Peace Church Theology  
TS 735 (Conrad Grebel University College)  
CGT 3610/CGT 6610 (Toronto School of Theology)  
Winter 2018

**Instructor**
Dr. Jeremy Bergen  
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**Class meeting**
Day: Mondays, 11:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.  
Location: Boardroom 2, TST building, 47 Queen’s Park Cres. E., Toronto  
Office hours: after class and at other times on Monday by appointment. The instructor can meet with students in the classroom for up to 15 minutes after class, or in the Toronto Mennonite Theological Centre office, located in the TST building.

**Land Acknowledgement**
This land on which this course is held is the territory of the Huron-Wendat and Petun First Nations, the Seneca, and most recently, the Mississaugas of the Credit River. The territory was the subject of the Dish with One Spoon Wampum Belt Covenant, an agreement between the Iroquois Confederacy and Confederacy of the Ojibwe and allied nations to peaceably share and care for the resources around the Great Lakes. Today, the meeting place of Toronto is still the home to many Indigenous people from across Turtle Island and we are grateful to have the opportunity to work in the community, on this territory.

**Course Description**
This course is a critical examination of contemporary peace theologies as they have developed within the Historic Peace Churches (Mennonite, Brethren, Society of Friends, though with a primary focus on the Anabaptist/Mennonite tradition) and through ecumenical engagement. Several themes emerges. 1) There is a strong ecclesiological character to peace church theology—the distinctive character of the community of faith is the embodiment of the peace of Jesus Christ. Whether particular understandings of a church’s peace witness, such as pacifism and nonviolence, are “church-dividing” issues depends, in part, on how ecclesiology and ethics are related to one another. 2) Ecumenical contacts have shaped and deepened peace church theology just as peace church theology has prompted a broadening of the discourse of peace within the ecumenical movement, and in other Christian traditions. As ecclesiology has emerged as the central issue in the “Faith and Order” stream of ecumenism, the historical peace churches have much to offer, and to receive, in the dialogue with the peace themes as they are developing in the “Life and Work” stream of ecumenism. 3) These ecumenical engagements have led to practical proposals around Just Policing (within the context of traditions committed to either Just War or Christian Pacifist approaches), and Just Peace (a framework that seeks to get beyond that dichotomy). The 2016 conference on “Nonviolence and Just Peace” co-sponsored by the Pontifical Council for Justice
and Peace is another significant development. 4) Whereas question of war and peace, just war and pacifism, and the nature and mission of the church shaped earlier rounds of reflection, theologians in the peace church traditions are also examining issues of atonement, the character of God, epistemology, ecology, and global capitalism. 5) There are profound internal contradictions in the theology of the peace churches. For example, the work of Mennonite theologian John Howard Yoder is central in the development of peace church theology, yet given his abuse of women also deeply problematic. Towards the end of the course, we will consider how the structure of the peace theology of which Yoder is a primary representative masks other forms of violence, especially violence that is internal to the community of faith.

**Learning outcomes**

1. Demonstrate understanding of peace church theologies, especially as they emerged in the Historic Peace Churches in the past century.
2. Articulate the relationship between ecclesiology and peace witness as it is developing in peace church theology.
3. Analyze and evaluate the discourses of peace as they are developing in ecclesial, scholarly, and ecumenical settings.
4. Assess the extent to which various understandings of the church’s peace witness may or may not be “church dividing.”
5. Articulate a variety of theological and practical approaches to peace.
6. Think critically about the implications of peace church theology for theological loci and ethical issues.
7. Understand and critically respond to the blind spots in peace church theologies, including the ways in these theologies have permitted or perpetuated violence.
8. Foster the capacity to engage in respectful and critical dialogue with others.
9. Develop skills in theological research and writing.

**Required texts:**


Other chapters and articles as noted below.

