



DISTRICT CHAPLAINCY POLICY

POLICY PRINCIPLES

The South-East Methodist District has a history of supporting and promoting chaplaincy in a wide variety of settings.

Schemes for which support from the District is sought must engage with the connexionally agreed framework of *'Our Calling; Priorities for the Methodist Church'* and the principles of the General Secretary's Report received by the Conference in 2011 *'Contemporary Methodism: a discipleship movement shaped for mission.'* The latter report sought to discern and describe a vision of the direction of travel of the life and work, worship and mission of the Methodist Church as it responds in loving obedience to the gracious prompting of the Spirit and to set an emphasis on the Methodist Church as a discipleship movement shaped for mission. They must also give expression to the principles found in the Connexional *Chaplaincy Everywhere* initiative.

The District seeks to promote chaplaincy everywhere as part of this, primarily as an outworking of our discipleship: seeking to work for the transformation of society through offering God's love and care beyond our structures and buildings to places where people work, learn and are cared for, and other community contexts, often in interfaith settings.

This is achieved by building relationships of trust through which the grace of God can flow. Chaplains are ambassadors, representing the church in a wide variety of contexts. They are also midwives enabling the birth of awareness of God in the place where they serve.

As they feed back to churches about the new insights they have gained, they also enable the growth in depth of faith of church members as they engage with wider society through the work of local chaplains. Chaplains are encouraged to facilitate worship and increase awareness of chaplaincy throughout the District. This serves to ensure that others recognise that chaplaincy can be a ministry for all — lay and ordained — of every ethnicity.

Within the South-East District there is a tradition of supporting chaplaincy in higher education in partnership with others the District is committed to continue Methodist support for chaplaincy in the Universities of Kent, Sussex and Surrey.

There has also been an ongoing commitment to the support of the Kent Workplace Mission and the chaplaincy based in the Bluewater Shopping Centre.

There are many Methodist chaplains in the District employed by other agencies, such as the NHS, Methodist Homes, the Home Office and the MOD. The ambition of the District is to offer them support in their work and in feeding back their insights into the life of the church.

There is a growing team of volunteer chaplains across the District which we seek to equip and develop in areas such as retail, schools and health care.

All chaplaincy is provided in partnership with the receiving organisations. The extent to which the funding is shared across the partnership varies, this is reviewed on a regular basis by the District Grants Committee and the District Council.

SUPPORT FOR THIS POLICY

GRANTS

Grants are available from the District Advance Fund.

DISTRICT CHAPLAINCY OFFICER (VOLUNTARY)

The District will try to recruit a Chaplaincy Officer whose main responsibilities will be:

- to advocate for chaplaincy throughout the District,
- to liaise closely with whatever resources are available for supporting chaplaincy Connexionally and promote them in the District;
- to raise the profile of chaplaincy as a vital ministry of the church in the context of 'One Mission';
- to support chaplains in the District, pastorally and through arranging training and development for them, and to encourage networking between them;
- to be responsible for an up to date mapping of chaplaincy across the district
- to take the lead for the District in advocating for Methodist policies that relate to the economy, e.g. the Living Wage as determined by The Living Wage Foundation.
- to liaise with ecumenical chaplaincy organisations in the District, e.g Kent Workplace Mission;
- to liaise with ecumenical chaplaincies across different sectors e.g. health care, education;
- to promote awareness of interfaith chaplaincy;
- to promote inclusion in chaplaincy contexts of gender and ethnicity, alongside age and disability;
- to facilitate good practice and encourage benchmarking across different areas of chaplaincy across the district;
- to promote equal opportunities within chaplaincy (with particular regard to the nine protected characteristics as defined under the Equalities Act 2010, and other marginalised groups);
- to work with the District Safeguarding Officer to ensure good safeguarding practice within chaplaincy.

Approved by District Council

June 2017