

Getting to the root of us



Radicale Methodism

Primary Source Guide



General Commission
on Archives & History

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This Primary Source Guide is meant for those participating in “Radicle Methodism: Back to Our Roots.” In it, you’ll find the recommended primary source readings which accompany each module. These should be read after you’ve completed each module.

They can be read in class, as a group, or on your own. Their goal is to bring the history you’ve learned to life!

The Introductory Module and Module 1 focus on the writings of John Wesley.

Modules 2-4 focus on the writings of early American Methodists as the movement of Methodism morphed into the institution that we know and serve today.

On the next page are suggested reflection questions. If you are readings these sources on your own or as homework, we encourage you to keep a journal of your thoughts upon these writings. Relate them to your own faith journey and your call as a United Methodist to spread God’s love in this world.

Reminder to download the Participant’s Guide and the Leader’s Guide which provide other information and reflective points.

REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS:

1. What is the primary message of this writing?
2. How does this message speak to my faith journey today?
3. How does this writing illustrate the lessons learned in its accompanying module?
4. What ideas or quotes from this writing do I find inspirational? Problematic? Relative?
5. What should The United Methodist Church, or my local congregation, take from this writing?

PRIMARY SOURCES
INTRODUCTORY MODULE

A Short History of Methodism.

A SHORT HISTORY OF METHODISM.*

[*Works*, v, 246-8.]

It is not easy to reckon up the various accounts which have been given of the people called Methodists; very many of them as far remote from truth as that given by the good gentleman in Ireland: "*Methodists! Ay, they are the people who place all religion in wearing long beards.*"

Abundance of the mistakes which are current concerning them have undoubtedly sprung from this: Men lump together, under this general name, many who have no manner of connection with each other; and then whatever any of these speaks or does is of course imputed to all.

The following short account may prevent persons of a calm and candid disposition from doing this; although men of a warm or prejudiced spirit will do just as they did before. But let it be observed, this is not designed for a defence of the Methodists (so called), or any part of them. It is a bare relation of a series of naked facts, which alone may remove abundance of misunderstandings.

In November, 1729, four young gentlemen of Oxford, —Mr. John Wesley, fellow of Lincoln College; Mr. Charles Wesley, student of Christ Church; Mr. Morgan, commoner of Christ Church; and Mr. Kirkham, of Merton College,—began to spend some evenings in a week together, in reading, chiefly, the Greek Testament. The next year two or three of Mr. John Wesley's pupils desired the liberty of meeting with them; and afterward one of Mr. Charles Wesley's pupils. It was in 1732, that Mr.

* I have not been able to ascertain the precise time at which this tract was written. . . . It appears to have been first published some time about 1764; and was probably intended to screen Mr. Wesley and his friends from the reproach attached to the conduct of those who separated from him.—EDIT.

Selections from Wesley.

Ingham, of Queen's College, and Mr. Broughton, of Exeter, were added to their number. To these, in April, was joined Mr. Clayton, of Brazennose, with two or three of his pupils. About the same time Mr. James Hervey was permitted to meet with them, and in 1735, Mr. Whitefield.*

The exact regularity of their lives, as well as studies, occasioned a young gentleman of Christ Church to say, "Here is a new set of Methodists sprung up;" alluding to some ancient physicians who were so called. The name was new and quaint; so it took immediately, and the Methodists were known all over the university.

They were all zealous members of the Church of England; not only tenacious of all her doctrines, so far as they knew them, but of all her discipline, to the minutest circumstance. They were likewise zealous observers of all the university statutes, and that for conscience' sake. But they observed neither these nor any thing else any farther than they conceived it was bound upon them by their one book, the Bible; it being their one desire and design to be downright Bible Christians; taking the Bible, as interpreted by the primitive Church and our own, for their whole and sole rule.

The one charge then advanced against them was, that they were "righteous overmuch;" that they were abundantly too scrupulous, and too strict, carrying things to great extremes: in particular, that they laid too much stress upon the rubrics and canons of the Church; that they insisted too much on observing the statutes of the university; and that they took the Scriptures in too strict and literal a sense; so that if they were right, few indeed would be saved.

* "Having now obtained what I had long desired, a company of friends that were as my own soul, I set up my rest, being fully determined to live and die in this sweet retirement."—*A Short History of the People Called Methodists*, 1781. *Works*, vii, 346.

A Short History of Methodism.

In October, 1735, Mr. John and Charles Wesley, and Mr. Ingham, left England,* with a design to go and preach to the Indians in Georgia: but the rest of the gentlemen continued to meet, till one and another was ordained and left the university. By which means, in about two years' time, scarce any of them were left.

In February, 1738, Mr. Whitefield went over to Georgia, with a design to assist Mr. John Wesley; but Mr. Wesley just then returned to England. Soon after he had a meeting with Messrs. Ingham, Stonehouse, Hall, Hutchings, Kinchin, and a few other clergymen, who all appeared to be of one heart, as well as of one judgment, resolved to be Bible Christians at all events; and, wherever they were, to preach with all their might plain, old, Bible Christianity.

They were hitherto perfectly regular in all things, and zealously attached to the Church of England. Meantime, they began to be convinced, that "by grace we are saved through faith;" that justification by faith was the doctrine of the Church, as well as of the Bible. As soon as they believed, they spake; salvation by faith being now their

* "We were above three months on board, during which time our common way of living was this: From four in the morning till five, each of us used private prayer. From five to seven, we read the Bible together. At seven, we breakfasted. At eight was the public service. From nine to twelve, I learned German; Mr. Delamotte, Greek; my brother wrote sermons; and Mr. Ingham instructed the children. At twelve, we met together. About one, we dined. The time from dinner to four, we spent in reading to those of whom each of us had taken charge, or in speaking to them severally, as need required. At four, were the evening prayers; when either the Second lesson was explained (as it always was in the morning), or the children were catechised and instructed before the congregation. From five to six, we again used private prayer. From six to seven, I read in our cabin to two or three of the passengers (we had eighty English on board); and each of my brethren to a few more in theirs. At seven, I joined with the Germans (of whom we had twenty-six on board) in their public service, while Mr. Ingham was reading between the decks to as many as desired to hear. At eight, we met again, to instruct and exhort each other; and between nine and ten went to bed."—*A Short History of the People Called Methodists*, 1781. *Works*, vii, 346-7.

Selections from Wesley.

standing topic. Indeed this implied three things: (1.) That men are all, by nature, "dead in sin," and, consequently, "children of wrath." (2.) That they are "justified by faith alone." (3.) That faith produces inward and outward holiness: and these points they insisted on day and night. In a short time they became popular preachers. The congregations were large wherever they preached. The former name was then revived; and all these gentlemen, with their followers, were entitled Methodists.

In March, 1741, Mr. Whitefield, being returned to England, entirely separated from Mr. Wesley and his friends, because he did not hold the decrees. Here was the first breach, which warm men persuaded Mr. Whitefield to make merely for a difference of opinion. Those, indeed, who believed universal redemption had no desire at all to separate; but those who held particular redemption would not hear of any accommodation, being determined to have no fellowship with men that "were in so dangerous errors." So there were now two sorts of Methodists, so called; those for particular, and those for general, redemption.

Not many years passed, before William Cudworth and James Rely separated from Mr. Whitefield. These were properly Antinomians, absolute, avowed enemies to the law of God, which they never preached or professed to preach, but termed all legalists who did. With them, "preaching the law" was an abomination. They had "nothing to do" with the law. They would "preach Christ," as they called it, but without one word either of holiness or good works. Yet these were still denominated Methodists, although differing from Mr. Whitefield, both in judgment and practice, abundantly more than Mr. Whitefield did from Mr. Wesley.

In the mean time, Mr. Venn and Mr. Romaine began to be spoken of; and not long after, Mr. Madan and Mr.

A Short History of Methodism.

Berridge, with a few other clergymen, who, although they had no connection with each other, yet preaching salvation by faith, and endeavouring to live accordingly, to be Bible Christians, were soon included in the general name of Methodists. And so indeed were all others who preached salvation by faith, and appeared more serious than their neighbours. Some of these were quite regular in their manner of preaching; some were quite irregular (though not by choice; but necessity was laid upon them; they must preach irregularly, or not at all); and others were between both, regular in most, though not in all, particulars.

In 1762, George Bell, and a few other persons, began to speak great words. In the latter end of the year, they foretold that the world would be at an end on the 28th of February. Mr. Wesley, with whom they were then connected, withstood them both in public and private. This they would not endure; so, in January and February, 1763, they separated from him. Soon after, Mr. Maxfield, one of Mr. Wesley's preachers, and several of the people, left Mr. Wesley; but still Mr. Maxfield and his adherents go under the general name of Methodists.

At present those who remain with Mr. Wesley are mostly Church-of-England men. They love her Articles, her Homilies, her Liturgy, her discipline, and unwillingly vary from it in any instance. Meantime, all who preach among them declare, "We are all by nature children of wrath:" but "by grace we are saved through faith;" saved both from the guilt and from the power of sin. They endeavour to live according to what they preach, to be plain Bible Christians. And they meet together, at convenient times, to encourage one another therein. They tenderly love many that are Calvinists, though they do not love their opinions. Yea, they love the Antinomians themselves; but it is with a love of compassion only: for they hate their doctrines with a perfect

Selections from Wesley.

hatred ; they abhor them as they do hell fire ; being convinced nothing can so effectually destroy all faith, all holiness, and all good works.

With regard to these, Mr. Relly and his adherents, it would not be strange if they should grow into reputation. For they will never shock the world, either by the harshness of their doctrine, or the singularity of their behaviour. But let those who determine both to preach and to live the Gospel expect that men will “say all manner of evil of them.” “The servant is not above his Master, nor the disciple above his Lord. If, then, they have called the Master of the house, Beelzebub, how much more them of his household?” It is their duty, indeed, “as much as lieth in them, to live peaceably with all men.” But when they labour after peace, the world will “make themselves ready for battle.” It is their constant endeavour to “please all men, for their good, to edification.” But yet they know it cannot be done : they remember the word of the Apostle, “If I yet please men, I am not the servant of Christ.” They go on, therefore, “through honour and dishonour, through evil report and good report ;” desiring only, that their Master may say in that day, “Servants of God, well done !”

The Character of a Methodist

Not as though I had already attained.

TO THE READER

1. Many have been at a loss to know what a Methodist is since the name first appeared. People want to learn the principles and the practice of those who are commonly called by that name. They are interested in the distinguishing marks of this sect, "which is spoken against everywhere."

2. Because I was one of the first to be called a "Methodist," and the movement's leader, it was generally believed that I was the logical one to write this account. I yielded to the continued pleading of both friends and enemies. In the presence of the Lord and Judge of heaven and earth, I will give the clearest account I can of the principles and practice that distinguish the people called Methodist from other groups.

3. I say those who are called Methodists, because, let me be very clear, that this is not a name which they take for themselves. It was imposed upon them without their consent, as a sign of rebuke. A student of Christ Church College at Oxford University first gave it to three or four fellow students. The name could be an allusion to the ancient sect of Physicians, so called, who taught that almost all diseases might be cured by a specific method of diet and exercise. It may also refer to their observing a more regular method of study and behavior than was usual with those of their age and station.

4. I would rejoice (I have no ambition to be at the head of any sect or group) if the name were buried in eternal

oblivion and mentioned never again. But if that cannot be, at least let those who will use it know the meaning of the word they use. Let us not always be fighting in the dark. Come and let us look one another in the face. Perhaps some of you who hate what I am called may love what I am by the grace of God. Or rather, what "I follow after, if I may understand that for which also I am understood by Christ Jesus." (Philippians 3:12)

The Character of A Methodist

1. THE distinguishing marks of a Methodist are not his opinions of any sort. His assenting to any system of religion, his embracing any particular set of ideas, his accepting the teaching of one man or of another, are all quite beside the point. Whoever, therefore, imagines that a Methodist is a person of such or such an opinion is grossly ignorant of the whole affair. They completely mistake the truth. We indeed believe that "all Scripture is given by the inspiration of God" (2 Timothy 3:16). We believe the written word of God is the only and sufficient rule both of Christian faith and practice. We believe Christ is the eternal, supreme God. But as for all beliefs that do not strike at the root of Christianity, we think and let think. So that whatever they are, whether right or wrong, they are not distinguishing marks of a Methodist.

2. We do not place our religion in any peculiar way of speaking or any quaint or uncommon set of expressions. We prefer the most obvious, easy, and common words in which our meaning can be conveyed; both on ordinary occasions and when we speak of the things of God. We never, therefore, willingly or by design, deviate from the most common way of speaking. Unless, of course, when we express scripture truths in scripture words, which we presume, no Christian will condemn. Neither do we use any

particular expressions of Scripture more frequently than others, unless the inspired writers themselves use them more frequently. Therefore, it is as great an error to place the marks of a Methodist in his words as in particular beliefs.

3. Nor do we desire to be distinguished by any actions or customs. Our religion does not lie in doing what God has not prohibited or abstaining from what he has not forbidden. It does not lie in what we wear, in the posture of our body, or the covering of our heads. Nor in abstaining from marriage or from foods and drinks which are all good if received with thanksgiving. Therefore, neither will any person who knows what we affirm, apply the mark of a Methodist in any actions or customs unsupported by the word of God.

4. Nor, lastly, is a Methodist distinguished by stressing any particular doctrine. If you say, "Yes, he is for he thinks 'we are saved by faith alone.'" I answer, you do not understand the terms. By salvation a Methodist means holiness of heart and life. And this he affirms to spring from true faith alone. Can even a nominal Christian deny it? Is this wrapping the whole of Christian faith into a particular doctrine? "Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid! More than this, we establish the law" (Romans 3:31). We do not place the whole of religion (as too many do, God knows) either in doing no harm, or in doing good, or in using the instituted means of grace. We know by experience that a man may labor many years and at the end have no religion at all, no more than he had at the beginning. Much less in any one of these, or it may be in a scrap of one of them: like a woman who sees herself as being virtuous only because she is not a prostitute; or a man who dreams he is honest merely because he does not rob or steal. May the Lord God

of my fathers preserve me from such a poor, starved religion as this!

5. "What then is the mark? Who is a Methodist according to your own account?" I answer: A Methodist is one who has "the love of God shed abroad in his heart by the Holy Spirit given to him" (Romans 5:5). A Methodist is one who "loves the Lord his God with all his heart, and with all his soul, and with all his mind, and with all his strength" (Mark 12:30). God is the joy of his heart and the desire of his soul that is constantly crying out, "Whom have I in heaven but you? And there is nothing on earth that I desire other than you. My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever" (Psalm 73:25-26)!

6. He is therefore happy in God, indeed, always happy, as having in him "a well of water springing up into everlasting life" (John 4:14), and overflowing his soul with peace and joy. "Perfect love" having now "cast out fear," he "rejoices evermore" (1 John 4:18). He "rejoices in the Lord always" (Philippians 4:4), even "in God his Savior;" and in the Father, "through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom he has now received the atonement" (Romans 5:11). "Having" found "redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of his sins" (Ephesians 1:7), he cannot but rejoice, whenever he looks back on the horrible pit out of which he is delivered; when he sees "all his transgressions blotted out as a cloud, and his iniquities as a thick cloud" (Isaiah 44:22). He cannot but rejoice, whenever he looks on his present state, "being justified freely, and having peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Romans 3:24). For "he that believes, has the witness" of this "in himself;" being now the son of God by faith (1 John 5:10). "Because he is a son, God has sent forth the Spirit of his Son into his heart, crying, Abba, Father" (Galatians 4:6)! And "the spirit itself bears witness with his

spirit, that he is a child of God” (Romans 8:16). He rejoices also whenever he looks forward, “in hope of the glory that shall be revealed” (Romans 8:18). Indeed, his joy is full and all his bones cry out, “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! By his great mercy he has given me a new birth into a living hope ... into an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for me” (1 Peter 3a, 4)!

7. And the one who has this hope, thus “full of immortality, in everything gives thanks;” as knowing that this (whatever it is) “is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning him” (1 Thessalonians 5:18). Therefore, he cheerfully receives all from God saying, “Good is the will of the Lord.” Whether the Lord gives or takes away, he equally blesses the Lord’s name. For a Methodist has “learned to be content in whatever state he finds himself” (Philippians 4:11). He knows “both how to be humbled and how to be exalted. Everywhere and in all things he is prepared to be full and to be hungry, to have in abundance and suffer need.” Whether in ease or pain, in sickness or health, in life or death, he gives thanks from the bottom of his heart to God who orders it for good. Knowing that as “every good gift comes from above” (James 1:17), so nothing but good can come from the Lord of the Universe into whose hand he has wholly committed his body and soul as into the hands of a faithful Creator. He is therefore careful (anxiously or uneasily) for nothing. As having “cast all his care on God who cares for him,” and “in all things” resting on him, after “making his request known to him with thanksgiving” (Philippians 4:6).

8. For indeed a Methodist “prays without ceasing” (1 Thessalonians 5:17). Prayer is his way of life. Not that he is always in the house of prayer. However, he neglects no

opportunity of being there. Neither is he always on his knees, although he often is, or on his face, before the Lord his God. Nor is he always crying out to God, or calling upon him in words. For many times “the Spirit makes intercession for him with groans that cannot be uttered” (Romans 8:26-27). But at all times the language of his heart is this: “Your brightness of the eternal glory, to you is my heart, though without a voice, and my silence speaks to you.” This is true prayer. At all times and in all places a Methodist’s heart is always lifted up to God. In this he is never hindered, much less interrupted, by any person or thing. In private or public, in leisure, work, or conversation, his heart is always with the Lord. God is in all his thoughts whether he lie down or rise up. He continually walks with God, having the loving eye of his mind firmly fixed upon God, and everywhere “seeing Him that is invisible” (Hebrews 11:27).

9. And while a Methodist always exercises his love of God by unceasing prayer and rejoicing, and giving thanks in everything, this commandment is written in his heart, “those who love God must love their brother and sister also” (1 John 4:21*b*). And he accordingly loves his neighbor as himself. He loves every man as his own soul. His heart is full of love to all mankind, to every child of “the Father of the spirits of all flesh” (Numbers 16:22). Being a stranger, enemy, or outcast, is no barrier to a Methodist’s love. For he loves his enemies, indeed, and the enemies of God, “the evil and the unthankful” (Luke 6:35). And if it is not in his power to “do good to those who hate him,” he does not cease to pray for them, though they continue to reject his love, and still “persecute him” (Matthew 5:44).

10. For the Methodist is “pure in heart” (Matthew 5:8). The love of God has purified his heart from all vengeful passions, envy, malice, wrath, and every unkind attitude or evil

desire. It has cleansed him from pride and the arrogance of spirit that leads to contention. And he has “put on compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, patience” (Col. 3:12). So that he “is patient and forgives if he had a quarrel against anyone; even as God in Christ has forgiven him” (Ephesians 4:32). And indeed all possible ground for contention, on his part, is completely removed. For no one can take from him what he desires. He does “not love the world or the things in the world” (1 John 2:15). “May [he] never boast of anything except the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world has been crucified to [him], and [he] to the world” (Galatians 6:14). Being dead to all that is in the world, to “the desire of the flesh, the desire of the eyes, and pride in riches...” (1 John 2:15) all his desire is for God and for the remembrance of God’s name.

