Fall 2015  EMT 2902  Christian Ethics in Context  Wednesdays 6:30 – 8:30 p.m.  Room EC 302

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Course Description  Pre-requisites: Intro Bible and Theology
This course is an introduction to several dimensions of Christian ethics: its languages, sources, norms, methods and concerns. It aims to foster ethical awareness and skills to bring to a variety of moral challenges in the lives of individuals, churches, and society in global context. To practice Christian ethical deliberation, these dimensions are introduced and discussed with reference to several urgent eco-social issues. In class: lectures, case studies, small group discussions. Written work: learning inventory; essay on moral formation and agency; paper on either use of the Bible in Christian ethics or on theological norms of love and justice; and final integrative paper.

Goals and Learning Outcomes
1. To increase awareness and understanding of the variety of sources, norms/criteria and methods involved in Christian moral deliberation.
2. To aid ongoing development of skills required to reflect on the moral life, engage ethical challenges, dialogue with or mediate between differing views, and offer guidance to others.
3. To gain introductory understanding of ongoing debates and engaged responses in Christian ethics, with an emphasis on Protestant and ecumenical work in 20th and 21st centuries.

The outcomes of the Emmanuel College and Toronto School of Theology basic degree programs to which this course primarily relates are:

**Christian Faith and Heritage**
- Demonstrate knowledge of the Christian heritage, and articulate clearly their own theological positions.
- Interpret scripture and Christian texts using a variety of methods, sources, and norms.
- Identify and respect the diversity of theological viewpoints and practices within the Christian tradition.

**Culture and Context**
- Demonstrate critical understanding for ordered and lay ministries of the relationship between faith practices and cultural contexts.
- Employ diverse methods of contextual analysis.
- Give evidence of critical self-awareness with regard to their own and other faith perspectives and practices.

**Required Texts** (on reserve at Emmanuel Library and from Crux Books)
- Bruce Birch and Larry Rasmussen, *Bible and Ethics in Christian Life*
- John Paul Lederach, *The Little Book of Conflict Transformation*
- *EMT 2902 Course Reader* marked *in the syllabus with an asterisk,*
  The Print Shop in the basement of Old Vic (cash only) first week of semester.
- *Pdf’s in the syllabus will be emailed in advance of the applicable session.*

*The Cambridge Companion to Christian Ethics*, ed. Gill
*The Oxford Handbook of Theological Ethics*, eds. Meilaender and Werpehowskii
*The Westminster Dictionary of Christian Ethics*, eds. Childress and MacQuarrie
EMT 2902    CLASS TOPICS + DATES

1. September 16    Getting Started
2. September 23    Charting the Moral Life in Context
3. September 30    Moral Formation and Agency (*Assignment #1 due*)
4. October 7       Doing Christian Ethics
5. October 14      Bible + Ethics (*Assignment #2 option A due*)
6. October 21      Theological Norms Love + Justice (*Assignment #2 option B due*)

NO CLASS    October 26 - 30    Reading Week

7. November 4      The Public Vocation of Christian Ethics
8. November 11     Professional Ethics (*Final Paper Option B – due 16 Dec*)
9. November 18     Violence and Peace
11. December 2      Ecology and Economy

★ Final Paper     DUE Monday 14 December 2015 by 4 p.m.
Deliver hard copy:
Emmanuel College Main Office
Email: Kampen and Legge

If you want your paper returned by mail, deliver it in a self-addressed stamped envelope
Learning Environment and Working Together

Studying ethics is not only a matter of reading and learning concepts and ideas. It is equally a matter of listening to and engaging others about their beliefs and perspectives, while seeking to articulate your own. Both members of the Teaching Team are available for consultation by appointment via email.

Policies and Assignments

Inclusivity

“Emmanuel College is intentionally inclusive, welcoming people regardless of ethnic or racial origin, faith expression, gender, age, or sexual orientation. The current community of faculty, staff and students is composed of a variety of people who come together for the common purpose of theological study in the Torontoian, Canadian, North American and global contexts.” Emmanuel College Basic Degree Handbook.

