

METHODIST STATISTICS

Are we yet  
**ALIVE?**

The **Methodist** Church 



## ‘Statistics for Mission’ and this booklet

Every year, each church in the Methodist Connexion is asked to fill in an online form. This form is like a census, including questions about church and circuit activities throughout the year as well as membership numbers and attendance at groups and worship in October.

The data gathered in this process is collected, analysed and reported by the research department of the Connexional Team. The results are published annually on the Methodist website and every three years a report is made to the Methodist Conference. The purpose of *Statistics for Mission* is to enable and encourage informed conversations, strategic thinking and mission planning for everyone in the Methodist Church.

The following pages provide Connexion-level analysis and information about some of the data collected, presented in a way that is hopefully more accessible than a series of spreadsheets and charts. It is just a small sample of a large quantity of reporting that is available in reports published online – including more detailed district and circuit reports. We hope that this will encourage Methodists to explore the reports in their own local contexts.

In most charts, numbers are rounded to the nearest hundred, thousand or per cent. For more detailed break-downs, visit [www.methodist.org.uk/statisticsformission](http://www.methodist.org.uk/statisticsformission).

The research team is available to talk to anyone involved in the *Statistics for Mission* process and welcomes suggestions about how to make it a more responsive, more mission-focused activity. Please feel free to contact us using the details at the back of this book.

Christopher Stephens and Liz Clutterbuck  
Research Officers  
email: [statisticsformission@methodistchurch.org.uk](mailto:statisticsformission@methodistchurch.org.uk)

## The Methodist Church in Britain

Churches are classified in one of six geographical categories:

- city centre
- council estate
- inner city
- suburban neighbourhood
- small town
- village rural.

## Church locations 2010

This chart shows that nearly half of Methodist churches are found in rural villages and only 8% in a city context. This has been a consistent pattern in recent years.

## What the Methodist Connexion looks like in 2010

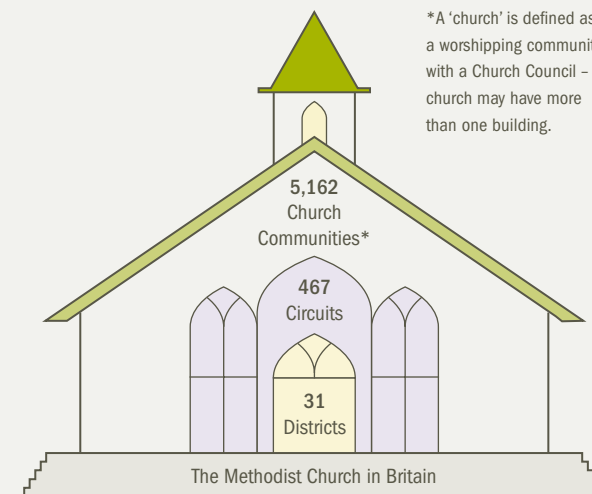


Fig. 1 Methodist Church in Britain

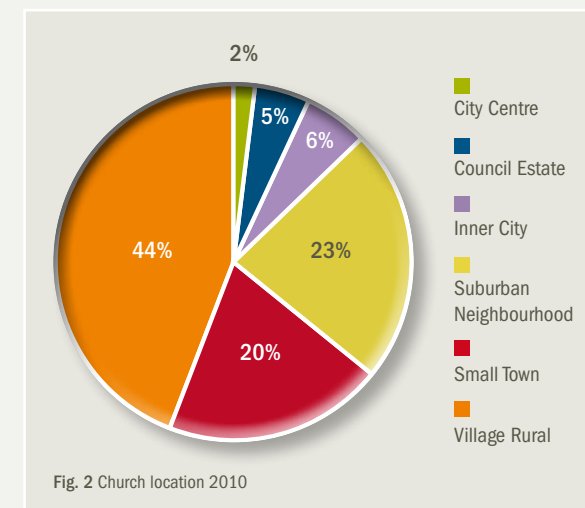


Fig. 2 Church location 2010



# Pastoral Others and Community Roll

## Membership

The number of members within Methodist churches varies from small churches with fewer than 10, to the largest with 549. It is estimated that in total there are 219,000 members in wholly Methodist churches, rising to 238,000 when including Methodist members worshipping in Local Ecumenical Partnerships (LEPs).

