

Our Church

Think about the committees and leaders of your own parish. On a sheet of paper brainstorm all the aspects of your local church. You may be able to put some of these into a diagram.

Ask your treasurer for a copy of the parish budget. Look at the items and see where your money goes.

Each of you must make up your own mind about how much to give. But don't feel sorry that you must give, and don't feel that you are forced to give. God loves people who love to give. 2 Corinthians 9:7

Each of us has an important role to play in the work of the body of Christ. We all have gifts to bring of our talents, our time, and of our money. All are vital to the work of the church and its mission.

Christ has many services to be done: some are easy. Others are difficult; some bring honour; others bring reproach; some are suitable to our natural inclinations and material interests; others are contrary to both. In some we may please Christ and please ourselves; in others we cannot please Christ except by denying ourselves. Methodist Covenant Service

What each person gives must be a personal decision. It should be made as a response to what God has done for us and in excitement for the work of God's people.

What is my place in the church? Where do I fit?
Draw a shield on a bit of paper and then within draw words or symbols of some of the ways in which you can serve God through the church.

Being Part of the Story



Unit 5 Our Church Family's Story

A resource in preparation for confirmation

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*Church – Generic term for any group trying to be like Christ.
Gaggle of geese, tin of spaghetti, church of Christians.
The Church – English Dictionary by Wroe, Reith, and Parke*

Take a moment to think about the word “Church”.
What picture or phrase comes into your mind when you hear the word “Church”?

The church is Christ's body and is filled with Christ who completely fills everything. Ephesians 1:23

The Greek word that is usually translated as “Church” is **ekklesia** (ecclesia). In Greek society the ecclesia was a gathering of people such as the political assembly of a state. The Christians used the term both for a local house group and for the entire community of the followers of Christ. The Greek terms for temple or sanctuary are rarely used for the Christian Church.

Why do you think the early Christians chose a secular term for their gatherings?

*Here is the church and here is the steeple.
Open the doors and here's all the people. Children's rhyme*

Probably the most common image of the Church used in the New Testament is that of the body (see e.g. 1 Corinthians 12:12-31). Here are some other images:

Ark
a place of refuge

School
A place of learning

Home
A place to belong

Theatre
A place for entertainment

Hospital
A place of healing

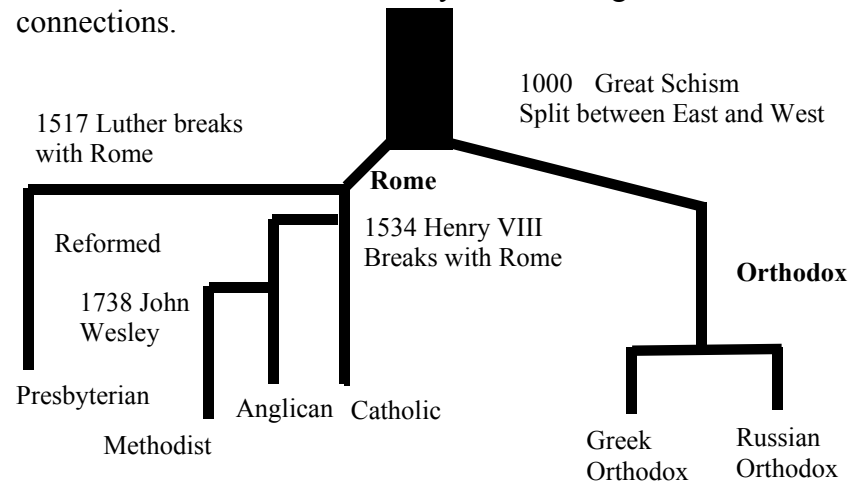
Burning Bush
A holy place

Revolution
A place for justice

Which do you think are valid? Can you add others?
What image do you feel reflects your church as it is?
What image reflects what the church should be?

*“the purest churches under heaven are subject both to mixture and error”
The Westminster Confession of Faith chapter xxv.5*

In the Christian Church there are many different branches and denominations. Below is a family tree showing some of the connections.



What Churches are in your area?

The Presbyterian Church can trace its family tree back to the time of the Reformation when John Calvin, based in Geneva, broke with Rome and the Catholic Church. The Presbyterian Church is part of the Reformed tradition. But it is said that the church is “reforming not reformed”.

What do you see is the difference?

If yours is a union church you should spend some time looking at the history and structure of your partner churches. (An additional leaflet gives a short background of the Negotiating Churches.)