

DM 6463 Seminar III: Contemporary Approaches to Classical Themes of the Christian Faith

January 8-12, 2024

<https://lpts-edu.zoom.us/j/83602138118>

8:30-3:00 EST

Scott C. Williamson

swilliamson@lpts.edu

502.468.5377

Brian Harrington

bharrington@lpts.edu

502.992.5291

COURSE DESCRIPTION

At the heart of our work together will be a series of discussions about two classical themes of the Christian faith, justice, and care for persons. We will discuss these themes in light of course texts and your research questions and larger project goals. Our work begins with a critical review of *Prophetic Care*, an expression used by African American homiletician and practical theologian Dale P. Andrews to describe the “underlying purpose of prophetic ministry: the prophet expresses care for the world in moods that range from the confrontative (e.g. Amos) to the consoling (e.g. Deutero-Isaiah).” (See Andrews, “We’re Never Done with the Work.”)

Next, we will think systematically about prophetic care in context, in conversation with the work of Stephen B. Bevans. Bevans, an American Roman Catholic Priest, theologian, and professor emeritus of Mission and Culture, proposes six systematic models for better understanding contextual theologies. These heuristic models can help students to think critically about prophetic care in the discrete contexts of their vocational setting. Bevans reminds us that theology must take into more serious account the context in which it is articulated due to two sets of factors, external and internal. External factors include historical events, intellectual currents, cultural shifts, and political forces. Internal factors include, but are not limited to, the incarnational nature of Christianity, the sacramental nature of reality, divine revelation, the catholicity of the church, and the Trinity.

Finally, we will examine prophetic care not only as a practical and contextual theology but also as a matter of moral concern. More specifically, we will read *Justice and Care: Essential Readings in Feminist Ethics*, edited by Virginia Held, professor emeritus of philosophy and women’s studies, in order to assess the efficacy of a care ethics as an alternative moral orientation to the prototypical justice ethics. Theorist Carol Gilligan explains the difference between a moral orientation formed by a justice perspective and a moral orientation formed by a care perspective:

“From a justice perspective, the self as moral agent stands as the figure against a ground of social relationships, judging the conflicting claims of self and others against a standard of equality or equal respect (the Categorical Imperative, the Golden Rule). From a care perspective, the relationship becomes the figure, defining self and others. Within the context of relationship, the self as a moral agent perceives and responds to the perception of need. The shift in moral perspective is manifest by a change in the moral question from “What is just?”

to “*How to respond?*” (Gilligan, “Moral Orientation and Moral Development,” 1987).

GOALS AND OUTCOMES

The work of the course has been designed to contribute to the following Student Learning Outcomes:

DMin SLO1: Students will demonstrate an advanced (comprehensive, appreciative, and critical) understanding and integration of ministry in relationship to several theological disciplines, including practical theology (Goals 1 and 2).

DMin SLO2: Students will demonstrate skills and competencies in methods of research in practical theology by successfully completing the D.Min research project and presenting an acceptable written project report (Goals 3 and 4).

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 SLO in many ways including but not limited to the following:

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

REQUIREMENTS AND LETTER GRADING:

1. Read texts carefully and complete a worksheet for each book BEFORE January 8. The format for the worksheets is at the end of the syllabus. (10%, 10%, 10%)
2. Actively participate in all discussions, asking and answering questions. This is extremely important for the success of the class as a whole. (30%)
3. Present ideas for a theological chapter for your project, including references to the reading materials. We will discuss these in class on January 12. (10%)
4. Write a 15-page paper on the theological and ethical issues and resources for your final project, due on February 12. (30%)

REQUIRED TEXTS:

1. *Preaching Prophetic Care: Building Bridges to Justice*, Phillis-Isabella Sheppard, Dawn Ottoni-Wilhelm, and Ronald A. Allen, editors (Eugene, Oregon: Pickwick Publications, 2018). ISBN: 978-1-5326-4337-8
Bookshop.org: <https://bookshop.org/p/books/preaching-prophetic-care-building-bridges-to-justice-dawn-ottoni-wilhelm/11066360?ean=9781532643378>

2. *Models of Contextual Theology, Revised and Expanded Edition*, Stephen B. Bevans (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 2002). ISBN: 978-1-57075-438-8
3. *Justice and Care: Essential Readings in Feminist Ethics*, Virginia Held, editor (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1995). ISBN: 0-8133-2162-X

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. For more information see:

<http://lpts.libguides.com/content.php?pid=469569&sid=4083885>

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.

