

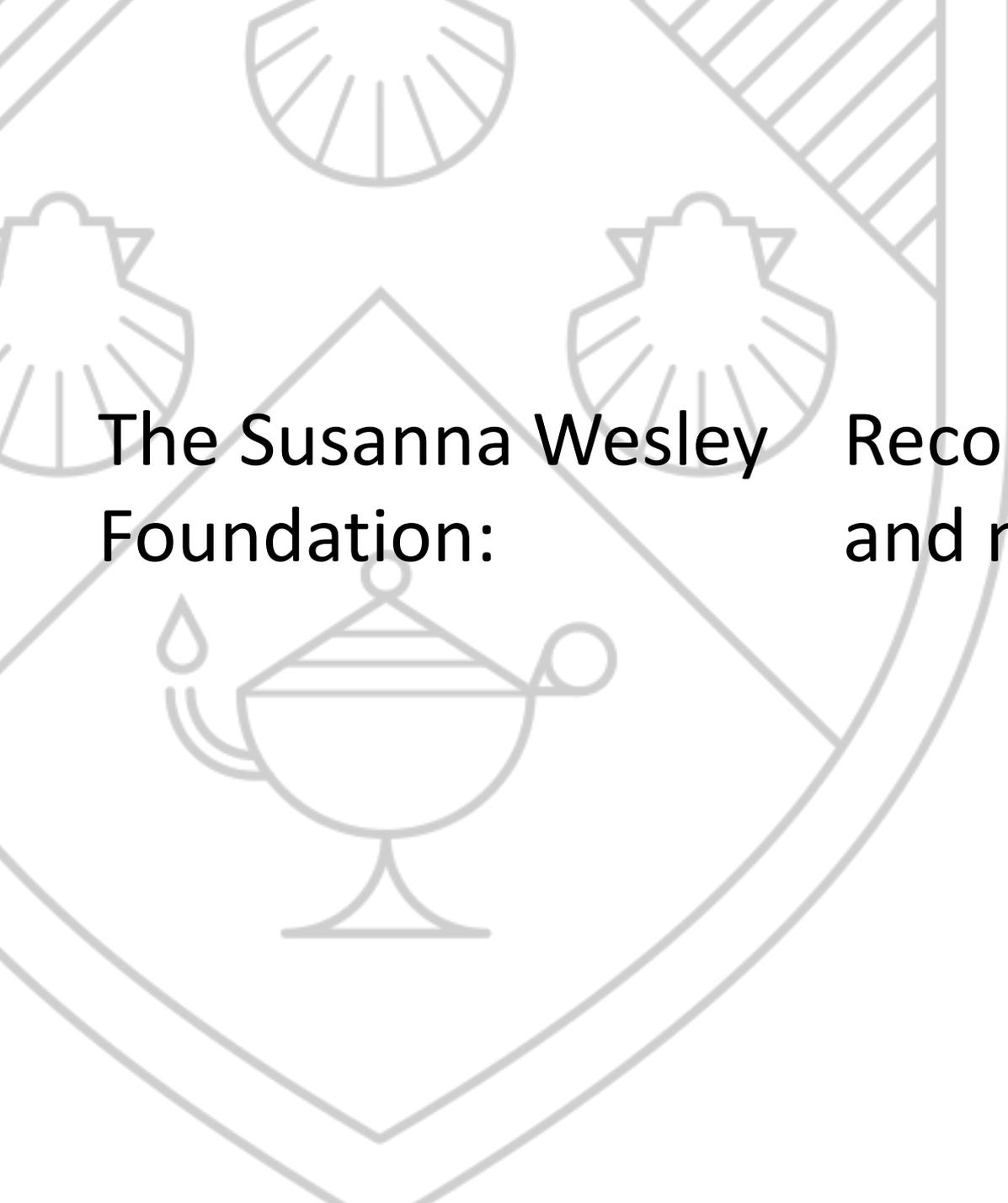
Susanna
Wesley
Foundation

Sue Miller

Research Group in Ministerial
Theology - 10 November

The **Methodist** Church 

 **University of
Roehampton**
London



The Susanna Wesley
Foundation:

Reconciling ministry
and management?

