

# From the Superintendent

*Rev Steve Day*

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Dear friends,

The new connexional year begins in September, and I would like to take the opportunity to share two initiatives in the circuit.

## **Equality, Diversity & Inclusion training**

The Methodist Church in Britain has committed to a Strategy for Justice, Dignity and Solidarity as it seeks to become a fully inclusive church. Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) training is an important aspect of implementing the strategy. This training is mandatory for specific officeholders, but will be beneficial to everyone, including those who have already done similar training.

While EDI training is being offered online, it has become apparent that not everyone can access it. In addition, doing the training individually online may limit the impact of our learning, which is about developing and sustaining healthy human relationships. For these reasons, Revd Sue Male and I have developed training which will take place throughout the autumn and hopefully reflect real issues we face locally.

A circuit service of café worship on Sunday 21 September at Ealing Green at 3.00 pm, will be our first learning opportunity together. We will be encouraged to share stories about when we have felt valued, included, and welcomed, as well as stories about when this has not been the case. This sharing will lay the foundations for further sharing in the following five sessions throughout the autumn. In the final session, participants will complete a Personal Responsibility Commitment identifying points for our ongoing learning and development.

Ajay, Sue and I have committed to offering five opportunities for us to participate in the five sessions, hopefully giving sufficient flexibility to accommodate other commitments. Dates, times and venues will be shared soon.

We hope this training will provide us with valuable and relevant learning which we can implement in all our relationships.

### **Envisioning Together in Ealing**

In the June Circuit Meeting, I shared with trustees about a potential two-year envisioning process for the circuit. A proposal about Envisioning Together in Ealing will come to the September Circuit Meeting. Should the Circuit Meeting approve the process, it will involve everyone; hence, it seemed helpful to share some details now.

Envisioning Together is a means by which we can assess our current position and seek God's vision for our future together. In seeking God's vision, we will pay attention to God as we listen to God in prayer, in conversation with one another and as we review what emerges. It is essential to note at the outset that we do not know what will emerge from this process; rather, it is a process of discernment in which we will discover, together, God's vision for our future.

The process will involve four stages:



The **listen** stage will occupy the next connexional year. It will involve hearing stories from our churches and congregation members as well as those from the wider community. These stories will be gathered, analysed and brought for consideration at an away day next summer to see how they can inform the ongoing stages of the process.

Having considered what has been learnt from the listening stage we would be invited to **dream**. We would be invited to imagine an ideal future, temporarily forgetting the limitations of our present reality, and considering not only what we want to do but also what change we would want to see resulting from our action.

The **choose** stage is a reminder that we have limited time and resources and thus need to choose particular priorities. Visits to churches and circuits beyond our circuit and district may help us to imagine new possibilities and understand the implications of engaging in new priorities.

The **act** stage emerges from the choices made in the previous stage. The circuit will produce a growth plan as a record of God speaking to us and our commitment to follow God's lead. It will set out the priorities for the circuit and its churches and be a means of holding each other accountable.

Envisioning Together in Ealing would mean a significant investment in time and energy in our circuit. However, this investment could be a significant step in enabling us to understand our place in God's kingdom and move forward in faith, confidence and courage.

I pray that God would bless, inspire, encourage and challenge us through the EDI training and Envisioning Together. I look forward to sharing in this journey with you.

God bless,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Sten', with a horizontal line underneath.