

THE CHURCH IN URBAN MISSION

Mennonite Brethren Biblical Seminary

IM-699
Wednesdays
Jim Westgate
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Fall 2006
6:00 – 9:00 p.m.
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Course Description: The 21st century church is facing the new “global city.” We have entered a new era of discipling, church planting and church growth. The impact of globalization, internationalization, and urbanization has changed the landscape of our current world. The speed at which our culture is changing will demand that church leadership look to new and creative approaches to do discipling and church. This course will explore the critical factors that are impacting the church, its mission and ministries. We will use a biblical theological approach to developing strategies for ministry and mission that are contextual and relevant to the new “global city.” We will examine new approaches to discipling and the development of transformational leadership. We will evaluate and create new structures and infrastructures to help the church demonstrate a wholistic gospel in a postmodern culture. Together we will “seek the Peace (Shalom) of the city.”

Ministry and Mission Formation Objectives:

1. To examine relevant Biblical passages used as a frame work for urban ministry and mission
2. To formulate a Biblical theology for personal stability and guiding the church in urban mission and ministry.
3. To utilize a biblical theologizing process to address key issues relating to ministry and mission in an urban setting. (poverty, personal and institutional racism and classism, fractured family networks and alternative gang structures, community disintegration and re-gentrification.
4. To examine resource materials in urban sociology, theology, evangelism and ministry in order to provide leadership in a globalized context.
5. To formulate discipling models to equip indigenous leadership for service in the church and the world.

Ecclesial Formation Objectives:

1. To develop an awareness of urban systems and their impact on ministry and the Christian Community.
2. To formulate a process of strategic thinking for addressing the problems and opportunities of urbanism and urbanization and their impact on the local church
3. To provide an exposure to a variety of urban church models for evangelism, ministry and mission.
4. To examine wholistic ministry models to assist the church in ministries of compassion and reconciliation in its surrounding community.

Course Outcomes:

The student should:

- * Know the Biblical themes relating to social, economic, and political issues of urban ministry.
- * Be able to analyze an urban context by using tools from sociology, anthropology, missiology

and theology.

- * Develop strategies for discipleship and church growth in an urban context.
- * Identify and train indigenous transformational leadership for ministry in an urban context.
- * Develop spiritual disciplines for personal health care and to sustain ministry leadership in the city.
- * Provide leadership in designing wholistic outreach ministries.
- * Be capable of designing new communities of reconciliation, justice, and caring centered in Christ's work of reconciliation.

Required Texts:

Harvie Conn and Manuel Ortiz, Urban Ministry. InterVarsity Press, 2001

John Fuder. A Heart for the City: Effective Ministries to the Urban Community
Moody Press, 1999

Robert Linthicum, Transforming Power. InterVarsity Press, 2003

Mark Gornik. To Live in Peace: Biblical Faith and the Changing Inner City. Eerdmans
Pub. 2002

Ron Sider, Philip Olson, Heidi Rolland Unruh. Churches That Make A Difference. Baker
Books, 2002

Glenn Smith, Editor. Towards the Transformation of Our City-Regions. Lausanne
Occasional Paper No. 37. Christian Direction Inc., 2005. ISBN: 2-921840-61-8

Reading:

There will be assigned readings for each class out of the required texts. Students are to read these assigned readings and come to class ready to discuss any portion of these readings.

Book Reviews:

Three critical or applicational book reviews of 3 to 4 pages each. Select any three of the five required books to do your reviews. I suggest that you choose the books that have the greatest interest to you.

