

Welcome to the **Local Preachers' & Worship Leaders News**



We're in an auspicious season at the moment - the contemplation of Lent led to the celebration of Easter, Ascension Day followed and Pentecost comes soon, immediately followed by Trinity Sunday, one of my favourite festivals for preaching. The whole gospel is enacted in a few weeks as the new life of spring emerges around us. There is so much to celebrate, so much hope to offer in our hurting and anxious world.

There are so many opportunities to learn and to grow in faith too, as this newsletter shows. I want to highlight particularly the Working Out Worship series of online workshops, presented by our colleagues in the Learning Network. At a time when "Local Arrangements" appear frequently on many of our preaching plans, here is an opportunity to think how we can embrace these as an opportunity to do new and creative things, involving more people than ever before in our shared worship. Every one of us has something we can offer to God in worship. Our task is to discover these hidden riches and encourage each other to share them together, so we can celebrate God's grace in our lives, and our worship.

Earlier this year, we said goodbye to Stefan Carney and wished him well with his new job in the Conference Office. Now it's our pleasure to welcome Kennedy Kouloumbri, our new administrator, who will be working with local preachers and worship leaders:

Hello, my name is Kennedy, and I am the new Administrator for Local Preachers. Something about me is that I am passionate about sustainability to be a force for good for people and the planet, something that I explored in my MSc dissertation in the context of Space!

If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to reach out at: localpreachers@methodistchurch.org.uk
- I look forward to working with you all!



Ideas & Resources



The poster features the title 'Working Out Worship' in large, stylized letters, with 'Working' and 'Worship' in white and 'Out' in black. The background is teal with colorful puzzle pieces. To the right, it lists the schedule: (Mondays, 7-9pm), 4 WEEKS' TRAINING ON PLANNING FOR: Local Arrangements 1: 2nd June, Local Arrangements 2: 9th June, Creative Worship: 16th June, and Intergenerational Worship: 23rd June. The bottom right corner features the logo of The Methodist Church.

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Creative Worship:	16th June
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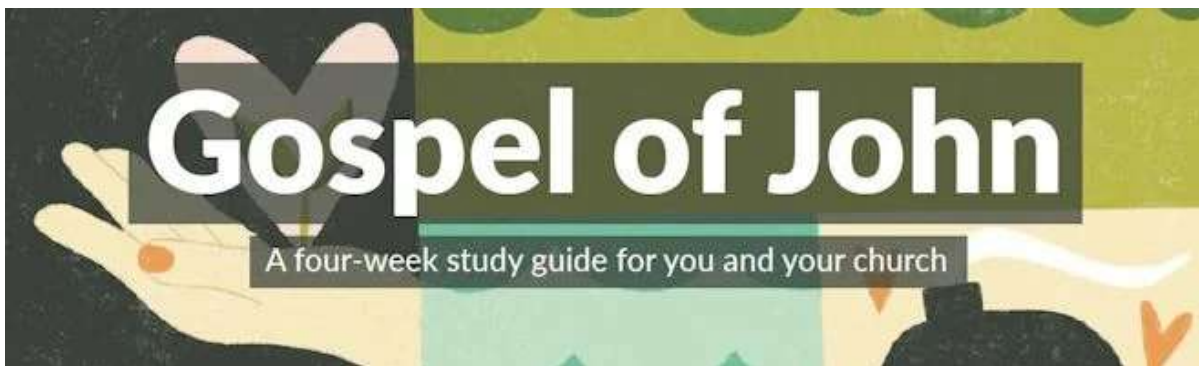
The Methodist Church

Working out Worship is a four week course designed to help you re-imagine and re-invigorate the worship life of your local church. Designed for anyone with an interest in leading worship or a need to do so, you'll work as part of a group to explore what a great experience worship can be, how we can put together local arrangements with creativity and confidence, and how we can ensure that everyone is included in a community experience together. God is not boring – and worship doesn't need to be either!

Click [here](#) to book and for more information.



Bible Month 2025



A great opportunity for your church or small group to immerse yourselves in John's amazing gospel.

Resource booklets are available either individually or in bundles of 10:

Order Bible Month booklets.

