page, the verifier must include the statement 'I confirm that this is a true copy of the original, taken on [DATE and TIME]'. This should be followed by their signature with your printed name. These documents must be scanned and sent to the HR team (immigration@methodistchurch.org.uk). Please also keep copies for your records.

- **Maintaining Contact Details.** The HR team must be informed of any change in the MOCC's UK residential address, UK work address, personal email address, telephone number and mobile phone number.
- **Monitoring and Reporting.** It is essential for all MOCCs sponsored by the MCB to inform the MCB HR team (immigration@methodistchurch.org.uk) if they are away from their manse overnight, even for a very short planned absences such as:
 - Annual Leave
 - Work-related business trips;
 - Family Leave (i.e. Maternity Leave, Paternity /Maternity Support Leave, Shared Parental Leave, Adoption Leave & Parental Leave)
 - Special Leave (such as Jury Service/Witness Duty, Sabbatical Leave and Study Leave)
 - Travel outside the UK (both for personal and work-related purposes)
 - Unpaid Leave
 - Sickness Absence
 - Compassionate Leave and Domestic/Family Emergency Leave, etc.

This absence may be for both church purposes or personal leave, as well as for sickness, statutory leave, study leave or travel outside the UK. It is imperative for the MCB to demonstrate to the Home Office that we know the MOCC's whereabouts at all times in order to support them. This information is also vital for any future application for Indefinite Leave to Remain. MCB HR team or the immigration advisor is available to assist with any enquiries.

- **Language and culture.** There may be times when it would help a MOCC or their family members to speak to someone in their mother tongue or to meet with someone from their home country. The Global Communities Officer can often help with this. There is also the Belonging Together group, who may have contacted the MOCC on their arrival. Other MOCCs might also be able

to help. If your Circuit becomes aware of this need, please contact the Ministerial Coordinator for the Oversight of Ordained Ministries in the first instance in order to identify someone who can help (ministryoffers@methodistchurch.org.uk).

- **General.** The Connexional Team run a year of induction for MOCCs. Even after the end of the first year, they are still prepared to support MOCCs and Circuits in any way they can. Contact the Ministerial Coordinator for the Oversight of Ordained Ministries if you have any questions and we will try to help (ministryoffers@methodistchurch.org.uk).

5.18 SAFEGUARDING

- The newly arriving MOCC will be bringing unique experiences and insights into their work with you, but some areas of British life and British Methodist life may not be familiar to them. Safeguarding is a key area where we need to ensure that those who have ministerial responsibilities understand their role and duties.
- They will need to undergo the standard two levels of safeguarding training that all presbyters and deacons are required to undertake (Foundation and Advanced modules). The Foundation module will be covered in their bespoke training session which is part of the induction year (held in September about 3 weeks after the start of their appointment). This also gives them an opportunity to tell the safeguarding team about their experience and understanding of safeguarding. **However, they will need to be booked onto the advanced module training as soon as possible in the District in which they are stationed. Please ensure this is arranged.**
- For those who are applying from outside of Britain, a police check will have been requested before they are stationed. **Once they arrive, please ask your superintendent minister to begin an enhanced DBS application with barring for both vulnerable adults and children on the District ministers' account as soon as possible.** It may be delayed a few months so that they have documents in their name containing the manse address.
- For those applying from within Britain, an enhanced DBS check for vulnerable adults and children will have been carried out as soon as they are matched with an appointment.
- **Please ensure your District safeguarding officer is aware of them.** This will enable the District safeguarding officer to contact and offer support to the MOCC, especially in the early days of their life in Circuit.
- Church and Circuit safeguarding officers can also play a key role in supporting the MOCC's understanding and responsibilities. Please ensure contacts are made.
- If there are any safeguarding contracts and Monitoring and Support Groups (MSG) in place in the churches for which the MOCC will be responsible, the superintendent should consult with the District safeguarding officer to decide the best way of managing these. It may be best for the MOCC not to be expected to manage these at least in the first years of their ministry in the MCB.

