

TH5/734 - "The Home of God: A Brief Story of Everything."

Miroslav Volf

The course will explore one of the largest of all questions: Why did God create the world? In the Christian tradition, there are, roughly, three basic answers (each with many versions) to this question. The first: the purpose of the world is God. The second: the purpose of the world is the world. The third: the purpose of the world is for the world to become the home of God. In the class we will explore this third answer by narrating the story of everything, examining the nature of God, the world, and their relation, and inquiring into consequences for what it means to flourish in a world become God's and our home in one.

Competencies

1. Students will learn about the purpose of creation as the home of God among mortals.
2. Participants will engage in the Christian tradition's wisdom about flourishing in creation in order to be a blessing in the world.
3. We will all appropriate the most profound wisdom around God, creation, human flourishing, and God's determination to be with us.

Readings: (pre-read prior to class)

Texts for purchase:

1. Jan Assmann, *The invention of Religion*, 1-31, 79-88, 204-240, 322-338.
2. Hartmut Rosa, *The Uncontrollability of the World*
3. Norman Wirtzba, *This Sacred Life*, (chapters 5-8.)

Readings (posted to CANVAS)

4. Bible (Genesis, Exodus, Isaiah 40-66, John, Romans 1-8, Revelation 18-22.
5. Jürgen Moltmann, *The Coming of God*, 22-46, 280-319.
6. Volf/McAnnally-Linz, *Fribourg Lectures*.
7. Volf/McAnnally, *The Home of God: A Brief Story of Everything* (manuscript)

Assignments: (Details to be provided at the class)

Certificate (Con.Ed):

Paper: 4 - 6 pages

Written assignments should:

- Demonstrate the ability to thoughtfully engage the material and reading for the class
- Give a personal reflection on the reading and material covered

The paper will be submitted to the Course Instructor **no later than August 31st**

Basic Degree (Diploma; MA; M.Div):

Paper: 6-8 pages in length (1,800 - 2,400 words).

Research paper bibliography: 5 – 8 entries beyond course texts

The paper will be submitted to the Course Instructor **no later than August 31st**.

Advanced Degree (GDTS; Th.M):

Paper: 12 - 15 pages in length (4,000 words).

Research paper bibliography: 20 – 25 entries beyond course texts

The paper will be submitted to the Course Instructor **no later than September 30th**.

Itinerary

Day 1: Modern homelessness and the search for home (Readings: Rosa; Fribourg Lectures)

Day 2: The aims of God with the world: A Brief Story of Everything (Readings: *The Home of God*)

Day 3: The God who Comes (Deliverance) (Readings: Exodus, St. John; Assmann; *The Home of God*)

Day 4: The God who Indwells (Consummation): (Readings: Romans; Revelation; Moltmann; *The Home of God*)

Day 5: The God who Creates (Creation) (Readings: Genesis; St. John 1; Wirtzba; *The Home of God*)