The Emmanuel College Attendance Policy: Academic credit for a course requires regular class attendance and is not just a matter of completing the assignments. Attendance means being present in the class for the entire scheduled class meeting, not just part of it. In the event of absence for any reason including sickness, students are responsible for any information or class content missed. Students are expected to inform the professor prior to class. The professor may require additional work to make up for an absence. The professor will be required to inform the Basic Degree Committee if a student misses two classes. For students who miss three classes, this may result in a lower grade or even a failing grade for the course. If attendance is low due to extenuating circumstances, students may petition the Basic Degree Committee to drop a course without academic or financial penalty. The Attendance Policy is found in the Policies and Guidelines section of the EM BD Student Handbook http://www.emmanuel.utoronto.ca/students/handbooks.htm

Writing: Writing is a significant mode of doing ethics. See www.utoronto.ca/writing/ for help with this process. The assigned papers are designed as learning exercises to help you organize your ideas, research and reflection. In your writing, show accurate knowledge and understanding of the materials studied, an ability to synthesize and express what you have learned clearly and in well-organized form, and a willingness to be creatively engaged as a “constructive critic” who is developing – and claiming – his or her own public/ecclesiastical voice and accountability as an ethicist. See the TST grading scale http://www.tst.edu/programs/grading.asp

NOTE: All assignments are to be submitted electronically and in hard copy. They may be used anonymously for program assessment purposes. Email addresses Teaching Team on page 1

Written Work and Style Guide

a. All work is due at the start of class. The late penalty is one point per day (see below). Emailed assignments will not be accepted or graded except in rare cases with my prior permission.

b. All your assignments will be typed, double-spaced, use 12 point serif (Times New Roman or other standard font), with numbered pages, (very important!), with your name, college, and full title of the assignment on the front or at the top of first page – and staple. PLEASE DO NOT USE FOLDERS.

c. Citations: Material from class readings can be cited with parenthetical references (“quote,” author, page in text). If you are citing a source outside assigned reading, give full citation using Kate L. Turabian A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses and Dissertations: Chicago Style. Be sure to give full credit to ideas that do not originate with you, whether you quote OR paraphrase.
Policy on Late Work: Each assignment will be submitted in class on the day it is due. It is very important that all students have the same amount of time to work on an assignment. This is an issue of fairness. If there is an emergency, Dr. Legge is (generally) understanding. However, poor planning or working on another paper do not constitute emergencies. Late papers will be deducted one point per day. Special consideration is of course given for students who have a learning disability who register via U Accessibility Services. You are also invited to meet with the professor to discuss accommodations. See Accessibility Disclosure Statement http://www.accessibility.utoronto.ca/Faculty-and-Staff.htm (see section about In Class, Statement on Disclosure)

Academic Honesty: All students are expected to abide by the rules of academic integrity. Plagiarism, in particular, will be treated as of utmost significance and is ground for immediate failure of that assignment and will be further handled by the Academic Director of the college of registration. See Code on Academic Matters: http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/Assets/Governing+Council+Digital+Assets/Policies/PDF/ppjn011995.pdf

Evaluation of Written Work
Written work is graded according to the assignment rubrics, using the TST Grading Scale, in general:
- the overall clarity of your thinking and expression;
- your critical engagement with texts, including your understanding of an author’s use of sources, norms, moral reasoning, and what’s at stake and for whom;
- your ability to evaluate the stance fairly and accurately; and to give evidence of dealing critically and carefully with similar and different stances;
- giving reasons for your own moral stance.

For all other academic policies check and follow the TST BD Handbook.
1. **Learning Inventory** (10% of final grade)
   3-5 pages, 750 – 1000 words  **Due** 22 Sept. Bring hard copy and email to Kampen and Legge

   First study the syllabus, peruse the topics and readings and then respond to these questions:
   - In terms of this course, what particular topics, issues or ideas interest you most? What key question(s) do you bring to this course? Why?
   - What background do you bring to this course? What do you hope to get out of this course? Why?
   - What do you think you can contribute to this course (for example, prior experience, knowledge skills, values)?
   - How do you learn? For example, free-range group discussion on a topic; small groups with a process; listening and thinking on your own; giving a presentation; hearing presentations and then responding; research and writing … etc.
   - Is there anything else you want to let us know (e.g., something that particularly worries or delights you about this course)?

