

# The Anglican-Methodist Covenant in Greater Manchester: a guide to procedures

*“You are all one in Christ Jesus” (Galatians 3,28)*



## Introduction

This paper is intended to give information about the Anglican-Methodist Covenant and to clarify what you can say “Yes” to. It has been prepared by the Anglican-Methodist Covenant implementation Group which consists of the Diocese of Manchester, the Manchester and Stockport Methodist District and the Bolton and Rochdale Methodist District.

The Anglican-Methodist Covenant was approved by the General Synod and the Methodist Conference in 2003. It encouraged covenanting churches to share ministries where possible, using the agreed procedures as outlined below.

## Contents

- Page 2 A guide for Anglican parishes: what you can do
- Page 3 A guide for Methodist congregations: what you can do
- Page 6 The future: Remaining issues for discussion; How to get closer
- Page 7 Terminology
- Page 8 Resources

# A guide for Anglican parishes: what you can do

The following regulations are governed by Canon B43. The Diocesan Bishop has stated that he wishes this to be followed in the context of commitments 3 and 4 of the Anglican-Methodist Covenant, which say:

*Commitment 3. We commit ourselves to continue to welcome each other's baptized members to participate in the fellowship, worship and mission of our churches.*

*Commitment 4. We commit ourselves to encourage forms of Eucharistic sharing, including Eucharistic hospitality, in accordance with the rules of our respective churches.*

## 1. Invitations from Church of England parishes to members of the Methodist Church

### A. General requirements in all cases

1. Those invited must be baptized and in good standing in the Methodist Church.
2. That person must perform a similar duty in the Methodist Church.
3. The invitation must come from the Incumbent/Priest in Charge.

### B. Subject to no additional requirements Methodist Ministers and lay people may be invited to:

1. Read the Bible at any service.
2. Lead intercessions or prayers at any service.

### C. With the additional requirement of PCC approval they may:

1. Preach on a single occasion.
2. Take Morning or Evening Prayer on a single occasion.
3. Assist at the distribution of Holy Communion on a single occasion.

### D. With the additional requirements of PCC approval and the approval of the Bishop they may:

1. Preach or lead worship regularly.
2. Assist at the distribution of Holy Communion (in both kinds) regularly.
3. Ordained Methodist Ministers may preside at a service of Holy Communion according to the Methodist rite and administer baptism according to the Methodist rite.

### E. With the additional requirements of PCC approval, Bishop's approval and at the request of the family they may:

1. Assist at a Baptism or Wedding.
2. Conduct a Funeral.

## **2. Invitations from members of the Methodist Church to Church of England parishes**

### **A. General requirements in all cases:**

1. The person must be an authorized minister in the Church of England (Clergy, Reader or Lay Worker).
2. The duty performed must be one for which they are authorized in the Church of England.
3. The Anglican minister must get the approval of the Incumbent/Priest in Charge of the parish in which the Methodist service is to take place. (Refusal may be appealed to the Bishop).

### **B. Subject to no additional requirements invited Anglicans may:**

1. Lead intercessions or prayers on a single occasion.
2. Read the Bible at any service on a single occasion.

### **C. With the additional requirement of approval of the PCC of the parish in which the service is to take place and with the approval of the Bishop of the diocese in which the service is to take place an invited Anglican may:**

1. Lead intercessions or prayers on a regular basis.
2. Read the Bible at any service on a regular basis.
3. If the person is in priest's orders they may preside at Holy Communion – the Bishop must be satisfied that there are special circumstances and that the rite to be used is acceptable.

## **3. Invitations to share in joint worship or to use an Anglican church for Methodist services**

### **A. With the permission of the Diocesan Bishop and the approval of the PCC joint worship or Methodist worship may take place on specified occasions in a Church of England church. As such:**

1. A service of Holy Communion or Holy Baptism in this context, if presided over by a Methodist minister, is understood to be a Methodist service and should be advertised and announced as such.
2. Baptism administered by a Methodist minister, in this context, should be recorded in the register of the Methodist church of the presiding minister and not in the register of the Church of England church at which the service took place.

