

Point Loma Nazarene University
School of Theology & Christian Ministry
Spring Semester, 2024

Point Loma Nazarene University 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 becomes an expression of faith.

Being of Wesleyan heritage, we aspire to be a learning community
where grace is foundational, truth is pursued, and holiness is a way of life.

Course: CHU 3095. The Christian Tradition. T-Th, 1:30-2:45. Rohr Hall 109.

Professor: Dr. Michael Lodahl. Office Smee 205; cell (858) 405-3184

Texts:

Heath, Elaine. *Five Means of Grace: Experience God's Love the Wesleyan Way* (**Grace**)

Lodahl, Michael and Cordero, April. *Renewal in Love: Living Holy Lives in God's Good Creation* (**Renewal**)

Course anthology, *Crucial Readings in the Christian Tradition* (**Readings**)

Please note that this anthology listed immediately above (*Crucial Readings in the Christian Tradition*) is posted among course materials on Canvas, but it is there for you to download. It is strongly encouraged that all students in this course to print a hard copy of the anthology for heightened pedagogical value, unless you use a screen on which you can take notes. Providing material evidence of having a hard copy, or at least of having some way to take notes on the pages of the anthology, will be worth an extra credit of 25 points in the attendance /

participation category of this course, as long as it is presented within the first two weeks of the semester.

Course Description:

Catalogue description: A historical survey of the ideas, practices, and institutions of Christianity from the end of the New Testament period to the present, with attention to the Wesleyan-Arminian tradition. [Note: The 'Wesleyan' refers primarily to John Wesley, 1703-1791; and 'Arminian' to Jacob Arminius, 1560-1609.]

Elaborated description: We shall attempt to focus our historical and theological study through the lens of the doctrine of *creation*, including the creation of human beings in God's image – and what this teaching implies about human responsibility in, and for, God's creation. This means that we shall attempt to keep ever before us the following question: What have selected Christian leaders down through the 21 centuries of Christian faith *believed*, and *written*, about **the material world as God's creation**? We will especially examine the doctrines of **the incarnation of the Word** and **the resurrection of the body** in connection with the doctrine of creation. Further, we shall attempt to discern what practical difference(s) such beliefs and claims have made upon those people's lives: what have they *done* in response to, and in light of, their convictions about the world as God's good, but fallen, creation?

Such questions as these demand that special attention be given to *Christology*, or the doctrine of Christ. This means that we shall attempt to keep ever before us the following question: What have selected key people during the 21 centuries of Christian faith *believed*, *thought*, and *said*, about Jesus of Nazareth as the Christ (or Messiah, the Anointed One of God)? Further, we shall attempt to discern what practical difference(s) such convictions have made upon those people's lives: what have they *done* in response to, and in light of, their faith in Jesus Christ? Most particularly, how have Christians thought about, and acted within, God's creation – the world in which we live and upon which we depend – in the light of Jesus Christ, God's incarnate Son?

*Point Loma Nazarene University
provides a foundational course of study in the liberal arts
informed by the life, ministry, crucifixion 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
that we might become Christ-like participants
in the world's diverse societies and cultures.*

Course Learning Outcomes. *Upon successful completion of this course, you will have:*

- 1) demonstrated increasing understanding of Christian Scripture and tradition, both through engagement with classic literary sources and through participation in a variety of Christian worship settings;
- 2) demonstrated the ability to describe the critical issues in the historical development of Christian tradition, particularly in regards to *Christology*, or the doctrine of Christ;
- 3) demonstrated the ability to describe the characteristic features of Arminian-Wesleyan theology, particularly in its development within Reformation debates and concerns;
- 4) examined the deep connections between central Christian convictions and ethical living, particularly as formulated and taught in the Wesleyan theological tradition, and considered especially in relationship to our growing ecological crisis;
- 5) grown in appreciation for the importance of active participation in Christian congregational life in its liturgical diversity; and
- 6) demonstrated a growing excellence in the discipline of effective writing, particularly as related to biblical, religious and theological literacy.

