



The **Methodist Church**
Plymouth & Exeter District

Partnership with the Diocese of Cuttack, Church of North India

A Proposal

The embryonic partnership that the Plymouth & Exeter District had with the Diocese of Cuttack has suffered a hiatus for the last three years. This followed the visit of the former Bishop of Cuttack to the District in May 2014 and the change of District Chair later the same year.

Earlier this year, we were delighted to welcome the new Bishop of Cuttack - Rt. Revd. Surrendra Kumar Nanda - to the District. During his time with us we discussed the partnership at some length and committed to seek permission to revive the partnership from our governing bodies. Bishop Nanda met with some District Officers and members of the District World Church Committee and they are unanimous in commending to the Synod this proposal to renew the partnership.

John Wesley famously declared that the whole world was his parish and the Methodist Church has always encouraged its members to 'live on a large map'. Our Connexionalism identifies that we are not just in relationship with those in the Methodist Church of Britain but with the world-wide Church of God. To this end, it is proposed that we focus our commitment to sisters and brothers in the World Church through a particular District partnership with the Diocese of Cuttack in the Church of North India.

The proposal seeks to embrace the District in a focussed partnership. It does not, however, seek to undermine or replace any partnerships that Circuits or churches within the District already have in place.

In conversation with Bishop Nanda, it is agreed that the partnership should not be based on fund-raising. That is, that raising funds for the Diocese of Cuttack will not be the main focus. That, instead, the focus will be on:

- learning about and from one another
- offering mutual support to each other
- prayer for one another

In seeking to support these aims, it is proposed that:

- a. the ministers in the District and Diocese who wish to take part, be linked as Prayer Partners for a twelve month period, followed by a change of partners for those who wish to continue or join every twelve months. (It may also be possible for lay people to be involved as Prayer Partners once a list has been established of those from Cuttack who would both like to take part and have internet access.)

- b. we seek to 'buddy' the five Methodist schools that we have in the District with the five Diocesan schools in Cuttack.
- c. the Sunday before Lent be designated as 'Cuttack Sunday' when we focus our prayers on our partners in the Diocese and they commit to pray for us. Prayers and other material to be prepared and exchanged beforehand.
- d. a fund be established to enable travel from India to England and so that necessitous grants can be made for people from England to visit our partners in India. Each church and Circuit to be encouraged to donate regularly to the Cuttack Fund.
- e. those churches that would like to 'buddy' with a church in the Diocese of Cuttack be enabled to do so.
- f. raising funds to support projects in the Diocese should be limited as we are seeking to develop partnership rather than reliance.

Proposal One: That the Plymouth & Exeter District commits to a partnership with the Diocese of Cuttack in the Church of North India for the next five years (that is, until August 2022.) And, that a review takes place in Spring 2021 with the possibility of extending the partnership for a further period beyond 2022.

Proposal Two: That the Plymouth & Exeter District develops a partnership with the Diocese of Cuttack that is based on learning, mutual support and prayer.

Proposal Three: That each year the Sunday before Lent be designated as 'Cuttack Sunday'.

Proposal Four: That the Cuttack Fund be established.

GT
27th April 2017