

Lutheran Heritage

Orientation Zoom call: Thursday January 16 at 7:30 PM Central Time (backup time Friday Jan. 17 at 7:30 PM Central Time)

Class Sessions January 17-March 27, 2025

Course facilitator: Rev. Dr. Russell Vardell has served urban and rural congregations in Texas and Oklahoma since 1981. In addition to the Lutheran Heritage Course for Select Learning, he also has taught Church History and Lutheran Identity for the Northern Texas - Northern Louisiana Synod's Parish Lay Ministry Academy. Other academic experiences include college teaching in Texas and serving as a Fulbright Scholar at the University of Zimbabwe.

About this course:

This course explores the Lutheran heritage in the contexts of the sixteenth-century Reformation and the subsequent development of Lutheranism in America. The video resources for the course are the 12-session "Reformation Roots" and the 6-session "'We Must Plant the Church': The Story of Lutherans in America" DVDs. The textbooks for the course are *The Story of Christianity, Volume II*, by Justo Gonzalez and *The Lutherans* by L. DeAne Lagerquist.

Orientation:

You will be enrolled in the course site the weekend of orientation week. Please take this time to explore the course site. There are several tasks to do during the orientation time: update your profile, introduce yourself in the "Getting to Know You" forum, and indicating your choice about "Why are you taking this course?" You can't hurt anything, so click around the course homepage and explore!

There will also be **an orientation Zoom call with the course facilitator on Thursday January 16 at 7:30 PM Central Time**. Instructions for the call will be in the class website. You will be using the tool Zoom. (The instructor is traveling that week and asked that in case of poor internet connection that Jan. 17 at 7:30 PM CT be a back time. Hopefully that will not be necessary.)

Covenant

Since the quality of the class is dependent on your level of participation you will be asked to covenant with each other about participation and communication. We will use the orientation conference call for you to establish together the content of your covenant. Each of you is important to the learning process of the whole group, and you are missed when you cannot be there! The covenant will give you the opportunity to establish the type of communication protocol you wish to establish with each other when those inevitable conflicts arise and someone will be late or missing.

Weekly course guide:

Sometime Friday-Monday of each week

- Read the assigned readings in the textbook.
- Watch the assigned video sessions.
- Post your discussion essay by Monday evening.

Tuesday-Wednesday

- Respond with a brief paragraph to at least 2 of your classmates' essays. (Please respond first to those with no responses or the fewest responses.)

Thursday-Friday

- Post to the key question forum based on the week's assignment.
- Respond with a brief paragraph to at least 2 of your classmates.

Variation: Sessions 4 and 8

During these two weeks, instead of posting to the second (key question) forum there will be a live small group discussion for 1 hour on **Monday evenings at 7:30 PM Central Time**

Grading:

The grading for the Lutheran Heritage course is simply pass-fail. This grade is assigned after the final paper is completed and takes into account the way you used what you learned in the course to weave together the lectures, reading and discussions in your final paper, whether you participated in the three Zoom discussions (Orientation and 2 session discussions), whether you posted all your Discussion Essays and Key Question Essays in a timely manner, and whether you responded to the Discussion and Key Question posts of two colleagues in a way reflective of our class covenant.

Passing = Participation in at least 2 of the 3 Zoom calls; posting of at least 12 of the 18 essays; at least 26 responses to the essays of your colleagues; submission of a final paper integrating the course material using the guidelines for the final paper.

Course Schedule

January 17 Session 1 The Need for Reform

Readings: Gonzalez, chapter 1
Video: Reformation Roots, # 1

January 24 Session 2 Rediscovering Grace

Readings: Gonzalez, chapter 2
Martin Luther's "95 Theses" (link on Select course webpage)
Video: Reformation Roots, # 2 and 3

January 31 Session 3 Growing Conflict

Readings: Gonzalez, chapters 3 and 4
Video: Reformation Roots, # 4 and 5

February 7 Session 4 Expanding Vocations: Church, Society, and Family Life

Readings: None
Video: Reformation Roots, # 6
Mosaic video on "Katie Luther: The Morning Star of Wittenberg" (link on Select course webpage)

February 14 Session 5 From Reforming Movement to Established Church

Readings: Gonzalez, chapter 9
Video: Reformation Roots, # 7 and 8

February 21

Session 6 Other Developments: Swiss Reformation and Radical Reformation

Readings: Gonzalez, chapters 5-7

Video: Reformation Roots, # 9 and 10

February 28

Session 7 Other Developments: English Reformation and Catholic Reformation

Readings: Gonzalez, chapters 8 and 12

Video: Reformation Roots, # 11 and 12

March 7

Session 8 Lutheran Beginnings in “the New World”

Readings: Lagerquist, chapters 1-3

Video: “We Must Plant the Church,” #1

March 14

Session 9 Growth and Development in American Lutheranism

Readings: Lagerquist, chapters 4-5

Video: “We Must Plant the Church,” #2 and 3

March 21

Session 10 Lutheran Unity and Diversity

Readings: Lagerquist, chapters 6-7

Video: “We Must Plant the Church,” #4, 5, and 6

April 3

Final paper due