## **4. Declared membership of churches by individuals**

### **A. Members of other Church denominations may declare themselves to be also members of the Church of England and be entered on the Church Electoral Roll.**

### **B. Those who are also actual communicants are eligible to stand for membership of the PCC, Deanery and General Synods. They may also serve as Churchwardens.**

*Further opportunities for shared sacramental worship are possible in the context of a Local Ecumenical Partnership (LEP) regulated by Canon B44. There are six categories of these identified by Churches Together in England, ranging from single congregation partnerships to local covenant partnerships involving several congregations. Guidance leaflets are available about LEPs from the Church of England Council for Christian Unity (contact details below).*

# A guide for Methodist congregations: what you can do

This section sets out the areas where such possibilities exist and the procedures that need to be followed to obtain authorisation under Methodist Standing Orders.

The Methodist Church is reflecting on its understanding of ministry and oversight. Current thinking is set out in a series of reports: *What is a Superintendent*, and *What Sort of Bishops?*. The outcome of these reflections and the decisions based on them will be very important both for the exercise of oversight in the Methodist Church and also for the working out of the Covenant.

## 5. Presbyteral/Diaconal

**A. There are 3 possible ways in which priests/deacons of the Church of England may exercise ministry in the Methodist Church on a more formal basis. These are dealt with in SO 732 and SO 733.**

### 1. As an Associate Minister/Deacon

- a. in particular local churches (in effect a Circuit will be named) or institutions to the extent that the Church of England allows them. This is an annual permission granted by the Conference and may include preaching, conducting services and administering the sacrament of Baptism, pastoral work and care but not pastoral charge and in the case of a priest the sacrament of the Lord's Supper.

### 2. As an authorised Minister /Deacon.

- a. The Conference may authorise a priest or deacon in the Church of England who has the permission of that Church to serve the Methodist Church in a specified Circuit and fulfill ministerial or diaconal duties within an appointment under the control of the Methodist Church. Such priests/deacons are accountable to their own church for their general vocation and discipline.

### 3. As a Recognised and Regarded Minister or Deacon

- a. This is a fuller form of recognition than 1) or 2) above in that the person will serve under the same terms and conditions as a Methodist minister/deacon.

## 6. Lay ministries

SO 567 provides opportunities for authorising of lay preachers or readers from the Church of England with the permission of their church to serve as lay preachers in the Methodist Church. The authorisation will be to a particular Circuit.

## 7. Eucharistic Presidency

**A. In the Methodist Church, the one who presides at the Lord's Supper is normally an ordained presbyter.** However, standing Orders of the Methodist Church allow other persons to preside, if a risk of 'deprivation' arises. Deprivation occurs when a Circuit considers that any of its Churches or a significant number of church members or other

Christians in the local community are deprived of a reasonably frequent and regular celebration of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, through lack of ministers. Guidance is provided in order to calculate whether deprivation exists. The aim is to provide a least one-communion service a month in each church at the best-attended service.

**B. It is important to remember that the authorisation of other people presiding is an exception to the norm.** An authorisation extends only to the Circuit in question. It is limited geographically in that way. It lasts for twelve months but can in certain circumstances be renewable annually. The application for authorisation must be approved by the Circuit Meeting, recommended by the District Policy Committee, District Synod, the Authorisations Committee, for ultimate decision by the Conference. The matter is dealt with in SO 011. The following may be authorized:

1. Probationer ministers and other lay persons, and deacons (but only deacons and probationer deacons in exceptional circumstances).
2. The person must be a member of or stationed to the Circuit in question.
3. The person must also be suitable and have been instructed and there are procedures to ensure this.

