

FINAL SYLLABUS AS OF 01/02/22

CM 4313 Cultivating Call: Pursuing Meaning and Purpose in Complex Times

Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary

J-Term 2022. ٠٠٠ January 10-14

Monday - Wednesday: 9am-4pm

Thursday: 9am-3pm

Friday: 9am - 12pm

Logistics and Links

Class links

- **Zoom:** <https://lpts-edu.zoom.us/j/82881753539?pwd=S1lqeXNWSWtMTNwNzhxVEIKQVJSQT09>. You can find this link on Canvas under the “Zoom” tab as well.
- **Canvas:** <https://lpts.instructure.com/>.
- **Course Reserves:** The course reserves site will be available after January 2. The required books for the course are available as e-books on the LPTS library site: <https://www.lpts.edu/library/>.

Instructor introduction and contact information

- **Instructor:** Dr. Kathryn House (she/her), Visiting Assistant Professor of Practical Theology
- **Preferred name/pronouns:** In our first class, I will invite you to share your preferred pronouns and how you would like to be addressed. I encourage you to add your pronouns and your preferred name on Zoom. I use she/her/hers pronouns, and I prefer to be called Dr. House.
- **Getting in touch:** You can email me at khouse@lpts.edu, and I will respond to your my.lpts.edu account. During the week we are meeting, I will check email before and after class. In general I try to respond to email within 48 hours. Feel free to send a follow up if I have not responded. I do my very best to take an email sabbath on Saturdays. Any emails that I send to everyone in the course, I also post as an “Announcement” on Canvas.

I aspire to help you to learn and succeed in this classroom. Do not hesitate to email me or schedule a meeting to discuss questions about assignments or topics related to the course. I do not discuss grades over email, however, so please schedule a meeting for discussions regarding grading.

- **Office Hours:** During our intensive week, I will stay on our Zoom call after class to answer questions. I am available for Zoom meetings to discuss class from Tuesday, December 28, 2021 - January 26, 2022, which is the day your final paper is due. Please email me 2-3 times possible meeting times that can work for you, and we will coordinate a time to meet.

The Big Picture

Course Description

This course invites students to theologically reflect on how they as individuals, and together with their communities of accountability, might discern, articulate, and pursue purpose and meaning in a complex time. We will attend to multiple understandings of vocation in the Christian tradition and explore a diversity of practices that ground and nourish personal and communal discernment. Course sessions will include consultations with guest speakers as well as congregational leaders who are a part of the [Myrtle Collaboration at LPTS](#). Through activities honing critical and reflexive thinking, deep listening, creative expression, and strong writing skills, students will articulate their own definitions of meaning and purpose in this contemporary moment.

Prerequisites

There are no prerequisites.

Course Outcomes and Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)

A full list of MDiv. and MAR SLOs is available at the end of the syllabus. You will also note that each assignment includes potential connections with SLOs. These are not exhaustive but offered as potential guides for your continued reflection over the course of your degree program.

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

1. Assess emerging sociological, economic, and demographic trends related to vocation and faith communities. [MAR 3, 4; MDiv. 3, 5]
2. Articulate key concepts and approaches to vocation across Christian traditions. [MAR 3; MDiv. 3, 5]
3. Examine and engage multiple practices of discernment within Christian traditions. [MAR 1, 3; MDiv.1, 3, 5]
4. Reflect self-critically on ways that aspects of social identity impact personal and communal vocation. [MAR 4; MDiv. 4, 5, QEP]
5. Complete a final project that includes an articulation of meaning and purpose in a context of vocational significance. [MAR 5; MDiv. 3, 5, QEP]

Course Structure

Synchronous Meetings

The course meets synchronously online January 10-14, 2022. Monday - Wednesday, we will meet from 9-4:00 pm. On Thursday, January 13, we will end at 3pm, and Friday, January 14, we will conclude the course at noon. Our typical pattern will be to divide days into 90-minute blocks with time for breaks and lunch. Our schedule might vary a bit depending on the day, however, but I will always be mindful of breaks and mitigating Zoom fatigue. Class time will include small and large group discussions of writing assignments, asynchronous lectures, guest speakers, and in-class writing and reflection activities.

Reading Schedule, Expectations, and Due Dates

In the Class Schedule below, you will see our focus for the day, the readings for which you will be responsible, any material you will need to prepare for the day's discussion, and any written work that is due. You will also see the currently proposed outline for our schedule for the day. Although there might be slight modifications to the schedule in the next two weeks due to a number of factors, **the readings and due dates will not change.**

A significant portion of our class time will be engaging the assigned materials - podcasts, readings, lectures, etc. There are five additional asynchronous lectures that will be posted by Wednesday, January 5. **Please work ahead as much as possible before the week begins!**

Activities and Assignments Summary

Please attend to due dates carefully. Your first paper is due on Friday, January 7, 11:59pm - the Friday before the course begins. All assignment descriptions are included in Canvas, linked to a Google doc here, and copied at the conclusion of the syllabus.

