

**Indiana Area Extension Course of Study School  
The United Methodist Church**

**In-Person Learning**

Fall: 2024 – September 7, September 14, October 12, November 9

**COS 523 Evangelism**

Rev. Dr. Andrew D. Kinsey, Instructor

This course examines the biblical and apostolic roots of the church's evangelistic mission. It also explores various aspects of the church's ministry of evangelism and the distinct contribution of the Wesleyan theological tradition to the church's universal mission of offering Christ. This course promotes vital theological reflection on the church's evangelistic practices, stressing the importance of a holistic approach to the Christian witness and mission.

**Course Objectives**

The course has the following objectives:

1. Ground a theology of evangelism in Scripture, the gospel, and God's mission.
2. Interpret the Wesleyan emphasis on evangelism and discipleship.
3. Analyze contemporary issues in evangelism (e.g., church growth, social justice)
4. Focus on evangelism in the local church.
5. Examine more extensive strategies and models for evangelism.
6. Critically analyze and appreciate electronic and social media for evangelism.

**Books**

The following books are *required* reading:

William J. Abraham – *The Art of Evangelism: Evangelism Carefully Crafted into the Life of the Local Church* (Eugene: Wipf & Stock, 1988/Reprint). ISBN – 13: 978-1-61097-664-0.

**CONTACT Andy Kinsey to order this book at [andrewdalekinsey@gmail.com](mailto:andrewdalekinsey@gmail.com).**

Doug Powe Jr. and Hal Knight III – *Transforming Evangelism: The Wesleyan Way of Sharing Faith* (Nashville: Discipleship Resources, 2006) ISBN – 10-0881-77485-5.

Kenneth H. Carter Jr. and Audrey Warren – *Fresh Expressions: A New Kind of Methodist Church for People Not in a Church* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2017) ISBN – 979-1-5018-4920.

Karl Vaters, *De-Sizing the Church: How Church Growth Became a Science, Then an Obsession, and What's Next* (Chicago: Moody Press, 2024) ISBN – 978-0-8024-258.

Students should contact Andy Kinsey if they have problems ordering books, both in terms of obtaining the books and price. Andy can assist in these areas.

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The following books are *recommended* reading for the work of evangelism (not required):

Eddie Fox & George E. Morris – *Faith-Sharing: Dynamic Christian Witnessing* (Nashville: Discipleship Resources, 1986).

George G. Hunter III – *To Spread the Power: Church Growth in the Wesleyan Spirit* (Abingdon Press: Nashville, 1987)

Eric H. Law – *The Wolf Shall Dwell with the Lamb: A Spirituality for Leadership in the Multicultural Community* (St. Louis: Chalice Press, 1993)

Jan G. Linn – *Reclaiming Evangelism: A Practical Guide for Mainline Churches* (St. Louis: Chalice Press, 1998)

Albert C. Outler – *Evangelism & Theology in the Wesleyan Spirit* (Nashville: Discipleship Resources, 1996)

Pricilla Pope-Levison – *Models of Evangelism* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2021).

Kevin E. Ruffcorn – *Rural Evangelism: Catching the Vision* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Press, 1994)

### **Assignment Instructions**

Please read the following instructions on how to write the papers.

1. Persons need to read the required books and come to class prepared with questions raised by the assigned materials.
2. Persons are to follow the instructions on preparing written materials for the class.
3. All work prepared for the Course of Study will be typed on double-spaced 8 ½ x 11 white paper with New Romans Font, 12 Points.
4. Persons are to use quotations from the books sparingly. The point is to put the text's argument in your own words. That is, what is the author or authors communicating? What is it saying? What points do you find compelling? What points might be confusing? What are the implications of this work for the practice of evangelism?

Please properly reference those points in the body of the written material, using correct page numbers, etc. If using a work not on the required or recommended reading list, please share in an appropriate form the name of the work (e.g., Author, Title, Publisher, Copyright, etc.).

5. Persons are to place a title on the top of their written material, including the following:

a) Your name, b) Course name and number, c) Home address

6. Staple the papers of the section together.

7. Submit all work to the instructor before class begins. You may also email your assignments to Pastor Andy at [andrewdalekinsey@gmail.com](mailto:andrewdalekinsey@gmail.com).

### **Plagiarism**

Using other documentation and property without acknowledgment, whether from a book, a journal, a teacher, a student, sermon service, lectionary aid, etc., is unacceptable. Stealing, or plagiarism, means failure for the course with notification sent to the Conference Registrar and the Division of Ordained Ministry. If you would like to have coursework returned, please inform the instructor.

