

# WHAT IT MEANS TO BE



To learn more about the Free  
Methodist Church in Canada  
and what we believe, visit  
[www.fmcic.ca](http://www.fmcic.ca)

# FREE METHODIST

Free Methodists want to **Introduce**  
People to Jesus, **Change** the World One  
Person at a Time & **Alleviate** Suffering



## WHAT'S OUR VISION?



**We want to see a healthy church within the reach of all people in Canada and beyond.**

We actively seek to develop healthy churches — congregations who do whatever it takes to continually place the gospel within reach of those around them resulting in worshiping communities of Jesus-followers across Canada.

## IN CANADA, EH!



In 1873, B.T. Roberts visited a group of dissatisfied Methodists east of Toronto, ON where the idea of The Free Methodist Church in Canada was discussed. The first Free Methodist Church in Canada was formed in Galt, Ontario (now part of Cambridge) in 1876.

In 1959, the Holiness Movement Church merged with The Free Methodist Church in Canada. This indigenous Canadian church was likewise the result of a renewal movement among Methodist churches in Eastern Ontario in the early 1900s.

In 1990, The Free Methodist Church in Canada became a self-governing General Conference with its own elected bishop. The Free Methodist Church in Canada belongs to the World Conference of the Free Methodist Church.

We are passionate about serving and advocating for the vulnerable, oppressed, marginalized, and people of all races and ethnicities in our communities. We encourage churches to form relationships with local indigenous communities; and devise ways to welcome newcomers to Canada.

## WHAT'S OUR DNA?



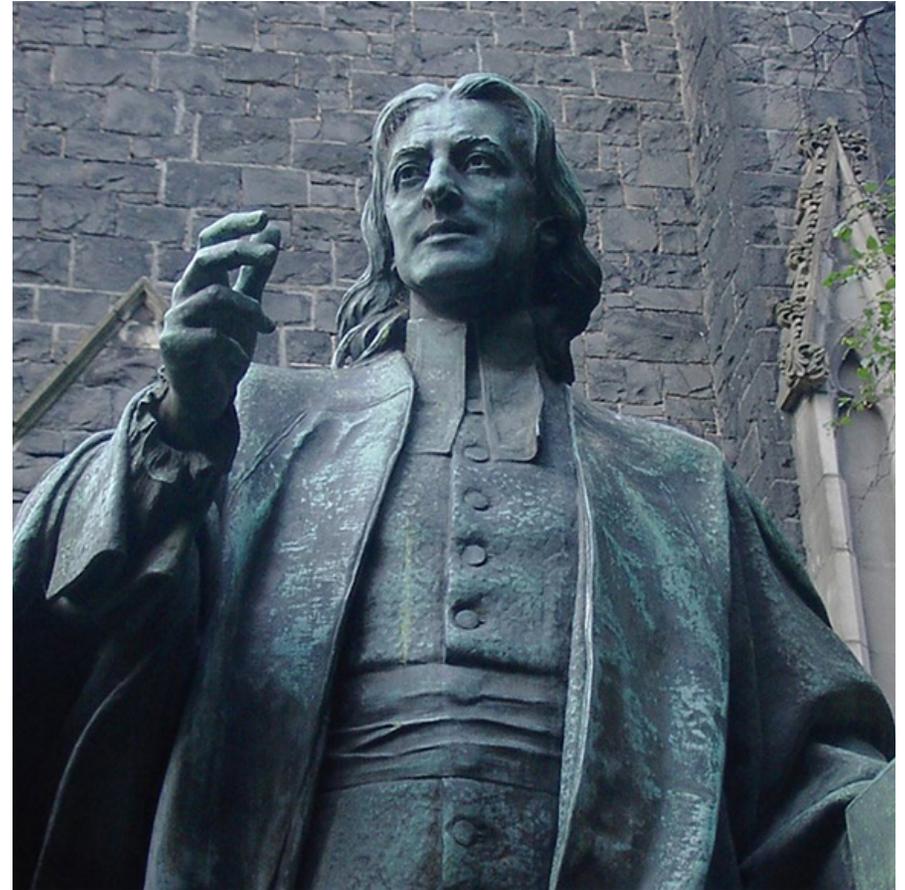
### Where do we come from?

We are rooted in historic, orthodox Christianity, tracing our influences from the teachings of the early Church Fathers the Roman Catholic Church, the Anglican Church, the Anabaptist movement, the Methodist Church, the Holiness movement and the wider Evangelical movement. A constant theme in our heritage has been the desire for ongoing renewal and reformation in personal spirituality as well as congregational and community life.

John Wesley, the founder of Methodism, was an Anglican priest in the 1700s. He had a desire to see the renewal of active spirituality among the common people of England. After meeting resistance for decades to its desire to remain as a renewal movement within the Anglican Church, eventually the Methodist Church was formed.

B.T. Roberts, the founder of the Free Methodist Church, was a Methodist Episcopal minister in New York State. He had a desire to see a renewal of earnest Christianity in the Methodist Episcopal Church and a commitment to meet the needs of the poor and disenfranchised. When the Methodist Episcopal Church excommunicated Roberts, he and a number of other clergy and laymen formed the Free Methodist Church in 1860.

## A SHORT HISTORY LESSON



Back in the 1700s, an Anglican priest named John Wesley founded the Methodist movement. He taught people throughout England about Jesus. His message: God could turn self-centered people into generous, giving people. Slavery was abolished. Hospitals were built. Child labour reform was enacted, and free health clinics and schools were established.

The Methodist movement found its way to North America, and in 1860, a group of Methodists renewed Wesley's vision to change the world, one person at a time. B.T. Roberts was the principal founder of this group who called themselves Free Methodists.

## WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE

### JUSTICE

Free Methodists were supporters of the anti-slavery movement and believed in equality for all, regardless of ethnic background. Today, we continue to pursue diversity and call out systemic and racial injustice.

### DISCIPLESHIP

Early Free Methodists renewed John Wesley's teaching that all Christians could be free from sin ruling their lives. Today, we want to support each other in our choices, attitudes, and behaviours and continue to point each other towards God.

### INNOVATION

Early Free Methodists moved away from strict formality and encouraged Spirit led freedom in their services. Today, we welcome a wide variety of worship and church ideas, in whatever shape, size, or creative expression God is revealing.

### INCLUSION

Methodists rented seats in their churches, but Free Methodists saw this as disenfranchising the poor and stopped the practice of renting out pews. Today, we continue to serve and advocate for the vulnerable, oppressed, and marginalized.

### JESUS

Early Free Methodists wanted all their members to be free from secret societies that often divided their loyalties. Today, we still believe that our first priority and pledge is to Jesus.

## FREE METHODIST, THEN AND NOW?

