Wholeheartedly
CONFERENCE GUIDE
Welcome

I am delighted to welcome you to Conference 2022.

The ‘people called Methodist’ in Ireland are committed to ‘living wholeheartedly as followers of Jesus for the transformation of the world’. This is a deeply significant and a stirring vision.

‘Wholeheartedly’ is the theme of Conference this year. The hope and prayer of the Conference Arrangements Committee is that God will use our time together to enthuse, bring joy and hope as we continue to walk with Jesus together.

Conference matters, for those who are members and for those who will observe in person and online. It matters for the whole Church as God uses it to remind us of our calling, to point us to Jesus and as the Spirit breathes and encourages us to live wholeheartedly for God’s glory. Please hold Conference in your prayers.

Heather
Introduction

Last year, the 252nd Conference of the Methodist Church in Ireland took place entirely online from a ‘studio’ at the Agape Centre on the Lisburn Road in Belfast.

A huge amount of work from a great team meant that, not only could all the representatives participate fully from their own homes, but also the sessions and services of Conference 2021 were available for all to watch on YouTube.

A booklet was made available to help those watching at home to record their observations and consider what God might be saying to them and to their wider Methodist family.

This year, we have produced this guide to help both Conference members and observers to become more aware of the issues facing the Church, Ireland and the world today.

So whether you’re in the building or watching from home, we pray that God might use this guide to encourage us in our role of making followers of Jesus, feel part of the wider Methodist family on this island and beyond. And above all, we hope you will encounter God in prayer, business, worship, study and conversation.
JOINING ONLINE

This year, while Conference is happening entirely in-person at Assembly Buildings in Belfast City Centre, the majority of the programme is being live streamed on the Methodist Church in Ireland's YouTube channel.

youtube.com/irishmethodistofficial

SOCIAL MEDIA

Key moments throughout Conference 2022 will be shared across MCI's Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. We encourage everyone in attendance or at home to share their reflections using the hashtag #MCICConf22 so others can engage with you and be encouraged!

The Methodist Newsletter will publish a daily reflection on their website at methodistnewsletter.org and IMYC's Instagram is having a young person takeover each day of Conference.

YOUR REFLECTIONS

What resonates with your spirit? Is there a Bible verse that connects with what you're hearing? Have you discovered something new about how the Methodist Church operates? Is God nudging you to get involved in a particular area of work or mission? Or is God whispering a word to you that could encourage the people called Methodist in this land?

We encourage you to write these things down and consider with whom you might share them.

Offerings

GIVE A GIFT

Rather than pass around offering plates at services, this year there will be an opportunity to contribute towards the running costs of the Conference as you leave the Assembly Buildings.

If you prefer to give online, simply scan the QR code opposite. You can also give a gift on our website at:

irishmethodist.org/conference-2022
Programme

Join Conference 2022 online at:
YOUTUBE.COM/IRISHMETHODISTOFFICIAL

THURSDAY 9TH JUNE, 2022

7:30PM CONSTITUTION & OPENING OF THE CONFERENCE
The Constitution and opening of Conference 2022 with the Election and Installation of the
Rev David Nixon as President for 2022-23 and Mr Tom Wilson as Lay Leader for 2022-24.

Pre-Service Praise from 7.15pm.

FRIDAY 10TH JUNE, 2022

9:00AM WELCOME & PRAYER
Opening Courtesies

9:30AM SESSION 1: AN OVERFLOW OF GOD’S LOVE
Speakers: Rev David Nixon (President) and Tom Wilson (Lay Leader)
A guided journey of reflection, worship and prayer through the story of the Prodigal Son.

11:10AM BREAK

11:30AM REPORT | GOVERNANCE BOARD
The Governance Board brings to Conference their annual report.

1:00PM LUNCH BREAK

2:00PM CONVERSATION ON THE WORK OF GOD
- An Introduction
Hosted by: Elaine Barnett (Editorial Secretary of Conference)
2:15PM REPORT | WORKING PARTY ON THE ROLES OF THE PRESIDENT & LAY LEADER

3:00PM CONVERSATION ON THE WORK OF GOD
- Irish Methodist World Mission Partners (Video)

3:05PM REPORT | FAITH & ORDER
The Faith & Order committee brings to Conference their annual report.

