

SYLLABUS

**Requirements for the Course of Study School of Ohio
Spring Heights Extension**

Meeting at Spring Heights Educational Center, Spencer, WV

Spring Term 2018 (March 16-18 and April 20-22, 2018)

COS 524

Theology and the Practice of Ministry

Instructor

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Purchase the first three (required texts) and as many recommended books as you want.

- 1) William Willimon – *Pastor: The Theology and Practice of Ordained Ministry*
- 2) Charles M. Wood & Ellen Blue – *Attentive to God: Thinking Theologically in Ministry*
- 3) Kathleen A. Cahalan – *Introducing the Practice of Ministry*
- 4) Frederick Buechner – *The Sacred Journey: A Memoir of Early Days*

The first book looks at the practical theology related to the traditional roles of the minister. Wood and Blue explore the ways in which the pastor's theological perspectives become informed by the various tasks involved in doing ministry. Cahalan considers the impact of Trinitarian theology on the task of making disciples. Buechner offers an autobiographical sketch of one who answered a call to ministry in response to effective ministry.

Keep in mind the task before us as outlined in the stated objectives for this course. "This course is the capstone to the student's basic course of study. Its focus is the integration of the biblical, theological, and practical aspects of ministry.

Students will be able to:

1. Articulate a Trinitarian theology for the practice of ministry.
 2. State clearly the nature and mission of the Church and its relation to pastoral ministry.
 3. Demonstrate the ability to reflect theologically.
 4. Develop a plan for lifelong theological reading, reflection, and growth."
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Prepare for the March class sessions

- 1) Read Willimon's book Pay attention to the variety of roles that constitute the work of the pastor.
- 2) Read at least the introductions and other preliminary information in the other three books.
- 3) **Write paper # 1 that will be due when you come to class on March 16th.**

Prepare for the April class sessions

- 1) Read the unread portions of Wood and Blue, Cahalan, and Buechner. Be prepared to discuss these materials in class in the light of your understanding of Willimon's view of pastoral ministry.
- 2) **Write paper # 2 that will be due when you come to class on April 20th.**

Some Suggested Topics for Papers

Paper # 1 due on March 16:

Select at least three distinct tasks of a pastor as indicated by Willimon and write about the manner in which you carry out those three tasks in your own ministry. Express your agreement or disagreement with Willimon's approach. Explain how the three tasks relate to each other and/or other tasks of ministry.

Paper # 2 due on April 20:

Describe in detail your plan for growth as a theologian, leading congregations in faithful response to Trinitarian Doctrine, and enabling the church to fulfill its mission and purpose. Use all four books and consult as many other resources as you wish.

Your papers should not attempt to summarize an entire book. Keep in mind that this course is about theology in practice, doing theology, the everyday stuff of being a pastor of a local church. Your papers need to be no more complicated than that. Nothing here needs to be your "final answer" on anything. You are trying to lead the church in faithful response to God's purposes.

WHAT'S IN A PAPER? (This is not an outline but an indication of the kind of substance your paper should present.)

1. Length. Let the length of your paper be determined by the available information. If your resource materials are only 15 pages long your paper needs to be shorter. The content determines the quality of your paper. Four to seven pages will probably do the job, but no penalty comes to a longer paper.
2. Use a typewriter or word processor.
3. Define the problem, question, or issue that you wish to discuss.
4. Identify what other resources or people have said or written about the problem, question, or issue.
5. Explain how the problem, question, or issue was resolved.
6. Give some examples of how this particular doctrine, practical task, or ministry might be received in the congregation you may serve.
7. Include something of your own position on the matter.
8. Provide any references to scripture that support your position.
9. Reflect on how you might lead a congregation in a faithful response to the problem, question, or issue.
10. Follow all the conventions of good writing by giving credit where credit is due. Use Modern Language Assoc. (MLA) format throughout your paper. Use as many books as you wish. **Include a bibliography at the end.**
11. **Place your paper in a self addressed, stamped mailing envelope.** Bring it to class with you. I will read and score the paper and return it to you in the mail. To contact me:

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