Free copies of the **30 Day Reading Guide** are available to order from **Methodist Publishing.**

Other resources, including a journalling kit to download are on the Bible Month webpage.

You can follow @biblemonth on Facebook and YouTube.



How do you feel right now?

From Anxious to grateful, and from lonely to seeking hope, the **Prayer Hub** features prayers and prayer prompts for a variety of different responses to this question.

The prompts are designed to help those unfamiliar with prayer to pray for the first time, or for those who pray regularly to explore different styles of prayer.

A new emotion will be added to the Prayer Hub each month. Email your suggestions or offers to write prayers to **mwol@methodistchurch.org.uk**

Roots

RESOURCES FOR CHURCHES

From June and through the summer, Roots resources will be exploring Paul's letters. In the Roots for Churches podcast, Melanie Cave sits down with Simon Jones, a theologian and activist, to dissect Paul's life, mission, and the various perceptions surrounding his legacy. Was Paul a proponent of misogyny and homophobia, or a misunderstood champion for social change?

To listen on Podbean on the web, click here: [**Did Paul write that? Paul as you never knew him, with Simon Jones**](#) or search for **Roots for Churches S3E7** on your usual podcast app.

To watch on YouTube click here: [**Did Paul write that? Paul as you never knew him, with Simon Jones**](#)



NEW CONTENT AWAITED

At the end of 2024, **All We Can** launched a joint appeal with The Methodist Church and the United Reformed Church to meet the urgent humanitarian need crisis as it worsens.

We're working with our partners to support the people most affected. These partners include the Department of Service to Palestinian Refugees (DSPR) which is an arm of the Middle East Council of Churches. Refugees are supported through economic and social justice programmes, emergency relief and resource management. DSPR has adopted a holistic, people-centred approach to their emergency relief programme in Gaza.

We're also supporting Compassion Protestant Society (CPS) which is the diaconal wing of the National Evangelical Synod in Syria and Lebanon (NESSL). CPS aims to deliver critical, life-saving support for those who have been displaced by the ongoing conflict. Their immediate focus is on ensuring safe and dignified shelter, essential, life-sustaining assistance, along with education and psychosocial support for affected children.

[Donate here](#), and **[read a statement on the situation in Gaza](#)**.



LWPT wants to help those who communicate biblical wisdom as preachers, worship leaders, house group leaders, counsellors and evangelists.



We create 4 online workshops and 2 online live webinars every year. They give attendees a chance to learn from excellent Bible-based communicators.

January 2025 saw Bob Hartman giving his workshop - "Transform How You Read Scripture". This workshop will equip you with techniques to bring Scripture to life, engage your listeners, and create space for the Holy Spirit to work.

Go to our [YouTube gallery](#) and choose the workshops, interviews and webinars that suit you.

A new church in a hair salon?



Darren Middleton tells his story:

During a sabbatical, inspired by Julian of Norwich, I sought a practical outlet. Someone suggested hairdressing, given my background as a ballet dancer and army padre. Picking up scissors opened a powerful missional opportunity.

Starting in a lounge at Woodford Methodist Church with a few tools, the vision for Rev7 was born. Now fully trained, I see hairdressing as a way to build relationships and connect with people's spiritual hunger — even outside traditional church.

Like when God asked Moses, "What's in your hand?" I believe God has placed scissors in mine. This work touches hearts, revealing God already at work in people's lives. If God gives you a vision, persevere, pray, build a team, and dream big.

Watch Darren's video [here](#)

Find out where else New Places for New People are springing up [here](#).



Celebrate Action for Children Sunday

Action for Children invites you to celebrate their amazing partnership with churches and the difference they make together by holding a special worship service.

This year's theme is:

Driven by love, we take action for children.

Action for Children Sunday is normally on the second Sunday in July, but churches can choose to do it whenever you like.

The Action for Children Sunday newsletter and worship booklet are now available on the [**Action for Children website**](#). Scroll to 'Action for Children Sunday' for worship materials, which include Bible readings, hymns and real-life stories of how church donations help children.

Thank you for making a real difference to thousands of children's lives.

