



Fall 2017

EMT 2902
Christian Ethics in Context

Wed 11 a.m. – 1 p.m.
Room EC 302

Dr. Marilyn Legge
Room 210
Office Hour: 4 -5 p.m. or by appt
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Course description

Pre-requisites: Introductory Bible and Theology

This course provides an introduction to Christian ethics and some tools for moral reflection and faithful action, with particular attention to justice, peace and the integrity of creation as urgent theo-ethical issues. As an introduction to authoritative sources, norms, and methods for doing Christian ethics, it aims to equip students to refine the ethical awareness that they bring to a variety of moral challenges, within their lives, communities, churches/religious groups, and as members of this heterogeneous society. Study questions, lectures, small groups, plenary discussion; 3 essays—on moral formation and agency; on love and justice in Christian ethics; and a final integrative project – on a mentor in Christian ethics, or professional ethics in ministry, or a theo-ethical examination of and response to an issue of eco-social concern.

Goals. This course assumes that living in a highly complex, pluralist and interrelated world presents the constant question of what is a distinctively Christian ethics and how it works. In response, this course

1. Engage and develop a working knowledge of the language and different themes in the field of Christian ethics;
2. Introduce some of the resources and tools to do Christian ethics related to personal, church, public realms;
3. Learn and/or to refine ability for identifying and analyzing moral arguments/stances;
4. Identify and practice methods for responding to moral dilemmas in order to more ably to negotiate moral complexities and uncertainties and to express one’s own moral stance in relation;
5. To explore Christian ethics as a discipline related to theology such that all theologies have ethical implications in religious life and work and thus to deepen insight and moral agency for your life/ministry/work.

Primary Learning Outcomes re: Emmanuel College and TST Basic Degree Programs

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 one’s 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. (HOW? Use in preparation and in class the guiding questions provided; moral formation paper; a final paper to meet learning outcomes specific to student’s context.)

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 your own and other faith perspectives and practices. (HOW? Show familiarity with ethical method (sources of authority and norms) by learning from several Christian ethicists, developing skills in constructive engagement by applying guiding questions; moral formation paper; figure or norms paper; final project to meet learning outcomes of Christian Faith and Heritage, Culture and Context, Spiritual and Vocational Formation and to develop moral insight into the implications for ministry/work and multiple/heterogenous communities and to articulate clearly own theo-ethical position.)

Required Texts (on reserve at Emmanuel Library)

Bruce Birch and Larry Rasmussen, *Bible and Ethics in Christian Life* (Abingdon, 1989) (Kindle edition)
EMT 2902 Course Reader @ The Print Shop in basement of Old Vic first week of semester (cash only)

Recommended: Katie Cannon et al, ed. *Womanist Theological Ethics: A Reader*
Miguel De La Torre, *Doing Christian Ethics from the Margins*
Robin Lovin, *Christian Ethics: An Essential Guide*
The Cambridge Companion to Christian Ethics, ed. Robin Gill
The Oxford Handbook of Theological Ethics, eds. Meilaender and Werpehowsoki
The Westminster Dictionary of Christian Ethics, eds. Childress and MacQuarrie



COURSE RESPONSIBILITIES AND GUIDELINES

- Every one of us deserves respect—this does not mean we need to agree with each other (in fact expressed and responsible disagreement can be a sign of deep respect). Participation with *R-E-S-P-E-C-T* involves *responsibility* for what you say and feel without blaming; *empathic* listening; being *sensitive* to difference, including communication styles; *pondering* what you hear and feel before you speak; *examining* your own assumptions and perceptions; keeping *confidentiality*; *tolerance and/or trusting* ambiguity. (See Eric Law, www.ladiocese.org/)
- Teaching Team: Legge is responsible for class structure, maintenance (including focus and weekly topics), and for providing and evaluating assignments. Kampen and I are available after the class or by appointment via email.
- Students are responsible to be familiar with and follow THIS SYLLABUS; attend class; do the weekly readings using the guiding questions; participate by listening and contributing on topic in small group discussions, hand in assignments *on time*. As below, a very crucial aspect of studying is your conscientious completion of written work.
- All of us are responsible for trying to develop an atmosphere of hospitality where we can learn, risks can be taken, and feedback can be constructively given and received.

CLASS STRUCTURE. We will study and learn together with a compassionate, lively and mindful curiosity,
A// Opening, including announcements; B// Lecture and Framing of Topic of the day ... BREAK
C// Small Group Topic Discussion; D// Plenary Discussion + Look Ahead to Next Week

Completion of Required Readings for each class will enhance your learning, participation and well-being in this course.

