

## Statistics for Mission District Report – 12, Cornwall District

### Triennial Membership Report, 2008-10

This district report is an overview of information contained within the district summary charts, designed for those who struggle with tables, to pick out the most interesting numbers and give a snapshot of district life. Guidance notes and the district summary charts are available on the Statistics for Mission website ([www.methodist.org/statisticsformission](http://www.methodist.org/statisticsformission)) and should be read in conjunction with this report.

### District Composition

The Cornwall District comprises 221 churches, including 7 Local Ecumenical Partnerships (LEPs), in 16 circuits, which is 4% of the Connexional total. Geographically the district is predominantly rural, with 83% of churches in rural locations, and no churches reporting an urban setting. This compares to a national distribution of churches of 13% urban, 43% semi-urban and 44% rural.

The response rate to the survey was 87% in total, with several churches failing to complete returns. The lowest response rates were for Bodmin, Padstow and Wadebridge and Truro Circuits, with response rates of 33% and 56% respectively<sup>1</sup>.

### Membership

The district has an estimated membership in 2010 of 6,422 (6,173 recorded)<sup>2</sup>, which is an 8% fall on both 2009 and 2008. There are, in addition, 55 Methodist 'joint members' of LEPs within the district.

The circuits with the highest membership are The Lizard and Mounts Bay and Camborne-Redruth. The circuit with the lowest membership is Isles of Scilly, but this has only two churches.

There are 7,801 'Pastoral Others'<sup>3</sup> connected to Methodist churches within the district, which is 1.2 times the number of members (this compares to a ratio of 1:1.38 nationally).

The Cornwall District has 141 churches with a membership of 30 or less, which is over 60% of the district, and 16 with a membership of 80 or more. The church with the largest recorded membership in the district is Truro Methodist Church, in the Truro Circuit, with 409 members, which is two thirds of the circuit's total membership.

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<sup>1</sup> In 2010, a number of districts opted to engage in a district-led pilot exercise, adapting the methods of data entry and the number and type of questions asked in the October Count. This report reflects only the results which correlate with data collected in all districts. For further information on and data gathered during the pilot exercise, see [www.stats4mission.org.uk](http://www.stats4mission.org.uk)

<sup>2</sup> Recorded membership is the number of members reported in response to the Statistics for Mission survey. Estimated membership includes inferred figures for those circuits and churches that failed to submit a response.

<sup>3</sup> 'Pastoral Others' comprise all non-members for whom the church has some direct pastoral responsibility and contact, such as those who attend worship regularly, along with those who attend enquiry courses such as Alpha or are otherwise involved with fellowship activities provided by the church.

## Adult Attendance

Total attendance on an average Sunday for the district is 6,155. Additional attendance at midweek services is 837. (The mid-week figures include only those who did not attend worship on Sunday. People who attend both Sunday and midweek worship are included in Sunday's figures). The average (mean) Sunday attendance per church across the district was just under 28, which is almost a third smaller than the national average of 40.13. Average weekly attendance (Sundays and midweek combined) for the district has fallen 7% since 2009, but is 6% higher than in 2008.

The St Austell Circuit has the highest church attendance, and has experienced growth in average weekly attendance of 13% in the last year.

Truro Methodist Church has the highest total attendance in the district, with 2,394 attendees in October. The church's total average weekly attendance is 599, which is over two thirds of the circuit's total.

## Youth Attendance

The average Sunday attendance for under-19s within the district was 724, of which nearly 80% were children under the age of 13. Additional midweek attendance by children and young people within the district was an average of 419, of which 77% were under 13s.

This year churches were asked about the number of individuals paid to work with children and young people. Within the Cornwall District there are 131 youth groups providing for 2,146 young people under the age of 25. There are 10 paid youth workers in the district, working a total of 300 paid hours. The majority of these are in the Launceston Area Circuit, which has 40% of paid provision. Overall, youth work provision within the district is small, with the number of young people provided for only 1.6% of the Connexional total.

## Wider Influence

Churches within the Cornwall District performed 188 baptisms and thanksgivings, 100 marriages and blessings and 731 funerals in 2010. These services to the wider community, while an important part of church life, are perhaps lower figures than would be expected from national averages, being 1.7%, 2.7% and 3% of the Connexional total, respectively.

## Ecumenical Partnerships

There are seven LEPs in the Cornwall District, with a total of 285 members, of which 111 are non-Methodist. The largest partner in the district's LEPs is the Church of England, with a total of 60 members. The average district LEP has a membership of 41, which is over a third larger than the adjusted average<sup>4</sup> for a district church.

## Fresh Expressions

There are 28 reported regular Fresh Expressions within the district, with a total normal attendance<sup>5</sup> of 3,012. This means that the average normal attendance for a district Fresh Expression is 107, which is more than 3.5 times the size of the average district congregation.

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<sup>4</sup> Both district membership figures, and the number of district churches, include LEP congregations. The adjusted average figure removes the influence of LEP Methodist members and congregations to allow an accurate comparison.

<sup>5</sup> The number of people, on average, who attend each regular meeting of the Fresh Expression.

While not all circuits have reported Fresh Expressions, five circuits have three or more, and Camborne-Redruth reports six expressions.

Across the district, the most regular types of Fresh Expression<sup>6</sup> are 'Messy Church', where members explore the Bible together in an all-age context, with creativity, celebration and eating together, and 'Café Church', where a community of members meet regularly in a café context. A higher proportion of expressions did not fit within the existing categories, although this shows something of the vibrancy and diversity of Fresh Expressions.

### **Diversity in Worship and World Church Links**

Eight churches within the district have formal links to an overseas church and one reports having worship in a language other than English. No churches in the district run worship in English for ethnically distinct congregations, although this is probably to be expected considering the ethnic mix of the area. The other language used for worship is Cornish.

Churches within the district maintain links with countries across the whole world, including Gambia, India, the Philippines, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

### **Chaplaincy**

For the first time this year, the survey asked about expressions of chaplaincy associated with each church. Chaplaincy is community-facing ministry that happens outside of the church. It can range from work within schools and prisons to initiatives such as Street Pastors and is undertaken by presbyters, deacons and both paid and unpaid lay people.

There are 43 reported expressions of chaplaincy within the Cornwall District. 41% of these expressions are undertaken by presbyters and 40% by volunteer lay people<sup>7</sup>. The 17% of expressions undertaken by paid lay people, while small in number, represents more than twice the national average.

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<sup>6</sup> A definition of the various categories of Fresh Expression used in this survey is included in the notes that accompany the district tables.

<sup>7</sup> Statistics for Mission asked churches to report how many of each type of expression of chaplaincy were performed by each of presbyters, deacons, paid lay people and/or volunteer lay people. Some expressions of chaplaincy will be performed by more than one type of chaplain, and as a result the percentages in chaplaincy report table often total to more than 100%.