

REFLECT

AND

RESPOND

STUDY GUIDE

Contents

Page

3	Introduction
4	Study 1: Being good news
4	Reflection 1
5	The abuse of power
5	Reflection 2
6	Reflection 3
7	Good news for the poor
7	Reflection 4
8	Study 2: A broken-hearted world and a loving heart of Christ
8	Reflection 1
11	Reflection 2
12	Study 3: Learning and Caring
12	Reflection 1
16	Reflection 2
17	Study 4: Service
20	Reflection 1
21	Reflection 2
22	A charter for survivors
23	Reflection 3
23	Resources

Author

This study guide was written by Revd Helen Cameron, with input from the Methodist Survivors Advisory Group.

Introduction

Welcome to this study guide. It reflects on the calling of the Methodist Church and is written from the perspectives of a number of survivors of abuse. It is a response to other documents produced by the Methodist Church to describe and reflect on the core calling of the Church.

Our Calling

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

The Church exists to:

- Increase the awareness of God's presence and celebrate God's love (Worship).
- Help people to grow and learn as Christians, through mutual support and care (Learning and Caring).
- Be a good neighbour to people in need and to challenge injustice (Service).
- Make more followers of Jesus Christ (Evangelism).

(Our Calling Conference Report 2000)

3

This booklet's reflection on Our Calling is distinct, because it is written from the perspectives of those who have survived abuse and contains direct accounts of their experiences. This study guide is offered to you by adult survivors of abuse. It is an invitation to you to reflect deeply and carefully as Methodist people about what difference their perspectives might make to you as you work out how to be a faithful Christian in a world that is wounded.

The views they offer are a challenge about what it means to belong to a Church that is also wounded, and which needs to be more accountable, humble and willing to learn. You may find some of the experiences described hard to hear about – but they were, and remain, real, lived experiences that should not be hidden away, avoided or ignored.

The themes of Our Calling have been explored in the life of our Church as principally being about transformation and reconciliation between God and the world God has made, and the means we use to enact this and live it out as disciples.

“The Methodist Church is committed actively and intentionally to work towards a world transformed by the love of God, sharing the love of God and celebrating its place within a worldwide family.” (SO 1000(2))

“In Christ, God was reconciling the world to himself. Through the Church, the body of Christ, within which the Methodist Church claims and cherishes its place, God seeks to reconcile the world itself into a unity with Christ. In this mission, necessarily undertaken both locally and globally, the vocation of the Church is to be a sign, witness, foretaste and instrument of the Kingdom of God.” (SO 1000(1))

4

Reflection 1

1. What does it mean to be good news for the world? Think about what this means, both for us as disciples and for us as the Methodist Church.
2. What does it mean for the Methodist Church to be a sign, a witness, a foretaste and an instrument of the kingdom of God?
3. What does it mean to belong to a church where abuse has taken place in the past? How do you feel about being part of an organisation where there still can be a struggle to make safeguarding a priority and be a safe place?

As we consider these questions, we must put ourselves in the shoes of those who have left the Church because their relationship with it has been broken. For them, or for those they love, the Church has become terribly bad news and a sign of something gone very wrong.

The abuse of power

Some people in positions of power have abused their power and used their influence in the Church to do great harm to those with less power. This is often the ordained, but not always; it also includes youth leaders, stewards and others in positions of responsibility within the Church.

We know now that abuse of power can happen anywhere in public life, including places that are meant to be safe and supportive. We know that abuse has happened in a range of locations, including the BBC, football clubs, hospitals and schools, as well as in churches and church-sponsored activities.

Reflection 2

1. Is it worse when abuse happens in a church environment? Is it worse when the abuser is someone to whom the Church has given power and authority, or where the Church has failed to prevent or block their abusive behaviours?
2. Can we expect the Church to be different from non-religious organisations and to know more about preventing abuse and its impact?
3. How should we expect the response of the Church to abuse to be different from other organisations?

5

The essential calling of the Church is to be more than an organisation. The Church is the Body of Christ and, like a human body, is capable of growth, change and transformation. If part of the body is wounded by abuse, we all should feel that pain, face it, own up to it and seek to bring healing and restoration.

We must ask why some parts of the Church resist implementing rigorous safeguarding training and processes. We can and must expect the response of the Church to be different from other organisations. The Church needs to change.

The following is the account of a survivor of childhood sexual abuse on Methodist Church premises.