Punctual attendance, active participation

Punctual attendance at all class sessions is required. Absences must be excused by the professor.

No credit for the course will be given for a student who misses more than 3 class sessions. *Participation* includes preparation and following of RESPECT Ground Rules, e.g., selective verbal contributions, attentive listening, and facilitating the participation of others in plenary and small groups.

WRITTEN WORK.

Accessibility: Special consideration is given for students who have a learning disability who register via UT Accessibility Services. You are also invited to meet with the professor to discuss accommodations and note **Accessibility Disclosure Statement** <http://www.accessibility.utoronto.ca/Faculty-and-Staff.htm>

1. All written work is to be submitted as ***both a hard copy and an email copy*** for purposes of programme evaluation. Emailed-only assignments will **not** be graded (except in rare cases with Legge's prior permission).
2. **Paper Format: First Page: Your name, college, title of the assignment and date**
Font size: 11 - 12 points.
Line spacing: one-and-a-half to double-spaced. Single spacing used only for long quoted passages and footnotes.
Footnotes and references: Put footnotes at *bottom of page* as per TST use the conventions of Kate L. Turabian et al., *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses and Dissertations*, 8th ed., Chicago: University of Chicago, 2013). **NUMBER and STAPLE pages and do not use folders.** Thanks!!!
3. **All papers are due at the end of class in hard copy AND by email to Legge and Kampen.**
Policy on Late Work. If there is an emergency, Dr. Legge is (generally) understanding.
Late papers will be deducted one point per day.
4. **Extensions** can be granted for personal and immediate family illness/crisis but will not be given for any sudden church-related issues or demands of other classes as we all lead busy and full lives.
Seek permission from Legge for extensions *in advance of the due date* via email or appointment.

5. **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 of Academic Matters @ <http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/Assets/Governing+Council+Digital+Assets/Policies/PDF/ppjun011995.pdf>

Evaluation of Written Work

Grading in this course follows the TST Grading Scale as published in the TST BD Handbook. Also

- Overall clarity of your thinking, expression and organization.
- Content: research and critical engagement with texts, including demonstration of comprehension of the text's key points and argument, ability to present points accurately and to evaluate fairly.
- Ability to state and justify (give reasons for) your own position in dialogue with the assigned material and topic (e.g., you could engage one point with which you agree and one with which you differ.)

Inclusivity Policy

“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 Torontonion, Canadian, North American and global contexts.” *Emmanuel College Basic Degree Handbook.*

For all other academic policies please consult and follow the TST BD Handbook.

LIBRARY RESEARCH SEMINAR – with Karen Wishart, Librarian

For all interested in research, e.g., into how to prepare to teach an issue of justice, peace and the integrity of creation in theo-ethical perspectives we will find a suitable time during the second week of class.



EMT 2902 ASSIGNMENTS

- ★ 1. **Reading Reports (15 x 2%)** (3 -5 pages, 750 -1000 words) Bring copy to class, email Legge and Kampen.
In response to each of the assigned readings for:

DUE September 27 *Engaging Scripture and Tradition*

DUE November 1 *Theo-Ethical Norms of Love and Justice*

Guidelines for Reading Reports (to practice being brief, concise and in dialogue)

1. At the outset briefly identify your own interest/bias toward the topic.
2. State the purpose, issue or main concern of the author and who is the audience (stated or likely)? What is the problem this author is trying to address?
3. Then ask the “how” and “why” questions. How does the author *support her or his basic claim?* (a claim is a position in 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 his or her case? To which *sources of knowledge* does the author appeal?
4. Finally offer an evaluation of each text. It is not necessary to agree but to say how the text contributes or not to your understanding of Christian ethics. *Be sure to give your reasons.*

- ★ 2. **Moral Authorities, Formation and Agency in Context** (30%) **DUE OCT 11**

(5 -7 pages, 1250 – 1750 words) *Bring copy to class + also email to Legge and Kampen.*

Introduction: An abiding concern in Christian ethics is to understand moral formation, i.e., *becoming persons and groups of character and moral conduct (as moral agents) within specific contexts who draw on authoritative sources in a lifelong process whereby we learn particular virtues, values, obligation/ responsibilities, and moral vision (study and apply the definitions of these terms from Birch and Rasmussen, ch.3).* Read the guiding questions below. Keep them in mind as you then read the assigned texts for Session 6 on this topic. You will also be in dialogue with Session 6 author(s).

The following questions will guide your discussion in dialogue, citing specific influences that have shaped you as a moral person/moral agent situated in specific contexts.

