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# 4D'S AT ALIVE

MEET GOD  
GROW IN FAITH  
MAKE A DIFFERENCE




# DISCOVERY CLASS

MEET GOD  
GROW IN FAITH  
MAKE A DIFFERENCE

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# WELCOME TO DISCOVERY



I hope you are doing well!

As your Interim Lead Pastor I want you to know how happy I am that you are considering membership at ALIVE Wesleyan. Making the commitment to be "part of the family" will be a mutually beneficial experience!

As you have been attending worship services and getting acquainted, you have witnessed the fact that God is blessing us. We believe this is a result of our sincere attempt to be a God-honoring church, meeting the needs of His people.

There's one thing we don't want! Please do not think that membership is just "another ritual" in our church. We have no intention of you joining ALIVE Wesleyan and then fading into inactive anonymity. Our hope is that everyone here will have a personal relationship with Jesus and active role in community.

Why do we want you to be an "active" member? Because we believe people bloom when they're serving God! Serving God in the church is a positive and rewarding experience. I have seen hundreds of people grow and bloom into the people God intended them to be through service in the church. Having an active role in Christian community is a significant piece of one's spiritual formation.

I, along with the entire staff, desire to serve you, too! My prayer is that you join hands with the body of Christ at ALIVE Wesleyan and allow the Word of God to speak to your heart; together we will be transformed into the image of Christ Himself. It's one of my highest honors to be your pastor!

Blessings and grace,  
Pastor Scott Simmons





# HISTORY OF ALIVE WESLEYAN

— 1893 —

Central First Wesleyan founded

— 2001 —

Clemson Wesleyan Church merged with Central First

— 2004 —

ALIVE began - SWU's Folger Auditorium

— 2013 —

First service at new campus on Chastain Road  
Dedication at new facility

— 2016 —

First service at Pleasant View Campus

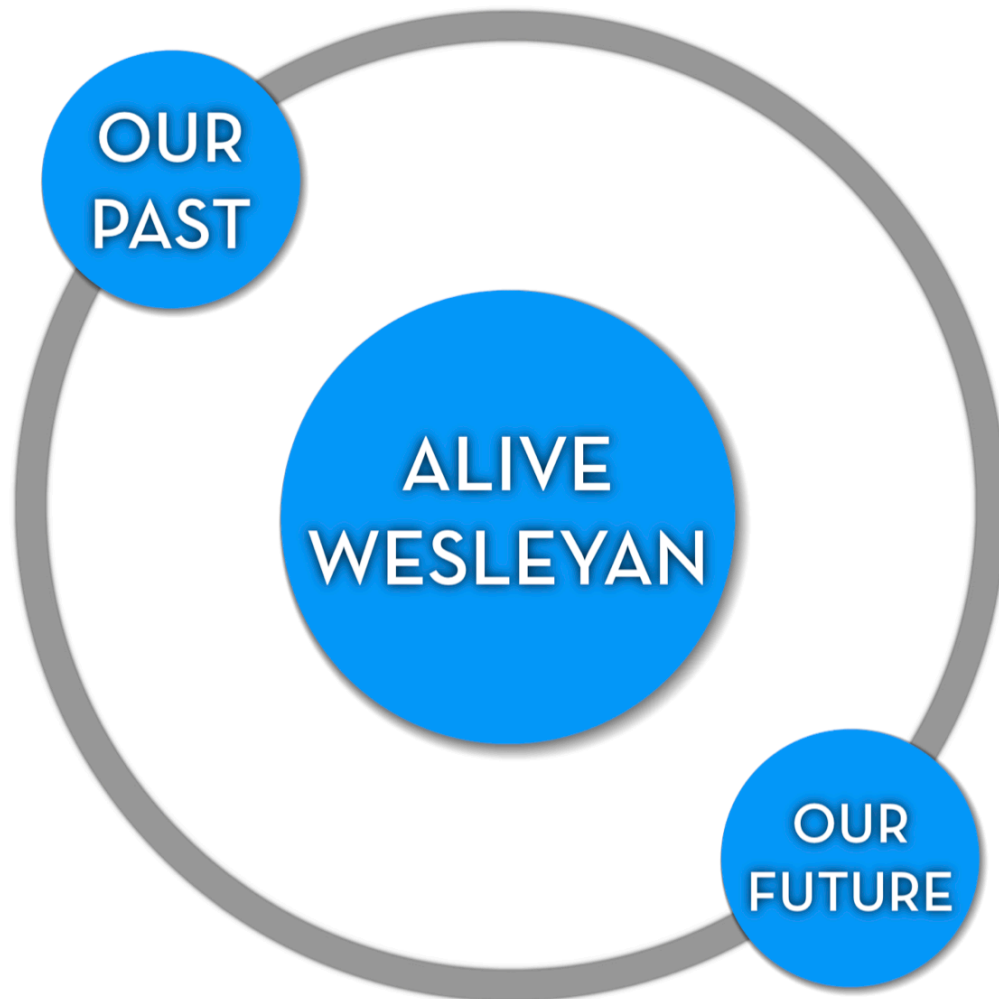
— 2019 —

First service at Pelzer Campus

— 2021 —

ALIVE launches The Mercantile  
Project 20 vision announced

# OUR STORY



"WHAT I REALLY WANT TO SAY IS WHAT THE SUN WOULD SAY TO THE SKY,  
'THANK YOU LORD FOR GIVING ME A PLACE TO COME ALIVE'."

– STEVEN CURTIS CHAPMAN –



# A BIBLICAL MODEL FOR A HEALTHY CHURCH

THESE SCRIPTURES CAPTURE THE PURPOSE AND STRATEGY FOR ALIVE WESLEYAN.

## **Matthew 22:37-40 - Great Commandment**

Jesus replied: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' All the Law and Prophets hang on these two commandments."

## **Matthew 28:19-20 - Great Commission**

"Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

## ALIVE WESLEYAN STATEMENTS

### OUR MISSION STATEMENT

ALIVE WESLEYAN EXISTS TO REACH SPIRITUALLY HUNGRY PEOPLE AND INTRODUCE THEM TO A PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP WITH JESUS CHRIST AND AN ACTIVE ROLE IN CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY.

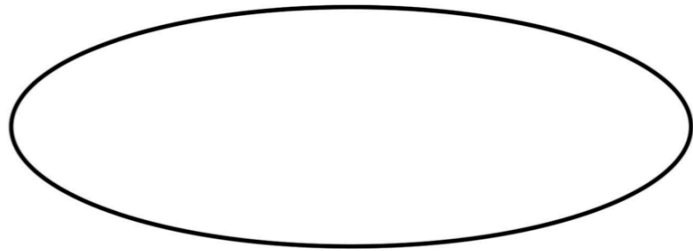
### OUR STRATEGY

Adoring our God	Worship	"Love the Lord your God" (Matt. 22)
Loving our Community	Fellowship	"Baptizing them" (Matt. 28)
Instructing Believers	Discipleship	"Teaching them to obey" (Matt. 28)
Valuing the Lost	Evangelism	"Go and make disciples" (Matt. 28)
Equipping for Ministry	Service	"Love your neighbor as yourself" (Matt. 22)

# THE HEART OF ALIVE WESLEYAN



**PROJECT 20**  
20  
CHRIST-CENTERED  
COMMUNITIES IN  
10 YEARS



In Pickens County 96,000 of our friends, neighbors, co-workers, and family are un-churched. All the churches in our county would have to have 600 in attendance on a Sunday morning to reach all 96,000. God has called us to give each of these men, women, and children the repeated opportunity to see and hear the message of Christ.





# THE VALUES OF ALIVE WESLEYAN

EVERY ORGANIZATION HAS A SET OF VALUES THAT DETERMINE ALL THAT HAPPENS IN THAT ORGANIZATION. THESE ARE THE VALUES OF ALIVE.



## BIBLICAL AUTHORITY

We believe the Bible is God's word and shows us the right way to do life, if we are willing to follow what it says is right and true.



## RELATIONAL INTIMACY

We believe no matter what we have done, we can have an intimate relationship with God by grace and through faith in Jesus.



## AUTHENTIC COMMUNITY

We believe pursuing truth together is the best opportunity to discover and apply truth to life.



## GIFTED SERVICE

We believe when we partner together by leveraging our time, talent, and treasures, we can best represent Jesus to the world.



## EXCELLENT ENVIRONMENTS

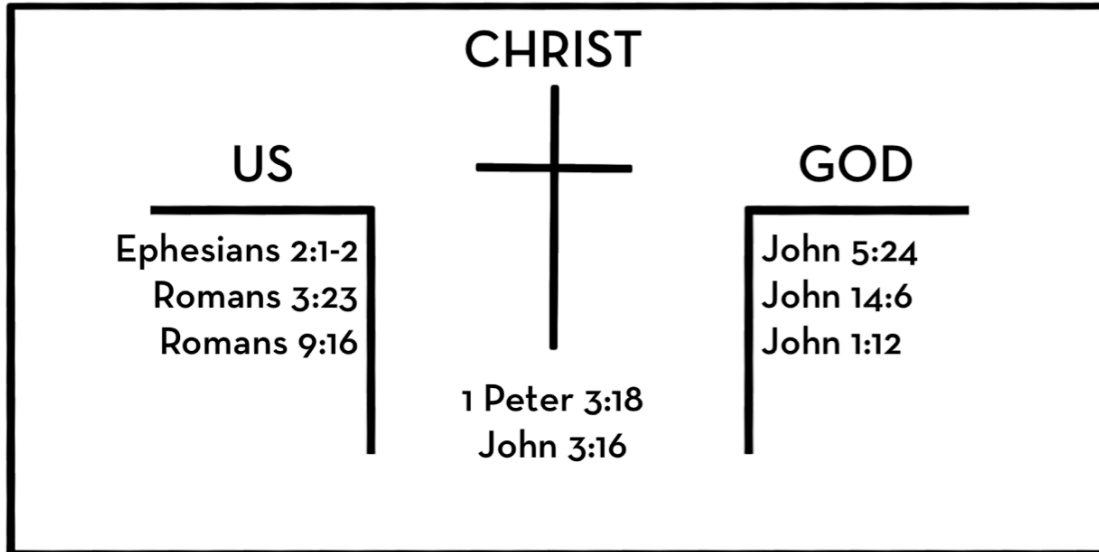
We believe that our role is to remove obstacles and create opportunities for people to bump into Jesus so that He can teach and do what only He can teach and do.



