

WHEN SHOULD I CALL MY PASTOR?

When You Are Facing A Serious Problem

Your pastor has been trained to help people with their personal, family and other problems. The important judgment of a spiritual leader, together with his prayers for Divine guidance, will enable you to face your problems with confidence.

When Someone Is Interested In The Church

You constantly meet young people and adults in your community who have not united with a local church. Tell them about your church and tell your pastor about the prospective members.

When There Is An Illness

Your pastor is as near as your telephone. His presence, counsel and prayer will be helpful. Your pastor will appreciate your phone call when you, your loved one, or a friend is sick or going into the hospital.

When There Is A Death

Your pastor should be notified when there is a death in the family so he can give comfort and counsel at this difficult time.

When You Must Make An Important Decision

If you or a family member are facing any important decision, make an appointment with your pastor. The viewpoint of your spiritual advisor should be considered.

When There Is A Wedding

Your pastor should be consulted before the wedding date is set. Since you will desire to have one or more meetings with him, it is advisable to contact him well in advance of the wedding.

When Someone Desires To Become A Christian

Happy, indeed, is the pastor who is asked to talk to someone desiring to become a Christian. He can give you guidance as you both speak to those who want to know more about Christ.

What I Should Know

The
Membership
Manual
for the

PRIMITIVE
METHODIST
CHURCH



This manual is designed to furnish information about our denomination to members and prospective members of the Primitive Methodist Churches. Some of these items are also found in our Primitive Methodist Discipline.

“What I Should Know” tells what Primitive Methodism is, gives a brief history and explains our doctrines and the duties of members. It explains the composition of the Annual Conference, the work of the District Conference, the Quarterly Conference and the Lay Elders, as well as the privileges and prerogatives of the Pastor.

A study of Biblical truth on some of the greatest subjects in the Word of God, based on the Statement of Doctrines in our Discipline, is also included in this booklet.

It is our hope that this manual will be a practical help to anyone who desires to become a member of the Primitive Methodist Church.

The Primitive Methodist Membership Manual is prepared by the Board of Christian Ministries of the Primitive Methodist Church in the United States of America.

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THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

Exodus 20:1-17

And God spoke all these words,

- I.** I am the Lord your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the land of slavery. You shall have no other gods before me.
- II.** You shall not make for yourself an idol in the form of anything in the heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below. You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sin of the fathers to the third and fourth generation of those that hate me; but showing love to a thousand generations of those who love me and keep my commandments.
- III.** You shall not misuse the name of the Lord your God, for the Lord will not hold anyone guiltless who misuses His name.
- IV.** Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the Lord your God. On it you shall not do any work, neither you, nor your son or daughter, nor your manservant or maidservant, nor your animals, nor the alien within your gates. For in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea and all that is in them, but he rested on the seventh day. Therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.
- V.** Honor your father and your mother, so that you may live long in the land the Lord your God is giving you.
- VI.** You shall not murder.
- VII.** You shall not commit adultery.
- VIII.** You shall not steal.
- IX.** You shall not give false testimony against your neighbor.
- X.** You shall not covet your neighbor's house. You shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or his manservant or maidservant, his ox or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor.

What is the Primitive Methodist Church? Historical Preface

The religious fervor which spread over the English countryside under the leadership of John and Charles Wesley began to cool in the early 1800's. The two men, Hugh Bourne and William Clowes, local preachers in the Wesleyan Church, became zealous, consecrated men of God, interested in seeing their fellow workers converted and brought to Christ. Feeling the importance of prayer, they constantly looked to God for guidance and longed for a day spent entirely in prayer and preaching. In 1806 Lorenzo Dow, an eccentric but mighty evangelist from America, told of the amazing results in the great American Camp Meetings. So enthused were Bourne and Clowes that they arranged for "a whole day's meeting" on Mow Cop, a rough and rugged mountain on the border between Staffordshire and Cheshire. The meeting was held May 31, 1807, beginning at 6 o'clock in the morning and continuing until 8 pm. From four preaching stands, the Gospel was proclaimed with unction and converting power to thousands who listened eagerly, many of whom experienced the joys of salvation. Yet, even though Methodism had been founded by that great open-air preacher, John Wesley, the converts made that day were refused admittance into the Wesleyan Church. Also, the two men most responsible, Hugh Bourne and William Clowes, were reprimanded for having part in the meetings. When they continued to pursue holding open-air meetings, they were dismissed from the church. Their answer to their objectors was, "It is better to obey God than man." Both Hugh Bourne and William Clowes waited patiently for two years to be reinstated in the Wesleyan Church. They were finally driven by necessity to the founding of a place for themselves and their new converts in 1810. The words of Bourne provide the evidence that this was not a schism for "we did not take one from them...but from providential circumstances...it now appeared to be the will of God that we, as a Camp Meeting Community, should form classes and take upon us the care of churches in the fear of God."

