



# CL7521 THE MISSIONAL CHURCH April – September 2006

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## SEMINAR DESCRIPTION

This seminar assists students in developing an understanding of the church in relation to the mission of the triune God in and to all of creation. Resources from the fields of both ecclesiology and missiology are brought to bear on helping students formulate a working theology of the missional church within their congregation and context. The diverse literature in the fields of church renewal, church growth, and church effectiveness are critically evaluated from this developing understanding of the missional church.

## APPROACH

Participants will access and use resources that assist them in reflecting on the missionary nature of the church and the development of a missiological ecclesiology. This work will serve as a foundation in helping each participant reflect on the present formal and informal ecclesiology that is at work in their ministry context, and to explore ways of developing a missional church identity for the congregation they are presently serving. A faculty member from the Leadership Division will facilitate the seminar, and will be joined by another instructor who will co-teach the course. The purpose of the project component is to help each person integrate the readings, research, and seminar discussion in a way that strengthens their professional development and serves their current ministry through developing a missional ecclesiology for that context.

## **OBJECTIVES**

Each seminar participant will . . .

1. Gain theological perspective on the issues of the Trinitarian foundations for ecclesiology, the missional church, and the development of a missiological ecclesiology.
2. Gain an understanding of the subjects of ecclesiology and missiology from both historical and contemporary perspectives.
3. Engage in evaluative reflection regarding the current formal and informal ecclesiology that appears to be operating within the congregation s/he is presently serving.
4. Engage in disciplined conversation with fellow participants around the subject matter of the seminar.
5. Engage in a constructive critique of current literature on church growth and church effectiveness from the perspective of a missiological ecclesiology.
6. Complete a seminar project that develops a missional ecclesiology for his/her current ministry.

## **COURSE FORMAT AND EXPECTATIONS**

### ***Seminar Structure***

The seminar is divided into three phases.

Phase I – Preparation April-July, 2006

Phase II – Seminar July 17-21, 2006

Phase III – Project Completion August-September 2006

### ***Use Of Technology***

To facilitate communication, each participant will be expected to have a Luther Seminary email address. This address will allow each person to access the software that is being used for course management, which is known as MyLutherNet. In addition, this course requires participants to use electronic databases and to conduct on-line research. It is expected that participants will be proficient in using Word and communicating electronically.

## **COURSE ASSIGNMENTS**

### **Module Assignments**

Each participant is expected to complete five modules for this seminar. These modules involve a wide range of reading requirements. The total number of pages that participants are expected to read for the seminar is approximately 2500.

### **Module 1: Reflections on Ecclesiology**

The purpose of this module is to introduce seminar participants to some contemporary thinking about ecclesiology and missiology, and for this information to be used as a lens for reflecting on both the formal and informal ecclesiologies that are operating in the congregation of each participant. A series of articles are provided as a reading assignment to help the participant develop a lens for thinking about ecclesiology, both historically and from a missional perspective. In reading these materials you should ask yourself the question, “What contextual and/or historical factors appear to be at work in shaping this document’s or this author’s understanding of an ecclesiology for the church?”; and “What biblical and theological assertions are being assumed or proposed as the basis for shaping this document’s or this author’s understanding of an ecclesiology for the church?” Note: Copies of all of these articles are being mailed to each participant for your use.

### **Required Reading**

#### **Historical Confessional Ecclesiologies**

The Constantinopolitan Creed (Nicene Creed) 381  
Lutheran: The Augsburg Confession, Article VII 1530  
Anglican: The Thirty-Nine Articles, Article XIX 1563  
Mennonite: The Dordrecht Confession, Article VIII 1632  
Reformed: The Westminster Confession, Chapter XXV 1646  
Baptist: The New Hampshire Confession, Article XIV 1833

#### **Ecclesiology Writings from the 1960s**

Paul Minear, *Images of the Church in the New Testament*, 1960, chaps. I and VII.  
Johannes Blauw, *The Missionary Nature of the Church*, 1962, Intro, chaps. 6 and 7.  
Hans Kung, *The Church*, 1967, forward, chaps. I and II.  
“Decree of the Church’s Missionary Activity – *Ad Gentes Divinitus*” – Introduction and Chapters I-III, in Austin P. Flannery, ed., *Documents of Vatican II*.