11. Agreeable to this his one desire, is the one pattern of a Methodist’s life, namely, “not to do his own will, but the will of God that sent him” (John 6:38). His one intention at all times and in all things is to please God whom his soul loves. He does not seek to please himself. He has a single eye. And because “his eye is healthy, his whole body is full of light” (Matthew 6:22). Indeed, there can be no darkness at all where the loving eye of the soul is continually directed toward God; “but the whole is light, as when the bright shining of a candle enlightens the house” (Matthew 5:15). God then reigns alone. All that is in the soul is holiness for the Lord. There is no movement in his heart contrary to God’s will. Every thought points to God and is in obedience to the law of Christ.

12. The tree is known by its fruits. A Methodist keeps God’s commandments because he loves God. He keeps not some, or most of them, but all; from the least to the greatest. He is not content to “keep the whole law, and offend in one

point" (James 2:10) but has, in all points, "a clear conscience toward God and all people" (Acts 24:16). Whatever God has forbidden he avoids. Whatever God has commanded he does, whether it is small or great, hard or easy, joyous or causes suffering. He runs the way of God's commandments. Now Christ has set his heart at liberty. It is his glory to do so. It is his daily crown of rejoicing "to do the will of God on earth, as it is done in heaven" (Matthew 6:10). A Methodist knows it is the highest privilege of "the angels of God, of those that excel in strength, to fulfil his commandments, and listen to the voice of his word" (Psalm 103:20).

13. Accordingly, a Methodist keeps all the commandments of God with all his might. For his obedience is in proportion to his love, the source from which it flows. Therefore, loving God with all his heart, he serves God with all his strength. He consistently presents his soul and body as a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God (Romans 12:1). Entirely and without reserve, he devotes himself, all he has and all he is, to God's glory. All the talents he has received are constantly employed according to his Master's will. Every power and gift of his soul and every part of his body are dedicated to serving Christ. Once he yielded them to sin and the devil, as instruments of unrighteousness. But now, being alive from the dead, he yields them all as instruments of righteousness to God.

14. Consequently, whatever a Methodist does, it is all to the glory of God. In all his efforts of every kind, he not only aims at this, (which is implied in having a single eye,) but actually attains it. His work and recreation, as well as his prayers, all serve this great end. Whether he sits in his house or walks by the way, whether he lie down or rise up, he is promoting, in all he speaks or does, the one business of his life. Whether he put on his clothes, or work, or eat and drink, or

entertain himself from hard labor, it all tends to advance the glory of God, by peace and good-will among men. His one invariable rule is this, "Whatever you do, in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father by him" (Colossians 3:17).

15. Nor do the customs of the world at all hinder his "running the race that is set before him" (Hebrews 12:1). He knows that vice does not lose its nature, though it becomes ever so fashionable. He remembers, that "every man is to give an account of himself to God." He cannot, therefore, follow even a multitude to do evil. He cannot "eat sumptuously every day," or "make provision for the body to fulfil its lusts" (Romans 13:14). He cannot "lay up treasures upon earth" (Matthew 6:19), any more than he can take fire into his bosom. He cannot adorn himself, on any pretense, with gold or costly apparel. He cannot join in or tolerate any diversion that has the least tendency to evil of any kind. He cannot speak evil of his neighbor, any more than he can lie either for God or man. He cannot utter an unkind word against any one for love keeps the door of his lips. He cannot speak idle words. No evil talk ever comes out of his mouth, but only what is useful for building up, as there is need, so that [his] words may give grace to those who hear (Ephesians 4:29). But "whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable" (Philippians 4:8), he thinks, and speaks, and acts, "glorifying the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ in all things" (Titus 2:10).

16. Lastly, as a Methodist has time, he "does good to all men" (Galatians 6:10). He serves neighbors and strangers, friends and enemies in every possible kind. He does good to their bodies by "feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, and visiting those who are sick or in prison" (Matthew 25:37-

40). But he doesn't stop there. A Methodist also works to do good to their souls, according to the ability that God gives. He seeks to awaken those that sleep in death and to bring those who are awakened to the atoning blood, that, "being justified by faith, they may have peace with God" (Romans 5:1). A Methodist encourages those who have peace with God to grow in love and in good works. And he is willing to "spend and be spent here" (2 Corinthians 12:15), even "to be offered up on the sacrifice and service of their faith" (Philippians 2:17), so they may "all come to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ" (Ephesians 4:13).

17. These are the principles and practices of our people. These are the marks of a true Methodist. By these alone do those who are scorned, desire to be distinguished from other people. If any one says, "Why, these are only the common fundamental principles of Christianity!", they are indeed correct. I know they are. I declare to God, to you and all people that I, and all who follow my judgment, do adamantly refuse to be distinguished from others by nothing more than the common principles of Christianity—the plain, old Christianity that I teach, renouncing and detesting all other marks of distinction. And a Methodist is what I preach, (let him be called whatever he likes, for names do not change the nature of things). He is a Christian not in name only, but in heart and in life. He is inwardly and outwardly conformed to the will of God as revealed in Scripture. He thinks, speaks, and lives according to the method laid down in the life of Jesus Christ. His soul is renewed according to the image of God, in righteousness and in all true holiness. And having the mind that was in Christ (Philippians 2:5) he walks as Christ also walked.

18. By these marks, by these fruits of a living faith, we seek to distinguish ourselves from the unbelieving world and from all those whose minds or lives are not in accord with the Gospel of Christ. But we earnestly desire to not be distinguished at all from real Christians, of whatever denomination, nor from any who sincerely follow after what they know they have not yet attained. "Whoever does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother and sister and mother" (Matthew 12:50). And I urge you, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, that we be in no way divided among ourselves. Is your heart right as my heart is with yours? I ask no nothing more. If it is so, give me your hand. Let us not destroy the work of God for opinions or words. Do you love and serve God? It is enough. I give you the right hand of fellowship. If there is any consolation in Christ, any comfort of love, any fellowship of the Spirit, any compassion, let us strive together for the faith of the Gospel. Let us walk together as those who are worthy of the vocation to which we are called. "Let us live and serve with all lowliness and meekness, with patience, watching over one another in love. Seeking to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, we remember there is one body, and one Spirit, even as we are called with one hope of our calling. There is...one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all (Ephesians 4:2-6)."

Contemporary English version by Steven W. Manskar, based on "The Character of a Methodist" contained in *The Works of John Wesley*, Vol. 8:339-347, ed. Thomas Jackson

PRIMARY SOURCES

MODULE 1

The Nature, Design, and General Rules of Our United Societies²

In the latter end of the year 1739 eight or ten persons came to Mr. Wesley, in London, who appeared to be deeply convinced of sin, and earnestly groaning for redemption. They desired, as did two or three more the next day, that he would spend some time with them in prayer and advise them how to flee from the wrath to come, which they saw continually hanging over their heads. That he might have more time for this great work, he appointed a day when they might all come together, which from thenceforward they did every week, namely, on Thursday in the evening. To these, and as many more as desired to join with them (for their number increased daily), he gave those advices from time to time which he judged most needful for them, and they always concluded their meeting with prayer suited to their several necessities.

This was the rise of the **United Society**, first in Europe, and then in America. Such a society is no other than "a company of men having the *form* and seeking the *power* of godliness, united in order to pray together, to receive the word of exhortation, and to watch over one another in love, that they may help each other to work out their salvation."

That it may the more easily be discerned whether they are indeed working out their own salvation, each society is divided into smaller companies, called **classes**, according to their respective places of abode. There are about twelve persons in a class, one of whom is styled the **leader**. It is his duty:

² John Wesley, *The Methodist Societies History, Nature and Design*, ed. Rupert E. Davies, vol. 9 in *The Bicentennial Edition of the Works of John Wesley* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1989), 69-73.

1. To see each person in his class once a week at least, in order: to inquire how their souls prosper; to advise, reprove, comfort or exhort, as occasion may require; to receive what they are willing to give toward the relief of the preachers, church, and poor.
2. To meet the ministers and the stewards of the society once a week, in order: to inform the minister of any that are sick, or of any that walk disorderly and will not be reproved; to pay the stewards what they have received of their several classes in the week preceding.

There is only one condition previously required of those who desire admission into these societies: "a desire to flee from the wrath to come, and to be saved from their sins." But wherever this is really fixed in the soul it will be shown by its fruits.

It is therefore expected of all who continue therein that they should continue to evidence their desire of salvation,

First: By doing no harm, by avoiding evil of every kind, especially that which is most generally practiced, such as:

- The taking of the name of God in vain.
- The profaning the day of the Lord, either by doing ordinary work therein or by buying or selling.
- Drunkenness: buying or selling spirituous liquors, or drinking them, unless in cases of extreme necessity.
- Slaveholding; buying or selling slaves.
- Fighting, quarreling, brawling, brother going to law with brother; returning evil for evil, or railing for railing; the using many words in buying or selling.
- The buying or selling goods that have not paid the duty.

- The giving or taking things on usury—i.e., unlawful interest.
- Uncharitable or unprofitable conversation; particularly speaking evil of magistrates or of ministers.
- Doing to others as we would not they should do unto us.
- Doing what we know is not for the glory of God, as:
 - The putting on of gold and costly apparel.
 - The taking such diversions as cannot be used in the name of the Lord Jesus.
 - The singing those songs, or reading those books, which do not tend to the knowledge or love of God.
 - Softness and needless self-indulgence.
 - Laying up treasure upon earth.
 - Borrowing without a probability of paying; or taking up goods without a probability of paying for them.

It is expected of all who continue in these societies that they should continue to evidence their desire of salvation,

Secondly: By doing good; by being in every kind merciful after their power; as they have opportunity, doing good of every possible sort, and, as far as possible, to all men:

- To their bodies, of the ability which God giveth, by giving food to the hungry, by clothing the naked, by visiting or helping them that are sick or in prison.
- To their souls, by instructing, reproving, or exhorting all we have any intercourse with; trampling under foot that enthusiastic doctrine that "we are not to do good unless our hearts be free to it."
- By doing good, especially to them that are of the household of faith or groaning so to be; employing them preferably to others; buying one of another, helping

each other in business, and so much the more because the world will love its own and them only.

- By all possible diligence and frugality, that the gospel be not blamed.
- By running with patience the race which is set before them, denying themselves, and taking up their cross daily; submitting to bear the reproach of Christ, to be as the filth and offscouring of the world; and looking that men should say all manner of evil of them falsely, for the Lord's sake.

It is expected of all who desire to continue in these societies that they should continue to evidence their desire of salvation,

Thirdly: By attending upon all the ordinances of God; such are:

- The public worship of God.
- The ministry of the Word, either read or expounded.
- The Supper of the Lord.
- Family and private prayer.
- Searching the Scriptures.
- Fasting or abstinence.

These are the General Rules of our societies; all of which we are taught of God to observe, even in his written Word, which is the only rule, and the sufficient rule, both of our faith and practice. And all these we know his Spirit writes on truly awakened hearts. If there be any among us who observe them not, who habitually break any of them, let it be known unto them who watch over that soul as they who must give an account. We will admonish him of the error of his ways. We will bear with him for a season. But then, if he repent not, he hath no more place among us. We have delivered our own souls.

Advice to The People Called Methodists

John Wesley (1745)

It may be needful to specify whom I mean by this ambiguous term; since it would be lost labour to speak to Methodists, so called, without first describing those to whom I speak. By Methodists I mean, a people who profess to pursue (in whatsoever measure they have attained) holiness of heart and life, inward and outward conformity in all things to the revealed will of God; who place religion in an uniform resemblance of the great object of it; in a steady imitation of Him they worship, in all his imitable perfections; more particularly, in justice, mercy, and truth, or universal love filling the heart, and governing the life.

You, to whom I now speak, believe this love of human kind cannot spring but from the love of God. You think there can be no instance of one whose tender affection embraces every child of man, (though not endeared to him either by ties of blood, or by any natural or civil relation,) unless that affection flow from a grateful, filial love to the common Father of all; to God, considered not only as his Father, but as "the Father of the spirits of all flesh;" yea, as the general Parent and Friend of all the families both of heaven and earth.

This filial love you suppose to flow only from faith, which you describe as supernatural evidence (or conviction) of things not seen; so that to him who has this principle,

The things unknown to feeble sense,
Unseen by reason's glimmering ray,
With strong commanding evidence
Their heavenly origin display.
Faith lends its realizing light,

The clouds disperse, the shadows fly;
The' Invisible appears in sight,
And God is seen by mortal eye.

You suppose this faith to imply an evidence that God is merciful to me a sinner; that he is reconciled to me by the death of his Son, and now accepts me for his sake. You accordingly describe the faith of a real Christian as "a sure trust and confidence" (over and above his assent to the sacred writings) "which he hath in God, that his sins are forgiven; and that he is, through the merits of Christ, reconciled to the favour of God."

You believe, farther, that both this faith and love are wrought in us by the Spirit of God; nay, that there cannot be in any man one good temper or desire, or so much as one good thought, unless it be produced by the almighty power of God, by the inspiration or influence of the Holy Ghost. If you walk by this rule, continually endeavouring to know and love and resemble and obey the great God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, as the God of love, of pardoning mercy; if from this principle of loving, obedient faith, you carefully abstain from all evil, and labour, as you have opportunity, to do good to all men, friends or enemies; if, lastly, you unite together, to encourage and help each other in thus working out your salvation, and for that end watch over one another in love, you are they whom I mean by Methodists.

The First general advice which one who loves your souls would earnestly recommend to every one of you is: "Consider, with deep and frequent attention, the peculiar circumstances wherein you stand."

One of these is, that you are a new people: Your name is new, (at least, as used in a religious sense,) not heard of, till a few years ago, either in our own or any other nation. Your principles are new, in this respect, that there is no other set of people among us (and, possibly, not in the Christian world) who hold them all in the same degree and connexion; who so strenuously and continually insist on the absolute necessity of universal holiness both in heart and life; of a peaceful, joyous love of God; of a supernatural evidence of things not seen; of an inward witness that we are the children of God; and of the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, in order to any good thought, or word, or work. And perhaps there is no other set of people, (at least, not visibly united together,) who lay so much and yet no more stress than you do on rectitude of opinions, on outward modes of worship, and the use of those ordinances which you acknowledge to be of God. So much stress you lay even on right opinions, as to profess, that you earnestly desire to have a right judgment in all things, and are glad to use every means which you know or believe may be conducive thereto; and yet not so much as to condemn any man upon earth, merely for thinking otherwise than you do; much less, to imagine that God condemns him for this, if he be upright and sincere of heart. On those outward modes of worship, wherein you have been bred up, you lay so much stress as highly to approve them; but not so much as to lessen your love to those who conscientiously dissent from you herein. You likewise lay so much stress on the use of those ordinances which you believe to be of God, as to confess there is no salvation for you if you wilfully neglect them: And yet you do not judge them that are otherwise minded; you determine nothing concerning those who, not believing those ordinances to be of God, do, out of principle, abstain from them.

Your strictness of life, taking the whole of it together, may likewise be accounted new. I mean, your making it a rule, to abstain from fashionable diversions, from reading plays, romances, or books of humour, from singing innocent songs, or talking in a merry, gay, diverting manner; your plainness of dress; your manner of dealing in trade; your exactness in observing the Lord's day; your scrupulosity as to things that have not paid custom; your total abstinence from spirituous liquors (unless in cases of necessity); your rule, "not to mention the fault of an absent person, in particular of Ministers or of those in authority," may justly be termed new: Seeing, although some are scrupulous in some of these things, and others are strict with regard to other particulars, yet we do not find any other body of people who insist on all these rules together. With respect, therefore, both to your name, principles, and practice, you may be considered as a new people.

Another peculiar circumstance of your present situation is, that you are newly united together; that you are just gathered, or (as it seems) gathering rather, out of all other societies or congregations; nay, and that you have been hitherto, and do still subsist, without power, (for you are a low, insignificant people,) without riches, (for you are poor almost to a man, having no more than the plain necessaries of life,) and without either any extraordinary gifts of nature, or the advantages of education; most even of your Teachers being quite unlearned, and (in other things) ignorant men.

There is yet another circumstance, which is quite peculiar to yourselves: Whereas every other religious set of people, as soon as they were joined to each other, separated themselves from their former societies or congregations; you, on the contrary, do not; nay, you

absolutely disavow all desire of separating from them. You openly and continually declare you have not, nor ever had, such a design. And whereas the congregations to which those separatists belonged have generally spared no pains to prevent that separation; those to which you belong spare no pains (not to prevent, but) to occasion this separation, to drive you from them, to force you on that division to which you declare you have the strongest aversion. Considering these peculiar circumstances wherein you stand, you will see the propriety of a Second advice I would recommend to you: "Do not imagine you can avoid giving offence:" Your very name renders this impossible. Perhaps not one in a hundred of those who use the term Methodist have any ideas of what it means. To ninety-nine of them it is still heathen Greek. Only they think it means something very bad, either a Papist, a heretic, an underminer of the Church, or some unheard-of monster; and, in all probability, the farther it goes, it must gather up more and more evil. It is vain, therefore, for any that is called a Methodist ever to think of not giving offence.

And as much offence as you give by your name, you will give still more by your principles. You will give offence to the bigots for opinions, modes of worship, and ordinances, by laying no more stress upon them; to the bigots against them, by laying so much; to men of form, by insisting so frequently and strongly on the inward power of religion; to moral men, (so called,) by declaring the absolute necessity of faith, in order to acceptance with God. To men of reason you will give offence, by talking of inspiration and receiving the Holy Ghost; to drunkards, Sabbath-breakers, common swearers, and other open sinners, by refraining from their company, as well as by that disapprobation of their behaviour which you will often be obliged to express. And indeed your life must give them continual offence: Your

sobriety is grievously offensive to a drunkard; your serious conversation is equally intolerable to a gay impertinent: and, in general, that "you are grown so precise and singular, so monstrously strict, beyond all sense and reason, that you scruple so many harmless things, and fancy you are obliged to do so many others which you need not," cannot but be an offence to abundance of people, your friends and relations in particular. Either, therefore, you must consent to give up your principles, or your fond hope of pleasing men.

What makes even your principles more offensive is, this uniting of yourselves together: Because this union renders you more conspicuous, placing you more in the eye of men; more suspicious, I mean, liable to be suspected of carrying on some sinister design (especially by those who do not, or will not, know your inviolable attachment to His present Majesty); more dreadful, to those of a fearful temper, who imagine you have any such design; and more odious to men of zeal, if their zeal be any other than fervent love to God and man.