1. Identify and reflect on *sources of authority* in your own decision-making and moral agency.
2. You can choose to focus on either one experience and how each source of authority played a role OR you can write about a different experience in relation to each source of authority -- for better or for worse (malforming):
experience as a source of authority (for example, family/upbringing, education, economics/work, friendship, nature, race/ethnicity, physical and/or mental ability, gender/sex, nation, religion, language/culture, and/or education);
scripture as a source of authority (for example, as sources of theological theme (e.g., compassion, exile, forgiveness, hospitality, justice, grace, love) or God as incarnate evokes being called into divine-human-cosmic relation) that has been important to you for being a moral agent; *tradition as a source of authority* (for example, my church is dedicated to becoming justly intercultural); *reason as source of authority* (for example, to discern if power
3. Finally, in your paper make reference to some *author* and note
 - something that resonates with your use of one or more sources (experience, scripture, tradition, reason), and/or your experience as a moral agent;
 - an idea that challenges or deepens your understanding of yourself as a moral agent (being and acting) that encourages you to explore your use of authoritative sources in moral formation as a moral agent.

- ★ **Final Project** (40%) **Due Wed. 13 December** (7 - 8 pages, 1750 - 2000 words)

Option A: “Mentor in Christian Ethics” or

Option B: “Professional Ethics in Ministry” [e.g., order of ministry candidates] or

Option C: “What should Christian communities teach and race, racism and reconciliation” OR
“ecology and economy?”

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

Choose ONE of the following mentors. Feel free to confer with either Kampen or Legge.

John Cobb, *Matters of Life and Death*

Miguel De La Torre, *Doing Christian Ethics from the Margins*

Eleanor Haney, *The Great Commandment: A Theology of Resistance and Transformation*

Beverly Harrison, *Making the Connections: Essays in Feminist Social Ethics*

Ada Maria Isasi Diaz, *La Lucha Continua: Mujerista Theology*

Karen Lebacqz, *Justice in an Unjust World: Foundations for a Christian Approach to Justice*

Grace D. Cumming Long, *Passion and Reason: Woman Views of the Christian Life*

Robin Lovin, *Christian Ethics: An Essential Guide*

Cynthia Moe-Lobeda, *Resisting Structural Evil: Love as Ecological-Economic Vocation*

Nyambura J. Njoroge, *An African Christian Feminist Ethic*

Rebecca Todd Peters, *In Search of the Good Life: The Ethics of Globalization*

_____, *Solidarity Ethics*

T. Richard Snyder, *Once You Were No People: The Church and the Transformation of Society*

Emilie Townes, *Womanist Justice, Womanist Hope*

Traci West, *Disruptive Christian Ethics: When Racism and Women’s Lives Matter*

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

- Introduce the author, the audience (stated or intended), and purpose of the book. Cite definitions of key terms as you proceed with your essay.
- What method do they use? What is at stake and for whom? What sources of theological ethics (scripture/tradition, reason, experience, imagination, difference) do they draw on? With what moral norm(s)?
- What do you find agreeable with your theo-ethical 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? Note any other considerations or concerns about how this mentoring has enriched your understanding of ethics and could be a resource for you and your organization or community/ies.

★ **Option B** “A Sustainable Professional Ethics of Ministry” (for ordered ministry candidates) (40%) Due Wednesday December 13 (7- 8 pages, 1750 - 2000 words)

For research

- a. Review the assigned course readings relevant to this topic, especially Week 9.
- b. Find and study the Ethical Guidelines For The Practice Of Ministry in your denomination (or use UCC’s).
- c. “Professional Ethics in The United Church and its Intercultural Ministries: Becoming an Intercultural Church” ALL links @ <http://www.united-church.ca/intercultural/resources>
- d. **ONE** of Karen Lebacqz, *Professional Ethics: Power and Paradox*

OR

Stephanie Spellers, *Radical Welcome: Embracing God, The Other and the Spirit of Transformation*

Then for writing use this three-part framework:

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. Given your assessment of today’s contexts of ministry, what moral norms and images encourage ministry that befits the context today? Name some specific roles and accountabilities for ministers as Christian moral agents.
3. In conclusion, are there particular insights and concrete suggestions that will help equip your own work/ministry and your peers? E.g., name several *practices* you connected to in your research to help shape necessary virtues, values, and/or obligations of paid accountable ministry. Finally, choose one metaphor, image or a biblical passage that depicts your current understanding of ministry as fitting for Christian moral life.



Option C

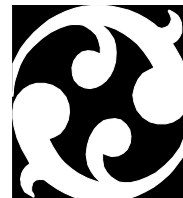
What should the Christian community teach and do about
Race, Racism and Reconciliation? OR Ecology and Economy?

