

**ME 530: Spirituality for Ministry**  
**Methodist Theological School in Ohio**  
**Summer 2013**

3 Semester Hours  
July 8 – 19, 2013  
1 PM– 5 PM, G-150

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**DESCRIPTION:**

This course intends to explore themes foundational for the spirituality of Christian ministry, including **Word, prayer, silence and solitude, call and commitment, community, journey inward/journey outward, being with the poor, and the Holy Spirit**. The students will be introduced to major theological and practical dimensions of spirituality, and be encouraged to apply them to their own spiritual journey and ministry. This course will combine lectures, class discussions, and student presentations.

**OBJECTIVES:**

To be able to formulate and practice a personal spirituality for ministry by:

- A. Becoming a person whose desire to serve others is increasingly derived from one's love for and commitment to Christ;
- B. Examining the dynamics in one's own practice of prayer, exploring and articulating the nature and practice of prayer in connection with certain themes drawn from Christian traditions, and gaining resources for the deepening and expanding of prayer;
- C. Engaging in spiritual/formative reading;
- D. Understanding the biblical identity and vocation of the church as an alternative community of faith for spiritual growth, mutual sharing, and moral discernment;
- E. Gaining an authentically Christian perspective on wealth, cultivating a life of simplicity, and deepening one's sense of compassion;
- F. Integrating spirituality of prayer and social involvement; and
- G. Exploring the person and role of the Holy Spirit for Christian spirituality and witness in the context of Trinitarian theology.

**REQUIRED TEXTS:**

- Ackerman, John. *Listening to God*. Bethesda, MD: Alban Institute, 2001.
- Bonhoeffer, Dietrich. *Life Together and Prayerbook of the Bible*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1996.
- Kelly, Thomas. *A Testament of Devotion*. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1941.
- Nouwen, Henri J. M. *The Way of the Heart*. New York: Ballantine, 1981.
- O'Connor, Elizabeth. *Journey Inward, Journey Outward*. 1968; rpt. Washington, D.C.: Potter's House, 1999.
- Sittser, Gerald L. *Water from a Deep Well*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2007.

Thompson, Marjorie J. *Soul Feast: An Invitation to the Christian Spiritual Life*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1995.

#### RECOMMENDED TEXTS:

- Chittister, Joan. *The Rule of Benedict: A Spirituality for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*. New York: Crossroad, 2010.
- Doberstein, John W., ed. *The Minister's Prayerbook: An Order of Prayers and Readings*. Rev. ed. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1986.
- Fee, Gordon D. *Paul, the Spirit, and the People of God*. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1996.
- Job, Rueben, and Norman Shawchuck. *A Guide to Prayer for Ministers and Other Servants*. Nashville: Upper Room, 1983.
- Wallis, Jim. *Call to Conversion: Rediscovering the Gospel for These Times*. Rev. ed. New York: HarperCollins, 1981.

#### COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

##### (1) *Class Attendance and Participation:*

Attendance at all sessions is expected. In order to complete the course with a passing grade, no more than one session may be missed. Much of the value of this course will come from interaction among the participants. Students are, thus, to prepare for each class session by carefully reading the assigned texts and to take an active part in the discussions.

##### (2) *Leading a Time of Devotion:*

Each student will lead a time of devotion at the beginning of class, helping the class experience the presence of God and be exposed to different traditions/types of prayer. This time of devotion (25 minutes) is to be prayerfully and carefully prepared so as to contribute to formative spirituality.

##### (3) *Critical Book Reviews:*

Students are required to complete two book reviews, reflectively interacting with the text for implications for spirituality for ministry. Each review is to be 2 one-and-a-half-spaced pages in length and to use parenthetical citations rather than footnotes. (Please understand that some of the books did not use gender-inclusive language as theirs was an age not yet sensitive to the issue.)

The following is the quote from "How to Write a Book Review" by Joel Green, which provides good guidelines:

"First, the review should indicate a thorough knowledge of the book as a whole, read on its own terms. . . . with an eye to several important questions, including: What is the book's fundamental aim? Central theme(s)? Presuppositions? Method(s)? Second, the review should engage the book critically and personally. . . . How has the reading of this book shaped you? . . . Whenever possible, you should situate your critique of the book within the larger discussion of the subject [that is, for us, the spirituality for ministry]."

