

Course Syllabus

KNT 5515HS – The Theology of Jürgen Moltmann Knox College, Toronto School of Theology Winter 2026

Instructor Information

Instructor: John A. Vissers, Professor of Systematic Theology
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Course Identification

Course Number: Course Code KNT5515HS
Course Format: *In-person onsite*
Course Name: The Theology of Jürgen Moltmann
Course Location: Knox College, Room TBA
Class Times: Wednesdays, 11:00 am. – 1:00 p.m.

Course Description

This is a doctoral seminar in which we read excerpts from seminal texts in the Moltmann corpus, namely *Theology of Hope*, *The Crucified God*, *The Church in the Power of the Spirit*, *The Trinity and the Kingdom of God*, with additional selections from *God in Creation*, *The Way of Jesus Christ*, *The Spirit of Life*, *The Coming Of God*, and *The Living God and the Fullness of Life*. By the end of the seminar, students will have a thorough introduction to Moltmann's theology, its problems and possibilities, and its significance for contemporary Christian faith and life.

Course Resources

Required Books

Moltmann, Jürgen. *Jürgen Moltmann: Collected Readings*. Edited by Margaret Kohl, Introduction by Richard Bauckham. Fortress Press, 2014.

Moltmann, Jürgen. *The Living God and the Fullness of Life*. Westminster John Knox, 2014.

Recommended Books

Bauckham, Richard. *The Theology of Jürgen Moltmann*. T & T Clark, 1995.

Moltmann, Jürgen. *Theology of Hope*. SCM Press, 1967.

Moltmann, Jürgen. *The Crucified God*. Fortress Press, 2015.

Moltmann, Jürgen. *The Church in the Power of the Spirit*. SCM Press, 1977.

Moltmann, Jürgen. *The Trinity and the Kingdom of God*. SCM Press, 1981.

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>.

Course Schedule

Week 1: Wednesday, January 7

Jürgen Moltmann, 1926-2024: An Introduction

Required Reading: *Collected Readings*, 1-6.

Week 2: Wednesday, January 14

Theology of Hope

Required Reading: *Collected Readings*, Chapter 1, 7-34.

Recommended: *Theology of Hope*, Chapters I-V.

Week 3: Wednesday, January 21

The Crucified God

Required Reading: *Collected Readings*, Chapter 2, 35-64.

Recommended Reading: *The Crucified God*, Chapters 1-8.

Week 4: Wednesday, January 28

The Church in the Power of the Spirit (Ecclesiology)

Required Reading: *The Church in the Power of the Spirit*, Chapter I, II.4, III.6. VII.

Recommended Reading: *The Church in the Power of the Spirit*, Chapters I-VII.

Week 5: Wednesday, February 4

The Trinity and the Kingdom

Required Reading: *Collected Readings*, Chapter 3, 65-102.

Required Reading: *The Trinity and the Kingdom*, Chapters I-VI

Week 6: Wednesday, February 11

God in Creation

Required Reading: *Collected Readings*, Chapter 4, 103-130.

Recommended Reading: *God in Creation*, Chapters I – Conclusion.

Week 7: READING WEEK (No Class on February 18)

Week 8: Wednesday, February 25

The Way of Jesus Christ (Christology)

Required Reading: *Collected Readings*, Chapter 5, 131-156.

Recommended Reading: *The Way of Jesus Christ*, Chapters I-VII.

Week 9: Wednesday, March 4

The Spirit of Life (Pneumatology)

Required Reading: *Collected Readings*, Chapter 6, 157-197.

Recommended Reading: *The Spirit of Life*, Chapters I-XII.

Week 10: Wednesday, March 11

The Coming of God (Eschatology)

Required Reading: Chapter 7, 199-226

Recommended Reading: *The Coming of God*, Chapter I – Conclusion.

Week 11: Wednesday, March 18

Ethics of Hope

Required Reading: *Collected Readings*, Chapter 8, 227-280.

Recommended Reading: *The Ethics of Hope*, Chapter I – Conclusion.

Week 12: Wednesday, March 25

The Living God and the Fullness of Life (1)

Required Reading: *The Living God and the Fullness of Life*, Chapters 1-4, 1-69.

Week 13: Wednesday, April 1

The Living God and the Fullness of Life (2)

Required Reading: *The Living God and the Fullness of Life*, Chapters 4-11, 71-207.

Week 14: Examination Week

Final Paper Due: April 8, 5:00 p.m.

Course Requirements

1. Attendance and participation. Your full involvement during the seminar is required to achieve a thorough understanding of Moltmann's theology through interaction with the instructor, the course material, and other students. Seminars will consist of lectures, student presentations, and discussions. Students must attend at least 80% of classes to be eligible for credit, i.e., not more than two excused absences.

