

Title: “Preaching and Worship in Life’s Transitions: Weddings, Funerals, and Healing Rites” DM 9319 January 3-13 8:00-11:00 a.m.

Course Description: A historical, theological, and practical examination of Christian liturgical practice concerning life transitions, such as weddings, funerals, healing rites, and related occasional services.

Required Readings

General Background

William H. Willimon, *Worship as Pastoral Care* (Abingdon Press, 1982).

Kathy Black, *A Healing Homiletic: Preaching and Disability* (Abingdon Press, 1996).

Funerals

Thomas G. Long, *Accompany Them With Singing: The Christian Funeral* (Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster John Knox Press, 2009).

Weddings

Susan K. Hedahl, *Preaching the Wedding Sermon*, (Chalice Press, 1999).

Kenneth W. Stevenson, *To Join Together, the Rite of Marriage*, (New York: Pueblo Publishing Company, 1987)

Paul V. Marshall, *Same-Sex Unions: Stories and Rites* (New York: Church Publishing 2004).

Healing Rites

Paul Meyendorff, *The Anointing of the Sick* (Crestwood, New York: St. Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 2009).

Denominational Sources

The Book of Common Prayer (New York: Church Publishing, 1979).

Book of Common Worship (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1993).

The United Methodist Book of Worship (Nashville: The United Methodist Publishing House, 1992).

Other Denominational Resources

Helpful Resources

Handbooks

Paul Turner, *Preparing the Wedding Homily: A Guide to Preachers and Couples* (Resource Publishers, 2002)

In Times of Crisis and Sorrow: A Minister's Manual Resource Guide, edited by Carol Noren (Jossey-Bass, 2001).

Reflective Essays: Death and Bereavement Around the World, John Morgan, Pittu Laungani, and Stephen Palmer (Baywood Publisher, 2009)

Collections of Services, Rites and Acts of Worship

Blair Gilmer Meeks, *Standing in the Circle of Grief* (Abingdon, 2002).

Charles Hoffacker, *A Matter of Life and Death: Preaching at Funerals* (Cowley Publications, 2002).

James K. Wagner, *Healing Services* (Nashville, Abingdon Press, 2007).

Megory Anderson and Thomas Moore, *Sacred Dying: Rituals for Embracing the End of Life* (Da Capo Press, 2003).

Cheryl Rohret and Deri Keefer, *Wedding Sermons and Marriage Ceremonies*

Cynthia L. Danals, *Funeral Services* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2007).

Amelia O'Dea, *In a Place of Flame: Prayers for Survivors of Sexual Abuse* (Fordham University Press, 1997)

Tears of Sorrow, Seeds of Hope, Nina Beth Cardin, 2007 (loss of unborn child)

Kim Kluger Bell, *Unspeakable Losses* (Harper 2000) (loss of child)

Sermon Collections

Sermons Seldom Heard: Women Proclaim Their Lives, edited by Annie Lally Milhaven (Crossroad, 1990)

Roger Alling and David J. Schlafer, *Preaching as Pastoral Caring* (Morehouse Press, 2005).

James T. Clemons, editor, *Sermons on Suicide* (Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster John Knox Press, 1989)

Best Wedding Homilies: An Anthology (CSS Publishers, 1997)

Recommended Background Reading

William H. Willimon, *Pastor: The Theology and Practice of Ordained Ministry* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2002)

Bruce T. Morrill, *Divine Worship and Human Healing: Liturgical Theology at the Margins of Life and Death* (Collegetown, Minnesota: Liturgical Press, 2009)

Kathy Black, *Culturally Conscious Worship* (Chalice Press, 2001)

Kathy Black, *Worship Across Cultures* (Abingdon, 1998)

Neil Pembroke, *Pastoral Care and Worship: Liturgy and Psychology in Dialogue* (T and T Clark, 2010)

Charles W. Gusmer, *And You Visited Me: Sacramental Ministry to the Sick and the Dying* (Collegetown, Minnesota: The Liturgical Press, 1984).

