
BELONGING

Companion

Membership
In

THE

wesleyan
METHODIST CHURCH

27/01/2018

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METHODIST CHURCH

LESSON ONE: Belonging to a Team

Read chapter 1 before you come

Key Point - ask these questions

POTENTIAL FOR GROWTH

- *The Great Commission* (p.5, para. 2) - evangelism + discipleship
- *The Body* (p5. para. 3)
- *The Authority of the Bible* (p.5 para 4) may be better to use 2Tim 3:16-17

BENEFITS OF COMMUNITY VALUES

- *Faith in Christ*
- *Confidence in the Bible*
- *Be Fully devoted followers of Christ, PLUS*
- *Compassion for the lost*

COVENANT: agreement that is mutually beneficial, with FOUR expectations

- *Faith in Christ and baptism*
- *Agreement with summery of doctrinal statements (pp 25-26)*
- *to be guided by the "Mission, Vision and Elementary Principles*
- *8 Minimum commitments*
- *Authority of the Handbook (how decisions are made) B Filter questions and Collective Conscience Statements ©*

VALUE OF THE WIDER NETWORK

- A network of churches - a spiritual home when you move
- District Resources: camps, teaching, vision and example
- A hammered out system of running the church
- Recognized ministerial training program

LESSON FIVE: Taking Membership

Read chapter 5 before you come

Note the Key Points, page 55 and 58, outlining differences between Covenant and Community Membership. Note the requirement of all leaders (including Community members) to the Leadership Covenant, which is on page 68, which is a very strong requirement, which is essentially Covenant membership.

Covenant Membership is the desired goal for all believers, because it truly reflects the commitment that we want of membership. Community membership should be seen as a temporary situation, for those needing more time to work through becoming Covenant Membership.

ARE YOU READY FOR MEMBERSHIP

There needs to be a strong assurance of salvation, the witness of the Spirit that you are a child of God. See Romans 8: 14-16 Baptism is also required of Community Members. (This is not fully clear in the first part of the chapter.)

Note the different questions for Community and Covenant membership

Group Time

1. Note the minimum age for membership is 16 years.
2. Ask if there are any questions about membership
3. Don't hesitate to say if you don't know. Find out and let them know that you will do so.

- Continuity when pastors move.
- Wider financial support
- A global missionary program
- Unified power of a shared vision (Assurance of salvation and an undivided heart)

HAVING YOUR SAY

- Pastor, Local Board and Local Conference (Members meeting - most often non-members are given a voice in members meetings.)
- Covenant members only are eligible for District / National positions

MEMBERSHIP IS MORE THAN VOTING RIGHTS. IT TELLS YOU WHO YOU CAN COUNT ON AS PART OF THE TEAM.

FURTHER THOUGHT

If you have time, choose some of the questions on page 10.

Group Time

1. The Church has been described in Scriptures as a BODY. In your group, what part do you think each other person is?
2. PRAY for God's direction for the next step in your spiritual Journey.

LESSON TWO: History and Structure

Read chapter 2 before you come

HISTORY

Beginnings

- Holy Club, Ordained as priest, sent as missionary, but still no assurance
- John's heart strangely warmed at Moravian chapel 24 May 1738
- Revival spread throughout UK and then America - "the world is my parish"

International

- 1784 Methodist Church of North America; 1795 Methodist Church of England
- Anti-slavery; balance of power;
- Methodism: 1815 Australia; Tonga 1822, Samoa 1828, Fiji 1835, PNG 1875, Solomon Island 1902, Bougainville 1916
- 1968 merger of Wesleyan Methodist & Pilgrim Holiness → Wesleyan

Australia

- Australia (1947) Kingsley Ridgway; purchase of Huntington Towers
- 1982 three Districts formed;
- 1992 Nth Qld formed Growth: growing credibility; formation of Uniting Church: ethnic churches
- Missionary Works in Bougainville, Solomon Islands and Mozambique Established Regional Status in 2012

LESSON FOUR: Collective Conscience

Read chapter 4 before you come

This section contains many areas where Christians differ. The "Collective" in "Collective Conscience" refers to the body of Wesleyan believers over time. So these are not one person's ideas, but the conviction of many, the majority, who would urge us to share these same convictions.

