

Worship:
leading &
preaching



Circuit Interviews for Persons on Trial

(These Guidelines supplement S.O.s 566(3) and (4).)

Introduction

1. The procedures set out in these guidelines apply to all those studying Worship: Leading and Preaching
2. The first interview shall normally be held at the Local Preachers' Meeting following the successful submission of the first portfolio (modules 1-4) and its appropriate Connexional moderation.
3. The second interview shall be held after the successful submission of the second portfolio, Connexional moderation and the last trial service. At this point the Local Preachers' Meeting considers whether the 'person on trial' should be recommended for admission as a local preacher.

Conduct of the Interview

1. The Superintendent has overall responsibility for the conduct of both interviews, but may delegate any part or all to another minister or a local preacher. It may be that the local tutor is deemed to be most suitable as interviewer, having worked closely with the person on trial. (**Note:** Permission will have to be given to attend if the local tutor is from another circuit.)
2. Care should be taken to put the person on trial at their ease for what is an interview conversation rather than an examination. A comfortable room with flexible seating would best facilitate this.
3. Normally the first interview should be no longer than 30 minutes, and the second no longer than 45 minutes.
4. After the interviews, opportunity should be given (but not insisted upon) for the person on trial and anyone else on trial to leave during deliberation by the meeting.
5. Appropriate pastoral support should be offered for those who are discontinued or not recommended for admission.

Purpose and Content of the Interviews

The First Interview

The purpose of this interview is for the person on trial to have the opportunity to share with the meeting the story of their Christian experience; their call to preach; any insights, challenges or difficulties experienced during the period on trial to date; and to assist the Meeting in reaching a decision on the continuation of 'on trial' status.

One approach to the Interview could be:

1. The person on trial shall be asked to give an account of their Christian experience particularly with regard to any change in perspective during the time 'on trial'.
2. The person on trial shall be asked to share with the Meeting their call to preach.
3. A review shall be made of worship led by the person on trial, including consideration of a detailed report by two preachers and a local church steward (who is not a local preacher) all of whom attended a recent service. The person on trial should be encouraged to express a personal view of these services, and to share what are felt to be particular strengths or weaknesses
4. A review shall be made of the progress of the person on trial in their studies, with a report from the local tutor on Connexional Assessment results. The preacher 'on trial' may be asked about new insights gained, or areas of difficulty in which further help is needed. (Note: Both the service report and the tutor's report shall be discussed with the preacher 'on trial' prior to the meeting).
5. When the person on trial and the meeting is satisfied that he or she has been adequately heard, the Meeting shall discuss and vote on whether or not the person on trial shall continue with 'on trial' status.

An Alternative approach embodying Appreciative Enquiry Techniques:

1. Tell us about a time when you felt closest to God
2. Can you describe your natural strengths?
3. How do you use your strengths in leading worship?
4. What have you noticed about your relationship with God – since you began Worship: Leading and Preaching?
5. What are your hopes and dreams for your preaching journey?
6. How will you know if you are ready to be considered for recognition as a local preacher in the Methodist Church

To the meeting:

Information should be shared on the person on trial's studies and leading of worship

The meeting should be asked to discuss in pairs and then share with the meeting:

From the conversation you have heard: What of God are you hearing?

When the preacher 'on trial' and the meeting is satisfied that they have been adequately heard, the Meeting shall discuss and vote on whether or not the person on trial shall continue with 'on trial' status.

The Second Interview

The purpose of this interview is to assess whether or not the person on trial is ready and suitable to be recommended to the Circuit Meeting for admission as a local preacher. It is to seek assurance that there has been continuing growth in knowledge and understanding of the faith, increase in competence in leading worship, and a maturing Christian experience.

Those 'on trial' must be able to give evidence in a clear and concise manner of their developing Christian maturity.

One approach to the Interview could be:

1. Re-evaluation of Christian experience and call to preach. The person on trial shall indicate any change felt in these areas since the first interview.
2. A review shall be made of worship led by the person on trial including consideration of a detailed report by two preachers (one of whom is a minister) and a local church steward (not normally a local preacher), on a recent service. The views of the preacher 'on trial' about leading worship should be heard.
3. Wesley's Sermons. The person on trial shall be invited to discuss one or more of these sermons read during their studies. The person conducting the interview may agree beforehand with the person 'on trial' which sermon or sermons they will discuss. This information should be sent out in advance to the rest of the meeting so that all local preachers may fully participate.
4. Acceptance of the duties of a local preacher. The person on trial shall be asked to confirm his or her acceptance of the duties, after they have been read to the meeting (S.O. 563 (1)-(4)).
5. After discussion, the meeting shall vote on whether to recommend to the Circuit Meeting that the person on trial be admitted as a local preacher.

An Alternative approach embodying Appreciative Enquiry Techniques:

1. Can you share with us an experience or story of someone who has influenced your preaching journey?
2. Can you tell us about a service or part of a service you led that went really well?
3. What does 'really well' mean to you in the context of worship?
4. Given no constraints what would you change about the worshipping life of the Methodist Church?
5. What in the Wesley sermon(s) you have read most relates to your preaching experience?
6. What have you learnt about yourself on this preaching journey?

7. You've read the duties of a local preacher in Module 8 of Worship Leading and Preaching. Do you agree to abide by these duties and rights? (Note: the Duties and Rights may be read to the meeting (S.O. 563 (1)-(4)).
8. How might your preaching be different in 12 months' time?

The meeting should be asked to discuss in pairs and then share with the meeting:

In what ways do you see this person is ready and suitable for admission as a local preacher?

After discussion, the meeting shall vote on whether or not to recommend to the Circuit Meeting that the person on trial be admitted as a local preacher.

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