## RELATIONAL EVANGELISM

We will intentionally leverage our influence in the world for the purpose of introducing people to the transforming love of Christ.

# MEET GOD



WHAT WAS MY LIFE LIKE BEFORE I MET CHRIST?

WHAT EVENTS AND PEOPLE INFLUENCED ME TO ACCEPT CHRIST?

WHAT DIFFERENCES HAVE THERE BEEN IN MY LIFE SINCE ACCEPTING CHRIST?

"That if you confess with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved."

Romans 10:9-10

# BAPTISM



## WHAT IS BAPTISM?

Once Jesus becomes the center of a person's life, the next step in the process is to experience Christian baptism. Baptism is a shout-out to the world that through being immersed or sprinkled with water in a public service, you identify with the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus. We publicly proclaim that we are dying to sin and coming alive in Christ. Baptism is your public witness of moving from a seeker to a believer.

## WHO SHOULD BE BAPTIZED?

A believer who has concluded that Jesus' death on the cross was a sacrifice for their sin and the only way to bridge the gap between God and us. By baptism, a believer is saying to the community, "I trust Christ alone for my salvation!"

If you are considering baptism, there are two important questions to ask yourself.

1. Am I putting my faith and trust in Christ alone for salvation and the forgiveness of my sins?
2. Am I ready to publicly share this life change with my community?

## WHY DO WE BAPTIZE?

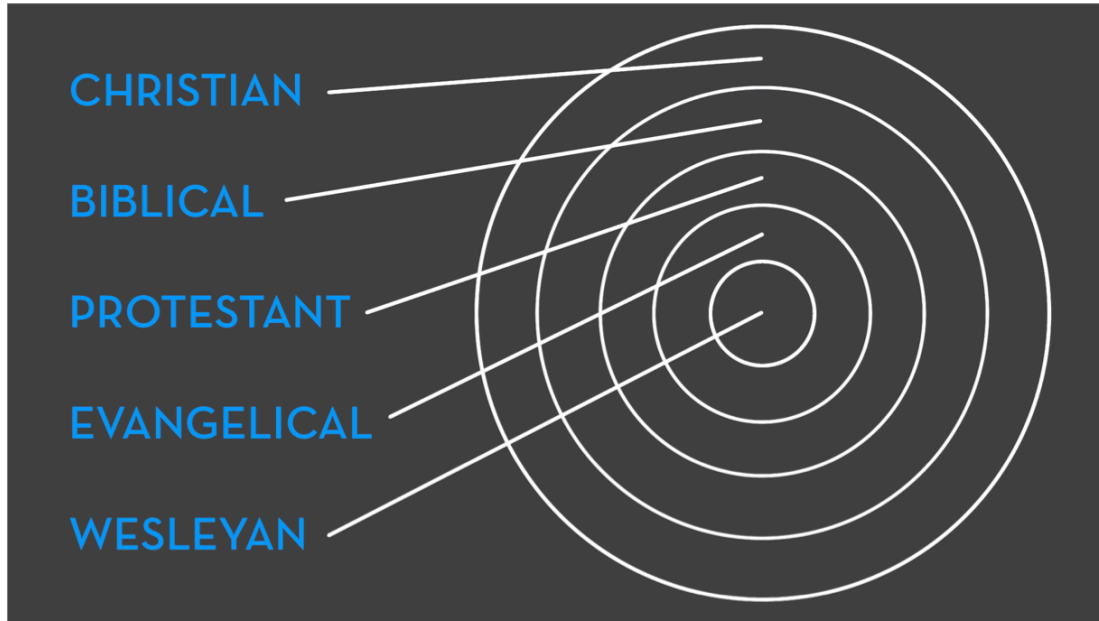
In Matthew 28:19-20 Jesus gives the "marching orders" for what Christians are to do with their one and only life. Jesus said, "Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

**BAPTISM IS NOT AN ACT BY WHICH WE ARE SAVED. IT IS AN OUTWARD SIGN OF WHAT CHRIST HAS ALREADY DONE IN OUR HEARTS.**

If you are unsure of where you stand with Christ, take your time. If you would like to read more about what the Bible says regarding baptism, check out these verses: Romans 6:1-11, Acts 2:41 & 8:12 & 10:47-48.



# WHO ARE THE WESLEYANS?



1. CHRISTIAN

2. BIBLICAL

3. PROTESTANT

4. EVANGELICAL

5. WESLEYAN

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON THE WESLEYAN CHURCH PLEASE VISIT THE  
INTERNATIONAL CHURCH WEBSITE AT: [WESLEYAN.ORG](http://WESLEYAN.ORG)

# THE WESLEYAN STORY

OUR NAME COMES FROM THE 18TH CENTURY PREACHER/SCHOLAR \_\_\_\_\_.

THE WESLEYAN CHURCH IS A \_\_\_\_\_ MERGER OF THE WESLEYAN METHODIST CHURCH AND THE PILGRIM HOLINESS CHURCH.

WE HAVE ABOUT \_\_\_\_\_ CHURCHES IN NORTH AMERICA, AND ABOUT \_\_\_\_\_ CONGREGATIONS AROUND THE WORLD.

WE MAY BE THE ONLY DENOMINATION FOUNDED PRIMARILY IN RESPONSE TO THE \_\_\_\_\_ ISSUES OF THE TIME. THOSE KEY SOCIAL ISSUES WERE SLAVERY, WOMEN'S RIGHTS AND \_\_\_\_\_.

WE WERE ONE OF THE FIRST DENOMINATIONS IN AMERICA TO ORDAIN A \_\_\_\_\_.

## THE VISION OF THE WESLEYAN CHURCH

TRANSFORMING LIVES, CHURCHES, AND COMMUNITIES THROUGH THE HOPE AND HOLINESS OF JESUS CHRIST.



# WESLEYAN BELIEFS

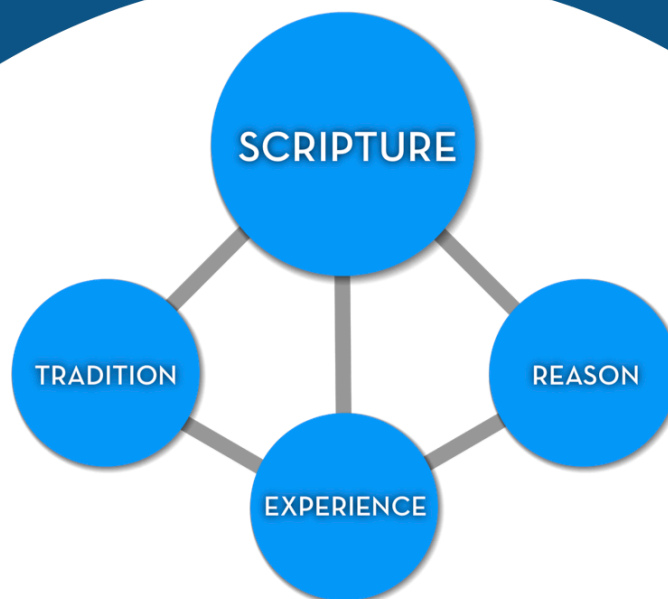
THE WESLEYAN QUADRILATERAL INDICATES THAT TRUTH SHOULD LINK ALL FOUR PARTS.

**The Bible (Scripture):** The Bible is the very highest written source of inspiration; therefore, it should be treated as having extreme authority.

**Reason:** God has given us minds to think and make logical decisions. We should listen to the best of human thinking to determine what may be learned using the minds which God has provided to help illuminate subjects.

**Tradition:** We need to know what the church has thought over a long period of time—the tradition of the church. If it was good enough for them, then there is good reason to pay attention. Nevertheless we need to be mindful that the church has gotten it dramatically wrong in the past with issues like women and slavery.

**Experience:** We believe that God has not written a dusty old textbook and then walked out of the class leaving us to get on with learning alone. As Christians we believe that God's Word is the Living Word, made real through the presence of God's Spirit within the church. We need to know the illumination of the Word through the Spirit; therefore, we should listen carefully to our own experiences and those of others.



# WESLEYAN HOLINESS

1. HOLINESS IS CLEANSING BY THE SPECIAL WORK OF THE \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.
2. ENABLED TO LIVE \_\_\_\_\_ LIVES OF PERFECT LOVE FOR GOD AND OTHER PEOPLE.
3. THE FIRST WORK OF GRACE IS CALLED \_\_\_\_\_ OR CONVERSION AND ASSURES US THAT WE ARE GOD'S CHILD.
4. THE SECOND WORK OF GRACE IS CALLED \_\_\_\_\_ OR BEING FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT AND ENABLES US TO LOVE DOING EVERYTHING THAT GOD WANTS US TO DO. (VERSUS MENTALLY AND SPIRITUALLY RESISTING AND HABITUALLY STRUGGLING WITH OBEDIENCE TO HIS WILL.)

SANCTIFICATION - THE WORK OF GOD IN US BY WHICH WE ARE MADE HOLY AND BECOME MORE LIKE CHRIST.

## VICTORY OVER SIN

HOW DOES THE BIBLE DEFINE SIN?

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WESLEYANS TEACH THE POSSIBILITY OF LIVING IN VICTORY OVER SIN THROUGH SANCTIFICATION.

WESLEY'S DEFINITION OF SIN: A \_\_\_\_\_ TRANSGRESSION. AS OPPOSED TO ANOTHER POPULAR DEFINITION OF SIN: ANYTHING WHICH FALLS SHORT OF GOD'S GLORY.

