



The Methodist Church

Press Pack

2024/2025

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Providing a media service for the Methodist Church in Britain

- Overseeing the Methodist Church website methodist.org.uk
- Running the Methodist Church's social media channels.
- Helping members of the media with information about any aspect of the life and work of the Methodist Church in Britain.
- News releases on stories related to the Methodist Church.
- Running digital campaigns to promote the work of Methodist churches across Britain.
- First point of contact for the views of the Church on current issues.
- Media support for local churches.

Useful links

For news from the Methodist Church in Britain: methodist.org.uk/News

For news and information about the Methodist Conference:
methodist.org.uk/Conference

Keep up to date with stories from across Methodism by signing up to one of our mailings: methodist.org.uk/SignUp

Follow our daily online Bible study: methodist.org.uk/Bible

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X/Twitter: @methodistgb
Facebook: @MethodistGB
Instagram: @methodistchurch
TikTok: @methodistgb
YouTube: @MethodistGB



The Methodist movement was founded by the Anglican clergyman **John Wesley (1703-91)**. Although Wesley declared, "I live and die a member of the Church of England," the strength and impact of the movement made a separate Methodist body virtually inevitable.

Today, the Methodist Church is one of the largest Christian churches serving Great Britain, with **148,180 members and regular contact with over 500,000 people.**

It has **3,688 active churches in Great Britain**, and also maintains links with other **Methodist churches totalling a worldwide membership of 80 million.**

Its activities, both alone and with ecumenical and secular partners, are based on **Our Calling** to respond to the gospel of God's love in Christ and to live out its discipleship in worship and mission. That is then expressed in four main ways:

- To increase awareness of God's presence and to celebrate God's love.
- To help people to grow and learn as Christians through mutual support and care.
- To be a good neighbour to people in need and to challenge injustice.
- To make more followers of Jesus Christ.

Methodist faith and worship



Methodists have always believed that no one is beyond the reach of God's love. Salvation is there for everyone who turns to God, and not just for a chosen few. It is a strong feature of Methodism that laypeople (those who aren't ordained) should play a major part in the running of the Church.



Methodists believe in what John Wesley called 'social holiness'. The longing for holiness is not about wanting to be 'holier than thou'. It is about wanting the love of God to permeate all of our lives, and for that love to be shown through our lives to other people.



Worship each week is not always led by an ordained minister, but often by a local preacher – a layperson who has been trained and authorised to lead worship. At all levels of the Methodist Church, laypeople are involved in decision making, and the Vice-President of the Conference is always a layperson or a deacon.



Music plays an essential role in Methodist worship, and singing is regarded as an important means of learning about, sharing and celebrating faith. Charles Wesley wrote about 6,000 hymns, many of which are still sung by Christians across the world today.

● The Connexion

Methodists belong to local churches, but are also part of a larger connected community: the Connexion. In the Methodist Church decisions are made as openly as possible, giving opportunities for all to contribute. Included in the British Methodist Connexion are all the districts of Scotland, Wales and England, along with the Isle of Man, the Channel Islands and Shetland.

● The local church

The local church is the congregational place of worship where Methodist members and other attendees are nurtured. Local Methodist churches are congregations based on the original Methodist 'societies' which met within the Church of England. When they began to gather in larger buildings, Methodists continued the practice of meeting in small groups or 'classes' for Bible study, prayer and Christian conversation.

● The circuit

A circuit is a group of local churches, served by a team of local preachers and ministers, led by the superintendent minister.

● The district

The district serves a geographical group of circuits and is led by the district chair. There are 24 Methodist districts across Great Britain. See methodist.org.uk/Districts for an up-to-date District map.

● The Methodist Conference

The Conference meets annually in June or July in a different location each year. It is the governing body for the Methodist Church.

It first met in 1744 under John Wesley, who gathered together his assistants (both ordained ministers and itinerant lay preachers) to confer together about "what to teach, how to teach, and what to do, ie how to regulate our doctrine, discipline and practice".

The contemporary Conference is a gathering of representatives from each Methodist district, along with some who have been elected by the Conference and some ex officio members and representatives of the Youth Assembly. There is a mixture of laypeople, ordained presbyters and deacons.