Course Requirements:

- 1) Consistent class attendance and participation (CLO 1). Generally, attendance at any given class session is worth five attendance / participation points (out of five possible). Each absence is scored as 0/5 for that day and *after four absences the student is eligible to be dropped from the course roll. I take this very seriously; I trust that you will too.*
- 2) Careful and disciplined reading of assigned texts for each class session. *Actually doing the daily reading is absolutely your responsibility.* This will be evaluated essentially by the quality of discussion/interaction which you are able to contribute to the life of the class, **and by occasional (or perhaps more than occasional) unannounced quizzes** whose scores will be entered in the attendance / participation category – such quizzes will address the day’s assigned reading and / or the main points of the previous lecture or lectures (CLO 1, 2).
- 3) A “semester writing project” (CLO 6) which can take *any one of the three following forms, A, B or C, although in light of CLO 1 and CLO 5 the preferred option should be A. For students with heavy Sunday responsibilities and commitments (beyond the art of sleeping in), however, Option A may be quite difficult (though probably not impossible) and either B or C may be more reasonable:*

Option A.

Three “field trip” visits to worship services of one congregation from each of the three groups listed below. In response to each of your visits, you will write a brief (but no less than two pages, double-spaced) paper in which you offer your own observations of the worship service; **for example**, write what you noted about the congregation itself, the style and content of the worship, the use of Scripture or other printed texts, **what is said about (or to) Christ**, what role art and architecture seem to play in this congregation’s life and worship, the behavior and sermon of the minister, priest or worship leader, etc. **You are strongly encouraged also to note what is said (if anything) in Scripture readings, hymns, or the sermon about the natural world or environment.** This paper **should not** be simply a summary of the sermon, though of course attention should be given to this. It is equally important to take note, theologically, of what is taught through the worship songs or hymns, Scripture readings, etc. These papers can (but need not) build on one another in terms of comparison / contrast, and are due as listed in course calendar. You must include a photograph of the church bulletin (or some other corroborating document) from the service you attended, upon which you should have your handwritten notes from the service along with your signature. (CLO 1, 2, 4)

Please note that for this assignment you are required to visit churches from three distinct ‘groups’; anyone who ignores this aspect of the assignment will receive drastically reduced credit (50 points subtracted from the 100-point assignment) for a church visit. (CLO 5)

*Please note also that in these papers, your professor is most interested in what you observe theologically—and even more specifically, what is either directly stated or implied about the world as God’s creation, in the particular service you attend. Most of your energies and attention should focus on what is said or implied about God as Creator, or about the world as God’s creation, in the Scripture reading(s), choruses or hymns that are sung, and the sermon itself (CLO4). Please do not generalize; be specific in describing what you heard *theologically* in the worship service. *You will be evaluated closely in regards to this criterion.* It is certainly encouraged, though, that you have fun with these papers and find a way to make your professor smile. (Good writing always helps! See CLO 6 and follow closely the wisdom to be gained from the ‘Writing Tips’ assignment early in the course.)*

Congregational worship visit possibilities – please keep in mind that you must select one church from each of the three groups for Writing Assignment option A:

Group 1: Roman Catholic, Orthodox (Greek, Russian, Coptic, Armenian, etc.), Anglican, Episcopal.

Group 2: Presbyterian, Lutheran, United Methodist, African Methodist Episcopal, United Church of Christ, Congregational Church, Christian Church (Disciples), Church of Jesus Christ, Scientist (Christian Science), *American* Baptist, Community of Christ (formerly Reorganized Latter-day Saints).

Group 3: *Southern Baptist, General Baptist, Friends, Seventh-day Adventist, Church of God in Christ, Christian Reformed, Assemblies of God, Nazarene, Salvation Army, Free Methodist, Wesleyan Methodist, Foursquare, charismatic, Pentecostal, Calvary Chapel, non-denominational congregations, Messianic synagogues, Jehovah's Witnesses (Kingdom Hall), Latter-day Saints (Mormon).*

***There may be possibilities other than these listed; however, please check with your professor before visiting a church congregation not listed above. In order to gain the richest experience from this assignment, you are strongly encouraged *not* to count a worship service in your own "home" tradition or denomination as one of your three visits. Although you may arrange your visits in any order you wish, it might be most useful to your educational process to follow the order of Groups 1-2-3 as outlined above.**

*If you choose Christian Science as your Group 2 visit or LDS as your Group 3 visit, I highly recommend you read the materials from Mary Baker Eddy (for Christian Science) or Joseph Smith (for Latter-Day Saints) at the end of the anthology as background / preparation for your visit.

