



McMaster Divinity  
College

## The New Parish

June 1-5, 2015      Course Number

Specializations: **Pastoral Studies (PS)**, **Christian Worldview (CW)**, **Church and Culture (CC)**  
*Also ideal for occasional students and those seeking a planning course as their summer retreat.*

### **Instructors**

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### **Course Description**

The practical work of Christian theology must be rooted in place. Our context and community serve to help us know who God is and how the Kingdom of God is at work. Rather than seeing the church as a haven from the culture, this class equips leaders to see the organization they steward (or will steward) as grounded in its very culture in order to participate in God's re-creation and redemption of their organizations, their neighborhoods, and themselves as leaders. This course enables leaders to help their ministries experience holistic worship conjoining mission, community and Christian identity formation within their neighborhood. Through active participation in the-course leaders will be guided into deeper understanding of their personal story, the story of their church, and the story of their neighborhood in light of God's capacious narrative which invites fullness of life, in service of the common good as the Gospel of Jesus Christ is lived out within one's locale. Assignments focus on the leader, the leader's rootedness within context, and linking within and beyond the leader's neighborhood.

### **Course Objectives**

Through active participation in the class, parish tours, class lectures/discussions, listening exercises, readings, and the assigned learning engagements student leaders will be able to:

#### **Knowing**

- Discover the intersection of their personal story, the story of their place, and the story of the Kingdom of God. Weaving these narratives together enables leaders to discern afresh their particular calling in time and place.
- Articulate their ministry strategy for entering into a local ministry

#### **Being**

- Demonstrate a Christian spirituality contextually reflective of the place they inhabit.

#### **Doing**

- Evidence the ability to listen deeply to the narrative of a place and discern their Christian practice in response to living within that place.

## **Required Reading**

Hjalmarson, Leonard. *No Home Like Church: A Christian Theology of Place*. Urban Loft Publishers, 2014.

Scandrette, Mark. *Practicing the Way of Jesus: Life Together in the Kingdom of Love*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2011.

Smith, C. Christopher and John Pattison. *Slow Church: Cultivating Community in the Patient Way of Jesus*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2014.

Sparks, Paul, Tim Soerens and Dwight J. Friesen. *The New Parish: How Neighbourhood Churches are Transforming Mission, Discipleship and Community*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2014.

Each Student's Neighbourhood. Students will practice prayerfully inviting the Holy Spirit to help them become attuned to God's presence, and mission within already within their place. 30 minutes, four out of seven days for each week of the term.

## **Highly Recommended Reading**

Bruggemann, Walter. *The Land: Place as Gift, Promise, and Challenge in Biblical Faith*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2002.

Dickau, Tim. *Plunging into the Kingdom Way: Practicing the Shared Strokes of Community, Hospitality, Justice, and Confession*. Wipf & Stock Pub., 2011.

**Textbook Purchase:** All required textbooks for this class are available from the College's bookstore, READ On Bookstore, Room 145, McMaster Divinity College. Texts may be purchased on the first day of class. For advance purchase, you may contact READ On Bookstore, 304 The East Mall, Suite 100, Etobicoke, ON M9C 5K1: phone 416.620.2934; fax 416.622.2308; email books@readon.ca. Other book services may also carry the texts.

## **Assignments and Evaluation**

All documents must be handed in by e-mail to dallasfriesen@gmail.com in either MS Word or .pdf format. You should expect a response to your e-mail noting that I have received it. If you do not receive this response, please get in touch with me. Late assignments will lose 2% per day (not including weekends). No assignments will be accepted after the cut-off day of **July 10, 2015**.

### **Research Paper [Knowing]**

#### ***"Why Place Matters"***

Write a biblical/theological research paper demonstrating how located particularity is God's created means for inviting human beings to own their limitations and accept their responsibilities. This "placedness" is the grounding of identity formation, Christian community, and authentic mission. Basically you are articulating why place matters within God's created order; the theological importance of place is becoming increasingly vital for ministry within globalizing, fragmenting, and virtual culture. The paper should demonstrate comprehension of course materials and familiarity with the required texts.

**Length: 5-7 pages**

**Grade: 20%**

**Due: July 6<sup>th</sup>, 2015**

### **Attunement Practice & Journal [Being]**

#### ***Listening and Discerning***

Students will engage in active listening to the place they inhabit. This assignment involves a two components: 1) "Attuning to Place" Reflection Journal, 2) Discern signs of God's re-creation/redemption within your Place.

