

Theological Reflection: The Practice of Ministry
Garrett COS, Summer 2019
(July 22 – July 26)

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PLEASE NOTE: This syllabus may be changed at the discretion of the instructor.

I. Course Description:

This course is the capstone to the student's basic course of study. Its focus is the integration of the biblical, theological, and practical aspects of ministry. It emphasizes the integration of the role of the practicing pastor with the church's theological heritage and its particular Wesleyan expression. The course also stresses theology as an ongoing task of critical reflection for the purpose of action. Consideration is given to issues, events, and institutions that form the context within which the pastor is required to think, speak, and act with theological clarity.

II. Course Objectives:

1. Articulate a Trinitarian theology for the practice of ministry.
2. State clearly the nature and mission of the Church and its relation to pastoral ministry.
3. Demonstrate the ability to reflect theologically.
4. Develop a plan for lifelong theological reading, reflection, and growth.

III. Required Reading:

1. Lacey Warner and Ken Carder. *Grace to Lead: Practicing Leadership in the Wesleyan Tradition*. (UM General Bd of Higher Education, 2010). 978-0938162766, retail price \$12.95
2. Bruce Epperly and Katherine Gould Epperly. *Tending to the Holy: The Practice of the Presence of God in Ministry*. Herndon, Virginia: Alban Institute, 2009. ISBN 13-978-1566993913. \$19.00
3. Charles M. Wood and Ellen Blue. *Attentive to God: Thinking Theologically in Ministry*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2011. ISBN 13-978-0687651627. \$15.01

IV. Assignments (Before Coming to Garrett):

(A) Online Section

1. Watch the video posted on the course hub introducing you to this class and the materials we will be using.
2. Introduce yourself in the online forum. You might share your ministry setting, family background, and hobbies/interests.
3. Read John Wesley's sermon *Free Grace*. Write a 500-word reflection on (a) the uniqueness of Wesleyan understanding of God in this sermon and (2) your practice of ministry in the United Methodist Church. Submit the paper to the instructor AND post it on the class moodle forum. Make a 100-word response to each of your peers' reflections. This sermon is available at <http://www.umcmmission.org/Find-Resources/John-Wesley-Sermons/Sermon-128-Free-Grace>
4. Choose one of Charles Wesley's hymns in the United Methodist Hymnal and write a 200-word theological reflection on the hymn text. Make a 100-word response to each of your peers' reflections. Submit the paper to the instructor AND post it on the class moodle forum.

(B) Written Work due by June 15, 2019.

In preparation for our class time together, please complete the following assignments, and submit all the written work on the Moodle **by June 15, 2019.**

1. Reading and Short Reflection Paper

Write a reflection paper of 2-3 pages on *Grace to Lead* or *Tending to the Holy: The Practice of the Presence of God in Ministry*. Ask yourself these questions:

- (1) *How does what we do witness to the God in Christ we proclaim?*
- (2) *How is this text helping me think theologically about my proclamation in the practice of ministry?*

The reflection paper should address an area where the reading helped you think about the practice of ministry from a theological perspective. If you choose *Tending to the Holy*, the reflection content must be different from your chapter presentation assignment specified in #2.

2. Class presentation outline

Each student will make a 20-minute presentation (10 minutes of presentation; 10 minutes of questions and answers) during the class on one chapter of *Tending to the Holy*. Read all chapters of this book. Choose one chapter of your choice. Prepare to present the chapter focusing on the following questions:

- a. What are the main ideas of this chapter?
- b. How does the author challenge me in my theology and practice of ministry?
- c. What is one idea from this chapter that I might apply to my ministry setting?

Create an outline (no longer than one page) of your presentation and submit it.

3. Case Study

Write a 1000-word case study on one particular situation in your ministry. This is a real situation story – no fictions. Please read *Attentive to God* to have a better understanding of what a case study is. As you write, please pay attention to the following:

- Simply describe the situation. Do not include any judgments on the good and the bad – let the reader explore on that.
- Be as detailed as possible. Give any subtle details you notice – twinkle in the eye of someone, colors of the room, and etc.
- The case study should be a real situation story. You may substitute names.
- You will present your case study during our residential week. The class will engage in theological reflection together. Please choose your topic and content accordingly. Please bring copies of your case study for all students. Your copies will be given back to you after presentation.

V. Residential Week Assignments

1. Case Study Presentation: Be prepared to present your case study. Make enough copies of your 1000-word case study for all students in the class.
2. Presentation on one chapter of *Tending to the Holy*.
3. Devotion: Lead a short (5-10 minutes) devotion. Your devotion may include prayers, singing a hymn, and/or a ritual, but not a sermon.

VI. Residential Week Schedule

July 22 (Monday)

Session I (1:30 p.m. – 3 p.m.)

- Devotion
- Introduction of the Class – introductions, syllabus, class structure, assignments
- Lecture: “Theology, Ministry, and Church”
- Reading Discussion

Session II (3:30 p.m. – 5 p.m.)

- Student Presentation & Discussion
- Case Study
- Reading Discussion

July 23 (Tuesday)**Session I**

- Devotion – Student
- Lecture: “God, Suffering, and Ministry”
- Reading Discussion

Session II

- Student Presentation & Discussion
- Documentary & Discussion
 - The Invisible Chapel

July 24 (Wednesday)**Session I**

- Devotion – Student
- Lecture: “Sin, Evil, and Forgiveness”
- Reading Discussion

Session II

- Student Presentation & Discussion
- Case Study
- Reading Discussion

July 25 (Thursday)**Session I**

- Devotion – Student
- Lecture: “Pluralism, Diversity, and Ministry”
- Reading Discussion

Session II

- Student Presentation & Discussion
- Movie: A Life of Ministry
 - Henry Nouwen

July 26 (Friday)

Session I

- Devotion – Student
- Lecture: “Creation, Christian Hope, & Ministry”
- Reading Discussion

Session II

- Paper Presentation & Discussion
- Case Study
- Reading Discussion

GRADE STRUCTURE

Participation: 10%

Wesley Sermon Reflection: 10%

Wesley Hymn Reflection: 5%

Online Responses to Peers: 5%

Short Reflection Paper (*Grace to Lead*): 20%

Class Presentation (*Tending to the Holy*): 20%

Case Study and Presentation: 20%

Devotion: 10%

Please note: Late submissions will result in a deduction in grade.

BLESSINGS ON YOUR MINISTRY!