



# WHAT WE BELIEVE



Asbury  
United Methodist Church





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ultimate authority  
in our lives and  
in the practice  
of our faith.



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Holy Spirit are three  
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# WHAT WE BELIEVE

At Asbury, everything we do is focused on helping others follow Jesus. This booklet explains some important aspects of our Methodist faith and how it is expressed through this congregation.

We are happy you are here with us today, and hope this place helps you better understand and experience God’s love.





# WE BELIEVE...



## IN THE TRINITY

**GOD THE FATHER** has always existed. He was not made, but all things were made by Him and for His glory. God is eternal and infinite, all-knowing, everywhere present, all-powerful and unchanging. God is holy, righteous, perfect and full of grace. God's mercies are new every morning, and His love endures forever.

**JESUS THE SON** has always existed. He was not made but was present at creation—all things were made through Him, and by Him all things hold together. Jesus is the Son of God, and He is the perfect likeness of the Father. He was incarnated (became a man) and lived a sinless life. Through His death and resurrection, Jesus defeated sin and death for all people. He physically ascended into heaven and will return to earth one day. He will judge all people, and His kingdom will never end.

**THE HOLY SPIRIT** has always existed. He was not made, but was active in the creation of the world. The Holy Spirit teaches, encourages, counsels. He convicts people of sin and points them toward their need for salvation. He dwells in the lives of believers: praying for them, empowering them, giving them spiritual gifts and new life in Jesus Christ.

*The word "trinity" comes from "tri" meaning three and "unity" meaning one. The Father, Son and Holy Spirit are three distinct "persons," meaning who they are is different, but they share one nature – so what they are is the same. The Bible tells us there is only one God because the three persons of the Trinity share the same divine essence.*



## IN THE AUTHORITY OF SCRIPTURE

The Bible was written by humans, but inspired by God and is useful for teaching, correcting and training believers to live in God's ways (right ways) so that we may be thoroughly equipped to serve Him. Jesus tells us God's word is truth, and He came to give evidence of that truth. Scripture is the ultimate authority in our lives and in the practice of our faith.



## IN THE POWER OF PRAYER

Prayer is essential to every part of our relationship with God. At the simplest level, prayer is conversing with God. At its greatest level, prayer is activating the power of God to bring His kingdom to bear on earth. Believing prayer that is in line with God's will transforms us, others and the world.



## IN ETERNAL LIFE

God created humans in His image and for His glory. We are spiritual beings with mortal bodies and immortal souls. However, humans are sinful and, therefore, unable to spend eternity with God except through faith in Jesus Christ. The traditional Christian view is those who believe and follow Jesus will share eternal joy with God in heaven, while those who refuse God's love suffer endless separation from Him. Those who believe will be resurrected into imperishable bodies suitable for eternal life with God and will be judged/rewarded according to how they lived their lives.

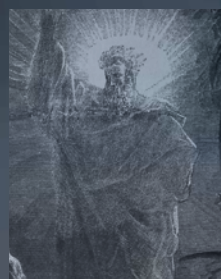
God is eternal and infinite, all-knowing, everywhere present, all-powerful and unchanging. God is holy, righteous, perfect and full of grace. God's mercies are new every morning, and His love endures forever.





# GOD'S BIG STORY: SALVATION HISTORY

God is big, and He has a big, big story. By looking at some key events in the Bible, we can learn about God's story—from creation to the end of time—and discover the active part we play in it. The salvation history helps us understand who God is, how He is at work in the world and why we matter.



## IN THE BEGINNING: CREATION

God created everything that *is* out of nothing, bringing us and our world into existence. Everything God created was good. We call the first humans Adam, from the Hebrew meaning “man” or “mankind,” and Eve, from the Hebrew meaning “source of life.” Among all His creation, humans were made in God's image and made to hold a special place in God's created order.



## A CHOSEN PEOPLE: ISRAEL

In response to humanity's universal evil, God chose Abraham and his offspring to become a nation through whom all the peoples on the earth would be blessed. God called them to be a kingdom of priests and a holy nation—His select and chosen representatives on Earth. The Old Testament recounts the history of their forefathers (called the patriarchs) and their prophets and kings (including the famous King David and wise King Solomon). In the context of Israel's calling, as a channel for God's blessings to all humankind, we begin to understand our own calling.



