

Course Syllabus

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School of Theology and Christian Ministry

THE 3060 Christian Life as Vocation

3 Units

Fall 2023

Meeting days/times T, Th 11:00 am – 12:15 am

Meeting location Rohr Hall (RH) 108

Final Exam: Thursday, 12/14/2023, 10:30-1:00

Instructor title and name: Dr. Milton Karahadian

Phone: 619-849-2649

Email: mkarahad@pointloma.edu

Office location and hours: Nicholson Commons 341. To schedule and an appointment click here:..[Milton Karahadian Calendar](#)[Links to an external site.](#)

PLNU Mission

To Teach ~ To Shape ~ To Send

Point Loma Nazarene University exists to provide higher education in a vital Christian community where minds are engaged and challenged, character is modeled and formed, and service is an expression of faith. Being of Wesleyan heritage, we strive to be a learning community where grace is foundational, truth is pursued, and holiness is a way of life.

Foundational Explorations Mission

PLNU provides a foundational course of study in the liberal arts informed by the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. In keeping with the Wesleyan tradition, the curriculum equips students with a broad range of knowledge and skills within and across

disciplines to enrich major study, lifelong learning, and vocational service as Christ-like participants in the world's diverse societies and culture.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

A study of the theology and practice of vocation as they have developed in the biblical and Christian traditions. Students will be led to reflect on career and professional life in a Christian way. The course will also study Christian ethical ways of living in the world. BIB1001 or BIB 1002 prerequisite.

COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES

After completing this course, students will be able to:

1. Explain the intellectual integrity, rich diversity, and coherence of the Christian tradition in its historical development. (GELO 3)
2. Explain the characteristic features of Wesleyan theology and the ways in which it embodies the central affirmations of the Christian tradition. (GELO 3)
3. Appreciate an ongoing, lifelong commitment to and participation in the Christian tradition and congregational life. (GELO 3)
4. Display nuances Christian faith offers to the understanding and practice of compassion and service. (GELO 2c)
5. Participate in a variety of Christian practices that help students grow (GELO 3)
6. Develop and articulating an understanding of vocation and (GELO 1a)

FOUNDATIONAL EXPLORATIONS LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students will be able to effectively express ideas and information to others through written communication. (GELO 1a)

1. Students will demonstrate an understanding of the complex issues faced by diverse groups in global and/or cross-cultural contexts. (GELO 2c)
2. Students will demonstrate an understanding of Christian Scripture, Tradition, and Ethics, including engagement in acts of devotion and works of mercy. (GELO 3)

Required Texts and Recommended Study Resources

- Heath, Elaine *Five Means of Grace: Experience God's Love the Wesleyan Way*. Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2019. ISBN 978-1501835643.
- Jethani, *With: Reimagining the Way You Relate to God*. Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2011. ISBN 978-1595553799.
- Nouwen, *Discernment: Reading the Signs of Daily Life*. New York, NY: Harper One, 2013. ISBN 978-0061686160.
- Warren, Tish *Liturgy of the Ordinary: Sacred practices in everyday life*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2016. ISBN 978-0830846238.

Assessment and Grading

Grades will be based on the following grading scale:

A	B	C	D	F
A 93-100	B+ 87-89	C+ 77-79	D+ 67-69	F Less than 59
A- 90-92	B 83-86	C 73-76	D 63-66	
	B- 80-82	C- 70-72	D- 60-62	

Assignments and Points

Assignments for this course:

Assignment(s)	Total Points
Reading & Discussion Board (20 each x 11)	220 points
Means of Grace Practices (75 each x 5)	375 points
Vocational and Calling Paper	100 points
Theology Art Project	105 points
Midterm and Final Exam	2X100 points=200
Total Points	1000 points

Final Examination Policy

Successful completion of this class requires taking the final examination on its scheduled day. The final examination schedule is posted on the [Class Schedules](#) site. If you find yourself scheduled for three (3) or more final examinations on the same day, you are authorized to contact each professor to arrange a different time for one of those exams.

