

EDI Officer Newsletter Issue Three

28 November 2025





Dear District EDI Officers,

I would like to offer my heartfelt thanks for all that you do. Your commitment, wisdom, and steady support have strengthened our shared work of justice, dignity and solidarity across the Connexion. The impact of your leadership is felt in every District and circuit you serve, and I remain deeply grateful for your partnership.

As I prepare to step down from my role as Director of Inclusion at Christmas, this will likely be my final communication with you in this capacity. It has been a privilege to serve alongside you. Thank you for your support, your prayers, and the solidarity you have shown throughout our journey together.

As we look ahead, I invite you to hold in prayer those within our Church who may feel alienated, unheard or excluded. Please reflect on how we can continue offering reassurance, creating belonging, and standing in true solidarity with every person in our Methodist family.

Your presence and encouragement remain vital.

Although my formal role is changing, I will continue to support this work within the church circuit I attend and worship, and I look forward to staying connected in the ongoing movement for justice and inclusion.

Blessings,
Bevan Powell

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Meet The Team! - Profile Series



Kristie Eve (she/her) – Learning & Development Officer

1. Please share a bit about yourself and your background

My social media bio declares I am a “lover of humanity, harbinger of hope” and I do think that sums me up! I love people and generally feel enthusiastic about life. I’m active in my local Methodist Church, near Preston in the North West England District, which has a great focus on social justice.

2. What is your role within the Connexional Team?

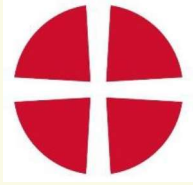
I have been a Learning and Development Officer with the Learning Network since 2018. I’m co-lead of the Learning Network’s JDS shared work group. This includes pulling together the Equipping for Equality programme, and I’m one of the authors of the MCBX EDI and Unconscious Bias training modules.

3. What's the most exciting project you have worked on?

I’m fortunate to have a job I love and find everything that I do exciting! I’m grateful to get to be alongside Methodists – members, lay folk and ordained ministers – and feel my role of encouraging and signposting plays to my strengths. Every day finds me doing something new – for example today I’m thanking lay employees by creating “you are a star” coasters.

4. What's your most favourite way of unwinding after a busy day at work?

My lovely lurcher models well how to relax – I love to cuddle up next to her. I also enjoy a good sing and have recently joined a samba drumming band.



Progress in implementing the JDS Strategy – An Anonymised Survey

In order to aid you to fulfil the requirements of Conference Resolution 63/2 agreed at Methodist Conference 2025 that: ***“District Synods should take time in the next year to consider the progress their District has made in implementing the JDS Strategy since its adoption five years ago, particularly in relation to systemic, structural and cultural change, and what more is to be done.”***

Your District is invited to assist the Justice, Dignity and Solidarity Committee by completing a survey exploring how far the Methodist Church has progressed in achieving the aims and intentions of the JDS Strategy. Some of you may already have received this survey through earlier circulation within your District.

If so, please note that the survey content has not changed, and those who have already completed it do not need to do so again. This message is simply to ensure that all Districts have access to the survey link and the opportunity to share it widely.

Please share the survey, via the link below, with all your District, Circuit and church contacts and encourage them to take part by **Monday 15 December 2025.**

https://kbs.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_6rOUTHqfWcM9lvs

Researchers from the Susanna Wesley Foundation at the Southlands Methodist Trust have been commissioned to design and manage the survey. The information gathered will provide important insights into the implementation and impact of the JDS Strategy. All responses will be fully anonymised, and the Foundation will conduct the analysis before presenting the findings to the Justice, Dignity and Solidarity Committee. These results will then inform the Committee’s report to the Methodist Conference in 2026.

Thank you for supporting this important work by sharing the survey widely and encouraging strong participation across your District.



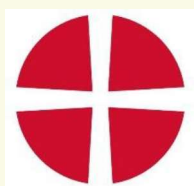
The Affirmations Scheme – Symbols of Inclusivity

Within each edition this year we would like to give updates on the Affirmations Scheme. For those of you that are not aware of this just yet, a very helpful introduction to this can be accessed via this link [Bedfordshire, Essex and Hertfordshire District : BEH Affirmations Scheme](#) Many thanks to Stuart Watkin, EDI Learning Development Officer, for providing this introduction through his work with the BEH District. If your District or Circuit are in the process of working towards this and you are willing to feature in the newsletters, do let me know.

Methodist schools have been pouring real energy and creativity into their entries for our recent competition, which invited pupils to create artwork showing what an inclusive church means to them. Early in the New Year we will work with the Publications Team, along with the winning pupils from both the primary and secondary categories, to shape these ideas into symbols that can be used across the connexion.

We will share the winning entries with you as soon as we can. We are also planning a display in the New Year so that people can come and view the artwork in person.

We would also love to hear from local churches. If you have symbols, artwork, or visual ideas that celebrate inclusion in your setting, please send us photos along with the name of your church so that we can acknowledge it properly.



The Learning Network

This coming year we have a broader than ever programme of “Equipping for Equality” events. Please do take a look and book on yourself as well as advertise them far and wide: [Equipping for Equality by Methodist Learning Network | Eventbrite](#).