## A ROYAL PRIESTHOOD: THE CHURCH

On the Jewish feast of Pentecost, God's Holy Spirit descended on the first followers of Jesus. This became the “birthday” of the Church. When we repent and believe in the gospel, we are reconciled to God and granted eternal life. We are “the Church.” We are the body of Christ on Earth until He returns. We are called to be the people of God and to live with purpose—to bring glory to God, to grow and to serve through the power of His Holy Spirit.



## ENDING IS BEGINNING: NEW CREATION

God made the heavens and the earth, and He is faithful not only to redeem and restore us, but all of creation too. When we join in the family of God, we receive the benefit of God's Holy Spirit making us new. Now we wait and hope with the rest of creation for Jesus to return, to resurrect our bodies and consummate His kingdom in the new heavens and the new earth. The end of this story is beginning of another.



## SEPARATE WAYS: SIN AND REBELLION

Adam and Eve's fall from the grace of God is called original sin. What was created good is now considered “fallen” and history proves human nature is to sin. Even though we bear God's image, we have rebelled against Him and become separated from His eternal presence. This separation continues to affect every area of our lives, and the world in which we live.



## KINGDOM COME: JESUS CHRIST AND GOD'S KINGDOM

More than 2,000 years ago, a baby was conceived under miraculous circumstances and was born to a young Jewish virgin named Mary. Jesus, from the Hebrew meaning “God saves,” was born both fully human and fully God. This event, called the “incarnation,” is commemorated every December 25th on the Holy Day of Christmas. As an adult, Jesus called God His Father and made God's Word come to life by performing miracles, teaching with parables and befriending the outcasts of society.

Although He was without sin and innocent of any crime, local leaders had Jesus arrested, tortured and crucified. Three days after He died, His followers discovered His tomb was empty. Jesus had risen from the dead! Over the course of 40 days, He physically appeared to individuals and groups as large as 500 at one time. Christ's death and resurrection fulfills the Old Testament prophecies and shows us Jesus is the Son of God. Christ's death was the payment required for our sin so that we could be made right with God. His resurrection defeats death and opens up a new life for us now and forever. Forty days after the Resurrection, Jesus ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of His Father.

These miraculous events are commemorated every spring on the Holy Days of Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and Easter Sunday. God sent His Son Jesus to Israel to inaugurate God's kingdom, to rule as Messiah to the Jews and as Savior to the Gentiles (those of us who are not Jewish). Jesus calls us to repent and trust Him. This is how we begin living in God's kingdom.





# THE CHURCH

The Church is the community of God's people living under God's rule and in God's presence. Because we believe in the resurrection of the dead, the Church—with an uppercase “C”—refers to all followers of Jesus throughout time and space, and includes all denominations which uphold the Trinity, the authority of Scripture and the divinity of Jesus Christ. When we refer to the church—with a lowercase “c”—we are referring to a local body of believers, a parish or congregation. As the Church, we're learning to live like Jesus and are empowered by the Holy Spirit to serve God.

Our core theological beliefs are expressed succinctly in the Apostles' Creed, one of the key historical statements of faith (found in the United Methodist Hymnal 881).

## METHODISM: A BRIEF HISTORY

In the early 18th century, John Wesley, an Anglican clergyman, had a transforming experience in which his intellectual belief was strengthened by a heartfelt faith in Jesus Christ. Wesley felt his heart, “strangely warmed.” He would write later, “I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone, for salvation; and an assurance was given me that He had taken away my sins.”

Wesley's message of salvation by faith in Christ and God's grace to all was delivered to those both inside and outside the Anglican Church. The separate Methodist church was born in England after Wesley's death in 1791, but the movement was already flourishing in the newly formed United States. The “United Methodist Church” formed in 1968 when the Methodist Church combined with the Evangelical United Brethren Church, a descendent of German-speaking American Methodists. Asbury United Methodist Church is named for a traveling preacher and one of America's first Methodist bishops, Francis Asbury, and has been meeting continuously for more than 50 years.

## STRUCTURE

Many local United Methodist church members don't realize they are part of a bigger, interconnected, broadly effective, and highly organized whole: an annual conference, a jurisdiction, the general church, local churches and other conferences around the world.

The *Book of Discipline* outlines rules and organization that United Methodist churches must follow, yet it provides ample room for a local church to adapt its distinctive ministries and mission to the needs, circumstances, and culture of its congregation and the local community.