2. Thoughtful and careful completion of the required readings. All students are expected to obtain and/or have access to the course texts and complete the weekly readings. Readings must be done before class; students should be prepared to discuss the readings in class. The total number of pages of readings required for this course is approximately 600 pages, 50 pages of primary text in per week.

3. Critical Summative Papers/In-class presentations: All students will submit a brief report on the required readings from Moltmann's texts. Each week, one student will present their paper and lead a discussion on it in class. The presentation should be a two-page review of the document that includes a summary, key issues, and critical questions. These papers are each worth 5% of the final grade (10 papers X 5% = 50% total).

4. Major Research Paper: All students will write a research paper on Moltmann's theology, a topic to be chosen in consultation with the instructor, worth 50% of the final grade.

Course Grading

Critical Summative Papers	50%
Major Research Paper	50%

This course will be graded according to the policies and procedures of the Graduate Degree Handbook of the Toronto School of Theology.

Course Policies

Handbooks: Policies for courses are contained in the TST Graduate Degree Handbook (You can find the TST Graduate Degree Handbook at <http://www.tst.edu/content/handbooks>) and the Knox Student Handbook (You can find the content of the Knox College Student Handbook at <https://knox.utoronto.ca/documents>).

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.

Upload assignments: All assignments are to be uploaded either as .pdf or .docx files onto Quercus.

Late Policy. Basic Degree students are expected to hand in assignments by the date given in the course outline. Please check the Late Policy in the Knox College Student Handbook and the TST

Basic Degree Handbook. 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. This penalty is not applied to students with documented medical or compassionate difficulties or exceptional reasons (e.g., a death in the family or a serious illness); when facing such difficulties students must consult the instructor immediately.

Completion of Course work: all course work (including any late work) must be completed by the end of term; the absolute final due date is the Thursday of examination week. Only in the case of illness (with a note from a doctor), bereavement or other unusual circumstances will an extension be considered, and this must be authorized by the Academic Dean and reported to the Basic Degree Committee and the Faculty of Knox College. 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 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.

Back-up copies. Please keep back-up copies of all essays that have been submitted online.

Course grades. Consistent 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. 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.

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. With the advent of publicly accessible generative AI (GenAI) tools, U of T has been assessing the technological landscape and updating relevant guidelines and protocols as needed. The University will be collecting and sharing the guidelines and protocols as they become available. Additional resources are regarding GenAI usage by faculty, students, researchers, and staff are posted at <https://ai.utoronto.ca/>. **Students may use generative AI tools like Microsoft 365 Copilot or ChatGPT for research, but all use of generative AI for composition to complete an assignment is strictly forbidden. All use of online resources must be documented appropriately.**

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>.

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. 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.

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.

A note about “trigger” warnings: You are preparing for vocations (congregational ministry, spiritual care, psychotherapy, teaching, research, etc.) that by their nature present you with stimulating situations, including domestic violence, child sexual abuse, effects of addiction, and other very traumatic events. Your vocational preparation anticipates that you will meet such situations in the real world, that you will not be warned about the nature of the stimulus, and that you have to protect a person from your own reaction to situations that may “trigger” a response in you. Your faculty advisor, the registrar’s staff, and the Ecumenical Chaplains can direct you to resources for you to engage in care for your own self. In your studies you will likely not be warned about the kind of “triggering” event that you may encounter. In this course, if you begin to lose control of your emotions, you may leave with one colleague from the class until you can collect yourself, or you may engage in other practices (journaling, meditation) that allow you to regain control. If you or your colleague are concerned that you cannot regain control or are unduly distressed, you and your colleague should seek assistance from the Knox Registrar’s office. Staff there have access to immediate assistance. In the end, your emotional safety is your own responsibility.

Consultation: Please do not hesitate to consult the instructor with any questions you have.

Course Objectives/Learning Outcomes

After this seminar, students will have a broad knowledge of Moltmann’s theological corpus. They will be able to situate it in the context of contemporary theology, describe its significance, and discuss its overall strengths and weaknesses. Students will also have an in-depth and critical knowledge of one doctrinal theme in Moltmann’s theology.

EXPECTATIONS and EVALUATIONS: In this course, students are expected to demonstrate the following by fulfilling the relevant assignments as either excellent or outstanding:

1. Depth and Breadth of Knowledge:	Readings and Class Participation Major Research Paper
2. Research and Scholarship	Major Research Paper
3. Level of Application of Knowledge	Major Research Paper
4. Professional Capacity or Autonomy	Major Research Paper
5. Level of Communication Skills	Class Presentation and Major Paper
6. Awareness of the Limits of Knowledge Participation	Major Research Paper and Class