

HT 294W THEOLOGY OF WARTBURG SEMINARY

Instructor: Craig L. Nessian

Elective; Open to all.

1 Credit; letter grade or credit/no credit

This course examines the theology of those who have taught and learned at Wartburg Theological Seminary. After an introduction to the history of the seminary, the course focuses on the theological commitments that characterized the ministry of Wilhelm Loehe, the pastor in Neuendettelsau, Germany, who in the mid-nineteenth century organized and trained pastors and missionaries for service in North America. Liturgy, mission, and diaconal service were central to Loehe's theological understanding. The course considers successive periods in the seminary's history: the leadership of Sigmund and Gottfried Fritschel and the connection with the Iowa Synod, the second generation of Fritschels and the theological influence of J. Michael Reu, and the post-Reu era after the Second World War. What contribution has Wartburg Theological Seminary made to the theological questions of the times? Special attention will be given to continuities in this theological tradition as well as to discontinuities.

OBJECTIVES:

1. To explore the historical narrative of Wartburg Theological Seminary (Practice of Biblical and Theological Wisdom).
2. To understand the theological and mission commitments of Wilhelm Loehe (Practice of *Missio Dei* in Word and Sacrament).
3. To investigate and discuss the theological positions of the Iowa Synod and J. Michael Reu (Practice of Ecclesial Partnership; Practice of Complex Analysis).
4. To reflect on continuities, discontinuities, and innovations in Wartburg's theological tradition (Practice of Immersion in Context).
5. To consider how tradition is "the living faith of the dead" rather than "the dead faith of the living"—Jaroslav Pelikan (Practice of Personal Faith and Integrity).

PROCEDURE: The course will meet once per week. The primary format will be interactive discussion of presentations by the instructor and student-led discussion leadership of assigned readings.

EVALUATION: 1) Class participation based on solid preparation of assigned readings.
2) A summative project based on a historical or theological topic of the student's choice as negotiated with the instructor.

BIBLIOGRAPHY:

- Julius Bodensieck, Editor. *The Encyclopedia of the Lutheran Church*.
Erika Geiger. *The Life, Work, and Influence of Wilhelm Loehe (1808-1872)*.
Lowell C. Green. "J. M. Reu and Reformation Studies."
Albert Llewellyn Hock. *The Pilgrim Colony*.
Kirchliche Zeitschrift 1976-1943. Memorial Ed. *Johann Michael Reu. A Book of Remembrance*.
Carsten Linden and Craig L. Nessian. *Paul Leo: Pastor with Jewish Roots in Flight from Nazism*.
Wilhelm Loehe. *Three Books about the Church*.
Craig L. Nessian, Editor. *The Air I Breathe is Wartburg: The Legacy of William Weiblen*.
**Craig L. Nessian. *Wilhelm Loehe and North America: Historical Perspectives and Living Legacy*.
Craig L. Nessian. *The Theology of Wartburg Theological Seminary*.
**Craig L. Nessian, Editor. *Theology of Wartburg Seminary: A Reader*.
David Ratke. *Confession and Mission, Word and Sacrament: The Ecclesial Theology of Wilhelm Loehe*.
J. Michael Reu. *Dogmatics and Homiletics* (and other texts).
Samuel Salzmann. "Theology of Wartburg Seminary."
A. Spaeth. *Sigmund Fritschel: A Short Biography*.
**William H. Weiblen. *Life Together at Wartburg Theological Seminary*.
William H. Weiblen. "J. Michael Reu—A Self-Made Theologian."

**Required texts.