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Registered charity no 1132208

To: All District, Circuit and Church Treasurers (via email)
Cc: All Ministers and Probationers Stationed in the Active Work (via Signpost for Ministry)

FINANCE NEWSLETTER

Dear Friends,

A very happy new year to you all!

We are distributing the link to this newsletter by e-mail to all District, Circuit and Church Treasurers and posting it on Signpost for Ministry for all ministers. Please feel free to forward this newsletter to others who you think may find it useful.

We are always happy to receive feedback on the newsletter and if you have items that you feel will be of interest across the Connexion we can consider these for inclusion in future editions.

Yours faithfully,

Matt Tattersall
Executive Director of Finance & Resources



FINANCE NEWSLETTER – JANUARY 2024

Allowances above stipend

As has been reported in previous newsletters, circuits are not able to approve local allowances for ministers over and above stipend. Where there are special circumstances requiring the payment of a local allowance, these should be submitted to the Connexional Allowances Committee (CAC) for consideration. Payment of local allowances should not form part of stationing conversations unless the allowances in question have already been approved by the CAC. If a departing minister is paid a local allowance it should not be assumed that the incoming minister is automatically eligible for that same allowance, a new approval is required from the CAC. There remain a number of historic local allowances being paid and these will continue until the end of the minister's current appointment. Should any circuit or district believe a new local allowance is required from September 2024, applications should be made through the Connexional Team at ministerial.grants@methodistchurch.org.uk or directly to the Chair of CAC at chaircac@methodistchurch.org.uk. The deadline for submitting a request is 30th April.

Methodist Ministers' Children's Relief Association (MMCRA)

The MMCRA was a connexional fund that helped ministers' children in need (often as adults themselves), in particular because of incapacity or disability, mental or physical, temporary or ongoing. Once the monies in the fund were depleted, the CAC agreed that such grants would continue to be made from the Methodist Medical Benevolent Fund (MMBF). A small number of churches and circuits continue to send donations for the benefit of the MMCRA for which we are very grateful. However, we would ask that such donations are now made to the MMBF.

Stipend 2024/25

The Connexional Allowances Committee is recommending that the standard stipend for 2024/25 is increased by 6.81% in line with the usual formula to £31,020.

District Assessment 2024/25

The Strategy & Resources Committee is recommending to the Methodist Council that the MCF District Assessment is increased by 3.3% in 2024/25. This includes a reduction of 3 percentage points in light of the difficulties some churches and circuits are having in paying their Assessment, then uplifted by 6.3% to reflect the impact of inflation.

It should be noted that the Assessment formula adjusts for relative staffing levels in each district. As a result, the actual change in Assessment in each district varies accordingly.

Computers for Ministry 2024/25

It is recommended that the Computers for Ministry (CfM) Allowance for 2024/25 will be £207 to be paid with the October 2024 stipend. It is payable to all ministers except those whose computing facilities are provided at their place of work. The allowance is non-pensionable and subject to tax and National Insurance.

Student ministers entering training are eligible to receive a grant equal to four times the annual CfM Allowance. They will then be eligible to receive the annual allowance once they begin ministry.

National Insurance Contributions

In the [Autumn Statement 2023](#), the Chancellor announced that the rate of Class 1 National Insurance contributions (NICs) for employees will be reduced from 12% to 10% from 6 January 2024.

Debit statements

This is a gentle reminder to download and save the monthly debit statements sent out from the payroll department. The secure system Proofpoint we are using will only keep them for two weeks.



Recruitment to the new Resourcing Committee and Connexional Council

From September 2024 the Connexional Council comes into existence as the trustee body for the Methodist Church in Great Britain and replaces the current Methodist Council. The new Council will be supported by four committees, three of which already exist (Mission, Ministries, and Audit & Risk Assurance) and one of which is a new Resourcing Committee. The Resourcing Committee replaces a number of existing committees as the church seeks to reduce the burden of administration. It is tasked with the responsibility to keep in constant review the life of the Methodist Church as it relates to Resourcing (People, Property and Funds).