(40%) **Due Wednesday December 13** (8 - 10 pages, 2000 - 2500 words)

- To begin, review your notes for this course, especially those weeks 10 and or 11 for your chosen topic, and be sure to cite/reference them = B+R on roles of church; Moe-Lobeda's "Framework" in Week 3, plus either Week 10 or Week 11.
- Then, choose a statement of a Christian/religious position on wealth and poverty, e.g., from texts in this class, your denomination (Quakers, UCC, Unitarian etc) 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.*

Use this three-part outline to facilitate your research and writing of this paper:

1. Introduce the statement, its context and audience, 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, locate yourself in this discussion in dialogue with your selected statement and authors: I.e., Where do you stand and why (give reasons)?
3. Finally, develop a modest 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 household, congregation, neighbourhood, or other civic community. While the focus is on possible or sustaining action, give a justification for these actions that situates your reasons in 2 above in that particular context of encouraging moral agents for common good.





EMT 2902 CLASS SCHEDULE AND TOPICS



SECTION ONE – INTRODUCTION: CHRISTIAN ETHICS and CONTEXT

1. September 13 Getting Started -- Genesis 1: 26-31; Hosea 4: 1-3; Romans 8: 18-24a; Mark 12: 28-31
2. September 20 Charting Moral Life: Engaging experience as authoritative source
-- Jeremiah 1: 4-5; 18: 1-11; 1 Corinthians 13



SECTION TWO – AUTHORITATIVE SOURCES AND NORMS OF CHRISTIAN ETHICS

3. September 27 Engaging Scripture & Tradition -- Genesis 32:22 ff; Matthew 26: 6 -13; Luke 10: 25 – 28
1 Tim. 2: 13-15; 2 Tim. 3: 16 – 17 **(Reading Report 1 due – 15%)**
4. October 4 Using Reason and Moral Imagination in Ethical Decision Making – Romans 1: 18-25
5. October 11 Experience and Moral Formation of Agency in Context – Gen.1:1, 26; Matt. 22: 34-40
(Topic paper due -- 30%)
6. October 18 Method: Doing Christian Ethics - Exodus 20: 1-17; Matt.25: 31-34; Luke 11: 1-9

October 23 -28 Reading Week = **NO CLASS**

7. November 1 Theological Framings: The Virtue of Love and Necessity of Justice
Micah 6: 6-8; Luke 10: 25-37; 1 Corinthians 13 **(Reading Report 2 due -15%)**



SECTION THREE – PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

8. November 8 Moral Discernment, Responding to Moral Dilemmas
9. November 15 Professional Ethics - 1 Corinthians 12: 4-13 (final paper option C)
10. November 22 Contexts and Issues: Race, Racism and Reconciliation (final paper option C)
11. November 29 Contexts and Issues: Ecology and Economy (final paper option C)
12. December 6 **LAST CLASS** Christian Ethics in a Beloved and Troubled World - Matt.25: 31-40



WEDNESDAY 13 December



Final Paper (40%) DUE

HARD COPY to Emmanuel College Main Office by 4 p.m.

ALSO email m.kampen@mail.utoronto.ca and m.legge@utoronto.ca



EMT 2902 COURSE SCHEDULE AND TOPICS

SECTION ONE – INTRODUCTION: CHRISTIAN ETHICS and CONTEXTS

1. September 13 - Getting Started

Welcome and Opening: Territorial Acknowledgement

Skill Focus: *What is Christian Ethics? Locating ourselves in relation to Christian ethics as a theological and engaged/practical discipline* *Scripture: Matt. 22: 34-40/ Mark 12: 28-31*

Introductions of the teaching team, classmates and expectations

Identify questions and ideas that you bring to the class about what is meant by ethics, by the study of ethics, and by Christian Ethics in particular

Review Syllabus + Research Skills (*find date for Librarian Karen Wishart's tutorial*)

Review Class guidelines (page 3, respect, hospitality, sharing space ...) **Discuss.** Other class norms to add?