**Course requirements and evaluation for students in TS 735 or CGT 3610:**

1. Engaged participation in class (10%), including attendance, completion of required readings and balanced involvement in class discussion. Students are to bring a critical question emerging from the readings to each class session.
2. Critical response papers (3 x 10% = 30%) on an issue or issues raised in one of the required readings for the day (4-5 pages each). These papers should include both an account of the author’s argument and the student’s critical engagement with it. The paper is due on the day the reading will be discussed in class. The papers are due by January 29, February 12, and March 5, but may be submitted earlier depending on the readings selected.
3. Book review (20%) or church workshop outline. Books for review should be scholarly in orientation and at least 175 pages in length. Students are generally advised against reviewed an edited volume. Instructor’s approval is required in all cases. The paper (6-7 pages) should
consist of about 2/3 summary of author’s thesis and argument, and 1/3 critical engagement. Students may instead choose to develop a fairly detailed outline for a series of workshops in a church setting on a topic relating to peace theology. Due February 26.

4. Research paper (40%) on a theme arising from or related to the course material (12 pages). Key features of this assignment are: additional reading, development and defense of a particular thesis, critical engagement, effective writing. Students are encouraged to discuss a proposed topic, thesis, and/or working bibliography with the instructor. The paper is due April 9, and may be submitted by email.

Course requirements and evaluation for students in CGT 6610:

1. Engaged participation in class (10%), including attendance, completion of required readings and balanced involvement in class discussion. Students are to bring a critical question emerging from the readings to each class session.

2. Critical response papers (2 x 10% = 20%) on an issue or issues raised in one of the required readings for the day (4-5 pages each). These papers should include both an account of the author’s argument and your own critical engagement with it. The paper is due on the day the reading will be discussed in class. The papers are due January 29 and February 12 but may be submitted earlier depending on the readings selected.

3. Class presentation and facilitation of discussion (10%) on a required reading. The student will not summarize the article, but rather highlight the thesis and most salient points, identify critical issues, and pose two or three questions for discussion.

4. Research paper (60%) on a theme arising from or related to the course material (25 pages), and brief presentation of research in class. Key features of this assignment are: additional reading, development and defense of a particular thesis, critical engagement, effective writing. Students are encouraged to discuss a proposed topic, thesis, and/or working bibliography with the instructor. The paper is due April 9, and may be submitted by email.

Further instructions for written assignments

- Citation of sources must be Chicago Style (Turabian), footnote/bibliography format.
- Use inclusive language (e.g. humankind rather than mankind) when referring to people.
- Add page numbers.
- Edit and proofread all submitted work.
- Assignments must be submitted in hard copy, except the research paper which may be submitted in hard copy to the reception desk of Conrad Grebel University College (Waterloo) or to the instructor by email.
- There is no binding rule about the number of sources to use in the research paper. It is often better to use a few sources well than to cite a dozen books and/or journal articles superficially. For the research paper students should expect to do significant reading, including both peer-reviewed journal articles and scholarly books, beyond the required readings discussed in class. It is expected that relevant required readings may be incorporated into the paper.
- The general rubric for marking research papers is as follows: 1/3 for a fair and accurate representation of your sources, 1/3 for your critical analysis, 1/3 for the quality of writing.
- Late submission of any assignment will be penalized 3% per calendar day if other arrangements have not been made.
Outline of class meetings

1. January 8 - Introduction
   - The Schleitheim Confession (1527), available at: Anabaptistwiki link to Schleitheim Confession

2. January 15 - Historic Peace Churches

3. January 22 - Theological articulation in mid-20th century: Yoder
   - John Howard Yoder, The Royal Priesthood:
     - “Peace without Eschatology,” 143-167.
     - “Christ, the Hope of the World,” 192-218.
   Optional:
     - “Peace is the Will of God” (1953), in A Declaration on Peace, 53-78.

4. January 29 - Yoder, continued
   - John Howard Yoder, The Royal Priesthood:
   - *John Howard Yoder, “See How They Go with Their Faces to the Sun’,” in For the Nations, 51-78.

