

# *The Episcopal Church & Contemporary Moral and Social Issues*

*IST 2024 (4.0 units), Spring 2022*

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Office Hours	Video/Voice/IM by appt.	TA:	None

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## ***Course Synopsis***

If you have never considered Ethics to be a steamy subject, perhaps you aren't an Episcopalian! The history of the Anglican Church is one fraught with scandal and intrigue. From Henry VIII's scandalous divorce from Catherine of Aragon to wed his pregnant mistress, Anne Bolyn,<sup>1</sup> to Archbishop Thomas Cranmer's dramatic burning at the stake—starting with the hand he had used to sign his recantations of the Protestant Anglican faith (which he renounced, to die a Catholic heretic and a Protestant martyr),<sup>2</sup> and more recently from the ordination of women, to the ordination of the first openly gay and lesbian bishops in the Episcopal church, ethics in the Anglican Tradition has been and continues to be a fascinating endeavor.

For nearly five centuries, the Anglican Church has been pushing the boundaries of doctrine, Christology, ecclesiology, and even epistemology, with the Episcopal Church on the leading edge of that boundary as we continue to rise to the new challenges greeting each new era in the Church. The study of Anglican ethics draws on a rich history of ethical dilemma as we have striven throughout our long history to engage with our faith as we live it out in an imperfect world (and an imperfect Church!).

This course offers an Anglican/Episcopal spin on Ethics from their foundations in ancient Greece and the early Church, through the tumult of the English (and continental) reformation, and into the post-modern era. In the first part of the course, we'll survey the foundations of ethical thought in Plato and Aristotle, the early church with Jesus, Paul, and Augustine, and the development of Anglican Ethics through the Church of England up through the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. In the second part of the course, we'll look specifically at the contemporary ethical dilemmas that have faced the Church and discuss how they have been approached – for good or for ill. We'll discuss how we might learn from our whole

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<sup>1</sup> ...in which Henry also rejected the Pope's power in England and set himself as the head of the church.

<sup>2</sup> Cramer authored the first three Books of Common Prayer and was martyred by "Bloody Mary."

history in approaching issues currently facing the Church from issues in the parish to current strained ties in the Anglican Communion.

### ***Objectives and Expectations***

Students who successfully complete this course will be able to:

- 1 Describe Anglican/Episcopal ethics as it relates to moral issues of contemporary society and the overlap between society and faith.
- 2 Identify key figures (classical and contemporary) contributing to the rich tapestry of the Anglican Moral Tradition(s)
- 3 Apply their understanding of Anglican Ethics to contemporary issues facing their own communities the broader church.
- 4 Engage with one another (and their faith communities) in discussing local issues as they relate to the broader ethical traditions of the Episcopal Church.
- 5 Demonstrate their command of theory in a final paper or by planning a practical workshop (forum/discussion/etc.) of their choosing (see final paper notes below).

### **Workload/Expectations**

It is my hope that this material will be as fascinating to those registered for this class as it is for me, that together we can create a learning environment that is mutually enriching and brings the material to life in such a way as to allow us to participate not only in the process of learning, but in the various elements that make Anglican ethics a living and vibrant subject and tradition both to study, and in which to engage.

Students are expected to take an active interest in the course, and an active role in bringing the learning community to life through contributions of online presence, discussion, and participation. As graduate students, you are invited (and will be expected to be able) to voice your needs if there is some blind spot either in course methodology or in the material.

As an exploration of ethics through the Episcopal lens, our online class format will largely be discussion based, giving us the opportunity to examine, with one another, the variety of contributing elements of the Episcopal ethical tradition as it has evolved from the single people in 6th century England to a uniquely American expression of what has become a legacy contributing to the whole global Anglican communion.

Students will be expected to participate in the online (Canvas) classroom regularly—please notify the professor if you are unable to make a full contribution (see below) during any week of the term. Additionally, your participation is expected as much as your online

presence. Your active contribution to our collective learning environment is important for your own development as well as for the development of the whole class, particularly in the online setting where we don't engage with one another face to face. Students are expected to post their reflections and respond to others' in discussion of the readings by scheduled deadlines each week.

