

HM600: Introduction to Homiletics

Spring 2016

3 Credit Hours

Prerequisites: HB-510, NT-510 and CT-549

Instructor: Rev. Valerie Bridgeman, Ph.D.
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Dates and Times: Tuesdays, 10:30-NOON
Place: G145/150

Room: G145/150

Office Hours: Tuesdays, 9-10 and 4-5:30
Wednesdays, 2-5
Thursdays, 10-12
By Appointment (which a professional courtesy, even if you’re coming for regular office hours)

Catalog Course Description

An exploration of the why, what, how and to whom of preaching in light of its history and tradition, content and context. Attention will be paid not only to the preparation and delivery of sermons, but also to the development of the capacity to evaluate one’s own preaching as well as that of others. Prerequisites: CT-549, HB-510 and NT-510. 3 credit hours.

Course Goal

This course will seek to make students comfortable with the idea of preaching and the how of preaching. By the completion of this course, students should:

- Be familiar with the major concerns of preaching
- Have an appreciation for multiple types of sermon creation and delivery
- Understand the role of the sermon in the act of worship
- Have an expanded set of resources for sermon development
- Understand the importance of integrity/unity in the sermon
- Be a more effective communicator of the Good News

SIGNIFICANT PREFACE

This course is an **introduction** to Christian preaching. As such, you should not expect to come out knowing all there is to know about preaching. The course has two foci: 1) to provide a context for the what, how, and why of preaching and 2) to help students begin to develop theologically sound sermons and be able to deliver them with confidence. My hope is that you will finish the course with at least one good sermon, some confidence, and a system for producing at least one other good sermon.

NOTE: YOU ARE WELCOME TO GET THE KINDLE VERSION OF BOOKS

Required Textbooks

1. Elliot, Mark Barger. *Creative Styles of Preaching*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2000.
2. Brooks, Gennifer Benjamin, *Good News Preaching: Offering the Gospel in Every Sermon*, Cleveland: Pilgrim Press, 2009.
3. Brown, Teresa L. Fry, *Delivering the Sermon: Voice, Body, and Animation in Proclamation* (Elements of Preaching Series, O. Wesley Allen, Jr., ed), Minneapolis: Fortress Press 2008.
4. Clader, Linda L., *Voicing the Vision: Imagination and Prophetic Preaching*. Morehouse Publishing 2004.
5. Foskett, Mary. *Interpreting the Bible: Approaching the Text in Preparation for Preaching* (Elements of Preaching). Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2009.
6. Graves, Michael, ed. *What's the Matter with Preaching Today*. Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 2004.
7. Kim, Eunjoo Mary. *Preaching in the Age of Globalization*. Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 2010.
8. Articles, essays, and YouTube sermons as provided (very few)

Optional Books:

1. Allen, Ronald J. *Thinking Theologically: The Preacher As Theologian* (Elements of Preaching)
2. Grading and Student Evaluation. Fortress Press, 2008.
3. Allen, Ronald, *Preaching and the Other: Studies of Postmodern Insights*. Chalice Press, 2009.
4. George, Timothy, James Earl Massey, and Robert, Jr. Smith, eds. *Our Sufficiency Is of God: Essays on Preaching in Honor of Gardner C. Taylor* [With CD (Audio)]. Atlanta: Mercer University Press, 2010.
5. LaRue, Cleophus, *I Believe I'll Testify: The Art of African American Preaching*. Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press.
6. McKenzie, Alyce. *Novel Preaching: Tips from Top Writers on Crafting Creative Sermons*. Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 2010.
7. Powery, Luke. *Spirit Speech: Lament and Celebration in Preaching*. Abingdon Press, 2009.

NOTE: I am indebted to Dr. Grey Carey, New Testament Professor at Lancaster Seminary, for the section "Things You Can Do to Foster Your Success." Modified and used with his permission.

Things You Can Do to Foster Your Success

1. Remember that this is your theological education and take ownership of it. The Seminary and the instructor are here to guide and assist your learning, but ultimately your education is what you make of it with the help of the Holy Spirit. Take account of your education in your prayer life. Your instructors do.
2. Prepare for class. **Read the assigned readings in preparation for each class session.** When you cannot read everything, take a few minutes to scan through the readings. **Identify the major topics and lines of argument.** The assigned readings will prepare you to benefit from class discussions. An active learner learns more than a passive learner does.
3. **Take a few minutes after each class session to reflect. What were the major discussion points of this class session?** Usually there are only a few – see if you can identify them. Perhaps discuss these points with a friend. Always ask: what is the big picture here?

