#### MINISTRY IN THE BLACK CHURCH (MN 7320 & DM 9302)

Perkins School of Theology, Southern Methodist University

June 2, 5pm - 9pm; June 3, 9am - 6pm June 9, 5pm - 8pm; June 10, 9am - 6pm June 16, 5pm - 8pm; June 17, 9am - 6pm.

Dr. Thomas W. Spann, Instructor

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302 Kirby

### I. Course Description

Explores the ministry of the black church. Examines the underlying theological rationale and its practical implications for ministry in the black church from the perspective of cultural pluralism in the black experience. Includes an experience in the context of the black church.

# II. Course Objectives

- 1. To become familiar with the African worldview that shaped the development of ministries in black churches
- 2. To become knowledgeable of denominational expressions of ministry in black communities
- 3. To explore Black women's perspectives on the church and community
- 4. To study particular church-based community action models
- 5. To explore responses of black churches to some contemporary issues, e.g., health of African Americans.
- 6. To study particular functions of ministry in the Black Church, e.g., worship
- 7. To address contemporary challenges facing black churches.

#### III. Textbook

Required:

Stacey Floyd-Thomas, et al, *Black Church Studies: An Introduction*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2007.

# IV. Requirements, Assignments and Evaluation (Master of Divinity/M.A.M.)

# 1. Class Participation (10%)

Students are expected to attend all classes and participate in all in-class activities.

### 2. Journal (25%)

Each student is expected to keep a journal. There must be at least 10 topical entries. Content of the journal should include your reflections on lectures, class discussions, and readings (see Outline and Bibliography). Reflections on lectures, discussions and readings should include your analysis of the issues, personal points of view, questions that were raised for you, and your sense of ministry application. Each journal entry should be at least 2-3 pages (double-spaced).

Due date: June 17

# 3. Contextual Experience (40%)--Either A or B

#### A. Site Visit

Each student is expected to participate in a contextual education experience. Some options include: attending a Sunday worship service, attending a Mid-week service, visiting a study group, participating in an outreach ministry, attending a staff meeting (by permission), attending an administrative board meeting (by permission). This experience may be followed up with personal interviews; however, the required experience is to be in the context of a church group.

Following your contextual education experience, write a reflection paper (3-5 pages) on the following questions:

- 1. What assumptions did you have about the ministry experience?
- 2. What were your feelings as you entered into this experience?
- 3. What did you observe in terms of the following: theological assumptions of the group, role/participation of women, openness to the community, physical space, presence of symbols (theological and cultural), rituals and how they were carried out, communication process, perception of interpersonal relationships, decision-making process, perception of the group's status, awareness of your own cultural/racial/ethnic identity, strengths and weaknesses of the experience?
- 4. What did you learn about yourself, about the church, about the church's role in the community?

#### Due date: June 16

# B. Ministry Vignette

Write a case study or vignette based on a real ministry situation (use fictional names, titles, or symbols).

Write a reflection paper based on the following guidelines.

- a. How did this ministry situation cause you to react emotionally, spiritually, and intellectually?
- b. How would you name the social, economic, political, and cultural issues in the vignette or case?
- c. What are the institutional and systemic power dynamics that could be named?
- d. What assumptions did you bring to this vignette/case?
- e. How would you talk about God's presence or God's deepest desire for human life in this case?
- f. What scriptural images, texts or personalities would you appeal to guide your reflections on the vignette/case?
- g. How would you propose to address the problem, issue, concern, or question in this vignette/case?

Your Ministry Vignette may be presented in class. A copy of the vignette and reflection paper is due to the professor at least two days prior to a class presentation.

Due date: June 17

# 4. Textbook or Website Report (25%)--Either A or B

- **A.** Select a chapter from the textbook and write a report (3-5 pages) addressing the following questions:
- 1) What is the claim of this chapter?
- 2) What are the supporting ideas to the major claim?
- 3) What questions are the authors seeking to answer?
- 4) What new insights or lessons did you learn?
- 5) What are the implications of the authors' insights for the practice of ministry?
- 6) How would you summarize this chapter for a presentation to a study group in your church?

- **B**. Select one of the active websites in the syllabus and write a report (analytical and reflective)
- 1) Evaluate the design and ease of use of the site
- 2) Evaluate the content of the site, e.g. use of language and images
- 3) How are women featured?
- 4) What did you learn about the Black Church from this site?
- 5) What questions did the content of the site pose for you?
- 6) What's missing? What would you add?
- 7) Would you recommend this site to others, and why?

