Northampton District Mission Team Synod Report

May 2025

# ✨Introduction

This report offers a snapshot of the exciting and diverse work undertaken during this Connexional year to date by the Mission Team across the Northampton District. From new evangelism training and creative outreach to deepening community ties and environmental action, the Spirit has been moving through ordinary moments and bold initiatives alike.

Much of what you see below can be found via our website: Northamptonmethodistdistrict.org.uk

# 🙌 1. Mission Team Highlights

📣 Evangelism and Growth planning sessions – Delivered in a number of Circuits with more to come. The sessions sparked practical ideas and spiritual enthusiasm. Are you interested in having a creative session from the team in your context?

🎉 Inspiring Events – A full day with Paul Nixon, a ReNew half-day on Zoom, an admin training event, and a most attended in-person ReNew event in March—all received warmly. More are planned through 2025 with the next ReNew happening on the 16th July 2025 (save the date!)

🎙️ OneVoice Podcast – It continues to grow, offering honest conversations and real stories from across the district. Have you listened yet? Why not give it a listen to wherever you get your podcasts from.

💷 Small Grants – A Significant amount has been awarded to local churches through the Small grants process. Some funded ideas are Lego Church, Warmspaces, Food pantry and family food project, to name a few. What could you apply for?

💡 Funding Conversations – Active discussions on DAF and NPNP support in multiple Circuits. Have you considered whether you could begin a New Place for New People?

🤝 Mission Enabler Communities – Regular gatherings—both in-person and online—strengthen peer support and idea-sharing. More community centred gatherings for specific roles are in planning for 2025-2026

🛡️ Forces Chaplaincy – Partnership with RAF Brize Norton continues to enrich chaplaincy in military settings and explorations are taking place to release Methodist Forces resources .

🌍 Environmental Justice – The Action for Hope group has shaped plans for environmental officer roles and carbon reduction proposals across the district.

# 🍽️ 2. FEAST (Friends Explorig and Sharing Together) Update

🌾 Seasons, Soil & Seeds – A creative resource born from district-wide conversations, now shaping mission planning in places like Stamford Circuit.

☕ Soul Food Pop-Up Café – Launched for Lent—helping churches connect with local communities over cake and deeper questions.

🧭 Circuit Connections – New partnerships forming in Milton Keynes, Leicester Trinity, and Northampton. FEAST is walking alongside circuits to nurture New Places for New People (NPNP).

🕊️ Stories That Speak – Loughborough students exploring faith; joy-filled Melton Mowbray FEAST; creative worship at Long Lawford.

🤲 Sustainability & Support – Volunteer-led models raise questions about long-term support, energy, and funding.

📚 FRCO Training – Brought together diverse teams to explore justice-rooted mission across the District.

# 🏡 3. Overstone Chaplaincy Project

🎁 Community Generosity – Events supported by local residents, sharing gifts and hot drinks.

🤝 Ecumenical Partnership – Strong collaboration with Revd Katrina Hutchins and Anglican churches.

🏃‍♀️ Walking Group Ministry – Connecting estates and building relationships.

🏠 Growing Spiritual Community – Plans for a discipleship group and prayer for suitable space.

📚 Chaplaincy Training – Mel Brown completed her MA in Chaplaincy, enriching her ministry.

**📝 5. Mission Enabler Update**

**🖥️Training Sessions**: Delivered tailored digital strategy workshops and tool trainings (e.g., Canva, Facebook Pages) across Circuits, including Oxford, Milton Keynes, High Wycombe, and Banbury. Sessions are designed to meet local needs, with overwhelmingly positive feedback.

**📈Social Media Growth**: District social media reach surged from 497 (January24) to 1,938 (May 24), with consistent content focused on community engagement, event publicity, spiritual reflection, and promoting the *OneVoice Podcast*.

**📰Newsletter Launch**: A monthly District Newsletter now reaches 400+ subscribers, featuring Circuit updates, job vacancies, District Chair insights, and partner content. Plans to trial a fortnightly format are underway. Have you signed up for the Newsletter yet?

**🎥DigiHub Initiative**: A new YouTube tutorial series on our facebook page (e.g., Facebook setup, Canva basics) was launched to provide accessible training. Long-term vision includes a dedicated website with downloadable resources and advanced in-person training opportunities.

🤝 Welcome to John Rose who will be the maternity cover digital enabler to serve you in your Circuits and Churches. Contact John Rose at digital@northamptonmethodistdistrict.org.uk

# 🔍 5. Reflections & Challenges

Across the District, there’s a shared sense of possibility and pressure. While many stories are full of hope and new life, challenges persist:

⚠️ Skepticism about change

⚠️ Low energy in some churches

⚠️ Leadership transitions

The Mission Team continues to walk with circuits offering encouragement, practical tools, and space for dreaming together.

Key questions remain:

- How do we sustain our leaders and volunteers?

- How do we nurture evangelism that feels real?

- What bold steps will we take toward inclusion, justice, and growth?

# 🌟 6. Hopes for the Remaining Year

🧡 Launch of the “Love is Listening” campaign

🌱 Embed and support the NPNP journey

📌 Identify and champion the next project(s) for Connexional funding

🚀 Encourage churches in crafting and living out growth plans that feel right for their context