



District Newsletter – February 2022

District Chair's Pastoral Letter

Dear Friends,

I am the vine, you are the branches / I am the vineyard, you are the vines. (John 15.5)

At the end of this month we welcome to the Cumbria District the Vice-President of the Conference for 2021-22. As a former secondary school RE teacher and head teacher with a focus on inclusion, Mrs Barbara Easton became Connexional Director of Education in the Methodist Church in 2016 with a responsibility for Methodist Schools. Together with this year's President of the Conference, the Revd Sonia Hicks, their Presidential theme has been 'All are welcome at God's table'.

Elsewhere in this Newsletter there are details of the Vice-President's visit from 27 February to 1st March to learn something of the contexts and issues that concern us in this District. In any given visit, some issues may be focused upon or parts of the District visited, with different areas being covered over time. There are then wider opportunities, on Monday 28th at 7.30pm for Local Preachers throughout the District to gather by Zoom to meet with the Vice-President, and before that for everyone to attend the District service when we will meet with and hear the Vice-President at Penrith on the Sunday 27th at 6.30pm, or you can join the live streaming on YouTube or catch up later. I hope that you can join this in person or online to celebrate the Vice President's visit, as she connects us to the wider Church.

Being connected to one another is central to Methodist understanding. It is not unique to Methodists, of course: think of the image of the vine and the branches in John 15 (although, at the Cumbria Ecumenical Ministry Development Day on February 5th, Professor David Ford noted that many scholars now think the better translations are: "I am the true vineyard, and my father is the vinegrower", and "I am the vineyard, you are the vines", retaining the interconnectedness but opening up new nuances). Yet in understanding what this might mean for Church organisation, blood has at times been shed over the tension between local autonomy and wider connectedness (or, as it is sometimes perceived to be, control). The dispute between episcopal, presbyterian, and independent systems was part of the English Civil War in the 17th Century (the century before the 'Connexionalism' of the Wesleys' 18th Century). The question is, how do we get the balance right in our thinking and systems?

Like others, Methodists also have an understanding of Church 'membership', of committing ourselves to working out our discipleship in this particular place at this particular time, watching over and being watched over by one another in love, and thus being mutually accountable to one another in Christ. It involves a humility and care that is a part of our ongoing repentance and growth, required of us all, you and me alike, without exception.

Given for Methodists our 'connexional' understanding, 'mutual accountability' means not just to others in the local church, but also more widely to one another in the whole Church. If sometimes this feels 'top down' and that decisions are made by a remote hierarchy in 'headquarters', rather, in our connexional system, decisions affecting the whole Church are made through a discernment under God in the annual Conference by representatives of whole people called Methodist. Moreover, 'bottom up', initiatives, principles, programmes and even 'rules' can be initiated by any part of the Methodist Church through designated processes, to then be determined by the Conference.

Our understanding and arrangements are not therefore determined by ourselves alone, nor by some remote hierarchy, but by the whole Church through its representatives, drawn from these islands, from city and hamlet, north and south, liberal and conservative, or from whatever descriptions or preferred perspectives

apply; all are involved and accountable in the watching over and discerning, and in the thinking and acting responsibly and lovingly, in the one vine, the one vineyard and body that is Christ.

As all of us are privileged to be welcomed by God and grown in the vineyard, in turn we discover ever more what it means to live not in isolation but in connectedness to one another, near and far, abiding in the freedom and responsibility of Christ's transforming love. May God forgive us when we get this wrong; may God bless as we endeavour to get it more right. Thus may we care for another and for all within God's limitless love; and may we celebrate and commit to that through the Vice-President's visit, and every day in all our encounters.