Students can anticipate an average of nine hours of work per week for this course. In general, reading and reflections should take about six hours of preparation time. Reading the weekly lecture notes and responding to one another's reflections should take no more than an additional three hours. If you find you are spending considerably more time than this, please let me know so we can either re-evaluate the required readings if everyone is struggling, or so I can help you prioritize the readings.

Approximately 250-275 pages of readings will be assigned per week as presented in the schedule at the end of the syllabus (the first weeks of class have a lighter load for ease of transition). Weekly assignments will include selections from our required texts, PDF files available on the Canvas class site, Web links (posted in the assignment section of our Canvas site at least two weeks before due dates), and a variety of print, audio, and video media elements to help enrich our understandings and discussions of Anglican Ethics.

Lecture notes will be posted at the beginning of each week to aid in highlighting important aspects of the readings, and to provide insights to help link readings from week to week.

*Expectations:*

- Students are expected to have read the material and lecture notes before posting reflections (due mid week to give time to respond to one another's reflections).
- Students are expected to respond to at least three other reflection threads by the time the conversations end on Sunday night at 11:59 pm. This represents the conversation and exploration part of our time this term.
- Students are encouraged to include topical and challenging events (personal, local, or global!) in their reflections as this gives us the opportunity to discuss the readings in the context of real contemporary world events.
- Students will write a final paper or design a practicum for use in their faith community (see evaluation section below for details). Paper/project proposals should be submitted to the professor by Wednesday of Week 5 to ensure time for response and feedback.

*Students may expect the following from their professor:*

- Lecture notes and any downloadable content two weeks ahead of the scheduled due dates

- Regular weekly contributions to discussion
- Timely response to student questions (I will do my best to respond to all emails/texts/phone messages within two days—barring the weekend when we all have our Sunday commitments to balance with our coursework). Email will be the easiest way to reach me, but for more urgent matters, students may call or text (see guidelines at the top of the syllabus).
- Constructive comments on discussion postings, paper/project proposal, and final paper/project.
- My presence at optional Zoom drop-in hours each Monday at Noon.

### ***Optional Zoom Drop-in Hours***

- Each Monday at Noon Mountain Time, open drop-in hours will be held on Zoom. Students may come for fellowship, conversation, to ask questions, to discuss readings or final projects, etc. In an online course, the lack of personal connection can be alienating. Come and meet your classmates and professor and join in on some weekly conversation when you can. <https://iliff-edu.zoom.us/j/6273341972?pwd=KzVWVkZFcDVmS2cwWWErNHoxOSTVdz09>

### ***Evaluation***

- Weekly Reflections – 30% ~500 words (2 pages double spaced)  
Students will submit weekly reflections based on readings, due in the Canvas forum by Thursday morning at 5am (i.e. sometime before Thursday morning everyone's reflection will magically have appeared in Canvas). Reflections over a day late will be considered as not submitted. More than two late reflections, or any missed (i.e. not submitted or over a day late) reflections will impact students' grade. Up to two reasonable "absences" may be reported to the professor via email without impacting grades (you may choose whether or not to make up the reflection or take it as one of your "two lowest grades"—see below).

The reflections are intended to be fun and engaging!

- feel free to take on a persona that places you in the context of one of the reading assignments
- pick a creative ethical tool/discipline/approach that sparks your interest
- get up on your soap box and preach us a homily that connects the readings to something significant in your own journey

However you approach it, get into it and enjoy it. Reflections should be about 500 words (about the equivalent of two pages, double spaced). Grades will be assigned based on demonstrated engagement with the material, creativity, and strength of written expression. The lowest two grades will be dropped.

