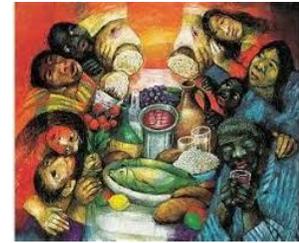




McMaster Divinity  
College

## **Welcoming the Other** 3 Unit Course Spring 2019



McMaster Divinity College  
Dr. Cynthia Long Westfall  
[westfal@mcmaster.ca](mailto:westfal@mcmaster.ca)  
Office #242  
905.525.9140 x23605

Online: April 23–June 5  
Webex online: April 23 3:30 EST  
Face-to-Face:  
May 7 (9 a.m.–5 p.m.)  
May 8 (9 a.m.–1 p.m.)

### **Course Description**

The welcome of the other is foundational in the identity and function of the people of God, and intimately connected with God's presence, promise and blessing. How do we define welcome? Who do we identify as the other (and who are "we"?)? What practices can we cultivate to welcome the other? The framework of this course will draw on concepts connected with the *invitation of radical hospitality* combined with *the movement towards incarnational actions* of becoming the other, crossing boundaries, sojourning and tearing down walls. By sharing our life, experiences and research interests, we will together identify the other, expand and build on the definition and practices of welcome, and populate the category of the other along with input from a select variety of people in the field and on the front lines. During the face-to-face time, we will concentrate on pooling our resources and building the biblical and theological bases for the praxis of radical hospitality together with incarnational identity and action rooted in the nature of God.

This is a hybrid course in which we combine two face-to-face sessions with online components: we will use Avenue to Learn as well as other online technologies. We open the semester with an online Webex session on April 23 at 3:30 p.m. EST.

### **Specializations**

#### ***Pastoral Studies (PS)***

Students taking this as a Pastoral Studies (PS) course are encouraged to explore how a biblical welcome of the other can be understood, practiced and transmitted in your target area(s) such as leadership strategies, ethical decisions, and pastoral care as well as worship, teaching and preaching.

#### ***Christian Worldview (CW)***

Students taking this as a Christian Worldview course are encouraged explore how welcoming the other provides a biblical and theological foundation as well as tools, methods and opportunity for the engagement and dialogue with other worldviews that are targeted in your specialization and additional contexts as well.

### ***Church and Culture (CC)***

Students taking this as a Church and Culture (CC) course are encouraged to explore the interface of the Church and the contemporary world in the theology and practice of welcoming the other in your targeted context(s) such as missions, development, evangelism, the emerging church, cultural context, preaching, or worship.

### ***Counselling and Spiritual Care (CS)***

Students taking this as a Counselling and Spiritual Care course are encouraged to explore the utilization of the biblical, theological and practical aspects of welcoming the other to frame, enrich and equip your approach to spiritual care and pastoral intervention in contexts of diversity (social, cultural, racial, economic, religious, etc.).

### ***Biblical Studies (BS)***

Students taking this as a Biblical Studies (BS) course will be encouraged to explore and research biblical content and develop a biblical theology that is exegetically responsible and interacts critically with scholarship that is fundamental in the practice of hospitality and incarnational movement in the welcome of the other, with applications that embrace the complexity of contemporary culture(s).

## **Course Objectives**

### **Knowing**

1. Understand the biblical basis for welcoming the other for the individual, the church, society and global contexts
2. Extend your understanding of welcome and the other to larger contexts and new possibilities.

### **Doing**

1. Research and develop a biblical topic/theme, passage or project that is relevant to your specialization and relates to the Church and/or current personal and communal practice.
2. Develop a life map on welcoming the other
3. Engage in welcoming the other in a local context and theologically reflect on that experience.

### **Being**

1. Awareness of your place, connection and circle of influence
2. Cultivated empathy for the other based on who you are & your past experience
3. Commitment to hospitality and an incarnational ministry consistent with your calling
4. Maturing habits of devotion & self-care that support the demanding nature of the discipline

## Reading

Pohl, Christine. *Making Room: Recovering Hospitality as a Christian Tradition*. Brewster, MA: Paraclete Press, 2011. 219 pp.

Warren, Michelle Ferrigno. *The Power of Proximity: Moving Beyond Awareness to Action*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2017. 182 pp.

Papers distributed to the class through Avenue to Learn and Dropbox

## Recommended

Fraser, Eloise Renich. *Confessions of a Beginning Theologian*. Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 1998.

Oden, Amy. *And You Welcomed Me: A Sourcebook on Early Hospitality as a Christian Tradition*. Nashville: Abingdon, 2010. 318 pp.

Volf, Miraslav. *Exclusion and Embrace: A Theological Exploration of Identity, Otherness, and Reconciliation*. Updated ed; Nashville: Abingdon, 2019. 336 pp.

## Course Requirements

### Online Participation (15%)

There will be a couple of venues in which you will be expected to contribute to the course online: (1) you will share content or initiate topics of discussion as directed in online presentations and (2) you can respond or interact with the contribution/content/topics of others. Contribute content on the average of once a week and interact with a minimum interaction or response to five others each week (on the average).

### Reading Report (10%)

Complete the required reading for the course and submit a reading report of the percentage of reading completed by **11:59 p.m. on June 5**.

## Written assignments

### *Theological Reflection on Welcoming the Other (20%)*

The student will engage in an encounter/ interaction in which you have an experience in welcoming the other (suggestions distributed on Avenue). The student will write a 5 page theological reflection on the experience based on the MRS model for spiritual reflection. **It is due midnight, June 5**. Submit to Avenue to Learn

### *Development of a Life Map Centered on Welcoming the Other (20%)*

Goal: Summarize your personal theology concerning welcoming the other, integrating identity, experiences, theology and practice. **It will be due 11:59 p.m. May 17**.