Methodists worship in 540 LEPs across Britain. LEPs can include their own members and members from partner denominations, including the URC, Baptists and the Church of England. The image below shows that, across all LEP churches with a Methodist community, Methodists make up nearly half of the church membership.

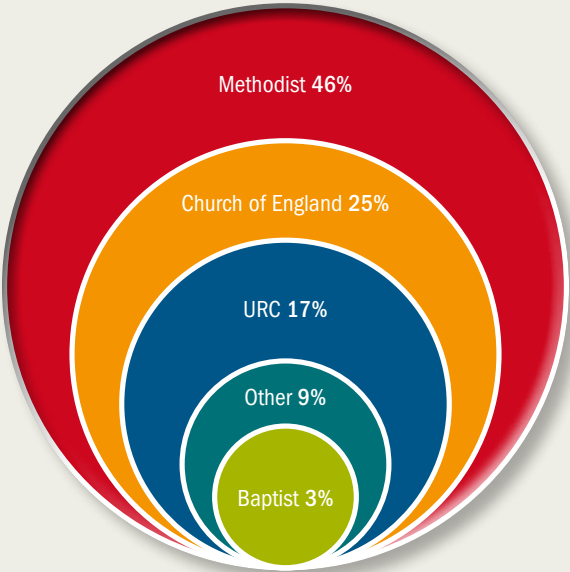


Fig. 3 LEP denominational membership makeup 2010 (not to scale)

‘Pastoral others’ are those linked with local churches but who are not officially members, including those attending church-sponsored events and regular worshippers. Across Methodist churches pastoral others totalled 289,000 in 2010, rising to 327,000 when including LEPs. The chart below demonstrates how membership and pastoral others numbers have changed in recent years.

	2008	2009	2010	Change 2008 to 2010	Change 2009 to 2010
Methodist members (non LEP)	234,000	224,000	219,000		-2%
Methodist members in LEPs	18,000	19,000	19,000		0%
<b>Total Methodist members</b>	<b>252,000</b>	<b>243,000</b>	<b>238,000</b>	<b>-6%</b>	<b>-2%</b>
LEP non Methodist members	17,000	20,000	22,000		
Pastoral Others	349,000	332,000	327,000		-2%
<b>Community roll</b>	<b>618,000</b>	<b>595,000</b>	<b>587,000</b>	<b>-5%</b>	<b>-1%</b>

Table 1 Denominational make up of membership 2008 to 2010

## Community Roll 2008 to 2010

The wider ‘community roll’ across Methodist churches is an even larger figure, made up of all Methodist members, non-Methodist LEP members and pastoral others, which in 2010 stood at 587,000. Here, we can see how the wider community roll has changed over the last few years.

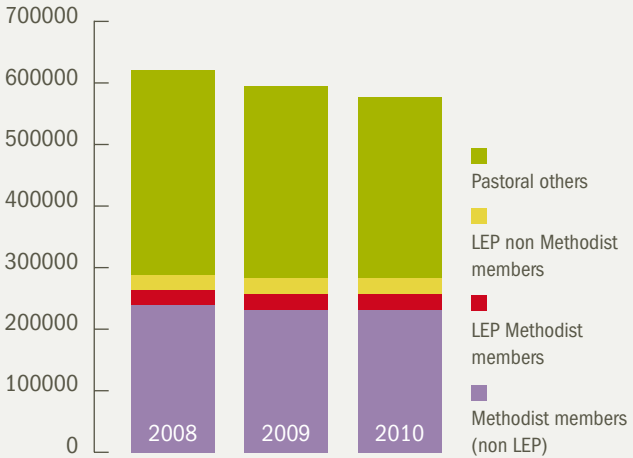


Fig. 4 Community roll 2008 to 2010



## Attendance

Every October, churches count how many people attend services, both on Sunday and during the week. We ask those counting to distinguish between adults, 13-19 year olds and those under 13.

