



BUMC CIRCUIT RIDERS COURSE CATALOG

Summer 2025 – Spring 2026

ABSTRACT

Rooted in our commitment to spiritual growth and Christian community, this catalog presents a wide range of courses for adult learners. These offerings reflect our desire to explore faith deeply, listen well, and live more fully into the way of Christ. Each class is an opportunity to learn, question, and journey together.

BUMC Circuit Riders

Care of Rev. Domenic Nigrelli,
Pastor of Adult Christian
Education, BUMC

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 Instructor: Rev. Jonathan Andersen

Passing on Your Faith to the Next Generation

 Instructor: Rev. Jonathan Andersen

 Email: jandersen@bumc.net

 Duration: 1 Week

 Course Description

In this one-session class, Rev. Jonathan Andersen will explore practical strategies for nurturing your child's spiritual growth and fostering a deep, authentic faith that lasts a lifetime. Drawing from studies and personal experience, the session will emphasize key principles that every family can live out.

 Learning Objectives

- Explore practical ways you can nurture faith in your child.
- Learn from other families' faith practices that may help your family.
- Gain wisdom from studies done by researchers about faith formation in children.

 Teaching Objectives

Share practical ways families can nurture faith in their children.

- Create an environment where families can learn from one another.
- Begin a conversation about how the church can partner with families for faith development.

 Materials

Required: None required

Optional: TV cart for computer

 Keywords

#Parenting #Faith #Spiritual growth
#Families



Instructor: Byrd Baggett **New Instructor!**



Unity – Course #1 **New Course!**



Email: byrdbaggett3@gmail.com



Duration: 1 week



Course Description:

Explores the need for unity and factors—both positive and negative—that can increase or decrease unity.



Learning Objectives:

- Learn the importance of unity and the negative effects of fractured or absent unity
- Learn how “biases” impact unity
- Learn about the power of influencers and their effects on our lives



Teaching Objectives:

- Clearly define unity as it pertains to church and spirituality
- Identify biases that challenge unity
- Identify the main influencers in our lives that impact unity



Materials Required:

- None



Materials Optional:

- None



Keywords:

Unity

Unity – Course #2 **New Course!**

 Instructor: Byrd Baggett

 Email: byrdbaggett3@gmail.com

 Duration: 1 week

Course Description:

This course defines the need for Christians to be responsible and to “speak the truth,” highlighting moral courage as a key element in that calling.

Learning Objectives:

- Learn how reflection and solitude help foster unity
- Understand the responsibility of being a Christian
- Understand why moral courage is necessary for healthy relationships

Teaching Objectives:

- Promote solitude and personal reflection to strengthen unity and relationships
- Emphasize that being a Christian involves speaking the truth Christ established
- Highlight that moral courage is essential for speaking truth

Materials Required:

- None

Materials Optional:

- None

Keywords:

Unity

Healing a Divided Nation: A Christian Perspective

New Course!

 **Instructor:** Byrd Baggett

 **Email:** byrdbaggett3@gmail.com

 **Duration:** 1 Week

 **Course Description**

Drawing inspiration from historical figures, theological principles, and contemporary challenges, this course explores the role of Christian teachings in addressing social issues, fostering unity, and promoting kindness in divided societies.

Learning Objectives

- Understand the teachings of Jesus and how they apply to modern social issues
- Explore the concept of moral outrage and righteous anger in the context of Christianity
- Analyze the impact of community actions, such as those by refugee ministries, to enact positive change
- Reflect on personal faith journeys and their influence on social activism

Teaching Objectives

- Facilitate a lesson that connects religious teachings with real-world applications
- Encourage class members to develop actionable plans to address division within their community
- Inspire critical thinking about faith-based responses to societal challenges
- Foster an environment of empathy and understanding among class members

Materials

Required: None

Optional: None

Keywords

#Faith #Unity #Jesus #Empathy #Immigrant #Hope #Cross

Spirituality New Course!

 **Instructor:** Byrd Baggett

 **Email:** byrdbaggett3@gmail.com

 **Duration:** 1 Week

Course Description

This one-week course explores how to live a fulfilled spiritual life. Participants will examine the meaning of spirituality, its role in daily living, and the connection between energy and spiritual well-being. Through reflection and real-world examples, attendees will consider how to grow as spiritually grounded individuals.

Learning Objectives

- Understand the definition of spirituality and its role in our lives
- Learn how energy impacts spirituality
- Learn the benefits of being a spiritually fit person

Teaching Objectives

- Define spirituality and its impact on life
- Introduce the four energy tanks and how they are interrelated, with emphasis on the spiritual tank
- Utilize examples of noted persons who faced spiritual challenges and explore the outcomes

Materials

Required: None

Optional: None

Keywords

#Spirituality #SpiritualEnergy #Energy

God Don't Make Junk **New Course!**

 **Instructor:** Byrd Baggett

 **Email:** byrdbaggett3@gmail.com

 **Duration:** 1 Week

Course Description

This one-week course emphasizes the need for unconditional acceptance of others and reminds participants that we are all children of God. Through scripture, discussion, and real-world examples, this class explores how love, dignity, and unity reflect the heart of Christian teaching.

Learning Objectives

- Learn the importance of Christ's directive to love everyone—no conditions
- Understand how “biases” formed out of fear are barriers to love and acceptance
- Explore the philosophy of notable figures who embraced the dignity of all people

Teaching Objectives

- Reinforce the need for unity and acceptance
- Clarify that fear is often the result of ignorant biases
- Identify practices that help us accept others without conditions

Materials

Required: None

Optional: None

Keywords

#Dignity #Unity #Love

Drought Proof **New Course!**

 **Instructor:** Byrd Baggett

 **Email:** byrdbaggett3@gmail.com

 **Duration:** 1 Week

Course Description

This one-week course invites participants to reflect on how to live a joyful and meaningful Christian life—even during seasons of spiritual drought. Through personal reflection, scriptural insights, and discussion, participants will examine how mindset shapes experience, and how faith can lead to lasting impact and legacy.

Learning Objectives

- Learn about the seasons of individual growth and the experiences that define each phase
- Reflect on the power of personal relationships in shaping joy and meaning
- Explore techniques for building a positive, lasting legacy

Teaching Objectives

- Clarify the seasons of personal growth and the beliefs and behaviors that shape them
- Identify actions that foster a life of significance and purpose
- Emphasize the role of legacy in the Christian journey

Materials

Required: None

Optional: None

Keywords

#Joy #Perseverance

 Instructor: Rosemary Blose

Lydia, Her Story and Her Importance **New Course!**

 Instructor: Rosemary Blose

 Email: rosietom@comcast.net

 Duration: 1 Week

 Course Description

During Paul's second missionary journey to Europe, he met Lydia at Philippi, a Gentile praying with Jewish women by the river. Though her story is brief, this class will explore why Lydia's faith, hospitality, and openness made her vital to the early church.

 Learning Objectives

Discover what we can learn from Lydia's story, faith, and hospitality.

Learn how Luke the physician came to be on Paul's journey.

Understand why Lydia is still honored today.

Learn why Lydia's story matters to the modern church.

 Teaching Objectives

Make Lydia's story come alive for class members.

Ensure class understands the story's importance.

Explain Paul's broader missionary context, especially the second journey.

 Materials

Required: None

Optional: None

 Keywords

#Lydia #Paul #Silas #Luke #Philippi

The History and Importance of Hymns in Our Worship Experiences

 Instructor: Rosemary Blose

 Email: rosietom@comcast.net

 Duration: 2 Weeks

 Course Description

This two-week course explores the rich history and spiritual power of hymns. The first session compares historical and modern hymnals, while the second session delves into the backstories of beloved hymns such as 'Amazing Grace' and 'It Is Well With My Soul.'

 Learning Objectives

Recognize the importance of hymns and their role in faith.

Understand what makes a hymn a hymn.

Trace how hymnals have evolved.

Explore hymn history and how it shaped authors' lives.

Pay closer attention to lyrics when singing hymns.

Appreciate hymns as tools for faith-sharing and worship.

 Teaching Objectives

Help participants appreciate hymn history.

Present hymn stories in an engaging and enjoyable format.

Encourage deeper love and understanding of hymns.

Highlight hymns as key elements in spiritual formation.

 All materials provided by teacher.

#Hymns #Hymnals #Authors

#Singing #History #Community

 Keywords

Job and God, the Creator

 Instructor: Rosemary Blose

 Email: rosietom@comcast.net

 Duration: 1 Week

 Course Description

Focusing on Job 38, this class explores Job's dialogue with God—highlighting Job's suffering, faith, frustration, and God's overwhelming response. Through this interaction, we rediscover God as Creator and the human struggle to find meaning in pain.

 Learning Objectives

Refresh the story of Job and its core themes.

Examine Job's faith and frustrations.

Study the dramatic conversation between God and Job.

Understand God's response of both anger and love.

Discover theological and practical lessons from Job's suffering.

 Teaching Objectives

Make Job's story relatable and compelling.

Encourage personal reflection: what would your answers to God be?

Underscore the need for a strong spiritual foundation in crisis.

Reawaken awe in God's creative power and sustaining presence.

 Materials

Required: None (bring Bible encouraged)

Optional: None

 Keywords

#Job #Suffering #Creator
#Conversation #Faith

Abimelech, The Bad Leader

 Instructor: Rosemary Blose

 Email: rosietom@comcast.net

 Duration: 1 Week

Course Description

This lesson examines Judges 9 and the rise and fall of Abimelech—a cautionary tale of power, violence, and God's justice. The story prompts discussion on good vs. bad leadership and how disobedience leads to ruin.

Learning Objectives

- Learn the lesser-known story of Abimelech.
- Analyze the corrupting power of ambition.
- Compare good vs. bad leadership traits.
- Understand how straying from God's path has consequences.

Teaching Objectives

- Introduce Abimelech to those unfamiliar with his story.
- Make connections to modern examples of leadership.
- Foster discussion on God's justice and human rebellion.
- Encourage further reading in the Book of Judges.

Materials

Required: None (Bible recommended)

Optional: None

Keywords

#Abimelech #Leader #Evil #Gideon #Power

Corrie ten Boom: A Story of Faith in Action **New Course!**

 Instructor: Rosemary Blose

 Email: rosietom@comcast.net

 Duration: 1 Week

Course Description

Corrie and her sister Betsy risked everything to protect Jews from the Nazis. This course follows Corrie's journey from the Netherlands to concentration camps and eventually to global evangelism. Corrie's faith in action under horrific circumstances continues to inspire today.

Learning Objectives

- Become interested in Corrie ten Boom's story.
- Learn how Corrie's faith can inspire us today.
- Understand how Corrie put faith into action in extreme adversity.

Teaching Objectives

- Inspire participants to live out their faith.
- Encourage reading Corrie's story (The Hiding Place by Corrie ten Boom).

Materials

Required: None

Optional: None

Keywords

#Corrie ten Boom #The Hiding Place

The Samaritan Woman at the Well: The Rest of the Story **New Course!**

 Instructor: Rosemary Blose

 Email: rosietom@comcast.net

 Duration: 1 Week

Course Description

In John 4, Jesus engages in a deep conversation with a Samaritan woman. Despite cultural divisions and her troubled past, she is transformed by this encounter. This course examines how Jesus elevates the marginalized and challenges social norms, both then and now.