- The key resource for MOCCs to be familiar with is the church's Safeguarding Procedures which can be found at [Policies, Procedure and Information](#). Some Circuits have reported that it helps MOCCs if they are provided with a hard copy of the procedures when they arrive.

5.19 REFLECTIVE SUPERVISION

- MOCCS are offered a briefing on reflective supervision as part of their induction. This explains the background to its importance for ministry in British Methodism, the approaches and methodology that might be used and the policy in place. Helpful introductory videos are also available.
- MOCCs are expected to receive reflective supervision just as all presbyters and deacons are. This means at least six sessions of supervision of 1.5 hours duration each year (or nine x one hour).
- Reflective supervision is offered by a supervisor accredited under the Supervision Policy (2021–2026). This supervisor will have been appointed with the agreement of District chair (and/or supervision implementation plan holder if that is a separated role).

5.20 PREPARING THE CHURCHES

- It is important that local churches who will be working most closely with the newly arriving MOCC are helped to prepare thoroughly. It can take quite a shift in thinking to prepare for a presbyter or deacon from another context.
- Please use the material in this handbook in any way that is helpful for your churches and your Circuit.
- Two members of each Circuit receiving a MOCC minister are likely to have attended the induction session. These two people are strongly encouraged to share the material discussed there with church leadership groups so that everyone is prepared.
- Areas to consider:
 - Who is designated to support and pray for the minister and their family?
 - Who is overseeing the construction of a support calendar leading up to their arrival?
 - How you are going to prepare the manse (remembering to ask the minister what they will be bringing and what they might need)?
 - Who will meet them on arrival and provide welcome meals or other forms of hospitality?
 - What will the whole family need to know to enable them to 'find their feet' in the local area? Consider making initial enquiries with a local GP practice, local banks and other agencies.
 - Who will help with finding school places and school uniform for the minister's children (where appropriate)? Are there other families with similar aged children who are prepared to support and befriend them?
 - Who will keep a particular supportive eye on the minister's spouse/partner (where appropriate)?

- Are there any ministers retiring soon who might donate some theological books if the minister is not able to bring many with them? Or is there someone in the circuit who is prepared to collect books being donated by others (contact ministryoffers@methodistchurch.org.uk for information).
- Who will investigate the arrangements local banks have for setting up new accounts for people who have not lived in the UK for very long?
- Who will ensure that records are ready for the minister – recent minutes of meetings, pastoral lists, photographs of office holders, church addresses, a map, etc?
- Who will be able to offer lifts to meetings and other events during the first month, if needed?
- What are church members excited about? Are these realistic expectations? Is a discussion needed as to what is realistic?
- What are church members concerned about? How can these things be addressed? For example, if the concern is about understanding a minister with an accent the church is not used to, how can they work at establishing a trusting relationship so that the church and the minister are able to be honest when they don't understand and help each other to reach deeper understanding? Help the church to remember that, for the minister, there are far more people they have to 'tune into' than there are for the church members.
- Is the supervisor ready to start their work with the minister?
- Does the Circuit and District safeguarding officer know about their arrival so they can arrange training and DBS checks as soon as possible, and explain any safeguarding contracts and Monitoring and Support Groups in their churches?
- Have the relevant church leadership teams been asked to read through this induction and formulate their own support plan?
- Please help church congregations to 'stand in the shoes' of these MOCCs and realise the enormous journeys they are travelling: physically but also mentally and socially. Then, it is hoped that congregations will want to do all they can to support them and smooth their path. Then, their ministry in the MCB will have a chance to be fruitful and positive
- MOCCs are greatly enriching the life of the MCB, strengthening partnerships, bringing new vision and perspective and helping to demonstrate the global and universal nature of the church.



*Come, all who will from every place;
Find here new powers of unity,
Accept the Spirit's strong embrace
Which binds us in community.*

From the hymn:
Come all who look to Christ today by Richard G. Jones

APPENDIX A: SAMPLE SUPPORT CALENDAR

Please adapt this to your own context.

