

# ***Preaching Contextually***

Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary  
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This is an advanced preaching course which provides an overview of principles for developing and delivering sermons beyond the purview of Basic Preaching. Sermons the students will learn to create include: doctrinal, social justice, wedding, funeral, Advent and Lenten sermons. The basic premise of the course is that in order for preaching to be effective, the preacher must take time to understand the preaching context which includes the people to whom/for whom the message is being developed and circumstances in which they find themselves (or the occasion).

By the end of the course students will be able to:

1. Demonstrate a nuanced understanding of a variety of special situations in which the sermons are preached.
2. Employ effective approaches for the development of sermons to meet a variety of preaching purposes.
3. Develop contextually -conceived, well-structured sermons that positively impact the lives of individuals and communities.
4. Demonstrate an ability to understand the spiritual and emotional needs of the people to whom they will be preaching.
5. Demonstrate an ability to constructively evaluate their peers.

Required Readings: Allen, Ronald J., ed. *Patterns of Preaching*. St Louis: Chalice Press, 1998.

## **Prerequisite: Basic Preaching**

### **Course Requirements:**

1. Students are required to attend all classes and actively participate in class discussions. (10%)
2. Students will read assigned readings and sermons post questions or observations about the readings one day prior to class meetings. (20%)
3. Each student will submit 2 sermon manuscripts for discussion in class. Students should make copies of their manuscripts for everyone in class. (20%)
4. Each student will also preach two 10-15 minute sermons. Students must bring copies of their sermons for everyone in the class. (50%)

Class Sessions and Readings:

## **Class 1 Contextual Preaching: Weddings and Funerals**

## **Readings:**

### **Assignment: Submit manuscript for wedding or funeral**

In Allen, Ronald J., ed. *Patterns of Preaching*. St Louis: Chalice Press, 1998.

“The Form of the Text Shapes the Form of the Sermon” by Alicye McKenzie

“Wedding Homily” by Lisa M. Leber Pages 139-143

“Funeral Homily” by Mary Alice Mulligan Pages 144-148

“From Wilderness to the Light” Gen. 21:14-20 by Cheryl A. Kirk-Dugan in

*This is My Story: Testimonies and Sermons of Black Women in Ministry*

Cleophus J. LaRue. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2005. Pages 186-190.

“Funerals” 42-63

“Weddings” 64-80

In Jacobsen, David Schnasa. *Kairos Preaching: Speaking Gospel to the Situation*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2009.

Examples of Wedding Sermons – Hedahl, Susan K. *Preaching the Wedding Sermon*. St. Louis, MO: Chalice Press, 1999. 86-89, 97-102

Examples of Funeral Sermons - Pollard, Joseph. *Homilies for Weddings and Funerals*. Blackrock, CO: The Columbia Press, 2004. 102-112

## **Class 2      Preaching Doctrine**

### **Readings:**

#### **Assignment: Submit a manuscript for doctrinal sermon**

In Patterns of Preaching:

“Sermon as Theological Quadrilateral” by Ronald Allen Pages 57-63.

“Preaching on a Doctrine” by Barbara Shire Blaisdell, Pages 171-176.

“Preaching on a Christian Practice” by Sally A. Brown, Pages 177-182.

“Declare These Things” Titus 1:11-15 by Ralph West. Editor Cleophus LaRue in *Power in the Pulpit*, Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2009. Pg 189-191.

“Toward a Definition of Doctrinal Preaching” 11-25

“Maintaining Doctrinal Balance” 127-140

“The Jazz of Doctrinal Preaching” 141-167

In Smith, Robert. *Doctrine That Dances: Bringing Doctrinal Preaching and Teaching to Life*. Nashville, TN: B & H Academic, 2008.

Examples of Sermons - Cox, James W., ed. *Best Sermons* Vol. 6. New York, NY: HarperCollins Publishers, 1993. 101-123

Post Questions and email manuscripts

## **Class 3      Preaching for Easter and Christmas**

### **Readings:**

**Assignment: Preach sermon for Easter or Christmas**

In *Patterns of Preaching*:

“Sermon as a Movement of Images” by Barbara K. Lunblad, Pages 104-109.

“Sermon as a Biblical Character” by Ella Pearson Mitchell, Pages 124-130.

“Preaching from Oops to Yeah” by Eugene Lowry, Pages 93-97.

“Found by Much More than You are Looking” John 20:11-18 by William S. Epps. Cleophus J. LaRue. *More Power in the Pulpit*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2005. Pages 34-40.

“The Season of Christmas” by Mary Hinkle Shore 33-72

In Mary Hinkle Shore, Herman C. Waetjen, Richard L. Eslinger, Melinda A.

Quivik, David B. Lott *New Proclamation: Year a 2007-2008 Advent through Holy Week*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2007.

“Resurrection of the Lord, Easter Day” 4-9

“Resurrection of the Lord, Easter Evening” 10-14

In Pittman, Nancy Claire, Richard I. Pervo, S.D. Giere, Shauna K. Hannan. *New Proclamation Year a 2011: Easter through Christ the King*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2010.

Examples of Sermons - Cox, James W., ed. *Best Sermons*. Vol. 7. New York, NY: HarperCollins Publishers, 1994. 49-64

Post Questions and email manuscripts

**Class 4 Preaching Social Justice**

**Readings:**

Assignment: Preach social justice sermon

In The Teaching Sermon by Ronald J. Allen

“How People Learn from Sermons” and “Developing the Sermon as an Event of Preaching” Pages 39-85.

