

Celtic Spirituality: Directed Readings in the Theology of John Philip Newell
S2017 - Online

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Course Description:

This course focuses on readings and discussions of selected themes and topics in the theology of John Philip Newell. Engaging in questions about what constitutes “celtic,” we will examine Dr. Newell’s theology as an example of the contemporary revival of Celtic spirituality. Dr. Newell will be on the Iliff Campus for two weekends of public presentations: attendance at his presentations is strongly encouraged. He will make himself available for lunch and further conversation with the students enrolled in the class on each of the two Saturdays he is on campus.

Course Requirements and Assignments:

1. Readings: Please do the assigned readings each week and in the order Dr. Newell has recommended.
2. Weekly Posts: Each week, by MIDNIGHT on TUESDAY, you must submit one substantive post on the readings.
3. Weekly Responses: Each week, by MIDNIGHT on FRIDAY, you must submit at least one substantive response to another student’s post.
4. Lecture Response: Two weeks after the two weekend programs with Dr. Newell, you will submit a brief (3-4 page) reflection about the lecture content.
5. Final Reflection Paper: Students will submit a 4-5 page reflection on the course materials and Dr. Newell’s lectures.
6. Dr. Newell’s Public Lectures: Attendance at the lectures is strongly encouraged for all students. As students enrolled in the class, you are automatically registered for a spot at the lectures, which is both highly covetable and a GOOD DEAL (registration is expensive!). If you are unable to attend in person, you are still required to engage the lectures through the recordings or live-stream that will be provided. There will be assignments based upon the material from these lectures, and you will engage the content in your final reflection.

Evaluation Policies

Grading: The course is 4 credit hours and will result in a letter grade. Students may petition to take the course Pass/Fail, but this must be done within the first week of the term and will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Participation:

Participation is imperative in an online course. Students must participate in the weekly posts and responses, because this is the basis for discussion and engagement with the course content. Posts need to be submitted on time so that other students may interact with and respond to them over the course of the week.

Weekly Posts: (10 points)

Your Tuesday posts should be a substantive engagement of the assigned readings, considering guiding questions or prompts, if given. Posts should not be simple summaries of the material, but should show an attempt to put the various readings in conversation with each other. This might be through thematic discussions, compare/contrast, or critical analysis of parts of the readings. Perhaps one argument resonated with you, you question the author's evidence, or you see connections with your life or other coursework. Please *cite* any authors referenced within the post. Your posts should be a maximum of 500 words and a minimum of 250.

Weekly Responses: (10 points)

Your Friday responses should be to one of your classmates whose post has not yet been engaged. (Once you have done this, you may, of course, respond to any other posts that catch your eye!) Try to respond to different people each week so that you can experience the variety and perspective of each of your unique classmates!

The responses should also be substantive, engaging both your own analysis of the readings as well as the poster's. If you do quote one of the readings, please *cite* the author appropriately. Responses should be a maximum of 500 words and a minimum of 250.

Lecture Response: (25 points)

The lecture response will be a reflection and evaluation of your experience of the lecture content in conversation with your readings up to that point. Describe your encounter with Dr. Newell's lectures (either in person or through the recordings). How did the lectures compare with the information you had received thus far in the course? What new insights (if any) did you gain? Do the course readings align with what you hear in the lectures?

Remember that though this is a "Response," your paper should be argument driven. This is not a stream-of-consciousness reflection, but an exploration of your experience. You should have a thesis.

Final Reflection: (50 points)

The final reflection will be a 4-5 page paper submitted at the end of the term. This paper will be thesis oriented writing centering on a topic that interests you from the course. Please submit topics during week 5 to Teresa Crist (tcrist@iliff.edu) for approval and direction. The paper should be both reflective of your experience in the course as well as an engaged analysis of the readings.

Remember that though this is a "reflection," your paper should be argument driven. This is not a stream-of-consciousness reflection, but an exploration of your insights from the course.

Grading is fairly straightforward, but if you are ever worried, please feel free to email me (tcrist@iliff.edu).

Course Schedule:

Week 1 (March 27, 2017) What is Celtic? Historical and Contemporary Considerations

Introductions

Readings:

“In Search of the Celts,” in *Celts: Art and Identity*, ed. Julia Farley and Fraser Hunter (UK: The British Museum Press, 2015), pp. 18-36. (CANVAS)

Ian Bradley, “But lo, there breaks a yet more glorious day: The Current Revival” in *Celtic Christianity Making Myths and Chasing Dreams*, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1999), 189-235. (CANVAS)

[Dr. Newell's First Lectures: Friday March 31- Saturday April 01]

Week 2 (April 03 , 2017) 'The Light of God: the Heart of all Things'

Readings for Online Discussion (in this order):

J. P. Newell, 'Introduction' & 'The First Day' in *The Book of Creation: An Introduction to Celtic Spirituality* (Paulist Press, 1999), pp. xv-xxv, 3-15 (including the practice of meditation on pp 14-15)

J. P. Newell, 'Listening for the Goodness: Pelagius', in *Listening for the Heartbeat of God* (SPCK, 1997), pp 8-22

J. P. Newell, 'The Memory of the Song,' in *Christ of the Celts: The Healing of Creation* (Jossey-Bass, 2008), pp. 1-15.

JP Newell Lecture Recording, “Pelagius” (CANVAS)

Prayer from J. P. Newell, *Celtic Benediction: Morning & Night Prayer* (Eerdmans, 2000), p 2.

