



ALAMO HEIGHTS
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH



END OF LIFE PLANNING GUIDE

Hymn of Promise

In the bulb there is a flower; in the seed, an apple tree; in cocoons, a hidden promise: butterflies will soon be free!

In the cold and snow of winter there's a spring that waits to be, unrevealed until its season, something God alone can see.

There's a song in every silence, seeking word and melody; there's a dawn in every darkness, bringing hope to you and me.

From the past will come the future; what it holds, a mystery, unrevealed until its season, something God alone can see.

In our end is our beginning; in our time, infinity; in our doubt there is believing; in our life, eternity.

In our death, a resurrection; at the last, a victory, unrevealed until its season, something God alone can see.

—Natalie Sleeth, 1986

A SERVICE OF DEATH AND RESURRECTION

A Service of Death and Resurrection is found in The United Methodist Hymnal 870-875. It is a service of Christian worship suitable for funeral and memorial services. This service is intended for use with the body of the deceased present, but it can be adapted for use at memorial services or other occasions.

Use of the term Service of Death and Resurrection is not intended to discourage use of the more familiar terms – funeral, burial of the dead, or memorial service.

- Funeral is appropriate for a service with the body of the deceased present.
- Burial of the Dead is appropriate for a service where the remains of the deceased are buried.
- Memorial Service is appropriate when the body of the deceased is not present.

Service of Death and Resurrection was selected as being appropriate to any of the wide variety of situations in which this service might be used. It expresses clearly the two-fold nature of what is done: the fact of death and bereavement are honestly faced, and the gospel of resurrection is celebrated in the context of God's Baptismal Covenant with us in Christ.

When circumstances make the service — as it stands — inappropriate, the pastor may make adaptations, using the alternative acts of worship on 158-166 and other available resources. Ethnic and cultural traditions are encouraged and may be incorporated in the service at the discretion of the minister.

— *The United Methodist Book of Worship*

HELPFUL INFORMATION FOR PLANNING A SERVICE

Suggested Hymns from The United Methodist Hymnal

110	A Mighty Fortress is our God	60	I'll Praise my Maker
700	Abide with Me	314	In the Garden
378	Amazing Grace	377	It is well with my Soul
534	Be Still, My Soul	89	Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee
451	Be Thou my Vision	580	Lead on, O King Eternal
369	Blessed Assurance	159	Lift High the Cross
302	Christ the Lord is Risen Today	261	Lord of the Dance
189	Fairest Lord Jesus	384	Love Divine, All Love Excelling
710	Faith of our Fathers	368	My Hope is Built on Nothing Less
711	For all the Saints	57	O for a Thousand Tongues to Sing
92	For the Beauty of the Earth	143	On Eagle's Wings
577	God of Grace and God of Glory	139	Praise to the Lord, the Almighty
140	Great is Thy Faithfulness	723	Shall we Gather at the River
77	How Great Thou Art	328	Surely the Presence of the Lord
707	Hymn of Promise	144	This is my Father's World
156	I Love to Tell the Story		

A Service for a Child

141	Children of the Heavenly Father	191	Jesus Loves me
707	Hymn of Promise		

The Faith we Sing

2051	I Was There to Hear Your Borne Cry	2282	I'll Fly Away
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SUGGESTED SCRIPTURE READINGS

HEBREW BIBLE

Job

19:23-27 I know that my redeemer lives...

Isaiah

25: 6-9 God will swallow up death forever...

26: 1-4, 19 God will keep them in peace...

40: 1-11, 28-31 Comfort my people...those who wait for the Lord ...

44: 6-8 I am the first and the last...

55: 1-3, 6-13 Oh, everyone who thirsts...

65: 17-25 I create new heavens and a new earth...

Lamentations

3: 22-26, 31-33 The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases...
Great is thy faithfulness.

Ecclesiastes

3: 1-5, 9 For everything there is a season...

7: 1 A good name is better than precious ointment and the day of death, than the day of birth...

Psalms

23 The Lord is my shepherd...

27: 1, 4-9a, 13-14 The Lord is my light and my salvation...

42: 1-6a As a deer longs for flowing streams...

46: 1-5, 10-11 God is our refuge and strength...
Be still and know that I am God.

90: 10-11, 12 Teach us to number our days...

103: 1-5, 15-18 Bless the Lord, O my soul...

121 I lift up my eyes to the hills...

Proverbs

31:10-12, 20-21, 25-31 A good woman who can find...

CHRISTIAN CANON

Matthew

11: 28-30 Come to me, all who labor...and I will give you rest...

Luke

18: 15-17 We enter the Kingdom only as children...

23: 39-43 Today you will be with me in Paradise...

John

3: 16-21 God so loved the world...
11: 25-27 I am the resurrection and the life...

5: 24-27 Whoever hears and believes has eternal life...