Month	Support	People responsible
February/March once stationing match is known	Phone, email or video call contact – or arrange an actual visit if they are in Britain	Superintendent and circuit steward
	Appoint a main contact person for the MOCC (eg a church or circuit steward who lives near the manse)	Circuit steward
	Find out hobbies and interests	Various
	Establish furniture and other needs	Main contact person
	General information is shared at Circuit Meeting	Superintendent
	Advice on transferable qualifications for spouse/partner if appropriate	Main contact person to find appropriate support from others
	Find out about school needs if appropriate	Main contact person
	Set up dates for regular (monthly) zoom meetings with the minister between now and August	Circuit steward
April	Attend induction for circuits receiving MOCC	Superintendent and circuit steward
	Contact Connexion to check visa process and timescale	Circuit steward
	Ensure funding in place for removals (in conjunction with Connexion)	Circuit steward
	Send link to Circuit website, relevant church websites and any relevant websites of local organisations	Main contact person
	Start a diary for the minister – ideally electronically so it can be shared with them	Main contact person
	Find out if any ministers retiring from the District have any books they could donate, or contact the Ministerial Coordinator to arrange donations of other books.	Superintendent
May	Collect material for information pack about the local area, circuit and churches, including maps, directories, photographs of key people, local magazines etc	Circuit and church stewards coordinated by the main contact person

	Run induction programme for the church leadership groups where the MOCC will minister	Superintendent and Circuit steward
June	Share information appropriately across the Circuit	Superintendent and Circuit stewards
	Start prayer support group	Interested people from each church involved coordinated by main contact person
	Make links with schools and put them in contact	Main contact person
	Check possible offers of furniture at Circuit Meeting and set up a plan to obtain any other furniture that will be needed	Circuit stewards
July	Set up worship support group (in conjunction with Circuit preacher's and worship leaders' meeting). Ensure that they and the MOCC understand their role to help the MOCC adjust to leading worship in the MCB context (this meeting does not have a reporting function)	Preachers and worship leaders' meeting
	Look ahead at plan dates and appointments	Superintendent
	Arrange to receive furniture and plan how to set out the manse	Circuit stewards and main contact person
	Appoint one or two key named people to be first point of call and organise a back-up team to provide support. Agree with the MOCC about the level of immediate support they will appreciate.	Main contact person
	Consider appointing a finance support person	Circuit treasurer
	Finalise information for welcome pack	Main contact person to liaise with others
	Check the MOCC has received the finance pack and is completing the forms	Superintendent
August – arrival	Working party to take responsibility for preparing the manse	Main contact person to liaise with church and circuit stewards
	Get utility bills for manse and produce instructions regarding utilities and operation of the heating system	Circuit steward

Arrange transport from airport to meet (as appropriate)	Main contact person to check travel arrangements for whole family
Welcome food, help with settling in, someone to welcome at the manse	Main contact person liaising with local church communities
Introduction to area (shops, public transport etc)	Main contact person
Registering with doctor	Main contact person
Induction to the church year, appointments, diary dates, identifying their rest day	Superintendent
MOCC 'buddy' appointed and connection made	Connexional Team
Induction at Cliff College	Main contact person to assist the minister and family with their travel arrangements and to liaise with the Ministerial Coordinator in the Connexional Team
National Insurance and finance Loans and grants Bank account Ready money Method for recording expenses	Finance support person and Circuit treasurer
Telephone and broadband in manse Support in obtaining a computer and set up	Circuit stewards
Car (provide drivers until licence transferred)	Main contact person to liaise with others
Orientation and welcome for children (as appropriate)	Youth workers, or local families with similar age children
Accompany family to arrange schools (as appropriate)	Main contact person, youth workers, or local families with

		similar age children
	Befrienders for spouse/partner if appropriate to set up regular contact	Main contact person
September	Welcome service	Superintendent to share information
	District new ordained ministers' welcome/induction event	Superintendent to share information
	Date of Sept Synod and arranging transport	Main contact person and Superintendent
	Accompany to all 'firsts' and help with meeting key people	Minister in Oversight
	Safeguarding induction at Cliff College (MOCC only)	Arranged by Connexional Team. Main contact person to help with travel arrangements
	Guidance about social media	Minister in Oversight
	Weekly oversight meetings for the first 3 months or until they are not needed	Minister in Oversight
	Supervision covenant is agreed	Supervisor
	Arrange for enhanced DBS check with barring for children and vulnerable adults	Superintendent
October	Cultivating recreation, exercise, outside interests	Main contact person to check in with the minister

