

MEADS

Ministerial Education and Discipleship Studies

Mission and Evangelism

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August 6-10, 2012 1:30 – 5:00 pm

I. Course Description

There will be twenty (20) hours of classroom lecture, discussion, and small group work, as well as assigned readings and written work outside of class. Students will:

- A. explore scriptural and theological foundations for mission,
- B. learn to select, evaluate and learn to use evangelism resources for personal and congregational mission,
- C. understand and be able to implement authentic mission in a pluralistic and diverse society,
- D. develop skills to implement a strategic vision that promotes mission and supports Community of Christ congregations in alignment with Mission Initiatives.

II. Required Reading

Please read the following prior to the first day of class.

Guder, Darrell L. *The Continuing Conversion of the Church*. Eerdmans, 2000.
ISBN 978-0-8028-4703-4.

Halter, Hugh and Matt Smay. *The Tangible Kingdom: Creating Incarnational Community*. Jossey-Bass, 2008. ISBN 978-0-470-18897-2

Halter, Hugh and Matt Smay. *The Tangible Kingdom Primer: An Eight Week Guide to Incarnational Community*. CRM, 2009. ISBN 978-0-9823233-0-4

Smith-Christopher, Daniel L. *Jonah, Jesus and Other Good Coyotes: Speaking Peace to Power in the Bible*. Abingdon Press. 2007. ISBN 978-0-687-34383-6.

Review: *Sharing in Community of Christ: Exploring Identity, Mission, Message and Belief*, 2nd edition (Herald House <http://heraldhouse.org>).

Review: Community of Christ Mission Initiatives (<http://www.cofchrist.org/mission/>).

[Please bring scriptures and assigned texts to class]

III. Course Requirements

- A. Show evidence that class texts have been read and studied prior to class.
- B. Write a one-to-two-page testimony on “Christ’s Mission, Our Mission: Why it Matters to Me.” to be shared in small groups on the first day of class.
- C. Attend all class sessions and participate in discussions and activities.
- D. No later than thirty days following the completion of the course (due on September 9, 2012), submit a five-to-seven-page paper (double spaced, 12 point type, electronic Word document) on mission and evangelism. Send as a Word attachment with YOUR NAME on each page to Karin Peter (kpeter@CofChrist.org and Robin Linkhart rlinkhart@cofchrist.org).

IV. Course Outline

Session 1

- A. **“Christ’s Mission, Our Mission: Why it Matters to Me.”** Sharing and discussion of written assignment.
- B. **“Foundations of Mission and Evangelism.”** Chapters 1, 2, and 3 of *The Continuing Conversion of the Church* by Darrell L. Guder.

Session 2

- A. **“Challenges in Mission.”** Chapters 4, 5, and 6 of *The Continuing Conversion of the Church* by Darrell L. Guder.
- B. **Mission Initiatives Review**

Session 3

- A. **“Mission and Peace and Justice Ministries?”** Chapters 1-6 of *Jonah, Jesus and Other Good Coyotes* by Daniel L. Smith-Christopher.

Session 4

- A. **“Mission as Incarnational Community.”** *The Tangible Kingdom* by Hugh Halter and Matt Smay
- B. Chapter 7 of *Jonah, Jesus and Other Good Coyotes* by Daniel L. Smith-Christopher.
- C. Chapter 7 of *The Continuing Conversion of the Church* by Darrell L. Guder.

Session 5

- A. **“Second Thoughts on Second Thoughts.”** Review chapter 9 of Smith-Christopher.

- B. *The Tangible Kingdom Primer: An Eight Week Guide to Incarnational Community* overview
- C. Updates and Review of selected resources from the Missionary Tool Kit.

V. Final Paper or Project

Choose **one** of the following topics as a means of integrating the course content with your ongoing expression of witness and mission.

