

Syllabus
United Methodist Heritage
Advanced Course for Lay Servants, Required Course for Lay Speaking

Reading: Living Our Beliefs: The United Methodist Way- Revised Edition (2009) by Kenneth L. Carder

Instructor: George Ramseyer (ramseyerg@gmail.com) (cell-315-720-6184)

Dates/Times: Wednesdays from 6:00 PM to 8:00 PM beginning October 14, 2020

Location: Zoom

Summary: This course will explore the special gifts of theology, witness, and organization that The United Methodist Church brings to the church universal, how we got where we are today, and how our distinctive emphases are still needed in the 21st-century church.

Course Description: The course is based upon the calling of John Wesley and the early leaders of Methodism. The place of doctrine in relation to the missional Methodism movement will be discussed. An understanding of Wesleyan theology and its influence on the practical structure and disciplines of Methodists will be explored. The history of Methodism and the formation of other Methodist denominations will be examined. An understanding of grace and how it became the key to this movement will be studied. The Wesleyan means of grace, and how today this grace leads to heart and life, will be considered.

Session Topics:

1. Wednesday, October 14 "And Can It Be that I should Gain", Chapter 1
We will learn about the life and ministry of John Wesley. We will gain an awareness of the place of doctrine in the missional movement known as Methodism. We will begin the history of Methodism by beginning with the Wesley family tree.
2. Wednesday, October 21 "In Whom We Live", Chapters 2, 3
We will gain a deeper sense of John Wesley's theological understanding of God and how that understanding inspired Wesley to create the practical structure and disciplines for the first Methodists. Learn more about the start of your congregation, and bring your Wesley family tree to class.
3. Wednesday, October 28 "Mission, Ministry and Innovation", Chapters 4, 5
We will identify many of the innovations that came through Wesley and the early Methodist movement. We will learn about the church's history and the formation of other Methodist denominations. Continue to gather information about your congregation.
4. Wednesday, November 4 "All about Grace", Chapters 6, 7
We will explore the Wesleyan understanding of grace and how it became key to the movement. We will also learn about other churches that are part of the Methodist heritage and will grow in appreciation of innovation as part of the Methodist lay ministry.
5. Wednesday, November 11 "Means of Grace", Chapters 8, 9
We will learn what Wesley identified as the means of grace and how these disciplines lead to the holiness of heart. The nature and mission of the United Methodist Church will be discussed. By an understanding of the theological and missional foundations for connectionalism, itinerancy and catholicity United Methodists live its identity and fulfill its mission.
6. Wednesday, November 18 "Ever the Covenant Renewed", Chapters 10, 11
We will recognize that the Methodist heritage is the basis for current ministry and gain an understanding of the Wesleyan quadrilateral in shaping vision for the future. The class will end with a Wesley Covenant Prayer Service.