The growth was such that in February, 1812, in Tunstall, the people took the name: the Society of the Primitive Methodists. This name was accepted when John Crawfoot, who had been present in April, 1790 when John Wesley preached in the city of Chester. Wesley reminded the preachers present of the need for preaching the Gospel. Then, lifting his hands while tears flowed down his face, he exclaimed, "and yet there is room! and yet there is room!" And added, "and this way the primitive Methodists did!" So, the resolution was carried that both the name and the conduct it represented should be adopted; that, like the primitive Methodists, the members of the community should continue to labor, and Primitive Methodists they would be called.

Due to the number of Primitive Methodist people migrating to America, it was felt that the work should be strengthened. In 1829, the first missionaries arrived in Brooklyn, NY. They suffered many hardships and the societies they founded in New York City struggled against many difficulties and had feeble growth. Elsewhere, in various parts of Pennsylvania, the societies attained considerable strength. Up to 1840 the societies in the United States constituted a "Mission under the control and partial support of the British Conference." It was found, however, that the conditions in the new world could not lend themselves to the customs and methods of the old; and, as the British Conference insisted on maintaining its old world methods and rules in America or withdraw its support, the Conference which met in New York on September 16, 1840: "Resolved that we consider ourselves from this time, distinct from, and unconnected with the English Conference."

In 1842, nine persons who settled in Illinois and Wisconsin found others who had formerly been identified with the Primitive Methodist Connexion, formed a Primitive Methodist Society. Their work was greatly blessed of God and spread to other areas. Societies multiplied and formed the Western Conference in 1844.

Prior to 1872, the churches in Pennsylvania and New York were recognized as a District of the Western Conference. However, distance and other problems led to their formation of the Eastern Conference, which held their first session in Plymouth, Pennsylvania in May, 1873.

Realizing the great need for a closer bond of unity between the Eastern and Western Conferences, representative visits were exchanged when the respective conferences were in session. These visits resulted in the formation of a General Conference in September, 1889, in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, composed of appointed delegates from each of the Conferences. The purpose was to formulate such laws as were necessary for the regulation of the churches and the more rapid and permanent advancement of the cause of God represented by Primitive Methodism in the United States. At this Conference, a Discipline was adopted and the two sections of the Church became one organization. In 1891 the Eastern Conference was divided into the Eastern Conference and the Pennsylvania Conference.

Organized Foreign Mission endeavors began in 1897 with the General Conference authorizing monies to be sent to the Primitive Methodist Society in England for a work in Africa. Mission vision continued to grow until 1921. The Conference in session at Hazleton, Pennsylvania voted to begin a missionary ministry in Guatemala, Central America. In January, 1922, the first Primitive Methodist Church service was held in Guatemala.

WHAT SHOULD I MEMORIZE?

The Apostles' 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 Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilot, was crucified, dead and buried. He descended into hell. 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 Ghost, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body and the life everlasting. Amen.

The Doxology

Praise God from Whom all blessings flow;
Praise Him, all creatures here below;
Praise Him above, ye heavenly host;
Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen.

The Gloria Patri

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost. As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be; world without end. Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, which art in heaven,
Hallowed be Thy Name.
Thy kingdom come,
Thy Will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our debts (trespasses),
As we forgive our debtors (those who trespass against us).
And lead us not into temptation,
But deliver us from evil:
For Thine is kingdom and the power and the glory, forever.
Amen.

The Need For Christ's Return: It is needed to bring about:

1. The resurrection of the dead (II Corinthians 5:1-4; I Thessalonians 4:14-16).
2. The removal of the curse (Genesis 3:16-19; Romans 8:19-22; Revelation 22:3).
3. The complete reign of Christ (Philippians 2:9-11; Hebrews 2:8; I Corinthians 15:25-27).

The Fact Of Christ's Return: He will return:

1. It is certain (Acts 1:11; John 14:3).
2. It is visible (Revelation 1:7; Matthew 24:30).
3. It is sudden (Matthew 24:27, 41-44).
4. It is redemptive (Hebrews 9:28).
5. It is pre-millennial (Revelation 20:2-5; I Corinthians 15:23-24).

The Result Of Christ's Return: When He comes:

1. The dead shall be raised (Daniel 12:2; John 5:28-29).
2. The just shall be raised first to be judged and rewarded for their work (II Corinthians 5:10; 3:11-15).
3. The unjust shall be raised afterward to be judged for sin (Psalm 91:8; Revelation 20:11-15). The just will not face this judgment.

Our Response To Christ's Return: As believers:

1. We should watch by always being prepared for Him (Matthew 25:13).
2. We should wait patiently (II Peter 3:3-4, 8-10).
3. We should work for Him (Galatians 6:9-10).
4. We should purify our lives (I John 3:1-3)

The work continued to expand until the Primitive Methodist Church of Guatemala was established in June, 1983. the same general form of government followed by the parent body in the United States is used. This Conference has continued to grow throughout Guatemala. Included in its ministry is a hospital, school, clinics, youth camp and an intensive evangelistic outreach for the cause of Christ in Guatemala. A mission work was started in the Dominican Republic, as well, and led to the formation of the Primitive Methodist Church in the Dominican Republic. There is also on-going work in Mexico.

