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†
THE LORD'S SUPPER &
Baptism

*What the two sacraments mean, what happens in the service, and how to
prepare your heart*

WESLEY A.M.E. ZION CHURCH
1500 LOMBARD STREET · PHILADELPHIA · SINCE 1820

OUR FAITH

THE LORD'S SUPPER & *Baptism*

What the two sacraments mean, what happens in the service, and how to prepare your heart

METHODIST CHURCHES, INCLUDING THE A.M.E. ZION CHURCH, celebrate two sacraments, because Jesus Himself commanded two: **Baptism** and **the Lord's Supper**, also called Holy Communion. A sacrament is an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace. Ordinary things — water, bread and wine — become, by Christ's command, channels of God's love to us.

This booklet explains both in plain words, so that when you come to the font or the table you know what is happening, and come with a ready heart.

THE DOORWAY INTO THE CHURCH

BAPTISM

MATTHEW 28:18-20 · THE GREAT COMMISSION

28 And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. ¹⁹Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: ²⁰Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.

KING JAMES VERSION

Baptism marks a person as belonging to Christ and to His Church. The water is a sign of washing from sin, of dying to the old life and rising to a new one, and of being received into God's family. Jesus Himself was baptized in the Jordan River, and He commanded His followers to baptize *"in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."*



Water: a sign of washing, new life, and belonging.

QUESTIONS ABOUT BAPTISM

Q WHO CAN BE BAPTIZED?

A In the Methodist tradition, both adults who profess faith in Christ and the children of believing parents may be baptized. When infants are baptized, parents and sponsors promise to raise them in the faith, and the church promises to help. When they are older, they confirm that faith for themselves.

Q SPRINKLING, POURING OR GOING UNDER THE WATER?

A Methodists accept all three. What matters is not the amount of water, but the promise of God and the faith of the Church. Talk with the pastor about how you would like to be baptized.

Q DO I NEED TO BE BAPTIZED AGAIN?

A If you were baptized with water in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit in any Christian church, Methodists recognize that baptism. God keeps His promises, even when we wander. Instead, you can reaffirm your baptismal vows.

Q HOW DO I ARRANGE A BAPTISM?

A Speak with the pastor after a Sunday service, or call the church office at (215) 735-8961. Adults and parents usually meet with the pastor beforehand to prepare.

HOLY COMMUNION

THE LORD'S SUPPER

1 CORINTHIANS 11:23-26

11 For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread: ²⁴ And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. ²⁵ After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. ²⁶ For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come.

KING JAMES VERSION

On the night before He died, Jesus shared the Passover meal with His disciples. He took bread and said, *"This is my body."* He took the cup and said, *"This cup is the new testament in my blood."* Then He said, *"This do ye ... in remembrance of me."* Ever since, Christians have gathered at the Lord's table to remember His death, give thanks for His resurrection, receive His grace, and look forward to His return.

WHAT THE LORD'S SUPPER MEANS

LOOK... WHAT WE DO	
Back	We remember Jesus' death on the cross for our sins.
Up	We receive Christ's presence and grace by faith, and give thanks (the word <i>Eucharist</i> means <i>thanksgiving</i>).
Around	We share one bread with our brothers and sisters. Communion means <i>sharing</i> — we are one family.
Ahead	We proclaim His death <i>till he come</i> , looking forward to the great feast in God's kingdom.

WHO MAY RECEIVE?

In the Methodist tradition the Lord's table is open: all who love Jesus Christ, earnestly repent of their sin, and seek to live in peace with one another are invited. John Wesley taught that Communion is a *means of grace* — a channel through which God strengthens us — not a reward for the already perfect. The traditional invitation, from the old Methodist and Anglican service, says it beautifully:

Ye that do truly and earnestly repent of your sins, and are in love and charity with your neighbours, and intend to lead a new life, following the commandments of God, and walking from henceforth in his holy ways: draw near with faith, and take this holy Sacrament to your comfort.

THE TRADITIONAL INVITATION TO THE LORD'S TABLE

HOW TO PREPARE YOUR HEART

- ☐ Examine yourself honestly before God (1 Corinthians 11:28). Confess any sin.
- ☐ Forgive anyone you are holding something against (Matthew 5:23-24).
- ☐ Give thanks for the cross and the empty tomb.
- ☐ Come humbly. No one is worthy by themselves. We come because He invites us.
- ☐ Receive with faith, and go out to live as one who has been fed by Christ.



At Big Wesley, Communion is often received kneeling at the altar rail.

A PRAYER BEFORE COMMUNION

Lord Jesus, I am not worthy to come to Your table, but You have invited me, and I come. Wash me, forgive me, and feed me. As I eat this bread and drink this cup, let me remember Your love, receive Your grace, and leave this table ready to live for You.

AMEN.



A PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Thank You, Lord, for feeding me with Yourself. Let what I have received at this table go with me into my home, my work and my neighborhood. Make me one with You and one with Your people, until we eat and drink together in Your kingdom.

AMEN.

SIT WITH IT

When was I baptized? What does it mean to me now?

What will I bring to the Lord's table next time — to confess, to give thanks for, to ask?



*“For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do
shew the Lord’s death till he come.”*

I CORINTHIANS 11:26

WESLEY A.M.E. ZION CHURCH

“Big Wesley” · The Freedom Church · Founded June 6, 1820

SUNDAY SCHOOL	9:30 AM
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SUNDAY WORSHIP	11:00 AM
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