

Chair of District: Rev Gill M Newton

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Serving the Methodist Church
in South Yorkshire,
North Nottinghamshire
and North East Derbyshire

February 2021

To all Members of the Sheffield Methodist District Representative Synod

Dear friends

I write to call you to an extraordinary session of the Representative Synod on **Saturday 27th February 2021 from 9.30 a.m. to 1.15 p.m.** at which we will vote upon the resolutions contained within the “God In Love Unites Us report.”

This will be a virtual gathering by Zoom for which all Synod members are required to register by following this link -

<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZ0qcO6qqTksH9LfiREng2mKLn3RHj097tv1>
Registration should be completed please by Friday 19th February.

As you prepare to participate in the Synod, please ensure that you have read the “God In Love Unites Us” report which can be found here - <https://www.methodist.org.uk/MandR19/>
You may also find it helpful to make use of some additional resources which you will find on our District website - <https://www.sheffieldmethodist.org/about-us/synod.html>

Over recent years, many conversations have been held in local churches and circuits about these matters and the feedback that has been received from some of those who participated has been summarised in a document attached to this communication.

As members of the Synod, you will have the opportunity to debate the resolutions prior to the votes being taken but please note that time limits will be set for speeches and you will only to be able to speak once on each resolution in accordance with our rules of debate.

The members of Synod are appointed or elected as being representative of the life of the District. You are therefore invited to vote as your own conscience dictates, not as a delegate from any particular church, Circuit or group. Voting will take place by completion of a poll card that will appear on your Zoom screen and only members of Synod are entitled to vote.

This process does mean that only one vote can be recorded per device so where possible please join the meeting on your own PC, laptop, tablet or phone. However, if it is not possible for you to do so and you need to share a device with another Synod member, please contact Katrin Hackett on admin@sheffieldmethodist.org so that we can advise you of the alternative arrangements that are being made to receive your vote.

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Guidance regarding the use of Zoom is enclosed with this communication. I am aware that many of you will have become very familiar with this platform over recent months, but if you require any additional help or assistance in this regard or indeed if participating in the Synod in this way will prove difficult for you, please do be in touch with Katrin as outlined above.

The final decision on these resolutions will be taken at the Methodist Conference later this year and our District representatives will vote in accordance with their own discernment and conscience. The results of the votes taken in our Synod will be reported to the Conference Office and along with results from all Districts will form part of the Conference debate.

The attached agenda outlines the way in which we will approach these important conversations and decisions and confirms that the time we spend together will be woven through with worship and prayer. These matters are sensitive and ones that could easily divide us. So I trust that you will continue to hold the Synod in your prayers and that we will be able to confer well together in an atmosphere of honesty, integrity, openness and trust.

I look forward to welcoming all of you to this Synod and to worshipping and sharing together in these challenging times.

Yours faithfully

Revd Gill Newton
District Chair

Revd Margaret Mwailu
Synod Secretary