The need for the strengthening of the denominational work resulted in the union of the Western and Pennsylvania Conferences in 1927 and the Eastern Conference in 1948.

Recently, churches have been started in new areas of the United States by the National Mission Board, in New Jersey and Florida.

Outreach for religious training in the denomination includes a Conference Center known as the Pocono Mountain Bible Conference. The School of Theology, offering instruction by correspondence, provides theological training for both student pastors and those preparing for the ministry.

With a desire to combine all the resources of the denomination for a greater endeavor for the cause of Christ, the Annual and General Conferences were united in May, 1975. This action placed all the legislative and administrative power in the hands of one Conference rather than dividing it into two bodies. The Primitive Methodist Church in the United States of America is the name chosen. The leadership of the denomination is to be found in the office of the President.

DOCTRINES

We believe the Bible, both Old and New Testaments, to be the only true rule of faith and practice. We hold it to be wholly and verbally given by God and therefore without error in all of its teachings.

WE BELIEVE IN:

One God who exists in three persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

The Deity of Jesus Christ, the Son, conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary.

The Deity and Personality of the Holy Spirit.

The creation of man by a direct act of God, man's fall into sin and the resulting corruption of the human race.

The provision of Redemption for all men through the death of the Lord Jesus Christ upon the cross.

The necessity of Repentance, including godly sorrow for sin and reformation of life.

Regeneration through the work of the Holy Spirit.

Justification by grace through faith of all who believe.

Sanctification by the Holy Spirit, producing holiness of heart and life.

The Resurrection of the dead and conscious future existence of all men.

The Second Coming of Christ in power and glory.

The future Judgment of both the just and unjust issuing eternal rewards and punishment of all men.

The Church which is instituted by Christ and composed of all believers in Christ as Savior.

THE LORD'S SUPPER

Old Testament Background: The Lord's Supper is the Passover meal (Matthew 26:19) described in Exodus 12 and transformed by Christ (Matthew 26:26-28).

Its Meaning: Passover is a backward look at God's deliverance (Exodus 12:14) and is a forward look to Christ (I Corinthians 5:7-8). The Lord's Supper also is a backward look at the death of Christ (I Corinthians 11:24-25) and a forward look to His coming (I Corinthians 11:26).

Who Should Partake Of It: Any who truly believe in Jesus Christ and intend to live a Christian Life (I Corinthians 11:27-28).

What Does It Signify: The eating and drinking illustrates the inward partaking of Jesus by faith. Just as we need to take food into our bodies for life, we must receive Christ and continue to feed on Him (John 6:40, 51-54).

THE DOCTRINE OF LAST THINGS

We believe that Jesus Christ will come again to the earth to reign. We believe that it will be pre-millennial, visible and redemptive. This is a great source of motivation for purification and inspiration for Christian service

We believe in the resurrection of the bodies of both the just and the unjust: the just first to the seat of Christ for reward of works and entrance into heaven; and the unbeliever to the Great white Throne for judgment of sin and banishment from the presence of God forever.

Importance: The return of Jesus Christ is the great and blessed hope of the Christian (Titus 2:13).

SACRAMENTS OF THE CHURCH

Definition: Sacrament is a Latin word meaning “testimony given under oath.” It is a sign or symbol ordained by Jesus Christ showing God’s grace and good will toward us and our acceptance of it by faith.

How Many: There are only two sacraments ordained by Jesus Christ: baptism (Matthew 28:19) and the Lord’s Supper (Luke 22:19-20).

Why Did God Give Them: By the sacraments, God demonstrates in picture form His pledge that He freely offers salvation through the death of Jesus Christ and the cleansing of sin by the Holy Spirit.

Why Do We Keep Them: Baptism is an outward sacred rite signifying an inward purity accomplished by Christ’s atonement, administered by the use of water to professing believers or to their children in obedience to the Holy Scriptures in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

The Lord’s Supper is the memorial of our redemption through the suffering and death of our Savior Jesus Christ, for through this supper we show forth the Lord’s death till He comes. It is also the symbol of the soul of the believer feeding on Christ. It is the sign of the communion we have with one another as members of the body of Christ.

Old Testament Background: Baptism compares to circumcision, the sign of the Old Testament covenant (Genesis 17:10; Romans 4:3, 10-11) which was a pledge to God of Circumcision of the heart (Deuteronomy 10:16; 30:6; Romans 2:28-29). Baptism in the new covenant has the same spiritual meaning (Colossians 2:11-12; Galatians 3:26-29).

What Is Required: Baptism is with water (Mark 1:8) in the name of the Trinity (Matthew 28:19).

Who Should Be Baptized: All who believe in Christ as Savior and Lord (Acts 2:38) and children of one believing parent. (Acts 2:39).

The Mode of Baptism: Sprinkling illustrates cleansing of sin (Psalm 51:7; I Peter 1:2; Revelation 1:5). Immersion illustrates the death and resurrection of Christ (Romans 6:3-5). Pouring illustrates the giving of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:17-18; Titus 3:5-6).

