



McMaster Divinity
College

Welcoming the Other
NT/MS 3XH3
3 Unit Course



McMaster Divinity College
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Spring Semester 2023
Asynchronous Course
Weekly On-Line Videos
Participation on A2L

Course Description

This course is a place where you can process some of the recent events that broke our hearts, by addressing broken relationships in areas such as social isolation, mental illness/depression, exclusion, victimization, and racism. Seek to develop biblical responses in your reading of Scripture, your theology, ministry and your personal transformation. 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 in-class 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 an asynchronous course in which we combine seven on-line sessions with weekly videos distributed on A2L that give course content: we will use Avenue to Learn as well as other online technologies.

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.

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.

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

- Provide explanations of the biblical basis for welcoming the other for the individual, the church, society and global contexts
- Summarize how welcoming the other extends to larger contexts and new possibilities.

Being

- Awareness of your place, connections, and circle of influence
- Experience empathy for the other based on who you are & your past experience
- Be committed to hospitality and an incarnational ministry consistent with your calling
- Possess habits of devotion & self-care that support the demanding nature of the discipline

Doing

- 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.
- Develop a life map on welcoming the other
- Engage in welcoming the other in a local context and theologically reflect on that experience.

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.

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.

Textbook Purchase

The bookstore will be open on campus. Textbooks can be ordered ahead of time with free delivery by contacting Bernice at books@readon.ca.

Course Requirements

View Videos (attendance)

Students are required to view the weekly videos online in advance of the weekly online session.

Online Participation (15%)

There will be a couple of venues in which you will be expected to participate in online activities and contribute to the course online:

- Post a video on A2L that introduces to you the class by **May 5, 11:59 p.m.**
- Complete the weekly “exercises” given in the videos and submit to A2L Content: Exercises
- Initiate one discussion thread a week based on the exercises under Communication: Discussion, creating and embedding videos—have some creative fun with it!
- Comment with videos on a minimum of 3 other discussion threads per week
- Post one current event or article relevant to Welcoming the Other per week on the course Padlet (4 total).

Reading Report (10%)

Complete the required reading for the course and submit a reading report of the percentage of reading completed by **June 16 at 11:59 p.m.**

Written assignments

Theological Reflection on Welcoming the Other (15%)

Objective: Engagement in welcoming the other in a local context and theological reflection on that experience.

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 July 14 at 11:59 p.m.** Submit to Avenue to Learn

Development of a Life Map Centered on Welcoming the Other (25%)

Objectives: meet the being objectives and explain the biblical basis for welcoming the other.

It will be due May 26 at 11:59 p.m.

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

- Establish your own identity by which you define the other
- Identify your experience of welcoming the other through your life story

- Identify your areas of responsibility, circle of influence and passion
- Summarize your unique calling to welcoming the other
- Clarify the biblical basis for welcoming the other in your area(s) of interest
- Problem-solve any challenges and barriers
- Praxis: 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/resources-forms/mdc-style-guide/>

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

Objective: The paper or project should extend welcoming the other to larger contexts and new possibilities in your ministry.

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 and present it at the closing WebEx Session. **It will be due June 30 at 11:59 p.m., 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/resources-forms/mdc-style-guide/>

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 Friday, June 2 at 11:59 p.m.** 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 15 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 15 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 July 16.**

Course Assessment Summary

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

Classroom Behavior

Attendance

Attendance will consist of watching the course videos. 100% attendance is expected.

Participation

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

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 ~ <http://www.mcmasterdivinity.ca/programs/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 by e-mail: westfal@mcmaster.ca

There are no set office hours, but I am available for Skype appointments or office appointments.

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: May 1–5

Introduction to the Course: Welcoming the other

Post a video on A2L introducing yourself by May 5, 11:59 p.m.:

- *Your name*
- *Something about your background*
- *Where you currently live and anything relevant you want to share about your life*
- *Where you are in your studies at MDC*
- *What your specialization (or program) is*
- *Why you are taking the course.*

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

Faith
Race
Nationality
Location
Gender
Sexuality
Class
Education

Week 2: May 8–12

Life maps
Theological reflection and practice-led discipline:
Explore identity, experiences and practice

Week 3: May 15–19

A Biblical Theology of Welcome,
Empathy
Incarnational presence
Invitation
Friending
Becoming the other
Social Identity theory
Spatial theory
Post-Colonial Interpretation, Liberation Theology

Week 4: May 22–26

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

Life Map due May 26

Week 5: May 29–June 2

The Marginalized & Needy

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

Homeless and poor

The socially isolated

Disabled

Mentally ill

Elderly

Immigrants

Refugees

Description of Paper/Project due June 2

Week 6: June 5–9

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

Victims of discrimination

Jews, Genocide & Reconciliation

Indigenous people (Canadian and global)

Week 7: June 12–16

Online Discussion of Life Maps, plans for projects and plans for field service (theological reflection)

Reading report due June 16

Major paper or profile projects due June 30, 11:59 p.m.

Theological Reflection on Field Service due July 14, 11:59 p

*Select Bibliography
To Be Continued*

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- Kuecker, Aaron. *The Spirit and the "Other": Social Identity, Ethnicity and Intergroup Reconciliation in Luke-Acts*. London: T&T Clark, 2011.
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