

MS 3P1050 Pastoral Theology of Preaching SYLLABUS

McMaster Divinity College
Phil C. Zylla, D.Th.
Office #: 215 - by appointment
Specializations: PS, CC, CW
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Term: Fall 2024

Course Delivery: In Person/Livestream
Class Sessions: Wednesday 2:00-3:50 p.m.

Bio:

Dr. Phil Zylla is *Professor of Pastoral Theology* at McMaster Divinity College. He also holds the *J. Gordon and Margaret Warnock Jones Chair in Church and Ministry*. His research interests include congregational studies, Christian spirituality, pastoral theology, and preaching. Dr. Zylla was preaching pastor of three congregations over 17 years and draws on his experience in the pulpit for this course. He lives in Ancaster with his wife Melodie.

Course Description:

The ministry of preaching in contemporary society demands a carefully developed framework of pastoral theological imagination. This course identifies dimensions of cultural engagement, discernment of pastoral needs, practices of creative and artful communication, and attention to the contours of spiritual development of congregations. Proclamation practices that facilitate meaning, purpose, and Christian identity will be established in order to develop a critical framework for contemporary preaching. Finding one's voice, articulating a spiritual vision, and thinking theologically about spiritual formation through preaching will be animated dimensions of this course. The course will offer guidance for both experienced and novice preachers, with the aim of strengthening a mature framework for contemporary pastoral theology of preaching.

Course Objectives:

Knowing

1. Participants will expand their knowledge of the dynamics contemporary preaching.
2. Participants will learn to think theologically about the practices of communicating the gospel and articulating a deeper Christian spirituality.
3. Participants will gain insight into the complexities of preaching in a postmodern context.

Being

4. Participants will deepen their commitment to authenticity in the ministry of preaching.
5. Participants will refresh their own spiritual practices of communion with God.

Doing

6. Participants will develop and craft sermons with creativity, depth, and integration.

Required Course Textbooks:

Francis, L. J. and Andrew Village. *Preaching with All our Souls*. London: Continuum, 2008.

Ward, David B. *Practicing the Preaching Life*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2019.

Westerhoff, John H. *Spiritual Life: The Foundation for Preaching and Teaching*. Louisville.: Westminster John Knox, 1994.

COURSE OUTLINE and TOPICS

September 11	<i>What Makes a Great Sermon?</i>
September 18	<i>Second Naivete and the Art of Attention</i>
September 25	<i>Proclamation as Formation</i>
October 2	<i>Theopoetic Preaching: Imagination, Punctuation, and Surprise</i>
October 9	Preaching Lab – Sermons A
October 16	no class – Reading Week
October 23	<i>Finding Your Voice in Preaching</i>
October 30	<i>Spirituality of Preaching and Self-Disclosure</i>
November 6	<i>Assessing the Spiritual Needs of a Congregation</i>
November 13	Preaching Lab – Sermons B
November 20	ETS/SBL Academic Conferences – <u>no class</u>
November 27	<i>Cultural Horizons of Contemporary Preaching</i>
December 4	<i>Preaching in Crisis</i>
December 11	<i>A Pastoral Theology of Preaching</i>

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

Assignment # 1:

Sermon A 12 pages total/18-20 min.

Sermons will be presented in class for interaction with your peers. The assignment has both preliminary requirements and a manuscript of the sermon itself. The preliminary requirements include the following features:

- a. Selection of an Old Testament pericope with an explanation of the context and theological importance of that passage (1.5 pages)
- b. A clear paragraph describing the 'core' message of the pericope. (.5 pages)
- c. Some analysis describing how this text can be culturally appropriated today (1 page)

The manuscript of the sermon [10 pages] will be evaluated by your peers using these criteria:

- Creativity and engagement of the audience
- Contemporary relevance of themes
- Theological insight of the text
- Exposition and development of the primary pericope
- Effectiveness of delivery
- Articulation and Voice

Length: The delivered sermon should be between 18-20 mins. in length.

Due Date: October 9, 2024 25%

Assignment # 2:

Textbook Review 5-7 pages

Select one of the course textbooks for review. Engage in a meaningful interaction with how this books shapes your vision of contemporary preaching. What are the critical insights that shape your approach to the preaching task? What fundamental adjustments will you make in respect to your own ministry of proclamation? What notable insights can you interact with as to how they impact your vision for preaching ministry. The review should include:

- a. A summary of the primary arguments of the author.
- b. A description of the homiletical insights gained from reading this text.
- c. An examination of how the critical insights of this volume will be applied in your preaching.
- d. A one page vision statement about your renewed perspective on preaching gained from reading this text.

Due Date: October 23, 2024 20%

Assignment # 3

Sermon B 12 pages total/18-20 min.

