

MN 131W-CL Introduction to Preaching: The Preaching Body

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Elective – Residential or Synchronous

Open to anyone who has not taken MN230; CL students prioritized; 1 credit (credit/no credit only)

Tuesdays 3:20-5:10 pm (Central) in Movement Room and Zoom

Course Description: This highly experiential course gives particular attention to the human body as the instrument through which the Gospel resonates and is proclaimed. Students engage in embodied prayer practices and learn exercises to care for and warm up their bodies and voices for the sake of free, uninhibited proclamation of the gospel. All bodies and all voices are warmly welcomed. *This course is one-credit but meets for two hours weekly due to its experiential nature. No more than one hour of work will be assigned outside of class.*

Objectives: As a result of this course, students will know how to:

1. Navigate basic tools to aid in the movement from text to sermon (*Practice of Missio Dei in Word and Sacrament*)
2. Attend to their bodies as vital instruments of proclamation (*Practice of Personal Faith and Integrity*)
3. Lead themselves through a warmup before preaching (*Practice of Curiosity*)

Books:

Required

There are no required books for this course.

All required articles or chapters will be posted on Castle Commons.

Recommended

Women's Voices and the Practice of Preaching by Nancy Lammers Gross

Transforming Preaching by Ruthanna Hooke

Freeing the Natural Voice: Imagery and Art in the Practice of Voice and Language, Revised and Expanded by Kristin Linklater

Ways of the Word: Learning to Preach for Your Time and Place by Sally Brown and Luke Powery

The Divine Voice: Christian Proclamation and the Theology of Sound by Stephen H. Webb

Netiquette: Treat all Zoom sessions as you would an in-person, face-to-face learning experience. Some things cannot be avoided (i.e., children, pets, partners, and garbage trucks passing by.). But commit to controlling the things you can in order to honor everyone's time and efforts. This means setting up your environment to be conducive to learning. Your screen should reflect mindfulness during learning and preaching, as well as avoiding distracting activities such as eating large meals, cooking, cleaning, or driving during class time. Do not participate from a reclined or laying position or bed unless it is a required accommodation per your medical provider.

You are expected to have your camera on and be able to unmute to speak at all times.

This class will not use the chat feature on Zoom. Why?

- Honor the neurodiversity of your colleagues, some of whom find the chat feature distracting to their learning.
- Practice being fully present to one another – particularly the speaker.

- “Multitasking has been found to increase the production of the stress hormone cortisol as well as the fight-or-flight hormone adrenaline, which can overstimulate your brain and cause mental fog or scrambled thinking.”¹
- Practice using your physical voice and body to articulate your thoughts – you likely have much more practice writing.
- Speaking is inherently vulnerable. Speaking to an invisible crowd is excruciating.
- Preaching is not a speech others happen to overhear – the listeners provide vital nonverbal (and sometimes verbal) feedback.
- Residential students don’t miss hearing others’ thoughts if they do not sign into Zoom. Share your wisdom out loud!

Procedure

This course will meet for **two** hours per week. Much of our time will be spent practicing embodied voicework. Other teaching and learning methods will include 1) interactive lectures, 2) group discussions, and 3) preaching and receiving feedback on brief homilies.

Assignments and Evaluation

This highly experiential course requires active participation, collegial interaction, arriving to class on time, and being prepared to engage in all assignments. Instructions for specific assignments can be found on Castle Commons.

For each class, please dress in comfortable clothes that do not restrict your movement or breathing. If possible, do not wear shoes. I will be asking you to move and make sound in ways that may be unfamiliar to you. Join the class in the room where you can be the least self-conscious about family or roommates seeing or overhearing you.

