

Conrad Grebel University College  
University of Waterloo  
TS 783: Theology and Practice of Leadership  
Spring 2024

**Class Time:** Tuesdays and Thursdays, 6 – 8 pm, May 21 – June 27

**Location:** Synchronous zoom

**Instructor:** Assistant Professor Carol Penner

**Office Hours:** By appointment, before or after class

**Office Location:** Room 2201

**Phone:** 519-885-0220 x24241

**Email:** [c2penner@uwaterloo.ca](mailto:c2penner@uwaterloo.ca)

### Course Description:

What does Christian leadership look like? Students will compare and contrast leadership models, and integrate their experiences working in churches and Christian organizations. The course will explore topics such as missional purpose, visioning, conflict transformation, interculturality, the importance of boundaries and self-care. Students will discern vocation and callings to salaried and volunteer ministry through personal reflection and dialogue.

### Learning Goals:

1. Students will explore and articulate their own vocational call to leadership from within their own religious tradition.
2. Students will demonstrate analytical skills through discussion of leadership themes presented in the course material.
3. Students will hone listening skills as they interact with the theologies presented by their peers.
4. Students will demonstrate the ability to academically research a specific leadership challenge.
5. Students will demonstrate the ability to develop a plan of action in response to a concrete ministry leadership challenge and communicate it, taking into account a broad array of contextual factors.
6. Students will be able to communicate their understanding of power dynamics and the importance of emotional, sexual and spiritual boundaries as they relate to ministry.
7. Students will recognize strategies for self-care and lifelong learning in ministry.

## Required Reading Materials:

### Books:

Palmer, Parker. *Let Your Life Speak*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1999.

### Articles:

Bacher, Robert N. and Michael L. Cooper-White. "External Relationships: Loving Thy Institutional Neighbor." In *Church Administration: Programs, Process, Purpose*, 217-240. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2007.

Bacher, Robert N. and Michael L. Cooper-White. "Planning with Passion." In *Church Administration: Programs, Process, Purpose*, 63-90. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2007.

Bolsinger, Tod. "How a Nursing Mother Saved America." In *Canoeing the Mountains: Christian Leadership in Uncharted Territory*, 189-203. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Press, 2015.

Branson, Mark Lau. "Practical Theology and Multicultural Initiatives." In *Churches, Cultures & Leadership: A Practical Theology of Congregations and Ethnicities*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, by Mark Lau Branson and Juan F. Martinez, 27-56. Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 2023.

Conner, Benjamin T. "'How Do You Think You are Going to Be a Pastor?': Vocation and Disability." *Theology Today* 77, 2 (2020): 138-153.

Cooley, Teresa. "Congregational Systems." In *Transforming Conflict: The Blessings of Congregational Turmoil*, 59-74. New York: Rowman & Littlefield, 2022.

Epperly, Bruce. "The Spiritual Lives of Spiritual Leaders." In *Starting with Spirit: Nurturing Your Call to Pastoral Leadership*, 139-150. Herndon: Alban Institute, 2011.

Harder, Gary. "Conflict: A Complicated Unkindness." In *Dancing Through Thistles in Bare Feet: A Pastoral Journey*, 109-139. Waterloo: Herald Press, 2008.

Hotchkiss, Dan. "The Job of the Board." In *Governance and Ministry: Rethinking Board Leadership*, 67-82. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2016.

Jones, Gregory and Kevin R. Armstrong, "Resurrecting Excellence in the Pastoral Vocation." In *Resurrecting Excellence: Shaping Faithful Christian Ministry*, 79-110. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2006.

Jones, Jeffrey D. "Attending to Self." In *Heart, Mind and Strength: Theory and Practice for Congregational Leadership*, 35-57. Herndon: Alban Institute, 2008.

Kimberly, John W. "Managing Personnel." In *The Business of the Church: The Uncomfortable Truth that Faithful Ministry Requires Effective Management*, 39-69. Herndon: The Alban Institute, 2010.

