

United Methodist Church (UMC)

The United Methodist Church (UMC) is a Protestant Christian denomination with a global reach.

- **Roots:** The UMC traces its roots to the 18th-century Methodist movement founded by John and Charles Wesley in England.
- **Formation:** Formed in 1968 through the merger of the Methodist Church and the Evangelical United Brethren Church, the UMC brought together various Methodist denominations.
- **Note:** The UMC is currently facing significant internal challenges, particularly regarding LGBTQ+ inclusion. These issues have led to divisions within the denomination and ongoing discussions about its future.

More info: umc.org.

Core Beliefs:

- **Trinity:** Belief in the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit as the one God.
- **Scripture:** The Bible as the inspired word of God, though not without error.
- **Grace:** Salvation is received through God's grace, not solely through human merit.
- **Social Justice:** A strong emphasis on social justice and the importance of Christian action in addressing poverty, inequality, and other social issues.
- **Wesleyan Quadrilateral:** This theological framework emphasizes Scripture, tradition, reason, and experience as sources of Christian truth.

Practices and Rituals:

- **Worship Services:** Traditional worship services often include hymns, prayers, Scripture readings, and sermons.
- **Sacraments:** Baptism and Holy Communion are considered sacraments.
- **Small Groups:** Small groups for Bible study, prayer, and fellowship are common.
- **Social Service:** UMC members are encouraged to participate in community service and social justice initiatives.

Places of Worship:

- **Churches:** Local churches are the primary centers of worship and community life.

Leadership Structure:

- **Hierarchical:** The UMC has a hierarchical structure with bishops, pastors, and lay leaders at various levels.
- **General Conference:** The highest legislative body of the UMC.
- **Annual Conferences:** Regional bodies that oversee the work of churches within a specific geographic area.

Main Symbols:

- **Cross:** The cross remains a central symbol of Christian faith.
- **Flame:** Symbolizing the Holy Spirit and the transformative power of the Gospel.