**United Methodist History: Fall 2020**

Rev. Dr. Cathie Kelsey, instructor

Online only format with 3 optional synchronous zoom sessions 2:30-3:45pm Mtn on 9/24/20, 10/15/20, and 11/5/20

4 credits (10 week term) Sept 14 – Nov 20, 2020

course designed for 12 hours of graduate work per week (reading, posting, writing, experiencing the core Methodist practices of daily prayer and weekly covenant group/band meeting)

**Course Description**

How did a movement based on sharing grace become a multi-continent denomination at war with itself? Whose voice and experiences got lost and found in the 275 years along the way of "methodism"? What in this history do you want to claim, and what do you want to reform? These questions are bigger than one 10 week course, but in these 10 weeks you will discover how to live toward answers as a leader among the next generation of the peoples called Methodist. This course is required for persons seeking ordination in The United Methodist Church (and probably in its successors, whatever they might be, as well).

**Course Learning Goals or Objectives**

1. you sought out at least two things that challenged you to see yourself or Methodism differently, and you engaged with them until you understood them or you were changed by them
2. you demonstrated that you can participate well in the connectional system that is a backbone of Methodism, by engaging frequently with your student colleagues and with me; sometimes with insightful thorny questions that helped us think more deeply, sometimes with tentative ponderings, sometimes by putting together things that we had not seen in light of each other, always with respect and genuine desire for growth in the work of the Holy Spirit among us
3. you did the reading (Methodists are readers) and you thought about it in light of your own questions and in light of the congregation you lead or are a member of
4. you have developed an overarching "story of the Methodist movement" for teaching others about what it means to be part of the Methodist tradition in North America

**Content and Assignments**

The following three pages show, week by week, the course readings and the tasks (including writing short posts and writing segments of what will become the final paper, as well as daily prayer and weekly meeting with a “band” or covenant group).

Books and articles referred to in the course “grid” are listed at the end.

At the end of the course a successful student will have:

1. Added to their prayer journal once a week and received the instructor’s spiritual guidance in response at the end of the term.
2. Met 9 times with 2 or 3 other students in a covenant group and submitted a written reflection on the experience.
3. Posted 20 times (twice each week) in response to a question engaging the readings.
4. Written 4 short 2 page accounts of an aspect of the Methodist movement in America
5. Synthesized those accounts within a larger narrative account of the history of one particular congregation, setting the congregation into the larger context of features of the Methodist movement in order to illuminate its times of success and times of difficulty.

