

## **Jonathan Edwards**

January 2014  
Gardencourt 213

### **Faculty:**

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### **Course description:**

This course will introduce you to the thought of the New England theologian, pastor, missionary, and philosopher, Jonathan Edwards, (1703-1758). It counts as a core theology elective. The readings will be from Jonathan Edwards's writings and recent secondary sources. There will be a special focus on the Great Awakening and on slavery in the colonial period.

### **Goals and objectives:**

This course is related most closely to this Student Learning Outcome:

***SL03: Students will demonstrate an understanding of multiple theological perspectives, historical and contemporary.***

To meet the aims of the "core" theology requirement, this class will place a special emphasis on the articulation of your own theological views, in conversation with Jonathan Edwards.

### **Class Requirements:**

#### **1. Reading and class participation (20%)**

Keeping up with the reading and regular attendance and participation in class discussion (including the Dramatization on Jan. 10, see below) are key to this class. Please let the instructor know in advance if you have to miss class.

#### **2. Four Face-to-Face papers (60%)**

The Face-to-Face papers are meant to engage you in theological conversation with Jonathan Edwards. They should each be approximately 3 pages, double-spaced. In general, devote about half the paper to presenting Edwards's view on the given topic, and the other half to your theological response. You can write these papers in essay form, or as a dialogue/debate between you and Edwards. See Class Calendar for topics and due dates. To substitute another topic for the one listed, please consult the instructor.

#### **3. Notebook short responses (20%)**

Many of the reading assignments have a Notebook question attached to them. After reading the assignment, please write a response of approximately 200 words. These written responses should be kept in a notebook that will be turned in on the last day of class, Friday, Jan. 24.

### **Required Books:**

John Smith, Harry Stout, Kenneth Minkema, eds., *A Jonathan Edwards Reader* (Yale Nota Bene, 2003) (All assignments from this book will be underlined, e.g. Resolutions)

Wilson Kimnach, Kenneth Minkema, Douglas Sweeney, eds., *The Sermons of Jonathan Edwards: A Reader* (Yale University Press, 2000) (All assignments from this book will be in small caps, e.g. THE WAY OF HOLINESS)

George M. Marsden, *A Short Life of Jonathan Edwards* (Eerdmans, 2008)

<http://edwards.yale.edu/> is a tremendous resource for writings by and about Edwards

### **On Reserve:**

John Smith, Harry Stout, Kenneth Minkema, eds., *A Jonathan Edwards Reader* (Yale Nota Bene, 2003)

Wilson Kimnach, Kenneth Minkema, Douglas Sweeney, eds., *The Sermons of Jonathan Edwards: A Reader* (Yale University Press, 2000)

George Marsden, *A Short Life of Jonathan Edwards* (Eerdmans, 2008)

Harry Stout, Kenneth Minkema, and Caleb Maskell, *Jonathan Edwards at 300: Essays on the Tercentenary of His Birth* (University Press of America, 2005)

Catherine Brekus, *Strangers and Pilgrims: Female Preaching in America* (University of North Carolina Press, 1998).

Harry Stout, *The Divine Dramatist: George Whitefield and the Rise of Modern Evangelicalism* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991)

Michael McClymond and Gerald McDermott, *The Theology of Jonathan Edwards* (Oxford, 2012)

### **Articles on CAMS:**

Ava Chamberlain, "Bad Books and Bad Boys: The Transformation of Gender in 18th-Century Northampton, Massachusetts" *New England Quarterly* 75 (June 2002) 179-203

Kenneth Minkema, "Hannah and Her Sisters: Sisterhood, Courtship, and Marriage in the Edwards Family in the Early Eighteenth Century," *New England Historical and Genealogical Register* 146 (January 1992): 35-56

Frank Lambert, "I Saw the Book Talk: Slave Readings of the First Great Awakening" *Journal of African American History*, Jan. 1, 2002 (attached)

Kenneth P. Minkema, "Jonathan Edwards's Defense of Slavery"

Harry Stout and Kenneth Minkema, "The Edwardsean Tradition and Antebellum Slavery"

Jonathan Edwards Jr., "The injustice and Impolicy of the Slave Trade, and of the Slavery of the Africans"

Rachel Wheeler, "'Friends to Your Souls': Jonathan Edwards' Indian Pastorate and the Doctrine of Original Sin" in *Church History* 72:4 (December 2003)

Stephen Holmes, "Edwards on Hell," *Pro Ecclesia* 9 (Fall 2000)389-403

H. Richard Niebuhr, "The Anachronism of Jonathan Edwards" in William Stacy Johnson, ed., *H. Richard Niebuhr: Theology, History, and Culture* (Yale University Press, 1996), 123-133.