From K

I sit on my local Church Council and sometimes have to listen to the mutters under the breath of some people present when safeguarding matters come up on the agenda. They don't know that I am an adult survivor of childhood abuse that took place in my local Methodist Church. Safeguarding is treated by some on my local Church Council as something preventing the mission of the Church and completely separate from it.

It sometimes seems that there is little enthusiasm for making the Church safer than it was when my Sunday School teacher abused me over a period of months. Safeguarding is not seen, in my local church, as something we all have responsibility for – just those who are safeguarding officers. It makes me feel despair at times that few people seem to 'get it'.

6

Reflection 3

1. How does K's account compare with your local context? How do we all take responsibility for making the Church a safer place?
2. What would help church members to understand that safeguarding the vulnerable is holy and godly work and, therefore, is mission?

We often speak fairly easily about individual people having a vocation. In church, that usually means they are called to be an ordained minister, local preacher or lay worker. Sometimes we remember that plumbers, doctors, teachers and parents are also expressing their vocation. We speak less often of the people of God having a vocation to be Church (rather than just to go to church or belong to the Church).

Our calling is to belong to the Body of Christ, to be ‘in Christ’, and in our baptism to die and rise with Christ. We belong to God, we are becoming more like Christ and, in our developing Christ-likeness, we are a new creation and a new community. This new community should be characterised by loving service (diakonia). It should not be a place where relationships are self-seeking or self-indulgent.

The Church is founded upon the self-offering of Christ. The Church is its best self and most Christ-like when it is humble, willing to learn and change and not be defensive; when it is able to make redress when it makes mistakes, fails to protect the vulnerable, and support those abused.

Good news for the poor

Read Luke 4:14-30

In Luke’s account, Jesus comes to Nazareth and reads in the synagogue. The passage from the scroll of the prophet Isaiah says: “He has anointed me to bring good news to the poor.” Upon finishing the reading, Jesus said: “Today this scripture has been fulfilled.” There was an outcry at Jesus having the audacity to claim that he was good news for the poor.

7

All that the Church believes about the Incarnation – that God came to dwell with humanity, be born among them, live their life and bear their pain – is fairly audacious. However, it is also important in how those who follow Jesus seek to be like him, follow his way, and be the continuation of his ministry.

Jesus told his disciples that: “Splendid are those who take sides with the poor: they are citizens of the bright new world.” Matthew 5:3 (*Good as New*, John Henson, 2004).

Reflection 4

1. Who are the poor? How do we take their side?
2. What does Jesus’ instruction to take sides with the poor mean in terms of the Church’s safeguarding work?

STUDY 2

A broken-hearted world and a loving heart of Christ

From D

I belong to my local Methodist church, despite the temptation to give up on it. It is a very inwardly focused church and it is hard, at times, to encourage people either to be honest and real about what they are feeling and facing in their lives apart from the Church, or to think beyond the walls of the church to the community we are part of, the city we belong to, to the wider global community, or to consider the reality of many people's lives. No wonder my children think church is irrelevant; they would never find important what this church has decided is important. So, because there is little honest conversation, they do not know I am a survivor of abuse. They do not know that the perpetrator of my abuse was a Methodist minister. They do not know what happened to me. They just do not know.

8

Reflection 1

1. Why does the Church find it so hard to realise that Church is not an end in itself?

Being Church together is to belong to a community of those who worship God and seek to see the ushering in of the kingdom of God. The values of the kingdom of God – the last being first, the weak becoming strong, and the broken-hearted finding consolation, restitution and wholeness – are values that should be visible in the daily life of the Church. While we wait for the final ushering in of the reign of God, we are called to live by the values and the practices of the kingdom now. Kingdom living should not be postponed.

In her novel *Gilead* (2004), Marilynne Robinson has a character who is a minister's daughter. She describes the Church: "For her, Church was an airy white room with tall windows looking out onto God's good world, with God's good sunlight pouring in through those windows and falling across the pulpit where her father stood, straight and strong, parsing the broken heart of humankind and praising the loving heart of Christ. That was Church."

Many survivors of abuse have failed to hear words in our churches that have denounced abuses of power and spoken of the need for abuses of power to be fully acknowledged. They remain broken-hearted.

The constant temptation for the Church to spiritualise everything and live in an unreal fantasy about power imbalances remains. Powerlessness against the machinery of church structures, along with the unwillingness of some congregations to believe that a person may have misused their power, is a constant, unrelenting and often unaddressed issue for many survivors of abuse. They have to decide if they can or want to belong to a Church that has not believed them, supported them sufficiently or made a safer space for them. At times, it can make it hard for them to hear, to trust the promises of "the loving heart of Christ" and to be filled with praise.

