

UNITED METHODIST CURRICULA CHECKLIST



The following checklist is presented to provide basic doctrinal and practical guidance in evaluating curricula. This checklist is a suggestive way to assess curricula for various church audiences.

Even if a resource or curricula meets all the following criteria from the checklist, it does not guarantee effective facilitation. This checklist cannot replace the need for training of leaders and facilitators.

The curricula should not be automatically rejected if it doesn't meet all the criteria on the checklist. This resource is intended to give leaders flexibility and implementation of curricula to their audience and ministry context. Finally, all curricula should be supplemented and taught in a way that is more in line with basic United Methodist doctrine and practice.

Educational Considerations

METHODIST (WESLEYAN)

Good Practice

- ☐ Ministry leaders will be able to use the lesson plan without a lot of guidance
- ☐ Multiple learning styles are engaged
- ☐ Questions are well sequenced
- ☐ Invites participation
- ☐ Allowance is made for leaders/facilitators to adapt and adjust

Bad Practice

- ☐ Lesson plan requires lots of monologue or verbal teaching
 - ☐ Questions are confusing and/or only aim for trivial (fact-based) answers
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Theological Considerations: Salvation

Guiding Question: What is the understanding/assumptions about salvation present?

METHODIST

- ☐ Salvation is expressed as both a future reality we yearn for and begin participating in currently
- ☐ Salvation is expressed with a **balanced** emphasis on individual and communal/corporate responsibilities

NON-METHODIST

- ☐ Salvation is expressed as "Once saved, always saved"
- ☐ Salvation is expressed as only a future reality
- ☐ Salvation is expressed only in individualistic categories
- ☐ Salvation is described as a work we must achieve

Theology Proper

Guiding Question: How is God imaged?

METHODIST

- ☐ There are a variety of primary terms used for God (God as Parent, Lord, Comforter, Warrior, Creator)
- ☐ God is presented as a loving, gracious God that we can personally relate with
- ☐ God is Triune – Three divine person(s) in community such that they are One
- ☐ God covenants with the community of believers
- ☐ God seeks for the reconciliation of all creation and invites human participation into this mission

NON-METHODIST

- ☐ God is only expressed as Father and/or Lord
 - ☐ God presented only as Sovereign Lord
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Grace

Guiding Question: How is the concept of grace covered?

METHODIST

- ☐ Grace is presented as a free gift of God **and** an empowerment of the Holy Spirit toward holiness

NON-METHODIST

- ☐ Grace is presented only as a free gift
 - ☐ Grace does not lead toward a deeper relationship with God
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Sin

Guiding Question: How is the concept of sin dealt?

METHODIST

- ☐ God first created the world out of gracious love and sin interfered and distorted the good
- ☐ God's grace is more powerful than the power of sin

NON-METHODIST

- ☐ Sin is the defining aspect of our relationship with God

Creation

Guiding Question: How does it deal with creation?

METHODIST

- ☐ The world is the object of God's love
- ☐ Created from God's goodness but is distorted through sin
- ☐ Since Jesus Christ is the second person of the Trinity and is both fully human and fully divine, we know that God can be encountered in the ordinariness of life and creation

NON-METHODIST

- ☐ The world is presented as only fallen and hostile
 - ☐ The world is presented as only good
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Atonement

Guiding Question: How does it deal with atonement (the death of Christ)?

METHODIST

- ☐ Part of God's plan for the reconciliation of the world
- ☐ Several images are presented to get at the mystery of Christ's atoning death—substitutionary (Christ takes our place), Christ provides a model, victorious (through Christ's death the sins of the world are nailed to the cross)
- ☐ Atonement is a work of what God has done for us, providing a pathway towards reconciliation with God

NON-METHODIST

- ☐ Jesus' death is only presented as the sacrifice to appease God's wrath
 - ☐ Atonement is presented as transactional (something done apart from and not necessarily leading into a relationship with God).
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Biblical Considerations

Guiding Question: How is the inspiration and authority of the Bible presented?

METHODIST

- ☐ The Bible is inspired by God
- ☐ Through the Bible we uniquely encounter how God has related with the covenant community of believers

NON-METHODIST

- ☐ The Bible is presented as inerrant (without any textual issues)
- ☐ The Bible is presented as one religious book among many

Sacramental Considerations

Guiding Question: How are the Lord's Supper and Baptism presented?

METHODIST

- ☐ Baptism is affirmed as God's claim of us as adopted children of God and that we, or guardians on our behalf, affirm the historic baptismal questions.
- ☐ Since God is the primary actor in baptism, baptism is a non-repeatable act. Reaffirmation of our baptism is repeatable.
- ☐ Christ's presence affirmed as mysteriously present in the partaking of the communion elements
- ☐ Believers should expect to encounter the grace of God through the communal partaking of the elements
- ☐ The elements should be duly administered by a clergy person or appropriately commissioned presiding elder
- ☐ Receiving communion can and should be done as often as possible. (There is no rule that Methodists take communion only once a month.)
- ☐ United Methodists recognize two Sacraments, each found in scripture and practiced by Jesus – (Baptism and Communion)

NON-METHODIST

- ☐ Baptism is expressed as only for adult believers or church members
- ☐ The elements of communion are expressed as becoming the actual body and blood of Christ
- ☐ Communion is presented exclusively as an act of remembrance
- ☐ Recognizing any additional sacraments besides baptism and communion, such as confirmation, marriage, or ordination.

Other Resources

- **Basic United Methodist Beliefs**
<https://www.umc.org/en/what-we-believe/basics-of-our-faith>
- **Social Principles**
<https://www.umc.org/en/what-we-believe/basics-of-our-faith/our-social-positions>
- **United Methodist Articles of Religion**
<https://www.umc.org/en/content/articles-of-religion>
- **By Water and the Spirit (PDF)**
<https://www.umcdiscipleship.org/resources/by-water-and-the-spirit-full-text>
- **This Holy Mystery and Study Guide**
<https://www.umcdiscipleship.org/resources/study-and-implementation-of-this-holy-mystery>