Gray Temple, *Gay Unions in the Light of Scripture, Tradition and Reason* (New York: Church Publishing, 2004).

Mark Searle and Kenneth W. Stevenson, *Documents of the Marriage Liturgy* (Collegetown, Minnesota: The Liturgical Press, 1992)

Kenneth Stevenson, *Nuptial Blessing* (Oxford University Press, 1983).

David Schnasa Jacobsen and Robert Allen Kelly, *Kairos Preaching : Speaking Gospel to the Situation* (Fortress Press, 2009)

Pre Class Assignments

#1 Bring wedding/funeral sermon and service you've already performed in your setting.

*Bring hard copies of your most recent wedding sermon and funeral sermons/services to our first class. If possible, bring CD or DVD of the sermon/service.

#2 Reflection Paper on your Guiding Principles in Conversation with Willimon's *Worship as Pastoral Care*

Prepare a 4-5 page reflection paper that answers these questions with regard to both funerals and weddings:

- What principles guide the way I prepare funeral and wedding sermons and services?
- Where do these principles come from?
- What elements do I try to include?
- What pitfalls do I try to avoid?
- Having read Willimon's *Worship as Pastoral Care*, compare and contrast Willimon's principles and your own.

#3 A Healing Homiletic by Kathy Black

Black wants us to preaching Jesus' healing narratives in a way that ceases to use blindness, deafness, and lameness as metaphors for negative spiritual states. She wants us to preach in a way that distinguishes between healing and cure. Such preaching becomes itself a healing rite.

With these thoughts in mind, prepare a 15-20 minute sermon on one of the healing narratives appointed in Revised Common Lectionary Year B through the completion of Eastertide (Mark 1:21-28; Mark 1:29-39; 2 Kings 5:1-14; Mark 1:40-45; Acts 3:12-19; Acts 4:5-12; John 9:1-41) This sermon needs to represent fresh work, not something you have already done.

Be prepared to hand in the first class the sermon manuscript and a 5 page paper to accompany it. In that paper, describe the influence Black's book had on the approach you took in the sermon. Describe insights gained from 3 additional commentaries on the passage. Proof your materials for accuracy and number your pages. Include list of commentaries consulted as the final page.

If possible, bring DVD or CD of the sermon

January 3-13 8:00-11:00 a.m.

Tuesday (Jan 3)

Topic: Introduction of Course - Guiding Principles for Christian Preaching and Worship:

Flow: Lecture by Stamm 30 minutes total (focus on liturgical principles)

Lecture by McKenzie 30 minutes total (focus on homiletical principles)

Group discussion of Willimon- students begin to reflect on their own practices and self identity

For tomorrow: Read *Accompany Them With Singing*, chapters 1-6; Bring a two page talking sheet that addresses the following questions:

- What is the thesis of Long's book?
- As you see it, what are the most significant issues that Long raises in his account of the history of Jewish and Christian funeral rites? (Name and briefly describe two of them)
- Long asks, "Whatever happened to the Christian Funeral?" (chapter 4). How do you respond to his assessment of contemporary funeral practices?
- Having received Long's assessment, what changes in ritual practice will you make or encourage, and what strategies would you follow to implement such changes?

Wednesday (Jan 4)

Topic: Whatever Happened to the Christian Funeral?

Flow:

Lecture: Stamm “Marks of a Christian Funeral” 20-30 minutes

Discussion of Long chapters 1-6

Group discussion of student practices in light of Long’s ideas

Activity: viewing student funeral DVD’s and evaluating in light of *Accompany Them with Singing*.

For tomorrow: Read *Accompany Them With Singing*, chapters 7-9

Read *To Join Together, The Rite of Marriage*.

