COURSE DESCRIPTION
IPT/TH5/710 - A Theology of Subversive Friendship
Vancouver School of Theology SUMMER 2019

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PURPOSE:
In this course, students will engage with friendship as a subversive model of relationality. The
subversive face of the model is in contrast to many relationships dominated by immunity,
domination, and segregation, both in society and the church. Several theological questions are
thus worth addressing: Can we imagine the Triune God as Friendship that invites all to
participate in the divine Friendship? What is the best leadership model for today’s churches
based on this Trinitarian friendship? How do we engage with our non-Christian friends? Can we
“disturb” our closed churches to open up their doors and embrace a risky friendship with
strangers? What kind of spirituality can we embrace to live in such an unfriendly world? While
each topic reflects the Asian contexts, from where the instructor comes, the conversation will
open up ecumenical and intercultural possibilities.

EXPECTATIONS AND COMPETENCE OBJECTIVES:
Students will be expected to learn and demonstrate the ability to:
• Explain the Trinitarian basis and implication for a theology of friendship
• Identify leadership models in their communities using the lens of friendship model
• Discuss the promise and pitfalls of interfaith engagement in their own contexts
• Construct their ecclesiological imagination in the world of strangers
• Narrate their spiritual stories as Jesus’ companions

REQUIRED READINGS:
Class #1:
• Brian Edgar, God is Friendship: Theology of Spirituality, Community, and Society (Wilmore,
• Liz Carmichael, Friendship: Interpreting Christian Love (London & New York: T&T Clark,
  2004), 70-100.
• Aelred of Rievaulx, Spiritual Friendship, Cistercian Fathers Series: Number Five, trans.
  Lawrence C. Braceland, ed. Marsha L. Dutton (Trappist, KY: Cistercian Publications, 2010),
  53-69.

Class #2
• Brian Edgar, God is Friendship: Theology of Spirituality, Community, and Society (Wilmore,
• Joas Adiprasetya, “Pastor as Friend: Reinterpreting Christian Leadership,” Dialog, 57 no 1
  (2018), 47-52.
• Edward Zaragoza, No Longer Servants, but Friends: A Theology of Ordained Ministry
  (Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 1999), 61-81.

Class #3:

Class #4:

Class #5:

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.

Further details about assignments will be provided on the course syllabus.

5. SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Students are also encouraged to read the whole book from which chapters are used in the required readings above.