4:00PM CONVERSATION ON THE WORK OF GOD
- Joan Strong, Methodist Women in Ireland

4:10PM REPORT | GOVERNANCE BOARD (2)

4:30PM REPORT | CONNEXIONAL TEAM

EXPRESSION OF THANKS | AFTERNOON TEA

CONVERSATION ON THE WORK OF GOD
- “We make the way by walking.”

We will be led in groups to walk around the city looking at parts of its history and the Church within it, through the lens of scripture and creative reflection, being prompted to prayer and conversations along the way. An adapted version of this walk will also be available to watch on the live stream.

7:30PM CONFERENCE ADJOURNS
“Living wholeheartedly as followers of Jesus for the transformation of the world.” was adopted by Methodist Conference in 2021 as a vision statement for the Methodist Church in Ireland.

Methodists in Ireland are part of the worldwide church and share much in common with Christian churches around the world yet there are some things about the way that we live as followers of Jesus that are particularly significant.

Read on to learn more about some of the distinctives communicated by this phrase.
A life lived wholeheartedly in relationship with Jesus is one where nothing is held back - faith in God isn’t limited to a Sunday but is lived out every day in how we love God and love others.

In how we passionately worship and pray.

In our commitment to small group intentional discipleship. In attending to the means of grace.

In our relationship with our families, our friends, our neighbourhoods and our communities.

In how we engage with and learn from those with whom we partner around the world.

In how we relate to the environment around us.

In our thinking and attitudes, whether that’s to politics or people with whom we differ, or on the moral and ethical issues of today.

In how we engage with wider society which groans waiting for God’s justice and mercy to be poured out.

The word "wholeheartedly" comes from a prayer of commitment that is prayed by most of our churches at the start of each new year - the Covenant Prayer.
We grow together and are sent out as “followers” of Jesus in everyday life.

"Come, follow me," Jesus said, "and I will send you out to fish for people." At once they left their nets and followed him. (Matthew 4: 19-20)

The first disciples responded to this call and set out on a journey of following Jesus. They spent weeks in his company as he brought life and healing to those that they encountered in villages and towns along the way.

The word “followers" was chosen for this statement to emphasise that it is of great significance to Methodist people that, like the first disciples of Jesus, “we help each other to be more like Jesus” (Methodist Church in Ireland Mission Commitments).

The early Methodists were organised into small groups called “Bands” and “classes”, to learn together what it means to follow Jesus. Small groups remain central to the life of Methodist Churches today.

God is already at work in the world, and it is up to us to join in – for the transformation of the world.

Isn’t “the transformation of the world" an enormous task? Yes! But all we do is only and always a response to what God has done first. Because of Jesus and in the power of the Spirit we live lives marked by God's love, mercy, and justice - all can glimpse what God's love looks like, and transformation take place.

Wesley spoke on how he viewed the world and his responsibility in it.

“I look upon all the world as my parish; thus far I mean, that, in whatever part of it I am, I judge it meet, right, and my bounden duty to declare unto all that are willing to hear, the glad tidings of salvation. This is the work which I know God has called me to; and sure I am, that His blessing attends it.”

John Wesley

We look for and commit ourselves to being part of a world which, in every part, reflects the character of God - in whatever part of it we find ourselves.
On Covenant Sunday 2022 the Secretary of Conference shared a dream that this statement wouldn’t just be a vision statement, or a statement of hope, or an aspiration to which we hold, but in the Grace of God and in the power of the Spirit that it would be a reality for the people called Methodist and for God’s glory!

Let’s pray together that the spirit will bring new life so that we can take up the challenge of “Living wholeheartedly as followers of Jesus for the transformation of the world.”

On May 1738, at a meeting in Aldersgate Street, John Wesley encountered the power of the Holy Spirit and had a new experience of God’s love. He described this experience saying, “I felt my heart strangely warmed”.

Wesley welcomed the ongoing work of the Spirit in the world, the church and in the life of Christians.