Sermons will be presented in class for interaction with your peers. The assignment has both preliminary requirements and a manuscript of the sermon itself. The preliminary requirements include the following features:

- d. Selection of a New Testament pericope with an explanation of the context and theological importance of that passage (1.5 pages)
- e. A clear paragraph describing the 'core' message of the pericope. (.5 pages)
- f. Some analysis describing how this text can be culturally appropriated today (1 page)

The manuscript of the sermon [10 pages] will be evaluated by your peers using these criteria:

- Creativity and engagement of the audience
- Contemporary relevance of themes
- Theological insight of the text
- Exposition and development of the primary pericope
- Effectiveness of delivery
- Articulation and Voice

Length: The delivered sermon should be between 18-20 mins. in length.

Due Date: November 13, 2024 25%

Assignment # 4

Preaching Plan

Write a three-month preaching plan for your own congregation or ministry context (ie. youth events, etc.). [n.b. For those in CW or CC specialization without a primary ministry, focus on presentations to a retreat audience and plan out three retreats – with four themes/messages for each retreat. Imagine an audience of participants from various churches]. The preaching plan should include the following:

- a. General theological themes and motifs with reading list
- b. Outline of the sermon series over the three months.
- c. A description of preparation planning, weekly patterns, and presentation ideas.
- d. Creativity in planning and executing.
- e. Analysis of the setting in which the preaching occurs – congregational analysis, cultural framework, denominational or other identity markers, etc.
- f. A rationale for the sequencing of ideas and the desired outcome.

Due Date: December 11, 2024 30%

MS 5P1060 DPT Syllabus Supplement:

DPT students who wish to take this course for five unit credit must contact the professor to obtain the DPT syllabus supplement. This supplement involves additional reading requirements and assignments appropriate to the doctoral level study of the subject. Contact: zyllap@mcmaster.ca requesting the syllabus supplement.

Late Papers: Late papers will be docked 1% each late day including weekends. (Extensions will only be granted in exceptional circumstances such as extended illness, etc.)

Spacing: All assignments are to be double-spaced.

Contacting the Instructor: Dr. Phil C. Zylla

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College Style for Submission of Written Work:

All written work—unless informed otherwise by the professor—is to be submitted in accordance

with the *McMaster Divinity College Style Guide for Essays and Theses*, available on the McMaster Divinity College web-site.

Academic Honesty

Academic dishonesty is not qualitatively different from other types of dishonesty. It consists of misrepresenting the ownership of written work by deception or by other fraudulent means. In an academic setting this may include any number of forms such as: copying or using unauthorized aids in tests, examinations; plagiarism, i.e., submitting work that is not one's own (regardless of the means of its production, including AI) but passing it off as if it is; submitting work for credit in a course for which credit is being or has already been given, unless the previously submitted work was presented as such to the instructor of the second course and has been deemed acceptable for credit by the instructor of that course; aiding and abetting another student's dishonesty; giving false information for the purposes of gaining admission or credit; giving false information for the purposes of obtaining deferred examinations or extension of deadlines; forging or falsifying McMaster University or McMaster Divinity College documents.

A special note about AI: You are expected to do your own thinking and to write your own papers, etc., and not to have AI do this work for you. There may be value in using an AI tool to help you locate and collate resources or to help you "tidy up" your English grammar, usage, and mechanics, especially if English is not your native language. However, using AI to create content for you and then submitting that content as if you created it is considered plagiarism (i.e., submitting work that is not one's own as if it is one's own) and is a violation of the academic honesty policy.

AODA

In accordance with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA), the content of this course is intended to be accessible to all students who are enrolled in the course, including those with disabilities. If a student requires accommodation to participate fully in this course, that student is to contact SAS at McMaster University, who will then work directly with the McMaster Divinity College Registrar to negotiate reasonably appropriate accommodation for the student. The MDC Registrar will communicate with faculty regarding necessary accommodations. Please note that an accommodation is not retroactive and must be requested in advance to allow sufficient time for implementation.

Gender Inclusive Language

McMaster Divinity College uses inclusive language for human beings in worship services, student written materials, and all its publications. It is expected that inclusive language will be used in chapel services and all MDC assignments. In reference to biblical texts, the integrity of the original expressions and the names of God should be respected, but you will need to use gender-inclusive language for humans, and you will need to quote from a gender-inclusive version such as, for example, the following: NRSVue (2022), TEV/GNB/GNT (1976), CEV (1995), NLT (1996), NIV (2011), and the CEB (2011).

Bookstore

All required textbooks for this class are available from the Hurlburt Family Bookstore located beside the entrance to the Nathaniel H. Parker Memorial Chapel of McMaster Divinity College. To purchase in advance, you may contact the bookstore manager, Bernice Quek, by phone at 416.620.2934 or 416.668.3434 (mobile); or by email at books@readon.ca. The Hurlburt Family Bookstore also carries other books and merchandise and is open throughout the academic year during posted hours.

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.

Selected Bibliography

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