



Rev. John-Edward Funnell appointed as Director **– 1st October 2026**

Trustees are delighted to welcome **John-Edward Funnell** as our first Director. From a strong and gifted field of candidates, John stood out for his proven, prayerful, sacrificial commitment to seeing ordinary people equipped for gospel ministry - exactly the conviction at the heart of everything we hope Yarnton will become. We are excited for what the Lord may do through his leadership, and grateful to churches and networks across England and Wales who have prayed for this appointment.

John is currently Pastor of Noddfa Church in Abersychan, in the South Wales valleys, and Principal of the Valleys School of Theology. He took on the pastorate in 2014, when the church numbered just a handful of elderly members. Since then, Noddfa Church has grown exponentially and serves hundreds of people each week through a variety of ministries that have drawn, in particular, young men with no previous church background. John is the author of *What God Can Do With a Little Oil*, a boxing chaplain with Sports Chaplaincy UK, and sits on the editorial board of the Evangelical Magazine.

John was appointed following a national recruitment process supported by Carnelian Search, in which he was assessed alongside a strong field of candidates and interviewed by Yarnton Trustees Robin Sydserff and Ben Stone, and John Stevens, National Director of the Fellowship of Independent Evangelical Churches (FIEC). John Funnell adds, 'I don't see this as a departure from what God has done at Noddfa, but as an overflow of it, and something now able to be shared with other churches across the UK. My prayer is that many more churches, in many more unlikely places, will discover what we have discovered: that the Lord delights to raise up workers from the most unpromising ground'.

Please join with Trustees in praying that this appointment will be received as good news well beyond those initially supported by Yarnton - by FIEC and ReNew churches, and other conservative evangelical networks, and by the wider family of gospel partnership across England and Wales.