“Evangelism is that dimension and activity of the church’s mission which seeks to offer every person, everywhere, a valid opportunity to be directly challenged by the gospel of explicit faith in Jesus Christ, with a view to embracing him as Saviour, becoming a living member of his community, and being enlisted in his service of reconciliation, peace and justice on earth.”

David Bosch, Transforming Mission

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Course Description:

This course is designed for students approaching ministry in pastoral and public contexts. Located in the field of Mission Studies, this course will attend specifically to contemporary issues in evangelism, by analyzing and studying the history, practice and effectiveness of how Christians share the gospel in the world, with a particular emphasis upon the Canadian context.

Purpose:

In her classic book on evangelism Out of the Saltshaker Rebecca Pippert confesses a time when, “there was a part of me that secretly felt evangelism was something you shouldn’t do to your dog, let alone a friend.” On the surface many kind-hearted Christians in Canada today would agree that the “E word” has become an embarrassing practice within the broader Christian movement. While reading Scripture on Sunday mornings in church is fine, speaking to others about their deep faith in Jesus where they live, work or play the rest of the week seems daunting to some and unseemly to others. While sanctuaries encourage people to flex their doxological muscles, the wider world can be a place where many Christians commonly experience “liturgical laryngitis.” And yet, the Triune God calls us to witness in the world. Like women running from
the empty tomb to proclaim the resurrection to others locked away in fear, we are sent Sunday by Sunday into the world with good news to share. At the heart of this course, is the desire to address the question of how we might best practice that sharing of good news with others, in a way that feels authentic and sensitive in a post-Christendom, pluralistic, and multi-faith world. Together, we will explore how to reclaim a “playful urgency” in sharing the gospel with others in partnership with the Holy Spirit’s ongoing reconciliation and redemption in the world.

Competence Objectives:

1. *Discern* the challenges and opportunities for practicing evangelism in a post-Christendom Western context, while developing an ability to *articulate* the essence of, and the urgency in, sharing the gospel as a means of participating in God’s reconciling mission in Christ to mend the world.

2. *Name and identify* a deep awareness of the missional pitfalls and fateful errors of evangelism linked with empire in our Christendom past, including the residential schools’ legacy with Indigenous peoples.

3. *Identify and assess* a variety of current evangelization models that build upon God’s agency in the world. By doing so, students will *evaluate* current approaches to evangelism vis-à-vis the reductionism that has been a shadow part of our mission history.

4. *Articulate* critical theological questions at stake in our attempt to build witnessing communities of Christian faith in the world today that engage in effective evangelistic practice.

Required Texts:


Texts are NOT on order at the UBC Bookstore. Instead, students should check for the required reading in the VST library or order online as ebooks or hardcopy or check with the Regent College Bookstore or another independent retail source.

**Format & Content:** This class meets weekly for three hours throughout the term. The primary format will be lecture and discussion based on the readings of the assigned texts, as well as an opportunity to practice and reflect on “E-Challenges” assigned throughout the course.

**Course Schedule:**

1. **Foundations for Evangelism Today**

Thursday, January 20

**Shouting Stones: The Biblical roots of Evangelism**

Please read *The Invitation*, pp. 1-131

*Evangelism After Christendom*, pp. 1-110.

*(What did you find most intriguing in reading about the biblical roots of evangelism? What did you find particularly challenging in today’s reading? What new insights into evangelism did you gain from the reading?)*

Thursday, January 27

**Good News & Bad News: The mixed history of Evangelism in the West**

Please read *The Unfolding Gospel*, pp. 1-122.

Watch Ray Aldred’s interview on 100 Huntley Street, “First Peoples Voices”:

[http://100huntley.com/watch?id=225553&title=first-peoples-voices--ray-aldred](http://100huntley.com/watch?id=225553&title=first-peoples-voices--ray-aldred)
as well as

http://100huntley.com/watch?id=225553&title=first-peoples-voices--ray-aldred

(What would you say to someone who asked you to explain how the church has hurt so many in its history of evangelism and mission? What could the Church be doing more effectively today to both acknowledge the good news and the bad news of evangelism’s past? Darrell Guder says that we must read the history of Christian mission and evangelism in the West dialectically – what do you think he means by that?)

Thursday, February 3

Saved to be Sent: How Evangelism today reverses the reductionism of Constantine’s gospel

Please read Evangelism after Christendom, pp. 111-170.