1) *Prayerful Attunement to Place:*

You will intentionally and prayerfully attune yourself to your place (prayerful walking/sitting/observing/listening/receiving, etc), 4 days out of 7 for each week of the term, recording a brief journal reflection for each day. You will bring your attunement journal to class each session and be prepared to share from it. **The idea is to be physically present within your neighbourhood inviting the Holy Spirit to help you see God's presence already at work.** This Process begins on June 1 and carries through to the end of the course (July 6).

2) *Discern signs of Re-creation/Redemption within your Place:*

As you attune yourself to your place, and attend to the story of your location how are witnessing signs of Gospel re-creation within your context? Where are you seeing signs of hope, shalom, reconciliation, collaboration, joining together, holistic justice, healing, grace, or joy? Who are some of the people/communities connected with these signs of Good News? Note these signs of God's shalomic mission in your Attunement Journal.

It is highly recommended that you gather a couple of neighbours, people from your church, roommates, spouse, children, or friends from your neighborhood sharing observations from your prayerful attunement, and your place's narrative; after sharing invite them to speak to how they see you in your place. In light of who they have experienced you to be (a character) and the story of where you are (the setting), what do they see as a faithful way of you joining God's redemptive work within your neighborhood (plot). This will aid you in your Narrative Weaving Assignment.

**Grade: 30%**

**Due: July 6**

## **Narrative Weaving Assignment [Doing]**

### ***God's Plot . Local Setting . Becoming a Character***

All good stories require the three narrative components of plot, character, and setting. This assignment is your opportunity to weave those narrative strands together into a strong braid of faithful presence as you think of your life and leadership. This assignment provides you space to bear witness to the particularity of God's redemptive plot being realized (in part) by you as a character within the setting that is your neighborhood.

**Tell the Story of what God is doing in your neighborhood, and how God's work in your place is inviting your unique participation.**

This assignment invites you to integrate your theological studies (especially your doctrine of God, creation, soteriology, mission, and ecclesiology) together with self-knowledge (especially through self-reflection, feedback from others throughout the years, CPE, spiritual direction, therapy, and personality/gifts assessments) together with the story of your place. As you have likely done a fair bit of work on the story of God and your personal story, we want to direct you in learning the story of your place.

Learn your neighbourhood's narrative. The goal here is to be able to faithfully tell the story of the place where you live so as to see God present and active, and therefore to better see the kind of faithfully present character God is inviting you to be within your setting. We don't expect you to know everything about your place, but we want you to be able to responsibly share enough about your place's past to

have a sense as to how it became the place it is, therefore laying the groundwork to imagine your participation in God's redemptive work there. Here are a few categories to help you think about the story of your place.

*Land & Built Environment:*

Identify the contours of your neighbourhood, map your place's gathering spots, hubs of activity, parks, holy places, places of tragedy, and other distinguishing features, (we will begin neighborhood mapping together in class). What particular God-given features of the land/water/air/location/etc give definition to this place? What particular human constructed roads/buildings/parks/systems/etc give definition to this place?

*People:*

It may be helpful to have conversations with dominant culture residents, (if there is a clear dominant group), non-dominant residents, business owners, civic leaders, youth, seniors, new residents, life-long resident, etc.

*History:*

You may want to consider your place's history: First Nations presence, European colonization, immigration, demographic trending (census), industry/economic development, farming, etc. When was its heyday, what are its tragedies, what systems of oppression were/are present, of what are they most proud, what is its history of violence, what does it celebrate, etc. Can you faithfully and responsibly tell the story of the place where you live?

Again the goal of this assignment is to weave together God's redemptive story, with your personal story and the story of your place. Some students have made timelines, mapped narrative arcs (beginning, middle, end), some have created and included paintings, photography, and short videos. Freedom and creativity are encouraged as you weave these three narrative strands into one vocational braid inviting your faithful presence.

We will be looking for a demonstration of:

- Depth of reflection upon God's story, your own experience, and your understanding of place.
- Your ability to communicate your story in a concise, clearly organized, compelling narrative structure.

**Grade: 40%**

**Due: July 6<sup>th</sup>, 2015**

**Class participation**

Students will be graded on their attendance, participation in discussions, and contribution to the overall learning environment.