### **Dramatization (January 10)**

On January 10 you will participate in a dramatization of some of the social and theological issues surrounding the colonial Great Awakening in the 1740s by impersonating a significant figure of the period. Do some research on your character so that you will be prepared to give a one-paragraph, first-person account of your character (include this in your Notebook) and to participate in a debate around these key questions:

What has been the effect of the recent revivals?

Who has been most active in the revivals?

What is your opinion of itinerant preachers?

What dangers are associated with the revivals?

Are the revivals the work of the Holy Spirit? Why or why not?

The year of the debate is 1743. Personages to be represented may include: Jonathan Edwards, George Whitefield, Bathsheba Kingsley, James Davenport, Sarah Edwards, Charles Chauncy, and Thomas Clap. The debate will be moderated by Massachusetts Governor Jonathan Belcher (aka Amy Pauw).

### **LPTS policies:**

As with all LPTS classes, this course will honor these Seminary policies:

#### **Use of Inclusive Language**

In accordance with seminary policy, students are to use inclusive language in class discussions and in written and oral communication by using language representative of the whole human community in respect to gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, age, and physical and intellectual capacities. Direct quotations from theological texts and translations of the Bible do not have to be altered to conform to this policy. In your own

writing, however, when referring to God, you are encouraged to use a variety of images and metaphors, reflecting the richness of the Bible's images for God. See for further assistance,

[http://www.lpts.edu/Academic\\_Resources/ASC/avoidinggendebiasinlanguage.asp](http://www.lpts.edu/Academic_Resources/ASC/avoidinggendebiasinlanguage.asp)

## **Academic Honesty**

All work turned in to the instructors is expected to be the work of the student whose name appears on the assignment. Any borrowing of the ideas or the words of others must be acknowledged by quotation marks (where appropriate) and by citation of author and source. Use of another's language or ideas from online resources is included in this policy, and must be attributed to author and source of the work being cited. Failure to do so constitutes plagiarism, and may result in failure of the course. Two occurrences of plagiarism may result in dismissal from the Seminary. Students unfamiliar with issues related to academic honesty can find help from the staff in the Academic Support Center. For the Seminary policy, see The Code of Student Conduct, 6.11; the Student Handbook, p. 19.

## **Citation Policy**

Full citations are not needed in your Notebook entries; it is sufficient to provide page numbers for references to course readings. Citations in your face-to-face papers should follow the Seminary standard, which is based on these guides:

Turabian, Kate L., Wayne C. Booth, Gregory G. Colomb, and Joseph M. Williams. *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations: Chicago Style for Students and Researchers*. 8th Edition. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013.

*The Chicago Manual of Style*. 15th ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003.

Copies of these guides are available at the library and in the Academic Support Center.

## **Special Accommodations**

Students requiring accommodations for a documented physical or learning disability should be in contact with the Director of the Academic Support Center ([kmapes@lpts.edu](mailto:kmapes@lpts.edu)) during the first two weeks of a semester and should speak with the

instructor as soon as possible to arrange appropriate adjustments. Students with environmental or other sensitivities that may affect their learning are also encouraged to speak with the instructor.

### **Attendance Policy**

According to the Seminary catalog, students are expected to attend class meetings regularly. In case of illness or emergency, students are asked to notify the instructors of their planned absence from class, either prior to the session or within 24 hours of the class session. Each class session is the equivalent of one week of a regular semester. Missing more than two classes may result in a low or failing grade in the course.

### **Class Calendar:**

#### **Monday, January 6**

Marsden, ch. 1, Personal Narrative

#### **Tuesday, January 7**

Marsden, ch. 2, Editors' Introduction, Diary, Resolutions, Apostrophe to Sarah Pierpont, Letter to Timothy Edwards, Letter to Esther Edwards Burr; CAMS: Kenneth Minkema, "Hannah and her Sisters"

Notebook: Following Edwards's example, write some "Resolutions" regarding your own Christian discipleship.

#### **Wednesday, January 8**

Marsden, ch. 3, EDITORS' INTRODUCTION, THE WAY OF HOLINESS, THE PLEASANTNESS OF RELIGION, THE EXCELLENCY OF CHRIST; The Spider Letter, Of Being, Beauty of the World, Images of Divine Things, The Mind

1st Face-to-Face paper (due Monday, Jan. 13) *Consent, beauty, sweetness, and excellency* are not usually central words in Christian theology. Pick any two of these terms and explain how they are used in the readings for today. Now pick two nouns that are central to your own theological self-understanding, and reflect on how they resonate—or don't resonate—with the nouns you chose from Edwards's theological writings.

