

MCMASTER DIVINITY COLLEGE  
WINTER SEMESTER 2011

**MS 3M03/6M06**

**THEOLOGICAL CONTOURS OF CHRISTIAN MINISTRY**

Tuesday, 3:30–5:20 p.m.

Location: TBA

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**Course Description**

This course offers a specifically Christological account of the church's ministry, explaining it less as an *imitation* of Christ than as a *participation* in Christ's ongoing ministry in and on behalf of the world. Accordingly, lectures, classroom exercises, and assignments will explore such foundational theological concerns as the nature of pastoral identity, the purpose of the church, and the goals of Christian ministry. While the course focuses on ministerial theology and praxis in a congregational setting, consideration will also be given to forms of ministry in other contexts.

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**Course Objectives**

*Cognitive:*

[KNOWING]

- ▶ To review foundational theological concepts and categories for understanding pastoral ministry, focussing especially on the identity and purpose of the church.
- ▶ To explore the Christological contours of discipleship in relation to congregational leadership and ministry, with particular attention to the dynamics of cruciformity.

*Affective:*

[BEING]

- ▶ For students to review key features of spiritual autobiography with a view to clarifying the nature of their own spirituality, discipleship, and ministerial vocation.
- ▶ For students to develop a fuller sense of their individual pastoral identities.
- ▶ To be formed together as a learning community.

*Practical:*

[DOING]

- ▶ To gain practice in theological discernment in relation to the pastoral offices of the church.
- ▶ To establish personal goals for the exercise of pastoral ministry.

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## Lecture Outline

January 4	Pastoral Ministry and the Purpose of the Church (I):	
January 11	Pastoral Ministry and the Purpose of the Church (II)	
January 18	Life “In Christ”: The Role of the Pastor (I)	Book Review due
January 25	The Role of the Pastor (II)	
February 1	Knowing God: Spiritual Temperament and Christian Ministry Background Reading: Foster, <i>Streams of Living Water</i> Thomas, <i>Sacred Pathways</i> Complete the survey at <a href="http://common.northpoint.org/sacredpathway.html">http://common.northpoint.org/sacredpathway.html</a>	
February 8	Ministry as Crucifixion and Resurrection (I): “If we have died with Christ, we shall live with Him” Autobiography, Spirituality, and Ministry assignment due	
February 15	Ministry as Crucifixion and Resurrection (II): “Apart from Me you can do nothing”	
February 22	<i>Reading Week: class cancelled</i>	
March 1	Ministry as Crucifixion and Resurrection (III): Cruciformity	Student Presentations
March 8	Ministry as Crucifixion and Resurrection (IV): “Our sufficiency is from Christ”	Student Presentations
March 15	The Crucifixion of Ministry Background Reading: Purves, <i>The Crucifixion of Ministry</i> Essays from March 1 due	Student Presentations
March 22	The Resurrection of Ministry Background Reading: Purves, <i>The Resurrection of Ministry</i> Essays from March 8 due	Student Presentations
March 29	Ministerial Practice as Theological Diagnosis Background Reading: Pruyser, <i>The Minister as Diagnostician</i> Essays from March 15 due	Student Presentations

April 5	Hope and Glory: The Ultimate Horizon of Pastoral Ministry	Student Presentations Essays from March 22 due MS 6M06 Theological Integration Study due
April 9	Last day of classes Final date for submission of late assignments	Essays from March 29 due

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### Course Requirements:

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#### A. Textbooks (on reserve)

Purves, Andrew. *The Crucifixion of Ministry: Surrendering Our Ambitions to the Service of Christ*. Downers Grove: IVP, 2007.

Purves, Andrew. *Pastoral Theology in the Classical Tradition*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2001.

Course texts are available for purchase through:

READ On Bookstore  
304 The East Mall Suite 100  
Etobicoke ON M9B 6E2

books@readon.ca  
www.readon.ca  
Tel: (416) 622-2934

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#### B. Additional Resources

Foster, Richard. *Streams of Living Water: The Great Traditions of the Christian Faith*. New York: Harper San Francisco, 1998.

Oden, Thomas C. *Pastoral Theology: Essentials of Ministry*. New York: HarperOne, 1983.

