

PRACTICAL THEOLOGY IN CONGREGATIONS (PTC)

PX 20031 AND 20032/20131 AND 20132

Fall 2017 (Continued in Spring 2018)

Monday Evenings 7:00-9:00PM in Schlegel 120 | Wednesday afternoons 1:30-3:20PM in Schlegel 122
(Small Groups meet in other rooms as assigned)

Teaching Team: Marcus Hong, Rev. Anne Vouga, Rev. Dr. Marion Miller
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CREDIT: 3 credits/semester for a total of 6 credits. Taken alongside an 8½ month-long congregational placement (1 FE unit/semester for a total of 2 FE units). This is a required course for the MDiv degree.

COURSE DESCRIPTION: PTC intentionally combines field-based and classroom learning in order to encourage participants to deepen their practical, spiritual and interpretive toolkits through the shared wisdom gained from communal reflection on the practice of ministry.

PREREQUISITES: There are no prerequisites; however, supervised, congregation-based field placement is ordinarily required to be **concurrent** with PTC. Also, students should have taken foundational courses in Area A (Biblical Studies) and Area B (Theology, History, and Ethics) before enrolling in this course.

GOALS: The fundamental goal is for students to develop practical wisdom for ministry and to begin to employ various frameworks for practical theological reflection and interpretation, with an emphasis upon the communal nature of ministry. We hope students will:

- Experience ministry collaboratively, reflecting with a community willing to wrestle together on issues of importance to each group member;
- Learn investigative techniques to assess theologically and sense intuitively the context, culture, and process of a community in order to guide ministry within that community and its context;
- Explore processes to help a congregation grow in faithfulness and discipleship in the world;
- Develop a clearer sense of self as a pastoral/congregational leader; and,
- Value and cultivate spiritual formation for themselves and others.

All of the course goals, along with the students' work in the congregational placement, support the Master of Divinity Program Goals 3, 4 and 5, as found on page 12 of the 2016-17 catalogue:

Goal 3: That students develop an understanding of the contemporary social and cultural context in which they will do ministry and the ability to reflect critically and constructively on the theological and ethical choices it poses in light of the reality of social injustice and ecological destruction in a global context.

Goal 4: That students acquire the skills necessary for the practice of Christian Ministry, including the ability to lead worship, to proclaim the Gospel, to teach, to provide pastoral care, to interpret the church's mission in an ecumenical and global context and to provide leadership for public ministry.

Goal 5: That students develop a personal identity that is informed by their vocational commitment as people of faith and church leaders to a life in the Spirit, nurtured by participation with others in Christian practices...

TEACHING METHODS: In the classroom, we will utilize lectures, presentations, panel discussions, artwork, large group discussion, small group work and case study reflection. Field supervisors will be invited to join in the class sessions at least twice a semester; we gain from the shared wisdom of our supervisors. Students will also write weekly in a Reflective Field Notebook and create an ePortfolio.

School and Class Policies

DISCUSSION: For ours to be an open classroom where freedom to speak and respect for all are assured, we need to agree that comments and expressions of belief that may be at variance with those of the instructors, another student, or our own must be respected, heard, and treated fairly. We hope this same attitude prevails in the churches where students serve and is modeled by them in these settings.

CONFIDENTIALITY: Confidentiality is a matter of ethics in ministry. It is the trustworthy use of information to assure appropriate care of those who seek our assistance. It is not synonymous with keeping a secret (Lebacqz, *Professional Ethics*, 1985). Rather, it requires being accountable for honoring another's trust while assuring the best possible care for them. Accountability may warrant consultation. In this course, for instance, we ask you to develop case material from your ministry settings for consultation with your classmates and the teaching team. To do such consultation responsibly, any identifying information is adequately disguised and the written cases are shredded after class.

Confidentiality applies in many situations in our course. Confidentiality should be kept appropriately regarding discussions in supervisory meetings and in small groups. Confidentiality should also be considered when writing about events in your journals.

In this age of social networking, students are reminded that professional ethics in ministry extends to the life we live online. Postings about confidential pastoral and congregational matters in the field education setting on any social networking sites are simply inappropriate and may become actionable legal, ecclesial, and disciplinary matters. Students are also advised to be careful and prudent about the personal data they share on such sites; despite the presumption of privacy, these social networks can be shared with third parties, including ordaining bodies, seminary officials, and church authorities.

INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE: Learning is fundamentally linked to communication, self-expression, and personal and social transformation. It respects individuals, their feelings, their value and worth, and their particular potential for contribution to common knowledge and community virtue. Learning is fundamentally and intentionally inclusive. Since all learning is inherently ethical and political, and theological discourse traditionally has been patriarchal and gender exclusive, the Seminary has established a policy, in the interest of the construction of an inclusive and egalitarian community, that the language (symbols, metaphors) used in our class discussions and written work will be gender inclusive and respectful of all persons and groups as valued human creatures of God.

