

**Chair of District: Rev Gill M Newton**

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March 2016

Dear Member of Synod

I write to call you to the next gathering of the Representative Synod of the Sheffield District of the Methodist Church which is being held at **Hinde House School, Shiregreen Lane, Sheffield S5 6AG from 9.30 a.m. to 3.30 p.m. on Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> April 2016**. A separate sheet providing travel directions and information about car parking is provided elsewhere in this mailing.

If you need to bring any children with you who will need care provided for them during the period of the Synod, please advise the District Office so that appropriate provision can be made.

Refreshments will be served from 9.00 a.m. before Synod commences and again during the lunch break, but please bring your own packed lunch with you.

The enclosed agenda outlines the business for our Synod and you will note that the theme for the day is **“Risk Taking Mission and Service.”** This is one of the Five Fruitful Practices for Healthy Congregations identified by Bishop Robert Schnase in the book of the same name, a book which I know some of you have read and are using as a model of good practice in your Circuits. We will continue to explore the remaining practices in future Synods.

As usual we will acknowledge all that has happened within the life of our District during the last year by receiving the reports contained within the enclosed Synod Agenda booklet. We will also hear stories and reports of projects around the District which reflect the theme of the day and we will be helped in our thinking about the theme by our **key note speaker, Rev Ian Bell**.

During the afternoon we will spend time in plenary and in workshops considering the proposed District Mission Statement and accompanying Action Plan. The workshops will each focus on one aspect of the Mission Statement i.e. Learning, Changing and Joining In. Please let Katrin Hackett at the District Office know which of these **workshops** you would like to attend by **Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> April**. Any Synod members who have not achieved this will be allocated to a workshop on their arrival at Synod, so if you do have a particular preference, please book early!

During the Synod there will be a collection taken for the benefit of the **Methodist Ministers Children’s Relief Association** so please do come prepared to support this cause as generously as possible. In addition, the **Marketplace** which will be available before the Synod and during the lunch break will provide opportunities for you to purchase books and resources.

Any **Notices of Motion or Memorials** for consideration by the Synod should be forwarded to me and to Rev Tom Read, Synod Secretary, at least **14 days before the Synod** meets, so that they can be included in the order papers. Any future events you may wish to announce can be included on a Notice Sheet if sent to the Synod Secretary by **Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> April** or alternatively they can be pinned to a notice board at Synod.

In this mailing you should have all the necessary papers for the agenda items. Any additional papers will be provided for you on the day. If you have papers, relevant to the business, which have not yet been circulated, please send them to the Synod Secretary for copying by **Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> April**.

As ever, Synod provides us with a wonderful opportunity to confer together and seek the mind and will of God for the church as well as an opportunity for us to watch over one another in love. So, your presence at the Synod and the contributions you make to our conversations and decision making are important. If you are a lay representative and for some good reason are unable to attend the Synod, **please send your apologies** through your Superintendent Minister, who may be able to arrange for a substitute to come in your place. If this is the case, please pass these papers on to any appointed substitute. Having this information will also enable us to ensure that the appropriate amount of seating is made available on the day.

Presbyters and deacons in the active work are required to attend Synod, but if for any compelling reason you may need a dispensation, please send your request directly to me at [chair@sheffieldmethodist.org](mailto:chair@sheffieldmethodist.org). Supernumeraries are, of course, very welcome at Synod, but if you are not able to come, please do not feel that you must let me know, particularly if doing so would be a burden to you.

May I take this opportunity to thank you all for all that you do to serve God and his church across this District. I very much look forward to seeing you all on Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> April and to us having a productive day together.

Yours sincerely



Revd Gill Newton  
Chair of Sheffield District