Paul W. Pruyser, *The Minister as Diagnostician: Personal Problems in Pastoral Perspective*. Philadelphia: Westminster, 1976.

Purves, Andrew. *Reconstructing Pastoral Theology: A Christological Foundation*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2004.

Purves, Andrew. *The Resurrection of Ministry: Serving in the Hope of the Risen Lord*. Downers Grove: IVP, 2010.

Thomas, Gary L. *Sacred Pathways: Discover Your Soul's Path To God*. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1996; rpr. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2002.

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C. Assignments % of Final Grade

1. Comprehensive preparation for and participation in all class sessions.

2. Background Reading

For professional degree students enrolled in MS 3M03, weekly reading assignments are optional; for advanced degree students enrolled in MS 6M06, reading assignments are a course requirement.

3. Book Review Due: January 18

a. Professional Degree Students (MS 3M03) 15%

Describe and evaluate Andrew Purves, *Pastoral Theology in the Classical Tradition* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2001). What, according to Purves and the sources that he cites, is the nature, content, and purpose of pastoral ministry? How do his arguments apply (or not) to your own discipleship and formation for ministry? For general directions, see “Basic Guidelines for Composing a Book Review” (below).

Length: 1,500 words

b. Advanced Degree Students (MS 6M06) 30%

Review and compare the perspectives and contributions to a theology of pastoral ministry offered by Purves, *Pastoral Theology in the Classical Tradition*, and *Reconstructing Pastoral Theology: A Christological Foundation*.

Length: 3,500 – 4,000 words

4. Autobiography, Spirituality, and Ministry Due Date: February 8

a. Professional Degree Students (MS 3M03) 25%

This assignment consists of three parts:

i. Spiritual Autobiography

Describe your spiritual journey to date, identifying the various influences and factors that have guided or shaped your life.

ii. Spiritual Temperament

Using the typologies developed by Richard Foster (*Streams of Living Water*) and/or Gary Thomas (*Sacred Pathways*), describe your spiritual temperament, identifying specific resources and forms of spirituality that guide your discipleship and ministry.

iii. Goals for Discipleship and Ministry

On the basis of the foregoing reflection, formulate (and explain) your goals for discipleship and ministry.

Length: 2,000 – 2,500 words

b. Advanced Degree Students (MS 6M06)

20%

In addition to the elements described above, offer a theological and practical assessment of the Foster/Thomas typologies as they apply to congregational leadership and ministry.

Length: 2,500 – 3,000 words

5. Culminating Exercise

a. Professional Degree Students (MS 3M03): Case Studies in Pastoral Theology

In conversation with the relevant chapter from Oden, *Pastoral Theology*, and other theological resources (both ancient and modern), present a case study in the application of pastoral theology to a specific ministry situation. Describe the situation; identify the role of the pastor, of God, and/or of the congregation; discuss relevant theological and practical goals; and specify an appropriate course of ministerial action. Possible categories for consideration include:

- i. Ordination (26–33)
- ii. Spiritual Gifts (66–81)
- iii. Prayer and Worship (85–103)
- iv. Baptism and Lord’s Supper (105–25)
- v. Preaching (127–39)
- vi. Teaching (141–52)
- vii. Pastoral Visitation (169–85)
- viii. Spiritual Direction (“Care of Souls,” 186–203)
- ix. Ministry to the Sick (249–65)
- x. Care of the Poor (267–91)
- xi. Care of the Dying (293–310)

For ministry situations not addressed by Oden (e.g. evangelism and mission), students must first consult with the instructor in order to identify suitable resource materials. This exercise is to be presented in two formats, both of which will be graded on the basis of theological insight and creativity of presentation (in addition to the general criteria outlined below):

- i. Class presentation of 20 minutes' duration (sign up sheet will be available on the first day of class; presentation dates will be spread throughout the second half of the semester). 30%
  - ii. Final essay 30%
- Length: 2,000 – 3,000 words      Due date: two weeks after class presentation
- b. Advanced Degree Students (MS 6M06): Theological Integration Study 50%

Evaluate the contribution of Purves to pastoral theology (supplemented, as appropriate, by Gorman and others) by comparison and contrast to the work of *either*

- i. one major theologian in the classical tradition (Augustine, Athanasius, Calvin, Gregory the Great, Luther, etc.), *or*
  - ii. one major pastoral theologian from the modern era (Donald Capps, Elaine Graham, Seward Hiltner, Henri Nouwen, Thomas Oden, Letty Russell, etc.).
- Indicate theological distinctives and/or continuities, as well as implications for pastoral practice in the context of contemporary church and society.

