

# **THE WOLVERHAMPTON & SHREWSBURY DISTRICT OF THE METHODIST CHURCH**

## **TRAINING AND LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES**

### **INTRODUCTION**

This paper sets out the many and varied opportunities that are presently available (although it may well not be comprehensive) to members of the Methodist Church to 'serve their church and to develop their faith and knowledge'.

This paper makes a distinction between training, which are defined herein as skill based, and meant primarily to equip people to undertake certain tasks and functions in the church; and learning, which are defined herein as knowledge and experience based, and meant primarily to equip individuals and groups to grow in the knowledge and actions of Christian faith. The distinction between the two – that is training and learning – may not always be clear-cut, but it is hoped that the definitions provide some direction.

The Wolverhampton & Shrewsbury District of the Methodist Church acts in two ways to promote training and learning opportunities. It does so 1) by directly offering opportunities and 2) promoting courses/opportunities run by others. This paper contains information about 1) and 2).

However, it is at the level of local church and circuit that training and learning needs are best identified. If we are to be a church that can respond to the 'needs of the present age' leadership teams at local church and circuit level have a responsibility to develop strategies for training and learning. If we are not to be overwhelmed by the many opportunities 'marketed' to us we need to take an overview of our situations and our people and develop local delivery supported by the district, the connexion and other partners.

The challenge of this paper is for local churches and circuits to develop training and learning opportunities using the resources available from the district (and others) – which might be reviewed and renewed every (1/2/3) years. The District Training Officer and other District staff can be consulted to assist this process.

The District employs several members of staff – the District Training Officer; the District Mission Enabler; the District Development Enabler the EDEV Co-ordinator, Youth Enabler, Safeguarding Officer and Layworkers Secretary. There are also the Chaplaincy Services operating across a range of organisations. There is also, has a team of volunteer trainers, and, has a District Training Group, all of whom work for the furtherance of training and learning across the district.

Training and Learning are clothes to fit the person/organisation and not 'one size fits all'. Whilst there are some knowledge/Skills based training which we all may have to undertake, eg Safeguarding, Learning is much broader and specific to individual needs. Churches, Circuits, Task Groups and Individuals are not the same, but may have some common needs. Starting with a basic analysis of training and learning needs, then, following a simple process, a circuit could develop a training and learning plan spanning 1-3 years. This could include; having Training and Learning as a standard Agenda Item at the CLT, having a 'Learning Champion' or small group, to oversee the Plan, and arrange the programme and events.

A sample chart is situated on the last page of this document for circuits to review and plan training opportunities/provision in their circuits. It is filled in with events for a fictional circuit that has planned 2 years activity.

The District Group hopes to improve the information available about training and learning on the District web-site.

## TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

1. SAFEGUARDING – The No. 1 priority currently for all circuits is the provision of Module A .....
2. CIRCUIT STEWARD TRAINING – delivered once a year by District/Circuit trainers this 1 Day Course offers an introduction to the roles and responsibilities of circuit stewards. Superintendents should contact Geoff Bond to arrange.
3. CHURCH STEWARD TRAINING – delivered by Circuit trainers this 3 hour course offers an introduction to the roles and responsibilities of church stewards. The course can be delivered locally at circuit or joint circuit level.
4. FOOD HYGIENE – Opportunities for food hygiene training. (The Baptist Union has prepared a useful guidance leaflet available at [www.baptist.org.uk](http://www.baptist.org.uk))
5. FIRST AID – for details of opportunities
6. SKILLS FOR CHILDREN'S WORK – There are a series of modules available – Child Development; Leadership Skills; Programme Planning; Children and Community; Pastoral Awareness; Spirituality and the Bible. The courses have been developed by the Bible Reading Fellowship and can be delivered locally by District Trainers. Contact Geoff Bond for details and visit [www.coreskillsforchurches.com](http://www.coreskillsforchurches.com)
7. YOUTH WORK TRAINING – The District team is aware that there is no provision of youth work/club training presently. The district continues to use the Spectrum Programme. Contact Geoff Bond if your circuit needs this opportunity.

8. PASTORAL VISITOR TRAINING – ‘Encircled in care’ is the latest resource offered by the church in partnership with MHA (although it is not aimed at only working with older people). All ministers have received a copy of the training pack. Talk with Geoff Bond if you want to run a course and have a trainer provided through the District.

#### 9. WORKING WITH ADULTS: TRAINING FOR TRAINERS

This course is designed specifically for those working to enable adults to learn and develop in a range of church-based contexts. Whether ordained or lay, the course aims to develop both an understanding of how adults learn and skills in facilitating learning. The course offers the opportunity to explore what it means to be a Christian educator, and to develop understanding in working with groups in a learning context. The programme takes place over 3 weekends (Fri-Sat) at The Queen Foundation. Contact Geoff Bond for details

#### 10. TRANSFORMING LEADERSHIP

This is a 3/4 day course designed to develop a greater understanding of Leadership and Change management. The course will integrate theology and practical application that will be relevant to leadership, strategic thinking and visioning in specific ministry contexts. Venue: The Queen’s Foundation. Contact Geoff Bond for details.