DUTIES OF MEMBERS OF THE PRIMITIVE METHODIST CHURCH

1. The members of the Primitive Methodist Church are expected to live sincere, godly lives; to attend the services on the Lord’s Day and at other services; to promote family worship.
2. They must support, to the best of their ability as God shall prosper them, all programs of the church. The Scriptures teach faithful stewardship by way of tithes and offerings as the means of meeting this obligation.
3. Members are urged to regularly participate in the observance of the Lord’s Supper.
4. They must observe the Scriptural injunction to do all the good they can by being merciful and kind, especially to those who are of the household of faith.
5. It is their duty to visit the sick and minister to the needs of the poor as they are able.
6. The Bible commands all Christians to live separated lives and to refrain from activities and associations in which the consciousness of God’s blessing cannot be realized.
7. Because the body of the Christian is the temple of God, members are expected to affirm the denominational position of total abstinence in the areas of intoxicating beverages, tobacco and habit-forming drugs.
8. Members are amenable to the Quarterly Conference with regard to questions of moral conduct.

WHY SHOULD YOU JOIN THE PRIMITIVE METHODIST CHURCH?

1. Let all seekers of Church membership know that the Church of Christ, of which all true believers are members, is of divine origin. It was founded by Christ and He is the Head. It has been blessed of God and led by the Holy Spirit. Its survival through the ages, amid great tests and trials, and its appeal to all races is adequate proof to its claim.

Matthew 16:18; Ephesians 2:21-22 and 5:25-27

2. It is through the Church that Christ calls us to repentance and promises forgiveness of sins. It is the Church that proclaims God's love and calls us into those arms that will not let us go.

Luke 15:11-24; Romans 8:35-39; I John 1:9; Romans 10:9-10

3. The Church compels us to accept our responsibilities; to vow that we will support it by our presence, gifts of time, money and service, because in such giving we experience God's promised blessing.

Matthew 25:14-30; Luke 6:38; Malachi 3:8-10

4. By uniting with the Church we become a part of that group who lift the community to a higher level of living and create a more wholesome atmosphere. Who of us would want to live where there is no Church?

Matthew 5:13-16

3. Witnessing to the world (Isaiah 49:6).

The Church was planned by God from the beginning (Ephesians 3:3-6), was promised by Christ (Matthew 16:13-18 (and is the creation of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:1-4).

The Nature: The Church is compared to:

1. The Body of which Christ is the Head (I Corinthians 12:12; Colossians 1:18).

2. The Building of which Christ is the Chief Cornerstone (Ephesians 2:20; I Peter 2:4-8).

3. The Bride of which Christ is the Bridegroom (Ephesians 5:22).

4. The Priesthood of which Christ is High Priest (I Peter 2:5, 9; Hebrews 4:14-16).

5. The Sheep of which Christ is Shepherd (John 10:14-16).

6. The Branches of Christ who is the Vine (John 15:5).

The Universality: The Church is composed of all who receive Christ as Savior, irrespective of race or color (John 3:3-5; Galatians 3:7; 3:26-29; Acts 2:47).

The Purpose:

1. Fellowship (Acts 2:41-47, Galatians 6:2; Philippians 2:1-2)

2. Worship (I Peter 2:9; Hebrews 13:15; John 4:23-24).

3. Witnessing (Matthew 5:13-16; Mark 16:15-16, 20; Acts 1:8).

How Does Sanctification Take Place?

1. It is the work of the Triune God, but especially of the Holy Spirit (Jude 1; Philippians 2:13; Ephesians 5:25-27; Galatians 5:22-23; II Thessalonians 2:13; I Peter 1:2).
2. But it requires human cooperation (Luke 11:13; Romans 6:1-13; Ephesians 4:30; Hebrews 12:14).

What Methods Are Used For Sanctification?

1. The Word of God (Psalm 119:9-11; John 17:17; II Timothy 3:16-17).
2. Chastisement (I Corinthians 11:30-32; Hebrews 12:6-8; Revelation 3:19).
3. Testing (Job 23:10; James 1:2-4; I Peter 1:6-7).

THE CHURCH

We believe the church to be instituted of God. It is the body of which Christ is the head. It is composed of believers by faith in Christ as Savior irrespective of race or color.

The Primitive Methodist Church is a congregation of believers joined together for mutual fellowship and the worship of God.

Importance: The Church is God's method of bringing the gospel to the world and is the place for Christian service.

The Origin: The Church is instituted of God. It is a continuation of God's redemptive program through Israel. God's purpose for Israel was to prepare for the Church by:

1. Guarding God's Word (Psalm 147:19-20).
2. Bringing the Redeemer into the world (Genesis 12:1-3).

5. The Church provides us with comfort in all the trials and bereavements of life. When called upon to go through deep waters (and who can prevent such?), it gives us assurance that nothing can take us out of our Father's hands, not separate us from the love of Jesus Christ our Lord. He is our Refuge and Strength, our Sun and Shield.

Romans 8:28; Psalms 27:1-2, 46:1-2 and 84:11

6. The Church provides an atmosphere for fellowship, human and divine, which we deeply need. In worship we find courage, help and uplift of soul in the company of others whose needs are like our own. We may experience the consciousness of God's presence in other places, but never quite so keenly as in the House of God.

