

MCMASTER DIVINITY COLLEGE
WINTER SEMESTER 2022

THEOLOGICAL CONTOURS OF CHRISTIAN MINISTRY
MS 3XT3 (MDiv/MTS)
MS 5XT5 (DPT)
MS 6XT6 (MA/PhD)

Asynchronous January 10 – February 25
March 7 – April 8
Synchronous January 10, 24; February 7;
March 7, 21; April 4
In person Thursday, March 3 (9:00 am–4:30 pm)
Friday, March 4 (9:00 am–1:00 pm)



Instructor:

Dr. Michael Knowles

Divinity College 214

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Course Description

This course offers a specifically Christological account of the church's ministry, explaining it less as *imitation* of Christ than as *participation* in Christ's ongoing ministry in and on behalf of the world. Lectures, classroom exercises, and assignments will explore such foundational theological concerns as the nature of pastoral identity, the purpose of the church, and the goals of Christian ministry. While the course focuses on ministerial theology and praxis in a congregational setting, consideration will also be given to forms of ministry in other contexts.

Specializations

Pastoral Studies

Church & Culture

Course Objectives

KNOWING

- ▶ To review and assess foundational theological concepts and categories of Christian ministry, focussing especially on the identity and purpose of the church.

- ▶ To explore the Christological contours of discipleship in relation to the ministry of leadership in church and academy, with particular attention to the dynamics of a theology informed by the cross.

BEING

- ▶ To examine key features of spiritual autobiography with a view to clarifying the relationship between personal spirituality, discipleship, and ministerial vocation.
- ▶ To develop a fuller sense of identity “in Christ” as it applies to ministries of scholarship and teaching.
- ▶ To be formed together as a learning community.

DOING

- ▶ To gain practice in theological discernment as it applies to the pastoral dimensions of academic ministry.
- ▶ To identify and clarify personal goals for vocation and ministry within church, academy, and society.

Course Outline

Offered in a hybrid format, this class will meet *online* for the first seven weeks (January 10–February 25), *in person* for one and a half days (March 3–4), then *online* for the final five weeks (March 7–April 8). Synchronous/online sessions are scheduled for Mondays, 7:00–9:00 p.m. When meeting in person, students are required to maintain social distancing and observe appropriate health protocols, for the safety of all members of the community.

Reading assignments are specified as PD (Professional degree), RD (Research degree), or PD/RD (all programmes)

January 10 Module 1: The Fragmentation of Theological Education

PD/RD Reading:

Shaw, “The Hidden Curriculum of Theological Education”

Synchronous Session One: Course Orientation

January 17 Module 2: Christian Identity and the Life of Christ

Ministry Assessment due

January 24	Module 3:	The Life of Christ in the Life of the Church Synchronous Session Two
January 31	Module 4:	Cruciform Discipleship RD reading: Gorman, <i>Cruciformity: Paul's Narrative Spirituality of the Cross</i>
February 7	Module 5:	The Rôle of the Pastor (I): "Apart from Me You Can Do Nothing" Synchronous Session Three Review Essay due
February 14	Module 6:	The Rôle of the Pastor (II): The Priority of Grace
February 21	Module 7:	The Rôle of the Pastor (III): <i>Participatio Christi</i> Brené Brown: "The Power of Vulnerability"
March 3 Thursday	Module 8A Module 8B	9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. 1:30 – 4:30 p.m. In person: Case Studies and Student Presentations PD reading: Blackaby and King; <i>Experiencing God</i> RD reading: Peterson, <i>The Pastor</i>
March 4 Friday	Module 8C	9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. In person: Case Studies and Student Presentations
March 7	Synchronous Session Four	
March 14	Module 9:	The Rôle of the Pastor (IV): The Pastor As Test Case
March 21	Module 10:	Ministry as Crucifixion: "Ministry in the Shape of the Cross" Synchronous Session Five Summative Essay due
March 28	Module 11:	The Resurrection of Ministry (I)
April 4	Module 12:	The Resurrection of Ministry (II) Synchronous Session Six

April 8 Final date for submission of late assignments

Course Requirements:

A. Textbooks

Professional Degree Programmes:

Blackaby, Henry T., and Claude V. King. *Experiencing God: How to Live the Full Adventure of Knowing and Doing the Will of God*. Nashville: Broadman and Holman, 1994.

