

Message from Tricia Mitchell

Welcome to the Learning & Development Newsletter!

I often hear it said that the only constant in life is change, and the only certainty is death.

It is true that change is all around us - and some changes are more welcome than others! When the time came to close the chapel in the village I live in, I found it difficult. Hard to give up the physical presence. Challenging to visualise how we could continue to offer a welcome without the building. I realised that my theology had a lot to do with hospitality – conversations over food, sharing warmth in the space as well as being warm-hearted people.

When we closed the doors we moved worship down the road into a local disability home. There we were welcomed by the residents who were delighted when we took worship to them, as most could not easily go out to worship in traditional spaces. They offered us a home. We shared the gift of God's love. I learned that hospitality is so much richer when we allow it to be two-way. From that place of 'homeless' vulnerability I have experienced grace in abundance. After death, resurrection. A short time into this new partnership, the manager of the hall expressed to the minister how the atmosphere there had changed! God's grace is beyond our understanding.

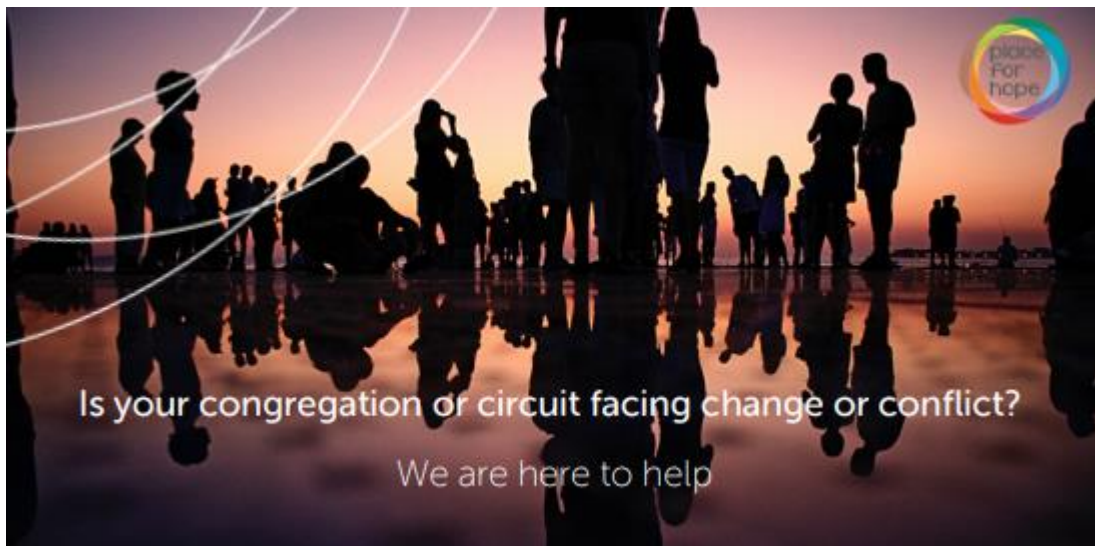
We have been guests in our new home for twenty years now! I don't miss having to take my place on the cleaning rota, sort out the insurance or pay the soaring utility bills! I would miss the new friends in our new home, the fellowship, the laughter, the tears and the stories of God that we share. The end of one chapter was a new beginning. Last year we made another new beginning – but I'll save that tale for another day!



This month our Methodist Way of Life focus is 'open'. The practising of hospitality and generosity with open hearts and open minds. I am sure you have your own stories of how your church has offered a warm welcome within the walls or has gone out to spread God's love. As many churches and circuits face changes I pray that we will all find new ways to be open, new ways to be generous in our communities as we reflect the abundance of God's love to us.

Tricia Mitchell

Learning and Development Manager



Living well with difference: reconciliation and mediation team

Is your congregation or circuit facing a time of change, tension or conflict? We are here to help.

Representing the diversity of the Church, our practitioners are here to help others approach disagreements and conflicts in more positive, transformational ways, enabling communities to live well with difference.