4. **Plan your writing before you write.** Statistically speaking, students who finish assignments with time to spare do better than students who rush at the last minute. When you're preparing a short essay or reflection, think about your topic during every class session. **Organize your thoughts before you begin to write.** Sketch out your ideas and line of thought before you write a single word. **Make sure you are ready to provide credit to the sources from which you glean ideas and information.** Once you've completed a first draft, review it – and consider whether your work meets the criteria of assessment spelled out in the Syllabus.

5. **Your success on written assignments is all about clarity, logic, and detail.** This is a masters-level course, and it provides preparation for religious leadership: superficial engagement will not do. Make sure you engage the primary texts directly and specifically. Make sure you engage the assigned readings where they can be helpful. Make sure you provide a clear thesis (or claim) and a clear line of thought. Think about it from your instructor's point of view: if you could have written this same assignment without having taken this class, something is wrong.

6. On rare occasions it is necessary to ask for an extension of a particular assignment. Be aware that students tend to do much, much better when they stay on schedule.

On Inclusive/Expansive Language for Humans and for God

As a part of our time together, **I expect students to use respectful, inclusive/expansive language regarding the deity and humans.** “The language we use represents who we are and for what we stand as theologians and ministers” (Yee, syllabus). The following statement, “The Language of Community,” is the statement given for this course when taught by Memphis Theological Seminary OT professor, Dr. Steven Parrish, and used by permission. I could not have said it better.

From its opening chapter, the bible affirms the worth of community. Both male and female in the human community bear the image of God (Genesis 1:26-27). The bible values children as a part of human community (Exodus 12:26; Deut. 6:20; Luke 9:46-48). The oppressed are given special consideration by the Bible; e.g., strangers, orphans, and widow are important people in God's community (Deut. 24:17, 19, 21). Further, Jonah discovered that even those he regarded as enemies are cherished by God and are important individuals in the world community. The faith of the Bible is an inclusive faith.

Further, the biblical language about God is also far more expansive and inclusive than we have often recognized. Exodus 3 maintains that God is essentially unnamable and free to remain who God wants to be. First Samuel 4-6 and 2 Samuel 6 testify to God's unwillingness to be “boxed in” by human formulations of what God “ought” to be. The metaphorical language of the bible is diverse indeed, describing God by images that range from the battlefield (e.g., Psalm 18, 24) to images that depict God as the one who gives birth to the mountains Psalm 90:2 and the ice (Job 38:29). One of the aims of this course is to grow in the ways we think and speak of one another and of God.

* Because you are Masters' level students, we together have designed this course with your active leadership and learning in mind. Students who arrive to class on time for each meeting, refrain from taking unexcused absences, demonstrate evidence of having read assigned material, and contribute to the class discussion, will have no problem receiving the total 25% available for this portion of the grade. Students who are habitually tardy will see an automatic drop in their letter grade. Students with 2 or more unexcused absences will automatically drop a letter grade. In short, be in class on time each week prepared to contribute and you will do very well in this course.

Preaching Exercises

Each student will write at least 3 short preaching exercises during the course of the semester. The topics will be assigned beforehand by the instructor. More details will be provided in class and the assignment will be given in writing. When time permits, some will be presented in class.

Final Sermons

Each student will preach a final sermon, two times. The first time will be to get extensive feedback from your cohort group. The second time (and it could be the same sermon reworked or a different text), the group will receive feedback from the group, the professor, and other course participants. The topic for the final sermon will be left to each student to decide, however it must be approved by the professor. The sermon:

- Will be 10 to 15 minutes in length
- May be delivered with or without a manuscript, but a manuscript must be uploaded to Populi before preaching the sermon
- The manuscript should contain a cover page with all your information on it (name, course title, title of the sermon, scripture, date preaching)
- Should demonstrate growth in the student from initial preaching exercises

Teaching Methods

Lectures (minimal); Classroom discussions (including online); Sermon evaluation from YouTube viewing & studying the sermons; Student cohort collaborations; Student sermons and peer evaluations

Letter Grade	4.0 Scale		100% Scale	
	Lower limit	Upper limit	Lower limit	Upper limit
A plus	4.0	4.0	97	100
A	3.8	4.0	93	96
A minus	3.4	3.7	90	92
B plus	3.1	3.3	87	89
B	2.8	3.0	83	86
B minus	2.4	2.7	80	82
C plus	2.1	2.3	77	79
C	1.8	2.0	73	76
C minus	1.4	1.7	70	72
D plus	1.1	1.3	67	69
D	0.8	1.0	63	66
F	0.0	0.7	0	62

Grading Rubric:

Active, informed, sustained participation: 15%

Presentation on Book (subset of active participation): 10%

30-second sermon and 2-minute sermon: 30%

Final sermon: 25%

Theology of Preaching (7-10 pages; a reflective essay that engages your own thinking about that role and purpose of preaching informed by your reading, classroom discussions, and watching and listening to the posted preachers): 20%