- a. Critical Reviews should include a very brief paragraph on the thesis of the book followed by points of agreement and disagreement or questions you raise from the themes in the book.
- b. Applicational book reviews should state the thesis in a brief paragraph and then share principles or models found in the book that you intend on using in your ministry. **(20% of grade)**

First Book Review:

Second Book Review:

Third Book Review:

Research paper/project:

Chose one of the topics on the attached list and write a 10-12 page paper. Please make sure you foot note all sources whether written or electronically that are used in the development of your research project/paper. Your research or project should address one of the topics below or a specific area of urban ministry that you believe will relevant to your current or future ministry. The official manual of style for the Seminary is Form and Style: Research Papers, Reports and Theses, by Carole Slade, published by Houghton Mifflin, 2000

Topics for Church and Urban Mission

1. Exegete a portion of your city by studying the demographics and identifying the various systems at work and explore how they effect the ministry of your church.
2. Choose two or three issues and develop a biblical theological approach using the Urban Hermeneutic approach shared in Class. (poverty, violence, justice, etc.)
3. Utilize the Immanence and Transcendence continuum to evaluate the various ministries at work in your city and in your church. Demonstrate how the theological concept of immanence or transcendence shapes the way they do ministry.
4. Do a demographic study of your neighborhood and develop an evangelistic/disciplemaking strategy that would penetrate the various people groups in your neighborhood.
5. Develop an intentional strategy for overcoming classism, racism or sexism in your local church.
6. Construct a biblical framework for designing a multi-cultural/multi-congregational church.
7. Develop a revitalization plan for a church that is caught in a transitional neighborhood.
8. Evaluate your church from a missional church focus and indicate the structures that would need to be changed to make your church a “Holistic Church” that help you change your geography into community.
9. Define how Christian Community Development can be used for evangelism/disciplemaking and develop growth in the urban church.
10. Define the difference between a kingdom focus and a church focus in developing mission and ministry for the local urban church.

Paper Due: End of Semester Dec. 15 noon (30% of Grade)

Class Participation:

Students are expected to arrive to class on time and be prepared to enter into the class discussion by reading assigned materials. **10% of your grade will be tied to your attendance and participation in class.**

Class Policies:

The *Academic Handbook* includes policies on extensions for incomplete course work, academic integrity, non-discriminatory language, academic appeals, etc. Students are expected to be familiar with and follow the MBBS academic policies. Violation of academic policies, especially plagiarism and academic integrity will result in failure of the course. Copies of the *Academic Handbook* are available online at www.mbseminary.edu.

Interview:

A list of Urban Ministry leaders in Fresno will be provided. Students are to interview two persons on the list and write up a summary of what you discovered about Urban Ministry. You may team up with another person to do the interview, but each person must write their own

summary of the meeting. The written summary of the interviews will be **due on Nov. 22 (20% of grade)**

City Scope, Sept. 23 - Students will need to participate with the Fresno Institute For Urban Leadership in their City Scope presentations. You will participate in a manuscript study and then go on a tour of the city. You need to turn in your biblical insights from the manuscript study and write a two-page summary of what you experienced on the tour. **Due on Oct. 4 (20% of grade)**

CCDA Conference in Philadelphia. If a student goes to the CCDA Conference in Indianapolis they can write up a summary of the workshops they attend and a review of the overall conference in lieu of their final paper. At the conference students may also interview leadership people in lieu of the local people on the list handed out in class. See professors to work out details.

Grading:

Critical Book Reviews	20%
Interviews	20%
City Scope	20%
Research/Conference paper	30%
Attendance and class participation	10%

Course Schedule- this schedule is a suggested guide for the course. We may at times move more quickly or slow down and spend more time on an area depending on the discussion and response in the class. If you miss a class, please check with your fellow classmates or the professor on what will be discussed for the next class.

Anchor Passages: Each class will begin with a bible study. These passages are anchor passages for me. I go to them often to keep my ministry and mission on track and my spiritual life balances. Please bring you bibles to class and read the passage before class.

