

Elementary Principles of The Wesleyan Church

270. Christ is the only Head of the Church, and the Word of God the only rule of faith and conduct.

272. No person who loves the Lord Jesus Christ, and obeys the gospel of God our Savior, ought to be deprived of church membership.

274. Every person has an inalienable right to private judgment in matters of religion, and an equal right to express personal opinions in any way which will not violate the laws of God or the rights of others.

276. All church hearings should be conducted on gospel principles only; and no minister or member should be excommunicated except for immorality, the propagation of unchristian doctrines, or for neglect of duties enjoined by the Word of God.

278. The pastoral or ministerial office and duties are of divine appointment, and all ordained ministers in the church of God are equal; but ministers are forbidden to be lords over God's heritage, or to have dominion over the faith of the saints.

280. The Church has a right to form and enforce such rules and regulations only as are in accordance with the Holy Scriptures, and may be necessary or have a tendency to carry into effect the great system of practical Christianity.

282. Whatever power may be necessary to the formation of rules and regulations is inherent in the ministers and members of the Church; but so much of that power may be delegated from time to time, upon a plan of representation, as they may judge necessary and proper.

284. It is the duty of all ministers and members of the Church to maintain godliness and oppose all moral evil.

286. It is obligatory upon ministers of the gospel to be faithful in the discharge of their pastoral and ministerial duties, and it is also obligatory upon the members to esteem ministers highly for their works' sake, and to render them a righteous compensation for their labors.