# Iliff School of Theology

# IST20131 Preaching in Christian Communities [DRAFT][[1]](#footnote-1)

#### Fall 2017

Tuesday, 1:00-4:30

1. **Instructor:**

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Office hours: By appointment

1. **Course Description and Objectives:** This course is designed as an introductory preaching class for those who have no or a little experience in preaching. The course aims to help the students gain fundamental knowledge about preaching and provid them with opportunities to practice preaching in a class setting. Following are the detailed course objectives:

* To learn a variety of theological understandings of preaching and a history of Christian preaching.
* To practice homiletical approaches, including the congregational analysis, biblical interpretation, sermon design, and the use of language.
* To enhance the student’s authentic voice, so that truth may come through him/her as effectively as possible.
* To learn to work as colleagues. (I cannot overemphasize that the core of the course is in working together with the peers).

1. **MDIV Degree Learning Goals:**

Theology and Religious Practices (PR): engage in analysis of contemporary religious traditions and institutions in order to assess, design, and perform meaningful leadership practices with sensitivity to contextual realities and relationship (*Master’s Student Handbook, p. 12)*.

1. **Required Texts**:

* Allen, Ronald (ed.), *Patterns of Preaching.* (ISBN: 0827229534).
* Cho, Wha Soon, *Let the Weak Be Strong.* (ISBN: 0940989379)
* Forbes, James, *The Holy Spirit and Preaching.* (ISBN: 0687173094).
* Kim, Eunjoo M.*, Preaching in an Age of Globalization.* (ISBN: 9780664233693)*.*
* Levenson, Jon, “The Hebrew Bible, the Old Testament, and Historical Criticism,” in Darren Sarenski (ed.), *Theology, History, and Biblical Interpretation*. (Available in Canvas).
* Lowry, Eugene, *How to Preach a Parable.* (ISBN: 0687179246).
* Taylor, Barbara B., *The Preaching Life.* (ISBN: 156101074X).

1. **Recommended Readings:**

* Kim, Eunjoo, *Women Preaching: Theology and Practice through the Ages.* (ISBN: 0829815279)*.*
* Lowry, Eugene, *Living with the Lectionary.* (ISBN: 0687179211).
* Rose, Lucy, *Sharing the Word: Preaching in the Roundtable Church* (ISBN: 0664256589).
* Ware, Corinne. *Discover Your Spiritual Type: A Guide to Individual and*

*Congregational Growth.* (ISBN: 1566991498)*.*

1. **Suggested Readings**:

* Bartlett, David L. and Barbara Brown Taylor (eds.), *Feasting on the Word, Preaching the Revised Common Lectionary.*  (ISBN: 978-0-664-23105-7, etc.)
* Hamilton, Adam, *Confronting the Controversies: A Christian Looks at the Tough Issues.* (ISBN: 0687045673)*.*

1. **Requirements:**
2. **Participation and attendance**. Active and responsible participation in discussion and evaluation of peers’ sermons are required. Students are expected to read all the assigned readings and post their written assignments in Canvas as scheduled.

Faithful and punctual attendance at all class sessions is required. The instructor should be informed in advance of any necessary absences. You cannot pass the course if you miss more than 2 classes.

1. **Three reflection papers.**
2. Read the following three books:

* Barbara Taylor, *The Preaching Life.*
* Cho Wha Soon, *Let the Weak Be Strong*.
* James Forbes, *The Holy Spirit and Preaching*.

1. Write a brief reflection paper on each book **(2-3 pages, double-spaced, or 500-750 words)**, focusing on the author’s homiletical insights and his or her life as a preacher (e.g., why does she choose to preach? How does he understand preaching? What is her understanding of God, humanity, and community? What is the relationship between the life she lives and the faith she articulates publicly?).
2. Post the papers in Canvas one day before the discussion dates (10/09, 10/30, 11/06) and prepare to share it in class.

\*You may volunteer to be a discussion leader.