Racism and white privilege, homophobia and transphobia, ageism, and prejudice toward people with physical and intellectual disabilities also permeate our society and are detrimental to any learning environment. We need to use language, symbols, and metaphors that honor our commitment to being a community respectful and welcoming of difference and opposed to all forms of social oppression.

Direct quotations from theological texts and translations of the Bible do not have to be altered to conform to this policy (though they can be). 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.

STATEMENT ON SEXUAL HARASSMENT AND FIELD EDUCATION: Upon matriculation, you received a copy of our Field Education Statement on Sexual Harassment. Please review this statement. If you cannot find your copy, please go to <http://www.lpts.edu/academics/field-education/placement-hub/policies-and-procedures>. A copy of our statement can be found at the bottom of the page.

From the Dean's Office

ATTENDANCE: 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. Six or more absences (1/4 of the course) may result in a low or failing grade in the course.

PLAGIARISM AND DOCUMENTATION POLICY: All students are expected to abide by Seminary policies and expectations concerning student integrity, including academic honesty and avoidance of plagiarism. Louisville Seminary's policy on plagiarism is detailed in the Student Handbook, which is available on the Louisville Seminary Intranet or from the Dean of Students Office. Assistance with academic writing is available from 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 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 should follow Seminary standards, which are based on these 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.

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

Assignments and Readings

GRADING: Students will receive feedback on their Reflective Field Notebooks and Congregational Projects from their Small Group Leader. Final decisions on grades will rest with Professor Hong. Field education supervisors will be responsible for evaluation of the field-based portion on a pass/fail basis. **Students who demonstrate basic competency in the skills listed in MDiv Program Goal 5 (see above) and who meet the terms of their Administrative Agreement and Learning Covenant will receive a passing grade for their two units of congregational placement. A passing grade from the field education setting is mandatory to pass PTC.**

Assignment Breakdown		Grade Scale			
Reflective Field Notebook	30%	A	93-100	C	73-76
Small Group Participation	20%	A-	90-92	C-	70-72
Congregational Projects	25%	B+	87-89	D+	67-69
ePortfolio	25%	B	83-86	D	63-66
	100%	B-	80-82	D-	60-62
		C+	77-79	F	59 and below

Detailed rubrics for most assignments (excluding Small Group Participation, the Life Framework Project, and ePortfolios) can be found at the end of the syllabus, further guidance will be given in class.

REFLECTIVE FIELD NOTEBOOK: Each week, students will critically and theologically reflect on 1) spiritual disciplines, 2) readings and discussions, 3) chosen memoirs, and 4) field education experiences. Students will put their reflections onto their ePortfolio website (see below) under a special, password-protected blog. Teaching Team members will read their Small Group's reflections and provide comments and feedback every other week.

In writing your notebook, we are looking for evidence of theological reflection on ministry, ministerial practice, and pastoral vocation. Each week, students will write approximately 1000 words (2 single-spaced pages, 12-pt font), with approximately 250 words dedicated to each of the four topics (sometimes more, sometimes less). Prompts for each week can be found in the detailed course schedule starting on page 6.

SMALL GROUPS: Small groups of 7 or 8 students, facilitated by one member of the Teaching Team, allow us to deepen our reflection. The Monday Night section of PTC counts as its own small group. On Wednesday, small groups will meet in breakout rooms on the second floor of Schlegel Hall. On some days, we will meet in small groups for the entire two hours; other days we will meet in a large plenary group for one hour then in small groups for the second hour. Our hope is that these small groups will become a source of support, encouragement, and challenge for everyone.

CONGREGATIONAL PROJECTS: Over the semester, often in consultation with their supervisor, lay committee, or other church members, students will complete 5 short projects. Instructions for each can be found in the course schedule the week before the projects are due. For the Fall Semester, these projects include 2 Case Studies and 1) Pastoral Calendar and Life Framework, 2) Exploring Congregational Culture, 3) Exploring Congregational Context. Please bring your completed projects to class.

EPORTFOLIOS: This is a year-long project. An ePortfolio is a curated online collection of “artifacts,” materials (written prayers, video or audio recordings, handouts, curricula, pictures, newsletter articles, etc.) that demonstrate learning, describe areas of interest or curiosity, and express the creator's personal character. Students will decide what artifacts to upload. Each artifact should be chosen to reflect on one or more of the following areas, which correspond to goals 4 and 5 of the MDiv Program (see above): 1) Worship; 2) Proclamation; 3) Formation; 4) Public Ministry; and 5) Vocational Identity. Students must upload at least one artifact per area. Each artifact should be accompanied by a descriptive and reflective paragraph (no less than 200 words) that makes the case for the artifact's inclusion.

