

SEABURY-WESTERN THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

Course title: Episcopal Church History, Polity, and Canon Law

Term offered Fall 2012

Instructor(s) William Sachs

Course period Sept. 4 – December 12, 2012

All student work is due no later than December 12, 2012.

Classroom sessions September 21, 1:00 p.m. – September 22, 4:00 p.m.

November 2, 1:00 p.m. – November 3, 4:00 p.m.

November 30, 1 p.m. – December 1, 4:00 p.m.

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Office hours by appointment. Please contact the instructor well in advance.

Course description

The history of the Episcopal Church consists of a series of pivotal issues and forceful personalities. Church leadership has arisen in various forms representing diverse ideals of faith and practice. These crossroads moments have shaped the church's life. This course examines Episcopal history through the lens of leadership, considering major figures, the issues they faced, and the ends they sought. "Polity" and "canon law" represent the ways Episcopalians have sought direction, and the forms of church life that have resulted.

- Students in this course will
 - Develop basic knowledge and understanding of the history of the Episcopal Church within the larger social and religious context of the United States.
 - Develop knowledge and understanding of the particular polity and canon law of the Episcopal Church.
 - Deepen their ability to live within a particular religious tradition while dealing in respectful and informed ways with persons of differing interpretations and other religious convictions.
 - Sharpen their sense of what it means to be a leader in the church.

- Students in this course will develop their ability to
 - Know the living tradition of Christian faith as richly diverse.
 - Recognize and respond to racism and other forms of oppression and exclusion in their personal and institutional manifestations.
 - Articulate their own beliefs as part of a living tradition.
 - Listen, read, and write effectively in order to contribute to the life of the church.

Requirements:

1. You will be expected to read selections from key books as the list below describes. We will discuss the reading during our three in-person sessions in Chicago.
2. Using Moodle, you must post 350-500 word responses to the “Forum” questions listed for each section by the dates specified.
3. You will be evaluated on your participation in online and class exercises and discussions, with the required reading as your foundation. You will also be evaluated on your ability to utilize other, substantial reading from print and online sources in class activities.
4. You are required to write two papers of at least ten pages each. For each paper you must choose between two possible topics. In each case you must make an educated argument, mustering information from the books you read for this course, but also ranging beyond this reading list to select appropriate primary and secondary sources to make your case. Your paper must include footnotes or endnotes citing specific sources for the points you make.

Required reading

Gary Dorrien, Social Ethics in the Making. Wiley-Blackwell. ISBN-10: 1444337303

Allen C. Guelzo, For the Union of Evangelical Christendom. Pennsylvania State University. ISBN-10: 0271027320

David Hein and Gardiner H. Shattuck, The Episcopalians. Church Publishing. ISBN-10: 0898694973

E. Brooks Holifield, Theology in America. Yale. ISBN-10: 030010765X

Harold T. Lewis, Yet with a Steady Beat. Trinity Press. ISBN-10: 1563381303

William Sachs and Thomas Holland, Restoring the Ties that Bind. Church Publishing. ISBN-10: 0898693799

Peter W. Williams, America’s Religions. Illinois. ISBN-10: 025207551X

Constitution and Canons of the Episcopal Church 2009.

http://www.episcopalarchives.org/CnC_ToC_2009.html.

Please note: changes to canons made at the 2012 General Convention go into effect January 1, 2013, so you will need a copy of the 2012 Constitution and Canons when they become available, most likely after this course finishes.

Required papers

The first paper will be on one or the other of the following topics:

- A. Throughout the history of the Episcopal Church there have been moments when novel understandings of spiritual authority have challenged inherited church structures and lines of authority. Select one example of such a challenge; summarize who was involved and why tension arose. Analyze contrasting forms of leadership that arose. In your opinion, what has been the long term impact of the episode you selected?
- B. Citing a notable personality or moment in Episcopal history, assess the impact of “inclusion” on the leadership and structure of the Episcopal Church. You should understand leadership in dynamic terms, that is, what goals were sought and what actions were taken to achieve it. As the church gave opportunities to persons who had been denied them, how did change occur, and what was the impact on the wider world? Pick an individual or episode to make your case.

