

**School of Theology and Ministry**  
Seattle University  
901 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Seattle, Washington 98122  
**Winter Quarter, 2006**

**Course Information**

STMA 550- Preaching the Word: Homiletics  
Room: Hunthausen, 100  
Meeting Day: Wednesdays  
Meeting Time: 9:00-11:50 a.m.

**Instructor**

Flora Wilson Bridges, Ph.D.  
Office: Hunthausen, 214  
Phone: 206 296-5337  
Tuesdays, 2:00-4:30 p.m.  
and by appointment  
Email: [fwb@seattleu.edu](mailto:fwb@seattleu.edu)

**\*Required Texts:**

Collier-Thomas, Betty. *Daughters of Thunder: Black Women Preachers and Their Sermons, 1850-1979*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 1998.  
Craddock, Fred B. *Preaching*. Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1985.  
Robinson, Haddon W. *Biblical Preaching: The Development and Delivery of Expository Messages*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2001.  
Taylor, Barbara Brown. *Bread of Angels*. Cambridge, MA: Cowley Publications, 1997.  
Warren, Mervyn A. *King Came Preaching: The Pulpit Power of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.* Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2001.

\* Various articles, sermons and videotapes will also be distributed during the quarter.

**Recommended Texts:**

Brooks, Phillips. *Lectures on Preaching*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1969.  
Buttrick, David. *Preaching the New and Now*. Louisville, KY: WJKP, 1998.  
Callahan, Kennon L. *Preaching Grace: Possibilities for Growing Your Preaching and Touching People's Lives*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 1999.  
Davis, H. Grady. *Design for Preaching*. Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1958.  
Farmer, Herbert H. *The Servant of the Word*. Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1942.  
Fichtner, Joseph. *To Stand and Speak for Christ*. New York, NY: Alba House, 1981.  
Gonzalez, Justo and Catherine. *Liberation Preaching*. Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 1981.  
Grasso, Domenico. *Proclaiming God's Message*. Notre Dame, IN: Notre Dame University, 1965.  
Jones, Illion T. *Principles and Practice of Preaching: A Comprehensive Study of the Art of Sermon Construction*. Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1956.  
Larue, Cleophus James. *The Heart of Black Preaching*. Louisville, KY: John Knox, 2000.  
Lischer, Richard. *A Theology of Preaching: The Dynamics of the Gospel*. Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 1981.  
Lischer, Richard. *Theories of Preaching*. Durham, NC: Labyrinth Press, 1986.  
McMickle, Marvin Andrew. *Preaching to the Black Middle Class: Words of Challenge, Words of Hope*. King of Prussia, PA: Judson Press, 2000.  
Ritschl, Dietrich. *A Theology of Proclamation*. Richmond, VA: John Knox, 1960.

## Course Requirements

***Attendance and Class Participation. 35% of Grade.*** Students are required to attend all classes and site visits. Please note that much that determines the grade is dependent upon mutual discussion and interaction. Students are required to demonstrate effective group skills by actively contributing to group discussions and using constructive peer feedback that includes honesty, challenge, and mutual respect. In order to engage in constructive peer feedback, you must be present. Grades will be lowered by one-half letter grade per absence from class and site visits with the exception of a medical emergency.

## SERMONS

***A General Statement on Sermon Preparation.*** The nature of this class is essentially experiential or based in the production and delivery of sermons. Sermons are to reflect in both their development and delivery a high level of preparation. Haddon Robinson writes,

How do we evaluate the assortment of approaches or explain the apparent effectiveness of sermons that appear to have behind them no method at all? More to the point, how do we derive procedures from all of this that others may follow?

As Robinson indicates, evaluation of the effectiveness of sermons is difficult; but in this class we will evaluate. Clear, relevant preaching does not take place Sunday after Sunday by either intuition or accident. Good preachers have methods for their sermonizing. It should be kept in mind throughout the quarter that the effectiveness of the sermons will be evaluated according to their insight, imagination, and spiritual sensitivity as it is revealed in clear methods of preparation through the strenuous work of thinking. You are encouraged to bring your own mind, spirit, and experience coupled with what you are learning in the course content. Both are equally important.

***Preached Sermons. 30% of Grade.*** Over the course of the quarter, each student will preach a total of three sermons in the following settings:

- 1) One sermon will be preached in class by each student;
- 2) One additional sermon will be preached at an actual preaching location (for example, in a church, at a conference, at a funeral home, etc.). The student must videotape this sermon and bring the tape to class for review.

Each sermon should be approximately twelve to twenty minutes in duration and accompanied by a well-structured sermon outline that will be given to every one in the class at the time of the delivery or viewing of the sermon.

***Site Visits. 10% of Grade.*** All students are to be present together on site for two additional preaching occasions. These occasions will be selected in class.

**Written Sermon. 10% of Grade.** Write one manuscript sermon. This sermon will be handed in twice during the quarter—first as a working draft at the middle of the quarter and finally upon its completion at the end of the quarter. The written length of this sermon should equal no more than 20 minutes of oral presentation. Please read your sermon out loud and time it accordingly.

**Written Sermon Reviews. 10% of Grade.** Students are to write a critical review of each sermon that is presented in class by their peers. This feedback will provide preachers the crucial opportunity for growth and improvement in preaching. Students need not worry about difficult reviews. The value of such feedback is that it is designed to help the preacher become more aware of his or her preaching strengths as well as areas and methods that need homiletical improvement.

