

APPALACHIAN LOCAL PASTORS SCHOOL - MAY 2017

Course: COS 323 - Congregational Care
Date: May 22-26, 2017
Location: Union College, Barbourville, KY
Instructor: Paul H. Walles (pwalles@mtco.com)

Course Description:

This course introduces students to practices of congregational care and the pastor's responsibility in caregiving. Readings, class experiences and course assignments are designed to deepen the students' appreciation for the collaborative ministries of the pastor and the congregation.

Goals:

Students will begin and/or deepen their ability to:

1. Implement and oversee appropriate types of care in varieties of settings, including prisons, hospitals, nursing facilities and homes.
2. Organize caring ministries within the congregation.
3. Discern and implement appropriate boundaries, knowing when and to whom to refer people, and when and when not to share information.
4. Reflect on and practice skills of sensitive caregiving, using role play and analysis of case studies.

Required Readings:

Larry E. Webb, Crisis Counseling in the Congregation
(ISBN: 978-1-4267-2698-9).

Edward P. Wimberly, African American Pastoral Care (Revised Edition)
(ISBN: 978-0-687-64949-5)

Karen Lampe, The Caring Congregation: Training Manual and Resource Guide
(ISBN: 978-1-4267-9312-7)

Suggested Reading:

Lee Franklin, A Pastor's Practical Guide to Funerals
(ISBN: 978-1-4267-5819-5)

Cameron Lee and James L. Furrow, Preparing Couples for Love and Marriage.
(ISBN: 978-1-4267-5320-6)

Supplemental Reading:

Jeanne Hoeft, L. Shannon Jung, Joretta Marshall, Practicing Care in Rural Congregations and Communities (ISBN: 978-0-8006-9954-3)

Howard Clinebell, Basic Types of Pastoral Care and Counseling
(ISBN: 978-0-687-66380-4)

Preface:

In 1977 Henri Nouwen offered the following counsel in his book The Living Reminder:

“Training for ministry will bear more fruit when it occurs in the context of a spirituality, a way of life in which we are primarily concerned, not to be with people but to be with God, not to walk in the presence of anyone who asks for our attention but to walk in the presence of God – a spirituality, in short, which helps us to distinguish service from our need to be liked, praised, or respected. Over the years we have developed the idea that being present to people in all their needs is our greatest and primary vocation. The Bible does not seem to support this. Jesus’ primary vocation was to be obedient to His Father, to live constantly in His presence. Only then did it become clear to Him what His task was in His relationships with people. This also is the way He proposes for His followers . . .”

Nouwen’s caution is that for ministry to be effectively done we must understand that our response in each relationship must be shaped by a prior relationship, our relationship with God. This class will focus on attempting to maintain a healthy balance between our identity in Christ and our call to servant ministry. Our ability to care grows out of our having received divine care.

As John wrote, “We love, because He first loved us.” (I John 4:19)

Pre-Class Assignments:

(Assignments must be submitted the date indicated by the ALPS Director)

Assignment #1:

This assignment will ask you to write about your understandings of the nature of your call to pastoral ministry. In order to accomplish this assignment shape your answer by responding to the following questions:

- (1) What is God wanting to accomplish in your life as a follower of Jesus?
- (2) As God’s purpose is accomplished in you, how does it shape the pastoral ministry to which you are called?

(3) All Christians are called to a ministry of caring. What is distinctive about your role as pastoral caregiver, and how does that relate to the ministry of all Christians?

(4) Give two examples that demonstrate your understanding of effective elements of congregational care. These examples should be instances you have observed in local church ministry.

As you write, give indications of how scripture informs your understandings (cite specific texts).

As you write, give indications of the ways your particular cultural setting has helped shape your understandings.

In a final paragraph compare your understandings with those expressed by Karen Lampe in her book and Larry E. Webb in his.

This assignment should be at least 6 pages in length.

Assignment #2:

This assignment will ask you to write about offering pastoral ministry and congregational care in the context of a wedding held at your church. In order to accomplish this assignment respond to the following:

(1) Write a case study describing a particular wedding held at your church. Describe what was done in offering pastoral care to the couple. Describe how the congregation offered care to the couple (and their families) in hosting the wedding. (If you have not done a wedding as a pastor, do the case study as your observation of a church you were involved in and of that church's pastor.)