6: 37-40 Anyone who comes to me I will not cast out...
I am the good shepherd...

14: 1-6, 25-27 Let not your hearts be troubled...

In my Father's house are many mansions...

Romans

8:14-23, 31-39 Nothing can separate from the love of God...
14: 7-9, 10b-12 Whether we live or die, we are the Lord's...

1 Corinthians

15: 51 Christ raised from the dead...

Revelation

14: 1-3, 6-7, 12-13 Rest for the saints...
21: 1-4, 22-25; A new heaven and a new earth...

22:3-5

TRADITIONAL UNITED METHODIST SERVICE ORDER

Gathering

The family will gather with the pastor before the service for prayer.

Words of Grace and Greeting

Words of greeting are delivered by a pastor.

Hymn or Song

A congregational hymn or special music may be sung. *(optional)*

Affirmation of Faith

A creed led by the pastor.

Gloria Patri

Sung or spoken by the congregation.

Pastoral Prayer

Offered by the pastor.

The Lord's Prayer

Spoken by the congregation.

Scripture Readings

Offered by an assigned reader or the pastor.

Reflection

Memories shared by family or friends may be offered. *(optional)*

Hymn

A congregational hymn or special music may be sung. *(optional)*

Homily/Message

Offered by the pastor.

Sending Hymn

A closing hymn or special music may be sung.

Benediction

A blessing offered by the pastor.

TO BE CONSIDERED AT THE TIME OF A DEATH

The following steps may be used at the time of the death of a loved one.

1. Call the church (210-826-3215) to contact your clergy, as their experience and concern for you will be very helpful. Your pastor can assist with scheduling issues and answer immediate questions. Please consult with a clergy person before finalizing or announcing the date and time of the service.
2. Locate any document prepared by the deceased which indicates their wishes as to a Christian burial.
3. If such a document does not exist, or cannot be found, and you have not heard the deceased express any opinion regarding the following, then examine your own positions.
 - a. Do you, or did the deceased, wish to be cremated? Do you, or did the deceased, wish to donate their body to medical science?
 - b. Choose a funeral director and call them if not already done, asking that they take the body into custody and await further word on your plans. If the death occurs in a hospital, the hospital will call the funeral director for you, upon your direction. If death occurs under hospice care, hospice will make all necessary arrangements, upon your direction.
 - c. Think about the kind of service you desire and the location:
 - i. A funeral service with the body or cremains present
 - ii. A memorial service
 - iii. Funeral Home, Church, or Columbarium
 - iv. Simple graveside service
4. Questions to ask:
 - a. Is there a cemetery plot? Who owns it? Where is the recording document?
 - b. If you need to buy a plot, where will it be and how many spaces will you need? You may want to consider future burials.
 - c. To avoid undue expenses, prayerfully consider the kind of casket or urn you desire.
 - d. If there are cremains, what will be their disposition style? Consider the Columbarium at AHUMC.
5. Determine whether you will have visitation at the funeral home.
6. Closed casket or open at the funeral home? In the Methodist church tradition, the casket is usually closed during the service.

7. Who should be notified? Who will contact them?
8. Who is coming from a distance? Has the scheduling of the service taken this into consideration?
9. Decide on the designation of memorial gifts.
10. Decide on two or three persons to meet with the funeral director to make arrangements, choose the casket or urn, and clarify clothing questions for the deceased. All plans will coordinate with the pastor and church.
 - Full name
 - Date and place of birth
 - Date of death
 - Father's full name
 - Mother's full name (including her maiden name)
 - Survivors (identify spouse and children by name, number of grandchildren, names of sisters, brothers, significant others)
 - Memberships (historical societies, service organizations, clubs, church, activities in church and community, etc.)
 - Names of newspapers in which death notices and obituary items should appear (include local papers and out-of-town papers, wherever there are friends to inform). Classified death notices are paid by you, usually through the funeral director who places the notices with the newspapers. Longer obituary news items based on the above information may be prepared and submitted to newspapers; they will be published at the editor's discretion.
 - Social Security number
 - Military serial or service number may be obtained through the Veteran's Administration.
11. After the service day and time has been confirmed through the clergy with the church and agreed upon with the funeral director, family may begin to notify other family and friends about the arrangements.

PERSONAL INFORMATION FOR MY FAMILY TO ASSIST IN PLANNING

Full Legal Name:

Address:

Phone / cell:

Place of birth (city, county, state):

Spouse's name:

Widowed

Divorced

Father's name, birthplace, and date of birth / death:

Mother's maiden name, birthplace, and date of birth / death:

Length of residence in the state:

Social security number:

Employer:

Type of Business:

Education:

Location of / deed to cemetery plot:

Number of death certificates required:

(The funeral home usually provides three copies; perhaps nine or ten will be necessary and can be obtained through the funeral home.)

