

Wesley Theological Seminary

Doctor of Ministry Program

DM-A610 The Spiritual Pilgrimage in Literature, Worship, Art, and Theology
January 4-8, 2016

Instructor: Bruce G. Epperly

bepperly@wesleyseminary.edu

Description:

Spiritual leadership is a work of art. The many practices of spirituality, ranging from prayer and preaching to prophetic action, involve the process of creative transformation, of bringing together diverse materials in ways to change our lives and the world. Spirituality and ministry are not limited to the “religious” sphere but embrace the secular as well. The whole earth is full of God’s glory, Isaiah learns in his encounter with God. Accordingly, God’s presence and inspiration can be found in every human endeavor. In this class, we will explore the intersection of spirituality and the creative process by looking at the impact of writing, worship, artistic media of all kinds, and theological reflection on our encounter with the Holy and the practice of ministry/spiritual leadership. Participants will explore the creative process through their own artistic adventures and discover the vocation of ministry and spirituality as artistic endeavors.

Assignments

- 1) Pre-class Assignment
- 2) Class participation and attendance
- 3) Class project, related to spirituality and the various creative media

Texts:

James Cone, *The Spirituals and the Blues*

Bruce Epperly, *Process Theology: Embracing Adventure with God*

Anne Lamott, *Bird by Bird*

Henri Nouwen, *The Return of the Prodigal Son*

Mary Oliver, *New and Selected Poems, Volume One*

Robert Wuthnow, *Creative Spirituality: The Way of the Artist*

PRE-CLASS ASSIGNMENT

- 1) Read the text books listed in the syllabus.
- 2) Respond to each text with a one page (or less) reflection on a question that you would like to ask the author. For example: What issues most intrigue you? What aspects of their work would most transform your spiritual leadership? In what might the book encourage your identity as an artist-spiritual leader?