In 2010 the total average attendance (across the whole week) in wholly Methodist churches was 212,300, with an additional 17,000 people when including the estimated Methodist portion of LEP congregations.

The charts below show how Sunday and mid-week attendance can be broken down by age group. (Mid-week figures do not include those who also attended on Sunday.)

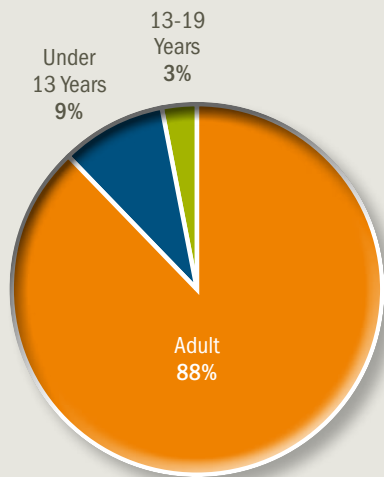


Fig. 5 Sunday attendance 2010

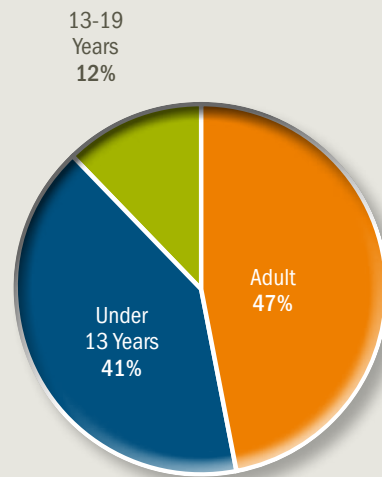


Fig. 6 Additional mid-week attendance 2010

This chart illustrates how average attendance has changed since 2004, across all age groups:

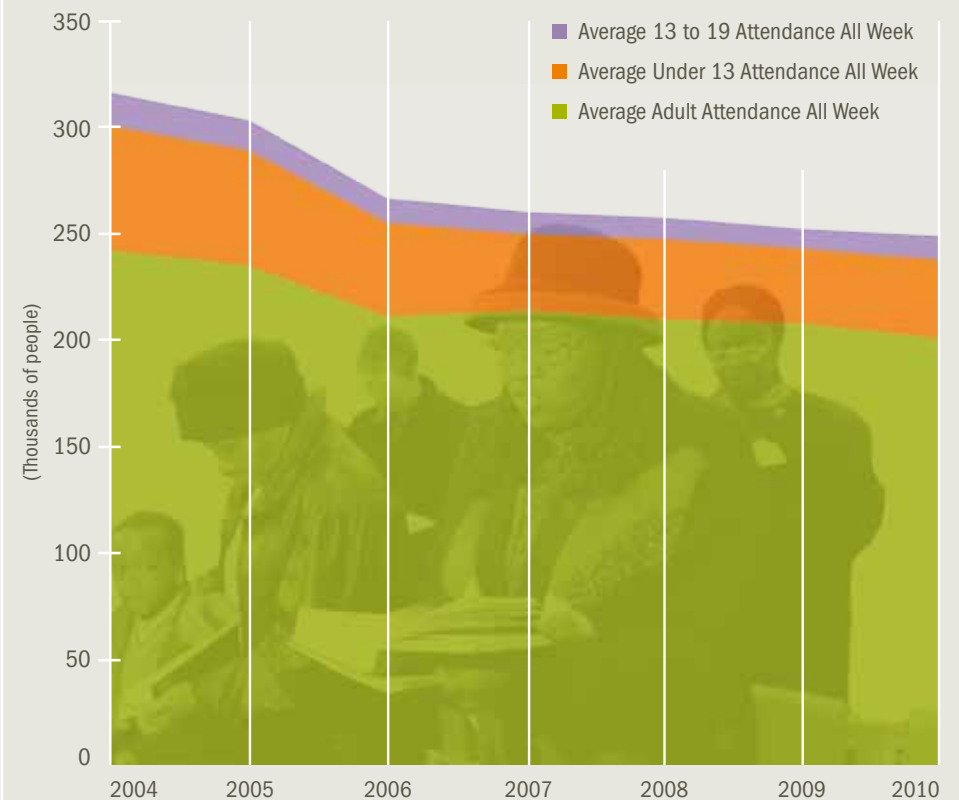


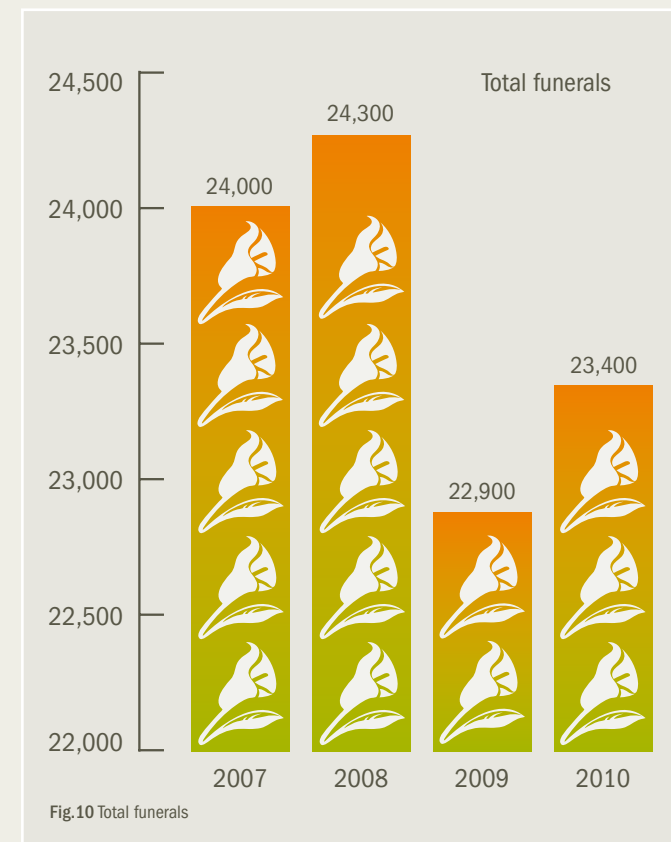
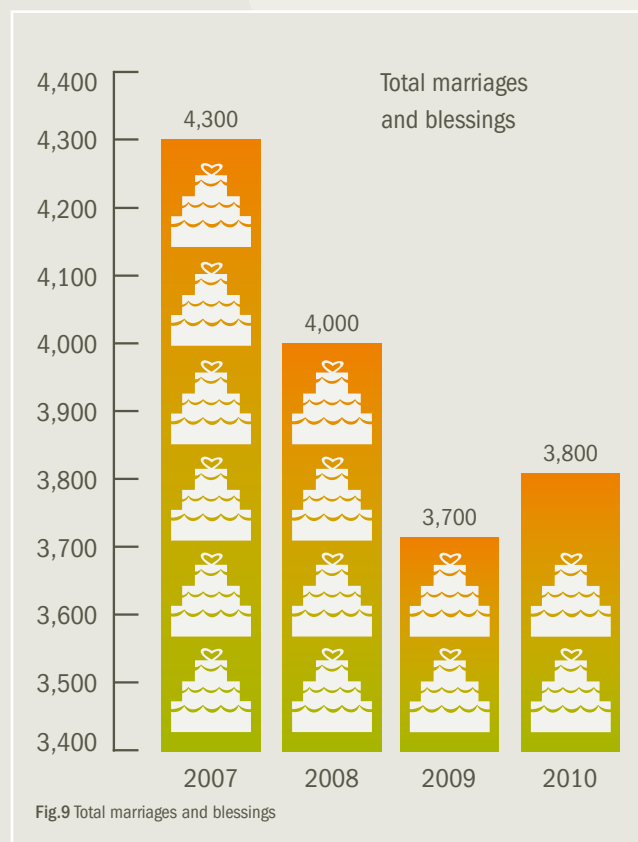
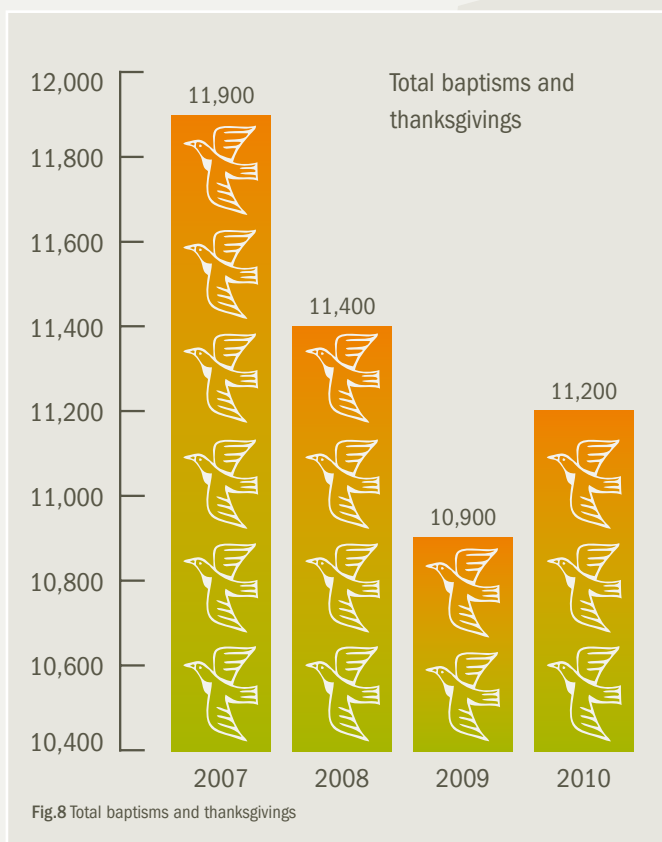
Fig. 7 Average all week attendance change 2004 to 2010