This offence will sink the deeper, because you are gathered out of so many other congregations: For the warm men in each will not easily be convinced, that you do not despise either them or their teachers; nay, will probably imagine, that you utterly condemn them, as though they could not be saved. And this occasion of offence is now at the height, because you are just gathered, or gathering rather, so that they know not where it will end; but the fear of losing (so they account it) more of their members, gives an edge to their zeal, and keeps all their anger and resentment in its strength.

Add to this, that you do not leave them quite, you still rank yourselves among their members; which, to those who know not that you do it for conscience' sake, is also a provoking circumstance. "If you would but get out of their sight!" But you are a continual thorn in their side, as long as you remain with them.

And (which cannot but anger them the more) you have neither power, nor riches, nor learning; yet, with all their power, and money, and wisdom, they can gain no ground against you.

You cannot but expect, that the offence continually arising from such a variety of provocations will gradually ripen into hatred, malice, and all other unkind tempers. And as they who are thus affected will not fail to represent you to others in the same light as you appear to them, sometimes as madmen and fools, sometimes as wicked men, fellows not fit to live upon the earth; the consequence, humanly speaking, must be, that, together with your reputation, you will lose, first, the love of your friends, relations, and acquaintance, even those who once loved you the most tenderly; then your business, for many will employ you no longer, nor "buy of such an one as you are;" and, in due time, (unless He who governs the world interpose,) your health, liberty, and life.

What further advice can be given to persons in such a situation? I cannot but advise you, Thirdly, "Consider deeply with yourself, Is the God whom I serve able to deliver me? I am not able to deliver myself out of these difficulties; much less am I able to bear them. I know not how to give up my reputation, my friends, my substance, my liberty, my life. Can God give me to rejoice in doing this; and may I depend upon him that he will? Are the hairs of my head all

numbered; and does He never fail them that trust in him?" Weigh this thoroughly; and if you can trust God with your all, then go on in the power of his might.

Go on, I would earnestly advise you, Fourthly: "Keep in the very path wherein you now tread. Be true to your principles." Never rest again in the dead formality of religion. Pursue with your might inward and outward holiness; a steady imitation of Him you worship; a still increasing resemblance of his imitable perfections, his justice, mercy, and truth.

Let this be your manly, noble, generous religion, equally remote from the meanness of superstition, which places religion in doing what God hath not enjoined, or abstaining from what he hath not forbidden; and from the unkindness of bigotry, which confines our affection to our own party, sect, or opinion. Above all, stand fast in obedient faith, faith in the God of pardoning mercy, in the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath loved you, and given himself for you. Ascribe to Him all the good you find in yourself; all your peace, and joy, and love; all your power to do and suffer his will, through the Spirit of the living God. Yet, in the mean time, carefully avoid enthusiasm: Impute not the dreams of men to the all-wise God; and expect neither light nor power from him, but in the serious use of all the means he hath ordained.

Be true also to your principles touching opinions and the externals of religion. Use every ordinance which you believe is of God; but beware of narrowness of spirit towards those who use them not. Conform yourself to those modes of worship which you approve; yet love as brethren those who cannot conform. Lay so much stress on opinions, that all your own, if it be possible, may agree with

truth and reason; but have a care of anger, dislike, or contempt towards those whose opinions differ from yours. You are daily accused of this; (and, indeed, what is it whereof you are not accused?) but beware of giving any ground for such an accusation. Condemn no man for not thinking as you think: Let every one enjoy the full and free liberty of thinking for himself: Let every man use his own judgment, since every man must give an account of himself to God. Abhor every approach, in any kind or degree, to the spirit of persecution. If you cannot reason or persuade a man into the truth, never attempt to force him into it. If love will not compel him to come in, leave him to God, the Judge of all. Yet expect not that others will deal thus with you. No: Some will endeavour to fright you out of your principles; some to shame you into a more popular religion, to laugh and rally you out of your singularity: But from none of these will you be in so great danger, as from those who assault you with quite different weapons; with softness, good-nature, and earnest professions of (perhaps real) good-will. Here you are equally concerned to avoid the very appearance of anger, contempt, or unkindness, and to hold fast the whole truth of God, both in principle and in practice.

This indeed will be interpreted as unkindness. Your former acquaintance will look upon this, that you will not sin or trifle with them, as a plain proof of your coldness towards them; and this burden you must be content to bear: But labour to avoid all real unkindness, all disobliging words, or harshness of speech, all shyness, or strangeness of behaviour. Speak to them with all the tenderness and love, and behave with all the sweetness and courtesy, you can; taking care not to give any needless offence to neighbour or stranger, friend or enemy.

Perhaps on this very account I might advise you, Fifthly, "not to talk much of what you suffer; of the persecution you endured at such a time, and the wickedness of your persecutors." Nothing more tends to exasperate them than this; and therefore (although there is a time when these things must be mentioned, yet) it might be a general rule, to do it as seldom as you can with a safe conscience. For, besides its tendency to inflame them, it has the appearance of evil, of ostentation, of magnifying yourselves. It also tends to puff you up with pride, and to make you think yourselves some great ones, as it certainly does to excite or increase in your heart ill-will, anger, and all unkind tempers. It is, at best, loss of time; for, instead of the wickedness of men, you might be talking of the goodness of God. Nay, it is, in truth, an open, wilful sin: It is tale-bearing, back-biting, evil-speaking, a sin you can never be sufficiently watchful against, seeing it steals upon you in a thousand shapes. Would it not be far more profitable for your souls, instead of speaking against them, to pray for them? to confirm your love towards those unhappy men, whom you believe to be fighting against God, by crying mightily to him in their behalf, that he may open their eyes and change their hearts?

I have now only to commend you to the care of Him who hath all power in heaven and in earth; beseeching Him, that, in every circumstance of life, you may stand "firm as the beaten anvil to the stroke;" desiring nothing on earth; accounting all things but dung and dross, that you may win Christ; and always remembering, "It is the part of a good champion, to be flayed alive, and to conquer!"

October 10, 1745

PRIMARY SOURCES

MODULE 2

The following primary sources are taken from Russell E. Richey, Kenneth E. Rowe, and Jean Miller Schmidt, *The Methodist Experience in America, Sourcebook*. Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2011.

BOARDMAN DESCRIBES THE BIRACIAL CHARACTER OF METHODISM IN NORTH AMERICA

Source: "Letter CCCXXIII. From Mr. Richard Boardman to the Rev. J. Wesley,"
Arminian Magazine [London] 7/3 (March 1784): 163-64.

New-York, Nov. 4, 1769

Rev. Sir [John Wesley],

After a nine weeks voyage of great difficulties, we safely arrived at Philadelphia. Several said there had not, in the memory of the oldest man on the Continent, been such hard gales of wind, as those for a few months past. Many vessels have been lost, while others got in with loss of masts, and much damage to their cargoes. We observed shipwrecks all along the coast of the Delaware. I never understood David's words as I now do: "They that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters, these see the works of the Lord, and his wonders in the deep." In calm, serene weather, I found much exercise of mind; strong temptations, and great dejection. In rough, stormy weather, particularly when it appeared morally impossible the vessel should live long, amidst conflicting elements I found myself exceeding happy, and rested satisfied that death would be gain. I do not remember to have had one doubt of being eternally saved, should the mighty waters swallow us up. This was the Lord's doing! O may it ever be marvellous [*sic*] in my eyes!

When I came to Philadelphia I found a little Society, and preached to a great number of people. I left brother Pilmoor [Pilmore] there, and set out for New-York. Coming to a large town on my way [probably Trenton, New Jersey], and seeing a barrac[k], I asked a soldier if there were many Methodists belonging to it? "O yes, said he, we are all Methodists: that is, we should all be glad to hear a Methodist preach." "Well, said I, tell them in the barrac[k] that a Methodist preacher, just come from England, intends to preach here to night." He did so, and the inn was soon surrounded with soldiers. I asked, "Where do you think I can get a place to preach in?" (it being then dark.) One of them said, "I will go and see if I can get the Presbyterian Meeting-house." He did so, and soon returned to tell me he had prevailed, and that the bell was just going to ring to let all the town know. A great company soon got together, and seemed much affected.

The next day I came to New-York. Our House contains about seventeen hundred hearers. About a third part of those who attend the preaching get in; the rest are glad to hear without. There appears such a williness in the Americans to hear the word, as I never saw before. They have no preaching in some parts of the Back Settlements. I doubt not but an effectual door will be opened among them. ● may he now give his Son the heathen for his inheritance.

The number of Blacks that attend the preaching, affects me much. One of them came to tell me she could neither eat nor sleep, because her Master would not suffer her to come to hear the word. She wept exceedingly, saying, "I told my Master I would do more work than ever I used to do, if he would but let me come; nay, that I would do every thing in my power to be a good servant."

I find a great want of every gift and grace for the great work before me. I should be glad of your advice. But, dear Sir, what shall I say to almost every body I see. They ask, "Does Mr. Wesley think he shall ever c
?"

I am, dear Sir, your affectionate Son and Servant,

R. BOARDMAN

RICHARD ALLEN LEADS BLACK METHODISTS OUT OF ST. GEORGE'S CHURCH, PHILADELPHIA

*Source: The Life Experience and Gospel Labors of the
Rt. Rev. Richard Allen (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1960), 15-35.
First published in Philadelphia in 1833. Excerpts.*

I was born in the year of our Lord 1760, on February 14th, a slave to Benjamin Chew, of Philadelphia. My mother and father and four children of us were sold into Delaware state, near Dover; and I was a child and lived with him until I was upwards of twenty years of age, during which time I was awakened and brought to see myself, poor, wretched and undone, and without the mercy of God must be lost. . . . I joined the Methodist Society and met in class at Benjamin Wells's, in the forest, Delaware state. John Gray was the class leader. I met in his class for several years.

My master was an unconverted man, and all the family, but he was what the world called a good master. He was more like a father to his slaves than anything else. . . . At length, our master said he was convinced that religion made slaves better and not worse, and often boasted of his slaves for their honesty and industry. Some time after, I asked him if I might ask the preachers to come and preach at his house. He being old and infirm, my master and mistress cheerfully agreed for me to ask some of the Methodist preachers to come and preach at his house. . . . Preaching continued for some months; at length, Freeborn Garrettson preached from these words, "Thou art weighed in the balance, and art found wanting." In pointing out and weighing the different characters, and among the rest weighed the slaveholders, my master believed himself to be one of that number, and after that he could not be satisfied to hold slaves, believing it to be wrong. And after that he proposed to me and my brother buying our times, to pay him 60£. gold and silver, or \$2000, Continental money, which we complied with in the year 17——. . . .

I was after this employed in driving of wagon in time of the Continental war, in drawing salt from Rehoboth, Sussex County, in Delaware. I had my regular stops and preaching places in the road. I enjoyed many happy seasons in meditation and prayer while in this employment.

After peace was proclaimed, I then travelled extensively, striving to preach the Gospel. My lot was cast in Wilmington. Shortly after, I was taken sick with the fall fever and then the pleurisy. September the 3rd 1783, I left my native place. After

leaving Wilmington, I went into New Jersey, and there travelled and strove to preach the Gospel until the spring of 1784. I then became acquainted with Benjamin Abbott, that great and good apostle. He was one of the greatest men that ever I was acquainted with. He seldom preached but what there were souls added to his labor. He was a man of as great faith as any that ever I saw. The Lord was with him, and blessed his labors abundantly. He was a friend and father to me. I was sorry when I had to leave West Jersey, knowing that I had to leave a father. . . .

December 1784, General Conference sat in Baltimore, the first General Conference ever held in America. The English preachers just arrived from Europe were, Rev. Dr. Coke, Richard Whatcoat and Thomas Vassey. This was the beginning of the Episcopal Church amongst the Methodists. Many of the ministers were set apart in holy orders at this conference, and were said to be entitled to the gown; and I have thought religion has been declining in the church ever since. There was a pamphlet published by some person, which stated, that when the Methodists were no people, then they were a people; and now they have become a people they were no people; which had often serious weight upon my mind.

In 1785 the Rev. Richard Whatcoat was appointed on Baltimore circuit. He was, I believe, a man of God. I found great strength in travelling with him—a father in Israel. In his advice he was fatherly and friendly. He was of a mild and serene disposition. My lot was cast in Baltimore, in a small meeting-house called Methodist Alley. I stopped at Richard Mould's, and was sent to my lodgings, and lodged at Mr. McCannon's. I had some happy meetings in Baltimore. I was introduced to Richard Russell, who was very kind and affectionate to me, and attended several meetings. Rev. Bishop Asbury sent for me to meet him at Henry Gaff's. I did so. He told me he wished me to travel with him. He told me that in the slave countries, Carolina and other places, I must not intermix with the slaves, and I would frequently have to sleep in his carriage, and he would allow me my victuals and clothes. I told him I would not travel with him on these conditions. He asked me my reason. I told him if I was taken sick, who was to support me? and that I thought people ought to lay up something while they were able, to support themselves in time of sickness or old age. He said that was as much as he got, his victuals and clothes. I told him he would be taken care of, let his afflictions be as they were, or let him be taken sick where he would, he would be taken care of; but I doubted whether it would be the case with myself. . . . I travelled several months on Lancaster circuit with the Rev. Peter Morratte and Irie Ellis. They were very kind and affectionate to me in building me up; for I had many trials to pass through, and I received nothing from the Methodist connection. My usual method was, when I would get bare of clothes, to stop travelling and go to work, so that no man could say I was chargeable to the connection. My hands administered to my necessities. . . . The elder in charge in Philadelphia frequently sent for me to come to the city. . . . My labor was much blessed. I soon saw a large field open in seeking and instructing my African brethren, who had been a long forgotten people and few of them attended public worship. I preached in the commons, in Southwark, Northern Liberties, and wherever I could find an opening. I frequently preached twice a day, at 5 o'clock in the

morning and in the evening, and it was not uncommon for me to preach from four to five times a day. I established prayer meetings; I raised a society in 1786 for forty-two members. I saw the necessity of erecting a place of worship for the colored people. I proposed it to the most respectable people of color in this city; but here I met with opposition. I had but three colored brethren that united with me in erecting a place of worship—the Rev. Absalom Jones, William White and Dorus Ginnings. These united with me as soon as it became public and known by the elder who was stationed in the city. The Rev. C—— B—— opposed the plan, and would not submit to any argument we could raise; but he was shortly removed from the charge. The Rev. Mr. W—— took the charge, and the Rev. L—— G——. Mr. W—— was much opposed to an African church, and used very degrading and insulting language to us, to try and prevent us from going on. We all belonged to St. George's church——Rev. Absalom Jones, William White and Dorus Ginnings. We felt ourselves much cramped; but my dear Lord was with us, and we believed, if it was his will, the work would go on, and that we would be able to succeed in building the house of the Lord. We established prayer meetings and meetings of exhortation, and the Lord blessed our endeavors, and many souls were awakened; but the elder soon forbid us holding any such meetings; but we viewed the forlorn state of our colored brethren, and that they were destitute of a place of worship. They were considered as a nuisance.

A number of us usually attended St. George's church in Fourth street; and when the colored people began to get numerous in attending the church, they moved us from the seats we usually sat on, and placed us all around the wall, and on Sabbath morning we went to church and the sexton stood at the door, and told us to go in the gallery. He told us to go, and we would see where to sit. We expected to take the seats over the ones we formerly occupied below, not knowing any better. We took those seats. Meeting had begun, and they were nearly done singing, and just as we got to our seats, the elder said, "Let us pray." We had not been long upon our knees before I heard considerable scuffling and low talking. I raised my head up and saw one of the trustees, H—— M——, having hold of the Rev. Absalom Jones, pulling him up off of his knees, and saying, "You must get up—you must not kneel here." Mr. Jones replied, "Wait until prayer is over." Mr. H—— M—— said "No, you must get up now, or I will call for aid and force you away." Mr. Jones said, "Wait until prayer is over, and I will get up and trouble you no more." With that he beckoned to one of the other trustees, Mr. L—— S—— to come to his assistance. He came, and went to William White to pull him up. By this time prayer was over, and we all went out of the church in a body, and they were no more plagued with us in the church. This raised a great excitement and inquiry among the citizens, in so much that I believe they were ashamed of their conduct. But my dear Lord was with us, and we were filled with fresh vigor to get a house erected to worship God in. Seeing our forlorn and distressed situation, many of the hearts of our citizens were moved to urge us forward. . . . I hope the name of Dr. Benjamin Rush and Robert Ralston will never be forgotten among us. They were the first two gentlemen who espoused the cause of the oppressed, and aided us in building the

house of the Lord for the poor Africans to worship in. Here was the beginning and rise of the first African church in America. But the elder of the Methodist Church still pursued us. Mr. John McClaskey called upon us and told us if we did not erase our names from the subscription paper, and give up the paper, we would be publicly turned out of meeting. We asked him if we had violated any rules of discipline by so doing. He replied, "I have the charge given to me by the Conference, and unless you submit I will read you publicly out of meeting." We told him we were willing to abide by the discipline of the Methodist Church, "And if you will show us where we have violated any law of discipline in the Methodist Church, we will submit; and if there is no rule violated in the discipline we will proceed on." He replied, "We will read you all out." We told him if he turned us out contrary to rule of discipline, we should seek further redress. . . .

We bore much persecution from many of the Methodist connection; but we have reason to be thankful to Almighty God, who was our deliverer. The day was appointed to go and dig the cellar. I arose early in the morning and addressed the throne of grace, praying that the Lord would bless our endeavors. Having by this time two or three teams of my own—as I was the first proposer of the African church, I put the first spade in the ground to dig a cellar for the same. This was the first African Church or meetinghouse that was erected in the United States of America. We intended it for the African preaching-house or church; but finding that the elder stationed in this city was such an opposer to our proceedings of erecting a place of worship, though the principal of the directors of this church belonged to the Methodist connection, the elder stationed here would neither preach for us, nor have anything to do with us. We then held an election, to know what religious denomination we should unite with. At the election it was determined—there were two in favor of the Methodist, the Rev. Absalom Jones and myself, and a large majority in favor of the Church of England. The majority carried. Notwithstanding we had been so violently persecuted by the elder, we were in favor of being attached to the Methodist connection; for I was confident that there was no religious sect or denomination would suit the capacity of the colored people as well as the Methodists; for the plain and simple gospel suits best for any people; for the unlearned can understand, and the learned are sure to understand; and the reason that the Methodist is so successful in the awakening and conversion of the colored people, the plain doctrine and having good discipline. But in many cases the preachers would act to please their own fancy, without discipline, till some of them became such tyrants, and more especially to the colored people. They would turn them out of society, giving them no trial, for the smallest offense, perhaps only hearsay. They would frequently, in meeting the class, impeach some of the members of whom they had heard an ill report, and turn them out saying, "I have heard thus and thus of you, and you are no more a member of society"—without witnesses on either side. This has been frequently done, notwithstanding in the first rise and progress in Delaware state, and elsewhere, the colored people were their greatest support; for there were but few of us free; but the slaves would toil in their little patches many a night until midnight to raise their little truck and sell to

get something to support them more than what their masters gave them, but we used often to divide our little support among the white preachers of the Gospel. This was once a quarter. It was in the time of the old Revolutionary War between Great Britain and the United States. The Methodists were the first people that brought glad tidings to the colored people. I feel thankful that ever I heard a Methodist preach. We are beholden to the Methodists, under God, for the light of the Gospel we enjoy; for all other denominations preached so high-flown that we were not able to comprehend their doctrine. Sure am I that reading sermons will never prove so beneficial to the colored people as spiritual or extempore preaching. I am well convinced that the Methodist has proved beneficial to thousands and ten times thousands. It is to be awfully feared that the simplicity of the Gospel that was among them fifty years ago, and that they conform more to the world of the fashions thereof, they would fare very little better than the people of the world. The discipline is altered considerably from what it was. We would ask for the good old way, and desire to walk therein.

