

FUNDAMENTAL FEATURES & PRINCIPLES OF A NEW METHODIST DENOMINATION

In the event that the special called 2019 General Conference results in circumstances where churches, laity, and clergy desire to migrate to a new Methodist denomination, the Wesleyan Covenant Association intends to offer a structure and strategy to fulfill that need. We offer this statement to outline fundamental features and principles that would define such a new denomination.

We long for and are working for a church that:

1. Believes that the mission of the church is to model God's holy love and lead all people to, the full and perfect love of God in heart, soul, mind, and strength and of neighbor as self (Mk 12). To this end, the church carries out the Great Commission going into all the world, making disciples of Christ by proclaiming, baptizing, and instructing (Mt 28); and the Great Charge, of lovingly feeding and tending the flock of God (Jn 21); and worshiping the Lord both in spirit and in truth (Jn 45). This the Church does until, perfected in love, she experiences the fullness of God's restored Kingdom with Christ
2. Aspires to introduce all people, without exception, to Jesus Christ, and recognizes that the mission in which we are engaged has eternal consequences.
3. Is rooted and grounded in the historic teachings of the Christian church and of John Wesley and his followers, with Scripture as the primary rule and guide for faith and life.
4. Is a vibrant, missional movement to spread scriptural holiness, make disciples, and equip disciple-makers. We desire an environment that supports innovative, risk-taking creativity to reach diverse communities with the fullness of the Gospel.
5. Leads those who invite Jesus into their lives and experience new birth into the Kingdom of God, into an ever deepening relationship with Him in order to become His fully devoted disciples growing in holiness of heart and life.
6. Invites the multi-faceted work of the good and life-giving Holy Spirit in and through believers, seeking the *fruit* and embracing all the *gifts*.
7. Assists members to watch over one another in love and grace, with the goal of being conformed to the image of Christ. We are committed to member participation in discipleship and accountability groups, including class meetings, as an essential means of achieving this goal.
8. Is intentionally catholic/universal with all members being represented to discern, through conferencing, God's leading for the church. We picture a global church where members work together in equal partnership, resourcing and learning from one another for the sake of the church's mission.

9. Recognizes the laity as the people of God and a royal priesthood chosen and empowered for the purpose of making disciples of Jesus Christ.
10. Is served by men and women, called of God and set apart by the church, who are grounded in the authoritative revelation of Scripture under the Lordship of Jesus Christ. Our clergy will minister in alignment with a Discipline that includes a settled doctrinal core to which they are accountable.
11. Commits to affirming and empowering the participation and leadership of men and women of all races, ethnicities, and nationalities on a full and equal basis in the church as the Body of Christ.
12. Cherishes our place in the church universal and gladly welcomes every good and perfect gift bestowed on the church by the Holy Spirit, through mutual respect, cooperative relationships, and, where possible, shared mission in the world.
13. Provides organization and structure to serve the mission of the church. We will keep organization and structure to the minimum necessary to accomplish the primary functions necessary to support the members of the local churches. Our polity is connectional in nature, creating networks and relationships that empower and multiply the gifts of the members for the sake of Christ's mission to the world.