In Patterns of Preaching:

“Preaching on a Social Issue” by Leonora Tubbs Tisdale Pages 199-206.

“Speaking Truth in Love: Strategies for Prophetic Proclamation” 21-40

“Giving Shape to the Witness: Forms for Prophetic Preaching” 63-88

In Tisdale, Leonora Tubbs. *Prophetic Preaching: A Pastoral Approach*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2010.

“Come Out and Stay Out” Acts 16:16-23 by Elaine Flake. Editors Ella Pearson Mitchell and Jacqueline B. Glass in *Those Preaching Women* vol. 4. Valley Forge: Judson Press, 2004. pg 117-119.

Examples of Social Justice Sermons - Hancock, E. Lee. *The Book of Women's*

*Sermons: Hearing God in Each Other's Voices.* New York: Riverhead Books, 1999.

### **Sermon Manuscripts**

All sermon manuscripts must be full texts of all sermons. Manuscripts should meet the requirements of “written assignment” listed below. When preaching, students do not need to use the full manuscript. All manuscripts must be submitted one week prior to class meeting.

### **Mutual Respect**

During class, each person is required to respect her/his classmates and the instructor by arriving to class on time, listening attentively to the thoughts and opinions of others, providing constructive feedback to sermons of others, and turning off cell phones before class begins.

### **Written Assignments**

1. All written assignments should be doubled-spaced.
2. All margins should be 1-inch (left, right, top, bottom).
3. All ideas and thoughts that are not original should be footnoted. Each footnote should begin a new line, **indented the same as amount at paragraphs.**
4. Font should be Times New Roman, 12 point.
5. Spell check all assignments before submitting.
6. Do not include a cover page or place papers in folders.
7. Include a header or footer with student name, submission date, and page numbers on each page.

### **Inclusive Language**

In accordance with seminary policy, students are to use inclusive language in class discussions and in written and oral communication by using language representative of the whole human community in respect to gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, age, and physical and intellectual capacities.

### **Late Policy**

All assignments are to be emailed on the due date by 6:00 p.m. **Assignments submitted late will be penalized twenty five percent per day.** The only exceptions for late work being penalized are in **cases of medical emergency or death in the family.** Preaching dates will be selected and negotiated in class. Once a date is set, do not expect to change it. Except in the event of a catastrophe or emergency, failure to preach on the assigned date is subject to a grade of “zero” for that sermon.

### **Plagiarism**

It is expected that students will perform all written and oral assignments with complete academic integrity by only submitting papers and preaching/submitting sermons with their own original thoughts and ideas. When using thoughts and idea of others, students are to properly attribute credit in footnotes. Any instances of plagiarism discovered will be reported to the Dean’s office. Two reports of plagiarism constitute grounds for dismissal from LPTS.

Preacher:

Title:

## Sermon Content Evaluation

<p><b>Reach/Trim</b> Amount of biblical/exegetical material need to make the sermon understandable to hearers. Before launching into the heart of the sermon, the preacher generally provides background information that hearers need to have more information about the characters/situation being referred to. Just enough exegetical material to illuminate the point/theme of the message.</p>	
<p><b>Introduction</b> Arouses interest of the listeners Related to the main point</p>	
<p><b>Transitions</b> Are transitions from one part of the sermon to the next smooth and easy for hearers to follow</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Introduction to the main body</li><li>• Between parts of the main body</li><li>• Main body to the conclusion</li></ul>	
<p><b>Theology</b> Is the theology well developed and easy to understand? Does it honor/acknowledge the views of the families/loved ones/faith community?</p>	
<p><b>Life Experiences</b> Is the use of life experiences and/or personal testimonies of close friends for weddings and funerals appropriate for occasion?</p>	
<p><b>Language Appropriateness</b> Uses language that lay people can understand and is appropriate for the occasion Sermon given color and life by descriptive speech</p>	
<p><b>Application</b> How is main theme of sermon relevant to lives of hearers? Use concrete examples of how the main theme of sermon makes a difference to the listeners</p>	
<p><b>Theme</b> There is one theme only and it is easy for listeners to follow</p>	

## Sermon Delivery Evaluation

Body (hands, feet, posture)	
Eye Contact  Facial Exp.	
Movement in/around Pulpit	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
Speech	<p><b>Rate (variance)</b></p>  <p><b>Phrasing (arrangement of words)</b></p>  <p>Other</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>

## Bibliography

- Allen, Ronald J. *Interpreting the Gospel: An Introduction to Preaching*. St. Louis, MO: Chalice Press, 1998.
- Jacobsen, David Schnasa. *Kairos Preaching: Speaking Gospel to the Situation*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2009.
- Pittman, Nancy Claire, Richard I. Pervo, S.D. Giere, Shauna K. Hannan. *New Proclamation Year a 2011: Easter through Christ the King*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2010.
- Quivic, Melinda Ann. *A Christian Funeral*. Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Fortress Press, 2005.
- Resner, Andre, Jr. *Just Preaching: Prophetic Voices for Economic Justice*. St. Louis, MO: Chalice Press, 2003.
- Shore, Mary Hinkle, Herman C. Waetjen, Richard L. Eslinger, Melinda A. Quivic, David B. Lott. *New Proclamation: Year a 2007-2008 Advent through Holy Week*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2007.
- Smith, Robert. *Doctrine That Dances: Bringing Doctrinal Preaching and Teaching to Life*. Nashville, TN: B & H Academic, 2008.
- Tisdale, Leonora Tubbs. *Prophetic Preaching: A Pastoral Approach*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2010.