In 1783 a committee was appointed from the African Church to solicit me to be their minister, for there was no colored preacher in Philadelphia but myself. I told them I could not accept of their offer, as I was Methodist. . . . I bought an old frame that had been formerly occupied as a blacksmith shop, from Mr. Sims, and hauled it on the lot in Sixth near Lombard street, that had formerly been taken for the Church of England. I employed carpenters to repair the old frame, and fit it for a place of worship. In July 1794, Bishop Asbury being in town I solicited him to open the church for us which he accepted. The Rev. John Dickins sung and prayed, and Bishop Asbury preached. The house was called Bethel, agreeable to the prayer that was made. Mr. Dickins prayed that it might be a bethel to the gathering in of thousands of souls. My dear Lord was with us, so that there were many hearty "amen's" echoed through the house. This house of worship has been favored with the awakening of many souls, and I trust they are in the Kingdom, both white and colored. Our warfare and troubles now began afresh. Mr. C. proposed that we should make over the church to the Conference. This we objected to; he asserted that we could not be Methodists unless we did; we told him he might deny us their name, but they could not deny us a seat in Heaven. . . . We agreed to be incorporated. He offered to draw the incorporation himself, that it might save us the trouble of paying for to get it drawn. We cheerfully submitted to his proposed plan. He drew the incorporation, but incorporated our church under the Conference. . . . We labored about ten years under this incorporation, until James Smith was appointed to take charge in Philadelphia; he soon waked us up by demanding the keys and books of the church, and forbid us holding any meetings except by orders from him; these propositions we told him we could not agree to. He observed he was elder, appointed to the charge, and unless we submitted to him, he would read us all out of meeting. We told him the house was ours, we had bought it, and paid for it. He said he would let us know it was not ours, it belonged to the Conference; we took counsel on it; counsel informed us we had been taken in; according to the incorporation it belonged to the white connection. We asked him if it couldn't be altered; he told

us if two-thirds of the society agreed to have it altered, it could be altered. He gave me a transcript to lay before them; I called the society together and laid it before them. My dear Lord was with us. It was unanimously agreed to, by both female and male. We had another incorporation drawn that took the church from the Conference, and got it passed, before the elder knew anything about it. This raised a considerable rumpus, for the elder contended that it would not be good unless he had signed it. The elder, with the trustees of St. George's, called us together, and said we must pay six hundred dollars a year for their services, or they could not serve us. . . .

Mr. Samuel Royal being appointed to the charge of Philadelphia, declared unless we should repeal the Supplement, neither he nor any white preacher, travelling or local, should preach any more for us; so we were left to ourselves. . . . [A]n edict was passed by the elder, that if any local preacher should serve us, he should be expelled from the connection. John Emory, then elder of the Academy, published a circular letter, in which we were disowned by the Methodists. A house was also hired and fitted for worship, not far from Bethel, and an invitation given to all who desired to be Methodists to resort thither. But being disappointed in this plan, Robert R. Roberts, the resident elder, came to Bethel, insisted on preaching to us and taking the spiritual charge of the congregation, for we were Methodists he was told he should come on some terms with the trustees; his answer was, that "He did not come to consult with Richard Allen or other trustees, but to inform the congregation, that on next Sunday afternoon, he would come and take the spiritual charge." We told him he could not preach for us under existing circumstances. However, at the appointed time he came, but having taken previous advice we had our preacher in the pulpit when he came, and the house was so fixed that he could not get but more than half way to the pulpit. . . .

The next elder stationed in Philadelphia was Robert Birch, who, following the example of his predecessor, came and published a meeting for himself. But the method just mentioned was adopted and he had to go away disappointed. In [the] consequence of this, he applied to the Supreme Court for a writ of mandamus, to know why the pulpit was denied him. Being elder, this brought on a lawsuit, which ended in our favor. Thus by the Providence of God we were delivered from a long, distressing and expensive suit, which could not be resumed, being determined by the Supreme Court. For this mercy we desire to be unfeignedly thankful.

About this time, our colored friends in Baltimore were treated in a similar manner by the white preachers and trustees, and many of them driven away who were disposed to seek a place of worship, rather than go to law.

Many of the colored people in other places were in a situation nearly like those of Philadelphia and Baltimore, which induced us in April 1816, to call a general meeting, by way of Conference. Delegates from Baltimore and other places which met those of Philadelphia, and taking into consideration their grievances, and in order to secure the privileges, promote union and harmony among themselves, it was resolved: "That the people of Philadelphia, Baltimore, etc., etc., should become one body, under the name of the African Methodist Episcopal Church."

We deemed it expedient to have a form of discipline, whereby we may guide our people in the fear of God, in the unity of the Spirit, and in the bonds of peace, and preserve us from that spiritual despotism which we have so recently experienced—remembering that we are not to lord it over God's heritage, as greedy dogs that can never have enough. But with long suffering and bowels of compassion, to bear each other's burdens, and so fulfill the Law of Christ, praying that our mutual striving together for the promulgation of the Gospel may be crowned with abundant success.

AILING ASBURY INSTRUCTS HIS SUCCESSORS ON HOW TO RUN THE CHURCH

Source: Francis Asbury, "Valedictory Address to William McKendree,"
The Journal and Letters of Francis Asbury
(Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1958), 3:475-92. Excerpts.

[To William McKendree]

Speaking to the Genesee [New York] Annual Conference in your presence on the subject of apostolical, missionary Methodist Episcopal Church government, I was desired to commit my thoughts to writing. I feel the more disposed to do this, that I may leave a written testimony which may be seen, read, and known when your friend and father is taken from the evil to come. . . .

I am bold to say that the apostolic order of things was lost in the first century, when Church governments were adulterated and had much corruption attached to them. At the Reformation the Reformers only beat off part of the rubbish, which put a stop to the rapid increase of absurdities at that time; but how have they increased since! Recollect that state of the different Churches as it respects government and discipline in the seventeenth century [i.e., eighteenth century] when the Lord raised up that great and good man John Wesley, who formed an evangelical society in England. In 1784 an apostolical form of Church government was formed in the United States of America at the first General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church held at Baltimore, in the State of Maryland. . . .

Comparing human Church history with the Acts of the Apostles, it will manifestly appear that the apostolic order of things ended in about fifty years. With the preachers and people of that day, the golden order was lost. But we must restore and retain primitive order; we must, we will, we have the same doctrine, the same spirituality, the same power in ordinances [sacraments], in ordination, and in spirit. . . .

You will say if our Church were as pure as the primitive Church, will it not, may it not, like other modern [Churches], decline? I answer, We live in a purer age and in a free country. If discipline be maintained, men that carry sand rather than salt for the sheep will be constrained soon to leave us, to join some more honorable, but perhaps fallen, Church where they can have more ease and

greater emoluments. We have lived to see the end of such persons who left us and set up for themselves—witness Hammett and O'Kelly. . . .

This leads me to conclude that there were no local bishops until the second century; that the apostles, in service, were bishops, and that those who were ordained in the second century mistook their calling when they became local and should have followed those bright examples in the apostolic age. . . .

We have a few more thoughts to add. It is my confirmed opinion that the apostles acted both as bishops and traveling superintendents in planting and watering, ruling and ordering the whole connection; and that they did not ordain any local bishops, but that they ordained local deacons and elders. I feel satisfied we should do the same. . . .

My dear Bishop, it is the traveling apostolic order and ministry that is found in our very constitution. No man among us can locate without order or forfeit his official standing. No preacher is stationary more than two years; no presiding elder more than four years, and the constitution will remove them; and all are movable at the pleasure of the superintendent whenever he may find it necessary for the good of the cause.

(Source: Francis Asbury, "Address, Counsel and Advice to the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, 1816," Journals and Letters of Francis Asbury [Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1958], 3:532.)

[Near Charleston, South Carolina] January 8, 1816

[To the members of the General Conference]

Most dearly beloved in the Lord:

My loving confidential Sons in the Gospel of the grace of God, in Christ Jesus; great grace rest upon you! The God of glory cover your assembly and direct all your acts and deliberations for the Apostolic order and establishment of the Church of God in holy succession to the end of time. Only recollect as far as your observation or information will go, what God hath done by us . . . in about 70 years in Europe and less than 50 years in America, and what wonderful things he may do for us and our successors in future years if we stand fast in the Gospel doctrine and pure Apostolic ordination, discipline and government into which we have been called and now stand.

We are prepared, and if called upon, to prove and demonstrate even in your assembly, not from uncertain Church Histories and testimonies, but from the pure Oracles of the New Testament,—Three distinct ordinations, their distinct powers rising in gospel order by constituted degrees, one over another, and under the government, and distinct in names, that is to say Apostles, Elders, and Deacons. We will enter the sanctuary of divine truth, here we shall stand, this is our ground.

[Francis Asbury]

ABOLITIONIST CLERGY IN NEW ENGLAND URGE IMMEDIATE END TO SLAVERY

Source: Zion's Herald (Boston) (4 February 1835), insert. Italics in original. Reprinted in full as document 16 in Charles Elliott, History of the Great Secession from the Methodist Episcopal Church in the Year 1845 (Cincinnati: Swormstedt and Poe, 1855), 858-78.

Zion's Herald Extra

Appeal to the Members of the New England and New Hampshire Conferences
of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

Dear Brethren—

If any apology be necessary for our troubling you in this manner, we trust a sufficient one may be found in the importance of the subject upon which we address you.

It is a command of the infinite God, that we should "open our mouths and plead a righteous judgment for the poor and the needy, who are dumb, and appointed to destruction" (Prov. xxxi.9); and it is in obedience to this command that we now appeal to you in behalf of more than two millions of our fellow citizens, who, we know, are made *poor* and *needy* by the bondage which they are compelled to suffer, and who are *dumb* [silent] in a most affecting sense, inasmuch as they are not, and never have been, permitted to speak for themselves.

On the subject of Negro Slavery, as it exists in the United States, we think we can say, that we have bestowed the most serious attention for a number of years past. It has interested our sincerest sympathies and prayers, both for the enslaver and the enslaved; nor are we conscious of having neglected any means which might serve to afford us a consistent and enlightened view of the question which we now wish to propose for your consideration.

But it is not the cause of two millions five hundred thousand slaves that we plead merely, nor yet the millions of their posterity which are yet to live and endure the evils of an unjust and violent bondage; but we plead for the Methodist Episcopal Church, of which we are, unworthy indeed, but we trust devoted members. We feel that we should prove ourselves utterly unfit for the relation which we sustain to this Church, either as members or ministers, were we longer to keep silence and do nothing to avert the dreadful evils with which Slavery threatens, so evidently, our

peace and prosperity. We cannot look on with indifference and see some of the plainest rules of her discipline outraged and set at defiance, though we were to leave out of the account the part which so many of her members and ministers have taken in the unnatural and anti-Christian work of Slavery.

In approaching this subject we are conscious of no unkind feelings towards any who may differ from us in opinion; we wish to "speak the truth in love," to discharge a solemn duty which we owe to God our maker, to the church of which we are members, and to the thousands of poor slaves from whose minds the light of science and religion are shut out, and who are held in a bondage more oppressive and cruel in many respects, than any other kind which ever prevailed among men.

It is not necessary that we should here enter into a detailed account of the evils of Slavery, or that we should attempt a particular discussion of its principles; nor is it our design to answer all the apologies which have been made by professing *Christians* and *Christian ministers* for the system. We wish simply to mention some of the most prominent features of the system of Slavery as it exists in the Methodist Episcopal Church, and to lay before you some of the reasons which force upon our minds the solemn conviction, that as a church and as individuals, we are far behind our duty in relation to this thing; that no man has, or can have, a right to hold a fellow man for one moment in bondage as a piece of merchantable property, to take the hire of his labor against his will, or to refuse him the means of social, moral and intellectual improvement; that personal liberty, that is, liberty to enjoy the fruits of one's own labor, is the inalienable gift of the infinite God to every human being; therefore to take away this liberty where no crime has been committed, is a direct violation of a right which belongs to God alone. Hence, every American citizen who retains a fellow being in bondage as a piece of property, and takes the price of his labor without his consent, is guilty of a *crime* which cannot be reconciled with the spirit of the Christian religion; and it is the more criminal for a professing Christian or Christian minister to do this, because they thus afford their support to an unjust and violent system of oppression; a system which always has been, is now, and always will be, the unyielding enemy of virtue, knowledge and religion; a system which leaves more than one sixth of the citizens of these United States without any adequate protection for their persons; a system which opens the way for and fosters the worst of passions and crimes—such as prostitution, adultery, murder, discord, theft, insurrection, indolence, insensibility to the claims of justice and mercy, pride and a wicked contempt for the rights and feelings of a large proportion of our fellow men. Its natural tendency upon all who become the victims of its oppression, is to benumb the sensibilities of the mind, to corrupt and deaden the conscience, and to kill the soul. Hence we say the system is *wrong*, it is *cruel* and *unjust*, in all its parts and principles, and that no Christian can consistently lend his influence or example for one moment in support of it, and consequently it should be abandoned NOW and FOREVER.

In this view of the subject we shall show you that we are not alone, but we are most firmly supported by the Bible, by the discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church, by the opinions of [John] Wesley, of Dr. [Adam] Clarke, of [Richard] Watson, and by the testimony of the British Conference, and the unanimous voice

of the Wesleyan Connection in England, including the whole of the preachers and people. We choose to confine ourselves to the above named testimonies, not indeed because there are not a multitude of other collateral ones, but rather because we wish to examine the subject in *connection with the Methodist Episcopal Church*. Hundreds of her ministers and thousands of her members are enslavers of their fellow men, as they have been for years. They hold the bodies and the souls of men, women and children,—many of whom are members of the same church with themselves—in abject slavery, and still retain their standing without any censure on this account. Nay, we shall show you that the *Christian Advocate and Journal*, the official organ [weekly periodical] of this Church, apologizes for the crimes of the enslaver of the human species, and attempts to justify the system! . . .

[Numerous texts from the Bible, from the 1804 *Discipline*, resolutions of the Methodist conference in England, and Methodist authors abhorring slavery, including large excerpts from Wesley's *Thoughts Upon Slavery* and his famous letter to Wilberforce, follow.]

It is well known that the laws of the United States declare the African slave-trade to be *piracy*, and punishable by death; but what can render the foreign slave-trade so much worse than the same kind of trade carried on under circumstances a thousand times more aggravating within the bounds of the United States? And yet the traffic in human souls is carried on among us in these *free* and Christian states, with the very same kind of violence, kidnapping and fraud which was ever perpetrated upon the coast of Africa. Thousands are bought and sold and transported from one place to another in this country every year. For evidence of this part of the subject, see the Doings of the N.E. Anti-Slavery Convention, held in Boston in May last.

Now in view of these appalling facts, you will naturally be led to inquire,—“What can we do?” To this inquiry we beg leave respectfully to answer, and to suggest a few things which we humbly conceive every Christian, and especially every Christian minister, is at this time more than ever deeply concerned to do.

1. We should make ourselves well acquainted with the state of Slavery in this country, especially as it is connected with the Christian church. . . .

2. There is another thing which God himself commands us to do:—“Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them: them which suffer adversity, as being yourselves also in the body.” Heb xiii.3. Two millions five hundred thousand of our fellow citizens or brethren are “in bonds,” even in this land of boasted freedom. Do we remember them at the family altar? Do we remember them at the monthly concert for prayer? * Do we remember that the greater proportion of them are in their sins, going down to hell; that it is the grand policy of most of their masters to degrade and brutalize their minds, by withholding from them all knowledge; and consequently, if there be any one class of human beings upon the face of the globe who have a higher claim than all the rest for our sympathies and missionary labors, the two millions five hundred thousand slaves in our own land are that class? And we should remember, too, that these miserable beings are increasing at the rate of from sixty to seventy thousand every year, or about two hundred are added to the number every day!

3. "But when should the System of Slavery cease?" We answer, if, as we trust it has been fully made to appear in the foregoing remarks, Slavery is one general system of violence, robbery, injustice, vice and oppression, then it is a sin in the sight of Heaven, and ought to cease at once, NOW and FOREVER. But mark us here. We do not mean by this that all the slaves should be thrust out loose upon the nation like a herd of cattle, nor that they should be immediately invested with all political privileges and rights, nor yet that they should be banished from the land of their nativity to a distant clime. But we mean that the slaves should immediately be brought under the protection of suitable laws, placing them under such a supervision as might be adapted to their condition; one which would secure to them, by adequate and impartially administered laws, the right of enjoying the fruits of their own labor, and the privilege of obtaining secular and religious instruction. And nothing in the world hinders the enactment of such laws, by which the slaves might be made free with all imaginable safety immediately, but the *wickedness* of those who hold them in bondage. . . .

We leave it to your own consciences and the providence of God to dictate to you the course of your duty. But we would respectfully suggest whether the true friends of Methodism and the church of Christ, will have done their duty, if the next general conference [1836] is suffered to pass without having heard from our congregations and conferences upon this momentous subject. Why should we be so very far behind our [Methodist] brethren in England, in relation to this thing? Why should we be at all behind any of the good and faithful in this country, in our efforts to relieve the Church of so "great" an "evil?" How can we stand still and pause, when God and the cause of bleeding humanity have claims so high!

Permit us to subscribe ourselves, dear brethren, with due respect and sincere affection,

Yours affectionately,

SHIPLEY W. WILLSON
 ABRAM D. MERRILL
 LA ROY SUNDERLAND
 GEORGE STORRS
 JARED PERKINS

Boston Dec. 19, 1834

P.S. Perhaps we should add here, that we know a number of brethren, members of the same Conference with ourselves, who agree with the foregoing views of Slavery, and we have no doubt but they would give their names to this Appeal if we could have an opportunity of consulting them.

* The last Monday night in each month has been observed recently in many places as a *concert* for prayer for the slaves in this country and their masters. We hope it will yet be observed by *all* who desire to obey the above command of God.

