

Who Are the United Methodist People?

The United Methodist Church is a worldwide connection of over 11 million members throughout Africa, Asia, Europe, the Middle East, and the United States. We are the person next door, the church on the other side of the country, and the worshipping community across the globe. Together, we share a legacy of living as disciples of Jesus Christ, sharing God’s love both in what we say and how we serve our neighbors.



Our Heritage: A Faith Shaped for Life

The United Methodist Church is part of a long Christian tradition shaped by a simple but powerful conviction: **faith is meant to be lived every day, not only believed.**

In the 1700s, John Wesley and others began organizing small groups of Christians who met regularly to pray, study Scripture, care for one another, and serve their neighbors. These groups emphasized growing in love of God and love of neighbor – what Wesley described as holiness of heart and life. Faith was not private or passive; it was active, accountable, and rooted in community.

As this movement spread, it took on a distinct character:

- God’s grace is available to all people
- Spiritual growth happens best in community
- Following Jesus involves personal devotion and care for the world

Over time, Methodists joined with other Christians who shared similar commitments to grace, discipleship, and connection. In 1968, these traditions united to form The United Methodist Church – a worldwide denomination grounded in shared mission rather than uniform culture.

Today, our heritage continues to shape who we are. United Methodists organize faith communities, respond to human need, educate leaders, and work for justice – not as isolated congregations, but as a connected church. Our past is not simply a story to remember; it is a foundation that continues to guide how we live, serve, and lead.

Learn more about our full history:
[UMC.org/History](https://www.UMC.org/History) | [UMCHistory.org](https://www.UMCHistory.org)

