

Syllabus: PrTh-Pb 3 Church Practice—The Changing Face of Ministry (Summer Intensive 2022)

Maine School of Ministry, Maine Conference, United Church of Christ

Instructor: Rev. Dr. Leslie Foley, B.C.C.

Background. The Maine School of Ministry’s “Christian Studies and Leadership (CSL) Curriculum and Certificate” program (<http://maineucc.org/5451-2/maine-school-ministry/>) offers twenty courses spread over four school years. Eight of these twenty courses are “Foundational” and twelve of them are “Practice-based”. The school offers “Semester courses” (Fall and Winter/Spring semesters) and “June intensives” courses. “The Changing Face of Ministry” is the later.

Course Description. “PrTh-Pb 3 Church Practice—The Changing Face of Ministry” is a June Intensive practice-based course which will examine the subject of “emerging ministries.”¹

Meeting 1 will explore bivocational ministry and the phenomenon of emerging ministries. There will be an overview of that context by the Instructor as well as presentations by the students of sections of John Dorhauer’s *Beyond Resistance: The Institutional Church meets the Postmodern World* (2015) and Part 1 of Darryl Stephen’s (collaborative project) *Bivocational and Beyond: Educating for Thriving Multivocational Ministry* (2021).

Meetings 2, 3, and 4 will be a continuation of our discussions emerging and bi-vocational ministries, including neighborhood/community churches, and ministry with special populations like the homeless and marginalized. All meetings will be conducted on-site.

At each meeting,

- mornings will feature a two-part seminar at which (~10-10:50am) assigned readings will be considered and (~11-12:00) presentations by students will be made.
- afternoons will feature a presentation by the pastor (and possibly a colleague). Topics may include: the history and evolution of the ministry; present-day opportunities; and challenges of that particular setting.

Course Expectations. Students will acquire an historical understanding of the societal and institutional forces which have given rise to emerging forms of ministry in North America and should gain a basic understanding of bi-vocational, neighborhood/community, and special population/homeless ministries in Maine. Whether a student registers for this course for reasons

related more to personal spiritual formation or to professional preparation for authorized ministry, he/she/they will leave the course with a deepened historical and practical appreciation for these emerging forms of ministry.

Meeting Time, Place, Dates. Four Saturday meetings (10am-3:00pm) on June 4, June 11, June 18, and June 25. All meetings will be held at ministry practice sites across the state, respectively at:

- (June 4) Oxford Congregational Church (UCC Oxford Union Association), 252 King Street, Oxford, ME 04270, (207) 539-2978. Pastor Lindy Howe.
 - (June 12) Acton Congregational Church (York Association, actoncongregationalchurch.org), 59 H Road, Acton, ME 04001. 207-636-3430. Rev. AbbyLynn Haskell.
 - (June 18) Neighborhood (UCC Mid-Coast Association, <http://www.faithinbath.org/contacts/>), 798 Washington Street, Bath ME 04530, (207) 443-2187. Pastor Bill Bliss.
 - (June 25) Williston Immanuel Church (UCC Cumberland Association), <http://williston-immanuel-united.org/>), 156 High Street, Portland ME 04101, (207) 775-2301. Pastor Jeff Logan.
- **Course Requirements.** Students will be pre-assigned reading and written work for each course Meeting. All four Meetings will thus be “front-loaded.” For Meeting 1 (June 4) students are well advised to acquire assigned texts and to begin reading and writing assignments at least three weeks in advance (thus by May 14). The same goes for Meetings 2, 3, and 4. A final written assignment of ~2000 words will be due within 15 days of the last Meeting (by July 9): *What fundamentally have you learned from your readings, the site visits, and your fellow students concerning each of these forms of emerging ministry? Of them, which presently would you most consider undertaking and why?*

Student Evaluation. Students’ assigned written work and in-class presentations will be marked Completed with Distinction, Completed with Promise, Completed, and Did not Complete and given comment. Students will receive a final mark using the same rubric. Class participation will be assessed separately and factor into your overall assessment. Extra credit is available.

Financial Aid: Limited financial aid will be made available to students in need to help defray the cost of course tuition and of book purchases. Please contact the Dean, Dr. Ron Beard @ rbaard@maineucc.org.

