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MS 615 Foundations of a Healthy Church

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MS615
A SYLLABUS AND GENERAL GUIDE FOR

“Foundations of a Healthy Church”

January Term, 2005

Fri./Sat. (Jan. 21-22 & Jan. 28-29), 8 a.m. /

Mont Duncan, Linda Mobley, Larry Rankin, Kendall Taylor, Bob Tuttle (professor of record)

3 hours credit, Asbury Theological Seminary

I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

Designed for clergy and laity with a desire to recognize and grow a healthy church, this course will address:

- the theological and biblical foundation for being a church,
- a practical understanding of a healthy church,
- developing or reclaiming vision and mission as a church,
- communicating and integrating healthy church strategies into the life of the church and community.

II. COURSE OBJECTIVES

Discover the appropriate balance between the inward-focus and outward-focus:

- the church as the body of Christ, Consider these texts:
- sheep and shepherd, I. Cor. 12; John 10,
- vine and branches John 15.

Seek a biblical and theological image of a healthy church that includes:

- teaching/learning,
- proclamation, Consider these texts:
- service, Acts 2:42-47; Matthew 28:16-20;
- community/fellowship, Acts 1:8; 2 Corinthians 5:17ff.
- worship.

Portray the practical components of a healthy church related to:

- essential characteristics and categories of a healthy church,
- the significance of and development of vision and mission,
- the United Methodist connection,
- the demographics of the community.

Apply healthy church strategies in the church and community.

III. TOPIC LISTINGS AND SEQUENCE (Subject to modification)

Jan. 21: “Getting started:”

- Devotional,
- Prayer,
- Studying the Word,
- Reading the literature,
- Practicums.

Jan. 22: “Establishing a vision,”

- Devotional,
- Exegeting the community,
- Creating a catalyst,
- Getting consensus,
- Practicums.

Jan. 28: “Implementing the plan,”

- Devotional,
- Worship,
- Education,
- Mission/Evangelism,
- Fellowship,
- Stewardship,
- Practicums.

Jan. 29: “Celebrating the victory,”

- Devotional,
- Spreading the word,
- The community,
- The world,
- The future,
- Practicums.
- The Eucharist

TERM PROJECT DUE! (TBA)

IV. COURSE EVALUATION PROCEDURES

Requirements: **For Seminary Credit**

- A. Attend and participate in class sessions.
- B. Complete assigned readings of approximately 1200 pages (from the required and collateral texts).
- C. Four book critiques limited to **one single-spaced**, typewritten page (three from the five required texts and one from the collateral reading). These should be completed **before** the last class.
- D. Integrative term report (**maximum** of 10-12 pages, typewritten, double-spaced) composed as if it is to be given to the ruling board of a local congregation known to you. It should incorporate recommendations and strategies for a healthier church, taking into consideration the nature of your community, and the condition of your church. Apply what you deem helpful from the course readings, lectures, practicums, and your personal involvement. Note the additional guidelines at the end of the syllabus.

Grading scale for course: Four book critiques 40%
Term Report 60%

For those taking the course as a part of the Healthy Church Academy or for CEUs but NOT for Asbury Seminary credit: Do the reading as necessary (at least 300 pages), one book critique from the “required” list. An integrative term report to be read (but not graded) by the professor.

[ALL PAPERS MUST HAVE A **SELF ADDRESSED ENVELOPE** FOR THEM TO BE RETURNED VIA THE MAIL!]

V. BIBLIOGRAPHY

Required Texts:

1. *The Power of Vision*, George Barna.
2. *The Second Reformation: Reshaping the Church for the 21st Century*, William Beckham.
3. *Discontinuity & Hope: Radical Change and the Path to the Future*, Lyle Schaller.
4. *Introduction to Natural Church Development: The Eight Essential Qualities of a Healthy Church*, Christian Schwartz.
5. *The Purpose Driven Church*, Rick Warren.

Collateral Texts: Read at least one of the following not previously read.

1. *The Next Christendom: the Coming of Global Christianity*, Philip Jenkins.
2. *Reclaiming the Great Commission*, Claude Payne.
3. *Visioneering*, Andy Stanley.

Recommended Reading:

Allen, Diogenes, Christian Belief in a Postmodern World: The Full Wealth of Conviction, Westminster/John Knox Press, 1989.

Arn, Win and Charles Arn, The Master's Plan for Making Disciples, Church Growth Press, 1987.

Berger, Peter L., A Rumor of Angels: Modern Society and the Rediscovery of the Supernatural, Revised Ed., New York; Doubleday, 1990.

Dodson, Ed, Starting a Seeker Sensitive Service, Zondervan, 1993.

Donovan, Vincent J., Christianity Rediscovered, Orbis, 1979.