Learning Objectives

- Understand the story of the Samaritan woman at the well.
- Learn about the tension between Jews and Samaritans.
- Recognize how Jesus embraced those on the margins.
- See how Jesus modeled inclusion for his disciples.

Teaching Objectives

- Deepen understanding of the story's spiritual and social meaning.
- Apply this story's relevance to contemporary life.

Materials

Required: None

Optional: None

Keywords

#Samaritan Woman #Jacob's well

Andrew, The 'Introducer' Disciple **New Course!**

 Instructor: Rosemary Blose

 Email: rosietom@comcast.net

 Duration: 1 Week

Course Description

Andrew, the first of the twelve Disciples, is known for bringing others to Jesus—including his brother Peter and the boy with the loaves and fish. This course studies Andrew's role as a bridge-builder in the Gospel story and encourages participants to become introducers themselves.

Learning Objectives

- Learn how Andrew served as 'The Introducer'.
- Understand Andrew's journey to becoming a Disciple and Apostle.
- Explore how we can follow Andrew's example today.

Teaching Objectives

- Clarify the difference between a disciple and an apostle.
- Use Andrew as a model for evangelism.
- Encourage deeper interest in studying the lesser-known Disciples.

Materials

Required: None

Optional: None

Keywords

#Andrew #Disciples #Apostles

Rahab: From Prostitute to Heroine

 **Instructor:** Rosemary Blose

 **Email:** rosietom@comcast.net

 **Duration:** 1 Week

Course Description:

We will examine the story of Rahab in the Book of Joshua. Rahab was a prostitute who hid the spies that Joshua had sent to Jericho to gather information. She protected them by lying to the authorities! Is it ever appropriate to lie? We will study the amazing story of a prostitute who became a woman of faith, received new life into the community of God's people, and is mentioned in four books of the Bible. Rahab is actually in the lineage of David and Jesus!

Learning Objectives:

- Learn the importance of Rahab and her story.
- See a great example of how God uses ordinary people to do His will.
- Be inspired by Rahab's faith and courage.

Teaching Objectives:

- Make Rahab's story interesting and inspiring.
- Ask the class if they are willing to take risks for God the way Rahab took a risk.

Materials:

Required: None. Teacher will supply any necessary materials.

Optional: —

 **Keywords:** Rahab • Joshua • Jericho

The Story of Martha and Mary and Their Love of Jesus

 **Instructor:** Rosemary Blose
 **Email:** rosietom@comcast.net
 **Duration:** 1 Week

Course Description:

We will examine and discuss the three stories in the Bible about Martha and Mary, sisters of Lazarus. We will explore the different ways that they showed their love of Jesus. Martha was focused on service and taking care of Jesus' earthly needs, while Mary was focused on sitting at Jesus' feet and learning from Him. We will look at the customs of the times, the friendship between Jesus and the sisters, and the impact of the miracle Jesus performed to raise Lazarus. Are you a Martha or a Mary?

Learning Objectives:

- Study the three stories of Martha and Mary in order to better understand them.
- Discuss what we can learn from these stories, especially when setting our own priorities.
- Understand how love and faith can be expressed in different ways for different people.

Teaching Objectives:

- Make the lesson interesting for the class.
- Help the class realize how the culture of the time played a role in these stories.
- Help the class understand the importance of knowing the context for these stories.

Materials:

Required: None. Teacher will provide any necessary materials.

Optional: —

 **Keywords:** Martha • Mary • Lazarus

The Story of Martha and Mary and the Story of Rahab



Instructor: Rosemary Blose



Email: rosietom@comcast.net



Duration: 2 Weeks



Course Description:

The first week we will explore the three stories in the Bible about Martha and Mary, the sisters of Lazarus. We will study John 11 and 12 and Luke 10. We will look at the differences of the sisters and how, despite their differences, they both had great love for Jesus. The second week we will look at a very different story, the story of Rahab the prostitute in Joshua 2. She took in the spies and protected them by lying. She had heard about the Israelite God, and she would eventually become a great believer. What can we learn from Rahab?



Learning Objectives:

- Examine the stories of these three women who lived in different times but were great believers.
- Think about what we can learn from these women.
- Explore whether their actions changed history.



Teaching Objectives:

- Encourage people to think about what kind of Christian servant they want to be.
- Encourage people to examine the actions they take to show their love of God.
- Help people get excited about Bible stories and what they can learn from them.



Materials:

Required: None

Optional: —



Keywords: Martha • Mary • Lazarus • Rahab

Wilberforce, Wesley, and Newton: Men of Extraordinary Faith



Instructor: Rosemary Blose



Email: rosietom@comcast.net



Duration: 2 Weeks



Course Description:

This course explores how the lives of Wilberforce, Wesley, and Newton intersected and shaped history. We begin with William Wilberforce, influenced by John Newton and John Wesley, who led the movement to end the slave trade in England. The second session highlights the powerful stories of John Wesley, the founder of Methodism, and John Newton, the former slave ship captain who wrote *Amazing Grace*. We'll reflect on their friendships, faith, letters, and lasting legacies.



Learning Objectives:

- Learn about Wilberforce, Wesley, and Newton and how they supported and influenced each other.
- Learn how their faith influenced their lives.
- Discuss what we can learn today from these three men.



Teaching Objectives:

- Make the class informative and interesting.
- Encourage class members to explore these three men on their own.
- Encourage watching the 2007 movie *Amazing Grace* about Wilberforce.



Materials:

Required: None. Teacher will bring all necessary materials.

Optional: —



Keywords: Wilberforce • Wesley • Newton

Joseph, Husband of Mary

 **Instructor:** Steve Bond

 **Email:** stevebond@comcast.net

 **Duration:** 1 Session

Course Description:

Joseph, the husband of Mary, never speaks in Scripture—and yet his actions speak volumes. This session will explore Matthew's account of Joseph, complemented with insights from Luke. We'll reflect on his role as a craftsman and a man of deep spiritual responsiveness.

Learning Objectives:

- See the spiritual formation of a first-century craftsman in wood, stone, and perhaps metal.
- See divine initiatives and human responses in Matthew's Gospel and their relevance today.

Teaching Objectives:

- Read relevant texts in Matthew and Luke.
- Offer an interactive session inviting participation and fresh insights.

Materials:

Required: Instructor will provide texts from the NRSV.

Optional: Other translations welcome for comparative nuance.

 **Keywords:** Divine initiative • Responses to God's initiatives

 **Instructor: Sharon Cox**

The ABC's of Resilience

 **Email:** esharoncox@aol.com

 **Duration:** 1–2 weeks

This program offers practical ideas to foster resilience in challenging times and includes a focus on attitudinal adjustments, behavior changes, and the value of connections in developing resilience. Spiritual disciplines are discussed as well as the healing power of nature and the value of gratitude.

Learning Objectives:

- Outline the ABCs of resilience and offer practical ways these can be integrated into daily routines.
- Describe the steps in behavior change and the value of having an accountability partner.
- Review additional resources to sustain personal change.

Teaching Objectives:

- Simplify the concept of resilience into a mental model that can be easily accessed.
- Stress the value of spiritual disciplines and developing new habits to sustain resilience over time.
- Offer resources for further study.

Materials (required):

- Slide deck provided by speaker

Materials (optional):

- Flip chart

Keywords:

- Spiritual disciplines
 - Healthy habits
 - Relational connections
-

Dealing with Change and Transitions

 **Instructor:** Sharon Cox

 **Email:** esharoncox@aol.com

 **Duration:** 1–2 weeks

Change is a constant, and this program deals with the inner work of adjusting to change. The focal points of ending, neutral zone, and new beginning are based on the models developed by William Bridges in his best-selling books on the topic.

Learning Objectives:

- Review the variety of changes we experience and ways in which Bridges' model for transitions can provide language for the psychological adjustment to change.
- Identify several ways to better manage transitions and reframe them as an opportunity for transformational change and spiritual growth.
- Review ways to support others as they navigate change.

Teaching Objectives:

- Discuss Bridges' model for transitions and encourage discussion about ways to better manage the psychological adjustment to change.
- Provide resources for further reading and encourage the use of Stephen Ministers as a means of support in times of transition.

Materials (required):

- Flip chart

Materials (optional):

- Speaker will provide handout

Keywords:

- Change
 - Transition
 - Psychological adjustment to change
 - Opportunity for spiritual growth
-

The Transformative Power of Gratitude

 **Instructor:** Sharon Cox

 **Email:** esharoncox@aol.com

 **Duration:** 1–2 weeks

This program highlights the many ways in which experiencing gratitude can improve mental health, foster a more productive mindset, and change perspectives.

Learning Objectives:

- Describe the ways in which gratitude benefits the mind and body.
- Identify practical ways in which a gratitude practice can be developed and sustained over time.
- Provide resources for further study.

Teaching Objectives:

- Demonstrate ways in which gratitude can be something more than just an emotion but rather an action and disposition.
- Provide additional resources for further study and support with a gratitude practice.

Materials (required):

- Slide deck provided by speaker

Materials (optional):

- No other materials required

Keywords:

- Gratefulness
 - Gratitude practice
 - Gifts of the Spirit
-

 **Instructor: John Delaney**

Simple Rules for Money

 **Email:** jdelaney70@att.net

 **Duration:** 4 weeks

John Wesley gave a sermon on the Use of Money, and this is a look at his four main points: when crisis forces change, gain all you can, save all you can, and give all you can.

Learning Objectives:

- Understand the 4 points from John Wesley's sermon "*The Use of Money.*"
- Create habits that lead us to a lifestyle that God intended us to have.

Teaching Objectives:

- Share the tried-and-true points from a sermon in the 1700s in a way that can be applied to people living in the 2000s.

Materials (required):

- Monitor to display a PowerPoint presentation

Materials (optional):

- The class could purchase the book *Simple Rules for Money: John Wesley on Earning, Saving, & Giving*

Keywords:

- Money
 - Earn
 - Save
 - Give
 - John Wesley
-

 **Instructor: Gino DeSalvatore**

It's A Wonderful Life

 **Email:** gdesalvatore1@aol.com

 **Duration:** 3–4 weeks

This course will focus on the wonderful lives we have and the components/experiences that make our lives wonderful. It focuses on the meaning of the holidays, how we deal with stress and situations that bring anxiety and fear to our lives.

Learning Objectives:

- Identify what makes our lives wonderful.
- Analyze the importance of community.
- Learn the importance of welcoming, community, togetherness, and connection.
- Analyze why we pray during times of stress and need.
- Understand why money plays an important part in our lives.

Teaching Objectives:

- Communicate the issues that affect our lives and our responses to everyday situations.
- Examine our relationship with God and His son Jesus and how we need them in our lives.
- Communicate the importance of friends.

