LS/SP503  TEACHING RETREAT:  
THE ANGLICAN SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM

Dates: November 1—3, 2019  
Instructor: Grant Rodgers  
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604-822-9815  
Bethlehem Retreat Centre, Nanaimo  
1 credit  

Course description:  
For Anglicans, Baptism has been understood as the primary sacrament, the symbolic entry point into life in Christ. Whether or not it is a definitive sacrament depends on a lot of factors. In addition to understanding the history and theology of Baptism in the Christian tradition, Anglican priests are expected to be competent leaders in presiding at sacramental worship, and to do so must be trained in various aspects of sacramental practice:

- The planning and conduct of liturgical rites
- The integration of the presider’s personality and the role/persona involved in presiding at public worship.
- The teaching, preparation and pastoral care of those seeking Baptism

Prerequisite: This retreat, part of the Anglican Formation program, is open to Anglican M.Div. students unless by special permission from the Instructor

In this three-day residential retreat, students will be expected to

- observe a discipline of corporate prayer, centered on the theme of Baptism, in the context of a community which prays, reflects, dines, and lives together
- reflect on the meaning of sacraments as that applies to the practice of Baptism
- develop a familiarity with the contemporary Anglican service of Baptism by examining its contents and components, and by comparing the contents and emphases of the BCP order for Baptism
- reflect upon a variety of baptismal theologies and approaches to initiation including infant and adult-only Baptism
- Consider how to approach Baptism in a parish or other context (e.g. hospital)
- reflect on Baptism from the point of view of those seeking it by creating a hypothetical “examination of the parish” by the candidates
- practice the liturgical movements, gestures and other aspects of ritual involved in presiding at Baptism
Course Competencies:
Students who complete the course will be able to demonstrate familiarity with Anglican traditions and teachings about Baptism, and the symbolism and use of water, font and liturgical space. They will be able to offer pre-Baptismal preparation to seekers who may or may not be familiar with Christian and Church practices, they will be able to articulate some of the questions that seekers might ask in assessing whether Baptism would be a good choice for them; and they will have developed at least the beginnings of a liturgical style for presiding that is personally and corporately appropriate.

By writing the 7 page assignment paper, participants will become better able to articulate their own their personal theology of Baptism, and how they would communicate the priority and meaning of Baptism in a parish context.

Texts:
Kenneth Stevenson; *The Mystery of Baptism in the Anglican Tradition*
World Council of Churches, *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry* – excerpt provided
The Book of Common Prayer, Anglican Church of Canada
The Book of Alternative Services, Anglican Church of Canada

Recommended Reading:
Robert Ross, *Preparing for Baptism Using the Book of Alternative Services*, ABC
Leonard Sweet, *Aqua Church*, 1999
Nick and Hazel Whitehead, *Baptism Matters*, National Society/Church House Publishing
Stewart C. Zabriskie, *Total Ministry: Reclaiming the Ministry of All of God’s People*, Alban Institute No. AL164
**Requirements:**
- attendance at all sessions in the residential setting (Bethlehem Retreat Centre, Nanaimo).
- active participation in discussions and group work during the course.
- Completion of assignments on time

**Evaluation:**

Evaluation will be based on participation and interaction in the course presentations and communal life of the retreat, with VST’s “Readiness for Ministry” criteria, the learning covenant, and the course competencies in mind; as well as the degree to which, through the written assignment, the student articulates his/her understanding of Anglican theory and practice.

Students will give evidence in their written assignment of having heard and understood the material presented at the retreat, and demonstrate familiarity with the assigned text(s). Each student will meet with the Instructor for a minimum of one hour to discuss and clarify (where necessary) their written assignment. The student is to take the initiative in arranging that meeting prior to the deadline specified.

Credit will be recommended once the written assignment has been handed in, discussed with the instructor, and approved by the instructor. A re-write may be requested if the paper does not meet the criteria, and credit deferred until such time as the requirements have been met.

Submission of assignments on time is a part of academic, professional and pastoral competence and a part of every course at VST. Late assignments and requests for extensions must be requested of the Instructor, based on medical or other real need, and will need to be approved by the Dean, The Rev. Dr. Pat Dutcher-Walls.

**Retreat Centre Fees:**

Each student attending this retreat is responsible for paying a $50 retreat accommodation fee. The charge will be applied to the student’s account as a separate charge at the point when the student registers for the course. *After the end of the Add/Drop period, there will be no refund of the accommodation charge if a student withdraws from the course.* Under the usual policy on Fee Refunds and Withdrawals, tuition charges for the course will still be eligible for a refund but the accommodation charge will not.