Aug. 30 **Introduction and Syllabus**
Anchor Passage – 2 Kings 2:7-25
Conceptualizing the City
Historical Perspective of the City
The New Global City
No assigned reading

Sept. 6 **The Urban Agenda of the Bible**
Anchor Passage – 1 Chronicles 22:11-19; 2 Chronicles 5:11-14
Old Testament Terms
New Testament Terms
Key Biblical Cities
• Assigned readings: Gornik – Chapter 4; Conn – Chapters 4-7

Sept. 13 **Theologizing for Urban Contexts**
Anchor Passages – Acts 17:1-4, 1 Thess. 2:1-13
Developing a Hermeneutic for Theologizing in Urban Ministry
Transcendence and Immanence continuum
Process of Urban Theologizing

Praxis of Urban Theologizing

- Assigned reading: Fuder – Chapters 3-4; Philippians chapter 2, Colossians chapter 1)

Sept. 20

Power and Peace in the City

Anchor Passage – Jeremiah 29:1-

Seeking the Peace of the City

Transforming Power for the City

- Assigned readings: Gornik – Chapters 3; Conn – Chapter 18 Linthicum – Chapters 1-6

Sept. 23

City Scope at Fresno Institute for Urban Leadership 9:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

Sept 27-Oct. 1

No Class - CCDA Conference in Philadelphia (See credit for conf.)

Oct. 4

The Church in the City

Anchor Passage – Ephesians 3:1-13

Kingdom Life of the Urban Church

Community Life of the Urban Church

Family Life of the Urban Church

- Assigned readings: Gornik – Chapters 1-2;

Oct. 11

No Class – Module Week

Oct. 18

Exegeting a City and neighborhood

Anchor Passage – Matt. 11:28-30

Demographics

Critical Factors in Urban Neighborhoods

Transition in Urban Neighborhoods

- Assigned Reading: Conn – Chapters 14-16

Oct. 25

Pastoral Issues in Urban Churches

Anchor Passage – Acts 17:22-34

Racism - Individual and Institutional

Classism - Individual and Institutional

Spiritual Warfare in the City

- Assigned readings: Fuder – Chapters 2-5; Conn – Chapters 13,19

Nov. 1

Diversity in the City

Anchor Passage – Ephesians 2:11-18

Cultivating Cross-cultural relationships

Multiculturalism

Multi-congregationalism

- Assigned readings: Conn – Chapter 17; Fuder – Chapters 15-19

Nov. 8

A Holistic Gospel for Urban Churches

Anchor Passage - Philemon 1-25

Calling the Church to Holistic Ministry

Keeping Evangelism/Disciplemaking central
Integrating Disciplemaking and Social Action
(Handouts for next class readings)

- Assigned readings: Fuder – Chapters 10-14; Sider - Chapters 1-5

Nov. 15

Revitalization of the Urban Church

Anchor Passage – Nehemiah 2:11-18

A Task Force approach to revitalizing the urban church

Building an evaluation instrument

Vision/mission statement

Strategic Initiatives

- Assigned reading – Handouts from previous class

Nov. 22

Leadership Development in an Urban Context

Anchor Passage - Joshua 14:6-14

Models of Leadership Training

Developing transformational Urban Leadership

Equipping Urban Leadership

Mentoring Urban Leadership

- Assigned readings: Fuder – Chapters 6 – 8; Conn – Chapters 22 - 24

Nov. 29

Models of Urban Christian Community Development and Organizing

Anchor Passage - Ezra 7:10

Christian Community Development Association (CCDA)

Circle Urban Ministry

Re-neighboring

Fresno Leadership Foundation

Relational Culture Institute

- Assigned readings: Sider – Chapters 6-11; Fuder – Chapters 5-6

Dec. 6

Reaching Disenfranchised Subcultures in Urban Areas

Anchor Passage – Luke 4:14-30

Ministry to the Homeless

Ministering in Apartment Complexes (Care Fresno)

Ministry to Addictive Behaviors

- Assigned reading: Fuder – Chapters 20-24

Dec. 13

No class – all papers due on due on Dec. 15 at noon in Jim Westgate's box in the faculty wing.