Due date: June 10

# **Doctor of Ministry Students**

Assignments

- 1. Select two books from the bibliography; write a 3-5 page review of each book.
  - A. What is the main thesis of the book?
  - B. Analyze the various arguments or positions put forward and how they are supported?
  - C. Provide a substantive critique of the book.
  - D. How would you use this book in your church's educational ministry?
    - 1) List strengths and weaknesses
    - 2) Outline an approach for teaching the book.
      - a. Questions
      - b. Sample statements for discussion
      - c. List of supporting resources or materials, e.g., videos, maps, statistics, case studies, etc.

Due date of first paper: June 9; second paper due: June 17.

- 2. Reflect theologically on your ministry. 7-10 pages.
  - A. What is your vision of pastoral ministry?
    - 1. Key themes?
    - 2. Supporting scriptures?
    - 3. Ministry outcomes?
    - 4. Intersection with other community resources?
    - 5. Include institutional self-critiques.

- B. What is your theology of ministry?
  - 1. Central biblical texts?
  - 2. Core loci or frameworks?
  - 3. Intersection of the gospel and current world events?
  - 4. Approach to systemic power analysis?
  - 5. Purpose of Christian ministry in the world?
- C. Select one issue that is impacting African American communities
  - 1. What is the nature of the issue?
  - 2. Describe its impact on community life.
  - 3. How do you propose to provide leadership to address it in your context?
  - 4. What are realistic goals and outcomes?
  - 5. What resources within and beyond your church could you employ?

Due date: June 16

# 3. Ministry Vignette

- A. Discuss ministry scenarios provided by Dr. Spann or one out of your ministry
- B. Write a critical review (3-5 pages) on one of the films listed below. Another film may be selected with prior approval of the instructor.

Keep the Faith, Baby (Adam Clayton Powell, Jr.)

The Road to Freedom: The Vernon Johns Story

The Role of the Black Church (PBS) Parts 1 & 2)

A Conversation with Howard Thurman

Say Amen Somebody!

The Preacher's Wife

Before They Die (The 1921 Tulsa Riot)

Kingdom Come

Selma

This Far By Faith (PBS)

Eves on the Prize (American Experience)

God in America: The Black Church (PBS)

Due date: June 10

#### V. Course Outline

First Week: Historical Overview

Reading: Floyd-Thomas, Black Church Studies, chapters 1-3.

Africa's Contributions to World Civilizations

Nile Valley Civilizations. Ivan Van Sertima

The World and Africa. W. E. B. DuBois

Aspects of African Religions and Spirituality

African Religions and Philosophy. John Mbiti

The Spirituality of African Peoples. Peter Paris

Slavery

Slave Religion. Albert Raboteau

Frazier Versus Herskovits

The Negro Church. E. Franklin Frazier

The Myth of the Negro Past. Melville Herskovits

The Black Preacher in Slavery *Images of the Black Preacher*. H. Beecher Hicks

The Black Preacher in America. Charles V. Hamilton

The "Invisible" Black Church/Spirituals

The Negro Spirituals Speak of Life and Death. Howard Thurman

The Book of Negro Spirituals. James Weldon Johnson

Definitions of the Black Church

Richard Allen and the African Methodist Episcopal Church

The Life Experience and Gospel Labors of the Rt. Reverend Richard Allen

Segregated Sabbath. Carol George

Jarena Lee

Contributions and Images of the Black Church

The Pursuit of Education

The History of the C.M.E. Church. Othal Lakey

The Bible

Biblical Faith and the Black American. Latta Thomas Stony the Road We Trod. Cain Hope Felder

**Politics** 

From Slavery to Freedom. John Hope Franklin

## **Economic Development**

The Black Church in the African American Experience. Chapter 9

#### Mainline Black Denominations

See: Lincoln and Mamiya. Chapters 2-4

The Institutional Church/Megachurches/ Prosperity Gospel

**Second Week**: Leadership, Women, and Ministry Models Reading: Floyd-Thomas, *Black Church Stuides*, chapters 4-5

To Redeem the Soul of America

The African American Church and Women

If It Wasn't for the Women. Cheryl Townsend Gilkes

Not Without a Struggle. Vashti McKenzie

Embracing the Spirit. Emilie Townes

Why African American Christian women are faithful to the church *Righteous Content*. Daphne Wiggins

