



WESLEYAN COVENANT ASSOCIATION

Confidence for the Future

*"Anyone who listens to my teaching and follows it is wise,
like a person who builds a house on solid rock." - Matthew 7:24*



Confidence for the Future

The Wesleyan Covenant Association (WCA) connects Spirit-filled, orthodox churches, clergy, and laity who hold to Wesleyan theology. It is an association or network of individuals and congregations who share a common understanding of our Wesleyan doctrine and desire to become a vibrant, faithful, growing 21st-century church.

We believe change is coming to The United Methodist Church, and as we live into what comes next, the Wesleyan Covenant Association will connect, encourage, and resource clergy, laity, congregations, and regional chapters by:

- Committing to the primary authority of Scripture and the Lordship of Jesus Christ
- Creating a unified response to the Bishops' Commission recommendation that would maintain traditional, orthodox Methodist beliefs
- Developing a plan for a positive and faithful future

The Wesleyan Covenant Association affirms the work of other renewal groups, such as The Confessing Movement, Good News, and UM Action. However, the WCA's purpose is not to fight the political battles raging across the church, but to prepare for and live into a positive and fruitful future.

"I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life." – John 8:12

Upholding Scriptural Authority and the Lordship of Jesus Christ

The earliest Christian affirmation was "Jesus Christ is Lord" (Acts 2:36). This is the core belief that characterizes all Christians and defines discipleship. As followers of Jesus, we seek to live together in obedience to Christ's teachings as found in Holy Scripture (Matthew 28:20). We know Christ authoritatively through the revelation of God's Word. We believe "all Scripture is God-breathed and is useful ... so that [we] may be thoroughly equipped for every good work" (II Timothy 3:16).

Our understanding and application of Scripture is informed by 2,000 years of Christian tradition, along with our reason and experience. But God's Word is "the true rule and guide for faith and practice" (Confession of Faith, Article IV). The Wesleyan Covenant Association aims to ground all of our beliefs and practices in the authority of Scripture and seeks to reestablish our church on this firm foundation. Living and serving under the Lordship of Jesus Christ and the authority of Scripture, we are moving forward with confidence for the future.

Creating a Unified Response

We are in a time of great uncertainty in The United Methodist Church. Persistent and escalating disobedience to the order and discipline of our church has created anarchy. The 2016 General Conference entrusted the Bishops' Commission on a Way Forward for the Church with the task of arriving at a recommended way to break the impasse over the church's ministry with lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender persons. A 2019 special General Conference will receive that recommendation and determine how our church will move forward.

The Wesleyan Covenant Association exists to give voice to Spirit-filled, orthodox members as we consider that recommendation and prepare for the decision of the 2019 General Conference. If the Commission's recommendation is something we can support, the WCA will do so. If not, the WCA will create a unified response, while maintaining our beliefs. We believe that we will be in a better position to respond to the Commission's recommendation as a unified body of Spirit-filled orthodox believers. Therefore, we seek to gather together as many like-minded clergy, laity, and congregational members of the Wesleyan Covenant Association as possible. This unified association will enable us to respond together and move forward together in the strongest way possible. Acting together will give us Confidence for the Future.

Preparing a Plan for the Future

We believe that, after the 2019 General Conference, United Methodism will look very different from how it looks today. However, we cannot wait until 2019 to figure out how orthodox, evangelical United Methodists will move forward together. That is why the Wesleyan Covenant Association is committed to working on plans for a revitalized 21st-century Methodism that can be implemented either within a United Methodist structure or outside it. Our plans need to be flexible enough to adjust to the Commission's recommendation and the 2019 General Conference's decisions. Our plans also need to uphold the integrity of our belief in the primary authority of Scripture under the Lordship of Jesus Christ, as well as seek the best framework for a vital, growing church that is making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. This planning and preparation will give us Confidence for the Future.

"This is a crucial time for those, like us, who are committed to a vibrant expression of the Christian faith that is true to the best of our Wesleyan heritage. I invite you to join with the Wesleyan Covenant Association as we work for the emergence of a Methodism which recaptures the passion that has marked our movement from the time of John Wesley." - WCA President, Keith Boyette

The Wesleyan Covenant Association provides . . .

