

48. Appointments of District Chairs

*****RESOLUTIONS**

- 48/1. The Conference designated for appointment the Revd Nigel Cowgill as Chair for the London District for a period of six years from 1 September 2015.**
- 48/2. The Conference designated for appointment the Revd Stephen J Lindridge as Chair for the Newcastle upon Tyne District for a period of six years from 1 September 2015.**
- 48/3. The Conference designated for appointment the Revd Dr Jonathan H Pye as Chair for the Bristol District for a period of six years from 1 September 2015.**

The following resolutions require a majority of 75%.

- 48/4. The Conference designated for appointment the Revd Stephen J Burgess as Chair for the York and Hull District for a further period of three years from 1 September 2015.**
- 48/5. The Conference designated for appointment the Revd Jeremy C Dare as Chair for the Shetland District for a further period of one year from 1 September 2015.**
- 48/6. The Conference designated for appointment the Revd A Peter Hancock as Chair for the Northampton District for a further period of five years from 1 September 2015.**

Reasoned Statements

The Revd Nigel Cowgill

Nigel Cowgill has served as a presbyter in three Circuits in the London District, encompassing a wide variety of churches and communities. As a superintendent minister in the Croydon Circuit and the Harrow and Hillingdon Circuit he has been involved in a number of creative and effective projects, promoting the witness, mission and service of the Methodist Church.

His style of ministry is that of an encourager, working with individuals and groups to enable them to realise their strengths and develop a strategic vision. He seeks to ensure that all voices are listened to, and to empower those who are more diffident to participate fully in church life and decision making. He engages easily with diverse communities, inspiring confidence and encouraging theological reflection. He is wholly committed to inclusivity and equality, and is skilled in working with people of different points of view.

In his work as a member and leader of district committees he has demonstrated an ability to deal with complex issues in a fair and objective way, holding the importance of good governance alongside deep pastoral concern.

He has a passion for sharing the good news of Christ, and is an enthusiastic and inspiring preacher. He will bring to the role of Chair energy, dynamism and a disarming sense of humour which brings people together. He has a high level of resilience and is able to handle stressful situations with calmness and professionalism.

The Synod recommends to the Conference that Nigel Cowgill be appointed to serve as Chair of the London District for a period of six years from 1 September 2015.

The Revd Stephen J Lindridge

Stephen Lindridge has served as a circuit minister and as District Evangelism Enabler for the Newcastle upon Tyne District. Since 2009 he has served as Connexional Missioner (seconded to the Fresh Expressions Team). He is deeply committed to mission and evangelism. He has a pastoral heart; a preference to lead collaboratively; and the ability to challenge and take a firm view when

things are wrong. He has a presence that is confident but not overconfident; the ability to speak passionately but also with reason, clarity and humour, and a clear sense of priority for those who inhabit the margins of society and church.

Stephen has considerable ecumenical experience and has worked closely with leaders from most other denominations in matters of strategy, policy and delivery.

The Synod recommends to the Conference that Stephen Lindridge be appointed to serve as Chair of the Newcastle upon Tyne District for a period of six years from 1 September 2015.

The Revd Dr Jonathan H Pye

Jonathan Pye has served in a variety of contexts, and his vision for the District comes out of a ministry of over 30 years including 20 years within the Bristol District. He has a commitment to pastoral care, disciplined discipleship and growth through change. He has demonstrated his ability to communicate at all levels across the Church, both within Methodism and ecumenically where he is held in high regard. His priorities for his first year combine around three themes which he sees as being the framework both for his work across the District and personally in his new role: active listening; being a learning Church and leading strategically on connexional initiatives and district priorities.

His strengths lie in the field of education and learning, demonstrated clearly through his time as Principal of Wesley College, Bristol, but also through his work as a chaplain in the University of Leeds and his ongoing links with Trinity College, Bristol. He is also a Trustee of the New Room.

The Synod recommends to the Conference that Jonathan Pye be appointed to serve as Chair of the Bristol District for a period of six years from 1 September 2015.

The Revd Stephen J Burgess

The Revd Stephen J Burgess has served as Chair of the York and Hull District since 2004. He is appreciated for his handling of difficult conflict situations; his teambuilding and collaborative working; his support for lay, ordained and youth ministry and his knowledge of the wider issues of the Connexion. In addition it is recognised that he has an extensive knowledge and appreciation of the District at a time of continual change. He is recognised as being willing to take unpopular decisions if the needs of the District required and as being approachable and resilient.

On the ecumenical front Stephen is recognised as having a strong belief in the reconciliation of a fractured church. His well-developed ecumenical relationships enable conversations at all levels of the church.

Stephen is recognised as being able to see the bigger picture and the Synod believes that an extension of his time in post will give him the ability to provide continuity and enable him to facilitate further conversation in the *Larger than Circuit* discussions.

The Synod recommends to the Conference that the appointment of Stephen Burgess be extended for a further period of three years from 1 September 2015.

The Revd Jeremy C Dare

The Revd Jeremy C Dare became Chair of the Shetland District in 2004, and was subsequently granted a five year extension to his appointment which runs until the summer of 2015.

He has shown himself to be a leader and minister much esteemed in the islands.

There is widespread appreciation of his leadership skills, his care, his encouragement, approachability, humility and friendliness. His spirituality, preaching and teaching skills have enriched the life of the District. His ability to communicate with young and old is another very positive quality.

The Synod recommends to the Conference that the appointment of Jeremy Dare be extended for a further period of 1 year from 1 September 2015.

The Revd A Peter Hancock

The Revd A Peter Hancock has served as Chair of the Northampton District since 2009. Working across a large and diverse District, Peter has demonstrated an ability to listen and to enter sympathetically into the varied situations of ministers, Local Churches and Circuits. Visiting Circuits, he shows an enviable ability to recognise and remember people, and it has been said that he 'connects really well across the board.' In addition to these essential pastoral gifts, his skills as a leader of worship and preacher are greatly appreciated: Peter is an engaging preacher, with a deep sense of spirituality and humour. His commitment to evangelism and to breaking new ground in mission is shown through encouraging and enabling innovative projects. Ecumenically he is valued as a first-class colleague. He deals effectively with the administration inevitable in his role.

A thorough consultation has been undertaken, and this has recognised wide appreciation for Peter's gifts and a strong sense of the benefits to the District of continuity in leadership.

The Synod recommends to the Conference that the appointment of Peter Hancock be extended for a further period of five years from 1 September 2015.

*****RESOLUTION**

48/7. The Conference appointed the Revd Graham Thompson as Chair for the Plymouth and Exeter District for a period of one year from 1 September 2014.

The Revd Graham Thompson

Graham Thompson has wide and contemporary experience as a Chair of District having served as Chair of the East Anglia District for 11 years. This, together with his warm personality, enabling and supportive leadership, sensitive pastoral care and competent oversight make him ideal to lead and serve the Plymouth and Exeter District in a time of transition for one year from 1 September 2014.