#### **Ecclesiology Writings from the 1970s**

Avery Dulles, S.J., *Models of the Church*, 1978, Intro, chaps. I and X.  
Lesslie Newbigin, *The Open Secret*, 1978, chaps. 1, 3 and 4.

#### **Recent Writings on Ecclesiology**

Martin E. Marty, “Public and Private: Congregation as Meeting Place,” in *American Congregations* Vol. 1, 1994.

Peter C. Hodgson, *Revisioning the Church*, 1988, Intro and section 1.

Kevin Giles, *What on Earth Is the Church?*, 1995, chap. 10.

John D. Zizioulas, "Christ, the Spirit, and the Church," *Being As Communion*, 1985.

**Articles on Ecclesiology from *International Review of Mission* 2001-02**

Background Documents by William G. Rush, Neville Callam, and Jean S. Stromberg.

Jet den Hollander, "Ecclesiology and Mission: A Reformed Perspective"

Aloys Klein, "Ecclesiology and Mission: A Roman Catholic Perspective"

Archbishop Ioann, "Ecclesiology and Canonical Foundations of Orthodox Mission"

Young-Gi Hong, "Church and Mission – A Pentecostal Perspective"

James J. Stamoolis, "An Evangelical Position on Ecclesiology and Mission"

Janet Scott, "Ecclesiology and Mission: A Quaker Perspective"

Michael W. Goheen, "'As the Father Has Sent Me, I Am Sending You': Lesslie Newbigin's Missionary Ecclesiology"

**Assignment**

Write a 6-8 page reflection paper (typed, double-space) in answering the following questions:

1. What are the primary insights from these readings which you feel *should* inform the development of an ecclesiology for a congregation from a missional perspective – a missiological ecclesiology?
2. Reflecting on your present congregation:
  - a. What is the '*formal*' ecclesiology that my congregation is operating with at this time (see constitution, formal polity, congregation by-laws and any adopted mission/vision statements)? Give some examples of how well this understanding is and/or is not functioning.
  - b. What is the '*informal*' ecclesiology that my congregation appears to be operating with at this time, and how does this differ from the formal one (as observable in the actual practices or discernable regarding attitudes and beliefs regarding the church)? Give some examples of how this manifests itself, and how it either reinforces or contradicts the formal ecclesiology.
3. In light of what you identify in number 2, develop some assertions and strategies regarding how you might bring your congregation into a fuller and deeper understanding of the church in terms of what you listed in point 1 above about a missiological ecclesiology.

Post your paper in the assigned location within MyLutherNet. Read all the papers posted by your classmates. Participate in the assigned group discussion in MyLutherNet.

**Posting Date for Reflection Paper: April 30, 2006**  
**Discussion groups May 5-12, 2006**

## **Module 2: Reading and On-Line Discussion/Interaction**

Each participant will be expected to complete the assigned readings for each week. The class will be divided into two discussion groups. **By the end of each assigned week**, one person will be designated to take the lead in posting an 600-800 word critical reflection on the assigned readings. **During the following week**, the other members of each discussion group will be responsible to post a 200-250 word interactive response to the lead posting.

**Primary Posting** (600-800 words) – the initial critical reflection should focus on: (a) engaging in a biblical and theological critique of the writings for the week, (b) offering some perspective on how these readings inform our understanding of a missional church and a missiological ecclesiology; and (c) relating these readings to the practice of ministry in your congregation – what is being done, what is not being done, what might be done.

**Responses to Primary Posting** (200-250 words) – these responses should focus on: (a) interacting with the biblical and theological critique and the suggested understanding of the missional church provided by your colleague by offering additional ideas or nuancing those already presented; and (b) offering additional ideas on how these readings relate to the practice of ministry in your congregation.