Watch the Covenant Sunday 2022 video at: IRISHMETHODIST.ORG/COVENANT-SUNDAY

Further resources to support you as you take up the challenge of 'living wholeheartedly' will be available throughout the year at: IRISHMETHODIST.ORG/LIVING-WHOLEHEARTEDLY
SATURDAY 11TH JUNE, 2022

9:00AM  WELCOME, PRAYER & REFLECTION

9:15AM  DAILY RECORD & ANNOUNCEMENTS

VOTE | REPRESENTATIVES TO THE BRITISH CONFERENCE

9:25AM  GREETING FROM THE BRITISH CONFERENCE
Where do you see ‘Wholeheartedly’ in your tradition?

9:35AM  SESSION 2: A CHOICE TO LIVE WHOLEHEARTEDLY PT. 1
Speakers: Gillian Gilmore & Jonny Best
An exploration of what it means as Methodists to follow Jesus wholeheartedly through the story of Caleb.

11:00AM  BREAK

11:30AM  SESSION 3: A CHOICE TO LIVE WHOLEHEARTEDLY PT. 2
11:30am - 12.30pm  District Discussions
12:30pm - 1pm  Closing Prayer

1:00PM  LUNCH BREAK

2:00PM  CONVERSATION ON THE WORK OF GOD
– Irish Methodist World Development and Relief (Video)

2:10PM  REPORT | COUNCIL ON SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY
Council on Social Responsibility brings to Conference their annual report.

3:10PM  CONVERSATION ON THE WORK OF GOD
– David Hines, Ballynafeigh Methodist Church (Video)
– David Griffith, Soul Mates

3:20PM  VOTE | PRESIDENT DESIGNATE

3:30PM  BREAK
3:45PM    SERVICE OF REMEMBRANCE FOR DECEASED MINISTERS
We gather as Conference and with the families of those who have died to thank God for the lives and ministry of Revs David Houston, Jack Robinson, Richard Russell and Vanessa Wyse-Jackson.

4:15PM    BREAK

4:30PM    RECEPTION INTO FULL CONNEXION
Revs Daphne Hanna and Michael Jones are to be received into Full Connexion, prior to their Ordination. Rev Edem Dzunu to be received into Full Connexion having transferred from another denomination.

4:45PM    TRIBUTES TO MINISTERS PERMITTED TO RETIRE
Revs George Bowes, Colin Duncan, Robert T Loney and Tommy Stevenson will have sought permission to retire at the Ministerial Session of the Conference.

5:15PM    SERVICE OF COMMISSIONING FOR PROBATIONERS
Revs Jackie McNair and Richard Wright are commissioned as Probationer ministers.

5:45PM    COMMISSIONING OF PIONEER MISSION LEADERS
Dr Chris and Ms Hannah Agnew are commissioned as Pioneer Mission Leaders to serve on the Coleraine Portrush, Portstewart and Ballymoney Circuit.

6:00PM    ANNOUNCEMENT OF VOTE FOR PRESIDENT DESIGNATE

6:10PM    UNCOMPLETED BUSINESS

EXPRESSION OF THANKS & CLOSING COURTESIES

7:30PM    SESSION 4: A POSTURE OF HOPE
Speaker: Lucy Hill (24-7 Prayer Ireland)
An evening to worship, listen, seek God and be challenged as we look to what it means to be carriers of hope for the transformation of the world.

SUNDAY 12TH JUNE, 2022

11:30AM    ORDINATION SERVICE
The ordination of Daphne Hanna and Michael Jones
Speaker: Mr Tom Wilson (Lay Leader)
Reflections

QUESTIONS FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

- As we journey through Conference, what is God saying to you?
- What catches your attention?
- What is the Holy Spirit nudging you to believe and/or to do?

We encourage you to use the spaces provided to write your own reflections and consider with whom you might share them. You could take some notes along the way and reflect on these questions at the end of the day.

THURSDAY 9 JUNE

Notes and reflections
FRIDAY 10 JUNE

Notes and reflections
Notes and reflections
Living Wholeheartedly

with Heather Morris

A NEW PODCAST FROM THE METHODIST CHURCH IN IRELAND