

L.A.C.E. Core ClassesSession 1: Spiritual Gifts

1. Introduction Questions
 - a. What comes to mind when you hear the words “Spiritual Gifts?”
 - b. How do you feel about the Spiritual Gifts?
 - c. What experiences have you had concerning the Spiritual Gifts?
 - d. What do you think is/are the purpose(s) of the Spiritual Gifts?
2. Biblical references to the Spiritual Gifts
 - a. Romans 12:1-8
 - b. 1 Corinthians 12:1-31; 14:1-25
 - c. Ephesians 4:11-16
3. List of the Spiritual Gifts
 - a. Miraculous Gifts
 - i. Apostle 1 Cor. 12:28, Eph. 4:11
 - ii. Tongues 1 Cor. 12:10,28,30
 - iii. Interpretation of Tongues 1 Cor. 12:10, 30
 - iv. Miracles 1 Cor. 12:10, 28
 - v. Healing 1 Cor. 12:9, 28
 - b. Enabling Gifts
 - i. Faith 1 Cor. 12:9
 - ii. Discernment 1 Cor. 12:10
 - iii. Wisdom 1 Cor. 12:8
 - iv. Knowledge 1 Cor. 12:8
 - c. Proclamation Gifts
 - i. Evangelism Eph. 4:11
 - ii. Prophecy Rom. 12:6. Eph. 4:11, 1 Cor. 12:10, 28
 - iii. Teaching Rom. 12:7; 1 Cor. 12:28
 - iv. Exhortation Rom. 12:8
 - d. Ministering Gifts
 - i. Shepherding Eph. 4:11
 - ii. Mercy Rom. 12:8
 - iii. Serving Rom. 12:7; 1 Cor. 12:28
 - iv. Giving Rom. 12:8
 - v. Administration Rom. 12:8; 1 Cor. 12:28
4. Discussion
 - a. Now what do you believe the purpose(s) of the Spiritual Gifts to be?
 - b. Has your understanding or thoughts on the Spiritual Gifts changed? How?
 - c. What do you think your Spiritual Gifts are? Why?

Spiritual Gift Inventory

1. Take the Spiritual Gifts Inventory
2. Homework: Answer the following questions.
 - a. What is your dominate Spiritual Gift?
 - b. Identify someone in Scripture that has that same dominate gift?
 - c. Identify someone in your life who has the same dominate gift?
 - d. How can you use that gift in the church?
3. Bring your answer sheet and your inventory to the District Conference.

Session 2: United Methodist History Top 10

1. Epworth Rectory 1703 – 1713
 - a. Parents:
 - i. Samuel Wesley. Anglican Priest
 - ii. Susanna Wesley
 - b. John had 18 brothers and sisters. He was the 15th born.
 - c. From the time they could walk and talk the children were taught by Susanna to read and speak Latin and Greek.
 - d. February 9, 1709 the Epworth rectory caught on fire, John was the last rescued.
 - i. Zec. 3:2 considered himself the “brand plucked from the fire.”
 - ii. Believed himself to be chose by God to do something great.
 - e. At the age of 11 in 1714 John was sent to the Charterhouse School in London.
2. Oxford 1720-1729
 - a. June 1720 John entered Christ Church in Oxford.
 - b. John graduated in 1724 with a Bachelor of Arts degree and went on to pursue his Master of Arts degree.
 - c. John was ordained as a deacon on September 25, 1725 affording him time to be a fellow and tutor at Oxford.
 - d. March 1726 John was unanimously elected a Fellow at Lincoln College, Oxford.
 - i. As a Fellow he taught Greek and New Testament.
 - e. John earned his MA in 1727 and returned to Epworth at his father’s request to serve in a neighboring town as pastor.
 - f. John was ordained as an Elder on September 22, 1728 and served the church for 2 years.
 - g. John returned to Oxford in November 1729 at the request of the Rector of Lincoln College. As a Fellow he received a salary and held responsibility to teach.
3. The Holy Club 1729-1734
 - a. Originally founded by John’s brother Charles.
 - b. They met daily from 6-9 am for prayer, reading of the Psalms, and to study the New Testament.
 - c. They took Holy Communion every Sunday.
 - d. The fasted every Wednesday and Friday until 3 p.m.