Given the limited length of your review, it is to be **succinct** and **to the point**. You would thus need to be very **selective** of the themes and topics to critically reflect on. What I would hope to see are indications of **your thorough reading of the text** and of **your personal and reflective engagement with it**.

(4) *Completion of the Assigned Readings:*

The textbooks and assigned articles are not heavy reading, although they would require a careful reflection. I would strongly encourage students to exercise “**spiritual reading.**” As Thompson says, these readings are designed for “**reflective interaction with the text**” (xvii).

(5) *Research Paper:*

A carefully integrated research paper (single-spaced; 2,300–2,500 words) **plus** appropriate footnotes and bibliography is required. Students may choose a topic of one’s own interest or examine in greater depth one of the themes addressed in the course. Topics should be chosen early so that students can conduct research and reflect upon interweaving themes and their significance for their own spirituality and ministry. *The paper should reflect a working knowledge of resources currently available. In addition to careful research, students are to engage various aspects of the course learning, including the readings, in an integrative way. Initial ideas and findings will be shared in class.*

(6) *Presentation on Water from a Deep Well.*

A group of two students will make a presentation on a chapter from Sittser, *Water from a Deep Well*. You are to help the class learn of the particular spirituality represented in the selected chapter. You are encouraged to provide an interactive and experiential presentation (30 minutes). The more creative, coherent, and insightful your presentation, the more likely the class will be interested and responsive. A grade will be given for each group.

(7) *Journaling:*

Each student is strongly encouraged to keep a journal no less than three days a week. The entries may include fruits of meditation upon Scripture (e.g., using *The Minister’s Prayerbook* or *A Guide to Prayer for Ministers and Other Servants*), readings, ministry experience, and discernment of God’s work in life through daily events.

**WRITTEN WORK:**

All written work must be typed with 12 point type. It will be evaluated on the basis of (1) clarity of the writing, (2) critical interaction with the text, and (3) the student’s own integrative reflection. There will be a penalty for late papers commensurate with the degree of lateness and the adequacy of the excuse. Students are expected to use inclusive language in all their written work.

**PLAGIARISM:**

Plagiarism is a serious matter of academic, professional, and personal integrity. All students at the masters level are expected to understand the requirement to provide attribution when the work of others is used. Students are also expected to be familiar with and understand the school’s policy on Academic Misconduct found in the Student Handbook. If a student has questions about attribution, citation, and how to avoid plagiarism they should consult the course instructor, the school’s writing instructor, or library staff. When in doubt it is better to provide attribution even if one is uncertain about the proper citation form. Please note that *plagiarism includes self-plagiarism*—that is, students may not utilize work submitted for one class in another class. Plagiarism is a form of academic misconduct that results in disciplinary actions per the Student Handbook that may range from failing an assignment or course to expulsion.

**EVALUATION:**

- 10% Class Attendance and Contribution
- 15% Completion of Reading Assignments
- 7.5% Leading a Time of Devotion
- 7.5% presentation on *Water from a Deep Well*
- 20% Critical Book Reviews (2x10%)
- 40% Integrative Research Paper

**GRADING STANDARDS:**

- A (94%), A- (90%):  
Superlative work that demonstrates a profound commitment to the course material, and excellence in thinking and performance as well as depth of insight.
- B+ (87%), B (83%), B- (80%):  
Very good work that completely fulfills all the requirements of the course in a conscientious and dedicated manner, and that demonstrates good mastery of the course content.
- C+ to C-:  
Satisfactory work that fulfills all the requirements of the course in an acceptable manner, but that falls short of demonstrating rigor and mastery.
- D+ to D-:  
Unsatisfactory work that reflects poor thinking and performance as well as lack of clear comprehension and understanding of the subject.

**Please See Student Handbook for Sections Providing Policy Details on the Following:**

**ADA**—MTSO seeks to remove barriers to inclusion in its learning communities. Students who feel they may need an accommodation based on the impact of a documented disability should contact the instructor privately to discuss their specific needs at the beginning of the semester. Please contact the Director of Student Services to coordinate reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities. Any accommodation must be agreed upon prior to the due date of the affected course requirement.