## THE PROCESS OF SANCTIFICATION

FREE WILL

HOLINESS OF HEART AND LIFE

1. INITIAL: AT THE POINT OF CONVERSION.
2. PROGRESSIVE: A JOURNEY OF DISCIPLESHIP.
3. ENTIRE: SPIRITUAL PURITY AND POWER.
4. COMPLETE: LIFELONG SPIRITUAL GROWTH.

# YOUR BELIEFS

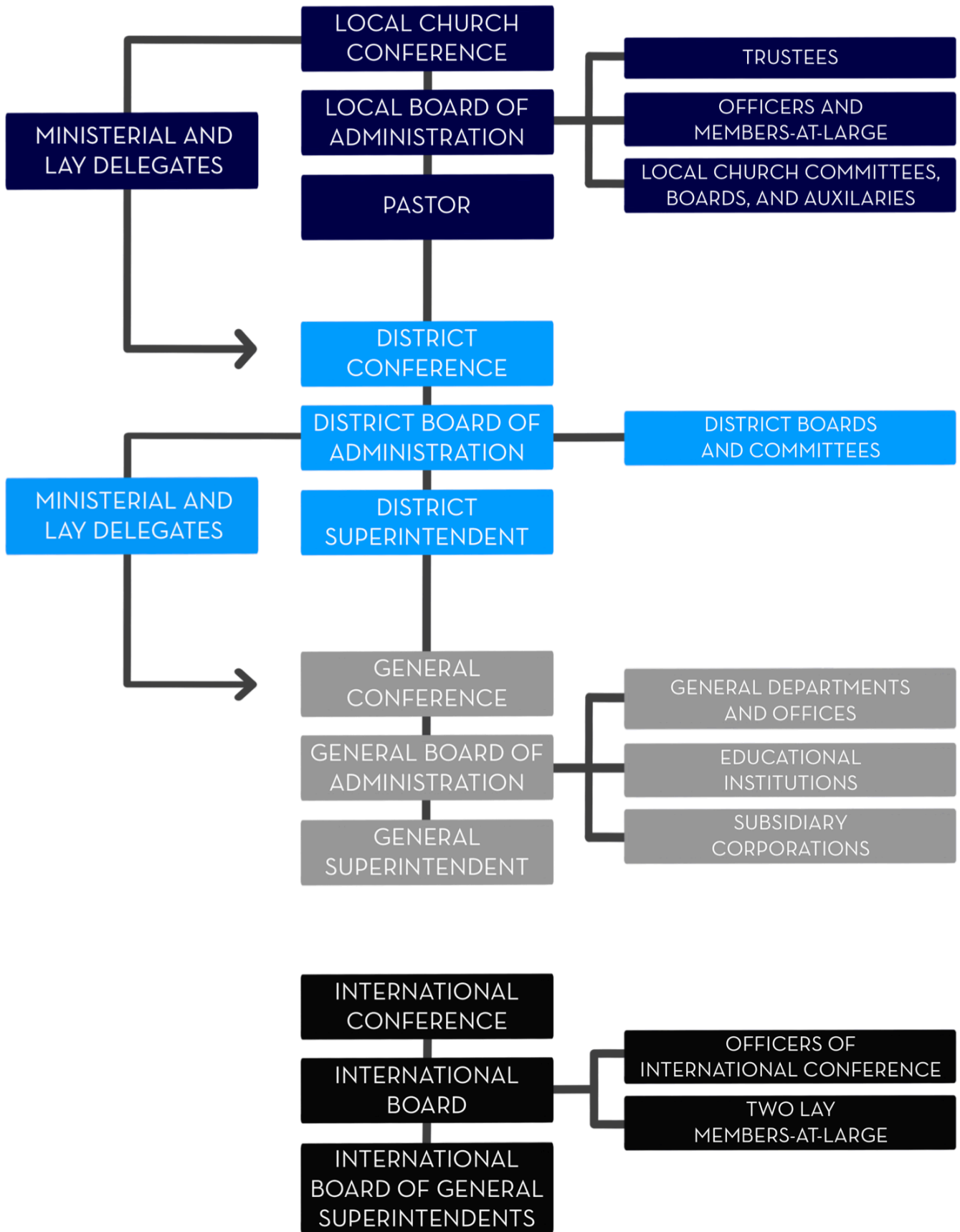
## DO YOU BELIEVE...

1. In God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit?
2. That Jesus Christ the Son died on the cross to atone for our sins?
3. That the Holy Scriptures are inspired (God-breathed or God-given) and inerrant (perfect as God originally gave them) Word of God?
4. That we are personally responsible for our choices between right and wrong?
5. That we must repent of our sins and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ to receive eternal life?
6. That people who are saved are transformed and do good works as a natural evidence of Christ's living in them (holiness)?

## STRUCTURE OF ALIVE WESLEYAN



# HOW THE WESLEYAN CHURCH IS ORGANIZED



# STAFF DIRECTORY



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# ALIVE ONLINE



ALIVE ALREADY MEETS IN MULTIPLE PHYSICAL LOCATIONS BUT YOU CAN ALSO JOIN US ON OUR ONLINE CAMPUS! THIS IS ONE MORE WAY WE BELIEVE GOD CAN USE ALIVE TO REACH SPIRITUALLY HUNGRY PEOPLE AND INTRODUCE THEM TO A PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP WITH JESUS CHRIST AND AN ACTIVE ROLE IN HEALTHY CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY.

## YOU'LL HAVE THE CHANCE TO:

- PARTICIPATE IN MEANINGFUL WORSHIP
- LEARN FROM AUTHENTIC, RELATABLE TEACHING
- REQUEST PRAYER FROM AN ALIVE ONLINE HOST
- SHARE YOUR EXPERIENCE & INTERACT WITH OTHERS DURING THE SERVICE

HEAD TO:

[ALIVEWESLEYANCHURCH.ONLINE.CHURCH](https://alivewesleyanchurch.online.church)

## CONNECT ON SOCIAL MEDIA

FOLLOW US FOR BEHIND THE SCENES FOOTAGE, UPDATES, AND MORE!



@ALIVEWESLEYAN

# ALIVE WESLEYAN OPERATING BUDGET

## ALIVE Wesleyan Church 2022 - 2023 Budget

	2022-2023 Budget	2021-2022 Budget
<b>INCOME</b>		
Tithes and Offerings	2,699,500	2,392,000
Interest Income	10,000	8,000
The Growing Place	102,500	83,000
The Exchange Income	17,675	
Other	1,200	
<b>INCOME TOTAL</b>	<b>2,830,875</b>	<b>2,483,000</b>
<b>EXPENSE</b>		
Salaries and Benefits	1,406,750	1,165,540
Ministries		
Worship	71,855	69,034
Outreach	179,590	167,266
Fellowship	15,575	13,990
Service	11,125	10,425
Discipleship	42,710	38,270
96,000 Reach	162,515	160,930
Ministries Total	483,370	459,915
Operations	152,520	145,371
Facilities and Equipment		
Building Payment	320,000	320,000
Depreciation/Capital	100,000	
Improvements/Repairs	45,750	41,400
Equipment/Technology	38,155	57,824
Utilities	84,330	92,950
Facilities and Equipment Total	588,235	512,174
General and District Budget	200,000	200,000
<b>EXPENSE TOTAL</b>	<b>2,830,875</b>	<b>2,483,000</b>



# CHURCH FINANCES

"Every Sunday each of you make an offering and put it in safekeeping. Be as generous as you can. When I get there you'll have it ready, and I won't have to make a special appeal."

– 1 CORINTHIANS 16:1-4 (MSG)

At ALIVE, we practice tithing for the support of the church, as God commands. We recognize and teach that giving 10% of our income is the Biblical standard for giving.

"Be sure to set aside a tenth of all that your fields produce each year."

– DEUTERONOMY 14:22

Giving is one of the central themes in the Bible. Jesus talked more about his subject than Heaven, Hell, or prayer. To understand what it means to be a Christ-follower, we must also understand what it means to be a giver.

"Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be good in my house. 'Test me in this,' says the Lord Almighty, 'and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that there will not be room enough to store it.'"

– MALACHI 3:10

## 1. TITHE

The tithe, or "first fruits" of our labor/income belong to God. We find this principle all through God's Word. Tithing, giving God the first 10% of our income to the local church, is the primary, practical way we acknowledge that God is first (Proverbs 3:9-10).

## 2. OFFERINGS

An offering is giving over and above the tithe. The Bible says that by giving generously, we are able to "take hold of the life that is truly life." You aren't really living unless you are freely giving (1 Timothy 6:18-19).

## 3. THE GIFT OF GIVING

The gift of giving is a spiritual gift that God gives to some people (Romans 12:8). It is a Spirit-given capacity and desire to serve God by giving of your material resources, far beyond tithe, to further the work of God.

MANY PEOPLE LOVE TO GIVE TO GOD, AND, AS THEY DO, THEY WANT TO FEEL CONFIDENT IN THE ORGANIZATION TO WHICH THEY GIVE. AT ALIVE, WE WANT PEOPLE TO UNDERSTAND THEY ARE GIVING TO GOD THROUGH THE CHURCH, NOT TO THE CHURCH. AS WE OPENLY SHARE THE HONESTY, INTEGRITY, AND SPIRITUAL VALUES THAT GUIDE THE FINANCIAL PRACTICES OF ALIVE, WE BELIEVE PEOPLE CAN FOCUS ON WHAT GOD IS CALLING THEM TO GIVE AND TRUST THAT HE IS LEADING OUR CHURCH TO STEWARD IT WELL.

THE GIVING OF TITHES AND OFFERINGS IS WORSHIP TO JESUS AND AN EXPRESSION OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE GIVER AND THE LORD. THAT IS WHY WE DON'T HAVE PEOPLE FILL OUT PLEDGE CARDS OR MAKE FAITH PROMISES. FUNDS ARE NOT JUST "CHURCH INCOME"-- THEY ARE WORSHIP AND ARE NOT CONSIDERED TO BE A BUSINESS TRANSACTION BUT AN EXPRESSION OF OUR GRATITUDE TOWARD GOD.