- Class participation – 30% Participate actively on discussion boards!  
This portion of your grade is based solely on your regular contribution to class discussions. While a minimum of three responses per week are expected, the quality as well as quantity of responses over and above what is required will separate the ‘average’ from the ‘above average’ and ‘excellent’ participation scores. Since this is where our "conversations" take place, take the opportunity to respond to your peers as often as you're able—the quality of our "classroom" time together in discussion depends on it!
- Final Project – 40% 15-20 Pages (due by 5am May 30)  
**As a leader in the church, how might you respond to or engage your community/parish in ethical discussion of a contemporary issue?**  
Recent examples abound from congregations splintering off from the Episcopal Church to “Tea Parties” that might split your congregation over non-religious politics, and from salacious gossip to passive-aggressive triangulation over the rector moving the choir. The final project will answer this question either in the form of a paper or in the form of a parish/community forum series or weekend workshop (or something similar of the student’s own design). *Be sure to incorporate elements of each of your favorite methodologies from this course to demonstrate your own ethical approach to the issue you choose.*  
In this final project, students will:
  - Choose a contemporary issue (that actually matters to them).
  - Write a proposal detailing their issue and their plan for approaching it ethically.
  - Develop their response to that issue in either a paper or a project (described below).

Students are encouraged to be creative in designing what might someday (or as immediately as over the summer) be used in a real community context. Be sure to incorporate elements of each of your favorite elements of Anglican/Episcopal ethics to demonstrate your own grasp of our rich tradition as you develop your own spiritual disciplines and those of your community.

*An excellent project will include:*

- *Rationale:* Why you chose the approach you chose and why your method of engaging it with your particular community will be beneficial.
- *Description of Setting and Event:* A brief case study of your community (including relative conservatism, demographics, size, level of commitment, current spiritual assessment, etc.), and a detailed description of the event you are proposing.
- *Feasibility:* Be realistic. This is your chance to design a forum/workshop that could reasonably be put to use in your current or future ministry.
- *Creative/Innovative Solutions:* You are a future leader in the church – how you conceive of new ways of engaging with communities will help shape the future of the church for the next generation. Give your format some real creative effort!

- *Thought:* The hope is that this will be fun, but regardless, this is your final exam for the course. Please take some time to put thought and effort into your project around the given question. If you can't discern how to evaluate "15-20 pages" of equivalent length in a project format, please ask!
- *Ethics!:* Demonstrate your understanding of Anglican/Episcopal ethics in the methodologies you employ in your teaching/exercises. (Footnotes can help give background for performance or artistic elements that don't speak directly of their methodological significance). Some background can also be given in the description of the event.
- *Samples:* If you're doing a forum or workshop, provide handouts and any media compilations that you'll use for the sessions.
- *A fully developed project:* Don't just speculate on the question. Whether in paper form or in a packaged curriculum box, this should be the idea drawn out to its practical conclusion.
- *Lasting impact:* Give some thought to what you really want people to take home from your forum/ workshop/(?), and how you will spark a passion within them that will carry through to long term results.

#### *Other Project Details:*

- Project length will be the equivalent of 15-20 double-spaced pages, and will be evaluated on feasibility, quality (investment in the project, and strength of expression), creativity, and strength of the information presented (the level of mastery demonstrated).
- Project proposals will be due by 5:00am the Thursday of week 5, and will be posted to Canvas in addition to being submitted to the professor. This gives you the opportunity to review and make suggestions to one another, as well as giving me the same opportunity. (Yes a reflection is still due that week too.)
- Each student will arrange to meet with me individually on Zoom to discuss their final project between weeks 6 and 8 of the term.
- Any student wishing a second review must submit revisions in writing at least two weeks before the project is due to allow for any final revisions to the project itself.
- Joint projects will be considered on a per-case basis and will require the equivalent of 15-20 written pages per person in the group.
- No late projects can be accepted without filing an incomplete for the course (this is *not* recommended).

#### *Additional Requirements*

##### *Introduction:*

Each student will be required to introduce themselves and provide a photo in their Canvas profile for the course. This is an opportunity for each of us to get to know one another a little better. Since there are no anonymous students in this class, it helps us to establish some common ground for our time together in the learning community.

### *Media Meditations:*

Starting in Week 3 (week of April 11), students will contribute our opening meditations. In week 1, the opening meditation is Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby's Presidential Speech at General Synod from February 2016. In week 2, I will be posting a multimedia meditation on "multiple intelligences" and another meditation form (perhaps a song) relating to our reading themes. Options to consider are multimedia productions, songs, videos, poems, etc., that resonate with your growing understanding of Anglican/Episcopal ethics as revealed in that week's readings. Guidelines are below. The sign up sheet is a collaborative document in Google Docs, which is one of week 1's assignments.