**Electronic Devices**—Turn mobile devices off or “vibrate only” during class. Browsing the Internet or engaging in email or social network conversations during class is discouraged. Instructors have the right to impose grading penalties for disruptions due to electronic devices.

**Human Subjects Research**—Research by MTSO faculty, students, or affiliated personnel that collects non-public information from and/or about living individuals or contemporary organizations/groups for purposes of publication or public presentation (including class assignments) must be approved by the Human Subjects Research Committee. MTSO faculty, students, or affiliated personnel should err on the side of caution and apply for committee approval of any activity that may fit this description.

**Inclusive Language**—In accordance with MTSO’s policy on inclusive language, all students are expected to use gender inclusive or gender neutral language in their writing and in the classroom discussions when referring to human beings.

**Incompletes**—To receive a course grade of Incomplete, students must submit the petition form from the Registrar with all signatures to the Dean’s Office before the last day of regularly scheduled classes. See Student Handbook for intensive term deadlines. Any petition submitted without a due date for outstanding work will be denied. If work is not complete by the due date the Registrar will record the grade of F for the course.

**Pass/Fail**—The decision to exercise this option must be made before the end of the second week of the course by completing the appropriate form available through the Registrar. To receive a grade of "pass" the student must do at least the equivalent of C minus work in the course.

#### **COURSE SCHEDULE & RECOMMENDED READING:**

➤ **Mon., July 8: “Overview of the Course”;  
& “Spiritual Hunger and Disciplines”**

**Assignments Due:**

- **Reading** of Evan B. Howard, “Introducing Christian Spirituality” (on Sakai)
- **Critical Book Review** (1) on Kelly, *Testament of Devotion*
- **Critical Book Review** (2) on Bonhoeffer, *Life Together*
- **Discussion Questions** on O’Connor, *Journey Inward, Journey Outward*

**Recommended Reading:**

Foster, Richard. *Celebration of Discipline: The Path to Spiritual Growth*. Rev. ed. San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1988.

➤ **Tues., July 9: “Journey Inward, Journey Outward”**

**Assignments Due:**

- **Reading of**
  - ✓ O’Connor, *Journey Inward, Journey Outward* (entire book)
  - ✓ Jim Wallis, “The Call” in *Call to Conversion* (on Sakai)

**Recommended Reading:**

Dorr, Donal. *Spirituality and Justice*. Mary Knoll, NY: Orbis, 1984.

Leech, Kenneth. *The Eye of the Storm: Living Spiritually in the Real World*. New York: HarperCollins, 1992.

Wallis, Jim. “Renewing the Heart of Faith: A Prophetic Convergence of the People of God.” *Sojourners*, 22/2 (1993), 10-14.

➤ **Wed., July 10: “Word” & “Prayer”**

**Assignments Due:**

- **Reading of** Thompson, **Chs. 1–4** in *Soul Feast*
- **Presentation** on *Water from a Deep Well*, **Ch. 9**

**Recommended Reading:**

Mulholland, M. Robert, Jr. *Shaped by the Word: The Power of Scripture in Spiritual Formation*. Nashville: Upper Room, 1985.

Mutto, Susan Annette. *A Practical Guide to Spiritual Reading*. Rev. ed. Petersham, MA: St. Bede's, 1994.

➤ **Thurs., July 11: "Prayer, Solitude, & Silence"**

**Assignments Due:**

- **Reading of**
  - ✓ Nouwen, *The Way of the Heart* (entire book)
  - ✓ Nouwen, "A Spirituality of Waiting," *Weavings* 2/1 (1987) (on Sakai)
  - ✓ **Presentation on *Water from a Deep Well*, Ch. 4**

**Video:** "The Abbey of Gethsemani: A School of the Lord's Service"

Recommended Reading:

Barth, Karl. *Prayer*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2002.

Bloom, Anthony. *Beginning to Pray*. New York: Paulist, 1970.

Nouwen, Henri J. M. *With Open Hands*. Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria, 1972.

Quoist, Michel. *Prayers*. Trans. Agnes M. Forsyth and Anne Marie de Commaille. New York: Sheed & Ward, 1963.