## **8. Alcohol and Communion**

**A. In the Methodist Church SO 922(2) provides that in the sacrament of the Lord's Supper the wine used shall be non –alcoholic. There are two exceptions to this rule (These two exceptions can assist LEPs):**

1. A non-Methodist congregation may use alcoholic wine at Communion when worshipping in a Methodist building SO 922(4)
2. The provisions of a sharing agreement under the Sharing of Church Buildings Act 1969 may permit (1) above.

## **9. Declared membership of churches by individuals**

**A. Members of the Methodist Church may declare themselves to be also members of the Church of England and be entered on the Church Electoral Roll (membership list with voting rights).**

**B. If these members are also communicants of the Church of England, then they are eligible to stand for membership of the PCC , Deanery and General Synods. They may also serve as Churchwardens.**

*Further opportunities for shared sacramental worship are possible in the context of a Local Ecumenical Partnership (LEP) regulated by Canon B44. There are six categories of these identified by Churches Together in England, ranging from single congregation partnerships to local covenant partnerships involving several congregations. Guidance leaflets are available about LEPs from the Church of England Council for Christian Unity (contact details below).*

# The future

## 10. Remaining areas for discussion

A. Three areas of difference in theology and practice still remain between the Church of England and the Methodist Church. These involve:

1. The elements of the Eucharist and the appropriate method of disposing of remaining consecrated elements.
2. Presidency at the Eucharist and the reasons for Church of England and Methodist disciplines on this.
3. Interchangeability of ordained ministries and what each Church requires in order to make this possible.

## 11. Steps to deepening the relationship between congregations

1. **Undertake an ecumenical audit** of your locality – who and where are your partners? How can you work together effectively and meet local needs?
2. **Pray** by name for your neighbouring churches and church leaders.
3. **Map out and share** your resources, eg in training.
4. **Participate** in each other's *normal* pattern of worship and meetings. Avoid adding another layer of joint services and events.
5. **Plan together** for new church and community programmes.
6. **Liaise** with other churches as a first stage of planning. Don't fix dates without consultation with others.
7. **Provide time** on your Church Council agenda for news of other churches. Report your news and plans to your partners.
8. **Nominate** particular people in your congregation to maintain two-way communication with neighbouring churches.
9. Work towards **shared programmes** of nurture and training.
10. **Use the opportunities** outlined above to invite members of other churches to participate in your church's worship.

## Different Church terminology and their nearest equivalents

### Church of England

**Standing Orders:** The rules, discipline and guidance regulating the affairs of the Church of England.

**Deanery:** A Deanery is a cluster of parishes. An Area Dean convenes clergy from these parishes to meetings. A parish is a legally recognized geographical area to which clergy are licensed. Each Church is governed by its Parochial Church Council (PCC).

**Ordinand:** A person who has been accepted by their Bishop and sponsored by him for training.

**Lay reader:** A form of accredited ministry allowing the person to preach, lead non eucharistic services and take funerals. Laity may also be licensed to preach if a person is suitably qualified.

**Synod:** Clergy and laity are elected serve in their Diocesan Synod. The Manchester Diocesan Synod votes on policy and makes decisions within the laws and regulations of the Church of England. Members of the 44 Diocesan Synods across England are voted to positions in the General Synod. The General Synod is the prime key decision making body, its decisions are then ratified after Parliamentary debate.

**Diocesan Bishop:** Each Diocese is led by its own Diocesan Bishop. The Diocesan Bishop grants licenses, ordains deacons and priests and confirms lay members into church membership. Suffragan Bishops are appointed to assist the Diocesan Bishop.

**Priest:** Priests may be also called Rector, Vicar, Incumbent, Priest in Charge and Locally Ordained Minister (if licensed to only one parish). Ordained ministers may operate within their own parish and Diocese. The exercise of ministry outside their own parish is usually by invitation or with agreement.

**Deacons:** This is a form of ordained ministry. It is reserved for those who have undergone formal training and ordination. Most deacons are ordained priest after a twelve-month period. It is only after ordination to the priesthood that they may celebrate the Eucharist.

