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"In essentials, we have unity. In non-essentials, we have liberty. In all things, we have charity."
 – John Wesley

In the Trinity

We describe God in three persons. Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are commonly used to refer to the threefold nature of God. Sometimes we use other terms, such as Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer. [Back to top](#)

In God

- We believe in one God, who created the world and all that is in it.
- We believe that God is sovereign; that is, God is the ruler of the universe.
- We believe that God is loving. We can experience God's love and grace. [Back to top](#)

In Jesus Christ

- We believe that Jesus was human. He lived as a man and died when he was crucified.
- We believe that Jesus is divine. He is the Son of God.
- We believe that God raised Jesus from the dead and that the risen Christ lives today. (Christ and messiah mean the same thing-God's anointed.)
- We believe that Jesus is our Savior. In Christ we receive abundant life and forgiveness of sins.
- We believe that Jesus is our Lord and that we are called to pattern our lives after his. [Back to top](#)

We Are Saved

What does it mean to be saved and to be assured of salvation? It's to know that after feeling lost and alone, we've been found by God. It's to know that after feeling worthless, we've been redeemed. It's to experience a reunion with God, others, the natural world, and our own best selves. It's a healing of the alienation-the estrangement-we've experienced. In salvation we become whole. Salvation happens to us both now and for the future. It's "eternal life," that new quality of life in unity with God of which the Gospel of John speak--a life that begins not at death, but in the present. But how does salvation happen? [Back to top](#)

By Grace Through Faith

Salvation cannot be earned. There's no behavior, no matter how holy or righteous, by which we can achieve salvation. Rather, it's the gift of a gracious God. By grace we mean God's extraordinary love for us. In most of life we're accustomed to earning approval from others. This is true at school, at work, in society, even at home-to a degree. We may feel that we have to act "just so" to be liked or loved. But God's love, or grace, is given without any regard for our goodness. It's unmerited, unconditional, and unending love.

As we come to accept this love, to entrust ourselves to it, and to ground our lives in it, we discover the wholeness that God has promised. This trust, as we've seen, is called faith. God takes the initiative in grace; but only as we respond through faith is the change wrought in us. [Back to top](#)

Conversion

This process of salvation involves a change in us that we call conversion. Conversion is a turning around, leaving one orientation for another. It may be sudden and dramatic, or gradual and cumulative. But in any

case it's a new beginning. Following Jesus' words to Nicodemus, "You must be born anew" (John 3:7 RSV), we speak of this conversion as rebirth, new life in Christ, or regeneration. [Back to top](#)

Growing In Grace

Conversion is but the beginning of the new life of wholeness. Through what Wesley called God's "sanctifying grace," we can continue to grow. In fact, Wesley affirmed, we're to press on, with God's help, in the path of sanctification, the gift of Christian perfection. The goal of the sanctified life is to be perfected in love, to experience the pure love of God and others, a holiness of heart and life, a total death to sin. We're not there yet; but by God's grace, as we United Methodists say, "We're going on to perfection!" [Back to top](#)

In the Holy Spirit

- We believe that the Holy Spirit is God with us.
 - We believe that the Holy Spirit comforts us when we are in need and convicts us when we stray from God.
 - We believe that the Holy Spirit awakens us to God's will and empowers us to live obediently.
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Human Beings

- We believe that God created human beings in God's image.
- We believe that humans can choose to accept or reject a relationship with God.
- We believe that all humans need to be in relationship with God in order to be fully human. [Back to top](#)

Sin

Genesis 1:27 asserts that we've been made in the image of the Creator. Like God we have the capacity to love and care, to communicate, and to create. Like God we're free, and we're responsible. We've been made, says Psalm 8, "a little lower than God" and crowned "with glory and honor." We believe that the entire created order has been designed for the well-being of all its creatures and as a place where all people can dwell in covenant with God.

But we do not live as God intends. Again and again we break the covenant relationship between God and us. We turn our backs on God and on God's expectations for us. We deny our birthright, the life of wholeness and holiness for which we were created. We call this alienation from God, sin.

A distinction should be made between sin and sins. We use the word sins to denote transgressions or immoral acts. We speak of "sins of omission and commission." These are real enough and serious, but they're not the essential issue.

The issue is sin in the singular. Sin is our alienation from God, our willful act of turning from God as the center of life and making our own selves and our own wills the center. From this fundamental sin our various sins spring. [Back to top](#)

The Church

- We believe that the church is the body of Christ, an extension of Christ's life and ministry in the world today.
- We believe that the mission of the church is to make disciples of Jesus Christ.
- We believe that the church is "the communion of saints," a community made up of all past, present, and future disciples of Christ.
- We believe that the church is called to worship God and to support those who participate in its life as they grow in faith. [Back to top](#)

The Bible

- We believe that the Bible is God's Word.
- We believe that the Bible is the primary authority for our faith and practice.

- We believe that Christians need to know and study the Old Testament and the New Testament (the Hebrew Scriptures and the Christian Scriptures). [Back to top](#)

The Reign of God

- We believe that the kingdom or reign of God is both a present reality and future hope.
- We believe that wherever God's will is done, the kingdom or reign of God is present. It was present in Jesus' ministry, and it is also present in our world whenever persons and communities experience reconciliation, restoration, and healing.
- We believe that although the fulfillment of God's kingdom--the complete restoration of creation--is still to come.
- We believe that the church is called to be both witness to the vision of what God's kingdom will be like and a participant in helping to bring it to completion.
- We believe that the reign of God is both personal and social. Personally, we display the kingdom of God as our hearts and minds are transformed and we become more Christ-like. Socially, God's vision for the kingdom includes the restoration and transformation of all of creation. [Back to top](#)

Baptism

- Through baptism we are joined with the church and with Christians everywhere.
- Baptism is a symbol of new life and a sign of God's love and forgiveness of our sins.
- Persons of any age can be baptized.
- We baptize by sprinkling, immersion or pouring.
- A person receives the sacrament of baptism only once in his or her life. [Back to top](#)

Holy Communion

- Holy Communion, or the Lord's Supper, is a holy meal of bread and wine that symbolizes the body and blood of Christ.
- The Lord's Supper recalls the life, death and resurrection of Jesus and celebrates the unity of all the members of God's family.
- By sharing this meal, we give thanks for Christ's sacrifice and are nourished and empowered to go into the world in mission and ministry.
- We practice "open Communion," welcoming all who love Christ, repent of their sin, and seek to live in peace with one another.