

2020 Licensing School: United Methodist Tradition

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Purpose: Being a United Methodist pastor is a high calling that includes many important duties, perplexing challenges, and countless blessings. A local pastor must have the ability to articulate United Methodist theology. In this course, we will engage with the core theological elements of the United Methodist tradition. We will examine these elements in ways that are practical and relevant to leadership within a local parish and beyond.

Our Goals:

Knowledge: Develop an understanding of the “Wesleyan Quadrilateral.”

Skill: Know the distinction of the four components.

Skill: Develop an ability to use the quadrilateral in articulating one’s own theology.

Resource: *Discipline* ¶ 104. Section 4–Our Theological Task

Knowledge: Develop an awareness of distinctive Wesleyan Beliefs.

Skill: Appreciate the differences between Wesleyan doctrines and other Christian traditions.

Skill: Develop a working awareness of Wesley’s understanding of grace (prevenient, justifying, and sanctifying).

Skill: Connect the theology of an individual’s personal “call to ministry” and how it is developed from the moment of salvation into a life of discipleship.

Knowledge: Begin to learn UM history.

Skill: Review early Methodist history and examine its connection with ecumenical history.

Skill: Express the relationship of works of mercy and works of piety.

Resources: *Discipline* ¶ 102. Section 1–Our Doctrinal Heritage

Discipline ¶ 103. Section 3–Our Doctrinal History

Required texts:

The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church

Part III: Doctrinal Standards and Our Theological Task

The United Methodist Hymnal

Willimon, William H. *United Methodist Beliefs: A Brief Introduction.*

Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2007.

Additional Suggested Reading

Our Wesleyan Heritage, found online at:

www.umc.org/what-we-believe/our-wesleyan-heritage

Theological guidelines, found online at:

www.umc.org/what-we-believe/theological-guidelines

Methodism 101 Online Course, found at:

<http://dev.fac.umc.org/what-we-believe/methodism-101>

Assignments:

- 1.) Describe your own faith journey with God using the four headings of the Wesleyan Quadrilateral. For example, how have the scriptures informed your life? What has been the role of reason and

experience? What traditions of the church have made the greatest impact on your life? (2 pages, due May 15).

- 2.) Compare and contrast "The Articles of Religion of the Methodist Church" and "The Confession of Faith of the Evangelical United Brethren" found in the *Book of Discipline*, Paragraph 104. Specifically, examine two or three differences between these two doctrinal standards (2 pages, due June 15).
- 3.) Examine these five creeds found in the *United Methodist Hymnal*: #880, #881, #883, #884, #885. Two are ancient, three are modern. Is there a creed that resonates with you the most? Describe why that is the case. Which creed do you find the most helpful and why? (2 pages, due the first day of class).
- 4.) It has been said Methodist theology has been shaped both by the theological writings of John Wesley and the hymns and poetry of Charles Wesley. Find a Charles Wesley hymn in the hymnal and show how it fits with broader Wesleyan--and United Methodist--theology. (2 pages, due first day of class).

Please include your full name in the title and page numbers on each page. Please proofread your work. Papers with many typographical and grammatical errors are a sign of careless work. Assignments may be emailed to me (jsnider@springfieldfirst.org) as attached doc. files or sent through the postal mail to my address above. Don't hesitate to contact me with any questions.

Blessings to you as you prepare for this great journey.