

Dear Friends in Christ,

Re: **The Butterfly Service – 25 November 2026**

Grace and peace to you.

On **25 November**, the world marks the **United Nations International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women**, beginning the **16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence**, which concludes on 10 December, Human Rights Day.

Methodist Women in Britain warmly invites every Methodist District, Circuit and Local Church to mark this important day by holding our **Butterfly Service** on or around **25 November**.

The Butterfly Service takes its name from the **Mirabal Sisters**—Patria, Minerva and María Teresa Mirabal—three courageous women from the Dominican Republic who opposed the brutal dictatorship of Rafael Trujillo. Known within the resistance movement as “**Las Mariposas**” (**The Butterflies**), they were brutally murdered by the regime on **25 November 1960**. Their deaths became a catalyst for change, and in their memory the United Nations chose 25 November as the **International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women**.

For **Methodist Women in Britain**, the butterfly carries an additional significance. It is our own symbol, representing hope, transformation and new life in Christ. The Butterfly Service therefore brings together these two powerful meanings: it remembers the courage and sacrifice of the Mirabal Sisters while proclaiming the Christian hope that God’s love transforms lives, heals wounds and calls us to work for justice.

Our Butterfly Service is an act of worship, remembrance and commitment. We remember every woman and girl who has experienced abuse, coercion or violence, and we honour those whose lives have been taken through gender-based violence. We pray for survivors, for families whose lives have been forever changed, and for all who work to bring justice, protection and healing.

In **2025**, Methodist Women in Britain held its first Butterfly Service to mark this international day. It proved to be a deeply moving occasion, bringing together prayer, testimony, remembrance and hope. Many spoke of the profound impact of gathering as the Church to name the reality of violence against women and girls within the context of Christian worship.

This year we hope that churches across the Methodist Connexion will join together in a shared act of witness by using the worship resources prepared by Methodist Women in Britain on or around **25 November**. By doing so, we stand alongside the global **Orange the World** campaign, affirming that violence against women and girls has no place in our homes, our communities or our world.

As followers of Jesus Christ, we believe that every person is created in the image of God and is worthy of dignity, respect and safety. Violence against women and girls is not only a social injustice; it is a challenge to the values of God’s Kingdom. Through our prayers, our worship and our actions, we commit ourselves to being people who speak out against abuse, support survivors and work for justice and peace.

We encourage every District, Circuit and Local Church to hold the Butterfly Service on or around **25 November**, helping to launch the **16 Days of Activism** with prayer, reflection and a renewed commitment to ending gender-based violence. Thank you for joining Methodist Women in Britain in this important act of remembrance, worship and witness. Together, may we become communities where every woman, every girl and every person is valued, protected and enabled to flourish in the love of God.

Yours in Christ, **Methodist Women in Britain**