

The Methodist Church in Ireland



The story of Methodism begins with the birth of John and Charles Wesley. Their father was the Rector of the parish of Epworth in Lincolnshire, England. Both boys were born in the Rectory there – John on 17th June 1703 and Charles on 18th December 1707. In 1709, when John was five, he was rescued from a fire at the Rectory. In later life, he referred to himself as ‘a brand plucked from the burning.’

Roots

At Oxford University, John and Charles met with other students to study, pray, care for the sick and dying and to visit those in prison. They were soon nicknamed ‘Methodists’ because of their methodical strictness in all their religious duties.

On 24th May 1738, John Wesley experienced what has come to be called his evangelical conversion; it gave him a new confidence and sense of mission.



Over the next fifty years, as an ordained Anglican Priest, John toured all of England, much of Wales and some of Scotland. He paid his first visit to Ireland in 1747.

The first Methodist building in Ireland was a chapel at Whitefriar Street in Dublin, built in 1752.

Today the Methodist Church in Ireland has 212 churches or 'societies' with a total community membership of around 47,000.

Moreover, the Methodist Church is a worldwide communion of over 70 million people.

Beliefs

Methodists believe that:

All need to be saved
All may be saved
All may know themselves saved
All may be saved to the uttermost

Features of Methodism include:

- Lay leadership in preaching, pastoral care and administration
- Hymn-singing in worship and teaching
- The division of congregations into small groups for instruction, pastoral care and fellowship
- The Circuit system, linking congregations in an area, and Districts, grouping a number of circuits
- The Connexional system, linking all congregations through an annual Conference

The Methodist Quadrilateral

Methodists traditionally use a fourfold approach to learn about our Christian faith and apply it to contemporary issues and to Christian practice:

Scripture

We seek to discover the word of God through reading the Bible, using resources such as different Bible translations, commentaries and Bible reading notes.

Tradition

This is the wisdom and creativity of Christians over time and across the world.

Reason

We are called to love God with our minds as well as with our hearts. To the best of our ability, we need to think things through in the light of reason.

Experience

Methodism particularly stresses the importance of our own experience of God's grace working in our lives.

For more information: <https://www.irishmethodist.org>