For the fall semester, students will create a basic website, including an “about me” section, a blog (the Reflective Field Notebook), and at least one artifact. Examples of ePortfolios and more detailed information will be given in the first course meeting.

BOOKS: Additional readings will be distributed in class or on CAMS; additional books may be added in the spring.

- Floding, Matthew, ed. *Engage: A Theological Field Education Toolkit*. New York, NY: Rowman & Littlefield, 2017.
- Nouwen, Henri J.M. *Creative Ministry*. New York, NY: Image Books/Doubleday, 1971, 2003.

Choose 1 of the following:

- Andrews, William L., ed. *Sisters of the Spirit*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1986.
- Daniel, Lillian and Martin B. Copenhaver. *This Odd and Wondrous Calling*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2009.
- Spong, Martha, ed. *There's A Woman in the Pulpit*. Woodstock, VT: Skylight Paths Publishing, 2015.

Choose 1 of the following:

- Lischer, Richard. *Open Secrets*. New York, NY: DoubleDay, 2001.
- Peterson, Eugene. *Pastor: A Memoir*. New York, NY: HarperCollins, 2011.
- Taylor, Barbara Brown. *Learning to Walk in the Dark*. New York, NY: HarperCollins, 2014.

Schedule

	TOPIC	Date	Discipline
Week 1	Introductions	Sep 11 and 13	
Week 2	<i>Who Are Pastors and What Do They Do? (Supervisors)</i>	Sep 18 and 20	EXAMEN
Week 3	Teaching	Sep 25 and 27	
Week 4	Caring	Oct 2 and 4	
Week 5	Celebrating	Oct 9 and 11	
	RESEARCH AND STUDY WEEK		
Week 6	<i>Ethics in Ministry (Supervisors, Panel)</i>	Oct 23 and 25	LECTIO DIVINA
Week 7	Case Study Presentations 1	Oct 30 and Nov 1	
Week 8	***Pressler Lecture***	Nov 6 and 8	
Week 9	Congregational Culture	Nov 13 and 15	VISIO DIVINA
	Thanksgiving (no class)		
Week 10	Congregational Context	Nov 27 and 29	
Week 11	Case Study Presentations 2	Dec 4 and 6	

Across the two semesters, this course slowly broadens from the personal to the societal. The fall semester moves from pastoral identity and self-care, to three central pastoral tasks: teaching, caring and celebrating, and ends with an examination of the congregation’s internal culture and external context.

This schedule below contains tools to help you budget your time. The course has been planned so that all tasks (including attending class) total between 10 and 14 hours per week. Different people may spend different amounts of time on different parts of the course. At **minimum**, each week, you can expect to spend 2 hours in class, 2 hours writing your Notebook, 4 hours reading, and 2 hours on other tasks. The weeks have been balanced so that a heavier week is followed by a lighter week, or a natural break in the course. It might behoove you to occasionally work or plan ahead.

Readings are listed according to 1) the two required textbooks; 2) readings on CAMS; 3) suggested pacing for your chosen memoirs. We have provided page counts for all readings excepting the memoirs. You might want to time how long it takes you to read the given number of pages during the first few weeks to help you determine how much time to budget for the rest of the course. The pacing for the memoirs rests on the premise that you could read 5-10 pages of the memoir every night or every morning and easily maintain the suggested schedule. These memoirs are to act as companions along the way, to be read slowly, to be pondered. Nevertheless, you can read at your own pace, as long as you finish reading both memoirs by the end of the semester.

Week 1 – September 11 and 13 – Introductions

Introduction to the syllabus, to practical theology, to ePortfolios, to our small groups.

DISCIPLINE: N/A

READINGS: Textbooks Nouwen, *Creative Ministry*, “Introduction” (8pp);
“Engaging Theological Field Education” (6pp);
“Engaging in Theological Reflection” (6pp);
On CAMS Osmer, *Practical Theology*, Introduction (30pp);

NOTEBOOK: **This first week, please write responses to these prompts in a word document. Print a copy and bring it to class. Once your blog is up, copy and paste this response as your first entry.**

- 1) Discipline – With what spiritual practices do you currently engage? Why? How often? If you do not currently engage in a particular practice, what brings shape and life to your daily living?
- 2) Readings and Class – In 3 sentences or less, provide your own definition of practical theology. What are your expectations for this course? What do you hope to learn? What are your fears?
- 3) Memoir – Which one did you choose? Why? What do you expect to experience?
- 4) Field Experiences – How was the first day of your placement? What surprised you? What are you most looking forward to doing this semester? What do you think will most challenge you?

