

Ministry 4320
Ministry in the Local Church

Instructor: Greg Neill

Austin Graduate School of Theology

Spring 2017

Thursdays 7:00 to 9:40 PM

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**Available by appointment at AGST on Thursday Afternoons
(in Marble Falls on Mondays and Tuesdays)**

I. Course Goals

The student will articulate major elements of a coherent Christian worldview and be able to communicate this effectively in a local church or parachurch setting. Specifically, through the successful completion of this course, the student will demonstrate familiarity with the work of a minister in a local context. The student will display a working knowledge and appreciation of the basic theology, attitude and skills necessary for ministry in the local church. The student will have an introductory understanding of what is involved in various congregational vocations. This awareness will be gained through regular lectures as well as presentations by and interaction with those who are currently involved in various traditional as well as innovative ministries. All this will be supplemented with reading, theological reflection, group discussions and exercises, and drafting a Philosophy/Theology of Ministry. The theme of the course is understanding ministry as serving the church, with an emphasis on equipping the church for ministry.

II. Course Objectives

1. The student will be able to clearly articulate and assess an understanding of ministry as a response to the commands to love God and love neighbor.
2. The student will gain a practical appreciation of ministry that equips others for ministry. The student will be able to clearly articulate and effectively assess how this understanding impacts and clarifies his/her own ministry definition and vocational direction.
3. The student will compare and evaluate a number of different approaches to ministry and different areas of ministerial focus as demonstrated by guest presenters who are leading these ministries.
4. The student will show a working knowledge of basic pastoral care skills, along with the ability to assess more critical needs and make referrals.
5. The student will show an understanding of the necessity of spiritual formation.
6. The student will understand the basic dynamics of family systems.
7. The student will exhibit a basic understanding of servant-leadership as modeling, mentoring, equipping, empowering and encouraging.
8. Thus, the student will grasp and apply a model of authority which is “authentically authoritative” rather than autocratic and authoritarian.

III. Means of Assessment

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|--|-----------|
| 1. Meaningful participation in class discussion | 15 points |
| 2. Weekly reflection papers from assigned readings | 25 points |
| 3. Case Study Group Project | 10 points |
| 4. Rule of Life paper | 5 points |
| 5. Book Review | 20 points |
| 6. Philosophy/Theology of Ministry paper | 25 points |

IV. Explanation of Assessments

All written works must use correct grammar, spelling, punctuation, etc. They must be clearly identified on a cover sheet by topic and student name, double-spaced twelve-point type with one-inch margins, clear and thorough enough to be useful to classmates. Students will provide the instructor with electronic and hard copies. Papers will be discussed in class.

Weekly Reflection Papers will offer theological reflections on the assigned weekly readings. The paper should seek to determine the author's purpose, the theological significance, and the practical application of the reading. The reflection papers are to be 1-2 pages in length. In addition to the reflections on the weekly readings, students will be asked to submit an outline for a funeral service or wedding ceremony.

For the funeral service/wedding ceremony outline students will be assigned a hypothetical background for a funeral, such as an elderly church member who passed away from natural causes or a younger person who died because of an accident, or a wedding, such as a younger couple's first marriage or two widowed people marrying again. Student will create a 1-2 page outline of the service or ceremony that includes an order of the service, suggested scriptures, different components of the service or ceremony.

***Students may skip one week of the reflection papers with the exception of the funeral/wedding outline.

The case study will involve working as a group to analyze a situation in a church context. The analysis will include identifying the components of the family system and suggesting possible interventions to address the situation. The group will present the case study to the class and submit a 2-3 page paper summarizing the analysis.

The Rule of Life Paper can follow any format that proves most beneficial to your personal spiritual formation. The 1-2 page paper should outline spiritual principles and practices by which the individual seeks to use in future spiritual growth and maturity.

The Book Review will address these kinds of questions: What is the author's thesis and main supporting points? How well and convincingly are the points made; how could they have been better presented? Where do you agree and where do you disagree with the author? What issues does the author fail to address? What is the best sentence or paragraph in the book? How does this book speak to the work of ministry and especially to your own ministry? Choices of books are indicated below. The paper should be 3-5 pages in length. The book reviews will be presented in class near the end of the semester.

The Philosophy/Theology of Ministry Paper will clearly and thoughtfully articulate your overall philosophy and theology of ministry; answering the question, “What is ministry, theologically, practically, personally, and communally?” Then your particular vision of the specific ministry context to which you are called--what are your own ministry plans? How does your philosophy/theology of ministry inform and shape those particular plans? Your answers to these questions should interact with your lived experiences, scripture, and key theological principles developed in class and from the reading assignments. Finally, it should be “fleshed out” with practical details which lead you to an informed and viable job description for your specific vocation within the local church. The paper should be 5-7 pages in length and will serve as the final exam.

