

**Course Syllabus**  
**Course Code – Preaching Practicum**  
**Knox College**  
**Toronto School of Theology**  
**Winter 2020**

***Instructor Information***

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Instructor: Emily K. Bisset, ThD  
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Office Hours: Thursdays, 10:00 am – 11:00am or by appointment

***Course Identification***

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Course Number: Course Code (e.g. KNH3020H)  
Course Format: *In-class*  
Course Name: Preaching Practicum  
Course Location: Room Number, Knox College  
Class Times: Thursdays 11:00am – 1:00pm  
Prerequisites: An introductory course in both preaching and New Testament. It is recommended that students be in or have completed their TFE placement.

***Course Description***

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This course is an advanced preaching practicum that will build on the basics of preaching and take the conversation about preaching to a new depth. The course will help students deepen their understanding of the relationship between preaching and the Bible; preaching and theology; and preaching and the listeners. Using a workbook for preachers, a new technique for Scriptural engagement, and reading current and topical essays in the forefront of preaching issues today, students will engage in thoughtful dialogue with some of the leading homileticians in North America and with one another. Significant attention will be given to the practical aspects of preaching such as voice, delivery, and oral/aural communication. Students will also strengthen their skills in evaluating sermons become more familiar with the resources for responsible and faithful preaching for the church today.

***Course Resources***

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**Required Course Texts (available at U OF T bookstore)**

- Anna Carter Florence, *Rehearsing Scripture: Discovering God's Word in Community*, (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2018)
- Thomas H. Troeger and Leonora Tubbs Tisdale, *A Sermon Workbook: Exercises in the Art and Craft of Preaching* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2013)

### Reserve texts (but not required for purchase)

- Scott Black Johnson, Ted A. Smith, and Leonora Tubbs Tisdale, ed., *Questions Preachers Ask: Essays in Honor of Thomas G. Long* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2016)

### Book Review Options

***(This is a very limited selection. The book for your book review should focus on an area of preaching that you are particularly interested in learning more about: biblical exegesis and preaching, sermon form/structure, the purpose of preaching, preaching and the listeners, homiletical theology, preaching and performance, etc. Please consult with the instructor.)***

- Frederick Buechner, *Telling the Truth: The Gospel as Tragedy, Comedy, and Fairy Tale* (HarperOne, 1 Edition, 2009)
- John C. Hobert and Alyce McKenzie, *What Not to Say: Avoiding the Common Mistakes That Can Sink Your Sermon* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2011)
- Jana Childers, ed. *Birthing the Sermon: Women Preachers on the Creative Process* (Chalice Press, 2001)

### Course Learning Objectives/Outcomes

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- to demonstrate ability to use a Biblical text in preaching and describe basic elements/movements in a sermon, especially in the Reformed tradition
- to articulate one's own theology and understanding of preaching and apply systematic theology to a teaching and preaching ministry within a congregation in relation to Reformed heritage
- to demonstrate ability to understand the role of the listeners in preaching and to preach within a particular context
- to describe the relationship of preaching to the other theological disciplines including exegesis, theology and pastoral care
- to situate, evaluate and reflect on roles and styles of preaching in relation to cultural and ecclesial changes
- prepare and preach sermons that communicate clearly in an oral/aural style
- To gain confidence in preaching and to reflect on the effectiveness and faithfulness of doing so as gospel proclamation

## ***Evaluation***

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### **Requirements**

The final grade for the course will be based on evaluations in five areas.

(1) Annotated Review of Preaching Resources (20%) – Students will prepare an annotated review of ten resources for preaching. The review will include:

- 2 Biblical commentaries
- 2 primary theologians or theological texts
- 2 websites/blogs
- 2 lexicons/Bible dictionaries
- 2 novelist/poets/writers

For each resource, students will be expected to describe the resource (such as publisher, author, theological perspective, content and intent) and write a brief explanation of how and why it is useful and insightful for preaching on an ongoing basis, using specific examples. The paper will be 4-6 pages.