ASSIGNMENTS: After our first meeting, spend 3-4 hours setting up your ePortfolio webpage. See the Handouts and Documents on CAMS for more information about starting an ePortfolio. Spend time working with your supervisor on the *Pastoral Calendar* provided in class. We will use these calendars to prompt discussion in class next week. Please bring them with you.

Week 2 – September 18 and 20 – Who Are Pastors and What Do They Do?

Supervisors attend. Introduction to Life Frameworks. Discussion of pastoral identity, roles, and schedules.

DISCIPLINE: Examen | Introduction to Life Frameworks

READINGS: Textbooks “Engaging with Your Supervisor-Mentor” (6pp);
“Engaging with Your Field Education Student” (6pp);
“Engaging as a Gendered Person” (6pp);
“Engaging in Sustaining Spiritual Practices” (6pp);
“Engaging in Personal Self-Care” (6pp);
On CAMS Jackson Carroll, *God’s Potters*, Chapter 4 (30pp);
Marjorie Thompson, *Soul Feast*, Chapter 9 (10pp);
Memoir Sisters of the Spirit – Preface, Forward, Intro
This Odd and Wondrous Calling – Forward, Preface, Chap. 1-4
There’s a Woman in the Pulpit – Forward, Intro, Part 1

NOTEBOOK: 1) Discipline – What was life-giving about your spiritual practice this week? What was a struggle?
2) Readings and Class – Respond to 1 or 2 questions from the end of the chapters from *Engage*. Please include the question(s) in your notebook so we know what prompted your reflection.
3) Memoir – What stood out to you from your reading?
4) Field Experiences – How was your first week? What was most life-giving? Most challenging? How was the experience of creating and then talking through a weekly pastoral calendar?

ASSIGNMENTS: Remember to turn in your Administrative Agreement and Learning Covenant (Due Sep. 21)!

Week 3 – September 25 and 27 – Teaching

Discussion of the pastoral task of teaching.

DISCIPLINE: Examen

READINGS: Textbook Nouwen, *Creative Ministry*, “Teaching” (20pp);
“Engaging in Faith Formation” (6pp);
“Engaging Learning Across Generations” (6pp);
Memoir Sisters of the Spirit – Jarena Lee
This Odd and Wondrous Calling – Chp. 5-11
There’s a Woman in the Pulpit – Part 2

NOTEBOOK: 1) Discipline – What was life-giving about your spiritual practice this week? What was a struggle?
2) Readings and Class – Reflect on someone you consider an excellent teacher. What characteristics did they exhibit? What do you make of Nouwen’s comparison between violent and redemptive learning?
3) Memoir – What stood out to you from your reading this week?
4) Field Experiences – What did you learn this week, about yourself, about your supervisor, about your congregation?

ASSIGNMENTS: Spend an hour or two working on the “About Me” section of your ePortfolio. What information do you want to include here? Why? What pictures or images? Why?

Week 4 – October 2 and 4 – Caring

Discussion of the pastoral task of caring.

DISCIPLINE: Examen

READINGS: Textbook Nouwen, *Creative Ministry*, “Individual Pastoral Care” (24pp);
“Engaging in Pastoral Care” (6pp);
On CAMS Jean Stairs, *Listening for the Soul*, “Credible Caregivers” (27pp.)
Memoir Sisters of the Spirit – Zilpha Elaw 1 – pages 51-103 (stop at the top of 103, “and souls for my hire.”)
This Odd and Wondrous Calling – Chp. 12-20
There’s A Woman in the Pulpit – Parts 3 and 4

NOTEBOOK: 1) Discipline – What was life-giving about your spiritual practice this week? What was a struggle?
2) Readings and Class – Do you agree with Stairs’ argument about credibility and spiritual practices? Who has modeled this for you? Put this into conversation with Nouwen’s discussion of Jesus’ call to deny oneself.
3) Memoir – What stood out to you from your reading this week?
4) Field Experiences – Who have you cared for this week? Who has taken care of you?

ASSIGNMENTS: N/A

Week 5 – October 9 and 11 – Celebrating (and Lamenting)

Discussion of the pastoral task of celebrating (and lamenting). Introduction to Case Studies.

