

**Wesleyan and Pan-Methodist**  
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**Research Focus:**

My research is focused in three areas: (1) Evangelistic theology and practices, (2) Pan-Methodism, and (3) The Black Church. My research in evangelism provides resources for students, pastors and congregations to develop better informed evangelistic theologies and practices. The term Pan-Methodist is used to designate The United Methodist Church and the traditional African American Methodist denominations (African Methodist Episcopal Church, African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church and Christian Methodist Church). My goal is to explore various theological doctrines and how the different Methodists denominations engage these doctrines. My work in the area of Black Church focuses on issues related to theology and culture. For example, one of the questions I am engaging is how religion and politics inform who we are as Americans.

**Mission statement:**

**The new mission statement puts an emphasis on making disciples for Christ and the renewal of the church.** My research in evangelistic theology and practices informs my teaching in these areas by helping students reflect upon the theology informing their evangelism. My goal is to prepare students for various ecclesial contexts and the importance of developing appropriate practices for that context. I have published the following pieces in evangelism: (1) *Transforming Evangelism: The Wesleyan Way of Sharing Faith* helps students understand the evangelistic theology and practices of John Wesley as one way of renewing the church, especially the United Methodist Church, (2) I have written two chapters in edited books (“Such a Great Cloud of Witnesses: Evangelistically Vital Churches” and “Hearing the Voice of Our Neighbor: A Voice from the Other Side”), (3) I participated in a video project (Wesley Studies Project: Equipping Global Ministry, “Wesleyan Revival Part II) focusing on evangelistic theology and practices. All of these works are rooted in the Wesleyan tradition and focus on discipleship and renewing the church.

**The new mission statement emphasizes staying rooted in the Wesleyan tradition and ends with the challenge of transforming the world.** My research in this area focuses on the Wesleyan tradition, but does so in a way that challenges students, pastors and congregations to transform the world by broadening their understanding of Methodism. I just completed a manuscript that will be forthcoming from Abingdon entitled, *Just-us or Justice: Moving Toward a Pan-Methodist Theology*. This book will help students and others to better understand the broader theological Methodist spectrum as it relates to certain strands of American Methodism. I also have contributed articles and lectured on various aspects of Methodism in the last four years. A particularly important piece that I contributed to is, *A Year with John Wesley and Our Methodist Values* which was given to all of the delegates at General conference.

**The new mission statement challenges us to inspire passion for ministry in diverse bodies.** My research and teaching in the area of Black Church Ministries seeks to embody this part of the mission by engaging the church through the lens of black culture. My research in this area benefits the Wesleyan tradition and helps Saint Paul School of Theology to engage more diverse

bodies. For example, I am working on a project with Angela Sims on religion and politics that engages black and whites. This is an important project because it challenges us to think about how certain narrative structure our political and religious lives. Many of the articles mentioned in the sections above also focus on the Black Church.

In addition I am currently working on a theology for younger African American youth who are drifting away from the church. As a part of my research I am involved in the start-up of a new worship called the “Tha C” at Centennial UMC focusing on African American youth. In this instance the practice of worship will inform the evangelistic theology I develop.

**General Conference:**

**My focus on evangelistic theology and practices also intersects with one of the four General Conference emphases (2)—church growth and renewal.** The United Methodist Church is in a period of numerical decline and a part of my work is focused on reversing this trend. In the future, my research will continue to emphasize evangelism rooted in the Wesleyan tradition while incorporating ecumenical practices that continue to help students, pastors and congregations to renew the church.

**My focus on Pan-Methodism intersects with General Conference emphases 1 and 3 because I am educating leaders of the church to be mindful of our commitment to the least among us.** I am providing resources and helping church leaders to think more deeply about what it means to be a part of the Wesleyan tradition within the context of the United States. In this context, the Wesleyan tradition must continue to provide leadership in creating a more equitable and just society.

**My focus on the Black Church intersects with General conference emphasis 3** because the African American Church continues to work for justice for the poor and other disenfranchised individuals in the Black and broader community. The goal is to help students, pastors and lay reflect theologically on what it means to live Christian lives in an ever changing culture that has a history of racism.

The three foci of my research are related and inform my teaching in a way that promotes not only the mission of Saint Paul School of Theology, but connects with the emphases of the General Conference.