

HARDWIRING FAITH MATURITY IN CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Vancouver School of Theology

July 11-15, 2016

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Course Description: During this course we will explore the spiritual lives of children and youth, practice different teaching methods that lead to greater understanding of faith, and analyze different resources designed for ministry with believers ages 0-18.

This will be done through lecture, discussion, media, and most importantly through course participants sharing their resources and experiences.

Goals: To understand contemporary views of the spiritual lives of children and youth
To develop strategies for empowering parents and church workers to guide children and youth into faith maturity

Objectives: Participants will:

- Read and apply contemporary theories of spiritual development and brain research to their ministry with young disciples.
- Practice different forms of engaging the spiritual lives of children and youth.
- Develop an action plan for implementing the learning in church and/or home

Required Reading:

Miller, Lisa. *The Spiritual Child: The New Science on Parenting for Health and Lifelong Thriving*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 2015.

Allen, Holly Catterton and Christine Lawton Ross. "Why Bring the Generations Back Together? The benefits of Intergenerationality" in *Intergenerational Christian Formation: Bringing the Whole Church Together in Ministry, Community and Worship*. Downer's Grove, Illinois: IVP Academic, 2012.

Csinos, David. "Four Ways of Knowing God: Exploring Children's Spiritual Styles" in *Journal of Childhood and Religion*. Volume 1, Issue 8 (December 2010). Available electronically here: <http://childhoodandreligion.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/Csinos-Dec-2010.pdf>

Fowler, James W. and Mary Lynn Dell. "Stages of Faith from Infancy Through Adolescence: Reflections on Three Decades of Faith Development Theory" in *The Handbook of Spiritual Development in Childhood and Adolescence*. Thousand Oaks: Sage, 2006.

Course Requirements

For all students: Attendance is expected during all five class sessions. It is assumed that participants will come prepared to engage the assigned reading and be open to other interactive strategies as we move through each session. It will probably be helpful to read the Lisa Miller book in advance of the course and then simply skim the book to refresh ones memory before each on campus class.

For certificate students: Choose one of the strategies presented and practiced in class and develop an action plan for your church or home. For instance, if you chose sharing in children and adolescent literature, you could develop an annotated bibliography of recommended literature and discussion questions for each book. This project should be 5-7 pages in length. Paper is due no later than August 31, 2016.

For MA/MDiv/ThM students registered for academic credit: Develop an action plan that combines 2-3 strategies presented and practiced in class for your church or home. Consider developing a scope and sequence for rolling out these strategies over the course of the year and not specific recommended resources that you would use. Include a rationale that draws on contemporary theories presented in class for why these strategies will be effective in guiding children and youth to faith maturity. If presenting this action plan as a paper the length should be 12-13 pages (3000 words) for MA/MDiv students and 20-25 pages (6000 words) for ThM students. As an alternative degree students can create a web presence for their church families that would connect church and home by providing resources for families to use in nurturing faith. This web site could use a separate tab for each strategy suggested to families. A separate paper rationale would still be required. Assignment is due no later than August 31, 2016.

SCHEDULE OF COURSE READINGS AND ASSIGNMENTS

Monday, July 11

Themes: From Fowler to Brain Research—what are scholars thinking about the spiritual development of children and youth?

Strategy: Connecting Church and Home

Required Reading:

Miller (Introduction through Chapter 3)

Fowler and Dell chapter

Helpful Web Resources:

Hardwired to Connect introduction with Lisa Miller

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PwvYa4eOZXo>

Lisa Miller's TEDx Talk for Teachers College

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mhu5rPf2FDI>

Short YouTube summary of Fowler's Faith Development Stages:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=icp85esMTn8>

St. Andrews Episcopal Church FISH Program <http://standrewsfish.weebly.com>

Tuesday, July 12

Themes: From individual to corporate—how do parents and church workers engage children and youth in expressing their faith?

Strategy: Asking Meaningful Questions

Required Reading:

Miller (Chapters 4-7)

Csinos Article

Helpful Web Resources:

Dave Csinos talking about his research:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wva1VkfU9BE>

Bloom's Taxonomy Question Stems

<http://goldenwestcollege.edu/wpmu/iec/files/2010/04/Questions-Using-Blooms-Taxonomy.pdf>

Godly Play, Canada <http://godlyplay.ca>

Wednesday, July 13

Themes: Pressing the Puberty Button- how does the spiritual life change at adolescence?

Strategy: Sharing in children and adolescent literature and media

Required Reading:

Miller (Chapters 8-10)

Helpful Web Resources:

Lisa Miller's TEDx Talk on Depression and Spiritual Awakening – aligned with ch. 10 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7c5t6FkvUG0>

Storypath Site from Union Presbyterian Seminary- <http://storypath.upsem.edu>

Visual Parables (Movie Reviews and Study Guides with a spiritual focus)
<http://www.readthespirit.com/visual-parables/>

Thursday, July 14

Themes: Continuing on the Spiritual Journey- how can adolescents and adults travel the road toward God together?

Strategy: Faith Practices for Parenting and Teaching Adolescents

Required Reading:

Miller (Chapters 11-13)

Helpful Web Resources:

Kenda Creasy Dean's Sermon on Paul and Eutychus-

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CJ6Kfvo4jc>

Practicing Our Faith- <http://www.practicingourfaith.org>

Friday, July 15

Themes: Growing in Faith with All Ages Together- what does it look like when we all learn our faith together in addition to learning our faith by age and stage? Also sharing of final project ideas

Strategy: Intergenerational Practices for Home and Church

Required Reading:

Allen and Ross chapter

Helpful Web Resources:

Scottie May from Wheaton College talks about Intergenerational Services in a podcast-

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pMWC2bNtC7A>

Faith 5 Plan through Faith Inkubators- <http://faith5.org>

Hope4CE Intergenerational Posts-

<https://hope4ce.net/category/developmental-designs/intergenerational/>

Reading List for Hardwiring Faith Maturity in Children and Youth

Required Reading

Miller, Lisa. *The Spiritual Child: The New Science on Parenting for Health and Lifelong Thriving*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 2015.

Allen, Holly Catterton and Christine Lawton Ross. "Why Bring the Generations Back Together? The benefits of Intergenerationality" in *Intergenerational Christian Formation: Bringing the Whole Church Together in Ministry, Community and Worship*. Downer's Grove, Illinois: IVP Academic, 2012. [I can provide a pdf of this chapter for Moodle if desired.]

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Additional Recommended Books

Berryman, Jerome. *The Complete Guide to Godly Play* (Volumes 1-8) Morehouse Educational Resources, 2012.

Bunge, Marcia J., general editor. *The Child in the Bible*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2008.

Caldwell, Elizabeth F. *Making a Home for Faith: Nurturing the Spiritual Life of your Children*. Cleveland: Pilgrim Press, 2007, revised edition.

Dean, Kenda Creasy and Ron Foster. *The Godbearing Life: The Art of Soul Tending for Youth Ministry*. Nashville: Upper Room, 2005 edition.

Yust, Karen Marie. *Real Kids, Real Faith: Practices for Nurturing Children's Spiritual Lives*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2004.