Ecotheology and the Spirit
People, Animals, and Earth

Instructor: Jay McDaniel
Meeting Time: 9:00 – 12:00 pm
Office Hours: By appointment, glad to visit.

This course introduces you to an intellectual, practical, and spiritual movement found throughout the world called *Ecotheology*. I like to think of Ecotheology as How Jane Goodall looks at the world. It emphasizes living with respect and care for the community of life, attentive to the needs of people, animals, and the earth; and finding spiritual resonance in the more than human world: hills and rivers, trees and stars. The overall nature of the movement is described in an essay I have written which you can find in PDF form at the bottom of this webpage. [What is Ecotheology? It’s how Jane Goodall looks at the World.](#)
The various subjects listed below – Five Foundations for a New Civilization, Our Kin the Animals, Wisdom from Buddhism, The Vision of Pope Francis, The Vision of John Cobb, The Vision of Thomas Berry -- form the learning goals of this course. By the time you complete the course, you will be able to present and discuss these subjects with friends, family members, teachers, colleagues, and workers. You will also be able to integrate them into your life calling, whatever it happens to be. You do not need to be religious to enjoy this course. But it probably helps if you have a sense of beauty.

Assignments prior to class

Please have read my “Ecotheology and the World’s Religions” prior to class.
Please have perused. *Laudato Si: On Care for Our Common Home (Encyclical Letter, 2015)*

Assignments during our week in class

Day One. Introduction to Ecotheology

Primary Online Reading (required reading prior to class time). 1, 2, 3, 4
Laudato Si: Chapters One and Two


Day Two. Animals

Primary Online Reading (required reading prior to class time). 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10
Secondary Online Reading (as time allows). 11, 12
Laudato Si. Chapters Three and Four


Day Three. Wisdom from Buddhism

Primary Reading (required reading prior to class time). 14, 15, 16
Secondary Reading (as time allows). 17
Laudato Si. Chapters Four, Five, Six


Day Four.  Wisdom from John Cobb and Pope Francis

Primary Online Reading (required reading prior to class time).  18, 19, 20, 21, 22

Thomas Berry.  Selected Writings on the Earth Community.  Introduction, Chapters 1–3


Day Five.  Thomas Berry

Primary online reading.  23

Thomas Berry.  Selected Writings of the Earth Community.  Chapters 6, 8, 9

**Requirements.**

**For Certificate Students.**

A 5–7 page paper reflecting on the learning to define the context of your personal leadership strategy is due August 31, 2016.

**For MA/MDiv/ThM students registered for academic credit.**

Two assignments: (1) A three–to–five page reflection paper on Ecotheology, due August 10, 2016; (2) a final paper defining on a topic of interest in Ecotheology, established in consultation with the professor, due August 31, 2016.

**Bibliography**


Pope Francis, Laudato Si. On Care for our Common Home, Encyclical Letter, @2015, Vatican City