Please read The Unfolding Gospel, pp. 123-178.

(What was potentially lost and gained from Christianity being adopted as the State Religion of the Roman Empire in the 4th Century? What is an example of Christendom legacy still present in the Church today in Canada? What new insights into evangelism did you gain from the reading?)

2. Practicing Evangelism Today: Personal

Thursday, February 10

Elevator Speech for Jesus? Testimony as a Christian practice of evangelization


Daniel Silliman, “Gen Z Wants to Talk about Faith,” Christianity Today August 13, 2021:


*(What would be your elevator speech for Jesus that you could offer like it asks for in 1 Peter 3: 15? What advantages might there be to adopt Richards’ approach to evangelism that offers non-militaristic metaphors for evangelism? How might congregations better equip Christians to develop and share their testimonies with emerging generations?)*

Thursday, February 17

**The Five Thresholds: Helping people take steps towards faith in Jesus**

Please read *Breaking the Huddle*, pp. 1-138.

Watch the Five Threshold videos: [https://vimeo.com/showcase/3605316](https://vimeo.com/showcase/3605316)

Please read *Models of Evangelism*, pp. 31-48.

*(In your experience, what helps people take steps towards faith in Jesus? What holds some people back after showing interest in Christianity but then not following through with a commitment to becoming a Christian? What new insights into evangelism did you gain from the reading?)*

Thursday, February 24

**Gotta Serve Somebody: Evangelism in a world converted by consumerism**

Please read *Can I Believe?* pp. 1-90.

Please read *Models of Evangelism*, pp. 49-68.

*(Beyond religious conviction, what are the most powerful forces of conversion at work in Western Society today? What did you find particularly challenging in “Can I believe” when it came to choosing Christian faith over other beliefs? How might you frame an evangelistic invitation to someone who appears to “have it all?”)*

***Reflection Paper Due at the end of Class***

*Reading Week: February 28 to March 4*
Practicing Evangelism Today: Corporate

Thursday, March 10

**Missio Dei Methodology: How Missional Theology impacts the Church’s evangelism**

Please read *The Invitation*, pp. 141-219.

Please read *Models of Evangelism*, pp. 69-90.

(What is your understanding of what “missional church” means? What is the difference between mission and evangelism? How does the practice of evangelism change in light of an understanding of the Missio Dei?)

Thursday, March 17

**Celtic Evangelism: Lessons from St. Patrick’s leadership for today**


Please read *Can I Believe?* pp. 91-180.

Please read *Models of Evangelism*, pp. 91-112.

(What impressions do you bring into class about St. Patrick? What advantage might we gain from studying an evangelistic mission to a pre-Christian culture in our current post-Christendom context? What new insights into evangelism did you gain from the reading?)

Thursday, March 24

**Speaking to Itchy Ears: Evangelistic preaching in a mainline context**

Please read Judy Paulsen, “The Evangelism Spectrum” Good Ideas:

https://institute.wycliffecollege.ca/2018/06/the-evangelism-spectrum-where-are-you/

Please read Models of Evangelism, pp. 113-134.

*(What is necessary in the preaching of a sermon to make it “evangelistic?” What holds preachers back from making their sermon evangelistic? What might preachers do in their weekly proclamation of the gospel to more effectively equip members of the church to share their faith?)*

Thursday, March 31

**Great Commission Teams: Equipping the local church for evangelism**


Please read *Breaking the Huddle*, pp. 139-206.

Please read Models of Evangelism, pp. 135-156.

*(What specifically did you find most helpful in today’s reading for building evangelistic teams? What did you imagine is the most challenging part of helping congregations engage in a ministry of evangelism? What can a congregation do in evangelism more effectively that an individual cannot?)*

Thursday, April 7

**Can I get a witness? Evangelism’s future movement from tongue-tied to testimony**


Please read Ross Lockhart “Not Our House, but God’s” in Good Idea: [https://institute.wycliffecollege.ca/2021/03/not-our-house-but-gods/](https://institute.wycliffecollege.ca/2021/03/not-our-house-but-gods/)
Please read *Models of Evangelism*, pp. 157-190.

*(What model of evangelism do you find most compelling as we end our time of study together? What role do you see evangelism playing in the church of the future in North America? What questions remain regarding the role of evangelism moving forward?)*

**Assignments:**

Please note:

*Audit students* will complete:

- All reading as assigned by instructor
- Class participation

No letter grades will be given for the completion of courses by audit.