ABOLITIONIST CLERGY ISSUE PUBLIC LETTER OF WITHDRAWAL

Source: Orange Scott, The Grounds of Secession from the M.E. Church; or, Book For The Times, being an Examination of her Connection with Slavery, and also of her Form of Government to which is added Wesley Upon Slavery, revised and corrected (New York. Published by C. Prindle for the Wesleyan Methodist Connection of America 1848), 3-16. Excerpts. Italics in original.

WITHDRAWAL OF JOTHAM HORTON, ORANGE SCOTT AND LAROY SUNDERLAND

With the date of this communication, closes our connection with the Methodist Episcopal Church. We take this step after years of consideration, and with a solemn sense of our responsibility to God—we take it with a view to his glory and the salvation of souls.

Twenty years and upwards of the best part of our lives has been spent in the service of this church—during which time we have formed acquaintances which have endeared to our hearts multitudes of Christian friends. Many of these are true kindred spirits, and we leave them with reluctance. But the view we take of our responsibility is not local in its bearings, nor limited in its duration. While we live, and when we die, we wish to bear a testimony which shall run parallel with coming ages; nay, with the annals of eternity. Many considerations of friendship as well as our temporal interests, bind us to the church of our early choice. But for the sake of a high and a holy cause, we *can* forego all of these. We wish to live not for ourselves, nor for the present age alone, but for all coming time; nay, for *God and Eternity*. We have borne our testimony a long time against what we considered wrong in the M.E. Church. We have waited, prayed, and hoped until there is no longer any ground for hope. Hence we have come to the deliberate conclusion that we must submit to things as they are, or peaceably retire. We have unhesitatingly chosen the latter.

It is however, proper, in leaving the church, that we assign our reasons. These are, mainly, the following:—

1. The Methodist Episcopal Church, is not only a slaveholding, but a *slavery defending church*. . . . She allows her members and ministers *unrebuked*, to hold innocent human beings in a state of hopeless bondage—nay, more, she upholds and

defends her communicants in this abominable business! All her disciplinary regulations which present a *show* of opposition to slavery are known and acknowledged to be a dead letter in the South. And they are as dead in the North as in the South. Even the General Rule [on Slavery] has been altered, either through carelessness or design, so as to favor the internal slave trade; and yet the last General Conference [1840] refused to correct the error, *knowing it to be such!*

This church has defended in a labored argument, through some of her best ministers, the *present rightful relation of master and slave*—in that she has never called them to account for putting forth such a document.

She has exhorted, through her regularly constituted agents and highest officers, the trustees of Methodist churches to close their pulpits against Methodist anti-slavery lecturers.

She has refused, in numerous instances, through her bishops, to entertain, in the annual conferences, motions expressive of the sinfulness of slave-holding—motions for the appointment of committees on slavery—motions for the adoption of reports on slavery; and that, because those motions and reports contained the sentiment, that *slaveholding is sin*—which, it was alleged, is contrary to Methodism, which recognizes and approves of the relation of master and slavery under some circumstances.

She has refused, through her bishops, to *hear* the prayers of scores and hundreds of her members *against* slavery, in some of the annual conferences.

She has said, through some of her annual conferences, that slavery is not a moral evil—while she has repeatedly refused, through her bishops, to allow other annual conferences to express the opposite sentiment. . . .

2dly, The government of the M.E. Church contains principles not laid down in the Scriptures, nor recognized in the usages of the Primitive Church—principles which were subversive of the rights, both of ministers and laymen.

While we admit that no *form* of church government is laid down in the Scriptures, we contend that *principles* are laid down which are in direct contravention with some of the existing forms. . . .

The power which our bishops claim and exercise in the annual conference is contrary to the plainest principles of Christian responsibility. . . . Another serious objection to Methodist Episcopacy is the election of bishops for life. . . .

We will mention but one thing more. And that is that feature in the economy of the M.E. Church, which gives the power to the preacher of excluding almost any member *he* may wish to get rid of. True, the Discipline requires the forms of trial, in case of expulsion; but as the preacher has the sole power to appoint the committee, and that without giving the accused any right of challenge, it is not, in general, difficult, for a preacher to punish whom he pleases. . . .

Such, in brief, are some of our reasons for leaving the Methodist Episcopal Church.

We wish it to be distinctly understood that we do not withdraw from anything essential to *our Wesleyan Methodism*. We only dissolve our connection with

Episcopacy and Slavery. These we believe to be anti-Scriptural, and well calculated to sustain each other. . . .

Though but three of us sign this document, scores if not hundreds, to our certain knowledge, might easily have been obtained. . . .

And now, dear brethren of the M.E. Church, we bid you farewell. Many of you we know and love. And while we do not impeach your motives or honesty, we hope in turn you will not treat us as barbarians. There is room enough for us all. Let us have no *unchristian* contention.

Jotham Horton
Orange Scott
LaRoy Sunderland

Providence, RI, November 8, 1842

PRIMARY SOURCES
MODULE 3

PHOEBE PALMER ASSERTS BIBLICAL AND HISTORICAL SUPPORT FOR WOMEN'S RIGHT TO PREACH

Source: *Phoebe Palmer, Promise of the Father; or, A Neglected Speciality of the Last Days* (Boston: Henry V. Degen, 1859), 21-24, 29-31, 329-30, 341-42.

Did the tongue of fire descend alike upon God's daughters as upon his sons, and was the effect similar in each?

And did all these waiting disciples, who thus, with one accord, continued in prayer, receive the grace for which they supplicated? It was, as we observed, the gift of the Holy Ghost that had been promised. And was this promise of the Father as truly made to the daughters of the Lord Almighty as to his sons? See Joel ii. 28, 29. "And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions. And also upon the servants, and upon the handmaidens in those days will I pour out my Spirit." When the Spirit was poured out in answer to the united prayers of God's sons and daughters, did the tongue of fire descend alike upon the women as well as upon the men? How emphatic is the answer to this question! "And there appeared unto them cloven tongues, like as of fire, and it sat upon *each of them*." Was the effect similar upon God's daughters as upon his sons? Mark it, O ye who have restrained the workings of this gift of power in the church. "And they were *all* filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak as the Spirit gave utterance." Doubtless it was a well nigh impelling power, which was thus poured out upon these sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty, moving their lips to most earnest, persuasive, convincing utterances. Not alone did Peter proclaim a crucified risen Saviour, but each one, as the Spirit gave utterance, assisted in spreading the good news; and the result of these united ministrations of the Spirit, through human agency, was, that three thousand were, in one day, pricked to the heart. Unquestionably, the whole of this newly-baptized company of one hundred and twenty disciples, male and female, hastened in every direction, under the mighty constrainings of that perfect love that casteth out fear, and great was the company of them that believed.

And now, in the name of the Head of the church, let us ask, Was it designed that these demonstrations of power should cease with the day of Pentecost? If the Spirit

of prophecy fell upon God's daughters, alike as upon his sons in that day, and they spake in the midst of that assembled multitude as the Spirit gave utterance, on what authority do the angels of the churches restrain the use of that gift now? Has the minister of Christ, now reading these lines, never encouraged open female testimony, in the charge which he represents? Let us ask, What account will you render to the Head of the church, for restricting the use of this endowment of power? Who can tell how wonderful the achievements of the cross might have been, if this gift of prophecy in woman had continued in use as in apostolic days? Who can tell but long since the gospel might have been preached to every creature? Evidently this was a *speciality* of the last days, as set forth by the prophecy of Joel. Under the old dispensation, though there was a Miriam, a Deborah, a Huldah, and an Anna who were prophetesses, the special outpouring of the Spirit upon God's daughters as upon his sons seems to have been reserved as a characteristic of the last days. This, says Peter, as the wondering multitude beheld these extraordinary endowments of the Spirit, falling alike on all the disciples—this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel, "And also upon my servants and upon my handmaidens will I pour out my Spirit."

And this gift of prophecy, bestowed upon all, was continued and recognized in all the early ages of Christianity. The ministry of the Word was not confined to the apostles. No, they had a laity for the times. When, by the cruel persecutions of Saul, all the infant church were driven away from Jerusalem, *except the apostles*, these scattered men and women of the laity "went off every where *preaching the word*," that is, proclaiming a crucified, risen Saviour. And the effect was that the enemies of the cross, by scattering these men and women who had been saved by its virtues, were made subservient to the yet more extensive proclamation of saving grace.

Impelled by the indwelling power within these Spirit-baptized men and women, driven by the fury of the enemy in cruel haste from place to place, made all their scatterings the occasion of preaching the gospel everywhere, and believers were everywhere multiplied, and *daily* were there added to the church such as should be saved. . . .

A large proportion of the most intelligent, courageous, and self-sacrificing disciples of Christ are females. "Many women followed the Saviour" when on earth; and, compared with the fewness of male disciples, many women follow him still. Were the women who followed the incarnate Saviour earnest, intelligently pious, and intrepid, willing to sacrifice that which cost them, something, in ministering to him of their substance? In like manner, there are many women in the present day, earnest, intelligent, intrepid, and self-sacrificing, who, were they permitted or encouraged to open their lips in the assemblies of the pious in prayer, or speaking as the Spirit gives utterance, might be instrumental in winning many an erring one to Christ. We say, were they permitted and encouraged; yes, encouragement may now be needful. So long has this endowment of power been withheld from use by the dissuasive sentiments of the pulpit, press and church officials, that it will now need the combined aid of these to give the public mind a proper direction, and undo a wrong introduced by the man of sin centuries ago.

But more especially do we look to the ministry for the correction of this wrong. Few, perhaps, have really intended to do wrong; but little do they know the embarrassment to which they have subjected a large portion of the church of Christ by their unscriptural position in relation to this matter. The Lord our God is one Lord. The same indwelling spirit of might which fell upon Mary and other women on the glorious day that ushered in the present dispensation still falls upon God's daughters. Not a few of the daughters of the Lord Almighty have, in obedience to the command of the Saviour, tarried at Jerusalem; and, the endowment from on high having fallen upon them, the same impelling power which constrained Mary and the other women to speak as the Spirit gave utterance impels them to testify of Christ.

"The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy." And how do these divinely-baptized disciples stand ready to obey these impelling influences? Answer, ye thousands of Heaven-touched lips, whose testimonies have so long been repressed in the assemblies of the pious! Yes, answer, ye thousands of female disciples of every Christian land, whose pent-up voices have so long, under the pressure of these man-made restraints, been uttered in groanings before God.

But let us conceive what would have been the effect, had either of the male disciples interfered with the utterances of the Spirit through Mary or any of those many women who received the baptism of fire on the day of Pentecost. Suppose Peter, James or John had questioned their right to speak as the Spirit gave utterance before the assembly, asserting that it were unseemly, and out of the sphere of woman, to proclaim a risen Jesus, in view of the fact that there were *men* commingling in that multitude. How do you think that he who gave woman her commission on the morning of the resurrection, saying, "Go, tell my brethren," would have been pleased with an interference of this sort?

But are there not doings singularly to these being transacted now? We know that it is even so. However unseemly on the part of the brethren, and revolting to our higher sensibilities, such occurrences may appear, we have to know that they are not at all unusual in religious circles [today]. . . .

One would regret more deeply than ourselves the error of writing one line that might seem to diminish the influence of an officially ordained ministry; yet it has for many years been our belief that the modern ideas of preaching, and apostolic preaching, differ greatly.

What is meant by preaching the Gospel? Says the devoted Dr. [Francis] Wayland, "The word *preach* in the New Testament has a different meaning from that which at present commonly attaches to it. We understand by it the delivery of an oration, or discourse on a particular theme, connected more or less closely with religion. It may be the discussion of a doctrine, an exegetical essay, a dissertation on social virtue or vices, as well as a persuasive unfolding of the teaching of the Holy Ghost. No such general idea was intended by the word as it is used by the writers of the New Testament. The words translated *preach* in our [King James] version are two. The one signifies simply to herald, to announce, to proclaim, to publish. The other, with this general idea, combines the notion of good tidings, and means to

publish, or be the messenger of good news." And in this exposition of the word, we believe most, and perhaps all other Bible expositors agree. And if this be the Scriptural meaning of the word *preach*, then where is the Christian, either of the clergy or laity, but would have every man, woman or child, who had an experimental knowledge of the saving power of Christ, herald far and near the tidings of a Saviour willing and able to save? When the ten lepers were healed, how reasonable it would have been, if they had neighbors or friends afflicted in the same manner, to have hastened with the glad tidings to them! And thus either men or women who prove the power of the heavenly Healer, the first impulse of their renewed nature is to proclaim the good news, so that all may be induced to come to the divine Restorer.

If this be the true Scriptural idea of *preaching*, to this we believe *every* individual called, whether male or female, who has been brought to an experimental knowledge of the grace of Christ, as the Saviour of sinners. And it is thus only that the command *can* be obeyed, and the gospel preached to every creature. How varied are the processes of grace on the human heart in leading it from sin to holiness! And just so diversified and correspondingly varied in interest, would be the proclamation of the healing, saving power of Christ in the assemblies of the saints, if the same ideas of preaching now prevailed as in the primitive days of Christianity. . . .

I have often thought, since then, how cruel to woman it is to compel her to stifle her convictions, to grieve the Holy Spirit, to deny the Saviour the service of her noble gifts, because the pleasure of the church (not surely the world, for it favors woman's liberty) must be regarded above that of God.

The church in many places is a sort of potter's field, where the gifts of woman, as so many strangers, are buried. How long, O Lord, how long before man shall roll away the stone that we may see a resurrection?

The church is a potter's field where the gifts of women are buried! And how serious will be the responsibilities of that church which does not hasten to roll away the stone, and bring out these long-buried gifts! Every church community needs aid that this endowment of power would speedily bring. And what might we not anticipate as the result of this speedy resurrection of buried power! Not, perhaps, that our churches would be suddenly filled with women who might aspire to occupy the sacred desk. But what a change would soon be witnessed in the social meetings of all church communities! God has eminently endowed women with gifts for the social circle. He has given her the power of persuasion and the ability to captivate. Who may *win* souls to Christ, if she may not?

And how well nigh endless her capabilities for usefulness, if there might only be a persevering effort on the part of the [ordained] ministry to bring out her neglected gifts, added to a resolve on the part of woman to be answerable through grace to the requisition! [The Church is] the only place where woman's gifts are unrecognized; that is, the church estranges herself from woman's gifts. To doubt whether woman brings her gifts into the church would be a libel on the Christian religion.

WCTU HEAD FRANCES WILLARD ADDRESSES WOMEN ON TRANSFORMING SELF, FAMILY, CHURCH, AND SOCIETY

Source: Frances E. Willard, Woman and Temperance; or, The Work and Workers of The Womans Christian Temperance Union (Hartford: Park Publishing Co., 1883), 42-47. Excerpts. Italics added.

The W.C.T.U. stands as the exponent, not alone of that return to physical sanity which will follow the downfall of the drink habit, but the reign of a religion of the body, which for the first time in history shall correlate with Christ's wholesome, practical, yet blessedly spiritual religion of the soul. "The kingdom of heaven is within you" [Luke 17:21]—shall have a new meaning to the clear-eyed, steady-limbed Christians of the future, from whose brain and blood the taint of alcohol and nicotine has been eliminated by ages of pure habits and noble heredity. . . .

The women of this land have never had before such training as is furnished by the topical studies of our society, in the laws by which childhood shall set out upon its endless journey with a priceless heritage of powers laid up in store by the tender, sacred foresight of those by whom the young immortal's being was invoked. The laws of health were never studied by so many mothers, or with such immediate results for good on their own lives and those of their children. The deformed waist and foot of the average fashionable American never seemed so hideous and wicked, nor the cumbrous dress of the period so unendurable as now, when from studying one "poison habit," our minds, by the inevitable laws of thought, reach out to wider researches and more varied deductions than we had dreamed at first. The economies of co-operative house-keeping never looked so attractive or so feasible as since the homemakers have learned something about the priceless worth of time and money for the purposes of a Christ-like benevolence. The value of a trained intellect never had such significance as since we have learned what an incalculable saving of words there is in a direct style, what value in the power of classification of fact, what boundless resources for illustrating and enforcing truth come as the sequel of a well-stored memory and a cultivated imagination. The puerility [simple-mindedness] of mere talk for the sake of talk, the unworthiness of "idle words," and vacuous, purposeless gossip, the waste of long and aimless letter-writing, never looked as egregious [absurd] as to the [WCTU] workers who find every day too short for the glorious and gracious deeds which lie waiting for them on every hand.

But to help forward the coming of Christ into all departments of life, is, in its last analysis, the purpose and aim of the W.C.T.U. For we believe this correlation of New Testament religion with philanthropy, and of the Church with civilization, is the perpetual miracle which furnishes the only sufficient antidote to current skepticism. Higher toward the zenith climbs the Sun of Righteousness, making circle after circle of human endeavor and achievement warm and radiant with the healing of its beams. *First of all, in our Gospel temperance work, this heavenly light penetrated the gloom of the individual tempted heart* (the smallest circle, in which all others are involved), illumined its darkness, melted its hardness, made it a sweet and sunny place—a temple filled with the Holy Ghost.

Having thus come to the heart of the drinking man in the plenitude of his redeeming power, Christ entered *the next wider circle in which two human hearts unite to form a home*, and here, by the revelation of her place in His kingdom, He lifted to an equal level with her husband the gentle companion who had supposed herself happy in being the favorite vassal of her liege lord. "There is neither male nor female in Christ Jesus" [Galatians 3:28]; this was the "open sesame," a declaration utterly opposed to all custom and tradition. But so steadily the light has shone, and so kindly has it made the heart of man, that without strife of tongues or edict of sovereigns, it is coming now to pass that in proportion as any home is really Christian, the husband and wife are peers in dignity and power. There are no homes on earth where woman is "revered, beloved," and individualized in character and work so thoroughly as the fifty thousand in America where "her children arise up and call her blessed, her husband also, and he praiseth her" [Proverbs 31:28] because of her part in the work of our W.C.T.U.

Beyond this sweet and sacred circle where two hearts grow to be one, where the mystery of birth and the hallowed face of child and mother work their perpetual charm, comes the outer-court of home, *that third great circle which we call society*. Surely and steadily the light of Christ is coming there, through the loving temperance Pentecost, to replace the empty phrase of punctilio [petty formality] by earnest words of cheer and inspiration; to banish the unhealthy tyranny of fashion by enthroning wholesome taste and common sense; to drive out questionable amusements and introduce innocent and delightful pastimes; to exorcise the evil spirit of gossip and domesticate helpful and tolerant speech; nay, more, to banish from the social board those false emblems of hospitality and good will—intoxicating drinks.

