

# A statement from the Methodist Church on Assisted Dying proposals

14 November 2024

A Bill to legalise a form of assisted dying will be debated and voted on in the UK Parliament on 29 November. This follows the introduction of a proposed Bill in the Scottish Parliament in March 2024 which would allow terminally ill adults in Scotland to end their own lives, and the approval of similar plans to proceed with the drafting of legislation to enable assisted dying in Jersey in May 2024, and on the Isle of Man in July 2024.

Historically the Methodist Church has opposed any change to the law on this issue. In 2015, when assisted dying was last seriously considered in the House of Commons, the Methodist Conference discussed the issue, and heard contributions on both sides of the debate. While there was consensus around affirming the intrinsic value of human life, and the importance of high quality palliative care, two extracts from the motions put forward illustrate the very sincere beliefs held both by those who believe the law should change to allow assisted suicide, and those who see that as a slippery slope:

“[Assisted dying] would have a seriously detrimental effect on the wellbeing of individuals and on the nature and shape of our society, and can only add to the pressures that many vulnerable terminally ill people will feel” [Notice of Motion

2015/212]

“where death is considered both certain and imminent, a compassionate due judicial dispensation to allow assisted end-of-life could be appropriate” [Notice of Motion 2015/221]

The Methodist Conference referred the matter to the Methodist Council, which decided not to revisit the Church’s position, but requested the production of resources to enable the Church better to respond to the needs of those requiring palliative care and understand the issues involved, in the wider context of the subject of death and dying.

These are available on the Methodist Church website here: [\*\*Death and dying - The Methodist Church\*\*](#)

As this issue is debated in Parliament again, we commend those resources for study and informed reflection. The web pages will be updated with additional resources and information over the coming days.

We also urge that this important issue is debated with sensitivity and kindness, recognising its potential to prompt pain and strong feelings in the people most closely affected by it.

Revd Dr Jonathan Hustler  
Secretary of the Methodist Conference