

**McMaster Divinity College**

**Spirituality of the Missional Church:  
Prayer, Community, Participation**

**McMaster Divinity College**  
**Jim Horsthuis, PhD**  
[jim.horsthuis@cogeco.ca](mailto:jim.horsthuis@cogeco.ca)

**Summer School 2017**  
**Three Saturdays:**  
**May 27<sup>th</sup>, June 3<sup>rd</sup> & 10<sup>th</sup>**

**Course Description:**

The missional church is nurtured through communion with God. Prayer, community and participation are core spiritual dynamics by which the missional church is sustained as a redemptive agent in the world. This course will explore the pastoral, theological, and biblical roots of a spirituality for the missional church. The missional church is invited by the *Father* to live out the sentness of the *Son* (John 20:21), in the power of the *Holy Spirit*. The rich resources of the biblical and Christian tradition will be surveyed to inform how the missional church participates with God in his missional work in the world. By examining the Trinitarian, participative, and spiritual dynamics of this missional spirituality, local churches will discern how Jesus is sending them into the world. Discerning this “sending” will help local churches to live out the *missio Dei* with an ever-deepening intimacy with the triune God. Practical attention will be given to the following missional imperatives: cultivating intimacy with God (prayer), contextual and incarnational communication of the Gospel (participation), and discerning a creative response to mission (community). This spirituality of the missional church will cultivate intimacy with the triune God as the means for its missional expression in the world.

“the church that is deeply intimate with the triune God cannot fail to be intentionally and widely influential in all aspects of mission.”

Ross Hastings, *Missional God, Missional Church*

“Prayer, therefore, is far from sweet and easy. Being the expression of our greatest love, it does not keep pain away from us. Instead, it makes us suffer more because our love for God is a love for a suffering God and our entering into God’s intimacy is an entering into the intimacy where all human suffering is embraced by divine compassion.”

Henri Nouwen, *Reaching Out*

**Course Text Book:**

**Required:**

Ross Hastings, *Missional God, Missional Church: Hope for Re-evangelizing the West*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2012.

Henri Nouwen, *Reaching Out: The Three Movements of the Spiritual Life*. New York: Doubleday, 1975.

Eugene Peterson, *Christ Plays in 10000 Places: A Conversation on Spiritual Theology*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005.

**Recommended:**

Michael J. Gorman. *Becoming the Gospel: Paul, Participation and Mission*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2015.

**Course Objectives:****Knowing:**

- To explore the biblical, theological and spiritual resources for the missional church.
- To understand the relationship between Christian spirituality and the mission of the local church.
- To discover the interrelation of spirituality and the missional church.

**Being:**

- To prayerfully cultivate intimacy with God which leads to personal and corporate missional expression.
- To develop spiritual practices which enable discernment and expression of participation in the *missio Dei*.
- To rest in and live out of the reality that the love of the triune God is the genesis and telos of spirituality and mission.

**Doing:**

- To identify and embrace the spiritual resources within the local church as it relates to God's mission in the world.
- To practice spiritual giftedness in a manner that contributes to church health and missional engagement.
- To articulate ways in which the local church can develop spiritual practices which lead to missional expression.

**Course Assignments:****1. Course Reading and Engagement with Life and Ministry 30%**

Based on your reading of the required course text books respond to each of the three categories of missional engagement identified below. An important part of your assignment is to develop a two-way engagement between the text books and your life and ministry. Show both evidence of engagement with the text books into your life and ministry but also how your life and ministry speaks back into the text books.

**Missional Church** ~ Using the book *Missional Church, Missional God* engage with this text book as it relates to the life and ministry of your local church. Include the following:

- Brief introduction of the author and book.
- Short overview of the book's thesis, development, and spiritual application.
- Articulate areas of engagement of the book to your local church and how your local church speak back into the book.
- Write a prayer for your church that is informed by your reading of this volume.

**Missional Leadership** ~ Using *Christ Plays in 10 000 Places* engage with this text book as it relates to the leadership of your local church. Include the following:

- Brief introduction of the author and book.
- Short overview of the books thesis, development, and practical direction.
- Identify areas of engagement between the contents of this book and your local church leaders and your local church leaders to the book.
- Write a prayer for your local church leaders that is informed by your reading of this volume.

**Missional Self** ~ Using *Reaching Out* apply this text book to your own life as a ministering person. Include the following

- Brief Introduction of the author and book.
- Short overview of the books thesis and development
- Identify areas of personal application you would like to follow from the book as well as how your life and experience speaks into the book.
- Write a prayer to God this informed by the reading of this volume.

