



PRESSES

2023/2024

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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

Find out about the views of the Church on key

issues: methodist.org.uk/views

Follow our daily online Bible study:

methodist.org.uk/bible

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- **Twitter** twitter.com/methodistgb
- **Facebook** facebook.com/MethodistGB
- **Instagram** instagram.com/methodistchurch
- **LinkedIn** linkedin.com/company/the-methodist-church-ct
- **TikTok** tiktok.com/@methodistgb
- **YouTube** youtube.com/@MethodistGB

About the Methodist Church

Image ©TMCP / Photo: TimEPhotography



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 164,000 members and regular contact with over 500,000 people. It has 4,000 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 four aims known as *Our Calling*:

- 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.

Church Structure

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 29 Methodist districts across Great Britain.

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 appointed 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.

Key People

The Methodist Conference in 2022 elected the Revd Gill Newton to serve as President and Deacon Kerry Scarlett to serve as Vice-President. They start their year of office when the Representative Session of the 2023 Conference opens in Birmingham, 22 June 2023.

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



The Revd Gill Newton
President of the
Methodist Conference
2023/2024

Gill Newton is a life-long Methodist, raised in Cornwall, with experience of circuit ministry and has served as the Sheffield District Chair since 2014.

She chairs the Ministries Committee overseeing the development of the Church's ministry in many varied contexts, and also serves on the Strategy and Resources Committee and the Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes Board. She has previously chaired the Ministerial Candidates and Probationers Oversight Committee and served as Chair of the Chairs.

The Revd Gill Newton said in response to her election:

"I am both humbled and honoured to have been entrusted with this role by the members of the Methodist Conference. With God's help and together with the Vice-President Designate, Deacon Kerry Scarlett, I look forward to the opportunity to encourage, inspire and challenge the Methodist people."



Deacon Kerry Scarlett
Vice-President of the
Methodist Conference
2023/2024

Kerry Scarlett, from the Birmingham District, has a passion for justice and seeks to enable and amplify the voices of others. She founded [Adavu](#), an anti-trafficking charity and has participated in regional network and anti-trafficking campaigns.

Kerry has served the Church in a number of ways including theological education, the Learning Network, a variety of committees including the Candidates Committee and has contributed to and facilitated complex reviews.

Speaking following the election, Kerry said:

"It is an honour and a privilege to have been elected Vice-President Designate. I am very grateful for the opportunity to serve the Methodist Church in this way."

Key People



The Revd Dr Jonathan Hustler
Secretary of the
Methodist Conference

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.



Thomas Hart
Methodist Youth
President
2023/2024

Thomas Hart lives in Ashby-Cum-Fenby, a small village in Lincolnshire and attends Keelby Methodist Church.