"Why Some Black Men Don't Go to Church"

Adam! Where Are You? Jawanzaa Kunjufu

Characteristics of Activist Churches and their Senior Ministers Mighty Like a River. Andrew Billingsley

"If You Want to Be a Leader"

The Stones that the Builders Rejected. Walter Fluker Black Ministers and Laity in the Urban Church. James Harris

Forms of Political Ministry

Ministry of Public Theologians

Another Day's Journey. Robert Franklin See: Lincoln and Mamiya. Chapter 8

#### Black Church Models

Restoring Broken Places and Rebuilding Communities. R. Clemetson and Coates Mighty Like a River. Andrew Billingsley. Chapter 12 Black Churches and Local Politics. R. Drew Smith and Frederick C. Harris

#### Rural Church Life

See: Lincoln and Mamiya. Chapter 5

Health Issues in the Black Community

Black Church and HIV/Aids Sexuality and Homophobia Mental Health Domestic Violence Environmental Racism

Sexuality and the Black Church. Kelly Brown Douglas Sisters of Dust, Sisters of Spirit. Karen Baker-Fletcher The Black Church in the Post-Civil Rights Era. Anthony Pinn. Chapter 5 Race Rules. Michael Dyson. Chapter 3

**Third Week:** Contemporary Ministry: Strengths, Weaknesses, and Challenges Reading: Floyd-Thomas, *Black Church Studies*, chapters 6-8.

# Afrocentrism in Ministry

Resurrection Song. Flora Bridges
Living the Intersection. Cheryl Sanders
The Prophethood of Black Believers. J. Deotis Roberts
The Recovery of Black Presence. Randall Bailey & Jacquelyn Grant

Understanding Black Church Culture

# Worship

African American Worship. Melva Costen Strengthening the Black Church through Worship. Tyrone D. Gordon

#### Prayer

Conversations with God. James Melvin Washington Prayer in the Black Traditon. Harold Carter

Special Occasions in the Black Church

Funerals

Protocol in Black Churches

#### Church Administration

Wisdom of the Ages. Robert Johnson-Smith We Have This Ministry. Samuel Proctor and Gardner Taylor. Chapter 4

## Mentoring

Perceived Strengths and Weaknesses of Black Churches

My Soul Looks Back. James Cone Black Ecumenism. Mary Sawyer

Practical Advice to Seminarians

Challenges to the Black Church See: Lincoln and Mamiya. Chapter 13

#### VI. MINORITY CONCERNS AND THE PERKINS CURRICULUM

In 1975 the Perkins Senate passed resolutions which bear on the relation of the Perkins curriculum to this school's common concern for the status of ethnic minority groups and of women both in education for ministry and in the ministry itself. The following statement summarizes these resolutions with respect to all courses except those in the area of Ministry.

- 1) Instructors and students alike are urged to use inclusive language, images and metaphors that give full and positive value to both the past contributions and the future prospects of ethnic minorities and women in the church and in the society at large.
- 2) Instructors and students alike are urged to give sensitive consideration to the role of images from a predominantly white and male culture in shaping both the language and concepts of Christian theology and the models and methods of Christian ministry that are widely current today.
- 3) Instructors are urged to make every effort to provide—in the syllabi, assignments and formats of their courses—opportunities (a) for women students and students from ethnic minority groups to pursue their study with special reference to their own status or tradition and (b) for all students to become acquainted with the special problems and conditions that affect women and ethnic minority groups in human society.

#### VII. SMU DISABILITY ACCOMMODATIONS

Southern Methodist University provides reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities. If you need academic accommodations for a disability, you must first contact Ms. Rebecca Martin, Coordinator, Services for Students with Disabilities (214.768.4563) to verify the disability and to establish eligibility for accommodations. Then you should schedule an appointment with the professor to make appropriate arrangements for the course work in the class.