Events

WLP Explore Weekends

WLP Explore Weekends offer two events in one:

For **WLP students**, Explore Weekends offer an opportunity to do the three Explore sessions for one module over a Saturday and Sunday away. It's great to share ideas and encouragement with people from all over the connexion.

For **Worship Leaders and Local Preachers**, there is a one-day programme of training on Saturday to help us develop our skills and be inspired by fresh ideas.

If you're interested in getting involved with leading worship, or perhaps help with Local Arrangement services in your church, they are a great way of finding out more.

Our next three events are:

5 & 6 July in Taunton, Somerset - including WLP modules 2 and 6 for students
Ongoing learning programme based on Working Out Worship (see below) looking at creative and intergenerational worship and a keynote from Jonny Libby, Worship Leader at Plymouth Central Hall

27 & 28 September in Salisbury, Wiltshire - including WLP modules 3 and 7
and a range of engaging speakers looking at music in worship and ethics in preaching and a keynote from Holly Adams, Evangelism & Contemporary Culture, Connexional Team

1 & 2 November in Grantham, Lincolnshire - including WLP modules 4 and 8
and an ongoing learning programme to be announced.

There is no cost for attending an WLP Explore Weekend, but you will need to organise your own travel and accommodation. We encourage circuits and districts to support students with travel and accommodation costs.

Note that students can only do one module per weekend, and you must have completed the "Learn" material online first.

More details on the **[WLP Explore page on the Methodist website](#)**, together with booking information.

REAWAKENING SACRAMENTAL LIVING



How do we lead lives that are 'outward and visible signs' that convey God's grace to a broken world?

Our Summer online retreat will take place from **7pm – 8.30pm** on the evening of **Friday 18th July**, and from **9am to 1pm** on **Saturday 19th**.

Led by **Rev Dr R Sidwell Mokgothu**, the Bishop of the Limpopo District of the Methodist Church of Southern Africa in Pretoria. Sidwell is a former liberation struggle activist, and an ecumenical leader grounded in social justice. He is an ardent proponent of a spirituality that balances the contemplative with prophetic action.

Register any time before 30th June. Attendance is free, but we invite participants to make a donation of around £10 to the Community.

To register, please email the registrar at [**registrar@communitysf.org.uk**](mailto:registrar@communitysf.org.uk).

For more information about the Community for Spiritual Formation and for details of this retreat, please visit our [**website**](#).

Neurodiversity and the Church

Saturday November 8, 2025 9:30 am - 5 pm
Westminster College, Cambridge and online



An interactive workshop designed for church leaders and active church members.

The Psychology of Neurodiversity with Dr Helen West, University of Liverpool

Neurodiversity and the Church: A Theological Perspective with Dr Joanna Leidenhag, University of Leeds

Workshop: Making churches more accessible to a neurodiverse congregation with Jennie Prentice, Growing Hope

Further info and bookings on the [**Faraday website**](#).

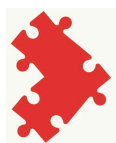


3Generate, the UK's largest Christian youth assembly, is back at the NEC in Birmingham this October! Whether you're a regular attendee or a first timer looking to share something new with the children and young people in your community, we would love to welcome you to 3Generate.

This year we will be hosting over 20 venues, including an expanded sports area, the Sound Studio for jamming and music workshops, and In the Beginning, a storytelling-focused venue with talks, workshops and opportunities to share your own stories.

3Generate also wouldn't be possible without an incredible team of volunteers, and you could join them. Our Delivery Team is made up of hundreds of incredible people dedicated to bringing faith, fun and discipleship to our children and young people. We have a wide range of roles for any ability, experience or skillset, so anyone can help make a difference and be a crucial part of making 3Generate happen.

For more information about the event, to learn more about the delivery team, or to book tickets, visit the [3Generate website](#).



Training & Development

Worship: Leading & Preaching

For Local Preachers' Secretaries...

Drop-In Sessions

The next round of these helpful sessions are coming up. Come with your ideas and questions and chat with others in this role across the connexion. Click on the date below to book:

Thursday 5th June 2025, 7:30-9pm

Tuesday 10th June 2025, 2-3:30pm

All who are Local Preachers' Secretaries or those who are considering taking on the role are welcome. Booking links are also on the **Local Preachers' Secretaries' page** together with lots of other useful information.