➔ The first paper is due by October 20. Please send the paper by email to bsachs@saintstephensrichmond.net

The second paper will be on one of the following topics:

- A. Describe what is unique or distinctive about “mission” in the history of the Episcopal Church. Select a representative person or moment or movement that, in your opinion, embodies Episcopal mission. Remember, write your response as if you are speaking to a group of people whom you must persuade to adopt your point of view.
- B. Outline the history of conflict among Episcopalians as if you were designing an adult education course on the subject. What core issues would you identify? What values are in conflict, and what styles of leadership have arisen among those who differed? What notions of authority and what strategies secured differing points of view? Describe how conflicts have been resolved in Episcopal history. What has helped Episcopalians to move forward? Select particular persons, issues, and points in time.

➔ The second paper is due by December 12, 2012. Please send the paper by email to bsachs@saintstephensrichmond.net.

Criteria for overall evaluation of students:

- Respectful and constructive participation in classroom and online discussions.
- Informed and insightful use of assigned reading in online and classroom discussions and in papers
- Informed and insightful use of substantial printed and online resources beyond what is assigned, especially in assigned papers
- Accurate and apt use of factual information
- Insightful and thoughtful comparison of historical circumstances to the present

- Ability to construct and convey an educated argument using information from required and other materials, in standard English with appropriate acknowledgment of sources. Use of Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, 6th ed., is highly recommended. You may also wish to consult Wayne C. Booth, Gregory G. Colomb, and Joseph M. Williams, *The Craft of Research*.

Please note that participation in worship, while not required, is an integral part of students' formation

Outline of Presentations and Readings

For each session of the course there is a summary description, assigned readings, and questions for discussion.

I. Introduction: September 2-8, 2012

The Episcopal Church arrived in colonial North America as the Church of England, with all the privileges and responsibilities of religious establishment. But its assumptions and its structures were remade by American circumstances.

Williams, pages 78-164; Holifield, pages 1-25

Forum questions: What were the major differences between the Church of England and the colonial church, by the mid-eighteenth century? How did adaptations the colonial church was forced to make set the stage for its later development? Moodle responses to these questions due by September 11.

II. Whitefield and Garden: The Shape of Colonial Authority: September 9-15, 2012

Challenges to religious authority were characteristic of colonial life. The key source was Evangelicalism, a trans-Atlantic movement with particular impact. In this section we consider a pivotal incident in colonial South Carolina to understand the contrasting forms of religious life and leadership that were emerging.

Holifield, pages 79-101; Hein and Shattuck, chapters 1-3

Forum: Who was Alexander Garden and what was his role in the colonial church? From his perspective, what responsibilities did he hold, and to whom and what was he accountable? In what sense was his responsibility religious? On the other hand, what constituted responsible leadership for George Whitefield? What brought him to America and what was his role in the church and colonial life? Responses to these questions due on Moodle by September 18.

September 21-22: Intensive classroom session at Seabury

III. White and Hobart: The Emergence of Mission: September 16-22, 2012

The organization of the Episcopal Church after the American Revolution entailed unprecedented adaptation. The church became self-sustaining after facing disestablishment, and defined itself as a missionary society. In this session we consider two approaches to mission by two leaders: one following the contours of the American constitution, the other emphasizing the church's distinctiveness. How did these contrasting leadership styles arise, and how have they endured?

Holifield, pages 234-255; Hein and Shattuck, chapters 4, 5; Guelzo, chapters 1, 2

Forum: What were the meanings of "mission" among Episcopalians, as White and Hobart embodied them? What different theologies did they represent? What sort of consensus about mission emerged among Episcopalians?

Moodle response due by September 25.