V. Required Texts

Bonhoeffer, Dietrich. *Spiritual Care*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1985.

Nouwen, Henri J. M. *Creative Ministry*. New York: Doubleday, 2003.

Peterson, Eugene. *Working the Angles*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987.

Steinke, Peter L. *A Door Set Open*. Herndon, VA: The Alban Institute, 2010.

VI. Class Schedule

- 1/19 **Theology and Ministry:** Introductions, What Is God Doing in the World?
- 1/26 **Ministry in Context:** Where Does Ministry Occur?
Nouwen: Intro and Chapter 1 Reflection Paper Due
- 2/2 **Scripture and Ministry:** The Nature and Function of Scripture in the Church
Nouwen: Chapters 2-3 Reflection Paper Due
- 2/9 **A Rule of Life:** The Minister's Personal Spiritual Formation
Nouwen: Chapters 4-5 and Conclusion Reflection Paper Due
- 2/15 **Responding to God:** The Power of Prayer in Ministry
Peterson: Chapters 1-3 Reflection Paper Due
- 2/22 **Preaching and Teaching:** The Minister as Theologian and Prophet
Peterson: Chapters 4-6 Reflection Paper Due, Rule of Life Paper Due
- 3/2 **Team Building:** Assembling Human Resources
Peterson Chapters 7-9 Reflection Paper Due
Case Studies Assigned
- 3/9 **Leading the Church:** The Leadership Function of the Minister
Case Study Group Meetings
- 3/16 **SPRING BREAK**
- 3/23 **Interconnected:** Family Systems, Traditions, and History
Steinke: Chapters 1-3 Reflection Paper Due
- 3/30 **What Ought To Be:** Navigating The Winds of Change
Steinke: Chapters 4-6 Reflection Paper Due
- 4/6 **Ancient Future:** Finding Our Future in the Wisdom of the Past
Steinke: Chapters 7-9 Reflection Paper Due
Case Study Presentations
- 4/13 **Pastoral Care Part 1:** Ministering to the Sick, the Sinful, and Stressed
Bonhoeffer: Chapters 1-6 Reflection Paper Due
- 4/20 **Pastoral Care Part 2:** Weddings, Funerals, and Everything Else
Bonhoeffer: Chapters 7-12 Reflection Paper Due
- 4/27 **Book Reviews:** Student Presentations of the Book Reviews
- 5/4 **The Business of Ministry:** Finances, Time Management, Relocating
Funeral/Wedding Outline Due
- 5/11 **Philosophy/Theology of Ministry Papers Due @ 9:00 PM**

**** Throughout the semester, we plan to hear from other ministers in varying contexts via Skype or in the classroom. ****

VII. Selection of Books For Book Reviews

Bonhoeffer, Dietrich. *The Cost of Discipleship*. New York: Touchstone, 1995.

Cukrowski, Kenneth L., Mark W. Hamilton, James W. Thompson. *God's Holy Fire: The Nature and Function of Scripture*. Abilene: ACU Press, 2002.

Endo, Shusaku. *Silence*. New York: Taplinger Publishing, 1980.

Hicks, John Mark. *Enter The Water, Come To The Table*. Abilene: ACU Press, 2011).

Johnson, Luke Timothy. *Prophetic Jesus, Prophetic Church*. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 2011.

Killen, Patricia O'Connell and John de Beer. *The Art of Theological Reflection*. New York: Crossroad Publishing, 2014.

Lewis, C.S. *Mere Christianity*. New York: Harper Collins, 2001.

Peterson Eugene H. *Answering God: The Psalms As Tools For Prayer*. New York: Harper One, 1989.

Rice, Howard. *The Pastor as Spiritual Guide*. Nashville: Upper Room Books, 1998.

Steinke, Peter L. *How Your Church Family Works*. Herndon, VA: The Alban Institute, 2006.

Switzer, David K. *Pastoral Care Emergencies*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2000.

Taylor, Barbara Brown. *An Altar in the World*. New York: Harper Collins, 2009.

Thompson, James W. *Pastoral Ministry According to Paul*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2006.

Tippens, Darryl. *Pilgrim Heart: The Way of Jesus in Everyday Life*. Abilene: Leafwood Publications, 2006.

Tozer, A.W. *The Knowledge of the Holy*. New York: Harper One, 2009.

Webber, Robert E. *Ancient Future Faith: Rethinking Evangelicalism for a Post-Modern World*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 1999.