In-Class exercise: “Tracing my Moral Self and Shaping of my Moral Formation”

Solo Reflection and Writing Response; then in threes; then debrief in plenary [BREAK]

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

Plenary // Looking Ahead to Next Week – watch for EMT 2902 Ethical Toolbox in your in box

2. September 20 – Charting Moral Life: Engaging Experience as Authoritative Source

m.kampen@mail.utoronto.ca + m.legge@utoronto.ca

Skill Focus: Basic Grammar of Christian Ethics and Setting Moral Formation and Agency in Context

Read: *Scripture:* Jeremiah 1: 4-5, 18: 1-11; 1 Corinthians 13

Birch and Rasmussen, ch. 3 in *Bible and Ethics in the Christian Life* (scan preface, ch. 1 and ch. 2; 35-65)

*Cynthia Moe-Lobeda, “Introduction,” *Resisting Structural Evil: Love as Ecological-Economic Vocation*, 1- 21
(= book option for MENTOR final paper)

*William Schweiker, “One World, Many Moralities: A Diagnosis of Our Moral Situation”

AT LEAST ONE OF: {pdf of options }

James Cone, “Looking Back, Going Forward”

Marvin Ellison, “Holding Up Our Half of the Sky”

Eleanor Haney, “A White Woman Eco-Feminist”

Letty Russell, “Bread Instead of Stone”

Wenh-In Greer Anne Ng, “Land of Maples, Land of Bamboo”

Mark Kline Taylor, Intro to *Remembering Esperanza*

Emilie Townes, “Ethics as An Art of Doing the Work our Souls Must Have”

REVIEW EMT 2902 Ethical Toolbox

Reading Response Questions:

1. How does each author describe moral life, its main concerns, and its context? How do you relate?
2. What sources and norms do they appeal to in discussing moral life?
3. How do they value their experience as authoritative within their context and their moral life?
4. Note something that encourages you – and/or one thing that discourages or frustrates you.

Small Groups // Debrief // Looking Ahead to Next Week: paper due next week...



3. September 27 Engaging Scripture and Tradition as Authoritative Sources

Read: Genesis 32: 22-31; Matthew 22: 6-13; John 4: 1- 42

Birch and Rasmussen, “Christian Ethics as Community Ethics” and “The Nature and Role of Biblical Authority,” ch. 2 17-34; & ch. 8, 141 -158

*Stan McKay, “Learnings from Scripture about Racism”

*Lois Wilson, “That’s Our Story Too”

“Church and Societal Context of our Report” in *The Authority and Interpretation of Scripture* (UCC 1992)

*Serene Jones, “Bounded Openness: Postmodernism, Feminism, and the Church Today,” *Interpretation* 55 (1): 49-59, 2001.

Recommended:

Kelly Brown Douglas, "Marginalized People, Liberating Perspectives: A Womanist Approach to Biblical Interpretation" *Anglican Theological Review*, Vol. 83, Issue 1, Winter 2001

Margaret Farley, “Feminist Consciousness and the Moral Authority of Scripture”

James Gustafson, “Ways of Using Scripture”

Kim-Cragg, H., and Schweitzer, D. (2016), “The Authority and Interpretation of Scripture in *Moving Toward Full Inclusion*,” and “Conclusion,” in Kim-Cragg and Schweitzer, eds., *The Authority and Interpretation of Scripture in The United Church of Canada: An Intercultural Adventure Part II*.

Daejangan Publisher: 102-144. (ON LIBRARY RESERVE SHELF)

Renita Weems, “Reading *Her Way* Through the Struggle”

Reading Response Questions:

1. How is the bible meaningful for you? Does scripture have a role in your decision-making?
2. What is it like to encounter struggles about the authority of scripture?
3. What do you learn from the bible about what it is like to struggle with moral issues? The Genesis passage tells the story of Jacob struggling with the angel. Does this story have significance for you in relation to your own understandings and experiences of moral issues and struggles? Are there other images, passages, or stories from Biblical text that have greater significance for you? How, in what way?
4. Matthew 26 includes the oft-cited passage where Jesus says, “The poor you shall always have with you.” Do you accept this as a moral instruction and ethical imperative? Why or why not?
5. How does interpretation shape the role of scripture in Christian ethics? The readings note some pivotal issues that have caused the interpretation of Scripture to involve conflict, dialogue, and change. The AIS study demonstrates that because of the nature of scripture and its varied reception by diverse communities *there is no one singular way to “read scripture.”* What other insights can you name from the readings that effect the role and effects of interpretation?
6. What is “bounded openness” like? Serene Jones reflects on what she characterizes as a strange relationship between postmodernism, feminism, and the church and argues that this relationship involves “embracing the gifts of critique and radical openness and, second, celebrating the gifts of normative structure and emancipatory vision” (Jones, 51). What are some of the qualities of the bounded openness that Jones describes in the article? Do you experience, or want to experience these qualities in your own encounters with tradition?

Lecture // Bible and Ethics at Borders: Jesus and the Samaritan woman at the well (interactive PowerPoint)

Small Groups Discussion and Debrief ---- Looking Ahead to Next Week

4. October 4 - Reason and Moral Imagination in Ethics

Skill Focus: Consider and articulate how reason is a source of authority in decision making; relationship between reason and revelation; ways universal principles emerge out of particular historical contexts; place of religion in liberal pluralist societies like Canada.

