

Hello Everyone

May your unfailing love come to me, Lord, your salvation, according to your promise; then I can answer anyone who taunts me, for I trust in your word (Psalm 119:41-42).

A free book dropped onto my doormat the other day. It doesn't have an awfully inspiring title but despite that I have appreciated its contents. The book, *What we believe: A catechism for the people called Methodists*, was first published in 1952, adopted by the Methodist Conference of 1986, revised in 2000 and was republished earlier this year. As we might expect with a catechism it follows the question and answer style. Here is a selection of questions and answers.

1. What is a Christian?

Christians are those who believe that God has revealed himself in Jesus Christ, accept Jesus Christ as their Lord and Saviour, live in communion with God and in the power of the Holy Spirit, and take their place in the fellowship of Christ's Church.

2. What is a Christian's calling?

A Christian is called by God to trust and follow Jesus Christ; to keep company with him; to learn from his words and actions; and to share in his mission, in the power of the Holy Spirit, in company with other Christians.

3. What is the mission of Jesus Christ?

To proclaim the coming of God's kingdom, to call people to repent and to receive the kingdom of God, to turn from their sins and believe the Good News.

12. What is faith in Jesus Christ?

Faith in Jesus Christ is trusting that through him alone God gives us salvation. We demonstrate our faith by desiring to do God's will and by the practical love we show to others.

13. What has Jesus done?

Jesus Christ came to reveal God to men and women and to offer them God's grace. To achieve this he shared their human life and death, dying on the cross. God brought him back from death with great power and glory, thereby conquering death and sin, and opening the kingdom of God to all believers.

37. Why do we need to pray?

We need to pray because we were created for friendship with God and have been reconciled to him in Jesus Christ. Prayer is the natural expression of this loving relationship with God our heavenly Father. We pray to him because we trust him and want to do his will in everything. We pray to him because we depend on him and seek his guidance, strength and comfort. Jesus himself frequently prayed and taught his disciples to do likewise.

51. Where can we find what Christians believe?

Christian beliefs are to be found in the Bible and, summarised, in the historic creeds (statements of belief) of the Church.

70. What are the duties of a member of the Methodist Church?

In the Church: A member is committed to worship, Holy Communion, fellowship and service, prayer and Bible study, and responsible giving.

In the world: A member is committed to the working out of their faith in daily life, the

offering of personal service in the community, the Christian use of their resources, and the support of the Church in its total world mission.

As the new church year begins, let's commit ourselves again to worship, Holy Communion, fellowship, prayer and Bible study. With its varied programme, *Tuesdays Together* gives opportunities for each of these. Considering our basis of membership, it would be good if every able-bodied member attended. Friends who are not members are still warmly welcome, of course.

This year (and probably next year too) our Bible study will be on Matthew's Gospel. Matthew is sometimes called 'the teaching Gospel'. No prior knowledge is expected or assumed. Prayers & Reflections give us the opportunity to pray, meditate and think quietly on several issues each month – no one is expected to pray aloud. Explore Together takes a Bible text or passage and enables us to engage with the Bible message in different ways, including reading, listening and craft activities. 2B1 is a time of praise, prayer and fellowship, including coffee/tea and cake. If you would like a book on Matthew's Gospel I am recommending the volume in the *Bible Speaks Today* series by Anglican scholar and evangelist, Michael Green (these will be about £10 if I can get a discounted price – just ask me).

God bless

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What we believe: A catechism for the use of the people called Methodists (2018, MPH)
£2.50