Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary  
31-501A & B – Developing and Preaching the Sermon  
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Office: Room 714

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Office Hours: Wednesday 10:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. or by appointment.

Class Hours:  
A: Tuesday 2:30 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.  
B: Monday 6:30 p.m. – 9:30 p.m.

Course Description:
This course is designed to help students find their individual preaching voice as they develop the abilities and skills necessary for the construction and delivery of effective sermons. The essential nature of the course moves beyond sermon preparation, to preparation of the preacher. Course work will include readings, lectures, video presentations, discussions, and group and class exercises. It will stress the preacher’s responsibility of preaching as an imperative ecclesial act and the importance of proclaiming transformative good news as the essence of the preaching task that undergird a message that helps to direct the hearers in their Christian discipleship. It will also explore the essential nature of the Holy Spirit in preaching, the significance of biblical exegesis and theological reflection in proclaiming the Gospel, and the critical need to contextualize sermons in order to appropriately address the listening congregation, especially as it pertains to the advancing justice in the world. Students will be required to reflect critically on the assigned texts, and to participate in the evaluation of their sermons and those of their classmates.

Course Outcomes:
Knowing:
Students will understand the sermon as the proclamation of the Gospel (good news), the Bible as foundational to preaching, the role of the Holy Spirit in preaching, and worship as the context for preaching. Be familiar with different preaching styles, able to select styles that are appropriate to both the text and the context of each preaching event, and know how to include interpretive material in a way that enriches the sermon while honoring the sources of such material and engaging the particularities of the preaching event.

Being:
Students will begin to claim their identity as preachers who have begun the process of finding his/her individual preaching voice; who value the place of preaching as proclamation of the Gospel; who understand the need for continued learning and development of their preaching skills; and are committed to honing their art as preachers in order to embody the good news of the sermon. Students will become preachers that are sensitive and responsive to the diversity of race and culture that represents the worldview that is the church, and help all voices to be heard.
Doing:
Be able to prepare and deliver listenable sermons that offer to the hearers transformative
good news and a message that challenges or advances their Christian discipleship; and that
are properly exegeted, well structured, and theologially sound. Offer through word and
personal witness that includes embodiment, sermons that are relevant and appropriate to the
context of the congregation, in that they consider the local and global culture and events in a
way that affirms social justice for all people.

Class Expectations:
1. That all students will attend all class sessions on time and be prepared to participate fully
in class activities.
2. That all assigned material will be read as scheduled, and all assignments will be
completed and turned in on time.
3. That sermons will be prepared and preached as scheduled to the present congregation,
except where specifically noted otherwise.
4. That the New Revised Standard Version of the Bible will be used for preaching.
5. That inclusive language will be used for God and human beings in written and oral work.
6. That all students understand and adhere to G-ETS policies on plagiarism (see Student
Handbook). This includes a clear understanding of the method of including and
recognizing the source of interpretive material in sermons.
7. That all students understand that the content of the course represents a beginning point in
the ongoing development and continuous growth of their preaching skills.
8. That the schedule and syllabus WILL be modified and additional material added as
the professor considers necessary to the course and the development of students.
9. There will be no extensions allowed past the end of the term.

Classroom Culture:
- A Culture of Respect: In order to maintain a culture of respect for human diversity and
collegiality within the classroom, students are expected to engage the professor and their
fellow students as colleagues and to receive all material with respect for the author.
Participation in class activities must take into account the right of every student to be heard,
which requires students to avoid interrupting the presentations of others or claiming an
inordinate amount of time in putting forward their point of view such that it prevents the
engagement of other students. Groups may be created for some of the class work and
students are expected to participate with integrity with the members of their group.
- Laptop Usage in Class: Because of the inability to ensure that students use laptops only to
take notes in class, the use of laptops is permitted only with specific approval from the
professor. All students who wish to use their laptops in class, must sign a covenantal
agreement regarding its use, prior to using their laptops in a class setting. Students that use
their laptop for anything other than specific class work will be disallowed from further class
use.
- Telephone Calls: Please turn off your telephone when you come to class. If there is an
ongoing emergency situation that may require you to receive a call, please let the professor
know before class begins. When that is the case, please put your phone on vibrate and leave the classroom before answering any call that you receive.

Required Texts: (Prices listed reflect the original publisher’s price)
8. The New Revised Standard Version of the Bible. Please have your NRSV Bible available in hard copy or ready on your computer for use at each class.

Secondary Texts

Grading:
Preparation for each class, including a pre-class assignment, faithful attendance and full participation in class and group activities. Students are expected to be present and on time for all class sessions, including timely return from breaks. Absence from 3 or more classes will be considered as non-attendance. Late arrival at or early departure from classes will also be considered in determining class attendance.

Three to five sermons preached in class. The grading of sermons will include both the content and the delivery. Some sermons will be recorded for later review. The final grading of sermons will reflect demonstrated improvement. There will be different styles of focuses of sermons. Specific sermon requirements will be provided in a detailed syllabus prior to the beginning of class.

Pre-Class Assignment:
- **Read Graceful Speech** by Lucy Lind Hogan
- **Prepare a 3-5 page paper** (12pt Times New Roman double spaced with 1 inch margins and numbered pages) that engages the substance of the text to be used for discussion and handed in at the first class session.
- **Contents of the Paper:** A critical reflection that uses theological language that articulates your definition of a preacher; your understanding of what it takes to become an effective preacher; and the essential requirements for proclamation of the gospel. Your paper should engage specific learnings gained from the book, especially any that were new to you or that reinforced your understanding of what is required to be an effective preacher. Please give special attention to the ideas the author recommends for preachers in the preparation of themselves for preaching. In place of footnotes, when referring to this text, include page numbers in parentheses for all quoted material or materials that are paraphrased or extensively referenced. Use footnotes for material taken from other texts or from online resources.

*Weekly Schedule: TBD*

*Selected Bibliography:*