Local Preachers' Updates - a request:

We are in the process of moving to a new database in the Connexional Team. We understand that the existing database will be decommissioned shortly. As part of this transition, the Local Preachers' functions on the **Online Portal** (sometimes known as **Stats for Mission**) will be switched off soon.

Please therefore refrain from using the **Online Portal** to report changes to us relating to local preachers and worship leaders, requests for admission packs, long-service certificates etc. We have been made aware that sometimes, changes made through the online portal are not reflected through the portal, resulting in confusion. Please be assured that all changes requested through the portal have been actioned by us.

If possible, please use the **Local Preachers Return Form** or email us at **localpreachers@methodistchurch.org.uk**. Please note that whilst we will process any remaining request made through the portal, these changes will not be visible to you, and will always show as "pending". This is a symptom of how the system works, and doesn't mean your request has been ignored.

Thanks (and a reminder)

First, **thanks**: earlier this year, we said goodbye to Stefan Carney, who has moved to a more senior role in the Conference Office. Stefan did an amazing job supporting Local Preachers and Worship Leaders. As we have worked through this transition period, I (Bob) want to thank you for your patience and good grace as I've tried to prioritise my work and keep up with correspondence.

Which leads to the **reminder**: if you require **Long Service Certificates** for your circuit, please request them early, and tell us the **actual date** when you will need them. Certificates are printed and sent from the office in London approximately two weeks ahead of the presentation date. If we don't know the date, you may not receive the certificates you need.

Similarly, when requesting **Presidents' Letters and Bookplates** for new Local Preachers, please tell us when the Admission Service is going to be, and we will aim to send them out two weeks ahead.

Please note that to avoid embarrassment, Admission Services should only be planned once a student has confirmation of their portfolio result and they have successfully completed their final interview. Moderation can take up to two months from completing a portfolio, and it's always possible that resubmission may be required.



ReciteMe

Have you tried it yet? Clicking this symbol on the Worship: Leading & Preaching website site opens the **ReciteMe** toolbar which provides a set of accessibility tools to help you to use the course website:



The buttons allow you to alter screen brightness, contrast, font types and sizes and many other things. There is a text-to-speech facility, which is automatically ON when you open the tool. This can be switched off by clicking the Settings button (the cog symbol). A User Guide can be found by clicking the button at the furthest right of the toolbar.

ReciteMe also has **instant translation facilities**. If you wish to access the course in your preferred language, please try it. We would value your comments on how the text and speech translation works in your chosen language.



Footnote

On 8th June, we celebrate Pentecost, commonly referred to by Christians as the "birth of the Church". The name refers to the fifty days since the events of Easter happened in that same city of Jerusalem. The occasion was a gathering of Jews and adherents from all over the known world to celebrate the Jewish feast of Shavuot, marking the counting of seven weeks since Passover.

At the heart of the account of Pentecost in Acts 2, we find something quite unexpected. An uneducated man from up north in Galilee (and the accent to prove it), stood up and addressed the crowd: *Listen carefully, all of you, fellow Jews and residents of Jerusalem! Make no mistake about this...what you see was predicted long ago by*

the prophet Joel: 'In the last days,' God says, 'I will pour out my Spirit upon all people...

He preached!

But what was more extraordinary was that this was no top Rabbi, but a man who used to fish for a living before he abandoned everything for a life on the road with Jesus. He was speaking from the heart, by the power of the Spirit. He proclaimed the good news of Jesus Christ to forgive sins, to transform people's lives and to challenge fear and injustice.

Peter was no highly talented orator or theological prodigy, he was a willing volunteer who made plenty of mistakes and occasionally aspired to greatness. He was ready and available to serve. He's a model for all of us who preach week by week in chapels and churches across the connexion. We're simply doing what Peter showed us: lifting our voices and proclaiming with confidence:

"...let everyone in Israel know for certain that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, to be both Lord and Messiah!"

With every blessing,

Bob Bartindale

Officer for Worship & Local Preachers

Acts 2 extracts from New Living Bible © 1996, 2004, 2015 Tyndale House Foundation.

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