

The Methodist Church is sponsoring its first garden at the RHS Flower Show at Tatton Park, Cheshire



**‘This Garden Isn’t Finished Without You’ will be open to the public from 17 to 21 July 2024. The garden illustrates the Methodist Church in Great Britain’s commitment to diversity, inclusion and sustainability.**

‘This Garden Isn’t Finished Without You,’ illustrates some of the values that are important to the Methodist Church. Each plant in the garden represents a person and signifies that, like plants, every individual is beautiful just the way they are. Globe Artichoke from the Mediterranean, Red leaved Rose from mainland Europe, Fig from the Middle East, Silky-Spike Melic from North Africa and Yellow Coneflower from North America will be planted together to display the harmony in diversity.

Holly Adams, Evangelism and Contemporary Culture Officer at the Methodist Church says, “We want to be a church that gets out and about, beyond the walls of our buildings, meeting people in the places where they gather and being good news. When Ollie approached us to explore creating a garden together it seemed like a no-brainer. We’re really proud of our commitment to inclusion and diversity – a commitment that is deeply rooted in our faith in a God who loves all of us unconditionally. The show allows us to express that commitment in a beautiful, creative way.”

The garden was designed by Ollie Pike from Pike Studio who was awarded a Silver Medal in the RHS Young Designer of the Year Competition with the Bible Society: Psalm 27 Garden in 2023. The reaction to the garden hit home the power that gardens and plants can have.

For 'This Garden Isn't Finished Without You', Ollie was inspired by "The amazing communities found in Methodist Church's across the UK. This was the foundation of the whole garden. Inspired by the typical floorplan of a Methodist Church, the layout is abstracted to create a beautiful communal space. To the planting which has diversity from across the world and most beautiful when combined together as a community."

The design focuses on sustainability and climate resilience to match the Methodist Church's ambitious environmental aims. The garden will feature climate resilient drought-tolerant planting along with sustainable materials, such as a cork-clad wall, recycled colourful stone paving and willow sculptures.

The garden aims to be net zero by 2030 by sequestering more carbon than it has produced. The use of vibrant climate-resilient plants and net zero regenerative materials shows that there is a bright future for sustainable and mindful gardening.

Revd Alan Bradley, Superintendent Minister comments, "We have a great team of 30 volunteers from Knutsford Methodist Church who will be helping to host the Methodist garden. We have many keen gardeners within the church and many who want to share the good news of God's love for everyone. The garden reflects one of our core values that God's love embraces all."

The garden will be relocated to nearby Mobberley Methodist Church (reducing its carbon footprint) and will become a wellbeing space for anyone to visit after the festival. This will greatly benefit the Greater Manchester Area, part of the newly forming North West England District which comes into being on 1 September 2024. Mobberley Methodist Church is less than 5 miles from the showground. Here the garden will achieve net zero by 2030 when it will have absorbed more carbon than its creation produced.

### **Notes to editors**

For questions, queries or to arrange interviews, contact Anaïs Pédrón on 020 7467 3534 ext 3534 or [pedrona@methodistchurch.org.uk](mailto:pedrona@methodistchurch.org.uk).

*All imagery for the garden can be accessed via this link here. Please credit all imagery to Pike Studio:*

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1yXsNhzw8MP3CWMNzpDh1WqqBrA8w7Ix0?usp=sharing>

The Methodist Conference was established in 1744 and each year the representatives elect the next President and Vice President for the following year and their job is to follow in John Wesley's (the founder of The Methodist Church) footsteps. The President and Vice President spend their year travelling around Great Britain, visiting Methodist churches and preaching.

From September, the Manchester and Stockport Methodist District will be integrated into the new North West England District, encompassing the Manchester, Liverpool, Lancashire, Cumbria and Bolton and Rochdale Districts.

Revd. Alan Bradley is the Superintendent Minister based at Knutsford Methodist Church and will soon take on the Mission Area Lead role in the new North West England District.