2. **Moral Formation and Agency in Context** (30%)
   5-7 pages, 1250 – 1750 words  **Due** 30 Sept -- in class + by email.

   An abiding concern in Christian ethics is to understand moral formation, i.e., becoming persons in relation within specific contexts who develop particular virtues, values, obligations and responsibilities, and moral vision (Birch and Rasmussen, ch.,3). Relying on the readings from Sessions 2 + 3, respond to the following:
   - Cite a key term and/or an insight into your self-understanding as being a moral agent. What experience, groups or communities have been especially formative of your moral life? I.e., name key factors that have formed you morally (for example, family/upbringing, economics/work, friendship, nature, race/ethnicity, physical and/or mental ability, gender/sex, nation, language/culture, and/or education) etc? Be sure to comment on how church/religion/spirituality shape/d you as a moral agent, for better and/or for worse.
   - Choose and cite from at least one reading from Session 2 (Charting the Moral Life in Context) and at least reading from Session 3 (Moral Agency) to note something that connected with your experience and why, and also something that challenged you and why. OR cite a definition of moral agency according to one or two authors and note why it is important theologically and socially.
   - Name one particular scripture text or ethical theme (e.g., care, compassion, exile, forgiveness, hospitality, justice, responsibility, grace, love) or an image of God/divine-human-cosmic relation that has been important to you as a moral agent. Briefly comment on how and why.
3. **Mid-Term Paper** (30%)  5 – 7 pgs, 1250 – 1750 words **Due:** Option A Oct 8 **OR** Option B Oct 15

   Option A. Scripture + Tradition as Sources in Ethics due Week 5, Oct 8.
   
   or

   Option B. Love, Justice and Care as Theological Norms, due Week 6, Oct 15.

After doing the assigned readings and reflecting on the study questions for your option, review the **Twenty Questions for Doing Christian Ethics** and use the following guidelines to engage the texts:

i) At the outset briefly identify your own interest or stake in the topic.

ii) For each text, state the context and purpose, issue or main concern of the author and who the audience is (given or likely). What is the problem the author is trying to address?

iii) Then ask the “how” and “why” questions. How does the author support the basic claim? (a claim is a position on which the author is taking a stand or making a point about something.) What evidence or examples does the author give? What are the critical steps the author takes to build their case? To which sources of knowledge does the author appeal?

iv) Finally respond to something you have learned, had affirmed or challenged that contributes to your understanding of the work of Christian ethics. Be sure to give your reasons.

4. **Final Project** (40%) Due Wednesday December 10  (7-8 pages, 1750 - 2000 words)

   Option A: “Mentor in Christian Ethics”
   Option B: “Professional Ethics in Ministry” [order of ministry candidates]
   Option C: “A Christian Stance on Wealth and Poverty”

★ **Option A** “Mentor in Christian Ethics”

Choose ONE of the following mentors in theological ethics:

- Christine Gudorf, *Comparative Religious Ethics: Everyday Decisions for our Everyday Lives*
- Eleanor Haney, *The Great Commandment: A Theology of Resistance and Transformation*
- Beverly Harrison, *Making the Connections*
- Cynthia Moe-Lobeda, *Resisting Structural Evil: Love as Ecological-Economic Vocation*
- Traci West, *Disruptive Christian Ethics: When Racism and Women’s Lives Matter*

Feel free to refer to other authors from class in your discussion to support some connections that resonate or challenge something you find significant. Write about what excited you, frustrated you and have learned from this author about doing Christian ethics:

- Introduce the author, the audience (stated or intended) and purpose of the book. Cite definitions of key terms as you proceed with you essay.
- What method do they use? What sources of theological ethics (scripture/tradition, reason, experience, imagination and difference) do they draw on? With what moral norms
- What do you find agreeable with your moral approach or stance, and why? If something was missing, jarring or dissonant for you, state what, and why. What keys or insights into the moral life will you take with you? Or how has this mentoring enriched your understanding of ethics and could be a resource for you and your community/ies?
**Option B** “A Sustainable Professional Ethics of Ministry” (for ordered ministry candidates) 
(40%) Due Wednesday December 10 (7-8 pages, 1750 - 2000 words)

a. Review the assigned course readings relevant to this topic, especially Week 9.
b. The ethical guidelines for the practice of ministry in your denomination (or use those of the UCC).
c. “Professional Ethics in The United Church and its Intercultural Ministries: Becoming an Intercultural Church” ALL links @ http://www.united-church.ca/intercultural/becoming/
d. ONE of the following:
   i. Karen Lebacqz, Professional Ethics: Power and Paradox [on reserve] OR
   ii. Eric Law, The Word at the Crossings: Living the Good News in a Multicultural Community OR
   iii. Stephanie Spellers, Radical Welcome: Embracing God, The Other + the Spirit of Transformation

Then organize your writing following this suggested three-part outline:
1. What is the context of doing ministry that challenges and excites the authors? What are key moral challenges and issues identified? Do you agree or not? Why? Is there something missing?
2. In response to 1 above, what moral norms and images encourage ministry that befits the context today? Note specific roles and accountabilities for ministers as moral agents of the gospel.
3. In conclusion, are there particular insights and concrete suggestions that will help equip your own work/ministry? E.g., are there some practices that shape certain virtues, values, and obligations, accountabilities of paid accountable ministry that you connected to in your research? Choose one metaphor, image or a biblical passage that depicts your current understanding of ministry as fitting for Christian moral life.

**Option C** “What should the Christian community teach and do about wealth and poverty?” 
(40%) Due Wednesday December 10 (7-8 pages, 1750 - 2000 words)

- To begin, review your notes for this course, especially those pertaining to this topic, e.g., B+R on roles of church; Moe-Lobeda’s “Framework” in Week 4, plus Week 7 Wealth and Poverty and Week 11 Economy and Ecology.
- Then, choose a statement of a Christian position on wealth and poverty, e.g., from texts in this class, your denomination or an ecumenical body such as KAIROS or World Council of Churches. 
  N.B. Be sure to attach a copy of the statement to your paper.

The following three-part outline will facilitate our research and writing of this paper:
1. **Introduce the statement**, its context, purpose and key claims. In doing so, note the sources, norms and reasons used in the document. The moral grounds/reasons are what justifies/supports the main claims. Discuss these in relation to a minimum of three (3) relevant readings from your work in this course, including at least one of Brubaker, Gnanadason, Lind, or Peters.

2. In relation to this statement, give your own position, explaining why you agree and/or disagree with the statement. Discuss why and on what grounds – give the reasons which you say should guide the moral agency of persons and communities of faith. Cite other authors to locate yourself in the discussion.

3. Finally, develop an action plan in response to a concrete situation related to the statement (feel free to use a current news item, case study, etc.) for a specific group -- your congregation, a national church, ecumenical body, or broader public community. While the focus is on possible action, give a justification for these actions that draws upon your extended justification in 2 above.
1. September 10 - Getting Started

Opening: Territorial Acknowledgement

Skill Focus: Locating ourselves in relation to Christian ethics as a theological and practical discipline

- Introductions of ourselves and to the course
- What is ethics? What is Christian ethics?
- What is “context” and why is it theologically and morally important?

Review Syllabus + Research Skills – Librarian Karen Wishart can be booked for a tutorial!

Class guidelines of respect, hospitality, sharing space

In 3’s: Name one or two practices that indicate the relationship of your faith and your moral life.
- Who and what inspires, challenges, guides you?
- What is “context”? Does it matter? Why or why not?

In-Class Exercise: “Tracing my Moral Formation” = to develop into assignment DUE Week 3 (Sept 30)

Lecture: “Necessary Considerations: Christian Ethics as a Theological and Practical Discipline”

Looking ahead to next week

2. September 23 – Charting the Moral Life in Context ★ Learning Inventory DUE

   2. How do you understand the connection between faith, church/religion/spirituality and wider public life?
   3. How does each author describe the moral life and its context? What sources (scripture, tradition, reason, and experience) and reasons do they use for justifying their moral approach?
   4. Note one difference and one similarity you have with any of the authors. Why?