## ROLES IN THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

### LAITY

Laity, from *laos*, meaning “the people” [of God]. A lay person is a baptized and confirmed member of a local church who, through his or her baptism and membership, serves as a witness to Jesus Christ. Laity are set apart from unbelievers through baptism. Clergy have spiritual authority and are set apart from laity through ordination.

Lay ministers serve in voluntary leadership roles through specific ministries in the church. However, the priesthood of believers, as referred to in 1 Peter 2:9 teaches us all followers of Jesus are ministers, serving God with their lives, no matter where they are or what they do.

Lay leaders are elected officials of the local church who sit on various governance committees or serve as lay representatives at conferences.

### PASTORS

Pastors are ordained or licensed and appointed by the bishop to be in charge of a local church or churches. In a formal sense, the pastor is the official representative of the annual conference and is responsible for serving effectively in the ministry of word, sacrament and order in the local church. In a less formal sense, “pastor” is a title synonymous with “minister.” Asbury's pastors consist of deacons and elders.

### DEACONS

Deacons are ordained clergy called to serve all people and equip and lead the laity in ministry. A deacon has authority to teach and proclaim God's Word, lead in worship, assist elders in the administration of the sacraments of Holy Baptism and Holy Communion, perform the marriage ceremony where the laws of the state permit, and bury the dead.

### ELDERS

Elders are men and women ordained to a lifetime ministry of service, word, sacrament and order. He or she is authorized to preach and teach God's Word, administer the sacraments of baptism and Holy Communion, and order the life of the church for mission and ministry.

### DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENT

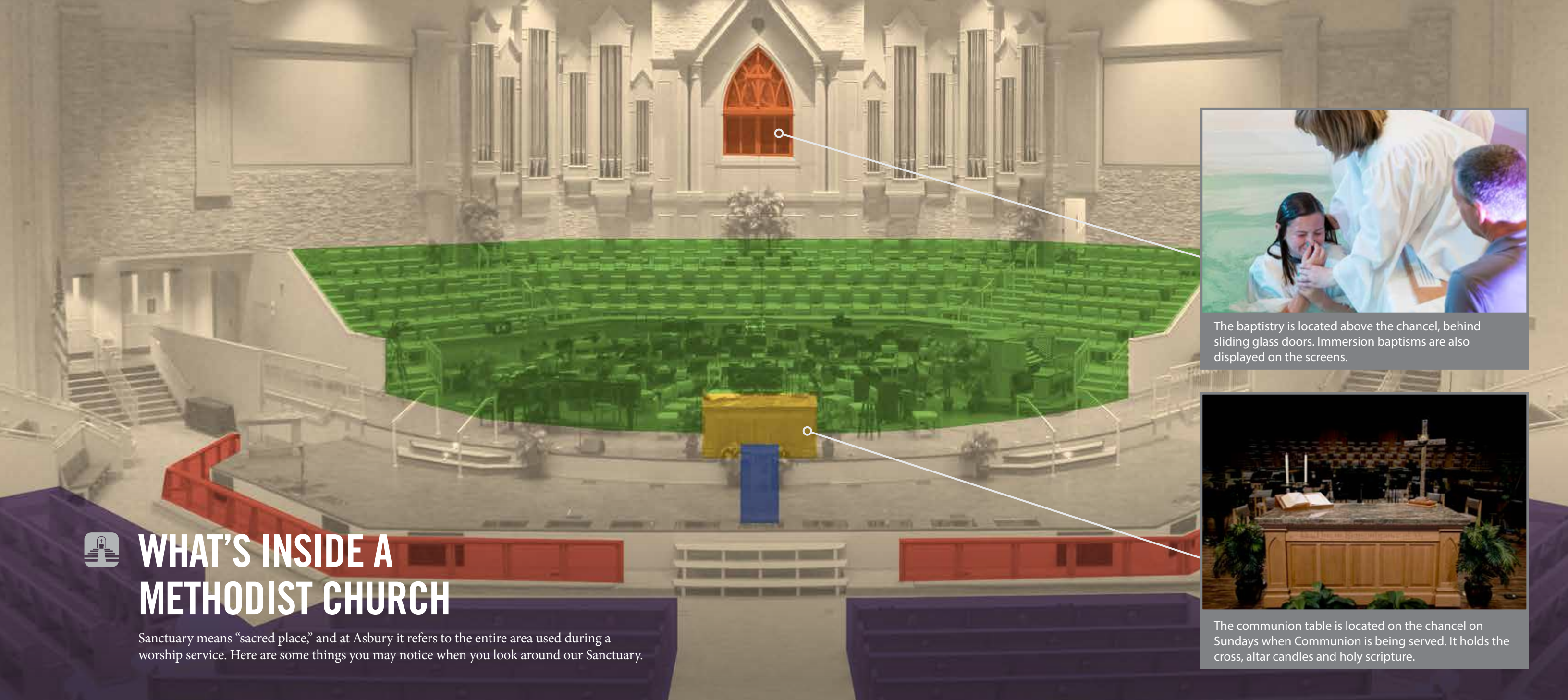
District superintendents are elders appointed by a bishop as an extension of his or her role in the annual conference. They function under the bishop's supervision.