John 4:23-24; Hebrews 10:24-25

7. The Gospel of Christ insists upon our confession before our fellow man. Such confession can best be made as an active, useful and consecrated member of Christ's Church.

Matthew 10:32-33; Acts 1:8

GOVERNMENT OF THE CHURCH

THE CONFERENCE

The Conference is the highest administrative and legislative body of the Primitive Methodist Church. It meets once a year and is composed of the pastors and one delegate from each church.

During the rest of the year the General Committee, made up of the President, Vice-President, General Secretary, Recording Secretary, Treasurer, the District Superintendents and an equal number of laypersons and/or pastors, conducts the business of the Conference.

The various boards that carry out the designated functions throughout the year are: Board of Christian Ministries, Conference Trustee Board, International Mission Board, Investment Foundation, National Mission Board, Pocono Mountain Bible Conference and Social Action Board.

THE DISTRICT

The District is any group of churches within a given area, the bounds of which shall be set by Conference.

The District Conference meets at least once a year prior to the Annual Conference and at any time considered necessary by the District Superintendent. It is made up of all the pastors in the District, a lay delegate elected by each church and all persons residing in the District who are Conference officers.

THE LOCAL CHURCH

The local church is a congregation of Christian believers organized for the worship of God.

The local church has two mandatory meetings a year: one to elect the pastor and one to elect the church officers.

Growth is the result of redemption. It is not necessary to be saved repeatedly (John 6:37; Philippians 1:6; Hebrews 6:1-2) but it is necessary to grow (Hebrews 5:11-12; II Peter 3:18). We grow by prayer (John 15:7), by worship (Hebrews 10:25), by Bible study (I Peter 2:2), by staying in fellowship with God (I John 1:7-9).

SANCTIFICATION

We believe that sanctification is the work of the Holy Spirit in the human heart, setting apart or consecrating for a task and producing holiness in the life.

Importance: Sanctification is God's purpose for us and one of the reasons for which He saved us (Romans 8:29).

What Does Sanctification Mean?

1. Separation from evil or uncleanness (II Corinthians 6:17; 7:1; I Thessalonians 4:7; I Peter 1:15-16).
2. Dedication to God, i.e. consecration for a task (John 10:36; Jeremiah 1:5; John 17:19).

When Does Sanctification Take Place?

1. At the New Birth (I Corinthians 1:2; 6:11; II Corinthians 5:17).
2. Progressively (II Corinthians 3:18; Philippians 3:12-13; II Peter 3:18).
3. Completed at the Coming of Christ (I Thessalonians 3:12-13; I Thessalonians 5:23; I John 3:2).

Sin is rebellion against God . Sin is why redemption is needed. Sin separates us from God and makes us unable to please God.

1. All have sinned (Psalm 14:2-3; Isaiah 64:6; Romans 3:23; James 2:10; I John 1:8-10).
2. All are unable to please God (Romans 3:20; 8:7-8).
3. All deserve death, which is separation from God forever (Ezekiel 18:4; Romans 6:23; Romans 8:6).

Christ is the price paid for our redemption. Redemption means buying back that which is lost. Jesus Christ provided redemption for all mankind by His death on the cross.

1. Shedding of blood (death) is the price God requires (Hebrews 9:22; Genesis 3:21; Genesis 4:4; Exodus 29:11-14). Blood provides atonement, which is “covering” (Exodus 12:13) and blood provides cleansing of sin (I John 1:7).
2. The death of Christ is the only acceptable sacrifice (John 14:6; Acts 4:12) and is sufficient to pay for the sins of everyone (II Corinthians 5:21; Ephesians 1:7; I Peter 3:18).

Faith is the means by which we receive the free gift of redemption. You must receive Christ as Savior and Lord by faith (John 1:12).

1. Faith involves knowledge of the Gospel, assent to its teachings and trust in Christ whom it reveals (Matthew 13:23; Hebrews 11:3; Acts 16:31; Romans 10:9-13)
2. Faith is always accompanied by repentance, i.e. a change of mind, emotion and will (Mark 1:15; Luke 13:3; Acts 17:30).
3. True saving faith always produces good works (Ephesians 2:8-10; James 2:17-20).