Materials (required):

- The DVD of *It's a Wonderful Life*

Materials (optional):

- Easel and notepad

Keywords:

- Wonderful Life
- Money
- Stress
- Friendship
- Community
- Holidays



Instructor: Waldon Garriss



A King's Poem and a Rabbi's Prayer

(Adapted from 21 Seconds to Change Your World by Dr. Mark Rutland)



Email: waldon.garriss@vumc.org



Duration: 2 Weeks



Course Description

This two-week study focuses on two familiar scriptural passages: the 23rd Psalm and the Lord's Prayer. Using an outline adapted from Dr. Mark Rutland's *21 Seconds to Change Your World*, the course explores the themes of divine care, personal transformation, and prayerful living.

- **Week 1** centers on the 23rd Psalm and its seven implicit assumptions, reflecting on our identity as sheep under the care of the Good Shepherd.
- **Week 2** turns to the Lord's Prayer, analyzing its six sections and meditating on the call to forgiveness and the coming of God's kingdom in our hearts and lives. Each session stands alone, allowing participants to attend either or both weeks.



Learning Objectives

Week 1: A King's Poem – 23rd Psalm

- Analyze and reflect line-by-line on the 23rd Psalm
- Identify and discuss seven theological assumptions within the psalm

Week 2: A Rabbi's Prayer – The Lord's Prayer

- Review and interpret the six parts of the Lord's Prayer
- Reflect on the meaning of divine will "in" the earth that is us
- Explore the role of forgiveness in Christian discipleship



Teaching Objectives

- Facilitate interactive, discussion-based engagement with scripture
- Encourage spiritual reflection and practical application
- Connect biblical themes to personal and communal transformation



Materials

Required: None (participants are encouraged to bring their Bibles)

Optional: *21 Seconds to Change Your World* by Dr. Mark Rutland



Keywords

Week 1: #23rdPsalm #Shepherd #Sheep #RodStaff

Week 2: #LordsPrayer #Hallow #Forgiveness

 **Instructor: John Gregory**

I Wish Jesus Hadn't Said That!

 johnwillisgregory@gmail.com

 3–6 weeks

These are lessons on passages that challenge modern-day disciples—sayings of Jesus so demanding, they make us wish he hadn't said them. Lessons currently cover the workers in the vineyard, the rich young ruler, and the least of these, with more in preparation. Each session is designed for one Sunday and will challenge participants to reflect deeply on Christ's call to costly discipleship, as opposed to the "cheap grace" Bonhoeffer critiqued.

Learning Objectives:

- Explore difficult sayings of Jesus through verse-by-verse study.
- Engage in class and small group discussions.
- Reflect on the personal relevance of each teaching.
- Discern practical, faithful responses to hard teachings.

Teaching Objectives:

- Encourage transformation in areas of money, power, influence, and discipleship.
- Offer faithful interpretations of Jesus' commands to his followers.

Materials (required):

- Whiteboard
- Weekly outlines prepared by instructor (copies provided by the church)

Materials (optional):

- None

Keywords:

- Tough Teachings of Jesus



St. Paul's Letters

 **Instructor:** John Gregory

 johnwillisgregory@gmail.com

 2–5 weeks

A multi-week Bible study exploring the letters of Paul with a focus on prayer, transformation, and theology. The course includes a two-week exploration of *Ephesians* with an emphasis on Paul's prayers, a two-week study of *Philippians* with attention to context and theological themes, and a one-week focus on *Colossians* using the same approach.

Learning Objectives:

- Discover how Paul's letters speak to modern Christian discipleship.
- Assess their relevance in today's world.
- Listen for the Spirit's invitation to transformation.
- Envision a renewed church through Pauline theology.

Teaching Objectives:

- Invite personal and communal transformation using Paul's letters as lenses.

Materials (required):

- Whiteboard

Materials (optional):

- None

Keywords:

- St. Paul's Letters
-

The Transformation of John Wesley



Instructor: John Gregory



johnwillisgregory@gmail.com



1 week

This single-session class traces the life and spiritual journey of John Wesley. From childhood to Aldersgate, participants will explore the pivotal moments that shaped Wesley's theology and the birth of the Methodist movement.



Learning Objectives:

- Understand the major events in John Wesley's life.
- Explore Wesley's theology of grace: prevenient, justifying, and sanctifying.



Teaching Objectives:

- Invite participants to reflect on their own path of spiritual transformation.



Materials (required):

- Whiteboard



Materials (optional):

- None



Keywords:

- Transformation
-

The Messianic Secret

 **Instructor:** John Gregory

 johnwillisgregory@gmail.com

 1 week

This one-session course explores the “Messianic Secret” motif in the Gospel of Mark, where Jesus frequently instructs followers and recipients of miracles to remain silent. The discussion draws on the insights of William Wrede (1901) and engages participants in exploring Jesus’ hidden identity.

Learning Objectives:

- Investigate Jesus’ reasons for instructing silence about his identity.

Teaching Objectives:

- Discover deeper insights into Jesus’ ministry and messianic mission.

Materials (required):

- Whiteboard

Materials (optional):

- None

Keywords:

- Discipleship

The One and the Many **New Course!**

 **Instructor:**

John Gregory

 **Email:**

johnwillisgregory@gmail.com

 **Duration:**

One week

Course Description

The "One and the Many" is a classical philosophical and theological problem: How do we make sense of both the unity and the diversity that we encounter in the world? This brief but rich course explores this question by connecting ancient philosophy to Christian theology, particularly the doctrine of the Trinity. Through discussion and a short video presentation by Franciscan teacher Richard Rohr, participants will explore how unity and diversity co-exist not only in creation but within the nature of God.

Learning Objectives

1. Introduce the philosophical dilemma of the One and the Many.
2. Explore how the doctrine of the Trinity addresses this dilemma through a unity of essence and a diversity of persons.
3. Examine the interdependent and relational nature of divine persons in Christian theology.

Teaching Objectives

- Reflect on how a theological vision of unity and diversity shapes our view of creation, human relationships, and cultural life.
- Encourage participants to embrace the richness of diversity while holding to deeper spiritual unity.
- Prompt conversation on how Christian theological insights can offer resources for living faithfully in a pluralistic world.

 Materials****Required:****

- Audio/visual equipment
- Whiteboard

****Optional:****

- None

 Keywords

Unity, Diversity, Trinity, Richard Rohr, Philosophy and Theology

Nicodemus

 **Instructor:** John Gregory

 johnwillisgregory@gmail.com

 1 week

Was Nicodemus an admirer or a follower? This course explores that question using insights from an essay by Søren Kierkegaard, inviting participants to reflect on the depth of their discipleship.

Learning Objectives:

- Are we followers or merely admirers?

Teaching Objectives:

- Challenge each participant to examine where they are on their faith journey of transformation.

Materials (required):

- Whiteboard

Materials (optional):

- Nothing additional

Keywords:

- Discipleship
-

The Kingdom Of The Poor **New Course!**

 **Instructor:** John Gregory
 **Email:** johnwillisgregory@gmail.com
 **Course Duration:** One week

Course Description

Based on *The Kingdom of the Poor* by Father Charles Strobel, this course explores the spiritual and moral insights found in moments of poverty, service, and compassion. Through personal reflections and the founding of the *Room In The Inn* ministry, Strobel offers a witness to living a Christ-like life as a “middle person”—someone fully aware of the fragility, beauty, and responsibility of life between birth and death. Participants will be invited to reflect deeply on their own spiritual poverty and their calling to live out the Beatitudes.

Learning Objectives

- Reflect on the existential question: Why were we born?
 - Embrace and recognize beatitude moments in everyday life
 - Deepen understanding of “poverty of spirit” as a spiritual virtue
 - Acknowledge our shared dependence on one another and on God
-

Teaching Objectives

- Practice the commandment to love one another more intentionally
- Learn how to identify and respond to the needs of others
- Encourage participants to live up to their God-given potential
- Explore how to be “zealous for good works” (Titus 2:14)

Materials

Required: Audio/Video equipment Whiteboard **Optional:** None

Keywords

The Poor · Beatitude Moments · Doing Good Works

God's Good Creation

 **Instructor:** John Gregory

 johnwillisgregory@gmail.com

 1 week

Based on N. T. Wright's *Surprised by Scripture*, this session explores God's good creation and its redemption. It traces Wesley's view of grace and draws scriptural connections from Genesis to the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Learning Objectives:

- Understand that all creation is being redeemed.
- Explore Wesley's theological model of grace: prevenient, justifying, and sanctifying.
- Reflect on scriptural accounts of creation and fall.
- Identify the incarnation and resurrection as the turning points in God's redemptive plan.

Teaching Objectives:

- Invite belief in the redemption of creation.
- Connect sanctification with ecological and spiritual stewardship.
- Explore how we are called to be stewards of God's good world.

Materials (required):

- Provided by instructor

Materials (optional):

- N/A

Keywords:

- Creation
 - Redemption
 - Wesley
-

 **Instructor: Mike Hendren**

Five Faith Fundamentals in Christian Apologetics

 mikehendren206@gmail.com

 4 weeks

Drawing on renowned Christian apologists such as C. S. Lewis, Richard Foster, Henri Nouwen, and others, this course uncovers five core themes in Christian apologetics: enemy territory, dying to self, humility, caring for others, and full commitment.

Learning Objectives:

- Engage with writings from influential Christian thinkers.
- Discover shared themes foundational to Christian life and witness.

Teaching Objectives:

- Introduce the wisdom and depth of classic Christian apologists.
- Encourage deeper exploration into each author's contributions to faith and discipleship.

Materials (required):

- Whiteboard

Materials (optional):

- None

Keywords:

- Culture
 - Born Again
 - Others
 - Committed
-



Prayer

 **Instructor:** Mike Hendren

 mikehendren206@gmail.com

 4 weeks

This course explores Richard Foster's *Prayer – Finding the Heart's True Home*, emphasizing the many dimensions of prayer and God's longing for our presence.

Learning Objectives:

- Understand that prayer is not something to master, but a relationship to deepen.
- Discover multiple forms of prayer.
- Experience prayer as invitation and transformation.

Teaching Objectives:

- Equip participants with a richer understanding and practice of prayer.
- Cultivate deeper intimacy with God through diverse prayer experiences.

Materials (required):

- Whiteboard

Materials (optional):

- *Prayer – Finding the Heart's True Home* by Richard Foster

Keywords:

- Coming Home
 - Open Heart
 - Genuine Longing
 - Divine Grace
-

 **Instructor: Rick Hotzfeld**

The Great Divorce

 rickhotzfeld@gmail.com

 5–6 weeks

This interactive course centers on C. S. Lewis' *The Great Divorce*, an allegorical tale exploring the inner dynamics of purgatory and heaven. Participants will reflect on characters and themes that mirror real-life spiritual struggles.

Learning Objectives:

- Identify with the book's characters and their internal obstacles.
- Reflect on how our own habits and desires affect our spiritual destiny.

Teaching Objectives:

- Encourage introspection on what we cling to that hinders spiritual growth.
- Foster open discussion around the themes of salvation, freedom, and transformation.

Materials (required):

- TV and connection cords

Materials (optional):

- Read the book along with the course

Keywords:

- C. S. Lewis
- The Great Divorce
- Heaven and Hell

New Testament Study of James

 **Instructor:** Rick Hotzfeld

 rickhotzfeld@gmail.com

 4 weeks

A comprehensive study and deep discussion of the Book of James, with a focus on its context in the early church and relevance today. Emphasis is placed on a discussion-based teaching method rather than lecture.