DISCIPLINE: Examen

READINGS: Textbook Nouwen, *Creative Ministry*, “Celebrating” (20pp)
On CAMS *Shared Wisdom*, Introduction, Appendix 1 and 2 (26pp);
Case Study Handouts (4pp);
Memoir Sisters of the Spirit – Zilpha Elaw 2 – pages 103-160
This Odd and Wondrous Calling – Chp. 21-24
There’s a Woman in the Pulpit – Part 5

NOTEBOOK: 1) Discipline – As we finish our last week of the Examen, reflect upon your experience. What was most helpful about it? What was most difficult? Would you engage in this practice again?
2) Readings and Class – Write about a deeply impactful communal spiritual ritual (this could be weekly worship, a wedding, a funeral, a service of healing, etc.). What do you make of Nouwen’s use of the word “obedience” to frame his reflections?
3) Memoir – What stood out to you from your reading this week?
4) Field Experiences – What was cause for celebration this week? What made you lament?

ASSIGNMENTS: N/A

RESEARCH AND STUDY WEEK

Enjoy this week away from the classroom! But, yes, please still do your readings, spiritual discipline, and notebook.

DISCIPLINE: Lectio Divina

READINGS: On CAMS Studying Congregations, Chp. 3 (27 large pp);
James R. Niemann, “Dancing” in *Christian Practical Wisdom* (31pp);
Spend time exploring: <http://studyingcongregations.org/culture-frame>
Memoir Sisters of the Spirit – Julia Foote
This Odd and Wondrous Calling – Chp. 25-28
There’s a Woman in the Pulpit – Part 6

NOTEBOOK: 1) Discipline – What was life-giving about your spiritual practice this week? What was a struggle?
2) Readings and Class – Looking back over the first half of the semester, what themes have emerged in your course work and reflections? Read through your previous notebook entries.
3) Memoir – As we finish reading our first memoir, what do you take away from what you have read? These first set of memoirs were collections. What common themes did you find across the life experiences of the different people included in your memoir? If you have not finished reading yet, let us know, and do this reflection piece during the week you do finish the book.
4) Field Experiences – Where did you experience God this week? Where do you wish you had experienced God?

ASSIGNMENTS: Consider what you might write for the first case study. Begin working on the “Exploring Culture” project (see Week 8 Assignments). The readings for this week prepare you for that project.

Week 6 – October 23 and 25 – Ethics in Ministry (Panel Discussion)

Supervisors invited. Special meeting with panel discussion.

DISCIPLINE: Lectio Divina

READINGS: Textbook “Engaging in Ministry Ethically” (6pp)
On CAMS Willimon, *Calling and Character*, “The Pastor in the Community,” (34pp)
Lebacqz and Driskill, *Ethics and Spiritual Care*, selections (63pp);¹
Memoir Open Secrets – Chp. 1 and 2
The Pastor – Intro, Chp. 1 and 2
Learning to Walk – Intro

NOTEBOOK: 1) Discipline – What was life-giving about your spiritual practice this week? What was a struggle?
2) Readings and Class – Research if your tradition has a code of ethics for pastors. What do you think of it? Write a your own code, in conversation with your tradition and the course readings.
3) Memoir – Which one did you choose? Why? What do you expect to experience?
4) Field Experiences – What questions about ministry have emerged out of your placement?

ASSIGNMENTS: Case Studies Due Next Week.

Instructions: All students should write a case study dealing with either “a first experience” or an event that raises issues pertaining to pastoral identity, pastoral authority, or some aspect of ministry. The experiences can be either positive or negative, but must contain some important matter you would like to discuss with the group. Handouts that detail a model for case studies were given in Week 5. They are also on our CAMS course site.

E-mail your case studies to your Small Group Leader by this Thursday (Oct. 26). They will select two students to present their case next week. These students should make physical copies for all small group members.

Remember: confidentiality. Please remove any identifying details about anyone involved in the event. All physical copies should be collected and destroyed after class next week.

Week 7 – October 30 and November 1 – Case Studies 1

Meet in our small groups for the whole time.

DISCIPLINE: Lectio Divina

READINGS: Memoir Open Secrets – Chp. 3-5
The Pastor – Chp. 3-7
Learning to Walk – Chp. 1 and 2

NOTEBOOK: 1) Discipline – What was life-giving about your spiritual practice this week? What was a struggle?
2) Readings and Class – Reflect on the experience of writing and participating in a case study presentation. What was helpful about the experience? What didn’t seem helpful?
3) Memoir – What stood out to you from your reading this week?
4) Field Experiences – Where have you experienced God? Where do you wish you had?

ASSIGNMENTS: Continue working on your “Exploring Culture” assignment (see Week 8 for instructions).

¹ The “grid” mentioned in this second reading is the work of Jack Mostyn, who outlined four dimensions in spiritual care. “(1) the *intrapersonal*, (2) the *interpersonal*, (3) the *structural*, and (4) the *environmental* aspects of life. Using the grid, persons seeking spiritual growth must look not only at their own intrapersonal issues and relationship with God, but also at the ways in which God may be at work in social relationships, the institutions and structures of the wider society (including but not limited to the church), and in the environment as a whole.” (p. 33 in *Ethics and Spiritual Care*)

Week 8 – November 6 and 8 – Pressler Lecture

We will not meet for class. Instead, please attend the Pressler lecture on Thursday. If you cannot attend, please let us know. Choose another event (either on campus or elsewhere). Spend time reflecting on this event in your notebook.