5. February 5 - Ecumenical theology and initiatives
   - John Howard Yoder, The Royal Priesthood:
     - “Catholicity in Search of Location,” 300-320.
   - World Council of Churches, An Ecumenical Call to Just Peace (Geneva: WCC, 2011). Available at: World Council of Churches website
Optional


6. February 12 - Mennonite- Catholic


[Reading Week]

7. February 26 - Cultures of Peace I

- Fernando Enns, et al., eds., *Seeking Cultures of Peace*:
- *Bonnie Klassen, “Communities of Hope: Colombian Anabaptist Churches Bridging the Abyss of Suffering with Faith,” in Klager, From Suffering to Solidarity, 251-273.

8. March 5 - Cultures of Peace II

- Fernando Enns, et al., eds., *Seeking Cultures of Peace*:

9. March 12 - Violence within the community of faith

Guest instructor: Dr. Kimberly Penner


10. March 19 – Theological developments

11. March 26 - Reframing
• Alain Epp Weaver, “Humility, Peacebuilding, and the Limits of Christian Pacifism,” The Conrad Grebel Review 35, no. 3 (Fall 2017). Available at: Conrad Grebel Review website
• *Lydia Neufeld Harder, “Seeking Wisdom in the Face of Foolishness: Toward a Robust Peace Theology,” in Friesen and Schlabach, At Peace and Unafraid, 117-152.

12. April 2 - Research paper presentations

Research papers due April 9 (may be submitted by email).

Policies
The working assumption is that the academic and disciplinary policies of the University of Waterloo and Conrad Grebel University College apply to students registered for TS 735. The academic and disciplinary policies of the Toronto School of Theology and its member Colleges apply to students in CGT 3610 and CGT 6610. Selected University of Waterloo policies are highlighted below. TST students are encouraged to consult their TST Handbook regarding relevant policies.

University of Waterloo Policies:
Academic Integrity
*Academic Integrity: In order to maintain a culture of academic integrity, members of the University of Waterloo are expected to promote honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility. See the UWaterloo Academic Integrity webpage and the Arts Academic Integrity webpage for more information.
**Discipline:** A student is expected to know what constitutes academic integrity, to avoid committing academic offences, and to take responsibility for his/her actions. A student who is unsure whether an action constitutes an offence, or who needs help in learning how to avoid offences (e.g., plagiarism, cheating) or about “rules” for group work/collaboration should seek guidance from the course professor, Grebel Dean, or the Graduate Associate Dean of Arts. When misconduct has been found to have occurred, disciplinary penalties will be imposed under Policy 71 – Student Discipline. For information on categories of offenses and types of penalties, students should refer to Policy 71 - Student Discipline. For typical penalties check Guidelines for the Assessment of Penalties.

**Grievance:** A student who believes that a decision affecting some aspect of his/her university life has been unfair or unreasonable may have grounds for initiating a grievance. Read Policy 70 - Student Petitions and Grievances, Section 4. When in doubt, please be certain to contact the department’s administrative assistant who will provide further assistance.

**Appeals:** A decision made or penalty imposed under Policy 70 - Student Petitions and Grievances (other than a petition) or Policy 71 - Student Discipline may be appealed if there is a ground. A student who believes he/she has a ground for an appeal should refer to Policy 72 - Student Appeals.

**Other information for students:**

Accommodation for Students with Disabilities
The AccessAbility Services office, located on the first floor of the Needles Hall extension (1401), collaborates with all academic departments to arrange appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities without compromising the academic integrity of the curriculum. If you require academic accommodations to lessen the impact of your disability, please register with the AS office at the beginning of each academic term. AccessAbility webpage.

**Additional Bibliography**


Weaver, Alain Epp, ed. *A Table of Sharing: Mennonite Central Committee and the Expanding Networks of Mennonite Identity*. Telford, PA: Cascadia, 2011.