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 more information, see The Code of Student Conduct, 6.11; the Student Handbook, p. 19.

Citation Policy

Citations in your papers should follow these Seminary approved guides:

American Psychological Association. *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*. 6th ed. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association, 2010.

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 ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013.

The Chicago Manual of Style. 16th ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010.

Special Accommodations

Students requiring accommodations for a documented physical or learning disability should be in contact with the Director of the Academic Support Center (bherringtonhodge@lpts.edu) in advance of the course, 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

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. Missing ¼ of the course (1.25 days) may result in a low or failing grade.

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE:

Please note that Dr. Williamson needs to leave class each day at 2:30 pm.

Time	Monday, January 8	Tuesday, January 9	Wednesday, January 10	Thursday, January 11	Friday, January 12
8:30–8:35	Morning Prayer	Morning Prayer	Morning Prayer	Morning Prayer	Morning Prayer
8:35–10:15	1. Intro to Class 2. Renewing acquaintances and catching up since Seminar II.	Preaching Prophetic Care -Description and Conceptualization	Models of Contextual Theology -Description and Conceptualization	Justice and Care -Description and Conceptualization	Reassessment of Care and Justice
10:15–10:30	Break	Break	Break	Break	Break
10:30–12:00	What is Feminist Ethics? Tasks of Theological Ethics	Preaching Prophetic Care -Reflecting and evaluating	Models of Contextual Theology -Reflecting and evaluating	Justice and Care -Reflecting and evaluating	Workshop Ideas for Theology Section of Projects
12:00–1:00	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
1:00–2:30	What is Contextual Theology? -Problematizing Care and Justice	Preaching Prophetic Care -Creation and application	Models of Contextual Theology-- Creation and application	Justice and Care -Creation and application	Workshop Ideas for Theology Section of Projects
2:30–3:00		Erin Hamilton (?)			Preparation for Seminar IV

Worksheet Format

For each book, please write a five-page response to several, if not all, of the following questions (15 total pages):

1. *Preaching Prophetic Care*

- How do you describe prophetic care?
- Which concepts and authors in the volume are most relevant to your understanding of prophetic care? Why?
- Discuss bridge building as an expression of prophetic care. How do power relations and privilege impact the work of bridge building?
- Describe the dialectic between the prophetic and the pastoral.
- Describe the meaning and relationship between encounter, re-encounter, and pre-encounter.
- How might your project benefit from prophetic care?
- Ask and answer a question of your choosing in reference to prophetic care.

2. *Models of Contextual Theology*

- Sketch the contextual models in one paragraph per model.
- Do any of the models inform how you currently think about contextual theology?
- Do the models benefit from the work of prophetic care?
- How might your project benefit from a systematic approach to contextual theology?
- Ask and answer a question of your choosing in reference to a systematic approach to contextual theology.

3. *Justice and Care*

- What makes an ethics feminist? Why is an ethics of care considered to be a feminist ethics?
- Are justice and care compatible? Are they alternative and incompatible ways of interpreting the same moral situations?
- Are care and justice both indispensable for adequate moral understanding?
- Does a feminist ethics of care have any efficacy for prophetic care?
- How might your project benefit from a feminist ethics of care?
- Ask and answer a question of your choosing in reference to a feminist ethics of care.

Questions for the paper due on February 12:

As you write on theological and ethical issues and resources for your final project, please answer the following questions:

- What is the context out of which you are writing? How has this answer changed since Seminar I?
- Who is the intended audience?
- What is the social system, structure, or problem that you will address?
- What resources from Christian traditions are most helpful to you at this point?
- Define any theological or ethical key terms that are important to your project.