Learning Objectives:

- Engage in facilitated discussion to understand the verses within their original context.
- Explore the Book of James' relevance to contemporary Christian life.

Teaching Objectives:

- Dissect the key aspects of James as a writer and leader in the early church.
- Clarify his views on faith, works, and community formation.

Materials (required):

- Weekly reading from the Book of James

Materials (optional):

- Bible

Keywords:

- James
 - Faith without works
 - Early Church writers
-

The Book of Romans

 **Instructor:** Rick Hotzfeld

 rickhotzfeld@gmail.com

 5 weeks

A week-by-week guided discussion on Paul's Letter to the Romans, exploring its major theological themes and practical applications in the life of the church.

Schedule:

- **Week 1:** If We Live by Sin
- **Week 2:** Righteousness Through Faith
- **Week 3:** Dying to Sin, Living with Christ
- **Week 4:** End of the Law?
- **Week 5:** Condemning the Condemnation Types

Learning Objectives:

- Examine Paul's arguments and rhetorical strategy.
- Discuss how Romans challenges and inspires modern discipleship.

Teaching Objectives:

- Use facilitation rather than lecture to encourage wide and deep participation.
- Promote reflection and dialogue about theological and ethical themes.

Materials (required):

- TV and connectors for PowerPoint slide presentation

Materials (optional):

- Bible (for aloud reading and discussion)

Keywords:

- Book of Romans
 - Letter to the Church at Rome
 - Paul
-

Pathways to Peace

 **Instructor:** Rick Hotzfeld

 rickhotzfeld@gmail.com

 4 weeks

Facilitated by Gino DeSalvatore & Rick Hotzfeld, this course fosters constructive and respectful engagement in polarized times, equipping participants to maintain healthy relationships across differences.

Learning Objectives:

- Gain tools for navigating challenging conversations.
- Cultivate empathy, emotional regulation, and productive communication.

Teaching Objectives:

- Empower participants to manage conflict with compassion.
- Provide practical ways to foster peace in tense personal and social settings.

Materials (required):

- Provided by facilitators

Materials (optional):

- *Anatomy of Peace*
- *I Never Thought of It That Way*
- *Love Your Enemies*

Keywords:

- Hate
 - Contempt
 - Polarization
 - Conversation
-

Searching for God Knows What

 **Instructor:** Rick Hotzfeld

 rickhotzfeld@gmail.com

 4 weeks

A discussion-centered study of Donald Miller's *Searching for God Knows What*. This class encourages participants to reflect deeply on their image of Jesus and on the way Christianity is communicated today.

Learning Objectives:

- Clarify how our actions reflect (or distort) the image of Jesus.
- Challenge assumptions about faith, love, and inclusion.
- Renew commitment to embodying Christ's love authentically.

Teaching Objectives:

- Use the Socratic method to promote thoughtful discussion.
- Confront formulaic religiosity and reclaim a faith centered on grace.

Materials (required):

- *Searching for God Knows What* by Donald Miller

Materials (optional):

- None

Keywords:

- Faith
 - Religiosity
 - Formulaic Religion
-

In the Beginning...

 **Instructor:** Rick Hotzfeld

 rickhotzfeld@gmail.com

 2 weeks

A deep, responsive exploration of Genesis 1. This course considers The Creator, The Creation, and the place of humanity in God's world, helping participants engage with this foundational passage anew.

Learning Objectives:

- Understand the structure and theology of Genesis 1.
- Explore the implications of creation theology in a modern world.

Teaching Objectives:

- Foster a deeper appreciation for the rich literary and theological dimensions of Genesis.
- Encourage fresh insights into a well-known biblical passage.

Materials (required):

- Bible (read Genesis 1)

Materials (optional):

- None

Keywords:

- Genesis
 - Creation
 - In Our Image
-



Instructor: Mack Jean



God Is Love



mackjean@gmail.com



1 hour lecture or 1 evening

In our Christian journey, we are invited to accept God's gift of forgiveness, redemption, and eternal life. When we do this, we become mindful of God's abiding presence within us. We no longer seek to live according to our self-centered desires but instead choose a God-centered life grounded in love. We remain in God with the joyful assurance that God remains in us.



Learning Objectives:

- Explain the Law of Moses and describe how the Ten Commandments became the foundation of Christian living.
- Describe God's gift of the Holy Spirit.
- Explain the transition from the Law to Grace.
- Describe prevenient grace.



Teaching Objectives:

- Encourage the acceptance of God's gift of forgiveness, redemption, and eternal life.
- Foster awareness of God's indwelling presence as the foundation for living a life of love.



Materials (required):

- Audio/video services for large groups
- Whiteboard



Materials (optional):

- None



Keywords:

- Moses
- Torah
- Jesus
- Grace
- Prevenient grace
- Holy Spirit
- Redemption



Study of Genesis

 **Instructor:** Mack Jean

 mackjean@gmail.com

 1 hour

The Book of Genesis is the first book of the Bible and opens with one of the most famous first sentences of any literary work: “In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.” It contains the foundational stories of Adam and Eve, Cain and Abel, Noah and the ark, Abraham and Isaac, and a well-dressed dreamer named Joseph.

 Learning Objectives:

- Describe the seven days of creation.
- Outline the creation of man and woman, the Garden of Eden, and the genealogical lineage entrusted with God’s ongoing plans.

 Teaching Objectives:

- Describe the four major events in Genesis: Creation, Fall, Flood, and Nations.
- Identify four important people: Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph.

 Materials (required):

- Whiteboard or flip chart

 Materials (optional):

- PowerPoint (planned for future use)
- Laptop with Wi-Fi and Internet access

 Keywords:

- Genesis
 - Abraham
 - Isaac
 - Jacob
 - Joseph
-

The Rapture and End Times

 **Instructor:** Mack Jean

 mackjean@gmail.com

 1 hour

This course, rooted in Christian eschatology, explores the concept of the Rapture and provides an overview of end-times events from a Premillennial perspective. Participants will gain insight into the biblical timeline of events and the resurrection of believers.

Learning Objectives:

- Describe the Premillennial timeline of the Rapture, Tribulation, and Second Coming
- Explain four pivotal Biblical events preceding the Rapture
- Describe the origin of the Church and scriptural documentation of the End Times
- Describe the resurrection of believers at the Rapture

Teaching Objectives:

- Present Christ's future plan for the Church
- Explain the significance of the Tribulation and the Second Coming

Materials (required):

- Laptop with internet connection for PowerPoint presentation

Materials (optional):

- Whiteboard, chalkboard, or flip charts

Keywords:

- 1 Thessalonians
 - Matthew 24
 - John 14
 - Rapture
 - End Times
-

 **Instructor: Phil Johnston**

Encouragement for a Successful Future as a Christian

 pejohnston50@gmail.com

 3 weeks

This course is a blend of lectures and personal reflection aimed at encouraging growth and fulfillment in the Christian life, especially during transitional seasons. Drawing from several authors, it invites participants to discover spiritual tools for longevity and peace.

Learning Objectives:

- Assess personal spiritual well-being
- Identify personal gifts and life purpose
- Discover tools for spiritual growth
- Increase satisfaction and vitality in your Christian walk

Teaching Objectives:

- Present key concepts from three inspirational Christian authors
- Facilitate self-evaluation as a spiritual growth tool

Materials (required):

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Laptop and screen for presentations | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Christian living • Emotional health • Spirituality • Growing older |
|---|---|

Materials (optional):

- *The Gift of Years* by Joan Chittister
- *The Ruthless Elimination of Hurry* by John Mark Comer
- *How to Stay Alive as Long as You Live* by Robert H. Spain

Keywords:

 **Instructor: Tracey Levine**

Addiction & Recovery: What's Family Got to Do with It?

 tlevine@healinghousing.org

 2 weeks

An introductory exploration into the family's role in addiction and recovery. The course emphasizes healthy communication, boundary-setting, and accessing community support while also integrating spiritual practices such as prayer.

Learning Objectives:

- Discuss when helping becomes hurting
- Explore boundaries and effective communication strategies
- Learn about available community resources

Teaching Objectives:

- Provide an overview of addiction and the continuum of care
- Examine family dynamics and roles in addiction
- Introduce the “Three C’s” and a fourth: I didn’t cause it, I can’t control it, I can’t cure it—and I won’t contribute
- Emphasize prayer as a meaningful form of action

Materials (required):

- Printed handouts provided by the instructor

Materials (optional):

- Paper and pen for note-taking

Keywords:

- Recovery
 - Family disease
 - Addiction
 - Boundaries
 - Loving an addict
-

Addiction & Recovery: What's Trauma Got to Do with It?

 Instructor: Tracey Levine

 tlevine@healinghousing.org

 1 week

This one-week course explores how early trauma—particularly during childhood—can significantly increase vulnerability to addiction. It introduces tools such as the ACE (Adverse Childhood Experiences) assessment and explores trauma-informed approaches to healing and recovery.

Learning Objectives:

- Understand the Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) assessment tool as a predictor for addiction

Teaching Objectives:

- Explore how trauma lives in the body
- Examine how addiction can serve as a coping mechanism for trauma
- Introduce various therapeutic modalities for treating trauma

Materials (required):

- Trauma handouts and reading list provided by the instructor

Materials (optional):

- Pen and paper for taking notes

Keywords:

- Trauma
- Addiction
- Recovery
- ACEs
- Therapy

 Instructor: Al McCree

Celebrating Your Natural Gifts

 al@almccree.com

 1 week

Discover how your inborn, God-given aptitudes can lead to greater satisfaction and purpose in both personal and professional life. This short course invites reflection and practical discovery of how to serve others through your natural gifts.

Learning Objectives:

- Understand your God-given aptitudes

Teaching Objectives:

- Help participants discover how to better serve others using their natural gifts

Materials (required):

– None

Materials (optional):

– None

Keywords:

- Gifts
-



Christian Nationalism NEW COURSE!



Instructor: Al McCree



Email: al@almccree.com



Course Duration: One Sunday



Course Description

This session offers an in-depth review of the Christian Nationalism movement. Participants will explore its origins, core beliefs, theological implications, and sociopolitical impact. Through clear presentation and open discussion, this course aims to foster understanding without promoting or condemning the movement, equipping participants with the knowledge to engage in informed, respectful dialogue.



Learning Objectives

- Understand the foundational beliefs and historical roots of Christian Nationalism
- Identify how Christian Nationalism differs from traditional Christian theology
- Explore the movement's influence on contemporary political and religious landscapes



Teaching Objectives

- Provide a clear, accessible overview of Christian Nationalism
- Encourage critical thinking about the intersection of faith and politics
- Facilitate a respectful, open conversation about the movement's implications for the Church and society



Materials

Required: AV suite



Keywords

Christian Nationalism · Dominionism

Mental Health – A Christian Perspective

 **Instructor:** Al McCree

 al@almccree.com

 4 weeks

This series addresses mental health from a Christian perspective, emphasizing that it is just as vital as physical health. The course includes presentations by a therapist, psychiatrist, and BUMC pastoral staff, all aimed at understanding and destigmatizing mental health in faith communities.



