

58. Report from the Presbyteral Session

The Presbyteral Session adopted a Notice of Motion 201(P) (see below) expressing concern about aspects of national life. Pursuant to the provisions of the Deed of Union the Presbyteral Session refers the substance of the notice of the motion to the Representative Session with the resolutions below.

The Conference engaged in discussion on 'Accessibility to the Conference.'

*****RESOLUTIONS**

58/1. The Conference adopted the Report.

58/2. The Conference directed that this statement be sent to the Prime Minister and to national media and that it be read in all Methodist Churches on Sunday 10 July 2016 or as soon as possible in July with it then being made available for members of the church to send to their own constituency MPs.

Notice of Motion 201(P) – After the Referendum: National Life

As a result of the referendum on 23 June 2016, the United Kingdom has voted to leave the European Union. In this time of very significant change and uncertainty there is a need for leadership which seeks the common good and encourages people to work together, to respect one another and to uphold the dignity of all.

The Methodist Conference believes that the British Isles are enriched by diversity and celebrates the contribution made by those who have come from other parts of the world.

The Christian tradition calls for respect, tolerance, love of neighbour and hospitality to the stranger.

All bear the responsibility of speaking and acting for healing, reconciliation, and mutual respect. The Methodist Conference abhors and deeply regrets those actions and words which incite hatred and lead to the victimisation of groups within society and notes with concern that such actions and words have been normalised in recent public discourse.

Believing that racism is a denial of the gospel and that to stay silent when others are abused is to collude with those who seek to promote hatred and division, the Methodist Conference calls:

- on the Methodist people to challenge racism and discrimination;
- for a political debate which neither demonises any nor leaves the vulnerable (the foreigner, the immigrant and refugee) in danger of victimisation;
- on political leaders to work together for the good of the whole community putting the needs of the nation before party politics;
- on all those in positions of power and authority to hear the voices of those who have been marginalised and alienated and to respond to them in ways which offer real hope for the future.

The Conference encourages the Methodist people to join the campaign to wear an empty safety pin as a badge symbolising solidarity against racism.

The Conference directs that this statement be sent to the Prime Minister, to all MPs and to national media and that it be read in all Methodist Churches on Sunday 10 July 2016 or as soon as possible in July.

The Presbyteral Session of the Conference refers the substance of this notice of motion to the Representative Session and invites that Session to support it.

The Conference adopted the motion.