- A. [Attendance and Participation](#) = 10%; due Friday, January 14, 2022, 11:59pm. You will complete a self-assessment via a Google form. The link will be shared via email before the final class.
- B. [Paper 1: "The Sound of the Genuine"](#) = 15%; **DUE Friday, January 7, 11:59 - *NOTE prior to beginning of class***
- C. [Paper 2: Story-linking](#) = 20% Wednesday, January 19, 11:59pm
- D. [Paper 3: "Angel of your congregation/community"](#) = 10%; due Friday, January 14, 11:59pm
- E. [Paper 4: Oxford Presbyterian Church Visit Debrief](#) = 5%; due Thursday, January 13, 11:59pm
- F. [Paper 5: Calling Throughout Life](#) = 10%; due Friday, January 14, 9am
- G. [Paper 6: Final Paper](#) = 30%; due by Wednesday, January 26, 11:59pm

Class Schedule

Course Work Prior to Intensive Sessions
Due Friday, January 7, 11:59pm, Paper 1: The Sound of Genuine
Monday, January 10: Listening for the "Sound of the Genuine" in this contemporary moment
Practice focus: Listening for the Sound of the Genuine
Come prepared to discuss:
Paper 1: The "Sound of the Genuine"
Asynchronous Lecture 1
"The Sound of the Genuine," Howard Thurman, https://www.uindy.edu/eip/files/reflection4.pdf .

Forum for Theological Education, "Sound of the Genuine" podcast, various dates, https://open.spotify.com/show/3b4sS6tuq9rDi5YNYFQEss?si=yLfXaCLwSqOoqy5MFS8NOw&nd=1&fbclid=IwAR1dKjqxBaBe5UeUWLJrfagBh5ZXrDP3cmh_jbRjr97JBHEoWGGVicjIhug. The podcast is also available on Spotify and Apple podcast.

All required readings (noting that you are only required to engage ONE for your Sound of the Genuine Paper)

Aronczyk, Amanda. "No Shortage of Labor Stories," December 17, 2021, <https://www.npr.org/2021/12/17/1065332194/no-shortage-of-labor-stories>. The transcript is available on Canvas.

Bazan, Jessie. "6 Stories of Vocations Interrupted by the Pandemic," U.S. Catholic (no. 86, vol. 6), 26-30. Also available at: <https://uscatholic.org/articles/202105/six-stories-of-vocations-interrupted-by-pandemic/>

Griswold, Eliza, "How Black Lives Matter is Changing the Church," *The New Yorker*, August 30, 2020, <https://www.newyorker.com/news/on-religion/how-black-lives-matter-is-changing-the-church>.

Florer-Bixler, Melissa. "Why Pastors are Joining the Great Resignation," *Sojourners*, November 30, 2021. <https://sojo.net/articles/why-pastors-are-joining-great-resignation>

Barna Research Group, "38% of U.S. Pastors Have Thought About Quitting Full-Time Ministry in the Past Year," <https://www.barna.com/research/pastors-well-being/>, November 16, 2021. ***If using this piece, also use the Florer-Bixler piece.***

Schedule

9-10:30am - Block 1: Introduction to course and one another

10:30-45 - Break

10:45-12:15 - Block 2: Interpreting this contemporary moment

12:15-1pm - Lunch

1-2:30 - Block 3: Discussion of Reflection Paper 1

2:30-2:45 - Break

2:45-4:00- Block 4: Discussion of Reflection Paper 1

Supplementary Readings

The Great Reset, *Time Magazine*, <https://time.com/collection/great-reset/>, 2021.

Rosalsky, Greg, "Why Are So Many Americans Quitting Their Jobs?" October 19, 2021. <https://www.npr.org/sections/money/2021/10/19/1047032996/why-are-so-many-americans-quitting-their-jobs>.

[Interview with Anthony Klotz, Anthony Klotz on Defining the Great Resignation:](https://www.theversedmedia.com/articles/anthony-klotz-defining-the-great-resignation)
<https://www.theversedmedia.com/articles/anthony-klotz-defining-the-great-resignation>.

Nair, Mohan. "How To Innovate In "The Great Reshuffle", December 8, 2021, <https://www.forbes.com/sites/forbestechcouncil/2021/12/08/how-to-innovate-in-the-great-reshuffle/?sh=2ddc6f3575da>.

Kinnaman, David and Carey Nieuwhof, Weekly Bonus Episode: "Are Pastors Burning Out?"
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WABCqe6QJck>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WABCqe6QJck>,
November 16, 2021.

Tuesday, January 11: Cultivating call through story-linking and story telling

Practice focus: The importance of stories

Come prepared to discuss:

Asynchronous Lecture 2

Your 1 page "Working Draft" for Paper 2: Story-Linking

Wimberly, Anne E. Streaty. *Soul Stories: African American Christian Education*. Nashville: Abingdon, 2005.

Wimberly, Anne E. Streaty. "Hospitable Kinship in Theological Education: Cross-Cultural Perspectives on Teaching and Learning as Gift Exchange." *Teaching Theology and Religion*, vol. 7 no. 1, pp 3–12.

9-10:30am - Block 1: Soul Stories and Story-Linking

10:30-45 - Break

10:45-12:15 - Block 2: Soul Stories and Story-Linking

12:15-1pm - Lunch

1-2:30 - Block 3: Group work with stories

2:30-2:45 - Break

2:45-4:00 - Block 4: Group work with stories

Supplementary Readings

Toure, Itihari. *The Sankofa in Innovation: Activating the Past to ReImagine our Future*. A Resource of the Samuel DeWitt Proctor Conference (SDPC), 2019.