## Baptisms, Thanksgivings, Marriages, Blessings and Funerals

The Methodist Church serves its own members and the wider community by conducting services celebrating and commemorating important moments in people's lives.

In 2010 there were 11,200 baptisms and thanksgivings, 3,800 marriages and blessings and 23,400 funerals conducted in or in the name of Methodist churches.





## Children and Young People

In 2010, the number of children and young people reported to attend groups attached to Methodist churches rose from 98,000 in 2009 to 133,000. This rise may be due to more churches answering the corresponding question than in previous years, but it is still good news.

Key facts include

- Average of 60 children or young people attending groups attached to each church that answered these questions
- Average of three groups at each church
- Largest age group (in terms of attendance) is 5-13 years

The chart below illustrates different types of activities and groups that children and young people were involved with in Methodist churches during 2010:

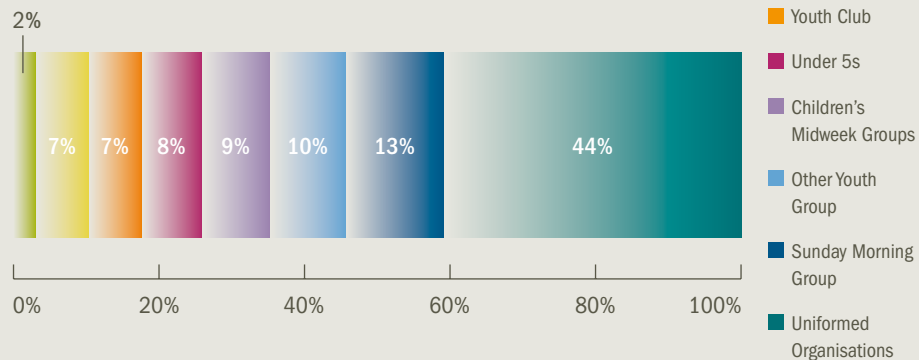


Fig. 11 Children and youth groups 2010

## People working with Children and Young People

In 2009 and 2010 churches were asked questions about who worked with children and in what capacity. In 2009, 19,099 volunteers were identified in 454 churches, alongside 816 paid posts (350 of which were shared in some way, such as within a circuit).

