

**Course Syllabus**  
**KNP1352HF – Basics of Biblical Preaching**  
**Knox College**  
**Toronto School of Theology**  
**Fall 2024**

***Instructor Information***

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Instructor: Dr. Sarah Travis  
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Office Hours: by appointment

***Course Identification***

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Course Number: KNP1352HF  
Course Format: *Online*  
Course Name: Basics of Biblical Preaching  
Course Location: Zoom  
Class Times: Mondays, 11am-1pm  
Prerequisites: none

***Course Description***

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Introduction to the art and science of preaching. Topics: exegesis and hermeneutics for the purpose of preaching, techniques of sermon preparation, structure and delivery.

Expanded course description: This course introduces students to the art and craft of preaching. By the end of the course, students will have the basic skills to create and deliver sermons rooted in the biblical text. The context of congregations and the social location of preachers will be taken seriously, along with a variety of patterns and approaches to sermon preparation. Students will engage with examples of excellent preaching, with the goal of beginning to develop their own style of sermon preparation and delivery.

***Course Resources***

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**Required Course Texts/Bibliography**

**All required texts will be available on Quercus/Library reading list**

Book: Alcántara, Jared E. *The Practices of Christian Preaching : Essentials for Effective Proclamation*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Academic, a division of Baker Publishing Group, 2019.

Book - Allen, Ronald J. *Patterns of Preaching: A Sermon Sampler*. St. Louis: Chalice Press, 1998.

Chapters - Fry Brown, Teresa. *Delivering the Sermon: Voice, Body and Animation in Proclamation*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2008. [Chapter 3 and 5](#).

Handbook: Travis, Sarah. *To Preach the Good News: A Preaching Handbook for Presbyterians in Canada*. Available for free download from [presbyterian.ca](http://presbyterian.ca)

Chapter - Long, Thomas G. *The Witness of Preaching*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Louisville: Westminster/ John Knox Press, 2005, Chapter 4.

## Course Website

Quercus: <https://q.utoronto.ca/>

This course uses Quercus for its course website. To access it, go to the UofT Quercus login page at <https://q.utoronto.ca/> and login using your UTORid and password. Once you have logged in to Quercus using your UTORid and password, look for the **My Courses** module, where you'll find the link to the website for all your Quercus-based courses. (Your course registration with ACORN gives you access to the course website in Quercus.) Information for students about using Quercus can be found at: <https://community.canvaslms.com/docs/DOC-10701> . Students experiencing difficulties accessing Quercus should contact the registrar's office of their college.

## ***Course Schedule (subject to change)***

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### **Week 1**

*September 9*

Welcome to the World of Preaching!

