

JUNE TERM 2008 (June 9-13)
COURSE SYLLABUS
CH 675-Special Topics in
Church History
Credit hours: 3
9:30 a.m.-12:00 p.m.
1:30 p.m.-4:00 p.m.

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John Wesley: Practical Anglican

I. Course Description

It is well known that John Wesley (1703-1791)—the ‘founder of modern evangelicalism’—remained Anglican to his dying day—but just what sort of Anglican was he? How did his Anglican spirituality and his evangelical activism combine? What did it mean to be a practical theologian in the Anglican tradition?

To answer these questions, we will consider how his practical theology of conversion and spiritual formation emerged within Anglicanism, and then became radicalized by his evangelical mission to the “unchurched” of his day. In our reading of an eclectic array of journal entries, letters, tracts, and sermons we will see how his innovative approach to discipleship in small-groups became a laboratory for this missional theology. And we also will trace some of the more surprising continuities with the Anglican Articles of Religion, Homilies, and Prayer Book.

In small groups we see Wesley’s profound commitment to Anglicanism *as it reflected the ancient Church*. In many respects, he was the first ‘Ancient-Future Anglican’... and it is for this reason that we find him especially helpful today—especially as we carry forward what the pre-modern church has to offer the post-modern church!

II. Course Objectives

By the end of the course, you should be able to ...

- appreciate the life, thought, and ministry of John Wesley, especially in regard to the experience, process, and implications of conversion (extending *what you know*)
- articulate the main contributions of John Wesley to the practical theologies of conversion and spiritual formation, especially within an evangelical *Anglican* context (broadening *what you can do*)
- develop greater confidence as a church historian, theologian, and practitioner of Jesus Christ’s call to whole-life conversion and discipleship (developing *who you are*)

III. Course Texts

Required:

- Richard P. Heitzenrater, *Wesley and the People Called Methodists* (Abingdon Press, 1994/1995).
- Albert C. Outler, ed., *John Wesley* (Oxford University Press, 1964/1980).

Additional required readings will be available via on-line, Blackboard, or via library reserve.

IV. Course Design & Requirements

This course offers formal lectures as well as less formal discussions in class and in small-group seminars. A class session usually begins with a general discussion of the assigned readings—especially the secondary sources (Heitzenrater and journal articles by other Wesley scholars, as noted below in the course schedule). The professor may provide an outline (usually via Blackboard), with selected highlights, illustrations, discussion points/questions to guide the class through the material. We're after the 'big picture' here. More formal lectures on special topics will also be featured each day. Usually the special topic is related to the general topic, with the idea of exploring one issue in greater depth. At some point, the class may meet in smaller seminar groups (approx. 6 per group), perhaps to share insights from the primary source readings, responses to the lectures or class discussions, etc. There may also be opportunity for students to share from their reading summaries, as described below. Students should take notes during these classroom activities—the input they receive will be helpful in writing the concluding reflection paper for the course.

Reading: A detailed course schedule of readings is available below. Students should have all the readings listed under 'class discussion' completed *prior* to the start of the course on June 9. This is the secondary source material that gives us historical background and interpretation of Wesley's life, thought, and ministry. Accountability for this reading will be chiefly demonstrated in classroom discussion—you may be asked specific questions about the material, so please be prepared. The quality of student preparation for, and participation in, class discussion constitutes 25% of the final grade for the course.

Students are also expected to read as much as possible of the primary source material listed under "reading summaries" (see course schedule below) *prior* to the start of class on June 9. 'Primary source' refers to readings by the historical subjects themselves—John Wesley, in our case. These can be a little more difficult to read since they are historical texts written in a less familiar and accessible style. So please allow plenty of time to "inwardly digest" them. At a minimum, students should read *one* set of readings and then prepare a reading summary, as described below. The remaining readings should be completed during or immediately after the course.

Reading Summary: Accountability for reading one set of primary sources (as listed under 'reading summaries' in the course schedule below) is demonstrated in written form. Pick a set of readings (from any of the five days of the course) then confer with the professor (preferably via e-mail) so that we have coverage for *all* the primary sources. You may be asked to choose another day's reading assignment if your first choice is already taken by another student. Once you get approval for your choice of dates from the professor, proceed as follows...

The summary begins by specifying the audience or occasion of the text—when and why was it written and to whom? (as best you can determine). Proceed with a straightforward account of the text(s)—tracing the general structure and flow of ideas. Be sure to highlight the main points, chief arguments, and conclusions where appropriate. You are providing a 'reader's digest' of the material. The reading summary constitutes 25% of the final course grade.

