Seminar Description
This seminar looks at the mission of the church and different modes of spirituality. Due emphasis will be given both to contemplative and active approaches, and attention will be paid to key texts. Three term hours. In particular, this seminar will focus primarily on Christian spirituality and how it is shaped by a missional perspective. This seminar engages participants in exploring anew the person and ministry of the Holy Spirit in relation to the Trinitarian community and *misio Dei* (God’s mission in the world) in order to address implications for an incarnational spirituality in relation to ecclesiology, church ministry, and pastoral leadership.

The last few decades of the 20th century gave much attention to focusing on the viability of the church and its ministry in society. Emphasis was placed upon church growth, church health, and developing effective church leadership (primarily with attention to business models). However, there is a growing awareness at the beginning of the 21st century, in light of the decline of Christendom and the church’s privileged status within it and the church’s perceived marginalization and disestablishment, that the church is called to cultivate a new way of being in the world, to recover its uniqueness as an alternate social reality in the world. The church is shaped by this understanding through discerning and examining how it participates with God in God’s mission through being sent into the world by God, empowered by the Holy Spirit in order to demonstrate a radically new way of being human.

The church is coming to realize that its purpose is not to foster its own mission, nor to make itself visible in the world, but rather “as a sign, foretaste, and instrument of God’s reconciling love and forgiveness, the church makes Jesus Christ visible in the world” (Dietterich, *Cultivating Missional Communities*, 5). This requires a reframing of how the church engages in spiritual formation in order to live out its presence in society in light of God’s redemptive mission.
Required Texts


A note about the texts: Since I first led this seminar in 2008, there has been some development in missional literature from a multiethnic perspective, however, the feminist perspective is still underrepresented. As a result, we will make these connections through our class dialogues.

Structure of the Seminar

This seminar is structured to aid the participant in the development of a missional spirituality which serves as a foundation for understanding the role of the church, engagement with culture and shaping the church’s beliefs, attitudes, and practices. Biblical, theological, and praxis-oriented reflection will help develop an understanding of the life and ministry of the local church as a community led by the Spirit and being sign, foretaste and instrument of God’s reign in the world.

Teaching approaches will be primarily dialogical and praxis-oriented. Participants will engage in preparation for the seminar through pre-seminar reading, reflection, and writing assignments. In class, learning will be engaged through the presentation of ideas, group learning, and reflection. Post-seminar assignments focus on applying seminar learning to a ministry project within the participant’s ministry context.

Each session of the seminar builds on the previous in order to help learners frame the contours of a missional spirituality. To aid in this theological development the learner will be introduced through the texts to different conceptualizations of the Spirit, spirituality, and mission for the forming of a missional spirituality in our diverse cultural contexts.
Pre-Class Assignments – To be turned in the first day of the seminar

• All readings must be completed prior to the first day of class. The books are to be read carefully

• A book reflection is to be written on each book, for a total of 11 reflections (Please present them together as a complete packet). Write reflections in response to the following questions: (1) What 2 significant points are presented by the author in relation to the Spirit and/or the mission of God? (2) Explain how these 2 insights shape a fresh perspective for your life and ministry? How and why?

These book reflections should each be exactly three pages long – i.e., written to the bottom of the third page (for a total of 33 pages for all reflections. Start each book reflection on a new page). They are to be 12 point Times New Roman font, have 1” margins on all sides and be on letter-sized paper. Parenthetical citations for page numbers are sufficient.

• Please develop and bring to class a one page description of what you understand by spirituality. Describe what it is, what its key characteristics are, and what its purposes are in the life of the Christian community (bullet points are fine for the format).

Post-Class Assignment

**Objective:** Application of an understanding of missional spirituality to a particular aspect, practice or issue in the life and witness of the church.

**Major Assignment:** Submit a comprehensive essay (18 – 20 pages) in which one dimension of a practice or issue in the spiritual life and witness of the church is examined from a perspective of the Holy Spirit and God’s mission.

The essay will include the following components:

(1) identification of a theme or dimension of the spiritual life of the church.

(2) exegesis/exposition of pertinent sections of the biblical text;

(3) theological considerations – engaging a theology of the Spirit and God’s mission

(4) practical implications of a missional spiritual perspective in relation to the theme for your congregation or the contemporary church.

Use not only the texts of the seminar but also engage numerous other sources. Read a minimum of 500 additional pages in order to examine the theme that has been selected. Annotate these sources in your bibliography.
The essay must be postmarked no later than August 3, 2012 and should be sent directly to the instructor at: Dr. Roland G. Kuhl, 2481 N. Bridle Circle, Round Lake Beach, IL 60073. Please be sure to keep a copy of your work in the event the paper is lost in transit. NOTE: Papers can also be submitted electronically by August 3, 2012 to rguhl@imissional.org.

Grading

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-course assignments</td>
<td>275</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seminar attendance and participation</td>
<td>90</td>
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<tr>
<td>Post-course assignment</td>
<td>300</td>
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Grades will be posted in December at the end of the University’s Fall term.

Seminar Outline

This outline highlights the major themes that we will address, yet due to the dialogical nature of this seminar, we may give more or less attention, or even address a new concern depending upon what arises in class discussion.

Part 1: The Holy Spirit and Christian Spirituality
Monday – Wednesday (June 11 – 13)

Readings: Edwards, Fee, Taylor

Reflections on spirituality? What is a Christian spirituality?
Missional Spirituality: Trinitarian Community, Spirit, and Mission
The Misunderstood Spirit – Biblical Images of the Holy Spirit

Part 2: God’s Story and Vision and Missio Dei
Thursday – Friday (June 14 – 15)

Readings: Barrett, Brueggemann, Newbigin

The Mission of God
God’s Story and Vision in dialogue with cultural narratives
Developing a missional hermeneutic
Part 3: Towards a Missional Spirituality
Monday – Thursday (June 18 – 21)

Readings: Augsburger, Branson & Martinez, Gittins, Van Gelder, Yaconelli

Contours of a missional spirituality – rooted in the Trinitarian community and mission
Cultivating missional practices within community
Noticing What God Notices – Discerning the Spirit in Mission in the World
Ministry in missional perspective in the multi-cultural North American context
Practicing Leading in the Presence of the Spirit

A Brief Bibliography (for Reference and Further Reading)


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 which will give full and positive value to both the past contributions and the future prospects of ethnic minorities and women in the church and in 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 (1) for women students and students from ethnic minority groups to pursue their study with special reference to their own status or tradition and (2) for all students to become acquainted with the special problems and conditions that affect women and ethnic minority groups in human society.

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 Marin, 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 your professor to make appropriate arrangements for the course work in this class.

Updated by RGK: 3/20/12