Greetings. Welcome to NT615: The Gospel of Luke. I look forward to sharing with you our exploration of Luke’s Gospel. Take some time to get familiar with our syllabus and the layout of our course. After familiarizing yourself with the course, please share some information about yourself by updating your profile as part of the first assignment (click on your name and then “Edit Profile”). In a traditional class setting, I always pass out a student survey on the first day and then ask each student to share a few categories which help us to get to know them better. This first exercise will give you the opportunity to share in this fashion with the rest of the class in your profile.

About Me

I am currently Professor of Biblical Studies at Judson College in Elgin, Illinois, just outside Chicago. My wife, Karen, and I have two children, Madeline, age 13, and Aidan, age ten. Prior to teaching at Judson College, I taught at Westmont College in Santa Barbara, Fresno Pacific University and the Mennonite Brethren Biblical Seminary in Fresno, California, as well as various seminaries in the San Francisco Bay area. I did my Ph.D. in New Testament at the Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley and wrote my dissertation in the area of Luke-Acts under the direction of Joel Green. I was also associated with Wycliffe Bible Translators for a time and this led to getting Masters in Linguistics as well.

I “cut my teeth” in terms of teaching the Gospel of Luke at the Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley when I was Joel Green’s Graduate Assistant in the early 90’s. Since then I have taught this course a number of times in both seminary and undergraduate contexts. I genuinely look forward to the kind of interactions we can have in this format. I believe that we can create a great learning environment in this course. I am sure there will be some adjustments along the way, just as there might be in a traditional classroom. So let us strive to create a learning environment which is characterized by graciousness and patience as we seek to master this technology and tap its wonderful potential.
Contacting the Professor and Office Hours

Email: Please post general questions in Course Questions. Just as in a traditional classroom, it often benefits the entire class to hear and interact with the answer to these questions. When you need to send personal messages, send them to me by clicking on the To Professor link. I am the only one who will view these materials. If you have an urgent matter, please flag your post with the word "Urgent" in the subject line.

Telephone: 847.628.1054 (work) or 847.697.8783 (home)

Office Hours: I will typically be checking in and working on the course for a period sometime each Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. I will respond to correspondence in the order in which it was received. In reviewing class discussions and postings, I will read all of the entries which are posted, but I will respond to a portion of the posts based on central themes for that week and pertinence to the discussion. If the need arises, we can also arrange time to speak via telephone. Just let me know if you would like to set that up and when you might be available for questions and/or conversation.

Course Description


Prerequisite: NT(IBS) 510 or 511; NT520; and NT500 or 501/502 or equivalent. (May be taken by students in M.A. programs not requiring Greek by special arrangement with the professor.)

Course Objectives

Having successfully completed this course, participants should be able:

• to identify a range of questions (e.g., historical, literary, canonical) relevant to the Gospel of Luke and explore those questions in the process of interpreting particular Lukan passages;
• to identify central issues and essential resources for the critical study of Luke’s Gospel and to engage these in a critical study of the Gospel of Luke;
• to evaluate critically the usefulness of secondary literature in the study of the Gospel of Luke;
• to probe the interplay between narrative, theology and ethics in Luke’s Gospel;
• to explore a variety of exegetical approaches relevant to the interpretation of the Gospel of Luke;
• to demonstrate proficiency in the use of a range of Greek-based language tools to in engage Luke’s narrative in its original language
• to integrate these concerns and methodologies in a sound hermeneutical method.

Online Section Descriptions and Communication guidelines

The Virtual Classroom is built upon the open-source Moodle platform. By logging into http://virtual.asburyseminary.edu you will have access to this course and be able to collaborate with participant-colleagues and me throughout the course. The following are functions with which you should familiarize yourself:

1. The **Course Information Center** contains many features to be used throughout the semester:
   
   a) **Course News and Announcements**, where I will post items important for the entire class;
   
   b) **Syllabus**, where a copy of the syllabus is provided;
   
   c) **To Professor**, which is a way for you to post a message directly to me and we can discuss an issue privately;
   
   d) **Course Questions**, which is a public forum where you can publicly post any questions you have regarding the course so others may see your message and respond. Anytime you have a question or comment about the course, the schedule, the assignments, or anything else that may be of interest to other participants and me you should post it to the Course Questions Forum;
   
   e) **Prayer Forum**, which is a public forum where you can post prayer concerns and praises for all to see. This is a way for us to build community;
   
   f) **Open Forum**, which is a public forum where you can post anything that is not course-related for all to see. Examples include someone getting married, an upcoming birthday, discussions on topics not course-related, etc. This is a way for us to build community.