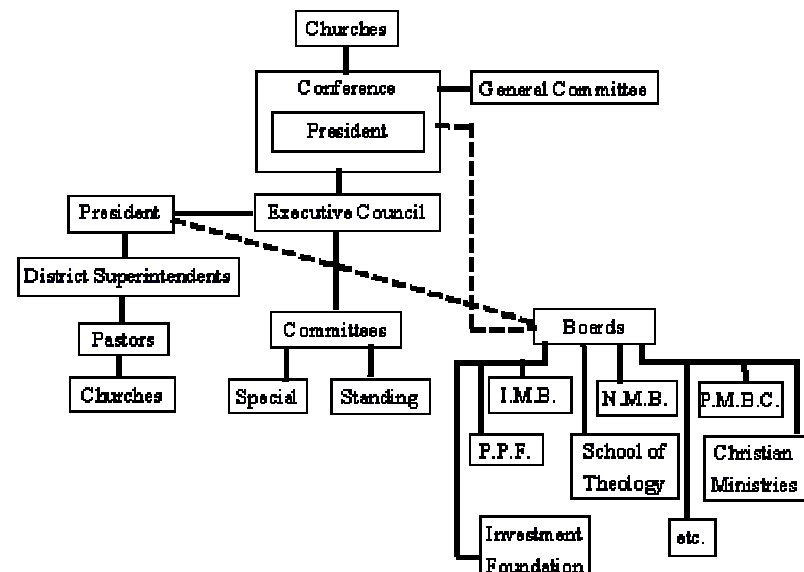
The Quarterly Conference is the highest official body of the local church. It is the governing body to which all organizations, boards, etc. are responsible. It administrates mainly the spiritual activities, delegating other activities (such as financial, social, etc.) to boards, organizations and committees. It is made up of the elected officials of the church as listed in the Discipline.

The pastor, assisted by the Lay Elders, carries out the work, spiritual leadership and ministry in the church.

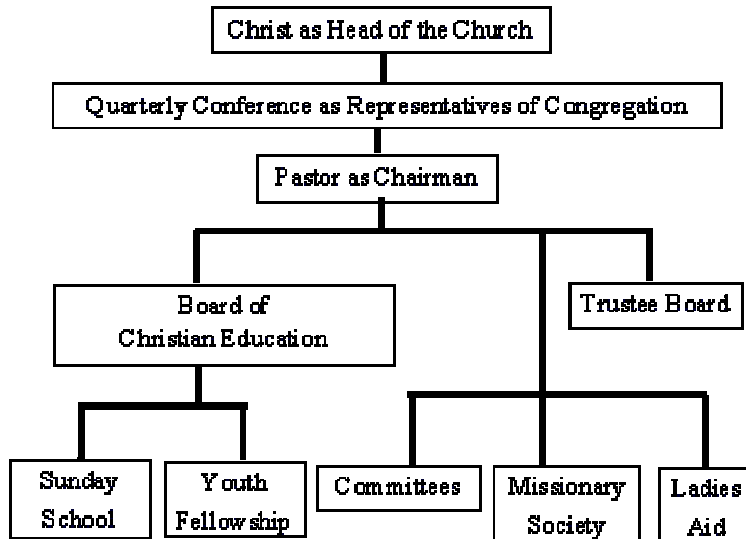
The Conference, Districts and Local Churches must conduct all their business according to the Discipline of the Primitive Methodist Church in the U.S.A.

HOW THE GOVERNMENT OF OUR DENOMINATION WORKS

THE PRIMITIVE METHODIST CHURCH IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA



**HOW THE GOVERNMENT OF A LOCAL
PRIMITIVE METHODIST CHURCH
WORKS**



2. Death passed upon all Adam’s descendents (Romans 5:12; Psalm 51:5; Psalm 58:3).

3. Man in his natural state cannot please God (Romans 3:20; John 3:5-6; Romans 8:7-8).

Original sin means being born with the desire to disobey God.

REDEMPTION

We believe that God has provided redemption for all men through the death of the Lord Jesus Christ on the cross. We further believe that, since man cannot save himself, God has provided the perfect offering for sin in Christ. We believe that man is justified in the sight of God by faith and that true, genuine faith produces regeneration, also called the New Birth. We further believe that Godly sorrow for sin (repentance) will produce reformation of character.

Importance: Redemption is the theme of the entire Bible, the goal of God’s plan for the ages and the purpose for faith.

Key Truths of Redemption:

Grace means undeserved favor. Redemption is a gift. God loves sinners and offers eternal life as a free gift.

1. God’s love and justice are satisfied by the death of Christ (John 3:16; Romans 5:8; I John 4:9-10).

2. Eternal life is a free gift that cannot be earned (Romans 6:23; Ephesians 2:8-9; Titus 3-5; I Peter 1:18-19).

3. God offers abundant life now and life with Him forever (Ezekiel 33:11; John 5:24; John 10:10; Philippians 3:20-21).

BIBLE STUDY COURSE

THE BIBLE

We believe the Bible, both Old and New Testaments, to be the Word of God. We believe it to be divinely inspired by the Holy Spirit. We further believe that its declarations are final, and that it is the only true rule of faith and practice.

The Bible Is Remarkable Because:

1. It is the most translated, most read, most durable book.
2. It is actually a library. "Bible" means "books." It is made up of 66 books, 39 in the Old Testament (written in Hebrew), 27 in the New Testament (written in Greek), composed over a period of 1,600 years by about 36 human authors.
3. It is God's Word.

How Does God's Word Come To Us?

Revelation – making something hidden plain.

Deuteronomy 29:29 "God Spoke"

Inspiration – keeping the writers free of error.

II Timothy 3:16-17: II Peter 1:20-21

"God spoke through men."