In 2010, churches were asked which groups these people employed to work with children and young people focused on:

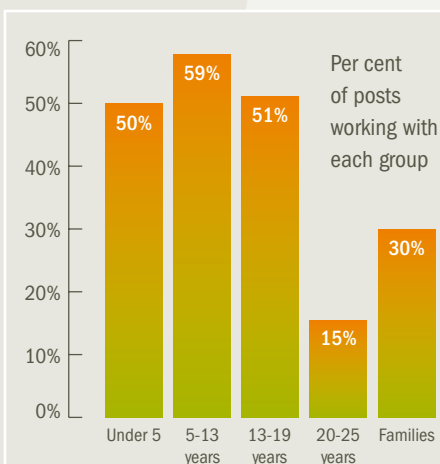
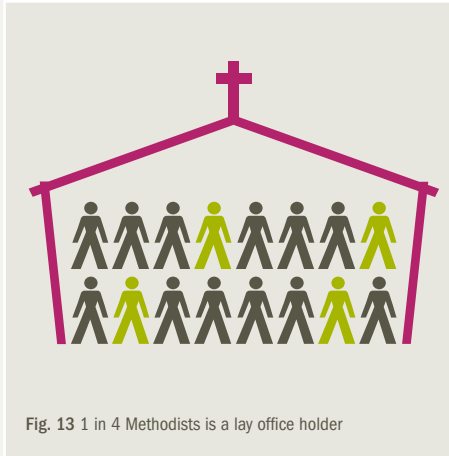


Fig. 12 People employed to work with children and young people 2010

## Lay Office Holders and Youth Participation

As part of the Youth Participation Strategy (YPS), churches were asked in 2009 to identify how many people in their congregation held some form of lay office (such as church steward, member of church council and treasurer) and, of these, how many were under 24 years of age.

We discovered that 56,000 Methodists are lay office holders – meaning that nearly a quarter of the Church's membership holds such an office.



While that's a very impressive statistic, figures showing lay office holders aged under 24 were not so encouraging, at only 1.4% of the total. However, the Shetland District bucked the trend with 10.8% of their office holders reported as under 24.



## Local World Church Links

In 2010, 6% of Methodist churches (327) reported that they had a formal link with an overseas church – such as a mission partner connection, a church-to-church link, involvement in an overseas project or by hosting an overseas minister.

These links were identified across 60 different countries, of which the largest number was with Kenya (19%). A significant number of links were also reported with Zambia (9%) and Zimbabwe (7%).

In this diagram, the chart on the right shows how many of the 327 links were of each type:

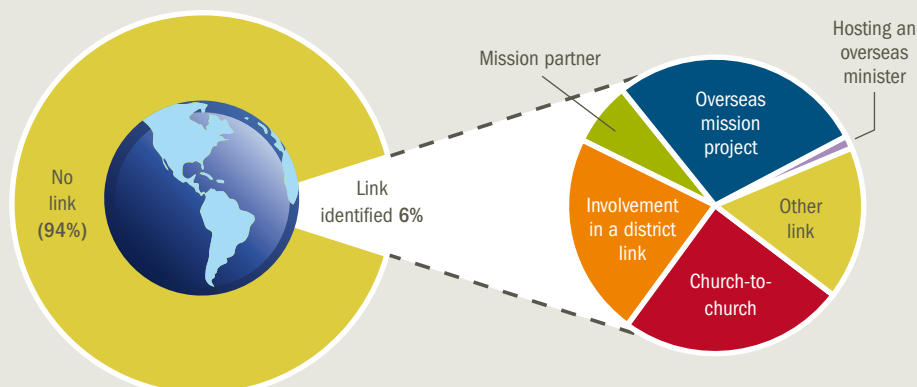


Fig. 14 Local world church links

## Worship and Fellowship Languages

In 2009 and 2010, 125 Methodist churches reported that they ran or hosted Methodist worship or fellowship events in a language other than English or Welsh – of these over a quarter were in the London district.