Please submit opening meditations to me by Saturday at 5pm (two days before the course week you're introducing) so I can post it to our "assignments" in time for Monday's class (i.e., if you sign up for the week of April 11, please have your mediation to me by 5:00 pm on Saturday, April 9, so I can add it to our class over the weekend and have it ready for Monday's start date).

### Media Meditation Guidelines

The opening meditations for our class are intended to get ideas flowing and stimulate conversation around the readings and themes of the day. Selections should creatively/artfully introduce the material for the day. This is your opportunity to creatively engage "intelligences" outside of the normal range engaged in lecture (see media meditation #1 in week 2 for what is meant by "intelligences"). Having experienced three such presentations before the first student-led meditation, you should have a reasonable idea of what is expected. However, PLEASE feel free to ask for help if you need it. For your reflection on weeks when you have done the meditation, please discuss how your meditation represents Anglican Spirituality to you in the context of the week's readings in lieu of a normal reflection post. The meditation is graded based on effort, appropriateness to the day's material, and description in your reflection for the week. Time commitment is expected to be approximately the same as for writing a two-page writing assignment.

### Audio/Video/Print Disclaimers:

Video, including still images, may not contain any content of a graphically violent, abusive, demeaning, profane, racist, sexist, discriminatory, or otherwise ill-fitting prohibited nature. If you're unsure if the image/video will be acceptable, please ask ahead of time. Similarly, audio may not contain any content suggesting or constituting violence, abuse, racism, discrimination, nor be demeaning or inflammatory. Please review the lyrics for

your version of any song that you intend to use to ensure that it is appropriate. Again, refer to the Iliff standards as your guide and ask if you're unsure.

For print media, you may use poetry, short story, word art, news, media flyers, literature, etc., as part of your meditation (please respect copyright laws if using non-original material!). The same limitations in audio and video above apply to print media. Refer to the Iliff standards as your guide and ask if you're unsure.



## ***Policies and Services***

**Degree Learning Goals:** Please take some time to look over the Professional Degree Learning Goals, available at <https://iliff.bloomfire.com/posts/893277> for MDiv, MASC, MAPSC, and the Academic Degree Learning Goals, available at <https://iliff.bloomfire.com/posts/935381>, for MTS and MA.

**Incompletes:** If incompletes are allowed in this course, see the Master's Student Handbook for Policies and Procedures (available at [https://my.iliff.edu/ICS/Portal\\_Homepage.jnz?portlet=Student\\_Handbooks](https://my.iliff.edu/ICS/Portal_Homepage.jnz?portlet=Student_Handbooks)).

**Pass/Fail:** Masters students wishing to take the class pass/fail should discuss this with the instructor by the second class session.

**Academic Integrity and Community Covenant:** All students are expected to abide by Iliff's statement on Academic Integrity, as published in the Masters Student Handbook ([https://my.iliff.edu/ICS/Portal\\_Homepage.jnz?portlet=Student\\_Handbooks](https://my.iliff.edu/ICS/Portal_Homepage.jnz?portlet=Student_Handbooks)), or the Joint PhD Statement on Academic Honesty, as published in the Joint PhD Student Handbook (<http://www.du.edu/duiliffjoint/Handbooks.html>), as appropriate. All participants in this class are expected to be familiar with Iliff's Community Covenant available at: <http://www.iliff.edu/index/learn/the-iliff-experience/community-covenant/>.

**Accommodations:** 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](mailto:advising@iliff.edu) or by phone at 303-765-1146.

**Writing Lab:** Grammar and organization are important for all written assignments. Additional help is available from the Iliff Writing Lab at <http://writing.iliff.edu/>, which is available for students of any level who need help beginning an assignment, organizing thoughts, or reviewing a final draft.

**Inclusive Language:** It is expected that all course participants will use inclusive language in speaking and writing, and will use terms that do not create barriers to classroom community.