**[DUE Thursday February 6]**

(2) Sermon 1 (25%) – Students are expected to preach 2 sermons. The first sermon will be preached in class and directed toward peers in the classroom setting. The sermon will be at least 12 minutes in length and not more than 16 minutes. The text for the first sermon must be chosen from the New Testament portion of the lectionary from January –March 2020 (Year A). The lectionary can be found here: <https://lectionary.library.vanderbilt.edu/> **Text selection is due by January 16.** The evaluative focus of this first sermon will be how the sermon works with the Biblical text and expresses theology in an authentic and engaging voice. Peer evaluation as well as criteria laid out by the instructor will be considered in the marking of the first sermon. Students will preach and offer evaluation in groups depending on the class size. During the preaching weeks, students may need to meet for a seminar outside the regular class sessions. The specific times and dates will be worked out among the class. Preaching from a manuscript is required and the manuscript will be turned in after the sermon is preached. Peer evaluation will be turned in after the feedback session.

(3) Sermon 2 (25%) -- Students will preach in a congregational setting outside of the college and video the sermon. If you need help arranging this preaching opportunity, please speak to the instructor. Students can choose their own text for preaching. **Text selection is due by February 27.** The ideal dates for preaching are Sunday March 22, Sunday, March 29, or (if necessary) April 5. The video will be submitted to the instructor, along with a manuscript of the sermon (even if a full manuscript is not used in the pulpit) and any notes the students made in preparation for the sermon in terms of exegesis or in consultation with resources, including the Sermon Workbook. The evaluative focus of the second sermon will include Biblical exegesis and Theology, but will also include more emphasis on connecting with the listener, sermon form, and effective delivery. The recorded sermon will be reviewed and evaluated by the instructor with feedback to be given in a one on one meeting with the student during Exam Week. All students will meet with the instructor for a one hour meeting during exam week. [Video, Manuscript and Notes DUE April 2 OR if preaching on April 5, all is due on April 5.]

(4) Book Review (20%) –Students will choose one book or set of essays to review. A preliminary list is provided in the syllabus. If there is a particular homiletics book that a student would like to review, or a particular area of preaching that a student is interested in furthering their knowledge about, please consult with the instructor for other possible choices. **ALL BOOK CHOICES MUST BE APPROVED BY THE INSTRUCTOR BY THURSDAY FEBRUARY 13.** The review will include a summary of the chosen book/articles, a critical evaluation of how it is helpful or useful to understanding and engaging in the preaching task, and an assessment of if the student would recommend this reading to other preachers and why or why not. **[4-6 double spaced, typed pages in length. DUE Thursday March 19]**

(5) Preparation, participation and reading (10%) – In addition to participating in the regular activity of the class, including the reading of the required texts, students are expected to complete the assigned exercises in the sermon workbook. Sometimes these assignments will be reviewed and shared in the class and at other times, students will be expected to turn in the assignments they complete. Engaging in active listening, discussion, being prepared to hand in exercises from the workbook, and seeking out help as needed from the instructor all contribute to this percentage of that overall mark

### **Grading System**

A+ (90-100)  
A (85-89)  
A- (80-84)  
B+ (77-79)  
B (73-76)  
B- (70-72)  
Failure

Please see the appropriate handbook for more details about the grading scale and non-numerical grades (e.g. SDF, INC, etc).

**Late work (BD).** Basic Degree students are expected to hand in assignments by the date given in the course outline. [The instructor should stipulate the penalty for late work.] This penalty is not applied to students with medical or compassionate difficulties; students facing such difficulties are kindly requested to consult with their faculty adviser or basic degree director, who should make a recommendation on the matter to the instructor. The absolute deadline for the course is the examination day scheduled for the course. Students who for exceptional reasons (e.g., a death in the family or a serious illness) are unable to complete work by this date may request an extension (SDF = “standing deferred”) beyond the term. An SDF must be requested from the registrar’s office in the student’s college of registration no later than the last day of classes in which the course is taken. The SDF, when approved, will have a mutually agreed upon deadline that does not extend beyond the conclusion of the following term. If a student has not completed work but has not been granted an SDF, a final mark will be submitted calculating a zero for work not submitted.