Zimbabwean/Shona was the most frequently reported language, with French, Korean and Punjabi following. An interesting result of asking this question was the reporting by several churches of worship or fellowship in British Sign Language (BSL).

Amharic,  
British Sign Language,  
Cantonese, Chinese, Congolese,  
Cornish, Creole, Eritrean, Ethiopian, Fante,  
Farsi, Fijian, Filipino, French, Gah, German,  
Ghanaian/Twi, Gujarati, Hindi, Kerala,  
Kiswahili, Korean, Lingala, Malayalam,  
Mandarin, Nepalese, Punjabi, Romanian,  
Russian, Shona/Zimbabwean, Swahili,  
Syriac, Tagalog, Tamil, Tongan, Urdu,  
Vietnamese, Yoruba,  
Zambian.

Fig. 15 Languages of Methodist worship or fellowship events

## Ethnically Distinct Congregations

In 2009 and 2010, 165 Methodist churches indicated that they ran or hosted Methodist worship or fellowship events primarily for groups which were ethnically distinct. Again, the highest number of these was reported in the London district (a third of the total). In fact, three districts accounted for nearly half of all events – London, Birmingham and Manchester & Stockport.

Of the three main groups of people churches identified, the most frequently reported was Ghanaian (33%), followed by Zimbabwean (27%) and then Nigerian (22%). Other groups specified included: Caribbean (16%), Sierra Leonian, Chinese, Congolese and Korean.



## Fresh Expressions

For the last two years we have collected information on Fresh Expressions\* attached to churches. In 2010, 941 Fresh Expressions (in 723 churches) met on a regular basis.

Key facts include:

- Between 1 and 13 Fresh Expressions were identified in any one circuit.
- Across the 315 circuits that identified Fresh Expressions, the average number per circuit was 3.
- 67% of all Methodist circuits have at least 1 Fresh Expression.

\*Defined formally as "a form of church for our changing culture established primarily for the benefit of people who are not yet members of any church".

This diagram shows the types of Fresh Expressions identified by churches (according to categories given on the form) and the location in which additional 'other' types meet:

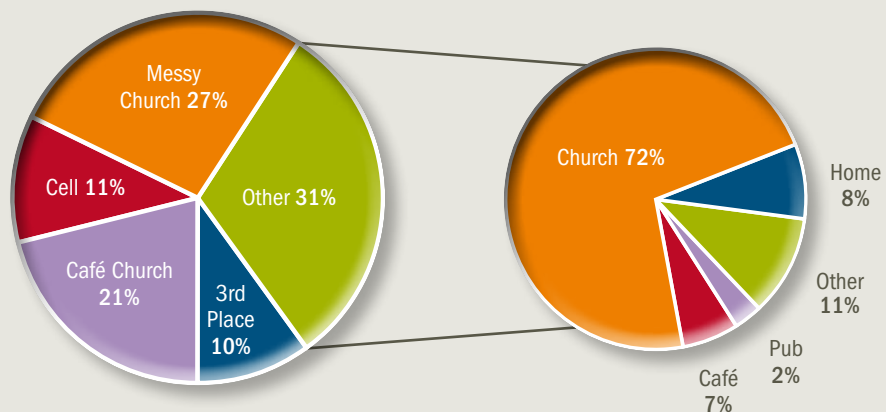


Fig. 16 Types of Fresh Expression and the locations in which 'others' meet

## Key membership and attendance statistics, 2007 to 2010

- All figures are rounded to the nearest 1000 or %.
- Attendance figures include all who worship in LEPs without attempting to calculate a 'Methodist portion'.