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| **Task and hours per week UM History 2020** | **Prayer & journal 2 hrs**  15% final grade | **Covenant group meeting 1 hr**  15% final grade | **Reading 6 hrs** | **Weekly posting in conversation about the readings 1 hr**  30% final grade (divided) | **Building the final paper – 2 hrs every other week**  40% final grade (divided) |
| Wk 1 | Use *A Wesleyan Spiritual Reader* to guide 20 minutes a day of prayer/meditation. Start with week 1 and read the Intro. to learn how to use the *Reader*.  **Record highlights of your experience in 1 or 2 paragraphs in your personal Canvas journal thread.** | Form your group of no less than 3 no more than 5; you can ask persons to join you who are not in this course, but they should read *The Band Meeting.* Your first weekly meeting (virtual or f2f) should happen by Sept 21st. | *The Band Meeting* chaps. 1, 4, 5, 6, 7  (98 pp—read this very quickly)  *Wesley and the People*, ch 2  (68 pp)  Examine to get one big picture of Methodism in 2020:  <https://worldmethodistcouncil.org/about/member-churches/statistical-information/> | See the discussion in Canvas for this week’s question.  You will find it at the beginning where I specify the reading.  If you are not the first to post, you are expected to build on or expand the focus of prior posts |  |
| Wk 2 | Same using week 2 in the *Reader*  **Record highlights of your experience in 1 or 2 paragraphs in your personal Canvas journal thread.** | Second group meeting – questions should be agreed on and **posted to the Covenant group thread** | *Wesley and the People*, chs 3, 4, 5  (150 pp) | See the discussion in Canvas for this week’s question. | In 2 pages (dbl spaced),  Explain the importance of John Wesley’s “Aldersgate experience” and its relation to his understanding of grace. |
| Wk 3 | Same using week 3 | Meet 1 hr | *Taking Heaven By Storm* chaps 1, 2, 3, 4 (100 pp) | See the discussion in Canvas for this week’s question. |  |
| Wk 4 | Same using week 4 | Meet 1 hr | *Taking Heaven By Storm* chaps 5, 6, 7, 8 (82 pp) | See the discussion in Canvas for this week’s question. | In 2 pages (dbl space) explain what the itinerant system, class meeting, and annual conferences contributed to the rapid expansion of the Methodist movement in North America 1768-1830 |
| Wk 5 | Same using week 5 | Meet 1 hr | Different branches of Methodism tell the history differently  Read two of these sources:  Champion, 41-65 (AME, AMEZ, CME)  Singleton, 1-56 (AME)  Baldwin, 9-80 (African Union)  Spragin, 17-53 (on Wesley)  Spragin, 184-254 (CME)  Williams, 122-138 (AMEZ) | See the discussion in Canvas for this week’s question. | Identify the resources you need to learn your own congregation’s history. (When it was founded. How. When it grew most. When it almost died. Were there splits?) |
| Wk 6 | Same using week 6 | Meet 1 hr | Becoming middle class & division/war  *Amer Meth* ch iii, iv, v, vi (60pp) | See the discussion in Canvas for this week’s question. | In 2 pages (dbl space) choose one separation among Methodists 1768-1875 and explain its significance for thinking about the Methodist movement. |
| Wk 7 | Same using week 7 | Meet 1 hr | Reconstruction & manifest destiny & their consequences  *Amer Meth* ch. vii, viii, ix (62 pp)  Tinker, “Redskin Tanned Hide…” (43 p) | See the discussion in Canvas for this week’s question. |  |
| Wk 8 | Same using week 8 | Meet 1 hr | 1939 unification articles by Davis  and by Kelsey  *Amer Meth* ch x (32 pp)  Dickerson, 220-236 | See the discussion in Canvas for this week’s question. | In 2 pages explain 3 strengths and 3 liabilities of being a bureaucratic Methodist connection 1866- 1966 |
| Wk 9 | Same using week 9 | Meet 1 hr  **Post one key insight about developing holiness of life** that has emerged from engaging this practice with your covenant group. | *Amer Meth* chs. xi, xii  Dickerson, 143-153  Dickerson, 154-175 | See the discussion in Canvas for this week’s question. |  |
| Wk 10 | Same using week 10  Review your journal entries and make a final entry that notices any patterns or progress or other insight about the practice of daily prayer and the practice of journal keeping. | Meet 1 hr  Thank your group members and decide whether the group will continue to meet after this week’s meeting. | Review readings from weeks 1 - 9 | See the discussion in Canvas for this week’s question. | Final paper:  Learn your congregation’s history. Then edit the previous 2 page explanations you have created and tell your congregation’s history in light of the overall “story of American Methodism.”  Refer to Canvas for more specific instructions.  Aim for 12 pages total – be both thorough and succinct.  I will stop reading at the end of page 15 if you go over 12 pages. |

**5 Books to purchase**:

Heitzenrater, Richard. *Wesley and the People Called* Methodists 2nd edition, 2013

Job, Rueben. *A Wesleyan Spiritual Reader*. Abingdon, 1998.

Richey, Rowe, and Schmidt, *American Methodism: A Compact History*. Abingdon, 2012

see next page for two more books

Watson, Kevin and Scott Kisker. *The Band Meeting: Rediscovering Relational Discipleship in Transformational Community*. Seedbed, 2017.

Wigger, John H. *Taking Heaven By Storm: Methodism and the Rise of Popular Christianity in America.* New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1998.

