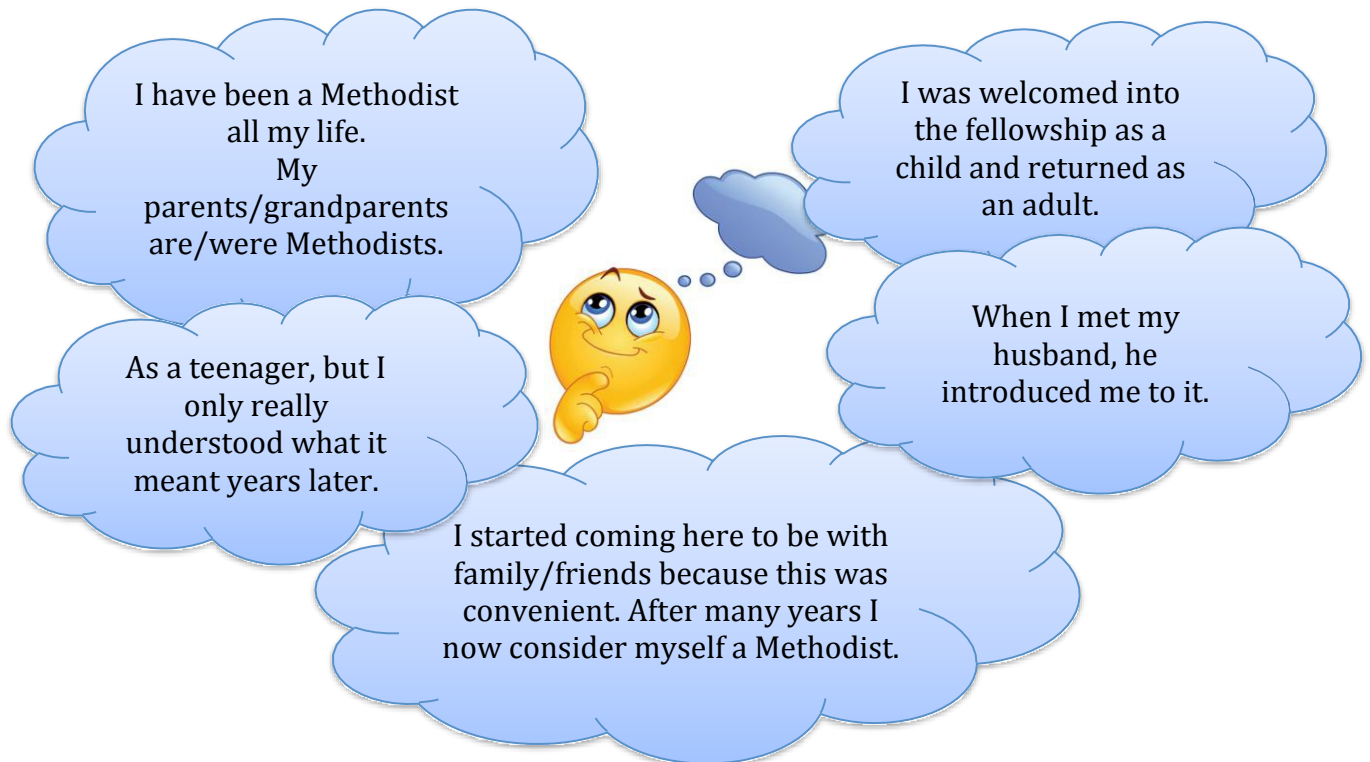


## What makes being a Methodist special?

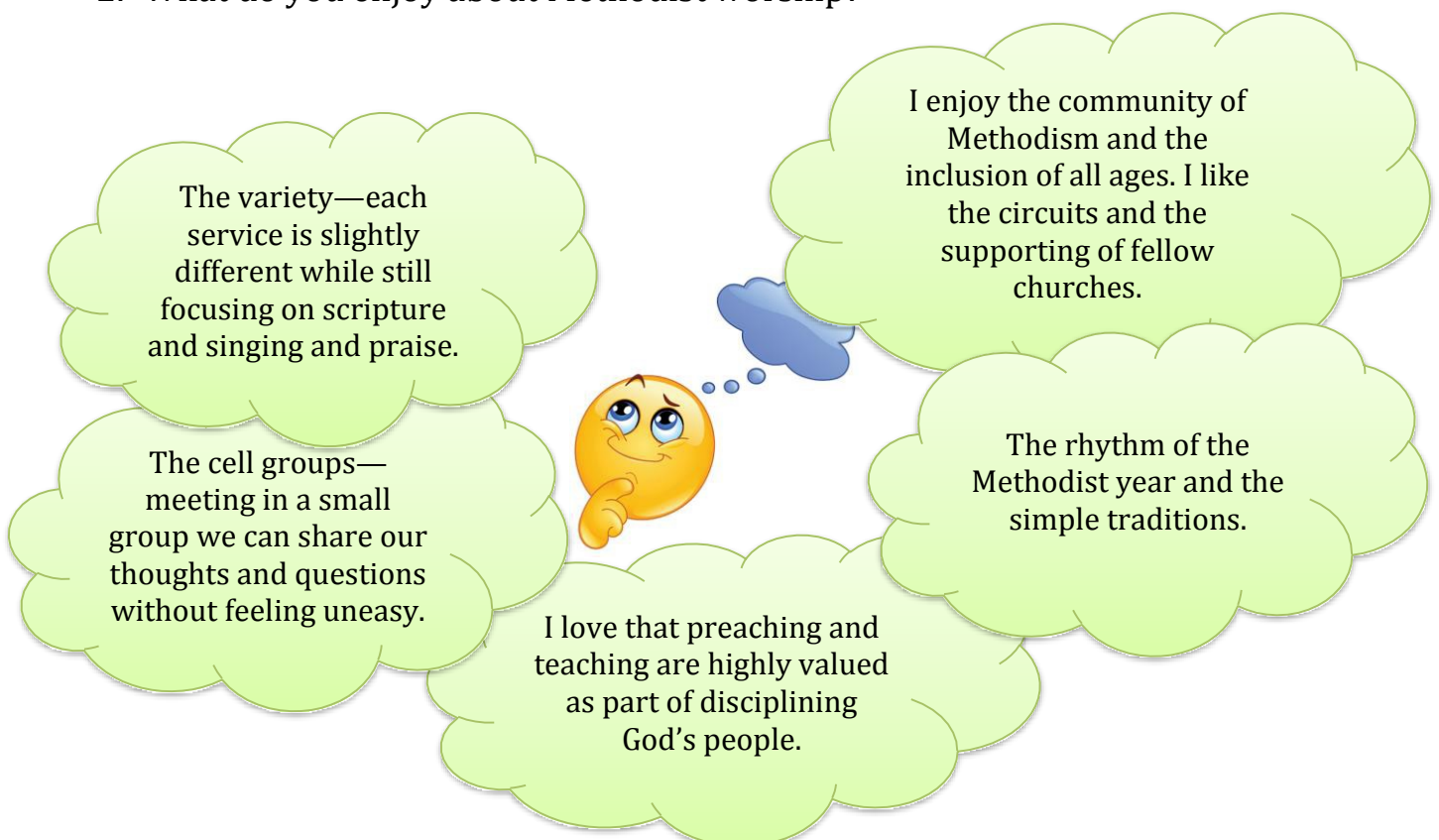
I have spoken to several people who regularly attend a Methodist service to ask them what they think.

These are just some of their responses.

