

Methodist consultation on 'Hope in God's Future' draft Conference Statement

This consultation of the Methodist people aims to gather their views on the draft Conference Statement on climate change, 'Hope in God's Future'. The results will determine recommendations to Methodist Conference 2011 on what shape the Statement should take.

A Conference Statement is used to set out the judgement of Methodist Conference on a major issue of faith and practice when it is considered likely that this will stand for some time. It is an important position statement that must be adhered to when anyone is speaking on behalf of the Methodist Church. It is also referred by groups such as Faith and Order when deciding on related areas of doctrine. (drawn from Standing Order 129).

If you would like to read the background to the consultation it is available at www.methodist.org.uk/higf.

HOW TO COMPLETE THIS CONSULTATION

Please make sure you have read the **draft Conference Statement Hope in God's Future** before completing this consultation document. Please ensure you answer all questions marked with an asterisk* If there is not enough space for your answer in any of the boxes, please continue on a separate sheet indicating which question you are continuing. Please return this consultation form to **David Webster, Methodist Church House, 25 Marylebone Road, London NW1 5JR**

Your details

1* This consultation is only open to Methodists. Please tick to confirm that you are a Methodist member or regular attendee of a Methodist church

2 Please tick if you have one of the following roles.

Presbyter Deacon Local Preacher Worship Leader

3* Age _____

4* Gender _____

5* Circuit _____

6* District _____

7 Tick here if you have already contributed to this consultation via focus group or interview

Scope

Hope in God's Future outlines its scope as follows:

"The approach we have adopted is to:

- Recognise the situation we find ourselves in, and the questions our faith provokes in this context;
- Bring these questions into dialogue with the Bible and Christian theological traditions;
- And seek to discern the implications of this encounter for changed practice."

8 Do you think this should be the scope of the Conference Statement?

Yes No

If you said 'No' how would you change its scope?

9 Do you think the current document achieves the aims set out above?

Yes No

If you said 'No' what do you feel is lacking?

10 Are there significant issues you feel the document ignores or to which it doesn't give adequate attention?

11 Are there additional types of information you think the document ought to provide?

12 Do you have any other comments relating to the scope suggested by the document?

Style

Structure

13 Would you have structured the order of the main sections within the document differently?

Yes No

If you said 'Yes' please describe

14 Would you have structured the order within any of the main sections within the document differently?

Yes No

If you said 'Yes' please describe

15 Do you feel that additional summary sections are necessary?

Yes No

If you said 'Yes' how frequently should summary sections appear?

Executive summary at start Summary every chapter
Summary every sub-heading Summary by major themes

16 How accessible did you find this document on a scale of 1-5 (where 5 is very accessible)? _____

If you scored it less than 5, what would have helped make it more accessible?

Shorter paragraphs More lists Summaries
Bullet points Shorter overall document Key points highlighted
Visual presentations of statistical information (e.g. graphs)
Less use of technical language
Other _____

Language

17 Considering the document's purpose as a Statement of Methodist Conference, do you feel that the language used is:

Appropriate Too simple Too complex

18 A Conference Statement of this sort has to be a considered statement of the judgement of the Conference on a major issue of faith and practice, and framed with a view to it standing as such for some years. That means that its language will have to be considered and somewhat formal. But to make it useable for the whole Church do you think it sufficient that, within that framework, every effort is made to make it possible for the document to be understood by all audiences; or that alongside the more formal Statement more accessible versions of material drawn from the Statement ought to be offered (e.g. for Youth/Children)?

This document should be made accessible for all audiences without additional resources

As well as the formal Statement there should be other more accessible versions of material drawn from the Statement made available

19 Are there any particular phrases used in the document that use language with which you are uncomfortable?

Yes No

If you said 'Yes' please give details

20 How accessible do you think this document would be for someone from outside of the church on a scale of 1-5 (where 5 is very accessible)? _____

21 Do you have any other comments relating to the style of the document?

22 When outlining the theological arguments, did you feel that the tone of the language used was appropriate?

Yes No

If you said 'No' why not?

Too negative Too positive Too directive Needed sharpening
Not sufficiently Methodist Off-putting to non-Christians
Off-putting to young people Other _____

Theology

23 Do you find the theological discussions in the statement easy to understand?

Yes No

If you said 'No', why?

Too complex Too much depth Too long
Use of jargon Too dense
Other _____

Use of the Bible

24 How appropriate do you feel the use of the Bible is within the document on a scale of 1-5 (where 5 is completely appropriate)? _____

If you scored it less than 5, how might it be improved?