As a presenter, while you may differ in degree, you are not entitled to change the emphasis presented here, but to faithfully present it as the "conscience" of our church. If you have a problem with this, you should talk to Pastor Stuart.

Note the difference between rules and convictions on page 51.

Note the additional information on alcohol in appendix A

If you have difficulty in answering questions, please don't hesitate to contact Pastor Stuart, who would be happy to spend time with you and/or your *Life Cell*.

Group Time

Use one of the questions under "FURTHER THOUGHT" (p.52).

STRUCTURES - see chart (p.21)

- At local, District, National, Regional and International levels there is an elected Board of Administration
- Local, District and National grow from a "Pioneer Status" to "Established" status.
- The Local Church is the foundational unit.
- The Local Church Conference (LCC) (all local members) govern the local church
- The Local Church Board of Administration (LBA) act between LCC's and are accountable to the LCC.
- District Boards of Administration (DBA) and National Boards of Administration (NBA) are accountable to their respective conferences.
- Each conference (local, district, national) elects delegates to the conference above it.
- Each conference hears reports, adopt plans, approves budgets, elects officials. etc.
- Local Church Conference meets quarterly
- District Conference meets annually
- National, Regional and International Conference meets every four years

Group Time

1. What is the value of structure? (Consider your human body.)
2. Describe your spiritual journey
 - a. How did it start?
 - b. Where is it now?
 - c. Where is it headed?

LESSON Three: Doctrines & Commitments

Read chapter 3 before you come

21 STATEMENTS OF FAITH

1. TRINITY - sets us apart from Mormons, Jehovah's Witnesses, Christadelphians, Scientology, Unification Church.
2. THE FATHER
3. SON
4. HOLY SPIRIT
5. HOLY SCRIPTURE - IS the Word of God (not just "contains" - as in Uniting Church)
6. GOD'S PURPOSE FOR MAN - Love God and Love others
7. MARRIAGE AND THE FAMILY - one man and one woman for life within marriage.
8. MAN'S CHOICE - Prevenient Grace that works in all men to bring them to the point of decision, without which we cannot desire God.
9. ATONEMENT - AT-ONE-ment
10. REPENTANCE AND FAITH - necessary for salvation - what man does
11. JUSTIFICATION AND REGENERATION - what God does
12. GOOD WORKS - deeds that flow from the gratitude of salvation
13. SIN AFTER REGENERATION - possible to sin; possible not to sin (wilful)
14. SANCTIFICATION - Romans 12:1 , Jude 24 - perfect love; Initial - when we first become Christians we receive the Holy Spirit Progressive - continuing work of the Holy Spirit Entire - when nothing is held back from the control of the Holy Spirit in our lives
15. GIFTS OF THE SPIRIT - given by the HOLY SPIRIT, "THE" Gift
16. THE CHURCH - all true believers who have and will ever live.
17. SACRAMENTS: Baptism (once) and Lord's Supper (repeatedly) for all believers
18. SECOND COMING - Jesus will return physically
19. RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD: All will rise physically for the judgement

20. THE JUDGEMENT of MANKIND - Final examination. rewards and punishments given
21. DESTINY - Heaven and Hell are real and eternal

THREE COMMITMENTS OF MEMEBERSHIP

1. Christ and Baptism
2. Ongoing Spiritual Growth
3. Life guided by the Holy Spirit and the Word of God (using the filter questions) Is it Helpful, a Habit, Helpful, Honouring

Group Time

1. What Statements of Faith would you like to discuss more?
2. What area(s) of your life would change if you seriously applied the filter questions? (p.37-38)