## VIII. Selected Bibliography

- Ali, Carroll A. Watkins. Survival & Liberation: Pastoral Theology in African American Context. St. Louis, MO: Chalice Press, 1999.
- Ashby, Homer U. Our Home Is Over Jordan: A Black Pastoral Theology. St. Louis, MO: Chalice Press, 2003.
- Andrews, Dale P. *Practical Theology for Black Churches*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2002.
- Ayers, Danielle L. and Reginald Williams. *To Serve This Present Age: Social Justice Ministries in the Black Church*. Valley Forge, PA: Judson Press, 2013.
- Bacote, Vincent E. The Political Disciple: A Theology of Public Life.
- Baker-Fletcher. Sisters of Dust, Sisters of Spirit. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1998.
- Barber, William J. Forward Together: A Moral Message for the Nation. St. Louis, MO: Chalice Press, 2014.
- Billingsley, Andrew. Mighty Like a River. New York: Oxford University Press, 1999.
- Bond, Adam L. *The Imposing Preacher: Samuel DeWitt Proctor and Black Public Faith.* Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2013.
- Bridges, Flora Wilson. *Resurrection Song: African-American Spirituality*. Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 2001.
- Brown, Teresa L. Fry. *God Don't Like Ugly*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2000.
- Carpenter, Delores C. A Time For Honor: A Portrait of African American Clergywomen. St. Louis, MO: Chalice Press, 2001.
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- Costen, Melva Wilson. *African American Christian Worship*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1993.

- Dash, Michael and Christine Chapman. *The Shape of Zion: Leadership and Life in Black Churches*. Cleveland: The Pilgrim Press, 2003.
- Davis, Reginald. *The Black Church: Relevant or Irrelevant in the 21st Century?* Macon, GA.: Smyth & Helwys Publishing, Inc., 2010.
- Day, Keri. Unfinished Business: Black Women, the Black Church and the Struggle to Thrive in America. New York: Orbis Books, 2012.
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- Fluker, Walter E., editor. *The Stones that the Builders Rejected: The Development of Ethical Leadership from the Black Church Tradition*. Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 1998.
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- Hicks, H. Beecher. *Images of the Black Preacher*. Valley Forge, PA: Judson Press, 1977.
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- Mbiti, John. African Religions and Philosophy. Garden City, NY: Anchor Books, 1969.
- McKenzie, Vashti M. Not Without a Struggle: Leadership Development for African American Women in Ministry. Cleveland: United Church Press, 1996.

McMickle, Marvin A. *Preaching to the Black Middle Class*. Valley Forge: Judson Press, 2000.

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Wimberly, Anne and Evelyn Parker, editors. *In Search of Wisdom: Faith Formation in the Black Church*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2002.

#### Websites

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www.TheAfricanAmericanLectionary.org

www.nationalbaptist.com (National Baptist Convention, USA, Inc.)

www.nbca-inc.com (National Baptist Convention of America)

www.fullgospelbaptist.org

www.cogic.org (Church of God in Christ)

www.urbanministries.com

www.AME-Church.com

www.cogicwomensdepartment.com

www.bmcr.org( Black Methodist for Church Renewal)

http://www.pnbc.org (Progressive National Baptist Convention, Inc.)

http://www.amez.org (African Methodist Episcopal Zion)

http://thecmechurch.org/ (Christian Methodist Episcopal Church)

http://www.nmbca.com/ (National Missionary Baptist Convention of America)

www.the-nbea.org (National Black Evangelical Association)

http://www.itc.edu (Interdenominational Theological Center)

http:www.urbanfaith.com

http://kineticslive.com/about-us/

http://sdpconference.info/index (Samuel DeWitt Proctor Conference)

http://www.somethingwithin.com/blog/ (Dr. Renita Weems' Blog) cynthiahaleministries.org (Women in Ministry Conference/Cynthia Hale) www.carolynknight.com/can-do-ministries www.rayofhope.org (Ray of Hope Christian Church) http://sfrefuge.org/ (City of Refuge, United Church; Pastor Yvette Flunder) http://www.balmingilead.org/ (The Balm in Gilead, Inc.) http://www.blackgospelpromo.com (Eblast Marketing) http://claudetteacopeland.org (Claudette Copeland Ministries) http://www.newshilohbaptist.org (New Shiloh, Baltimore, MD) allianceforgreaterworks.org (formerly Faith and Philanthropy Institute) www.ocbfchurch.org (Oak Cliff Bible Fellowship) www.fwbc.org (Friendship-West Baptist Church, Dallas) http://sclcnational.org (Southern Christian Leadership Conference) http://natlblackchurch.com (National Black Church Initiative) http://metropolitaname.org (Metropolitan A.M.E. Church, Washington, DC) http:www.americapreachers.com womanpreach.org leftofblack.tumblr.com FaithintheCity.org

# 40 Essential Books For Any #BlackChurchSyllabus (And more.)

# Antonia Blumberg

Associate Religion Editor, The Huffington Post

Posted: 08/21/2015

The Rev. Dr. Alton B. Pollard, dean of Howard University's School of Divinity, is among the scholars sharing their reading lists with the conversation. For him, #BlackChurchSyllabus is important for many of the same reasons #BlackLivesMatter is important.