IV. Cummins: Worship, Revision and Revolt: September 23-29, 2012

Bishop George David Cummins was stunned to discover at a General Convention that the Episcopal Church was different in worship and belief from the church he had understood. Cummins discovered that powerful trends were reshaping the church and he concluded that Episcopal life was moving in an unfaithful direction. What Cummins perceived, how he assessed the church's prospects, and how he responded form the basis of a crucial turn in the church's life and leadership.

Guelzo, chapters 3-6

Forum: Why did George David Cummins believe that his movement had far-reaching implications? What did he value and how did his actions reflect those values? In what sense did he set a precedent for Episcopal life?

Moodle responses due by October 2.

V. Brent and Tucker, Women, and Mission: September 30-October 6, 2012

During the nineteenth century outstanding leaders fostered a new view of mission among Episcopalians. The church's identity shifted as people once marginalized gained recognition. In this section we consider the expansion of Episcopal mission and the resulting forms of leadership and institutional life. Bishops Charles Henry Brent and Henry St. George Tucker were emblematic of this expansive era.

Hein, chapter 6; Lewis, chapters 1-4; Williams, pages 245-292; Dorrien, ch. 2.

Forum: What was new about leadership and church life as an energetic focus on mission emerged in the nineteenth century? What new form did leadership take? Moodle responses due by October 9.

VI. Scarlett, Sherrill, and the Birth of Inclusion: October 7-13, 2012

In the first half of the twentieth century social justice emerged as a profound theme in Episcopal life. It did so in part because notable leaders embraced it, none more forcefully than Bishop William Scarlett of Missouri. Shortly after World War II, Henry Knox Sherrill, Bishop of Massachusetts and then Presiding Bishop, began to revamp church structures to accord with such ideals. Episcopalians worked to remake the church so that it might remake the world—a lasting leadership focus.

Hein, chapter 7; Lewis, chapters 5-7; Dorrien, chapter 4

Forum: The Episcopal Church has been seen as the church of the American social establishment. By the mid-twentieth century its influence far exceeded its actual membership. Yet a number of its leaders were restive. Why? How did leaders such as Scarlett and Sherrill seek new channels of social influence? Did they succeed? Moodle responses due by October 23.

VII. October 14-20, 2012. Use this week for formulating and writing your paper

VIII. Pike, Hines, Shepherd and the Rise of a New Church: October 21-27, 2012

In the second half of the twentieth century a new spirit of activism blossomed among Episcopalians and captivated a disparate set of its leadership. Initiative to revise the contours of Christian belief and its expression had a major impact, and united a broad swath of the church's membership. James Pike, John Hines, and Massey Shepherd, each in his own way, cast a new vision of belief and practice.

Lewis, chapters 8-10; Williams, pages 343-377; Hein, chapter 8

Forum: What did "reform" mean in the context of the Episcopal Church in the second half of the twentieth century? What sort of consensus about church reform emerged and how far did it extend? What patterns of leadership were novel in the pursuit of reform and what was the impact on church structures? Moodle responses due by October 30.

IX. Activism and Reaction: October 28-November 3, 2012

Activism among Episcopalians included opposition to what was perceived as the church's misdirection. By the early twenty-first century there had been a series of movements challenging liturgical revision, the ordination of women, and the acceptance of gay persons. But while the church faced its own culture wars, it was being remade by fresh forms of spirituality and mission at the grassroots.

Sachs/Holland; Dorrien, chapters 7,8.

Forum: How could conflict embroil the Episcopal Church while signs of grassroots initiative emerged? What was the variety of leadership styles and intentions at this critical juncture in Episcopal history?

Moodle responses due by November 6.

X. Beyond Conflict: November 4-10, 2012

A decade after the church seemed to be splitting apart, it became clear that conflict had noticeably ebbed. Fault lines over human sexuality and a prominent divide between progressives and traditionalists remained. But increasingly Episcopalians looked to “restructure” the church and revitalize mission.

Readings to be distributed.

Forum: How did the existing structures of the church, including its canon law, either facilitate or hinder a restructuring of church life? What did restructuring mean, theologically and practically?