Purves, Andrew. *The Crucifixion of Ministry: Surrendering Our Ambitions to the Service of Christ*. Downers Grove: IVP, 2007.

Purves, Andrew. *The Resurrection of Ministry: Serving in the Hope of the Risen Lord*. Downers Grove: IVP, 2010.

Research Degree Programmes:

Gorman, Michael J. *Cruciformity: Paul's Narrative Spirituality of the Cross*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001.

Peterson, Eugene H. *The Pastor: A Memoir*. New York: HarperOne, 2011.

Purves, Andrew. *Pastoral Theology in the Classical Tradition*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2001.

Purves, Andrew. *Reconstructing Pastoral Theology: A Christological Foundation*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2004.

All required textbooks are available from MDC's book service, READ On Books, located in the Hurlburt Family Bookstore at McMaster Divinity College, located in Cullen Hall. For advance purchase, you may contact READ On Bookstore, 5 International Blvd, Etobicoke, Ontario M9W 6H3. Orders can be placed by phone (416 620.2934), text (416 668.3434), or email (books@readon.ca), with payment by e-transfer, credit card, or cheque; shipping is free for students. Other book services may also carry the texts.

B. Additional Resources

Foster, Richard. *Streams of Living Water: The Great Traditions of the Christian Faith*. New York: Harper San Francisco, 1998.

Oden, Thomas C. *Pastoral Theology: Essentials of Ministry*. New York: HarperOne, 1983.

The course bibliography is available on the Avenue to Learn course site. In addition of the virtual and print collections of McMaster Mills Library, all registered students also have access to the online Digital Theological Library collection: <https://libguides.thedtl.org/home>. Please keep the password that you have been assigned confidential.

C. Student Responsibilities and Course Assignments

Written assignments are due at 11:59 p.m. on the due date, and are to be submitted via the Avenue to Learn course website. In order to avoid late penalties, students are responsible for ensuring that their assignments have been uploaded successfully.

In completing course assignments, students in Basic Degree programmes are expected to identify and emphasize themes relevant to their chosen area of specialization, whether Church & Culture or Pastoral Studies. Students in Research Degree programmes should tailor their assignments towards their respect areas of research interest, in consultation with the course instructor.

1. Class Participation

Regular and timely participation in all virtual and in-person class sessions. Auditors are requested to complete the course readings and are required to complete the “Theological Ministry Assessment” assignment.

2. Reading

Written assignments should give evidence of course and background reading commensurate with programme standards:

MDiv/MTS	3,000 pages
DPT	4,000 pages
MA/PhD	8,000 pages

3. Theological Ministry Assessment

Due: January 17

Offer a theological analysis of your present or most recent ministry situation. Describe the goals and methods or means of this ministry: what does it seek to accomplish, as well as why and how? In particular, where is God in relation to this ministry and how can you know? For example, does this ministry seek to imitate God? Represent God? Operate as a result of what God has previously done? Join what God is doing now? What actual difference does God make?

MDiv/MTS	750 words	15%
DPT	1,500 words	15%
MA/PhD	1,500 words	10%

4. Review Essay

Due: February 7

Review and compare the perspectives and contributions to a theology of pastoral ministry offered by the two main course texts for the professional and research degree programmes, respectively:

MDiv/MTS Andrew Purves, *The Crucifixion of Ministry* and *The Resurrection of Ministry*.

MA/DPT/PhD Andrew Purves, *Pastoral Theology in the Classical Tradition* and *Reconstructing Pastoral Theology: A Christological Foundation*.