There will be a repeat this year of some workshops such as “An Introduction to Cultural Intelligence” (Mar 18th) and “A Guide to the Inclusive Language Guide” (July 9th). Additionally we have some new topics and speakers to look forward to.

We're delighted to have Vikki Pestell share her wisdom about "What it means for our churches to be sensory space aware" (Feb 10th); Simon Sutcliffe will be discussing "Reimagining masculinity: Creating safer spaces for all (20th April) and Sharon Nugent will be leading a session entitled "Becoming an Intercultural Church" (May 12th).

There are also opportunities for people who want to attend an online session of the Unconscious Bias training, so if you know of anyone who hasn't completed this training, the dates are here: [Unconscious Bias Training by Methodist Learning Network | Eventbrite](#) and also included below:

Equipping for Equality Programme – all here:

[Equipping for Equality by Methodist Learning Network | Eventbrite](#)

Thurs Dec 4th [Equality Impact Assessments explained Registration, Thu 4 Dec 2025 at 19:00 | Eventbrite](#) by Bevan Powell

Tues 10th Feb [What does it mean for our churches to be sensory space aware? Registration, Tue 10 Feb 2026 at 19:00 | Eventbrite](#) by Vikki Pestell

Thurs 5th Mar [Showing 'After the Flood': Thinking well about yourself and attendees Registration, Thu 5 Mar 2026 at 19:00 | Eventbrite](#)

Weds 18th March [An Introduction to Cultural Intelligence Registration, Wed 18 Mar 2026 at 19:00 | Eventbrite](#) by Sharon Nugent

Mon 20th April [Reimagining masculinity: Creating safer spaces for all Registration, Mon 20 Apr 2026 at 19:00 | Eventbrite](#) by Revd Simon Sutcliffe

Tues 12th May [Becoming an Intercultural Church Registration, Tue 12 May 2026 at 19:00 | Eventbrite](#) by Sharon Nugent

Thu 9th July [Guide to the Inclusive Language Guide Registration, Thu 9 Jul 2026 at 19:00 | Eventbrite](#) by Kristie Eve and Stuart Watkin

We look forward to seeing you at any of these events and as always, please do let us know what else might help equip you in your role.

‘After The Flood’

Following the Memorial to Conference in 2021, the Methodist Conference formally recognised the impact and legacy of the transatlantic slave trade on enslaved African people and their descendants. It is currently exploring that legacy, looking at the extent to which the Church benefitted directly or indirectly from the transatlantic slave trade and will bring a report to Conference next year.

After the Flood is a powerful documentary that explores the historic role of the Church in the transatlantic slave trade and the continuing call to justice and repair. The Methodist Church is encouraging people to watch the film and use it as a prompt for reflection and conversation across our communities.

Within the link below, we share a reflection from Rev Olufemi Cole-Njie who recently attended a screening, offering a thoughtful response to this important film.

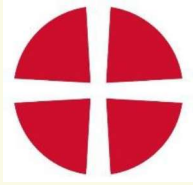
[Showing 'After the Flood' Workshop Session_A Reflection.pdf](#)

In relation to ‘Femi’s reflection, the Task Group working to deliver on the Memorial to Conference have said that the Methodist Church in Britain are working with the African Methodist Council and partner churches in West Africa to carry out a literature review on impact/benefit to the Methodist Church from the enslavement and trade in African people. That historical research, theological engagement and subsequent conversations will be helping shape and inform what reparation might look like. We are also conducting a similar exercise with the Methodist Church in the Americas and Caribbean.

For those who are considering showing the film, there will also be an opportunity to consider tips on how to sensitively support those who attend, across a range of reactions and emotions, to enable reflection on the film content and engage in conversations at the following online session: [Showing ‘After the Flood’: Thinking well about yourself and attendees Registration, Thu 5 Mar 2026 at 19:00 | Eventbrite](#)

Further information on the film can be accessed via the following - [After the Flood - The Methodist Church](#)

Kristie and Stuart, The Learning Network



The Solidarity Circles – a new strategy for engagement

A new strategy is being developed to engage with local congregations and communities (including those without easy website access) to join the Solidarity Circles and to strengthen the voice of lived-experience in the Church's work of justice, dignity and solidarity. (Based on the Strategy for Justice, Dignity and Solidarity). ([The Methodist Church](#))

The key objectives is to:

1. **Raise awareness** in local churches about what Solidarity Circles are, why they matter, and who can join.
2. **Engage potential members**, especially those who may not regularly use the website, using a variety of channels.
3. **Build local ownership** so that churches and circuits feel part of this recruitment, rather than it being only central.
4. **Reflect diversity** in membership (age, background, geography, lived experience) in line with the Terms of Reference. ([d1yuutt686hfi0.cloudfront.net](#))

The target audiences:

- Members of local Methodist churches (lay and ordained) who have interest in equality, diversity, inclusion and justice work.
- Those who feel under-represented or whose voices are less often heard (e.g., people with disabilities, LGBTQ+ members, women, rural church members).
- Church leaders and EDI officers who can act as ambassadors.
- Local communities connected to Methodist churches who might feel distant from central communications or websites.