The reconciliation and mediation team is offering mediation at no cost in the following Districts: Bedfordshire, Essex and Hertfordshire; Bolton and Rochdale; Cumbria; Chester and Stoke; East Anglia; Isle of Man; Lancashire; Liverpool; Lincolnshire; London; Manchester and Stockport; Northampton; Nottingham and Derby

We will be coming to other Districts soon, but prior to that there will be a small cost. Please get in touch and we can talk you through it.

To find out more email [Katie Bradley](mailto:Katie.Bradley@methodist.org.uk), Methodist Way of Peace Programme Manager.



Abundance of God's creation is the focus for the new *Rainbow* magazine and JMA Commissioning Service. You can now find new resources available to download from the Methodist Church website.

Click [here](#) for more information.

WRITE
TO YOUR
MP ▶ **ASK YOUR MP TO**
MAKE TACKLING
POVERTY A PRIORITY
AHEAD OF THE
GENERAL ELECTION.

VISIT [LETSENDPOVERTY.CO.UK/ACTION](https://letsendpoverty.co.uk/action)



Let's End Poverty – Write to your MP

Tackling poverty has to be a key issue at the next general election. With 1 in 5 people across the UK struggling against poverty, we urgently need change for our communities. That's why the Methodist Church is a founding partner of the new Let's End Poverty movement, bringing people together in a movement for a UK where poverty can't hold anyone down.

Could you get involved by writing to your MP? Our political leaders need to know that we want tackling and ultimately ending poverty to be one of the top priorities for the next government. Use our online action to send a letter to your MP asking them to make sure the next general election marks the beginning of the end for poverty in the UK.

Click [here](#) to find your MP and send them an email.

Could you get a group together in your church to write to your MP? Order a set of postcards to use as a group to write your messages to your MP. Find everything [here](#).

If your church would like to get more involved with Let's End Poverty, we'd love to have you involved. You can sign up as a Church [here](#) or email [Hannah Fremont-Brown](mailto:Hannah.Fremont-Brown) if you want to talk about getting more involved.

A promotional poster for 3GENERATE 2024. The top left features the logo '3GENERATE 2024' with a red cross icon, and 'Methodist Children & Youth Assembly' below it. The main text on the left reads '4-6 October NEC Birmingham' and 'Join one of these three fabulous volunteer teams'. Below this is a paragraph: 'Bring your gifts and help make 3Generate 2024 happen. With roles to suit all skillsets, join a fabulous volunteer team and have a weekend to remember.' A QR code is provided with the text 'Find out more about different roles and sign up below: www.methodist.org.uk/3Genvols'. The right side of the poster shows a collage of photos of volunteers in green shirts. Three circular icons are overlaid: a purple heart for 'Care', a blue question mark for 'Help', and a green speech bubble for 'Engage'. At the bottom right, a quote from a '2023 Volunteer' reads: 'Witnessing the entry of those children with their leaders and the caring way the team welcomed and prepared them was completely amazing.'

Volunteering for 3Generate was launched on Monday 12th February There are plenty of different ways to join the team and help make the event happen.

[Here's](#) Jude sharing why volunteering matters.

Check [here](#) for further information.

Opportunities at Cliff



Are you ready to study for a PhD with Cliff College?

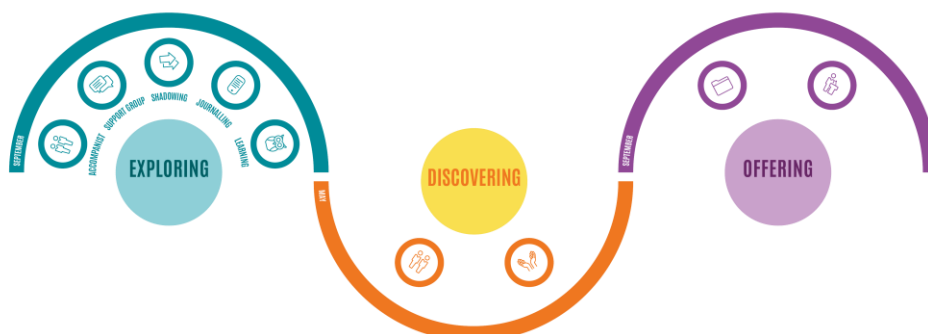
If you already hold a Masters in Religions and Theology (or a related area), and have an interest in pursuing further study, we have an exciting opportunity launching this spring.