Persons in my family who remain to celebrate my life:

(Identify spouse and children by name; number of grandchildren; names of parents, sisters, brothers, and significant others; be careful to spell correctly.)

Name and telephone number of my attorney:

Name and telephone number of funeral home to be contacted:

Contact for Death Benefits

Social Security:

Life Insurance:

Financial Advisor:

Location of Health Information

Primary Physicians:

Request for donation of body or parts thereof

Location of Personal Papers

Will:

Birth Certificate:

School and College Diplomas:

Marriage Certificate:

Other (i.e., legal papers, safe deposit box and keys):

Location of Information about all Assets

Savings Accounts:

Checking Accounts:

Canceled checks:

Bank books:

Name and telephone of broker(s):

Treasury Bonds / Notes / Bills:

Money Market Accounts(s):

Stock Information:

Information about Home

Location of Deed / Lease / Mortgage:

Insurance information:

Warranty information:

Information regarding other property

Location of Information about Automobile(s)

Registration:

Insurance:

Title:

Maintenance records:

Warranty:

Income Tax Information

Location of previous and current year's records:

Name and telephone number of accountant:

Living Will, Directive to Physicians, Health Care Proxy, Power of Attorney Information:

Military Information

Branch of Service:

Service serial number:

Date entered Service:

Place:

Date of Separation:

Place:

Grade, rank, or rating:

Wars / conflicts served:

Children

Name

Address

Phone

Persons to be Notified

Name

Address

Phone

Organizations to be Notified

Name

Address

Phone

Notes

Notes

[illegible]

Notes

[illegible]

MY FUNERAL / MEMORIAL SERVICE

I, _____, would like to encourage you to cause my funeral or memorial service to be a worship service of hope and celebration. Gather to give thanks to God for the reality of the Resurrection.

Listed below are my wishes at this time for my service and burial.

Name of church or cemetery or columbarium:

Located at:

Clergy:

Contact information for clergy:

Lodge / Veteran Service by:

Casket / Urn:

Music

Hymns to be sung by the congregation:

Hymns to be played by organist:

Special Music:

Soloist:

Scripture Selections

Possible Pallbearers

In lieu of flowers, make gifts to:

THE COLUMBARIUM AT AHUMC

Generations of individuals and families have shaped their life in Christ through our community at Alamo Heights United Methodist Church. As Christians, we know that death is never the *final word*.

The Columbarium at AHUMC is a consecrated courtyard located in the center of our campus. The surrounding garden provides a quiet, peaceful place for remembrance, meditation, and prayer where urns of cremated remains are stored. The traditional churchyard for burial is long past, but the Columbarium at AHUMC offers the church as the final resting place for its present and former members and their families.

Columbarium niches are available to members, former members, ordained Methodist ministers, and their family members — including spouses, parents, grandparents, children, and grandchildren. The Columbarium may be visited daily at any time between daylight and dusk. It is well maintained by our facilities staff as part of our continued stewardship of our church.

For more information on the Columbarium, please call the church office at 210-826-3215 extension 111 or visit ahumc.org/funeral.

THE AHUMC FOUNDATION

The AHUMC Foundation is a permanent endowment fund established to steward the potential of the church in its efforts to welcome all people, build community, share God's love, and serve the world.

With a variety of giving options, the Foundation invites members to invest in the church's long-range vision, and friends and family may give as a lasting way to honor a loved one.

The story and love of God flows through a faithful remnant — it always has. Remnant people are people of remembrance. They have a distinct hope during hardship and an unusual confidence in the life-changing power of love. The AHUMC Foundation hopes to utilize every opportunity to preserve, celebrate, and pass on our rooted and remnant faith.

Through the establishment and management of trusts, bequests, and endowments that minimize tax burdens, the AHUMC Foundation has reinforced and reinvigorated the church for over 40 years. The fund receives gifts of cash, bequests, life insurance proceeds, retirement accounts, real estate, and more.