# OUR DISCIPLESHIP PROCESS AT ALIVE

## OUR PRAYER FOR YOU

"I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know Him better. I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which He has called you, the riches of His glorious inheritance in His holy people."

EPHESIANS 1:17-18

Our spiritual journey consists of three steps:

### 1. MEET GOD

"[I pray]... that you may know Him better [personally]."

EPHESIANS 1:17-18

"Some of these people have missed the most important thing in life--they don't know God..

1 TIMOTHY 6:21

At ALIVE, we help people know God through church services.

### 2. GROW IN FAITH

"[I pray]... that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened [focused and clear]."

EPHESIANS 1:17-18

"Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed."

JAMES 5:16

At ALIVE, we help people to grow in faith through Small Groups and 4Ds.

### 3. MAKE A DIFFERENCE

"[I pray]... that you may grasp the immensity of this glorious way of life He has for His followers [in His holy people]."

EPHESIANS 1:17-18

"Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it."

1 CORINTHIANS 12:27

"This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples... I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete.

JOHN 15:8,11

"Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms."

1 PETER 4:10

At ALIVE, we help people use their gifts to make a difference through serving and outreach.

# GROUPS AT ALIVE EXIST TO CREATE HEALTHY COMMUNITIES THAT PRODUCE MISSIONAL BELIEVERS.



## Small groups provide three things:

### 1. A place to **CONNECT** with others.

"Yes, whatever a person is like, I try to find common ground with him so he will let me tell him about Christ and let Christ save him."

1 CORINTHIANS 9:22 (TLB)

We were not made to do life alone. God created us for community, and Small Groups provide a place for you to connect with others, share life, and grow in faith together.

### 2. A place to **PROTECT** each other.

"We know what real love is because Jesus gave up His life for us. So we also ought to give up our lives for our brothers and sisters."

1 JOHN 3:16 (NIRV)

When we do life together, our problems become smaller as God uses others to bring support and encouragement to our lives. Small Groups become a place where others don't just know your name but care about what is happening in your life and want to support you in your spiritual journey.

### 3. A place to **GROW** together.

"As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another."

PROVERBS 27:17

We believe every person is created with God-given potential to make a difference in the world. Small Groups are a place you can grow with others to become more like Jesus and reach the potential God has put inside you.

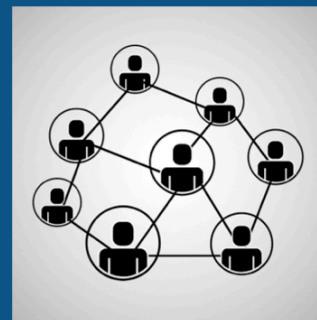
# SMALL GROUPS MODEL AT ALIVE



WE BASE OUR SMALL GROUPS MODEL ON THE EARLY CHURCH AS DESCRIBED IN THE BIBLE IN THE BOOK OF ACTS. IN ACTS, YOU CAN READ ABOUT HOW SMALL GROUP MEETINGS IN HOMES HELPED LAY THE FOUNDATION FOR TREMENDOUS GROWTH IN THE FIRST CHURCH IN JERUSALEM.

"They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles. All the believers were together and had everything in common. They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need. Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved."

— ACTS 2:42-47



"Day after day, in the temple courts and from house to house, they never stopped teaching and proclaiming the good news that Jesus is the Messiah."

— ACTS 5:42

WE DESIRE THAT ALIVE IS A CHURCH OF SMALL GROUPS,  
NOT JUST A CHURCH WITH SMALL GROUPS.

---

## HOW CAN A LARGE CHURCH MAINTAIN CLOSE FRIENDSHIPS?

Every attendee needs to be a part of a small group. We believe our church must grow larger and smaller at the same time.

## FOUR THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT ALIVE SMALL GROUPS:

1. Our groups are "free market."

We want people to gather together based on things they enjoy and are important to them. Essentially, the things you are already doing in your life are the things that can make up your Small Group! From sports groups to lunch groups, parenting groups to college groups, Bible study groups to craft groups, our groups are as varied as we are.

# SMALL GROUPS MODEL CONT. AT ALIVE



Our groups at ALIVE fall into 4 broad categories:

- LIFE Groups (do life together)
- Study Groups (dive into the Word together)
- Recreation Groups (participate in a sport or skill together)
- Service Groups (meet a need in the community together)

## 2. We offer seasonal and ongoing groups.

Ongoing groups meet year-round and may be LIFE groups, recreation, or service-based groups.

Winter/Spring and Fall groups meet for roughly 13 weeks, while Summer groups meet for roughly 6 weeks.

We know seasons change, and we want to make it easy for you to be in the right small group for you in each season!

## 3. Everyone can join a group.

You do not need to be a member to join a group. Our hope is for every person at ALIVE to be connected to a meaningful community through a small group! Check out our current groups at [alivewesleyan.com/groups](http://alivewesleyan.com/groups). Once you find a group that interests you, sign up and a leader will reach out, so that you can plan to check out the group in person.

## 4. Anyone can host a group.

Hosting a group is simple - everyone has something to offer others! Whether you have a passion, a life experience, or skill to share - or if you have an area you'd like to grow in alongside other - hosting a small group is a great way to bring people together in meaningful community. Plus, we know hospitality is a spiritual gift! Facilitating community and conversation might be a way God has made you to contribute to the Kingdom!

## 5. Members can lead a group.

If you're interested in leading a group, membership is required. This helps ensure that leaders of groups, who might be representing our church have agreed to and understand our church's stances and beliefs.

TO LEARN MORE ABOUT STARTING A HOST GROUP,  
SIGN UP TO START A GROUP ON [ALIVEWESLEYAN.COM/GROUPS](http://ALIVEWESLEYAN.COM/GROUPS).

# NOT READY TO JOIN

WE UNDERSTAND THAT SOME PEOPLE ARE NOT READY TO TAKE THE NEXT STEP TOWARD MEMBERSHIP.

YOU ARE LOVED AND WELCOMED IN THIS FELLOWSHIP.

## EXPECTATIONS

- CONVERSION
- BAPTISM
- ACCEPTANCE OF:
  - THE ARTICLES OF RELIGION
  - ELEMENTARY PRINCIPLES AND AUTHORITY OF THE DISCIPLINE

## OPPORTUNITIES

- CAN HOLD ANY LEADERSHIP OFFICE OR POSITION
- CAN VOTE ON ANY ISSUE PRESENTED AT CHURCH CONFERENCE
- CAN BE TRANSFERRED TO ANOTHER WESLEYAN CHURCH

# MEMBERSHIP



# WHAT WILL BE ASKED OF ME IF I BECOME A MEMBER OF ALIVE WESLEYAN CHURCH?

## WILL YOU SUPPORT THE WESLEYAN CHURCH WITH:

- Your prayers
- Your presence
- Your gifts
- Your service

## PROCESS OF BECOMING A MEMBER

1. Let the church know if you are transferring your membership or joining for the first time. If you are transferring, please supply the church with the contact information from your previous church.
2. Your name will be taken to the Local Board of Administration (LBA).
3. You will be taken in as a member in front of the congregation.
4. Congratulations; you are a member of ALIVE Wesleyan!

## OUR MISSION STATEMENT

ALIVE Wesleyan exists to reach spiritually hungry people and introduce them to a personal relationship with Jesus Christ and an active role in healthy Christian community.

## OUR 5 PURPOSES

- Adoring Our God
- Loving Our Community
- Instructing Believers
- Valuing the Lost
- Equipping for Ministry

## ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP REAFFIRMATION

1. I have been born again through faith in Jesus Christ.
2. I am committed to pursue holiness in all things.
3. I have been baptized.
4. I am committed to abide by the teachings of The Wesleyan Church, including the Articles of Religion and the Elementary Principles.
5. I accept the authority of The Wesleyan Church in matters of church government.
6. I am committed to live out the mission and vision of The Wesleyan Church through a disciplined relationship within the local church.



# NEXT STEPS

## 1. BECOME A MEMBER AT ALIVE.

Membership at ALIVE is not about adding your name to a roster; it's about connecting with the people and the vision of the church. We would love for you to be a part of our church family.

## 2. JOIN A SMALL GROUP.

Browse our ALIVE Groups at [alivewesleyan.com/groups](http://alivewesleyan.com/groups). Once you find a few groups that interest you, sign up to learn more and make plans to check out the groups(s) in person.

## 3. COMPLETE ALL CLASSES IN THE 4DS.

Discovery Class - Become a member. Deepen Class - Grow in your faith. Define Class - Define your gifts. Decide Class - Join the team.

## 4. SERVE ON A TEAM.

You're invited to be a part of the team! Find a service opportunity that fits your gifts, and get ready to make a difference in the lives of others.

**NO MATTER WHAT YOUR NEXT STEP IS,  
WE'RE GLAD TO HAVE YOU HERE AT ALIVE!**



# SUMMARY OF THE WESLEYAN CHURCH'S MEMBERSHIP COMMITMENTS

AS TAKEN FROM THE DISCIPLINE OF THE WESLEYAN CHURCH,  
WESLEYAN.ORG, AND CHURCH AND CULTURE

## **GROWING IN OUR LOVE FOR GOD**

Wesleyans believe it is important to honor God in both words and actions. Two important ways we strive to do this are by treating His name with reverence and by keeping Sunday as the day of worship and spiritual service. This careful use of our speech and our time are evidence of our respect for God and obedience to His will.

We agree that loyalty to Jesus Christ means rejecting competing spiritual loyalties.

We discourage membership to organizations that require people to promise allegiance to teachings and practices that contradict clear biblical instructions. We devote ourselves, instead to trusting Christ alone as our divine helper. And the Lord's church is the best focus for our spiritual loyalties, energies, charity and fellowship.