APPENDIX B: AN ORDAINED MINISTER'S YEAR

This is an example – details may differ in different contexts.

Month	Event
September	Representative Synod Circuit Meeting Welcome service Circuit leadership team meeting Local preachers and worship leaders meeting Other committees' first meetings of year Staff meeting (then at least monthly) Supervision starts Covenant services (if not in January)
October	Harvest festivals (sometimes in September or November) Church councils Half term holiday for schools Pastoral committee in local churches (or in September or November)
November	Remembrance Sunday
December	Local preachers and worship leaders meeting (some Circuits) Advent courses Carol services Christmas Eve services Christmas Day services Watchnight services (some churches) Bank holidays
January	Covenant services (if not in September) Week of Prayer for Christian Unity
February	Half term holiday for schools Church councils Presbyteral Synod (or March) Lent groups (or March)
March	World Day of Prayer service (often ecumenical) Circuit meeting Mothering Sunday
April	Holy Week (depending on date of Easter) Good Friday services and acts of witness (often ecumenical) Easter Bank holiday on Easter Monday Representative Synod General church meetings
May	Two bank holidays (beginning and end of the month) First week of May – Convocation for the Methodist Diaconal Order Wesley Day and Aldersgate Sunday
June	Church councils (some churches) End of June – Methodist Conference Circuit meeting (some Circuits)
July	School holidays (around 20 July to the end of August)
August	Holiday clubs

APPENDIX C: FINANCIAL INFORMATION

8.1 INTRODUCTION

- This is not a complete reference document, but it does indicate where further information may be found. It is most important that MOCCs are aware of their own financial responsibilities and what is provided by, or available from, the Church, the UK Government or other bodies.
- A finance pack will be issued to MOCCs following confirmation of your stationing at the Conference. This will contain the necessary forms that require completion, along with the latest guidance.
- The financial circumstances of MOCCs and their households vary, and advice and guidance should be sought, as and when necessary, from reliable sources.
- **Dates:**
 - The Methodist year runs from 1 September to 31 August. All financial figures and policies determined by the Church apply for that period.
 - The UK Government's tax year runs from 6 April to 5 April.
- **Definitions:**
 - 'The UK' – the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland – comprises England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.
 - 'Great Britain', or more simply 'Britain', excludes Northern Ireland.
 - For Methodist purposes, the British Methodist Church not only covers England, Scotland (including the Shetland Islands) and Wales, but also the Channel Islands, the Isle of Man and the Methodist Churches in Gibraltar and Malta.
 - The Methodist Church in Northern Ireland is part of the wider autonomous Methodist Church in the whole of Ireland.

8.2 STIPENDS

- On arrival to the UK a bank account can be opened and the stipend form be filled out and emailed to the Payroll team – stipends@methodistchurch.org.uk.
- From 1 September 2025, presbyters and deacons are paid a standard stipend of £31,980 per year, payable monthly in advance. This is credited directly to the presbyter's or deacon's bank account on the first of the month, or on the last working day of the previous month if the first is not on a working day (non-working days are defined as Saturday, Sunday or a bank holiday). Payslips can be downloaded each month and should be checked so that any queries can be raised without delay.
- The stipend is reviewed annually, and the adjusted figure is approved by the Conference in June/July for implementation from 1 September. However,

the Resourcing Committee publishes the recommended figure some months before.