Read: Proverbs 4:5b-6; Mark 3: 31-35; Romans 12: 1-2

* Daloz et al., “Developing Critical Habits of Mind” in *Common Fire: Lives of Commitment in a Complex World*.

* Gascoigne, R. (2001), “Revelation and Reason in Liberal Societies,” in *The Public Forum and Christian Ethics*, Cambridge University Press: 11-44.

* Summary of John Paul Lederach, “The Moral Imagination: The Art and Soul of Peacebuilding”

Reading Response Questions:

1. How do you know that you know something, a person, or a situation? What confirms this knowledge?
2. *What is reason?* Gascoigne begins by describing how liberal societies provide “freedom from a unitary tradition” (11). What is the role of Reason in this freedom? What is your own definition of reason?
3. *What is the place of religion in a liberal society?* Gascoigne examines some aspects of the debates between “traditions of the good and the public forum of liberal societies” (p. 21). What are some key points he makes about the contribution that Christian revelation can make to a liberal pluralist society? Do you have other arguments to add?
4. *What is Kant’s view on reason and revelation?* Gascoigne describes Immanuel Kant’s philosophy (pp. 26ff) and particularly his critique of revealed tradition. What specific criticisms does Kant make about the place of revelation in morality?
5. What is moral imagination? How is related to reason? As sources of authority for doing Christian ethics?
6. Why is the claim made that “reason is a necessary but insufficient source” for living a Christian life?

Lecture// Discussion// Looking ahead -- Paper due next week

5. October 11 – EXPERIENCE and Moral Formation of Agency ★ Paper DUE (30%)

Skill Focus: Becoming “self-reflexive” moral agents in community (see EMT 2902 Toolbox)

Reading Response Questions: 1. What is experience? What is situated moral agency? Where are you situated?

2. Identify particular loyalties and accountabilities that guide your life. What are Townes?
3. What connections do Birch and Rasmussen make between moral formation and social structure? How do privilege and marginalization matter for moral agency in terms of subject and social positionality?
4. What dynamics of social exclusion identified from the research discussed in Neysmith et al essay?
Note how particular exclusionary practices relate to each of the other readings.

Read: Emilie Townes, “Ethics as an Art of Doing the Work our Souls Must Have”

Birch and Rasmussen, review ch. 3 (34 – 65); chs. 4 & 5 in *Bible and Ethics*, 66 – 99

Barbara Applebaum, “Situated Moral Agency” (pdf)

*Michelle Landsberg, “Unpacking the Backpack of Privilege”

Sheila Neysmith, et al, “Shut Out: Uncovering the Dynamics of Social Exclusion”

Debrief Papers in Small Groups – BREAK Small Group Discussion of Case Study of “Shut Out”

Lecture ... Looking ahead -- HAND IN PAPERS

6. October 18 – METHOD: Doing Ethics, Analyzing Moral Arguments

Read: Matt. 25: 31 – 34; Luke 10: 25-28.

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*Roger Hutchinson, “Towards a Pedagogy for allies of the oppressed” in *Studies in Religion/Sciences Religieuses 13 (2), 1984: 145-150.*

Terence Anderson “Worldview and Basic Convictions: Eyes to See, Ears to Hear,” in *Walking the Way: Christian Ethics as a Guide*. United Church Publishing House, 1993, 151-186.

Twenty Questions at the end of this syllabus

KAIROS <http://www.kairoscanada.org/product/strength-for-climbing> AND

<http://www.kairoscanada.org/what-we-do/indigenous-rights/windsofchange-94calls2action>

Recommended: Douglas Jay, “Roger Hutchinson as Ethicist and Educator in an Age of Religious Pluralism” in *Doing Ethics in a Pluralistic World: Essays in Honour of Roger C. Hutchinson*. Wilfrid Laurier University Press: 13-37, 2002.

Reading Response Questions:

1. What is Hutchinson’s method?
2. What is your worldview according to Anderson’s four fundamental questions?
3. What is the KAIROS process worldview?

Case Study: KAIROS “Strength For Climbing” (a resource for seeking right relations among indigenous peoples and non-Aboriginals)

**Lecture // Small Group Discussion of Case Study// Debrief // Looking Ahead to next class NOV.1
READING REPORT DUE**

Looking Ahead = Mid-Term check in about how the course is going: What is working?
What could we improve and how?