Wednesday, January 12: Identifying gaps, pursuing purpose

Practice focus: Building your community and network

Come prepared to discuss:

Asynchronous Lecture 3

Reyes, Patrick. *The Purpose Gap: Empowering Communities of Color to Find Meaning and Thrive*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2021.

Your 1 page "Working Draft" for your Final Paper

9-10:30am - Block 1 - Engaging *The Purpose Gap*

10:30-45 - Break

10:45-12:15 - Block 2 - Engaging <i>The Purpose Gap</i>
12:15-1pm - Lunch
1-2:30 - Block 3 - Engaging <i>The Purpose Gap</i>
2:30-2:45 - Break
2:45-4pm - Block 4 - Preview of Discerning in community
Thursday, January 13: Discerning in community
Practice Focus: Communal discernment
Assignment due: Oxford Presbyterian Church Debrief Document, by 11:59pm
Come prepared to discuss:
Asynchronous Lecture 4
Wink, Walter, "Introduction," <i>The Powers that Be: Theology for a New Millenium</i> , (New York: Doubleday), 1999, 1-11.
Wink, Walter, "The Angels of the Churches," <i>Unmasking the Powers: The Invisible Forces that Determine Human Existence (Volume 2: The Powers)</i> , (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press), 1993, 69-86.
The angel you create
Called to Lives of Meaning and Purpose Initiative (spend some time reviewing the Initiative website): https://calledtolives.com/
9-10:30am - Block 1 - Angel creation activity
10:30-45 - Break
10:45-12:15 - Block 2 - Angel activity discussion
12:15-1pm - Lunch
1-2:30 - Block 3: Consultation with Rev. Lawrence Bartel and Pat Gifford (and potentially others!) from Oxford Presbyterian Church
2:30-3:00 - Check in on Debrief writing assignment
Friday, January 14 - Vocation across the lifespan and sustaining spirit
Practice Focus: Expanding visions and sustaining spirit
Due by 9am: Paper 5: Calling Throughout Life Paper
Due by 11:59pm: Paper 3: "Angel of Your Congregation/Community" Paper
Due by 11:59pm: Your Attendance and Participation Assessment
Come prepared to discuss:

Asynchronous Lecture 5
Paper 5: Calling Throughout Life Paper
Campbell-Reed, Eileen. "Examen," Three Minute Ministry Mentor Episode 25, https://eileencampbellreed.org/2019/05/20/3mmm-episode-25-examen/ .
9-10:30am - Block 1: Vocation across the life-span/reflection on chapter from <i>Calling All Years Good</i>
10:30-45 - Break
10:45-12pm - Block 2: Final class reflections
Due after class
Wednesday, January 19: Story-linking paper
Wednesday, January 26: Final Paper due

Required Books

- Cahalan, Kathleen A. and Bonnie Miller-McLemore. *Calling All Years Good: Christian Vocation Throughout Life's Seasons*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2017.
- Reyes, Patrick. *The Purpose Gap: Empowering Communities of Color to Find Meaning and Thrive*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2021.
- Wimberly, Anne E. Streaty. *Soul Stories: African American Christian Education*. Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 2005.

Required Readings or Links to Required Materials (podcasts, etc.) on Canvas

Each day of our course has a corresponding module in Canvas where you will find applicable course readings, any relevant links, a 10-15 minute recorded presentation, and a place to submit any assignments that are due that day. There is also a "Supplementary Readings" Module.

Aronczyk, Amanda. "No Shortage of Labor Stories," December 17, 2021, https://www.npr.org/2021/12/17/1065332194/no-shortage-of-labor-stories . The transcript is available on Canvas.
Bazan, Jessie. "6 Stories of Vocations Interrupted by the Pandemic," U.S. Catholic_(no. 86, vol. 6), 26-30. Also available at: https://uscatholic.org/articles/202105/six-stories-of-vocations-interrupted-by-pandemic/
Griswold, Eliza, "How Black Lives Matter is Changing the Church," <i>The New Yorker</i> , August 30, 2020, https://www.newyorker.com/news/on-religion/how-black-lives-matter-is-changing-the-church .
Florer-Bixler, Melissa. "Why Pastors are Joining the Great Resignation," <i>Sojourners</i> , November 30, 2021. https://sojo.net/articles/why-pastors-are-joining-great-resignation

Barna Research Group, "38% of U.S. Pastors Have Thought About Quitting Full-Time Ministry in the Past Year," https://www.barna.com/research/pastors-well-being/ , November 16, 2021.
Forum for Theological Education, "Sound of the Genuine" podcast, various dates, https://open.spotify.com/show/3b4sS6tuq9rDi5YNYFQEss?si=yLfXaCLwSqOoqy5MFS8NOw&nd=1&fbclid=IwAR1dKjcxBaBe5UeUWLJrfagBh5ZXrDP3cmh_jbRjr97JBHEoWGGVvicjIhug . The podcast is also available on Spotify and Apple podcast.
"The Sound of the Genuine," Howard Thurman, https://www.uindy.edu/eip/files/reflection4.pdf .
Wink, Walter, "Introduction," <i>The Powers that Be: Theology for a New Millennium</i> , (New York: Doubleday), 1999, 1-11.
Wink, Walter, "The Angels of the Churches," <i>Unmasking the Powers: The Invisible Forces that Determine Human Existence (Volume 2: The Powers)</i> , (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press), 1993, 69-86.
Called to Lives of Meaning and Purpose Initiative (spend some time reviewing the Initiative website): https://calledtolives.com/
Wimberly, Anne E. Streaty. "Hospitable Kinship in Theological Education: Cross-Cultural Perspectives on Teaching and Learning as Gift Exchange." <i>Teaching Theology and Religion</i> , vol. 7 no. 1, pp 3–12.
Campbell-Reed, Eileen. "Examen" <i>Pastoral Imagination: Bringing the Practice of Ministry to Life</i> . Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2021, pp. 119-122. Please also watch: "Examen," Three Minute Ministry Mentor Episode 25, https://eileencampbellreed.org/2019/05/20/3mmm-episode-25-examen/ .