Resources - To Churches

- A connection with like-minded United Methodists and Wesleyans around the world that brings encouragement and support
- Regional support, resourcing and shared ministry
- A system that connects like-minded congregations
- Educational materials to help congregations address the conflict we are experiencing in United Methodism today
- Keep congregational leaders up to date with what is happening across the church in preparation for the 2019 General Conference
- A voice and vote in shaping what is next within Methodism.
- Recommended resources and partner ministries that can increase the effectiveness of local church ministry
- A public listing of orthodox, evangelical Wesleyan congregations to help people find a congregation.
- A reason to stay within The United Methodist Church as we prepare together for whatever comes from the Bishops' Commission and the 2019 General Conference

Support - To Clergy

- A connection with like-minded United Methodists and Wesleyans around the world that brings encouragement and support
- A system that facilitates the connection of like-minded clergy in a regional area for support, resourcing, and addressing the concerns unique to clergy
- Encouragement and support in staying true to the orthodox, biblical gospel message
- Keep congregational leaders up to date with what is happening across the church in preparation for the 2019 General Conference
- A voice and vote in shaping the "next" Methodism for a revitalized 21st -century church
- Recommended resources and partner ministries that can increase the effectiveness of local church ministry
- Resources, prepared materials, and recommended guidance for delivering a unified message to the congregation, to the community, and to United Methodist denominational leaders
- A public listing of orthodox, evangelical Wesleyan clergy that can facilitate persons who are seeking such a pastor to find one and facilitate such clergy connecting with one another
- A reason to stay within The United Methodist Church as we prepare together for whatever comes from the Bishops' Commission and the 2019 General Conference

Solidarity - To Laity

- A connection with like-minded United Methodists and Wesleyans around the world that brings encouragement and support
- Solidarity with other laity in promoting a traditional, orthodox, Wesleyan understanding of the Christian faith
- Offering a way to help and strengthening the Spirit-filled, orthodox Wesleyan voice through membership, as the Wesleyan Covenant Association advocates for the Lordship of Jesus Christ through the primary authority of Scripture and prepares to respond to the Bishops' Commission and the 2019 General Conference
- Regular communication that keeps laity up to date with what is happening across the church in preparation for the 2019 General Conference
- Recommended resources and opportunities for lay participation
- A reason to stay within The United Methodist Church as we prepare together for whatever comes from the Bishops' Commission and the 2019 General Conference



*"My sheep listen to my voice; I know them,
and they follow me." - John 10:27*

Who We Are

The Wesleyan Covenant Association Founding Council

Rev. Dr. Jeff Greenway (Reynoldsburg, OH) – Council Chair
Rev. Carolyn Moore (Evans, GA) – Council Vice-Chair
Rev. Madeline Carrasco Henners (La Grange, TX) – Council Secretary
Ferrell Coppedge (Marietta, GA) – Council Treasurer
Rev. Dr. Bill Arnold (Wilmore, KY)
Rev. Shane Bishop (Belleville, IL)
Rev. Keith Boyette (Spotsylvania, VA)
Rev. Dr. Bryan Collier (Tupelo, MS)
Jennifer Cowart (Kathleen, GA)
Rev. Joe DiPaolo (Wayne, PA)
Rev. Dr. Kimba Evariste (Democratic Republic of Congo)
Jeff Jernigan (Powder Springs, GA)
Rev. Dr. Randy Jessen (Parker, CO)
Rev. Dr. Jerry Kulah (Gbarnga City, Liberia)
Rev. Jessica LaGrone (Wilmore, KY)
Rev. Thomas Lambrecht (The Woodlands, TX)
Rev. Forbes Matonga (Nyadire, Zimbabwe)
Cara Nicklas (Oklahoma City, OK)
Rev. Dr. Jonathan Razon (Baguio City, The Philippines)
Rev. Rob Renfro (The Woodlands, TX)
Rev. Dr. Chris Ritter (Geneseo, IL)
Dr. David Watson (Dayton, OH)
Rev. Steve Wood (Alpharetta, GA)

