

CHAPTER 3

MEANS OF GRACE

3.01 The means of grace recognised by the Methodist Church include:

- (a) public worship and the Sacraments,
- (b) meetings for fellowship, prayer and Bible study,
- (c) family worship,
- (d) individual Bible study and prayer.

Public Worship

3.02 The usual order of public worship consists of:

THE PREPARATION which includes prayers of adoration and confession, with an assurance of God's forgiveness.

THE MINISTRY OF THE WORD through the Old and New Testament Scripture readings and the Sermon. The use of the Lectionary is recommended.

THE RESPONSE in prayers of Thanksgiving, Intercession and Dedication.

Hymns, Songs, a Children's Address and other activities should be inserted where appropriate.

The Methodist Hymn Book (1933), Hymns and Psalms (1983), Singing the Faith (2011), the Revised Common Lectionary (1992), the Book of Offices (1936) and the Methodist Service Book (1975) are authorised for use. The Methodist Worship Book (1999) is recommended for use subject to the approval of the Church Council. These shall be used for the administration of the Sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, and for the celebration of marriage.

Services at the New Year traditionally include a Watchnight Service on the last night of the year and the Covenant Service on the first Sunday of the year.

The Sacraments

3.03 There are two Sacraments ordained of Christ, that is to say, Baptism and the Lord's Supper.

3.04 Baptism.

The Sacrament of Baptism shall, if possible, be administered in connection with public worship, and, in general, only to the children of members and those on the Congregational Register, and to adults who have not previously been baptised. Careful instruction on the meaning of baptism shall be given to parents of children and to adults requesting this Sacrament.

- (a) All baptisms shall be registered by the officiating minister in the Baptismal Register. Baptisms of children shall also be entered in the Junior Roll of the Circuit.
- (b) No probationer shall administer this Sacrament without the express sanction of the Circuit Superintendent.
- (c) Recognising that the Church has not authorised rebaptism, a minister receiving a request for baptism from one who has been baptised as an infant, shall advise the applicant regarding Methodist usage. Should the applicant, on grounds of conscience, still desire this ceremony, the minister concerned shall seek advice on this matter from the President through the Superintendent of the District.

3.05 The Lord's Supper

The Lord's Supper shall be observed regularly in every church and be administered by a minister in full connexion.

The administration shall be by the Superintendent or other minister in full connexion except as provided for in paragraphs 4B.31 and 4G.16 - 21.

Admission to the Lord's Supper shall be the privilege of members of the Church, and such members of the congregation, including children who wish to communicate, as the minister may judge to be eligible.

The wine used in the ordinance shall be unfermented.

At observances of the Lord's Supper an offering for the Benevolent Fund shall normally be received.

Meetings for fellowship, prayer and Bible study

3.06 Meetings for fellowship, prayer and Bible study shall be held on church premises, in homes and other suitable places, in different parts of the Circuit, at times which will not interfere with public worship.

Family Worship

3.07 Regular and reverent family worship and the saying of grace before meals are encouraged in all homes. Members are encouraged to engage in regular reading of and meditation on Scripture and in private prayer.