

# 2025 Upper Midwest GMC Lay Ministry School

**COURSE TITLE:** GLOBAL METHODIST HISTORY, POLITY AND THEOLOGY

**INSTRUCTOR:** The Rev. Dr. Wesley Gabel

**COURSE SCHEDULE:** 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM, Saturday, August 16, 2025

**COURSE LENGTH:** 6 lecture and discussion hours plus four hours of reading/writing

**COURSE OVERVIEW:** Preparing followers of Jesus Christ to serve in the Global Methodist Church as Certified Lay Ministers with a practical understanding of the gift of full salvation that we can both embrace and share with others.

- Students will learn how the history, polity, and theology of the Global Methodist Church stewards this important work of Christ.
- Students will learn the basics of Wesleyan theology, which are shared in the broader Christian community, and distinctives that are part of the divine calling of Methodism.
- Students will also be offered resources to further their learning.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES:** Upon completion of this course, the student will be able to:

1. Define key terms that express aspects of God's saving work in Christ.
2. Give a compelling reason for why God has established the Global Methodist Church to serve his purposes.
3. Describe some of the distinctive teachings and practices of the Global Methodist Church and the reasons for them.
4. Express why Wesleyan theology relies on 66 books of the Protestant Bible as unique revelation from God that equips God's people for living in a confused and conflicted world.
5. Describe some of the means of grace through which God transforms people into the likeness of Christ.
6. Identify and address some of the doctrinal differences from Wesleyan theology Certified Lay Ministers will encounter in their parish and community.
7. Apply Wesleyan theology in ministering to broken, lost, and hurting people.
8. Acquire resources (people, audio/video, written) to grow understanding and partnership with Christ in ministry.

## PRE-COURSE ASSIGNMENTS:

1. REQUIRED: Read The Global Methodist Church's *Book of Doctrines and Discipline*. Available at: <https://globalmethodist.org/what-we-believe>. [PURPOSE: to familiarize yourself with the theology and polity of the GMC]
2. REQUIRED: Read and have a copy of The Catechism of the Global Methodist Church with you for reference during our sessions. [PURPOSE: to discuss the basic and non-negotiable beliefs of the Global Methodist Church]
3. REQUIRED: Ask a GMC pastor how the Methodist Distinctive teaching on holiness are practiced in your church. Be prepared to share your answer. [PURPOSE: to provide perspective on Wesleyan thought regarding Salvation]

4. REQUIRED: Read “Chapter 1: A Theology of Church Growth,” and “Chapter 2: A Theology of Church Life,” from the 2001 doctoral dissertation by the instructor (see attachments) [PURPOSE: to provide students a framework of thought to begin discussions on Wesleyan theology, polity, and doctrine]
5. REQUIRED: Email the instructor (by August 9<sup>th</sup>) with at least one question from your assigned readings, your discussion with the pastor, or from the topic of GMC history, polity, and theology. [PURPOSE: to prepare a means to address concerns of the students in our sessions]
6. RECOMMENDED: Read John Wesley’s treatise on Baptism (see attachment) [PURPOSE: to witness how Methodism addresses the prominent sacramental view of salvation]
7. RECOMMENDED: Read *Perfect Love: Recovering Entire Sanctification—the Lost Power of the Methodist Movement* by Kevin M. Watson

**INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES:** This course combines lectures and readings with discussion and personal sharing. More than the information presented, personal relationships formed in these sessions, and continued beyond them, are part of the equipping and empowering work of the Holy Spirit for ministry.

#### **COURSE OUTLINE:**

1. Wesleyan Theology: Beginnings - Creation and the Fall
2. Wesleyan Theology: Redemption - God’s Pursuit of Estranged and Condemned Children
3. Wesleyan Theology: Revelation – The Word Spoken, Written, and Incarnate
4. Wesleyan Theology: Salvation – The Work of God.
5. GMC History and Distinctive Theology
6. GMC History and Distinctive Polity
7. Doctrinal Questions, Concerns, and Clarity

#### **COURSE SESSIONS:**

9:00-10:15 AM: *Wesleyan Theology: Beginnings & Redemption*

Break

10:30-11:45: *Wesleyan Theology: Revelation & Salvation*

Lunch Break

1:00-2:15 PM: *GMC History & Distinctive Theology and Polity*

Break

14:30-15:45: *Doctrine & Polity Questions*

Break

16:00-17:00: *Doctrinal Concerns and Clarity*

#### **RECOMMENDED READING:**

*Perfect Love: Recovering Entire Sanctification—the Lost Power of the Methodist Movement* by Kevin M. Watson

*Power Evangelism and Power Healing* by John Wimber

*Revival Fires* by Wesley Deuwel

*Doctrine, Spirit, and Discipline* by Kevin Watson

#### **SELECTED RESOURCES:**

*Church History in Plain Language* by Bruce L. Shelley

*Transforming Evangelism: The Wesleyan Way of Sharing Faith* by Henry H. Knight II & F. Douglas Powe, Jr,  
Discipleship Resources

*Essential Bible Study Tools for Ministry* by David R. Bauer

*Customs and Culture: The Communication of the Christian Faith* by Eugene A. Nida

*The Question of Canon: Challenging the Status Quo in the New Testament Debate* by Michael J. Krueger

*The Apostolic Congregation* by George Hunter

#### **ABOUT THE INSTRUCTOR:**

Wesley Gabel is married, has four children, three grandchildren and lives in suburban Minneapolis. He received a BA from South Dakota State University (1977), a MDiv from Asbury Theological Seminary (1981), and a DMin from Fuller Theological Seminary (2001). He retired in 2022 after 41 years of service in Minnesota United Methodist churches, where he served in rural, county seat, and urban churches that involved mixed races and cultures. In addition to leading various non-profit organizations, he founded an ecumenical ministry that united churches of various denominations and ethnicities in evangelism, prayer, and service of the poor.