- Some ordained ministerial roles, such as superintendents, District chairs and Connexional posts, have an allowance above stipend, as published on the website.
- There are also allowances above stipend and other financial provisions for those stationed in Circuits outside the UK mainland: these apply to a small number of people and will be advised when necessary.
- Circuits may not pay any allowance above standard stipend without the consent of the Resourcing Committee, and it is granted only in the most exceptional circumstances.

8.3 MANSES

- The Circuit is responsible for providing an adequate manse, according to standards published in CPD, not only as living accommodation for the MOCC and family but as the base for work.
- By arrangement with HMRC, this provision is not subject to tax. However, there can be tax implications in relation to fixtures & fittings and if improvements are made to the manse. Further information is available from the Connexional tax directory [Taxation Directory - The Methodist Church](#)
- The Circuit is responsible for manse general repairs and maintenance, property insurance (but not contents – that is the minister's responsibility), and the payment of Council Tax (the local tax paid to the local authority for the provision of local services) and water rates.

8.4 PENSIONS

- All presbyters and deacons are automatically enrolled in the Methodist Ministers' Pension Scheme (MMPS). The provisions and entitlements of the scheme are available from the Pensions Department see [Pensions - The Methodist Church](#) including arrangements for payment of pension (when the time comes) into bank accounts outside the UK.
- The presbyter or deacon contributes 9.3 per cent of standard stipend into the scheme and the Church contributes 26.9 per cent. These percentages are reviewed from time to time following actuarial valuations of the pension fund.
- Presbyters and deacons may opt out of the pension scheme: if they wish to do so, contact should be made with the pensions manager.
- Upon retirement, pensions are based on a proportion of standard stipend (i.e. excluding any allowances above stipend) based on years of service.
- There is a Methodist Ministers Housing Society which seeks to provide a home for ordained ministers when they retire, subject to certain strict qualifying conditions, such as: years of service (currently ten years' service) and their financial situation, for which a rent is charged.

- Any queries relating to pensions, which can be a complex topic, should be addressed to the pensions manager.

8.5 NATIONAL INSURANCE AND INCOME TAX

- Within the band of income for presbyters and deacons, the normal National Insurance (NI) contributions towards to the national provision of health care and other state benefits are 13.8 per cent of stipend by the Church and 12 per cent by the presbyter or deacon.
- Income tax is paid at the rate of 20% above a certain level of annual income (in the tax year 2024-2025, £12,570), announced each year by the government. Note, above a higher level of income (in 2024-2025, £50,271), it is 40% – i.e. it is regarded as a progressive system. There is a system of allowances against tax which affect these thresholds. Changes in taxation are announced in the budget statement by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the UK's Finance Minister, each year.

The ministerial payroll system makes all deductions from stipend (for tax, NI, pension contribution) automatically, so that the presbyter's or deacon's bank account is credited with the net amount each month

8.6 COMPUTER ALLOWANCE

- All presbyters and deacons are paid a 'computer allowance' (£211 in 2024-2025, payable in October and reviewed annually). As you are new to the MCB, in your first year your allowance will be four times the annual amount i.e. £844. Please note the computer allowance is subject to tax and NI but is not pensionable.

The allowance enables presbyters and deacons to choose and upgrade/replace their own computing devices as suits their ways of working. Please ensure you retain receipts for computer equipment and that they are in the name of the MOCC.

8.7 EXPENSES INCURRED FOR WORK PURPOSES

- Reasonable expenses incurred in a MOCC's work for the Church may be claimed but must be supported by receipts or other acceptable evidence. These are presented to and claimed from the Circuit, by arrangement with the Circuit treasurer or stewards.
- It is advisable to find out what these arrangements are as soon as possible, and to keep clear records of expenses, with receipts. Such legitimate expenses are not subject to tax.
- In particular, travel expenses by car can be claimed at the rates set by the Conference (and with the agreement of HMRC, for tax purposes) as follows:
 - 45p per mile for the first 10,000 qualifying miles per year
 - 25p per mile for any qualifying miles above 10,000 per year