2. **Modules**, which are located below the Course Information Center, will contain forums where group discussions will take place, documents or other files to download or view online, and assignment links where you will
post your assignments to me. Modules will be clearly labeled so you can follow along during the semester.

3. **Resources**, a section located on the left side, provides links to items you may want to use often in the semester.

**Expectations:**

**What you can expect of me:**
1. Prompt replies to your questions and postings. Typically this should be by the end of the next day I have scheduled online office hours.
2. Interaction, participation, and direction in the ongoing discussions that will occur over the course of the semester.
3. Timely and substantive feedback on your assignments. For example, when one assignment builds on a previous assignment, you will have received back the first assignment before the second is due. I will strive to make my comments substantive by affirming what you have done well and underscoring areas for improvement.
4. Occasional mistakes in my ongoing adjustment to this mode of teaching and means of interacting.
5. My genuine enthusiasm for this material and my excitement about what we will be learning.

**What I can expect of you:**
1. Active and engaged participation in our online discussions, as a class and in groups.
2. Timely completion of assignments.
3. Your honest questions when you don’t understand the material or the instructions.
4. Your patience as we work together in this medium.
5. Your willingness to engage in material that may stretch and challenge you.
6. Your willingness to entertain and engage different perspectives on their own terms in a non-dismissive manner.

**What to expect from this course:**
Through a variety of readings, online discussion, mini-lectures, sectional overviews and selected close readings of Luke's Gospel, we will strive to engage personally and critically with the ministry and message of Jesus as communicated in Luke's narrative. Though Luke's Gospel has long been recognized as a source of information on the historical Jesus, recent decades have increasingly demonstrated the Gospel of Luke's theological and literary genius as well. Today we understand much more of the gospel writers' roles as narrators of the story of Jesus in their capacity as evangelists, pastors, historians, theologians, and literary artists. In this course we will focus on how Luke's narrative was shaped, influenced, and heard within its original cultural and
historical contexts as we grapple with its inherent interplay of culture, theology, and ethics.

We will be reading a variety of sources on the Gospel of Luke. No doubt some of this reading will stretch you in terms of the challenging ideas and information. Nevertheless, this reading will lay a vital foundation for much of our class discussion and “hands on” interpretive work. Please make a commitment to set aside ample time to stay on schedule with your reading. If you find unfamiliar terms or concepts in your reading, I would also suggest picking up a copy of Patzia and Petrotta’s *Pocket Dictionary of Biblical Studies* listed in our recommended bibliography.

**Course Guidelines:**

**Postings:** Postings in forums should strive for substantive engagement without being excessive. As a rule of thumb, your postings should fall in the range of 50 to 75 words. Postings should be at least 50 words in length. Each week’s assignments run from 8:00 a.m. Monday to 8:00 a.m. on the following Monday. (All times listed in this course are Eastern Standard Time.) In a typical week you should read the session readings and as well as the initial question to get things started. These will always be available to the class by 8:00 Monday morning, but often before if you need to work ahead. You will need to post one substantive response to my initial question/assignment for that week and two substantive responses to your classmate's postings for that week. You must post your initial response to my question/assignment by Thursday 12 midnight. All students are expected to read ALL the initial posts of the class. Watch the discussion as it unfolds and then jump in again at some point with your responses. Substantial responses will demonstrate some critical reflection and content in relation to the question or posting being addressed. Hence, three postings per module is just the MINIMUM requirement to fulfill this part of the course. Additional postings are always welcomed and encouraged.

When you post your "first" message, i.e. your own contribution to the discussion, please post it as a NEW message. In the Subject header, use the following form:

QUESTION # YOURLASTNAME

If I were posting my first response, the subject header would read Question 1 McKeever

When you reply to a colleague's message, please click "Reply" within his/her post. It will subordinate your reply to the one you are answering, making it possible to read the discussion in sequence.

**Grammar and English Usage:** Proper English grammar should be used at all times. Please always incorporate complete sentences, punctuation,
capitalization, and correct spelling. Poor grammar will be reflected in the final grade. Granted, communication in the forums will certainly be more conversational and spontaneous. Nevertheless, we should aim for clarity and precision in all of our communication. This is particularly important given the constraints of online communication.

**Discussion:** A crucial element of this course is the dialogue that we enter into with each other. All discussions are to be in the vein of encouragement, gentleness, patience, persistence, and hope. This does not mean that we will not challenge, confront, or question each other. It does mean that these things will be undertaken for the purpose of growth and stimulation to think and understand the subject at hand more deeply and more intimately.