**Course grades.** Consistently with the policy of the University of Toronto, course grades submitted by an instructor are reviewed by a committee of the instructor’s college before being posted. Course grades may be adjusted where they do not comply with University grading policy (<http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/grading.htm>) or college grading policy.

## ***Policies***

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***Accessibility.*** Students with a disability or health consideration, whether temporary or permanent, are entitled to accommodation. Students must register at the University of Toronto's Accessibility Services offices; information is available at <http://www.accessibility.utoronto.ca/>. The sooner a student seeks accommodation, the quicker we can assist.

***Plagiarism.*** Students submitting written material in courses are expected to provide full documentation for sources of both words and ideas in footnotes or endnotes. Direct quotations should be placed within quotation marks. (If small changes are made in the quotation, they should be indicated by appropriate punctuation such as brackets and ellipses, but the quotation still counts as a direct quotation.) Failure to document borrowed material constitutes plagiarism, which is a serious breach of academic, professional, and Christian ethics. An instructor who discovers evidence of student plagiarism is not permitted to deal with the situation individually but is required to report it to his or her head of college or delegate according to the TST *Basic Degree Handbook* and the Graduate program Handbooks (linked from <http://www.tst.edu/academic/resources-forms/handbooks> and the University of Toronto *Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters* <http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/AssetFactory.aspx?did=4871>. A student who plagiarizes in this course will be assumed to have read the document "Avoidance of plagiarism in theological writing" published by the Graham Library of Trinity and Wycliffe Colleges [http://www.trinity.utoronto.ca/Library\\_Archives/Theological\\_Resources/Tools/Guides/plag.htm](http://www.trinity.utoronto.ca/Library_Archives/Theological_Resources/Tools/Guides/plag.htm).

***Other academic offences.*** TST students come under the jurisdiction of the University of Toronto Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters <http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/behaveac.htm>.

***Back-up copies.*** Please make back-up copies of essays before handing them in.

***Obligation to check email.*** At times, the course instructor may decide to send out important course information by email. To that end, all students in conjoint programs are required to have a valid utoronto email address. Students must have set up their utoronto email address which is entered in the ACORN system. Information is available at [www.utorid.utoronto.ca](http://www.utorid.utoronto.ca). The course instructor will not be able to help you with this. 416-978-HELP and the Help Desk at the Information Commons can answer questions you may have about your UTORid and password. *Students should check utoronto email regularly* for messages about the course. **Forwarding** your utoronto.ca email to a Hotmail, Gmail, Yahoo or other type of email account is not advisable. In some cases, messages from utoronto.ca addresses sent to Hotmail, Gmail or Yahoo accounts are filtered as junk mail, which means that emails from your course instructor may end up in your spam or junk mail folder.

***Email communication with the course instructor.*** The instructor aims to respond to email communications from students in a timely manner. *All email communications from students should be sent from a utoronto email address.* Email communications from other email addresses are not secure, and also the instructor cannot readily identify them as being legitimate emails from students. The instructor is not obliged to respond to email from non-utoronto addresses.