- There is also a provision of a payment of £350 (taxable) per each completed period of three months if a presbyter or deacon is off work through illness: this recognises that their car continues to need the annual vehicle tax, car insurance and (if the vehicle is over three years old) the Ministry of Transport (MoT) Test of roadworthiness, which are fixed expenses

8.8 INITIAL GRANTS AND LOANS

- All MOCCs being stationed for the first time in the British Methodist Church may apply for an initial grant and/or a loan. Grant and loan forms to be emailed to ministerial.grants@methodistchurch.org.uk.
- The maximum grant which may be claimed is £3,000 irrespective of the MOCC's financial circumstances or age. It is assumed that those with sufficient funds will not need to claim the full amount or not claim at all – this is left to their discretion and judgement.
- When ministers move between Circuits, they are entitled to a grant of £600 from the receiving Circuit. However, as you are eligible for the £3,000 initial grant from Connexional funds, you will not receive a further £600 from your Circuit. This would be payable if and when you subsequently move to a new Circuit.
- An initial loan from the Methodist Church Fund of up to £10,000 may also be made, repayable over a maximum of five years (60 months) at the rate of £167 per month. The loan is interest-free and the repayments are deducted from stipend at source each month.
- The purpose of both the initial grant and loan are to assist the MOCC and their family in establishing themselves in a manse and acquiring a car.
- It must be noted that there are no obligations on the Church, either locally or Connexionally, to offer any other benefits to newly stationed MOCCs.

8.9 STATE BENEFITS

- It is essential that MOCCs in the Tier 2 visa category understand the UK restrictions on their eligibility to claim state benefits. It is suggested that advice is sought in individual circumstances, where necessary, to ensure that any restrictions are understood.
- The main elements are that MOCCs may claim the equivalent of child benefit and/or tax credits annually from the Methodist Church Fund, via the Finance Office in Methodist Church House, London, for the period while they are not eligible to make a relevant claim on the UK state. A new claim must be made each year, and it is the minister's responsibility to inform the Finance Office as soon as there is any change in their circumstances that would impact their eligibility.
- Also, there are constraints, based on immigration status, on:
 - spouses and older children gaining employment and accessing unemployment benefit when without work, and
 - the eligibility of MOCCs' children to access loans and grants for university courses. University funding in the UK is complex, most notably

because it is different between England, Wales and Scotland, and different again in the non-UK territories within the geographic coverage of the MCB. Details are accessible on appropriate websites.

- Please note that the benevolent funds outlined in section 12 below may not be used to offer grants as a substitute for state benefits or to assist with university funding for MOCCs' children.

8.10 REMOVAL AND RELOCATION IN ACTIVE MINISTRY

- For incoming MOCCs, the Methodist Church Fund pays the costs to the UK point of entry for flights of the MOCC and three dependents, together with furniture removal.
- The receiving Circuit will pay the costs from the port to the Circuit manse.
- The MOCC will need to provide three quotes from removal companies on official letterheads to the Finance Office, via ministerial.grants@methodistchurch.org.uk. The quotes must be split into two parts:
 - removals from country of origin to the port of entry in the UK – paid for by the Connexional Team/finance administrator
 - removals from port of entry in the UK to manse – paid for by the Circuit
- The Connexion will only fund the cost of the lowest quote. The MOCC will be reimbursed once in the UK. However, where necessary, a payment direct to the removal company can be arranged through the finance office. The Connexion will reimburse essential removal costs but does not pay for the transporting of pets, vehicles or other unusual oversized items.
- Once a quote has been approved, please send the final two invoices to the finance office via ministerial.grants@methodistchurch.org.uk. The finance office will arrange for payment for removals from the country of origin to the port of entry in the UK and will forward the invoice for removals from port of entry in the UK to manse to the contact in the Circuit for payment. The following information is required to pay the removal company:
 - name of freight company
 - name of bank
 - address of bank
 - bank account name
 - account number
 - swift code
 - currency to be paid in
- 48 hours' notice is required for any financial transaction as this is the amount of time it takes on a weekday for the money to reach the international bank account from the UK.
- In the case where the cheapest quote is not the preferable supplier, the MOCC should provide a reasoned statement to support the request. Should the Connexion decline the request, the MOCC will still be able to use the preferred supplier and pay the difference.