**Grade: 10%**

**Class Schedule**

<b>Monday, June 1, 2015</b>	11:30am – 4pm
<b>Tuesday, June 2, 2015</b>	9:00am – 4pm (with 1 hour lunch)
<b>Wednesday, June 3, 2015</b>	9:00am – 4pm (with 1 hour lunch)
<b>Thursday, June 4, 2015</b>	9:00am – 4pm (with 1 hour lunch)
<b>Friday, June 5, 2015</b>	9:00am – 11:30am

## **Academic Honesty**

Academic dishonesty is a serious offence that may take any number of forms, including plagiarism, the submission of work that is not one's own or for which previous credit has been obtained, and/or unauthorized collaboration with other students. Academic dishonesty can result in severe consequences, e.g., failure of the assignment, failure of the course, a notation on one's academic transcript, and/or suspension or expulsion from the College. Students are responsible for understanding what constitutes academic dishonesty. Please refer to the Divinity College Statement on Academic Honesty ~

<http://www.mcmasterdivinity.ca/programs/rules-regulations>

All stylistic considerations (including but not limited to questions of formatting, footnotes, and bibliographic references) must conform to the McMaster Divinity College Style Guidelines for Essays and Theses.

[www.mcmasterdivinity.ca/sites/default/files/documents/MDCStyleGuideMarch0413.pdf](http://www.mcmasterdivinity.ca/sites/default/files/documents/MDCStyleGuideMarch0413.pdf)

Failure to observe appropriate form will result in grade reductions.

## **Gender Inclusive Language**

McMaster Divinity College uses language for human beings in worship services, student written materials, and all of its publications. In reference to biblical texts, the integrity of the original expressions and the names of God should be respected. The NSRV and TNIV are examples of the use of inclusive language for human beings. It is expected that inclusive language will be used in chapel services and all MDC assignments.

## **Sexual Harassment**

Sexual harassment is a violation of the integrity of persons in the form of unsolicited, unwelcome, verbal or physical behavior, which discriminates on the basis of gender about a person's body, attire, gender, marital status or economic status. Among faculty, staff and students, sexual harassment of any kind will not be tolerated.

## **Disclaimer**

This syllabus is the property of the instructors and is prepared with currently available information. The instructors reserve the right to make changes and revisions up to and including the first day of class.

## **Recommended Readings**

The following resources have been selected and arranged around key themes for rooted and linked Christian leadership within one's place:

### **Theology of Place**

- Bakke, Ray. *Theology As Big as the City*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1997.
- Bartholomew, Craig G. *Where Mortals Dwell: A Christian View of Place for Today*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2011.
- Brueggemann, Walter. *Land: Place as Gift, Promise, and Challenge in Biblical Faith*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2002.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Journey to the Common Good*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2010.
- Davey, Andrew. *Urban Christianity and Global Order: Theological Resources for an Urban Future*. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson publishers, 2002.
- Dawn, Marva. *Powers, Weakness, and the Tabernacling of God*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing, 2001.
- Gornik, Mark R. *To Live in Peace: Biblical Faith and the Changing Inner City*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2002.
- Gorringe, Timothy J. *A Theology of the Built Environment: Justice, Empowerment, Redemption*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2002.
- Gutenson, Charles E. *Christians and the Common Good: How Faith Intersects with Public Life*. Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press, 2011.
- Inge, John. *A Christian Theology of Place*. Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2003.
- McKnight, Scot. *Kingdom Conspiracy: Returning to the Radical Mission of the Local Church*. Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press, 2014.
- Sheldrake, Philip. *Spaces for the Sacred: Place, Memory, and Identity*. Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001.
- Stark, Rodney. *Cities of God: The Real Story of How Christianity Became an Urban Movement and Conquered Rome*. New York, NY: HarperOne, 2006.
- Volf, Miroslav. *A Public Faith: How Followers of Christ Should Serve the Common Good*. Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press, 2011.
- Wilson-Hartgrove, Jonathan. *The Wisdom of Stability: Rooting Faith in a Mobile Culture*. Brewster, MA: Paraclete Press, 2010.