9

OUR CALLING

The Church exists to increase awareness of God's presence and to celebrate God's love (Worship).

This study guide contains a number of accounts from survivors speaking to the four strands of Our Calling. These accounts speak truthfully and powerfully of how hard it is, each day, to trust God's presence in the life of the Church and be able to offer praise and celebration with a glad and thankful heart.

From K

How do I go to church to public worship when I don't get any warning before someone there wants to touch me? Every time I go, there is shaking hands, sharing the peace, unsolicited hugs, being asked to hold hands, being kissed, being anointed with oil, foot washing, arms around the shoulders, hands lingering when bread is offered, and people wanting to look deep into my eyes. Why is the Church so convinced it can touch me without my permission or make it so hard to avoid such unwanted touch without having that avoidance pointed out for all to see and comment on?

From C

10 The debate about the use of inclusive language in worship is less of an issue in Church Action on Sexual Abuse Issues (CASAI)* because inclusion is always on the agenda. It's less easy to make changes in places that have their roots in traditional worship. Many ministers, worship leaders and local preachers have ignored the invitation to create more inclusive worship because it demands change from what has previously been done without thinking.

In CASAI, we believe God is beyond gender, and so the language, metaphor and images we use should reflect that. Survivors need space and freedom to explore language in worship, so it's important to have variety of language, metaphor and imagery. Fear and mistrust can cause survivors to be defensive; fear and complacency can cause traditional churches to be stuck in their ways. Everything in every service doesn't have to change, but it's not fair to not include people's real and lived experiences, or not be sensitive to struggles, or to just have everything comfortable and unreal.

* CASAI is an organisation in the Liverpool District working alongside female survivors of sexual abuse.

From C continued

The *Time for Action* and *Tracing Rainbows through the Rain* reports both challenged the use of exclusively male language for God and people in worship, and encouraged the Methodist Church to use more inclusive liturgies. Bullies and abusers continue to be part of Methodist Church worship communities, but our worship needs to offer imagery and language that offers alternative language and images, symbols and metaphors.

Reflection 2

1. What difference has the COVID-19 pandemic made to our approach to using touch in worship? Can we become more thoughtful?
2. Is it possible to use touch in worship in a way that is appropriate, therapeutic and restorative?
3. If touch is a symbol of what we are thinking and feeling when we worship, what is it we want to say to God and one another when we gather together?

STUDY 3 Learning and Caring

OUR CALLING

The Church exists to help people to grow and learn as Christians, through mutual support and care (Learning and Caring).

Reflection 1

1. How do we decide what we need to learn as a Church to express the quality and character of love we know in Jesus Christ? Who decides?
12. 2. What are the accounts and narratives we take seriously and allow to form and shape us?

The following two accounts from survivors explore these questions powerfully. You are invited to read, listen and reflect deeply.

From F

I am writing as a survivor. I am now in my 60s and the sexual abuse happened when I was 7, so I have had a long time to reflect on what I wish people had learnt earlier so that they could have genuinely cared for me as child victim and as an adult survivor. There was one thing that people absolutely did not want to learn – they did not want to know that child sexual abuse was real and that it was happening to real children. They did not learn that the demons who came in the night were flesh and blood people doing real damage, not just childish imagination.

From F continued

I think of this as the care of my soul. What that man did to my body was bad enough, but what he did to my young mind and soul was infinitely worse. The lessons he instilled in me were intended to last a lifetime, so that his crimes would never be discovered. He taught me to fear discovery. He taught me to dread being exposed as a sinner. He taught me that I was a fraud masquerading as a decent person, and that if anyone ever found out what I was really like, I would be completely shunned. He brainwashed me. It is not hard for an adult to brainwash a child. The poison he injected into my soul was intended to keep me quiet, frightened, cowed and compliant.

For a physical condition, a doctor would always start with a history and diagnosis before deciding on the best way to care for a patient. The diagnosis and treatment would be based on a huge body of research and the practitioner's own experience of treating conditions. But what about the soul? My soul practitioners, my elders and betters, didn't know my history and wouldn't have believed it anyway. They had full confidence that they knew best, simply because they were my elders and betters.

