

COURSE DESCRIPTION

DS515: Confessing the Faith: Worship, Creeds and Subordinate Standards in the Reformed Tradition (PCC) Fall Term 2019

*Instructor: The Rev. Dr. Ross Lockhart, Associate Professor, St. Andrew's Hall
Director of Presbyterian Formation, Vancouver School of Theology*

Purpose: To help students prepare for their role as leaders (Teaching & Ruling Elders) in the Presbyterian Church in Canada (PCC) by: (1) exploring ways of leading worship, both in weekly Sunday worship and special occasions; (2) examining the place of creeds and confessions in the PCC; and (3) exploring leadership resources initiating and implementing change that strengthens the missional focus of congregations.

Competence Objectives:

1. Students will *determine and describe* aspects that are essential to the Reformed understanding and practice of Christian worship;
2. Students will *demonstrate* knowledge of, and competency in leading various aspects of Reformed Christian Worship through classroom exercises and assignments;
3. Students will *identify and analyze* pressing issues of Reformed worship in the church and society today;
4. Students will *articulate and evaluate* the essential doctrinal claims within the historic creeds and confessions of the Christian Church, with particular focus on Reformed confessions;
5. Students will *engage and apply* the three subordinate standards of The Presbyterian Church in Canada to pastoral scenarios provided in class;
6. Students will *practice skills* for teaching doctrine and group facilitation for use in future Christian communities;
7. Students will *demonstrate* conscientiousness and willingness to take personal responsibility for learning, honesty and personal integrity in leadership.

Format: The class will meet weekly on Tuesday mornings throughout the fall beginning September 10th and ending November 26th. Classes will be spent in lecture, small group discussion and student presentations. Please note that all students are required to attend a Barriers Workshop on the PCC policy on sexual abuse and harassment as well as our Leading with Care policy during their time of study towards leadership in the PCC. If you have not already taken one, such a workshop will be arranged for you through your Presbytery.

Content: Class time and assignments will focus

- (1) on worship resources, including *The Book of Common Worship*, with an emphasis on the various parts of the worship service (order of service, prayers, reading of scripture, preaching, celebration of the Sacraments and music); including “hands on” practice of leading communion and baptism, how to officiate at weddings and funerals as well as how to implement positive change in worship patterns through a missional lens.
- (2) On an introduction to the confessions of faith that are subordinate standards of the PCC, with focus on the PCC’s *Confessing the Faith Today: the Nature and Function of Subordinate Standards*.
- (3) On readings and discussion of recent missional thinking on the kind of leadership required in today’s context for initiating and implementing congregational change.

Expectations: Attendance at classes, active and informed class participation, completion of reading assignments, quick ethnography assignment on a local church, class presentations and an essay are required. Integration with learning from other courses and life experience is expected. Familiarity with *The Book of Common Worship*, *Book of Praise*, and *Book of Forms* is assumed.

Evaluation: will be based on class attendance and participation, and on satisfactory preparation and completion of assignments. These will include class presentations prepared in advance called “Detective of Divinity Reports” and the writing of one properly researched paper.

Theologian Allan Lewis describes pastoral ministry as “the polygraph of theology.” How does our Reformed theology affect the practice of pastoral ministry in an increasingly secular and pluralistic Canadian context? How does our Reformed theology take shape as robust Christian witness in the challenging times of post-Christendom North America? Therefore, the final paper (Due December 10) will be a thoughtful response in 15 to 20 pages selecting:

- one (1) of the The Presbyterian Church in Canada’s Subordinate Standards (Westminster Confession, Declaration of Faith Concerning Church & Nation, or Living Faith);
- and the paper will reflect and explore how three (3) doctrinal beliefs in that statement might affect one (1) of the follow pastoral scenarios:

1. Baptism
2. Marriage
3. Funeral/Grief
4. Social justice issue
5. Congregation in conflict
6. Congregational Revitalization

Example:

Subordinate Standard Selected: Living Faith

Pastoral Scenario: #3 – Death of a church member.

