“Wesleyan vile-tality”: Calls to Reclaim, Revive, and Renew Our Wesleyan Heritage

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1. **Reclaim** our Wesleyan heritage as “prophetic offenders”

2. **Revive** our connectionalism as systematic missiologists

3. **Renew** our spirits as *vile* United Methodists

“Wesleyan vile-tality”:
“…the putting children to learn sewing before they can read perfectly is the very reason why so few women can read fit to be heard, and never to be well understood.”

-Susanna Wesley
“Wesleyan vile-tality”

A willingness to look beyond today’s acceptable practices, standards, and norms and bend the rules in order to ensure that more and more persons can be included within the Kin-dom and that all persons, no matter who they are, how they identify, whom they love, or how they live can know and experience the love of God, can know their own self-worth, and can then grow to love themselves and others.
“Wesleyan vile-tality”

“Wesley and his Oxford friends’ eccentricities might...be tolerated – their excessive religious observance, their closed group intensity, their self-denial and strict code of living reminiscent of some of the wayward Puritan sects of the previous century. Even their lowering themselves to undertake good works in the prisons and workhouse was not beyond the pale. But it seems that when they took up the advocacy of a man accused of sexual crimes, they crossed the boundary between the bizarre but tolerable to the reprehensible.”

-Peter Forsaith, 2020
"I scarcely could reconcile myself at first to this strange way of preaching in the fields..."

- John Wesley, Journal, April 1739
…I had been all my life (till very lately) so tenacious of every point relating to decency and order that I should have thought the saving of souls almost a sin if it had not been done in a church.”

- John Wesley, *Journal*, April 1739
“At four in the afternoon, I submitted to be more vile and proclaimed in the highways the glad tidings of salvation, speaking from a little eminence in a ground adjoining to the city, to about three thousand people.”

-John Wesley, *Journal*, April 1739
Wesleyan vile-tality
“I am conscious how ridiculous I must appear in the eyes of many for so doing. Therefore, if some persons consider me an impudent woman, and represent me as such, I cannot blame them…Besides, I do nothing but what Mr. Wesley approves; and as to reproach thrown by some one me, what have I to do with it, but quietly go forward saying, ‘I will still be more vile, if my Lord requires it.’”

- Mary Bosanquet
1) “you are a new people;”
2) “do not imagine that you can avoid giving offence;”
3) “trust God with your all, then go on in the power of [God’s] might;”
4) “Keep in your path…and be true to your principles;” and
5) “not to talk much of what you suffer.”
“But although a difference in opinions or modes of worship may prevent an entire external union, yet need it prevent our union in affection? Though we can’t think alike, may we not love alike? May we not be of one heart, though we are not of one opinion? Without all doubt we may. Herein all the children of God may unite notwithstanding these smaller differences. These remaining as they are, they may forward one another in love and in good works.”

-John Wesley, 1750