FORMAT: The reading summary should be 8-10 pages (*total*) in length, 1.5 or double-spaced, typed in 11- or 12-pt. font (preferably *Times New Roman*), with one-inch margins. Quotations from the assigned texts should be cited with author/editor and page number(s) in parentheses,

but keep quotations to a minimum—I prefer summary in your own words. No bibliography or other citation is required. Title pages are *not* required.

DUE: Please send your reading summary to me electronically by Thursday, June 5, 5:00 p.m. I may post the summaries on Blackboard once the course has begun on June 9.

Reflection Paper:

The reflection paper consists of a written essay that includes summary, analysis, and conclusions regarding the content of the course. This helps the student organize his/her thoughts and consider implications and practical outcomes for life and ministry. The reflection paper should account for *all* of the readings, discussions, and lectures featured in the course.

FORMAT: The reflection paper should be 15-20 pages in length, 1.5 or double-spaced, typed in 11- or 12-pt. font (preferably *Times New Roman*), with one-inch margins. Quotations from the assigned texts should be cited with author and page number(s) in parentheses. Citations from other sources (optional) should be footnoted on a separate page using Turabian's *Manual for Writing* or *The Chicago Manual of Style* (current editions) or the *MLA Style Manual and Guide to Scholarly Publishing* (current edition). A title page is required. Further details concerning the reflection paper will be provided in class. The reflection paper counts for the remaining 50% of the final course grade.

DUE: The reflection paper is due on Monday, July 14, 5:00 p.m. I prefer that the paper be delivered in hard-copy, but electronic form (as an e-mail attachment) is acceptable for non-residential students.

Some 'Good Housekeeping' Reminders:

- Reading assignments, summaries, and reflections should be completed on the dates specified. This is important for keeping pace with the course and developing time management skills that are necessary in ministry. If illness or some family or personal emergency occurs that makes this impossible, please contact me as soon as possible. Otherwise, late submissions may be penalized with a reduced grade.
- Please note the rules against copying material given on page 94 and 95 of the *Academic Bulletin*. Plagiarism is a serious ethical breach and could be grounds for failure on the course, so please take note. In particular, the *Bulletin* states,

Using materials that are written or spoken by others and copying or transcribing them as one's own without proper punctuation (quotations marks) or credit (footnotes) is plagiarism. Plagiarism includes copying from a book, a speech, a conversation, a lecture, an article on the Internet or any other source where the ideas and expression are not one's own. Cheating also occurs in quoting from one's own previously written material without proper acknowledgement. Resubmission of previously written work for course credit is considered cheating.

Grades:

Grades will be based on the following scheme drawn from the University of Durham, UK.

A (95+)	Work in this category will show full and informed coverage of the topic. It reveals awareness of different views and interpretations and the ability to assess and evaluate them. There will be close familiarity with primary and secondary literature and detailed and accurate references. The structure will be clear and coherent and will show development of ideas. There will be well-developed comment and analysis and an awareness of how the subject fits into the wider picture. The style will show a 'sparkle' and lightness of touch, which reflects a genuine engagement with the material.
A- (90-94)	This is still excellent work, and will show many of the above qualities, but without the 'sparkle' which marks out papers getting the top grade.
B+ (87-89)	Work in this category will still show good coverage of the material and an awareness of different views. There will be a clear structure and evidence of the ability to assess viewpoints critically. Coverage will be adequate and comment competent without being outstanding.
B (83-86)	This kind of paper will offer less incisive analysis of differing viewpoints and less full coverage. Comment and reflection will be adequate but lacking in the penetrating insights of more highly graded work.
B- (80-82)	Like category B, this work will show reasonable competence. It is still good work, but it will lack sparkle and show the ability to summarize the opinions of others rather than display originality and unusual insight. It will be accurate and coherent in its structure.
C+ (77-79)	This category is marked by reasonable coverage, some awareness of differing views and some ability to comment. It will lack real analytical power and a wide awareness of the place of the subject in a wider context. There will be no serious inaccuracies or gross irrelevance but the abiding impression will be of adequacy rather than competence and of ability to summarize content rather than astuteness in analysis.
C (73-76)	Papers in this category will show reasonable accuracy, basic knowledge of the material and an attempt to structure this, but beyond that will have few positive merits. Papers will be relevant without imagination or real ability to analyze and comment on differing viewpoints.
C- (70-72)	This is the lowest category which is deemed a 'pass'. Work assessed at this grade will show just adequate knowledge of the material, some elementary structure but no comment or analysis.
D (60-69)	Work given this category falls short of the criteria outlined above. Both coverage and relevance will be unsatisfactory and there will be a lack of analysis and comment. Style will be pedestrian and the structure lacking in coherence.
F (0-59)	Work of this grade will show a complete failure. Papers may be far too short, display complete irrelevance and gross inaccuracy, as well as complete ignorance of opposing viewpoints. Serious failures in grammar, spelling etc. might well be further evidence of work at this level.