1. **Three sermons.**  All three sermons will be preached in class. You can prepare the sermons for your home church, a group of people in your actual ministerial setting, your classmates, or chapel services at Iliff:

1. **Sermon #1 (storytelling preaching)** should be a 7-10 min. mini sermon (no more, no less, without scripture reading):
   1. Read Eugene Lowry’s book, *How to Preach a Parable*.
   2. Select one of the parables or stories in the Bible as your sermon text.
   3. Fill out “The Interpretive Process Form for Sermon #1” and post it in Canvas by **Friday, 11:59 p.m.,** four days before your preaching date.
   4. Paraphrase the parable (or craft your sermon) by using one of the four approaches that are introduced in Lowry’s book.
   5. Memorize and preach it without a manuscript (outlines may be okay) in class on your scheduled date. You may refer to “Tips for Preaching without Manuscript” attached to the syllabus.

1. **Sermon #2 (lectionary preaching)** should be a 12-20 min. sermon (no more, no less, including Scripture reading):
   1. Select a liturgical season and choose a particular Sunday for preaching.
   2. Review the assigned biblical texts from the Revised Common Lectionary and deepen your understanding of the theological meaning of the liturgical season.
   3. Fill out “The Interpretive Process Form for Sermon #2” and post it in Canvas by **Friday, 11:59 p.m.**, four days before your preaching date.
   4. Design a sermon following one of the patterns introduced in Allen’s *Patterns of Preaching*.
   5. Prepare and practice to preach your sermon in class on your scheduled date. In terms of delivery, you are welcome to take into the pulpit either a full manuscript, notes, or nothing–whatever enables you to preach most effectively.
2. **Sermon #3 (topical preaching on an ethical or spiritual issue)** should be a 12-20 min. sermon (no more, no less, including Scripture reading).
3. Choose one of the spiritual or social issues that is the most pressing issue for you and your congregation as the topic of your sermon. Research your topic by analyzing what is going on in relation to the topic within and beyond your church and why this is going on.
4. Bring your sermonic topic to Class #7 (10/24) to discuss it with other classmates to measure its theological and biblical appropriateness and gain homiletical insights.
5. Select a biblical text(s) in relation to your topic, fill out “The Interpretive Process Form for Sermon #3,” and post it in Canvas by **Friday, 11:59 p.m.**,four days before your preaching date.
6. Design a sermon following one of the patterns introduced in Allen’s *Patterns of Preaching*.
7. Prepare and practice to preach your sermon in class on your scheduled date. In terms of delivery, you are welcome to take into the pulpit either a full manuscript, notes, or nothing–whatever enables you to preach most effectively.
8. **Self-evaluation of the three sermons.** The three sermons preached in class will be videotaped. Bring your own recording device (e.g., a smart phone, a camera, a computer, etc.). Watch your sermon videos, write up a one-page, double-spaced (or 250-300 words) self-evaluation of each sermon, and post it in Canvas within a week. When you write the self-evaluation of each sermon, concentrate on what was strong and weak in substance and delivery and two or more goals you have for improving your preaching.

**VIII. Evaluation:**

Students who want to contract for a grade of P/F must send a note to the instructor in writing **by the date of Class #2 (09/19).** You will receive the grade of “P” by completing all the 3 requirements listed in Section VII.

The normal grading system is used for a letter grade. In order to ensure accountability and fairness, the following grading system will be applied:

Requirement #1…………………….……….…..………………………..……… 20%

Requirement #2…..………………………………………………….……………30%

10% x 3 Papers = 30%

Requirement #3…..………….……………………….……………….………...…60%

20% (Preaching in class [10%] + The Interpretive Process Form [7%]

+ Self-evaluation [3%]) x 3 sermons = 60%

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Total 100%

The Iliff grading system is a five-letter system from A through F with pluses and minuses. In computing grade point average (GPAs), grades are assigned the following numerical values:

A : 4.00 (100 − 96%)

A-: 3.75 (95 – 91%)

B+: 3.25 (90 – 86%)

B : 3.00 (85 – 81%)

B-: 2.75 (80 − 76%)

C+: 2.25 (75 – 71%)

C : 2.00 (70 – 66%)

(*Masters Student Handbook*, p. 79)

\*Late submissions **(unexcused and excused)** will result in lowering your grade (-2 points/each). The deadline of all late submissions is **November 19 (Sun.), 11:59 p.m.** Late submissions may not receive written comments from the instructor.