However, unless you have three (3) or more exams on the same day, no requests for alternative final examinations will be granted.

Content Warning

I acknowledge that each of you comes to PLNU with your own unique life experiences. This contributes to the way you perceive various types of information. In 3060, all of the class content, including that which may be intellectually or emotionally challenging, has been intentionally curated to achieve the learning goals for this course. The decision to include such material is not taken lightly. These topics include death, suffering and hell. If you encounter a topic that is intellectually challenging for you, it can manifest in feelings of discomfort and upset. In response, I encourage you to come talk to me or your friends or family about it. Class topics are discussed for the sole purpose of expanding your intellectual engagement in the area of [subject/major], and I will support you throughout your learning in this course.

Trigger Warning

I acknowledge that each of you comes to PLNU with your own unique life experiences. This contributes to the way you perceive several types of information. In Christian Life and Vocation, we will cover a variety of topics, some of which you may find triggering. These topics include death, suffering, self-image and social justice issues . Each time this topic appears in a reading or unit, it is marked on the syllabus. The experience of being triggered versus intellectually challenged are different. The main difference is that an individual must have experienced trauma to experience being triggered, whereas an intellectual challenge has nothing to do with trauma. If you are a trauma survivor and encounter a topic in this class that is triggering for you, you may feel overwhelmed or panicked and find it difficult to concentrate. In response, I encourage you to take the necessary steps for your emotional safety. This may include leaving class while the topic is discussed or talking to a therapist at the Counseling Center. Should you choose to sit out on discussion of a certain topic, know that you are still responsible for the material; but we can discuss if there are other methods for accessing that material, and for assessing your learning on that material. Class topics are discussed for the sole purpose of expanding your intellectual engagement in the area of [subject/major], and I will support you throughout your learning in this course.

Incompletes and Late Assignments

All assignments are to be submitted/turned in by the beginning of the class session when they are due—including assignments posted in Canvas. Incompletes will only be assigned in extremely unusual circumstances.

Spiritual Care

Please be aware PLNU strives to be a place where you grow as whole persons. To this end, we provide resources for our students to encounter God and grow in their Christian faith.

If students have questions, a desire to meet with the chaplain or have prayer requests you can contact your professor or the [Office of Spiritual Life and Formation](#).

State Authorization

State authorization is a formal determination by a state that Point Loma Nazarene University is approved to conduct activities regulated by that state. In certain states outside California, Point Loma Nazarene University is not authorized to enroll online (distance education) students. If a student moves to another state after admission to the program and/or enrollment in an online course, continuation within the program and/or course will depend on whether Point Loma Nazarene University is authorized to offer distance education courses in that state. It is the student's responsibility to notify the institution of any change in his or her physical location. Refer to the map on [State Authorization](#) to view which states allow online (distance education) outside of California.

PLNU Copyright Policy

Point Loma Nazarene University, as a non-profit educational institution, is entitled by law to use materials protected by the US Copyright Act for classroom education. Any use of those materials outside the class may violate the law.

PLNU Academic Honesty Policy

Students should demonstrate academic honesty by doing original work and by giving appropriate credit to the ideas of others. Academic dishonesty is the act of presenting information, ideas, and/or concepts as one's own when in reality they are the results of another person's creativity and effort. A faculty member who believes a situation involving academic dishonesty has been detected may assign a failing grade for that assignment or examination, or, depending on the seriousness of the offense, for the course. Faculty should follow and students may appeal using the procedure in the university Catalog. See [Academic Policies](#)[Links to an external site.](#) for definitions of kinds of academic dishonesty and for further policy information.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Policy

Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools (e.g, ChatGPT, iA Writer, Marmot, Botowski) is not permitted, and use of these tools will be treated as plagiarism.