Lawson, Kevin E. and Mick Boersma, "Time Together, Part 1." In *Supervising and Supporting Ministry Staff: A Guide to Thriving Together*, 33-47. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2017.

Lawson, Kevin E. and Mick Boersma, "Time Together, Part 2." In *Supervising and Supporting Ministry Staff: A Guide to Thriving Together*, 49-66. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2017.

Long, Kimberly Bracken. "The Heart: The Spirituality of the Presider." In *The Worshiping Body*, 111-119. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2009.

Long, Thomas. "The Essential Untidiness of Ministry." In *From Midterms to Ministry: Practical Theologians on Pastoral Beginnings*, edited by Allan Hugh Cole Jr., 1-12. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2008.

McClintock, Karen A. "Dangers in Pastoral Counselling." In *Preventing Sexual Abuse in Congregations: A Resource for Leaders*, 115-130. Herndon: The Alban Institute, 2004.

McClintock, Karen A. "Professional Roles and Romantic Relationships." In *Preventing Sexual Abuse in Congregations: A Resource for Leaders*, 69-82. Herndon: The Alban Institute, 2004.

Murray Williams, Sian and Stuart. "Multi-voiced Discernment." In *The Power of All: Building a Multi-Voiced Church*, 137-158. Harrisonburg: Herald Press, 2012.

Nagassar, Rohadi. "Naming the Powers." In *When We Belong: Reclaiming Christianity on the Margins*, 77-96. Harrisonburg: Herald Press, 2022.

Nemecek, Sean. "Am I in Burnout?" *The Weary Leader's Guide to Burnout: A Journey from Exhaustion to Wholeness*, 3-17. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2023.

Proeschold-Bell, Rae Jean and Jason Byassee. "Clergy Flourishing: In Their Own Words." In *Faithful and Fractured: Responding to the Clergy Health Crisis*, 126-156. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2018.

Rendle, Gil. "Telling the Story That Will Get Us Through the Wilderness." In *Quietly Courageous: Leading the Church in a Changing World*, 215-238. Lanham: Rowan & Littlefield, 2019.

Sisk, Ronald D. "I Saw the Holy City: Competent Leadership." In *The Competent Pastor: Skills and Self-Knowledge for Serving Well*, 125-146. Lanham: Rowan & Littlefield, 2005.

Standish, N. Graham. "Prayerful Leadership." In *Humble Leadership: Being Radically Open to God's Guidance and Grace*, 55-88. Herndon: The Alban Institute, 2007.

Steinke, Peter L. "The Nonanxious Presence." In *Congregational Leadership in Anxious Times: Being Calm and Courageous No Matter What*, 31-45. Herndon: The Alban Institute, 2006.

West, Traci. "Learning to Build Christian Community: Males, Whites, Heterosexuals Wanted for Leadership." In *From Midterms to Ministry: Practical Theologians on Pastoral Beginnings*, edited by Allan Hugh Cole Jr., 237-249. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2008.

### Additional Reading Materials:

Epperly, Bruce. "The Healthy Pastor." In *Starting with Spirit: Nurturing Your Call to Pastoral Leadership*, 151-169. Herndon: Alban Institute, 2011.

Hotchkiss, Dan. "How Congregations Organize." In *Governance and Ministry: Rethinking Board Leadership*, 29-46. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2016.

Johnson, Janeen Bertsche. "Holding Together Inner and Outer Dimensions of Call." *Vision* 12, 2 (2011): 52-58.

Kondrath, William M. "Transforming the Way Women and Men Work Together." In *God's Tapestry: Understanding and Celebrating Differences*, 153-183. Herndon: The Alban Institute, 2008.

McCamis, Kathy. "Holding Together Individual Experience and Communal Wisdom." *Vision* 17, 1 (Spring 2016): 72-77.

Olson, Richard P., and Ruth Lofgren Rosell, Nathan S. Marsh, Angela Barker Jackson. "Relational Self-Care." In *A Guide to Ministry Self-Care: Negotiating Today's Challenges with Resilience and Grace*, 89-103. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2018.