### **Attendance and Participation**

Students are expected to attend all the classes in person. Deviation from attending may result in a reduction of grade or loss of credit.

### **Inclusive Language**

Students are expected to be aware of the power of language in theology. Inclusive language respects gender and racial diversity about God and persons and strives to bring justice to theological discourse in speaking and writing.

### **Grading**

The instructor assumes that everyone in the class can complete the work required to receive a “C” grade for each assignment. Persons who don’t complete an assignment receive an automatic “F” grade. The range of grades is from A to C-. A student whose grade falls below C- will meet with the instructor and, possibly, the director of the Course of Study. Students whose assignments are late will receive two letter grades lower.

### **Criteria for Evaluating Assignments**

There are four essential qualities of excellent work toward knowledge and wisdom in ministry, especially concerning learning. Here are the criteria for evaluating class assignments.

1. Demonstrate an emphatic understanding of the material's content, including books, articles, classroom discussions, and participation.
2. Critical thinking that provides appropriate evidence for your arguments.
3. Creativity that moves beyond reporting someone else’s ideas.
4. Grammar, spelling, and form for good communication of thoughts.

## **Class Preparation and Study**

This course will combine several disciplines: spiritual formation, practical theology, biblical study, leadership, evangelism, and mission. Persons are strongly encouraged to keep up with the assignments and integrate the work into the practice of ministry in the local church. A few suggestions for study include. There will also be moments for class discussion and feedback.

### **Saturday, September 7<sup>th</sup>**

Online class and information sharing with Pastor Andy from 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. Watch for the Zoom link. Students will receive a breakdown of critical biblical texts from the instructor to ground their understanding of the theology of evangelism. They will also write a paragraph on their knowledge of evangelism and how they came to faith in Christ. They will bring this paragraph to class on September 14<sup>th</sup>. During this session, they receive three articles to read before the class session on September 14<sup>th</sup>.

### **Saturday, September 14<sup>th</sup>**

#### **Book Review Assignment:**

*The Art of Evangelism: Evangelism Carefully Crafted into the Local Church.*

Write a four-page paper utilizing the following questions to format your responses:

1. What is the conception of evangelism Abraham focuses on?
2. What are other conceptions of evangelism?
3. What are some of the false gospels Abraham mentions? Can you think of other false gospels?
4. What are the strengths and weaknesses of this particular book?
5. How could you use this book to craft a ministry of evangelism in your church(es)?
6. How does a person's understanding of the gospel influence how they practice evangelism?

#### **Packet of Readings: The Mission is Possible**

Each student will receive a packet of short readings on evangelism and mission on the first day of class. These short reading assignments are for *class discussion*. Students will read the assignments and participate in class conversation. There is no writing for these readings. Persons will receive these three articles through emails from Andy Kinsey.

“Missional: Possible” by Chad Hall (six-minute read)

“Fresh Hope for Rural Churches” by Jennie Birkholz (five-minute read)

“Evangelism with Integrity” by Doug Powe and Pricila Pope-Levison (ten minutes read)

The class begins with morning prayer based on *The United Methodist Book of Worship*. Students will share and offer prayer and read scripture.

While sharing these articles under the Section “The Mission is Possible,” the class will also take time for peer learning and focus on particular case studies students may wish to bring to the class that deals with issues raised in these texts.

**Saturday, October 12<sup>th</sup>**

**Book Review Assignments:**

*Fresh Expressions: A New Kind of Methodist Church for People Not in Church.*

Write a three-page paper on this book answering the following questions:

1. What is a Fresh Expression?
2. What strengths do you see in these books regarding the ministry of evangelism?
3. What weaknesses do you see?
4. What insights may assist you in evangelism in your local church?

*Transforming Evangelism: The Wesleyan Way of Sharing Faith.*

Write a three-page paper to answer the following questions:

1. What is the main point of this book?
2. How did Wesley's understanding of salvation shape how he practiced evangelism?
3. What strikes you about how the early Methodists practiced evangelism?
4. What strikes you about how United Methodists practice evangelism today? Do they?

Students will discuss these books in class.

**Packet of Readings: The Mission is Possible**

- “Becoming a Light House Church” by Philip Brooks (five-minute read)
- “John Wesley on the ‘Grand Stumbling Block’ to the Church’s Mission” (five-minute read)
- “The General Spread of the Gospel” by John Wesley (find online)
- “John Wesley’s Rules for Helpers” by John Wesley (two-minute read)

Be prepared to discuss these short pieces as part of the class conversations.

