

Starr King School for the Ministry
Introduction to Preaching in a Cross Cultural Context
Fall, 2015

Instructor: Rev. Sofia Betancourt
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Tuesdays 2:10 – 5:00 pm
Fireside Room, SKSM

Course Description:

This non-lectionary, thematic preaching course embraces counter oppressive ministry through worship and the arts. Hands on learning will combine the sharing and peer review of brief homilies with exercises aimed at identifying your authentic preaching voice. Each student will also deliver two full-length sermons in class. Questions of how to make our worship services more relevant in today's culturally shifting world will be explored through thea/ological study of homiletics through a libratory lens and an engagement with issues of cultural appropriation and misappropriation in Unitarian Universalist liturgical practice. Course work in basic homiletics is not required for this class. Students from all traditions are welcome.

Required Texts:

Smith, Christine Marie, *Preaching Justice: Ethnic and Cultural Perspectives* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock 2008).
ISBN: 978-1606081426
List Price: \$20.00

Arnason, Wayne, and Rolenz, Kathleen, *Worship that Works: Theory and Practice for Unitarian Universalists* (Boston: Skinner House, 2008).
List Price: \$16.00
[Available at the UUA Bookstore online, or as an ebook (\$7.99)]

Rzepka, Jane and Sawyer, Ken, *Thematic Preaching: An Introduction* (St. Louis, MO: Chalice Press, 2001).
ISBN: 0827236530
List Price: \$28.99

Walker, Nathan, *Exorcising Preaching: Crafting Intellectually Honest Worship* (St. Louis, MO: Chalice Press, 2014).
ISBN: 0827208448
List Price: \$19.99 (kindle: \$8.49)

Course Objectives:

Students are expected to:

- Gain a working knowledge of non-lectionary thematic preaching in a congregational setting;
- Acquire a basic understanding of cross cultural impacts on worship and the liturgical arts;
- Begin to build a toolkit of strategies for “preaching to every pew”; and
- Work on developing their own unique identity and voice as preachers.

Requirements:

Students are required to:

- Complete all course readings as assigned, and be prepared to participate in thoughtful discussion;
- Complete brief homilies and two original full length sermons over the course of the semester; and
- Bring a compassionate and constructive voice to peer review and feedback.

Sermon Writing and Delivery:

Each student must write manuscripts for **two original sermons**, on the theme of your choosing, of 18-20 minutes in length. A starting benchmark is 100 words per minute. Remember that no two preachers are alike. Practice your sermon aloud, and *time yourself*. Along with each manuscript, students should include the full text of their readings and at least two hymns to complement the sermon. You may not use sermons for this class that you have already preached or that you have written for another class.

Sermons can be on any theme of your choosing. **Please submit your working draft to the instructor via email on the Sunday before you are scheduled to preach.**

Deadline: 11:59pm SUNDAY before you preach.

Reading Assignments:**September 8:**

None, Introduction to Course

September 15:

Preaching Justice, Chp 1

Worship That Works, Visions and Challenges section

September 22:

Preaching Justice, Chp 2

Worship That Works, Qualities of Transformative Worship section

September 28:

TBD. Guest Lecturer.

October 6:

Preaching Justice, Chp 3

Worship That Works, Practical Details section and Conclusion

October 13:

Preaching Justice, Chp 4

Thematic Preaching, “Blue Ducks” through “Trusting Instant Inspiration”

Thematic Preaching, “Sermons That Help the Healing” through “Sermons That Tend the Institution”

October 20:

Preaching Justice, Chp 5

Thematic Preaching, “Getting Started” through “More Than a Message”

Thematic Preaching, “Sermons That Engage with the Larger World” through
“Sermons That Build the Loving Community”

October 27: READING WEEK, NO CLASS

November 3:

Preaching Justice, Chp 6

Thematic Preaching, “The Hour Draws Nigh” through “Preaching As a Ministry”

Thematic Preaching, “Sermons That Inspire” through “Sermons That Explain a Particular Religious Identity”

November 10:

Preaching Justice, Chp 7

Thematic Preaching, “Issues in Preaching” through “Am I a Performer?”

Thematic Preaching, “Sermons That Provide Intellectual Stimulation” through
“Sermons That Startle, Awaken, or Amuse”

November 17:

Preaching Justice, Chp 8 and Conclusion

Exorcising Preaching, Part I

November 24:

Handout on Class Diversity and Preaching

Exorcising Preaching, Part II

December 1:

Exorcising Preaching, Part III

December 8:

Exorcising Preaching, Part IV

December 15: Last Day of Class, no Readings.

Grading:

Grading for this course will be based on:

- Timely submission of assignments;
- Thoughtful class participation; and
- Your two sermons.