Supplementary Readings on Canvas

The Great Reset, <i>Time Magazine</i> , https://time.com/collection/great-reset/ , 2021.
Rosalsky, Greg, "Why Are So Many Americans Quitting Their Jobs?" October 19, 2021. https://www.npr.org/sections/money/2021/10/19/1047032996/why-are-so-many-americans-quitting-their-jobs .
Interview with Anthony Klotz, Anthony Klotz on Defining the Great Resignation: https://www.theversedmedia.com/articles/anthony-klotz-defining-the-great-resignation .
Nair, Mohan. "How To Innovate In "The Great Reshuffle", December 8, 2021, https://www.forbes.com/sites/forbestechcouncil/2021/12/08/how-to-innovate-in-the-great-reshuffle/?sh=2ddc6f3575da .
Kinnaman, David and Carey Nieuwhof, Weekly Bonus Episode: "Are Pastors Burning Out?" https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WABCqe6QJck https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WABCqe6QJck , November 16, 2021.

Grading Scale

(10) Excellent: A substantive response directly and critically engaging the prompt/s in clear, well-polished writing. Excellent work includes robust examples, insightful details, and clear explanations. All requirements met in a more than satisfactory manner.

(9) Very good: Solid work addressing the prompt and engaging the class material in a thoughtful manner. Some refining necessary. All requirements met in a satisfactory manner.

(8) Satisfactory: Satisfactory engagement, though not substantive and/or sufficiently thoughtful. Engagement is present and some detail is included, but description needs greater depth.

(7) Fair: Effort made, but insufficient direct engagement with the material and/or prompt. Engagement lacks significant depth and clarity.

(6) Passing: Minimal effort present; prompt and material not well engaged.

(5) Incorrect engagement: Incorrect engagement or requirement not present.

	B+ 89-87	C+ 79-77	D+ 67-69	F = 59 and below
A 93 and up	B 86-83	C 76-73	D 66-63	
A- 92-90	B- 82-80	C- 72-70	D- 62-60	

Late Work

Assignments should be submitted on time. All other assignments will decrease by 5 points each day an assignment is late. I want to help you succeed in this class. Please reach out to me if you are having a difficult time completing assignments.

Pass/Fail

Ordinarily, all students in a course are subject to the manner of grading (letter grades or Pass/Fail) used in the course. However, at the discretion of the instructor, exceptions may be granted for students who make a case (within the first 20% of course sessions) for the need for a letter grade in a Pass/Fail course or for Pass/Fail assessment in a letter-graded course (in the face of extraordinary changes in life circumstance).

DMin. Students

DMin. students should be in touch with the professor to discuss assignments.

Other Items Relating to Fall Instruction, Learning, and Technology at LPTS

- To access the library and its resources, visit: <https://lpts.edu/library/>
- To request a library laptop loan, contact library@lpts.edu
- For a summary of information related to accessing Outlook, Canvas, CAMS, and the Intranet, see: Accessing LPTS Resources
- For general help with campus network access, Outlook (email), contact support@lpts.edu

- For information on Student Assistance Funds to help with costs associated with learning technology and access (\$300 maximum), contact Gina Kuzuoka at gkuzuoka@lpts.edu

Assignments and Assessments

A. [Final as of 12/28] Attendance and Participation (10%)

- **Due: January 14, 2022, 11:59pm**
- **Description:** Your presence, preparation, and participation in class are essential aspects of creating a flourishing learning environment. Attendance and preparation include:
 - completing readings before class and being fully prepared to discuss the class topic
 - engaging with colleagues through active listening and respectful dialogue
 - contributing thoughtful observations, analyses, and questions
 - being present with our class as we learn together at a distance, which includes keeping your camera on unless previously discussed with professor or for brief interludes
- **Attendance expectations:** Students are expected to attend all class sessions over Zoom at our designated class time. If you are unable to attend, please contact me via email 24 hours in advance.
- **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 instructor of their planned absence from class, either prior to the session or within 24 hours of the class session. Absences totalling more than 1/4 of the course (typically three sessions) may result in a low or failing grade in the course.
- **Zoom Etiquette:**
 - The “default” setting for our class will be to keep cameras on. My hope for our class is that keeping our cameras on might help create a sense of presence with one another, even at a distance. There will be times when you will need to turn your camera off for a brief time. You should exercise your best judgment in these situations. However, full participation in the course will include keeping cameras on. If keeping the video on for most of the duration for our class poses a hardship, please be in touch with me as soon as possible.
 - Mute your microphone unless you are speaking.
 - Experiment with lighting and backgrounds to find what works best for you.
 - To the best of your ability, keep multi-tasking to a minimum. There will be exceptions in this time when home is everything and everyone is home. With gratitude for all of the loved ones in our lives, saying hello to housemates, family members, pets, etc. will be part of the joy of our time together. However, please keep distractions like driving or other online activity to a minimum.