Rendle, Gil. "A Word about Structure and Process." In *Quietly Courageous: Leading the Church in a Changing World*, 93-123. Lanham: Rowan & Littlefield, 2019.

Russell, Letty M. "Outsiders Within," *Church and Society* 93:6 (Jan-Feb 2006): 64-72.

Section IV, Ethics in Ministry, *A Shared Understanding of Church Leadership*, Polity Manual for Mennonite Church Canada and Mennonite Church USA. Harrisonburg, Kitchener: MennoMedia, 2014), 55-72.

## Evaluations:

Assignment	Weighting	Due Date
Vocation and Call Journal	20%	May 31
Précis of 3 articles	15%	May 30, June 6, June 13
Critical Book Review Presentation	10%	June 18
Integration Project Proposal	5%	July 5
Integration Project	50%	August 2

## Assignments:

### #1. Vocation and Call Journal: 20%

Read: Parker Palmer, *Let Your Life Speak: Listening for the Voice of Vocation* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2000), pp. 1-55.

This assignment is not a book review, but a self-reflection based on your reading of a section of Palmer's book. The purpose is to encourage you to think about vocation and calling to leadership in your own life. Use the questions that Palmer asks as prompts for your own self-reflection about yourself as a leader. Questions you might consider are:

How are you challenged to live your life "from the inside out"?

What do you know about yourself from the work that you have done?

How have doors opening or closing influenced your vocational path?

What has motivated your vocational choices so far?

What direction do you feel drawn to for the future?

**Due Date: May 31, 2024**

**Length: 1750-2000 words**

### #2. Précis of Three Articles (15%)

For each class where students are divided into groups to do a reading, you must come to class prepared with a précis of the reading. A précis is a 150 word paragraph which concisely summarizes what the author is doing in this article or chapter. A précis includes the author's thesis, their main points and their method(s). It is not a critique or reaction to the article. Each class, I will call on three students to read their précis as a way of beginning our discussion and response to the article. Submit the précis before you come to class. List the article's title and author as a heading above the précis; you do not have to repeat this in the précis itself.

**Due Date: May 30, June 6, June 13**

**Length: 150 words each**

### #3. Critical Book Review Presentation: (10%)

In a 5 minute presentation to the class, concisely share what the book is about (3 minutes to describe its topic, organization and method), your primary critique of the book (1 minute on a major drawback or omission) and how it might be useful in developing your own theology of leadership (1 minute). The notes from your presentation are to be handed in on LEARN. They can be point-form notes.

**Due Date: June 18**

You will be assigned a book, since we want to learn about as many books on the list as possible. Send an email to the instructor no later than May 21 with your top 3 choices, and a book will be assigned. (Books with an asterisk have one chapter available on LEARN in our weekly readings.)