Class Meetings and pre-Meeting Assignments. Each Saturday there will be a morning (10:00-12:00) and an afternoon (1:00-3:00) session, as described in the Course Description. Mornings, coffee and tea will be provided by our host. You may also bring refreshments. The morning meeting will have a mid-session stretch break. Lunch (and/or a walk break) will last 12:00p-1:00 and will be brown bag.

1. **Saturday, June 4: Alternative Paths and the Context for Emerging Ministries** (on location in Oxford)

Required Reading: (see Readings List pp. 4-5 for full entries)

- John Dorhauer, *Beyond Resistance: The Institutional Church meets the Postmodern World*.
- Stephens, Darryl (and colleagues). *Bivocational and Beyond: Educating for Thriving Multivocational Ministry* (published in 2021 by Atla Press).

Pre-Meeting Assignments

- **Pre-Meeting Reading:** Read Dorhauer (Chapters 1-11) as well as Part 1 of *Bivocational and Beyond*.
- **Pre-Meeting Writing:** For the whole class: each of you prepare and submit a ~500 word summary&comment of all points covered by Chapter 1 for presentation to the class (one presenter will start, subsequent presenters will augment). Then communicate among yourselves to do this:
 - Group 1: each of you prepare a ~300 word summary&comment on two of the even-numbered chapters (2, 4, 6, 8, 10) in Dorhauer's book *or* Part 1 of *Bivocational and Beyond* for presentation to the class. Please make it so that all or most of these five chapters are summarized by your half of the class.
 - Group 2: each of you prepare a ~300 word summary&comment on two of the odd-numbered chapters (3, 5, 7, 9, 11) in Dorhauer's book *or* Part 1 of *Bivocational and Beyond* for presentation to the class. Groups are encouraged to coordinate presentations ahead of time (choosing a primary presenter, relevant discussion points...) Please make it so that all or most of the readings are summarized by your half of the class.

Recommended Reading (see Readings List pp. 4-5)

- Mark Chaves, *American Religion: Contemporary Trends*.

2. **Saturday, June 11** (on location in Acton at Acton Congregational Church, United Church of Christ)

Required Reading

- Stephens, Darryl (and colleagues). *Bivocational and Beyond: Educating for Thriving Multivocational Ministry* (published in 2021 by Atla Press). Part 2 and Part 3.

Pre-Meeting Assignments

- **Pre-Meeting Reading:** Read *Bi-vocational and Beyond: Educating for Thriving Multivocational Ministry*. Part 2.
- **Pre-Meeting Writing:** For the whole class: each of you prepare a ~500 word summary&comment on all points covered in your assigned section of *Bivocational and Beyond* for presentation to the class. As before, groups are encouraged to coordinate presentations ahead of time (choosing a primary presenter, relevant discussion points...)
 - Group 1: each of you prepare a ~300 word summary&comment on Part 2 of *Bivocational and Beyond* for presentation to the class.
 - Group 2: each of you prepare a ~300 word summary&comment on Part 3 of *Bivocational and Beyond* for presentation to the class.

Recommended Reading (see Readings List pp. 4-5)

- Terry Dorsett, *Developing Leadership Teams in the Bivocational Church*.
- G. Jeffrey MacDonald, “A move to part-time clergy sparks innovation in congregations.”

3. **Saturday, June 18:** Neighborhood/Community Ministry (on location in Bath)

Required Reading (see Readings List pp. 4-5 for full entries)

- Paul Sparks and Tim Soerens. *The New Parish: How Neighborhood Churches Are Transforming Mission, Discipleship and Community.*

Pre-Meeting Assignments

- **Pre-Meeting Reading:** Read Sparks and Soerens chapter by chapter (all 9) as well as the Introduction and Conclusion.
- **Pre-Meeting Writing:** For the whole class: each of you prepare and submit a ~500 word summary&comment of all points covered by Part 1: Why Do We Need a New Parish (Chapters 1 “Dislocated” and 2 “Misplaced”) for presentation to the class (one presenter will start, subsequent presenters will augment).
 - Group 1: each of you prepare a ~300 word summary&comment on two of the three chapters (3, 4, 5) of Part Two: What is the New Parish? for presentation to the class. Please make it so that all three chapters are summarized by your half of the class.
 - Group 2: each of you prepare a ~300 word summary&comment on each of two of the four chapters (6, 7, 8, 9) of Part Three: How Do We Practice the New Parish? for presentation to the class. Please make it so that all or most of these four chapters are summarized by your half of the class.