- For travel to the UK, the Connexion will fund the costs of the MOCC and three dependents. The MOCC must obtain at least two quotes for these journeys and send them to the finance office, via ministerial.grants@methodistchurch.org.uk along with the following information:
 - MOCC overseas home address and email address
 - names, dates of birth and nature of the relationship to the MOCC of all accompanying family members travelling to the UK
- Once approved, please send the finance office, via ministerial.grants@methodistchurch.org.uk, the final invoice with the following details:
 - travel company's name
 - name of bank
 - address of bank
 - bank account name
 - account number
 - swift code
 - currency to be paid in
- 48 hours' notice is required for any financial transaction as this is the amount of time it takes on a weekday for the money to reach the international bank account from the UK.
- When an ordained minister moves to another Circuit in active ministry (or is requested by the Circuit to move manse within the Circuit), the receiving Circuit, i.e. the Circuit to which the ordained minister is moving, is responsible for paying the removal costs. These normally comprise of the furniture removal, and the ordained minister and their family's travel costs.
- If MOCCs continue their active ministry (i.e. before retirement) in other Conferences and Churches either within the UK or in other countries, or move to appointments outside the control of the MCB, it is their responsibility to ensure that removal and relocation costs are covered, either personally or by the receiving Conference, Church or employing body.

8.11 SABBATICALS (Finance)

- The Church has a policy of enabling presbyters and deacons to have a sabbatical for three months after the first seven years of ministry and every seven years thereafter.
- There is a Connexional Sabbaticals Fund from which presbyters and deacons may claim expenses up to a maximum of £1,000, so long as receipts are provided. The Districts are responsible for the oversight of Sabbaticals and the process of claiming expenses.

8.12 BENEVOLENT FUNDS AND TRUSTS

- There are benevolent funds and trusts available to presbyters and deacons, as outlined below, but it is emphasised they are used in exceptional circumstances, strictly adhering to the purposes of each fund or trust.

- The Resourcing Committee oversees these funds and trusts, and is responsible for ensuring that decisions on each application are made according to consistent criteria. Where genuine and legitimate need is identified, the Committee seeks to be sympathetic and generous.
- Applications for grants are made on different forms for different purposes (which are available on the Methodist Church website) and should be submitted to the finance office. In certain cases, grants may be tax-free whilst in others the grant is treated as income and therefore subject to tax and National Insurance deductions, in accordance with agreements with HMRC.
- **Fund for the Support of Presbyters and Deacons (FSPD).** Whilst this fund is mainly for the financial support or supernumerary (retired) presbyters and deacons and their dependants, it may be used in accordance with SO 364(1) to provide support to enable ordained ministers with an impairment to continue in ministry and also to assist ordained ministers 'who are in acute financial need'. In the former case, it is often required for adaptations to a manse, for which the Circuit would apply. The phrase 'acute financial need' is normally taken to relate to unexpected and unavoidable circumstances of hardship outside the ordained minister's control and grants are made very sparingly. Grants are not made to help ordained ministers who:
 - simply overspend their stipend or budget, or
 - request financial support to fund choices for which they are responsible, or
 - seek to backfill income from legitimately denied sources of other funds
- **Methodist Ministers' Children's Fund (MMCF) also known as the Trinity Hall Trust (THT).** Grants may be made to ordained ministers to assist with expenses incurred in their children's education (for such things as school trips, music lessons, school uniforms and laptops, but not for fees and basic materials such as books). Children must be at least three years of age on 1 September and not more than 18 years of age on 31 August. Grants are not given for any expenses for higher or further education, ie colleges and universities. The maximum per child per year is currently £600, which must be applied for annually and is treated as income for tax and state benefit purposes. It is granted only when the household earned income is less than or equal to twice the standard stipend.
- **Methodist Medical Benevolent Fund (MMBF).** Grants may be made from this fund to presbyters and deacons or their immediate dependants to help pay for emergency medical diagnosis and counselling when the National Health Service (NHS) is unable to do so within a reasonable time; and for recuperative breaks arising from serious illness or a personal crisis. It is not a ready source of private health care.
- **Methodist Diaconal Order Trusts.** There are two trusts restricted to the benefit of deacons and their dependants, with purposes similar to those of the FSPD and MMBF. They are used as far as possible when the applicant is a deacon.