- **Logistics:** You will complete a self-assessment for attendance on Friday, January 14 based on the description and expectations above. You will receive a Google form link via email before our final class that you will submit by Friday, January 14 at 11:59pm.
- **Rubric:** See rubric in Canvas.

B. [Final 01/02/22] Paper 1: “The Sound of the Genuine” - 15%

- **Due:** Friday, January 7, 11:59pm
- **Description:**

In Howard Thurman’s May 4, 1980 Baccalaureate Speech at Spelman College, Thurman remarked to graduates:

“So the burden of what I have to say to you is, ‘What is your name— who are you—and can you find a way to hear the sound of the genuine in yourself?’ There are so many noises going on inside of you, so many echoes of all sorts, so many internalizing of the rumble and the traffic, the confusions, the disorders by which your environment is peopled that I wonder if you can get still enough—not quiet enough—still enough to hear rumbling up from your unique and essential idiom the sound of the genuine in you. I don’t know if you can. But this is your assignment.” (p. 2)

This assignment invites you to take up Thurman’s “assignment” and to reflect on his articulation of the importance of listening to “the sound of the genuine” in your life in this contemporary moment. In this 750-1000 word essay, you will explore the question:

❖ **What does it mean to you to hear the sound of the genuine in this contemporary moment?**

The essay has four parts. You might think of a particular event, situation, or story in which you want to contextualize your response. The four parts of the essay will engage the following questions:

- Part 1: What does it mean to you to hear the “sound of the genuine” right now?
- Part 2: What “noises,” “echoes,” “rumble,” “traffic,” “confusion,” etc., which Thurman names as prohibitive of hearing the sound of the genuine (Thurman 2) would you name as potential obstacles to your being able to hear the sound of the genuine in your life? You might reference one of our additional required readings here if applicable to you.
- Part 3: How do you hear the sound of the genuine in others? (Thurman, 3)
- Part 4: What is one thing you learned from the narrative shared in the podcast you chose that illuminates what it can mean for you to “cultivate the discipline of listening to the sound of the genuine” in yourself? (Thurman, 3)

Your essay should reference the following three items:

- **Thurman’s address** “The Sound of the Genuine”

- **One** of the following: Aronczyk, Bazan, Griswold, Florer-Bixler and Barna (if using Florer-Bixler, must also reference the Barna Group results. Florer-Bixler is referencing the Barna Group study).
- **Your choice of one** of [the episodes](#) in the Forum for Theological Education podcast series “The Sound of the Genuine.” As of 12/20/21, there are 20 episodes.
- **Logistics:**
 - a. **Citations:** These are explicitly open-book reflection and “open podcast” opportunities. If a page number is available for a reading, use the author’s last name and the page number (ex. Thurman, 3). For a podcast, use quotes as appropriate, but you only need to cite the speaker (ex. Yates).
 - b. Please include a word count at the end of your paper.
- **Submitting:** Class Canvas site, Module for Paper 1
- **Rubric:** On Canvas
- **Word count/length:** 750-1000 words/3-4 pages

C. [Final 01/01/21] Paper 2: Story-linking - 20%

***Please be sure to see “Asynchronous Lecture 2 and the Canvas site instructions for more detail on each section of the paper. The linked Google doc also has the same information.**

- **In class working draft:** Tuesday, January 11, in class
- **Final due:** Wednesday, January 19, 11:59pm
- **Description:** Story telling – sharing, listening to, and making meaning with our own stories and those of others – is an integral part of how we approach the meanings, purposes, and calls that enliven us. For our class session on Tuesday, January 11, and for your second paper, we are engaging story-telling as a practice of discernment through studying and practicing the “story-linking process” articulated by Anne E. Streaty Wimberly in *Soul Stories: African American Christian Education*.

Wimberly’s disciplinary focus is Christian education. She writes that there is a need for Christian education that centers “everyday lives” while also calling forth “liberating wisdom and hope-building vocation”(xi). It is in this context, and with these priorities, that Wimberly introduces the “story-linking process” (21). The story-linking process “can help us open ourselves to God’s call to act in ways that are liberating for us and others and to decide how we will do this. It can also help us discern our vocation, formed and informed by the Christian story, as well as ways of accomplishing it”(26).

In our class on Tuesday, January 11, we will have a robust discussion of *Soul Stories*. We’ll be guided by Wimberly’s suggestions for group processes and story-linking more broadly (see chapter 6). We will also discuss her articulation of “kinship hospitality” as an approach to our work together. We will also study the story-linking process in detail (all chapters, see especially the summary on pages 33-35) and review her assessments of the case studies.

The final version of Paper 2 invites you to practice the four parts of Wimberly’s story-linking process and name how you might envision using the process in your context. You will find the final paper instructions at the conclusion of the instructions for the working draft.

January 11: For class on Tuesday, January 11, you will bring a 1-page working draft of your story-linking paper. You are essentially completing the first step of “disclosure” of the story-linking process with some additional reflection. This paper should include a few sentences on how you are currently considering approaching each part of the process and on how you can envision engaging the story-linking process in your ministry context.

- Engaging the everyday story
- Engaging the Christian faith story in the Bible
- Engaging Christian faith stories from the African American heritage
- Engaging in Christian ethical decision making
- How you envision using the story-linking process in your ministry context.