Illumination – work of the Holy Spirit giving understanding

II Corinthians 2:13-14 "God spoke through man and helps us understand."

2. The Apostle Paul believed in a literal Adam and Eve

(I Corinthians 15:22; I Timothy 2:13-14).

His Personality: He was made in the image of God (Genesis 1:26-27)

1. He is a person with intellect, emotion and will.
2. He has the power to make moral choices.
3. He is able to enjoy fellowship with God.

His Position: He is the highest of all creation

1. He is higher than the angels (I Corinthians 6:2-3; Hebrews 1:14).
2. He is to possess the world to come (Hebrews 2:5-7).
3. He is called "brethren" by Christ (Hebrews 2:11).

MAN'S FALL

Origin of Evil: Satan brought evil into the world.

1. Satan was a worshipping angel who rebelled against God (Isaiah 14:12-15; Ezekiel 28:11-19) because of his innate wickedness (John 8:44; I John 3:8).

2. Satan was allowed to tempt man so man could learn to choose good and reject evil (Genesis 2:9, 16-17; 3:1-6) but man freely chose evil instead (I Corinthians 10:13).

Original righteousness is the absence of evil desires, habits and instincts. Perfect righteousness is the result of the atoning work of Christ applied to the believing heart which manifests itself in the choosing of good and the rejection of evil.

Result of Man's Fall: The sentence of death passed upon mankind.

1. Death entered the world (Genesis 2:17; 3:14-19; Ezekiel 18:4, Romans 6:23). Death is spiritual (separation from fellowship with God), physical (suffering and death of the body) and eternal (punishment in hell forever).

Why Believe The Bible Is God's Word?

1. Claims of the Old Testament
Exodus 24:3,4,7; Deuteronomy 31:24
"Thus saith the Lord."
2. Attitude of Christ to the Old Testament
John 10:35; John 5:46-47; Matthew 5:17;
Matthew 22:29; Luke 24:27
3. Apostles claimed inspiration
II Timothy 3:16-17; II Peter 1:20-21; I John 4:6;
I Corinthians 14:37; II Thessalonians 3:14;
I Timothy 5:18 quotes Luke 10:7;
II Peter 3:15-16 acknowledges the writings of Paul as
Scripture; Jude 3:18 quotes II Peter 3:3
4. Testimony of the Book of Revelation
Revelation 1:3; Revelation 22:18-19
5. Witness of Miracles
Hebrews 2:4 The perfect Bible is the greatest miracle; free
of all error, contradiction and inconsistency.
6. Fulfillment of Prophecy
examples: Micah 5:2; Isaiah 53; Psalm 2
Some are still being fulfilled: Matthew 24:14;
Ezekiel 37-39
7. Effects of Bible on world
Where it is obeyed, the culture advances; where neglected;
culture sinks into depravity.
8. Witness of the Holy Spirit
I Corinthians 2:12-14

What Does the Holy Spirit Do?

1. The Holy Spirit brings about the new birth (John 3:5; Titus 3:5; John 16:8-11)
2. Since the Day of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit indwells every believer (John 7:38-39; John 14:17; Acts 2:1-4)
to encourage and comfort us (John 14:16; Romans 8:15-16)
to enable or guide us (John 14:26; John 16:13)
to empower us (Luke 24:49; Acts 1:8; Ephesians 4:7, 8, 11)
to exalt Christ in us (John 15:26; John 16:13-14)
3. The result of His indwelling is the sanctification of the believer (Luke 11:13; Romans 8:2-5; Galatians 5:22-25).

MAN

We believe that man was created by the direct act of God, in His image, possessing personality and the right of choice. In his original state, man enjoyed fellowship with God. We further believe that man chose not to remain in the happy state in which God created him. Being tempted by Satan, man became disobedient and incurred upon himself and his posterity the sentence that sin deserved. We further believe that man in his natural state cannot please God.

Importance: Man is a spiritual being and one's beliefs about the nature of man affect one's doctrine of redemption.

MAN'S NATURE

His Origin: He was created by the direct act of God.

1. The Biblical account will not allow for evolution (Genesis 1; Exodus 20:11, Genesis 2:7; Genesis 3:19).

THE HOLY SPIRIT

We believe the Holy Spirit to be the third Person of the blessed Trinity. He is eternal God. His office work is to reprove the world of sin, of righteousness and of judgment. We believe the Holy Spirit to be a Person who regenerates, sanctifies, empowers, teaches, guides and comforts. He is at work in the world as a witness to Christ, as the builder of the Church and as the indweller of the Brethren.

Importance: Of all church doctrines, people know the least about the Doctrine of the Holy Spirit. But He is God in us, making us like Christ.

Who Is the Holy Spirit?