"I endorse the Wesleyan Covenant Association and call upon all United Methodists in Africa and beyond to join this new alliance of congregations, pastors, and laypeople who believe in the Scripture as the authentic Word of God for faith and Christian living, and are committed to evangelizing the nations, revitalizing the global UMC, and transforming society." – Rev. Dr. Jerry P. Kulah, Dean, Gbarnga School of Theology, United Methodist University/General Coordinator, UMC Africa Initiative

"The Wesleyan Covenant Association is a gift. To be able to share fellowship, mission, and evangelism with an association of lay and clergy persons who are committed to the authority of Scripture and the Lordship of Christ is a special blessing." – Rev. Dr. Maxie Dunnam, Former president of Asbury Theological Seminary

"We live in an intense season of trial and incubation. The WCA gives us space to pray together, to think together, to seek God's face, to recover our nerve, and to discover fresh resources for ministry. So relax, get on board, and move forward into a new Day of grace, truth, and power." – Rev. Dr. William J. Abraham, Albert Cook Outler Professor of Wesley Studies, Perkins School of Theology

"Friends in Christ, I invite and encourage you to consider joining with me as a member of the Wesleyan Covenant Association. I do so as a call to the highest level of doctrinal integrity and missional commitment in the name of our Lord. Let us come together in a unity of gospel purpose as Christ prayed in John 17:21 and not simply a conglomeration of the lowest element of denominational engagement. Together, with all United Methodists who call on Christ, let us be united in renewing the Wesleyan movement for the advancing Kingdom of God." – Bishop Mike Lowry, The Central Texas Conference of the United Methodist Church, The Fort Worth Episcopal Area

A Call to Membership in the Wesleyan Covenant Association

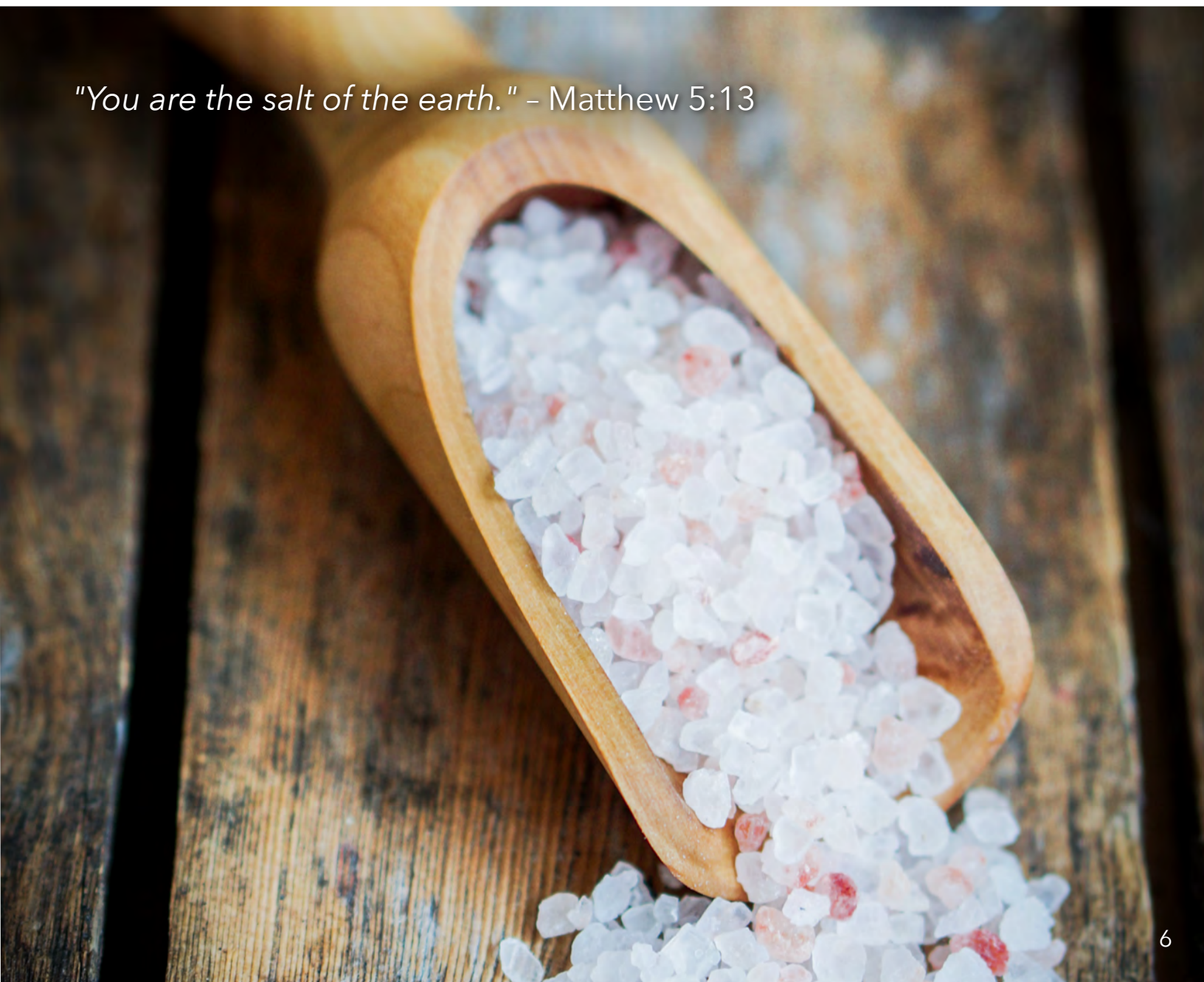
God is at work in The United Methodist Church and in the impending changes coming to our church. In this time of uncertainty, you can trust the Wesleyan Covenant Association to uphold the Lordship of Jesus Christ through the primary authority of Scripture and to advocate for a way forward that will not compromise the integrity of our beliefs.