I reiterate that this first 'church visit' option for the semester writing project is the most preferable; however, the following two options are offered particularly to those for whom church visits are difficult or impractical especially given other Sunday responsibilities. Hence, a second 'semester writing project' possibility is:

Option B.

A 6-8 page response / reflection paper on any one of the following books:

Elizabeth Johnson, *Consider Jesus: Waves of Renewal in Christology*

Elizabeth Johnson, *Women, Earth and Creator Spirit*

Terence Fretheim, *Creation Untamed: The Bible, God, and Natural Disasters*

Michael Lodahl, *Praying with Jesus: Mediations on the Prayer Jesus Taught His Disciples*

Thomas Oord and Michael Lodahl, *Relational Holiness*

Daniel Taylor, *The Myth of Certainty*

John Walton, *The Lost World of Genesis One: Ancient Cosmology and the Origins Debate*

John Wesley, *A Plain Account of Christian Perfection*

OR, as a third option for the semester writing project,

Option C.

A 6-8 page research paper on a topic of your choosing that is relevant to this course, and is approved by your professor. This paper, regardless of topic, will require your consulting / reading from a minimum of six outside sources (not including class text or the Bible) and a minimum of 150 pages read from those sources. You will document the pages read from each of your outside sources as part of your bibliography or works cited page. *Failure to do so will result in immediate reduction of paper grade* (subtraction of 15 points from 100-point assignment).

The due date for options B and C are listed in the course calendar; that due date corresponds with the due date for the third church visit paper (Option A). Please note that the same grade reductions will hold for these writing options: *a paper turned in later than the midnight deadline will receive a 10-point reduction if it is submitted within the following 24 hours; it will receive a 25-point reduction if it is submitted sometime in the next 24 hours (i.e., two days late); it will receive a 50-point reduction if it is submitted sometime in the next 24 hours (i.e., three days late). After the three-day period, a paper receives no credit unless the student has made arrangements with the professor.*

Important Points Regarding Your Writing for this Class:

Please keep in mind that grammar, spelling and punctuation all play a critical role in your professor's evaluation of all your papers (CLO 6). Please avail yourselves of the services of a competent, trustworthy proofreader or the university's tutorial center. I make no apologies for this. This is a liberal arts institution, which means I reserve the right to be equally concerned with your spelling, grammar, and punctuation as I am with your ideas. Indeed, your ideas are severely compromised when expressed poorly in writing. I take this seriously.

- To help you in the endeavor of writing a good paper for this class and other classes, please give careful attention to the handout ('Writing Tips') from the professor regarding common errors in student writing. Peruse this document carefully; you shall be held responsible for its contents in your professor's reading of *all* of your assigned papers. Indeed, it is one of your first attendance /participation assignments for this course.
- No papers will be accepted after the date of the final day of classes (prior to finals week). *Do not waste your breath or my time by asking for extra credit opportunities beyond that point.* It is remarkable how often students clamor for some way to raise their grade after the semester has ended. Please note, again, that the only written work I will accept after the last day of classes is work that actually has a due date after that last day.
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- The PLNU School of Theology and Christian Ministry is committed to the full equality and dignity of all people. Recognizing that human beings have often used language in ways that imply the exclusion or inferiority of women and other marginalized

peoples, the department strongly urges students, faculty and staff to avoid sexist and racist language in public discourse, in classroom discussions and especially in their writings.

4) Brief reflection paper on Elaine Heath's *Five Means of Grace*.

5) Two exams, to be taken as scheduled on course calendar. These exams will be objective in nature (multiple choice) and will draw significantly from the daily lecture materials and class handouts. *The final examination will be cumulative.*

Final Grade will be determined on the basis of:

1. the two exams (16% on mid-term, 20% on the final);
2. the semester writing project (the three congregational worship visits and response papers are 10% each, while the other two possible projects are 30%);
3. brief reflection paper on Elaine Heath's *Five Means of Grace* (10%); and
4. attendance, quizzes and participation (24%).

94-100, A; 90-93, A-; 87-89, B+; 83-86, B; 80-82, B-; 77-79, C+;
73-76, C; 70-72, C-; 67-69, D+; 60-66, D; 56-59, D-; below 56, F.