**Read:** Alcántara, Introduction  
Travis, Introduction.

**Watch:** Bishop Yvette Flunder  
<https://youtu.be/y0NdKpQD7x4>

## **Week 2**

September 16

Preaching as Conversation

**Read:** Alcántara, Ch 1  
Travis, Chapters 1-4

**Watch:** Bishop Michael Curry <https://youtu.be/9czWAZnNUT4>

## **Week 3**

*September 23*

Exegesis for Preachers: Part I – Conversations WITH the Text

**Read:** Alcántara, Ch 2.  
Travis Ch 5 and 6

**Watch:** Barbara Brown Taylor <https://youtu.be/NhlmqnHtBUg>

## **Week 4**

*September 30*

Exegesis for Preachers: Part II – Conversations ABOUT the Text

**Read:** Allen, Patterns of Preaching: Introduction and Patterns # 1,2,4,11,13,18,23,28,31,34.  
Travis Ch 8,9

**Watch:** Fred Craddock <https://youtu.be/OobgXCEtmes>

## **Week 5**

*October 7*

Exegesis for Preachers Part III: Conversations with the Congregation

**Read:** Alcántara, Ch 5 and 6  
Travis: Chapter 7

**Watch:** Junia Joplin [https://youtu.be/XP2j\\_lk06BE](https://youtu.be/XP2j_lk06BE)

**Week 6**

*October 14*

The Funeral Sermon

**Read** Alcántara Ch 3 and 4

**Watch:** Nadia Bolz-Weber <https://youtu.be/XyoxUwdSnzA>  
(sermon begins at 50:00)

**Week 7**

*October 21*

Crafting the Sermon

**Read:** Travis, Ch 10.  
Long, Chapter 4.

**Watch:** Anna Carter Florence Sermon  
<https://youtu.be/hwrHfxtIH3w>

DUE: EXEGESIS PAPERS AND SERMONS

**Week 8**

*November 4*

*Delivering the Sermon*

**Read** Fry Brown: Ch 3 and 4

**Watch:** A sermon of your choice (Pay special attention to the delivery of the sermon)

**Week 9**

*November 11*

Preaching Funeral Sermons

**Week 10**

*November 18*

Class Sermons

**Week 11**

*November 25*

Class Sermons

**Week 12**

*December 2*

## ***Evaluation***

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### **Requirements**

The final grade for the course will be based on evaluations in four areas:

1. Participation 15%
2. The Funeral Sermon 20%
3. 'Tik Tok' sermons 15%
4. Exegetical exercise and sermon manuscript 30%
5. Sermon Preached in Class 20%

### **ASSIGNMENTS: DETAILS AND DUE DATES**

#### **1. Engagement**

We learn to preach by listening to preachers. We learn to preach by reflecting and conversing about the nature of God's action in the world. In this class we will listen and read, reflect and engage in conversation. I expect that you will come to class each week prepared to discuss the readings for the week. I expect that you will pay attention to sermons we watch/listen to, and offer your opinions and questions.

Students are also asked to watch one sermon each week (links provided). Please be prepared to discuss your impressions of the effectiveness of the sermon. As you watch the sermons, please answer the following questions

What was the main point of this sermon?

What did this sermon inspire me to do?

What did I love about this sermon?

What made me uncomfortable about this sermon?

**Evaluative Criteria:** Contribution to class discussions (by listening, speaking, asking questions etc), participation in peer evaluations, familiarity with course readings and materials, attendance (including punctuality).

## 2. 'Tik Tok' Sermons

Prepare and record a 1-2 minute mini sermon on a psalm. Upload to an unlisted youtube channel and share the link with the professor. Due Oct 21.

## 3. Prepare and Preach a Funeral Sermon

Imagine that a member of your congregation has died, and you have been asked to deliver the funeral sermon. Invent the circumstances of the person's death and the family context. Choose an appropriate biblical text, and prepare a short sermon to be preached to the class. The sermon should be 5 MINUTES MAXIMUM.

Think through the circumstances of the death. Prepare a brief comment about a) the circumstances of the death; b) the family context of the deceased; c) the location of the funeral (i.e. Funeral home/ church/ graveside); d) why you chose this particular scripture text. You will share this information with the class immediately prior to preaching your funeral sermon. Due November 11. See Rubric.

## 4. Exegetical Paper and Sermon Manuscript

- a) Prepare an exegetical paper based on a lectionary text for Year A: Advent. This paper should be approximately 3000 words. The form of this paper is **to follow the Exegetical Method for Preachers taught in class**. This means that your paper describes your experience with the process of exegesis outlined by the instructor. You must cite at least **10 sources** that are found in TST libraries.
- b) Prepare a sermon based on your exegetical work. This sermon should be approximately 1200-1500 words. It may follow a pattern as described in Allen's Patterns of Preaching. Please identify your focus and function statements. Due November 4. **See Rubric**

## 5. Sermon Preached In-Class

### Delivery and Assessment:

- a. Revise the sermon you wrote for your exegesis assignment according to the professor's feedback and your reflection.
- b. Deliver your sermon to the class. The sermon should be 10-12 minutes. Members of the class will provide feedback following the presentation of the sermon. Due In class: November 18, November 25, December 2. **See Rubric**

### Grading System - Basic Degree Students

1000, 2000 and 3000 level courses use the following numerical grading scale:

90-100 (A+)      Exceptional

### Grading System - Graduate Degree Students

5000, 6000 and 7000 level courses use the following alpha grading scale:

A+      (90-100)      Profound & creative

85-89 (A)	Outstanding	A	(85-89)	Outstanding
80-84 (A-)	Excellent	A-	(80-84)	Excellent
77-79 (B+)	Very Good	B+	(77-79)	Very Good
73-76 (B)	Good	B	(73-76)	Good
70-72 (B-)	Acceptable	B-	(70-72)	Satisfactory
0-69 (FZ)	Failure	FZ	(0-69)	Failure