## LEARNING OPORTUNITIES – CHRISTIAN FAITH AND LIFE

There are a wide range of courses available in the 'marketplace'. Geoff Bond has already distributed a paper entitled The Discipleship Challenge that details many of these – to a degree there will be a process of discernment undertaken by house groups and/or churches and/or circuits as to which are suitable in respect of theology etc. Contact Geoff if you need a copy. The Methodist Church web-site (go to Discipleship) also offers ideas. The newest and most challenging course (in terms of time – 33 weeks) is called Disciple – Becoming Disciples through Bible Study - to down load a leaflet about this course go to [www.methodist.org.uk](http://www.methodist.org.uk) and click on A-Z index, then D, then Discipleship Bible study course. Shorter studies using distinctly Methodist materials include Called by Name, Share this Feast, All This For You, and Time to Talk of God – again go to [www.methodist.org.uk](http://www.methodist.org.uk), click on A-Z index, then D, then Discipleship.

For individuals in our churches that are looking to develop academic knowledge The Queen's Foundation offers various courses each year in Christian Theology, Biblical Studies etc. These are usually for 1 term. They send out this information to churches each year. Also available on [www.queens.ac.uk](http://www.queens.ac.uk)

For individuals in our churches that might be thinking about their discipleship in relation to career and or volunteering the opportunity to run the Exploring Discipleship Extending Vocation(?) (EDEV) is the place to turn. Caroline Wickens is the person responsible for establishing circuit based groups.

## LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES – MISSION FOCUS

Contact Jeff Reynolds, District Mission Enabler for all courses in this section.

1. Fresh Expressions Mission Shaped Vision Days – for those beginning to think about mission – Jeff sends out details of these vision days as they are organised.
2. Fresh Expressions Mission Shaped Introduction course – held over 6 sessions a more in depth exploration of the mission-shaped concept of church. Go to [www.freshexpressions.org.uk/missionshapedintro](http://www.freshexpressions.org.uk/missionshapedintro)
3. Fresh Expressions Mission Shaped Ministry – A 1year, part-time course. Best attended as a group looking to work together. Go to [www.freshexpressions.org.uk/missionshapedministry](http://www.freshexpressions.org.uk/missionshapedministry)
4. Faith Sharing – a newly developing course enabling people to recognise and articulate our faith story. The format is flexible, running over 4 evenings or a weekend.
5. Welcome! - To encourage a culture of welcome in church – again 4 evenings or a weekend.

## OTHER LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

1. Local Preachers/Presbyters (and Worship Leaders). Much on-going learning is of course the responsibility of each preacher to read etc. The connexion is currently undertaking some research into CLPD and we wait to see their findings. The District is aiming to provide one major seminar each year. LPMA offer some training conferences each year. Circuits will provide some study sessions for Preacher's in evening meetings or study days and there is much expertise available at local level. During 2011/12. Mike smith is the District LP Secretary.
2. CLTs and/or Staff Teams – Team Days to explore leadership and change management can be arranged. Contact Paul Trenbirth District Development Enabler.  
Re Jane webb is also available to offer some time on the issue of leadership and change for circuits looking to develop collaborative working and new initiatives.
3. Church Workers and Administrators have their own networks with training events organised via Kevin Gripton and Geoff Bond.
4. CALMonline is a free online database of adult Christian courses, sources and resources in England and Wales. It is aimed at learners, providers and those with responsibility for adult Christian learning, and for anyone else who wishes to use it. The database contains details of more than 2000 courses, sources and resources relating to Christian adult learning in England and Wales. CALM has used a working definition of adult Christian learning, as follows: *Adult Christian learning is an activity undertaken in which the purpose in whole or in part is to improve or enhance the participants' knowledge, skills or personal qualities. Christian learning is that which is aimed at developing Christian faith, understanding and spirituality.* <http://www.calmonline.org.uk/index.htm>

## Sample Proforma

	<b>COURSE</b>	<b>MONTH</b>	<b>VENUE</b>	<b>PEOPLE</b>
<b>CIRCUIT</b>	Module A  EDEV	Sept/Oct Nov/Dev Begin March – ongoing for 18 months	Church 2 Church 3 Church 4	All required  People signed up = 5
<b>CHURCH 1</b>	Encircled by Care  Discipleship	Jan/Feb  From Sept-June	Church 1	Pastoral visitors from Church 1 and 4
<b>CHURCH 2</b>	Fresh Expressions – Mission Shaped Intro	Feb/Mar/April	Church 2	Church 2 and 3
<b>CHURCH 3</b>	House Groups studying 'Share the Feast'	Sept-December	Homes	Congregation
<b>CHURCH 4</b>	Welcome Course  CORE training	April  Sept, Nov, Jan, Mar, May	Church 4	All Church Council members + others  All children's workers
<b>PREACHERS MEETING</b>	Day training planned with X leading 6 x Training evenings	Nov  Jan, Mar, May, July, Sept, Nov	Church 3  Church 3	All Preachers and Worship leaders Anglican Lay Readers
<b>DISTRICT TRAINING</b>	New Circuit Steward Preacher's and Worship Leaders	June  May/June		New Circuit Steward  All Preachers and Worship Leaders
<b>CLT</b>	2 x 2 hour sessions on change with Jayne Webb	Sep and Nov	Church 2	All Ministers and circuit officers plus senior stewards of each church
<b>SPECIAL EVENT</b>	New Hymn Book – Introducing to circuit	Sept	Church 1	All invited