PLNU Academic Accommodations Policy

PLNU is committed to providing equal opportunity for participation in all its programs, services, and activities. Students with disabilities may request course-related accommodations by contacting the Educational Access Center (EAC), located in the Bond Academic Center (EAC@pointloma.edu or 619-849-2486). Once a student's eligibility for an accommodation has been determined, the EAC will issue an academic accommodation plan ("AP") to all faculty who teach courses in which the student is enrolled each semester.

PLNU highly recommends that students speak with their professors during the first two weeks of each semester/term about the implementation of their AP in that particular course and/or if they do not wish to utilize some or all of the elements of their AP in that course.

Students who need accommodations for a disability should contact the EAC as early as possible (i.e., ideally before the beginning of the semester) to assure appropriate accommodations can be provided. It is the student's responsibility to make the first contact with the EAC.

Language and Belonging

Point Loma Nazarene University faculty are committed to helping create a safe and hospitable learning environment for all students. As Christian scholars we are keenly aware of the power of language and believe in treating others with dignity. As such, it is important that our language be equitable, inclusive, and prejudice free. Inclusive/Bias-free language is the standard outlined by all major academic style guides, including MLA, APA, and Chicago, and it is the expected norm in university-level work. Good writing and speaking do not use unsubstantiated or irrelevant generalizations about personal qualities such as age, disability, economic class, ethnicity, marital status, parentage, political or religious beliefs, race, gender, sex, or sexual orientation. Inclusive language also avoids using stereotypes or terminology that demeans persons or groups based on age, disability, class, ethnicity, gender, race, language, or national origin. Respectful use of language is particularly important when referring to those outside of the religious and lifestyle commitments of those in the PLNU community. By working toward precision and clarity of language, we mark ourselves as serious and respectful scholars, and we model the Christ-like quality of hospitality.

You may report an incident(s) using the [Bias Incident Reporting Form](#)[Links to an external site.](#)

Sexual Misconduct and Discrimination

In support of a safe learning environment, if you (or someone you know) have experienced any form of sexual discrimination or misconduct, including sexual assault, dating or domestic violence, or stalking, know that accommodations and resources are available through the Title IX Office at pointloma.edu/Title-IX. Please be aware that under Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, faculty and staff are required to disclose information about such misconduct to the Title IX Office.

If you wish to speak to a confidential employee who does not have this reporting responsibility, you can contact Counseling Services at counselingservices@pointloma.edu or find a list of campus pastors at pointloma.edu/title-ix.

PLNU Attendance and Participation Policy

Regular and punctual attendance at all class sessions is considered essential to optimum academic achievement. If the student is absent for more than 10 percent of class sessions, the faculty member will issue a written warning of de-enrollment. If the absences exceed 20 percent, the student may be de-enrolled without notice until the university drop date or, after that date, receive an "F" grade.

Assignments at a Glance (see actual assignments in Modules for details and information):

1. **Reading and Discussion (20 points x 11=220 points).** You are to complete 10 of the 12 weekly 250 word essays in response to the discussion questions raised from the assigned reading, and then you are to post it on Canvas by 11:59PM the prior day of class discussion. (*Class Discussion on 1/19, essay due on Canvas by 1/18, 11:59PM*) Essays are graded based on the rubric included in Canvas. Also, you are to be prepared to discuss the readings in class.
2. **Christian Practices: Means of Grace (75 points x 5 = 375 points).** Reflect on Elaine Heath's book, *The Five Means of Grace*, and participate in Christian practices or "means of grace" that the author discusses in the book. At the end of each module, you are to engage in the assigned practice.
 - **Module 1-Searching the Scriptures (*Lectio Divina*).**
 - **Module 2-Prayer (Examen).**
 - **Module 3-Lord's Supper (Worship)** --Attend a worship service outside of your tradition, preferably with a different cultural group and write at 500-word response that addresses the following areas:
 1. Describe the service you attended (include worship space and symbols) and compare it to your own church tradition or PLNU chapel based on aspects of preparation, singing, prayer, preaching, sacraments, and interaction of congregants.
 2. Conclude with what stepping out of your pattern of worship taught you about Christian worship.
 3. Take a photo of yourself attending the service and copy it into your
 - **Module 4-Fasting/Sabbath-** You are to take an intentional time of Fasting in one of the following ways:
 1.
 - 1. Technology Fast-you take one day (24 hours) and do not engage in any email, phone, or texting.
 2. Solitude-you take one day (24 hours) to be alone and not talk or engage in conversation with anyone. This is a time to rest and relax.