**Course Requirements:**

The assignments in this course are meant both to introduce you to foundational concepts and skills and to build toward integration in your final research paper. That is, we will develop interpretive skills for engaging our primary text, the Gospel of Luke, and critical skills for engaging secondary literature, our course texts. These will both be integrated in our final research assignment which will incorporate both of these skills.

**Preparation and Participation:** Students should prepare for each module by completing all biblical and other readings and actively participating in group discussions and/or group assignments. Your participation grade will be based upon quality of participation in online discussions, and evidence of appropriate preparation. Your comments should give evidence of careful thought about the topic of discussion or question posed and careful reading of class sources.

Quantity of interaction will only prove relevant in terms of the depth of your treatment of the topic. Quantity just for quantity’s sake or at the expense of quality should be avoided. In short, think through the issue and think about what others—your professor, your classmates and other authors—have said about the subject.

In my own assessment, I will attend to the following: Have you posted the minimum three postings per assignment? How many total postings did you make per module? How many were significant and substantive postings? How well did you respond when questions were posed to you by the professor or other students? Did your postings show evidence of interacting with course readings? (20%)  

**Critical Book Review:** Each student will write a critical book review of one of the following books. This book review *(Due 4/14, 8 a.m.)* is to be on either Resseguie, Longenecker, or Borgman. Reviews should be 1,000-1,250 words in length (4-5 pages), typed, and double-spaced. These will be submitted to the
appropriate assignment link. Please follow the guidelines for writing critical book reviews posted in the course. (15%)

(Culls recent study in narrative criticism to present the spiritual significance of the geographic environment, social relationships, and the local economy in Luke’s Gospel.)

(A fictional correspondence between Luke and a Roman citizen concerning his Gospel and the early church movement.)

(A reading of Luke’s Gospel through the lens of hospitality.)

**Small Group Interpretive Assignments:** For three of the Close Reading texts students will work in groups of 3-5 to prepare an Interpretive Assignment consisting of informal observations based upon a close reading of a specific Lukan passage. Each close reading should be around 1,000 words (1-2 pages, single-spaced type). Your observations should always be supported by reference to the passage under consideration and your work should be carefully written with attention to grammar and spelling. However, these essays are not intended to be research assignments. Hence, consultation of secondary materials is not allowed. Nor are they intended to be *application papers* or *sermons*. Rather, they should give evidence of a close reading of the assigned New Testament text, attending to literary form and structure, with sensitivity to social, cultural, historical and theological issues.

You will have opportunity each week to tackle one of your three Interpretive Assignment passages. (See the syllabus for the particular text we will be looking at that week.) I posted a sign-up sheet for each passage to facilitate your collaboration with 2-4 other classmates on this assignment. One of these passages will then become the focus of your final research paper. Therefore, I would suggest you look over the passages we will be tackling this semester to find three passages you may wish to work on.

These assignments will be due and should be posted by 12 midnight on Thursday of the week we cover that particular passage. Since all of the class will be discussing the assigned text, Interpretive Assignments will never be accepted late (i.e., after discussion of the passage has already taken place). If you do not have these assignments in by Thursday of the relevant week, then you will have to choose a different assigned passage later. Remember, you have a number of opportunities to complete the necessary three assignments.

When submitting Interpretive Assignments please post them *both* to your group(s) in the appropriate forum and to the assignment link by Thursday. It is
always valuable to the class when they can see the work of their fellow students, especially since we will all be interacting over the same passage that week to varying degrees, even if we do not choose to do an Interpretive Assignment on that particular passage. It will greatly facilitate the interaction with your fellow students and simplify my own feedback if you can remember to paste your comments into a post rather than attach it as a separate document, even if you compose it on your own word processor. Please follow the handouts and guidelines for writing interpretive assignments as posted in the course and the format for submitting assignments below. (3 x 10% = 30%).

**Exegetical Paper and/or Project:** This will be a 2500-3000 word (10-12 pages) research paper typed, double-spaced, with appropriate notes and bibliography, presenting an interpretation of a Lukan passage chosen from among your interpretive assignments. This essay should exhibit both a close reading of the Lukan text(s) selected for study (as in the Interpretive Assignments, above) and critical engagement with fellow interpreters of the Gospel of Luke (as in the Critical Review Assignments, above—e.g., commentaries, special studies, articles). The appropriate number of sources for such a paper is the amount needed to cover adequately your chosen topic. However, as a general guideline, I would suggest you include at least 10 graduate level sources beyond our course texts, including 1 Book, 2 Encyclopedia or Dictionary Articles, 2 Journal Articles and only scholarly Internet Sources. For internet sources to be of a scholarly nature, it should represent an online version of material that is also published in printed media such as the sources above, i.e., books, encyclopedias, dictionaries or journals. Students are encouraged to discuss their projects beforehand with the instructor and to peruse other bibliographical tools for relevant secondary literature. **Papers are due on 5/23, 5 p.m.** (35%)

On questions of style, especially with regard to paper organization and references, see Carole Slade, *Form and Style: Research Papers, Reports, Theses* (10th ed.; Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1997).