## **GROWING IN OUR LOVE FOR OURSELVES**

It is our goal as Wesleyans to help all persons reach their full potential as God's children. So, we encourage one another to be faithful to Christ by living selflessly for him, by using our time wisely, and by living with modesty in mind. We challenge each other to put God first demonstrating a positive social witness by abstaining from all forms of gambling in our financial affairs and show love for Him and His work by giving generously to the church we attend.

## **GROWING IN OUR LOVE FOR THE FAMILY**

Wesleyans are committed to strong family values and Christian education in the home. We uphold the authority of the home, church and state. We follow biblical teachings about marriage, divorce, and human sexuality, looking to God's plan in each of these areas for guidance.

## **GROWING IN OUR LOVE FOR THE CHURCH**

We have the highest esteem for our relationships in the Church. We believe it is our duty and honor to work together, to practice sympathy, purity, love and courtesy with one another; to worship faithfully together; and to encourage one another in personal spiritual devotion.

## **GROWING IN OUR LOVE FOR OTHERS**

We feel it is our strong duty to do good to others in every possible way. Therefore, we promote the development of a strong social conscience among our members. This should be displayed in acts of charity to those in need. We seek respect from all persons, regardless of race, color, or sex. We pursue honesty and integrity in all our dealings and faithfulness in all our commitments.

# MEMBERSHIP COMMITMENTS

260. To be identified with an organized church is the blessed privilege and sacred duty of all who are saved from their sins and are seeking completeness in Christ Jesus. From the Church's beginnings in the New Testament age, it has been understood that such identification involves putting off the old patterns of conduct and putting on the mind of Christ. In maintaining this Christian concept of a transformed life, The Wesleyan Church intends to relate timeless biblical principles to the conditions of contemporary society in such a way as to respect the integrity of the individual believer, yet maintain the purity of the Church and the effectiveness of its witness. This is done in the conviction that there is validity in the concept of the collective Christian conscience as illuminated and guided by the Holy Spirit. The following items (265) represent historic, ethical and practical standards of The Wesleyan Church. While it is hoped that our people will earnestly seek the aid of the Spirit in cultivating a sensitivity to evil which transcends the mere letter of the law, those entering into membership are encouraged to follow carefully and conscientiously these guides and helps to holy living. Disregard of the principles embraced in these Membership Commitments subjects all credentialed ministers and any member serving in an elected leadership capacity to Church discipline (268; see also 550-610).

265. Those admitted to membership in our churches commit themselves to demonstrate their life in Christ in such ways as:

## TOWARD GOD

(1) To reverence the name of God and to honor the Lord's Day by divine worship and spiritual edification, participating in those activities which contribute to the moral and spiritual purposes of this day.

Gen. 2:3; Ex. 20:3, 7-11; Deut. 5:11-15; Isa. 58:13-14; Mark 2:27; Acts 20:7; Heb. 4:9.

(2) To seek only the leading of the Holy Spirit and to abstain from all forms of spiritism, such as the occult, witchcraft, astrology and other similar practices.

Lev. 19:31; 20:6; Deut. 18:10-14; Acts 19:18-19; Gal. 5:19-20.

## TOWARD SELF

(3) To exercise faithful stewardship through the wise use of their time and material resources, practicing careful self-discipline in order to further the mission of Christ's church (remembering the principle of tithing which is basic to the New Testament standard of stewardship) and to demonstrate compassion to those in need.

Prov. 3:9; Mal. 3:10; Matt. 25:34-40; Acts 20:35; 1 Cor. 16:2;

# MEMBERSHIP COMMITMENTS

(4) To demonstrate a positive social witness by abstaining from all forms of gambling and by abstaining from using or trafficking (production, sale or purchase) in any substances destructive to their physical, mental and spiritual health, such as alcoholic beverages, tobacco and drugs (other than proper medical purposes of drugs); and by refraining from membership in secret societies and lodges which are oath bound, believing that the quasi-religious nature of such organizations divides the Christian's loyalty, their secret nature contravenes the Christian's open witness and the secret nature of their oaths is repugnant to the Christian conscience.

2 Cor. 9:7; Eph. 5:16; Col. 3:17; James 2:15-16; 1 John 3:17.

Gambling violates the principle of Christian stewardship and the tenth commandment, is harmful to the individual in that it is emotionally addictive, is a poor example to others, and pollutes the moral climate of society.

Exod. 20:17; Rom. 14:21; 1 Cor. 6:12.

Christians are to regard their bodies as temples of the Holy Spirit. While no "thing" of itself is sinful, the Christian should avoid the use of anything which would not help build the fellowship of the church, would not help the believers to realize their full potential in Christ, or which would enslave them. In the light of the scientific knowledge of our day concerning the actual and potential harm of these substances, total abstinence is more in keeping with these biblical principles than is moderation.

Prov. 20:1; Rom. 6:12; 14:21; 1 Cor. 6:12-20; 10:23; 2 Cor. 7:1; Eph. 5:18; 1 Thess. 5:22.

These prohibitions do not restrict membership in labor, civic or other organizations which do not contradict loyalty to Christ and the Church. When in these relationships Christian principles are violated, members shall be dealt with because of such violations and not because of the membership itself.

Exod. 20:3; Matt. 5:34-36; John 18:20; Acts 4:12; James 5:12.

(5) To follow the teachings of the Scriptures regarding gender identity and sexual conduct.

Gen. 1:27; 1 Cor. 6:12-20; 7:17-24.

## TOWARD FAMILY

(6) To follow the teachings of the Scriptures regarding marriage and divorce. We affirm that sexual relationships outside of marriage and sexual relationships between persons of the same sex are immoral and sinful. We further affirm that marriage between one man and one woman is God's design, and we regard sexual sin of the spouse, such as adultery, homosexual behavior, bestiality or incest, as clear biblical grounds for considering divorce, and then only when appropriate counseling has failed to restore the relationship.

Exod. 20:14, 17; 22:19; Lev. 20:10-16; Matt. 5:32; 19:19; Mark 10:11-12; Luke 16:18.

# MEMBERSHIP COMMITMENTS CONT.

(7) To preserve the sanctity of the home by honoring Christ in every phase of family life and by demonstrating Christlike love (always avoiding violence, including physical, psychological, emotional, or sexual abuse toward one's spouse or family members, as well as sexual infidelity or desertion, any of which warrant church discipline for the offender and may justify separation or divorce if true repentance and appropriate counseling cannot bring about reconciliation, and by living peacefully with one another, thereby building up one's spouse and family members through word and deed, and encouraging the nurture and education of the children in the Christian faith so as to bring them early to the saving knowledge of Christ.

Prov. 22:6; Malachi 2:13-16; Mark 10:9; 1 Cor. 7:10-16, Eph. 5:28; 6:4.

## TOWARD THE CHURCH

(8) To work together for the advancement of God's kingdom and for the mutual edification of fellow believers in holiness, knowledge and love; to walk together in Christian fellowship by giving and receiving counsel with gentleness and affection; by praying for each other; by helping each other in sickness and distress; and by demonstrating love, purity and courtesy to all.

Rom. 15:1-2; Eph. 4; 1 Thess. 5.

(9) To grow in the knowledge, love and grace of God by participating in public worship, the ministry of the Word of God, the Lord's Supper, family and personal devotions and fasting.

Mark 2:18-20; Acts 13:2-3; 14:23; Rom. 12:12; 1 Cor. 11:23-28; Eph. 6:18; Phil. 4:6; 1 Tim. 2:1-2; 2 Tim. 3:16-17; Heb. 10:25; 1 Peter 2:2; 2 Peter 3:18.

(10) To preserve the fellowship and witness of the Church with reference to the use of languages. The Wesleyan Church believes in the miraculous use of languages and the interpretation of languages in its biblical and historical setting. But it is contrary to the Word of God to teach that speaking in an unknown tongue or the gift of tongues is the evidence of the baptism of the Holy Spirit or of that entire sanctification which the baptism accomplishes; therefore, only a language readily understood by the congregation is to be used in public worship. The Wesleyan Church believes that the use of an ecstatic prayer language has no clear scriptural sanction, or any pattern of established historical usage in the Church; therefore, the use of such a prayer language shall not be promoted among us.

Acts 8:14-17; 1 Cor. 12:1-14:40; Gal. 5:22-24.



# MEMBERSHIP COMMITMENTS CONT.

## TOWARD OTHERS

(11) To do good as much as is possible to all people as God gives opportunity, especially to those in the body of Christ; by giving food to the hungry, by clothing the destitute, by visiting or helping those who are sick or in prison; by instructing, correcting or encouraging them in love.

Matt. 25:31-46; Eph. 5:11; 1 Thess. 5:14; Heb. 3:13; 10:23-25.

(12) To respect the inherent individual rights of all persons, regardless of race, color or sex.

1 Cor. 8:13; 12:13; Gal. 3:28; 1 Tim. 5:21.

(13) To live honestly, be just in all dealings and faithful in all commitments.

Ecccl. 5:4-5; Rom. 12:17; Phil. 4:8-9; 1 Peter 2:12.

268. These are the Membership Commitments of our Church. We believe all these to be consistent with the principles of Christ as taught in the Word of God, which is the only and sufficient rule both of our faith and practice. If any among us do not observe them, and/or habitually break any of them, we will admonish such persons in love with the hope of restoring them to lives of harmony with the above Membership Commitments.

If such efforts of restoration continue to prove fruitless, official action may be taken toward termination of said persons' church membership. However, the church members are encouraged to continue efforts toward the spiritual restoration of these persons.

Matt. 18:15-17; 1 Cor. 5:6-7, 9-13; 2 Cor. 2:5-7; 5:18-20; 6:14-18; Gal. 6:1-10; Eph. 4:25-32; Titus 3:10-11.

## WHAT WESLEYANS BELIEVE

Wesleyans believe in one God, who is Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and the Savior of all men and women who put their faith in Him alone for eternal life. We believe that those who receive this new life in Christ are called to be holy in character and conduct, and can only live this way by being filled with the Lord's Spirit. We believe in the Bible and seek to establish our faith and actions on its teaching. We believe God wills for people everywhere to know Him and that the purpose of the Church is to tell the world about Christ through its worship, witness and loving deeds.

