# The Gift of Togetherness, led by the DSOs

15 May 2021

**Summary of Zoom chat**

great to see so many Circuit safeguarding Officers here

(what are your gifts?)

Loving, kind, generous, thankful, good host, good listener,

Christian counsellor, knitter, dancer, crafter, teacher

kind genuine gardening art sociology loved by God as we all are.

sitting with a friend as her life ebbs away- sharing her hope in her new life...

Breakout questions:

 1. What things could prevent individuals using their gifts?

 2. Are the things within the structures and relationships within your local church that could prevent people using their gifts?

fear of outshining others

mentoring,/ longer handover of roles not just done at a meeting

Not doing a role as good as someone else

need to know people, skills audit? abusers do not come wearing the tshirt

Sharing roles or stewards taking on full responsibility for certain aspects of the role that they have a definite Gift for. This leaves others free to concentrate on the more onerous responsibilities

Our structures, such as the preaching plan creates and maintains passive dependence in our congregations.

Controlling people In church roles can often inhibit others from volunteering

For younger people growing up within a church family there may not be the recognition that they have developed certain skills and talents. Also we need to consider our language / jargon that can be misunderstood

Accepting folk for what they can do, not what they can't do- eg a busy mum/teacher said she didn't think she could be a steward- however we wanted her for her wisdom.. others who are ( semi) retired etc can do more of the doing- but she asks us the difficult questions., so she joined us. Importance of team not individuals- also good to prevent those of us who can at times seem too powerful to others

Breakout questions:

 1. What will it take for people to feel safe enough to ‘open up their box’ and use their giftings within the church and community? How can we encourage this with people of all ages and all abilities?

 2. The things holding us back from using our gifts will not automatically disappear, how can we learn to live with/work around these things?

 3. How does the church being a safe space play a part in us using our gifts and what can we practically do to work towards this?

 4. How can we use good safeguarding practice to give us more confidence in feeling free to use our gifts?

Lockdown offered new opportunities. We have three One Opportunities participants who have blossomed in their worship leading, Bible study, & Family sessions

Will take on board what has just been shared about how we word things / the language we use. Thank you.

<https://www.methodist.org.uk/for-churches/office-holders/circuit-stewards/>

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Job descriptions helps to address in an appropriate way when roles boundaries are crossed or become blurred

'Role descriptor' sounds less onerous than 'Job description'. I know they are only words but this may help to soften the approach.

following on from yesterday, wellbeing needs us to give, if everyone gave something in church, would be less onerous

Safeguarding is a prime example of the vastness of the job - so overwhelming sometimes it puts one off doing anything.

As children and young people's worker I find that there is a lack of supervision and support for the volunteers in their role. How do we do this when there are legal implcations if words like supervision etc. are used in job description. I cannot put myself down for this as there are legal implications.

We need radical rethink about how we make our churches more inclusive if we are to recognise and acknowledge the gifts and talents of everyone

Thank you. The week has been inspiring.