When submitting your assignments as an attachment, please follow the format as outlined here: Your last name followed by IA for Interpretive Assignment followed by the number, 1, 2, 3, etc., BR for Book Review, and RP for Research Paper. For example, if I were turning in my first interpretive assignment using an attachment, I would call it McKeeverIA#1. If I were turning in my book review I would label the attachment McKeeverBR. Additionally, messages sent to me and message threads should always have an accurately filled Subject line. Your assistance in this manner will go a long way toward helping manage and organize the course. Also, please keep a copy of all of your assignments until your final grade is issued.

**Grading:**

Asbury Seminary defines grades using the following criteria (catalog, p. 24):
A= Exceptional work: outstanding or surpassing achievement of course objectives
B= Good work: strong, significant achievement of course objectives
C= Acceptable work: essential achievement of course objectives
D= Marginal work: minimal or inadequate achievement of course objectives
F= Unacceptable work: failure to achieve course objectives
A plus (+) or minus (–) indicates positions between categories (for example, B+ = very good; C– = slightly below acceptable, etc.).
Incompletes: “A grade of ‘I’ denotes that the work of a course has not been completed due to an unavoidable emergency, which does not include delinquency or attending to church work or other employment” (Catalog, 29). I know that all of us feel overworked and face a variety time related pressures, but please note that this policy is strictly adhered to. Plan accordingly.

Specific Grading Policies for NT615:

1. If you should complete more than three Interpretive Assignments, I will assign your grade based upon your top three assignments. However, Interpretive Assignments will not be accepted late.
2. Other late papers will not receive written comments and will be marked down 1/3 of a letter grade per day late. For example, a “B” paper will become a “B-” if a day late.
3. Poor grammar and spelling will have an effect on your final grade.

Required Resources:

   Tales from the Madhouse from Vision Video, available in both DVD and VHS formats.

   And any one of the following Commentaries:


   And any one of the following for your Critical Book Review:

Related Bibliography and Recommended Reading

Course and Reading Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Session</th>
<th>Material to Cover</th>
<th>Close Reading Texts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>3/3-10</td>
<td>4.</td>
<td>The Ministry of Jesus in Galilee (4:14-9:50)</td>
<td>4:31-44</td>
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<tr>
<td>3/31-4/7</td>
<td><strong>No Class: Spring Break</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Due: Critical Review</strong></td>
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ExL Support Contact Information

For general questions and administrative assistance regarding the ExL program, contact Dale Hale: ExL_Office@asburyseminary.edu  Phone: (859) 858-2393

For technical support, library research support, library loans, and ExL media contact Information Commons: Info_Commons@asburyseminary.edu  Phone: (859) 858-2233; Toll-free: (866) 454-2733

Accessing Information Commons Materials

1. General Questions:
   a. The Information Commons is a "one-stop shop" for all student research, circulation and technical needs. The Information Commons hours are posted here: http://www.asburyseminary.edu/information/hours.htm

2. Materials Requests:
   a. To search the library catalog for available materials, click here: http://www.asburyseminary.edu/information/index.htm

   b. ExL Students may request books, photocopies or emailed attachments of journal articles/portions of reference books from Asbury Seminary’s Library. Please allow 3-10 business days for all requests to be filled. Contact the Information Commons for costs and instructions on how to make requests.

   c. ExL students are encouraged to make use of local library resources. Students who live within a 50-mile radius of either the Florida or the Kentucky campus should come to campus to obtain their materials.

3. Research Questions:
   a. ExL students are encouraged to contact the Information Commons for research assistance including help determining the best sources to use for a paper, finding book reviews, or research questions about using the online databases or any other library materials.
4. Online Databases:
   a. To access the online library resources including the library catalog and full-text journal databases, go to http://www.asburyseminary.edu/information/index.htm and enter your 10-digit student ID# number in the login box. Your student ID# is provided on the biographical information section of the student registration webpage. Add a 2 and enough 0’s to the front to make a 10-digit number (20000XXXXX where XXXXX = your student id).

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