October 23 -28 Reading Week = NO CLASS

7. Nov 1 – THEOLOGICAL NORMS: The Virtue of Love and Necessity of Justice DUE Reading Report

Read: Micah 6: 6-8; Luke 10: 25-37; 1 Corinthians 13

Beverly Harrison, “The Power of Anger in the Work of Love” (= MENTOR option final paper)

*Martin Luther King, Jr. “Letter from a Birmingham Jail”

*Ada Maria Isasi-Diaz, “Un poquito de justicia – a little bit of justice”

*Virginia Held, “The Meshing of Care and Justice”

ONE OF

*Daniel Maguire, “Theories of Justice: What’s So Good about the Common Good?” (51 – 60)

*Cynthia Moe-Lobeda, “Love’s Moral Framework” in *Resisting Structural Evil: Love as Ecological-Economic Vocation*, 237 – 268 (= book is option for MENTOR final paper)

Reading Response Questions:

1. What is a moral norm? What are Harrison’s three basepoints for loving?
2. What does love have to do with justice? With care?
3. What does Christian social engagement look like? How does love become action?
Consider the Good Samaritan story revisited with norms of love and justice in relation to groups seeking appropriate moral responses – name some in the forefront of your and public concern.
4. Review KAIROS Process <http://www.kairoscanada.org/product/strength-for-climbing> Identify its norms...

Topic Lecture // Small Group Discussion // Looking Ahead



SECTION THREE – PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

8. November 8 – Moral Discernment and Action

Read: *Daniel Maguire, “Ethics: How to do it” in *Introduction to Christian Ethics* R.Hamel and K.Himes, eds Paulist Press, 1989: 533-550.

Birch & Rasmussen, *Bible and Ethics*, ch. 6, “Decision Making” (moral discernment), 100-119

“Towards 2025: A Justice Seeking/Justice Living Church” (pdf)

Reading Response Questions:

1. *How do you respond to a dilemma?* Provide a brief example to identify and illustrate the 8 steps outlined by Maguire.
2. *What room is there for creativity and imagination in moral discernment?* Maguire identifies a role for creativity in moral discernment (e.g., p. 545). Can you describe a time when you have responded creatively to a dilemma? What are some obstacles to the practice of creative imagination in church and society?
3. *What’s the use of a method for making decisions?* What do you think the general role is for methods, or “systematic approaches to ethics” (Maguire, 546)? What do you look for in a method?
4. What moral discernment do you find in *Towards 2025*?

Recommended: Birch & Rasmussen, *Bible and Ethics*, ch. 6, “Decision Making” (moral discernment), 100-119

Topic Lecture // Small Group Discussion // Looking ahead

9. November 15 – Professional Ethics in Ministry (Final Paper Option)

Read: James Gustafson, “Professions as Callings”

Karen Lebacqz and Joseph Driscoll, “Ethics for Clergy”

Karen Lebacqz and Ronald Barton, “Pastoral Power” & “Ethical Framework”

Carole Fontaine, “The Abusive Bible: On the Use of Feminist Method in Pastoral Contexts” (pdf)

UCC “A Vision for Becoming an Intercultural Church”

Stephanie Spellers, *Radical Welcome*, Foreword and Introduction, ix – 28

UCC Ethical Guidelines For The Practice Of Ministry (find online)

Recommended: Sondra Ely Wheeler, *Stewards of Life*, “Thinking Through Conflicts” and “Discernment and Witness: The Roles of the Pastor in Medical Crisis” 69 -76, 93 – 112

Terence Anderson, “Aspects of The Moral Life: Basepoints for Ethical Reflection,” in *Walking the Way: Christian Ethics as a Guide*, 13-19

Reading Response Questions:

1. What are the professional roles of Paid Accountable Ministers?
2. What are the rules or standards of Paid Accountable Ministers?
3. What are the guidelines/norms and how are they enacted in the moral formation of persons and congregations? In wider public life?

Topic Lecture // Small Group Discussion // Looking Ahead

10. November 22 – Contexts and Issues: Race, Racism and Reconciliation (Final Paper Option)

- READ:** Traci West “Constructing Ethics: Reinhold Neibuhr and Harlem Women Activists,” in *Disruptive Christian Ethics* PAGES
- The United Church of Canada (2014) “Statement to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada”.
<http://www.united-church.ca/social-action/justice-initiatives/truth-and-reconciliation-commission>
- The United Church of Canada (2016) “1986 – 1998 Apologies” @
<http://www.united-church.ca/social-action/justice-initiatives/apologies>
- O. Sensoy, and R. DiAngelo, R., “Racism,” in *Is everyone really equal? An Introduction to Key Concepts in Social Justice Education*, pp. 96-117
- Jennifer Henry, “Decolonizing the Heart” (pdf)

Reading Response Questions:

1. Where does knowledge of racism come from? Reflect on your own socialization in and responses to the intersections of faith and political issues. Identify and consider responses to moral dilemmas that arise in relation to race, racism, and reconciliation and critically analyze your own position.
2. Consider how colonialism in Canada frames current politics and raises issues of the role of the churches. What moral norms are involved in calls to reconciliation and anti-racism work?
3. What actions are called for with respect to churches? Can you identify any examples of the actions described by Gary Paterson (UCC Statement)? (e.g., examples of acts of reconciliation).