Recommended Urban Bibliography

- Appleby, Jerry. Church is in a Stew. Beacon Hill, 1990
- Bakke, Ray. A Theology as Big as the City. IVCF, 1997
- Callahan, Kennon. Effective Church Leadership. Harper, 1990
- Corbitt, J. Nathan Taking it to the Streets: Using the Arts to Transform your Community. Baker Books, 2003
- Conn, Harvie The Urban Face of Mission P & R Publishing, 2003
- _____ Clarified Vision for Urban Ministry Zondervan, 1987
- Dawson, John. Taking Our Cities For God. Creation House, 1989
- DeYoung, Curtis Paul; Emerson, Michael O.; Yancey, George; Kim, Karen Chai. United by Faith Oxford, Oxford Press, 2003
- Dyrness, William. Invitation to Cross-cultural Theology, Zondervan, 1995
- Escobar, Samuel. The New Global Mission: The Gospel from Everywhere to Everyone. Downers Grove, IVP, 2003
- Elliott, Barbara J. Street Saints: Renewing America's Cities. Templeton Foundation Press, 2004
- Emerson, Steven and Michael Smith. Divided By Faith. Oxford, Oxford Press, 2000
- Fuder, John. Training Students for Urban Ministry: an Experiential Approach. Eugene Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2001
- Gannakan, Ken. Proclaiming Christ in a Pluralistic Context. Bangalore, Theological Book Trust, 2000
- George, Carl. Prepare Your Church For The Future. Revell, 1991
- Gordon, Wayne - Real Hope in Chicago. Zondervan, 1995
- Greenway, Roger Discipling the City Baker, 1995
- Grigg, Viv. Companion to the Poor. Albatross, 1984
- _____ . Cry of the Urban Poor. Monrovia: MARC Publication, 1992
- Jenkins, Philip. The Next Christendom: the Coming of Global Christianity. Oxford, Oxford Press, 2002
- Kretzman, John P. and John L. McKnight. Building Communities from the Inside Out. Northwestern University, ACTA Publications, 1993

Linthicum, Robert, City of God City of Satan, Zondervan, 1991

Lupton, Robert. Rebuilding the Ruins: Memoirs of an Urban Developer. IVP, 2004

Paris, Jenell Williams and Margot Owen Eyring. Urban Disciples: A Beginner's Guide to Serving God in the City. Valley Forge: Judson Press, 2000

Pier, Mac and Kathie Sweeting. The Power of a City at Prayer: What Happens When Churches Unite for Renewal. Downers Grove, IVP, 2002

Rutz, James. The Open Church. The Seedsowers, 1992

Saunders, Stanley P. and Charles L. Campbell. The Word on the Street: Performing the Scriptures in an Urban Context. Grand Rapids, William B. Eerdmans Pub., 2000

Shelly, Marshall and Bruce. The Consumer Church. IVP, 1992

Shenk, David Global Gods Herald Press, 1996

Sine, Tom. Mustard Seed vs. Mcworld. Grand Rapids, Baker Books, 1999

Stone, Bryan Compassionate Ministry, Theological Foundations Orbis, 1996

Steger, Manfred B. Globalization: a Very Short Introduction. Oxford, Oxford Press, 2003

Tiplady, Richard. One World or Many? The Impact of Globalization on Mission. World Evangelical Alliance Missions Commission, William Carey Library, 2003

Van Engen & Tiersma, God So Loves the City, MARC, 1994

Villafane, Eldin Seek the Peace of the City Eerdmans, 1996

Villafane, Eldin, Bruce W. Jackson, Robert A. Evans, Alice Frazer Evans. Transforming the City: Reframing Education for Urban Ministry. W. B. Eerdmans Pub. 2002

Volf, Miroslav. Exclusion and Embrace. Abingdon, 1997

Von Hoffman, Alexander. House by House, Block by Block: The Rebirth of America's Urban Neighborhoods. New York: Oxford University Press, 2003

Washington & Kehrein, Breaking Down the Walls , Moody, 1994

White, Randy Journey to the Center of the City Downers Grove, IVP, 1997