### BISHOP

Bishops are elected from the elders and set apart for the purpose of servant leadership, general oversight and supervision. As followers of Jesus Christ, bishops are authorized to guard the faith, order, liturgy, doctrine and discipline of the Church. The role is to exercise oversight and support of the Church in its mission of making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

Bronze statue of John Wesley on the south lawn of the Asbury main building





## WHAT'S INSIDE A METHODIST CHURCH

Sanctuary means “sacred place,” and at Asbury it refers to the entire area used during a worship service. Here are some things you may notice when you look around our Sanctuary.



The baptism is located above the chancel, behind sliding glass doors. Immersion baptisms are also displayed on the screens.



The communion table is located on the chancel on Sundays when Communion is being served. It holds the cross, altar candles and holy scripture.

### BAPTISTRY:

Contains water in which new members of the church are immersed in baptism. Alternately, a person may be baptized on the platform with water from a bowl.

### CHANCEL:

The chancel is generally raised and includes the area in which the communion table, and pulpit or lectern are found. The organ console and choir seating also are often in this area. Usually the chancel is set apart from the remainder of the room by a low railing that is used for prayer. Historically, that portion of the church or sanctuary was reserved for the clergy.

### THE LORD'S TABLE OR COMMUNION TABLE:

Where the elements are placed during the sacrament of Holy Communion.

### CROSS:

The symbol of Christ's death, burial and resurrection. Reminds us of God's grace, mercy and love as demonstrated through Christ's atoning sacrifice.

### ALTAR CANDLES:

Two candles are placed near the altar or on the communion table to represent the presence of Jesus Christ, the Light of the world, in the worship service. One candle represents His divinity and the other His humanity.

### HOLY SCRIPTURE:

Prominently displayed near the altar, the inspired Word of God has been tested by faith and proven by experience. This sacred text is our rule for the practice of our faith.

### PULPIT:

A stand or lectern used by the minister for proclaiming the word of God and for conducting a worship service. In most United Methodist churches the pulpit is on a dais, or elevated platform.

### PEW:

A seat for worshippers in a church.

### CHANCEL RAIL OR ALTAR:

The low railing which in many United Methodist churches separates the chancel from the remainder of the sanctuary. Generally it includes a kneeling bench along its entire length. It is common practice for the worshippers to come forward and kneel at the chancel rail after receiving Holy Communion. The chancel rail is sometimes referred to as the altar. When people are invited to come forward to the altar for prayer or special observances, it is to the chancel rail that they come.



UNDERSTANDING THE CHRISTIAN CALENDAR

The Church identifies six distinct periods of Christian observances with each one focusing upon a different aspect of the Christian experience and tradition, based around the events of Jesus’ birth, life, death and resurrection. These periods or seasons do not necessarily occur on the same dates from year to year but are related to the dates of the two principal Christian celebrations of Christmas and Easter.