Read: Exodus 2: 1 – 14 Moses, Midwives and Pharaoh’s Daughters
   http://www.gc41.ca/sites/default/files/pcpmm_2025.pdf
   Birch and Rasmussen, ch. 3 “Charting the Moral Life” in Bible and Ethics in the Christian Life (35-65)
   UCC poverty issues and policies – see Session 4 “Wealth and Poverty”

Lecture… Discussion… looking ahead to next week
3. September 30 – Moral Formation and Agency in Context ★ Assignment #2 Due

**Skill Focus:** Becoming self-reflexive moral agents; context of social relations of difference and power

**Study Guide:**
1. What is moral agency? How and why is it of theological significance?
2. What grounds make sense and encourage you in becoming the moral subject of your own life in relation? What factors in the readings do you find helpful? What do you find challenging?
3. How do the texts discuss the relationship between personal experience and “social subject position”?

**Read:**
- Wenh-In Ng, “Reflecting on Identity* and “Diversity and Difference”
- Jennifer Henry, “Decolonizing the Heart” (pdf to be emailed to class)
- Birch and Rasmussen, ch. 4 + 5, “The Elements of Character Formation” and “Character Formation and Social Structure” in *Bible and Ethics* (66 – 84, 85 - 99)

**ONE OF:**
- Allen G. Johnson, “Privilege, Oppression and Difference”*
- Tracey Ore, “The Social Construction of Difference and Inequality” *
- Michelle Landsberg, “Unpacking the Backpack of Privilege” *
- Rita Kaur Dhamoon “Considerations on Mainstreaming Intersectionality” (pdf)

**Lecture… Looking ahead to next week**

4. October 7 – Method: Ways of Doing Christian Ethics

**Skill Focus:** Methods (frames for how to proceed): sources, norms, practical moral reason and decision-making

**Study guide:**
1. How do you connect with Christian scriptures and traditions? Why?
2. Recall a recent moral decision you made and how you discerned. What makes it a moral question?
3. What are your assumptions about how Canadian churches and society has dealt with and should deal with issues of basic human and ecological need?
4. How are data and knowledge confirmed? = to make/”justify” a moral argument

**Read:**
- Matt. 25: 31 – 34
- Roger Hutchinson, “Appendix: Levels of Clarification,” 2009 Camrose Lectures*
- Birch & Rasmussen, ch. 6, “Decision Making” *Bible and Ethics in the Christian Life*, 100-119
- EMT 2902 Course Reader Study Pages: Sources + Norms; Spiral Method of Engagement; Analyzing a Moral Position – Taking a Stand; Handling a Specific Case in Context

**Recommended:**
- James Gustafson, “Relationship of Empirical Science to Moral Thought”*

**Lecture… Neysmith Case Study, Plenary ….. Looking ahead to next week …**
5. October 14 – Bible + Ethics  

**Assignment 3 Option A Due**

**Skill Focus:** The complicated relation of context, hermeneutics and action

**Study Guide:** What makes the Bible authoritative and meaningful for you?  
Consider Jesus and the Samaritan woman at the well and how he related to her.  
Note any strong affinities and/or disagreements you have with any of these readings.

**Read:**  
- John 4: 1-42 “Jesus and the Samaritan Woman at the Well”  
- Birch + Rasmussen, “Preface” “Intro, Consensus and Questions” in *Bible and Ethics*  
- Stan McKay, “Learnings from Scripture about Racism”*  
- Margaret Farley, “Feminist Consciousness and the Moral Authority of Scripture”*  
- The Authority and Interpretation of Scripture (UCC 1992), 22-26 (RP)  
- James Gustafson, “Ways of Using Scripture”*

**Recommended:** Birch and Rasmussen, *Bible and Ethics*, 141-188

**Lecture … Discussion … looking ahead to AFTER READING WEEK**

6. October 21 – Theological Criteria of Love and Justice  

**Assignment 3 Option B Due**

**Skill Study Focus:** How are love, care and justice related? How and with whom do you practice these norms?  
Consider the Good Samaritan story revisited with norms of love and justice in relation to seeking appropriate moral responses to the missing and disappeared Aboriginal women.  

