

Terms of Reference for Solidarity Circles

Each Solidarity Circle will work to these Terms of Reference but will augment and adopt them in relation to any specific factors of their area of experience.

Aims:

- a) To offer mutual support for those who share a particular characteristic
- b) To develop understanding of what is positive and negative about their Church experiences
- c) To provide active involvement in any new procedures, processes or training because members are 'Experts by Experience'
- d) To act as partners in the development of theology, liturgy and resources
- e) To be actively involved in proposals for any structural changes affecting the Church's life

The Solidarity Circles:

- f) Must be the responsibility of the Methodist Council/ District / Circuit, as the institution seeks to listen and to learn, in order for the future of the Methodist Church to be more fully inclusive, in line with the Strategy for Justice, Dignity and Solidarity
- g) Need to be safe and brave spaces, and so confidentiality must be agreed and maintained, in order for this safety to be ensured. No information should be shared beyond the group unless agreed together
- h) Need to cover a broad range of diversities within that particular life experience in order to help the Church to learn from the full breadth of this human experience
- i) Will actively seek to include younger adults relating to that life experience, and to liaise with the Children, Youth and Families Team about how to hear the voices of children
- j) Will 'have the ear' of Church leaders, through reporting to the JDS Committee
- k) Will act as active partners with the Connexional Team, and the Methodist Council, in relation to the work of the Methodist Church, especially in relation to new policy and practice
- l) Will receive a formal response from the JDS Committee, to any queries raised or concerns high-lighted
- m) Will develop their own programme and processes
- n) Will be held on-line to help with accessibility from across the Connexion, and to enable growth and development of the work

Membership of the Solidarity Circle:

- i) Recruitment will be open recruitment, by application and then interview (for the Coordinator)
- ii) Recruitment for SC members will be open recruitment, by expression of interest
- iii) The JDS Committee will nominate one person to be a member of each Solidarity Circle and to report back to the Committee
- iv) 13 members will be recruited extra to the Coordinator and the JDS-nominated member, to represent a diversity of experience, and to include one person who will relate to the Children, Youth and Families Team, in ensuring the voices of young people are heard
- v) The members will be appointed for 1,2 or 3 years (3 years max) and then 5 new members will be recruited each year (by open recruitment) ensuring a diversity of views and experience are heard
- vi) Each member (including the Coordinators) will have a Volunteer Agreement and will also sign a Confidentiality Agreement.