**Listen to Podcast/YouTube Program**

“Doing Justice Together” by Michael Adam Beck and Stephanie Moore Hand (30 minutes)  
Pastor Andy will send the link to you. Listen and be prepared to share in class.

Questions for Class Discussion:

1. What are the four points of doing justice together in the local church?
2. What does a failure of discipleship and evangelism look like?
3. What is the “Great Omission”?
4. Where are conversations happening in your community with others?

**Project: Interview and Story-Telling**

This project involves three steps. First, listen to the podcast with David Brooks about his book *How to Know a Person: The Art of Seeing Others Deeply and Being Deeply Seen*. Brooks

explains how many of our biggest problems stem from people not feeling seen and known. Listen to the interview. What does Brooks say are the challenges facing us? What are the implications of what he says for evangelism and pastoral care? How do we get to know others deeply?

Then, find a person who might be considered a “None,” a person no longer affiliated with or involved in the church, or someone who doesn’t believe. Maybe you know them. Perhaps you don’t. Ask to schedule a time to share why they don’t have faith or no longer attend church. Provide a safe space to listen to their story. Maybe set up a time for coffee. You are not there to judge. Ask them to share. Pastor Andy will provide a template for sharing, but students are encouraged to do so independently.

Finally, write up a one-page report noting what they communicated. What did you learn? What might this person teach the church? What are the possible next steps in the relationship (if any)? What do you feel was left unsaid? Share what your relationship is with the person.

### Saturday, November 9<sup>th</sup>

#### **Book Review Assignment:**

*De-Sizing the Church: How Church Growth Became a Science, Then an Obsession and What’s Next.*

Write a three-to-four-page paper on Vaters’ book and focus on the following questions:

1. What is the central thesis or argument of this book?
2. What does Vaters mean by de-sizing?
3. What did you find helpful about this volume?
4. What is church growth in your congregation?
5. How do we measure growth? Can we?

Be prepared to discuss this book in class.

#### **Packet of Readings: The Mission is Possible**

“Measuring the Things that Matter” by Bryan Bonfiglio (six-minute read)

“Who is Attending Online Church?” by Ryan Burge (ten-minute read)

“Bivocational Ministry as Evangelism Opportunity” by Ed Setzer (five-minute read)

“Critical Observations for Reaching Latino Populations” by Lovett Weems (five-minute read)

Be prepared to share and discuss these articles in class.

#### **Project: Paper on Your Church and Community**

Write a four- to five-page paper on the following: Students should begin by walking around the community surrounding the church (drive if needed). Students should then access information about your community and answer the following questions.

1. What is the demographic of your congregation(s) – race, age, economics?

2. What is the demographic of your zip code (use mission insite or other census service)
3. How does your congregation match the demographics of the community?
4. What ministries is your congregation offering the zip code?
5. What evangelistic opportunities do you see in your community?

Your paper will include a brief description of your church. When you share demographic information, ensure you include the following information: What civic groups meet near your congregation? What organizations, schools, other churches, government services, and non-profits are nearby? What partnerships have you created? What opportunities do you see? Share the names of the laypeople you have spoken to about this project. What are the next steps you plan to take?

### **One-Page Paper**

Write a one-page paper on how your understanding of evangelism has or has not changed since the beginning of class. What new things might you have learned? Where do you see yourself and your church going in the days ahead in the area of evangelism? What was helpful and unhelpful?

### **Summary of Class Assignments**

The following assignments represent the work of the class:

#### **The following are due September 14<sup>th</sup>**

*The Art of Evangelism* (3 to 4 pages)

A paragraph explaining your current understanding of evangelism.

“The Mission is Possible” – Short articles and readings for class discussion.

#### **The following are due on October 12<sup>th</sup>**

*Fresh Expressions*

*Transforming Evangelism*

Project on listening to the podcast and sharing with a person not involved in church.

“The Mission is Possible” – Short articles and readings for class discussion.

Listen to the Podcast “Doing Justice Together” for class discussion.

#### **The following papers are due on November 9<sup>th</sup>**

*De-sizing the Church*

Project on your church and community.

One-page paper on how your understanding of evangelism has changed, if at all.

“The Mission is Possible” – Short articles and readings for class discussion.

### **More Information**

If a student would like to set up a Zoom time and share it with Andy, please know that it is possible to do so via Zoom.