

European Methodist Lecture Program (EMLP)

October 15 – December 17, 2024

Co-hosted by the Reutlingen School of Theology (GBHEM LEaD Hub Europe)
& Wesley House, Cambridge (GBHEM LEaD Hub Britain)
and in cooperation with The Methodist related Schools in Europe (MTSE)

Love, Grace and Transformation:

Worship as Ethics and Ethics as Worship in Methodist Theology

“And while he thus always exercises his love to God, by prayer without ceasing, rejoicing evermore, and in everything giving thanks, this commandment is written in his heart, that ‘he who loveth God, loves his brother also.’ And he accordingly ‘loves his neighbour as himself’; he loves every man as his own soul. His heart is full of love to all mankind, to every child of ‘the Father of the spirits of all flesh’. (...) And if it be not in his power to do good to them that hate him, yet he ceases not to pray for them (...)” (*John Wesley, The Character of a Methodist*).

In Wesleyan and Methodist Theology worship and ethics, prayer and discipleship, works of piety and works of mercy cannot be torn apart or be separated from each other, but rather are mutually dependent. In a complex world, in times of crisis and conflict and a strong influence of religious individualism especially in European economical contexts the European Methodist Lecture Program 2024 seeks to rethink the relation of worship and ethics in Methodist Theology and its significance for today. While initial lectures about ethical formation and the values of worship will give some introduction to the scope of the course, offer definitions and ways of thinking about worship theologically and ethically, further lectures will explore different aspects of what it might mean to worship in ways that live into the ethic of love.

Formal frame

- Title: **Love, Grace and Transformation:
Worship as Ethics and Ethics as Worship in Methodist Theology**
- Time frame: A lecture series with 10 lectures once a week
- Language: English
- Responsible: Lecturers from different Methodist related Schools in Europe (MTSE) and beyond
- Participants: Students from MTSE and other interested persons - both clergy and lay
- Expectations: in order to get 2 ECTS for the class students take part regularly and read suggested; concrete requirements for passing the class are formulated by each school; for non-credit students' participation in majority of lectures is requested
- Time: winter/fall semester, October 15 – December 17, 2024
- Time: weekly on Tuesday - 90 minutes session with lecture and discussion
 - 5:15 – 6:50 pm GB/ Ireland/ Portugal (GMT+1)
 - 6:15 – 7:50 pm Czech Republic/ Denmark/ Germany/ Italy/ Norway/ Slovak Republic/ Spain/ Sweden/ Switzerland (GMT+2)
 - 7:15 – 8:50 pm Estonia/ Russia – Moscow (GMT+3)



REGISTRATION-LINK

<https://form.jotform.com/241821914371353>

Responsible for the planning and implementation of the lecture series:

Prof Dr Ulrike Schuler / Prof Dr Stephan von Twardowski
Reutlingen School of Theology
Lead Hub Europe

Administrative Assistant and responsible for technical issues:



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For any questions, please don't hesitate to contact her




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Love, Grace and Transformation: Worship as Ethics and Ethics as Worship in Methodist Theology

Winter/Fall Semester, October 15 – December 17, 2024

	<p>(1) 15.10.2024</p> <p>Worship as Ethics (Rev Dr Jane Leach/Great Britain)</p>
<p>Summary</p>	<p>John Wesley's approach to the life of faith placed love of God and neighbour at the heart of the Christian life. He was also a daily communicant. In this lecture we will examine the contribution that corporate worship makes to the ethical formation of disciples, looking at what/to whom we give worth in worship explicitly and implicitly – who/what are we worshipping? and how do we align our espoused values with our operant values.</p>
	<p>(2) 22.10.2024</p> <p>The Power of Worship and Liturgy (Rev Dr Jørgen Thaarup/Denmark)</p>
<p>Summary</p>	<p>The Jewish synagogue worship was a reality before the Old Testament came into being. The Christian worship was the framework for writing the four gospels and many of the epistles. The liturgy of the Lord Supper and Baptism was developed before New Testament came into being. The confession of the Three-One God and the Creed was in place and used as the normative basic instrument when the first conferences of the church decided the composition of the New Testament. When John Wesley in 1784 appointed Thomas Coke to organize a Methodist Church in America, he did not give a book of doctrines neither a book of Discipline or ecclesiastical structure. Wesley gave them only a book of Liturgy and a Hymnal, ordering the preachers to administer the Lords Supper, the Baptism and the Preaching of the Gospel as the only instrument to build the new Church. Liturgy and Worship is our basic doctrinal foundation and the instrument to build the future church. Liturgy and Worship has the power to transform people and institutions.</p>