VIII. Bibliography

- Ammerman, Nancy T., Jackson Carroll, Carl S. Dudley, and William McKinney. *Studying Congregations: A New Handbook*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1998.
- Blanchard, Ken. *Leading at A Higher Level*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 2007.
- Branson, Mark Lau and Juan F. Martínez. *Churches, Cultures and Leadership: A Practical Theology of Congregations and Ethnicities*. Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 2011.
- Branson, Mark Lau. *Memories, Hopes, and Conversations: Appreciative Inquiry and Congregational Change*. Herndon, Virginia: Alban, 2004.
- Bonhoeffer, Dietrich. *Spiritual Care*. Translated by J. C. Rochelle. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1985.
- _____. *The Cost of Discipleship*. NY: MacMillan, 1959.
- Bullard, George W. *Pursuing the Full Kingdom Potential of Your Congregation*. St. Louis: Chalice Press, 2005.
- Callahan, Kennon L. *Twelve Keys to an Effective Church: Strong, Healthy Congregations Living in the Grace of God*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2010.
- Calhoun, Adele Ahlberg. *Spiritual Disciplines Handbook: Practices that Transform Us*. IVP, 2005.
- Cukrowski, Kenneth L., Mark W. Hamilton, James W. Thompson. *God's Holy Fire: The Nature and Function of Scripture*. Abilene: ACU Press, 2002.
- Dale, Robert D. *Keeping the Dream Alive: Understand and Building Congregational Moral*. Nashville: Broadman Press, 1988.
- _____. *To Dream Again: How to Help Your Church Come Alive*. Nashville: Broadman Press, 1981.
- Farley, Edward. *Practicing Gospel*. Westminster John Knox, 2003.
- Foster, Richard, and James Bryan Smith (Eds.). *Devotional Classics*. San Francisco: Harper San Francisco, 1993.
- Gorman, Michael J. *Becoming the Gospel: Paul, Participation and Mission*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2015.
- _____. *Inhabiting the Cruciform God: Kenosis, Justification and Theosis in Paul's Narrative Soteriology*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009.
- Harder, Cameron. *Discovering the Other: Asset-Based Approaches For Building Community Together*. Lanhan, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2013.
- Herrington, Jim, Mike Bonem and James Furr. *Leading Congregational Change: A Practical Guide for the Transformational Journey*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2000.

- Hiebert, Paul G. *The Gospel in Human Contexts: Anthropological Explorations for Contemporary Missions*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2009.
- Johnson, Luke Timothy. *Prophetic Jesus, Prophetic Church*. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 2011.
- Killen, Patricia O'Connell, and John DeBeer. *The Art of Theological Reflection*. NY: Crossroad, 1995.
- Lewis, C.S. *Mere Christianity*. New York: Harper Collins, 2001.
- McGrath, Alister. *Christian Spirituality: An Introduction*. Oxford: Blackwell, 1999.
- Moschella, Mary Clark. *Ethnography as a Pastoral Practice*. Cleveland: Pilgrim Press, 2008.
- Nouwen, Henri J. *Creative Ministry*. New York: Doubleday, 2003.
- Osmer, Richard R. *Practical Theology An Introduction*. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2008.
- Peterson, Eugene H. *Answering God: The Psalms As Tools For Prayer*. New York: Harper One, 1989.
- _____. *The Pastor*. New York: HarperOne, 2011.
- _____. *Working the Angles: The Shape of Pastoral Integrity*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987.
- Rice, Howard. *The Pastor as Spiritual Guide* (Nashville: Upper Room Books, 1998).
- Russell, Norman. *Fellow Workers with God: Orthodox Thinking on Theosis*. Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2009.
- Schwarz, Christian A. *The All By Itself Pathway*. St. Charles, IL: Church Smart Resources, 2015.
- Steinke, Peter L. *A Door Set Open: Grounding Change in Mission and Hope*. Herndon, VA: The Alban Institute, 2010.
- _____. *How Your Church Family Works*. Herndon, VA: The Alban Institute, 2006.
- Stevens, Paul and Phil Collins. *The Equipping Pastor: A Systems Approach to Congregational Leadership* (New York: The Alban Institute, 1993).
- Swinton, John and Harriet Mowat. *Practical Theology and Qualitative Research*. London: SCM Press, 2013.
- Switzer, David K. *Pastoral Care Emergencies*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2000.
- Taylor, Barbara Brown. *An Altar in the World*. New York: Harper Collins, 2009.
- Thompson, James W. *Pastoral Ministry According to Paul*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2006.
- Webber, Robert E. *Ancient-Future Faith: Rethinking Evangelicalism for a Postmodern World*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 1999.
- Westerhoff, John H. *Will Our Children Have Faith?* Revised and expanded. Toronto: Morehouse Publishing, 2000.

Willard, Dallas. *Renovation of the Heart: Putting on the Character of Christ*. Colorado Springs: NAV Press, 2002.

Williams, D. H. *Evangelicals and Tradition*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2005.

Wright, N. T. *After You Believe: Why Christian Character Matters*. San Francisco: HarperOne, 2011.