**THE METHODIST CHURCH – NORTHAMPTON DISTRICT**

**Minutes of District Synod (Representative Session) held on 10 May 2025**

**at Oadby Methodist Church in the Leicester Trinity Circuit**

**District Chair :** The Rev’d Dr SH

**Synod Secretary :** PS

**Theme: Where is the Love?**

**1. Welcome**

Rev’d AF (Superintendent Minister) welcomed Synod to Leicester.

**2. Worship**

Rev’d KA and Rev’d LD-D led opening worship.

Throughout the meeting, Rev’d NF led Synod in singing.

**3. Opening business**

Attendance: The Synod was held in hybrid format with 88 members on site and 25 attending online.

The Chair welcomed members of Synod, present and online, and particular welcomed GW, who is the new Learning and Development Officer aligned to the Northampton District.

Dispensations had been granted to the Rev’d PC, Rev’d SC, Rev’d AH, Rev’d AL, Rev’d LM-H, Rev’d BT and Rev’d Sir RW, in addition to 24 permanent dispensations.

Apologies had been received from 32 supernumerary ministers and lay members of the Synod.

**Deaths**

The Synod noted the deaths since the last representative session of the Synod of the

Rev’d BQ, Rev’d PD and Rev’d NB. The Chair led Synod in prayer to give thanks for their lives and service.

**Letters of greeting** were sent to Rev’d LM-H, BT, and Rev’d GT.

**Reports:** The Synod Secretary drew Synod’s attention to the [Reports to Synod](https://www.northamptonmethodistdistrict.org.uk/about/synod/spring-synod-2025.html) on the District website, and warmly thanked those who had done the work reported therein.

**District Executive:** Rev’d KB was elected to the District Executive, for a three year term starting in September. Synod agreed that the DE could co-opt additional members, since there were still two vacancies.

**Cease to Meet**

Synod agreed the recommendations from the DE that the following churches cease to meet:

* Stapleton, in the Hinckley Circuit
* Churchill in the West Oxfordshire Circuit
* Charlbury in the West Oxfordshire Circuit
* Edgehill Road in the Leicester Trinity Circuit

The Chair gave thanks to God for fruits shared and nurtured, and for visions planted and mission enabled, in these four churches.

**New Charnwood and Mowbray Circuit**

Rev’d DA, Deputy Chair, introduced the proposal that the Loughborough and Melton Mowbray Circuits merge to form a new Circuit. He thanked Rev’d KB who had been serving as Superintendent of both Circuits since September, and noted the generosity, hospitality and willingness with which the Circuits had come together. All churches had voted in favour of the merger, and the two Circuit meetings had been unanimous. He proposed the following Resolution:

*That the Northampton Synod recommends to The Methodist Conference that the Melton Mowbray and the Loughborough Circuits amalgamate from 1st September 2025 to form a new “Charnwood and Mowbray circuit.”*

The resolution was carried by 113 votes in favour, and none against.

The Deputy Chair led Synod in prayer for the new Circuit.

**4. Singleness**

Rev’d MM led a session on Singleness. She had introduced a Notice of Motion to the 2022 Conference, pointing out that there was much still to do in welcoming, affirming, and celebrating the presence and contribution of single people in the church’s life together. As a result, the Faith and Order committee had presented a report to the 2024 Conference.

MM presented a variety of experiences of single people in the church and challenged churches to respond. Synod broke into groups to discuss what resonated from her presentation, and what actions could be taken.

Summing up, she encouraged churches and Circuits to start these conversations, using the Faith and Order 2024 [Report on Singleness](https://media.methodist.org.uk/media/documents/conf-24-pc-17-singleness.pdf) , and the resources available from the [Single Friendly Church](https://singlefriendlychurch.com/) network.

**Synod adjourned for lunch**

**5. Resolution to Conference about the high stress levels amongst ministers**

Rev’d DS briefed Synod on a Resolution from the Presbyteral Synod urging action to address stress levels, and to bring the working hours of ministers into line with the norm in society of two rest days per week.

**6. Ordinands**

Synod welcomed the news that Rev’d SG and Rev’d RP would be ordained at Conference this year.

**7. Safeguarding**

SW and NH reported their work on Safeguarding.

**8. District Mission Team Report**

MF (Mission Team Leader) reported on the team’s work. Rev’d KS (FEAST enabler) led Synod through an exercise to help members identify where love was to be found, with contributions describing a wide variety of mission activities.

**9. All We Can**

RB from All We Can briefed Synod on how the huge strides in reducing global poverty between 1990 and 2015 had come to an end. In the face of large cuts in US and UK aid, All We Can was supporting strong local charities, and campaigning to hold politicians to account. A collection at Synod for All we Can raised £221, plus unknown amounts donated online.

**10. The Vice-President-designate**

The Chair interviewed MF about his experiences leading up to becoming Vice President at the forthcoming Conference (including a visit to Hong Kong), and prayed for him in his new role.

**11. MHA**

Rev’d DM, who represents the Methodist Church on the Board of trustees for MHA, briefed Synod on its role, as one of the largest charities in the country, in a sector which was decimated by Covid and neglected by government. He urged churches to hold an MHA Sunday.

**12. Closing business**

The Chair prayed for ministers who would be leaving the District before the next meeting, and those who would be sitting down.

She expressed her thanks to all those involved in Synod – the Oadby church and Leicester Trinity Circuit; those who had led worship and provided music; those who had presented; AV technicians; and all who had spoken.

**14. Closing worship**

The Chair led closing worship.

**15. Next meetings**

Autumn Representative Synod: 20th Sept 2025.

Spring Representative Synod: 25th April 2026

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Reverend Dr SH

Chair of the Northampton District

Thursday 15th May 2025



PS

Representative Synod Secretary

Thursday 15th May 2025