

What Is a Methodist? – Part 1

edited by Rev. Bill L. Wiggs, Jr.



Often those who are part of a Methodist congregation and those who are part of other faith traditions ask the question, "What is a Methodist?" That is a complicated question to answer because Methodism is multifaceted. This new feature of our Newsletter will, over the next few months, bring answers. It seems that the best way to begin to answer this question is to start with those who began the Methodist movement.

Early Methodists were defined not merely by doctrine, but by a distinctive way of life — a methodical pursuit of holiness of heart and life, grounded in Scripture, empowered by grace, and expressed in love of God and neighbor.

1. A Methodist Is One Who Loves God and Neighbor

John Wesley's (the primary founder of the Methodist movement) most famous definition comes from his 1742 sermon titled "The Character of a Methodist." There, Wesley writes: "A Methodist is one who has the love of God shed abroad in his heart by the Holy Ghost given unto him; 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."¹

Wesley continues: "Love is the fulfilling of the law, the end of the commandment. It is not only 'the first and great' command, but all the commandments in one. Whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, if there be any virtue, if there be any praise, they are all comprised in this one word, love."¹

2. A Methodist Is One Who Pursues Holiness

Methodism, from its beginning, emphasized personal and social holiness. John Wesley wrote: "The gospel of Christ knows no religion but social; no holiness but social holiness."²

This didn't mean mere activism, but rather that Christian faith must be lived in community and action. Holiness was to be cultivated through the means of grace: prayer, Scripture, fasting, the Lord's Supper, and Christian conferencing.

3. A Methodist Is One Who Lives by the General Rules

The General Rules of the United Societies (1743) also shaped Methodist identity. These rules are summed up as: Do no harm. Do good. Attend upon all the ordinances of God (i.e., the means of grace).³ The late Bishop Rueben P. Job offered a modern interpretation of the Third General Rule by paraphrasing it as: "Stay in love with God." "This simple rule reminds us that the disciplines of the faith are the central acts that keep us connected with the One who is the source of our being."⁴

These practices became the shared discipline that formed early Methodists into a connectional movement of discipleship and mission.

4. A Methodist Is One Who Holds Tightly to the Word of God.

For John Wesley the foundation of his faith and theology, and thus Methodism, was the Bible. In his Collected Works, Volume I (1739), specifically in the introduction to his Sermons on Several Occasions he writes: "**I want to know one thing, the way to heaven... God himself has condescended to teach the way: for this very end He came from heaven. He hath written it down in a book. O give me that book! At any price, give me the Book of God! I have it: here is knowledge enough for me. Let me be homo unius libri—a man of one book.**"⁵

This phrase—homo unius libri (Latin for "man of one book")—became a hallmark of Wesleyan spirituality and identity. It underscores the primacy of Scripture in the life of faith. John Wesley insisted that Methodism be grounded in the authority, inspiration, and sufficiency of Scripture, without which we cease from being Methodist.

5. Charles Wesley's Hymns Also Described the Methodist Identity

Charles Wesley's hymns were deeply formative in expressing and shaping Methodist theology and identity. For example:

"He breaks the power of canceled sin,
He sets the prisoner free;
His blood can make the foulest clean,
His blood availed for me."⁶

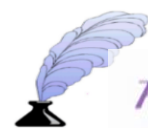
Such hymns get to the heart of the Methodist experience, "All need to be saved. All can be saved. All can know they are saved. All can be saved to the uttermost."

More to come in part 2



MARSHALL FUMC

JULY 2025



From the Pastor's Pen

Grace and peace to you in the name of Christ Jesus our Lord, who goes with us, before us, and dwells within us through the power of His Spirit.

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Summer is in full swing, and with it comes a flurry of family trips, cookouts, reunions, and time away from our usual routines. Whether you're packing the car for a road trip, finding rest in your backyard hammock, or preparing for another week of work while others are out enjoying the summer slowdown, this season brings with it a change of pace.

And while the summer rhythm may be different, one thing remains the same: *you are a follower of Jesus, part of His body the Church, and Christ's ambassador in the world wherever you go.*

As the Church we are His people, filled with His Spirit, gathered in worship, and scattered in mission. Jesus told us, "**You are the light of the world**" (**Matthew 5:14**), and that light is not limited by walls or schedules. Whether you're attending worship here every Sunday, streaming while on vacation, or praying with your family at a rest stop picnic table, the presence of Christ within you makes holy the place you occupy.