Sweep a wider circle still, and behold in that ecclesiastical invention called "denominationalism," Christ coming by the union of His handmaids in work for Him; coming to put away the form outward and visible that He may shed abroad the grace inward and spiritual; to close the theological disquisition of the learned pundit, and open the Bible of the humble saint; to draw away men's thoughts from theories of right living and center them upon right living itself; to usher in the priesthood of the people, by pressing upon the conscience of each believer the individual commission, "Go, disciple all nations" [Matthew 28:19], and emphasizing the individual promise, "Lo, I am with thee always" [Matthew 28:20].

But the modern temperance movement, born of Christ's Gospel and cradled at His altars, is rapidly filing *one more circle of influence, wide as the widest zone of earthly weal or woe, and that is government. . . .* "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done *on earth.*" Christ shall reign—not visible, but invisibly; not in form, but in fact; nor in substance, but in essence, and the day draws nigh! Then surely the traffic in intoxicating liquors as a drink will no longer be protected by the statute book, the lawyer's plea, the affirmation of the witness, and decision of the judge. And since the government is after all a circle that includes all hearts, all homes, all churches, all societies, does it not seem as if intelligent loyalty to Christ the King would cause each heart that loves Him to feel in duty bound to use all the power it could gather to itself in helping choose the framers of those more righteous laws? But let it be remembered that for every Christian man who has a voice in making and enforcing laws, there are at least two Christian women who have no voice at all. Hence, under such circumstances as now exist, His militant army must ever be powerless to win those legislative battles, which, more than any others, affect the happiness of aggregate humanity. But the light gleams already along the sunny hilltops of the nineteenth century of grace. Upon those who in largest numbers love Him who has filled their hearts with peace and their homes with blessing, slowly dawns the consciousness that they may—nay, better still, *they ought* to—ask for power to help forward the coming of their Lord in government—to throw the safeguard of their prohibition ballots around those who have left the shelter of their arms only to be entrapped by the saloons that bad men legalize and set along the streets.

"But some doubted" [Matthew 28:17].

This was in our earlier National Conventions. Almost none disputed the value of the added weapon in woman's hand—indeed, all deemed it "sure to come." It was only the old, old question of expediency; of "frightening away our sisters among the more conservative." But later on we asked these questions: Has the policy of silence caused a great rallying to our camp from the ranks of the conservative? Do you know an instance in which it has augmented your working force? Are not all the women upon whose help we can confidently count, favorable to the "*Do Everything Policy*," as the only one broad enough to meet our hydra-headed foe? Have not the men of the liquor traffic said in platform, resolution, and secret circular, "The ballot in woman's hand will be the death-knell of our trade?"

And so to-day, while each State *is free to adopt or disavow* the ballot as a home protection weapon, and although the white-winged fleet of the W.C.T.U. in a score of States crowds all sail for constitutional prohibition, to be followed up by "Home Protection," still though "the silver sails are all out in the West," every ship in the gleaming line is all the same a Gospel ship—an "*old ship Zion—Hallelujah!*"

PRESIDENT THEODORE ROOSEVELT ADDRESSES GENERAL CONFERENCE ON SOCIAL REFORM

Source: "President Roosevelt's Address," *Methodist Episcopal Church, Daily Christian Advocate* 16/12 (19 May 1908): 5.

Bishop Cranston, I want to thank you personally for that introduction. I value it more than I can express. I do. I feel akin to you. I would be glad to address you at any time, in any place. But I am doubly glad to address you here; and I most earnestly wish you well in your purpose to plant here a great American University—a university that shall fulfill the dream of the greatest and first American President, George Washington.

And let me say a special word of thanks to those brethren who sang that hymn that I happen to be fondest of. I sing very badly, but I joined with you in all three verses—

"Ein feste burg ist unser Gott."

And now, friends, it is indeed a pleasure to be with you today and to bid you welcome on behalf of the nation, here in the capital of the nation. I am glad to meet here good Methodists from so many lands. The Methodist Church plays a great part in many lands: and yet I think I can say that in none other has it played so great and peculiar a part as here in the United States. Its history is indissolubly interwoven with the history of our country for the six score years since the constitutional convention made us really a nation. Methodism in America entered on its period of rapid growth just about the time of Washington's first presidency. Its essential democracy, its fiery and restless energy of spirit, and the wide play that it gave to individual initiative, all tended to make it peculiarly congenial to a hardy and virile folk, democratic to the core, prizing individual independence above all earthly possessions, and engaged in the rough and stern work of conquering a continent. Methodism spread even among the old communities and the long-settled districts of the Atlantic tide water; but its phenomenal growth was from these regions westward. The whole country is under a debt of gratitude to the Methodist circuit riders, the Methodist pioneer preachers, whose movement westward kept pace with the movement of the frontier, who shared all the hardships in the life of the frontiersman, while at the same time ministering to that frontiersman's

spiritual needs, and seeing that his pressing material cares and the hard and grinding poverty of his life did not wholly extinguish the divine fire within his soul. Such was your work in the past; and your work in the present is as great, and even greater; for the need and opportunity for service widen as the field of national interest widens. It is not true in this country that the poor have grown poorer. It is not true. (Cries, "No! No!") And the judgment that we speak of will come on those who tell too much untruth. Sometimes I feel a little like a Methodist lay preacher myself. But it is true that in many sections, and particularly in our large cities, the rich have grown so very much richer as to widen the gulf between the man of very large means and the man who makes each day's livelihood by that day's work; and those who with sincerity, and efficiency, and deep conviction, band together for mutual help, as you are banded—not only for one to reach down and help another, but for each to extend his hand in help to, and to take the hand extended to him in help by his brother. Those of you who do that are those who can do most to keep the gulf from becoming too wide. Join with a man in doing something of common interest to both of you, and you find there's not going to be, even, any gulf between him and you. Is not that common sense? Exactly! Exactly!

True religion, through church organizations, through philanthropic organizations, in all the field of kindred endeavor, can manifest itself as effectively in the crowded and complex life of today as ever it did in the pioneer yesterdays; and the souls of men need the light now, and strive blindly toward it, as they needed it, and strove toward it in the vanished past. Glory in the past! But treat it as an incentive to do well in the present. Do not confine yourselves to being so proud of it that you forget to do similar work today. It is your task to do the work of the Lord on the farm and in the mine, in the counting room and the factory, in the car shops and beside the blasting furnaces, just as it was the task of your spiritual forebears to wrestle for the souls of the men and women who dwelt on the stump-dotted clearings in the wilderness.

No nation in the world has more right than ours to look with proud confidence toward the future. Nowhere else has the experiment of democratic government, of government by the people and for the people, of government based on the principle of treating each man on his innate worth as a man, been tried on so vast a scale as with us: and on the whole the experiment has been more successful than anywhere else. Moreover, on the whole (when I say this I think you will acquit me of having made any attempt to minimize the evils of the present day. But, on the whole) I think it can be said we have grown better and not worse; for if there is much evil, good also greatly abounds, and if wrong grows, so in even greater measure grows the stern sense of right before which wrong must eventually yield. It would be both unmanly and unwarranted to become faint-hearted or despairing about the nation's future. And the Methodist Church would not be the Methodist Church if it either were unmanly or grew faint hearted! Clear-eyed and far-sighted men who are both brave of heart and cool of head, while not for a moment refusing to see and acknowledge the many evils around us, must yet also feel a confident assurance that in the struggle we shall win and not lose, that the century that has just opened will see great triumph for our people.

But the surest way to achieve this triumph is, while never losing hope and belief in our progress, yet at the same time to refuse to blind ourselves to what is evil in the complex play of the many forces, working through, and with, and against one another, in the upbuilding of our social structure. There is more of good than evil; but there is plenty of evil, and it behooves us to war against it. There is much that tends toward evil as well as much that tends toward good; and the true patriot is that man who, without losing faith in the good, does his best to combat the evil, to stamp it out where that is possible, and if that is not possible, at least to minimize the harm it does. Prosperity such as ours, necessary though it be as the material basis of national greatness, inevitably tends to undue exaltation of the merely material side of the national character; and we must largely rely on the efforts of such men and women as those I am addressing to build up the spiritual life without which the material life amounts in the end to nothing.

I do not want to be misunderstood. I do not want to seem to be guilty of cant. The material success is a good thing. Don't ever let me be misunderstood as saying to a man or the nation to disregard material success. You want your son to be able to pull his own weight—not to have to be helped by somebody else to keep himself and his wife and his children, and I hope he will have plenty of them. (Laughter and applause).

You want him to be able to care for himself and for those close to him and dependent upon him. But you do not want him to be content with only taking care of his body. Let him take care of his body; but remember that it amounts to nothing if he does not take care of his soul. And as it is with the man, so it is with the nation.

As generation succeeds generation the problems change in their external shape; old needs vanish, and new needs arise; but it remains as true as ever that in the last analysis national greatness, national happiness, national success, depend upon the character of the individual man and individual woman. Nothing can supply the place of that individual character. We need good laws; we need to have these laws honestly and fearlessly administered; we need wealth; we need science and art and all the kindred activities that spring from the clever brain and the deft hand. But most of all we need the essential qualities that in their sum make up the good man and the good woman; most of all we need that fine and healthy family life the lack of which makes any seeming material prosperity but a glittering sham.

If the average man is brave and hard-working and clean-living—he has got to be that; he has got to be brave; the timid good man is not worth much. He has got to have common sense. He has got to be willing to work hard, and to be clean of life and thought. If he is that type of man; if the average woman has the qualities which make a good wife and good mother, if each of them alike has self-respect, and if each realizes that the greatest thing in life is the chance to do service; if that is true of the average man and woman, we need not bother about the future of the nation. It is secure. But, men and women, we can not stand up for what is good in manhood and womanhood without condemning what is evil.

We do not want to be too hard upon the sinner. But we do not want to spare the

sin; and sometimes; as an incident to that, you must condemn the one guilty of the sin. We must condemn the man who is either brutal and vicious or weak and cowardly; the man who fails to do his duty by the public, who is a bad neighbor, an idler—let not the idler lay the unction to his soul that he has not harmed anybody. If he does not benefit anybody he cumpers the ground. We must condemn the man who fails to do his duty by the public, who is a bad neighbor, an idler, an inconsiderate and selfish husband, a neglectful father.

Just one word to the man whose goodness is confined to affairs outside his own house. Let him remember that by being selfish, inconsiderate, exacting in his own home, he may be able to inflict considerably more misery than he can ever offset outside. So much for the man. I am better fitted to preach to him than to the woman. But the woman likewise is to be condemned who, whether from cowardice or coldness, from selfish love of ease or from lack of all true womanly quality, refuses to do aright her great and all-essential duties of wifehood and motherhood. We admire a good man; but we admire a good woman still more.

I believe in the future of this nation, because I think the average man is a pretty good fellow. But I think his wife is a still better fellow. But in the case of war she is not; I am not going to say that she is. All honor to the man who does his full duty in peace; and honor evermore to the man who does his full duty in war—as the Methodists did in the civil war. (Applause.) But there is one person whom I put above the soldier, and that is the mother who has done her full duty. For every man worthy the name must recognize that the birth pangs make all men the debtors of all women. No human being has quite the title to respect that the mother has who does her full duty. It is owing to her that the nation can go on—that it grows and not decays; so that in quality and in quantity the citizenship of the nation shall increase and not decrease. The measure of our belief in and respect for the good man and the good woman must be the measure of our condemnation of the man and the woman—of either man or woman—who, whether from viciousness or selfishness or from vapid folly, fails to do each his or her duty in his or her special sphere. Courage, unselfishness, common sense, devotion to high ideals, a proper care for the things of the spirit—which does not in the least mean that there shall not also be a proper care for the things of the body—these are what we most need to see in our people.

It is not genius, brilliancy, keenness of intellect, that we most need in our people. We most need the common, everyday, humdrum qualities which make up the ordinary good man and good woman. These are the qualities that make up the right type of family life; and these are the qualities that by precept and by example you here—you Methodist men and women whom I am addressing—are bound to do all in your power to make the typical qualities of American citizenship. (Great applause).

The President: I just wish I could stay longer with you, but I have another engagement—I have been leading a quite busy life recently—and I am a little late for it now. It has been a very real pleasure to meet you here today. I am not at all sure that I have helped you, but you have helped me. (Great applause.)

METHODIST FEDERATION FOR SOCIAL SERVICE
EXECUTIVE HARRY WARD PRESSES
CHURCH TO ENGAGE SOCIAL ORDER

Source: Harry F. Ward, "Social Service and the Church," Centenary Celebration of American Methodist Missions, Columbus, Ohio, June 20-July 13, 1919, *Souvenir Book (Cincinnati: Methodist Book Concern, 1919)*, 25.

The Spirit which gave Methodism birth was a spirit of service. Wesley's philanthropy at Oxford began with his sympathy for prisoners. Under his leadership a reading club became a center for brotherly services to the unfortunate; releasing prisoners held for debt, helping the poor with money and medicine, maintaining children at school and providing winter clothing for them. These and other demands came with such power and conviction to the little group that the very walls of their club were stripped of its pictures to meet the needs revealed.

From the day of the famous club to the end of his life Wesley's days were filled with practical service to the needy of every description. Furnishing employment, mapping out the city of London into districts with volunteer visitors appointed for each to look after the poor and sick, establishing a lending society, creating dispensaries, founding schools and orphanages, even publishing the classics in cheap editions, these were some of the activities in which that restless doer of good works engaged.

The followers of Wesley never lost altogether the initial impulse toward practical service given by their leader. In these later days the spirit of service to every individual need is once again stirring the church with new life; and from that idea of service to the individual, the local churches are beginning to reach out into the field of community service, until now the ideal of service to the whole community is fairly well established as the direction in which the church is moving.

But the past few years have revealed a far larger task than had appeared on the horizon of Wesley's day, or upon the day of any generation until the present one. That task is the regeneration of the social order itself. For its accomplishment, there is no lack of guiding principles, either in the early tradition of the church, or in its later ideals. What remains now to be done, is to make full and complete use of those principles in the construction of a Christian order of society.

A three-fold challenge comes to the church today as it stands, with immense resources, power and influence, before this call to a new application of its ideals.

First, is the church to be content merely to carry forward on a larger scale than ever before the services which it has already established? Or will it seek also the creation of a society in which many of those services will be forever unnecessary?

Again, will it use its power and influence merely in an attempt to coerce the opposing forces on the industrial field into "right relations" with one another, or will it give itself also to the utmost to build that kind of a social order in which there shall be no opposing camps, but only cooperation in a common task?

Finally, will it be content to teach the necessity of good material conditions for all? Or will it challenge as well the righteousness of a system of society which perpetuates power and profits for one group and wages and work for the other, to the spiritual destruction of the wielders of power and the physical and moral degradation of those over whom the power is held?

If the church would today meet the challenge of the times, it must bear its full share of the task of breaking new paths to the goal of economic brotherhood. Only so can it fulfill its ministry to a world weary of strife over material possessions, and hungering for the spiritual joy which comes only with the opportunity of working together in fellowship at a common task for the good of all men.

CHURCH ARCHITECTURE EXECUTIVE ELBERT CONOVER FAVORS GOTHIC CHURCHES

Source: *Elbert M. Conover, Building the House of God (New York: Methodist Book Concern, 1928), 69-73, 100-111. Excerpts. Italics in original.*

CHAPTER VI. THE PROBLEM OF MODERN CHURCH BUILDING

We now face the problem of leadership in church building of a type worthy of the present generation, which commands resources undreamed of in the thirteenth century. Can we equal those builders of the past in abandon and devotion to a great cause? Some American churches frankly broke with the churchly order of the past and set up in this country as independent denominations but failed to give to the people the full ministry properly expected of a church. Too often men have come to look upon the house of God as just another civic structure that might in design and expression be little different from the town hall, theater, library, schoolhouse, or bank. Wise leadership in a church-building enterprise must insist that just as there are fundamental truths in our holy faith, so there are certain facts essential of maintenance in Christian architecture; otherwise it is as incongruous for its purposes as the Koran in a Christian pulpit. While local conditions and the materials of construction widely differ, there are motives and features that should mark the house of God regardless of its location. There is a language of architecture in which either truth or falsehood will be expressed.

Some Essential Elements That Must Obtain in a Worthy Church Architecture

Church architecture should express religious truth. The language of architecture may not consciously be understood but its influence is potent. When this influence is negative, there is a real loss to the community. Particularly should the church be careful of her architecture—it speaks directly to the feelings. It is the duty of the church builder to understand this language, absorb its vocabulary, and through it proclaim such a message as cannot otherwise be expressed. We are coming more generally to realize the influence of buildings. . . . The churches of a denomination that invests millions of dollars in church buildings ought to realize what a power

for good, evil or indifference such an expenditure may become. The inappropriateness of pagan forms of architecture in connection with the Christian Church should be quite evident. Quite likely all people are strongly influenced by their architectural environment even if they are not able to analyze its effect. Doubtless the architecture with which the almost illiterate Roman Catholics in isolated parts of the world are familiar has had a most effective influence upon their lives, and we may venture the assumption that conditions of irreverence of which some folks anxiously complain have been induced by the conglomerate or sterile architecture that has prevailed in our churches. To-day there is a tendency to give tone and meaning to the structure used for the activities of commerce and industry. The community is beginning to question the right of an industry sordidly to devastate the possible beauty of a locality by the erection of ugly buildings. How much more should be expected of a church!

The church building should express aspiration. In the upward trend of all the parts of the [Gothic] building is seen the influence of a faith that finds its climax in the heavenlies. Crude and stubby towers ended abruptly before reaching the height of the roof ridge, fail to lead one's mind far upward. . . . The square library type of building does not aspire at all. It may be a . . . safe storage place for books and relics, or works of art, but does not attempt to point upward. The architecture that came out of pagan thought and worship [classical revival] cannot express the Christian hope. . . .

Christian architecture should express a spiritual faith. It should witness a faith that sustains the people during an earthly existence. It must express more than a cold utility. Some plans would indicate that the people who propose to use the church have not an idea in the world disassociated from their commercial pursuits. A church building enterprise is a venture of faith. It should speak of the faith and sacrifice that make the house of worship and Christian service possible.

It should inspire worship. A Christian church building should promote worship. The architect should be clearly informed as to the program of public and private worship, so that proper facilities may be provided for these services. Especially should the interior of a church stimulate a devout frame of mind. A sanctuary fashioned after a concert hall cannot produce the warmth of heart that will lead to the thought, "This is none other than the house of God." Windows that do not glare, decorations that are refined in tone, uplifting lines of structure with something that reminds of God go far toward producing the realization of God's presence. Nothing should intrude between the prayerful state of the soul and the thought of God. . . .

Modern church building calls for a leadership definitely and intelligently devoted to this noble endeavor. Aside from its practical considerations, Christian architecture may be the very highest expression in the realm of art. How much, then, depends upon those who are called to this work! To build the house of God and make it a place where people can realize the Divine Presence, where little children will be instructed in the Way, the Truth, and the Life, and where Christian fellowship and service will evidence the presence of the Divine Spirit in human living, is a work of art in the supreme sense. . . .