### **Further Procedures for Discussion Groups**

1. Participants will be placed in three groups and will engage in discussion with their groups around the primary posts and responses.
2. The participants in the three groups will be rotated after the first five weeks, with several persons exchanging groups so that you will have an opportunity to interact with more of your colleagues.
3. The instructor will set up and manage the discussion site, and will list the dates when postings are due for each discussion. Participants will be asked to 'volunteer' for when to place their primary posting in each six week period.'
4. Each person will make two (2) primary postings and ten (9) response postings during the twelve (10) weeks assigned to this reading. This means you have one week when you are free not to post a response.

### **List of books for required reading:**

- Richard H. Bliese and Craig Van Gelder, *The Evangelizing Church: A Lutheran Contribution*, Augsburg Fortress, 2005.
- David J. Bosch, *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission*, Orbis Books, 1991.
- Darrell L. Guder, *The Continuing Conversion of the Church*, Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2000.
- Darrell L. Guder et al., *Missional Church: A Vision for the Sending of the Church in North America*, Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1998.
- Craig Van Gelder, *The Essence of the Church: A Community Created by the Spirit*, Baker Books, 2000.

Miroslav Volf, *After Our Likeness: The Church as the Image of the Trinity*, Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1998.

**Reading and Discussion Schedule**

May 8-14	Readings: Bosch, xiii-11 Guder MC, vi-17 Bliese/Van Gelder, ix-10 Van Gelder, 7-26 Guder CC, vii-27
May 15-21	Readings: Bosch, 181-189 Guder MC, 18-45 Bliese/Van Gelder, 11-31 Van Gelder, 27-44 Guder CC, 28-72
May 22-28	Readings: Bosch, 190-213 Guder MC, 46-76 Bliese/Van Gelder, 32-50 Van Gelder, 45-72 Guder CC, 73-119
May 29-June 4	Readings: Bosch, 214-238 Guder MC, 77-109 Bliese/Van Gelder, 51-70 Guder CC, 120-144 Volf, ix-28
June 5-11	Readings: Bosch, 239-261 Guder MC, 110-141 Bliese/Van Gelder, 71-91 Volf, 29-72
June 12-18	Readings: Bosch, 262-283 Guder MC, 142-182 Bliese/Van Gelder, 92-112 Volf, 73-126
June 19-25	Readings: Bosch, 284-348 Guder MC, 183-220 Bliese/Van Gelder, 113 -137

Van Gelder, 73-100  
Volf, 127-158

June 26-July 2      Readings:  
Bosch, 349-367  
Guder MC, 221-247  
Bliese/Van Gelder, 138-153  
Van Gelder, 101-126  
Volf, 159-190

July 3-9              Readings:  
Bosch, 15-55, 368-446  
Guder MC, 248-268  
Van Gelder, 127-154  
Volf, 191-257

July 10-16          Readings:  
Bosch, 56-180, 447-520  
Guder 145-208  
Van Gelder, 155-184  
Volf, 258-282

### **Module 3**

#### **Engaging in Critical Reflection on Ecclesiology in Relation to the Church Growth and Church Effectiveness Literature**

This module is designed to assist each participant to use what they have learned through the seminar, up to this point, in engaging in some critical reflection on the ecclesiology that appears to be formally and/or informally at work in the current church growth and church effectiveness movement(s). Each participant will select and read a book from this literature (see suggested list below, although other choice options will be considered on request), and will write a four-page critical reflection paper, answering the following questions:

1. What is the formal and/or informal ecclesiology that appears to be at work in this book's presentation?
2. How would you critique the adequacy of this ecclesiology from the perspective of the missional church and a missiological ecclesiology?
3. What constructive suggestions would you make to the author if you were asked how the argument and presentation of the book might be strengthened?

**Possible Books to Consider** (another may be substituted by permission of the instructor):  
It is recommended that each person select a different book, which will then allow for a wide critique of this literature to be shared in this review.

Leith Anderson, *A Church for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, Bethany, 1992.  
George Barna, *User Friendly Churches*, Regal, 1991.