3. Exercise-you exercise three times during a week as part of your self-care. Write a 500-word essay describing how this Sabbath rest improved your sense of well-being, reduced your anxiety, and helped you connect with
- **Module 5-Christian Conferencing (Develop a Rule of Life)- Developing a Rule of Life** that articulates your pattern of spiritual growth and development. The Rule of Life becomes a document that summarizes principles and practices that will deepen your relationship with Christ, your sense of vocation and calling, and help you grow in personal and social holiness.

You have a great deal freedom in discerning how you will do this, as long as it connects with the explanations of the practice in Heath's book. You are to complete these on your own, or in a group setting and then write a 500-word essay talking about your experience.

You might find it helpful to personally journal on those questions and simply write a concise version of your responses when writing your essay.

The questions could be as follows:

1.
 1. Which means of grace did you practice this week?
 2. Why do the means of grace matter to Christian life and faith?
 3. What did you observe, feel, experience, through this practice?
 4. How did you feel about this experience and is this a practice that you might incorporate in your spiritual life?

*As can be seen through this assignment, this course will include practices of Christian spirituality. While the professor does hope you find these meaningful for your own reflection and meaning-making, the professor does not assume that everyone at PLNU is a Christian. If you do not feel comfortable engaging in Christian practices, please know that the professor is willing to discern alternative options for you. Simply inform the professor during the first week of class and set up a meeting to discuss alternatives.

3. **Vocation and Calling Paper (100 points).** Since this class is about how you discern your sense of vocation it is important to be able to articulate your sense of vocation and calling as it relates to your gifts and abilities. You are to write a 500-750 word essay regarding your sense of Vocation, and as you write the paper you might consider responding to some of the following prompts:
 1. What is your major, and how did you find your way to PLNU?
 2. In what ways do you see your faith intersecting with your career plans?

3. What insights have you gained from reading and practicing the “means of grace” (Heath’s book)?
4. What kind of life do you sense God calling you to live?
5. In what ways are you embracing this call or embracing a meaningful life?

- 3.
4. **Theology Art Project (125 points).** There are four components to the Theology Art Project: (1) your original creation, (2) your artist’s memo, (3) your presentation video to be shared in class with your art piece, and (4) your reflection on three classmates’ projects. A rubric will be provided. For a description of the four components, see the explanations below.

- - **Your original creation.** You will submit *your own original creation* that substantively expresses and builds upon a practice/sacrament from the Harrison Warren book (example: Baptism, Liturgy, Confession, Passing of Peace, Community, etc.) This project can be done in several ways (i.e., painting, poster, poetry, story, short film, song, music video, podcast, game, app, built structure, machine, organizational chart, business plan, spreadsheet, concept illustration, food, clothing, etc.), and is to represent how you view this particular practice/sacrament in relationship to your sense of vocation. If your original creation can be created digitally, you will submit the digital file containing the project. Be prepared to share your video presentation and/or art project in class.

While it is true that many do not feel as if they are creative people, the theological reality is that every human being is created in the image of God—the Creator of all things. We are created by a creative God as divinely creative creatures. As you prepare for this assignment, feel free to try your hand at something new. However, don’t assume creativity is limited to a stereotypical box. Take a moment to reflect on the various ways your passion, skills, talents and sense of wonder lead you to create.

