

Licentiate Course Outline: Fostering Practices for Congregational Growth and Evangelism



course number

Location: St. George's, The Blue Mountains
Day(s): Saturday-Sunday, April 22nd-23rd (10 a.m. - 6 p.m.)

Instructor(s): The Reverend Grayhame R. Bowcott
Contact info: 519-374-4066; grayhamebowcott@diohuron.org

Requirements for this Course:

Participate actively in the two-day residential course, read the text and one other book from the bibliography provided, and write a two-page commentary on both books. Complete a congregational ministry project within 30 days related to a topic of your own choosing from the course materials. The topic should be discussed with the instructor prior to the ending of the last day of class.

Course Syllabus:

The purpose of this course is to enable lay leaders and future practitioners in ministry with a toolbox of resources to encourage vital practices that have been proven to enable congregational vitality and membership growth. The course will draw upon current research within the Canadian Anglican ministry context into methods of increasing congregation capacity in order to foster new Christian relationships, or in other words, evangelism.

Saturday, April 22nd, 2019

- expectations for the course
- why is congregational growth and evangelism needed in today's ministry context?
- a survey of denominational membership trends in Canada
- what is missiology?
- understanding the biblical and theological underpinnings of evangelism
- an introduction to Leslie Newbigin, the Fresh Expressions Movement, and the study of Local Theologies by Robert Schreiter
- definitions of congregational growth
- cultivating a congregational culture that is open to growth
- the role of the pastor in fostering growth
- the role of lay leadership in fostering growth
- the role of the congregation in fostering growth
- common barriers to congregational growth

Working with Groups: Strategies to fostering growing in your own ministry context
Ministry Case Studies

Sunday, April 23rd, 2019

An introduction to the Core Text: *Green Shoots out of Dry Ground*.

- the nature and purpose of Christian Evangelism
- the Catechumenate: practices of discipleship for everyone in the congregation. Living into the vows of baptism.
- developing intergenerational ministries

- the dynamics of welcoming newcomers
- fostering relationships with youth: Messy Church, Holy Moly, WHIRL, Godly Play, Seasons of the Spirit
- fostering relationships with seniors: care and prayer groups, community meal programs, community education for seniors, seniors-oriented fellowship
- enabling lay leaders in small congregation ministry
- the attractional church model vs. the apostolic (sent) church model
- the future landscape of congregational ministry in Canada
- a review of evaluative expectations and discussion around the book reviews and congregational ministry project.

Together, we will learn:

- how congregational trends of decline are prevalent among all denominations in Canada, but that some churches are still growing
- how all congregations are called by God to be growing in their relationships with others
- the theological rationale for evangelism and church growth
- how the Fresh Expressions movement is causing us to reflect on what the contemporary Church should look like and how it might look differently than the Church of the past
- a variety of vital practices to foster evangelism in congregations
- how to relate to, dialogue with and provide hospitality to newcomers over different age groups
- how some church practices are prohibitive to congregational growth
- how to cultivate conversations in our own ministry contexts that may explore new ways of evangelism and discipleship
- how to enable lay leaders/ lay leadership teams to strengthen the future ministry of our own congregations
- how to take the theory of this course and put it into practice in our own lives and ministries.

Course Materials:

Text : Bowen, John P. *Green Shoots out of Dry Ground : Growing a New Future for the Church in Canada*. Eugene, Oregon : Wipf and Stock, 2013.

ISBN : 13: 978-1-61097-862-0

Assignments & Method of Evaluation of Assignments:

The Student will be evaluated on attendance and participation, 20%, book responses 20%, concluding congregational project agreed upon before departing on the Sunday 60%

Additional Statements:

1. Support Services:

- Huron's Faculty of Theology, LTh Program: janstead@uwo.ca.