The Revd Dr James Tebbutt

DISTRICT NEWS AND EVENTS

Vice President's Visit 27th February – 1st March

Mrs Barbara Easton will be in the District for a short visit and all the details of what is taking place can be found on the flyer attached to the electronic Newsletter. There are two opportunities for others to join in with events and these are:

1. A District Service at Penrith Methodist Church on 27th February at 6.30 pm. As well as an invitation for people to join in person the service will be livestreamed and can be found on Penrith Methodist Church Youtube channel.
2. A session for Local Preachers on Zoom on Monday 28th February at 7.30 pm. Joining details are being circulated by Circuit Local Preachers Secretaries or contact the District Administrator.

Tourism Chaplaincy Visit

The Cumbria Tourist Board recently issued a press release following a visit by Maggie Patchett, Chaplain to the Tourism Industry in the South Lakes Circuit, to Windermere Lake Cruises. The press release is largely reproduced below and the video which accompanies this can be viewed here:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1PiFZkkyOpeCOToaPQhOp_qZcPvuQipF-/view?usp=sharing

MV Swift voyage for chaplain Maggie as she sails out to support tourism workers



Windermere Lake Cruises has played host to the South Lakes tourism industry chaplain, Deacon Maggie Patchett, as part of work to highlight the support available to workers in the industry.

Deacon Maggie boarded the company's newest vessel, MV Swift, to record a film to show how the church can help and support to tourism workers whose lives have been badly disrupted by the Pandemic.

Deacon Maggie Patchett filming with MV Swift skipper Rob Beal from Windermere Lake Cruises

"The last two years have been very tough for people in the tourism industry," says Deacon Maggie Patchett. "The pandemic has led to uncertainty and stress about jobs and money. Peoples' mental health has suffered and its caused anxiety.

"I just want to let them know we are here to offer a caring, listening ear. Hopefully we can help them cope with those stresses. It's just about being there for people."

The Deacon, who is a Methodist minister, says support is available to anyone who works in the industry – those of any faith or non.

On board Windermere Lake Cruises' 300 seat vessel MV Swift, she recorded an interview for the film outlining her role which will be broadcast at the Diocese of Carlisle's Cumbria Ministry Development Day in February - an ecumenical event involving clergy and officers from the Church of England, Methodists, United Reform Church and Salvation Army.

"I just want people to know that someone is here to talk to if they need it. We can arrange to meet outside of work, in a private space, so they can talk freely about their anxieties. It can be really helpful."

Jennifer Cormack, Sales and Marketing Director for Windermere Lake Cruises, says: "We were delighted to welcome Deacon Maggie on board. The support she offers to people is so important in normal times and especially now after all the disruption to lives caused by the Pandemic.



"She is a regular and welcome visitor to Bowness and Ambleside and speaks to staff regularly. We display her contact details around our premises so that people know they can get in touch if they feel it will be helpful."

Deacon Maggie meets Jennifer Cormack from Windermere Lake Cruises

Deacon Maggie, who lives in Windermere, has been visiting tourism venues including attractions, hotels, cafés and bed-and-breakfasts in the South Lakeland district since 2017.

"The tourism industry has been through so much disruption in the Pandemic and many people have had worries about their livelihoods," she says. "If they feel they might benefit from a friendly listening ear they just have to get in touch with me."

The chaplain has also appealed for volunteers to help carry out the support work. "It's just about being there for people," she said. "We are not a counselling service, but if people need a counsellor we can refer them on."

Anyone who would like to seek support or volunteer to help can contact Deacon Maggie Patchett at tourismchaplain@slakesmethodist.org.uk

Methodist Women in Britain

Following a Cumbria gathering a few months ago Joan Wager, a member of the MWiB District Team, has shared the following report. Others have given feedback on the happenings over the few days and these are attached to the electronic Newsletter. Notes on the sessions led by Revd Nicola Price-Tebbutt were prepared by Claire Middleton and if anyone would like to receive a copy of these please contact the District Administrator.

CUMBRIA DISTRICT METHODIST WOMEN IN BRITAIN

RESIDENTIAL GATHERING

22 – 24 November 2021

'WOMEN OF FAITH IN TIMES OF CRISIS'



35 women from Cumbria gathered in late November for their annual District Methodist Women in Britain event at Thornleigh, Grange over Sands, under the skilful leadership of Rev Dr Nicola Price-Tebbutt.