SWF: A project of Southlands Methodist Trust (SMT)

SMT's charitable purposes:

- as part of the work carried out through the Discipleship and Ministries Learning Network, **to support, in association with the College and University, the development of Christian, and specifically Methodist, scholarship, research and innovation, of local, national and global significance and to facilitate the public dissemination of such developments.**
- to **enable members of the Methodist community** and wider public in Britain and internationally **to benefit from the academic and other expertise and experience within the College and the University and the facilities available within them.**
- to enrich the community life of the College and the work of its Chaplaincy in ways that reflect its Methodist values and ethos.
- to maintain and develop the relationship between the Methodist Church, the College and the University in the context of **developing the contribution made to the work carried out through the Discipleship and Ministries Learning Network.**
- to further the wider charitable purposes of the Methodist Church through close **working with the other persons and bodies responsible for the work carried out through the Discipleship and Ministries Learning Network.**



— S W F —

Susanna Wesley Foundation

A community of scholarship, research and innovation at Southlands College informed by the needs of the Methodist Church and other religious communities and with the aim of producing outputs and outcomes which will be of benefit to the Churches.



— S W F —

SWF's contribution

A combination of research, support for learning and innovation, and practical resources for churches and communities



— S W F —



Conversation, risk and conversion

“Talking happens a lot. It is often monologue. Conversation is rarer, by far. It is always dialogue. No one takes leave of a real conversation the same as when one entered into it. Our conversations create us. Conversation and risk and conversion belong together.....”

Michael Cowan and Bernard Lee (1997)



SWF: assumptions, values and methodologies

- Promotion of conversation and dialogue; recognition of importance of participation; understanding of learning as social process
- Preference for action research
- Agenda for transformation
- A place for interdisciplinary study, research, theory and practice
- Conception of organisations as complex systems
- Use of a particular model for measuring impact – *'most significant change'*



SWF's Work: Identifying, supporting and promoting opportunities for research, enquiry and dialogue around

- Learning for management, leadership and ministry
- Work, life and identity in Christian ministry
- Diversity in leadership and ministry
- The Church and governance, management and organization



SWF's four themes

Learning for management, leadership and ministry: Exploring the processes of equipping people for ministry and leadership in the Churches, both lay and ordained

Work, life and identity in Christian ministry: Exploring ways in which those called to roles in the Churches shape their contributions and how this work impacts on identity and well-being

Diversity in leadership and ministry: Exploring issues around difference, inclusion and participation in relation to leadership and ministry in the Churches

The Church and governance, management and organization: Exploring structures, systems, decision-making and transformative change processes within Churches and faith communities



Learning for management, leadership & ministry

- Practice-based formation

Nature of practice

Location of learning

Accountability and oversight

- Equipping for lay leadership



Work, life and identity in Christian ministry

- Well-being for the ordained
 - Prior work in MCH – definitions and approach applied to both lay and ordained*
 - Distinctive issues for the ordained?*
- Roles and identities of those working in the MC's Discipleship & Ministries Learning Network



Diversity in leadership & ministry

- Recent conference: *Gender Diversity Leadership*
- Diversity monitoring – an alternative approach
- Women in circuit ministry in the MC
- Women in leadership – in education and the Churches: a comparative study
- Cultural diversity & circuit ministry
- Migration, Theology and ‘Ubuntu Leadership’ in the Methodist Church in Britain



The Church: management, governance and organisation

- First SWF conference – *Ministry and management: God & mammon?*
- Application of models and theories of organisation to churches
- ‘Strategy’ and the Churches
- Connexionalism as an alternative model to that of public management
- Communities of practice as enablers of transformative change: action research in partnership with DMLN



Ministry and management

...To foster the establishment of a theory and practice of ecclesiastical administration that will stand beside ecclesiastical law and history as an essential part of the corpus of theology and will, furthermore, relate to theories of management as developed in the lay world of business and public administration. The subject might indeed be called Managerial Theology.

Rudge 1968



Ministers and management

- Is there an aversion to management amongst ministers?
- Is management seen as an obstacle to 'real' ministry?
- Is it a particular conception of 'management' which makes it so unpalatable?
- What assumptions about organisations and organisational behaviour guide ministers in their ministry?



Reconciling ministry and management:

- Would it be helpful if ministers' assumptions were uncovered by reference to organisation studies...and how might this impact on the practice of ministry?
- What does theology have to say about management?
- Is there a conception of organisation which corresponds most closely to a truly Christian understanding?



Reconciling ministry and management: themes & issues

- Relevance of organisational theories and of 'business' models?
- Differences between church and business leadership?
- Professionalism in ministry - misnomer and misconception?
- A place for theologically informed models and practices?
- Covenant and Spirit – alternative relationships?



Interdisciplinary study: the place of theology

“When we employ other disciplines, on what basis are we ‘trusting’ them – rationality, compliance with the assumptions of secular culture, a sense of theology as ‘one discipline among others’, or a theology of grace and faith which opens up a discerning and constructive (if critical) interdisciplinary conversation?”

*Cameron, Bhatti, Duce, Sweeney and Watkins
2010*





Website

www.susannawesleyfoundation.org