**Read:**  
- Dorothee Soelle, “Justice: A feeling in the pit of your stomach”*  
- Ada Maria Isasi Diaz, “Un Poquito Justica: A Little Bit of Justice”*  
- Beverly Harrison, “The Power of Anger in the Work of Love”*  
- Virginia Held, “The Meshing of Care and Justice”*  
- John Asling, “Moving from Charity Towards Justice”*  

**Recommended:** KAIROS: Canadian Ecumenical Justice Initiatives [http://www.kairoscanada.org/sustainability/](http://www.kairoscanada.org/sustainability/)

**Lecture … Discussion … looking ahead to next week**

**October 26 -30  Reading Week  NO CLASS**
7. November 4 – Wealth and Poverty  (Final Project Option A)

Skill Focus: Examining a contested moral issue, taking a stand.

Study Guide: In what ways are wealth and poverty of concern to you? What do you struggle with? How are poverty and wealth related? Bring to class 2 definitions of poverty from the readings. How do they relate to wealth production and accumulation?

What is the relationship between economics and theological ethics? Why does it matter or not?

Read: “Defining Poverty” google it in The Toronto Star*
“The Treadmill of Poverty”*
Interfaith Social Assistance Reform Council (ISARC) “Building an Ontario for All”
UK Churches, “The lies we tell ourselves: ending myths about poverty” @
Armine Yalnizyan, “A window into a world of need”*
Visit www.united-church.ca/economic
David Gushee, “What Would Jesus Say About Wealth?”*
“Dignity for All...” Citizens for Public Justice*

Recommended:
• Jason McBride, “Breaking the Food Bank” in The Globe and Mail, August 8, 2009: M1, 4
• ISAC – Income and Security Advocacy Centre of Community and Legal Education Organization of the Law Foundation of Ontario – see Resources for interesting fact sheets, e.g. current social assistance rates: http://www.incomesecurity.org/index.html
• Three Cities in Toronto: http://www.urbancentre.utoronto.ca/pdfs/curp/tnrn/Three-Cities-Within-Toronto-2010-Final.pdf
• “Shaping a Future for Everyone” @ Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives
• City of Toronto – visit demographics or social atlas e.g. Ward Profiles: 2011 (latest) data http://www1.toronto.ca/wps/portal/contentonly?vgnextoid=2394fe17e5648410VgnVCM10000071d60f89RCRD
• Social Planning Council of Toronto – Advocacy and research http://www.socialplanningtoronto.org/
• Social Planning Network of Ontario - Advocacy and research http://www.spno.ca/
• Poverty Free Ontario – http://www.povertyfreeontario.ca/
• Put food in the budget – Ontario based advocacy group http://www.putfoodinthebudget.ca/
• http://www.united-church.ca/economic/poverty -- scan this site for UCC actions
• KAIROS: http://www.kairosCanada.org/?s=poverty+action

Case Study: “Request at the Doorstep of the Church”*
Lecture … Discussion … looking ahead to next week
8. November 11 -- The Public Vocation of Christian Ethics

**Study Guide:**
1. How do you understand the connection between faith, church, religion and wider public life?
2. What intrigued, affirmed or bothered you about Birch and Rasmussen’s discussion of ethics and social analysis as matters of theological import?
3. Identify one concern that relates to public vocation and bring in a tangible resource to share (news item, group action, programme etc). Or bring an issue or question on 3x5” card.

**Read:**
- Birch +Rasmussen, [review chs 4, 5, 6] “The Church and the Moral Life” in Bible and Ethics, 120 -140
- Emilie Townes, “Ethics as An Art of Doing The Work our Souls Must Have”

**Recommended:** Ellen Ott Marshall, Christians in the Public Square (2008)

**Opening:** Name one of your concerns, questions...
- e.g., What about the UCC/your community +The TRC? (Truth and Reconciliation Commission) as prompted by ‘14 Calls To Action’ for churches and faith groups – re: United Church work above