Fewer Biblical examples

More Biblical examples

Fewer specific examples, more over-arching themes

More focus on New Testament

More focus on Old Testament

Greater discussion of why particular Biblical stories should impact upon modern

Christian living

Other _____

Theological content

Theological components in the document

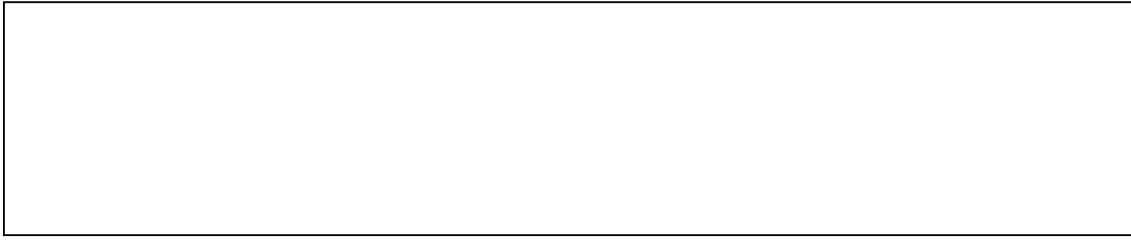
Are there any theological components of this document that you would like to comment upon, either positively or negatively?

25 Use of the Bible

26 Sin

27 Structural Sin

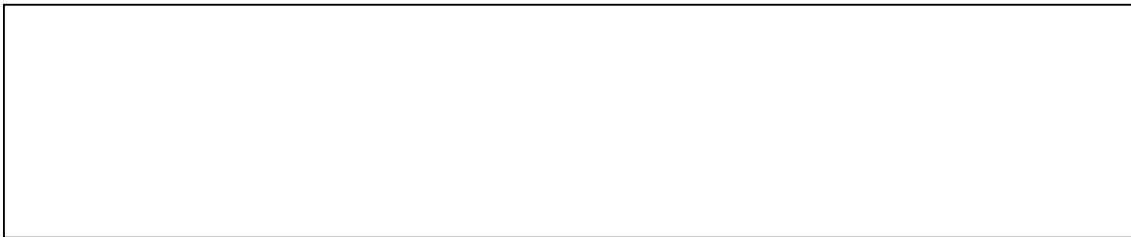
28 Judgement



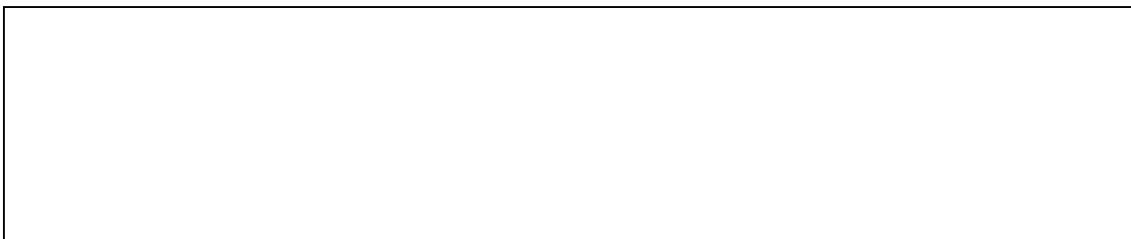
29 Christian Hope (including God's purposes for humanity and creation)



30 Redemption



31 Covenant



32 Stewardship



33 Are there any major theological themes that you feel are missing from the document?

34 Any other comments relating to the theological aspects of the document?

Science

35 How accessible did you find the scientific sections of this report on a scale of 1-5 (where 5 is very accessible)? _____

If you scored them less than 5, what would have improved their accessibility?

Less technical language Less density within arguments
More use of visual tools (e.g. graphs) More examples / case studies
Other _____

36 Did you have any particular objections to the scientific evidence used within the document?

Yes No

If you said 'Yes' please describe

37 How well did you feel the document explained the likely consequences of climate change on a scale of 1-5 (where 5 is very well)? _____

If you scored it less than 5, how could it have been improved?

More localised examples

More international examples

More modern examples

More specific church-based examples

Other _____

38 Are there any areas of scientific/technological impact that you feel this document has excluded?

39 Any other comments relating to the scientific aspects of the document?

Action

40 Do you feel that the targets set for CO2 reduction in this document are appropriate for the national Church?

Yes

No

If you said 'No' please explain why

41 Do you feel that the targets set for CO2 reduction in this document are appropriate for local churches?

Yes

No

If you said 'No' please explain why

42 Do you feel that the targets set for CO2 reduction in this document are appropriate for individuals?

Yes No

If you said 'No' please explain why

43 Does the document give sufficient instructions about how Methodists can contribute to this debate?

Yes No

If you said 'No', how could the document be improved in this respect?

44 Does the document give sufficient instructions about how Methodists can contribute to carbon reduction?

Yes No

If you said 'No', how could the document be improved in this respect?

General

45 Do you think that this document should become a Conference Statement in terms of the definition of a Conference Statement set out at the beginning of this consultation?

Yes, as it currently stands

Yes, with some minor changes

Yes, with substantial changes

No

If you ticked any of the 'Yes' options, please choose the two most relevant reasons why you think this document should become a Conference Statement

Need for Methodist theological input

Need for a Methodist statement on the issue

Need for additional Christian theological discussion on the issue

Need of particular guidance on how to act on climate change

Other _____

If you ticked 'No', please state why you think this document should not become a Conference Statement

46 Any other general comments on Hope in God's Future

Please return this consultation form to
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London NW1 5JR