DISCIPLINE: Lectio Divina

READINGS: Memoir Open Secrets – Chp. 6-12
The Pastor – Chp. 8-16
Learning to Walk – Chp. 3 and 4

NOTEBOOK: 1) Discipline – As we finish our last week of Lectio Divina, reflect upon your experience. What was most helpful about it? What was most difficult? Would you engage in this practice again?
2) Readings and Class – Reflect on the Pressler Lecture. What were your takeaways? How could you incorporate insights from the lecture in your ministry (current or future)?
3) Memoir – What stood out to you from your reading this week?
4) Field Experiences – Your “Exploring Culture” Project counts as your reflection for this week.

ASSIGNMENTS: Continue working on your “Exploring Culture” assignment (due next week!).

Instructions: As early as Research and Study Week, spend time interviewing church members. Start with your lay committee (if you have one), but also make sure to interview 2-3 others. If you don’t have a lay committee, do Part 1 with 2-3 church members and Part 2 with 2-3 different ones. Either bring or take pictures of any artifacts that emerge as important. Bring all of the following parts to class, in addition to any artifacts.

Part 1 Gather your Lay Committee. Explain that you’ll need approximately 1 hour, that this is part of your coursework, and that you’ll share the answers with classmates, teachers, and supervisor. Ask everyone to take 10 minutes to think about and write down an incident or story from the life of this congregation that represents the church at its best. Bring these stories to class. Ask each person to share their story, then, as a group, discuss what these stories say about the strengths, values, and culture of this congregation.

Part 2 Interview 2-3 congregants (if possible, different from above and of disparate backgrounds), either in person or in writing (record any verbal responses as close to verbatim as possible). Ask them:
Who are the heroes and the heroines of the congregation?
What are key events (positive and/or negative) in the congregation’s life?
If this church were a Bible Story, what story would it be? Why?

Part 3 In 3-4 single-spaced pages, reflect on your interview findings, utilizing the following questions as prompts (you don’t have to answer all):

1. What story is symbolic of the heart of your congregation’s culture? How has this story has shaped the congregation? What themes or patterns emerged? Any special words?
2. Who is this congregation? In what ways is their culture reinforced or re-created? Some aspects to consider: Symbols, Rituals and Artifacts, Rules (probably unwritten), Social Location, Denominational History, Relationship to the World, Budget.
3. What behavior would be utterly unacceptable in your congregation?
4. How does the congregation use the Bible? What verses are quote frequently? What verses are found in the building? Which book of the Bible is the favorite?
5. What do you need to know about your congregation to survive? What clues does the culture give to how you can work for change?

Week 9 – November 13 and 15 – Culture

We will meet briefly together as a large group. The bulk of our time will be spent in small groups, discussing our “Exploring Culture” projects.

DISCIPLINE: Visio Divina

READINGS: Memoir Open Secrets – Chp. 13-15
The Pastor – Chp. 17-19
Learning to Walk – Chp. 5

NOTEBOOK: 1) Discipline – What was life-giving about your spiritual practice this week? What was a struggle?
2) Readings and Class – Reflect on the process of compiling your “Exploring Culture” Project. What was the most challenging part? How did the people react to being interviewed? What surprised you?
3) Memoir – What stood out to you from your reading this week?
4) Field Experiences – Your “Exploring Context” Project counts as your reflection for this week.

ASSIGNMENTS: ePortfolio (upload 1 artifact);
“Exploring Context” Project

Instructions: Bring all of your responses to the class after thanksgiving break.

- Part 1* Spend time exploring this site: <http://studyingcongregations.org/ecology-frame>
If it is safe for you to do so, conduct a windshield/walking/bicycling tour through the neighborhood of your church (see <http://studyingcongregations.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/StudyingCongregationsToolkit-Walking-Web.pdf>).
Otherwise, take the time to write about why it may or may not be safe for you to do so in that neighborhood. Take time to also conduct a space tour of your congregation’s building.
Use the reflection questions in the Walking Tour Toolkit to write up a 1-2 page report of your observations. What did you see – don’t worry about what it means. What questions did this raise? Where is God in this neighborhood?
- Part 2* Research the demographics of your church’s neighborhood through the U.S. Census (see <http://studyingcongregations.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/StudyingCongregationsToolkit-Census-Web.pdf>). Another good resource is the Association of Religion Data Archives (www.thearda.com) - although, please note that not all congregations are included in this resource, and some of the data is now old. Click on the Congregational Resource Center link, download the Community Profile Builder Guide, and use the tools to build a community profile.
Write a 1-page report of your demographic findings.
- Part 3* Write a 1-page reflection based on the following questions: Where does the culture of your congregation reflect or not reflect the context of the neighborhood you have now explored? Are the congregation’s beliefs and behaviors out of place?