1. Mental Health – An Overview
2. The Role of the Therapist – Dr. John Fite
3. The Role of the Psychiatrist – Dr. Joe Sharpe
4. BUMC Resources – Rev. Casey Orr

Learning Objectives:

- Understand mental health as a core component of overall well-being

Teaching Objectives:

- Help the Methodist community reduce the stigma around mental health

Materials (required):

- LCD projector for in-person sessions

Materials (optional):

- LCD projector for in-person sessions

Keywords:

- Mental Health
-

The Christian Response to the Addiction Epidemic

 **Instructor:** Al McCree

 al@almccree.com

 4 weeks

This course provides a Christian framework for understanding and responding to the addiction crisis. It features guest speakers, counseling insights, and ministry resources to support the BUMC community in addressing addiction as a treatable disease.



1. Overview – Al McCree
2. Addiction Counseling – David Hampton
3. Mending Hearts Ministry
4. BUMC Resources – Congregational Care Minister

Learning Objectives:

- Understand that addiction is a treatable disease

Teaching Objectives:

- Encourage a faithful and compassionate response to addiction

Materials (required):

- A/V: Large Screen TV or Projector & Screen

Materials (optional):

- A/V: Large Screen TV or Projector & Screen

Keywords:

- Addiction
-

The Refugee Crisis

 **Instructor:** Al McCree

 al@almccree.com

 4 weeks

Explore the religious, political, and humanitarian dimensions of the global refugee crisis and BUMC's local ministry involvement. Each week features a different presenter and a stand-alone session.



1. The Refugee Crisis – Al McCree
2. The Legacy Mission Ministry – Randy Hartley
3. The BUMC Refuge Ministry – BUMC Staff
4. The Salome Ministry

Learning Objectives:

- Understand the religious and political aspects of refugee and immigration issues
- Learn about BUMC's outreach and response

Teaching Objectives:

- Present challenges, potential solutions, and BUMC's specific response to the refugee crisis

Materials (required):

- A/V: Large Screen TV or Projector & Screen

Materials (optional):

- A/V: Large Screen TV or Projector & Screen

Keywords:

- Immigration
 - Refugees
-

Mental Health – A Christian Perspective

 **Instructor:** Al McCree

 **Email:** al@almccree.com

 **Duration:** 4 weeks

Course Description:

Mental health is just as important as physical health, yet often remains misunderstood and stigmatized. This four-part series highlights the importance of mental health and explores how the church can be part of the solution.



1. Mental Health – An Overview
2. The Role of the Therapist – Dr. John Fite
3. The Role of the Psychiatrist – Dr. Joe Sharpe
4. BUMC Resources – Rev. Casey Orr

Learning Objectives:

- Understand mental health as part of overall physical health

Teaching Objectives:

- Help the Methodist community remove the stigma surrounding mental health

Materials (required):

- LCD projector (for in-person sessions)

Materials (optional):

- LCD projector (for in-person sessions)

Keywords:

- Mental Health
-

The Christian Response to the Addiction Epidemic

 **Instructor:** Al McCree

 **Email:** al@almccree.com

 **Duration:** 4 weeks

Course Description:

This four-week series explores the opioid crisis and its devastating impact on our communities. Participants will gain a better understanding of addiction as a treatable disease and learn how to respond with compassion and faith.



1. Overview – Al McCree
2. Addiction Counseling – David Hampton
3. Mending Hearts Ministry
4. BUMC Resources – Congregational Care Minister

Learning Objectives:

- Understand that addiction is a treatable disease

Teaching Objectives:

- Explore how Christians can respond to addiction in compassionate and effective ways

Materials (required):

- Large screen TV or projector & screen

Materials (optional):

- Same as above

Keywords:

- Addiction
-

The Refugee Crisis

 **Instructor:** Al McCree

 **Email:** al@almccree.com

 **Duration:** 4 weeks

Course Description:

This stand-alone series covers the global refugee crisis and the specific work of BUMC's Legacy Mission and Refuge Ministries. Each week offers a new lens and presenter on this urgent and complex issue.



1. The Refugee Crisis – Al McCree
2. Legacy Mission Ministry – Randy Hartley
3. The BUMC Refuge Ministry – BUMC Staff
4. The Salome Ministry

Learning Objectives:

- Understand the religious and political aspects of refugees and immigration
- Learn about BUMC's immigration ministry

Teaching Objectives:

- Present the challenges, solutions, and BUMC's response to the refugee crisis

Materials (required):

- Large screen TV or projector & screen

Materials (optional):

- Same as above

Keywords:

- Immigration
 - Refugees
-



Forgiveness

 **Instructor:** Al McCree

 **Email:** al@almccree.com

 **Duration:** 1 week

Course Description:

Forgiveness is perhaps the hardest thing we are called to do as Christians. This course presents the theological foundation and various methods for practicing forgiveness in everyday life.

Learning Objectives:

- Understand how fundamental forgiveness is to being a Christian

Teaching Objectives:

- Present the importance of forgiveness
- Explore different methods of forgiveness

Materials (required):

- None

Materials (optional):

- None

Keywords:

- Forgiveness
-



Giving / Tithing

 **Instructor:** Al McCree

 **Email:** al@almccree.com

 **Duration:** 1 week

Course Description:

A new look at an old topic, this course reexamines the spiritual discipline of giving and the lifelong practice of tithing through biblical and practical lenses.

Learning Objectives:

- Understand the importance of lifelong tithing

Teaching Objectives:

- Present the concept of giving and tithing as a spiritual practice

Materials (required):

- TV projector and screen

Materials (optional):

- TV projector and screen

Keywords:

- Giving
 - Tithing
-

Making Good Decisions

 **Instructor:** Al McCree

 **Email:** al@almccree.com

 **Duration:** 1 week

Course Description:

This course offers practical tools to improve decision-making in personal, professional, and spiritual contexts. It includes resources such as the Wesleyan Quadrilateral, Rotary's Four-Way Test, and more.

Learning Objectives:

- Understand different methods of decision making

Teaching Objectives:

- Present various models for making thoughtful and ethical decisions

Materials (required):

- Large screen TV or projector & screen

Materials (optional):

- Large screen TV or projector & screen

Keywords:

- Decision Making
 - The Wesleyan Quadrilateral
 - The Four-Way Test
-

Ecclesiastes

 **Instructor:** Al McCree

 **Email:** al@almccree.com

 **Duration:** 3 weeks

Course Description:

An in-depth Bible study on Ecclesiastes, one of the most philosophically rich and thought-provoking books in the Old Testament.

Learning Objectives:

- Learn the unique theological and literary features of Ecclesiastes

Teaching Objectives:

- Guide participants in a complete reading and critical analysis of the book of Ecclesiastes

Materials (required):

- Large screen TV or projector & screen

Materials (optional):

- Bibles

Keywords:

- Ecclesiastes
-

Homosexuality and Christianity

 **Instructor:** Al McCree

 **Email:** al@almccree.com

 **Duration:** 3 weeks

Course Description:

This course offers a respectful and comprehensive exploration of one of the most challenging issues facing Christianity today, examining both scriptural and cultural perspectives.

Learning Objectives:

- Understand the biblical and cultural issues surrounding homosexuality and Christianity

Teaching Objectives:

- Present a historical and biblical study of the topic
- Create space for thoughtful and respectful discussion

Materials (required):

- Large screen TV or projector & screen

Materials (optional):

- Large screen TV or projector & screen

Keywords:

- Homosexuality
 - LGBTQ
-

Politics and Religion

 **Instructor:** Al McCree

 **Email:** al@almccree.com

 **Duration:** 3 weeks

Course Description:

Where does the Methodist Church stand on political issues? This class explores the complex history of the relationship between faith and politics, and clarifies where the Methodist Church positions itself on contemporary matters.

Learning Objectives:

- Understand the history of politics and religion
- Learn the Methodist Church's political positions

Teaching Objectives:

- Present a brief history of politics and religion
- Present the Methodist Church's political positions

Materials (required):

- Large screen TV or projector & screen

Materials (optional):

- Large screen TV or projector & screen

Keywords:

- Politics
 - Social Principles
 - Lobbying
-

Sex and the Bible

 **Instructor:** Al McCree

 **Email:** al@almccree.com

 **Duration:** 4 weeks

Course Description:

There is a lot about sex in the Bible. This study invites participants to speak openly about sexuality through the lens of Scripture—from Genesis through the letters of Paul.

Learning Objectives:

- Understand biblical references to sex

Teaching Objectives:

- Explore sexual themes from Genesis to Paul's letters

Materials (required):

- Large screen TV or projector & screen

Materials (optional):

- Large screen TV or projector & screen

Keywords:

- Sex
 - Bible
 - Fornication
 - Song of Songs
-

Social Principles of the UMC

 **Instructor:** Al McCree

 **Email:** al@almccree.com

 **Duration:** 4 weeks

Course Description:

This class examines where the United Methodist Church stands on contemporary social issues—from the environment to abortion—through the lens of its official Social Principles.

Learning Objectives:

- Understand the Social Principles of the UMC

Teaching Objectives:

- Survey the UMC's Social Principles on major issues

Materials (required):

- Large screen TV or projector & screen

Materials (optional):

- Large screen TV or projector & screen

Keywords:

- Social Principles
-

With God

 **Instructor:** Al McCree

 **Email:** al@almccree.com

 **Duration:** 4–5 weeks

Course Description:

Reimagining the Way You Relate to God. This book study invites participants into an in-depth examination of their relationship with God and offers a variety of spiritual perspectives.

Learning Objectives:

- Engage in a guided book study on how we relate to God

Teaching Objectives:

- Reflect on different theological perspectives on being with God

Materials (required):

- Book: *With God*
- Large screen TV or projector & screen

Materials (optional):

- None

Keywords:

- With God
-

The Seven Experiment

 **Instructor:** Al McCree

 **Email:** al@almccree.com

 **Duration:** 8 weeks

Course Description:

A powerful and challenging Lenten study based on the true story of Jen Hatmaker's family. Over seven months, they fasted from seven areas of excess to rediscover simplicity and focus: Food, Clothes, Spending, Media, Possessions, Waste, Stress.

Learning Objectives:

- Understand spiritual fasting from material excess

Teaching Objectives:

- Guide participants through thematic fasts and reflection

Materials (required):

- DVD player
- Large screen TV or projector & screen

Materials (optional):

- Large screen TV or projector & screen

Keywords:

- Fasting
-

Witnessing

 **Instructor:** Al McCree

 **Email:** al@almccree.com

 **Duration:** 1 week

Course Description:

How to witness your faith without embarrassment. This session explores practical and approachable methods of sharing your Christian faith with confidence.

Learning Objectives:

- Learn the many methods of witnessing

Teaching Objectives:

- Present the various approaches to witnessing in daily life

Materials (required):

- TV screen and computer input

Materials (optional):

- See above

Keywords:

- Witnessing
-

BUMC Foundation

 **Instructor:** Al McCree

 **Email:** mccreereal@gmail.com

 **Duration:** 45–50 minutes

Course Description:

Learn about the mission and ministry of the Brentwood United Methodist Church Foundation. This session introduces participants to its financial grants, ministry partners, and ways to become involved.

