Ambassador
Nurturing the life of the Institute

Ambassador Update

Institute for Discipleship

Ambassadors nurture the life of the Institute for Discipleship through their prayers, advocacy, and financial support, advancing the Kingdom of God worldwide.

October 2026



On September 24 and 25, I spent time with the United Methodist conference directors of Lay Servant Ministries at their annual gathering in Nashville, Tenn. These programs work with non-clergy ministers who support local churches in a variety of ways. We support this program by providing their training courses online at BeADisciple.com.

That's how much of the support of the Institute works. WE support the Bible study leader and the participants at BeADiscpleApp.com with high-quality content and accessibility. Our administrative support provides a platform for instructors to teach and learners to learn at BeADisciple.com. Our visiting scholar teaches and does his research. The Bishop scholars learn and grow.

Underneath all that we support is your support!

Thank you for your ongoing support.

Steve Wilke
Emeritus Executive Director



A recent donor offered four gently used adult coats to our Bishop Scholars. It may seem small but not to these young adults who come to us from a climate quite different from the upcoming Kansas winter season.



BeADisciple Study App Features Top Communicators

The BeADisciple Study App depends on people who are communicators. Many of them have podcasts, sermon YouTube channels, videos, and social

media feeds to share God's word and we are thankful that they also share the written word. In our short-term studies, we use their materials and adapt them for your use on the app.

Rachel Billups (above) is featured in an Advent study now available now at the ***BeADisciple Study App.***



Join Steve and Beth Wilke as They Walk in the Footsteps of Paul

Beth and I would love for you to join us May 2-15, 2027, for a trip to Greece and Türkiye. As part of Educational Opportunities Tours, we will be visiting the places the Apostle Paul walked and worshiped. This trip will be a great time of fellowship with each other as we learn more about Paul's journeys.

During the 14-day cruise we will explores such sites in Greece as Mykonos and Rhodes, and Türkiye stops will include Istanbul, Thessaloniki, and Athens. A full schedule and downloadable brochure is available **here.**

A 30-minute webinar with Steve and the president of EO will be offered Tuesday, November 10, at 4 p.m. (Central). If you have any questions, this is a great time to learn more and get your questions answered. Join the webinar by clicking on the button below.

This once-in-a-lifetime trip will bring new life to your study of Paul's life and letters, and we would love to have you join us.

Click This Link to Join Nov. 10 Webinar

Perry Supports Learning and Leading Through BeADisciple.com



When Rev. Beth Perry began teaching courses at BeADisciple.com more than 15 years ago, she was looking for a way to offer the church-centered boundary awareness training, "Safe Sanctuaries," online. Having taught in-person classes for many years, bringing that content to a wider audience made perfect sense and led to much greater opportunities when, two years later, she taught her first Lay Servant Ministries course, "Rediscovering Our Spiritual Gifts." Still offered today, Beth has equipped more than 1,600 students in hearing and answering God's call through just that one online course.

From that first Lay Servant Ministries (LSM) course in 2013, Beth has gone on to build and teach eight additional LSM courses, create two IFD Ministry Certification programs, teach in the Wesley Academy program, and write

independent courses centered on spirituality, preaching, and more. For more than five years, Beth coached new and seasoned BeADisciple instructors with best practices for building, teaching, and promoting their courses for maximum impact. Through her courses and her coaching, Beth has supported BeADisciple.com and the ministry of the Institute for Discipleship with dedication and professionalism.

Through challenging seasons such as the Covid pandemic and disaffiliations in the UMC, Beth's courses brought quality ministry training, peer interactions, and a personal connection to many who felt isolated by physical distance or denominational strife. "I remember teaching during the worst of the pandemic." Beth shared. "Many of us were hungry for engagement and for hope - and we could share that with each other in our courses. Also, I knew that online gathering with BeADisciple was not only informative but also formative and transformative! Together - BeADisciple, me, congregational leaders - we could support each other, take that support back to local congregations, and continue to worship God!"

With the number of active ordained clergy declining across denominations in the U.S., churches look increasingly to lay persons for leadership. With instructors such as Beth ready to equip and nurture through accessible and affordable training, the Institute for Discipleship is poised to support the demand for quality ministry education now and into the future.

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