Utilizing the tools given in the course, design a map (model) with the following sections:

- Identify your experience of welcoming the other through your life story
- Clarify the biblical basis for welcoming the other in your area(s) of interest
- Identify your areas of responsibility, circle of influence and passion

- Problem-solve any challenges and barriers
- Plan to implement necessary changes.
- In summary, write your personal mission statement.

Detailed instructions for the Life Map will be posted in an online presentation on April 29.

The Life Map should be a minimum of 10 pages long and follow the MDC Style Guide <https://mcmasterdivinity.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/mdcstyleguide.pdf>

***Choice of Exegetical Paper, Research Paper or Portfolio Project (35%)***

Each student will either (a) write a research paper, (b) write an exegetical paper or (c) create a portfolio project on welcoming the other, suitable to the student's specialization. **It will be due 11:59 p.m., June 5 submitted to Avenue to Learn** (projects may be submitted in hard copy by arrangement). For all matters of style and form, consult the McMaster Divinity College Style Guidelines for Essays and Theses: <https://mcmasterdivinity.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/mdcstyleguide.pdf>

Each student's choice of paper or profile project will be described by the student in detail in a paragraph **submitted to Avenue to Learn due on May 10**. Each student will receive feedback on their choice and description.

Exegetical papers will be approximately 15 pages, written according to the Steps to Exegesis (Steps to Exegesis, instructive PowerPoints and a rubric posted on Avenue).

Research papers will be approximately 3000 words (about 12 pages) of text, excluding footnotes and bibliography. There should be a minimum of 15 academic sources used in the footnotes and bibliography. A rubric for research papers will be posted online together with a YouTube video on how to write research papers.

Portfolio projects should largely be determined by your specialization. Creativity is encouraged. You may choose to design an artifact: an art project, poetry or song, but in that case, you must also submit a written detailed description of exactly how your artifact utilizes, interprets and applies Scripture and the principles of biblical interpretation of the course.

Marking will be based on:

- How the message and content utilizes and applies Scripture and the principles of biblical welcome studied in the course as the primary goal.
- The appropriateness of the project for the identified target group,
- The quality and proficient use of the medium
- The estimated effort expended on the project (it should be nearly equal to the effort of a 12 pg. exegetical paper).

If the student fails to submit the paper on time, a late penalty of 2% a day will be applied to the paper's final grade until 7 days, when it will be 5% a day. **No papers will be accepted after June 7.**

### **Course Assessment Summary**

Online Participation	15%
Reading	10%
Theological reflection	15%
Life Map	25%
Paper or Project	35%

### **Classroom Behavior**

#### **Attendance**

Students are required to be present for the face to face sessions on May 7 & 8. Students are expected to stay for the entire class sessions, unless arranged in advance.

#### **Participation**

Please respect the opinions of others without disrespect or ridicule, even if you do not agree with them. However, feel free to respond logically and critically in an orderly manner. Similarly content in all papers should be irenic while it may critique alternate positions.

Students are not expected to be doing work on any other subject except that which is appropriate in the course outline.

Students are not to carry on off-topic conversations in class in person, the phone or on the internet.

We will eat and drink in class—please help with set up and clean up.

Students who fail to respect these guidelines will be dismissed from the class with consequences.

### **MDC Policies**

#### **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

~ <https://mcmasterdivinity.ca/rules-regulations/>

#### **Gender Inclusive Language**

McMaster Divinity College uses inclusive 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 NRSV 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.

### **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

Failure to observe appropriate form will result in grade reductions.

### **Appointments & office hours**

Contact me if I can assist you in any way via Avenue or e-mail: [westfal@mcmaster.ca](mailto:westfal@mcmaster.ca)

Phone: 289-238-9836

There are no set office hours, but I am available by appointment

### **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 to and including the first day of class.

## Course Schedule

Week 1: Webex online: April 23, 3:30

Introduction to the Course: Welcoming the other

**Self –Introduction: Establishing our own identities (intersectionality): Who are “we”?**

- Faith
- Race
- Nationality
- Location
- Gender
- Sexuality
- Class
- Education

Week 2: April 29–May 3

Online presentation and discussion forum

Life maps, theological reflection and practice-led discipline: tools to clarify what is “practice-led”: explore identity, experiences and practice

Week 3: Face-to-Face sessions

May 7

- Pooling of our resources on the other:
- A biblical theology of welcome
- DPT Hour: Crafting our theological foundation

May 8

- Biblical theology cont.
- Theologies, Theories and Philosophies
  - A theology of Welcome: empathy, incarnational presence, invitation, friending, becoming the other
  - Social Identity theory
  - Spatial theory
  - Post-Colonial Interpretation, Liberation Theology
- DPT Hour: Identifying and utilizing methodologies

May 10

**Paragraph description of paper or profile project due**

Week 4; May 13–18:

Categories of other

Online presentation, discussion forum

- Faith
- Race
- Nationality
- Culture
- Gender
- Class
- Education

Those with limited resources (income, options, genetics)  
Sexuality  
Victims  
Perpetrators  
Those who suffer consequences of their own behavior  
**May 17, 11:59 p.m. Life Map due**

Week 5: May 20–25

The Marginalized & Needy

Online Presentation, videos of those on the field and discussion forum

Homeless and poor

Disabled

Immigrants

Refugees

Week 6: May 27–31

The Oppressed, Victims & Those “We” have Wronged/Offended

Online Presentation, videos of those on the field and discussion forum

Victims of crime

Women as paradigmatic

Jews, Genocide & Reconciliation

Indigenous people (Canadian and global)

Week 7: Webex online: June 5, time TBA

**June 5, major paper or profile projects due prior to Webex**

**June 5, 11:59 p.m., Reading Report due**