
SL 211

Theology 2

Time: Mondays and Wednesdays, 3:00-4:20 pm
Instructor: Gordon Jensen, Office: Room 226 phone: 966-7866
gordon.jensen@usask.ca

Course Description:

This course is designed to provide a systematic study of theology, dealing primarily with the topics of pneumatology, ecclesiology, sacraments, ministry and mission, and eschatology. While the primary focus of this course will be the exploration of the classical patristic and Lutheran understanding of these *loci*, an engagement of contemporary theological and pragmatic issues arising from these issues will also be addressed.

Student Outcomes:

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

1. Recall, differentiate and describe the main teachings on the theological *loci* covered in this course
2. Apply the classic theological traditions to contemporary issues confronting the church and formulating appropriate responses to these issues
3. Examine church and parish practices around these *loci*, and compare and interpret the practice with the theory of classical, traditional and contemporary theologians of the church

Course Requirements:

1. **Short assignments:** (2) 2 x 25%
 - a. Topic: These assignments are meant to provide for your preparation for the discussions for any two of the 4 contemporary issues discussions scheduled. You are to choose one of the two topics for conversation for that day.
 - b. Length: 5-7 pages, double-spaced, 12 point in a Times or Helvetica variant or similar font; one inch (2.54cm) margins. These two papers must be handed in before the class period begins.
 - c. Note: marks will be deducted for falling outside the page limits or guidelines given.

2. **Major essay** 35%
- a. Topic: Should non-ordained (lay) people be allowed to preside over sacraments?
 - b. Participants will address this question with reference to the role of the Holy Spirit, the nature of the Church, the nature of a sacrament, the role and understanding of the Church's ministry and mission, Christian hope and eschatology (following the structure of the course). Students should also reflect upon the implications of their conclusions for the Anglican Communion in light of the *Waterloo Declaration*. The **paper is due on December 3** by the beginning of class.
 - c. Length: 12 – 15 pages, according to the instructions detailed above in the “short assignments” section.
3. **Participation** 15%
- a. Based on regular attendance and participation in class discussions.

Required Texts:

Braaten, Carl E., and Jenson, Robert W., eds. *Christian Dogmatics*. Volume 2. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984.

McGrath, Alister, *Christian Theology: An Introduction*. Fourth Edition. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2007.

McGrath, Alister, ed., *The Christian Theology Reader*. Third Edition. Oxford. Blackwell Publishing, 2007.

Other works worth consulting for assignments:

Chemnitz, Martin, *Loci Theologici*. Translated by Jacob A.O. Preuss. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1989. Two Volumes. (*Martin Chemnitz, often called the “Second Martin” was one of the leading second generation Lutheran Theology Scholars of the Reformation, and one of the leading figures in the writing of the Formula of Concord. It is foundational for a lot of LC-MS theology, even today*).

Fiorenza, Francis Schüssler and Galvin, John P., editors, *Systematic Theology: Roman Catholic Perspectives*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1991. 2 Volumes. (*A North American Roman Catholic Systematic Theology. Helpful for comparisons and contrasts with Lutheran perspectives*)

Hall, Douglas John. *The Cross in Our Context: Jesus and the Suffering World*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2003. (*A contemporary Canadian's overview of the Christian faith placed in our contextual perspective*).

Melanchthon, Philip, *Loci Communes*. Translated by Jacob A.O. Preus. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1992. (*Luther considered this systematic theology book by Melanchthon as one of the most important works of the reformation era*).

There are also articles related to our topics posted on my website, which is found at www.gjlts.com, under the tab, “resources.” You will be given the ID and password in class

Course Schedule and Assigned Readings:

I. THE SPIRIT OF GOD

September 8 & 10

Introduction to the course. A review of a Lutheran hermeneutic based on the theology of the cross and the article of justification, the first and chief article (*Smalkald Articles*), or the 'article by which the church stands and falls.'

September 15& 17

The patristic and classical theological understandings of the Holy Spirit. The relationship of the Holy Spirit to the other members of the Trinity; the role and function of the Spirit in relationship to the church. *Readings: McGrath; 81-2, 235-42; Reader, 200-208; Braaten & Jenson, 109-64.*

September 22& 24

Languages and approaches to encounter with the Spirit (including contemporary movements). Charisms, spiritual gifts. The role of the Spirit in the equipping of the church. The charisms of the weak and the ordinary.

September 29

Contemporary issues discussion. Question Choices:

- 1) How has the church, in reaction to the charismatic movement, stifled and/or emphasizes the work of the Spirit?
- 2) What is the relationship between the work of the Holy Spirit in a person's life and justification?

II. THE CHURCH

October 1

Ecclesiology and the way we design church buildings. Practical ecclesiology: What does it say about a theology of the Church? What does it say about who speaks for the Church?

October 6 & 8

The multifaceted nature of the church. The divine-human nature of the church. New Testament images, and historical and contemporary marks and models of the church. The tensions, ambiguities and continuities found in the characteristics of the church. How traditional understandings of the church fit with contemporary realities.

Readings: McGrath; 391-418; Reader, 490-509; Braaten & Jenson, 203-242.

October 15: (No class on Monday, October 13th – Canadian Thanksgiving Day)

The mission of the church. The relationship of the church to the Kingdom of God. The Church and Christian Discipleship. Living in the community of *simul iustus et peccator*. The Donatist controversy. *Readings: Reader, 510-43; Braaten & Jenson, 243-52.*

October 20 & 22: No classes. Fall Break and Reading Week

October 27:

Theological reflection on orders of ministry. What purpose are the orders supposed to serve? What are the historical roots of the orders? How are they connected/differentiated? Ordination from below (priesthood of all believers) and from above (call of God). Is there a third alternative?

Readings: Braaten & Jenson, 224-31. supplementary reading: Timothy J. Wengert, Priesthood, Pastors, Bishops: Public Ministry for the Reformation and Today (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2008).

October 29 & November 3:

Living the Christian Life. Justification, Sanctification and Ethics.

Reading: Braaten and Jenson, 395-444.

November 5:

Contemporary issues discussion. Question Choices:

1. Who in the church has the right or responsibility to speak publicly on political issues?
2. What distinguishes the laity from the ordained/consecrated in the Lutheran Church?

III. SACRAMENTS

November 10: *No class – professor away*

November 12:

What are our actual Lutheran sacramental practices? What is the operative theology revealed (and embedded) in our liturgies and the practices surrounding them?

Readings: McGrath, 419-44; Braaten & Jenson, 291-366.

November 17 & 19:

Theological reflections on the sacraments. Sacramental theology, Word and Sacrament, and the Means of Grace.

Readings: Reader, 544-604; Braaten and Jenson, 367-394.

November 24:

Contemporary issues discussion. Question Choices:

1. What complexities are introduced when marriage is treated as a sacrament of the Church?
2. Should the rite of confirmation occur only when a bishop is presiding? What are the implications for Anglican/Lutheran relationships, based on the Waterloo Declaration?

IV. ESCHATOLOGY**November 26:**

Popular views of the “End Times.” The classical teachings on eschatology.

December 1:

The tension between promise and fulfillment: “Now but not yet.” Death, resurrection, and the end of time.

Readings: McGrath, 464-85; Reader, 643-82; Braaten & Jenson, 481-540, 555-87.

December 3:

Contemporary issues discussion. Question Choices:

1. In light of the theories of the end of time that are so popular with evangelical groups today, how can one pastorally address the issue of the rapture?
2. How can you distinguish Christian hope from utopian promises for people in a palliative care unit? What are the distinguishing marks for each?