**Additional Sermon Videotape. 5% of Grade.** Each student is required to bring to class one videotape of a sermon someone else has preached that they feel is either poorly or expertly delivered. The student will be expected to explain what they believe are the strengths and/or weaknesses of these sermons.

## Course Description

The overall goal of this course is to educate students to develop and hone the necessary skills and resources to answer and then address the question, how does one prepare and deliver an effective sermon? In this learning process students should develop greater pastoral sensitivity and theological acumen that will lead to greater efficacy in the whole cycle of communication that is sermon preparation and preaching. Two basic assumptions (as stated by Fred B. Craddock in his book *Preaching*) underlie this course:

- 1) Learning to preach is difficult, and the difficulty is not greatly relieved by having a skilled instructor or by the discovery that one seems to be naturally a ‘good talker’;
- 2) While learning to preach is difficult, it can be done.

## Course Objectives

- 1) Help students first to *listen to find their own voice*. This listening will include hearing (again in the analysis of Fred Craddock): the voice of God who calls one to preach; the voice of one’s emerging abilities; the voices of one’s background (i.e. family, friends, and other significant people throughout the fabric of one’s life); the voice of one’s past; the voices of teachers in the disciplines of theology, church history, biblical studies, sociology of religion, spirituality, etc.; the voice of one’s faith community; the voices of God’s people; and, finally, the voice of all of God’s world that is crying out for liberation and transformation.
- 2) Inspire students to use this listening to empower them to *speak a God word* or preach in the light of what they hear through skilled, passionate, and compassionate sermon delivery.

- 3) Enable students to participate in *benevolent and critical theological reflection* on the sermons of their peers in a way that will richly and sensitively help them to become better preachers and communicators.
- 4) Foster in students a *basic respect, gratitude, and humility for the complexity of the preaching task in the humble knowledge that ultimately it is God* who must fashion human words into the Word if preaching is to be effective.

### **Grading Criteria**

***Class participation/Group skills.*** Students are graded on: 1) Use of effective communication skills in class; 2) Punctual and regular attendance; 3) Active participation in the healthy development of the class that includes talking in class about the course material and displaying attitudes of honesty and mutual respect.

***Scholastic Performance.*** Students are graded on: 1) Demonstrated ability to think in a rigorously critical and theological manner about the course material; 2) Demonstrated ability to speak and write in a way that shows they have increased homilectical competence and ability.

## **COURSE ASSIGNMENTS**

### **Wednesday, January 4: Session 1**

Course Introduction:

1. Introductions and Distribution of Syllabus
2. Review of Assignments

Two Examples of Effective Preaching:

3. Sermons:
  - a. Video: "I Have a Dream", Martin Luther King, Jr.
  - b. Manuscript: "The Sound of the Genuine", Howard Thurman
  - c. Some Characteristics of Effective Preaching

CLASS BREAK

Small Group Discussion:

4. Who am I as a preacher? Who and what informs my preaching?

### **Wednesday, January 11: Session 2**

1. Reading Assignment: *Preaching* by Fred B. Craddock
2. Class Discussion on Craddock
3. Review of Videotapes of Other Preachers (Michael TenEyck, Allen Hicks)

**Wednesday, January 18: Session 3**

1. Reading Assignment: *Biblical Preaching* by Haddon W. Robinson
2. Class Discussion on Robinson
3. Review of Videotapes of Other Preachers (Jerry Harris, Carol Harberg)
4. First In-class Sermons: Douglas Anderson, Diana Bottin

**Wednesday, January 25: Session 4**

1. Reading Assignment: *Daughters of Thunder* by Bettye Collier-Thomas
2. Discussion of Collier-Thomas
3. Review of Videotapes of Other Preachers (Linda Fowler, Lorriann Erno)
4. First In-class Sermons: Jan Cherry, Bruce Chittick

**Wednesday, February 2: Session 5**

1. Reading Assignment: *Bread of Angels* by Barbara Brown Taylor
2. Discussion of Taylor
3. Review of Videotapes of Other Preachers (George Davenport, Bruce Chittick)
4. First In-Class Sermons (George Davenport, Lorriann Erno)
5. First Draft of Written Sermon Due

**Wednesday, February 8: Session 6**

1. Reading Assignment: *King Came Preaching* by Mervyn A. Warren
2. Discussion of Warren
3. Review of Videotapes of Other Preachers (Jan Cherry, Diana Bottin)
4. First In-Class Sermons (Linda Fowler, Carol Harberg)

**Wednesday, February 15: Session 7**

1. Review of Videotapes of Other Preacher (Douglas Andersen)
2. First In-Class Sermons (Jerry Harris, Allen Hicks, Michael TenEyck)

**Wednesday, February 22: Session 8**

1. View Videotaped Sermons of Douglas Anderson, Dianna Bottin, Jan Cherry

**Wednesday, March 1: Session 9**

1. View Videotaped Sermons of Bruce Chittick, George Davenport, Lorriann Erno

**Wednesday, March 8: Session 10**

1. View Videotaped Sermons of Linda Fowler, Carol Harberg, Jerry Harris, Alllen Hicks, Michael TenEyck
2. Hand in Final Manuscript of Written Sermon