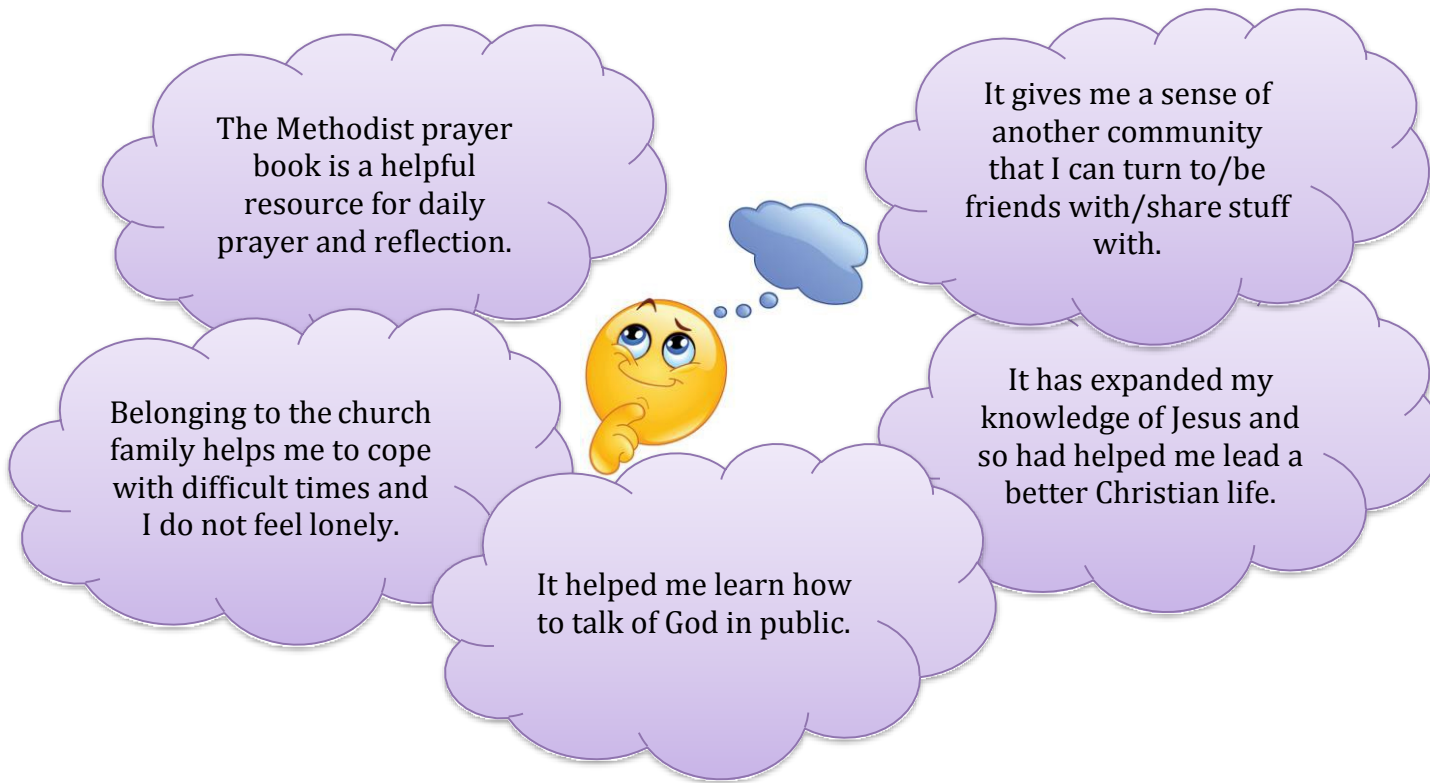
### 1. When did you become a Methodist and why?