The following are terms descriptive of who Wesleyans are and why they do what they do. They describe the "soul of the Church":

**BIBLICAL AUTHORITY:** The Bible is God's holy Word. It uniquely and infallibly reveals God's plan for His people and how to live out that plan, individually and corporately. Beliefs, practices, priorities, and our mission are to be anchored in clear biblical teachings.

# WHAT WESLEYANS BELIEVE CONT.

**CHRISTLIKENESS:** Jesus Christ is the defining feature of God's will and relationship with all humankind. In Christ is found both newness of life and the highest and clearest example for godliness. People made new in Christ find Him to be the source of faith, hope, and love in both the inner life and in our outward actions engaging a world desperate for hope and life.

**DISCIPLE-MAKING:** Making disciples is a clear mandate from Christ. This requires a strong missional focus on evangelism and training in spiritual growth and holy living. Done effectively, this will produce and promote growth and health in and among the churches.

**LOCAL CHURCH CENTERED:** The denomination exists to help local congregations grow and multiply, be more healthy, and more authentically reflect God's plan. Local churches are the most fundamental and strategic points of evangelism and discipleship. The challenge of the denomination is to keep finding the best ways to serve, strengthen, and multiply congregations.

**SERVANT LEADERSHIP:** Wesleyans respect leadership that is placed over them, while realizing that the authority and effectiveness of spiritual leadership is not primarily bestowed, but earned, and is characterized by a loving and willing heart of obedience that serves God and mankind gladly. Wesleyans desire to be leaders in serving.

**UNITY IN DIVERSITY:** There is intrinsic value in every person. Biblical unity becomes all the more important and beautiful in the light of the wide-ranging differences in personalities, cultures, races, languages, talents, and perspectives. Finding unity and mutual love in Christ eliminates devaluation and deprivation of life to one another.

## **SOCIAL ISSUES & THE POSITIONS TAKEN BY THE WESLEYAN CHURCH**

The Wesleyan Church was born in the 19th century through a determined struggle to abolish slavery and other social sins and sickness. We continue to claim the task of being "salt and light" in society, and bring a balanced ministry of truth and grace.

# **SOCIAL ISSUES & THE POSITIONS TAKEN BY THE WESLEYAN CHURCH CONT.**

## **ABORTION**

The Wesleyan Church seeks to recognize and preserve the sanctity of human life from conception to natural death and, thus, is opposed to the use of induced abortion. However, it recognizes that there may be rare pregnancies where there are grave medical conditions threatening the life of the mother, which could raise a serious question about taking the life of the unborn child. In such a case, a decision should be made only after very prayerful consideration following medical and spiritual counseling. The Wesleyan Church encourages its members to become informed about the abortion issue and to become actively involved locally and nationally in the preparation and passage of appropriate legislation guaranteeing protection of life under law to unborn children.

## **DOMESTIC VIOLENCE**

The Wesleyan Church is committed to its mission of fulfilling the Great Commission in the spirit of the Great Commandment. The Great Commandment calls us to minister to the needs of society with the love and spirit of Christ. We cannot ignore, minimize or deny the abuse that occurs in the families of our congregations and of our communities. Without intervention and help, the abuse frequently grows more severe. We must provide resources and refuge for its victims. We must call those

who act abusively to accountability, repentance and change. We must engage ourselves in the response of our communities to this issue by cooperating and collaborating with community-based resources, such as shelters, therapists, police and legal aid. When we apply the "healing balm of Gilead," we do what Jesus would do. We feed, clothe and weep with those who are suffering. We speak out against evil. We serve our communities like our mission statements promise. We obey God and the Scriptures and love our neighbor-both within and beyond the household of faith.

## **MARRIAGE & DIVORCE**

To follow the teachings of the Scriptures regarding marriage and divorce. We affirm that sexual relationships outside of marriage and sexual relationships between persons of the same sex are immoral and sinful. We further affirm that marriage between one man and one woman is God's design, and we regard sexual sin of the spouse, such as adultery, homosexual behavior, bestiality or incest, as clear biblical grounds for considering divorce, and then only when appropriate counseling has failed to restore the relationship.

To preserve the sanctity of the home by honoring Christ in every phase including physical, psychological, emotional, or sexual abuse toward one's spouse or family members, as well as sexual infidelity or desertion, any of which warrant church discipline for the offender and may justify separation or divorce if true repentance and appropriate counseling cannot bring about reconciliation), and by living peacefully with one another, thereby building up one's spouse and family members through word and deed, and encouraging the nurture and education of the children in the Christian faith so as to bring them early to the saving knowledge of Christ. (cont. on next page)



# SOCIAL ISSUES & THE POSITIONS TAKEN BY THE WESLEYAN CHURCH CONT.

## (MARRIAGE & DIVORCE CONT.)

Divorce and Remarriage. On the basis of a careful study of the Scriptures, and in keeping with its Membership Commitments (265:6), The Wesleyan Church teaches the following with reference to divorce and re- marriage after divorce:

(a) To obtain a divorce on other than scriptural grounds is a sin against God and humanity. Such putting asunder of what God has joined is a direct and deliberate act of disobedience against both the Law and the Gospel. It separates one from God and may subject a member to Church discipline (222).

(b) However, recognizing the fallen state of humanity, divorce has been recognized in the Scriptures as a valid and permanent dissolution of marriage with all its rights and responsibilities. Divorce is not reversible. There is no way to "restore" a dissolved marriage. The divorced (unmarried) status can be changed only by a new marriage to the same person or another person. No divorced and remarried person has two spouses, only a former spouse and a present spouse, as in Deuteronomy 24:1-4 and 1 Corinthians 7.

(c) Divorce, however sinful the act and however serious the consequences, is not "unpardonable." A redeemed sinner or reclaimed backslider is "free" to marry "in the Lord" or to remain unmarried, a eunuch for the kingdom of God's sake. The one exception to this freedom of choice is mentioned by the Apostle Paul. It is a believer who disobeys the commandment of God and puts away a believing spouse. That person must remain unmarried to leave room for reconciliation to the spouse (1 Corinthians 7).

(d) The right to remarry in no way excuses the sin of divorce. It only implies that the Church must forgive and restore those whom the Lord forgives and restores. Neither penance nor penalty remain to the truly penitent and restored sinner, or backslider, whatever the traumatic consequences of the sin may be.

## SEXUALITY

Human Sexuality. The Wesleyan Church maintains a biblical view of human sexuality which makes the sexual experience, within the framework of marriage, a gift of God to be enjoyed as communion of a man and woman, as well as for the purpose of procreation. Sexual relationships outside of marriage and sexual relationships between persons of the same sex are immoral and sinful. Yet we believe the grace of God sufficient to overcome both the practice of such activity and the inclination leading to its practice.

# SOCIAL ISSUES & THE POSITIONS TAKEN BY THE WESLEYAN CHURCH CONT.

## HOMOSEXUALITY

We believe that every person is created in the image of God, that human sexuality reflects that image in terms of intimate love, communication, fellowship, subordination of the self to the larger whole, and fulfillment. God's Word makes use of the marriage relationship as the supreme metaphor for His relationship with His covenant people and for revealing the truth that this relationship is of one God with one people. Therefore God's plan for human sexuality is that it is to be expressed only in a monogamous lifelong relationship between one man and one woman within the framework of marriage. This is the only relationship which is divinely designed for the birth and rearing of children and is a covenant union made in the sight of God, taking priority over every other human relationship. We adhere to the teachings of Scripture regarding gender identity, sexual conduct, and the sacredness of marriage, and believe that sexual relationships outside of marriage and sexual relationships between persons of the same sex are immoral and sinful.

## GENDER

Maleness and femaleness are universal human categories. A Christian perspective begins with the assumption of "divine assignment" at the head of the list of determining factors for one's gender identity. At the same time, it must be recognized and acknowledged that feelings about gender identity also involve an intricate interplay of physiology, hormones, genetics, psychology, family nurture and the will (one's own moral choices). The distortion of one's sense of identity occurs whenever any of these causal factors is abused, ignored or goes awry.

Gender differentiation and male/female uniqueness are part of a divine design that God indelibly engraved upon creation. God gives our bodies to us for spiritual and relational purposes, as well as physical ones. It is His desire that the most fundamental distinctions we experience as human beings should remind us that our completeness is ultimately found in communion with Himself and others. For this reason, "The Lord God said, 'It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him'" (Genesis 2:18). Personal fulfillment involves intimate fellowship and union with God, as exemplified by the ideal of Christ as the bridegroom and the Church as His bride (Ephesians 5:22-32; Revelation 19:7-9).

Based on our biblical and theological study, there is no argument for a "third gender" among humans. Gender confusion and dysphoria are ultimately the biological, psychological, social and spiritual consequences of the human race's fallen condition. This state of depravity affects all persons individually and collectively (cont. on the next page).

# SOCIAL ISSUES & THE POSITIONS TAKEN BY THE WESLEYAN CHURCH CONT.

## (GENDER CONT.)

Yet, the One who is not willing that any should perish, but that all should have eternal life, has provided a way of redemption through the incarnation, sanctification, passion and resurrection of Jesus Christ. No matter how broken our lives have been, the compassionate love of God opens the door for restoring a sense of self-worth grounded in relationship with Christ and His people. Entering into a right relationship with God and restoring right relationships with others with the help of His enabling grace paves the way for release from guilt and shame and for discovering new self-confidence and inner peace.

We affirm the reconciling power of the gospel to bring congruity to lives torn by sin, guilt and shame. It is this redemptive power that we believe can establish new clarity about one's personal worth as a bearer of the image of God. Individuals can be "made new" by responding to the gospel call "to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; to be made new in the attitude of your minds; and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness" (Ephesians 4:17-24).