CHAPTER X. BUILDING FOR WORSHIP

In divine worship, the human personality enters into its most sublime experience. If the service appointed for worship does not make the Divine Presence appreciable and does not inspire or comfort or create humility of mind, it fails of its purpose. . . .

The Nave. The nave should be at least twice as long as it is wide; the height at least equal to the width. In this manner of planning the maximum number of worshippers is seated in front of the aisles straight. A sloping floor in a church is of no real advantage. If the height of the pulpit is increased a few *inches*, this will compensate for any advantage of pitching the floor a corresponding number of feet. . . .

There has been a regrettable tendency in America to build our churches of too great width. If there is no clerestory, the walls must be carried up to a greater height, risking a barnlike appearance; if the ceiling is too low, the room appears squatty. Another fault has been to have the sanctuary too large. The growing opinion is that it should be of such size that it will be well filled on normal occasions. . . . It is unwise to allow the needs of an occasional convention to determine the size of the church auditorium. . . .

The Chancel. The chancel is the separated place in front of the church in the apse—if there be one—in which are the minister, the choir and the equipment required for conducting the services of worship and preaching. . . . In most of the so-called non-liturgical churches there is a very marked increase in the use of the open chancel arrangement. In brief, this open or churchly chancel arrangement calls for a point of focus or highlight for the entire sanctuary. This is provided by giving the communion table a central position. . . . At one side of the chancel is the lectern, devoted to the ministry of reading the scriptures and at the opposite side the pulpit, which gives the ministry of preaching a separate, distinct, and permanent setting. The baptismal font, a constant symbol of entrance into the Christian fellowship is just within the railing or in some permanent and dignified position. . . .

Provision for the Holy Communion. Give to the table of the Lord the position of honor due it, with nothing but the communion rail between it and the people. To place the communion table in a narrow passage, or to overshadow it by a so-called pulpit-desk, is to detract from the high significance of the service and all that it represents in the life of the Christian Church. . . .

METHODIST WOMEN IN THE SOUTH OPPOSE SEGREGATED PLAN OF UNION

Source: *Woman's Missionary Council of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South*, 27th Annual Report (1936-37), 140-41. Excerpts. Italics added.

Committee on Interracial Co-operation *Study Group on Unification and Race Relations*

At the meeting of the Executive Committee of the Woman's Missionary Council in November 1935, plans were made for a number of studies of matters considered important for our work. Since some of us had been troubled about the racial aspect of the proposed plan for the unification of Methodism, your Interracial Committee was asked to make a study of that aspect of the plan and to report their findings to the Executive Committee. When the report was presented last November, the Executive Committee requested that the Interracial Committee continue their studies, reporting to the Council.

The plan proposes to unite into one church the entire membership of the Methodist Episcopal Church, the Methodist Episcopal Church, South and the Methodist Protestant Church in the United States of America and abroad. Provision is made for one General Conference, for Annual Conferences as the fundamental bodies of the church, and for another type of conference new to Methodism, to be composed of a number of annual conferences contiguous to each other, intermediate in its scope between General Conference and the annual conferences. These conferences are called *Central* in the foreign fields; in the United States they are called *Jurisdictional* conferences. Five of them are geographically described: the Northeastern; the Southeastern . . . ; the North Central; the South-Central; and the Western. The sixth jurisdictional conference is called the *Central [Jurisdictional] Conference* and is composed of the Negro Annual Conferences of the Methodist Episcopal Church as now constituted, extending over the United States, except in New England and in twelve of the states of the West. In New England and in these western states Negro churches will remain in the Annual Conferences composed chiefly of white members within whose geographical boundaries they are situated. The great bulk of the Negro membership will fall in

the Central Conference which includes all the southern and southwestern states, and the large cities of the East and Middle West. . . .

The racial aspect of Methodist unification has been widely discussed in the church press and in Negro newspapers and journals. Several outstanding church papers have criticized it severely as unchristian, unbrotherly, and insulting to the Negro. The Negro press has been for the most part bitterly opposed to the plan, although here and there Negro writers have defended it as offering the Negro larger autonomy than he has heretofore had in the Methodist Episcopal Church, and as involving no greater segregation than has been practiced for decades, and that through the expressed choice of the Negro membership. Some defend it as the only basis in which the Northern and Southern churches can be united, the Negro's status in the Methodist Episcopal Church being sacrificed in order to bring about an important and long-overdue union of the two.

Your committee agrees that the plan is less than ideal; that it leaves much to be desired if the Methodist Church is fully to represent the Kingdom of God on earth. For Methodist Churches in the same city to be related to each other only through a General Conference that meets once in four years, seems consistent neither with Methodist connectionalism nor with Jesus' concern that "they all may be one." And yet is that not what we have had in Methodism, both North and South, for a generation or more? And is it not preferable to a nation-wide church with only white members? Is it not preferable to a church in which a Negro minority is included, but with little if any opportunity for developing a leadership of its own and church program suited to its needs and interests?

Your committee believes that certain provisions of the plan represent an advance in interracial respect and co-operation. The plan provides the same autonomy, including the election of bishops, for the Central Conferences as it does for the other Jurisdictional Conferences. In the General Conference, the Negro Jurisdictional Conference, the Negro delegates and the Negro bishops will have equal representation and equal participation with white conferences, white delegates, and white bishops. *The inadequacy of the plan lies in its failure to provide for co-operation between white and colored Methodists in annual and jurisdictional Conferences and in local communities.* We think we may safely say that the Commission on Unification did not make provision in the plan for more direct relationship between white and Negro Annual Conferences and white and Negro local churches because our churches as a whole are not yet ready for such co-operation. These being the facts, we may perhaps agree that the commission has done the best it could under the circumstances.

There remains the question what can we do to set in motion forces that will build up a desire for co-operation between white and colored Methodist churches in our own communities? We think we have already found the answer in our increasing fellowship with the Colored Methodist Episcopal Church. It was about ten years ago that we began working together as missionary women in Leadership Schools for colored women. Many of us, through participation in these schools, have grown in our knowledge and experience of God and have found joy in a broader and

more satisfying Christian fellowship than we had ever known before. This year we are finally merging our Leadership schools for colored women with the training schools of the C.M.E. Church, their Board of Religious Education carrying the final responsibility for the schools with the officers of our Conference Missionary Societies and the conference secretaries of the Board of Christian Education of our church participating in the planning of the schools, in their financing, in the recruiting of students, and, where it is desired, in teaching and administration. Is not this a good road for us all to travel? Can we not extend this type of co-operation to the Negro groups of the M.E. Church within the bounds of our annual conferences?

We are not suggesting a procedure identical to this, but we are suggesting that we become aware of the Negro congregations in our midst, especially of the M.E. connection, and that we seek to find ways of co-operating with them in the good work of the Kingdom. Let us seek to know their leaders in the missionary societies and let us ask our pastors to go with us in this adventure in Christian understanding. As we find work that we can best do together, let us undertake it together. Let us sometimes worship with one another. Those of us who have had such worship experiences will testify that they have brought us new visions of God and of his love for all men. Is not this the practical way to do our part toward building a great church in which men of all races and nations may find fellowship, in which we may all learn to build together the Kingdom of God?

We as women know the value of having an organization of our own in which we may do things our own way, with our own leaders, meeting at times that are convenient for us. There is room in the world for organization by age groups, by sex, by occupations, by special interests, by races, by geographical areas, for the pursuit of special objectives. But the Church of God must include all such groups, excluding none and discriminating against none, but uniting all and relating each to all for the sake of the Kingdom.

We rejoice that Methodism around the world includes men of so many races and nations and we pray that it may be used of God to further international justice and good will. We rejoice also that Methodism in America has in many instances and in many communities stood for interracial justice and good will when it required Christian insight and Christian courage to do so. We believe that we have a great opportunity to help to solve the race problem in America in a Christian way through strengthening the church ties between white and colored Methodists. We believe that such a Methodist connectionalism transcending race and nation and economic class will be better able to create in us the mind which was in Christ Jesus, who taught us of one God who is the Father of all and in whom we are all brothers one of another.

Louise Young, *Chairman*;
Mrs. R. P. Neblett, *Secretary*

WOMAN'S DIVISION ISSUES CHARTER OF RACIAL POLICIES

Source: Methodist Church (U.S.) Board of Missions and Church Extension, Woman's Division of Christian Service, Journal of the 12th Annual Meeting, Buck Hill Falls, Pa., January 8-12, 1952 (New York: Woman's Division, 1952), 47-48.

CHARTER ON HUMAN RIGHTS

We Believe

1. We believe that God is the father of all people of all races and we are His children in one family.
2. We believe that the personality of every human being is sacred.
3. We believe that opportunities for fellowship and service, for personal growth, and for freedom in every aspect of life are inherent rights of every individual.
4. We believe that the visible church of Jesus Christ must demonstrate these principles within its own organization and program.
5. We believe that the Woman's Division as an agency of The Methodist Church must build, in every area it may touch, a fellowship and social order without racial barriers.
6. We believe that progress may be advanced by declaring emphatically those policies on which the Woman's Division is determined to move in order to come nearer the ideal.

POLICIES

1. Persons to fill positions within the official body or staff of the Woman's Division of Christian Service shall be selected on the basis of qualifications without regard for race.

The committee on Nominations of the Woman's Division shall consider all openings for service in the Division or staff on this principle, giving due consideration to circumstances which will offer opportunity for fruitful and happy service.

2. The institutions and projects of the Division are instruments by which we may translate the Christian ideals and attitudes of this charter into action.

- a. We will employ all missionaries, deaconesses and other workers, regardless of racial or national background, on the basis of qualifications, and the promise they show for effective work in the field to which they will be sent.
 - b. The facilities and opportunities offered by our projects and institutions shall be open to all people without discrimination because of racial or national background.
 - c. Where law prohibits or custom prevents the immediate achievement of these objectives, workers and local boards are charged with the responsibility of creating a public opinion which may result in changing such laws and customs.
3. All promotional plans of the Woman's Division must take into account the various racial groups within its organization pattern and related to its program emphases.
 4. Special guidance toward the integration of all groups into the life and work of the church shall be given to the auxiliary societies of the Woman's Division.
 5. Summer Schools of Missions and Christian Service of both Jurisdictions and Conferences are urged to seek increasingly to establish a working relationship across racial lines in planning and carrying out all phases of the programs, taking into account geographical accessibility of groups involved.
 6. Summer school subsidies provided for or by any Jurisdiction or Conference should be available when requested for use at the school most accessible to the person receiving the subsidy.
 7. Workshops, seminars, and institutes should be set up on a geographical basis with full opportunity for initial participation by all racial groups in the making and execution of the plans.
 8. Local Societies and Guilds should give increased emphasis to the working together of all racial groups and study and action that affect the life of the church and community.
 9. All Jurisdiction and Conference societies are urged to work for the enactment of policies at all Methodist Assembly grounds that will enable the full participation of any racial group in any phase of the assembly program.
 10. The Woman's Division has consistently observed its established policy for holding its meetings in places where all racial groups can have access to all facilities without discrimination in any form. To further extend this policy Jurisdiction and Conference Societies are urged to work for its implementation as a basic step toward building a Christian fellowship within the organization and toward an impact on the community as a whole.

THE WOMAN'S DIVISION OF CHRISTIAN SERVICE CALLS WITH NEW URGENCY ON THE JURISDICTION AND CONFERENCE WOMAN'S SOCIETIES OF CHRISTIAN SERVICE TO STUDY THE PRINCIPLES AND POLICIES STATED IN THIS CHARTER, LOOKING TOWARD EARLY RATIFICATION BY EACH JURISDICTION AND CONFERENCE. SUCH A RATIFICATION WILL CONSTITUTE A COMMITMENT TO WORK FOR THE SPEEDY IMPLEMENTATION OF THOSE PRINCIPLES AND POLICIES WITHIN THE BOUNDS OF A RESPECTIVE JURISDICTION OR CONFERENCE.

PRIMARY SOURCES
MODULE 4

PROFESSOR ALBERT OUTLER DETAILS “UNFINISHED BUSINESS” IN SERMON TO UNITING CONFERENCE

Source: Albert C. Outler, “Uniting Conference Sermon,” *United Methodist Church, Journal of the General Conference (1968)*, 2: 995-1003. Excerpts.

Tuesday Morning, April 23, 1968
“Visions and Dreams”

Fathers and Brethren and Sisters in Christ:

Here we are this morning, gathered together from over the world and from all sorts and conditions of men—to celebrate a birthday, *our* birthday as The United Methodist Church. In just a few moments now, we shall join in a ceremony symbolizing our new covenant of unity and mutual growth together. The aura of every newborn thing is an aura of hope. And so it is with us today. We stand here on a threshold. A new horizon looms ahead.

In some ears, it may sound fantastic to relate *this* day to the first Pentecost recorded in Acts 2—what with no rushing mighty wind, no tongues of fire, no glossolalia, and so forth. But actually, the lasting meaning of *that* Pentecost was its opening the way for others to follow after.

And while the day of Pentecost was getting on, they [the disciples] were all together with one accord in one place. . . . And they were filled with the Holy Spirit . . . and began to speak . . . as the Spirit gave them the power of utterance . . . about the great deeds of God. . . .

This is, of course, an abridgement of the longer text, with the marvels omitted and also those two bits of local color that still intrigue me: the one where Peter denies that the disciples are drunk because it was too early in the morning (about the same time of day as *now!*); and that other one about the 3,000 new members added in one day. What a frustration it must have been for Peter to have all that happen, with no board to report it to!

Clearly, though, that *first* Pentecost was less significant for what happened *then* than for what came after. Pentecost *was the day when the real work of the church began*, when the Christian people accepted the agenda of their unfinished business in the

world and began to get on with it! Those first Christians were not very well furnished in terms of ecclesiastical apparatus. Their organization was shaky, their polity and discipline sketchy. Their theologians were in typical disagreement, and their most prominent "lay leaders" were Ananias and Sapphira!

Even so *that* Pentecost was ever thereafter memorable as the Church's *birthday*, as the day when Joel's prophecy was fulfilled—when the Holy Spirit would come and abide as God's governing presence in the midst of his People—and this memory remained, even when the rushing mighty wind subsided to homiletical zephyrs, when glossolalia was relegated to the margins of Christian experience, when the tongues of fire gave way to controversy and conflict. Pentecost is rightly remembered as the day when the Christian church was launched on its career *in* history, *for* the world. In every age, her performance has been scandalously short of her visions and dreams—and her plain imperatives. And yet also in every age since the first Pentecost, it is the Christian church that has marked off the crucial difference between man's best hope and his genuine despair.

I know as well as anyone that this analogy between that first birthday and this one of ours does not apply four-square. Our new church does not represent a radical break with our several past histories, nor is there a comparable intention toward a radically new future. Even so, the analogy between the first Pentecost and this one could be edifying to us, too. This is the day when *the real work of the UMC begins*. It is a day when doors are opened that heretofore were closed, when new possibilities of reformation and renewal are literally "at hand."

The essence of the event is self-evident: it is the accomplished fact of The United Methodist Church. Where once, scarcely a generation ago, there were five churches, now there is one. Where once our differences kept us apart—with different languages and folkways—now they are overcome or at least contained within a larger circle of committed fellowship. We have been Christian brethren, after a fashion, for the better part of two centuries—but *separated* brethren. Now our memberships and ministers have been mingled without compromise or indignity; our separate traditions have been sublated and made one.

Obviously, no part of our venture in unity is really *finished* as yet! Our joy in *this* union ought to be tempered by our remembrance, in love, of those others of our Christian brethren, whom we acknowledge as such, and yet from whom we are still separated. Moreover, the various practical, domestic problems posed by our agenda in this Conference loom large and exigent. It will *not* be a debonair fort-night; few of us are likely to be content with the outcome. And yet, here we are and this is our birthday. Here we turn a new page in modern church history—and just as smugness is excluded from our celebration, so also is cynicism.

Let us then ask ourselves what this fact of a new church makes possible. What will it take to turn this beginning into the reality of its promise and of our hopes? We can offer our ungrudging gratitude and honor to all those whose toil and tears, faith and fortitude have led us to this hour—so long as we are all clear that none of their laurels (and certainly none of ours) is for *resting on*. We have much to be grateful for, nothing to be complacent about. Our joy this day is foretaste: foretaste

of a future that can be even more creative than we have yet dared to ask or think.

This means that, as we turn from ceremony of beginnings to the tasks that follow, our foremost need is for a vivid sense of the church we have been called to be. By what norms shall we seek to transform our covenant into genuine *koinonia*? By what principles are we willing to be guided in the agonies of growth that lie ahead? To what heavenly vision are we prepared to be obedient in the difficult days and years that even the blithest optimist can foresee?

One thing is for sure: what has served till now as our *status quo ante* will simply not suffice for the upcoming future. For all its great merits—for all its saints and heroes—the standing order is now too nearly preoccupied with self-maintenance and survival. The world is in furious and agonizing turmoil, incomprehensible and unmanageable. The church is in radical crisis, and in the throes of a profound demoralization, at every level: of faith and order, life and work. In such times, business as usual simply will not get our business done. Our own past golden age (the 19th century)—the heyday of pietism in a preurbanized society—has faded. Frontiersmen for tomorrow must be as dynamically adaptive to the *new* “new world” as our forefathers were in theirs.

There is, of course, a bit of glibness here—for the brute fact is that we have no clearly visible alternative to the *status quo* ready to hand, available merely for our choice and application. For all their advertisements, none of the new experiments of celebration of our own brave new world can honestly be hailed as the shape of things to come. Nor is it the case that any of our sister churches have had vouchsafed to them, the blueprints for Zion’s Ark, space-age model—though some (notably the Roman Catholics) have recently exposed themselves to more massive and more fruitful self-examination than we.

For freedom we have been set free, from the outdated past—but it begins to look as if we have been condemned to freedom as well: condemned to come up with something better than protests and complaints and self-righteous criticism of others; we are condemned to *responsible* prophecy, reform and renewal—or else to the fatal consequences of destructive discontent. If, in this new church of ours, we are to avoid “the dinosaur-syndrome” (with its zeal for furnishing later ages an abundance of fossils) or its opposite, “the Elijah complex” (with its self-pitying, self-righteousness about our minority status), we *must* find our way forward in conscious concern for the continuum of the Christian tradition and history in which we stand with our forefathers: always aware of God’s habit of linking the past and the future by means of the hopeful acts of men in decisive *present* moments—like *this one!* We must learn to discipline our imaginations and inventions, not by our own constrictive biases, but by God’s open-hearted mandates for his people, by patterns that will serve our *common* life in the Body of Christ. . . .