Moodle responses due by November 13.

XI. The Canonical Background: Organization: November 11-17, 2012

Constitution of the Episcopal Church; Title I of the Canons of the Episcopal Church. Other readings to be distributed.

XII. The Canonical Background: Worship and Ministry: November 18-24, 2012

Title II and III of the Canons of the Episcopal Church. Other readings to be distributed.

XIII. The Canonical Background: Discipline: November 25-December 1, 2012

Title IV of the Canons of the Episcopal Church. Other readings to be distributed.

XIV. Conclusion: The Future of Mission Among Episcopalians: December 2-8, 2012

Forum: What is the future of mission by Episcopalians? What theological basis? What emphasis in church structures? How reflected in the canons?

Moodle responses due by November 20.

Please note Seabury's statement on responsible use of materials by others:

PLAGIARISM

Plagiarism is the taking of the words, ideas, and methods of others as one's own. In academia, plagiarism involves the use of others' words and ideas without adequate reference to the author or indication of quotation. It is a serious form of academic dishonesty or academic fraud, and offenders are subject to discipline, up to and including expulsion from the school. In order to avoid plagiarism, especially by inappropriate use or citation of quotations and ideas, students are expected to familiarize themselves with the requirements and practices of citation found in Turabian's *Manual for Writers*. Unfamiliarity with these requirements and practices is not an acceptable reason for unintentional plagiarism. Plagiarism cannot be evaded through the alteration of occasional words from one's source.

When plagiarism is detected, the instructor will assign the work an appropriate grade and then refer the matter, together with evidence, to the Academic Dean who, in consultation with the faculty and the President, will make an appropriate disposition of the matter, which may include failure of the course, academic probation for a designated period, suspension for a designated period, or expulsion from the program. The student's bishop will normally be notified of the situation.

Those who have questions about the nature and scope of plagiarism should consult the Academic Dean, Ellen K. Wondra, at ellen.wondra@seabury.edu or 773-380-7040.

Relationship of this course to Seabury curricular goals and objectives

Students in this course will *know*

- The living history of the Episcopal Church in the United States, with particular emphasis on leadership and adaptation to context;
- The variety of contexts, communities, and circumstances that have been significant in the church's development as a community of faith and as an organization
- The importance of race and gender in the history of the Episcopal Church

This knowledge will be demonstrated through

- Apt use of assigned and additional readings
- Informed, constructive participation in online and classroom discussions
- Accurate and apt use of factual information in support of reasoned points

Students in this course will be able to increase their *ability* to

- Recognize and respond to racism and other forms of oppression and exclusion in their personal and institutional manifestations
- Contribute to a learning community characterized by dialogue, mutual respect, and appreciation of diverse views.

- Listen, read, and write effectively in order to contribute to the life of the church.
These abilities will be demonstrated through
 - Explicit attention to race and gender in considerations of historical events and developments
 - Respectful, careful engagement in conversations (written and oral) with others
 - Consistent use of standard English, clear development of points, and supporting materials

Students in this course will develop their *identity* as leaders in ministry among God's people within and outside the church.

This development will be demonstrated through capacity to relate course materials to contemporary leadership challenges.

This course affords students the opportunity to draw on diverse life contexts and modes of intelligence through

- Focus on a teaching/learning community characterized by dialogue, mutual respect, and appreciation of diverse views.
- Use of various modes of teaching/ learning, such as classroom and online discussion as well as faculty presentations, assigned readings, and academic papers.

Effective use of these opportunities will be demonstrated in

- online and classroom discussions and in assigned papers
- student evaluation of course and instructor

This course affords students the opportunity to engage diverse cultural contexts and develop an antiracist framework through

- Attention throughout the course to the role of racism and other forms of oppression and exclusion in their personal and institutional manifestations.

Effective use of these opportunities will be demonstrated in

- online and classroom discussions and in assigned papers
- student evaluation of course and instructor