

McMASTER DIVINITY COLLEGE  
WINTER SEMESTER 2023

### PREACHING RESURRECTION

MS 3PR3 (MDiv/MTS)

MS 5PR5 (DPT)

MS 6PR6 (MA/PhD)

In person            Mondays, 2:00 – 3:50 p.m.  
                             January 9 – February 13  
                             March 6 – April 3  
Asynchronous      February 20 – March 3

**Instructor:**        Dr. Michael Knowles  
                             Divinity College 214  
                             knowlesm@mcmaster.ca



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### Course Description

At the core of the church's faith in God is the resurrection of Jesus from death. Notwithstanding contemporary efforts to reduce resurrection to metaphor, myth, or psychology, Jesus' in-person post-mortem return to his disciples encapsulates God's intent to bestow life in reversal of human failure, suffering, and death, thus making "all things new." This conviction is the ultimate focus of all Christian preaching and the source of its power. Beyond explorations of doctrine or belief alone, "Preaching Resurrection" entails an all-encompassing orientation to God's gift of life in the life and ministry of the church.

### Specializations

Church & Culture

Christian Worldview

Pastoral Studies

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### Course Objectives

#### KNOWING

- ▶ To examine the theological and historical foundations of belief in the resurrection of Jesus.

- ▶ To explore the implications of Jesus' resurrection for Christian identity, Christian ministry, and homiletical theology in particular.
- ▶ To articulate an interim theological ethic for Christian ministry in the context of pilgrimage.

#### BEING

- ▶ To situate personal spiritual autobiography in the context of Jesus' resurrection.
- ▶ To foster ministerial identity and function in relation to the identity of Christ.
- ▶ To be formed together as a learning community

#### DOING

- ▶ To develop skill in the devotional application of a Christian worldview.
- ▶ To gain practice in preparation, delivery, and assessment of sermons that focus on resurrection and its implications for Christian life.
- ▶ To develop greater facility in fostering the spiritual growth of fellow disciples.

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### Course Outline

Although classes are in-person, the timing of Family Day and the Hybrid Intensive week allows for a mid-semester asynchronous module (February 20–26). When meeting in person, students are required to observe appropriate health protocols, for the safety of all members of the community.

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January 9	Module 1 Powerlessness in the Pulpit: Why Preaching is so Difficult
January 16	Module 2 Resurrection in Modern Theology Reading: <i>Third Voice</i> , 1–30
January 23	Module 3 Three Keys are in the Hand of God: The Power of the Father Supplemental: Knowles, <i>Of Seeds and the People of God</i> , 21–39; 89–118 Review Essay due
January 30	Module 4 Words of Life: The Power of the Son Reading: Purves, <i>Resurrection of Ministry</i> , 11–84

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“The Testimony of Scripture” presentations (1)

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February 6    Module 5

Signs and Wonders: The Power of the Holy Spirit

Reading: Purves, *Resurrection of Ministry*, 85–153

“The Testimony of Scripture” presentations (2)

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February 13    Module 6

Speech Act Theory and Performative Utterance: The Power of Words

Reading: *Third Voice*, 51–91

“The Testimony of Scripture” presentations (3)

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February 21    Module 7

Sermon Preparation Crash Course (asynchronous online)

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February 27    Hybrid Intensive Week (no class scheduled)

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March 6        Module 8        Resurrection as Method: Bearing Witness to the Ways of Life

Reading: *Third Voice*, 127–55

“The Testimony of Scripture” presentations (4)

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March 13        Module 9        Sermons I

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March 20        Module 10       In-Between Spaces: Preaching While Pilgrim

Reading: *Third Voice*, 156–95

“The Testimony of Scripture” presentations (5)

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March 27        Module 11       Sermons II

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April 3         Module 12

Summary: The Character of Resurrection Preaching

Reading: *Third Voice*, 199–232

Final essay due (DPT/MA/PhD)

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April 6         Final date for submission of late assignments

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## Course Requirements:

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### A. Texts

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Knowles, Michael P. *Third Voice: Preaching Resurrection*. Eugene, OR: Cascade, 2021.

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

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.

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### B. Additional Resources

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.

Allen, O. Wesley. *Preaching Resurrection*. St. Louis: Chalice, 2000.

Blount, Brian K. *Invasion of the Dead: Preaching Resurrection*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2014.

Knowles, Michael P. *Of Seeds and the People of God: Preaching as Parable, Crucifixion, and Testimony*. Eugene, OR: Cascade, 2015.

Sancken, Joni S. *Stumbling Over the Cross: Preaching the Cross and Resurrection Today*. Lloyd John Ogilvie Institute of Preaching Series 8. Eugene, OR: Cascade, 2016.

Wright, N. T. *The Resurrection and the Son of God*. Volume 3 of Christian Origins and the Question of God. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2003.

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## C. Student Responsibilities and Course Assignments

Written assignments are due at 2:00 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, Christian Worldview, or Pastoral Studies. Students in Research Degree programmes should tailor their assignments towards their respective areas of research interest, in consultation with the course instructor.

### 1. Class Participation

Regular and timely participation in all in-person class sessions. Auditors should complete the course readings and are required to preach two sermons in class.

### 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	6,000 pages

### 3. The Testimony of Scripture (All degree programmes)

This assignment consists of an oral class presentation followed by a written submission due one week later, on the basis of one of the following passages (a sign-up sheet will be made available on the A2L class page). According to the text in question, what difference does resurrection make to Christian identity, discipleship, and ministry? Submissions will be graded on the basis of theological insight and creativity of presentation.