These works are to be

- reviewed as to content and argumentation, in keeping with the “Basic Guidelines for Composing a Book Review” (below);
- compared in this respect to each other; and
- evaluated for their contribution to a broader theology of pastoral ministry.

Reviews for Research Degree students (MA/DPT/PhD) must interact with the work of at least one other pastoral theologian of the modern era (e.g., Donald Capps, Elaine Graham, Seward Hiltner, Emmanuel Lartey, Bonnie Miller-McLemore, Henri Nouwen, Thomas Oden, Letty Russell, etc.). Students who wish to substitute another theologian or theoretician of specific relevance to their programme of research must first consult with the course instructor.

MDiv/MTS	1,250 words	25%
DPT	2,500 words	25%
MA/PhD	3,500 words	20%

5. Culminating Exercise: Theory and Application of Pastoral Theology

The purpose of this exercise is twofold:

- 1) to identify the pastoral dimensions of ministry to church, academy, and society, and
- 2) for students to situate their own research and ministerial interests in relation to broader conceptual and practical considerations raised by pastoral theologians both ancient and modern.

a. Case Study

In conversation with relevant material from Oden, *Pastoral Theology*, and other theological resources (whether ancient or modern), present a case study in the application of pastoral theology to a specific ministry situation, giving attention both to conceptual and to methodological considerations. Assess the ministry situation from a theological perspective; identify the respective rôles and responsibilities of the minister, God, and/or the congregation; discuss appropriate pedagogical and practical goals; and specify suitable courses of ministerial and/or congregational action. Discuss your findings in relation to your own ministry, as well as their specific relevance to the needs of the church, the academic community, and society at large.

As identified by Oden, possible categories for consideration include (but are not limited to):

- a. Ordination (26–34)
- b. Spiritual Gifts (64–81)
- c. Liturgical Leadership (85–104)
- d. Baptism and Lord's Supper (105–26)
- e. Preaching (127–40)
- f. Teaching (141–52)
- g. Institutional Administration (153–65)
- h. Pastoral Visitation (169–85)
- i. Spiritual Direction ("Care of Souls," 186–205)
- j. Ministry to the Sick (249–66)
- k. Care of the Poor (267–92)
- l. Care of the Dying (293–310)

For other ministry situations (e.g., evangelism, church planting, cross-cultural mission, etc.), students are advised to consult with the instructor in order to clarify the scope of the topic and identify appropriate resource materials.

b. Format

This exercise is to be presented in two formats, each of which will be graded on the basis of theological insight and creativity of presentation (in addition to the general criteria that apply to all assignments, indicated below):

i. In-person presentation of 20 minutes' (for professional degree students) or 30 minutes' duration (for research degree students) followed by 10 minutes for questions and guided discussion, led by the presenter. The presentation as a whole is intended convey the significance of your research for ministry within church, academy, and society, in a creative, intellectually coherent, and engaging manner. Presentations are scheduled for March 3–4, according to a prearranged schedule.

ii. Summative essay in standard academic format that represents an amended version of the class presentation (as determined by post-presentation critique and review).

MDiv/MTS	2,000 words	35%	Due: March 21
DPT	4,000 words	35%	Due: March 21
MA/PhD	8,000 words	30%	Due: March 21

Summary of Assignments and Grading				
Professional Degrees (MDiv/MTS)		<i>Due</i>	<i>Length</i>	<i>Grade %</i>
Theological Ministry Assessment		January 17	750 words	15%
Review Essay		February 7	1,250 words	25%
Culminating Exercise	Class Presentations	March 3–4	20 + 10 minutes	25%
	Summative Essay	March 21	2,000 words	35%
DPT		<i>Due</i>	<i>Length</i>	<i>Grade %</i>
Theological Ministry Assessment		January 17	1,500 words	15%
Review Essay		February 7	2,500 words	25%

Culminating Exercise	Class Presentations	March 3–4	30 + 10 minutes	25%
	Summative Essay	March 21	4,000 words	35%
MA/PhD		<i>Due</i>	<i>Length</i>	<i>Grade %</i>
Theological Ministry Assessment		January 17	1,500 words	10%
Review Essay		February 7	3,500 words	20%
Culminating Exercise	Class Presentations	March 3–4	30 + 10 minutes	30%
	Summative Essay	March 21	8,000 words	35%

D. 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 (<https://mcmasterdivinity.ca/resources-forms/mdc-style-guide>). Failure to observe appropriate conventions will result in grade reductions.