(2) Citing your reading from the Webb, Wimberly and Lampe texts, develop a description of how you would do premarital counseling, organize a wedding rehearsal, and provide follow-up care for the newly married. Be as specific as you can, with the intention of actually using what you develop.

This assignment should be at least 5 pages in length.

Assignment #3:

This assignment will ask you to write about offering pastoral ministry and congregational care in the context of a death and the attendant grief. In order to accomplish this assignment respond to the following:

(1) Write a case study describing a particular death that occurred involving your church. Describe what was done in offering pastoral care to the grieving family. Describe how the congregation offered care to the family. Describe how both the pastor and the congregation prepared for the funeral and provided ministry surrounding it. (If you have not done a funeral, do the case study as your observation of a church you were involved in and of that church's pastor.)

(2) Citing your reading from the Webb, Wimberly and Lampe texts, develop a description of how you would have an initial meeting with a grieving family, how you would organize a funeral, and provide follow-up care for the grieving family. Be as specific as you can, with the intention of actually using what you develop.

This assignment should be at least 5 pages in length.

Assignment #4:

The apostle Paul wrote, "The gifts He (Christ) gave were that some would be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the Body of Christ . . ." (Ephesians 4:11) This assignment will ask you to write a plan for "equipping the saints for the work of ministry", emphasizing the collaborative nature of ministry in a local congregation. In order to accomplish this assignment respond to the following:

(1) What does it mean to be a church? Share your understanding of how pastors and congregations are intended to work together to provide caring ministry. How does it diminish the church's ministry when only one person (the pastor) provides care?

(2) Design a congregational care plan suited to your congregation by identifying the following:

(a) What specific things can people do in your congregation to provide care? What kinds of things are they already doing? Are there ways you could better equip them for what they are doing?

(b) Are there specific people in your congregation who have the kinds of gifts to assist in visitation (in homes, in hospitals, in nursing homes)? Are there specific people in your congregation who could be mentors to new Christians? Are there specific people in your congregation who could walk with people through crisis times (grief, divorce, sickness)? How could you equip them to be effective in these kinds of caring ministries?

(c) Are there ways, specific to your church's community, that the church could provide care to the community? Identify particular needs and what it would take to meet them.

(d) If you are already in a church that has a working congregational care plan, are there specific ways in which it could be improved or expanded? What could you do to increase their effectiveness?

In developing your plan make good use of your required reading books in (note specific ideas from the books that you have incorporated in your plan).

In responding to the questions, cite scriptures that inform your understandings and your strategies.

Try to be as honest and as practical as you can in putting together your plan for congregation. Write it to do it.

This assignment should be at least 6 pages in length.

Assignment #5:

This assignment will ask you to write about your own spiritual, emotional, relational and physical health and the importance of self-care for caregivers. In order to accomplish this assignment respond to the following:

(1) Give an honest assessment of your spiritual health, your emotional health, your physical health and the health of your primary relationships. What kinds of things are you currently doing to maintain or to increase your health in these areas?

(2) Where are your growing edges in these areas? What personal disciplines might aid you finding greater health?

(3) How do these things impact your ministry? How could your ministry be stronger if you were healthier?

(4) Develop a self-care covenant. What will you commit yourself to do to address your personal health (spiritual, emotional, relational and physical)?

This assignment should be at least 3 pages.

Class Assignments:

During the class meetings you will have opportunities to share some of your writing and to give attention to that of classmates. Be prepared to fully participate.

By the end of class meetings, you will be asked to reflect on those things that have contributed to your growth, as well as to identify those things that still need to be explored as potential growth points.

Grading:

The final grade will be calculated by:

20% Pre-Class Assignment #1 grade

20% Pre-Class Assignment #2 grade

20% Pre-Class Assignment #3 grade

20% Pre-Class Assignment #4 grade

10% Pre-Class Assignment #5 grade

10% Class participation grade

May School Pre-course Assignments Due: postmarked April 5, 2017

Mail ALL pre-course assignments to:

Dr. Barbara Nye

1204 Choctaw Trail

Brentwood, TN 37027

Do Not email pre-course assignments.

Do Not send pre-course assignments by certified mail.

This will save you money and delays. If no one is available to sign for certified mail it is returned. Thank you.