THANKSGIVING BREAK WEEK

Week 10 – November 27 and 29 – Context

We will meet together as a large group for one hour, then divide into our small groups.

DISCIPLINE: Visio Divina

READINGS: Textbook “Engaging Your Context for Ministry” (6pp);
“Engaging Race” (6pp)

Memoir Open Secrets – 16-19
The Pastor – Chp. 20-28
Learning to Walk – Chp. 6 and 7

NOTEBOOK: 1) Discipline – What was life-giving about your spiritual practice this week? What was a struggle?
2) Readings and Class – Reflect on the process of completing the “Exploring Context” project. What was the most challenging part? Did anything surprise you?
3) Memoir – What stood out to you from your reading this week?
4) Field Experiences – You should be filling out your final evaluation for this semester. What insights emerged from doing this?

ASSIGNMENTS: Case Studies Due Next Week.

Instructions: All students should write a case study dealing with either “a first experience” or an event that raises issues pertaining to pastoral identity, pastoral authority, or some aspect of ministry. The experiences can be either positive or negative, but must contain some important matter you would like to discuss with the group. Handouts that detail a model for case studies were given in Week 5. They are also on our CAMS course site.

E-mail your case studies to your Small Group Leader by this Thursday (Nov. 30). They will select two students to present their case next week. These students should make physical copies for all small group members.

Remember: confidentiality. Please remove any identifying details about anyone involved in the event. All physical copies should be collected and destroyed after class next week.

Remember to turn in your Fall Evaluation (Due next week, Dec. 7)!

Week 11 – December 4 and 6 – Case Studies 2

DISCIPLINE: Visio Divina

READINGS: Memoir Open Secrets – Chp. 20-22
The Pastor – Chp. 29-Afterword
Learning to Walk – Chap. 8, 9 and Epilogue

NOTEBOOK: 1) Discipline – As we finish our last week of Visio Divina, reflect upon your experience of this spiritual practice. What was most helpful about it? What was most difficult? Would you engage in this practice again? Also reflect upon spiritual practices for this semester. Any adjustments to your life framework (Week 2)?
2) Readings and Class – Reflect on the experience of writing and participating in this case study presentation. What was helpful about the experience? What didn’t seem helpful?
3) Memoir – As we finish reading our second memoir, what do you take away from what you have read? What surprised you about these memoirs?
4) Field Experiences – Your final evaluation counts as your reflection for this week.

ASSIGNMENTS: N/A

REFLECTIVE FIELD NOTEBOOK RUBRIC

Components	Total Points Possible	Points Earned	Strength	Competence	Weakness	Missing
Theological Reflection	12		Strong and consistent theological reflection on ministry and pastoral vocation. (10-12 pts)	Some evidence of theological reflection on ministry and pastoral vocation. (7-9 pts)	Little evidence of theological reflection on ministry and pastoral vocation (4-6 pts)	This area is not addressed in any fashion. (1-3 pts)
Engagement With Course Materials	12		Consistent, deep engagement with spiritual disciplines, class sessions, course readings, and field placements in ways that are integrative, inform practice, and contribute to student's self-understanding and perspective of congregational life. (10-12 pts)	Tentative and surface engagement with course materials. (7-9 pts)	Superficial engagement with course materials in ways that leave out aspects of the course that have obvious bearing on matters the student encounters. (4-6 pts)	No engagement with course materials. (1-3 pts)
Writing style & mechanics	6		Good use of written English, correct punctuation, and exemplary documentation. Communicates clearly. (6 pts)	A few grammatical or spelling errors. Proper documentation provided. Some parts unclear or disorganized. (4-5 pts)	Writing is acceptable, but often unclear and disorganized. Proper documentation missing. (2-3 pts)	Abundant grammatical, spelling, and documentation errors. Writing indecipherable. (1 pts)
TOTAL	30 pts.		Comments:			

