

# BAPTISM

**Methodists believe that baptism is a sacrament of initiation into the Christian faith, symbolizing God's grace, forgiveness of sin, and incorporation into the church community.**

## **Sacramental Significance**

In the Methodist tradition, baptism is viewed as a vital sacrament that signifies the forgiveness of sin and new birth in Christ. It is considered a visible sign of God's invisible grace, representing the cleansing of sin and the beginning of a new life. Through baptism, individuals are united with Christ in his death and resurrection, experiencing spiritual rebirth and the promise of eternal life.

## **Role of Grace**

Methodists emphasize that baptism is an act of God's grace, which is unmerited and unconditional. This grace is believed to be available to all, including infants, who are baptized to signify that God's love reaches them even before they can make a conscious decision to accept it. This practice reflects the belief that baptism is not merely a human act but a divine gift.

## **Community and Fellowship**

Baptism also marks the incorporation of the individual into the body of Christ, fostering a sense of community and fellowship within the church. It signifies a commitment to the Christian faith and participation in the life of the church, highlighting the interconnectedness of believers.

## **Mode of Baptism**

Methodists typically practice sprinkling as the mode of baptism, which symbolizes the pouring out of God's grace upon the individual. This method is rooted in historical practices and theological beliefs that emphasize the spiritual significance of the act rather than the physical method used.

## **Lifelong Journey**

Baptism is seen as the beginning of a lifelong journey of faith and discipleship. It is not viewed as a one-time event but as part of the ongoing process of salvation, where individuals are called to respond to God's grace throughout their lives.