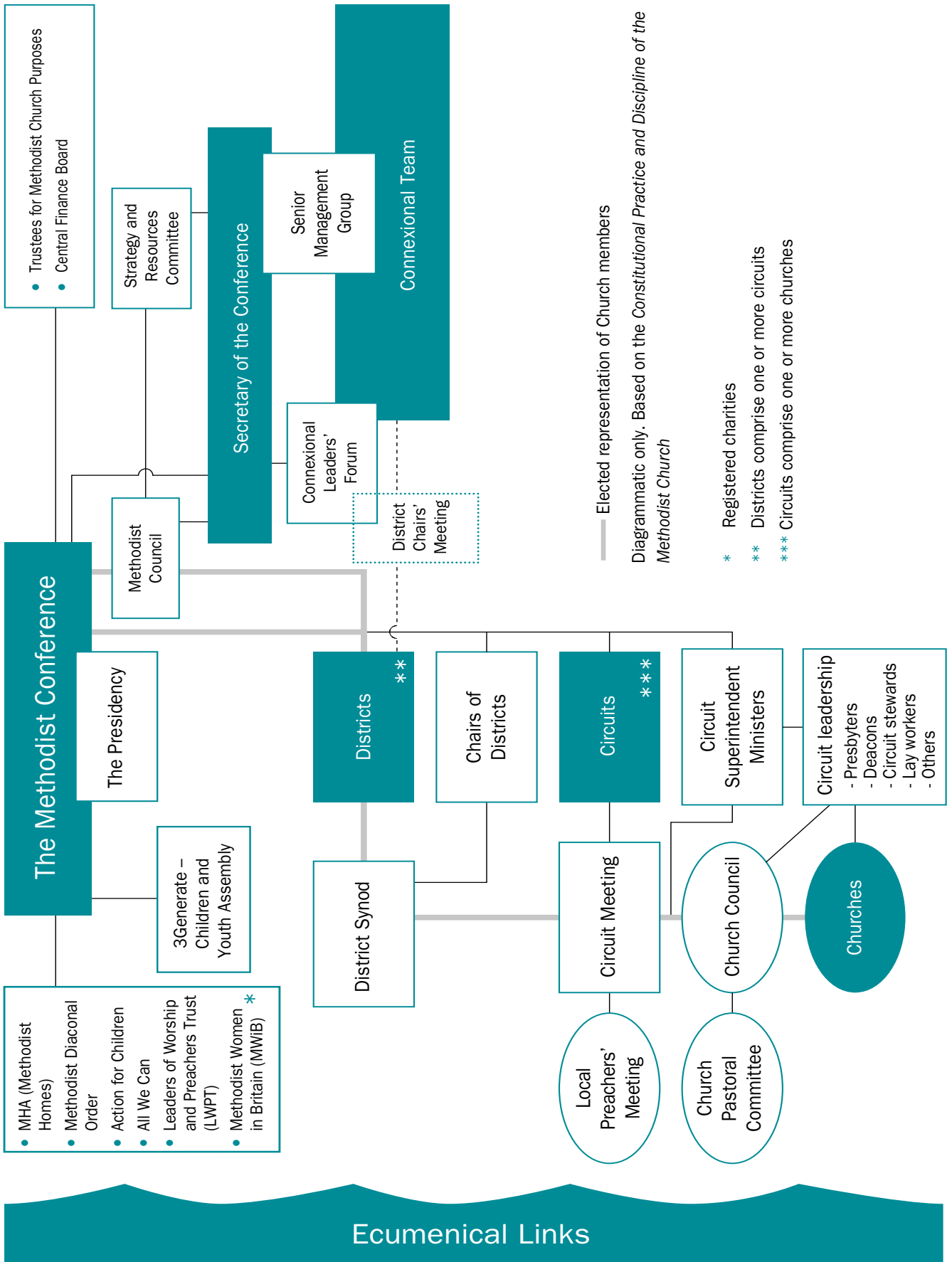
Thomas, also known as Tom, was brought up a Methodist, becoming a member when he was 14 and later a youth steward and congregational representative. He loves music and playing in bands and is planning to study for a degree in popular music. He also enjoys travel and learning about different cultures and lifestyles.

The Methodist Youth President is a salaried position working full-time for one year. The role involves meeting and representing young Methodist people to ensure that their voices are heard and to help them be involved in every aspect of the Church's life.

On his election to Youth President, Tom commented:

"Friendship and a sense of community make me who I am, I enjoy conversation with people of different and no faith, belief or thoughts. I want to ensure the message of God and Christianity is something that everyone can understand."

Structure and Organisation Diagram



Methodist District Map



Methodist Districts

- 2 Wales Synod Cymru
- 5 Birmingham
- 6 Bolton & Rochdale
- 7 Bristol
- 9 Cumbria
- 10 Channel Islands
- 11 Chester & Stoke-on-Trent
- 12 Cornwall & the Isles of Scilly
- 13 Darlington
- 14 East Anglia
- 15 Isle of Man
- 17 Lincolnshire
- 18 Liverpool
- 19 Manchester & Stockport
- 20 Newcastle upon Tyne
- 21 Lancashire
- 22 Nottingham & Derby
- 23 Northampton
- 24 Plymouth & Exeter
- 25 Sheffield
- 26 Southampton
- 27 Yorkshire West
- 28 Wolverhampton & Shrewsbury
- 29 Yorkshire North & East
- 31 Scotland
- 32 Shetland
- 34 Bedfordshire, Essex & Hertfordshire
- 35 London
- 36 South East
- * District 2 forms the Methodist Church in Wales