- e. They visited the jails, cared for the poor, paid the debts of the debtors, preached, and taught.
 - f. They were so methodical that they became known and “Methodists.”
4. Georgia 1736-1738
- a. October 14, 1735 John and Charles set sail for Savannah in the providence of Georgia in the colony at the invitation of James Oglethorp, the founder of the colony in 1733.
 - b. ON the way their ship was hit by a storm that tore off the main mast. Wesley was impacted by the actions of the Moravians who remained calm and sang hymns and praises while everyone else was frightened.
 - c. In 1736 John arrived in Georgia as a High Churchman to “revive primitive Christianity and evangelize the heathen Native Americans.”
 - d. Over the two years John was there attendance in worship and at communion increased.
 - e. John met and fell in love with Sophia Hopkey. John did not propose to her due to his commitment to his ministry and interest in clerical celibacy.
 - f. Sophia married William Williamson. John claimed that her faith had waned and refused to serve her communion.
 - g. Williamson brought charges against John and a warrant was sworn out for his arrest. In December 1737 John fled Savannah and returned to England.
5. Aldersgate May 24, 1738
- a. On the evening of May 24, 1738 John reluctantly attended a Moravian meeting on Aldersgate Street in London in which the preface to Martin Luther’s commentary on Romans was read. Upon hearing it Wesley later wrote in his diary that he felt his heart “strangely warmed at a quarter of nine as the preface was being read.”
 - b. This was a major pivotal part n John’s life.
6. Field Preaching April 2, 1739
- a. John allied himself with the Moravians. He even went to Germany to study, which ultimately resulted in his being “put out” of the pulpits in England.
 - b. John’s Oxford friend George Whitefield was also banned from the pulpits in England and took to the fields to preach in the open air to the minors.
 - c. Whitefield asked John to preach for him while he was away and John reluctantly agreed.
 - i. Earlier John had said that “open air preaching was almost a sin.”
 - d. Later John was so accustom to open air preaching that he used his father’s headstone as a pulpit.
 - e. John preached wherever he could for the next 50 years.
7. Discipleship Groups November 1738
- a. As a means of Christian accountability and holiness John formed disciple groups he termed Class / Band.
 - b. The Classes were for all Methodists and the Bands were for the leaders.

- c. They met once a week and would answer a series of questions together.
 - d. Attendees would be issues a ticket to be able to take communion. No ticket, no communion.
 - e. These disciple groups were the key to the Wesleyan movement.
8. The Methodist Connexion 1741
- a. The Connexion were a circuit of prayer groups who would employ traveling ministers.
 - b. Thomas Maxfield was converted by John on May 1, 1739 in Bristol became a lay minister.
 - c. John gave Maxfield charge of the Foundry Society with instruction to pray and give good council.
 - d. Maxfield began to preach as well and some complained to John. At his mother's urging John heard Maxwell preach and gave him his blessing.
 - e. Maxfield became divisive.
 - i. Maxfield began to support George Bell's prediction that the world would end on February 28, 1763.
 - ii. Maxfield broke from Wesley on April 28, 1763 and took 200 people with him.
9. Christmas Conference December 24, 1784 – January 2, 1785
- a. Held at Lovely Lane Chapel in Baltimore, Maryland.
 - b. Pre-Revolutionary War preachers appointed by John to form societies but to stay within the Anglican Church.
 - c. The war caused most to return to England. Two stayed; Francis Asbury 1771 and James Dempster.
 - d. July 1784 John ordained Richard Whatcoat and Thomas Vasey as Elders and Thomas Coke as the Superintendent of the American Church and instructed Coke to ordain Asbury as Co-Superintendent.
 - e. There were 81 preachers invited to Asbury's ordination and was ordained with unanimous approval.
 - f. This became known as the first General Conference of the American Methodist Episcopal Church.
 - i. They adopted the Anglican 39 Articles of Religion and added one.
 - ii. This along with the Anglican governing principles were formed to become the Book of Discipline.
 - iii. They adopted the name Methodist Episcopal Church.
 - iv. They ordained 12 people that conference.
10. The Methodist Book of Concern
- a. Formed in 1789 as the publishing house of American Methodism.
 - b. Published and printed 6 million books and pamphlets a year making it the largest publishing house in America.
 - c. John Dickens started the publishing house the Methodist Book Concern with \$600.