We will commit a large part of our class time to sharing and listening to stories and to reflecting on the story-linking process together. You do not need a complete paper! You will, however, want to have a few sentences about your initial thoughts on how you will approach the final assignment.

Wednesday, January 19: Your final paper builds on your working draft and is a more robust example of the story-linking process. Although modeling the full process is outside the scope of this paper, your story-linking paper is an opportunity to attend to an abbreviated version of each part of the process and to offer a brief reflection on how you can envision engaging

A. For each of the **first three stages** of the story-linking process, you should reflect on **Activity 1 and one additional Activity of your choice for the first three stages of the process.** The first three stages are:

- Engaging the everyday story
- Engaging the Christian faith story in the Bible
- Engaging Christian faith stories from the African American heritage

B. For the **final stage**, “Engaging in Christian ethical decision making,” reflect on just **one Activity.**

C. Personal reflection: A ½-1 page reflection on how you can envision engaging the story-linking process in your ministry context.

- **Submitting:** Class Canvas site, Module for Paper 2
- **Rubric:** On Canvas
- **Word count/length of final:** Minimum of 1250 words (5 pages), but up to 8 pages (2000 words)

[Final 01/02/22] Paper 3: "Angel of your congregation/community" project and analysis - 10%

*Be sure to read the Reflection on Wink, cross-listed as Asynchronous Lecture/Written Reflection 3 below the instructions.

- **In-class work:** Wednesday, January 12, 2022

- **Final written assignment:** Due Friday, January 14, 2022, 11:59pm
- **Description:** This assignment asks you to identify a congregation of which you are a part (a member, a pastor, a field education student) or another community of accountability and, drawing from the Walter Wink articles, to artistically express the character and vocational identity of your congregation as informed by Wink’s concept of the “angel of your congregation.” As Wink writes, analyzing the “angel of a congregation” is a way to understand its complexities, realities, and what it would be like for its fragmentations to become who God has called the congregation to be (as Siler says, to become more like Christ). This is a chance to experiment with Wink’s approach to assessing the spirit of an institution and how/if you think it might be living up to God’s call.

- **Instructions:**

**This assignment is adapted from one designed by Dr. Courtney Goto, Associate Professor of Practical Theology at Boston University School of Theology. I am grateful to Dr. Goto!*

Paper 3 has three parts:

1. **Make an angel:** During class on Wednesday, January 12, 2022, in our first block of class, we will discuss Wink and you will have time to make an “angel” of a community of accountability for you. You can make the angel of your home congregation, your field education site, another community, etc. We will commit 90 minutes of class time to the creation of your angels. You can keep your cameras on or off.
 2. **Discuss your angel:** In the second block of time, you will share about your angel in a small and large group.
 3. **Write about your angel:** Compose a 250-word written reflection on your angel that includes the following:
 - a. The name of your congregation
 - b. A description of your angel. Feel free to be creative, but please give attention to at least **one** of the six lenses of discernment that Wink names in *Angels*, 73-77.
 - c. What is at least one thing that your angel reveals about the vocation of the community?
- **Logistics/special notes:**
 1. Although we will discuss your angel in class, you will have until Friday, January 14, 11:59pm, to submit your written reflection.
 2. We will have 90 minutes of class time to make angels, but you are welcome to get a head start if you would like longer. In addition, over the next few weeks, I encourage you to gather any sort of materials you would like to use to create your angel. Hold on to boxes, wrapping paper, bows, old art supplies, etc. Get creative!
 3. Abbreviated citations for the Wink articles that follow the pattern I used in this reflection: (*Angels*, xx and *Powers*, xx).
 - **Rubric:** See Canvas
 - **Word count/length:** 250-500 words/~1-2 page/s
- *Note: I use “Powers” as an abbreviation for *Powers That Be* and “Angels” as an abbreviation for “Angels of the Churches.”*

[Final as of 12/28] Paper 4 - Oxford Presbyterian Church Visit Debrief - 5%

- **Due:** Thursday, January 13, 11:59pm
- **Description:** This assignment asks you to share brief reflections on the conversation with the leadership from Oxford Presbyterian Church
- **Instructions:** Please provide brief answers (1 sentence where appropriate, and up to 4 sentences) to each of the following questions:
 1. What is one insight that surprised you about what was shared today?
 2. How did what you heard today resonate with, challenge, or expand what you understood about calling?
 3. What is one insight that connects to your final project?
 4. What question or questions still remain/s for you?
- **Submitting:** Class Canvas site, Thursday, January 13 Module
- **Logistics:** You can upload as a document or write directly into the text box.
- **Rubric:** See Canvas
- **Word count/length:** 1-4 sentences, where appropriate, per question

[Final version 01/01/22] Paper 5 - Calling Throughout Life = 10%

- **Due:** Friday, January 14, 2022, 9am
- **Description:** This essay is an opportunity for you to explore calling in a particular stage of life. The chapters in *Calling All Years Good: Christian Vocation Throughout Life's Seasons* attend to "callings over a lifetime" (Cahalan, 12). Authors focus on callings in childhood, adolescence, younger adulthood, middle adulthood, and late adulthood, and older adulthood. Each chapter addresses the following five themes: Entering the phase, characteristics of the phase, vocational experiences, communal dynamics, and ending. There are also "Biblical interludes" by Jane Patterson that illuminate a story from scripture that speak to the particular season of life that an author is exploring.