### 2. What do you enjoy about Methodist worship?



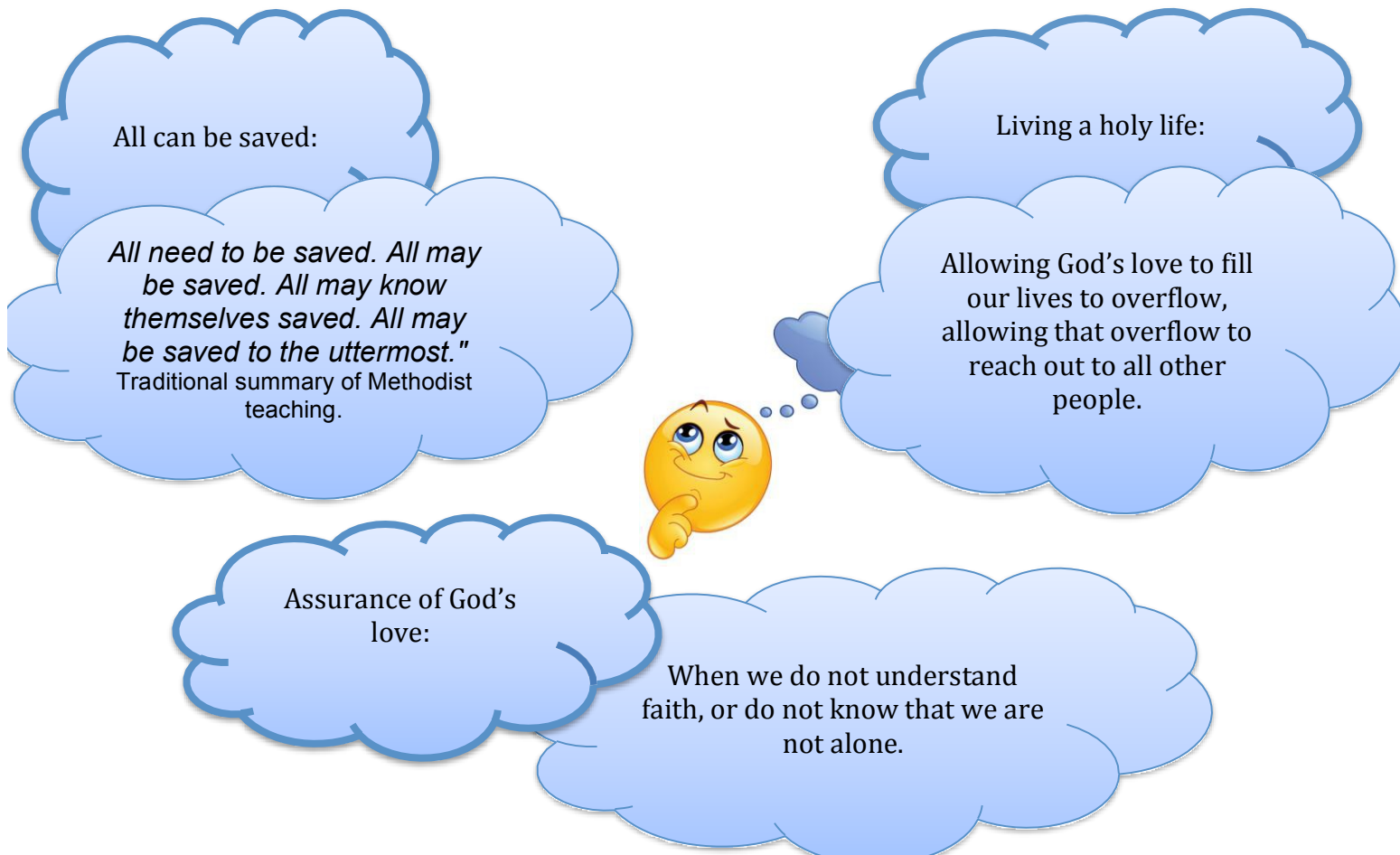
### 3. How does belonging to the Methodist church make a difference in your daily life?



To get a professional opinion I had a look on the Methodist website.

(<https://www.methodist.org.uk/about-us/the-methodist-church/what-is-distinctive-about-methodism/>)

### 1. Why do people become Methodists?



## 2. What do people enjoy about Methodism:

It is a grassroots movement:

Lay people always played a significant role in the running of the Church.

Born in song:

Singing is an important way of learning and sharing our faith.

A Covenant with God:

Each Methodist Church holds a covenant service once a year—in this service we celebrate all that God has done for us and we dedicate our lives to Him

## 3. How does belonging to the Methodist Church fit in with the wider community and daily life?

Small groups:

John Wesley encouraged small groups so that all members and leaders of the church could be supported and challenged in their faith.

The Connexion:

*"Do not allow yourself one thought of separating from your brothers and sisters, whether their opinions agree with yours or not"*  
John Wesley.