We often think of missions as something that happens far away, in another country or through a special event. But Scripture reminds us that *every believer is a missionary*—in our neighborhoods, on our vacations, and even in the conversations we have while waiting in line. Paul encouraged the church in Colossae: "**Whatever you do or say, do it as a representative of the Lord Jesus**" (**Colossians 3:17, NLT**). That means at the campground, the beach, the hotel lobby, or while gathered watching the fireworks on the 4th of July, you and I are called to be a witness of His grace at all times in all places.

You carry Christ with you—not just for your own sake, but for the sake of the world He loves. Your kindness to a stranger, your grace toward a frustrating family member, your offer to pray with someone who shares a burden—all these are ways the Church shows up beyond the sanctuary.

This month, I encourage you to *stay connected to Christ and His people* even when you're away:

- Find a place to gather with the body of Christ in Worship. You never know what a blessing you might be to a local church in an area you are visiting and what a blessing they may be to you.
- Take a Bible with you or use a reading app to stay rooted in the Word.
- Pray with your family—at meals, before you hit the road, or as you wind down at night.
- Share one story with me or a fellow church member of where you "saw God" during your travels.

Whether scattered or gathered, we remain the Body of Christ, united by His Spirit, called to love and serve. And when we return home, we do so with new stories to tell and new opportunities to grow together in faith.

May your travels be safe, your rest be deep, and your witness be strong. And if you're staying close to home this summer, may you find God at work right here in our neighborhood. Wherever you go, go as one sent by Christ, with the love of the Church surrounding you.

With joy in the journey and hope in Christ,

Pastor Bill

1. John Wesley, The Character of a Methodist, 1742, in The Works of John Wesley, Vol. 9: The Methodist Societies: History, Nature, and Design, ed. Rupert E. Davies (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1984), pp. 34–46.

2. John Wesley, Preface to Hymns and Sacred Poems (1739), in The Works of John Wesley, Vol. 14: The Writings: Hymns and Sacred Poems I, ed. Frank Baker (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1983), p. viii.

3. The Nature, Design, and General Rules of the United Societies in London, Bristol, Kingswood, and Newcastle upon Tyne, 1743. Reprinted in The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church (2020), ¶ 103.

4. Rueben P. Job, Three Simple Rules: A Wesleyan Way of Living (Nashville: Upper Room Books, 2007)

5. John Wesley, Preface to Sermons on Several Occasions, in The Works of John Wesley, Vol. 1, ed. Albert C. Outler (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1984), p. 105.

6. Charles Wesley, "O For a Thousand Tongues to Sing" (1739), in The United Methodist Hymnal (1989), No. 57.

July Volunteers

Liturgist All Month – Kathy Brown

Greeters

6 th	Garvin & Barbara Manhart
13 th	Becky Wiggs & Alane White
20 th	Deb Miller & Alane White
27 th	Deb Miller & Alane White

Ushers Jack & Nancy Crumrin and
Jo & Jim Vadas

Counters Beverly Smith & Mike Sanders

<u>Lobby Watch</u>	6 th	Ryan Arthur	<u>Nursery</u>	6 th
	13 th	Jim Arthur		13 th
	20 th	Charlie Moore		20 th
	27 th	Rick Manuel		27 th

Currently a mystery –
please see note below.

We are in need of more volunteers! The clipboards are in the welcome center, and we do have a few volunteers through the rest of the year, but we have empty spots. We need Lobby Watch, Greeters, and Ushers. Please sign up in the Welcome Center.



We THINK there is a full schedule of nursery volunteers for the rest of the year, but we don't know where that list is, so we can't fill in the volunteer schedule above. If you have that full schedule, or know who we should talk to in order to know the schedule, please contact the office. Thanks!

We also need people willing to work the nursery through Sunday School time. If you are available, please let us know that, too!



If you lead Sunday School or any special events connected to the church (like UWF circles), please take attendance and leave it in the letter box outside the office door. We have one person entering all of our attendance now, and it helps if it is all collected in the same place. Thank you very much!

P.S. All Sunday School attendance folders will be in your box in the office from now on. Please pick them up before Sunday School each week.



July 1 UWF Board meeting 4:00PM in the Chapel

July 3 Book Study 8:30 AM in the Chapel

July 10 Esther Circle 7:00PM

Faith Circle is not meeting in July or August.

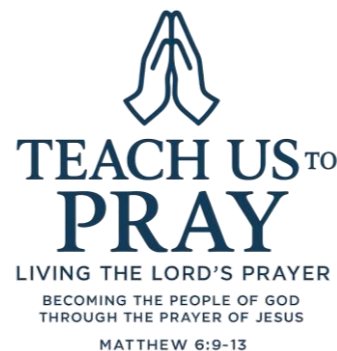
July 18 Ice Cream Social Courthouse Lawn 7:00PM. All church ladies are encouraged to bring 1 baked item. Pies are always a big hit. Baked goods should be there at 6:30. This is our summer fund raiser.