Dyrness, William, How Does America Hear the Gospel?, Eerdmans, 1989.

Eims, Leroy, The Lost Art of Disciple Making, Zondervan, 1778
(updated reprint available).

Green, Michael, Evangelism Through the Local Church, Nelson, 1992

Griffin, Em, The Mind Changers, Tyndale House, 1976.

Hendricks, William D., Exit Interviews: Revealing Stories of Why People Are Leaving the Church, Moody Press, 1993

Hybels, Lynne and Bill, Rediscovering Church: The Story and Vision of Willow Creek Community Church, Zondervan, 1995.

Johnson, Ronald W., How Will They Hear If We Don't Listen? Broadman & Holman, 1994.

Kraft, Charles H., Communication Theory for Christian Witness, Second Ed., 1991.

McGavran, Donald A., Understanding Church Growth, 3rd Ed., Eerdmans, 1990.

Mead, Loren B., The Once and Future Church: Reinventing the Congregation For a New Mission Frontier, The Alban Institute, 1991.

Newbigin, Leslie, Foolishness to the Greeks: The Gospel and Western Culture, Eerdmans, 1986.

Nida, Eugene A., Message and Mission: The Communication of the Christian Faith, revised ed., William Carey Library, 1990.

Pannenberg, Wolfhart, Christianity in a Secularized World, Crossroad, 1989.

Richardson, Don, Eternity in Their Hearts, Regal Books, 1981.

Roxburgh, Alan J., Reaching a New Generation, IVP, 1993.

Schaller, Lyle, The Seven-Day-a-Week Church, Abingdon, 1992.

_____, Growing Plans, Abingdon, 1983.

_____, Strategies for Change, Abingdon, 1993.

Smith, Donald K., Creating Understanding: A Handbook for Christian Communication Across Cultural Landscapes, Zondervan, 1992.

Stiles, J. Mack, Speaking of Jesus: How To Tell Your Friends the Best News They Will Ever Hear, IVP, 1995.

Strobel, Lee, Inside the Mind of Unchurched Harry and Mary, Zondervan, 1993.

Toulmin, Stephen, Cosmopolis: The Hidden Agenda of Modernity, New York: Free Press, 1989.

Tuttle, Robert, Can We Talk: Sharing Your Faith in a Pre-Christian World, Abingdon, 1999.

Wimber, John and Kevin Springer, Power Evangelism, Revised ed., Harper and Row, 1992.

Wright, Timothy, A Community of Joy: How To Create Contemporary Worship, Abingdon, 1994.

HOW TO DO A BOOK CRITIQUE

1. A book critique is not:
 - A summary.
 - A reflection paper.
2. A book critique should contain the following:
 - Analysis of the **mechanics** (more objective: 10-15%).
 - Structure of the book.
 - Flow: How does the material fit together?
 - Resources.
 - Analysis of **content** (more objective: 50-60%).
 - Describe: What is it? Was it achieved?
 - **Strengths**: What does the book do, contribute, etc.
 - **Weaknesses**: What is missing, etc.
 - Application (more subjective: 25-34%).
 - How does this information impact my ministry?
 - What do I find helpful, not so helpful, etc.
3. Use a writing resource manual.
 - Some resources to keep in mind.
 - Slade, Carol. Form and Style. 10th ed. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1996 (cf. grammar, syntax, style, etc.).
 - Adler, Mortimer J. and Charles Van Doren. How to Read a Book. NY: Simon and Schuster, 1972 (note pp. 163-4).
4. Assignment grading information.
 - Each assignment will be evaluated on the following basis.
 - **Perception**: Did you understand the material?
 - **Thoroughness**: Did you cover the main elements?
 - **Clarity**: Did you clearly communicate your ideas?
 - **Objectivity**: Did you represent the author's views?
 - **Mechanics**: Did you use a proper writing technique (see above)?
 - **Application**: How did this material impact you?
 - **Integration**: Can you incorporate what you learned into your life and ministry (**most important**)?

GUIDELINES FOR THE INTEGRATIVE TERM REPORT

Assignment Instructions:

1. Content: The intent here is to provide you with a working tool to take to your local church or organization.

- Each report should contain a brief description of the church in question (history, location, particular problems, etc.).
- State your program (be specific, do not try to spread yourself too thin).
- State your resources (how do you plan to implement the program).
- Project a time line (this part of the program should be completed by ...).
- Describe your desired results.

2. Style: Watch your syntax and grammar (proof read your paper).

- Avoid run on sentences (Why did God invent the semicolon?).
- Feel free to use headings.
- Double space with ample margins for the instructors comments.

3. Documentation: Some of this can be omitted from the copy presented to the church or organization.

- Footnotes (identify your sources).
- Bibliography.