What barriers to such actions can you identify?
4. How does racism get in the way of reconciliation? What challenges as defined by Sensoy and DiAngelo are presented to the tasks of reconciliation and of living out apologies?

11. November 29 – Contexts and Issues: Ecology and Economy (Final Paper Option)

Read: Genesis 1: 26 -31

*Stan McKay, “An Aboriginal Perspective on the Integrity of Creation”

* David Hallman, “Spiritual Values for Earth Community”

*Christopher Lind, “Whatever Happened to the Ethics in Economics?” in *Rumours of a Moral Economy*. Fernwood, 2010: 15-29.

* W. Jenkins. “Ethics in the Anthropocene,” in *The Future of Ethics: Sustainability, Social Justice and Religious Creativity*. Georgetown University Press, 2013: 1-15.

* Pam Brubaker, “What Does Faith Have to Do with Globalization” (option for Mentor Final Paper) WARC Accra Confession -- Economics and Earth Covenant 2004 (pdf)

Recommended:

Cynthia Moe-Lobeda, “Climate Change and Climate Debt” JSCE, 36, 1 (2016): 27 – 49.

<http://www.kairoscanada.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/11/SUS-CJ-11-10-PovertyWealthEcology-.pdf>

Reading Response Questions

1. *What do you know about ethics and economics?* Christopher Lind begins by describing how he has asked students this question and often heard the response that they “know nothing” about economics (p. 15); he suggests that there is a political reason for students to think they don’t understand economics. Do you agree? What is your own response to conversations about economics?
2. *What happened to the ethics in economics?* What is the problem that Lind is addressing in his article? What is he arguing against?
3. *What moral norms are named to respond to ecological crises?*

Topic Lecture // Small Group Discussion // Looking Ahead TO LAST CLASS

12. December 6 – Christian ethics in a global world

LAST CLASS

Read: Harrison, “Living in Resistance: Interview with Pamela Brubaker”

Birch and Rasmussen, “Summary and Challenge,” *Bible and Ethics*, 189 – 202

Marcia Riggs, “Living as Religious Ethical Mediators: A Vocation for People of Faith ...”

Reading Response Questions:

What do I/we/the church do as Christians to be good disciples of Jesus Christ, following the promise and ways of relationship with God? Or, alternatively, how does our search for the good (moral) life relate to faith/religious life?

★ **Closure** Evaluation of this course in Christian Ethics in Context.

Review the syllabus and your work in this course.

★ 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.

★ **Final Paper DUE Wednesday December 13**

HARD COPY by 3 pm

Emmanuel College Main Office

Email Kampen and Legge

If you want your paper returned by post, just hand in your paper in a stamped self-address envelope.



Guiding Questions For Doing Christian Ethics in Context: Sources and Norms

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 a little 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 4 sources of authority used in any Christian approach--experience, scripture, tradition and reason) and focus on ways to work with these components by focus on urgent issues of our time (racism, economics and ecology), giving you some practice with these components in class and in the Final Project.



20 QUESTIONS FOR YOUR WORK IN DOING CHRISTIAN ETHICS

Using Experience

1. How does the author draw upon human experience? Whose experiences?
2. Are these experiences filtered or interpreted in any particular way? What is at stake and for whom?

Using Knowledge

3. 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?
4. 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?
5. 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?
7. What kind of agent does the author presuppose—a single actor? A collective actor? An interpreting responder? An isolated individual? A socially contextualized person? A person marked by sin and grace? Is the author concerned with the nature of this agent?
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, teachings)

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? soteriology
11. What role do God and Jesus and the Holy Spirit appear to play in this author's work? Are they defined in any way? How do they seem to "authorize" Christian morality? theology/Christology/ pneumatology
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? As flawed yet good? 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—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 (how ethics is done)

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? Will you incorporate this into your life/work/ministry?
20. What new insights have you gained from reading Christian ethicists? How will you practice this?

(*Adapted with permission from Elizabeth M. Bounds)