Steere, Douglas V. *Dimensions of Prayer: Cultivating a Relationship with God*. Rev. ed. Nashville: Upper Room, 1997.

➤ **Fri., July 12: "Call to Commitment"**

**Assignments Due:**

- **Reading of Kelly, *Testament of Devotion***
- **Reading of Parker Palmer, "The Broken-Open Heart: Living with Faith and Hope in the Tragic Gap," *Weavings* 24/2 (2009) (on Sakai)**
- **Presentation on *Water from a Deep Well*, Ch. 1**

Recommended Reading:

Jones, E. Stanley. *Victory through Surrender*. Nashville: Abingdon, 1966.

Niebuhr, H. Richard. "Reformation: Continuing Imperative." *Christian Century*, 77 (1960), 248-251.

Nouwen, Henri J. M. *The Wounded Healer*. New York: Doubleday, 1972.

➤ **Mon., July 15: "Fast, Self-Examination, & Hospitality"**

**Assignments Due:**

- **Reading of Thompson, Chs. 5–8 in *Soul Feast***
- **Reading of**
  - ✓ McClurg, "A Haiti Journal" (on Sakai)
  - ✓ John Wesley, "The Danger of Riches" (<http://gbgm-umc.org/umhistory/wesley/sermons/serm-087.stm>)
  - ✓ Mark Buchanan, "Go Fast and Live" (on Sakai)
- **Presentation on *Water from a Deep Well*, Ch. 2**

Recommended Reading:

Foster, Richard. *Freedom of Simplicity*. San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1981.

Gutierrez, Gustavo. *We Drink from Our Own Wells: The Spiritual Journey of a People*. Mary Knoll, NY: Orbis, 1984.

Hulteen, Bob and Jim Wallis, eds. *Who Is My Neighbor: Economics as If Values Matter*. Washington, D.C.: Sojourners, 1994.

Yoder, John H. "The Disciple of Christ and the Way of Jesus." In *The Politics of Jesus*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1994.

Wheeler, Sondra Ely. *Wealth as Peril and Obligation: The New Testament on Possessions*. Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 1995.

➤ **Tues., July 16: "Spiritual Formation in Congregations"**

**Assignments Due:**

- **Discussion Questions** on Ackerman, *Listening to God* (entire book)
- **Presentation** on *Water from a Deep Well*, Ch. 3

**\*Guest Lecturer: Rev. Philip Wilden**, Pastor, Asbury United Methodist Church, Delaware

➤ **Wed., July 17: "Community and New Monasticism"**

**Assignments Due:**

- **Reading** of Bonhoeffer, *Life Together*
- **Reading** of
  - ✓ Jim Wallis, "Vision" in *Call to Conversion*
  - ✓ Jonathan Wilson-Hartgrove, "Living as Community" (on Sakai)
- **Presentation** on *Water from a Deep Well*, Ch. 11

Recommended Reading:

Niebuhr, H. Richard. "Toward a Definition of the Church." In *The Purpose of the Church and Its Ministry: Reflections on the Aims of Theological Education*. New York: Harper & Row, 1956.

\_\_\_\_\_. "The Church Defines Itself in the World." In *Theology, History, and Culture: Major Unpublished Writings*. Ed. William Stacy Johnson. New Haven: Yale Univ., 1996.

Yoder, John H. *Body Politics: Five Practices of the Christian Community before the Watching World*. Nashville: Discipleship Resources, 1992.

➤ **Thurs., July 18: "The Holy Spirit"**

**Assignments Due:**

- **Reading** of Gordon Fee, Chs. 1–2 in *Paul, the Spirit, and the People of God* (on Sakai)
- **Presentation** on *Water from a Deep Well*, Ch. 10
- **Sharing of Research Papers**

Recommended Reading:

Smail, Thomas A. *Reflected Glory: The Spirit in Christ and Christians*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1975.

➤ **Fri., July 19: Conclusion and Evaluation**

**Assignments Due:**

- **Reading** of Thompson, "Putting It All Together" in *Soul Feast*
- **Sharing of Research Papers**

➤ **Friday, August 2: Final Research Paper Due**