## ***Course Schedule***

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**THE READINGS AND WORKBOOK EXERCISES LISTED FOR EACH CLASS ARE TO BE READ AND COMPLETED IN ADVANCE OF THE CLASS MEETING, UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED.**

### **WEEK 1**

*Thursday January 9*

Course introduction  
Exercise during class: *Sermon Workbook*  
Chapter 1, Hallmarks of Good Preaching  
Chapter 2, Diversity of Preaching

### **WEEK 2**

*Thursday January 16*

**[Selection of preaching text  
for FIRST sermon DUE]**

Preaching and the Bible  
Reading: *Questions Preachers Ask*, Introduction and Chapter 1, “Shaped by Hearing” (pgs, xv-xix, 3-11)  
Reading: *Rehearsing Scripture*, Preface, Chapters 1&2 (pgs 1-31)  
Exercise: *Sermon Workbook*, (for review)  
Chapter 4, “Biblical Exegesis for Preaching”

### **WEEK 3**

*Thursday January 23*

Preaching and the Bible  
Reading: *Rehearsing Scripture*, chapter 3 and 4  
Exercise: *Sermon Workbook*  
Chapter 23 “What do you see?”  
*2<sup>nd</sup> half of class*: Embodiment and Voice  
Preaching and Performance  
Reading the punctuation

### **WEEK 4**

*Thursday January 30*

Preaching and Theology (focus on major doctrines of the Reformed tradition, theological vocabulary and homiletical theology)  
Reading: Emily K Rodgers, *Solid Food: The Integration of the Theology of Sanctification and Homiletics to Nurture Congregational Preaching, Dissertation 2007* pgs. 124-132, 151-165 (Distributed)  
Exercise: *Sermon Workbook*  
Chapter 11, “Theology and Preaching”  
Chapter 26, “Reason and Feeling”

## WEEK 5

Thursday February 6

**[Annotated Review  
of Preaching Resources  
DUE]**

Preaching and Your Theology

Exercise: *Sermon Workbook*

Chapter 12, “Making Theology Incarnate for Preaching”

2<sup>nd</sup> half of class:

Embodiment and Voice

The preachers identity

Exercise: *Sermon Workbook*,

Chapter 21 “Taking Part in an Experience of God’s Living Word”

## WEEK 6

Thursday February 13

**[Selection for book review  
must be submitted  
for approval  
to the instructor]**

Finding your Preaching Voice, Delivery, and Ethos

Reading: *Questions Preachers Ask*, Chapter 5, “Discerning Authorities”

Reading: *Rehearsing Scripture*, chapter 6

Reading and Exercise: *Sermon Workbook*

Chapter 15 “Sermon Delivery Options”

Chapter 16 “Oral/Aural Speech for Preaching”

## WEEK 7

READING WEEK

**NO CLASS**

## WEEK 8

Thursday February 27

Topic: Preaching Seminars

**[Selection of preaching text for SECOND sermon DUE by email]**

## WEEK 9

Thursday March 5

Topic: Preaching Seminars

## WEEK 10

Thursday March 12

Preaching and Your Listeners

Reading: TBA

Exercise: *Sermon Workbook*,

Chapter 5, “The Sermons People Receive”

Chapter 8 (for review) “Exegeting the Congregation for Preaching”

**WEEK 11**

Thursday March 19

**[Book review DUE]**

Sermon Form and Content

Reading: *Questions Preachers Ask*, Chapter 2, “Form follows Function”

Reading: *Rehearsing Scripture*, chapter 6 “Saying Something True”

Reading and Exercise: *Sermon Workbook*,  
Chapter 10, “A Repertoire of Sermon Forms”

**WEEK 12**

Thursday March 26

Rehearsing the Scriptures Together

Reading: *Rehearsing Scripture*, Chapter 5 and Appendix 3 (pgs. 176-191)

Exercise: *Sermon Workbook*

Chapter 18, “Congregations as Partners in Preaching”

**WEEK 13**

Thursday April 2

Looking to the Future of Preaching and outstanding questions  
Being stewards of the mystery

Reading: *TBA*

Exercise: *Sermon Workbook*

Chapter 25, “The Ambiguities of Tradition”

Chapter 29, “The Purposes of Preaching”

**[Video, Manuscript and Notes for Second Sermon DUE no later than April 5]**

**EXAM WEEK: SIGN UP FOR A TIME TO MEET WITH THE INSTRUCTOR FOR  
FEEDBACK REVIEW OF SECOND SERMON**