● The President and Vice-President

At the start of the Representative Session at each Methodist Conference, a new President and Vice-President are elected to preside over that year's Conference. They then spend the year travelling around the Connexion and abroad, representing the Methodist Church. The President is always an ordained presbyter and the Vice-President is always a layperson or deacon.

● Global relationships

The Methodist Church in Britain works with 60 Partner Churches worldwide in four geographical areas: Africa, Europe, the Americas and the Caribbean, Asia and the Pacific, as well as the Methodist Church in Ireland and the Middle East. The Church sends and receives mission partners, arranges scholarships for students and advises on the mutual sharing of resources and experiences with our Partner Churches.

The Methodist Conference in 2023 elected the Revd Helen Cameron to serve as President and Mrs Carolyn Godfrey to serve as Vice-President. They start their year of office when the Representative Session of the 2024 Conference opens in Leeds, 29 June 2024.

The role of President of the Methodist Conference is reserved for presbyters and that of Vice-President for laypeople or deacons.



**The Revd
Helen Cameron**
President of
the Methodist
Conference
2024/2025

The Revd Helen Cameron is the Moderator of the Free Churches Group and Free Church President of Churches Together in England. She was the Chair of the Northampton District until June 2024. Helen has worked extensively with survivors of sexual abuse and co-wrote the study guide Reflect and Respond with members of the Methodist Survivors Advisory Group.

Helen enjoys novels, poetry, gardening and theatre.

Helen said of her appointment:

“I am overjoyed, humbled and rather amazed to be designated as the President of the Conference for 2024/2025. I want to serve the Methodist Church to the best of my ability and work with others to become an inclusive, safer and justice-seeking Church.”



**Mrs Carolyn
Godfrey**
Vice-President
of the Methodist
Conference
2024/2025

Mrs Carolyn Godfrey is the District Safeguarding Officer in the Darlington and Newcastle Districts and a local preacher. Carolyn is particularly interested in how worship and all aspects of church life can be more inclusive and accessible. Her experience in safeguarding, education and lifelong engagement with the Methodist Church has given her a drive to understand and challenge the use and misuse of power.

To unwind she likes to be creative, especially with crochet. She loves to spend time with her husband, her two grown-up daughters and her grandson.

Shortly after the announcement, Carolyn said:

“It is an honour and a privilege to serve the Church this way.”



**The Revd Dr
Jonathan Hustler**
Secretary of
the Methodist
Conference

The Secretary is the executive officer of the Conference, which is the governing body of the Methodist Church. The Secretary is responsible to the Conference for the implementation of the Conference's decisions.

Before becoming Secretary of the Methodist Conference in 2019, Jonathan had been Assistant Secretary since September 2017. Prior to this he was the Ministerial Coordinator for Oversight of Ordained Ministries in the Connexional Team.

Jonathan trained at Wesley House, Cambridge, and studied as Finch Scholar in Rome for a year. He was ordained in 1992. He served in circuit appointments in Leighton Buzzard and Stewkley, Cleveland, and Mid-Lincolnshire, before returning to Wesley House as Vice-Principal and Director of Pastoral Studies.

Jonathan has served on a number of committees in the Church and as a District Ecumenical Officer. His involvement in the training of local preachers and ministers has been extensive and he continues to write on pastoral theology, preaching and church history.



Bea Hulme
Youth President
2024/2025

Bea, aged 21, attends Penrith Methodist Church in Cumbria. Among Bea's interests are walking, kayaking, crafting and even crocheting their own jumpers!

