

Orange Beach Methodist Church

Statement of Doctrine and Belief

Core Beliefs

God is expressed in three persons: (Deut. 6:4; Matt 28:19; 1 John 5:6-10; 2 Cor 13:14)

- Father (Creator)
- Jesus the Son (Savior)
- Holy Spirit (Indweller)

The truth about God is found in the Bible as contained in the Old and New Testaments. There we find who God is, how we relate to God, each other, and the world in which we live. (2 Pet. 1:20-21; 2 Tim 3:15-17; Heb 4:12)

Humans are created in the image of God as eternal beings to have a relationship with God now and into eternity. Ultimately we will exist with God (Heaven) or without God (Hell). One day Jesus Christ will return victoriously to earth. (Gen 1:27; Rev 20:15; 1 Cor 15:20-23; John 5:24-29)

Humanity is scarred by sin, separating us from God. Therefore all humanity is in need of a Savior, One who can forgive their sins, transform their hearts, and reunite them with their Heavenly Father. Jesus, the Son of God, through His life, death, and resurrection, became that One and Only Savior. A person enters a relationship with God through confession, repentance, and a trusting belief in Jesus Christ. Then they receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. (Rom 3:23; 1 Cor 15:20-23; John 3:16; Rom 10:9-10; Acts 2:38)

Through a relationship with Jesus Christ we are...

- Adopted into God's Family and given the gift of the Holy Spirit (Eph. 1:5, John 14:15-31, Rom 8:9-10)
- United into a community where we learn to live and love like Jesus (The Church) (Eph 2:19; Rom 12:5)
- Called to a purpose greater than ourselves (John 14:12; Phil 2:12-13; 2 Tim 1:9)

The mission of The Local Church is to...

- Introduce people into a life changing relationship with Jesus Christ (Matt 28:19-20)
- Connect them in a worshiping community of believers (Heb 10:25)
- Send them out to make a difference in our world. (Matt 6:10; Eph 2:10)

Life with Jesus is best! (John 10:10)

Guiding Creed: The Apostle's Creed:

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth. And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord; Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit; Born of the Virgin Mary; Suffered under Pontius Pilate; Was crucified, dead and buried; The third day He rose again from the dead; He ascended into heaven; And sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; From thence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit; The holy catholic* Church, the Communion of Saints; The Forgiveness of sins; The Resurrection of the body; And the life everlasting. Amen.

*that is, the true 'universal' Christian church of all times and all places

(This creed is called the Apostles' Creed not because it was produced by the apostles themselves but because it contains a brief summary of their teachings. It sets forth their doctrine "in sublime simplicity, in unsurpassable brevity, in beautiful order, and with liturgical solemnity." In its present form it is dated no later than the fourth century. More than any of other Christian creed, it may justly be called an ecumenical symbol of faith.)

Sacraments: We believe the Sacraments, given and instructed by Christ, are symbols and pledges of the Christian's profession of faith and of God's love toward us. Sacraments are means of grace by which God works invisibly in us, quickening, strengthening and confirming our faith in Him. Two Sacraments are ordained by Christ our Lord, namely Baptism and Communion (also called the Lord's Supper.)

Baptism: Is a public declaration marking the beginning of one's spiritual journey, formally introducing them in the church. (Matt 28:19-20; Acts 2:38; 22:16)

Communion: A simple meal of bread and juice that spiritually feeds, unites, and reminds the receiver of the work of Jesus Christ and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit into one's life. This meal is open for all who wish to receive it. (Mark 14:22-25; Luke 22:18-20; 1 Cor 11:23-26)

Ceremonies/Celebrations

Marriage Covenant: A two part lifelong covenant between one man, one woman, and God. The first covenant is made between the individual and God. This is a promise to God to honor the spouse in the bond of marriage. The second covenant is between the two individuals. It is the promise to honor each other in the bond of marriage for the remainder of their lives on earth. Sexual intimacy is reserved for this relationship. (1 Cor 7:1-5; Matt 19:4-6; Eph 5:22-33; Heb 13:4)

Ordination: Recognition of the Body (the local church) of an individual's:

- Call into ministry
- Gifts to serve in that ministry
- Preparation (education and experience) to serve in the ministry by...
 - Word (Oversight of the preaching, teaching, and pastoral care ministry)
 - Sacrament (Oversight of the administration of the sacraments)
 - Order (Organizing, overseeing, systemizing, leading, managing, teaching, and administering the church's ministry and mission)
 - Service (Oversight of the mission and ministry of the church)
- (Ordination requirements will be spelled out in this document)
- (Acts 13:1-3, 14:23; 1 Tim 4:14, 5:22)

Child Dedication: Recognition of the gift of a child into a family, where the family gives thanks for the child and commits to raising that child in a manner so that they will want the faith of their parents. It is also a commitment of the church to support the family providing a safe place for all children at the church. (1 Samuel 2)

Wesleyan Distinctiveness:

We are a church in the Wesleyan Theological tradition.

(<https://www.britannica.com/topic/Methodism>). This church began in 1993 as a United Methodist Church. In 2023, we separated from the UMC forming Orange Beach Methodist Church retaining our Wesleyan distinctiveness that includes...

- Our understanding of Grace:
 - Prevenient Grace: God is at work in our lives, calling us to Him, even before we recognize it.
 - Justifying Grace: The forgiveness of sin by repentance and trusting belief in Jesus as one's Savior. It is not by one's works.
 - Sanctifying Grace: The Holy Spirit continues His perfecting work in our lives, making us more like Jesus.
- Social Holiness: We are to make a difference in our community/world
 - The gospel of Christ knows of no religion, but social; no holiness but social holiness. Faith working by love, is the length and breadth and depth and height of Christian perfection. Christians love others because God loves others. The depth of our holiness is measured by our love for others. Social holiness is our motivation for outreach, missions, ministries of mercy, and the meeting of physical/spiritual needs.
- The church is organized as a representative democracy with a Leadership Council that reports to the church body as a whole.
- There is equality between Men and Women in all areas of ministry.
- Openness to all people
- Adherence to the three simple rules
 - Do no harm
 - Do good

- Stay in love with God

Membership/Partnering

Those wishing to become members/partners of OBMC must complete the prescribed membership class(es), have been baptized, and affirm the following vows...

- Do you pledge and reaffirm your love for Jesus Christ, placing your trust in His grace, and promising to serve Him as your Lord?
- As a partnering member of this congregation will you do all in your power to support and strengthen its ministries with your prayers, presence, gifts, service, and witness?

If the individual is a minor, they must complete the confirmation process, have been baptized, and affirm the membership vows.

Members/Partners will be removed from membership by...

- Request of member/partner
- Death of member/partner
- Following a year of no contact, member/partner will be contacted to ask of their intention regarding membership. If no reply is made within the following 6 months the person can be removed from membership.