This is intended only as a guide rather than as a set of rules—the requirements for a course of this nature are essentially qualitative, not quantitative in nature. I trust, however, that the scale will indicate what a particular grade means and suggest what steps might be taken to achieve higher grades.

As a rule of thumb: C grades: are for summarizing the reading.
B grades: are for summarizing and commenting on the reading
A grades: are for arguments that use summaries and comments

V. Course Schedule

Prior to June 9:

Students will have completed *all* of the reading listed below under “class discussion” *prior to the start of class on June 9*. Accountability for this reading will be demonstrated in class discussion—be prepared for lively participation!

As noted above, students will prepare a written reading summary of one set of the John Wesley readings listed below under “reading summaries.” For example, a student may write a reading summary for Tuesday, June 10 on the following readings: John Wesley, *Journal* excerpts in Outler, ed., pp. 41-69 (“An Early Self-Analysis,” and “The Aldersgate Experience”); and “A Short History of Methodism” [as listed below]. Instructions for preparing a reading summary are provided above in this syllabus.

Please note that the *WTJ* [*Wesleyan Theological Journal*] articles mentioned below are also available online at: http://wesley.nnu.edu/wesleyan_theology/theojrnl/index-31-35.htm

Monday, June 9: Introduction to John Wesley and His Anglican Context

Class discussion: Heitzenrater, Ch. 1 (“Methodism and the Christian Heritage in England”).

Reading summaries: John Wesley, “A Farther Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion,” in Outler, ed., pp. 384-424.

Tuesday, June 10: Wesley’s Spiritual Journey (1725-1739)

Class discussion: Heitzenrater, Ch. 2 (“The Rise of Methodism”).

Reading summaries: John Wesley, *Journal* excerpts in Outler, ed., pp. 41-69 (“An Early Self-Analysis,” and “The Aldersgate Experience”); and “A Short History of Methodism” [available on reserve at TSM Library].

Wednesday, June 11: The Wesleyan Revival (1739-1744)

Class discussion: Heitzenrater, Ch. 3 (“The Revival Begins”).

Reading summaries: John Wesley, Letter to James Hervey (1739), in Outler, ed., pp. 70-73; and “A Plain Account of the People Called Methodists” [available on reserve at TSM Library].

Thursday, June 12: John Wesley as Faithful Anglican

Class discussion: Ted A. Campbell, “Christian Tradition, John Wesley, and Evangelicalism,” *Anglican Theological Review*, vol. 74 (Winter 1992): 54-67; and William H. Shontz, “Anglican Influence on John Wesley’s Soteriology,” *Wesleyan Theological Journal*, vol. 32 (Spring 1997): 33-52 [both articles are available on reserve at TSM Library].

Reading summaries: John Wesley, “The Doctrine of Salvation, Faith and Good Works, Extracted from the Homilies of the Church of England,” in Outler, ed., pp. 121-133; “The Duty of Constant Communion,” *Ibid.*, pp. 332-334; and “A Separation from the Church of England” [available on reserve at TSM Library].

Friday, June 13: *John Wesley as Innovative Anglican*

Class discussion: Theodore Runyon, "Holiness as the Renewal of the Image of God in the Individual and Society," in *Embodied Holiness: Toward a Corporate Theology of Spiritual Growth*, ed. Samuel M. Powell & Michael E. Lodahl (InterVarsity Press, 1999): 79-88; and David Hunsicker, "John Wesley: Father of Today's Small Group Concept," *Wesleyan Theological Journal*, vol. 31 (Spring 1996): 192-211 [both articles are available on reserve at TSM Library].

Reading summaries: John Wesley, "On God's Vineyard," in Outler, ed., pp. 104-116; "Upon Our Lord's Sermon on the Mount," Sermon XIX [available on reserve at TSM Library]; "Rules of the Band-Societies" and "Directions Given to the Band-Societies" [available on reserve at TSM Library].

Monday, July 14, 5:00 p.m.: Reflection Paper Due