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

## ***Policies***

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***A note about “triggers”:*** As you prepare for your vocation, you will encounter situations in class and in the real world that stretch the limits of your emotional capacity. If you are struggling with your emotions, please reach out to the Professor. In this class, you are welcome to turn off your screen for a couple of minutes, or take a walk if you need time to pull yourself together. If your distress continues, please reach out to the Registrar’s office whose staff will be ready to assist you. In your practice of ministry you will not necessarily have an opportunity to collect yourself before responding to uncomfortable emotions. It is vital that you learn coping skills and strategies for caring for yourself.

***Class attendance.*** Students are expected to conduct themselves in a manner congruent with the vocation they are seeking to enter and in which they desire to give leadership. To that end, it is a regulation of Knox College that a minimum of approximately 80% attendance at courses (10 of 12 weeks) is required for credit; 100% attendance is expected at seminar courses. Habitual lateness for class will be counted as absence.

Teaching and learning are interactive, not passive, activities. Therefore, students may not “attend” an in-person class through unauthorized audio or video streaming or by watching or listening to a recording; instructors are not obligated to record or permitted to stream their in-person classes. Online classes that include a synchronous video component require the same level of attendance as an in-person course, and students may not “attend” by watching or listening to a recording. Online classes that include an asynchronous component require participation in all the activities for each week or module to meet the attendance requirement. Students requiring accommodations to attend class must present medical and/or Accessibility Services documentation that outlines the type and duration of accommodation(s) required.

***Class recording.*** Much of the learning that goes on in the virtual or in-person classroom is founded upon mutual disclosure that takes place between instructor and student, and between students. Parties outside of this learning community have not committed themselves to this relationship of trust. A student without an approved accommodation who wishes to make an audio recording of an in-person class must secure the agreement of the instructor and all classmates; livestreaming and video recordings are not permitted. Online video-streamed classes may be recorded at the discretion of the instructor. Personal recordings may be used only by the student who made the recording; no recording may be reproduced, posted, or distributed without the written permission of the instructor.

***Late work (BD).*** Basic Degree students are expected to hand in assignments by the date given in the course outline. If you need more time to complete an assignment you must contact the Professor prior

to the due date. There is no penalty for late work. The absolute deadline for the course is the examination day scheduled for the course or the last day of exam week for the semester in which the course is taught, whichever is sooner.

Students with documented medical or compassionate difficulties or exceptional reasons (e.g., a death in the family or a serious illness) are kindly requested to consult with their faculty adviser or basic degree director, who should make a recommendation on the matter to the instructor and request an SDF. The absolute deadline for obtaining an SDF for the course is the examination day scheduled for the course or the last day of examination week, whichever is sooner. An SDF must be requested from the registrar's office in the student's college of registration no later than the last day of exam week 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.

**Late work (Graduate).** The prima facie deadline for the completion of work in a course is the last day of the examination week for the trimester in which the course is taken. Students are expected to meet the course deadlines of the instructor offering the course and are advised to plan their research projects accordingly. Students who find themselves unable to meet deadlines for completing coursework can, under certain conditions, receive extensions for completing the work after the dates set by the college in which the course is offered.

The authority to grant an extension for the completion of work in a course beyond the original TST or college deadline (whichever is earlier) for that course rests with the student's college Graduate Director, not the instructor of the course. Nevertheless, the instructor's signature is required for course extension requests to be processed. Students will petition their college Graduate Director for extensions, using a standard form provided by TST on its website. See Section 7.11 of the Conjoint Graduate Degree Handbook.

**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 to ACORN. Grades are not official until they are posted to ACORN. Course grades may be adjusted where they do not comply with University Assessment and Grading Practices Policy found at <https://governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/secretariat/policies/grading-practices-policy-university-assessment-and-january-26-2012>, policies found in the TST conjoint program handbooks, or college grading policy.