Length: 5,000 – 7,500 words      Due date: April 5

*Grading Summary*

Professional Degree Students (MS 3M03)

- 1. Book Review (1,500 words) 15%
- 2. Autobiography, Spirituality, and Ministry (2,000 – 2,500 words) 25%
- 3. Culminating Exercise: Case Studies in Pastoral Theology
  - a. Class presentation (20 minutes) 30%
  - b. Final essay (2,000 – 3,000 words) 30%

Advanced Degree Students (MS 6M06)

- 1. Book Review (3,500 – 4,000 words) 30%
- 2. Autobiography, Spirituality, and Ministry (2,500 – 3,000 words) 20%
- 3. Final Essay: Theological Integration Study (5,000 – 7,500 words) 50%

B. Style

All stylistic considerations (including but not limited to questions of formatting, footnotes, and bibliographic references) must conform to the *McMaster Divinity College Style Guidelines for Essays and Theses* (<http://www.macdiv.ca/students/documents/MacStyleGuide.pdf>). Failure to observe appropriate form will result in grade reductions. See also “CRITERIA FOR GRADING OF

WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS,” below. Electronic submission of assignments (whether via email, fax, or posting to the web) is not permitted.

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### C. Academic Dishonesty

Academic dishonesty is a serious offence that may take any number of forms, including plagiarism, the submission of work that is not one’s own or for which previous credit has been obtained, and/or unauthorized collaboration with other students. Academic dishonesty can result in severe consequences, e.g., failure of the assignment, failure of the course, a notation on one’s academic transcript, and/or suspension or expulsion from the College. Students are responsible for understanding what constitutes academic dishonesty. Please refer to the Divinity College Statement on Academic Honesty: [www.macdiv.ca/regs/honesty.php](http://www.macdiv.ca/regs/honesty.php)

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### D. Inclusive Language

McMaster Divinity College is committed to employing inclusive language for human beings in worship services, written materials, and all publications. With regard to biblical texts, the integrity of original expressions (including references to God) should be respected; the NRSV and TNIV provide appropriate examples of the use of inclusive language for human subjects. With the exception of direct quotations from historical documents, inclusive language is to be used in chapel services and in all assignments submitted for academic credit.

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### E. Deadlines and Late Submission Penalty

Assignments are due in class at 3:30 p.m. on the afternoon of the due date, after which they will be considered late and penalized accordingly. The penalty for late submission of assignments is 1% per calendar day (without limit).

***The final date for submission of all course assignments is the last day of classes, April 9  
Assignments received after this date will not be accepted for grading or credit.***

### Disclaimer:

This syllabus is the property of the instructor and is prepared with currently available information. The instructor reserves the right to make changes and revisions up to and including the first day of class.

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APTITUDES, ATTITUDES, AND SKILLS FOR PASTORAL MINISTRY

(Based in part on the McMaster Divinity College *Field Education Manual*  
“Areas of Skill Development and Expectations for Professional Experience”)

**A. General**

1. *Vocation*

Your sense of calling to vocational ministry is rooted in

- mature Christian discipleship
- appropriate personal aptitudes and abilities
- specific affirmation by mature Christians who know you well
- personal conviction of God’s direction

2. *Disposition*

- emotional stability and maturity
- intellectual aptitude
- physical health

3. *Denominational Identity*

- familiarity with denominational culture, expectations, and organizational standards
- affirmation for ministry/ordination by denominational authority

4. *Leadership*

- Ability to take responsibility for the completion of tasks and commitments, and to be answerable to an accountability group.
- Ability to formulate, adapt, implement, and evaluate a plan of action.
- Ability to mentor another person in developing their own ministry skills.

