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422 – Theological Heritage IV: Wesleyan Movement (2021)

Fall Term | Sept. 25, Oct. 23, Nov. 20 Class time 8:30 – 5:30 (with 1 hour for lunch)

This course covers the significant individuals, decisive events, and theology of the Methodist movement. Utilizing categories of grace, faith, and holiness, the student will appropriate the Wesleyan heritage.

Students will be able to:

- Understand and reflect on the movements, major figures, and events that led to the eighteenth century revivals, especially the lives and ministries of John and Charles Wesley.
- Understand and articulate the vision of holiness and the theology of grace as it shaped the Wesleys, and the structures of the Methodist movement.
- Identify and discuss significant theological and historical developments in American Methodism, including ordination and episcopacy.
- Reflect theologically on their Wesleyan heritage and identity.

Required Textbooks

Wesleyan Beliefs: Formal and Popular Expressions of the Core Beliefs of Wesleyan Communities,
by Ted A Campbell

Grace Sufficient : A History of Women in American Methodism, 1760-1939 by Schmidt, Jean Miller
I'm Black I'm Christian I'm Methodist, Rudy Rasmus, ed.

Grading Criteria

Your grade will be determined as follows: 50% advance assignments and subsequent revisions; 25% readings and in-class participation; 25% final essay. The final essay is due no later than December 17.

Advance Assignments (50% of final grade)

Aside from your autobiography, **rough drafts** of the three papers will be submitted in advance of each session and discussed in class. Your autobiography (#1, below) and the rough draft of Paper #2 are due to me by **Friday, September 17, 2021**. The other drafts are due to me no later than October 15 and November 12, respectively. **Bring a printed copy of your rough draft to each class** for which that material will be addressed. **Final drafts of each paper are due to me by the 2nd Monday after the class session** (October 4, November 1, November 29).

1. A one-page autobiography. Where are you from? Are you bi-vocational? Have you always been United Methodist or are you new to the UMC? Say something about your calling. What do you love to do in ministry? What is most challenging for you?
2. Session 1: *Wesleyan Beliefs*. Your paper (five pages total) will focus on Chapters 1,2,3, and 6. Write 4-5 paragraphs per chapter, addressing these questions:
 - Ch 1: Examine the doctrines Wesley considered most essential to Christian faith. What distinctive Wesleyan teachings and specific practices did Wesley incorporate into his understanding? Articulate Wesley's sacramental understanding. What influenced his thinking, and what was his unique contribution?
 - Ch 2: Describe the impact of the Reformed tradition on Wesley's thinking. What were distinctive teachings of the Methodist movement? What was Wesley's understanding of the way of salvation?
 - Ch 3: Describe Charles' role in conferring Christian teaching and Methodist practices through hymns and poetry. Share specific examples.
 - Ch 6: Trace the development of Charles and John's ecclesiology over the years. Did they regard Methodism as a church or a religious movement? What issues were at stake? How did Methodist architecture reflect this ongoing conversation?
3. Session 2: *Grace Sufficient*. Women were not ordained as clergy until 1956. Your paper (five pages total) will focus on how faithful Methodist women overcame this barrier in order to fulfill their calling to serve. For each part (I, II, III, IV), write 4-5 paragraphs profiling specific women and their contributions to the Methodist movement.
 - What actions did she take? What risks? What unique gifts did she bring?

→ Make sure to leave room for theological reflection. What understanding of scripture, especially 2 Corinthians 12:9, was articulated? How was God understood to be acting in the ministry of women? Where are these theological issues seen today?
4. Session 3: *I'm Black I'm Christian I'm Methodist*. Over five pages, reflect on the impact of racism on our denomination. Choose four essays, writing 3-4 paragraphs on the individual's experience and insight.
 - What issues are raised?

- What can we learn from this person's experience?
- How does this person's experience speak to the larger conversations our society is having around racial justice?

For your final page, are there themes/issues/hoped for futures that consistently appear across your chosen essays? What implications do you see for the United Methodist Church?

→ Make sure to leave room for theological reflection. What understanding of scripture was articulated? How was God understood to be acting in the ministry of Black men and women-- despite barriers? Where are these theological issues seen today?

Final Paper (Four pages; 25% of final grade; due no later than December 17)

I have had the privilege of serving on various Districts Committees on Ministries (DCOM) for many years. Every year we love to hear our local pastors articulate the Wesleyan way of salvation. Your final essay will help prepare you for your next turn in the Hot Seat! Of the ten doctrines listed below, choose six. Drawing from readings and class activities, write a three paragraph essay for each doctrine, articulating your understanding of Wesley's teachings.

Atonement
 Holiness
 Regeneration/Rebirth
 Sin
 Grace

Salvation
 God the Father
 Jesus Christ
 The Holy Spirit
 Faith

Related to Content and Critical Thinking

- Read the assigned books thoroughly, making notes of what resonates within you and what brings up resistance in you.
- Are there other books or resources that would be appropriate? Bring them into the conversation.
- Resist the temptation to write a book report! Instead, focus your writing on what the author(s) have to say about the assigned topic(s), integrating your own thoughts about the topic(s).
- Practice being in dialogue with all the authors and their material. Who would say what? How would you and the other writers respond? This practice dialogue will not be included in your papers, but it will help you to move into critical reflection.
- If you strongly agree or disagree with an author's point of view, offer your own affirmation or disagreement, supporting your view with additional resources.

- Watch for unsupported “leaps” made by a writer. What, in your opinion, is missing? Use additional resources to fill in the gaps.

Class Requirements and Recommendations

It is expected that Course of Study courses be rigorous and theologically robust educational experiences, designed and taught to satisfy the Course of Study objectives established by the Division of Ordained Ministry, General Board of Higher Education and Ministry. To that end, students shall complete significant reading and writing assignments. Students and faculty are required to read and work with the material in the assigned texts. It is expected that students complete assignments, papers and projects equivalent to 20 pages per course. The standard number of class hours for each of the basic courses is a minimum of twenty (20) hours.

Advance Preparation

Advance preparation is required of all students in classroom-based courses. Assignments will include material related to classroom studies, as well as experience in pastoral ministry.

Class Attendance

A student is expected to attend every class session. Unexcused absences may be cause for loss of credit or dismissal from the school. A student missing twenty percent (20%) or more of the classroom work shall not receive credit for those classes. Online work shall be included in the attendance policy.

Grades and Evaluation

Course of Study Schools will use letter grades A, B, C, D, or F. If, for personal or family reasons, a student has to drop out of a course before completing it, an “Administrative Withdrawal” may be given. Grade reports will be sent to the Division of Ordained Ministry, the annual conference, and (in the case of the extension schools) the Regional COS Director. The deadline for grades will be 60 days after the completion of class sessions. Grade reports from the extension schools will indicate whether the student is a part-time or a full-time local pastor. Incomplete grades that are not resolved within 60 days will be recorded as an F. An F or Administrative Withdrawal grade will remain on the transcript even if the course is retaken and passed. Students who wish to have grade reports sent to undergraduate schools for purposes of receiving external degree credit may request them by writing to the Division of Ordained Ministry, COS Registrar.