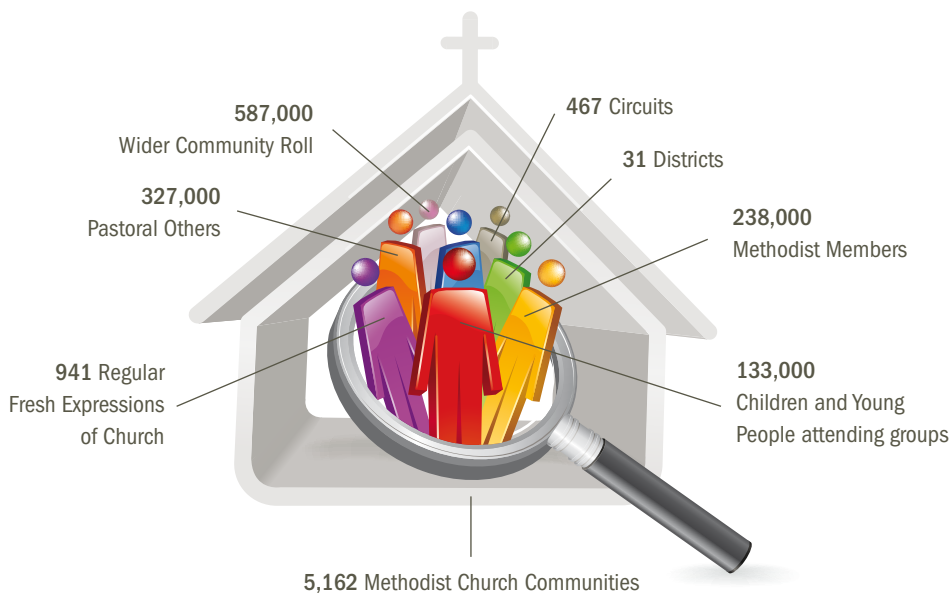
	Thousands				Change 2007 to 2010	Change 2009 to 2010
	2007	2008	2009	2010		
Membership	263	252	243	238	-10%	-2%
Community Roll	644	601	575	565	-12%	-2%
Baptisms and Thanksgivings	12	11	11	11	-6%	3%
Confirmations	3	3	3	3	0%	15%
Couples Married or Blessed	4	4	4	4	-12%	3%
Funerals	24	24	23	23	-3%	2%
Average Adult Sunday Attendance	194	189	188	181	-7%	-4%
Average Adult Midweek Attendance	22	22	21	20	-11%	-7%
<b>Average Adult Attendance All Week</b>	<b>215</b>	<b>211</b>	<b>209</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>-7%</b>	<b>-4%</b>

Average Under 13 Sunday Attendance	22	22	21	20	-9%	-5%
Average Under 13 Mid-week Attendance	14	16	14	17	20%	17%
<b>Average Under 13 Attendance All Week</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>4%</b>

Average 13 to 19 Sunday Attendance	7	7	6	6	-6%	0%
Average 13 to 19 Midweek Attendance	4	4	3	5	18%	35%
<b>Average 13 to 19 Attendance All Week</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>10%</b>

Average Sunday Attendance	223	217	215	207	-7%	-4%
Average Midweek Attendance	40	42	39	41	3%	6%
<b>Average Attendance All Week</b>	<b>262</b>	<b>259</b>	<b>254</b>	<b>248</b>	<b>-5%</b>	<b>-2%</b>





## Where to find more information on Statistics for Mission

[www.methodistchurch.org.uk/statisticsformission](http://www.methodistchurch.org.uk/statisticsformission)

Containing: connexional reports, district highlight reports, district and circuit data spreadsheets and other useful information, including maps.

If you have any queries or suggestions relating to Statistics for Mission, please email: [statisticsformission@methodistchurch.org.uk](mailto:statisticsformission@methodistchurch.org.uk)

Methodist Research

Web: [www.methodist.org.uk/research](http://www.methodist.org.uk/research)

Email: [research@methodistchurch.org.uk](mailto:research@methodistchurch.org.uk)

  
The **Methodist** Church