	ADVENT SEASON	CHRISTMAS SEASON OR CHRISTMASTIDE	ORDINARY TIME	LENT	EASTER OR EASTERTIDE	ORDINARY TIME
DATES AND DAYS	Advent begins with the Sunday closest to November 30 and ends with Christmas Eve day.	Christmas season is the 12 days from sunset Christmas Eve on December 24, through Epiphany on January 6.	The season after Epiphany begins January 7 and lasts until Ash Wednesday.	The season of Lent begins with Ash Wednesday and ends at sunset Easter Eve. The exact dates of Lent depend on the date for Easter (a “moveable” feast). Lent lasts for 40 days, not counting Sundays, because Sunday is never a day of fasting.	Easter is the first Sunday after the first full moon after March 21. Because the date for Easter moves between March 22 and April 25, the length of the Ordinary Time after Epiphany and Pentecost vary, but Easter season is always 50 days.	This second season of Ordinary Time begins immediately after Pentecost Sunday and continues until the beginning of Advent.
MARKS	Advent marks the beginning or first season of the Christian year. The period of Advent always includes the four Sundays before Christmas Day.	Christmas is the day Christians celebrate the birth of Christ, the Jewish Messiah. Epiphany marks the visit of the wise men to the Christ Child, representing the Light of Christ coming to the Gentiles (non-Jews).	Ordinary time refers to all the parts of the liturgical year which are not included in the “major seasons.” The numbered weeks of Ordinary Time represent the ordered life of the Church—the period in which we live our lives neither in feasting (as in the Christmas and Easter seasons) nor in penance (as in Advent and Lent) but in watchfulness for Christ’s return.	Lent is a period of focus on prayer, penitence (showing sorrow and regret for having done wrong) and preparation for the Resurrection event of Easter. On Ash Wednesday, the faithful are reminded of their mortality and are called to repentance. Lent typically includes fasting and abstinence.	Easter is the greatest feast in the Christian calendar. On this Sunday, Christians celebrate the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. Through spiritual struggle and self-denial during Lent, we have prepared ourselves to die spiritually with Christ on Good Friday, the day of His Crucifixion, so that we can rise again with Him to new life on Easter.	This season focuses on the significance of the Church as a sign of God’s continuing presence and activity in the world.
EXPLANATION	Advent focuses on preparing for the coming of Christ. The term is derived from the Latin word <i>adventus</i> , meaning “to come toward.”	The earliest Christians celebrated a saint’s birth into eternal life (in other words, his death) so Good Friday and Easter took center stage. Christmas began to be celebrated as a time of feasting around the 4th century.	Ordinary Time is called “ordinary” not because it is common but simply because the weeks of Ordinary Time are numbered. The Latin word <i>ordinalis</i> , refers to numbers in a series and stems from the Latin word <i>ordo</i> , from which we get the English word <i>order</i> .	This season includes the events of Holy Week beginning with the commemoration of Jesus’ triumphant entry into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday, His Last Supper with His disciples on Maundy Thursday and His Passion (meaning “suffering”), His death on Good Friday, and while His body was in the tomb on Holy Saturday.	Easter season begins with the Resurrection of Christ. This period represents the risen Lord, His subsequent appearances and miracles, and His bodily ascension into heaven in the sight of His disciples. The Easter season ends at Pentecost, which marks the day the Holy Spirit descended and the Church was born.	The Christian year concludes on the last Sunday before Advent begins. Traditionally, this Sunday is set aside as a celebration of the coming reign of Jesus Christ and the completion of creation.
COLORS AND SYMBOLS	The liturgical color is purple, symbolizing penance and humility.	The liturgical color for the Christmas season is white, symbolizing joy and victory.	The liturgical color is white for the first and last Sundays, representing Christ’s baptism, and the transfiguration, respectively. All other times are green, symbolizing life and hope.	The liturgical color for this season of the Christian year is purple, symbolizing penance and humility.	The liturgical colors are white, symbolizing joy and victory, until the day of Pentecost. The color for Pentecost is red, symbolizing fire and blood.	The liturgical colors are white for the first and last Sundays, marking Trinity Sunday and Christ the King Sunday, respectively. All Saint’s Day is also white. All other times are green.

Folk art wood carving of the crucifixion of Jesus Christ





# SACRAMENTS

The basic meaning of a sacrament is an outward sign of an inward or invisible grace. We think of a sacrament as a “sacred mystery.” Participation in the sacraments is a pledge, an oath of loyalty, to Jesus Christ as Lord. A sacrament is a symbol of an inner, spiritual reality—so by receiving a sacrament, we proclaim that we follow Jesus.

United Methodists have two sacraments: Baptism and Holy Communion. These are the two things which Jesus told all people to do.



## BAPTISM

Baptism is the sacrament of initiation.


With infants and small children, it primarily symbolizes God’s love for us before we are able to respond. Parents make the vows on behalf of the child. The baptized child may choose to make his or her own public commitment to Christ and officially join the church after going through a confirmation process.

When someone is able to answer for himself or herself, baptism is a time to admit to being a sinner and acknowledge trust in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. Water is a symbol of being washed or cleansed from sin. It is not the amount of water or the mode of baptism that is the focus, but rather, God’s grace coming into our lives. Believer’s baptism is a way of saying before others, “I follow Jesus.”

