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Homiletics HOM500

Fall, 2023

Course Description

PURPOSE: Whether you have been preaching for some time or have never attempted a sermon/homily, this course is designed to provide introductory level immersion in the various disciplines that comprise the field of homiletics. Therefore, we will engage in the practice of a homiletical exegesis of the lessons encountered in the Revised Common Lectionary, be in conversation with each other regarding our own homiletical formation, and explore various contexts for preaching. We will explore the biblical witness in preaching. With Dr. Cleophus LaRue, we will locate ourselves within the various domains of preaching, both personally and within our church traditions. A significant portion of the class will be devoted to homiletical method with several post-modern approaches to shaping the rhetoric and structure of the sermon being considered. The Intensive, on site, final two days of the class will serve as the “Preaching Lab” during which each student will preach and receive feedback from others in the class and the instructor.

PREREQUISITES: None

COMPETENCE OBJECTIVES:

- Reflect on your own homiletical formation and that provided by the student’s ecclesial location (denomination, theological commitments, etc.).
- Engage in the best practices of homiletical exegesis of biblical texts and demonstrate such competence in an exegesis paper focusing on a lesson that will serve as the text for the sermon preached during the Intensive.
- Explore important contexts for preaching including such topics as the lectionary and liturgical year, the liturgy and the Eucharist, preaching to the baptized, race and racism, and the environment
- Discuss the domains of preaching in small online group settings, both as proposed by LaRue and as supplemented by readings on Populi. Identify which domains appear most congruent with your own theological and social context and, in contrast, which domains you regard as more distance from your own.
- Gain practical knowledge of the homiletical methods of Ellen Davis, David Buttrick, Paul Scott Wilson and homileticians advocating a narrative methodology. This competency includes an ability to compare critically these homiletical methodologies and to apply one of them as the dominant shape of the sermon preached during the Intensive.

FORMAT AND CONTENT:

This class meets on the following Thursday afternoons for three hours, 2-5pm, during the fall semester, 2023: September 14, September 28, October 5, October 19, November 2, and November 16. An on-site Intensive “Preaching Lab” is scheduled for November 30 and December 1 (Thursday 2-5; 6-9 and Fri 9-12; 2-5).

The Instructor will teach the classes via Zoom (not in person), and students will connect via Zoom, synchronously only. If there is a cohort of local students who would like to join the classes from a VST classroom, VST will arrange a classroom and on-campus Tech Assistant.

Work in the course consists of classes including lectures, discussions and small group exercises, some prepared before class. Where they differ, expectations for fully distance students and any in-class cohort will be spelled out in the syllabus.

TEXTS:

Ellen Davis, with Austin McIver Dennis. *The Luminous Word*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2016. 97800802874238.

Richard L. Eslinger. *Preaching and the Holy Mystery*. Ashland City, TN: OSL Publications, 2016. 978-1878009722.

Cleophus J. LaRue. *The Heart of Black Preaching*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2000. 0-664-25847-6.

Thomas G, Long. *The Witness of Preaching*, 3rd ed. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2016. 0664261426.

(Please secure the third edition of the Long book since it incorporates numerous upgrades from the first and second editions.)

Barbara Brown Taylor. *The Preaching Life*, Lanham, MD: Cowley Publications, 1993. 10: 1-56101-074-X

(Please read the Taylor book over the summer.)

These books will be available at online bookstores.

All other course readings, articles and chapters listed in the weekly reading, will be found on Populi – access codes are provided with course registration.

EXPECTATIONS, ASSIGNMENTS AND EVALUATIVE CRITERIA

Pedagogical methods include lectures, several three-page reflection papers, class discussions, a homiletical exegesis on a pericope chosen from the Year B Incarnational Cycle of the Lectionary, and a sermon submitted in text form and preached during the Intensive “Preaching Lab.” Student participation in the on-going conversations and small group work will be of importance. Details for all assignments will be provided in the syllabus and other rubrics

Please note that the rhythm of the scheduled on-line classes alternates between one week and two week sequences. For example, following the opening three-hour Zoom gathering on September 14, there are two weeks that will involve advanced readings and project submissions (such as the

three-page exegesis on the lesson you have chosen from the Year B Advent/Christmas Cycle). This text and your exegesis will later become the Scripture for your sermon during the Intensive “Preaching Lab” that concludes the course. Following the two-week sequence from September 14th to the 28th, there will be only one week until we gather online once more on October 5th. This two-week and one-week alternation continues through the course with the Reading Week (10/23-28) making October 19th to November 2nd a one-week sequence. This alternation and the topics and assignments relevant to each sequence will be fully defined in the Syllabus.

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Blount, Brian K. *Invasion of the Dead: Preaching Resurrection*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2014.

Sally A. Brown. *Sunday’s Sermon for Monday’s World*. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 2020.

Brown, Theresa Fry. *Delivering the Sermon: Body, Voice, and Animation in Proclamation*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2008.

_____. *Weary Throats and New Songs: Black Women Proclaiming God’s Word*. Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2003.

Childers, Jana, ed. *Birthing the Sermon: Women Preachers on the Creative Process*. St. Louis, MO: Chalice Press, 2001.

David Buttrick. *Homiletic: Moves and Structures*. Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1987.

Richard L. Eslinger. *The Web of Preaching: New Options in Homiletic Method*. Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2002.

Kenyatta R. Gilbert. *Exodus Preaching: Crafting Sermons about Justice and Hope*. Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2018.

Hilkert, Mary Catherine. *Naming Grace: Preaching and the Sacramental Imagination*. London: Continuum, 1997.

Kim, Matthew and Daniel Wong. *Finding Our Voice: A Vision for Asian North American Preaching*. Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2020.

Lischer, Richard. *The End of Words: The Language of Reconciliation in a Culture of Violence*. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 2005.

Lord, Jennifer. *Finding Language and Imagery*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2010.

Eugene L. Lowry. *The Homiletical Plot: The Sermon as Narrative Art Form*, 2nd ed. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2001.

- McKenzie, Alyce. *Preaching Biblical Wisdom in a Self-Help Society*. Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2002.
- Henry H. Mitchell. *Black Preaching: The Recovery of a Powerful Art*, Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1990.
- Michael Monshau, ed., *Preaching at the Double Feast: Homiletics for Eucharist Worship*. Collegetown, MN: Liturgical Press, 2006.
- Powery, Luke. *Spirit Speech: Lament and Celebration in Preaching*. Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 2009.
- Robert Stephen Reid and Lucy Lind Hogan. *The Six Deadly Sins of Preaching: Becoming Responsible for the Faith We Proclaim*. Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2012.
- Schnasa Jacobsen David and Robert Kelly. *Kairos Preaching: Speaking Gospel to the Situation*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2009.
- Sancken, Joni. *Words That Heal: Preaching Hope to Wounded Souls*. Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2019.
- _____, Luke A. Powery, and John Rottman. *Getting to God: Preaching Good News in a Troubled World*. Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2023.
- Thomas, Frank A. *How to Preach a Dangerous Sermon*. Nashville: Nashville: Abingdon, 2018.
- _____. *Introduction to African American Preaching*. Nashville: Abingdon, 2016.
- Tisdale, Lenora Tubbs. *Preaching as Local Theology and Folk Art*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1997.
- Paul Scott Wilson. *The Four Pages of the Sermon: A Guide to Biblical Preaching*, 2nd ed. Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2018.
- William H. Willimon. *Peculiar Speech: Preaching to the Baptized*. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1992.

