



# Our Pro-Baptismal / Anti-Racist Journey Be The Bridge Fall Study

## Session One The Honest Truth

### Our Church History

John Wesley, Methodism's founder wanted to minister with Native Americans and abolish slavery. But decades after John Wesley's death, a Methodist bishop was a slaveholder, and a Methodist clergyman was responsible for one of the worst massacres of Native Americans in U.S. history. So what went wrong?

**Read:** [What does The United Methodist Church say about racism?](#) to learn more about our denomination's history, and where we stand today.

When Edenton Street was founded in 1811, 44 of its 76 members, were black. While a few may have been freedmen, most were slaves. Eventually, St. Paul AME - a block away from our church - became their church home. [Check out St. Paul's website](#) for a timeline and [click here for more information about our church history.](#)

What's your history? Consider researching your family tree and discovering any role your ancestors played in systemic racism or abolition.

What does the Bible say about how we are to be in relationship with one another? What do we commit to in our baptismal vows? It is important for us to know why, as followers of Jesus, this is the work we are called to do. It also is important for us to know and seek truth as we embark on the hard work of living into what it means to fully love our neighbors as ourselves.

In addition to reading chapters 1-3 of *Be The Bridge: Pursuing God's Heart for Racial Reconciliation*, we encourage you to check out these additional resources for our discussion:

**Watch:** [This sermon by Latasha Morrison](#)

**Read:** [Renounce, Reject & Resist Racism & Historical Foundations of Race](#)

**Meditate on:** [John 17:23](#)

**Think about:**

- Why did you sign up for this study?
- Do you believe anti-racist work is spiritual work? List two scriptures that support this.
- When were you first aware of your race? How has race shaped your life?
- If we are all made in the image of God, what does that say about ethnic diversity? What does it say about the nature of God? How does Latasha Morrison differentiate between ethnicity and race?
- Why does the process of bridge building begin with truth and awareness?
- What are some historical facts related to our nation's racial history that you learned outside of school?
- What are you currently lamenting related to our racial history or what is going on in today's world?