8.13 REMOVALS EXPENSES AND RELOCATION GRANTS ON RETIREMENT

- Bearing in mind that the receiving Circuit pays the removal costs and relocation grant when ordained ministers move in the active work within the MCB, when an ordained minister retires, there is no receiving Circuit as such. The following policies apply to ordained ministers in appointments within the control of the Church at the point of their retirement.
- **Ordained ministers in Full Connexion, and those RR having served at least five years, retiring in the UK:** the removal costs and relocation grant are paid by the FSPD.
- **Ordained ministers in Full Connexion retiring to another country:** the removal costs up to a maximum of £4,500 and the relocation grant are paid by the FSPD. The Resourcing Committee will consider applications for removal costs in excess of £4,500.
- **RR ministers, having served at least five years, retiring to another country:** a discretionary grant from the FSPD may be given with the consent of the Resourcing Committee towards removal costs and the relocation grant. It is expected that RR ministers who retire to their home (or another country) continue to receive oversight from their home Church or Conference, with consequent financial responsibilities.

8.14 THE RESOURCING COMMITTEE

The committee is established by SO 300 and reports via the Connexional Council to the Conference. The committee meets six times a year, and it comprises seven people, lay and ordained, representative of diverse constituencies in the Church. The committee has responsibilities mainly set out in SO 361 & 362 for the strategic oversight and use of resources with regard to personnel, finance and physical assets, which are within the purview of the council. Within this, is the responsibility for making recommendations to the council, to be brought to the Conference, as to ministerial stipends, allowances, and related matters; producing guidance on grants, loans and allowances for ministers; making recommendation as to any other terms under which ministers and probationers serve within their covenant relationship with the Conference.

8.15 FURTHER INFORMATION AND ADVICE

- In addition to the documents listed in section 1, further information can be found in the Methodist Church and UK Government websites.
- All MOCCs will be issued with the relevant finance forms and supporting guidance once their appointment has been approved by the Conference.
- Contact details for the Financial Department at Methodist Church House are given in the Quarterly Letter and advice is available locally from Circuit stewards and treasurers. The Pensions and HR departments are also based in Methodist Church House.

APPENDIX D: CHECKLIST OF INFORMATION FOR A TAX RETURN

The year under consideration for any tax return runs from 6 April to 5 April.

Ministers need to collect the following information and keep it safely so that they can submit it when required for their tax return

- P60 (as supplied by payroll)
- Form P11D (copy as supplied by Circuit)
- Total of any fees received (for example, for weddings, funerals or other services provided)
- Invoice/details of any new office equipment purchased during the year and information about the disposal of any such equipment
- Details of dividends received
- Details of interest received on building society and bank accounts
- Any other interest received
- Details of benefits or other income received from the government, including state pension and – if you are a high earner – child benefit receipts
- Details of property and/or all other income received
- Details of proceeds of sale of shares, antiques, property or other major assets
- Details of any Gift Aid donations made – regular and one-off
- Details of any additional pension arrangements entered into
- Details of all 'claimable' expenses, such as:
 - entertaining
 - clothes for Divine Worship (purchase, repair, dry cleaning, etc.)
 - material for sermon preparation
 - heat and light (total of actual gas, electricity, oil, etc bills for the year required)
 - computer repairs/servicing and software (if not reimbursed by the Circuit)
 - cost of maintaining the garden
 - cost of cleaning the manse
 - contents insurance (the premium paid during the year)
 - costs of a 'stand in' – *locum tens* (rare)

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