July 21 Susannah Wesley Circle – Breakfast in the Park – Lincoln Trail Park 9:00AM

Sisters in Faith is not meeting in July

Sisters in Faith cleaned the toys in the nursery for their June project and will be making feminine product kits to take to Midwest Mission in July.

Preparing bags for weaving and weaving mats continues in the chapel on Wednesdays from 10:00 AM to noon. Come join us anytime, we'll train you.



New Sermon series on the Lord's Prayer

This July, join us for “Teach Us to Pray: Living the Lord’s Prayer” — a powerful four-week journey into the heart of Jesus’ most famous prayer. More than words we recite, the Lord’s Prayer is a call to become the people of God in a world that pulls us in every direction. Each week we’ll explore how this prayer reorients our identity, reshapes our values, teaches us to trust, and equips us for spiritual battle. From our allegiance to our Heavenly Father to our daily dependence on His provision, this

series will challenge and inspire you to pray not just for what you want—but for who God is forming you to be. Come discover how the prayer of Jesus can become the pattern of your life.

Sunday, July 6, 2025 - Fourth Sunday after Pentecost

Sermon 1 - Our Father in Heaven: A People with a Higher Allegiance" Matthew 6:9–13

Sunday, July 13, 2025 - Fifth Sunday after Pentecost

Sermon 2 - Your Kingdom Come: Living for What Matters Most" Matthew 6:9–13

Sunday, July 20, 2025 - Sixth Sunday after Pentecost

Sermon 3 - Give Us This Day: Trusting God for Daily Bread" Matthew 6:9–13

Sunday, August 10, 2025 - Ninth Sunday after Pentecost

Sermon 4 - Deliver Us: Victory in the Midst of Temptation and Evil" Matthew 6:9–13

Birthdays and Anniversaries this month!

Jordan Brown	July 01
Darlene Hildebrand	July 01
Doris Ellington	July 02
Brandon Daugherty	July 03
Barbara Manhart	July 16
Michael Henderson	July 17
Jackie Davidson	July 19
Kimberly Baugher	July 20
Phyllis Boatright	July 27



Scott & Danielle Cline	July 03
Ken & Nancy Claypool	July 11
Tom & Sarah Brannan	July 15
Alex & Brooke Bullock	July 16
Paul & Amy Cannady	July 18
Carrol & Doris Ellington	July 18
Adam & Erica Crumrin	July 26



At Marshall First, we believe in clear communication and faithful stewardship. That's why the Unified Leadership Council shares a monthly giving report—to help you see how your generosity supports the life and mission of our church. In addition to funding our local ministries, we are asked each year to contribute \$31,956 to the broader work of the Illinois Great Rivers Conference. These apportioned gifts, given only through designated giving, help support leadership and ministry across our region. **It's important to note that your regular, undesignated tithes and offerings are what keep our local ministries moving—from worship and children's programs to pastoral care, outreach, and daily operations.** Right now, we're facing a shortfall in our general fund, and your consistent, prayerful support is more vital now than ever. Let's continue working together to fuel the mission God has given Marshall First.

	2025 Local Church Budget	Conference Apportionments	Faith Promise & Missions
Budget	\$344,662.00	\$31,956.00	Faith Promise, Missions, Scholarships & Memorial are supported by designated giving.
Needed Monthly	\$28,721.84	\$2,663.00	
Needed Weekly	\$6,628.12	\$614.54	
Given Year to Date	\$130,412.72	\$10,330.57	\$6,161.67
Given June 2025	\$43,923.38	\$550	\$500



Online Giving

We have two ways that you can give online. You can go to our website and give online, or you can log in into Breeze. If you login into Breeze, you can track your giving and adjust what has been scheduled. If you would like to get a login for Breeze, please speak with the office.