1. He is known in the Bible by several names, all indicating His Deity and personality (Luke 11:13; John 3:5; John 14:16-17, Acts 2:4; Romans 8:9; II Corinthians 3:17; Ephesians 4:30).
2. He is a living Person, not an impersonal force (Acts 5:3; Ephesians 4:30; Acts 13:2).
3. He is God, the third Person of the Blessed Trinity (Acts 5:3-4; Matthew 28:19; II Corinthians 13:14).
4. He is associated with the Father and Son in all the great works of:
 - Creation (Genesis 1:1; Colossians 1:16; Genesis 1:2)
 - Incarnation (Luke 1:35)
 - Resurrection (Acts 2:24; John 10:18; Romans 8:11)
 - Inspiration (II Timothy 3:16; John 16:13; II Peter 1:21)
 - Salvation (I Peter 1:2)
 - Indwelling (John 14:17, 23)

GOD

We believe that God exists in three Persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit; three Persons, one God. We believe He is self-existent, infinite, personal, unchangeable and eternal in His being. He is perfect in holiness, love, justice, goodness, wisdom and truth. He is omnipotent, omniscient and omnipresent. He is the Creator and Sustainer of all things visible and invisible.

Importance: The chief end of man is to glorify God and to enjoy Him forever. We can only do this if we know who the true God is (I Corinthians 10:31; Exodus 20:3; Deuteronomy 6:5; I Corinthians 8:5-6).

Who Is God?

God is the Trinity, three Persons, one nature. Evidence for the Trinity is greater than just Matthew 28:19 and II Corinthians 13:14. The Scriptures assure us:

1. The Father is God (I Peter 1:2-3)
2. The Son is God (John 1:1)
3. The Holy Spirit is God (Acts 5:3-4)
4. The Father is not the Son (John 14:28)
5. The Son is not the Holy Spirit (John 14:16)
6. The Father is not the Holy Spirit (John 14:26)
7. But there is only one God (Deuteronomy 6:4)
8. He is self-existing (Exodus 3:14; John 5:26)
9. He is eternal (Psalm 90:2; I Timothy 6:16; Revelation 1:8)
10. He is unchanging (Hebrews 1:12; 13:8; James 1:17; Malachi 3:6)

What is God Like?

1. God is holy (Isaiah 6:3; I Peter 1:15-16)
2. God is love (I John 4:16)
3. God is perfect in justice, goodness and truth (Exodus 34:6-7)
4. God is perfect in wisdom (Psalm 147:5; Jude 25)
5. God is omnipotent (all-powerful) (Job 42:2; Matthew 19:26)
6. God is omniscient (all-knowing) (Isaiah 46:9-10; Hebrews 4:12-13)
7. God is omnipresent (everywhere) (Matthew 18:20; 28:18-20)

What Does God Do?

1. He is the Creator (Genesis 1:1; John 1:3; Colossians 1:16)
2. He is the Sustainer (Acts 17:28; Colossians 1:17; Hebrews 1:3)

CHRIST

We believe in the Deity of Jesus Christ, in His eternity, in His incarnation by the virgin birth, thus uniting perfect man and perfect God in one body. We believe also in His sinless life, in His vicarious death and bodily resurrection from the dead and in His ascension to the right hand of the Father. We further believe in His present ministry of advocacy and His coming again in power and glory.

Importance: Christianity is the only religion centered on a resurrected, living person. Without Jesus, there is no Christianity.

His Deity: He is God, the Son, the second person of the Trinity (John 1:1; John 5:18; Isaiah 9:6). Christ is described with the same words as God (compare Exodus 3:13-14 to John 5:58; Isaiah 43:11 to Luke 2:11; Isaiah 44:6 to Revelation 1:11).

His Eternity: Only begotten does not mean there was a time when Christ was not. He was eternally the Son of God (Micah 5:2; John 17:5; Hebrews 1:12).

His Incarnation and Virgin Birth: He was born without a human father (Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:18; Luke 1:34-35) by taking on complete humanity (John 1:1,14; I John 4:2-3) without ceasing to be God (Matthew 18:20; John 2:24; Philippians 2:6-8) so He could identify with us and bring us to God (Hebrews 2:17; Matthew 1:23).

His Sinless Life: He never sinned (John 14:30; Hebrews 4:15; I Peter 2:22) and He did positive good works (John 10:32; Acts 10:38) to earn righteousness for us (Galatians 3:10; Matthew 5:17-20; Hebrews 5:7-9; II Corinthians 5:21).

His Vicarious Death: He died on the cross to pay the penalty for our sins (Isaiah 53:4-6; Romans 6:23; Hebrews 9:22) for all the sins of the world (I Timothy 2:6; Hebrews 2:9; I Peter 2:24) for all time (Hebrews 9:26; 10:12) out of love for us (John 15:13; Romans 5:8).

His Resurrection: It is sure and it is physical (Luke 24:1-7, 36-43). He rose for our assurance, our forgiveness, our eternal life and our submission to Him (Romans 1:4, 4:25, 8:11, 14:9).

His Ascension and Present Ministry: He returned to heaven (Mark 16:19; Acts 1:9; Hebrews 1:3) where He defends us (I John 2:1; Romans 8:34) and intercedes for us (Hebrews 4:14-16).

His Second Coming: He will return to earth (Matthew 26:63-64; Acts 1:11) so that we can be with Him (John 14:3; I Corinthians 15:51-52; II Timothy 2:12).