

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course unfolds a biblical ethic of kinship, discerning scripture's invitation to live in loving solidarity with one another. Some recent exponents of Christian ethics have rightly focused on the contrastive life of a Christian community (taking diverse approaches, such as hospitality or an ethic of love). In this course we offer a new approach to community and ethics, one that is arguably both more demanding and also more transformative: a biblical ethic of kinship. We can be tempted to think of kinship quite narrowly as a blood tie. But biblical kinship is not only biological. The deep narrative structure of Scripture (and countless texts within that narrative) nourishes the people of God to live together as a make-shift family, to enfold the weakest among them at the very center of the community, while also seeking the flourishing of every person in society. Recognition and acceptance of the biblical call to kinship has the potential to generate profound change within communities. It can lead us to embrace our own vulnerabilities as we enfold one another, helping us to joyfully grasp new opportunities for mutual transformation. This ethic resonates with the call of African American theology to a sisterhood/brotherhood of humankind.

In this course we carefully retrieve an ethic of kinship from the Pentateuch, the Gospels, and the Pauline Epistles. We explore how this vision might be embodied within households and within worshipping communities. We also creatively imagine how this ethic of joining might energize creative neighbourhood engagement, in life, word, and deed. And, we use the resources of political theology to probe how this vision can mobilize the church to advocate both for a just society and also a just global community where every person can flourish.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Upon the successful completion of this course, students should have a clearer understanding of:

1. Articulate a biblical ethic of kinship running through the arc of the biblical story;
2. Nourish missional communities to seek to live as a make-shift family, bringing the weakest among them to the center of the community;
3. Creatively imagine how their church can engage its neighbourhood via this biblical ethic;
4. Begin to advocate in their city and nation for policies and institutions that value every person, enfolding them in the society as family.

COURSE OUTLINE

Day 1 July 5 A biblical ethic of kinship

Day 2 July 6 Biblical ethic of kinship in the Old Testament

Day 3 July 7 Biblical ethic of kinship in the New Testament

Day 4 July 8 Biblical ethic of kinship and the mission of the church

Day 5 July 9 Biblical ethic of kinship for nations and the global community

REQUIRED TEXTS

Brueggemann, Walter. *The Prophetic Imagination*. Second edition. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2001.

Bujo, Bénédzet. *The Ethical Dimension of Community: The African Model and the Dialogue between North and South*. Nairobi: Paulines, 1998.

Carsten, Janet. *After Kinship*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003.

Choose one of the following:

Bauman, Zygmunt. *Strangers at Our Door*. Cambridge: Polity, 2016.

Bowens, Lisa Marie. *African American Readings of Paul: Reception, Resistance, and Transformation*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2020.

Jennings, Willie J. *The Christian Imagination: Theology and the Origins of Race*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2010.

Pui-Lan, Kwok. Louisville. *Postcolonial Imagination and Feminist Theology*. WJK, 2005.

Looking for textbooks? Please [contact](#) the Regent Bookstore, or check out their [direct-fulfillment website, Aerio](#).

Please Note: This Course Information Sheet is meant to assist in selecting courses.

The official syllabus should be consulted for more detailed information. A full syllabus with drop deadlines, policies, and course assignment details is available on Moodle for registered students: moodle.regent-college.edu/login