We recognize the baptism of other Christian churches as valid. If you were baptized as an infant or in another Christian church, you will not be “re-baptized” at Asbury. We believe God was active in your life far before you came here.

We think of a sacrament as a “sacred mystery.” Participation in the sacraments is a pledge, an oath of loyalty, to Jesus Christ as Lord.





Baptism and Holy Communion. These are the two things which Jesus told all people to do.

## HOLY COMMUNION

Communion is often called the Lord's Supper. *Eucharist*, from the Greek word for "thanksgiving," is another traditional name for the sacrament. It recalls the Last Supper of Jesus with the disciples. It is a celebration and remembrance of God's grace and mercy through Jesus by His death and resurrection, and of Christ's continuing presence with us through His Spirit.

Founder John Wesley taught Communion was one of the means by which we receive God's grace and that every Christian should take Communion frequently. When we receive the elements, the bread and the juice, we remember Christ—His death, resurrection and His future return; we earnestly repent of our sin, proclaim our love for Him and receive His grace.

## COMMUNION AT ASBURY:

You are invited to the Lord's Table even if you are not a member of Asbury or a United Methodist. To receive Communion, follow the prompts for the prayers, confession and congregational responses as provided by the pastor who will typically use the prepared liturgy which is displayed on the screens during worship and may also be found on page 6 of the United Methodist Hymnal which is located under your seat.

When the ushers release your row, you may (if you choose) come forward to receive the bread. The server will say, "This is the body of Christ, given for you." Cup your hands and hold them out to the server. An appropriate response is, "Amen" or "Thanks be to God." The second server will say, "This is the blood of Christ, shed for you." Here, you dip the bread into the juice before consuming. Again, it is appropriate to say, "Amen" or "Thanks be to God." The bread and juice combined serve to remind us of our Savior's mutilated body and shed blood during His crucifixion and how He overcame death on Easter Sunday, so we partake in Communion with gratitude and reverence. At this point you may return to your seat or kneel at the chancel rail. Either way, it is appropriate to spend a few minutes in prayer.

With both sacraments, it is important to remember it is not the amount or type of food that is served, nor is it the volume of water used, the sacrament is an outward sign that tells others we have trusted Christ as our Savior.

## FAQ

### Who may take Communion in a United Methodist Church?

We have an "open table," meaning a person doesn't have to be a member of Asbury or The United Methodist Church to receive Communion.

### Are children allowed to take Communion?

Yes, children are permitted to receive Communion, though we urge parents to talk with the children about this to make certain they understand the significance.

### Is real wine used in Communion?

We use grape juice instead of wine so that any who profess faith in Jesus Christ will not be hindered from participating in the Lord's Supper.

### What if I'm gluten intolerant?

Gluten-free wafers are provided at each service.





# GUIDE TO A WORSHIP SERVICE AT ASBURY

Corporate worship is the gathering of the saints (that's us) for the purpose of ascribing glory to God. It is the triune God who receives all honor and praise in a worship service—He is an audience of one. The congregation are the worshippers. The clergy, musicians, readers and others are responsible for leading the congregation in worship through the use of praise songs, hymns, liturgy and the spoken word, prayer, tithes and offerings, fellowship in the Name and Spirit of Jesus, the sacraments and so forth. These are elements of a worship service which help worshippers to engage the heart, mind and body in ascribing the glory that is due to the Lord God Almighty.

## THE GREETING OR THE PEACE

The ancient and traditional practice of Christians greeting one another with the peace of Christ by extending a sign or word of love or blessing. This is done with an embrace, a handshake, or the exchange of a word of encouragement. At Asbury, it's also a time to personally welcome newcomers.

## PASTORAL PRAYER

A prayer offered on behalf of the congregation. To participate, a person listens, inwardly agrees with what is being prayed, and joins in saying "Amen" at the conclusion.

## THE LORD'S PRAYER

The name given to the prayer Jesus taught His followers to pray as found in Matthew 6:9-13. It is prayed weekly and all are encouraged to participate by speaking the prayer aloud, in unison, as the pastor leads.

"Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy Name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. Thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory forever. Amen."

## THE DOXOLOGY

A short statement of praise and thanksgiving to God, designed to be sung by the congregation as the offering is received. The doxology most common at Asbury is Hymn 95:

"Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; praise him all creatures here below; praise him above, ye heavenly host; praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen."