\* **Both unexcused and excused absences** will result in lowering your grade (-5 points/ each).

\*The use of inclusive language is strongly urged in all discussions, sermons, and writings, etc.

**Incomplete Policy:** Students are responsible for the procedures outlined in the document, “Incomplete Courses” attached to the end of this syllabus.

**ADA Policy:** Iliff engages in a collaborative effort with students with disabilities to reasonably accommodate student needs. Students are encouraged to contact their assigned advisor to initiate the process of requesting accommodations. The advising center can be contacted at advising@iliff.edu or by phone at 303. 765.1146.

**Course Schedule**

###### **Class #1 (09/12):**

###### Meditation

###### Getting Acquainted

###### Many Voices of Preaching

###### Components of Preaching

###### Syllabus Review (Q & A)

###### Criteria for Sermon Evaluation

###### Preparation for Sermon #1: Storytelling Preaching

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###### Readings: Lowry, *How to Preach a Parable.*

**Class #2 (09/19):**

Meditation led by a preacher

Preaching Sermon #1: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Preaching and Congregational Culture

Transcontextual Preaching

Spiritual Types

Readings: Kim, *PIAAOG*, Chs. 1, 2 & 3.

Suggested Readings: Ware.

**Class 3 (09/26):**

Meditation led by a preacher

Preaching Sermon #1: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Biblical Hermeneutics for Preaching

Preaching and the Hebrew Bible

Readings: Kim, *PIAAOG*, Ch. 4; Levenson.

**Class 4 (10/03):**

Meditation led by a preacher

Preaching Sermon #1: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Styles of Preaching and the Use of Language

Preparation for Sermon #2: Lectionary Preaching

Readings: Allen, Chapters 1, 2, 12, 13; Kim, *PIAAOG*, Ch. 5.

Recommended readings: Lowry, *Living with the Lectionary*

**Class #5 (10/10):**

Meditation led by a preacher

Preaching Sermon #2 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Discussion on Taylor’s *The Preaching Life.*

Readings: Taylor

Assignments: Post your reflection paper on Taylor’s book by 10/09 (Mon.),

11:59 p.m.

**Class #6 (10/17):**

Meditation led by a preacher

Preaching Sermon #2: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

A History of Christian Preaching

Recommended readings: Rose; Kim, *Women Preaching.*

**Class #7 (10/24):**

Meditation led by a preacher

Preaching Sermon #2: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Preparation for Sermon #3: Topical Preaching

Suggested readings: Hamilton

Assignments: Bring your topic for Sermon #3 to discuss it in class.

**Class #8 (10/31):**

Meditation led by a preacher

Preaching Sermon #3: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Discussion on Cho’s *Let the Weak Be Strong*

Readings: Cho

Assignments: Post your reflection paper on Cho’s book in Canvas by 10/30 (Mon.),

11:59 p.m.

**Class #9 (11/07):**

Meditation led by a preacher

Preaching Sermon #3: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Discussion on Forbes’ *The Holy Spirit and Preaching*

Readings: Forbes

Assignments: Post your reflection paper on Forbes’ book in Canvas by 11/06 (Mon.),

11:59 p.m.

**Class #10 (11/14):**

Meditation led by a preacher

Preaching Sermon #3: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Course Wrap-up

**Selected Bibliography**

Achtemeier, Elizabeth, *Preaching from the Old Testament*

Allen, Ronald (ed.), *Patterns of Preaching.*

Bartlett, David L. and Barbara Brown Taylor (eds.), *Feasting on the Word, Preaching the*

*Revised Common Lectionary*

Childers, Jana, *Purposes of Preaching.*

Craddock, Fred, *As One Without Authority.*

Forbes, James, *The Holy Spirit and Preaching*.

Hilkert, Mary, *Naming Grace*.

Jacobson, David, *Homiletical Theology: Preaching As Doing Theology*.