**Chapters and articles provided in Canvas**:

Baldwin, Lewis V. “The African and Methodism Prior to African Methodist Beginnings” and “African Dissent in American Methodism: The Rise of the Union Church of Africans” 9-80 in *“Invisible” Strands in African Methodism: A History of the African Union Methodist Protestant and Union American Methodist Episcopal Churches, 1805-1980*. Metuchen, N.J.: The American Theological Library Association, 1983.

Champion, G. Lovelace, Sr. “About Black Methodism” 41-65 in *Black Methodism Basic Beliefs*. Nashville: AMEC Sunday School Union, 1995.

Davis, Morris L. “The Methodist Merger of 1939: ‘Successful’ Unification?” 181-191 in *Unity of the Church and Human Sexuality: Toward a Faithful United Methodist Witness*. Nashville: General Board of Higher Education and Ministry, 2018.

Dickerson, Dennis C. “Black Ecumenism: Efforts to Establish a United Methodist Episcopal Church, 1918-1932” 220-236 in *African Methodism and Its Wesleyan Heritage: Reflections on AME Church History*. Nashville: AMEC Sunday School Union, 2009.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. “Rufus E. Clement, Zion Methodism, and the Atlanta School Board Election of 1953” 143-153 in *African Methodism and Its Wesleyan Heritage: Reflections on AME Church History*. Nashville: AMEC Sunday School Union, 2009.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. “The Wesleyan Witness in the U.S. Civil Rights Movement: The Allen Legacy Against 20th Century American Apartheid” 154-175 in *African Methodism and Its Wesleyan Heritage: Reflections on AME Church History*. Nashville: AMEC Sunday School Union, 2009.

Kelsey, Catherine. “How Do United Methodists Know a Sin When We See It?” 225-245 in *Unity of the Church and Human Sexuality: Toward a Faithful United Methodist Witness*. Nashville: General Board of Higher Education and Ministry, 2018.

Singleton, George A. “Background and Early Environment,” “The Beginning—Richard Allen,” “Growth and Expansion,” and “An Eventful Period” 1-44 in *The Romance of African Methodism*. Nashville: AME Press, 1952, reprint 1985 and 2001.

Spragin, Ore L., Jr. “English Methodism” 17-53 in *The Christian Methodist Episcopal Church (1870-2009): Faithful to the Vision*. Lima, OH: Wyndham Hall Press, 2011.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. “The Christian Methodist Episcopal Church” 184-254 in *The Christian Methodist Episcopal Church (1870-2009): Faithful to the Vision*. Lima, OH: Wyndham Hall Press, 2011.

Tinker, Tink (wazhazhe / Osage Nation). “Redskin, Tanned Hide: A Book of Christian History Bound in the Flayed Skin of an American Indian: The Colonial Romance, christian Denial and the Cleansing of a christian School of Theology” *Journal of Race, Ethnicity, and Religion* 5/9, October 2014, 1-43.

Williams, Milton A. “A Brief History of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church—‘100 Years of Methodism’” 122-138 in G. Lovelace Champion, Sr. *Black Methodism Basic Beliefs*. Nashville: AMEC Sunday School Union, 1995.

**Recommended Resources**:

Maddox and Vickers, eds. *The Cambridge Companion to John Wesley*. Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 2010.

**Links to e-resources**

https://archive.org/details/americanmethodism?&sort=-downloads&page=2 (Links to an external site.) a collection of archival material from a number of different collections. All of it electronically available

https://divinity.duke.edu/initiatives/cswt/research-resources (Links to an external site.) Duke Divinity School's basic page for research resources, including basic getting started materials.

www.gcah.org (Links to an external site.) the home page for the Commission on Archives and History. Look at the UMC History tab for a variety of basic tools and access to further links

http://palni.contentdm.oclc.org/cdm/search/collection/archives/order/date/ad/asc (Links to an external site.) DePauw University archive (one of the earliest Methodist colleges) Indiana conferences archives