Length:	15 minutes/1,500 words
MDiv/MTS	15% (oral) + 20% (written)
DPT	15% (oral + written)
MA/PhD	15% (oral + written)

January 23	Ezekiel 37:1–14	Daniel 12:1–4
February 6	Matthew 28:1–10	Mark 16:1–8
February 13	Luke 24:13–35	John 20:1–18
March 6	John 20:19–29	John 21:1–14
March 20	1 Corinthians 15:1–28	1 Corinthians 15:35–58

4. Popular Preaching on the Resurrection (MDiv/MTS only) 25%

Select five sermons on the subject of resurrection, whether in print or online (preferably by well-known preachers or theologians). If desired, one of the sermons may be from a pre-modern (e.g., Patristic, Medieval, Reformation, etc.) era. Describe, analyse, and compare the five sermons both theologically and practically: what do they have to say about resurrection and what difference does resurrection make both to the sermon itself and (according to the preacher) in the lives of the hearers?

Length: 2,000 words

Due: January 30

5. Review Essay (DPT only) 30%

Compare three recent treatments of preaching and resurrection:

Allen, O. Wesley. *Preaching Resurrection*. St. Louis: Chalice, 2000.

Blount, Brian K. *Invasion of the Dead: Preaching Resurrection*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2014.

Sancken, Joni S. *Stumbling Over the Cross: Preaching the Cross and Resurrection Today*. Lloyd John Ogilvie Institute of Preaching Series 8. Eugene, OR: Cascade, 2016.

Offer a synthetic and comparative review of their theological content and argumentation, in keeping with the “Basic Guidelines for Composing a Book Review” (below), evaluating their respective contributions to the theology and practice of preaching. For each author, what is the nature or meaning of resurrection, and what kind of preaching should resurrection inspire? Which

approach is of most practical benefit to your own preaching (or not), and why is this so in each case?

Length: 3,000 words

Due: January 30

6. Review Essay (PhD only) 35%

In conversation with relevant background literature, provide an original review of N. T. Wright, *The Resurrection and the Son of God* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2003). Explain Wright's understanding of Jesus' resurrection, its implications for a Christian worldview and Christian mission, and, in particular, the relevance of resurrection for your own programme of doctoral research.

Length: 3,500 words

Due: January 30

7. Sermon Preparation (All degree programmes)

Each student will preach two sermons in class, on texts of the student's choosing. Sermons will be discussed and graded by other members of the class, using the "Sermon Evaluation Form" posted on the course website (and included below).

a. Sermons I: *Content and Method* (March 13)

Prepare and preach an original sermon on a biblical text that directly addresses the subject or significance of resurrection (whether that of Jesus or the saints in general). Both the content and the method of the sermon should engage with resurrection as foundational to preaching.

b. Sermons II: *"A Sermon for Easter Morning"* (March 27)

Prepare and preach an original sermon suitable for Easter morning.

*Please note that in order to accommodate all students, class sessions may extend beyond the scheduled time slot on these two dates.*

MDiv/MTS 2 × 20% Length: 15 minutes maximum (all programmes)

DPT 2 × 15%

MA/PhD 2 × 15%

8. Final Essay (DPT/PhD only)

35%

In consultation with the course instructor, the final essay provides opportunity for doctoral students to explore the interface between resurrection as a theological concept and specific areas of research interest. Essays will conduct this exploration in the context of a suitable methodological framework and in dialogue with a comprehensive range of primary and secondary literature.

DPT            3,000 words  
MA/PhD       5,000 words

Due: April 3

Summary of Assignments and Grading				
Professional Degrees (MDiv/MTS)		<i>Due</i>	<i>Length</i>	<i>Grade %</i>
The Testimony of Scripture		various	15 minutes	15%
			1,500 words	20%
Resurrection Preaching		January 30	2,000 words	25%
Sermons	1. Content	March 13	15 minutes	20%
	2. Method	March 27	15 minutes	20%
DPT		<i>Due</i>	<i>Length</i>	<i>Grade %</i>
The Testimony of Scripture		various	15 min/1,500 words	15%
Review Essay		January 30	3,000 words	20%
Sermons	1. Content	March 13	15 minutes	15%
	2. Method	March 27	15 minutes	15%
Final Essay		April 3	3,000 words	35%
MA/PhD		<i>Due</i>	<i>Length</i>	<i>Grade %</i>
The Testimony of Scripture		various	15 min/1,500 words	15%
Review Essay		January 30	3,500 words	20%
Sermons	1. Content	March 13	15 minutes	15%
	2. Method	March 27	15 minutes	15%
Final Essay		April 3	5,000 words	35%



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## 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](https://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.

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## 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/>

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## 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.

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## 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 6, 2023  
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

## SERMON EVALUATION FORM

Date:

Start time:

End time:

Preacher:

Evaluator:

Theme, focus, or text:

Thesis: The main point this sermon makes is...

Purpose: As a result of this sermon, the hearers should...

Structure: What is the basic outline of this sermon? (List points on reverse side)

Was the sermon clearly structured or developed (beginning, middle, end)? Easy to follow?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 \_\_\_\_\_

Biblical exegesis/theological analysis: How clearly did the sermon explain the text/theme?

3 6 9 12 15 18 21 24 27 30 \_\_\_\_\_

Culture and Audience: How clearly did the sermon relate to contemporary culture/the immediate audience?

3 6 9 12 15 18 21 24 27 30 \_\_\_\_\_

The Speaker: How effectively did the speaker use voice and body movements?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 \_\_\_\_\_

Communicative strategies: How effective were the illustrations in relation to the text/theme?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 \_\_\_\_\_

Summary: How effective was the sermon in accomplishing its intended purpose?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 \_\_\_\_\_

Additional comments and observations:

TOTAL

100