Recommended Reading (see Readings List pp. 4-5)

- C. Christopher Smith and John Patterson, *Slow Church: Cultivating Community in the Patient Way of Jesus.*
- G. Jeffrey MacDonald, “Simple Church blends dinner, worship and enterprise to create a new model.”

4. **Saturday, June 25: Special Population Ministry/Homeless and Marginalized (on location with Grace Street Ministries at Williston-Emmanuel)**

Required Reading (see Readings List pp. 4-5 for full entries)

- Alan Burt, *Blessings of the Burden: Reflections and Lessons in Helping the Homeless*.
- Mair Honan, *Walking in the Realm of Miracles: Reflections from the Street* (to be handed out).

Pre-Meeting Assignments

- **Pre-Meeting Reading:** Read Burt chapter by chapter (all 6) as well as the Introduction and “More about Homeless Not Helpless Inc.” and Honan entire (48 pages).
- **Pre-Meeting Writing:** For the whole class: each of you prepare and submit a ~500 word summary&comment on Honan for presentation to the class (one presenter will start, subsequent presenters will augment). Then communicate among yourselves to do this:
 - Group 1: each of you prepare a ~300 word summary&comment on two of Burt’s first three chapters (1-3: “My Journey to God through the Homeless” through “The Perfect Storm”) for presentation to the class. Please make it so that all three chapters are summarized by your half of the class.
 - Group 2: each of you prepare a ~300 word summary&comment on two of Burt’s next three chapters (4-6: “Cape Cod’s Response” through “Some Concluding Thoughts”) for presentation to the class. Please make it so that all three chapters are summarized by your half of the class.

Recommended Reading (see Readings List pp. 4-5)

- Blake Barrow, *Stories from the Shelter: A Lawyer’s Ministry with God’s Children Who Are Homeless*.
- G. Jeffrey MacDonald. “Boston church’s program gives teens a crash course in homelessness from those who know it best.”

Readings List

Barrow, Blake W. *Stories from the Shelter: A Lawyer's Ministry with God's Children Who Are Homeless* (2014). ISBN 978-1-4908-2519-9 (sc).

Burt, Alan R. *Blessings of the Burden: Reflections and Lessons in Helping the Homeless* (2013). ISBN 978-0-8028-6860-3.

Chaves, Mark. *American Religion: Contemporary Trends* (2011). 978-0-691-15966-9.

Dorhauer, John. *Beyond Resistance: The Institutional Church meets the Postmodern World* (2015). ISBN 978-0913552-74-2.

Dorsett, Terry W. *Developing Leadership Teams in the Bivocational Church* (2013). ISBN 978-1-6150-7252-1.

Honan, Mair. *Walking in the Realm of Miracles: Reflections from the Street*. (No date, no ISBN).

MacDonald, Jeffrey G. "A move to part-time clergy sparks innovation in congregations." Faith and Leadership: A learning resource for Christian leaders and their institutions from Leadership Education at Duke Divinity. At <https://www.faithandleadership.com/move-part-time-clergy-sparks-innovation-congregations>.

MacDonald, Jeffrey G. "Boston church's program gives teens a crash course in homelessness from those who know it best." At: <https://www.faithandleadership.com/boston-churchs-program-gives-teens-crash-course-homelessness-those-who-know-it-best>.

-----". "Simple Church blends dinner, worship and enterprise to create a new model." Faith and Leadership: A learning resource for Christian leaders and their institutions from Leadership Education at Duke Divinity. At <https://www.faithandleadership.com/simple-church-blends-dinner-worship-and-enterprise-create-new-model>.

Smith, C. Christopher and John Patterson. *Slow Church: Cultivating Community in the Patient Way of Jesus* (2014). ISBN 978-0-8308-4114-4.

Sparks, Paul and Tim Soerens. *The New Parish: How Neighborhood Churches Are Transforming Mission, Discipleship and Community* (2014). ISBN 978-0-8308-4115-8.

Stephens, Darryl (and colleagues). *Bivocational and Beyond: Educating for Thriving Multivocational Ministry* (published in 2021 by Atla Press).