

NORTHAMPTON DISTRICT BELONGING TOGETHER GROUP
(used to be known as "World Church Group")
SYNOD REPORT 2024

A decision was made to change the name of the District World Church Group to District Belonging Together Group.

It was felt that the name for the Group "Belonging Together" would make sense as this indicates that there is always a safe place to talk. The group can be a space to have conversation about other people's experiences in confidence and get support from others.

The group met twice during the year 2023. This was because one of the important events held previously (the annual Church Service of Praise and Celebration) which celebrates the diversity of our District, did not take place. The possibility of broadening the group by inviting lay workers, for example, lay pastors and lay chaplains of minority ethnicities is being explored.

Some of the issues looked into during the year are as follows:

- How do we support one another?
- How do we encourage one another into places of representation, for example, seeking to be representatives to the Conference?
- How do we get our voices heard in the wider Church?
- How do we encourage people into leadership (lay and ordained)?

Specific issues include:

- encouraging members of the group to consider taking up roles in the life of the Church when requested in areas such as membership of the District Executive, or being a representative to the Conference, etc. This would allow a broader range of people to be represented, thus promoting diversity.
- The importance of mentoring people into leadership was discussed as a way of preparing people and giving them confidence in leadership. For example, one can be nurtured through shadowing a role for a year or being mentored while in a current circuit appointment.
- Considering co-superintendency. This was viewed as a way of nurturing and encouraging global heritage ministers to take leadership positions, but this would require clear specification of duties for the individuals.
- Stationing process: though improved, there are still a high number of concerns expressed by ministers from a global heritage about their experiences in stationing matching.
- New Chairs of the Group, Rev Jimmy Kaci and Rev Edson Dube were appointed to co – Chair the District belonging together group.