[Dr. Newell's Second Lectures: Friday April 07 - Saturday April 08]

Week 3 (April 10, 2017) 'The Wildness of God: Untamed Sacredness'

Readings for Online Discussion (in this order):

J. P. Newell, 'The Second Day: The Wildness of God', in *The Book of Creation*, pp 19-32 (including the practice of meditation on pp 31-32).

J. P. Newell, 'Listening within Creation: Eriugena', in *Listening for the Heartbeat of God*, pp 23-38.

J. P. Newell, 'A Forgotten Tune,' in *Christ of the Celts*, pp. 17-30

JP Newell Lecture Recording, “Eriugena,” (CANVAS)

Prayer from J. P. Newell, *Celtic Benediction*, p 20.

Week 4 (April 17, 2017) ‘The Fecundity of God: Earth’s Seed-Force’

Readings for Online Discussion (in this order):

J. P. Newell, ‘The Third Day: The Fecundity of God’, in *The Book of Creation*, pp 35-47 (including the practice of meditation on pp 46-47).

J. P. Newell, ‘Listening for God in All Things: Carmina Gadelica’, in *Listening for the Heartbeat of God*, pp 39-58.

J. P. Newell, ‘The Rhythm of the Earth,’ in *Christ of the Celts*, pp. 31-45.

Prayer from J. P. Newell, *Celtic Benediction*, p 26.

Week 5 (April 24, 2017) ‘The Harmony of God: Sacred Feminine - Sacred Masculine’

Readings for Online Discussion (in this order):

J. P. Newell, ‘The Fourth Day: The Harmony of God’, in *The Book of Creation*, pp 51-64 (including the practice of meditation on pp 63-64).

J. P. Newell, ‘Listening with the Imagination: George MacDonald’, in *Listening for the Heartbeat of God*, pp 59-73.

J. P. Newell, ‘Empty Notes,’ in *Christ of the Celts*, pp. 47-60.

Prayer from J. P. Newell, *Celtic Benediction*, p 46.

[Lecture Response Due April 24, 2017 5:00pm]

Week 6 (May 01, 2017) ‘The Creatureliness of God: the Physical & the Spiritual Conjoined’

Readings for Online Discussion (in this order):

J. P. Newell, ‘The Creatureliness of God’, in *The Book of Creation*, pp 67-79 (including the practice of meditation on pp 78-79).

J. P. Newell, ‘The Sound of Love’ & ‘Paying the Piper,’ in *Christ of the Celts*, pp. 61-91.

Prayer from J. P. Newell, *Celtic Benediction*, p 58.

Week 7 (May 08, 2017) ‘The Image of God: the Divine & the Human Consubstantiated’

Readings for Online Discussion (in this order):

J. P. Newell, 'The Image of God', in *The Book of Creation*, pp 83-97 (including the practice of meditation on pp 96-97).

J. P. Newell, 'Listening and Acting: George MacLeod', in *Listening for the Heartbeat of God*, pp 74-93.

J. P. Newell, 'The Hymn of the Universe,' in *Christ of the Celts*, pp. 93-106.

JP Newell Lecture Recording "MacLeod" (CANVAS)

Prayer from J. P. Newell, *Celtic Benediction*, p 68.

Week 8 (May 15 , 2017) 'The Stillness of God: the Rhythm of Creativity'

Readings for Online Discussion (in this order):

J. P. Newell, 'The Stillness of God', in *The Book of Creation*, pp 101-112 (including the practice of meditation on pp 111-112).

J. P. Newell, 'Two Ways of Listening: John and Peter', in *Listening for the Heartbeat of God*, pp 94-107.

J. P. Newell, 'Broken Cadences' & 'Postlude,' in *Christ of the Celts*, pp. 107-132.

JP Newell Lecture Recording, "Teilhard de Chardin" (CANVAS)

Prayer from J. P. Newell, *Celtic Benediction*, p 76.

Week 9 (May 22, 2017) Review and Questions

Student Led Review and Discussion

Week 10 (May 29, 2017)

Final Reflections Due: Jun 02, 2017 5:00PM