The theme for the event – over 3 days - was 'Women of Faith in times of Crisis'. There were five sessions with intriguing titles – 'Fight or Flight', 'Pain Relief', 'The Still, Small Voice', 'Being Hope' and 'Being Women of Faith'.

Nicola drew on stories of women from the Bible, from history and the present day.

Among others, we learned about Sojourner Truth – born into slavery as Isabelle Baumfree – who became a Methodist, an abolitionist and human rights activist.





The play 'Life in a Jar' recounts the story of Irena Sendler, a Polish Catholic who rescued hundreds of Jewish children from the ghetto; she kept a record of their identities, burying the papers in jars so the children could be identified later on – her life an example of 'being hope'.

Modern day examples relating to unhelpful perceptions and actions towards women who suffered abuse or had a chronic debilitating condition enabled us to reflect on women being 'bearers of pain in society'. Then there were challenging stories from the Bible – of Hagar (Abraham's concubine and mother of his son, Ishmael), Shiphrah and Puah (who refused to obey Pharaoh's command to kill all male babies at birth).

Each session was grounded in encouraging us to take time to reflect on how we react in a crisis, what our own experience of 'being found by God' was like, how we have experienced God's silence, and to identify who has been a figure of hope in our lives. Nicola shared some of her own experiences and we were challenged to ask where God is calling us to be, and what we need from Him.

Appropriately, the final session – a service of Communion, was also led by Nicola, in which she encouraged us not to be passive recipients of God's love, but to reach out to him, whatever the circumstances. Nicola concluded 'We are women of faith in a time of crisis, and God needs us to keep on being that, as God, the creative life force, calls us to become his perfect creation.'

Besides providing an inspiring programme, Nicola enabled a warm and open atmosphere. This invaluable experience of sharing together was further enhanced by morning and evening prayers, led by the Cumbria District Co-ordinating Team, and 'fun time' in the evenings with entertainment from 'Harps North West', and a thoroughly enjoyable quiz night.

Joan Wager (MWiB Cumbria District Team)



Cumbria District Data Protection Bulletin 3

Getting started: Data Mapping

I hope that by now your church has recognised that every church holds some personal data – see Bulletin 2 on this link: <https://www.cumbriamethodistdistrict.org.uk/resources/gdpr.html>.

If you have a circuit role, please read 'circuit' as well as 'church', every time I mention 'church' in this bulletin.

Now it's time to get started, if you haven't already. Perhaps the first step is to identify someone in the church who can be the church Data Champion, or at least be willing to be the contact for personal data issues in your church. If your church doesn't have such a person identified, I suggest that the stewards get together to identify such a person, preferably someone who is reasonably organised, and can get others to deal with 'boring data protection'.

Alternatively, the stewards could be jointly responsible for GDPR? While formally the Managing Trustees are responsible, I can't envisage a whole Church Council filling in a form together! By the way, whilst it would be good to get the Church Council to confirm the role, you can get started straight away, provided that the church leadership is agreed.

The first thing for the nominated person(s) to do is to find out who in your church holds what personal data. To help with this, there is a standard Data Mapping Form, available on this link: <https://www.tmc.org.uk/about/data-protection/resources/standard-documents-and-forms/data-mapping-form>. The form looks like this (I know it's small writing, but you don't need to read it all):

Document/list description	For what purpose is the data held?	What data is collected?	Do you have explicit consent to use the data?	Do you process any Special Categories of personal Data?	How is the data held and what security measures are in place?	Who holds the data and who has access to it?	How long is the data kept for?	How is the data destroyed?	Is any data kept by or circulated to persons outside of the Methodist Church including any Ecumenical partners?
Example: Church Directory ¹	To provide a list of church members and office holders	Names, addresses, email addresses, telephone numbers	Yes ²	No ³	Data Collection consent form (locked filing cabinet) and Church administrator's Laptop (password protected)	Minister, Church Administrator, Circuit Administrator, District Administrator	Until asked to remove	Paper shredder and electronic deletion from laptop	Yes, it is published on our website and freely available from the church

At first sight, the form looks a little overwhelming, but I've highlighted 'Who holds the data' above, because I think this is the key to getting a decent completed Data Mapping Form: you should contact all the officers in your church and ask them to complete a table row, or rows, for the personal data they hold.