**Inclusive Language.** In your assignments and class discussions, you are expected to use language that is inclusive for people, and use a variety of terms to refer to God. Knox College has an inclusive language policy, available at [https://knox.utoronto.ca/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/Knox-College-Policy\\_Use-of-Language-Policy-and-Glossary\\_221003.pdf](https://knox.utoronto.ca/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/Knox-College-Policy_Use-of-Language-Policy-and-Glossary_221003.pdf).

**Accessibility.** Students with a disability or health consideration, whether temporary or permanent, are entitled to accommodation. Students in conjoint degree programs must register at the University of Toronto's Accessibility Services offices; information is available at <http://www.studentlife.utoronto.ca/as>. 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 their head of college or delegate according to the Graduate program Handbook linked from <http://www.tst.edu/academic/resources-forms/handbooks> and the University of Toronto *Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters* <https://governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/secretariat/policies/code-behaviour-academic-matters-july-1-2019>. 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: <https://www.trinity.utoronto.ca/library/research/theology/avoiding-plagiarism-in-theological-writing/>

**Use of Generative AI, e.g., ChatGPT.** While AI may be used as a conversation partner in developing your assignments, you may not submit assignments generated by AI unless it is specifically required by the instructor for a particular assignment.

**Other academic offences.** TST students come under the jurisdiction of the University of Toronto *Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters* <https://governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/secretariat/policies/code-behaviour-academic-matters-july-1-2019>.

**Back-up copies.** Please make back-up copies of assignments 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 me may end up in your spam or junk mail folder. Students in non-conjoint programs should contact the Registrar of their college of registration.

**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 in conjoint programs must 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 for students in conjoint programs. Students in non-conjoint programs should only use the email address they have provided to their college of registration.

## Course Learning Objectives/Outcomes

### Basic Degrees – Knox and TST

<i>This course has the following course-level learning outcomes</i>	
<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Evaluation</b>
1. Critically evaluate effective sermons and discuss the practices of effective preachers that will enhance their own sermons.	Participation Sermons
2. Reflect upon the contextual nature of preaching as it relates to the local and global context of the congregation.	Sermons
3. Demonstrate a working knowledge of exegesis for the preaching task by writing an exegetical paper based on an exegetical method which is applied to sermon development.	Exegesis Papers Sermons
4. Practice the art of preaching a sermon by preparing and delivering a brief funeral homily and a full-length sermon.	Sermons Funeral Homily

<i>A student successfully completing this course has made progress towards the following Knox College degree program learning outcomes:</i>		
<b>MDiv</b>	<b>MTS</b>	<b>MPS</b>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Interprets Scripture and Christian tradition (Reformed), using a variety of methods, sources, and norms, to preach, teach, write, and to provide care and witness. <i>Evaluation:</i> Exegesis, sermons	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates knowledge at a basic level in various theological disciplines. <i>Evaluation:</i> Exegesis, sermons	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates knowledge at a basic level in various theological disciplines, in the Reformed or another tradition. [* the student may come from another tradition] <i>Evaluation:</i> Sermons, exegesis

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates skills in creative, faith-centred, adaptive, and innovative leadership for current and emerging communities of faith. <i>Evaluation:</i> sermons	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Finds, selects, reads, and appropriately integrates theological information. <i>Evaluation:</i> Exegesis, sermons	<input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates knowledge and skills in spiritual care and therapy, grounded in appropriate theories, for professional practice and leadership in community and institutional settings. <i>Evaluation:</i> <i>Click or tap here to enter text.</i>
<input type="checkbox"/> Enhances the vocational and spiritual development, practices, and well-being of self and others. (See Professional and Critical Competencies.) <i>Evaluation:</i> <i>Click or tap here to enter text.</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Engages respectfully and constructively in a theological community of scholarship. <i>Evaluation:</i> participation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates an appropriate spiritual and professional identity formation in relation to specialized practice. <i>Evaluation:</i> sermons
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Analyzes and evaluates social, cultural, and community contexts to enable communities of faith to participate in God’s work and justice in a diverse and changing world. <i>Evaluation:</i> Sermons, participation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Writes and speaks in English sufficiently well to engage in theological discourse. <i>Evaluation:</i> Sermons, exegesis	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Writes and speaks in English sufficiently well to engage in professional practice. <i>Evaluation:</i> Sermons, exegesis