Learning Objectives:

- Understand the mission, structure, and work of the BUMC Foundation
- Learn how to apply for grants and become a ministry partner

Teaching Objectives:

- Provide a complete overview of the Foundation's mission and role at BUMC

Materials (required):

- None

Materials (optional):

- None

Keywords:

- BUMC Foundation
 - Grants
 - Ministry Support
-

Know the Truth

 **Instructor:** Al McCree

 **Email:** al@almccree.com

 **Duration:** 1 week

Course Description:

An in-depth exploration of how to discern truth spiritually, intellectually, and philosophically in a world of information overload.

Learning Objectives:

- Understand that truth can be subjective
- Recognize how news is marketed and sold
- Learn techniques for discerning truth

Teaching Objectives:

- Guide participants in identifying reliable truth sources and biases

Materials (required):

- Standard AV setup (TV/computer hookup)

Materials (optional):

- None

Keywords:

- Truth
 - News
 - Discernment
-



Instructor: Peg McCree



The Journey Toward the Ordination of Women in the UMC



Email: Peg.McCree@gmail.com



Duration: 2 sessions

Course Description:

This course examines the historical journey of women in the Methodist Church—from early Methodism to ordination and beyond—and reflects on the theological and institutional challenges they have faced.



Learning Objectives:

- Explore Methodist history from 1730 to today through the lens of women's ordination
- Understand theological arguments for and against women's ordination
- Increase awareness of ongoing challenges for women clergy



Teaching Objectives:

- Present an organized historical overview of women's roles in Methodism
- Foster appreciation for women's contributions to the UMC



Materials (required):

- TV or monitor for PowerPoint slides



Materials (optional):

- None



Keywords:

- Ordination of Women
- Methodist History
- Gender Roles
- Clergy



Instructor: Nelson Mangione



The Gift of the Magi



Email: njmangione@gmail.com



Duration: 2 weeks

Course Description:

Explore Matthew's account of the visit of the Magi in this engaging course. Participants will learn the origins of the Magi, uncover myths, examine the symbolism of the gifts, and reflect on the meaning of the nativity star.



Learning Objectives:

- Take a fun quiz on Magi facts
- Watch a reading of *The Gift of the Magi* by Kristin Chenoweth
- Study Matthew 2:1–12 in detail
- Discuss the historical and symbolic significance of the Magi and their gifts
- Explore interpretations of the nativity star



Teaching Objectives:

- Clarify common misunderstandings about the Magi and propose deeper insights



Materials (required):

- Computer and display monitor
- Microphone (for large rooms or audiences)



Materials (optional):

- Microphone (for small rooms)



Keywords:

- Magi
- Nativity
- Christmas
- Epiphany

So... Do You Believe in Santa Claus

 **Instructor:** Nelson Mangione

 **Email:** njmangione@gmail.com

 **Duration:** 1 week

Course Description:

This one-week class traces the fascinating journey of Santa Claus from his origins in Eastern Europe to the beloved figure of Christmas morning. We begin and end with a single, playful but reflective question: So... do you believe in Santa Claus?

Learning Objectives:

- Learn the history of St. Nicholas and the evolution of his story
- Discover how the “secular” Santa Claus retains deep Christian roots

Teaching Objectives:

- Explore the historical timeline of St. Nicholas across Eastern Orthodoxy, Western Catholicism, and Protestant traditions
- Uncover Christian (Messianic) metaphors in the Santa Claus tradition
- View and reflect on a scene from *The Santa Clause* movie

Materials (required):

- Television with computer DVR adapter
- Microphone (for large rooms or high ceilings)

Materials (optional):

- Microphone (for small rooms)

Keywords:

- Christmas
 - Advent
 - Santa Claus
-



Instructor: Russell McIntire



Finding Faith in the Faith of Others



Email: russell.m.mcintire@vanderbilt.edu



Duration: 4 weeks

Course Description:

Based on Barbara Brown Taylor's *Holy Envy*, this class explores world religions—Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, Islam, and Christianity—through the lens of interfaith curiosity and spiritual growth.



Learning Objectives:

- Deepen understanding of one's own Christian faith by learning from other faith traditions
- Appreciate the values and strengths of diverse religions



Teaching Objectives:

- Facilitate open, respectful discussions about religious difference and spiritual enrichment



Materials (required):

- None



Materials (optional):

- *Holy Envy: Finding Faith in the Faith of Others* by Barbara Brown Taylor (2019)



Keywords:

- Faith
 - World Religions
-

Medical Ethics and the Christian

 **Instructor:** Russell McIntire

 **Email:** russell.m.mcintire@vanderbilt.edu

 **Duration:** 4 weeks

Course Description:

Explore contemporary medical dilemmas through the lens of Christian ethics and biblical insight. Topics include truth-telling in clinical settings, genetic research, designer babies, and end-of-life decisions.

Learning Objectives:

- Reflect on how a Christian might approach complex bioethical issues

Teaching Objectives:

- Lead thoughtful dialogue about scriptural and theological implications of modern medicine

Materials (required):

- None

Materials (optional):

- None

Keywords:

- Christian Ethics
 - Biomedical Ethics
-

 Hope

 **Instructor:** Russell McIntire

 **Email:** russell.m.mcintire@vanderbilt.edu

 **Duration:** 4 weeks

Course Description:

This course considers hope as a theological virtue often overshadowed by faith and love. Using *Lively Hope* by J. Daniel Day, participants will explore hope's power, presence, and promise in Christian life.

 Learning Objectives:

- Recognize the centrality of hope in spiritual formation
- Develop the capacity to nurture and live in hope

 Teaching Objectives:

- Facilitate reflection and discussion around cultivating hope

 Materials (required):

- None

 Materials (optional):

- *Lively Hope: A Taste of God's Tomorrow* by J. Daniel Day (2021)

 Keywords:

- Hope
 - Faith
-



Instructor: Stephen Minister, TBA New Instructor!



What Stephen Ministry Does for Those in Need **New Course!**



Email: voicedoctor@hotmail.com



Duration: 1 Week



Course Description

This course introduces participants to the mission and practice of Stephen Ministry. It explains who Stephen Ministers are, the types of situations they serve, how they are trained, and how individuals can seek or become a Stephen Minister. The session also clarifies what Stephen Ministers do *not* do, ensuring realistic expectations for this confidential, Christ-centered care ministry.



Learning Objectives

- Identify life situations where a Stephen Minister could offer meaningful support
- Understand the referral process for connecting with a Stephen Minister
- Learn about the comprehensive training and supervision involved in Stephen Ministry
- Discern whether you or someone you know might be called to become a Stephen Minister



Teaching Objectives

- Educate and inform participants so they can seek or recommend care when needed
- Provide an accurate picture of the purpose, limitations, and strengths of Stephen Ministry



Materials

Required: A/V setup – large screen TV with USB link

Optional: None



Keywords

#StephenMinister #CaringMinistry #ChristianCare #Support



Instructor: Monicah Muhomba



Becoming a More Forgiving Christian



Email: mctg12@icloud.com



Duration: 4 weeks

Course Description:

This course invites participants to explore forgiveness through scripture, psychology, and personal reflection. Sessions cover definitions of forgiveness, barriers, scientific insights, and the practice of self and other-forgiveness.



Learning Objectives:

- Study key scriptures on forgiveness
- Understand the distinctions between forgiving others and self
- Learn practical steps toward living a more forgiving Christian life



Teaching Objectives:

- Guide participants through a holistic exploration of forgiveness, including spiritual, psychological, and relational dimensions



Materials (required):

- Board and markers



Materials (optional):

- None



Keywords:

- Forgiveness
 - Forgiving
 - Christian
-

Mindfulness and Spirituality

 **Instructor:** Monicah Muhomba

 **Email:** mctg12@icloud.com

 **Duration:** 4 weeks

Course Description:

This course explores scripture alongside the practice and benefits of mindfulness. Participants will examine how mindfulness can reduce stress and how Jesus modeled mindfulness in his ministry. Sessions include short guided practices and discussion on mindfulness in spiritual life.

Learning Objectives:

- Identify and explore scriptures related to mindfulness
- Recognize the connection between mindfulness and Christian spirituality
- Practice three easy, Christian-context mindfulness techniques

Teaching Objectives:

- Examine the spiritual and physiological impact of mindfulness
- Guide class through foundational mindfulness exercises

Materials (required):

- Board and markers

Materials (optional):

- None

Keywords:

- Mindfulness
 - Spirituality
-

Prayerful Attitude in a Distracting World

 **Instructor:** Monicah Muhomba

 **Email:** mctg12@icloud.com

 **Duration:** 4 weeks

Course Description:

This course addresses how Christians can develop and maintain a prayerful attitude despite a world filled with noise and distraction. Drawing on scripture, the teachings of John Wesley, and writings by Richard Rohr, Marjorie Thompson, and Paul Miller, participants will explore prayer as an ongoing posture of the heart.

Learning Objectives:

- Explore Wesleyan and biblical understandings of prayer
- Learn how prayer can help navigate life's distractions
- Consider the idea of prayer as a continual process
- Engage the voices of contemporary Christian thinkers on prayer

Teaching Objectives:

- Present a framework for cultivating prayerfulness through scripture and tradition

Materials (required):

- Board and markers

Materials (optional):

- None

Keywords:

- Prayer
 - Prayerful
 - Attitude
-

 Instructor: Rev. Domenic Nigrelli **Instructor!**

◆ Faith in a Secular Age: Religion and Unbelief Today **New Course!**

 Email: dnigrelli@bumc.net

 Duration: 3 weeks (negotiable)

Course Description:

Why is it that belief in God once seemed inevitable, but today, disbelief is often seen as a reasonable or even necessary option? This course explores that dramatic shift through the lens of philosopher Charles Taylor's *A Secular Age*. We will trace the historical and cultural developments that have led to the current landscape of religious belief and secular unbelief. Our goal is to understand this tension honestly, and learn how to express faith in a way that is articulate, nonviolent, and deeply rooted.

Learning Objectives:

- Understand the historical, philosophical, and cultural forces that have shaped modern secularism
- Learn Charles Taylor's definition of "secularity" and how it differs from common usage
- Examine how religious and non-religious spiritualities coexist and influence one another
- Consider how faith can be articulated within a pluralistic and often skeptical world
- Explore examples of nonviolent, authentic witness in both religious and secular communities

Teaching Objectives:

- Present Taylor's key concepts in accessible, engaging language
- Guide participants through key historical moments that shifted the framework of belief
- Facilitate open discussion that allows for diverse viewpoints to be voiced and respected
- Encourage critical and theological reflection on the current state of belief and unbelief
- Provide tools for participants to develop their own faithful articulation of Christian spirituality today

Materials Required:

- Provided by Instructor

Materials Optional:

- None

Keywords:

#Secularism • #CharlesTaylor •
#FaithToday • #BeliefAndUnbelief •
#SpiritualPluralism

◆ Jesus the Wisdom of God **New Course!**

 Instructor: Rev. Domenic Nigrelli, Ph.D.