I do round up on percentages, e.g., a final percentage of 93.5 and higher is an A.

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, or concepts as one's own when in reality they are the results of another person's efforts. 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 PoliciesLinks to an external site.](#) for definitions of kinds of academic dishonesty and for further policy information.

PLNU Academic Accommodations Policy:

If you have a diagnosed disability, please contact PLNU's Disability Resource Center (DRC) within the first two weeks of class to demonstrate need and to regist

ter for accommodation by phone at 619-849-2486 or by e-mail at DRC@pointloma.edu. See [Disability Resource CenterLinks to an external site.](#) for additional information.

PLNU Attendance and Participation Policy:

Regular and punctual attendance at all classes is considered essential to optimum academic achievement. If the student is absent from more than 10 percent of class meetings (please note that in summer school, this means two days' worth of classes!), the faculty member can file a written report which may result in de-enrollment. If the absences exceed 20 percent (our four day's worth of classes), the student may be de-enrolled without notice until the university drop date or, after that date, receive the appropriate grade for their work and participation. See [Academic PoliciesLinks to an external site.](#) in the Undergraduate Academic Catalog.

Semester Academic Work Policy:

Please note that when the semester ends, so do all opportunities to work to improve your grade. No last-minute or after-the-fact appeals for extra credit will be even briefly considered.

Please Note the Following:

- I generally do offer a number of extra-credit assignments. I do not do these just for the sake of giving students a chance to earn extra points. I do it when I find opportunities for student learning that are relevant to this course. Because I know your time is valuable and you are faced with many choices and pressures concerning your schedule, I offer extra-credit as a stimulus for student attendance and participation for relevant events. ***For every extra-credit opportunity, what is required is your attendance of the event, and a summary / reflection / response paper of two to three pages. All extra-credit points are applied to the "quizzes and participation" category (see above).***
- While all students are expected to meet the minimum academic standards for completion of this course as established by the instructor, students with disabilities may require academic accommodations. At Point Loma Nazarene University, students requesting academic accommodations must file documentation with the Disability Resource Center (DRC), located in the Bond Academic Center. Once the student files documentation, the Disability Resource Center will contact the student's instructors and provide written recommendations for reasonable and appropriate

accommodations to meet the individual needs of the student. This policy assists the university in its commitment to full compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities (ADA) Act of 1990, and ADA Amendments Act of 2008, all of which prohibit discrimination against students with disabilities and guarantees all qualified students equal access to and benefits of PLNU programs and activities.

- Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Please consult the school catalog under the heading of Academic Honesty to learn the professor's intended policy regarding student dishonesty regarding academic work. It would be a bare minimum that any student caught cheating or plagiarizing will receive a score of zero for the assignment in question; it is also within the professor's rights simply to fail the student for the course.

Course Calendar

Jan 9 – Introduction to the course. Topic: *Jesus's question: "Who do you say that I am?"*

Jan 11 *Renewal in Love* Chapter 1; *Readings* 1-3. (Please note that *Readings* will be identified not by page number but by sections.)

Topic: *Humanity Created (and Renewed) in the Image of God.*

Jan 16 *Renewal in Love* Chapter 2 (pages 35-44); John 1:1-18.

Topic: *Jesus Christ, the Word, Image, and 'Very Being' of God*

Jan 18 *Readings* 4-8 (excerpts from Gospel of Thomas, the *Didache*, and Ignatius of Antioch). Topic: *The Incarnate Word vs. Gnostic Christologies*

Jan 23 *Renewal in Love*, 69-80; *Readings* 9-13. Topic: *Irenaeus, Recapitulation and the Battle against Heresies*

Jan 25 *Readings* 14-24 (excerpts from Justin Martyr, Clement of Alexandria, Tertullian and Origen) Topic: *Faith in Christ and Philosophical Reasoning*

Jan 30 *Renewal in Love*, Chapter 3. Topic: *Reason's Intersection with Reading Scripture.*

Feb 1 *Readings* 25-29 (excerpts from Arius and Athanasius) Topic: *The Christological Debate at the Council of Nicea*

****First worship visit response paper due no later than Feb 4, midnight. If you are not pursuing this writing option, you will need to inform me at this time (via Canvas assignment entry) as to which of the other two writing options you intend to pursue.***

Feb 6 *Renewal* 80-86; *Readings* 30-35 (excerpts from Apollinaris and Gregory of Nazianzus) Topic: *The Christological Debate at the Council of Constantinople*

Feb 8 *Readings* 33-42 (excerpts from Gregory of Nazianzus, Basil of Caesarea and Gregory of Nyssa) Topic: *The Cappadocians' Critical Contributions*

(Course schedule for week for Feb 12-16 follows the announcement below.)