Book Groups:

GROUP 1	GROUP 2	GROUP 3	GROUP 4
<i>Good News Preaching</i>	<i>Preaching in the Age of Globalization</i>	<i>Voicing the Vision</i>	<i>What's the Matter with Preaching Today</i>
Robert Blanchard	Jeremiah Diegel	Neil Gaiser	Karen Gebhart
Hope Hutchison	Jon Hutchison	Jen Leskovac	Michael Malley
Sara McSwords	Sally Meyer	Luigi Perez Perez	Ethan Rapping
Nick Shaw	Cecil Thompson	Joel Wildermuth	Mary Willis

Preaching Cohorts:

GROUP A	GROUP B	GROUP C	GROUP D
Jeremiah Diegel	Robert Blanchard	Karen Gebhart	Neil Gaiser
Jen Leskovac	Michael Malley	Sally Meyer	Hope Hutchison
Sara McSwords	Cecil Thompson	Ethan Rapping	Jon Hutchison
Nick Shaw	Joel Wildermuth	Mary Willis	Luigi Perez Perez

Course Schedule and Reading Assignments

DATE	PREPARATION	ASSIGNMENT DUE	IN-CLASS	ON-LINE
Feb 2	Bring your full self	none	Introductions/Syllabus Collaboration	Bridgeman lecture
Feb 9	Read Foskett	none	Attend Schooler Institute	Barbara Brown Taylor sermon and 2+ minutes on preaching
Feb 16	Finish Foskett/Read McMickle, <i>Shaping the Claim</i>	Lectionary TEXTS for the semester chosen	Meet in library with Book cohort/switch to preaching cohort	Post lectionary texts in Sermon cohort on line Watch Craddock; follow instructions on Populi
Feb 23	Read <i>What's the Matter with Preaching Today</i> Read your lectionary texts each week	Book Group 4: Notes, complete with bibliographic information for class posted on line	Work on questions for 1 st sermon with your cohort group Discuss Foskett/McMickle Presentation on <i>What's the Matter with Preaching</i> by Group 4	Watch Eugene Cho sermon; follow instructions on Populi
Mar 1	Read <i>Preaching in the Age of Globalization</i>	Book Group 2: Notes, complete with bibliographic information for	Group 2 presentation on <i>Preaching in Age of Globalization</i>	Watch Gina Stewart sermon and interview; follow instructions on

	Read your lectionary texts	class posted on line	Sermon work in Groups on 30 second sermon	Populi
Mar 8	Read <i>Voicing the Vision</i>	Book Group 3: Notes, complete with bibliographic information for class posted on line	Group 3 presentation on <i>Voicing the Vision</i> Mini-lecture on sermon prepping/asking questions: Bridgeman	Watch Tony Campolo sermon and the short video; follow instructions on Populi
Mar 15	Read <i>Good News Preaching</i>	Book Group 1: Notes, complete with bibliographic information for class posted on line	Group 1 presentation on <i>Good News Preaching</i> Sermon work in Groups on 2 minute sermon	Watch both Valerie Bridgeman sermons; follow instructions on Populi
Mar 22/29	EASTER AND SPRING BREAK	REST/CATCH UP ON READING	Prepare/practice sermons	
Apr 5	30-second sermon	EVERYONE MUST POST 30-second sermon to Populi	Listen to sermons/offer feedback	Watch all 4 Brueggemann videos; follow instructions on Populi
Apr 12	2-minute sermons	EVERYONE MUST POST 2-minute sermon to Populi	Listen to sermons/offer feedback	Watch the TD Jakes sermon; follow instructions on Populi
Apr 19	Sermons	EVERYONE MUST POST their 10-15 minute sermon	Listen to sermons/offer feedback	Watch both Kershner sermons; follow the instructions on Populi
Apr 26	Sermons		Listen to sermons/offer feedback	Online reflections on in-class sermons. Follow the instructions on Populi
May 3	Sermons		Listen to sermons/offer feedback	Listen to the Howard-John Wesley sermon; follow the instruction on Populi
May 10	Sermons		Closing Remarks	Reflection on in-class sermons. Follow instructions on Populi

May 17	THEOLOGY OF PREACHING paper DUE	Post Final Reflections in the Discussion for this course		Read at least two reflections other than you own and provide feedback/response to your colleague. It should be someone in your preaching cohort
May 21	Commencement	Congratulations to our Graduating Students		

OTHER RESOURCES FOR YOUR INFORMATION:

1. Ronald J. Allen and Clark M. Williamson, *Preaching the Gospels without Blaming the Jews* (W/JK 2004), Year C, Intro, xv-xxvi and 169-250; 978-0-6642-2763-0
2. Allen, Ronald J., Dale P. Andrews, L. Susan Bond, Dan P. Moseley, G. Lee Ramsey, Jr., John S. McClure, eds. *Listening to Listeners: Homiletical Case Studies* (Chalice Press 2004) [195 pages] 978-0-8272-0500-0
3. Walter Brueggemann, *Cadences of Home: Preaching Among Exiles* (W/JK 1997) [176 pages] 978-0-6642-5749-1
4. Brueggemann, *The Word Militant: Preaching a Decentering Word* (Fortress Press, 2007)
5. Charles L. Campbell, *The Word before the Powers*, 978-0-6642-2233-8 (W/JK 2002) [220 pages]
6. Jana Childers, *Birthing the Sermon* (Chalice Press)
7. Linda L. Clader, *Voicing the Vision: Imagination and Prophetic Preaching* (Morehouse Publishing 2004 [176 words]) 978-0-8192-1932-9
8. Fred B. Craddock, *Preaching* (Abingdon Press)
9. Joseph R. Jeter, Jr. and Ronald J. Allen, *One Gospel, Many Ears: Preaching for Different Listeners in the Congregation*
10. Cleophus J. LaRue, *The Heart of Black Preaching* (John Knox Press 1997) [272 pages] 978-0-6642-5847-4
11. Cleophus LaRue, *More Power in the Pulpit: How America's Most Effective Black Preachers Prepare Their Sermons* (W/JK 2009) 978-0-6642-3278-8
12. Richard, Lischer, ed., *The Company of Preachers* (Wm B Eerdmans Pub. Co. 2002) 978-0-8028-4609-9 [478 pages]
13. Thomas G. Long, *Accompany Them with Singing: The Christian Funeral* (W/JK 2009) [200 pages] 978-0-6642-3319-8
14. James Earl Massey, *The Burdensome Joy of Preaching* (Abingdon Press)
15. John S. McClure, *Other-Wise Preaching: A Postmodern Ethic for Homiletics*
16. John S. McClure, *Preaching Words* (W/JK 2007 [192 words]) 978-0-6642-3013-5
17. Marvin A McMickle, *Where Have all the Prophets Gone: Reclaiming Prophetic Preaching in America* (Pilgrim Press 2006) 978-0-8298-1720-1
18. *The New Interpreter's Bible*
19. Frank A. Thomas, *They Like to Never Quit Praisin' God* (Fortress Press)
20. Frank A. Thomas, "The African American Funeral Sermon: Divine Re-Framing of Human Tragedy," in *Companion to the Africana Worship Book*, Valerie Bridgeman and Safiyah Fosua, eds (Discipleship Resources 2007) 978-0-8817-7533-4
21. Mary Donovan Turner and Mary Lin Hudson, *Saved from Silence: Finding Women's Voice in Preaching*
22. Marjorie Hewitt Suchocki, *The Whispered Word: A Theology of Preaching* (Chalice Press 1999) [118 pages] 978-0-8272-4239-5

23. Frederic C. Tiffany & Sharon H. Ringe, *Biblical Interpretation: A Road Map* (Abingdon Press 1996 [239 pages]) 978-0-6870-1608-2
24. David L. Schlafer, ed., *What's the Shape of Narrative Preaching* (Chalice Press 2008) [244 pages] 978-0-8272-4255-5
25. Leonora Tubbs Tisdale, *Preaching as Local Theology and Folk Art* (Fortress Resources for Preaching) (Augsburg Fortress Press 1997) [175 pages] 978-0-8006-2773-7

JOURNALS & WEBSITES

The ATLA Religion database (accessible through our library) provides a thorough list of source materials in theological studies (journal articles, essays, books, reviews, etc.).

The African American Lectionary (www.theafricanamericanlectionary.org)

The Living Pulpit, www.pulpit.org

WorkingPreacher.org, <http://www.workingpreacher.org/>

Journal for Preachers

The Text This Week, <http://www.textweek.com/>

www.preaching.com/preaching

www.preachingtoday.com, provides sermons and other resources for preachers **for a fee**.

Sermon Central, www.sermoncentral.com, has 40,000 free sermons, with some in Spanish.

www.homilies.com, features Catholic sermons

www.chapel.duke.edu/, sermons from the Duke Chapel

www.ccel.org/, sermons and sermon-Lectionary Resources

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.

Class attendance—Regular attendance is expected in all classes. During unavoidable absences, students are responsible for missed work. An excessive number of absences may result in grade reduction or course failure, despite successful completion of all assigned work. In most cases, a student will not be allowed credit for a course if he or she is absent for 25% of the class sessions. As it relates to blended courses, students may not be allowed credit if they are absent for 25% of class meetings or if 25% of online course work is not completed. Use of Skype or similar technology is not a substitute for attendance in class.

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.

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 students have 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. 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.

Updated 8/13/14