

Pastoral Care Policy

Vision:

Our calling, as part of the Methodist Church, is to learning and caring:

We long for our churches to be places where individuals can grow in discipleship and where all people feel welcomed and cared for. Our churches should be places where:

- All can learn and grow as disciples
- All can gain confidence in the Christian faith and their Methodist heritage
- All can play a part in ministry
- All can recognise their own gifts and use them both in the church and outside the church
- We nurture caring people
- We nurture others by caring for them
- We nurture an open welcoming church
- Groups that help those who are vulnerable are nurtured.
- Where discipleship in the whole of life is encouraged

To fulfil this vision:

We encourage all churches to have either a pastoral committee or a lay pastoral contact, whose role with the minister, is to ensure that **all** our members and those on our community roll have someone

- with whom they can relate,
- who will encourage them in their discipleship
- who will enable the church to respond to their pastoral needs as appropriate.

Responsibilities:

Circuit:

To promote good practice

To provide training and support in issues relevant to the needs of pastoral visitors

To provide materials for the use of pastoral visitors

To review policy

Church councils:

To receive the pastoral committee report

To ensure the suitability of those offering to be pastoral visitors

To make appointments of pastoral visitors

To ensure policy is implemented and reviewed

Minister in pastoral charge:

To respond to urgent or specific pastoral needs

To ensure a ministerial visit is organised for those we are aware of in hospital

To provide opportunities for home communions

To keep an up to date record of membership and community roll

To provide up to date statistics for mission to the administrator once a year

To maintain a log of pastoral visits

Pastoral visitor:

In general:

To keep up to date with safeguarding training

To attend pastoral visitor training

To attend pastoral committee meetings

To be aware of the circuit policy on confidentiality and act appropriately

To be aware of the circuit policy on accepting money.

To be rooted in the worship life of the local church

When visiting:

- To visit regularly depending on need
- To ensure the visit is carried out in the context of prayer
- To keep the minister informed if there are urgent or specific pastoral needs
- To keep a record of visits
- To ensure their safety and the safe care of those they visit
- To arrange with a minister regular home communions
- To attend home communions with the minister.
- To wear a badge that easily identifies the pastoral visitor on visits
- To leave a card from the church

Pastoral committee: (or church council)

- To keep the minister in pastoral charge up to date with pastoral needs
- To keep with the minister an up to date record of membership and community roll which should be reviewed annually
- To prayerfully consider those on the church roll
- To consider who might benefit from attending a membership course
- To arrange for reception into membership for those wishing to be members
- To remove from membership those no longer wishing to be members
- To deal with any pastoral issues
- To ensure pastoral visitors are trained and training is up to date.
- To make recommendations to the church council on appointments of pastoral visitors

Record keeping:

- Records should be kept of the membership and community roll
- Each pastoral visitor should also keep a record of all visits
- Records should be kept of any specific concerns
- The superintendent minister should be consulted on record keeping where there are safeguarding and/or disciplinary concerns

Money:

If an offering is given to a pastoral visitor by someone who is capable of understanding what they are doing, a receipt should be given. A record should be kept by the pastoral visitor and the transaction should be recorded by the church treasurer.
In the case of someone who is not capable of understanding, money **should not** be accepted; a note should be made of the incident and the action taken recorded.

Date

Signed (Superintendent Minister)

Signed(Circuit Secretary)