## RACIAL RECONCILIATION

It is a clarion call to reach every race and ethnic group with the Gospel of Jesus Christ and should not discriminate. The fruit of evangelism in a multiracial society ought to be a diverse church, and any lack of diversity when it comes to a specific race or ethnic group should be explored to better understand why we are falling short of our mission and what we can do about it.

"The Wesleyan Church opposes the denial of basic human and civil rights to any individual regardless of ethnicity, religion, gender, or national origin. While our denomination was born in an anti-slavery movement, we have sometimes ignored our own heritage and been guilty of both personal and collective racism and prejudice. For this sin, we have collectively repented and asked for God's forgiveness, and we intend to strive for complete racial reconciliation, for we know that this is the will of God."

## WOMEN IN MINISTRY

On the basis of the total teaching of Scripture, the sovereign call of God to women, and the demonstration of divine sanction and empowerment of women in ministry in our own denominational history, as well as that of the larger holiness movement, The Wesleyan Church affirms that woman is fully equal to man in terms of her responsibility, as directed by the Holy Spirit and authorized by the Church, to preach, teach, lead, govern or serve in any office or ministry of the Church.

# SOCIAL ISSUES & THE POSITIONS TAKEN BY THE WESLEYAN CHURCH CONT.

## REFUGEES

We, the delegates of the 3rd International Conference of the Wesleyan Church agree to the following statements in dealing with foreign refugees and internally displaced persons.

We call upon our church members and adherents everywhere to show God's love to refugees:

1. Wesleyans should make themselves aware of refugee situations, and especially of foreign refugees currently seeking recognition within their country, and they should commit themselves to respond to refugees with mercy and kindness, as befitting a follower of Christ.
2. Wesleyans should create social programs to reach out to foreign refugees and internally displaced persons in their country and in their neighborhoods.
3. Wesleyans should lobby their government and its agencies dealing with refugee admission to provide more places for refugees.
4. Wesleyans should join voices with those who seek to resist injustice, oppression and violence, with the goal of reducing the causes for refugee crises in the countries of origin.
5. Wesleyans should consider peaceful civil action in situations where the national policies and immigration laws of their country are unjust and do not reflect Kingdom principles and values.

## GLOBAL POVERTY

We, The Wesleyan Church worldwide, are committed to alleviating poverty in all its forms. We recognise and accept our Biblical responsibility to the poor, our duty of care for creation and the environment, and the need to value and celebrate the potential of those trapped by poverty.

We will demonstrate these locally, nationally and internationally by:

- Placing people and their identified needs at the heart of our mission and activities
- Deliberately challenging systemic evil, policies and practices which enslave people and communities; and
- Proactively engaging with other churches, agencies, governments and non-government organizations who share our vision for community transformation.

We promote good stewardship, accountability and justice in society, and hold our respective governments and the United Nations to account by advocating:

- Economic trade that is fair:
- Education and training that is relevant; and
- Empowerment through sustained resources and debt relief.



# SOCIAL ISSUES & THE POSITIONS TAKEN BY THE WESLEYAN CHURCH CONT.

## IMMIGRATION

Understanding that all are made in the image of God, as Wesleyans we will seek to treat all people humanely and with dignity, regardless of race, class, nationality, gender, or legal status.

As Wesleyans, we will give of ourselves in wholehearted love to others without intolerance, judgment, favoritism or disrespect, and in spite of who they are or what they have done to live among us.

As Wesleyans, we view immigration as an aspect of God's larger plan to bring salvation to the world. Immigration can be used through God's wisdom to introduce many to Jesus who might not otherwise hear the gospel message.

As Wesleyans, we will exercise awareness of the laws as they pertain to immigration and will endeavor to obey them, and encourage all immigrants to do the same, unless these laws are contrary to God's Word as interpreted by the collective wisdom and authority of the body of Christ. We support the rights of those who engage in civil disobedience against harsh and unjust laws, policies and measures on the basis of biblical principles.

As Wesleyans, we will encourage one another to engage in acts of kindness and compassion (i.e. providing food, shelter, clothing, and other resources) toward immigrants who are in need regardless of their immigration status (documented or undocumented).

As Wesleyans, we will unashamedly engage in both evangelizing and discipling immigrants in our communities, training and appointing immigrant persons as pastors, lay leaders, and workers, with respect for applicable employment laws as we do.

As Wesleyans, we will show God's grace by accepting those less fortunate than us. We will seek to have a welcoming heart to those that are strangers in our land, showing them acts of kindness and doing our part to understand other people's cultures to better serve them through God's love.

As Wesleyans, we oppose and condemn all unjust and harsh laws, policies and measures directed against immigrants among us, whether documented or undocumented. We will act as advocates for just and humane policies for all people by all levels of government and in all parts of society.

# SOCIAL ISSUES & THE POSITIONS TAKEN BY THE WESLEYAN CHURCH CONT.

## CREATION CARE

The Wesleyan Church believes it is time for Christians to take the lead in ensuring that the beauty and majesty of God's creation are sustained. We believe that these efforts will help ensure the protection and health of future generations, will be a blessing to peoples all around the world (especially the poor), will improve our witness to a watching world, and most of all, will express our love and worship for our Creator, Redeemer and Friend.

We encourage Wesleyans to work vigorously for the protection and care of God's creation in ways that honor the dignity and welfare of human beings. We suggest the following practical steps:

1. Become informed about environmental issues and needs locally, nationally, and globally.
2. Take intentional measures to reduce the harm we personally do to the environment.
3. Encourage our local churches to adopt policies and practices that minimize environmental damage and reflect good environmental stewardship.
4. Include environmental stewardship as a topic for teaching and discussion in our churches, so that Wesleyans might be equipped to take action appropriate to their setting and context.
5. Advocate for reasonable public and governmental policies which will protect and preserve the environment.
6. Lovingly communicate that all of these efforts are motivated by our love for our Creator and our desire to steward what He has entrusted to our care.

## SUMMARY OF THE ARTICLES OF RELIGION

We believe in God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

We believe that Jesus Christ the Son suffered in our place on the cross, that He died but rose again, that He now sits at the Father's right hand until He returns to judge every person at the last day.

We believe in the Holy Scriptures as the inspired and inerrant Word of God. We believe that by the grace of God every person has the ability and responsibility to choose between right and wrong, and that those who repent of their sin and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ are justified by faith.

We believe that God not only counts the believer as righteous, but that He makes such persons righteous, freeing them from sin's dominion at conversion, purifying their hearts by faith, perfecting them in love at entire sanctification, and providing for their growth in grace at every stage of spiritual life, enabling them through the presence and power of the Holy Spirit to live victorious lives.

# ARTICLES OF RELIGION

## **Faith in the Holy Trinity**

210. We believe in the one living and true God, both holy and loving, eternal, unlimited in power, wisdom and goodness, the Creator and Preserver of all things. Within this unity there are three persons of one essential nature, power and eternity - the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

## **The Father**

212. We believe the Father is the Source of all that exists, whether of matter or spirit. With the Son and the Holy Spirit, He made man, male and female, in His image. By intention He relates to people as Father, thereby forever declaring His good will toward them. In love, He both seeks and receives penitent sinners.

## **The Son of God**

214. We believe in Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God. He was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary, truly God and truly man. He died on the cross and was buried, to be a sacrifice both for original sin and for all human transgressions, and to reconcile us to God. Christ rose bodily from the dead, and ascended into heaven, and there intercedes for us at the Father's right hand until He returns to judge all humanity at the last day.

## **The Holy Spirit**

216. We believe in the Holy Spirit who proceeds from the Father and the Son, and is of the same essential nature, majesty, and glory, as the Father and the Son, truly and eternally God. He is the Administrator of grace to all, and is particularly the effective Agent in conviction for sin, in regeneration, in sanctification, and in glorification. He is ever present, assuring, preserving, guiding, and enabling the believer.

## **The Sufficiency & Full Authority of the Holy Scriptures for Salvation**

218. We believe that the books of the Old and New Testaments constitute the Holy Scriptures. They are the inspired and infallibly written Word of God, fully inerrant in their original manuscripts and superior to all human authority, and have been transmitted to the present without corruption of any essential doctrine. We believe that they contain all things necessary to salvation; so that whatever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man or woman that it should be believed as an article of faith, or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation. Both in the Old and New Testaments life is offered ultimately through Christ, who is the only Mediator between God and humanity. The New Testament teaches Christians how to fulfill the moral principles of the Old Testament, calling for loving obedience to God made possible by the indwelling presence of His Holy Spirit. (Cont. on the next page).



# ARTICLES OF RELIGION CONT.

The canonical books of the Old Testament are:

Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1 Samuel, 2 Samuel, 1 Kings, 2 Kings, 1 Chronicles, 2 Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, The Song of Solomon, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi.

The canonical books of the New Testament are:

Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Acts, Romans, 1 Corinthians, 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 Thessalonians, 2 Thessalonians, 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon, Hebrews, James, 1 Peter, 2 Peter, 1 John, 2 John, 3 John, Jude and Revelation.

## **God's Purpose for Humanity**

220. We believe that the two great commandments which require us to love the Lord our God with all the heart, and our neighbors as ourselves, summarize the divine law as it is revealed in the Scriptures. They are the perfect measure and norm of human duty, both for the ordering and directing of families and nations, and all other social bodies, and for individual acts, by which we are required to acknowledge God as our only Supreme Ruler, and all persons as created by Him, equal in all natural rights. Therefore all persons should so order all their individual, social and political acts as to give to God entire and absolute obedience, and to assure to all the enjoyment of every natural right, as well as to promote the fulfillment of each in the possession and exercise of such rights.

## **Marriage and the Family**

222. We believe that every person is created in the image of God, that human sexuality reflects that image in terms of intimate love, communication, fellowship, subordination of the self to the larger whole, and fulfillment. God's Word makes use of the marriage relationship as the supreme metaphor for His relationship with His covenant people and for revealing the truth that this relationship is of one God with one people. Therefore God's plan for human sexuality is that it is to be expressed only in a monogamous lifelong relationship between one man and one woman within the framework of marriage. This is the only relationship which is divinely designed for the birth and rearing of children and is a covenant union made in the sight of God, taking priority over every other human relationship. We adhere to the teachings of Scripture regarding gender identity, sexual conduct, and the sacredness of marriage, and believe that sexual relationships outside of marriage and sexual relationships between persons of the same sex are immoral and sinful.