## ***Required Texts (Kindle editions are available for most if not all of these)***

Stephen Holmgren: *Ethics After Easter* ISBN 9781561011766

Richard Hooker, *The Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity*, Books 1 and 5 (free PDF available on Project Canterbury, <http://anglicanhistory.org/hooker/index.html>)

Kwock Pui-lan, *Postcolonial Imagination and Feminist Theology* ISBN 978-0664228835

Desmond Tutu, *No Future without Forgiveness*, ISBN 978-0385496902

Walter Wink, *The Powers that Be*, ISBN 978-0385487528

## ***Additional Resources***

Additional materials in the form of journal articles, chapters from out of print (or not yet in print) texts, etc., will be supplied at least two weeks ahead of their due dates. If you require the materials earlier than two weeks ahead of time, please email Dr. Leininger to request to them.

## ***Optional Texts***

The *Westminster Dictionary of Christian Ethics* is a valuable and highly recommended resource. MDiv students will find this volume particularly helpful in the GOEs, but all will find it a valuable resource for Ethical review and reference.

Elmen, ed., *The Anglican Moral Choice* is out of print. Those able to find a serviceable used copy at a reasonable price are encouraged to do so. The required sections of the text will be posted on Canvas.

Plato, *Republic* is a classic worth owning, and free copies are available through Amazon's Kindle store as well as in HTML format (Google). Required sections will be posted on Canvas.

Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, is also a classic worth owning (also available free via kindle or HTML). Required sections will be posted on Canvas.

## *Calendar Of Assignments*

In general, the weeks will follow the pattern of Week 1. For "watch" and "do" sections, see the "Assignments" page on our Canvas classroom site. Assignments will be posted at least two weeks prior to their due dates.

### *Week 1 (Week of 28 March): Finding Common Ground amidst Holy Chaos!*

*Guiding question for this week:* What is "ethics" to you?

*Read:* Welcome "lecture-ette" (you may watch this if you prefer), course Syllabus, and this week's readings:

- Primer on Ethics PDF (14 pages)
- Anglican Theological Review articles by Davis, Dackson, and Greenman, Sedgwick, Gibson, and Smith—electronic resource in PDF (106 pages),
- Week 1 Lecture (you may also watch this if you prefer, but I'll post the print version for your convenience).

*Watch:* Justin Welby's Presidential Address at the 2018 General Synod; the welcome "lecture-ette;" and Week 1 Lecture (see "Week 1 Overview" for links).

*Do:*

- 1 Pick a News Feed to draw current events into discussion from the Episcopal Church (or Anglican Communion if you're so inclined!)
- 2 Introduction: Write an introduction of yourself on this week's discussion forum.
- 3 Respond to peers' Introductions
- 4 Opening Reflection on this week's readings
- 5 Respond to peers' reflections

### *Week 2 (Week of 4 April): A Famous Anglican Hooker*

*Read:*

- Rowan Williams, "The Richard Hooker Lecture" PDF (5 pages);
- Rasmussen, "Richard Hooker's Trinitarian Hermeneutic of Grace" PDF (14 pages)
- Richard Hooker, The Laws Of Ecclesiastical Polity, Book 1, Chapter I-XIV (74 pages)
- Richard Hooker, Laws, Book 5, Chapters 56-63 (60 pages)
- Week 2 Lecture

### Week 3 (Week of 11 April): Women's Ordination

Read:

- Pemberton and Reece "Five Years In: Where are Women in the Church of England?" in Wingate ed *Anglicanism*, p.22-26 PDF (4 pages),
- Holmes *A Brief History of the Episcopal Church* pp.167-170 PDF (3 pages),
- Lambeth Conference 1978 Resolutions 20-22 & 1988 Resolution 1 PDF (2 pages)
- Schjonberg "Lambeth Palace tells presiding bishop not to wear symbol of office" PDF (2 pages)
- Religious Tolerance.org ("Ordination of female priests and bishops in the worldwide Anglican Communion" <http://www.religioustolerance.org/femclrg3.htm>) (2 pages)
- Eames Monitoring Group Report 1997 PDF (27 pages)
- Episcopal News Service Press Release # 89221 Women in Episcopate dialogue PDF (2 pages)
- Lambeth 2008 - From the report on the Indaba Group Conversations PDF (0.25 pages)
- Leininger: "Journey to the World's First Lesbian Bishop" (33 pages)
- Week 3 Lecture