Jeter, Jr., Joseph & Ronald Allen, *One Gospel, Many Ears*.

Kay, James, *Preaching and Theology*.

Kim, Eunjoo M., *Preaching the Presence of God: A Homiletic from an Asian American*

*Perspective.*

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, *Women Preaching: Theology and Practice through the Ages.*

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_*, Preaching in an Age of Globalization.*

Lowry, Eugene, *How to Preach a Parable.*

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, *Living with the Lectionary*.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, *The Homiletical Plot.*

McKenzie, Alyce, *Hear and Be Wise.*

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, *Noble Preaching.*

Mitchell, Henry, *Black Preaching*.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, *Preaching as Celebration and Experience.*

Nieman, James & Thomas Rogers, *Preaching to Every Pew*.

Rose, Lucy, *Sharing the Word: Preaching in the Roundtable Church*

Smith, Christine, *Weaving the Sermon.*

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, *Preaching as Weeping, Confession, and Resistance: Radical Responses to Radical Evil*.

Taylor, Barbara, *The Preaching Life.*

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, *When God is Silent*.

Turner, Mary D. & Mary L. Hudson, *Saved from Silence*.

Ward, Richard, *Speaking the Holy.*

Tips for Preaching Without a Manuscript

The most important thing about preaching a sermon without a manuscript is to tell the sermon in your own words in your own way.

1. Write your sermon manuscript.
2. Read the manuscript several times.
3. Tell it in your own words without looking at the manuscript.
4. Read the manuscript again to see if you left out any important points.
5. Tell it again, making it your own.
6. Make the listeners “feel “and “see” the sermon by:
   * Using simple words. Remember people only remember half of what they hear. Use words that will evoke pictures in the listeners’ minds. If you can picture the scene in your mind as you relate the sermon, the listeners will be able to also.
   * Using dialogue whenever possible—say the words the way that the characters would. You can use a slight accent or dialect, but not too strong because people will be distracted by the accent and forget to follow the sermon line.
   * Being consistent with vocal expressions and different pitch or tone of voice for each character’s lines if they are used; then you do not have to always state who said what because people will know by the tone of voice or your body posture.
   * Using appropriate gestures. Inappropriate gestures may distract from the words.

INCOMPLETE COURSES

Faculty will clarify at the beginning of each quarter whether or not they will accept Incompletes in special circumstances. If faculty choose not to allow Incompletes for any reason, that should be stated on the syllabus. Faculty will distribute to students a copy of the procedures and policies regarding Incompletes at the beginning of each course. Please note that an Incomplete given by an instructor without the appropriate form is recorded on the transcript as an “F."

If Incompletes are allowed, the following procedures will be followed:

a. The request must be made in writing to the instructor before the end of the quarter, using an Incomplete request form available from the Office of the Registrar. The instructor, if in agreement with the request, signs the Incomplete request form and forwards it to the dean for approval. The approved incomplete request is given to the registrar and a copy is sent to the student and the instructor. A separate form is needed for each Incomplete requested.

b. When the work is completed, the student must turn the work in to the registrar who will forward it to the instructor. The instructor will submit the grade to the registrar normally by the end of the quarter in which the work is submitted. The Business Office will bill students ($20.00 per incomplete) for the fee.

c. Incompletes automatically turn into failing grades after four quarters (one calendar year). The latest time to turn in incomplete work is the last day of class of the fourth quarter. See the Academic Calendar at the front of the *Masters Student Handbook* for dates. **Extensions will not be given for Incompletes beyond the established four quarters.**

d. If work for an incomplete is turned in later than one quarter after the end of the course, the work may be graded on a Pass/Fail basis, at the discretion of the instructor. At the discretion of the instructor, students taking an Incomplete may be required to attend class sessions at the next course offering to finish the course requirements, provided the course is offered within the established time frame.

e. Normally, students with 10 or more credits of outstanding Incompletes at one time will not be allowed to register.

Courses in which an Incomplete has been granted but not yet completed are not included in the student’s GPA calculations.

1. This course syllabus may be changed depending on the class size. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)