## **Christian Ministry**

- Bakke, Ray, and Jon Sharpe. *Street Signs: A New Direction in Urban Ministry*. Birmingham, AL; New Hope Publishers, 2006.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Urban Christian: Effective Ministry in Today's Urban World*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1987.
- Cleveland, Christina. *Disunity in Christ*.
- Frazer, Randy. *Making Room for Life: Trading Chaotic Lifestyles for Connected Relationships*. 2003.
- Friesen, Dwight J. *Thy Kingdom Connected: What the Church Can Learn From Facebook, the Internet and Other Networks*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2009.
- Lanza, Mike. *Playborhood: Turn your Neighborhood Into a Place for Play*. Menlo Park, CA: Free Play Press, 2012.
- Longacre, Doris Janzen. *Living More with Less*. 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary ed. Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 2010.
- Lupton, Robert D. *Compassion, Justice and the Christian Life: Rethinking Ministry to the Poor*. Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 2007.
- Perkins, John M., editor. *Restoring At-Risk Communities: Doing it Together and Doing it Right*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1995.
- Reid, Herbert, and Betsy Taylor. *Recovering the Commons: Democracy, Place, and Global Justice*. Urbana, IL: University of Illinois, 2010.
- Roxburgh, Alan J. *Missional: Joining God in the Neighborhood*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2011.
- Senge, Peter M., C. Otto Scharmer, Joseph Jaworski, and Betty Sue Flowers. *Presence: Human Purpose and the Field of the Future*. Crown Business, 2008.
- Smith, Christopher, and John Pattison. *Slow Church: Cultivating Community in the Patient Way of Jesus*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2014.
- Smith, James K. A. *Desiring the Kingdom: Worship, Worldview and Cultural Formation*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2009.
- Scandrette, Mark. *Practicing the Way of Jesus: Life Together in the Kingdom of Love*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2011.
- Yoder, John Howard. *Body Politics: Five Practices of the Christian Community Before the Watching World*. Herald Press, 2001.

## **Built Environment & Placemaking**

- Jacobson, Eric. *The Space Between: A Christian Engagement with the Built Environment*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2012.
- Walljasper, Jay. *The Great Neighborhood Book: A Do-it-Yourself Guide to Placemaking*. New Society Publishers, 2007.
- Berry, Wendell. *Imagination in Place*. Berkeley, CA: Counterpoint, 2010.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Sex, Economy, Freedom & Community*. New York, NY: Pantheon Books, 1992.
- Woolever, Cynthia, and Deborah Bruce. *Places of Promise: Finding Strength in Your Congregation's Location*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2008.

## **Context**

- Bishop, Bill. *The Big Sort: Why the Clustering of Like-Minded Americans is Tearing Us Apart*. Boston, MA: Mariner Books, 2009.

- Florida, Richard. *Who's your City: How the Creative Economy is Making Where to Live the Most Important Decision of your Life*. New York, NY: Basic Books, 2008.
- Hunter, James Davison. *To Change the World: The Irony, Tragedy, & Possibility of Christianity in the Late Modern World*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2010.
- Spretnak, Charlene. *The Resurgence of the Real: Body, Nature and Place in a Hypermodern World*. New York, NY: Routledge, 1999.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Relational Reality: New Discoveries of Interrelatedness that are Transforming the Modern World*. Topsham, ME: Green Horizon Books, 2011.
- Volf, Miroslav. *A Public Faith: How Followers of Christ Should Serve the Common Good*. Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press, 2011.
- Walljasper, Jay. *All That We Share*. New Press, 2010.

### **Leadership & Community Development**

- Block, Peter. *Community: The Structure of Belonging*. San Francisco, CA: Berrett-Koehler, 2008.
- Heifetz, Ronald A., and Marty Linsky. *The Practice of Adaptive Leadership: Tools and Tactics for Changing Your Organization and the World*, 2009.
- McKnight, John, and Peter Block. *The Abundant Community: Awakening the Power of Families and Neighborhoods*. San Francisco, CA: Berrett-Koehler, 2010.
- Morse, MaryKate. *Making Room for Leadership: Power, Space and Influence*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Press 2008.
- Palmer, Parker. *A Hidden Wholeness: The Journey Toward an Undivided Life: Welcoming the Soul and Weaving Community in a Wounded World*. San Francisco, CA: Wiley, 2009.
- Parks, Sharon Daloz. *Leadership Can Be Taught: A Bold Approach for a Complex World*. 2005.
- Pohl, Christine. *Living into Community: Cultivating Practices that Sustain us*.
- Wheatley, Margaret. *Leadership and the New Science: Discovering Order in a Chaotic World*. 3rd edition. Berrett-Koehler Publishers, 2006.