Channels & Methods:

- Send posters to Supers (A4 & A5) to be placed on noticeboards, in church vestibules, halls, church coffee areas.
- Insert a short announcement and tear-off slip in the Sunday bulletin / newsletter.
- Use the circuit or district EDI officer to host drop-in information sessions (tea & chat) after worship where people can ask questions and fill paper forms.
- Also accessible via the Methodist Church website.

An example for advertisements for the church notice boards, newsletters:

Be Heard. Be Seen. Be the Change.

Join a Methodist Church Solidarity Circle

Solidarity Circles are small groups of Methodists across Britain who share lived experiences and help guide the Church's journey toward justice, dignity and solidarity.

Each Circle welcomes members with experience to any of the following Circles:

- Disability Solidarity Circle
- LGBTQ+ Solidarity Circle
- Racial Justice Solidarity Circle
- Women's Solidarity Circle
- Rural Church Solidarity Circle

Why it matters:

The Church needs your perspective. Circles help ensure decisions, priorities and worship reflect the full diversity of God's people.

No experience needed — just your story and faith.

👉 Apply online: *[insert link]*

✉ Or request a paper form from your District EDI Officer [your Superintendent will have the contact details]

Deadline: *[insert date]*

Your voice. Our Church. Let's grow together.

Justice. Dignity. Solidarity.

Further information on this new strategy and recruitment will follow in the New Year.



Notice Board

Quick Pulse...

A check-in where you tell us what support you need and flag any immediate priorities

What support would you welcome in this space?

- Policy updates
- Training
- Templates

Send your thoughts to equality&diversity@methodistchurch.org.uk

Your EDI Win...

invites you to share a short success from your context.

One or two lines and a photo with consent, so we can spotlight practical ideas other can use next month.

We look forward to hearing from you equality&diversity@methodistchurch.org.uk

Peer Support Circle...

Share a real scenario you would like to discuss, keep it brief, and get practical peer advice you can use right away.

- Send 2 to 3 sentences, what happened, what you tried, and the question you want help with.

- Remove names and identifiers, include any access or safeguarding factors we should consider.
- Submit to equality&diversity@methodistchurch.org.uk
- We discuss the scenarios at the next online meeting, the owner of the scenario gives a 60 second intro, then the group offers options and resources.
- After the meeting you receive a one page summary of suggestions, links to tools, and an optional follow up slot with the JDS team.

Zoom and Teams User Guides

Click on the link below for a quick guide to run and participate in inclusive meetings on Zoom and Microsoft Teams, with steps for hosting, access, sharing and follow up.

[Zoom and Teams Guide](#)

We look forward to hearing from you.

Kim Medford-Vassell - JDS Programme Coordinator

equality&diversity@methodistchurch.org.uk



Links to Webpages and Newsletters

Follow the links below to Methodist items of interest.

If you would like to add links from your Circuit or District to this section, send an email to the following address – equality&diversity@methodistchurch.org.uk

JDS Pages - [Strategy for Justice, Dignity and Solidarity - The Methodist Church](#)

The Learning Network Pages - [About the Learning Network - The Methodist Church](#)

Methodist News - [News - The Methodist Church](#)

The Connexion Magazine - [The Connexion magazine - The Methodist Church](#)

Prayer for Today - [A prayer for the day](#)

Methodist Publishing, order free A5 size copies of the booklet for you and your local church
- [Strategy for Justice, Dignity and Solidarity](#)

Advent Resources - [Advent and Christmas Resources - The Methodist Church](#)



Contacts

Contact the Team on the email addresses below:

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Additional dates for your diary...

2025 Connexional Council

6 December

13 December

10 February

20-22 March

For information on Connexional Council and membership, visit the following page - [The Connexional Council - The Methodist Church](#)

2026 EDI Newsletter Publication dates

27 March (deadline for submissions 6 March)

26 June (deadline for submissions 5 June)

25 September (deadline for submissions 4 September)

19 December (deadline for submissions 4 December)

- ❖ **UK Disability History Month** - 14th November to 20th December
- ❖ **International Day of Persons with Disabilities** - 3 December
- ❖ **Human Rights Day** - 10 December
- ❖ **LGBT+ History Month** – February
- ❖ **Race Equality Week** – 5-9 February
- ❖ **International Women's Day** – 8 March



Thought for the day..

As the Advent season approaches, I felt it fitting to offer a short reflection as we prepare for this time of hope and expectation.

Advent Hope in Our Shared Work

As Advent unfolds, we pause to remember that the light we wait for is already stirring among us. The Methodist calling invites us to be a people who notice grace in ordinary places, who make room for one another, and who shape communities where dignity is honoured and love is practiced with intention.

Your work as EDI Officers reflects this calling in real and hopeful ways. Every conversation, every careful decision, and every act of welcome becomes part of the light that Advent promises.

Thank you for the care you bring and the quiet persistence that helps our Church grow into the inclusive body Christ calls us to be.

May this season bring moments of calm, courage, and joy.