

FOOD, FAITH, AND JUSTICE: HOLY COMMUNION FOR THE WHOLE CREATION

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Course Description

This dynamic course integrates a theology of holy communion with an examination of how “our daily bread” and “common cup” are produced, distributed, and consumed in the global market economy. Through a combination of classroom engagement with lectures, media presentations, and discussion and outdoor learning at area community gardens, permaculture farms, food cooperatives, and more, participants are immersed in the critical questions, spiritual energies, and regenerative practices bound up in the emergence of a more ecologically sustainable and economically just food economy.

Course Objectives

Knowing – To understand the economic logic, industrial processes, political dynamics, and environmental implications of our present food system, as well as the holistic perspectives and practices of the emerging alternative food movement.

Being – To deepen one’s appreciation for the limits and needs of the good creation, the power of healthy interrelationships, and the mysteries gathered up in the food and fellowship we eat.

Doing – To gain basic practical knowledge about common land ownership, holistic gardening techniques, cooperative business models, integrative production design, and urban ecological food ministries.

Required Course Texts

Ackerman-Leist, Philip. *Rebuilding The Foodshed: How to Create Local, Sustainable, and Secure Food Systems*. Chelsea Green Publishing, 2013 (ISBN: 9781603584234, Price \$12.89 at www.barnesandnoble.com).

Berry, Wendell. *The Art of the Commonplace: The Agrarian Essays of Wendell Berry*, Norman Wirzba, ed. Counterpoint, 2003 (ISBN: 9781593760076, Price \$12.16 at www.barnesandnoble.com).

Davis, Ellen. *Scripture, Culture, Agriculture: An Agrarian Reading of the Bible*. Cambridge University Press, 2008 (ISBN: 9780521732239, Price \$23.90 at www.barnesandnoble.com).

Shiva, Vandana. *Earth Democracy: Justice, Sustainability, and Peace*. South End Press, 2005 (ISBN: 9780896087453, Price \$17.77 at www.barnesandnoble.com).

Wirzba, Norman. *Food and Faith: A Theology of Eating*. Cambridge University Press, 2011 (ISBN: 9780521146241, Price \$22.52 at www.barnesandnoble.com).

Recommended Course Text

Hemenway, Toby. *Gaia's Garden: A Guide to Home-Scale Permaculture, 2nd Edition*. Chelsea Green Publishing, 2009 (ISBN: 9781603580298, Price \$20.75 at www.barnesandnoble.com).

Course Requirements for Seminary Credit

1. Reading of all assigned literature and active participation in class discussions.
2. Submission of one substantive question per assigned reading per day (24 total).
3. Final Paper (18-20 pages). Framed by a theology of food and eating, provide a critical analysis of one area of our present food and agro-economic system as well as a constructive and practical vision for how people of faith might participate in the emergence of a new food economy.

Course Requirements for Auditors

1. Reading of all assigned literature and active participation in class discussions.
2. Submission of one substantive question per assigned reading per day (24 total).

Final Grading for Seminary Credit

1. Class Participation – 40%
2. Reading Questions – 10%
4. Final Paper – 50%

Grading Criteria for Papers

1. You accomplish what the assignment asks of you.
2. Your paper offers a clear thesis statement, follows a logical organization, is well developed, and is free of grammatical and spelling errors.
3. You enter into intelligent, critical conversation with the course texts and lectures.
4. You demonstrate a depth of insight in your theological and ethical claims.

Grading Criteria for Class Participation

1. You attend every class period and are on time.
2. You demonstrate familiarity with the assigned readings for the day.
3. You listen carefully to the instructor and to your classmates.
4. You are an active participant in the class discussions.

Course Schedule

Jesus Christ Invites All: Land, Soil, and Access

Shiva, 1-61
Ackerman-Leist, xv-26, 97-133, 209-253
Davis, 1-20, 120-138
Berry, 35-64
Wirzba, 35-70
(Hemenway, 3-12, 71-95)

Documentary: www.dirtthemovie.org

Site Visit: The Talking Farm (thetalkingfarm.org)

The Holy Spirit Joins Everyone Together: Community of Creation

Shiva, 109-143
Ackerman-Leist, 159-175
Berry 93-143, 144-158, 159-181, 267-275
Wirzba, 71-109
(Hemenway, 21-67)

Documentary: www.inhabitfilm.com

Site visit: *Roger's Park Walking Tour with Permaculture Designer Milton Dixon* (midwestpermaculture.com/about/our-instructors) and *Discussion with the Eco-Justice Collaborative Co-Founders Pam and Lan Richart* (ecojusticecollaborative.org)

The Father/Mother Nourishes Every Body: Economics for the Earth

Shiva, pp. 73-107
Ackerman-Leist, 27-96
Davis, pp. 21-41, 80-100, 139-154
Berry, pp. 65-80, 207-235, 279-292
Wirzba, 1-34, 110-143
(Hemenway, 96-172)

Documentary: www.thefilm.thischangeseverything.org

Site Visit: *The Dill Pickle Food Co-op* (dillpickle.coop)

The Triune God Arranges Guests as Companions: Cooperative Power

Shiva, 61-72
Ackerman-Leist, 176-208, 254-276
Davis, 101-119
Berry, 195-204, 236-261
Wirzba, 144-178
(Hemenway, 175-229)

Documentary: www.magpictures.com/aplaceatthetable

Site Visit: *The Plant* (plantchicago.com)

The Lord God Grants Permission to Begin: Feasting toward a New Creation

Shiva, pp. 145-186
Ackerman-Leist, 134-158, 277-292
Davis, 42-79, 155-180
Berry, 81-90, 262-266, 293-327
Wirzba, 179-234
(Hemenway, 230-272)

Documentary: www.thefutureoffood.com

Afternoon Site Visit: *Eden Place* (edenplacenaturecenter.com)