Recruitment of volunteers from a range of backgrounds for these new governance bodies is currently underway. The roles are:

- Chair of the Connexional Council
- Members of the Connexional Council
- Members of the Resourcing Committee
- Chair of the Audit & Risk Committee who will also be a member of the Connexional Council

Further details on the roles and how to apply can be found on the website at [Volunteer recruitment](#).

Independent Examination of Accounts

We have been asked to remind treasurers that independent examiners of accounts need to be truly independent. The guidance¹ from the Charity Commission states

“For an examiner to be independent they must have no connection with the charity trustees which might inhibit the impartial conduct of the examination. This is not the same as having no connection with the charity; an examiner can be a member or supporter of the charity and often some involvement brings an added quality of personal enthusiasm and familiarity with the charity which can be advantageous....”

“Independence means that the examiner is not influenced, or perceived to be influenced, by either close personal relationships with the trustees of the charity or by a day to day involvement in the administration of the charity being examined.”

The Church interprets this to mean that an independent examiner must not be:

1. A member of the church council or any of its sub committees.
2. An employee or person who receives benefit or support from the church council.
3. A close relative, business partner or employee of any of the above.
4. A major donor to the church.

A message from our colleagues at the Central Finance Board of the Methodist Church/Epworth Investment Management

Aligning Financial Goals with Faith

It's that time of year when individuals generally revisit their finances, especially with one eye on the tax year end that will quickly creep up on us all.

Our colleagues at Epworth would like to take the opportunity to remind you of their first Christian Investment solution for private individuals. With the 5 risk rated portfolios, individuals can align their financial goals with their faith and look to put their investments, pensions and ISAs into vehicles that promote both People and Planet. This is a solution for Christians who want to invest following God's call to care for people and planet and further information can be found here:

<https://www.epworthinvestment.co.uk/managed-portfolio-service/>

Please do share this with your congregations where you can – Simon Woolnough can help with this, and his email address is simon.woolnough@epworthinvestment.co.uk

¹ [independent examination of charity accounts Version June 2021.pdf](#)



Association of Church Accountants and Treasurers (ACAT)

Connexional funds are used to pay a block subscription so that every Methodist Church, Circuit and District can have free membership of ACAT. If you have not yet signed up, please find more details at [ACAT Membership](#). Details of forthcoming events can be found at [Home - ACAT](#).

Circuit Connexional Fund Treasurers

The Connexion benefits greatly from all the donations received to Connexional funds, for which we are very grateful. We particularly want to acknowledge the work of the Connexional funds' treasurers appointed by Circuit Meetings. However, we are aware of the difficulties in recruiting Connexional funds' treasurers and the challenges of processing donations in this way (not least the difficulties some experience banking cash and cheques, and the requirement for audited accounts). If treasurers have views on how we could improve this process and reduce the administrative burden, please send them via: [Connexional Fund Treasurers](#)

Methodist Church House



This is a reminder that in February 2023, the Methodist Church said goodbye to Methodist Church House in Marylebone. Our new building at 25 Tavistock Place is currently undergoing a complete renovation. Whilst this work is being undertaken, we are sharing an office space with our ecumenical friends, the Church of England at Church House Westminster. Please use our future address 25 Tavistock Place, London WC1H 9SF for any correspondence (though we continue to encourage the use of electronic communication). We will redirect any post etc. to our temporary accommodation at Church House Westminster in the meantime. If you are attending a Connexional meeting in London, not all such meetings will take place at Church House Westminster. Therefore, it is very important you check your invite for the location of the meeting.

Contacting the Finance Team

The contact details for Finance team can be found on the Finance page of the Methodist Church website at: [Contact the Finance Office \(methodist.org.uk\)](#).

Particular contacts are as follows:

For the Ministers payroll and benefits please e-mail stipends@methodistchurch.org.uk

For the lay payroll please e-mail payrollbureau@methodistchurch.org.uk

For ministerial grants please email ministerial.grants@methodistchurch.org.uk

For the Gift Aid bureau please email giftaid@methodistchurch.org.uk

If you don't know who you need to contact please email finance@methodistchurch.org.uk

