



The **Methodist Church**
Cornwall & Isles of Scilly District

Synod Secretary:

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To Circuit Superintendents

Dear Colleagues,

Marriage & Relationships Report – Guidance for Spring Synod

Happy New Year to you all!

I am sorry to have to send you a wordy document so early in January, but it is offered as a means to enabling our conversations together about the Marriage and Relationships report, and in the hope that circuits and the representative session of our Synod might be more fully engaged.

With this letter is a copy of the feedback form, which we have devised for our District. You will be aware that it is only at Synod level that we are required to vote, and the votes from all the Synod across the Connexion will be collated and will inform members of Conference 2020 when they come to vote.

Similarly, we wished to offer to Circuits the opportunity to respond to Synod, so that Synod members could be duly informed before they vote. (The form allows for comments, and for voting totals, if a vote is taken).

The Representative Session of our Synod is to be held on 28th March at Truro Methodist Church. In order to collate the responses from the feedback forms from Circuits, the forms will need to be with me by 28th February. This is 4 weeks before the Synod and would allow time for the responses to be summarised in some fashion then circulated to Synod members a fortnight before the Synod. (My thanks to those circuits who have already sent their feedback forms.)

There are of course a number of other means for us to feedback concerns about, or to express dissent from, the resolutions within the report. I have laid out below some of the options available to circuits and to the Synod.

Memorial to Conference

Circuits can submit memorials to Conference. Some guidance is offered at SO 516. I would be happy to offer advice to circuits if that is requested. Copies of circuits' memorials to Conference should be sent to the Synod Secretary for reporting to the Synod.

The Synod itself can send memorials to Conference. Should this be desired then I would need to have sight of the proposed memorial (and the names of the two members making the proposal) for circulation to Synod members two weeks before the Synod.

District Resolution

Unlike a memorial from the Synod, which will be handled by the Conference Memorials Committee (and a response published by them and presented to the Conference), normally a District Resolution has to be debated by the Conference. Usually the cost of printing these in the Conference agenda is borne by the District, but this cost has been waived for Conference 2020. Again, the text of any such resolution, along with the names of the two Synod members proposing it, should be with the Synod Secretary 14 days before the Synod.

Amendments to the Provisional Resolutions

It is possible for a Synod to amend any of the 5 provisional resolutions contained within the report, and, if agreed, to vote on the amended resolutions.

We should note SO 413 (13)(a) "Any amendment of the terms of a resolution may be proposed if it is relevant to the subject-matter of the resolution, unless the same result could be achieved by the rejection of the resolution." Which means, for example, that we could not amend resolution 10/8 "The Conference consents in principle to the marriage of same-sex couples on Methodist premises..." to say "The Conference does **not** consent..."

Anyone intending to bring amendment(s) to the provisional resolutions should inform the Synod Secretary, preferably 14 days before the date of the Synod. (This is not strictly necessary by standing orders, as amendments could be made on the day. However, it would be most helpful for those arranging the Synod to have notice in good time.)

Details about our programmed for Synod, and the usual arrangements will come out through normal channels in due course.

I am happy to engage in conversation about any of the above relating to the M&R report.

Every blessing,

Simon Clarke