*Certificate students* will complete:

- All reading as assigned by instructor
- Class participation and group work
- A 3-credit course requires 9-12 pages; therefore, Certificate students will complete the mid-term personal reflection paper *but NOT* complete the final paper.

Written assignments should demonstrate the ability to thoughtfully engage the material and reading for the class while offering a personal reflection on the reading and material covered. Certificate courses will be evaluated on an Approved (APP) /Not Approved (NAPP) system. No letter grades will be given for the completion of certificate courses.

*Asynchronous Students* in Certificate and Basic Degree programs will also be required to submit to Professor Lockhart (by email at rlockhart@standrews.edu) a 500-word summary after watching the recording providing their top three insights from the class.

*Basic Degree students* will complete:

- All of the assignments below numbered 1 through 4.

*Advanced Degree students* will complete:
• All of the assignments below numbered 1 through 4, with #2 (mid-term) being 3,000 words and #4 (research paper) being 5,000 words.

1. **Class Participation and Expectations**

Consistent and timely attendance is required according to VST guidelines. This includes the completion of the assigned reading for each class with students ready to engage in discussion. *Students will be asked to read and summarize in class a chapter (model) of Priscilla Pope-Levison’s “Models of Evangelism” according to a presentation schedule developed in class.* If a student is unable to attend a class, Professor Lockhart is to be informed by email (rlockhart@standrews.edu). Smart Phones can be disruptive to the learning experience of other students. Please set all phones to silent during class. Sending texts and emails will be limited to breaktime.

2. **E-Challenges**

Students are expected to engage and reflect upon the challenges given to them weekly as part of the course. Whether they succeed or fail in the challenges is irrelevant. The student’s ability to reflect theologically on the practice is the critical part for learning in this course.

3. **Reflection Paper**

Students will submit a personal non-research reflection paper of 2,000 words in which they share what they understand evangelism to mean in the church and how they see themselves engaged in an evangelizing ministry. Included in this paper should be:

• A personal philosophy of evangelism (2 pages suggested)

• How evangelism would be incorporated into the student’s future ministry (2 pages suggested)

• An assessment of personal strengths and weaknesses that the student brings to the practice of evangelism (2 pages suggested)

• A continuing education plan that the student might employ to continue the develop of skills in the practice of evangelism after graduation (1 page)

DUE DATE: February 24th at the end of class.
4. Research Paper/Presentation

The final assignment is a 3,500-word paper that integrates and tests the student’s study, knowledge and practice of evangelism in this course through a specific “speech act.” The student will use the first 1,000 words to set the context for their talk, drawing on their learning from lectures, course readings, e-challenge insights and class discussion. The next 1,500 words will be used for the speech act or talk itself. The final 1,000 words will be used for theological reflection and analysis on what was communicated in and through the evangelistic encounter. The student’s first and last 1,000 words (context and analysis) will be supported by proper footnotes and bibliography. For example, the first 1,000 words might name the context as a university setting and draw on lectures and readings exploring particular aspects of evangelism for Millennials or Generation Z. The next 1,500 words would be an example of an evangelistic presentation made to a student gathering on a university campus. The final 1,000 words would analyze what was presented, and name the key theological concepts and principles that the speaker attempted to make and explain why they were important for this evangelistic presentation.

DUE DATE: April 20\textsuperscript{nd} by email to rlockhart@standrews.edu  \textit{(Graduating student deadline: April 14\textsuperscript{th})}

**Deadlines:**

Submission of assignments on time is a part of academic, professional and pastoral competence and a part of every course at VST. All assignments in courses are due on the dates specified in the syllabus for each course. Failure to submit an assignment on time will be noted in the narrative evaluation of an assignment. Repeated failure to submit assignments on time may affect the final grade for the course. All assignments are to be submitted electronically to Professor Lockhart at rlockhart@standrews.edu

**Selected Bibliography**


Honeycutt, Frank G. *Preaching for Adult Conversion and Commitment.* Nashville:


**Website Resources**

http://www.evangelismconnections.org

http://Presbyterian.ca/resources/resources-ef/ (Equipping for Evangelism and Mission)

http://institute.wycliffecollege.ca

http://www.christianitytoday.com/edstetzer/