Thursday (Jan 5)

Topic: The “Good Funeral”; The “Good Wedding”

Flow:

Lecture by McKenzie “The ‘good’ funeral sermon” 20-30 minutes

Discussion of the marks of a “good” funeral according to Long

Continued viewing and evaluation of student sermons/services if any weren’t covered yesterday

Lecture by Stamm: “Historical Perspective on Christian Weddings” based on *Marriage Documents* by Searle and Stevenson

For tomorrow

Read Susan K. Hedahl, *Preaching the Wedding Sermon*, Chalice Press, 1999. Be prepared to discuss her advice and suggestions with regard to your own practices.

Read Paul V. Marshall, *Same-Sex Unions: Stories and Rites* (New York: Church Publishing 2004).

Write a 2 page talking sheet about Marshall’s book that addresses these concerns:

- *What I found enlightening*
- *What I found troubling*
- *What I agree with*
- *What I disagree with*

- *Where I go from here in my thinking*

Friday, Jan 6

Topic: The Good Wedding Sermon/Service

Flow:

- Lecture by McKenzie "The good wedding sermon/service"
- Evaluation of student sermons/services in light of Hedahl's suggestions
- Discussion of Marshall's book.

For Week Two:

Read *The Anointing of the Sick* by Paul Meyendorff. Bring a two page talking sheet that addresses the following questions:

- What is the thesis of Meyendorff's book?
- As you see it, what are the most significant issues that Meyendorff raises in his account of the history of healing rites? (Name and briefly describe two of them)
- Meyendorff redefines "normal," insisting that death and sickness are not normal (p. 65). What is his theological basis for this claim, and how do you respond to it?
- Having read Meyendorff's account of Orthodox healing rites, what changes in your church's ritual practice can you envision, and what strategies might you follow to implement them?

Book Review

Choose one of several books from the recommended reading list and develop a report on it to make to the class. (15-20 minute report with a 1-2 page outline to hand out to classmates)

- Neil Pembroke, *Pastoral Care and Worship: Liturgy and Psychology in Dialogue* (T and T Clark, 2010)
- Kathy Black, *Culturally Conscious Worship*
- David Schnasa Jacobsen and Robert Allen Kelly, *Kairos Preaching*,
- Roger Alling & David J. Schlafer, *Preaching as Pastoral Caring* (Morehouse Press, 2005).

Review of sermon or service collection

Choose one resource- either a sermon collection or collection of services from recommended lists and be prepared to report on it in class. Be prepared to give a 8-10 minute report accompanied by a one page description/outline and a statement of why you would or would not recommend this resource and what its strengths and weaknesses are.

Funeral rite/sermon outline

Choose a difficult death scenario and develop a rite and sermon outline to address it (death of child, violent death, suicide) Submit complete order of worship and 3 page sermon preview that describes the scenario and gives the text(s), theme, resources consulted and intended impact.

Healing rite/sermon outline

Choose a situation of loss and develop a healing rite and sermon outline to go with it (miscarriage, loss of job, loss of health, post traumatic stress, divorce) Submit complete order of worship and 3 page sermon preview that describes the scenario and gives the text(s), theme, resources consulted and intended impact.

Session Plans Week Two

Monday (January 9)

Topic: Healing and Cure in Biblical perspective

Flow Dr. McKenzie – lecture/ discussion on Kathy Black’s book (preaching as a healing rite)

Students present their sermons/reflection papers on healing narratives guided by Black’s book.

Dr. Stamm: lecture on Merrill book (Bruce T. Morrill, *Divine Worship and Human Healing: Liturgical Theology at the Margins of Life and Death* (Collegeville, Minnesota: Liturgical Press, 2009)

Tuesday (January 10)

Topic: Healing in Historical Perspective

Flow:

Student reports on resource (sermon or service collection) they’ve reviewed

Discussion of Meyendorff book

Wednesday (January 11)

Topic: Resources for sermons and services

Flow: Student book reports on book of their choice from list

Thursday (Jan 12)

Topic : Students present their funeral sermon/services

Friday (Jan 13)

Topic: Students present their healing sermons/rites