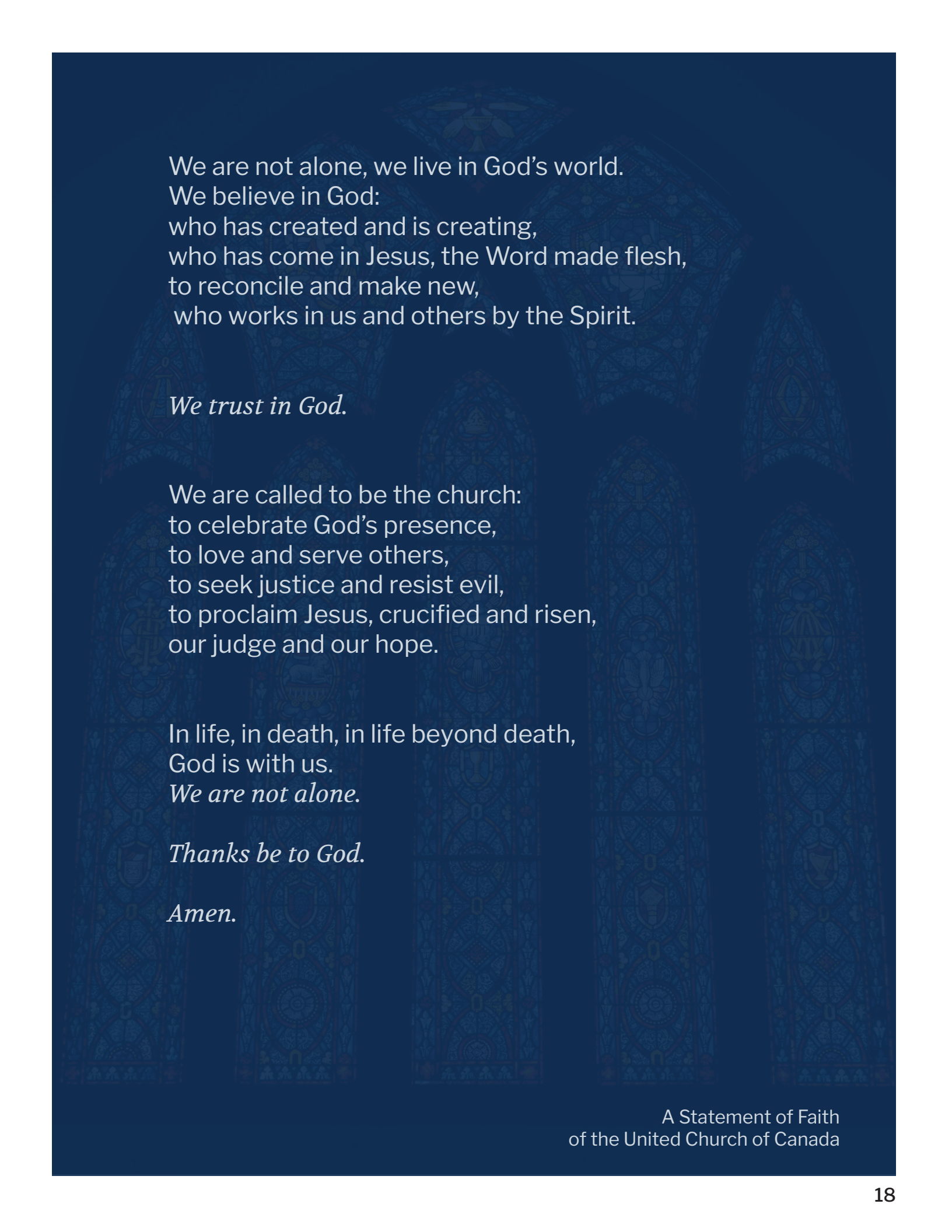
The next day, Wesley took a fever and began to decline rapidly. His housekeeper was at his side throughout the following week and recorded the events in some detail. On March 1, the feeble Wesley gathered his strength and began singing Isaac Watts' hymn, "*I'll Praise my Maker While I've Breath,*" which astonished those attending him. Further attempts to sing or speak were quite unsuccessful; "*those lips which used to feed many, were no longer able to convey their accustomed sounds.*" He was able to gather up his strength for one of his last utterances, "*The best of all is, God is with us.*" On the following morning, March 2, 1791, he uttered his last, "*Farewell*" (JWJ, 8:138-44).

Wesley's quest for assurance, which gave impetus to his spiritual pilgrimage, was over. His search for peace had known both the despair of fear and the hope of faith. His warmed heart had experienced both the assurance of God's loving forgiveness and the continuing struggle with doubt. His restless heart, that had found a trusting and confident faith but had on occasion wavered, had now found its rest with God.

Wesley had long lived in the presence of his Maker...in awe of God's majesty and yet confident in his gracious love, in expectation of continual surprises from God's Spirit, and yet hoping through it all for guidance and comfort. So that at his death, Wesley knew of what he spoke when, from a heart that had long sought peace, he uttered his final testimony of faith,

"The best of all is, ... God is with us."

— Richard P. Heitzenrater
Wesley and the People Called Methodists
Abingdon Press, 1995



We are not alone, we live in God's world.
We believe in God:
who has created and is creating,
who has come in Jesus, the Word made flesh,
to reconcile and make new,
who works in us and others by the Spirit.

We trust in God.

We are called to be the church:
to celebrate God's presence,
to love and serve others,
to seek justice and resist evil,
to proclaim Jesus, crucified and risen,
our judge and our hope.

In life, in death, in life beyond death,
God is with us.
We are not alone.

Thanks be to God.

Amen.



For more information
VISIT AHUMC.ORG