## THE OFFERING

The term offering is commonly used for the portion of the service in which the tithes and offerings are given as an act of worship. To tithe is to return to God the first 10 percent from His provision to us. The Old Testament provides the guideline for a "tithe" as "a tenth."

Tithing is a personal step of faith that demonstrates belief in God's ability to provide and transform the heart of the giver in the process. The tithe is monetary. Giving your time and talent is necessary to further the work of the church, but it does not replace a tithe.

Any giving in excess of the tithe is called an "offering" or a "gift" and does not replace a tithe.

## THE MESSAGE

The preacher proclaims and expounds the Word of God for the building up of the body of Christ.

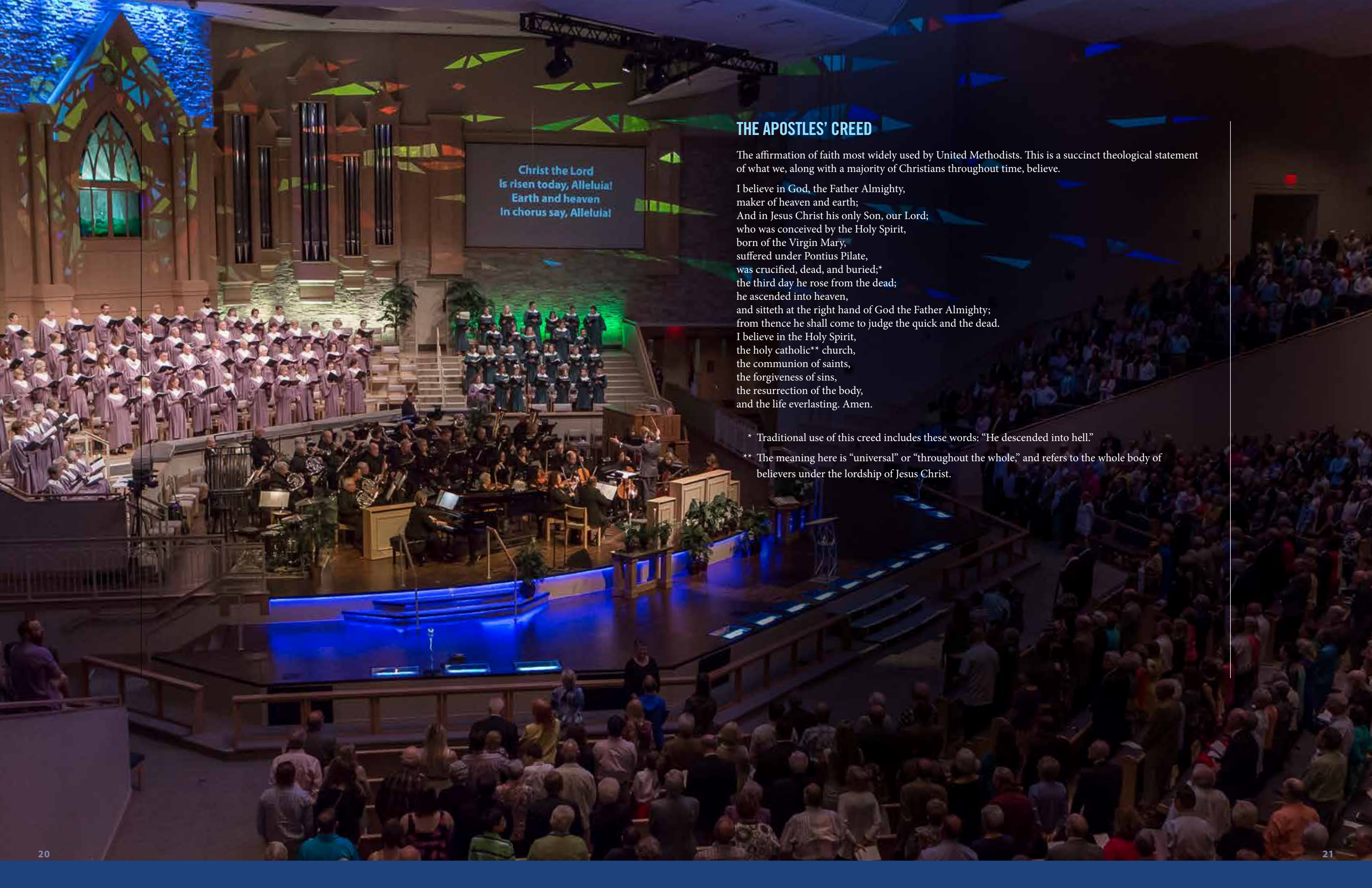
## THE BENEDICTION

The service concludes with a short prayer of blessing and "sending forth" for the congregation. As the congregation leaves the Sanctuary, they carry the Spirit of Jesus Christ with them into the world.