Please note that I am offering significant extra credit opportunities Feb 12-14, during Point Loma School of Theology's annual Wiley Lecture Series. This year the lectures feature Dr. Sarah Jean Barton of Duke University, whose lectures will address themes in disability theology. There are four lectures scheduled as listed below; for each lecture you attend for extra credit, you must attend in person, take careful notes (to be turned in), and write a thoughtful 2-3 page (double-spaced) summary / reflection / response paper. For each lecture response paper, the paper will be graded with a maximum possible extra point total (for each paper) of 25 points in the attendance / participation category. All extra credit papers for these lectures will be due by the end of the month of February.

Lecture 1: "Lord, Teach Us to Pray: Practicing Disabled Prayer"

*Monday Feb. 12, 2024 11:00-11:50am, Crill Performance Hall

Lecture 2: "Bless the Lord, O My Soul: Prayer as Disabled Joy"

*Monday Feb. 12, 2024 1:30-2:20pm, Crill Performance Hall

Lecture 3: "There We Sat Down and Wept: Prayer as Disabled Lament"

*Tuesday Feb. 13, 2024 9:30-10:20am, Crill Performance Hall

Lecture 4: "On Earth As It Is In Heaven: Prayer as Disability Justice"

*Wednesday Feb. 14, 2024 8:30-9:20am, Crill Performance Hall

Feb 13 *Readings* 46-49. Topic: *St. Augustine, the great Bishop of Hippo*

Feb 15 *Readings* 50-52; *Renewal* 44-49. Topic: *Augustine's Incredible Rule for Reading Scripture*

Feb 20 *Readings* 53-57; *Renewal* 86-92. Topic: *Human Nature in Eastern Christianity.*

Feb 22 *Readings* 58-59. Topic: *Anselm and Abelard (and Heloise!)*

Feb 27 *Readings* 60-64. Anselm, Abelard and Heloise, cont'd.

Feb 29 Mid-term examination

March 4-8 Spring Break

Mar 12 Readings 65-68. Topic: *Thomas Aquinas: Reason and Revelation.*

Mar 14 Readings 69-70. Topic: *Julian of Norwich: Mysticism, Christ, and Creation*

Second church visit paper due no later than March 17, midnight.

Mar 19 Readings 73-81. Topic: *Luther vs. Erasmus on Divine Grace / Human Willing*

Mar 21 Readings 82-86; Heath, *Five Means of Grace* vii-x, 27-35. Topic: *On the Lord's Supper, or Holy Communion, or Eucharist*

Mar 26 Readings 87-89. Topic: *John Calvin's Sovereign God*

March 28 – April 2 Easter Break

Apr 4 Readings 90-92. Topic: *James Arminius, and the Reaction of the Synod of Dort*

Apr 9 Elaine Heath, *Five Means of Grace* 3-23; Readings 93-99. Topic: *Reading Scripture in a Wesleyan Way*

Apr 11 Continue discussion of Wesley's theology, Readings 93-99

Apr 16 Review Heath 27-35; *Renewal* 86-110. Topic: *Tasty Grace*

Apr 18 *Grace* 39-49; Reading 101; *Renewal* 111-123. Topic: *Eating and Fasting on a Starving Planet*

Apr 24 *Grace* 53-64; *Renewal* 123-146. Topic: *Wesleyan Means of Grace and our Ecological Crisis*

Apr 26 Wrap-up and Review for Final Exam.

Third church visit paper – or paper under Options B or C – due no later than midnight, April 28. Please note this deadline, and see syllabus details above for late submission penalties.

Final Examination: As scheduled by the university.

* *Response paper on Heath, Five Means of Grace, due no later than Friday, May 4, midnight. Prompt will be provided.*