**B. Specific**

1. *Administration*

- Have the experience of being responsible for the organizational details/operation of a team, committee or group.
- Have the opportunity to observe and participate in the ongoing management of a church or ministry organization, including observing some of the deacons, elders, or organizational board/committee meetings.

2. *Contextualization Skills*

- Have the experience of learning to read a culture and do ministry in a way that respects and is sensitive to that culture.

### 3. *Pastoral Care Skills*

- Have the experience of visiting people in an institutional setting (hospital, nursing home, prison) on several occasions.
- Have the experience of engaging individuals in pastoral counselling settings on several occasions.
- Have the experience of observing the preparation and implementation of a wedding ceremony (including exposure to pre-marital counselling materials and techniques).
- Have the experience of observing the preparation and implementation of a funeral service (including exposure to working with the bereaved and funeral home services).

### 4. *Preaching Skills*

- Have the experience of delivering at least two sermons in a church or institutional setting with the benefit of feedback from a supervisor or trusted mentor.

### 5. *Teaching Skills*

- Have the experience of being the teacher of an ongoing class or small group with the benefit of feedback from a supervisor or trusted mentor.

### 6. *Worship Leading Skills*

- Have the experience of participating on several occasions in the planning of corporate worship services.
- Have the experience on several occasions of participating in leading corporate worship through several of the following: congregational singing, prayer, scripture reading, liturgical reading, announcements, benediction.
- Have the experience of leading, or assisting in the administration of the Lord's Supper.

### 7. *Evangelistic Skills*

- Participate in a program or activity that is explicitly designed to help expose people outside of the Christian faith to the gospel.
- Have the experience of observing the preparation and implementation of a baptism

### 8. *Relational Skills*

- Have the experience of being connected to a church or group of people for an extended period where the development and maintenance of relationships is necessary.

CRITERIA FOR GRADING OF WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS

Grading of written materials will be based on the following general criteria

Grade Range	Content	Argument	Presentation
90–100A+ 85–89 A 80–84 A–	Mastery of subject matter; creativity and individualized integration of insights and their relationships; exceeds required elements	Clear, logical structure; with comprehensive introduction, persuasive argumentation, and innovative conclusions	Detailed adherence to relevant style for formatting of text, notes, and bibliography; no errors of grammar or syntax; elegant presentation
77–79 B+ 73–76 B 70–72 B–	Above-average grasp of principles and concepts, and their inter-relationship; completion of all required elements	Coherent structure and consistent argumentation; well-stated introduction and conclusion	General adherence to relevant style and format; few errors of grammar or syntax
67–69 C+ 63–66 C 60–62 C–	Adequate understanding of theoretical foundations; minimal completion of required elements	Rudimentary structure; minimal introductory and concluding statements	Significant errors of grammar, syntax, or style
57–59 D+ 53–56 D 50–52 D–	Low level of comprehension; required elements incomplete or missing	Lack of coherence or structure in argumentation; no introduction or conclusion	Abundant grammatical, syntactical, and stylistic errors
0–49% F	Inability to grasp basic concepts; required elements missing	Incomprehensible or illogical structure and argumentation	Failure to follow stylistic guidelines; incomprehensible syntax

## Basic Guidelines for Composing a Book Review

### 1. Publication Data

- a. Provide essential bibliographical data, in the proper format.

### 2. Description

- a. Who is the author, and what is his/her expertise or qualification for writing?
- b. What main points does the author make? Is there a key passage or statement?
- c. How does each part relate to what precedes and follows?
- d. For what audience is this argument/discussion intended?

### 3. Evaluation

- a. Is the author's thesis cogent and convincing?
- b. Are there unstated assumptions or gaps in logic? Does the author offer novel insights and perspectives? An innovative synthesis of current knowledge?
- c. Who are the author's main discussion partners? Who does the author cite for support, or argue against, and why?

### 4. Application

- a. How do the author's insights apply to your own field of endeavour or research?
- b. What are the implications of this study for the life and ministry of the church?
- c. To whom would you recommend this book (or not)?

SUMMARIZE

ASSESS

ENGAGE

"what?"

"so what?"

"now what?"