Body and Voice Questionnaire 5%

Voice Drawings and Poem 5%

3 to 5-minute Homily 10%

Voice Reflection Paper 15%

Attendance, Preparation, Collegiality, Participation 65%

Class Schedule

Week	Date	Topic/Assignment
	<i>For Sept. 12</i>	Complete Body and Voice Questionnaire
1	Sept. 12	Introduction to the Course and One Another
	<i>For Sept. 19</i>	Complete Voice Drawings and Poem <u>Optional:</u> Read Linklater, 7-25
2	Sept. 19	Voice Drawings and Poems
	<i>For Sept. 26</i>	Read Hooke, <i>Transforming Preaching</i> , “Chapter One: Why is it Frightening to Preach?”

¹ Also consider: “Asking the brain to shift attention from one activity to another causes the prefrontal cortex and striatum to burn up oxygenated glucose, the same fuel they need to stay on task. And the kind of rapid, continual shifting we do with multitasking causes the brain to burn through fuel so quickly that we feel exhausted and disoriented after even a short time.” Daniel J. Levitin, “Why the Modern World Is Bad for Your Brain,” *The Observer*, January 18, 2015, sec. Science, <https://www.theguardian.com/science/2015/jan/18/modern-world-bad-for-brain-daniel-j-levitin-organized-mind-information-overload>.

		<u>Optional:</u> Read Linklater, 31-41
3	Sept. 26	Physical Awareness
	<i>For Oct. 3</i>	Read Hooke, <i>Transforming Preaching</i> , “Chapter Two: Is There a Word from the Lord?” <u>Optional:</u> Read Linklater, 43-53
4	Oct. 3	Breathing Awareness
	<i>For Oct. 17</i>	Read Paulsell, <i>The Soul of Higher Education</i> , “Chapter Four: Lectio Divina” <u>Optional:</u> Read Linklater, 65-75
		RESEARCH & READING WEEK, OCT. 9-13
5	Oct. 17	The Touch of Sound
	<i>For Oct. 24</i>	Read your assigned Scripture’s section of <i>Feasting on the Word</i> Prepare your homily <u>Optional:</u> Read Linklater, 87-107
6	Oct. 24	Freeing Vibrations 1
	<i>For Oct. 31</i>	Read your assigned Scripture’s section of <i>Feasting on the Gospels</i> Prepare your homily <u>Optional:</u> Read Linklater, 107-112
7	Oct. 31	Freeing Vibrations 2
	<i>For Nov. 7</i>	Read your assigned Scripture’s section of <i>New Beacon Bible Commentary</i> Prepare your homily <u>Optional:</u> Read Linklater, 54-63, 76-86
8	Nov. 7	Floorwork 1 + 2 Homilies on Matt. 25:1-13
	<i>For Nov. 14</i>	Read your assigned Scripture’s section of <i>Belief: A Theological Commentary on the Bible</i> Prepare your homily <u>Optional:</u> Read Linklater, 112-126
9	Nov. 14	Floorwork 2 + 2 Homilies on Matt. 25:14-30
	<i>For Nov. 28</i>	Read your assigned Scripture’s section of <i>Interpretation: A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching</i> Prepare your homily <u>Optional:</u> Read Linklater, 127-137
		RESEARCH & READING DAYS/THANKSGIVING RECESS, NOV. 21-25
10	Nov. 28	The Channel 1 +2 Homilies on Mk. 13:24-37
	<i>For Dec. 5</i>	Read your assigned Scripture’s section of <i>Fortress Biblical Preaching Commentaries</i> Prepare your homily <u>Optional:</u> Read Linklater, 139-150
11	Dec. 5	The Channel 2 + 2 Homilies on Mk. 1:1-8
	<i>For Dec. 12</i>	Write ~3-page Voice Reflection Paper
12	Dec. 12	Review and Reflection

Late Assignment Policy

Treat your assignments like preaching on a Sunday morning. Unless the circumstances are such that you would not arrive to worship with a sermon prepared, you are expected to turn your assignments in on time. Rescheduling a preaching date is not guaranteed. 10% will be taken off the grade each day an assignment is late.

