

## Our Statement of Faith

### Melissa United Methodist Church

At Melissa UMC, we stand in the historic faith of the Church passed down through Scripture, affirmed in the Articles of Religion and Confession of Faith of The United Methodist Church, and celebrated whenever we join Christians around the world in saying the Apostles' Creed.

We are a people shaped by grace, drawn into God's story, and sent to share Christ's love with our community and world.

Below is a summary of what we believe.

### God

We believe in the one true, holy, and living God—Creator of all that is seen and unseen. God is love: infinite in wisdom, perfect in justice, overflowing with mercy.

God is revealed as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—three persons, one essence—eternally united in self-giving love.

### Jesus Christ

We believe that Jesus Christ is God with us: fully divine, fully human.

Born of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary, Jesus lived among us as a servant, teaching the way of God's Kingdom.

Through his life, death on the cross, and resurrection, he breaks the power of sin, reconciles us to God, and opens the way to new life.

He ascended to the Father and will come again to renew all things.

Jesus is Savior, Redeemer, and Lord.

### The Holy Spirit

We believe the Holy Spirit is God's ongoing presence in the world and in the Church.

The Spirit awakens us to our need for grace, draws us toward Christ, comforts us in hardship, empowers us for holy living, and equips us with gifts for ministry.

The Spirit leads us into truth, unity, and joyful obedience.

### The Holy Scriptures

We believe the Bible—Old and New Testaments—is inspired by God and contains all things necessary for salvation.

Through the Holy Spirit, Scripture reveals God's will, shapes our faith, guides our practice, and anchors us in God's story.

We read it with devotion, study it with curiosity, and live it with courage.

### The Church

We believe the Church is the Body of Christ on earth—one, holy, apostolic, and catholic (universal).

It is a community of believers formed by grace, grounded in love, and committed to following Jesus together.

The Church proclaims the Word, celebrates the sacraments, grows disciples, and joins God's work of healing the world.

We affirm the full inclusion of women and men in all forms of ministry, trusting the witness of Scripture and the empowerment of the Holy Spirit who gifts people of every gender to lead, preach, teach, and serve.

We welcome all people as beloved children of God. We believe every person is of sacred worth, created in God's image. We seek to be a community where people of all ages, races, sexual orientations, gender identities, backgrounds, and life experiences can find belonging, healing, and purpose in Christ.

### The Sacraments

We believe Christ has given the Church two sacraments as sure signs of God's grace:

Baptism — our welcome into the family of God, a sign of new birth and the beginning of the Christian life.

Holy Communion — a table of grace where Christ meets us, nourishes us, and unites us with God and one another.

Through these gifts, God strengthens, shapes, and sustains us.

### Humanity, Sin, and Grace

We believe that every person is created in God's image and is made for a relationship with God and with others.

Yet we all fall short; sin distorts our desires, harms our neighbors, and separates us from God.

We cannot save ourselves—but God's grace moves first.

Through prevenient grace, God draws us.

Through justifying grace, God forgives us in Christ.

Through sanctifying grace, God transforms us into people of love.

Grace is the heart of our faith.

### Free Will and New Life

We believe God's grace enables real freedom.

By the Spirit, we can turn from sin, respond to God's love, and grow in Christlikeness.

Christian life is not static—it's a lifelong journey of repentance, renewal, and joyful participation in God's mission.

### Reconciliation Through Christ

We believe God was in Christ reconciling the world.

Jesus' self-giving sacrifice is complete and sufficient for the sins of all people.

Through faith, we are forgiven, restored, and invited into a new way of life marked by hope, peace, and purpose.

### Our Wesleyan Way

As United Methodists, we live our faith through:

Grace that goes before us

A faith that is both personal and social

A commitment to grow in holiness of heart and life

A mission to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world

Social Principles that guide our public witness to justice, compassion, and human dignity

We believe following Jesus is never just about believing the right things—it's about allowing love to shape everything.

### In Short...

We belong to God.

We follow Jesus.

We listen to the Spirit.

We trust Scripture.

We walk together as the Church.

We are shaped by grace.

And we seek to live a story of love, justice, hope, and reconciliation—right here in Melissa and beyond.