CASE STUDY RUBRIC

Components	Total Points Possible	Points Earned	Strength	Competence	Weakness	Missing
Background	4		Provides helpful context. (4 pts)	Provides some context. (3 pts)	Provides little meaningful context. (2 pts)	This area not addressed in any fashion. (1 pt)
Description	6		Brief, but thorough description of events with details that are important to the analysis, evaluation and reflection. (6 pts)	Brief and fair description with enough details to make sense of analysis, evaluation and reflection. (4-5 pts)	Cursory description or overly long description with either insufficient or extraneous details. (2-3 pts)	This area is not addressed in any fashion. (1 pt)
Analysis	4		Meaningful analysis with themes that make connections between the description, the evaluation and the theological reflection. (4 pts)	Clear analysis with themes that make some connections between the description, the evaluation, and the theological reflection. (3 pts)	Superficial analysis with themes that do not seem to draw from the case or provide material for the evaluation and reflection. (2 pts)	This area is not addressed in any fashion. (1 pt)
Evaluation	6		Thoughtful, thorough evaluation of the case, with evidence of good self-reflection and good questions that open up group discussion. (6 pts)	Good evaluation of the case, with evidence of self-reflection and some insightful questions for group discussion. (4-5 pts)	Cursory evaluation of the case, with little evidence of self-reflection and generalized questions. (2-3 pts)	This area is not addressed in any fashion. (1 pt)
Theological Reflection	6		Clear and creative reflection that pulls together biblical and/or theological themes in ways that emerge organically from the case. (6 pts)	Good reflection that pulls out themes that make some sense in the context of the case. (4-5 pts)	Reflection does not address biblical or theological themes, themes are disconnected from the case. (2-3 pts)	This area is not addressed in any fashion. (1 pt)
Writing style & mechanics	4		Good use of written English. Clear communication. (4 pts)	A few spelling or grammatical errors. Some parts unclear or disorganized. (3 pts)	Writing acceptable, but often unclear, disorganized. (2 pts)	Abundant grammatical and spelling errors. Writing indecipherable. (1 pt)
TOTAL	30 pts.		Comments:			

EXPLORING CULTURE RUBRIC

Components	Total Points Possible	Points Earned	Strength	Competence	Weakness	Missing
Part 1	4		2-3 people interviewed. Stories brought to class (3-4 pts)	1 person interviewed. Stories brought to class (2 pts)	1 person interviewed. No stories obtained. (1 pt)	This area is not addressed in any fashion. (0 pts)
Part 2	4		2-3 people interviewed. Responses brought to class. (3-4 pts)	1 person interviewed. Responses brought to class. (2 pts)	1 person interviewed. No responses obtained. (1 pt)	This area is not addressed in any fashion. (0 pts)
Part 3	16		Meaningful analysis with themes that make connections between the various interviews, and demonstrate interpretive depth, with theological nuance. (12-16 pts)	Clear analysis with themes that make some connections. Basic interpretive and theological depth. (8-11 pts)	Superficial analysis with themes that do not seem to draw from the interviews. Little interpretive or theological depth. (4-7 pts)	This area is not addressed in any fashion. (1-3 pts)
Writing style & mechanics (only for Part 3)	6		Good use of written English. Clear communication. (5-6 pts)	A few spelling or grammatical errors. Some parts unclear or disorganized. (3-4 pts)	Writing is acceptable, but often unclear and disorganized. (2 pts)	Abundant grammatical and spelling errors. Writing indecipherable. (1 pt)
TOTAL	30 pts.		Comments:			

EXPLORING CONTEXT RUBRIC

Components	Total Points Possible	Points Earned	Strength	Competence	Weakness	Missing
Part 1	12		Clear and vibrant exploration of the context, with vivid descriptions and keen observations. (9-12 pts)	Helpful exploration of the context, with workable descriptions and observations. (6-8 pts)	Superficial exploration of the context, with little detail. (3-5 pts)	This area is not addressed in any fashion. (1-2 pts)
Part 2	8		Detailed demographic report that demonstrates good research effort. (7-8 pts)	Workable demographic report that demonstrates some research. (5-6 pts)	Superficial demographic report that seems confused and unorganized. (2-4 pts)	This area is not addressed in any fashion. (1 pt)
Part 3	6		Meaningful analysis with themes that make connections between the windshield and space tour, the demographic data, and the “Exploring Culture” Project. Demonstrates interpretive and theological depth. (5-6 pts)	Clear analysis with themes that make some connections. Basic interpretive and theological depth. (3-4 pts)	Superficial analysis with themes that do not seem to draw from the data or observations. Little interpretive or theological depth. (2 pts)	This area is not addressed in any fashion. (1 pt)
Writing style & mechanics	4		Good use of written English. Clear communication. (4 pts)	A few spelling or grammatical errors. Some parts unclear or disorganized. (3 pts)	Writing is acceptable, but often unclear and disorganized. (2 pts)	Abundant grammatical and spelling errors. Writing indecipherable. (1 pt)
TOTAL	30 pts.		Comments:			