Doctrines: Soteriology – 3.4 Jesus is Saviour to 3.6 Salvation in Christ

Belief and Assurance – 6.1 Faith/6.2 Doubt

Eschatology – 10. Our Hope in God

A paper is constructed offering an imagined pastoral scenario (a 35-year-old church member dies of cancer leaving behind a husband and two young children with a shocked church and broader community). Draw on the doctrines as described in Living Faith (as well as other theological resources on those doctrines you've studied in other classes) to describe your pastoral response to the situation. How would you lead as a pastor in this scenario? What is at stake theologically and how would you witness to the grace of Jesus Christ in that context?

Course Outline:

Tuesday, September 10 - 9 am to noon

Reformed and Reforming Worship: Why Worship?

Detective of Divinity Report Assignment due the following week: Quick Ethnographic Study of a local church service.

Tuesday, September 17 – 9 am to noon

Truth through personality? Preaching today

Detective of Divinity Report Due: Exegesis of the Situation, Text and Self

Tuesday, September 24 – 9 am to noon

Praying Attention: the discipline of public and private prayer for Christian leadership

Detective of Divinity Report Due: Write a prayer of Confession for Christmas Eve, a Prayer for Illumination for an Easter Sunday, a Prayer of Intercession for Remembrance Sunday.

Please read and come ready to discuss: Greenman, Jeffrey. *Pedagogy of Praise*. Vancouver: Regent Publishing, 2017.

Tuesday, October 1 – 9 am to noon

Sacraments: Baptism & The Lord's Supper

Detective of Divinity Report Due: Create a (maximum) 5 minute children's time on either Baptism or The Lord's Supper

Tuesday, October 8 – 9 am to noon

Weddings & Funerals

Detectives of Divinity Report Due: Write a brief (5 minute) wedding or funeral sermon

Read and come ready to discuss: Long, Thomas G. *Accompany Them with Singing: The Christian Funeral*. Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 2012.

Tuesday, October 15 – 9 am to noon

Creedal & Loving it: How Believing shapes Beholding, Belonging & Behaving

Introduction to the Apostle's Creed

Detectives of Divinity Report Due: Complete the "I believe" assignment creating your own statement of faith/creed.

The Westminster Confession

Detectives of Divinity Report Due: Select two of the 33 Chapters from the Westminster Confession and "re-write" them in modern day language while trying to maintain the original meaning. Just as Eugene Peterson paraphrased scripture in "The Message" so too will you "paraphrase" the Westminster Confession.

Please read and come ready to discuss: Lockhart, Ross A. *Lessons from Laodicea: Missional Leadership in a Culture of Affluence*. Eugene: Cascade, 2016.

Tuesday, October 22 – READING WEEK – NO CLASS

Tuesday, October 29 – 9 am to noon

The Declaration of Faith Concerning Church and Nation

Detectives of Divinity Report Due: Session has received several letters from congregation members requesting that the Canadian flag (and the Union Jack) be removed from the sanctuary of the Presbyterian Church. You receive these letters on the second Tuesday night of October the same night the Royal Canadian Legion sends a letter requesting a church parade for your November 11th Remembrance Sunday service. Write a thoughtful response on what you would do as the Pastor?

Tuesday, November 5 – 9 am to noon

Living Faith: A Statement of Christian Belief

Detectives of Divinity Report Due: You are teaching a confirmation class to teenagers using Living Faith. Create an outline of a session exploring Living Faith – what do you hope to communicate and how do you go about reaching your audience of teenagers. Be creative!

Please read and come ready to discuss: Jinkins, Michael. *The Church Transforming: What's Next for the Reformed Project?* Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 2012.

Tuesday, November 12 – 9 am to noon

Practice What You Preach I: Christian Leadership Today

Detective of Divinity Report Due: If you were abandoned on a deserted island, what three doctrines would you take with you and why? Please make reference to our subordinate standards in your 750-word response.