#### **Thursday, January 9**

Marsden, chs. 4-5; Faithful Narrative, Divine and Supernatural Light, A Treatise Concerning Religious Affections, Letter to George Whitefield

Notebook: How is Edwards's insistence in *Religious Affections* that "Christian practice or a holy life" is "the chief of all the signs of grace" (JE Reader, p. 165) a response to the revivals of the 1730s and 1740s?

### **Friday, January 10**

SINNERS IN THE HANDS OF AN ANGRY GOD; HEAVEN IS A WORLD OF LOVE; GOD GLORIFIED IN THE WORK OF REDEMPTION; THE REALITY OF CONVERSION; A History of the Work of Redemption, Notes on the Apocalypse; CAMS: Frank Lambert, "I Saw the Book Talk: Slave Readings of the First Great Awakening"

Great Awakening Dramatization Today!!

Notebook: Write a one-paragraph first-person summary of your character, and be prepared to answer the questions in the syllabus under **Dramatization**

**Monday and Tuesday, January 13-14** NO CLASS: Reading and Writing Days (First face-to-face paper due on Monday, Jan. 13)

### **Wednesday, January 15**

Marsden, ch. 6; Receipt for Slave Venus CAMS: Harry Stout and Kenneth Minkema, "The Edwardsean Tradition and Antebellum Slavery"; Jonathan Edwards Jr., "The injustice and Impolicy of the Slave Trade, and of the Slavery of the Africans"; Kenneth Minkema, "Jonathan Edwards's Defense of Slavery"; John Saillant, "African American Engagements with Edwards in the Era of the Slave Trade"

2<sup>nd</sup> Face-to-Face paper (due Wednesday, Jan. 15): Edwards himself was a slaveowner, and gave a qualified defense of slavery. But others, including his son and some of his students, saw resources in his theology to argue for abolition. What were those resources? Does this later use of Edwards's thought change his theological legacy?

### **Thursday, January 16**

Marsden, ch. 7 A FAREWELL SERMON, The Bad Book Case, An Humble Inquiry, Letter to Thomas Foxcroft; CAMS: Ava Chamberlain, "Bad Books and Bad Boys: The Transformation of Gender in 18th-Century Northampton, Massachusetts"

Notebook: Marsden (*A Short Life*, pp. 12-13) writes about two competing views of the church in eighteenth-century New England. What view or views of the church are reflected in the readings for today?

## Friday, January 17

Marsden, ch. 8; TO THE MOHAWKS AT THE TREATY, Letter to Thomas Prince; “Edwards on (and in) Mission,” in McClymond and McDermott, *The Theology of Jonathan Edwards*, pp. 549-565. CAMS: Rachel Wheeler, “‘Friends to Your Souls’: Jonathan Edwards’ Indian Pastorate and the Doctrine of Original Sin” in *Church History* 72:4 (December 2003)

3<sup>rd</sup> Face-to-Face paper (due Tuesday, Jan. 21): McClymond and McDermott raise the question of whether Edwards was the “‘grandfather’ of modern Protestant missions.” Provide your own answer to this question, and give an evaluation of Edwards’s missionary work, based on your own theology of mission.

## Monday, January 20 NO CLASS: MLK Birthday

## Tuesday, January 21

I KNOW MY REDEEMER LIVES, MUCH IN DEEDS OF CHARITY, Miscellanies, Images of Divine Things (again)

Notebook: Following Edwards’s example, write your own “miscellany” or “image of divine things” on a theological topic of your choice, and be prepared to share it with the class.

## Wednesday, January 22

Freedom of the Will, Original Sin, HE THAT BELIEVETH SHALL BE SAVED; CAMS: Stephen Holmes, “Edwards on Hell”

Notebook: In what sense is the human will free, in Edwards’s view?

## Thursday, January 23

The Nature of True Virtue; Letter to Moses Lyman; Letter to Joseph Bellamy; Letter to Sarah Pierpont Edwards; Letter to the Trustees of the College of New Jersey

4<sup>th</sup> Face-to-Face paper (due Monday, Jan. 27): Choose any chapter from Part Two of McClymond and McDermott, *The Theology of Jonathan Edwards*, summarize its presentation of Edwards’s view, and give your own theological response to Edwards.

## Friday, January 24

Marsden, Conclusions; CAMS: H. Richard Niebuhr, The Anachronism of Jonathan Edwards; Amy Plantinga Pauw, “Edwards as American Theologian: Grand Narratives and Pastoral Narratives”

Notebook: Answer Marsden's question (p. 134) for yourself: "What Should We Learn from Edwards?"

**Monday, January 27** No class—final paper due