When you are dealing with adult survivors, you are probably not dealing with people who can trust that God is love. If you love someone, you care about what happens to them. Many sexually abused children feel that nobody cares about what is happening to them, including God. In my own case, I believed that God might one day love me if I fully atoned for my terrible sin. I didn't have love, but I did still have the hope that it could happen one day if I worked really hard and tried to be extra specially good. I will confess that Jesus and I parted ways soon after the abuse.

The Jesus model that is sold to infant school children is "Gentle Jesus, meek and mild". I didn't need meek and mild, I needed the Old Testament God, full of fire and fury, to intervene and save me and banish the devil who came in the night. As an adult, I have apologised to Jesus for rejecting him and made my peace with him. God sent me what I really needed. He sent me a succession of people, outside of the Church, who had the extraordinary gift of discernment. These people recognised a soul in pain and took the pain seriously.

From F continued

I believe we are just about at the beginning of a real call for the Methodist Church to start properly caring about adult survivors. But it is only a beginning. There is a huge amount of learning to be done before you can know what care is needed. The Church has a great deal to learn about this terrible thing it has been avoiding for years.

I hope that, with the growing social awareness of abuse, future child victims will not end up as refugees from the Church. What can we do for the older generation of adult survivors who have already fled the Church to seek a safe place? I think first of all we need to accept the reality of that and not just pretend it is not so.

Those adult survivors are somewhere out there. So here is a suggestion. In the past, monks stayed safely within the walls of the monastery while the warriors were outside battling whatever hostile threat had invaded. But the monks weren't simply avoiding the fight. They had a powerful job to do. They had to pray and pray hard. So perhaps those inside the Church should consistently and regularly set time aside to openly, earnestly and honestly pray for that generation of lost children who are outside the Church trying to save themselves from the dark.

From P

When I gave my 'YES' to Jesus some years ago, I meant it. I really meant it. At the time I didn't understand that it might be a rough journey. Nobody in church told me that God has a way of probing outer defences and inner murky places that we don't know about. They talked a lot about sin though. They said that sin was the cause of all my troubles – my sadness, my addiction, my isolation. 'God loves you,' they insisted, but I wondered about that.

What is love? Our first experience of love is our mother, the most precious of people. If we don't have that, how do we know what love really is? And where do we find it? And why was I questioning this anyway? Clearly it wasn't my problem. I'd had a perfect upbringing in a respectable family and my parents had given me a secure and happy childhood. Nevertheless there was something there, something lurking in the deep and I couldn't quite see it. I didn't know why this mattered. Why it felt so bad.

Then one Sunday, there were the sudden unexpected prayers in Church giving thanks for our wonderful mothers, for their care and loving kindness and... the 'something' stirred. Something unspeakable. I had a sense of being trapped in a kind of shell and realised that my life was made up of layers. My past became a constant companion as little by little, week by week, those layers peeled away to uncover painful secrets that had been hidden – even from myself. It felt like a kind of death. On and on it went until finally a door opened into a dark pit. A howling emptiness. A gaping wound, where trust had been destroyed and love betrayed. It was a place of no language. A place of haunting abandonment and desolation, but it was in this place that I came face to face with a part of myself I didn't know was there. A scrap of worthless humanity desperate for her mother's arms, her gaze, her safety, her love and as I stared at this creature, the truth slowly unravelled into one long primal scream... and I knew with a deep knowing, that I had been emotionally neglected and sexually abused at a early age by my own mother.

From P continued

My world fell apart. My infant needs came spilling out and struggling with the emotions of a pre-verbal infant, I clutched greedily for any snippet of attention. I was desperate for someone to carry my pain and soon became attached to an older woman in a position of authority who was gentle, kind and seemed to glow with maternal love. I longed for her warm smiles, her loyalty. I longed to be inwardly held and soothed as a good mother holds a wounded child.

Our relationship developed and eventually I disclosed to her what had happened. Although I was initially heard and believed, my personal sin seemed more important than the things that had been done to me. She advised me to control all negative emotions, to forgive and move on with my life, to be lovingly respectful towards my mother. However hard I tried, I found it impossible to leave behind those early childhood wounds that had determined the shape and shades of who I had become. She quickly grew tired of me. I was patronised, then disregarded and ignored. Was it something I'd said? Something I'd done? Had I been too demanding? She had been a lifeline for me, but now a glass wall had come between us and my dark narrative became even darker. Overwhelmed with grief and shame, I retreated into the shadows. All I could do was trust the thin strand of a loving Reality who was holding me firm as I left the Church to seek the help I needed elsewhere.