- a) \*Bacher, Rober N. and Michael L. Cooper-White. *Church Administration: Programs, Process, Purpose*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2007.
- b) \*Bolsinger, Tod. *Canoeing the Mountains: Christian Leadership in Uncharted Territory*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Press, 2015.
- c) \*Branson, Mark Lau and Juan F. Martinez. *Churches, Cultures & Leadership: A Practical Theology of Congregations and Ethnicities*. 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 2023.
- d) \*Cooley, Teresa. *Transforming Conflict: The Blessings of Congregational Turmoil*. New York: Rowman & Littlefield, 2022.
- e) David, James Calvin. *Forbearance: A Theological Ethic for a Disagreeable Church*. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2017.
- f) \*Kimberly, John W. *The Business of the Church: The Uncomfortable Truth that Faithful Ministry Requires Effective Management*. Herndon: The Alban Institute, 2010.
- g) \*Kondrath, William M. *God's Tapestry: Understanding and Celebrating Differences*. Herndon: The Alban Institute, 2008.
- h) McKnight, Scot and Laura Barringer. *A Church Called Tov: Forming a Goodness Culture That Resists Abuses of Power and Promotes Healing*. Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 2020.
- i) \*Murray Williams, Sian and Stuart. *The Power of All: Building a Multi-Voiced Church*. Harrisonburg: Herald Press, 2012.
- j) \*Nagassar, Rohadi. *When We Belong: Reclaiming Christianity on the Margins*. Harrisonburg: Herald Press, 2022.
- k) \*Nemecek, Sean. *The Weary Leader's Guide to Burnout: A Journey from Exhaustion to Wholeness*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2023.
- l) \*Olson, Richard P., and Ruth Lofgren Rosell, Nathan S. Marsh, Angela Barker Jackson. *A Guide to Ministry Self-Care: Negotiating Today's Challenges with Resilience and Grace*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2018.
- m) Pries, Betty. *The Space Between Us: Conversations about Transforming Conflict*. Harrisonburg, VA: Herald Press, 2021.
- n) \*Proeschold-Bell, Rae Jean and Jason Byassee. *Faithful and Fractured: Responding to the Clergy Health Crisis*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2018.
- o) \*Rendle, Gil. *Quietly Courageous: Leading the Church in a Changing World*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2019.
- p) Standish, N. Graham. *Humble Leadership: Being Radically Open to God's Guidance and Grace*. Herndon: The Alban Institute, 2007.
- q) \*Steinke, Peter L. *Congregational Leadership in Anxious Times: Being Calm and Courageous No Matter What*. Herndon: The Alban Institute, 2006.

#### #4. Integration Project (55%)

This project demonstrates theological depth through developing a case study involving a concrete problem, situation or opportunity in ministry from a specific community with which you are familiar. The Integration Project is summative for those in the MTS Applied stream.

A. Integration Project Proposal: A summary of the case study you are proposing, and an initial bibliography of at least four books and four articles (your final bibliography should be longer). In the last two classes, we will brainstorm topics, and you can get feedback from others about approaches or resources. The instructor has the prerogative to ask you to modify your proposal.

**Due: July 5**

**Length: 250 words plus bibliography (5%)**

#### B. Integration Project Paper

This paper should have three sections:

i) Description and Analysis. What is going on? (500 – 750 words)

This section will describe in detail the case you have chosen:

--What is the problem, challenge or opportunity, and who is currently involved?

--What is the history of this situation, including its practical social and cultural aspects?

--What theological issues are at the forefront of this case study?

--Who has the power in this situation, and why?

--Why is this a concern to your community or church, and more specifically, to you?

ii) Theological Interpretation. What does it mean? (1500 – 1750 words)

This section will interpret and reflect on your case using insights from scripture, theology, and your specific denomination's tradition.

--Identify at least two central theological or ethical issues relevant to this case study. How will your theological commitments impact your plan of action?

--What can you learn from theologians or biblical scholars that is relevant to this case study?

--Is this a new problem, or is it one we have seen before in the past in other church communities?

iii) Plan of Action: How would you address this situation or challenge as a leader? (1250-1500 words) Write this section as if you had power to initiate a multi-level faith community response to this case.

--What, if any, is the current response to the situation?

--How would you mobilize your community to address this case? Which groups could be involved? What tools such as re-structuring, fundraising, preaching, teaching, pastoral care, worship or outreach programs would you use to change individuals and your community? Be specific, and include timelines.

--Your plan of action could include bringing in resource people or restructuring the organization, creating new programs or revamping old ones, holding educational seminars, having a sermon series, or bible study. How might your plan of action be implemented through rituals, or worship?

