

Wesley Theological Seminary Doctor of Ministry Program

Course: DM-969OL **Small Church in Social and Ecological Context**

On-Line September 1 – October 30, 2015 with synchronous sessions every Tuesday at 6:30-8:00 PM

Faculty: Dr. Gilson Waldkoenig, Professor of Church in Society, Gettysburg Seminary

Email: gwaldkoenig@ltsg.edu / via Blackboard gwaldkoenig@wesleyseminary.edu

Description: Seventy-one per cent of congregations in the United States are small, with 100 or fewer in average weekly attendance, according to the National Congregations Study. Small congregations can foster spirituality and community, respond to needs of neighbors, and thrive amidst change. The course examines the literature on the small church and through presentations and practical discussions highlights the gifts and vibrant mission of small churches in their social and ecological settings.

Requirements:

- Complete readings and view online presentations prior to weekly synchronous session;
- integrate ideas from the readings and presentations with your observations about ministry in the field;
- participate fully in weekly online synchronous session;
- write a post for a discussion board by Friday each week (250-500 words);
- write a final reflection paper that assesses your own learning across the course and envisions next steps

Texts:

Katie Day, *Faith on the Avenue*. Oxford 2014

Anthony Pappas, *Entering the World of the Small Church*, 2nd ed. Alban 2000

Brandon J. O'Brien, *The Strategically Small Church*. Bethany House 2010

L. Gail Irwin, *Toward the Better Country: Church Closure and Resurrection*. Resource Pub. 2014

Jeff Wild & Peter Bakken, *Church on Earth: Grounding Your Ministry in Sense of Place*. Fortress 2009

Pre-course assignments:

READ Anthony Pappas, *Entering the World of the Small Church*, 2nd ed. (Alban 2000) pp 1-94

VIEW Pre-course Introductory Presentation (posted on course web page one week prior to course)

AND WRITE responses to the following questions (100-250 words each):

1. I am interested in the small church because....
2. My top three questions about small churches are....
3. I would like the participants in the class to know about me that...