In this reflection, you will choose one chapter from *Calling All Years Good* and prepare a reflection on the chapter. You will share your reflections in a small group with others who chose the same chapter and then in a large group with all students.

- **Instructions:**

In your essay, please attend to the following:

 1. Why was it important to you to examine vocation in this stage of life?
 2. Choose **two** of the five themes that are covered in each chapter (entering the phase, characteristics of the phase, vocational experiences, communal dynamics, and ending) and explore one key insight about each of the themes you chose. You might explore what challenged you, excited you, made you curious, is a point with which you disagree, etc.
 3. Drawing a connection to one additional reading or discussion we had in class this week, what is one point you think is important to share with your colleagues about this chapter?
- **Logistics:** Please reference particular passages and page numbers with the author's last name and the page number (ex. Cahalan, 23).

- **Submitting:** 9am to the Class Canvas site, January 14 Module
- **Rubric:** See Canvas
- **Word count/length:** 250-500words/1-2 pages
- **Due:** Friday, January 14, 2022, 9am
- **Description:** You will choose one chapter from *Calling All Years Good: Christian Vocation Throughout Life's Seasons* and prepare a reflection addressing key themes and questions that you will share in class with your colleagues on the final day of class. This is not an exhaustive treatise, but rather an opportunity to articulate significant points from the reading and explore questions that sparked for you.
- **Instructions:**
 1. Pick one chapter.
 2. Identify one important theme, concept, or argument you are tracking in the chapter.
 3. Write a 250-500-word response to the chapter that demonstrates your understanding of the material and critical reflection on the topic you are raising. Cite specific places in the text/s where you see this topic or argument developed. Pose one question for continued reflection or class discussion.
 4. Be prepared to share your response. You will share your response in a small group and draw from your response in our large group discussion, so please be able to access your response (and upload to Canvas before class begins).
- **Logistics:** Please reference particular passages and page numbers with the author's last name and the page number (ex. Cahalan, 23).
- **Submitting:** Class Canvas site, January 14 Module
- **Rubric:** See Canvas
- **Word count/length:** 250-500words/1-2 pages

Final paper - Closing the Purpose Gap - 30%

- **Due:** Wednesday, January 26, 11:59pm
- **Description:** In *The Purpose Gap*, Reyes writes, "Closing the purpose gap means creating the conditions for future generations to achieve meaningful and purpose-filled lives. It means removing the barriers, generating the resources, building the power, and imagining the future where those who are the most marginalized thrive. It is spirit work. Closing the purpose gap is the realization of Jesus's Beatitudes in the Sermon on the Mount..." "For theirs is the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 5:10)" (12-13).

Your final paper imagines what it would look like to close the purpose gap in a community that is meaningful to you. It includes reflection on the conditions that perpetuate the purpose gap, reflections on how you envision closing the purpose gap in your context, and an articulation of how you envision your call to the work. The practice focus of the paper draws from Chapter 9, "What Does Daily Thriving Look Like," where Reyes articulates "three core practices that will help you close the purpose gap for both you and your community" (183). For your final paper, you will engage Reyes's three practices to address a purpose gap in a community that is meaningful to you and reflect a bit further on context and your own sense of call.

Wednesday, January 12: For class on Wednesday, January 12, you will bring a 1-page working draft of your final paper. In a few sentences per part, sketch out how you would approach each part of the paper. You do not need a complete paper! We will commit a large part of our class time to Reyes's book and the projects you are envisioning. You will, however, want to have a few sentences about your initial thoughts so that you can discuss your brainstorms with your colleagues.

Wednesday, January 26: Final paper requirements

1. There are five parts to the paper with flexibility within each part for you to address the purpose gap in a way that is generative for your context.
 2. Include at least **one** source from class and **five** outside sources.
 3. The paper length should be between 2000-2500 words, not including citations.
- **Part I: Background (~1 page)**
 - a. **Identify your community:** Name the community or organization you are engaging.
 - b. **Personal significance:** Why is this community and this work important to you? If you have a current role in the community, include it here.
 - c. **Describe the “purpose gap” in this community:** What are the conditions preventing this community from achieving their purpose? Be specific and give examples. You might draw from sociological data, statistics, information that an organization shares about itself, etc. Note that this can be a brief overview (4 sentences - 1/2 page, even) of the purpose gap in your community to introduce your community. You will have more time/space to expand on the stifled reality you want to address when you explore Part III/Practice II.
 - **Part II/Practice 1: Telling a New Story (~1-2 pages; see especially 183-187)** In this part, you will “retell the story of purpose” in your community (31). This is an opportunity for you to “reframe the narrative” (185) and create a “bold vision for thriving” (183) in your community. You might explore questions like...
 - What stories and narratives about your community intervene in thriving? What stories do you “need to leave behind”? (33)
 - Are there stories from the natural world, scripture, personal narratives, literature etc. from which you will want to draw?
 - What images ground your new story of thriving in your community?
 - **Part III/Practice II: Designing for Purpose on Our Own Terms (~4-5) pages; see especially 187-191)** In this part, you will engage Jeanne Liedtka and Tim Ogilvie's model of design thinking and an additional question unique to this assignment. You will want to give ample time to each section and draw from literature relevant to your context and community. You will want to revisit pages 187-191 and 52-59.
 - (1) What Is? - What is the reality in which you want to intervene?
 - (2) What If? - What is the alternative you seek?
 - (3) What Wows? - What would a bold and courageous manifestation of this vision look like?
 - (4) What Sticks? - “What sticks are those things that change the daily lives of people” and narrates “solutions that serve a greater purpose.” (187)
 - (5) Who Do You Need in Your Constellation? - Name one person you already personally know and whose wisdom you would appreciate about this work (see Ch. 5)?