**Due: August 2**

**Length: 3500 - 4000 words (50%)**

## Course Schedule:

Class	Topic	Reading
1. May 21	What does it mean to be a leader?	Jones & Armstrong, "Resurrecting Excellence" Long, "The Heart"
2. May 23	How do we discern vocation?  Guest speaker: Marilyn Rudy-Froese, Church Leadership Minister, Mennonite Church Eastern Canada	Palmer, <i>Let Your Life Speak</i> , 1-55.  Additional reading: Johnson, "Holding Together" McCamis, "Holding Together Individual..."
3. May 28	How does our spiritual role impact leadership tasks?  Guest speaker: Bev Suderman-Gladwell, former Chaplain at Parkwood Seniors Community	Kimberley, "Managing Personnel" Standish, "Prayerful Leadership"
4. May 30	What is healthy leadership, and how do leaders stay healthy?  Guest speaker: Marcus Shantz, President, Conrad Grebel University College	<b>Everyone reads:</b> Proeschold-Bell & Byassee, "Clergy Flourishing: In Their Own Words" <b>Group A précis:</b> Jones, "Attending to Self" <b>Group B précis:</b> Nemecek, Sean. "Am I in Burnout?"  Additional reading: Epperly, "The Healthy Pastor" Olsen, Rosell, et. al. "Relational Self-Care"
5. June 4	How do we lead in the diversity of our contexts and identities?  Guest speaker: Suzanne Gross, Bridge Building Facilitator, Mennonite Church Alberta	Bolsinger, "How a Nursing Mother" Conner, "How Do You Think" West, "Learning to Build"  Additional Reading: Kondrath, "Transforming the Way Women and Men Work Together" Russell, "Outsiders Within"
6. June 6	Why must leaders think carefully about power?  Guest speaker: César Garcia, General Secretary of Mennonite World Conference	<b>Everyone reads:</b> McClintock, "Professional Roles and Romantic Relationships" <b>Group A précis:</b> McClintock, "Dangers in Pastoral Counselling" <b>Group B précis:</b> Nagassar, "Naming the Powers"  Additional Reading:



Class	Topic	Reading
		Section IV, Ethics in Ministry, <i>A Shared Understanding of Church Leadership</i> . Mennonite Church Canada, 2014.
7. June 11	Why do leadership structures matter?  Guest speaker: Darren Pries-Klassen, CEO Abundance Canada	Hotchkiss, "The Job of the Board" Lawson & Boersma, "Time Together" Part 1 Bacher & Cooper-White, "External Relationships"  Additional Reading: Hotchkiss, "How Congregations Organize" Rendle, "A Word About Structure"
8. June 13	How do we lead in times of change and conflict?  Guest speaker: Doug Klassen, Executive Minister Mennonite Church Canada	<b>Everyone reads:</b> Harder, "Conflict" <b>Group A précis:</b> Cooley, "Congregational Systems" <b>Group B précis:</b> Murray Williams, "Multi-voiced Discernment"
9. June 18	How can planning be a spiritual endeavour?  Book Review Roundup	Bacher & Cooper-White, "Planning with Passion" Branson, "Practical Theology and Multicultural Initiatives"
10. June 20  --no synchronous class	Why do leaders connect mission and storytelling?  Samantha Coelho, Advocacy and Networking Specialist, Mennonite Central Committee Ottawa	Rendle, "Telling the Story" Sisk, "I Saw the Holy City"
11. June 25	How do we construct our own theology of leadership?  Integration Project Brainstorming	Lawson & Boersma, "Time Together" Part 2 Long, "Essential Untidiness of Ministry"
12. June 27	Reflecting on learnings  Integration Project Brainstorming	Epperly, "The Spiritual Lives of Spiritual Leaders" Steinke, "The Nonanxious Presence"

## UWaterloo Policies

**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.

Arts: [Academic Integrity website](#) University of Waterloo: [Academic Integrity Office](#)

## Notes

### The Land on Which We Meet:

We acknowledge that we are located on the traditional territory of the Attawandaron (also known as Neutral), Anishinaabe, and the Haudenosaunee peoples. The University of Waterloo and Conrad Grebel University are situated on the Haldimand Tract, the land promised to the Six Nations that includes ten kilometers (six miles) on each side of the Grand River. In our words and in our actions we will strive to live in right relationship with our Indigenous neighbours. Specifically, in this theological course we will keep the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Call to Action #60 in mind: *TRC Call to Action #60: We call upon leaders of the church parties to the Settlement Agreement and all other faiths, in collaboration with Indigenous spiritual leaders, Survivors, schools of theology, seminaries, and other religious training centres, to develop and teach curriculum for all student clergy, and all clergy and staff who work in Aboriginal communities, on the need to respect Indigenous spirituality in its own right, the history and legacy of residential schools and the roles of the church parties in that system, the history and legacy of religious conflict in Aboriginal families and communities, and the responsibility that churches have to mitigate such conflicts and prevent spiritual violence*

