

Wesley Theological Seminary
Doctor of Ministry Program
Art and Theology Track E
Reading List

Course: DM-A608OL: Poetry for Spiritual Formation

Dates: October 15 – November 19, 2015 | Required synchronous (live online) classes on the following dates and times: Thursdays, Oct 15, 22, 29, Nov 5, 12, & 19 from 11:00 am to 12:30 pm EDT. Additional work to be completed online

Faculty: Kathleen H. Staudt

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Course Description: Reading, writing, and reflecting on poetry as contemplative practices that slow our perceptions, attune our hearts and open the way for prayer. Attending to distinct voices of poets including Gerard Manly Hopkins, George Herbert, Wendell Berry, Mary Oliver, Lucille Clifton, Denise Levertov, Scott Cairns, Li-Young Lee and others, to see how their poetry invites our own prayer. Reflecting theologically on the craft of poetry – image, sound, rhythm and form—to explore how art made out of words can inspire, challenge and move the People of God.

Requirements: Completion of all reading assignments and participation in all online discussion forums per instructions listed for each online session on the Blackboard course site. Completion and timely submission of the final paper for the course. (Discussion boards to be posted on Blackboard; 1-2 weekly synchronous online meeting times to be scheduled at a time suitable to the group.

Final Assignment:

A portfolio/anthology of 8-12 poems at least two of which may be original, with reflection and commentary. All poems should be introduced with theological reflections, and the portfolio as a whole should invite others to the experience of prayer with poetry, broadly defined. Portfolio contents should be crafted so as to be useful to the spiritual formation of an audience in student's ministry context.

Portfolio should demonstrate:

- Engagement with the voice and work of a variety of poets from diverse backgrounds
- evidence that you have engaged in the processes of revision and deep reading, and have reflected on and tried some of the techniques and practices of poetic crafting that we discuss, in your reading and/or writing of poetry.
- A sense of audience, theological framework and purpose relevant to spiritual practice and ministry: i.e., the portfolio as a whole should point toward themes and ideas that will help in the formation of others for Christian life and ministry, and should be “shareable” for this purpose.

- Careful, clear writing

REQUIRED BOOKS (in addition to articles to be posted on Blackboard site)

Malcolm Guite, *Faith Art and Poetry*. Ashgate 2010 978-1-4094-4936-2

Esther de Waal, *Lost in Wonder: Rediscovering the Spiritual Art of Attentiveness* 0-8146-2992-X

Mary Oliver, *A Poetry Handbook* Mariner, 1994 978-0156724005

Moyers, *The Language of Life: A Festival of Poets* (1996) Anchor 978-0385484107

RECOMMENDED:

Donald Davie, ed, *The Oxford Book of Christian Verse*

Lucille Clifton, *Blessing the Boats*

Mary Oliver, *Thirst*

Denise Levertov, *The Stream and the Sapphire: selected Poems on Religious Themes*

Scott Cairns, *Idiot Psalms: New Poems* Paraclete, 2014 978-1-61261-515-8