

THE DUTIES OF STEWARDS OF THE METHODIST CHURCH

SOCIETY STEWARDS.

THESE HAVE SPECIAL CHARGE OF ALL THE TEMPORAL AND SPIRITUAL INTERESTS OF THE SOCIETY TO WHICH THEY BELONG, viz:

I. PREACHERS.

(a.) **CONSULTATION.** The Society Stewards should be in the Vestry at least *ten minutes* before each public service on Sunday, to consult with the Preacher, and give any information that may be required.

(b.) **HOMES.** To provide suitable homes for the Preachers, and to pay their expenses, if any.

(c.) **DISAPPOINTMENTS.** Should a Preacher, through any unforeseen or unavoidable circumstances, fail to take his appointment, or to send an accredited Substitute, or through accident, &c., be unduly late, the Society Stewards shall either obtain a Preacher to commence the Service at the usual time, or one of themselves shall conduct the whole Service in the usual way. They shall, further, immediately inform the Superintendent Minister of such disappointment, so that the case may be fully investigated.

II. NOTICES.

To prepare, and sign, all Notices for the Pulpit—which should always be either *written or printed*—concerning the Collections, Sacraments, Lovefeasts, Week-night Services, Special Services, &c., appointed on the Circuit Plan. All such Notices should be given to the Preacher *before* going into the pulpit. No notice of any kind, whether written or printed, unless from one of the Circuit Ministers, should be sent into the pulpit, and no circular or handbill should be distributed in the pews, without the sanction of the Society Stewards.

III. COLLECTIONS.

To make all Collections as appointed on the Plan, taking care to have them duly announced on the previous Sunday. No alteration should in any case be made without *previously consulting* one of the Ministers. All Collections should be duly entered in the Society's book, and the money forwarded immediately to the proper persons. All Connexional Collections should be paid to the Superintendent Minister or to the appointed Treasurers.

IV. BAPTISMS.

To see that the necessary provision is made for the administration of the Sacrament of Baptism, and that information is given to the Minister in due time.

V. LEADERS'

MEETINGS.

To attend the Leaders' Meeting, audit the Class Books, receive from the Leaders the Contributions of their Members towards the support of the Ministry, to forward these moneys, together with all Circuit and Quarterly Collections, to the Circuit Stewards; to keep the accounts of the Society, and the minutes of the Leaders' Meetings. To present to the *first Leaders' Meeting* after each Quarterly Meeting a statement showing the average contributions from each class in the Society.

VI. SPECIAL

SERVICES.

To consult with the Superintendent, or one of the Ministers of the Circuit, before making arrangements for any Anniversaries or Special Services. Should it be thought desirable to invite a Preacher other than the one appointed on the Plan, for any Special Services, after the sanction of the Superintendent has been obtained, it is necessary that a kind and courteous letter be addressed by the Society Stewards to the Preacher appointed, asking his concurrence with the arrangements.

STEWARDS FOR THE POOR FUND.

THESE HAVE THE CARE OF ALL MATTERS RELATING TO THE FUND FOR THE POOR.

I. PROVISION.

To make provision for the celebration of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, and for Lovefeasts; also to direct communicants to the Lord's Table so as to prevent confusion.

II. COLLECTIONS.

To make a collection for the Poor Members of the Church at each Sacrament and Lovefeast; to keep all accounts on behalf of the Poor's Fund, and give a statement of the same to the Leaders' Meeting when required.

III. LEADERS'

MEETINGS

To attend the Leaders' Meeting, and pay those sums which may be voted by it to the Poor Members, handing the same for distribution to the Leaders with whom such Members respectively meet. To furnish the Ministers with the names and addresses of any Sick Members.

CHAPEL STEWARDS.

THESE HAVE CHARGE OF THE SECULAR BUSINESS AFFAIRS OF THE CHURCH UNDER THE INSTRUCTIONS OF THE TRUSTEES.

I. BUILDINGS.

(a.) To do all they can to carry out the objects of the Trust; to guard the interests of the Estate, and to see that the buildings and premises are kept in good repair, and insured against loss or damage by fire.

(b.) To have the Church, Vestries, &c., properly cleaned, warmed, lighted, ventilated, &c., and as far as possible add to the comfort for the worshippers.

(c.) To arrange for the regular letting and re-letting of the Pews and Sitings of the Church, and to receive or collect the Seat Rents as soon as due. All seat rents are due in advance.

(d.) To see that the Caretaker properly discharges his duties, and is duly paid.

II. ACCOUNTS.

(a.) To keep the Accounts of all Income and Expenditure made on behalf of the Trustees, a Statement of which should be given to the Trustees' Treasurer at least once a quarter.

(b.) **Books.** The Trustees' Stewards' books must be open for inspection at all Trustees' Meetings, and for the inspection of the Superintendent, and every person whom he may depute to see them, at all other reasonable times; and the accounts must be audited in the presence of the Superintendent and the Circuit Stewards, or his or their deputy or deputies, once every year—or oftener if the Superintendent desire it—at a Meeting convened for that purpose. Where there is no Trustees' Secretary appointed the Trustees' Steward shall take and preserve minutes of all the business transacted at each Trustees' Meeting.

III. COLLECTIONS.

To arrange—under the direction of the Superintendent and the Trustees' Meeting—for making Anniversary, or other Public Collections, in aid of the Trust Fund.

The Society and Poor Stewards are *annually* appointed at the first Leaders' Meeting after the December Quarterly Meeting; the nomination being with the Superintendent, or one of his colleagues acting on his authority, or any member of the Leaders' Meeting who has given written notice to the Minister concerned fourteen days prior to the December Leaders' Meeting; the approval or disapproval is with the Meeting.

The Chapel Stewards are appointed at the Annual Meeting of Trustees, held at the beginning of each year. The Trustees in conjunction with the Superintendent choose their own Stewards.

The office of a Steward ceases at the end of the year; and no Steward shall remain in office above three years in succession, except in some extraordinary case.