- \_\_\_\_\_, *The Second Coming Of The Church*, Word Publishing, 1998.  
Randy Frazee & Dallas Willard, *The Connecting Church*, Zondervan, 2001.  
Carl F. George, *The Coming Church Revolution*, Revell, 1994.  
George G. Hunter III, *Church for the Unchurched*, Abingdon, 1996.  
Walt Kallestad, *Turn Your Church Inside Out*, Augsburg Fortress, 2001.  
Brian D. McLaren, *The Church on the Other Side*, Zondervan, 1998.  
Mark Mittelberg, *Building a Contagious Church*, Zondervan, 2000.  
Bishop Claude Payne & Hamilton Beazley, *Reclaiming the Great Commission : A Practical Model for Transforming Denominations and Congregations*, Jossey-Bass, 2000.  
Lyle E. Schaller, *The Seven-Day-a-Week Church*, Abingdon, 1992.  
Leonard Sweet, *Aqua Church*, Group, 1999.  
C. Peter Wagner, *Churchquake: How the New Apostolic Reformation Is Shaking Up the Church As We Know It*, Gospel Light, 1999.  
Rick Warren, *The Purpose Driven Church*, Zondervan, 1995.

**Paper to be posted in assigned forum by: July 10, 2006.**

## **Module 4**

### **Annotated Bibliography on Additional Readings**

Participants are expected to read a total of 2500 pages for this seminar. Each student will keep track of the number of assigned pages s/he has read. They will then select additional books to complete the assigned number of pages required from books in the area of ecclesiology and missiology that bear on the content of this course. They will write a 250-300 word annotated bibliographic summary of each book read and will post these in the appropriate site in blackboard.

**Annotated bibliographies to be posted by: August 31, 2006**

## **Module 5**

### **Seminar Project**

Each participant will complete a project during August-September that relates the content of the seminar to their current ministry context. The approach that each person is to pursue includes the following steps:

#### *During the Seminar*

1. Develop a working outline of summary points of what a local, contextual missional ecclesiology would look like in your present ministry location. This outline should include at least the following areas:
  - a. Description of current ecclesiology at work in this ministry context (refer to paper for module one), and the implications of this on the identity and ministry of the congregation/organization
    - i. Formal ecclesiology
    - ii. Informal ecclesiology

- b. Discussion of both the general theology, and the local contextual theology that seems to be supporting this present ecclesiology
  - c. Develop a general framework of a missional ecclesiology that is related to/inter-related with your theological tradition
  - d. Develop the primary moves you would make theologically in shaping a local contextual missional ecclesiology – what would such a contextual missional ecclesiology look like?
  - e. Identify a draft process and time table for sharing your work with the church - who, when, how
2. Test this outline with your assigned group at least twice during the week, with a view towards refining and further developing your outline.

#### *Following the Seminar*

1. Engage your DMin conversation group in communal discernment to test the outline and further refine and develop it.
2. Take this group through a process of reflecting with you on this outline as you prepare to write your project paper.
3. Write a paper (suggest between 20 – 30 pages) that covers all the areas noted above.
4. Test the paper with your group of leaders and invite them to work with you on designing a process for sharing this with the larger congregation/ministry.
5. OPTIONAL – create a power point presentation that captures the primary movements of the paper, which can be used for generating discussion and reflection with the larger congregation/ministry

**Project to be posted by: September 30, 2006**

### ***Seminar Meeting***

Participants will meet together for the week of July 17-21, 2006 in a group seminar. The instructors will co-facilitate the seminar. There will be extensive time spent in discussion and reflection on the readings completed and research done during the preparation phase of the seminar.

### ***Several Items To Note***

**Purchasing Books** – It is recommended that seminar participants go “on-line” to one of the bookstores available (i.e. Amazon, Barnes and Nobles, etc.) and purchase their copies of the volumes that are required or selected for reading. All items listed are available in this format.

**Use of Technology** – This seminar assumes participant familiarity with the basics of using the computer for on-line research, and being able to access the web from your terminal. There is technical assistance available, if needed, to work through any problems you might have. We will be using a web-based program known as MyLutherNet for the purposes of communication and discussion.