 Email: dnigrelli@bumc.net

 Duration: 3 weeks (negotiable)

Course Description:

This course explores selected passages from the Gospel of John to uncover the deep theological themes of Jesus as the embodiment of God's eternal Wisdom and the active presence of the Holy Spirit in the lives of believers. The course is centered on the idea that theological concepts are not abstract but profoundly relevant to living an abundant and spiritually rich life.

Learning Objectives:

- Understand the Gospel of John's presentation of Jesus as the Wisdom of God
- Explore how the Holy Spirit is portrayed and how it functions in the spiritual life of believers
- Connect theological insights to practical, everyday Christian living
- Reflect on the significance of key stories such as the Cana wedding and Jesus' dialogue with Nicodemus
- Recognize the continuity between God's eternal creativity and the life of Jesus

Teaching Objectives:

- Facilitate theological discussion rooted in scripture and experience
- Guide students through key Johannine texts for theological insight and application
- Encourage participants to apply the themes of divine wisdom and spiritual rebirth to their own lives
- Foster a practical spirituality rooted in scripture and deepened by theological reflection

Materials Required:

- Bible (any reliable translation)
- Handouts provided by instructor

Materials Optional:

- None

Keywords:

#Jesus • #Wisdom • #HolySpirit • #GospelOfJohn • #SpiritualLife • #Cana • #Nicodemus

◆ The Doctrine of the Trinity **New Course!**

 Instructor: Rev. Domenic Nigrelli, Ph.D.

 Email: dnigrelli@bumc.net

 Duration: 5 weeks

Course Description:

This course explores the heart of Christian doctrine: the Trinity. Using biblical, historical, and theological insights, it introduces the inner life of God as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit and the life we share through grace with that Triune God.

Learning Objectives:

- Understand how the Trinity is revealed in the story of salvation
- Explore what it means to be created in the image of the Triune God
- Trace the development of the doctrine of the Trinity from Scripture through church tradition
- Discover the implications of Trinitarian theology for Christian life today

Teaching Objectives:

- Present a clear overview of major theological interpretations of the Trinity
- Engage participants in conversation about how the Trinity shapes faith and worship

Materials Required:

- A Bible

Materials Optional:

- Course handouts provided by the instructor

Keywords:

#Trinity • #FatherSonSpirit • #ChristianDoctrine • #ChurchTradition

◆ A Basic Introduction to Hinduism **New Course!**

 Instructor: Rev. Domenic Nigrelli, Ph.D.

 Email: dnigrelli@bumc.net

 Duration: 3 sessions

Course Description:

This short course introduces the basic concepts, texts, and spiritual practices of Hinduism, one of the world's oldest religious traditions. The course will focus on key terms such as *dharma*, *karma*, *moksha*, *yoga*, and the diversity of devotional practices within Hinduism. Participants will be invited to understand this tradition with empathy and curiosity, not necessarily agreement.

Learning Objectives:

- Become familiar with the foundational texts and practices of Hinduism
- Understand central Hindu concepts like *dharma*, *karma*, and *moksha*
- Recognize the diversity within Hindu spiritual life and philosophy

Teaching Objectives:

- Build interreligious literacy
- Help participants see points of connection and difference with Christian thought

Materials Required:

- None

Materials Optional:

- Selected readings and videos provided by the instructor

Keywords:

#Hinduism • #Interfaith • #WorldReligions • #Dharma • #Yoga



Instructor: David Pflaum



Gospel of Mark



Email: davidpflaum@comcast.net



Duration: 6 weeks

Course Description:

A comprehensive Bible study focused on the Gospel of Mark, this course will examine the historical background, key themes, and theological significance of the shortest of the four Gospels.



Learning Objectives:

- Understand the Gospel of Mark in its first-century historical and theological context



Teaching Objectives:

- Facilitate discussions around Mark's structure, urgency, and portrayal of Jesus



Materials (required):

- A Bible



Materials (optional):

- None



Keywords:

- Mark
-

Genesis

 **Instructor:** David Pflaum

 **Email:** davidpflaum@comcast.net

 **Duration:** 6 weeks

Course Description:

This study explores the book of Genesis, the foundational narratives of creation, covenant, and the beginnings of the people of Israel. Participants will engage with the stories of Adam and Eve, Noah, Abraham, Jacob, and Joseph.

Learning Objectives:

- Learn about the book of Genesis and its theological importance

Teaching Objectives:

- Guide participants in understanding Genesis from a historical and literary-theological lens

Materials (required):

- A Bible

Materials (optional):

- None

Keywords:

- Genesis
-

The Miracles of Jesus

 **Instructor:** David Pflaum

 **Email:** davidpflaum@comcast.net

 **Duration:** 3 weeks

Course Description:

This class delves into Jesus' miracles with a focus on their theological symbolism and more-than-literal meanings. Together, we will explore healing stories, nature miracles, and exorcisms to uncover their messages for today.

Learning Objectives:

- Understand the theological depth of Jesus' miracles beyond the literal interpretation

Teaching Objectives:

- Invite participants to reflect on the meaning and relevance of miracles in contemporary Christian life

Materials (required):

- A Bible

Materials (optional):

- None

Keywords:

- Jesus
 - Miracles
-

The Gospel of John

 **Instructor:** David Pflaum

 **Email:** davidpflaum@comcast.net

 **Duration:** 6 weeks

Course Description:

A study of the Gospel of John, focusing on its unique theological themes and literary structure. Participants will explore key passages to better understand John's portrayal of Jesus as the Word made flesh.

Learning Objectives:

- Learn how the Gospel of John differs from the Synoptic Gospels
- Understand its major themes including light, life, belief, and the Spirit

Teaching Objectives:

- Facilitate learning through close reading and discussion of selected texts

Materials (required):

- A Bible

Materials (optional):

- None

Keywords:

- John
 - Gospel
 - Theology
-

Parables of Jesus

 **Instructor:** David Pflaum

 **Email:** davidpflaum@comcast.net

 **Duration:** 4 weeks

Course Description:

An in-depth look at the parables of Jesus and their meanings both in the first-century context and today. This course explores how Jesus used parables to reveal the kingdom of God.

Learning Objectives:

- Understand the structure and symbolism in Jesus' parables
- Explore the cultural and historical context of each parable

Teaching Objectives:

- Guide reflection on how the parables challenge and inspire modern faith

Materials (required):

- A Bible

Materials (optional):

- None

Keywords:

- Parables
 - Jesus
 - Kingdom of God
-

Psalms

 **Instructor:** David Pflaum

 **Email:** davidpflaum@comcast.net

 **Duration:** 4 weeks

Course Description:

This course is a study of the Psalms with attention to different literary types (praise, lament, thanksgiving, etc.) and their role in both private devotion and public worship.

Learning Objectives:

- Learn the different genres and purposes of psalms
- Develop a deeper personal engagement with the Psalter

Teaching Objectives:

- Help participants interpret and apply the psalms to daily spiritual practice

Materials (required):

- A Bible

Materials (optional):

- None

Keywords:

- Psalms
 - Prayer
 - Worship
-

Acts of the Apostles

 **Instructor:** David Pflaum

 **Email:** davidpflaum@comcast.net

 **Duration:** 6 weeks

Course Description:

A study of the book of Acts, tracing the formation and expansion of the early church. The course will focus on major themes including the role of the Holy Spirit, the apostles' preaching, and the inclusion of Gentiles.

Learning Objectives:

- Learn how the early Christian movement developed
- Explore how Acts relates to the Gospel of Luke

Teaching Objectives:

- Facilitate discussion on mission, church life, and the power of the Spirit

Materials (required):

- A Bible

Materials (optional):

- None

Keywords:

- Acts
 - Apostles
 - Holy Spirit
 - Church
-

Revelation

 **Instructor:** David Pflaum

 **Email:** davidpflaum@comcast.net

 **Duration:** 6 weeks

Course Description:

A study of the book of Revelation, its apocalyptic imagery, and its message of hope and perseverance. This course will demystify symbols and show how Revelation encourages faithful living in difficult times.

Learning Objectives:

- Understand how Revelation uses symbolism and prophecy
- Explore its relevance for Christian hope today

Teaching Objectives:

- Provide a faithful and reasoned interpretation of a highly misunderstood biblical text

Materials (required):

- A Bible

Materials (optional):

- None

Keywords:

- Revelation
 - Apocalypse
 - Hope
 - End Times
-

Jesus' Birth Stories

 **Instructor:** David Pflaum

 **Email:** davidpflaum@comcast.net

 **Duration:** 3 weeks

Course Description:

A study of Jesus' birth stories in Matthew and Luke.

Learning Objectives:

- Learn about the differences and symbolism in the two New Testament stories of Jesus' birth

Teaching Objectives:

- Facilitate learning about the differences and symbolism in the two New Testament stories of Jesus' birth

Materials (required):

- A Bible

Materials (optional):

- None

Keywords:

- Jesus' birth
-

The Will of God

 **Instructor:** David Pflaum

 **Email:** davidpflaum@comcast.net

 **Duration:** 1 week

Course Description:

A short study of Leslie Weatherhead's famous book, *The Will of God*.

Learning Objectives:

- Learn more about the will of God

Teaching Objectives:

- Facilitate learning about the will of God

Materials (required):

- None

Materials (optional):

- None

Keywords:

- Will of God
-

Sermon on the Mount

 **Instructor:** David Pflaum

 **Email:** davidpflaum@comcast.net

 **Duration:** 4 weeks

Course Description:

A Bible study of the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 5–7.

Learning Objectives:

- Learn about the Sermon on the Mount

Teaching Objectives:

- Facilitate learning about the historical and theological aspects of the Sermon on the Mount

Materials (required):

- A Bible

Materials (optional):

- None

Keywords:

- Sermon on the Mount
 - Beatitudes
 - Gospel of Matthew
-

Luke 15

 **Instructor:** David Pflaum

 **Email:** davidpflaum@comcast.net

 **Duration:** 1 week

Course Description:

A Bible study of the three “lost” parables in Luke 15.

Learning Objectives:

- Learn more about the three “lost” parables in Luke 15

Teaching Objectives:

- Facilitate learning about the three “lost” parables in Luke 15

Materials (required):

- None

Materials (optional):

- None

Keywords:

- Luke
 - Lost sheep
 - Lost coin
 - Prodigal Son
-

The Bible's Buried Secrets

 **Instructor:** David Pflaum

 **Email:** davidpflaum@comcast.net

 **Duration:** 5 weeks

Course Description:

A study of the NOVA documentary on Biblical archaeology.

Learning Objectives:

- Learn about the history of the Hebrew Bible

Teaching Objectives:

- Facilitate learning about the history of the Hebrew Bible

Materials (required):

- None

Materials (optional):

- None

Keywords:

- Biblical archaeology
-

The Bible's Two Creation Stories

 **Instructor:** David Pflaum

 **Email:** davidpflaum@comcast.net

 **Duration:** 1 week

Course Description:

A study of the two creation stories in Genesis.

Learning Objectives:

- Gain a better understanding of the two creation stories in Genesis

Teaching Objectives:

- Guide participants through the differences and theological significance of Genesis 1 and 2

Materials (required):

- N/A

Materials (optional):

- Bible

Keywords:

- Creation
 - Adam & Eve
 - Genesis
-

The Revelation to John

 **Instructor:** David Pflaum

 **Email:** davidpflaum@comcast.net

 **Duration:** 8 weeks

Course Description:

An in-depth study of *The Revelation to John* based upon *Breaking the Code* by Bruce Metzger.