It may seem to some a mite unseasonable to suggest that the UMC needs to take conscious, urgent thought of being or becoming “truly reformed,” *just now!* We *are* a Church re-formed: what with our new plan [of union] and our newer report and with ten more days to pull and haul away at their discussion, amendment, and adoption. Surely *this* is enough for the present moment. Well, ye-s-s—in a way—but

that's partly my point. This plan and the report in the form in which they will stand when we adjourn will doubtless be the very best we can do, under *all* the circumstances, etc., etc. But for how long will *that* be good *enough*? The answer: not much beyond the results being printed in the new *Discipline*. Wherefore, *now* is the time, as at that first Pentecost, for young men to see visions and for old men to dream dreams—visions and dreams that ask more of the Methodist people than we have ever asked before, visions and dreams that offer a richer, fuller life for all God's People, visions and dreams that see this "new" Church *renewed* yet again and again, not only "in the Spirit" but in her structures, functions, folkways.

This is not a proposal, not even indirectly, for any special reform—yours or mine or anybody else's. It is, however, an open advocacy of the *idea* of reform and of "the Protestant principle" of *semper reformanda*. When more of us get accustomed to the notion that this new church of ours *can* be remade for yet more effective mission, for still more authentic democracy and local initiative, for still more efficient, adventurous leadership—and that all this *can* be done and *should* be done forthwith!—then the pooled wisdom of our fellowship will surely be enabled to prove that rational, responsible change is a far more faithful pattern of obedience to Christ than the most devoted immobilism can ever be.

This, then, is our birthday—a day to celebrate, a day to remember, a day for high hopes and renewed commitments. This is a day when the eyes of the whole Christian community are focused on us and especially those of our Methodist brethren in Britain who are with us here in spirit. This *is* the day that the Lord has made. Let us *really* rejoice and be glad in it—glad for the new chance God now gives us to be a *church united in order to be uniting, a church repentant in order to be a church redemptive, a church cruciform in order to manifest God's triumphant agony for mankind,*

Till sons of men shall learn *his* love
And follow where *his* feet have trod
Till, glorious from the heavens above,
Shall, come the city of our God!

[Frank Mason North, "Where Cross the Crowded Ways of Life," v. 6, *The Methodist Hymnal* 1966, no. 204.]

Let us pray:

O God, of unchangeable power and eternal light, look favorably on thy whole church, that wonderful and sacred mystery; and, by the tranquil operation of thy perpetual providence, carry out the work of man's salvation; and let the whole world feel and see that things which were cast down are being raised up, that those things which had grown old are being made new, and that all things are returning to perfection, through him from whom they took their origin, even Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

FIRST LADY HILLARY CLINTON CONFESSES INDEBTEDNESS TO METHODISM

Source: "Address by Hillary Rodham Clinton," *Daily Christian Advocate* 3/10 (25 April 1996), part 2, 655-58.

I have to confess to you that I have not been this nervous, with 150 bishops, someone told me, behind me, since I read my confirmation essay on "What Jesus Means to Me" in my home church. (*laughter and applause*) And I got through that all right. I hope I am able to convey to you my great sense of honor and pleasure at being here.

This quadrennial General Conference is important to all of us who are Methodists. And Methodism has been important to me for as long as I can remember. My father came from a long line of Methodists who had immigrated from England and Wales. And they took their church very seriously. And when my brothers and I were born, despite the fact we were then living in Chicago, my parents took us back to the Court Street Methodist Church in Scranton, Pa., to be christened in front of my grandfather and other relatives. We recently took back my nephew to go through the same experience at that church.

My parents belonged to a very large and active congregation in Park Ridge, Ill., the First United Methodist Church. It was the center not only for Sunday morning worship, but Sunday evening youth groups, and often during the week, for other activities. My mother taught Sunday school, and my brothers and I were there as often as the church doors opened, sometimes, although my mother later confessed that one of the reasons she taught Sunday school was to keep an eye on my brothers, so that they actually showed up and stayed after they were dropped off.

The church was a critical part of my growing up. And in preparing for this event, I almost couldn't even list all the ways it influenced me, and helped me develop as a person, not only on my own faith journey, but with a sense of obligations to others.

It taught me practical lessons as well; for example, how to recover from the embarrassment of passing out in an over-heated sanctuary when I was playing an angel during the Christmas pageant. [*laughter*] That particular lesson has stood me in good stead on many occasions in my adult life.

But most importantly, I learned from the ministers there, and the lay leaders there, the men and women such as yourselves, who ran the church life, about the connection between my personal faith and the obligations I faced as a Christian, both to other individuals and to society.

I am particularly indebted to the many people who taught Sunday School and Vacation Bible School. I can remember the lessons there, sometimes more vividly than what I have read or seen just last week. How many times did I sing the song, "Jesus Loves the Little Children of the World—red and yellow, black and white, they are precious in his sight." Those words have stayed with me more personally and longer than many earnest lectures on race relations. And to this day, I find myself wondering how anyone who ever sang them could be prejudiced against any group. [*applause*]

When I graduated into Methodist Youth Fellowship, I was fortunate to have a youth minister who arranged for us, living in our very comfortable, middle-class, all-White suburb of Chicago, opportunities to go into the inner city; to have exchanges with church groups of Black and Hispanic youngsters; to baby-sit for the children of migrant workers who, for those of you who did not grow up around Chicago in the 1950s and can only imagine flying into O'Hare where everything looks developed, might find it hard to believe how many farm workers we would have. And our church took some responsibility for helping. We visited the residents of nursing homes. We would go to public events that would feature speeches by people we'd barely heard of like Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. We discussed what our faith meant in the world; and I am so grateful for those lessons and those opportunities.

I am equally grateful that my daughter has had the same, both at her church in Little Rock, and now at her church in Washington. Her Sunday School teachers there have helped her and her peers explore and express ideas and fears. One time just this past year, Bill and I went to a meeting of the teen-age Sunday School group where the teen-agers talked about what bugged them about their relationships with their parents. And it helped to have another child say what your own child didn't want to say to you directly. It was one of the many experiences that we have had because of the loving and faithful adults who care for young people in the Methodist Church. [*applause*]

And I hope that one of the lessons that we all take from our own experience, and one of the messages that comes forth from this conference, is that despite all the headlines and the problems that we face in helping our children and young people, we have so many wonderful young people. [*applause*] And just a few days ago, I received a letter from a young man who is a delegate here from Arkansas. You are going to think that between the bishop and me, we are promoting Arkansas. He wrote to me about all the good things that were happening in his church and conference, and he said to me, "Our church and our world must know that youth are not just involved in gangs, drugs, and violence; they are also involved in youth programs, missions, and the life of our church."

And I hope that each of us, and certainly from my background with the debt I

owe to so many who helped me, understand that in today's world, churches are among the few places in society where young people can let down their guard, let off steam, and be part of a fellowship that offers them the opportunity for religious and spiritual expression and acts of humanity. And if we look at the positive side of what we can offer to young people, then we know that at the center of that experience is our faith and our mission as Methodists and as Christians.

That faith has certainly meant a great deal to me over the years. But I know that today, here at this conference and throughout the world, we are faced with many new challenges and opportunities that test and try us; that ask us how we will put into action what we believe. We know we need to strengthen the spiritual and moral context of our lives. And we know that we need a new sense of caring about one another in which every segment of society, every institution, fulfills its responsibility to the larger community, and particularly to families and children.

Here, in the United States, and certainly in the other countries represented here, we see too many children and people who remain on the margins of society. We see children who are unloved, unfed, unhealthy, and unschooled. We see women and people of color who are marginalized because they are denied the opportunities they deserve to become full participants in society. Those are the continuing challenges; and yet, we now know much more about what we can do together to meet those challenges. Despite the problems of poverty, and illiteracy and violence, there are solutions being born, being born in churches and communities, throughout the world.

The bishop mentioned a book that I have written, *It Takes A Village*, which really does, for me, express my fundamental belief that we all have an obligation to reach out to assist each other; and that we all should be willing to work toward solutions to our problems. It is easy to complain about the problems we face. It is harder but far more rewarding to roll up our sleeves and work together to solve them. [applause]

I was heartened, therefore, when I read a text of this year's episcopal address, to see that the Council of Bishops has renewed its call to make the welfare of children a top priority. And I commend the council for adopting the Episcopal Initiative on Children and Poverty, which will amplify the discussion of this very important issue world-wide. Children need us. They are not rugged individualists. They depend, first and foremost, on their parents who bare the primary responsibility for their upbringing.

And, yet, as a mother, I know that my daughter's life has been influenced and affected by countless other people, some of whom I know; many, many others I will never meet. Think of it: the police who patrol our streets to keep our children safe; the government officials who monitor the quality of air and water and food; the business leaders who employ parents and make decisions about what kind of income and benefits they will receive; the executives who produce the programs that our children see on television.

As adults we have to start thinking and believing that there isn't really any such thing as someone else's child. [applause] My child, your child, all children every-

where must live and make their ways in society. And now, in the increasingly shrinking world we live in, in the larger *globe* as well.

For that reason, we cannot permit discussions of children and families to be subverted by political or ideological debate. There are strong feelings about what should or should not be done, but there are also, I believe, strong areas of agreement where people should get beyond their disagreements to work together. There should be no disagreement about the fact that the family structure is in trouble; not only here, but in many parts of the world. There should be no debate that children need the nurturing and care that a stable family can provide. And there should be no debate about a common sense truth that children are the result of both the values of their parents and the values of the societies in which they live.

And so, if we look honestly at the problems we have, as the Episcopal Initiative is doing, then we should be asking ourselves, "What areas of common agreement do we have that can lead us as individuals, as a church, as community and society to work together on behalf of our children?" We know the biblical admonitions about caring for each other. We know so well what Jesus said to his disciples in Mark, holding a small child in his arms, "that whoever welcomes one such child in my name, welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me, welcomes not me, but the one who sends me." If we could only keep that in mind, and see in every child's face that faithful hopefulness. Take the image we have of Jesus—I can remember so clearly walking up the stairs so many times to my Sunday School class and seeing that picture that is in so many Methodist Churches of Jesus as the Shepherd—taking that face and transposing it onto the face of every child we see. Then we would ask ourselves, "Would I turn that child away from the health care that child needs? Would I say, that there is no help for that child because, look who he is, or look who her parents are?" No, we would take a deep breath in the face of disappointment in our efforts to help, and we would continue to try.

For me, the Social Principles of the Methodist Church have been as much a description of our history as a prod for my future actions. We can find direction if we look to the church's call to strengthen families and renew our schools, and encourage policies that enable each child to have a chance to fulfill his or her God-given potential.

Now, it is not easy to do that. I don't think it ever has been. I believe if one looks back, not only into the Bible but certainly since then, and reads the stories of John and Charles Wesley, and looks to other church leaders in the last century, we know that acting on our faith is never easy. And it is often a test of our own resolve as much as anything else. I think of the stories that I heard, even as a child, of John Wesley preaching to people who did not want to hear him. There was that one memorable story of where they were throwing whiskey bottles at him. And I think to myself, how many of us, myself included, would even go into places now where we were likely to be the object of thrown whiskey bottles? Not many of us. And in part what we have to confront is our own willingness to take the blessings we have and take them into a world that is complex, often turns away, and may even be hostile.

But just look at the tradition we come from. We continue in this church to answer John Wesley's call to provide for the educational, health, and spiritual needs of children. We can be proud that our church has been a leader in the fight to improve the quality of education, promote parental responsibility, curb smoking among young people, expand comprehensive health care, strengthen marriages, and help people of all kinds of backgrounds. I'm heartened by the work I see being done in the Communities of Shalom Initiative, where individual churches and churches in union are looking to transform just four city blocks in some instances. But taking that responsibility on, being there one-on-one with people unlike ourselves, often letting people hear the message of the gospel as well as the example of our works, will do more to change lives than any program that could be passed by any legislative body. [*applause*]

As I look at this great gathering, I see reflected here John Wesley's words that "the world is my parish." And if that be the case, then I am optimistic. Despite the headlines of the moment, and all of the difficulties we know lurk outside in this city we are in today, and every other one, I am optimistic because I see spiritual growth and action, based on that, beginning to manifest itself in so many different ways. In my book I wrote a little chapter called "Children Are Born Believers" because I feel so strongly that we owe our children a chance for them to have a spiritual life; for them to be part of a church. And it is not only something we do for them; we do it for ourselves, and we know that in ways we might not even predict, consequences can be positive.

A recent survey of young people and drug use found that children and youth who had regular religious involvement and attendance in a church or synagogue were far less likely to engage in self-destructive behavior like drug use. So we do it because we believe. And we do it because we trust that it will lead our young people to a better life for themselves.

Just this past month, I attended the funeral of a young man who epitomized the Methodist spirit of compassion and charity. He was the grandson, the son, and the nephew of Methodist ministers. His name was Adam Darling. He attended Foundry Church in Washington, as my husband and daughter and I do. And he had accompanied Commerce Secretary Ron Brown on his trip to Bosnia and was among the men and women who died on the side of that mountain in Croatia. He was only 29 years old. But in the four years the President and I had known him, we had seen a young man who not only blossomed professionally, but was committed to rebuilding cities, rebuilding communities, living in one of the toughest neighborhoods in Washington, getting to know his neighbors, babysitting for their children when he had time, hitting a ball with them in the street. Because he understood from the way he was raised that fame and success were fleeting. But a commitment to the spirit, involvement in the work of his church, would give him satisfaction and build a legacy that others, themselves, could take advantage of. I raise his name because when one contrasts what his short young life meant, and what he was attempting to rebuild, it gives me a great deal of energy and optimism about what all young people can do if they are given a chance.

I know that we have disagreements in society. We even have disagreements in the church. I think one of the reasons that I'm a Methodist is because I think disagreements are part of life. I think [*applause*] it's part of how we grow together. And I think all of us know that despite our disagreements, as the *Book of Discipline* puts it, we are engaged in a task to articulate our vision in a way that will draw us together as a people in mission. In the name of Jesus Christ, we are called to work within our diversity, while exercising patience and forbearance with one another. Such patience stems neither from indifference toward truth nor from an indulgent tolerance of error, but from an awareness that we know only in part, and that none of us is able to search the mysteries of God except by the spirit of God. That call to humility, and forbearance, and patience is not only important for the work of the church within the church, but it's critical to our work outside. It calls us to try, time and again, to reach into the lives of those who are left out. And it also prods us to look for ways we can work together to help our children.

If we were able, even within our own church in every congregation represented here, to help every mother and father be the best parent that parent could be, we would have done a wonderful piece of work. [*applause*] If we were able to persuade every parent that it's important to talk to a baby, to be affirmative toward a child, to wrap that child in the love, attention and discipline every child needs, then by the time those children reached our schools we would be able to persuade our teachers to look at every child and see hope, and see possibility. And we could renew and reform our schools so that they involved—even welcomed—parents, threw open their doors to the community, and were determined to leave no child behind.

We would also ask those in the business community to think about the decisions they make in terms not only of their primary responsibility to their bottom line, but also to the communities that they serve and work in. To ask how they, too, could be [*applause*] part of strengthening families. [*applause*]

Even simple things, like giving time off to parents to go to parent-teacher conferences in schools, would send a wonderful signal about what is important. [*applause*]

And if we were able to persuade everyone who has any control of what appears on our televisions and what we hear on our radios, to think about their own children (would they want their own children to see and hear what comes into our homes on a daily basis, or would they rather not?) [*applause*] and therefore change what they produce. [*applause*]

And we would ask all of us who are members of churches, and synagogues and mosques, we would ask all of us to set an example of love and respect. We would ask all of us, in whatever form it appears in our holy writings, to follow what we call "the Golden Rule." We would ask all of us to act on the outside of church the way we try to act inside, [*applause*] and throw open the doors [*applause*] of our churches, and welcome in those who John Wesley sought out. And open those doors after school, on weekends, especially in some of our tougher neighborhoods, so that children have places that are safe to go.

There is so much we can do in meeting these challenges; and so many opportunities for us, as Methodists, to grasp and be part of fulfilling.

I am grateful for my Methodist upbringing. I am grateful for this church. I watch with great interest and appreciation those of you who struggle to make the decisions that will govern us for the next four years. And I appreciate that you are grappling with the hard issues; being willing to debate and discuss what needs to be done. And I would hope that many of us, not only members of this church, but all people of faith, would say we have so much in common that we can do, and summon our energy on behalf, first and foremost, of our children.

If we were to do that, I know we would see changes before our very eyes; and that the church you serve, and that has served us, would continue to grow because it was serving the world, living out the gospel, and being a servant for those who need to hear that message.

With that in mind, I thank you for keeping alive the Methodist traditions and teachings; for helping to awaken and strengthen the spirit and faith of men, women, and children; and for helping all of us to have courage in the face of change; to be willing to struggle forward doing what we can individually; and to make common cause with others who believe that we are called, both for personal salvation, but also for the work we must do in this world. Thank you very, very much. [*applause*]

To read the Revised Social Principles, please visit

<https://www.umcjustice.org/who-we-are/proposed-revised-social-principles-for-general-conference-charlotte>

where you can find a summary and the full text.

2016 Social Creed

We believe in God, Creator of the world; and in Jesus Christ, the Redeemer of creation. We believe in the Holy Spirit, through whom we acknowledge God's gifts, and we repent of our sin in misusing these gifts to idolatrous ends.

We affirm the natural world as God's handiwork and dedicate ourselves to its preservation, enhancement, and faithful use by humankind.

We joyfully receive for ourselves and others the blessings of community, sexuality, marriage, and the family.

We commit ourselves to the rights of men, women, children, youth, young adults, the aging, and people with disabilities; to improvement of the quality of life; and to the rights and dignity of all persons.

We believe in the right and duty of persons to work for the glory of God and the good of themselves and others and in the protection of their welfare in so doing; in the rights to property as a trust from God, collective bargaining, and responsible consumption; and in the elimination of economic and social distress.

We dedicate ourselves to peace throughout the world, to the rule of justice and law among nations, and to individual freedom for all people of the world.

We believe in the present and final triumph of God's Word in human affairs and gladly accept our commission to manifest the life of the gospel in the world. Amen.

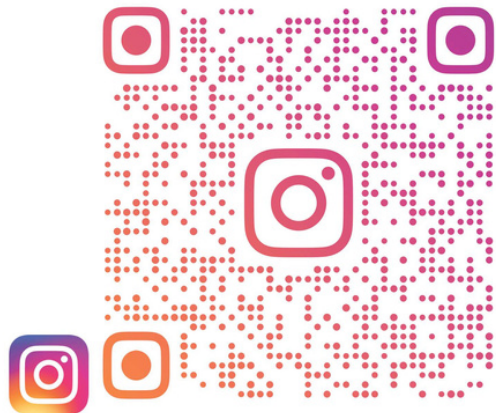
(It is recommended that this statement of Social Principles be continually available to United Methodist Christians and that it be emphasized regularly in every congregation. It is further recommended that “Our Social Creed” be frequently used in Sunday worship.)

From The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church – 2016. Copyright 2016 by The United Methodist Publishing House. Used by permission. A leaflet containing the original Social Creed (1908), the Companion Litany (2008) and a musical response to the Companion Litany may be found [here](#)

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