Reading the Bible:

*"The Bible is a record of God's self-revelation, supremely in Jesus Christ, and is a means through which he still reveals himself, by the Holy Spirit."*  
A Catechism for the people called Methodists, Question 52.

The Methodist Quadrilateral

This is a traditional fourfold approach to learn about our faith and apply it to daily living.

## **What does this mean for us:**

### 1. Why do we choose to be Methodists?

#### *All can be saved:*

Methodists have always believed that every one can and should be saved. Salvation can only be found when you turn to God and actively seek Him.

When you come to a Methodist church, you immediately feel welcome as without even thinking about it, unconditionally of who you are, where you come from or what you have done in the past—to come and seek God and receive salvation.

Even John Wesley (the founder of Methodism) struggled with his faith. But he did not give up, instead, he kept searching. He found God and his calling in an unexpected moment at a meeting in Aldersgate on the 24<sup>th</sup> May 1738.

#### *Assurance of God's love:*

We are assured of God's love, because we know that our faith is not dependent on our own feelings and ourselves but on the faithfulness of the God we serve.

#### *Living a holy life:*

The more we become engaged in the Word of God, the more our lives change until we start to reflect God in all we do and say.

### 2. What do we enjoy about being Methodists?

#### *It is a grassroots movement:*

The diversity that is brought to the church by involving lay people in the daily running of the church.

It was important to John Wesley to not only preach to the working man, but also to involve the community in caring for each other in their congregations. He did this by training lay people who could then take care and challenge the people and also maintain the meetings (Stewards) and others to preach in one area rather than travelling like he did (Local preachers).

This diversity can still be seen today when different lay preachers and ministers preach, as each one brings a bit of himself to the meeting.

This allows different members of the congregation to connect to each service in a different manner.

### *A covenant with God:*

In life we are encouraged to show off what we can do and what we achieved by ourselves. But being in a relationship with God means that we should allow Him to show us the way and to work through us. This can be difficult. It is good to remember that we surrender to God in Love and allow Him to guide us in Love.

### *Born in song:*

We all love singing, and what better way there is to spread the Gospel other than through hymns and songs! People remember songs much longer than any sermon. John and Charles Wesley were aware of this and wrote thousands of songs, many of which is still being used today and not only in Methodist Churches.

3. How does belonging to the Methodist church make a difference in our daily lives?

### *Small groups:*

John Wesley encouraged small groups so that all members and leaders of the church could be supported and challenged in their faith.

Today we still have small groups, called cell groups or home groups. Many of us find it easier to ask questions about faith when in these small groups rather than at a sermon. We are there to encourage each other and to pray for each other's needs. It is a place where friendships are built and where we can feel safe.

### *Reading the Bible:*

As Christians we need to be familiar with the contents of the Bible, both the Old - and the New Testament.

The texts in the Bible are old and have been gathered and written over many years. We should aim to find out as much as we can about the context of the text in the time it was originally written, but also aim to find how it applies to our lives today. By talking to each other in our small groups or listening to different preachers, both local and ordained, we can learn from each other as we may find different interpretations on the same text.

### *The Methodist Quadrilateral:*

A big word used to describe a traditional fourfold approach to learn about our faith and apply it to daily living.

The four categories are:

Scripture – The Bible, we use this to seek God's word and to learn His will. As already said we can find many different interpretations amongst us for the same

text. To best understand the Scripture, we need to use different translations of the Bible and also the commentaries.

Tradition – This is wisdom and creativity of Christians that has formed over time. This can include things like hymns, prayers, poetry and devotional books and also the creeds and the catechism along with statements and reports from the Methodist Conference.

Reason – In Mark 12 we are called to love God with all our hearts and all our minds. To do this we need to acknowledge the different interpretations, and to the best of our ability reason through in order to make sense of God's world.

Experience – How do I and other Christians fit into, and what can we learn from the "stories" in the Bible.

*The connexion:*

As Methodists we belong to a local church, which is connected to a circuit – a community of churches. The circuit in turn is also connected to other circuits. In this the whole forms one unit similar to the one body containing different parts.