(The last sentence of Article 7 was added by the 2016 North American General Conference and submitted for approval to the subsequent Caribbean and Philippine General Conferences in keeping with the provisions of 6765:1.)

# ARTICLES OF RELIGION CONT.

## **Personal Choice**

224. We believe that humanity's creation in the image of God included ability to choose between right and wrong. Thus individuals were made morally responsible for their choices. But since the fall of Adam, people are unable in their own strength to do the right. This is due to original sin, which is not simply the following of Adam's example, but rather the corruption of the nature of each mortal, and is reproduced naturally in Adam's descendants. Because of it, humans are very far gone from original righteousness, and by nature are continually inclined to evil. They cannot of themselves even call upon God or exercise faith for salvation. But through Jesus Christ the prevenient grace of God makes possible what humans in self effort cannot do. It is bestowed freely upon all, enabling all who will to turn and be saved.

## **Sin: Original, Willful, and Involuntary**

225. We believe that through the disobedience of Adam and Eve sin entered the world and all creation suffered its consequences. The effects of sin include disruption of the relationship between God and humanity, deterioration of the natural order of creation, and exploitation of persons by evil or misguided social systems. The whole of creation groans for redemption. Each person is born with a proclivity toward sin, manifested in an inordinate orientation toward self and independence from God, leading to deliberate acts of unrighteousness. The residual effects of Adam and Eve's disobedience include a marred human nature from which arise involuntary shortcomings, faults, infirmities, and imperfect judgments, which should not be accounted the same as willful sin. However, as manifestations of the fallen nature of humanity, these shortcomings of God's holiness still necessitate the merits of the atonement, the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit, and the self-control of the believer. Willful sin results when a morally accountable person chooses to violate a known law of God, using freedom of choice to please self rather than obey God. The consequences of willful sin include a loss of fellowship with God, a self-absorption with one's own interests rather than love and concern for others, a bondage to things which distort the divine image, a persistent inability to live righteously, and ultimately everlasting misery and separation from God. The atoning work of Christ is the only remedy for sin, whether original, willful or involuntary.

(Article 9 was approved by the 2016 North American General Conference and submitted for approval to the subsequent Caribbean and Philippine General Conferences in keeping with the provisions of 6765:1.)

# ARTICLES OF RELIGION CONT.

## **The Atonement**

226. We believe that Christ's offering of himself, once and for all, through His sufferings and meritorious death on the cross, provides the perfect redemption and atonement for the sins of the whole world, both original and actual. There is no other ground of salvation from sin but that alone. This atonement is sufficient for every individual of Adam's race. It is unconditionally effective in the salvation of those mentally incompetent from birth, of those converted persons who have become mentally incompetent, and of children under the age of accountability. But it is effective for the salvation of those who reach the age of accountability only when they repent and exercise faith in Christ.

## **Repentance and Faith**

228. We believe that for men and women to appropriate what God's prevenient grace has made possible, they must voluntarily respond in repentance and faith. The ability comes from God, but the act is the individual's.

Repentance is prompted by the convicting ministry of the Holy Spirit. It involves a willful change of mind that renounces sin and longs for righteousness, a godly sorrow for and a confession of past sins, proper restitution for wrongdoings, and a resolution to reform the life. Repentance is the precondition for saving faith, and without it saving faith is impossible. Faith, in turn, is the only condition of salvation. It begins in the agreement of the mind and the consent of the will to the truth of the gospel, but issues in a complete reliance by the whole person in the saving ability of Jesus Christ and a complete trusting of oneself to Him as Savior and Lord. Saving faith is expressed in a public acknowledgment of His Lordship and an identification with His Church.

## **Justification, Regeneration and Adoption**

230. We believe that when one repents of personal sin and believes on the Lord Jesus Christ, that at the same moment that person is justified, regenerated, adopted into the family of God, and assured of personal salvation through the witness of the Holy Spirit.

We believe that justification is the judicial act of God whereby a person is accounted righteous, granted full pardon of all sin, delivered from guilt, completely released from the penalty of sins committed, by the merit of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, by faith alone, not on the basis of works.

We believe that regeneration, or the new birth, is that work of the Holy Spirit whereby, when one truly repents and believes, one's moral nature is given a distinctively spiritual life with the capacity for love and obedience. This new life is received by faith in Jesus Christ, it enables the pardoned sinner to serve God with the will and affections of the heart, and by it the regenerate are delivered from the power of sin which reigns over all the unregenerate.

We believe that adoption is the act of God by which the justified and regenerated believer becomes a partaker of all the rights, privileges and responsibilities of a child of God.

# ARTICLES OF RELIGION CONT.

## **Good Works**

232. We believe that although good works cannot save us from our sins or from God's judgment, they are the fruit of faith and follow after regeneration. Therefore they are pleasing and acceptable to God in Christ, and by them a living faith may be as evidently known as a tree is discerned by its fruit.

## **Sin After Regeneration**

234. We believe that after we have experienced regeneration, it is possible to fall into sin, for in this life there is no such height or strength of holiness from which it is impossible to fall. But by the grace of God one who has fallen into sin may by true repentance and faith find forgiveness and restoration.

## **Sanctification: Initial, Progressive, Entire**

236. We believe that sanctification is that work of the Holy Spirit by which the child of God is separated from sin unto God and is enabled to love God with all the heart and to walk in all His holy commandments blameless. Sanctification is initiated at the moment of justification and regeneration. From that moment there is a gradual or progressive sanctification as the believer walks with God and daily grows in grace and in a more perfect obedience to God. This prepares for the crisis of entire sanctification which is wrought instantaneously when believers present themselves as living sacrifices, holy and acceptable to God, through faith in Jesus Christ, being effected by the baptism with the Holy Spirit who cleanses the heart from all inbred sin. The crisis of entire sanctification perfects the believer in love and empowers that person for effective service. It is followed by lifelong growth in grace and the knowledge of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. The life of holiness continues through faith in the sanctifying blood of Christ and evidences itself by loving obedience to God's revealed will.

## **The Gifts of the Spirit**

238. We believe that the Gift of the Spirit is the Holy Spirit himself, and He is to be desired more than the gifts of the Spirit which He in His wise counsel bestows upon individual members of the Church to enable them properly to fulfill their function as members of the body of Christ. The gifts of the Spirit, although not always identifiable with natural abilities, function through them for the edification of the whole Church. These gifts are to be exercised in love under the administration of the Lord of the Church, not through human volition. The relative value of the gifts of the Spirit is to be tested by their usefulness in the Church and not by the ecstasy produced in the ones receiving them.



# ARTICLES OF RELIGION CONT.

## **The Church**

240. We believe that the Christian Church is the entire body of believers in Jesus Christ, who is the founder and only Head of the Church. The Church includes both those believers who have gone to be with the Lord and those who remain on the earth, having renounced the world, the flesh and the devil, and having dedicated themselves to the work which Christ committed unto His church until He comes. The Church on earth is to preach the pure Word of God, properly administer the sacraments according to Christ's instructions, and live in obedience to all that Christ commands. A local church is a body of believers formally organized on gospel principles, meeting regularly for the purposes of evangelism, nurture, fellowship and worship. The Wesleyan Church is a denomination consisting of those members within district conferences and local churches who, as members of the body of Christ, hold the faith set forth in these Articles of Religion and acknowledge the ecclesiastical authority of its governing bodies.

## **The Sacraments: Baptism and the Lord's Supper**

242. We believe that water baptism and the Lord's Supper are the sacraments of the church commanded by Christ and ordained as a means of grace when received through faith. They are tokens of our profession of Christian faith and signs of God's gracious ministry toward us. By them, He works within us to quicken, strengthen and confirm our faith.

We believe that water baptism is a sacrament of the church, commanded by our Lord and administered to believers. It is a symbol of the new covenant of grace and signifies acceptance of the benefits of the atonement of Jesus Christ. By means of this sacrament, believers declare their faith in Jesus Christ as Savior.

We believe that the Lord's Supper is a sacrament of our redemption by Christ's death and of our hope in His victorious return, as well as a sign of the love that Christians have for each other. To such as receive it humbly, with a proper spirit and by faith, the Lord's Supper is made a means through which God communicates grace to the heart.

## **The Second Coming of Christ**

244. We believe that the certainty of the personal and imminent return of Christ inspires holy living and zeal for the evangelization of the world. At His return He will fulfill all prophecies made concerning His final and complete triumph over evil.

## **The Resurrection of the Dead**

246. We believe in the bodily resurrection from the dead of all people of the just unto the resurrection of life, and of the unjust unto the resurrection of damnation. The resurrection of Christ is the guarantee of the resurrection which will occur at Christ's Second Coming. The raised body will be a spiritual body, but the person will be whole and identifiable.

# ARTICLES OF RELIGION CONT.

## **The Judgment of All Persons**

248. We believe that the Scriptures reveal God as the Judge of all and the acts of His judgment are based on His omniscience and eternal justice. His administration of judgment will culminate in the final meeting of all persons before His throne of great majesty and power, where records will be examined and final rewards and punishments will be administered.

## **Destiny**

250. We believe that the Scriptures clearly teach that there is a conscious personal existence after death. The final destiny of each person is determined by God's grace and that person's response, evidenced inevitably by a moral character which results from that individual's personal and volitional choices and not from any arbitrary decree of God. Heaven with its eternal glory and the blessedness of Christ's presence is the final abode of those who choose the salvation which God provides through Jesus Christ, but hell with its everlasting misery and separation from God is the final abode of those who neglect this great salvation.

# NOTES



## ALIVE WESLEYAN CHURCH EXISTS

to reach spiritually hungry people and introduce them  
to a personal relationship with jesus christ and an  
active role in healthy christian community.



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