	<p>(3) 29.10.2024</p> <p>Grace under Pressure Again: Moving from Charity, Service, and Advocacy to Deep Solidarity (Prof Dr Jörg Rieger/USA, Germany)</p>
<p>Summary</p>	<p>In the Wesleyan traditions, grace is often more powerfully experienced under pressure, in the struggles and pains of everyday life, than on the mountaintops. Grace under pressure also finds expression in John Wesley's often-neglected concern to hold together the so-called works of piety and works of mercy, with works of mercy being not primarily social activism but rather true means of grace because God is working through them for the transformation of the world. On this background, this presentation will focus on the works of mercy, arguing that a Wesleyan theology of grace can only be explored when we extend the church's imagination beyond the current ecclesial practices of charity, service, and advocacy. More profound encounters of divine grace emerge when works of mercy are interpreted in terms of what will be called works of deep solidarity.</p>
	<p>(4) 05.11.2024</p> <p>Worship and Memory (Rev Dr Erika Stalcup/Switzerland/USA)</p>
<p>Summary</p>	<p>Memory is never neutral. The ways in which we treat our past shape our perception of (and therefore behavior toward) particular people and peoples within the body of Christ. Given that worship 1) reflects and creates collective memory and 2) reconstitutes us spiritually and physically as the body of Christ, how do our ways of worship strengthen or compromise the integrity of individuals bodies within the corporate body? How are injustices acknowledged, lamented, silenced, proclaimed or perpetuated in the context of congregational worship? This presentation explores worship as an expression of social holiness and a prophetic act of both restoration and resistance.</p>
	<p>(5) 12.11.2024</p> <p>Worshipping Together Interculturally (Rev Dr Kirk Sims/USA/Germany)</p>
<p>Summary</p>	<p>The Articles of Religion passed on by Wesley affirms adapting worship "according to the diversity of countries, times, and men's manners...so that all things may be done to edification." Many Methodist congregations in Europe are in multicultural communities and an appropriate pastoral adaptation is to have intercultural worship. This lecture will look at the biblical and theological foundations for intercultural worship and explore ways of implementing it.</p>

	<p>(6) 19.11.2024</p> <p>Worship as Ethical Formation: The Lord's Supper as Ethics (Prof Dr Michael Nausner/Sweden)</p>
<p>Summary</p>	<p>For John Wesley, Holy Communion was an indispensable means of grace, and in contrast to a certain quietism from which he distanced himself, he encouraged frequent celebrations of the Eucharist. He believed in it as a “converting means of grace”, probably inspired by his mother Susanna Wesley. In this lecture I want to explore not only the personally transformative aspects of Holy Communion, but the communally transformative aspects of that meal in their political and ethical breadth. Rooted in a Wesleyan understanding of holiness as social holiness, I argue that the social, religious, and even ecological boundaries of the community celebrating Holy Communion are transformed and widened. The turning inward toward the mystery of the incarnation proves to be a turning outward to the suffering world and a participation in its transformation.</p>
	<p>(7) 26.11.2024</p> <p>Worship and Hope in a Changing World: How Worship Can Connect Us to the Larger Story of Redemption, Reconciliation and Spiritual Communion (Rev Dr Mark Lewis/Denmark)</p>
<p>Summary</p>	<p>Worship is often regarded as an “anchor” – a source of stability and constancy in an ever-changing world, and a valuable source in the formation of faith, character and values. Yet anchors can also weigh us down, and sometimes even act as impediments to growth and worldview development. This lecture will explore how worship can help us to embrace Christian identity while encouraging us to faithfully engage the changing world with renewed love and greater curiosity.</p>
	<p>(8) 03.12.2024</p> <p>“In times of war” - Peace Narratives of Jewish and Christian Liturgies as a Challenge for Current Practice (Rev Dr Thomas Roscher/Germany)</p>
<p>Summary</p>	<p>„Nothing can unite humanity more closely than common prayer for peace” (Shalom Ben-Chorin). In times of war, we call for prayer for peace in our churches. But with what motives do we pray for peace? There is a temptation to limit our prayer to a specific region, nation, church and community, instead of giving space to the great longing for peace that overcomes the divisions between people, nations and God (Eph 2:14). The lecture attempts to open up the peace narratives of the Jewish-Christian tradition using individual examples and aims to show that the prayer for peace can overcome borders.</p>

	<p>(9) 10.12.2024</p> <p>Worship for Indigenization (Rev Dr Daniel Pratt Morris Chapman/Great Britain)</p>
<p>Summary</p>	<p>John Wesley is often viewed as having been conservative and traditionalist when it comes to worship. However, a closer examination of his Theology and Ministry reveals an intriguing balance of respect for the rich heritage of the early church alongside an ability to embrace the wide variety that exists within Christian spirituality. In many ways he was ahead of his time. An example of this can be seen in his transformation of early Christian patterns of worship into accessible forms of worship for his contemporaries. He also showed an openness to aspects of worship which were not accepted by the ecclesial norms of his day (as is reflected in his Watch Nights Services). Methodism is a global family which holds together a rich tapestry of different styles and expressions of worship. European Methodism has for many decades been engaged in dialogue with members of the world Methodist family. This has in many ways challenged and enriched perceptions of Methodist Worship. However, in order for us to live out our calling as the people called Methodists it is imperative that we travel beyond casual encounters with the Other in order to embrace the fullness of our calling to reflect the rich diversity of what it means to be the body of Christ.</p>
	<p>(10) 17.12.2024</p> <p>Worship for Understanding and Promoting Peace (Dr Richard Davis/New Zealand and Great Britain)</p>
<p>Summary</p>	<p>John Wesley's most common use of the word peace is still found in the Church of England Evensong - that peace which passes all understanding. Worldly peace is now understood much better in secular thought, but does not take enough of a role in our Christian ethical thought and moral formation. This presentation will examine what role worship can play in promoting an understanding Christian ethics with peace at its centre.</p>