- d. The first publication was printed on August 17, 1789 titled, “An Extract of the Christians Pattern.” Written by Thomas A. Kempis.
 - e. The ME Church split over slavery into two churches.
 - i. Methodist Episcopal Church– Abington Press
 - ii. Methodist Episcopal South – Cokesbury located in Nashville, TN
 - f. In 1939 they united to form the Methodist Church.
11. The Union April 23, 1968
- a. In 1968 the Methodist Church merged with the Evangelical United Brethren Church to form the United Methodist Church – The Methodist Publishing House.
 - b. At the time of the merger the newly formed UMC recorded 11 million members.
 - c. In 1989 the United Methodist Hymnal replaced the 1966 Methodist Hymnal.
 - d. In 1980 Marjorie Matthews was made the first female Bishop.
 - e. Women were ordained in the Methodist Church since 1956.

Session 3: United Methodist Theology

1. Grace

- a. Prevenient Grace (John 1:9)
 - i. The grace of God available to all people pre-salvation.
 - ii. The working of God in one’s life prior to salvation.
 - iii. Produces conviction of sins against God.
 - iv. Benefits of Prevenient Grace
 - 1. Basic knowledge of God revealed to all.
 - 2. After the Fall, humanity is not in an utterly dejected state but able to recognize to some measure the moral laws of God.
 - 3. The conscience is not formed by society or nature, rather it comes from God.
 - 4. A measure of free will is restored.
 - 5. The restraint of wickedness. No a slave to evil.
- b. Convincing Grace
 - i. In sin a person can reject the grace of God.
 - ii. The role of the Holy Spirit to superintend the process of repentance.
 - 1. Convicting
 - 2. Illuminating
 - 3. Teaching
 - 4. Wooing the sinners soul
 - iii. Overcomes the spiritual dullness caused by sin to become awakened to God’s love.
- c. Justifying Grace
 - i. What God does for us that we cannot do for ourselves.
 - ii. The fruit of repentance bringing about salvation.

- iii. The moment in which a person accepts or receives God offer of salvation through Jesus Christ.
- iv. The fruit of justifying grace
 - 1. Forgiveness
 - 2. Ceasing from evil
 - 3. Doing good
 - 4. Using the ordinances of God
 - 5. Obedience to God
- v. Free Grace meaning free in all. Grace is not dependent on the power or merit of the person.
- vi. Liberation from the power of sin and the consequence of past sin.
- vii. “It is the act of God the Father, whereby, for the sake of the propitiation made by the blood of his Son, he showed forth his righteousness (mercy) by the remission of sins that are past.” John Wesley
- d. Sanctifying Grace
 - i. The power and favor of the Most High
 - ii. What God does in us.
 - iii. The grace imparted allowing the believer to become holy as a result of the divine favor of God and his enabling presence.
 - iv. The transformative process whereby one becomes more like Jesus and less like the old natural self.
- e. Means of Grace
 - i. The grace of God mediated to the soul through a variety of means.
 - ii. Outward signs, words, or actions ordained by God to be channels whereby God might convey his prevenient, justifying, and sanctifying grace.
 - iii. The Sacraments; Communion and Baptism
 - iv. Study of Scripture
 - v. Prayer; public and private
 - vi. Fasting
 - vii. Worship
 - viii. Faith Sharing
 - ix. Doing Good Works; tending to the poor, visiting the sick, etc.
 - x. Giving Generously
 - xi. Seeking justice and ending oppression, injustice, and discrimination
- 2. Wesley’s Order of Salvation
 - a. Sin
 - b. God’s action for human salvation
 - c. Old Testament covenant
 - d. New Testament covenant
 - e. Christian Church Means of Grace

- f. Sacraments
 - i. Baptism
 - ii. Communion
 - g. Prevenient Grace
 - h. Repentance and Faith
 - i. Justification
 - j. Regeneration
 - k. Assurance
 - l. Falling from Grace / Faith
 - m. Sanctification
 - n. Acts of Discipleship
 - o. Christian Perfection
 - p. Glorification
2. The Wesleyan Quadrilateral
 - a. The four sources used by John Wesley to come to a theological conclusion.
 - i. Scripture
 - ii. Tradition
 - iii. Reason
 - iv. Experience
 3. Other Wesleyan Theological Issues
 - a. Baptism (next session)
 - b. Free Will / Eternal Security
 - i. Hebrews 6:4-6
 - ii. 2 Peter 2:21