Affirmation of Commitments to DEI

I inevitably see the world first through the lens of a straight, white, millennial, married, middle-class woman who has spent most of her life in coastal cities and who has had the privilege of higher education. I have done and am doing work to expand my own lens, but I am human, and so I will make mistakes. I ask for grace along the way, as I seek to offer grace to all of you.

Wartburg Theological Seminary is a diverse community, seeking greater diversity, and this diversity is paramount in the beauty of God's good creation. This understanding is grounded in our confession of the diversity within and the unity of the holy and blessed Trinity. Diversity can refer to multiple ways that we identify ourselves, including but not limited to race, national origin, languages, sex, ability, body type, age, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, gender identity, ancestry, veteran status, culture, and/or genetic information. These diversities and more contribute to the perspectives and excellence we, as instructors, bring into the classroom and beyond and will be affirmed.

In the classroom and beyond, we are still learning how to best celebrate multiple perspectives: we invite students to let us know ways to celebrate your identities, pronouns to use, and/or when something is said or assumed in class that concerns you. We acknowledge that for centuries grammar and language have been taught from Western-dominated categories and understandings. We try to engage the Biblical text with an understanding also of how translation has been dominated by white male Western translators and interpreters. In our common work, your suggestions are encouraged and appreciated. How can we improve the effectiveness of this course for you personally and for groups of students?

Topics covered in seminary are often difficult on various planes. When we embrace diverse perspectives, we embrace healthful disagreement—a mark of deep and true community. Please engage in discussion with care and empathy for yourself and others. In this class, we endeavor to embrace the uncomfortable as we critically examine some of our most basic assumptions, values, and beliefs. As you work to bring good courage to this course, we will work to ensure an environment that supports your full participation and risk-taking.

Inclusive Language

It is expected that all Wartburg Theological Seminary students use inclusive and expansive language for humankind and for God in classroom discussion and written assignments. It is appropriate for all members of the Wartburg community—students, staff, and faculty alike—to remind each other of our commitment to the use of inclusive language. For more information regarding Wartburg's policy on inclusive language, please consult the Student and Community Life Handbook.

Learning Disabilities Accommodations Policy

It is Seminary policy to provide, on a flexible and individualized basis, reasonable accommodations to students who have medically documented disability conditions that may affect their ability to participate in course activities or to meet course requirements. Any student who feels they may need a learning accommodation should contact the Academic Dean and complete the Accommodations Request Form. Students are responsible for informing their instructor of any documented disability by the end of the first week of class or upon subsequent diagnosis. For more information regarding Wartburg's policy on Learning Accommodations, please consult the Student and Community Life Handbook.

Writing Center

If you need writing help, contact Writing Center Coordinator Hannah Bernhard at: hbernhard@wartburgseminary.edu

Title IX – Sexual Harassment, Discrimination, and Misconduct

Wartburg Theological Seminary is committed to ensuring a safe environment free of discrimination on the basis of sex, including sexual misconduct and harassment. If you have experienced any incident of sex or gender-based discrimination, harassment, or sexual misconduct, we encourage you to report it. Wartburg faculty and staff are required to report incidents of sex- or gender-based discrimination, harassment, and sexual misconduct of which they are aware. The Director of Community Life and Candidacy, Deacon Kellie Lisi, is the designated Title IX Coordinator. Students may address complaints and grievances related to Title IX to the Title IX coordinator. Reports may be made in person, via email or phone, or via the [Incident Reporting Form \(IRF\)](#). For more information about Wartburg's Title IX policy, please consult the Student and Community Life Handbook.

Plagiarism and Academic Integrity

Members of the Wartburg Theological Seminary community are expected to conduct themselves responsibly and honestly in academic matters. The seminary defines plagiarism as the copying or use of another person's work in any form without acknowledgement. The act of Plagiarism refers not only to the citation of books and articles but also to personal interviews, the Internet, and all other sources of information. Students are expected to submit their own original work for all assignments. Students shall neither represent the work of another as their own nor in any way misrepresent either their own work or the work of another. For more information regarding Wartburg's policy on plagiarism, please consult the Student and Community Life Handbook.