16

Reflection 2

1. Can we create public worship that permits all realities and lived experiences to be included, validated and honoured? For example, Mothering Sunday worship can often be sentimental, rather than reflective of the difficult parenting experiences many have.
2. When people stop attending public worship, do we carefully consider why?
3. Whose stories do we listen to and whose do we avoid and ignore?

STUDY 4 Service

OUR CALLING

The Church exists to be a good neighbour to people in need and to challenge injustice (Service).

The Methodist Church is convinced it exists to be a good neighbour to people in need and to challenge injustice. However, the very injustices we may need to challenge begin with us as a Church, our attitudes, our pre-conceived notions, our capacity for 'othering' anyone who does not look or sound like us. The very notion of warm fellowship, welcome and belonging of which we are so proud as a Church may be a dangerous notion if it excludes the most vulnerable, those who are different and yet includes those who abuse power and target those who cannot be heard or believed.

17

From H

Ninety per cent of the time whenever I enter a room full of new people, I see fear on people's faces. I have quite severe cerebral palsy. All my four limbs are affected and I have a speech impediment. Many people assume I have a learning disability or that I'm deaf. There is an assumption that I'm totally dependent on others in every aspect of life. My speech impediment embarrasses people so they helplessly look to the people around me to interpret for them. If no one is there I am often ignored.

I am, in fact, a qualified social worker and teacher. I have lived independently for over 30 years and drive a car. Why do I mention the above? If you're reading this, you're probably trying to get a greater understanding of how to support survivors of childhood sexual abuse.

From H continued

NSPCC statistics report that one in three girls and one in six boys are sexually assaulted as children. These statistics are horrifying in themselves. However, if you have any type of disability in childhood, statistics further tell us that you are three times as likely to be sexually assaulted.

The reasons for this are certainly complex, but they have their origins in how a disabled person is perceived, not only in the church but in society. The birth of a disabled child is still met with some awkwardness by people in general. Is it a celebration or not, we wonder?

Nurses, teachers and paid carers are all seen as valiant people for working in these areas. No one would suspect such harm from such noble people. Parents/carers/guardians are 'saints' for caring for their disabled children and 'saints' do not harm children.

18 This leads to most onlookers seeing both the disabled child and their parent within their minds as 'special'. Disabled people become different; they are not part of the norm. Psychologists call this 'othering'. In lay terms, this means that any action or attitude by which an individual or group becomes mentally classified in somebody's mind as 'not one of us'. Whilst I have no intention of labelling all parents/carers of disabled children as abusers (for I realise most love their children dearly), research from the NSPCC recognises that othering can create opportunities for those who do wish to sexually harm disabled children, as it creates isolation for either the person or the carer. Isolation results in desperation which abusers are willing to use for their own gratification.

How can the Church care for disabled survivors of childhood sexual abuse? **Firstly, we need to recognise the problem.** We are all created in God's image as holistic beings, which includes our sexuality. This does not change when you have a disability. If we attribute asexual characteristics to disabled people, we will not recognise the potential sexual harm they may experience.

From H continued

Secondly, we must learn how to listen to disabled people. Most perpetrators of any kind of abuse rely on the silence of their victims, which is why those who do not use verbal communication are often targeted. Yes, we must listen verbally, but we must also listen with our eyes. Someone who has no speech can still communicate through his or her behaviour. Despair and distress are displayed in many ways.

Thirdly, we as a church need to stop seeing disabled individuals as 'passive' people who have little to offer the church because they cannot do certain things. In reinforcing this stereotype, we both negate their worth before God, ourselves and the people that have, or who seek to, sexually harm them.

From C

We are always looking at creative ways to make sense of the gospel messages for those who have different measures of hope as well as ways to involve all those called to be Church and highlight their need to belong and to find ways to be freed from their past abuse. In CASAI, we talk about being in the tomb as a process for healing, a time of recovery, an endless stuckness or being dead to anything life giving, or claustrophobic depression. Jesus died and his dead body was placed in a tomb.

Jesus experienced assault, betrayal, abandonment, murder, theft, loss, embarrassment and removal of dignity. These are all things that people feel when they have been abused. The tomb would have been dark, humid, sweaty, dusty and unclean. It is understandable that at times the Christian narrative is told in a way that cleans and neatens it just as supporters, friends and families often want survivors to be in recovery and sorted out. Justice comes after survivors are believed, are accepted, and are truly welcomed and not until.