It may be the case when you fill in the form that certain gaps are identified. For example, you might wonder whether you need consent for some personal data, but if you don't have consent, the best answer for now is 'No'. Remember that you may not need consent, for example if you can rely on 'legitimate interest' (probably the subject for a later bulletin). Let's focus just now on actually finding out what personal data is held in your church. Remember that even just your name is personal data.

I know this seems somewhat bureaucratic, but we do all this not only because we have to meet legal requirements, but also because we care about people and their personal data. In reality, **if we don't know who holds what personal data, how can we claim to be in control of personal data in our church?**

If you have any views on this bulletin, or have any queries about data protection, please do get in touch with me, and I'll see what I can do. The answer may well be on <https://www.tmcpc.org.uk/about/data-protection>.



Alec Bounds,

Cumbria District Data Champion,

boundsalec@gmail.com

CUMBRIA METHODIST DISTRICT DIARY

FEBRUARY 2022

22 19:00 District Grants Committee – on Zoom
27-1 Visit of Mrs Barbara Easton, Vice-President

MARCH 2022

3 10:00 District Probationers Committee – Penrith Methodist Church
5 10:00 District Circuit Stewards Meeting – Stainton Methodist Church
10 16:00 Being Inclusive in Cumbria Group – on Zoom
16 10:00 Presbyteral Synod – The Sands MC, Appleby (KSAT Circuit)
17 13:30 God for All Operations Group – on Zoom
22 10:00 District Policy Group
22 Cumbria MWiB Spring Day – Levens MC
29 09:30 NW&M Learning Network Forum - VTBC
31 09:30 Lay Employee Day – on Zoom

APRIL 2022

5 19:00 District Finance Committee additional meeting – Zoom
30 10:00 Representative Synod – Carver Uniting Church, Windermere (South Lakes Circuit)

MAY 2022

14 10:00 District Stationing Briefing – Stainton Methodist Church
 24 13:30 God for All Operations Group – on Zoom

JUNE 2022

9 10:00 Regional Learning Network – Preston TBC
 18 10:00 District Safeguarding Group – Penrith Methodist Church TBC
 21 13:00 God for All Strategy Group – Bishop’s House, Keswick
 23-30 Conference - Telford

JULY 2022

7 10:00 District Policy Group

SEPTEMBER 2022

2 10:00 District Finance Committee meeting – Zoom
 10 09:30 Representative Synod – North Cumbria Circuit
 14 09:30 God for All Operations Group – Zoom
 30-1 3Generate – NEC, Birmingham

OCTOBER 2022

5 13:30 God for All Strategy Group – Zoom
 8 10:00 District Local Preachers’ Meeting – Levens MC TBC
 19 10:00 District Policy Group

NOVEMBER 2022

16 10:00 District Sabbaticals Advisory Group
 16-18 Ministers Retreat

DECEMBER 2022

13 13:30 God for All Operations Group – on Zoom

This has been sent to Ecumenical Representatives, District Officers, Ministers, Supernumerary Ministers, Lay workers, Circuit Stewards, Circuit Administrators, and others who have subscribed to this Newsletter. Please feel free to circulate this among your churches and to others who may find any of these items of interest. If anyone would like to be added to the circulation list, please contact the District Administrator, Carolyn Dickinson.

If anyone has any information that could be included in the next issue of the Newsletter, please send this to the District Administrator, Carolyn Dickinson.

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