Learning Objectives:

- Gain a deeper understanding of *The Revelation to John*

Teaching Objectives:

- Facilitate theological exploration of apocalyptic imagery and prophecy in Revelation

Materials (required):

- Bible

Materials (optional):

- *Breaking the Code* by Bruce Metzger

Keywords:

- Revelation
-

Reading the Bible Seriously But Not Necessarily Literally

 **Instructor:** David Pflaum

 **Email:** davidpflaum@comcast.net

 **Duration:** 1 week

Course Description:

An overview of reading the Bible in its historical context and searching for its more-than-literal meaning.

Learning Objectives:

- Learn to read the Bible in its historical context and recognize figurative meanings

Teaching Objectives:

- Teach historical-critical tools and how to appreciate metaphor and symbolism

Materials (required):

- N/A

Materials (optional):

- Bible

Keywords:

- Bible
 - Literalism
 - Metaphor
-



Instructor: Doug Ralls



Hebrews



Email: dougralls@gmail.com



Duration: 6 weeks



Course Description:

An in-depth study/discussion of the New Testament book of Hebrews.



Learning Objectives:

- Why was this book initially written, and to whom?
- What was the purpose of the book?
- What meaning does this book have for Christians today?
- How can we thrive despite criticism of our faith?



Teaching Objectives:

- To facilitate understanding of the historical and theological aspects of the book of Hebrews.



Materials Required:

- Bible



Materials Optional:

- None



Keywords:

Hebrews, New Testament



The Book of Acts



Instructor: Doug Ralls



Email: dougralls@gmail.com



Duration: 6 weeks



Course Description:

An overview video and discussion study of the Acts of the Apostles.



Learning Objectives:

- How did the young church survive after the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus?
- What truths still hold true for Christians today?



Teaching Objectives:

- To facilitate understanding of how belief and trust in Jesus Christ influence our daily lives.



Materials Required:

- TV or screen
- Bible



Materials Optional:

- None



Keywords:

Acts, Early church, Holy Spirit



The Parables of Jesus



Instructor: Doug Ralls



Email: dougralls@gmail.com



Duration: 2 to 4 weeks



Course Description:

A study of the parables told by Jesus. We will take a different look at the parables and discuss why Jesus taught primarily through this method.



Learning Objectives:

- How do parables teach us?
- What was the message that Jesus was trying to impart?
- How should we read the parables today?



Teaching Objectives:

- To facilitate understanding of the purpose and significance of Jesus' parables.



Materials Required:

- Bibles



Materials Optional:

- None



Keywords:

Parables



Bonhoeffer



Instructor: Doug Ralls



Email: dougralls@gmail.com



Duration: 4 weeks



Course Description:

Using video, readings, and discussion, we will go through Eric Metaxas' biography of Dietrich Bonhoeffer. Both his life and his theology will be reviewed.



Learning Objectives:

- Review Bonhoeffer's views on:
 - What is the Church?
 - Living in Christian Community
 - Religionless Christianity
 - Come and Die



Teaching Objectives:

- Did Bonhoeffer's life lead him to his views on religion, or vice-versa?
- What was the theological and historic significance of Bonhoeffer?



Materials Required:

- TV or screen



Materials Optional:

- Metaxas' biography of Bonhoeffer



Keywords:

Bonhoeffer, Metaxas, Germany



Love Does by Bob Goff



Instructor: Doug Ralls



Email: dougralls@gmail.com



Duration: 5 sessions



Course Description:

Using videos by acclaimed public speaker Bob Goff, we will discuss and explore how our Christian faith calls us to live into our faith through actions.



Learning Objectives:

- How can we follow Jesus' teachings more faithfully?
- How can we risk more for building the Kingdom?



Teaching Objectives:

- To facilitate understanding of how to live out our Christian faith through actions.



Materials Required:

- None



Materials Optional:

- None



Keywords:

Bob Goff



All Hallowtide



Instructor: Doug Ralls



Email: dougralls@gmail.com



Duration: 1 session



Course Description:

Discussion of the origins of Halloween and the days that surround it.



Learning Objectives:

- What did Hallowtide mean to early Christians?
- What do these days mean to us today?



Teaching Objectives:

- To facilitate understanding of the historical and theological aspects of All Hallowtide.



Materials Required:

- None



Materials Optional:

- None



Keywords:

All Hallowtide, Halloween, Holidays



The Difficult Words of Jesus



Instructor: Doug Ralls



Email: dougralls@gmail.com



Duration: 6 sessions



Course Description:

Using A.J. Levine's book *The Difficult Words of Jesus*, we will discuss some of the things that many wish Jesus had never said.



Learning Objectives:

- "Sell what you own"
- Hating your family
- Are we really slaves?
- Did Jesus exclude gentiles?
- Did Jesus condemn people to hell?
- Why did Jesus speak ill of others?



Teaching Objectives:

- To facilitate understanding of the challenging and seemingly harsh teachings of Jesus.



Materials Required:

- TV screen



Materials Optional:

- *The Difficult Words of Jesus* by A.J. Levine



Keywords:

Harsh words



The Book of Ruth



Instructor: Doug Ralls



Email: dougralls@gmail.com



Duration: 2 sessions



Course Description:

In-depth exploration of the book of Ruth. What did it mean to those who wrote it, and what lessons can we learn from it for today?



Learning Objectives:

- How Ruth speaks to us today
- What Ruth meant to ancient Israelites



Teaching Objectives:

- To facilitate understanding of the historical and theological aspects of the book of Ruth.



Materials Required:

- TV screen



Materials Optional:

- None



Keywords:

Ruth, Naomi, Boaz



The Gospel of Mark



Instructor: Doug Ralls



Email: dougralls@gmail.com



Duration: 6 sessions



Course Description:

Based on Dr. Amy-Jill Levine's book and video series. We will delve into the Gospel of Mark and what it meant to first-century Christians, and to Christians today.



Learning Objectives:

- What does the Gospel of Mark mean to you?
- How does Mark differ from the other gospels?
- Why was Mark written in the way that it was?
- What lessons can we take from Mark?



Teaching Objectives:

- See above



Materials Required:

- Bibles



Materials Optional:

- None



Keywords:

Gospel, Mark, A.J. Levine



Science and Religion



Instructor: Doug Ralls



Email: dougralls@gmail.com



Duration: 3 sessions



Course Description:

We will learn about the history of the conflict between science and religion. Topics include the creation of the universe, evolution, and whether science and scripture can co-exist.



Learning Objectives:

- How have religion and science co-existed throughout history?
- What is the "Big Bang" theory, and does it conflict with the Bible?
- How did life on earth come to be, and how has it evolved?



Teaching Objectives:

- See above



Materials Required:

- None



Materials Optional:

- None



Keywords:

Big Bang, Evolution, Darwin, Creation

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 **Instructor: Joerg Rieger**

Liberating People, Planet, and Religion

 Email: j.rieger@vanderbilt.edu

 Duration: 4 weeks

Course Description:

“Jesus preached the kingdom of God, and what came was the church.” This course explores what difference the church can make in the twenty-first century by examining how Jesus’s message addresses racial justice and environmental concern. If the exploitation of people and the planet is often supported by religion and the church, how can Jesus’s message help liberate all three?

Learning Objectives:

- Understand how religion can be both part of the problem and the solution.
- Deepen understanding of structural racism and ecological devastation beyond individual blame.
- Explore paths of liberation through solidarity, new structures, and participation in God’s reign.

Teaching Objectives:

- Guide the community in seeing where God is at work in global challenges.
- Shift from guilt and moralism toward hopeful visions of God’s grace (“grace under pressure”).

Materials Required:

- Chapters 1 and 4 of *Theology in the Capitalocene* by Joerg Rieger (Fortress Press, 2022)
- Or summarized blog versions of the work

Materials Optional:

- Wendland-Cook Program in Religion and Justice: www.religionandjustice.org

Keywords:

Liberation, Racial justice, Ecological justice

 Instructor: Michael Russell

Blessed are the Peacemakers: Conflict Management for People of Faith

 Email: michael@michaelrussellonline.com

 Duration: 1 to 4 weeks (based on class preference)

Course Description:

Conflict is inevitable—even in the Church. This course examines scriptural teachings and modern research on managing conflict in faithful and effective ways.

Learning Objectives:

- Understand the history of conflict in the Church
- Learn the biblical approach to managing conflict
- Gain practical dispute resolution strategies

Teaching Objectives:

- Communicate biblical truths about conflict
- Introduce modern conflict resolution strategies and research

Materials Required:

- Instructor-provided handouts

Materials Optional:

- None

Keywords:

Conflict, Dispute Resolution, Peace

 **Instructor: Marcus Stamps**

The Book of Job

 Email: wmstamps@comcast.net

 Duration: 3–4 weeks

Course Description:

A comprehensive study of the Book of Job, exploring biblical themes and their real-life application. Phases include Job's suffering, his friends' responses, God's silence, and the final divine encounter.

Learning Objectives:

- Exploring what we don't know when disaster strikes
- How to stabilize in difficult times
- What to know when God seems silent
- How to stay in relationship with God during hardship
- Humility when you realize you're not God

Teaching Objectives:

- Understand Job's full narrative arc
- Reflect on remaining faithful in times of trouble
- Explore the nature of God and human limits

Materials Required:

- Bible

Materials Optional:

- Whiteboard or chalkboard

Keywords:

Disaster, Resilience, Pain and suffering, Intimacy with God



Instructor: Michael Thomas



I'm Waiting, God: Finding Blessing in God's Delays



Email: thomasmikeh34@gmail.com



Duration: 4 weeks



Course Description:

This study will help you trust God even when His timing doesn't make sense. You'll find peace in God's provision and understand more about God's care.



Learning Objectives:

- Learn from four biblical women dealing with delayed answers:
 1. Hannah – feeling forgotten
 2. Ruth – facing tragedy
 3. The bleeding woman – suffering for years
 4. Martha – receiving God's "no"



Teaching Objectives:

- Learn how to show patience in faith
- Explore spiritual frustration and divine timing



Materials Required:

- None



Materials Optional:

- Handouts and 15-minute video clips by author Barb Roose



Keywords:

Women in the Bible, Waiting on God, Challenges to faith



God and Sports



Instructor: Michael Thomas



Email: thomasmikeh34@gmail.com



Duration: 1 week



Course Description:

Explore how God and sports intersect on and off the playing field to shape lives. Includes the video presentation: *Christian Athletes Who Aren't Ashamed of Jesus Christ*.



Learning Objectives:

- Understand that while competition is fierce, God desires good sportsmanship.
- Learn how strength, hard work, and courage can honor God in everyday Christian life.



Teaching Objectives:

- Highlight how current pro athletes and public figures use their platforms to glorify God.
- Contrast this with earlier eras when many high-profile individuals avoided such expressions of faith.



Materials Required:

- None



Materials Optional:

- None



Keywords:

Daily Prayer, Athletics, Teamwork, Good Sportsmanship, Support of Others