*A note about children in worship: We have age-appropriate programming available for children and students; however, we believe parents are the most influential people in regard to the spiritual development of their children. Therefore, we suggest families worship together. Children of all ages are welcome in the services, but those who are ages 5 and up are strongly encouraged to join in the life of the church through worship with their family or caregivers.*







## THE APOSTLES' CREED

The affirmation of faith most widely used by United Methodists. This is a succinct theological statement of what we, along with a majority of Christians throughout time, believe.

I believe in God, the Father Almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth;  
And in Jesus Christ his only Son, our Lord;  
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,  
born of the Virgin Mary,  
suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, dead, and buried;\*  
the third day he rose from the dead;  
he ascended into heaven,  
and sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty;  
from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.  
I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy catholic\*\* church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and the life everlasting. Amen.

\* Traditional use of this creed includes these words: "He descended into hell."

\*\* The meaning here is "universal" or "throughout the whole," and refers to the whole body of believers under the lordship of Jesus Christ.



SALVATION BY GRACE THROUGH FAITH

Salvation cannot be earned. There is no behavior, no matter how good or righteous, by which we can gain salvation. Rather, it is a gift of God’s grace to us through His Son, Jesus Christ.

By grace we mean God’s unmerited favor — God’s extraordinary love for us and His mercy toward us. In most of life, we try to earn approval from others. We often feel we have to act “just so” or perform well to be liked or loved. But God’s love, or grace, is given without any regard for our goodness. It is unmerited, unconditional and unending.

As we come to trust and accept this love, we move toward the wholeness in life that God has promised. This trust is called faith. God takes the initiative in grace; but only as we respond through faith does God work to change us and give us new life.

John Wesley and the Methodists proclaimed: *We’re saved by grace through faith alone.* We are made whole and put in right standing with God by the love of God as we receive it and trust in Him.

Yet, United Methodists insist that faith and good works belong together. Because of what God has done for us through Jesus, we offer our lives back to God through a life of service. Love of God is always linked to love of neighbor, and at Asbury it is demonstrated by a passionate commitment to helping others follow Jesus. This is putting faith and love into action.

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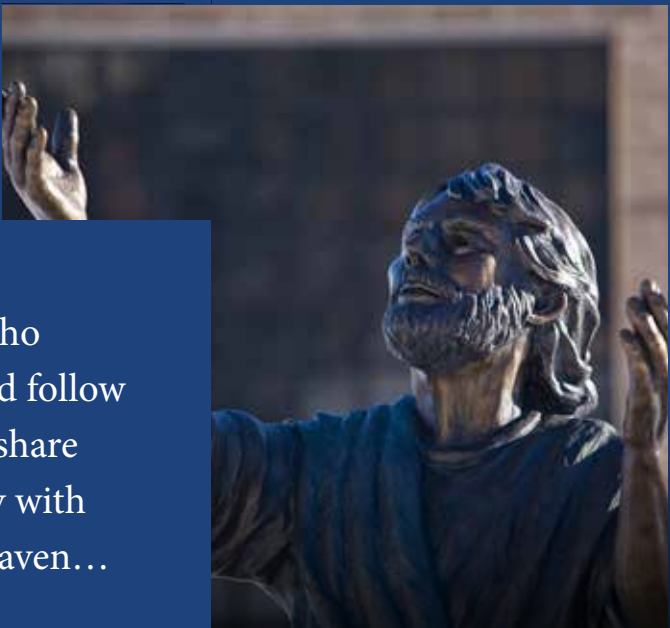
Prayer is essential  
to every part of  
our relationship  
with God.



Asbury  
United Methodist Church



...those who  
believe and follow  
Jesus will share  
eternal joy with  
God in heaven...





Love of God is always linked to  
love of neighbor, and at Asbury it  
is demonstrated by a passionate  
commitment to

*Helping Others Follow Jesus.*



Asbury United Methodist Church  
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