

Melissa M. Skelton
melissamskelton@gmail.com
778 861-5160 (cell)

COURSE DESCRIPTION

HOM517 - Loosening the Tongue: The Practice of Preaching without Notes
Vancouver School of Theology SUMMER 2018

PURPOSE

The purpose of the course is to strengthen students' capacity to preach short homilies without notes that assist listeners in experiencing *metanoia* (a change in the way they see and respond to the world). In the course we will do this through focusing on the preacher's words, ideas, stories, ability to make a connection to listeners' lives and ability to create experiences for listeners that "stick." In addition, attention will be given to strengthen the preacher's presence, use of the voice and use of the body in preaching. Students will prepare and preach five brief sermons, and will receive specific feedback from their student colleagues in the above-mentioned areas.

EXPECTATIONS AND COMPETENCE OBJECTIVES

By the end of the course, students will have:

- Read the assigned texts and viewed the assigned videos and prepared and discussed assigned questions.
- Identified their own learning goals for strengthening their preaching based on the readings and discussion.
- Created five brief sermons using the same text but with different contexts in mind, delivered those sermons in class and received feedback on specific dimensions of the sermon and on identified learning goals.
- Identified key areas of learning from the course that they can apply to their back-home preaching process and sermons.

REQUIRED READINGS:

Chip and Dan Heath *Made to Stick: Why Some Ideas Survive and Others Die* (New York: Random House, 2007).

Chip and Dan Heath *The Power of Moments: Why Certain Experiences Have Extraordinary Impact* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2017).

Sondra B. Willobee *The Write Stuff: Crafting Sermons that Capture and Convince* (Westminster: John Knox/Westminster Press, 2009).

Viewing the following videos and prior to the first class outline the presentation/sermon and make lists of what "worked" for you and what didn't work.

- Dr. Brené Brown on the power of vulnerability,
http://www.ted.com/talks/brene_brown_on_vulnerability.html

- Fr. Greg Boyle on compassion and kinship,
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ipR0kWt1Fkc>
- The Rev. Ginger Gaines-Cerilli, “Easter,” from Foundry United Methodist Church:
<http://www.ustream.tv/recorded/60772496>
- The Rev. Roger Scholtz, “Distraction & Presence,” from Hyde Park United Methodist Church: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dguMxRxz4uY>
- The Rev. Dr. Charles Campbell, “An Unsettling Debut,” from Duke University Chapel,
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D_Dxa9xMmUY
- The Rev. Dr. Lillian Daniel, “Casting Out Demons,” from Duke University Chapel,
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j7YrkhGEZYQ>

ASSIGNMENTS

1. Reading and class participation: All Students including auditors are expected to do all the required readings and participate in class discussions. 100% attendance is required of Certificate and Degree students.
2. Certificate students: Certificate students are required to hand in 5-6 pages of writing that demonstrates the ability to thoughtfully engage the material and reading for the class and gives a personal reflection on the reading and material covered.
3. Basic degree students (Diploma; MA; M.Div): are required to do any required oral assignments during the course itself and submit any combination of written assignments totaling approximately 1500-1875 words/6-8 pages.
4. Advanced degree students (Th.M): are required to do any required oral assignments during the course itself and submit any combination of written assignments totaling approximately 3750-4250 words/15-17 pages.