**Length: 12-15 pages (4/5 pages for each category)**

**Weight: 30%**

**Due Date: June 16, 2017**

## **2. Specialization Project in Spiritual and the Missional Church**

Rooted in your area of specialization do one of the following projects that will aid your local church to understand and practice its spirituality for the missional church. Each of the projects are to be rigorously completed and include all materials used (from promotion to handouts to content to evaluation), include a commentary of why you are doing what you are doing, a detailed outline or manuscript of all teaching/preaching sessions, a bibliography of sources used. The submitted material should represent a complete and ready to be used ministry event on spirituality and the missional church.

**Pastoral Studies** ~ Develop a weekend retreat for a local church that is designed to aid participants in being spiritually prepared for missional engagement in their church and world. This assignment must include the objectives, teaching plan, detailed agenda, and spiritual disciplines that will be used during this weekend. Include a commentary for each element of the weekend that explains what is being done and how it relates to the spiritual objectives you have for the weekend. Ensure that participants come away with an understanding of the importance of prayer, community, and participation as it relates to their church's missional concern in the world.

**Christian Worldview** ~ Identify and present to the leaders of a local church key areas of missional engagement you discern for their local church context:

- a. Help the church to understand the contemporary context in terms of its philosophical and spiritual values.
- b. Guide the church to discern its spiritual strengths, and weaknesses, and missional calling.

- c. Show how this local church might express the Gospel of Jesus Christ in a contextually relevant and incarnational manner.
- d. Identify ways in which the local church can practically engaged with its local community.

**Spiritual Care and Counseling** ~ Develop a missional care and counseling ministry in a local church. Begin by writing a position paper for your local church that explains the connection between spiritual care and counseling and the missional church. Help those in your church understand the connection between spiritual formation, spiritual health and healing, and the mission of the church. Explain how presence, guidance, and healing are essential but underdeveloped dynamics of missional churches. Help this church to understand the need for, and the resources it takes for this new ministry. Include promotional as well as all presentation materials used to initiate this new ministry.

**Christian History and Thought** ~ Develop a seminar for a local church that explains the emergence of, and spiritual contribution of, the missional church. Identify the theological themes which lead to the emergence of the missional church and offer some critical reflection on its strengths and weaknesses as well as identifying how a local church today might benefit from these theological and spiritual developments. Try to show in what ways that particular local church can spiritually grow as a missional church. Remember to include all promotional, presentation and evaluations material with this assignment.

**Focus: Chose one of the above specialization assignments**

**Length: Varies (equivalent to a 15 page research paper)**

**Weight: 35%**

**Due Date: June 30th**

### **3. Your Spiritual Theology of the Missional Church Paper 35%**

Write a paper that articulates your spiritual theology of the missional church. What are the theological, spiritual, and practical contours for the missional church from your perspective? What is the relationship between prayer, community and participation in the context of being a missional community. This paper will have to draw on all course materials, course text books and additional research (at least 3 articles and a minimum of 8 additional books).

**Length: 15 Pages**

**Weight: 35%**

**Due Date: June 23rd**

## **Class Schedule and Outline:**

### **May 27<sup>th</sup>**

#### **Morning:**

- Session 1 ~ Welcome, Introductions, Syllabus and Course Overview
- Session 2 ~ The Missio Dei & the Missional Church

#### **Afternoon**

- Session 1 ~ The Trinity, Participation, Spirituality and Mission
- Session 2 ~ Prayer: Spiritual and Missional Integration

### **June 3<sup>rd</sup>**

#### **Morning:**

- Session 1 ~ Intimacy with God the Spiritual Logic of Mission
- Session 2 ~ The Local Church as Sent Community the Missional Logic of Spirituality

#### **Afternoon:**

- Session 1 ~ Giftedness: The Communal Nature of this missional Spirituality
- Session 2 ~ Community and Discerning The Local Church's Creative Response to the World

### **June 10**

#### **Morning**

- Session 1 ~ The Biblical Vision for the Spirituality of the Missional Church
- Session 2 ~ Jesus, Paul and the Art of Contextualizing the Good News: Spiritual and Missional Resources

#### **Afternoon**

- Session 1 ~ Participating in the Missio Dei: Spiritually, Communally, Prayerfully
- Session 2 ~ Spiritual Practices of Missional Participation

### **Additional Notes:**

**Academic Dishonesty** – Academic dishonesty is a serious offence in the academic world 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 the transcript, and/or suspension or expulsion from the College. It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty. Please refer to the McMaster Divinity College Statement on Academic Honesty located at

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

**Inclusive Language** ~ McMaster Divinity College uses inclusive language 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 NRSV is a good example of the use of inclusive language. It is expected that all students will use inclusive language in 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 instructor and is prepared with currently available information. The instructor reserves the right to make changes and revisions up until the first day of class.

**Style** ~ 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

<http://www.mcmasterdivinity.ca/sites/default/files/documents/mdcstyleguide.pdf>

Failure to observe appropriate form will result in grade reductions.