

AUSTIN GRADUATE SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

MINISTRY 6302

The Ministry of Preaching

Instructor: Greg Neill

Fall 2017

Monday Evenings: 6:30-9:10

The Ministry of Preaching (MIN 6302)

Course Syllabus and Class Schedule

Instructor: Greg Neill
Email: gmneill1962@gmail.com
Phone: 512-755-6026

I. Course Objectives

1. Students will learn to present the Christian message through the event of preaching.
2. Students will reflect upon the challenges and impact of the ministry of preaching in a congregational context.
3. Students will engage the biblical text, current homiletic theory and shared experience and integrate those studies into finished preaching.
4. Students will develop skills that moves one from the biblical text to a sermon that challenges and engages their audience.
5. Students will experience the formative power of giving and receiving feedback on sermons.
6. Students will learn to minister appropriately in weddings and funerals.
7. Students will define the nature and purpose of biblical preaching and describe the key characteristics and components of a sermon.

II. Required Texts

Craddock, Fred B. *Craddock on the Craft of Preaching*, Chalice Press, 2011.

Long, Thomas G. *The Witness of Preaching* (Third Edition), Westminster John Knox Press, 2016.

Taylor, Barbara Brown. *The Preaching Life*, Cowley Publications, 1993.

III. Means of Assessment

- | | |
|--|------------|
| 1. Reflection papers/exercises from assigned readings. | 150 Points |
| 2. Mid-term: A 6-8 Minute Homily | 150 Points |
| 3. Book Review of <i>The Preaching Life</i> | 150 Points |
| 4. Forty-Five Week Preaching Plan | 300 Points |
| 5. Final Exam – Full Sermon (20-25 Minutes) | 250 Points |

IV. Explanation of Assessments

Reflection Papers/Exercises and Class Participation: Students will submit theological reflection papers on selected assigned readings. The papers should seek to determine the author's purpose, the theological significance, and the practical application of the reading. The reflection papers are to be 2-3 pages in length. Class exercises and participation will include oral and written presentations on various components of a sermon (the focus and function, illustrations, titles, etc...). Some of the exercises and reflection papers are noted on the class schedule and others will be assigned as the class progresses.

Book Review (7-10 pages): Students will read and reflect on Barbara Brown Taylor's *The Preaching Life*. The book review should include a brief summary of the book's content and should engage the following questions: How would you articulate Taylor's theology of preaching? What is the most thought provoking sentence, paragraph or chapter in the book? How does the Taylor's presentation of the ministry of preaching cohere with your understanding of preaching? How does Taylor's presentation of the ministry of preaching differ from your understanding? What aspects of preaching in this book resonate with your contexts and experiences? The book reviews will be discussed in class. **Due November 6.**

Mid-term Homily (October 16): Students will orally present a six (6) to eight (8) minute homily from a **miracle narrative** in one of the gospels. Other students will offer a critique of the homily using a rubric that will be provided. Each student will also critique themselves. The grade for the homily will be calculated using the following weighted formula: Instructor's Critique (50%), Average of the Student Critiques (40%), and Self-Critique (10%).

Forty-Five Week Preaching Plan: Students will prepare a forty-five-week preaching plan. The plan will include a selected for each week, a title for the sermon, and a description of each sermon that includes the selected text's claim, the sermon's focus and the sermon's function (no more than 100 words). **Due November 27.**

Final Exam Sermon: Students will orally present a twenty (20) to twenty-five (25) minute sermon from a text of their selection. In addition to the oral presentation, student will submit a written outline or manuscript of the sermon and submit any exegetical notes that were used in preparing the sermon. Other students will offer a critique of the sermon using a rubric that will be provided. Each student will also critique themselves. The grade for the final will be calculated using the following weighted formula: Instructor's Critique (50%), Average of the Student Critiques (40%), and Self-Critique (10%).

Pre-Course Assignments:

1. Read Chapter 1 of Long's, *The Witness of Preaching* and write a 2-3 page reflection paper on the images of the preacher. Which image in the chapter best describes you? What others images could be used to describe a preacher? Reflect on the strengths and weaknesses of each image in your ministry context and experiences. **Due September 18.**
2. Attend the First Things Lecture (9/11/17) at the University Avenue Church of Christ and submit a 500-word reflection on the lecture. **Due September 18.**

Note: All written papers are to be in Times New Roman, 12 point, and double spaced.

Class Schedule

- September 4 Labor Day (No Class)
- September 11 First Things Lecture – University Avenue Church of Christ
- September 18 Course Introduction
The Theology of Preaching
Readings: Long - Chapter 1 and Craddock - Chapters 1-2
Reflection Papers Due: The Image of the Preacher, First Things Lecture
- September 25 A Word from the Lord
Preaching Old Testament Narratives (2 Samuel 11-12)
Readings: Long – Chapters 2-3
Reflection Paper Due: What We Bring to the Text
- October 2 Focus and Function of the Sermon
Preaching Old Testament Prophetic Texts (Hosea 1-2)
Readings: Long – Chapter 4 and Craddock - Chapters 3-4
Exercise Due: Focus and Function Statements
- October 9 The Form of the Sermon
Preaching the Psalms (Psalms 120-134)
Readings: Long – Chapters 5-6 and Craddock – Chapters 5-6
Exercise Due: Experimenting with Forms
- October 16 Mid-Term Homilies
Preaching the Gospels (Matthew 5-7, Mark 1-2, John 8-9, Luke 22-24)
- October 23 Beginnings and Endings
Preaching from Acts (Acts 15-17)
Readings: Long – Chapter 7 and Craddock – Chapter 16
Exercise Due: Introductions and Conclusions
- October 30 Illustrations, Analogies, and Personal Experiences
Preaching from Paul (Philippians, Galatians)
Readings: Long – Chapter 8 and Craddock – Chapters 7-10
Exercise Due: Finding the Right Illustration
- November 6 **Book Reviews Due**– Discussion of *The Preaching Life*
Plagiarism and Other Pitfalls of Preaching
Readings: Long – Chapter 9
- November 13 Sermon Planning
Preaching the Epistles (1 John, Jude, 2 Peter)
Readings: Long – Chapters 10-11 and Craddock – Chapters 14, 17

November 20	TBD – Thanksgiving Week
November 27	Weddings and Funerals Technology and Multimedia Resources Preaching Plan Due
December 4	Final - Sermon Presentations
December 11	Final - Sermon Presentations

***** Please note that the schedule is tentative and is subject to change. As of now, the plan is NOT to meet the week of Thanksgiving. However, we will discuss Thanksgiving week on the first day of class and make a final decision then.**