- - **Your artist’s memo.** Along with your original creation, you must submit an “artist’s memo” that explains your intentions, goals, and purposes for the project’s composition. Your explanation in the “artist’s memo” needs to make it very clear that you understand the theological theme and that your original creation has been created in a thoughtful and careful manner. The length of the “artist’s memo” is 250-500 words. The “artist’s memo” needs to answer the following questions:
 1. What is the significance of this piece?

- 2. How does it substantively relate to a practice/sacrament in the Harrison Warren book?
 - 3. How does this practice/sacrament relate to your sense of vocation and calling?
- - **Your video presentation.** You will post a 5-minute video presentation of your original creation. In this video, you need to expound upon content in your artist's memo.
 - - **Your reflection on three peers' projects.** You will respond to three of your peers' presentations by replying to their posts with your answers to the following questions:
 1.
 1. What did you appreciate or find intriguing about this project?
 2. What questions do you have for the artist?

5. Midterm and Final Exam (100 points each).

6. Extra Credit #1- TBA

Course Summary:

Date	Details	Due
Wed Sep 6, 2023	Assignment Reading Report #1	due by 11:59pm
Wed Sep 13, 2023	Assignment Reading Report #2	due by 11:59pm
Wed Sep 20, 2023	Assignment Means of Grace: Searching the Scripture (Lectio divina)	due by 11:59pm
Wed Sep 27, 2023	Assignment Reading Report #3	due by 11:59pm
Wed Oct 4, 2023	Assignment Reading Report #4	due by 11:59pm
Thu Oct 12, 2023	Assignment Mid-Term Exam	due by 11:59pm

Date	Details	Due
Wed Oct 18, 2023	Assignment Vocational and Calling Paper	due by 11:59pm
Wed Oct 25, 2023	Assignment Reading Report #5	due by 11:59pm
Fri Oct 27, 2023	Assignment Means of Grace: Prayer (Examen)	due by 11:59pm
Wed Nov 1, 2023	Assignment Reading Report #6	due by 11:59pm
Wed Nov 8, 2023	Assignment Reading Report #7	due by 11:59pm
Fri Nov 10, 2023	Assignment Theology and Art Project	due by 11:59pm
Wed Nov 15, 2023	Assignment Reading Report #8	due by 11:59pm
Fri Nov 17, 2023	Assignment Means of Grace: Fasting/Sabbath	due by 11:59pm
Tue Nov 21, 2023	Assignment Reading Report #9	due by 11:59pm
Wed Nov 29, 2023	Assignment Reading Report #10	due by 11:59pm
Fri Dec 1, 2023	Assignment Means of Grace: Christian Conferencing (Rule of Life)	due by 11:59pm
Wed Dec 6, 2023	Assignment Reading Report #11	due by 11:59pm
Mon Dec 11, 2023	Assignment Means of Grace: Lord's Supper (Worship)	due by 11:59pm
Thu Dec 14, 2023	Assignment Final Exam	due by 10:30pm
Fri Dec 15, 2023	Assignment Extra Credit Community Service Project	due by 11:59pm
	Assignment Roll Call Attendance	

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Calendar

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
30 July 202330 Previous month	31 July 202331 Previous month	1 August 20231	2 August 20232	3 August 20233	4 August 20234	5 August 20235
6 August 20236	7 August 20237	8 August 20238	9 August 20239	10 August 202310	11 August 202311	12 August 202312
13 August 202313	14 August 202314	15 August 202315	16 August 202316	17 August 202317	18 August 202318	19 August 202319
20 August 202320	21 August 202321	22 August 202322	23 August 202323	24 August 202324	25 August 202325	26 August 202326
27 August 202327	28 August 202328	29 August 202329 Today	30 August 202330	31 August 202331	1 September 20231 Next month	2 September 20232 Next month
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Course assignments are not weighted.