- A. Based primarily on Darrell Guder's seventh chapter, "Converting the Church: The Local Congregation," but drawing from all course content, write a paper on the following questions about Community of Christ congregation(s) with which you serve:
 - a. What are three congregational behaviors that you feel must change so that the Community of Christ congregation(s) can be more faithful in its witness?
 - b. At the same time, in what ways does current congregational life help us be faithful to our mission?
 - c. Describe programs or processes you would put in place to alter those behaviors? What outcomes would you anticipate?
 - d. How might Daniel Smith-Christopher's "Second Thoughts" (Chapter 9), or reflections on *The Tangible Kingdom* inform these programs/processes?
- B. Addressing the following questions, explore Daniel Smith-Christopher's concept of crossing borders in light on Doctrine and Covenants 163:
 - a. What does it mean to cross borders in the Community of Christ tradition, present congregational expressions, and our call to pursue peace?
 - b. How would generous sharing of the sacraments be reflected in crossing borders? Care of the Earth? Education? Priesthood? The Temple?
 - c. How would your congregation look if it were to more fully engage in the practice of crossing borders as "good coyotes"? Be practical and specific, but also visionary and prophetic.
- C. One of our missional goals is to "create diverse communities." You live and minister in communities that are becoming more theologically, culturally, socially, and ethnically diverse. Based on insights gained from our readings and discussion regarding incarnational community and diversity, write a paper responding to the following questions:
 - a. What are the scriptural and theological principles that call us to "create diverse communities"? Why does it matter?
 - b. What borders might your congregation or mission center be called to cross in order to more fully live out the mission initiatives?
 - c. Develop a plan for helping your congregation or mission center to take the next important steps to become an incarnational community of disciples. How will you support, resource, and engage in these opportunities?
 - d. Describe what resources and support from the World Church, field or mission center would be most helpful to you in this journey?

- D. Prepare a class for camp, reunion, a congregational education or witnessing initiative, or an invitational class/event/activity using the new church member's manual, *Walking with Jesus: Reflections on the Journey* (or another agreed-upon resource in the Missionary Tool Kit).
- a. Think about the many ways people engage in learning. How will you draw on the experience and context of each class member?
 - b. Include learning outcomes for the overall class and for each session.
 - c. In what ways will spiritual formation practices be included?
 - d. How can fellowship and community develop in class?
 - e. Describe how invitation will be modeled.
 - f. List materials needed for each session.
 - g. Develop and include an evaluation tool for class members to complete at the end of the class.
- E. Based on Guder's discussion of the reduction of the gospel in our time, and based on Hall's discussion of post-Christendom witness, write a testimony of Christ and the Christian way that is authentic in a pluralistic world. Assume that you are sharing your testimony with a non-Christian (either an agnostic or atheist, a person who is "spiritual" but not religious, or a member of another world religion). Consider some of the following questions in your response:
- a. Why Jesus? Why do you declare yourself a follower of Jesus? What difference has it made for you?
 - b. What significance does the cross have for you? What about the resurrection? What other Christian symbolism is especially meaningful to you, and why?
 - c. What does salvation through Christ mean in a Christian fellowship that promotes community and pursues peace?
 - d. How does Jesus of Nazareth matter in the realities of our postmodern world?
 - e. What does it mean to belong to the Body of Christ? How would you define your mission and purpose as a member of Christ's body?
 - f. How might a Muslim (Sikh, Taoist, Jew) encounter God through the ministry and message of Jesus Christ?
- F. Using ideas and learnings from Halter and Smay (*The Tangible Kingdom, The Tangible Kingdom Primer*) and from class discussions, write a reflection paper comparing "attractional" and "incarnational" approaches to mission. As you share your own experience with each answer the following questions:
- a. Have you been more of focused on being secure or a sojourner ?
 - b. What is your missional posture? What does it say about you as a disciple?
 - c. Describe how you build authentic relationships with others.
 - d. In what ways have you struggled with environmental consumerism and materialism? How has this affected your discipleship and witness?
 - e. How are you balancing hospitality, communion, and witness?
- G. Or, you may wish to write on another mission topic mutually arranged between you and your instructor.