### Class Attendance

If you know you will be away for an unavoidable reason (sickness or family emergency), please email the instructor, and you can fill out the UWaterloo verification of illness forms [here](#). Missing three or more classes even for unavoidable reasons will result in an additional assignment to be determined by the instructor. Please mute phones and refrain from doing email or texting during class. It is expected that you will participate with camera on.

### Citations and Plagiarism and Format

Your sources must be fully documented, according to the *Chicago Manual of Style*. A brief guide with examples is available [here](#). Please use the notes and bibliography system rather than the parenthetical author/date system. Using undocumented quotations from published sources, or submitting work that is not your own will have serious ramifications for your academic career. Please submit all work double-spaced, in a Word document.

### Use of Artificial Intelligence

The use of Generative artificial intelligence (GenAI) like Chat GPT, DALL-E, or GitHub CoPilot to produce your work is not permitted in this class. Unauthorized use in this course, such as using GenAI to complete a course assessment is considered a violation of [Policy 71](#) (plagiarism or unauthorized aids or assistance). Work produced with the assistance of AI tools does not represent the author's original work and is therefore in violation of the fundamental values of academic integrity. If the use of GenAI is suspected, you may be asked for proof that the submitted material is your original work. You should keep your rough notes, including research notes, brainstorming, and drafting notes. You may be asked to submit these notes along with earlier drafts of their work, either through saved drafts or saved versions of a document. Through this process, if you have not sufficiently supported your work, academic misconduct allegations may be brought to the Dean.

## Tardy Assignments

Punctual submission of assignments is expected. If you think you cannot hand in an assignment on time, email the instructor to request an extension. Marks may be deducted for assignments that are over one week overdue.

## Sensitive Course Content and Confidentiality

This course addresses issues about boundary crossings that may trigger distress in students because of their own personal experiences, or through their connection to someone who has lived through trauma. You are encouraged to take care of yourself by stepping away when you need some space, or with the permission of the instructor, absenting yourself from a specific class. There are mental health supports Conrad Grebel University College (see below).

In the course of our discussions, the students or instructor may wish to share stories of a personal nature. It is expected that personal stories you hear in class will not be repeated outside the classroom without the express permission of the person who told the story.

## Other sources of information for students:

**Mental Health Services** aim is to provide holistic programming and services to help you lead a healthy and balanced life. We strive to provide a secure, supportive environment for students of all orientations and backgrounds. Students suffering from problems with anxiety, depression, problems with sleep, attention, obsession or compulsions, relationship difficulties, severe winter blues, etc., may make an appointment by phone or in person. Appointments are usually available within two days of initial contact with one of our medical doctors. All contacts are completely confidential. Phone 519-888-4567 ext. 32655.

**For students with learning differences:** The [AccessAbility Services \(AAS\)](#) office, located in Needles Hall Room 1132, 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 ASS office at the beginning of each academic term.

**Counselling Services:** Counselling Services provides free confidential counselling, in both individual and group sessions, with qualified professionals to help registered students, faculty and staff with personal concerns, educational career decisions, and strategies for studies and exams: <https://uwaterloo.ca/campus-wellness/counselling-services>, ext. 33528, NH Room 2080.

**The Writing Centre:** Writing Centre staff offer one-on-one support in planning assignments and presentations, using and documenting research, organizing and structuring papers, and revising for clarity and coherence. Make an appointment or drop in at the Library for quick questions or feedback. To book a 50-minute appointment and to see drop-in hours, visit <https://uwaterloo.ca/writing-and-communication-centre/>.