### Week 4 (Week of 18 April): LGBTQIA+ Part 1

Read: (If you don't have time to fit in all 284 pages... They are listed in priority order for your convenience. If you've never heard of the Windsor report, please at least skim through it so you have some sense of the history and urgency of the matter as considered from the wider communion.) Lecture may be watched or read, as always.

- To Set Our Hope on Christ (all), PDF (135 pages)
- Holmgren, pp. 127 – 151 (24 pages)
- Integrity ("Toward and Full and Equal Claim") (24 pages)
- Lambeth Indaba, Section H (Human Sexuality"), Sections 105-120 + "Resources"—pp. 31-34 PDF (3 pages)
- Called to Full Humanity (Study on Human Sexuality) PDF (5 pages)
- [Windsor Report (all), PDF (93 pages)]
- Week 4 Lecture

### Week 5 (Week of 25 April): LGBTQIA+ Part 2

Read: (If you can't fit in all 242 pages this week, you may prioritize chapters 2-6 in my book and King's essay). Lecture may be watched or read, as always.

- Leininger, *Holy Sex* PDF (233 pages)
- Ellen Clark King, "The Divine Call To Be Myself" (9 pages)
- Week 5 Lecture (only if you cannot attend Gathering Days)

Attend: Week 5 Lecture (Gathering Days! Lecture date this week TBA)

### Week 6 (Week of 2 May): Environment

*Read:* (If you don't have time to read all 199 pages this week, prioritize all but the last two essays below.) Lecture may be watched or read, as always.

- Holmgren, pp. 152 – 176 (24 pages)
- Golliher, "This Fragile Earth, Our Island Home" PDF (23 pages)
- Wright, "The Earth is the Lords," from *Keeping God's Earth* PDF (25 pages)
- Lambeth Study Document "Called to Full Humanity," Theme 2-"The Environment" PDF (3 pages)
- Lambeth Conference "1998 Lambeth Resolutions 1.8, 1.9" PDF (3 pages)
- Hood "Social Teachings in the Episcopal Church" ch. 4 PDF (21 pages)
- Leininger, "Defining an Ecological Imperative" PDF (26 pages)
- "Creation Catechism" PDF (36 pages)
- "Stewarding Water in the Great Economy" PDF (20 pages)
- "A Call To Watershed Discipleship" PDF (18 pages)
- Week 6 Lecture

### Week 7 (Week of 9 May): Empire Part 1

*Read:* (If you don't have time to read all 261 pages this week, prioritize Kane, Althaus Reid, and ch 1-7 in *PIFT*). Lecture may be watched or read, as always.

- [Gibson, "Ethics from the Other Side" ATR]
- "Introduction" from Marcella Althaus-Reid, *Indecent Theology* PDF (9 pages)
- Kwok Pui-lan, *Postcolonial Imagination and Feminist Theology* (230 pages)
- Kane, "Tragedies of Communion" PDF (22 pages)
- Week 7 Lecture

### Week 8 (Week of 16 May): Empire Part 2

*Read:* (If you can't make it through all 282 pages this week, prioritize chapters 1-4, 6, 8, and 10). Lecture may be watched or read, as always.

- Desmond Tutu, *No Future Without Forgiveness* (282 pages)
- Lecture

### Week 9 (Week of 23 May): Power and Politics

*Read:*

- Wink *Powers that Be*, Intro, ch. 1-3, and ch. 5, (95 pages)
- The Anglican Covenant PDF (9 pages)
- [Windsor Report AND *To Set our Hope on Christ*]
- Wondra, "The Importance of Moral Authority" PDF (11 pages)
- Lecture

Week 10 (Week of 30 May): Goodbyes

*Read:*

- Closing Lecture