Headed up by Dr Heather Major (Research Fellow), we invite you to join our Research Community and explore the possibility of PhD study. Between April and June 2024 you will engage in a number of seminars, training and tutorials to develop your research skills and to assist you in assessing whether PhD study is right for you, and if it is, formulating a PhD proposal.

We hope at the end of this process to form a small Research Team of PhD students at Cliff, with a focus on New Places for New People (NPNP) and Church at the Margins (CAM).

Click [here](#) for more information or send us an [email](#).

Upcoming Learning Opportunities



This newsletter is all about being Open, as part of a Methodist Way of Life.

For some of us, this element of our discipleship is key, be it about hospitality, or giving generously, for others this is a station we get engage with less frequently. Knowing which elements of our discipleship are most familiar to us, and which are harder, is important as we grow in faith. Equally this information can help us to discern our vocation too.

Explore is an opportunity for any member of the Methodist Church in Britain to take a step back, and consider if you are called to respond to God's invitation to church leadership, and if so, what forms that could take.

You can register anytime of the year for the Explore programme, although the course starts in May and September.

- [Registration for the programme](#)
- [Taster event for the course: April 11th 2024](#)

Once registered, you get a 1:1 Accompanist, support about theological reflection, signposts to a range of resources, encouragement to shadow people already in leadership, and will be part of a 9-month course.

Click [here](#) to find more information.



BIBLE
month

GENESIS



BIBLE MONTH TRAINING DAY

**FOR MINISTERS, LOCAL PREACHERS, WORSHIP LEADERS
AND THOSE WORKING WITH CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES**

Genesis is the starting point for all Christian theology and explores many of the foundational questions of life and faith. Through the book, we get to journey with many different characters as they wrestle (sometimes literally!) with finding answers to these questions in the midst of the messiness and uncertainty of life.

Join us for a day exploring this strange and fascinating text, and get equipped for helping your church discover its many treasures.

10AM - 3PM / SAT 16 MAR



At a Hub
In your Circuit



Online (at home)
Via YouTube

BOOK NOW

BM24-Training
.eventbrite.co.uk



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Faith in Change and Conflict

Join us as we explore change and conflict together and discover new, positive ways to navigate challenges in our churches and communities.

Find out more [here](#).



Social Justice and Evangelism Webinars

An online space to think about the connection between social justice and evangelism. Open to anyone who wants to listen, learn, and share in conversation. Click [here](#) for more information.

Church Planting Intensive, 15-17 March 2024 at Cliff College, bookings via this [link](#), followed by online sessions (Thursdays 7-8.30pm). Click [here](#) for more information.

A promotional poster for a rural mission and ministry course. The background is a photograph of a green field with mountains in the distance under a cloudy sky. The text is overlaid in white. In the top right corner, there is a small green circular logo with a white cross.

rural
mission and ministry
course

£150*
*including Methodist bursary

YARNFIELD 1-2 MAY '24
NORTHAMPTON 2-3 OCT '24

Book online:
www.tinyurl.com/2024RMC

[Rural Mission & Ministry Course](#)

Come and gather with other ecumenical rural leaders to explore what community, mission, evangelism & leadership can look like in rural contexts.

“Really helpful – practical, inspiring & encouraging!”- RMC participant.

For further information & to book, click [here](#) or email [Sarah Hulme](#), rural mission & ministry officer.

50% bursary for Methodists



Have something you want to see in the Midweek email?

The next newsletter is due to come out on Wednesday 27th March

For any submissions, please email [Funmi Oyedokun](#) by **4pm Wednesday 6th March**.

To avoid delays, please include the following in your message:

- A paragraph of supporting text as you would like it to appear in the monthly mail
- Any and all links and email addresses that are required for readers to click for more information
- An image of the logo or anything related to the text, which should be clear and in jpeg format

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