Come ready to discuss Tod Bolsinger's *Canoeing the Mountains: Christian Leadership in Uncharted Territory*.

Tuesday, November 19 – 9 am to noon

Practice What You Preach II: Christian Leadership Today

Come ready to discuss Matt Miofsky & Jason Byassee's *Eight Virtues of Rapidly Growing Churches*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2018.

Tuesday, November 26 – 9 am to noon

I'm (Not) Sorry: Reformed Apologetics and Confessing the Faith in a post-Christendom Canada

Please read and come ready to discuss: Hjalmarson, Len. *Soul of the City: Mapping the Spiritual Geography of Eleven Canadian Cities*. Portland: Urban Press, 2018.

Required Reading

Bolsinger, Tod. *Canoeing the Mountains: Christian Leadership in Uncharted Territory*. Downers Grove: IVP, 2018.

Greenman, Jeffrey. *Pedagogy of Praise*. Vancouver: Regent Publishing, 2017.

Hjalmarson, Len. *Soul of the City: Mapping the Spiritual Geography of Eleven Canadian Cities*. Portland: Urban Press, 2018.

Jinkins, Michael. *The Church Transforming: What's Next for the Reformed Project?* Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 2012.

- Lockhart, Ross A. *Lessons from Laodicea: Missional Leadership in a Culture of Affluence* Eugene: Cascade, 2016.
- Long, Thomas G. *Accompany Them with Singing: The Christian Funeral*. Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 2012.
- Miofsky, Matt & Jason Byassee. *Eight Virtues of Rapidly Growing Churches*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2018.
- Presbyterian Church in Canada, Board of Congregational Life, *The Book of Common Worship*. Toronto, PCC, 1991. (Students do NOT need to purchase)
- Presbyterian Church in Canada, *Confessing the Faith Today: The Nature and Function of Subordinate Standards: A study document for The Presbyterian Church in Canada*. PCC, Committee on Church Doctrine, 2003.
- Presbyterian Church in Canada, *Declaration of Faith Concerning Church and Nation*, www.presbyterian.ca
- Presbyterian Church in Canada, *Living Faith: A Statement of Christian Belief*. www.presbyterian.ca
- Presbyterian Church in Canada, *Westminster Confession*, www.presbyterian.ca

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- Chapman, Dean W. *How to Worship as a Presbyterian*. Louisville: Geneva Press, 2001.
- Clifford, N. Keith *The Resistance to Church Union in Canada: 1904-1939*. Vancouver: UBC Press, 1985.
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- Daniels, Harold M. *To God Alone Be Glory*. Louisville: Geneva Press, 2003.
- Dawn, Marva J. *Reaching Out Without Dumbing Down*. Eerdmans: Grand Rapids, 1995.
- Grant, John Webster *The Church in the Canadian Era*. Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 1972.
- Hart, D.G. *Recovering Mother Kirk: The Case for Liturgy in the Reformed Tradition*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2003.
- Hayes, Stephen "Presbyterian history holds some surprises" *Presbyterian Record*, October, 2004, 23.
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- Lapthrop, Gordon W. *Holy Ground: A Liturgical Cosmology*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2003.
- Leith, John. *The Reformed Imperative: What the Church Has to Say that No One Else Can Say*. Philadelphia: Westminster, 1988.
- Long, Thomas G. *Beyond the Worship Wars: Building Vital and Faithful Worship*. Hernden, Virginia: The Alban Institute, 2001.
- Milloy, John S. *A National Crime: The Canadian Government and the Residential School System, 1879-1986*. Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 1999.
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- Westminster Standards, *The Directory for the Public Worship of God*. 1645.
- White, James F. *Protestant Worship: Traditions in Transition*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1989.
- World Council of Churches: Faith and Order *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry*. Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1982.