

Greetings Synod,

As we approach the end of the 2023-4 Connexional year, we look back on a year of transition within the Learning Network structure. We have established new ways of working as 'one Learning Network team' to bring easier access to all the wonderful resources on offer and greater consistency in the support available. We have said goodbye to some established members of our team: Wendy Allen, Nigel Pimlott, Michael Wadsworth and Ann Howlett-Foster. We have also welcomed some new colleagues: Roxanne Bainbridge, David Knight, Tim Annan and James Key. We have developed new partnerships with you in the district and circuit as well as with other Connexional colleagues. Change is a feature of life and this has certainly been a time of change, but we are really encouraged by the number of people who have independently affirmed the changes they are witnessing in the way the Learning Network is serving the wider church. Thank you to those who have fed back to us, we need your perspectives to ensure our changed ways of working continue to meet local and connexional needs.

In the Learning Network, we are excited to mention some of the new and developing areas of our work:

- [Who Cares?](#), a newly launched training resource for pastoral care, available to all in the church
- Supporting churches towards Eco Church (read a story [here](#))
- The growing Connexional communities of practice: Circuit Stewards, Lay Employees, the Eco Community, District Reconciliation Groups, Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Officers and others involved in EDI work. These are spaces for conversation and learning from others in a similar role.
- Working with our digital communications colleagues to help churches, circuits and districts strengthen their digital skills and strategy.
- Opportunities to explore vocation through the [Encounter](#) and [Explore](#) programmes.
- An updated [Safeguarding Foundation Module](#), developed alongside safeguarding colleagues.
- Self-guided Circuit Steward training, launched on our online learning platform, [MCBX](#).
- Ministerial Review and Development Training in January 2025

Reflecting ahead, we look forward to extending the line management training resources; developing support for church stewards; supporting the awesome developments in God for All 2; and seeing the flourishing of the new online Eco-Community.

For more information, please visit our website, www.methodist.org.uk/learning, or browse the [Learning Network brochure](#)

Thank you for continuing to engage with our [Facebook group](#) and the [Methodist Church Resources group](#) where you can keep up to date with the latest resources and news. These are essential spaces for keeping your church and circuit in touch.

Thank you for all that you are and all you do - sharing in prayer, mission and ministry. We are privileged to work with you and we appreciate very much all that you give in the life of the church.

The aligned Learning Network officer for the district is Jenna Thorne. From 1st September, co-aligned officer Ann Howlett-Foster will retire after 15 years. Ann began her work in learning and development for the Methodist Church in East Anglia and Bed Essex and Herts. Ann has offered much expertise and skill in the way of creative facilitation skills, support for the District, vision and mission planning, and development of learning and development materials, and we're hope that you will wish her all the best in her future endeavours, including the consultancy work she will be continuing.

Jenna continues to support East Anglia in its learning and development. Through Jenna you have access to the entire Learning Network to provide the right support and development for your church community. Please contact Jenna to discuss any aspect of the life of your church community where there are opportunities for further learning, development, conversation and sharing, at: thornej@methodistchurch.org.uk.

All the best,

The Learning Network team

Learning Network dates of events for the upcoming connexional year:

- **Circuit Stewards**
 - **Training**
 - Tuesdays, 7.00-9.00pm, 14th Jan – 11th Feb
 - **Community of Practice**
 - Wednesdays, 7.00-9.00pm, last Wednesday of every month, except December and August
- **District Reconciliation Groups networking and resourcing spaces**
 - Mon 25th Nov and Thu 28th Nov, evening, repeated session
- **Local Preachers' Secretaries' drop-in sessions**
 - Thu 17th Oct 7.30-9.00pm
 - Tue 22nd Oct 2.00-3.30pm
 - Thu 20th Feb 7.30-9.00pm
 - Tue 25th Feb 2.00-3.30pm
 - Thu 5th Jun 7.30-9.00pm
 - Tue 10th Jun 2.00-3.30pm
- **Ministerial Development Review**
 - Thu 23rd Jan 7.00-9.00pm
 - Sat 25th Jan 10.00am-12.00nn
- **Positive Working Together** training in how we engage and interact with one another in a distinctively Christian way
 - **Growing together through Change and Conflict**
 - Tue 22nd Oct 9.30am-4.00pm
 - Mon 20th Jan & Wed 22nd Jan, 7.00-9.30pm, participants need to attend both sessions
 - Thu 3rd Apr 9.30am-4.00pm
 - **Responding to Bullying & Harassment**
 - Tue 19th Nov & Fri 22nd Nov, 9.30am-1.00pm, participants need to attend both sessions
 - Thu 12th Jun 9.30am-4.00pm
- **Supervision continuing development modules**
 - Thu 10th Oct 9.30am-12.30pm (Essential skills for first time supervisees)
 - Thu 7th Nov 9.30am-12.30pm (Balancing Support and Challenge in Reflective Supervision)
 - Thu 7th Nov 1.30-4.30pm (Refreshing supervision)

- Wed 29th Jan 2.00-5.00pm & Tue 13th May 9.30am-12.30pm (Supervising cross culturally)
 - Tue 25th Feb 9.30am-12.30pm & Thu 12th Jun 9.30am-12.30pm (Listening theologically)
- **Unconscious Bias training online**
 - Mon 16th Sep 7.00-8.30pm
 - Wed 6th Nov 2.00-3.30pm
 - Thu 3rd Apr 10.00-11.30am
- **Well: Resourced**, resourcing for those in children's and youth ministry
 - Thu 19th Sep 1.30-3.00pm
 - Thu 7th Nov 7.00-8.30pm
 - Tue 21st Jan 1.30-3.00pm
 - Tue 4th Mar 7.00-8.30pm
 - Thu 8th May 1.30-3.00pm
 - Thu 17th Jul 7.00-8.30pm
- **Working out Worship**, a series of sessions for those who lead Local Arrangements, and others who lead worship
 - Mondays, 7.00-9.00pm, 28th Oct – 11th Nov
- Supporting the **Worship: Leading and Preaching** course training for Local Preachers and Worship Leaders
 - **Online 'Explore' sessions**
 - Friday 7.00-9.00pm, Saturday 9.00-11.00am & 1.00-3.00pm
 - 1st-2nd Nov, 7th-8th Feb, 9th-10th May, 11th-12th Jul
 - **Induction sessions**
 - Wed 25th Sep 7.30-9.00pm
 - Fri 18th Oct 2.00-3.30pm
 - Wed 20th Nov 7.30-9.00pm
 - Fri 13th Dec 2.00-3.30pm
 - Wed 22nd Jan 7.30-9.00pm
 - Fri 21st Feb 2.00-3.30pm
 - Wed 19th Mar 7.30-9.00pm
 - Fri 25th Apr 2.00-3.30pm
 - Wed 14th May 7.30-9.00pm
 - Fri 20th Jun 2.00-3.30pm
 - Wed 23rd Jul 7.30-9.00pm
 - Fri 22nd Aug 2.00-3.30pm
 - **Study Skills for students**
 - Wednesdays, 7.30-9.00pm, 6th-27th Nov

- **Further skills for tutors**
 - Wed 25th Sep 7.00-9.00pm
 - Wed 6th Nov 7.00-9.00pm
 - Wed 29th Jan 7.00-9.00pm
 - Wed 5th Mar 7.00-9.00pm
 - Wed 28th May 7.00-9.00pm
 - Wed 2nd Jul 7.00-9.00pm

Additionally, here is the date for the launch of this year's advent campaign, facilitated by the Evangelism & Growth team:

- **Advent campaign "Hush the Noise" [webinar](#)**
 - Thursday 5th Sep, 7.00-8.00pm