

District Executive

By Ruth Bemrose, secretary to the executive

At its meeting on 4 December 2006, the District Executive welcomed two new synod-elected representatives, viz. Rev. Martin Smithson (Wantage and Abingdon Circuit) and David Duxbury (High Wycombe Circuit).

The executive had a long and careful discussion of the relative merits of two possible sites that could provide both permanent office accommodation for district officers, and rooms for district committee meetings and training events. The executive decided to pursue the possibility of renting suitable spaces that will soon become available in Northampton at the offices of the Diocese of Peterborough. The executive hopes to bring a firm recommendation to the spring synod this year.

On the experience gained at the launch of the new Northampton District at synod last September, it seems that synod will fit comfortably in a church or hall seating about 250; sometimes a suite of smaller rooms will also be needed for group work. Various venues have been offered and arrangements are being pursued for the next few synods. As the inclusion of a service of Holy Communion at the beginning of last year's autumn synod was greatly appreciated, the executive decided that this pattern should continue for now.

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District News

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Celebrating history

The Northampton District has produced a new resource in response to the number of anniversaries that will take place in the coming year.

Celebrating Your History encourages people to reflect on history and what can be learnt from the past. In particular, the publication urges church members to explore the history of their church and reflect on the findings, and then to consider the implications of these for the mission of the church today.

Further details of *Celebrating Your History* are available on the district website:

www.methodistdistrict23.org.uk.

District chair

Rev. Alison Tomlin's appointment as district chair ends in 2009. Early in the next Methodist year, which begins in September 2007, we will start the process of finding Alison's successor. One of the preliminary tasks is the preparation of a "District statement of needs and opportunities". This will guide the Nomination Committee, and the District Executive will begin work on the statement this spring. Suggestions for the document, however brief, will be welcome, and should be sent to the synod secretary, Rev. Dr Martin Wellings (martin@wellingsmethodist.fsnet.co.uk; 53, Oxford Road, Kidlington, OX5 2BP), for consideration by the executive.

Kids want Christ

This will be the theme of the first District Children's and Youth Workers' Day on Saturday 12th May. The event is for anyone who works with children and/or young people in the church. For more details, please contact Rev. Norman Hooks: (minister@wellstreetchurch.org.uk; 01280 813862).

Schedules

What should you do with your schedules? You may wish to offer a number of answers! However, the correct ones are:

- Schedules A, C or the Standard Form of Accounts should go to Rev. Alison Tomlin at the District Office.
- Schedule D should go to Colin Bemrose, District Property Secretary.

District Advance Fund

Amendments to the guidance notes for District Advance Fund grants came into force on 1st January this year. The changes relate to property schemes, and are designed to ensure that any outstanding work is completed before new work begins. Applications to the District Advance Fund for property schemes will be rejected where Disability Discrimination Act requirements are outstanding, or other urgent work required to the property disclosed in the relevant quinquennial report has not been done, unless clear reasons for making an exception are made very clear.

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On the financial side, a Ministry and Mission grant application is being prepared to help fund the new district post of Director of Mission from September 2007.

The executive agreed to recommend a further District Advance Fund grant of £4,000 for 2007/08 to support work at the Fairford Leys Local Ecumenical Project in the Aylesbury Vale Circuit.

The executive heard that circuit reviews are to become mandatory in the near future, and are to be reported to the Connexion through district officers. Much in terms of grants and staffing may hang on the proper carrying out of such reviews. The executive's decisions about changes in Circuit Advance Fund grant applications are reported elsewhere on this page.