### Methodist Church

**Standing Orders:** The rules, discipline and guidance regulating the affairs of the church laid down by Conference.

**Circuit:** The primary unit in which local churches express their interconnection in the Church is the Circuit. Although an ordained presbyter will have pastoral charge of particular local churches, they are appointed to the Circuit, of which those local churches are as part of.

**Probationer minister/deacon:** A person who has been admitted by the Conference upon probation for ministry or deaconate and is stationed to a circuit but has not yet been ordained.

**Deacon:** The Diaconate is a separate order of lay ministry within the Methodist Church. Presbyters are not ordained as deacons prior to ordination as presbyters.

**Conference:** The ultimate internal decision making body in the Methodist Church Superintendent Minister. Each Circuit has a superintendent minister who is responsible for enabling and ensuring that officers, deacons and ministers in the Circuit fulfill their specific responsibilities.

**District Chair:** Each Methodist District has a chair, who is an ordained presbyter. The Chair is a pastor to the ministers, deacons and probationers and leads the people of the District in the work of preaching and worship, evangelism, pastoral care, teaching and administration. The Chair is responsible to the Conference for the observance within the District of Methodist discipline. The Chair also exercises oversight of the character and fidelity of the ministers and ministerial probationers in the District.

**Presbyter:** A minister ordained to the ministry of word and sacrament in the Methodist Church. A presbyter is often referred to as a "minister".

# Resources

Latest news can be found at <http://www.anglican-methodist.org.uk>

Documents can be found on the Methodist Church website. [www.methodist.org.uk](http://www.methodist.org.uk) or from The Church of England Council for Christian Unity, Church House, Great Smith Street, London SW1P 3NZ. [www.cofe.anglican.org](http://www.cofe.anglican.org)

Recommended Reading: "In the Spirit of the Covenant" a joint publication by Church House Publishing and The Methodist Church of the 2005 interim report of the JIC. (ISBN 1 85852 299 4 ) (£6). This gives lots of background information and theological material, and sets out the main issues involved in the Covenant.

## **The County Ecumenical Officer**

The Revd Graham Kent  
GMCT Office  
St Peter`s House  
Oxford Road  
Manchester  
M13 0GH  
0161 273 5508  
[sph.gmct@man.ac.uk](mailto:sph.gmct@man.ac.uk)

## **The Diocesan Ecumenical Officer**

The Ven Andrew Ballard  
2 The Walled Garden  
Swinton  
Manchester  
M27 0FR  
0161 794 2401  
[ae.ballard@btinternet.com](mailto:ae.ballard@btinternet.com)

## **Manchester**

The Revd Jeremy Brading  
The Vicarage  
Moorfield Road  
Salford  
M6 7EY  
0161 736 3064  
[jeremycbrading@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:jeremycbrading@yahoo.co.uk)

## **The Archdeaconry Ecumenical Officers**

### **Bolton**

The Revd David Griffiths  
Ainsworth Vicarage  
Ainsworth Hall Road  
Ainsworth, Bolton  
BL2 5RY  
01204 398567  
[dbgriff@fish.co.uk](mailto:dbgriff@fish.co.uk)

### **Rochdale**

The Revd John Brocklehurst  
Friarmere Vicarage  
1 Cobler`s Hill  
Delph  
Oldham  
OL3 5HT  
01457 874209  
[john.brocklehurst@saddleworthteam.cofe.org](mailto:john.brocklehurst@saddleworthteam.cofe.org)

Methodist Ecumenical Officers:

### **Bolton and Rochdale District**

The Revd Phil Mason  
12 Kinloch Drive  
Heaton, Bolton,  
BL1 4LZ  
01204 493271  
[fil1966@aol.com](mailto:fil1966@aol.com)

### **Manchester and Stockport District**

The Revd John Fenner  
25 Sandy Lane  
Stretford  
Manchester  
M32 9DB  
0161 865 4648  
[johnfenner@hotmail.com](mailto:johnfenner@hotmail.com)