To assist with prose composition, students are encouraged to make use of grammarly.com, which is funded by the university, along with the Writing Support Services provided by the McMaster Student Success Centre (<http://studentsuccess.mcmaster.ca/students/academic-skills/writing-support-services.html>). See also “CRITERIA FOR GRADING OF WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS,” below.

E. Academic Dishonesty

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/>

F. Gender Inclusive Language

McMaster Divinity College is committed to employing inclusive language for human beings in worship services, written materials, and all publications. With regard to biblical texts, the integrity of original expressions (including references to God) should be respected. The NRSV and NIV provide appropriate examples of the use of inclusive language for human subjects. With the exception of direct quotations from historical documents, inclusive language is to be used in all assignments submitted for academic credit.

G. Deadlines and Late Submission Penalty

Assignments are to be submitted to the Avenue to Learn website by noon on the due date, after which they will be considered late and penalized 1% per calendar day.

*The final date for late submission of course assignments is April 8, 2022
Assignments received after this date will not be accepted for grading or credit*

Disclaimer:

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

Basic Guidelines for Composing a Book Review

1. *Publication Data*

- a. Provide essential bibliographical data, in the proper format.

2. *Description*

- a. Who is the author, and what is his/her expertise or qualification for writing?
- b. What main points does the author make? Is there a key passage or statement?
- c. How does each part relate to what precedes and follows?
- d. For what audience is this argument/discussion intended?

3. *Evaluation*

- a. Is the author's thesis cogent and convincing?
- b. Are there unstated assumptions or gaps in logic? Does the author offer novel insights and perspectives? An innovative synthesis of current knowledge?
- c. Who are the author's main discussion partners? Who does the author cite for support, or argue against, and why?

4. *Application*

- a. How do the author's insights apply to your own field of endeavour or research?
- b. What are the implications of this study for the life and ministry of the church?
- c. To whom would you recommend this book (or not)?

SUMMARIZE

ASSESS

ENGAGE

"what?"

"so what?"

"now what?"

CRITERIA FOR GRADING OF WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS

Grading of written materials will be based on the following general criteria

Grade Range	Content	Argument	Presentation
90–100 A+ 85–89 A 80–84 A–	Mastery of subject matter; creativity and individualized integration of insights and their relationships; exceeds required elements	Clear, logical structure; with comprehensive introduction, persuasive argumentation, and innovative conclusions	Detailed adherence to relevant style for formatting of text, notes, and bibliography; no errors of grammar or syntax; elegant presentation
77–79 B+ 73–76 B 70–72 B–	Above-average grasp of principles and concepts and their inter-relationship; completion of all required elements	Coherent structure and consistent argumentation; well-stated introduction and conclusion	General adherence to relevant style and format; few errors of grammar or syntax
67–69 C+ 63–66 C 60–62 C–	Adequate understanding of theoretical foundations; minimal completion of required elements	Rudimentary structure; minimal introductory and concluding statements	Significant errors of grammar, syntax, or style
57–59 D+ 53–56 D 50–52 D–	Low level of comprehension; required elements incomplete or missing	Lack of coherence or structure in argumentation; no introduction or conclusion	Abundant grammatical, syntactical, and stylistic errors
0–49% F	Inability to grasp basic concepts; required elements missing	Incomprehensible or illogical structure and argumentation	Failure to follow stylistic guidelines; incomprehensible syntax