We can work together to provide a unified response to the recommendations of the Bishops' Commission, as we prepare and plan for a revitalized 21st-century expression of the church. Within the Wesleyan Covenant Association there will be integrity and accountability to our stated beliefs and standards.

Together we will reach out and provide connection and support to embattled clergy and congregations in regions that are unfriendly toward a traditional, evangelical understanding of the gospel. We are working to intentionally include and partner with our brothers and sisters in the global United Methodist connection in Africa, Europe, and The Philippines.

Your membership, prayers, and support are essential to help us move together toward a more faithful and fruitful future. We invite you to join us today with Confidence for the Future!

"You are the salt of the earth." – Matthew 5:13



How to join:

To learn more about membership and to join the Wesleyan Covenant Association, please go to: wesleyancovenant.org/membership. Donations over and above the membership fee are welcome and may be made at the same web address.

The WCA currently has individual clergy and lay members from every annual conference in the United States and every central conference outside the United States. Churches go through a process in deciding to become members of the WCA and we are excited that churches of every size, including some of the largest membership churches in The United Methodist Church, have already become members of the WCA. These churches are from every jurisdiction in the United States. The membership of the WCA continues to grow daily.

Within the Wesleyan Covenant Association there are three types of membership: congregational, clergy, and laity. Membership is open to persons and congregations both within and outside The United Methodist Church. WCA membership is available on a global scale, with membership fees adjusted regionally. Membership provides a way to stand with like-minded Methodists to support and carry out the work of the WCA. Memberships are renewed annually and provide a steady income stream to fund the work of the WCA (staff, communications, and resource development).

Regional chapters of the Wesleyan Covenant Association are forming in the various annual conferences and regions of The United Methodist Church. WCA members are automatically members of their regional chapter.

Voting by members takes place at the regional level, and representatives are elected to attend the annual meeting of the Wesleyan Covenant Association to elect the WCA Council and set WCA policy (beginning in 2018). Congregations are represented by lay delegates at the regional level. There will be equalization of lay and clergy delegates at the regional and global levels.



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