Lecture … Discussion … Looking ahead to next week

9. November 18 – Professional Ethics *(Final Paper Option B)*

**Skill Focus:** Professional Roles and Conduct in Ministry

**Study Guide:**
1. What defines professional?
2. What is the relationship of ministry and professions?
3. What is your experience with professional ethics?
4. What is the role of paid accountable ministers:
   a) in the moral formation of persons and congregations?
   b) in wider publics

**Read:**
- 1 Corinthians 12: 4-13
- Stephanie Spellers, “Re-Imagine your Common Life” in Radical Welcome, 97-119*
- James Gustafson, “Professions as ‘Callings” in Moral Discernment in The Christian Life, 126 -138*
- Karen Lebacqz and Joseph Driscoll, “Ethics for Clergy”*
- Karen Lebacqz and Ronald Barton, “Pastoral Power” and “Ethical Framework”*
- Adele Halliday, “Intercultural Ministries and Empire”
- Sondra Ely Wheeler, “Thinking Through Conflicts” and “Discernment and Witness: The Roles of the Pastor in Medical Crisis” 69 -76, 93 – 112*

Lecture… Discussion + Verna’s Case … looking ahead to next week

**Study Guide:** 1. Think of a specific form of violence that concerns you and that you are or want to be doing something to respond to transform it.
   2. What did you read about that aids to build cultures of peace? How are these approaches justified, i.e. what reasons are given and based on what sources of authority?
   3. Name one action in the church statements and policies that inspires you. Write it on a 3X5” card to use in class and hand in.

**Read:**
- Matthew 5: 38 – 48
- Interview with John Paul Lederach (pdf)
- John Paul Lederach, *The Little Book of Conflict Transformation*
- Daniel Smith-Christopher, “Political Atheism and Radical Faith” World Council of Churches:
- Canadian Council of Churches:

**Recommended:** Birch and Rasmussen, “Christian Ethics as Community Ethics” *Bible and Ethics* (17-34)

**Lecture … Discussion … looking ahead to next week**

11. December 2 – Ecology and Economy

**Skill Focus:** Connecting ecology and economics with faithful work and witness

**Study Guide:** 1. Consider one norm in any of the readings below that expanded or challenges traditional Christian notions and practices.
   2. How have you, your household, congregation and/or workplace responded to environmental and economic issues?

**Read:**
- Stan McKay, “An Aboriginal Perspective on the Integrity of Creation”* [http://www.thestar.com/opinion/commentary/2013/03/17/who_will_protect_the_land_from_reckless_development.print.html](http://www.thestar.com/opinion/commentary/2013/03/17/who_will_protect_the_land_from_reckless_development.print.html)
- Cynthia Moe-Lobeda, “Introduction,” *Resisting Structural Evil: Love as Ecological-Economic Vocation*
- David Hallman, “Spiritual Values and Earth Community”*

- Christopher Lind, *Rumours of a Moral Economy*
- Rebecca Todd Peters, *In Search of the Good Life: The Ethics of Globalization*
- Stephen Bede Scharper, @

**Lecture…discussion… looking ahead to next week**
### 12. December 9 – Christian ethics in a global world

**LAST CLASS**

**Skill Focus:** What do I/we/the church do as Christians to be going along the way of Jesus Christ, following the promise and ways of relationship with God, ourselves, neighbour and cosmos?

Or, alternatively, how does our search for the good life relate to faith?

**Read:**
- Birch and Rasmussen, ch. 2, “Christian Ethics as Community Ethics” + “Summary and Challenge,” *Bible and Ethics*, (17-34, 189 – 202)
- Beverly Harrison, “Living in Resistance: Interview with Pamela Brubaker”
- Shawn Copeland, “Saying Yes, Saying No”

**Study Guide:** Evaluation of this course and your learning.
- Review the syllabus and your work in this course.
- Then respond IN WRITING to Guiding Questions 19 & 20:
  - What appeals to you about doing Christian ethics? What challenges you?
  - Name one or two new or renewed insights you will take away from your work in this course.