From C continued

CASAI often looks after survivors whose mental health challenges, frightens and confuses those they engage with, and they are often misunderstood.

Survivors have said to me that it seems to them that abusers are easier to tolerate than survivors in church buildings because they appear to conform, they can be charming, and they are given a safeguarding monitoring and support group.

Reflection 1

In Luke 8:2-3, we learn that Mary Magdalene is healed of seven spirits. We know that she is a follower of Jesus, and that she is present at the Crucifixion and the Resurrection. But consider what the Church has done over the centuries with the tradition of Mary Magdalene. It has turned her from “the apostle to the apostles” into a repentant prostitute in religious art and imagery. In some pictures and sculptures, she is dressed in crimson and with long red flowing hair – the sign of a prostitute. Mary Magdalene has been othered.

20

1. Why did the Church do this? What was the Church afraid of in the story of Mary Magdalene?
2. What are the stories or narratives that the Church is reluctant to hear and be changed by?
3. What must change in our attitudes and practices so that we truly include people of all abilities in the life of the Church?

OUR CALLING

The Church exists to make more followers of Jesus Christ (Evangelism).

The renewed emphasis on evangelism and growth in the life of the Methodist Church is to be welcomed. However, real growth and maturity in the life of the Church will come when we are a fully accountable and transparent Church.

From C

Jesus invited people to change, offered spaces for growth and talked about relationships. Jesus offered ways to be healed and challenged people to look at their behaviour and be accountable to others for their conduct and practice.

The best and most effective evangelism is through consistent, real living of the faith not just talking about it. Survivors of abuse often recognise that which is fake and false and pick up quickly on a lack of sincerity. Abuse affects lives so utterly that faith and trust in God is always affected and has to be renewed, revived and resurrected. For survivors, one thing is certain – after abuse nothing is ever the same.

When faith is expressed in worship using the language of God as father, Jesus as our brother and Jesus as teacher, then survivors can struggle to use this language. We must be able to share the good news of Jesus in a language which survivors can hear and respond to, even when you do not realise they are present.

21

Reflection 2

1. Why do you think the language, imagery and symbols we use in worship matter so much?
2. Is there sometimes a gap between what we say we believe about God and how we behave in the life of the local church?
3. What will make us credible as people of faith to others of no faith or those who have given up on Church?

A charter for survivors

This charter was written by the Methodist Survivors Advisory Group and is an invitation to the Methodist Church to listen, to repent, and to change.

We call on the Methodist Church:

- To enable every survivor to know they matter.
- To convince every member or person in contact with the Methodist Church to know why the safeguarding agenda matters.
- To see survivors of abuse as successful people, not only or always victims.
- To work for the expression and celebration of the full humanity of survivors whose personhood and flourishing must be about more than just survival.
- To practise and live out that the truth about abuse (establishing of facts) is a cause worth fighting for.
- To enable every member to benefit from the principles underlying the work of the Methodist Survivors Advisory Group and learn from the group.
- To encourage more listening, contemplation and self-reflection for all church people.
- To support the supporters of survivors and stand alongside them.
- To understand that it takes a community to support a survivor – it is a congregational responsibility. There is a shared responsibility of being fully present to the abused.
- To recognise the Church is already fractured and wounded because survivors of abuse are part of the Church.
- To change attitudes in relation to mental health.
- To recognise that some survivors are unlikeable and some perpetrators are likeable and charming, and learn to avoid stereotypes.
- To learn the difference between secrecy, privacy and confidentiality.

- To understand that a survivor may not know what is meant by family, forgiveness, trust, foundation, safety, truth or confidentiality.
- To be a resource for people supporting historical survivors.
- To detoxify the disclosure of sexual abuse (over and above other disclosures).
- To encourage a healthy theology of the Body and avoid spiritualising everything.
- To promote the declaration that the Methodist Church has a zero tolerance response to abuse.

Reflection 3

Read and reflect on the charter.

1. What do you want to do differently?
2. What do you want your local church to do differently? How would you like your church to change?

23

Resources

Methodist Church safeguarding information:

www.methodist.org.uk/safeguarding

The Survivors Trust

www.thesurvivorstrust.org

National Association of People Abused in Childhood (NAPAC)

www.napac.org.uk

Church Action on Sexual Abuse Issues (CASAI)

colcasai@liverpoolmethodist.org.uk

The **Methodist** Church 

Methodist Church House

25 Marylebone Road

London NW1 5JR

Tel: 020 7486 5502

www.methodist.org.uk