Prayer List



Diana Bailey, Dave Culbertson, Rev. John Davis, Mike Delp, Monty Dixon (friend of Kathy Brown with brain cancer), Gail Glick, Darrell Kirby, Molly Macke, Tiffany Macke, Candy Painter, Gary Strohm, Sharon Welliver, Karen Wheat (Kathy Brown's friend)
Our children and youth who will be attending Camp Illiana during July

Our Church and her leaders:

Marshall First UMC Pastor Bill Bishop Kennetha Bigham-Tsai Bishop David A Bard
Our District Superintendent, Angie Lee Connie Weick and other Missionaries

Our Military Personnel:


Chris Bradford John Flowers Daniel Gard Michael Holmes John Kuhn
Shelby Sanborn Lewis Sanborn Jake Hoalt Chaplain Jonathon Maloney
Our Nation, Our Nation's Leaders, and our Armed Forces

Our Homebound & Health Care Facility Residents

Phyllis Boatright	Gordon & Carolyn Clark	Violet Cook
Dan Flowers	Ray King	Sharon Miller



Kids' Corner



Kids' Corner

Summer roared off to a great start here at FUMC! The youth traveled each day during the week of June 9 on an adventure. We went to Lincoln Trail for a picnic and to Gaslight Art colony to paint the northern lights. On Wednesday evening we traveled to Effingham and jumped at the Arena, a trampoline park. Then the next morning we fished with Jack and Nancy Crumrin. We ended the adventures with a tour of Candles Museum in Terre Haute and lunch at Culver's. So much fun with a great group of kids!

The church was overrun the week of June 16 with kids, helpers, and Alaskan wildlife! The VBS theme this year was True North - Trust in Jesus. Attendance averaged 62 children and about 25 adults each day. THANK YOU to everyone who helped out. VBS week is my favorite week here. The church is just bursting with energy and smiles, so thanks again to all.

Summer KFC got started on June 11. We will meet each Wednesday through July 16. All kids from kindergarten through 6th grade are invited. The times and activities are as follows:

July 2 @ 11:00 -picnic lunch provided

July 9 @11:00 - F.R.O.G. activities here at the church. Bring a sack lunch.

Our final KFC activity for the summer will be a trip to Aikman Wildlife Adventure in Arcola. The date and time will be announced as soon as possible and I'll send information home with the KFC kids.

Looking forward to August, mark your calendars for Camp Cornerstone August 5 - 7!



Seniors



Holy Grounds Coffee Group meets every Tuesday. All are welcome to join! (You don't even have to be a Senior.)

- 1st - Marshall Family Restaurant 9AM
- 8th - Holly Brook 2PM
- 15th - Gypsy Queen 9AM
- 22nd - Gypsy Queen 9AM
- 29th - TBA

The group often meets for lunch on the fourth Tuesday of the month. If you have any suggestions for a fun place for us to go, please talk to Mary Ann Stepp.



Does anyone know who coordinates the exercise groups that meet on Mondays and Fridays? Please let the office know, so we can check in with them if needed. Thank you!

JULY 2025

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
 Have a safe and happy 4 th of July!		1. Holy Grounds-9AM @ Marshall Family Restaurant UWF Board 4PM	2. Weave from 10AM-Noon Summer KFC 11:00AM	3. Pickleball 8:30am UWF Book Study 8:30AM	4. Office Closed Exercise- 8:30 AM	5.
6. Communion Sunday	7. Exercise- 8:30 AM Pickleball 6:30pm	8. Holy Grounds-2PM @ Holly Brook SPRC 6:00PM	9. Weave from 10AM-Noon Summer KFC 11:00AM	10. Pickleball 8:30am Esther Circle 7pm	11. Exercise- 8:30 AM	12.
--- Please pray for the kids who will be at Camp Illianna this week. ---						
13.	14. Exercise- 8:30 AM Pickleball 6:30pm	15. Holy Grounds- 9AM @ Gypsy Queen	16. Weave from 10AM-Noon	17. Pickleball 8:30am	18. Exercise- 8:30 AM	19. <i>Come volunteer at the Thrift Shop from 8:30-12</i>
--- Please pray for the kids who will be at Camp Illianna this week. ---						
20.	21. Exercise- 8:30 AM Susanna Wesley @ Lincoln Trail for Breakfast in the Park Pickleball 6:30pm	22. Holy Grounds- 9AM @ Gypsy Queen <hr/> <i>Come volunteer @ the Food Disbursement Center from 12-4:30PM</i> <hr/> Unified Leadership Team Meeting at 6PM	23. Weave from 10AM-Noon	24. Pickleball 8:30am	25. Exercise- 8:30 AM	26.
27.	28. Exercise- 8:30 AM Pickleball 6:30pm	29. Holy Grounds - TBA	30. Weave from 10AM-Noon	31. Pickleball 8:30am	<u>Beulah Holiness Camp Meeting July 25 – August 2</u> Come for a day, or stay for a few days! Worship is open to everyone at any time. Prayer meeting is at 7AM, Adult Bible Study at 9:30AM, and Evening Worship is at 7:30PM. The address is 700 Trolley Rd, Eldorado IL. If you want more info, ask Pastor Bill or Becky! You can also check out https://beulahholinesscamp.org	