"The whole of body, mind and spirit are inextricably met in the freedom struggle of peoples of African descent, no less people of color, women, the LGBTQ community, persons on the margins," Pollard told HuffPost. "Teaching the #BlackChurchSyllabus is to affirm a people long denied to be people and in whose struggle is expressed the transgression of generations and the interrogation of a discordant social order."

Below is a sampling of suggested readings from Pollard, as well as Dr. Ralph C. Watkins, Dr. Anthony G. Reddie and Rev. Dr. Eboni Marshall Turman.

# Here are 40 essential #BlackChurchSyllabus books, according to the scholars:

- 1 James Cone, God of the Oppressed
- 2 Kelly Brown Douglas, The Black Christ
- 3 Kelly Brown Douglas, *The Black Church and Sexuality: A Womanist Perspective*
- 4 Cheryl Townsend Gilkes, If it Wasn't for the Woman...
- 5 James Hood, Must God Remain Greek?: Afro Cultures And God Talk
- 6 Will Coleman, Tribal Talk: Black Theology, Hermeneutics, and African/American Ways Of "Telling The Story"
- 7 Horace L. Griffin, Their Own Receive Them Not: African American Lesbian And Gays in Black Churches
- 8 Frederick L. Ware, Methodologies of Black Theology
- 9 James Cone, A Black Theology of Liberation
- 10 Jacquelyn Grant, White Women's Christ and Black Women's Jesus
- 11 Delores Williams, Sisters in the Wilderness
- 12 Katie Cannon, Katie's Cannon
- 13 Anthony G. Reddie, Working Against The Grain
- 14 Anthony G. Reddie, *SCM Core text: Black Theology*
- 15 Dwight N. Hopkins, *Down, Up and Over*
- Dwight N. Hopkins and Edward P. Antonio, *Cambridge Companion to Black Theology*
- 17 Monica A. Coleman, Making A Way Out of No Way
- 18 W. E. B. Du Bois, *The Negro Church*
- 19 Howard Thurman, Jesus and the Disinherited
- 20 Zora Neale Hurston, Their Eyes Were Watching God

- 21 Desmond Tutu, God Is Not A Christian
- 22 Cheryl Anderson, Ancient Laws & Contemporary Controversies
- 23 James Forbes, Whose Gospel?
- 24 Anthony Pinn and Dwight Hopkins, eds, *Loving the Body: Black Religious Studies and the Erotic*
- 25 Toni Morrison, Beloved
- 26 Alice Walker, *The Color Purple*
- 27 Derrick Bell, Ethical Ambition
- 28 Michelle Alexander, The New Jim Crow
- 29 Ta-Nehisi Coates, Between the World and Me
- 30 Alton B. Pollard III and Carol B. Duncan, eds, *The Black Church Studies Reader*
- 31 James Cone, Black Theology & Black Power
- 32 James Cone, The Cross & The Lynching Tree
- 33 Kelly Brown Douglas, Stand Your Ground: Black Bodies and the Justice of God
- 34 Marcia Y. Riggs, Plenty Good Room: Women Versus Male Power In The Church
- 35 Emilie M. Townes, A Troubling in My Soul: Womanist Perspectives on Evil and Suffering
- 36 Mitzi Smith, I Found God In Me: A Woman Biblical Hermeneutic Reader
- 37 Kelly Brown Douglas, What's Faith Got to Do With It: Black Bodies/Christian Souls
- 38 Gayraud S. Wilmore, *Black Religion and Black Radicalism: An Interpretation*
- 39 Ida B. Wells, Southern Horrors and Other Writings: The Anti-Lynching Campaign of Ida B. Wells, 1892-1900
- 40 Raphael Warnock, *The Divided Mind of the Black Church: Theology, Piety, and Public Witness*