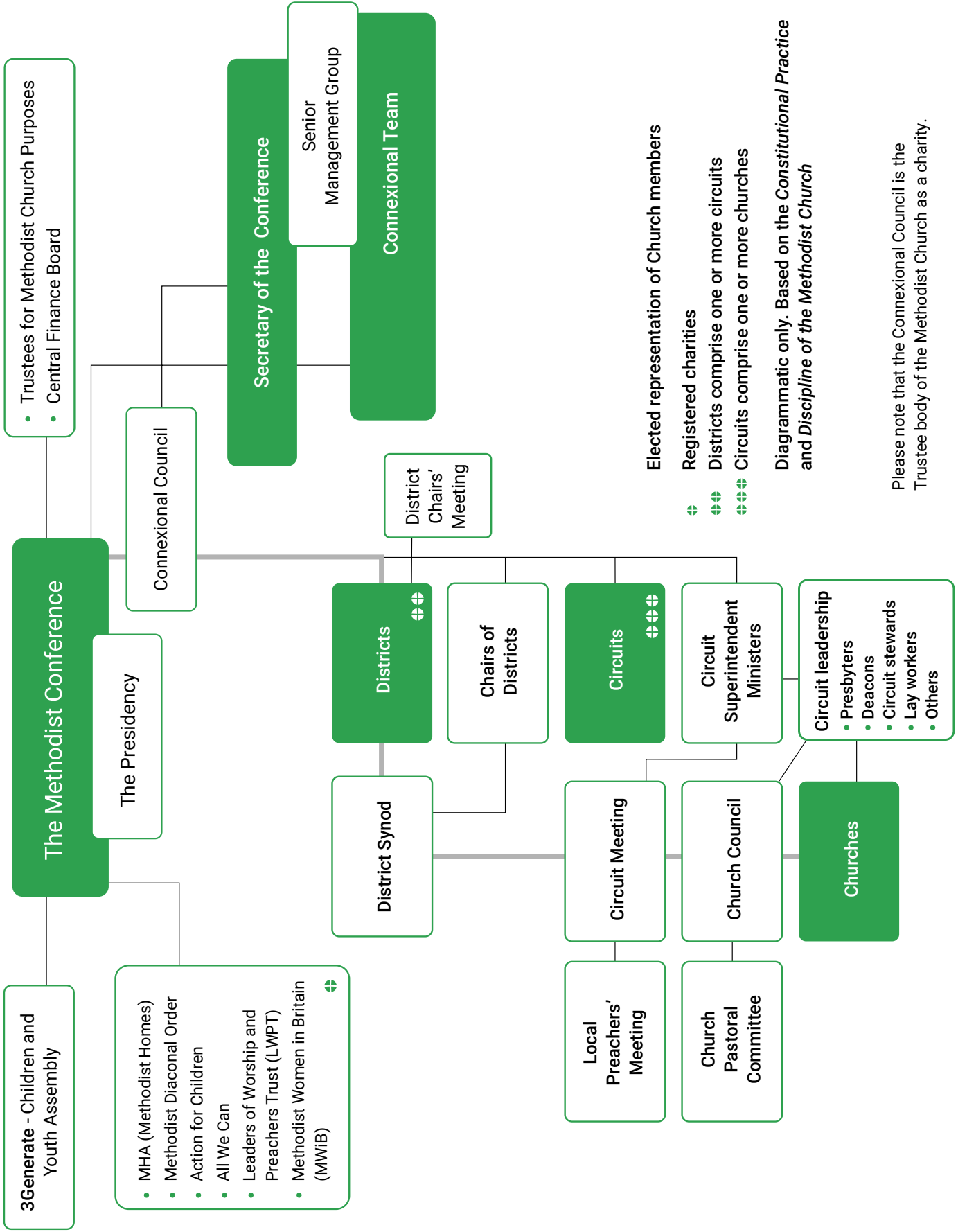
The Methodist Youth President is a salaried position working full-time for one year to serve the children and young people of the Methodist Church in Britain, representing them to ensure that their voices are heard and ensuring they are involved in every aspect of Church life.

