

## **Mentoring for church roles.**

This is a very simple outline of what could take place, to encourage a wider range of people to take up leadership roles.

1. The practice of mentoring is one more familiar in Black church cultures, but is also behind formal apprenticeships, and also the informal 'sitting alongside Nellie' learning by example from an experienced older colleague, found in many smaller industrial workplaces.

In the BMC culture it is normally the pastor who spots the potential of a younger person who starts to give them small tasks, sees how they do, gives feedback, gives them something more stretching and if they continue to show promise, gives them a mentor who has done the role before from whom they can learn.

2. In the District setting, it would mean asking ministers to take the time to consider who of their younger, or coming-up-to-retirement members, might show signs of being able to develop into a new role – we do it for Local Preachers and Worship Leaders already, but less often for other roles. We also have LP mentors too.

The potential people would then be put in touch with the existing Office holder, or a past one, to help them understand the role and begin to work together so that after the end of the existing Office holder's term of office, they are ready for the task. You might have the two people attending one or two meetings before the end of the existing office holder's term of office, but I don't think that is a problem with Zoom meetings.

3. If the post is an elected one, at some point – ideally at least two years before the existing person's term of office is over, and once it is clear that the new person is capable of the role, their name would go forward for election. If for any reason they drop out or are not accepted, then there is time to identify and develop another person before the existing office holder retires

4. Obviously, this is quite a long process envisaged for major roles for which it is difficult to recruit. More straightforward roles where the job description is simple and requires less judgement do not need such an onerous process, but in the local church context, may well be helpful for younger people to gain confidence in leadership.

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