**Closure and do evaluation forms**

★ **Final Paper:** DUE Wednesday December 10 @ 4 pm

**Email Kampen + Legge**
**Hard Copy >>> Main Office, Emmanuel College (office closes at 4 pm)**
**Course Approach and Framework**

*What do I/we/the church do as Christians to be good disciples of Jesus Christ, following that hope and ways of relating with God? Alternatively, how does our search for the good life relate to faith?*

While this question is quite clear, how to answer it is not at all simple. It may be helpful to see learning ethics this semester as similar to learning a language. To be learned, a language has to be broken down into parts, which are practiced separately, building toward the time when you can speak the language smoothly without, say, trying to remember the 3rd person plural past, etc. The tricky part about working with morality is that we already think we ‘speak’ its language since we make moral decisions of lesser or greater importance all of the time. But one of the purposes of this course is to give you a chance to practice some of the parts of Christian ethics which will make you more aware of your own moral assumptions and, perhaps, deepen your ongoing moral work.

We will foreground the works of certain Christian ethicists as models of how they “spoke” Christian ethics. Analyzing their work will give you some background in Christian ethics and begin to help you think about your own ways of “speaking.” Please note that the authors we read answer these questions in very different ways! It is important to think about why some questions are important for an author and why some are unimportant.

We will also foreground some of the key components of ethics (i.e., elements of method include the four sources of a Christian approach--experience, scripture, tradition and reason) and focus on ways to work with these components by focusing on urgent issues of our time (poverty, economics and ecology), giving you some practice with these components in class, in your written work, and in the Final Project.

**Twenty Questions for Doing Christian Ethics in Context**

1. **Using Experience**
   - How does the author draw upon human experience? Whose experiences?
   - Are these experiences filtered or interpreted in any particular way?

2. **Using Knowledge**
   - What kinds of knowledge does the author rely upon (e.g., social theories, historical, scientific, etc.)? How does the author appear to choose and/or interpret these sources?
   - How “knowable” does the author believe the world to be? Does it seem to be a world governed by laws? Does it seem to be able to be understood/analyzed through human understanding/knowledge? Does emotion have a place?
   - Does the author take historical and social context into consideration? How generalized a framework does the author present? (e.g., something that could be used at any time or place or something more specific to a particular context)
Moral Reasoning

6. Does the author seem to move deductively from principles/laws to outcomes or inductively from experience to norms? Or both? Or is the author more concerned with the virtues, or features of character?


8. How does the author seem to locate/define moral work—is it aimed toward the future, to consequences? How much does it take into account the past or tradition as accumulated in certain beliefs and principles, and related to certain ends? Or is the focus on the present context? Is the concern more for action in the world or the nature of moral agent undertaking action?

Authority and Interpretation of Scripture

9. What role does scripture appear to play in this ethics? Is it used as a general authority? Are particular verses or scriptural norms/themes key?

Theological Framings (doctrines)

10. Is there predominant concern for certain theological or doctrinal themes—e.g., doctrine of sin or of grace/salvation; love or justice, forgiveness or reconciliation? How are these defined?


12. How is the “world” defined? Does it include the natural world? How is it related to God/Jesus? To the church? i.e., ecclesiology/ecology/eschatology

13. How are humans defined and theologically framed—e.g., as inescapably sinful? As redeemed? How does this frame appear to affect the possibility of moral action? theological anthropology/moral agency?

Practicing Tradition

14. How does the author define tradition? What seems to be included in that tradition? Does it appear univocal or multiple? What kind of authority does tradition have?

15. Is there attention to the church? If so, how does it seem to be defined (e.g., congregation, Universal Church, Protestant or Roman Catholic)?

Imagination and Difference

16. What kind of audience does the author assume or have in mind—any human? A Christian? Persons in certain locations (e.g., churches)? Social groups?

17. How does the author work with hope and vision?

Overall Assessment of Method in Christian Ethics

18. What sources does the author require to be considered in Christian ethics—scripture, tradition, knowledge (philosophy, natural and social sciences etc), experience? How does the author suggest we draw upon these sources? Do the sources seem to be prioritized in any way?

19. What appeals to you about doing Christian ethics? How will you incorporate this into your life and work/ministry?

20. What new insights have you gained from reading Christian ethicists? How and with whom will you practice moral reflection?

*Questions adapted with permission from Elizabeth M. Bounds