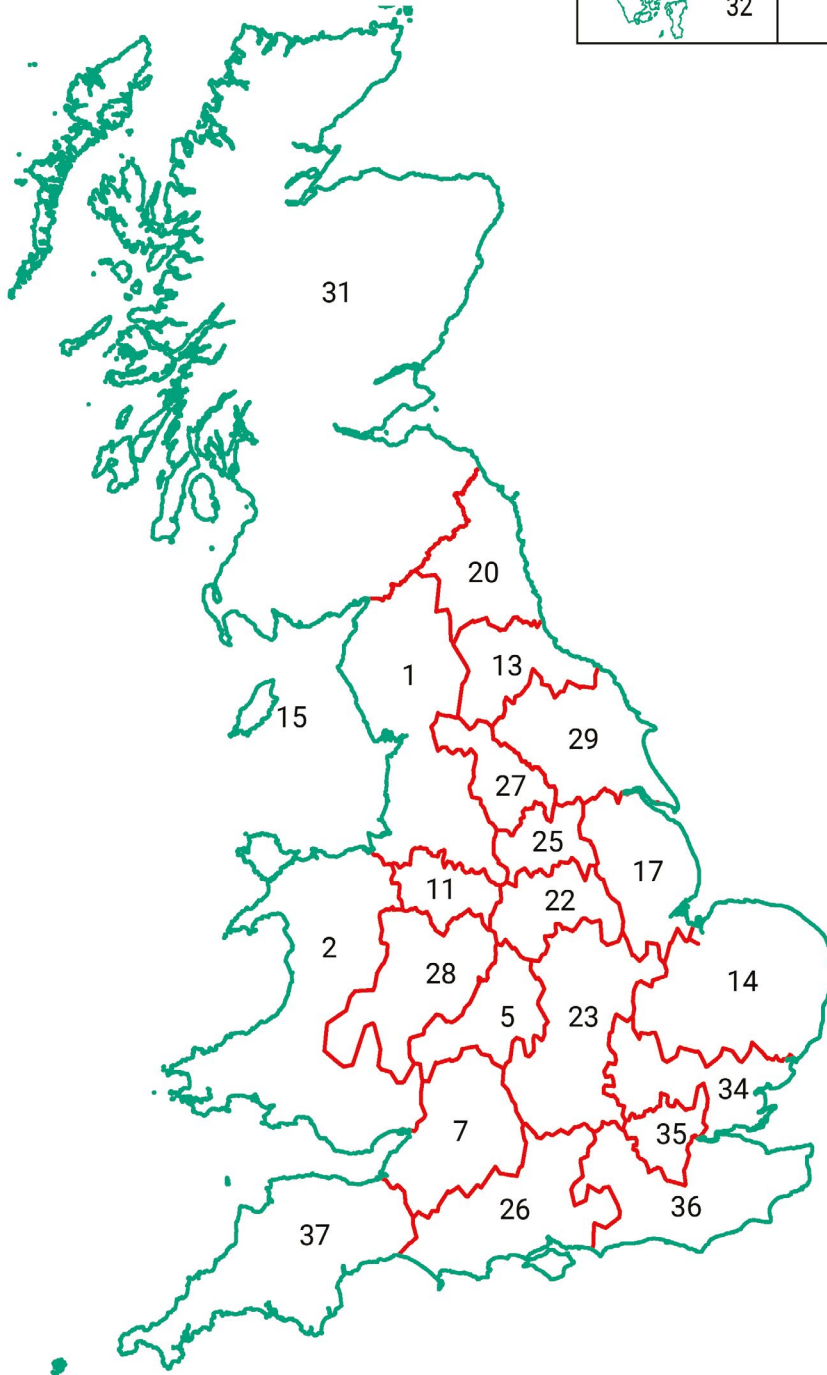
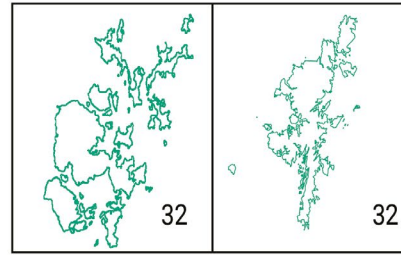
During their year as Youth President, Bea is keen to encourage young Methodists to engage with issues around the climate crisis, LGBT inclusion and raising awareness of the refugee crisis.

Bea has grown up a Christian and a Methodist. They became involved in the wider life of the Church through volunteering.

“I got involved in Methodism properly thanks to volunteering with the Hope and Anchor team at Greenbelt. When I was looking for churches at university, I had trouble finding one that was as accepting of me as they were.”

Structure and Organisation Diagram





Districts of the Methodist Church in Britain

- 1 North West England
- 2 Wales Synod Cymru
- 5 Birmingham
- 7 Bristol
- 10 Channel Islands
- 11 Chester and Stoke-on-Trent
- 13 Darlington
- 14 East Anglia
- 15 Isle of Man
- 17 Lincolnshire
- 20 Newcastle upon Tyne
- 22 Nottingham and Derby
- 23 Northampton
- 25 Sheffield
- 26 Southampton
- 27 Yorkshire West
- 28 Wolverhampton and Shrewsbury
- 29 Yorkshire North and East
- 31 Scotland
- 32 Shetland
- 34 Bedfordshire, Essex and Hertfordshire
- 35 London
- 36 South East
- 37 South West Peninsula

Key
 Methodist District Boundary

