

## A Methodist resourcing of the mission of the Church

1. The Council is provided with three papers to enable a discussion about the use of resources and the deployment of ministers. In discussing these papers it is hoped that the Council will be able to contribute to the task of identifying priorities so that resources can be used in the most effective way.
2. In holding a conversation about priorities the Council may be assisted in paying attention to the adoption at the 2015 Conference of The One Mission Statement. The statement called the Church to this vision:  
**A world transformed by God's love;  
 a confident Church motivated to share God's love;  
 a people celebrating being part of a worldwide family.**
3. This vision is now contained in Part 10 of CPD entitled 'The Church in Mission' and followed reflection on the nature of mission for the Methodist Church today. This is a mission which brings together both the local and the global aspects. To date little strategic work has been carried out on how either the whole Connexion focuses on this vision, or how the Connexional Team is structured to support this focus on mission. Too often we have allowed the idea to prevail that everything the Church does is 'mission' and so therefore the whole Church and Team already engages in this work.
4. Over the last year the Secretary of the Conference has called the Church to focus on worshipping God and proclaiming the Gospel. The fact that engaging in the One Mission of Jesus Christ requires 'greater and clearer expression within our connexional structures' was clearly spelt out by the Secretary and comes at a time when a number of initiatives (or at least emerging ideas) are coming together.

The Church's task is to participate in God's mission. That involves dialogue – not only sharing the Christian faith, but listening to the understanding which others have of God, life and salvation. It involves working with them for justice and peace. Such co-operation and dialogue are fruitful only if they are entered into in a spirit of openness, for 'authentic dialogue opens both partners to a deeper conversion to the God who speaks to each through the other'. In this way, Christians can come to a deeper understanding of God, the Christian faith, and of what it means to be the Church, and at the same time contribute to God's eternal purpose of bringing all things into a unity in Christ.

Called to Love and Praise

5. A preliminary list of work already in existence which contributes to themes supporting One Mission includes:  
*Preparation of a major report on the nature of Ministry in the Methodist Church report 2018*  
*The creation of the Property Development Committee –*  
*Ongoing conversations about connexionally held funds and how they are used and distributed*  
*Emerging conversations on the appropriate use of locally held funds for mission and ministry (Releasing resources for God's mission)*  
*A renewed focus on the mutuality of connexionalism*  
*The identification of the need for a renewed Apologetic to support Methodism talking about God*

*Reworking or replacement of SO962 – District plans for future mission which need to be supported by the Team where appropriate*  
*Developing a pattern of ongoing Vocational development and leadership training for the whole people of God, including the way in which the Church identifies and stations District Chairs.*

*Supervision and accountability work arising from the Past Cases Review*

*Global Relationships strategy outworking – a move from grant making to relationship building*

*A renewed focus on partnership in Europe with us as a participant player*

6. Approaching all of this work in a more comprehensive way could offer confidence and coherence to the wider Church.
7. In whatever way all of this work is addressed the core components of One Mission must not be overlooked. The concept of One Mission was only ever to enable the people called Methodist to:  
Worship the God who loves us  
Talk confidently about the Gospel;  
Act imaginatively both to spread that message and to live it out;
8. Be connected to others doing the same, worldwide and at home; As each Circuit is the primary unit for mission, so each Circuit needs to be challenged about how they are addressing each of these components in their own context and also to be offered support for that process. Providing resources and support that enables and equips Methodists to engage and respond as part of God's mission through evangelism, social justice actions, worship and imaginative outreach will contribute to the faithfulness of the Church.
9. It is vital that the links between apologetics, evangelism, global/local mission, developing discipleship and worship are not lost. The very history of Methodism shows its people spreading the Gospel through an understanding of the intrinsic links that exist between a personal response to Christ which leads to a spreading the gospel in all places and in all contexts. Methodism is a global and broad community, and by continuing to journey with partners we can all be stronger in a world which often does not want to hear our witness.

The Gospel has to be both spoken and lived. The gospels show that 'good news and good works are inseparable', and that to preach the Kingdom of God involves a commitment to justice and peace. So although Christians may differ in their respective commitments to evangelism and social justice, the two tasks belong together. The Church is called both to 'make disciples' and to work for a loving, just and peaceful society which anticipates the Kingdom of God. This involves identifying with those who suffer, sharing their burdens, and speaking out with them against the injustice they experience.

Called to Love and Praise

10. In what follows the Council is offered some points for discussion and reflection. Over the course of the next year updates will be brought to the Council on the work outlines in paragraph 5 above. The following three papers bring into rather sharp focus two pressing issues; the use of financial resources and the deployment of ordained ministry.