- **Part IV/Practice III: “Closing the Purpose Gap is About Today” (~½-1 page)**
Limning from Reyes’s questions on 191, what does it look like for you to “daily...work toward healing and freedom?” You might reflect on this section by engaging 1-2 of Reye’s questions from the middle paragraph on p. 191.
- **Part V: Your Meaning in a Minute (~½-1 page):** In 250 words or less, articulate how you understand your personal call as part of the work of closing the purpose gap in this context.
- **Logistics** - All citations should be Chicago style as outlined in the syllabus.
- **Submitting:** Class Canvas site, Module Wednesday, January 26
- **Rubric:** On Canvas
- **Word count/length:** 8-10 pages

LPTS Policies (Excerpted from the Faculty Handbook)

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. More discussion about inclusive language can be accessed from the Academic Support Center and from the section of the LPTS web site with information for current students.

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 the 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 more information, see the Policy for Academic Honesty in the Student Handbook.

Special Accommodations

Students requiring accommodations for a documented physical or learning disability should be in contact with the Director of the Academic Support Center during the first two weeks of a semester (or before the semester begins) 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.

Citation Policy

Citations in your papers should follow Seminary standards, which are based on the guides below.

American Psychological Association. *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*. 7th ed. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association, 2020.

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*. 9th ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2020.

The Chicago Manual of Style. 17th ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2017.
Copies of these guides are available at the library and in the Academic Support Center.

See also the library's citation help page: <https://lpts.libguides.com/digitalresources/citingsources>

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 instructor of their planned absence from class, either prior to the session or within 24 hours of the class session. An absence of 1/4 of the course may result in a low or failing grade in the course.

Student Learning Outcomes

Master of Arts (Religion) Degree Program:

SLO1: Be able to interpret Scripture critically and imaginatively.

SLO2: Demonstrate an understanding and appreciation of the global history of the Church.

SLO3: Demonstrate an understanding of multiple theological perspectives, historical and contemporary.

SLO4: Demonstrate the ability to think theologically, strategically, imaginatively, and contextually about ethical issues.

SLO5: Students will be able to conduct independent critical research and write clearly and convincingly on a topic of biblical, theological, historical, or ethical concern.

Master of Divinity (M.Div.) Degree Student Learning Outcomes

SLO 1: Students will gain knowledge and understanding of the Bible, and the ability to use critical skills and educated imagination to interpret it in contemporary social and cultural contexts.

SLO 2: Students will learn to become skillful interpreters of the history of Christian experience.

SLO 3: Students will be able to think theologically and ethically in relation to particular traditions and contemporary needs.

SLO 4: Students will demonstrate the ability to reflect critically and self-critically on relationships between Christian faith and various forms of systemic injustice.

SLO 5: Students will acquire the knowledge and skill sets necessary for the practice of Christian ministry – as demonstrated by effectiveness in such activities as:

- Leading congregations within the framework of their communions, confessions, and polity

- Preaching, teaching, and leading worship
- Praying and teaching others to pray
- Leading an organization effectively
- Providing public leadership
- Inviting others into the Christian faith
- Offering pastoral care
- Participating in constructive intra-Christian and interreligious engagement

SLO 6: Can articulate own theological perspective, mindful of the global, multicultural, multi-religious context of contemporary ministry.

QEP SLO:

Students can describe strategies, grounded in their practice, for working toward racial justice appropriate to their particular vocational settings. Students can demonstrate competence with this Student Learning Outcome (SLO) in many ways including, but not limited to, the following:

- Defining and using key terms in ways informed by an understanding of systemic racism
- Identifying racism in its many manifestations (structural, personal, communal, etc.)
- Critical reflection on the history and current contexts regarding race, racism, and anti-racism
- Critical reflection on racist and antiracist practices and theologies
- Developing and implementing antiracist policies, practices, and theologies

Further Reading

These sources are a starting point, and as you conduct research and dive further into the course, you will find sources you want to recommend to your colleagues. This bibliography is a shared Google sheet for your additions throughout the semester.

Bibliographies/curated resources:

1. Bibliography created by the PCUSA (current through 2006):
<https://www.presbyterianmission.org/resource/bibliography-book-vocation/>
2. Forum for Theological Education: <https://fteleaders.org/resources/>
3. Called to Lives of Meaning and Purpose Initiative (includes links to many curated sites on vocation): <https://calledtolives.com/vocation/>.
4. Baylor University Soundings Project Bibliography on Vocation:
<https://www.baylor.edu/ifl/index.php?id=953048>

Resources

Badcock, Gary D. *The Way of Life: A Theology of Christian Vocation*. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1998.

Bass, Dorothy C., and Craig Dykstra, eds. *For Life Abundant: Practical Theology, Theological Education, and Christian Ministry*. First Edition edition. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2008.

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- . *Let Your Life Speak: Listening for the Voice of Vocation*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2000.
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