Session 4: Sacraments

1. Definition: An outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace ordained by Jesus Christ himself used to strengthen and confirm our faith.
2. Types:
 - a. Holy Communion
 - b. Baptism
3. Holy Communion
 - a. The New Testament sign of the New Covenant instituted by Jesus Christ as a continual remembrance of the death of Christ by the eating of the bread and drinking of the wine, which are the outward signs of the inward grace, the body and blood of Jesus.
 - b. A remembrance that entails the presence of Jesus. The bread and the wine are conduits for God's saving grace.
 - c. The Presence, "The Holy Spirit brings Christ to us, expressing the grace and love of God toward us through the means of bread and wine.

- d. Food for the journey and strength for the challenges that lie ahead.
 - e. Service of Word and Table in the UM Hymnal
 - f. UMC has Open Communion
 - g. The elements must be blessed by an Ordained Elder.
4. Baptism
- a. Known as the Sacrament of Initiation
 - b. Baptism is not interchangeable with new birth or salvation, rather it is an obedient response to the command of Jesus in Matthew 28:18-20 and a means of initiation into the family of faith.
 - c. In Baptism God is the primary actor. The power of baptism rests on God and not the individual.
 - d. Infant Baptism
 - i. The Anabaptists in the 1800's believed only in "believer's baptism," prior to that infant baptism was common.
 - ii. There is a difference between Infant Baptism and Infant Dedication.
 - iii. Infant Baptism was practiced since the birth of the church.
 - 1. Acts 16:15' 18:8; 1 Corinthians 1:16
 - iv. The command of Jesus was simply to baptize and does not exclude children.
 - v. We cannot know if a child has faith, nor can we be certain as to the faith of an adult. Faith does not constitute baptism but receives it. Baptism summons us to faith.
 - vi. John Wesley's defense of Infant Baptism
 - 1. Infants are under the sin of Adam and baptism cleanses that original sin.
 - 2. Baptism is the Christian equivalent of circumcision. It is consistent with the Abrahamic covenant.
 - 3. Matthew 19:13-14 Jesus calls the children to come to him.
 - 4. It was the practice of the Apostles.
 - 5. Augustine, Origin, Cyprian, Chrysostom all supported Infant Baptism.
 - e. Modes of Baptism
 - i. There is no direct translation to English for the Greek word "Baptismo."
 - 1. To wash, cleanse, immerse
 - ii. Jesus does not prescribe a direct method for baptizing.
 - iii. The Old Testament is full of cleansing rituals and laws.
 - iv. Earliest depictions of the baptism of Jesus show John pouring water over the head of Jesus as he stood in the river.
 - v. The accounts of the baptism of Jesus do not indicate that Jesus was immersed.
 - 1. Matthew 3:13-17
 - 2. Mark 1:9-13
 - 3. Luke 3:21-22

4. John 1:29-34
- vi. Modes include:
 1. Immersion
 2. Pouring
 3. Sprinkling
- f. Because the primary actor in baptism is God and not the individual, re-baptism is not practiced in the UMC.

Session 5: United Methodist Structure and Offices

1. The Connectional Church (handout)
2. Local Church Offices (handouts)
 - a. SPRC / PPRC
 - b. Committee on Lay Leadership (Nominations)
 - c. Trustees
 - d. Finance, Finance Secretary
 - e. Membership Secretary
 - f. Lay Leader
 - g. Administrative / Board Council
 - h. Lay Member to Annual Conference

Session 6: Congregational / Pastoral Care and Service

1. Congregational Care
 - a. Scripture
 - i. Matthew 25:31-40
 - ii. John 4:7-12
 - b. Types
 - i. Community Involvement
 - ii. Home Visits
 - iii. Hospital Visits
 - iv. Nursing Home Visits
 - v. Funeral Care
 1. Funeral Etiquette Handout
2. Service
 - a. Biblical Examples
 - b. Modern Day Service Opportunities
 - i. Within the Church
 - ii. Within the Local Community
 - iii. Beyond the Local Community
 - iv. Global