

# HOOD THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

Salisbury, North Carolina

**President:** Dr. Albert J. D. Aymer,

**Dean:** Dr. Reginald Broadnax

**Course:** PTH 133 “United Methodist Polity”

Summer **2009**

**Instructor:** Dr. Donald W. Haynes

## Syllabus

Hood Theological Seminary is approved by the University Senate of The United Methodist Church for the Master of Divinity Degree, and accredited by the Association of Theological Schools in the United States and Canada for the MDiv and Doctor of Ministry Degree. Hood is a seminary of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church and currently trains over a hundred United Methodist divinity students. All full time faculty have earned PhD degrees from some of America’s most prestigious universities!

Dr. Haynes comes to this class as one who has been “within the polity” of the The United Methodist Church over a half century—Local Preacher’s License in 1953, under appointment since 1954, ordained Deacon in 1956 and Elder in 1958. His undergraduate degree is from High Point University where he is a lifetime Trustee; his Master of Divinity is from Duke Divinity School; his Doctor of Divinity is from Pfeiffer University; his graduate work was at Oxford, Edinburgh, and London. He was an elected delegate to three Jurisdictional Conferences and two General Conferences. His appointments included 34 years in the parish, annual conference Director of Ministries, District Superintendent, and seminary vice president in development. Officially retired in 1999 after 45 years of service, this is his seventh academic year of teaching United Methodist Polity, History and Doctrine at Hood..

Welcome to United Methodist Polity—**get out your Book of Discipline; your Book of Worship; your Book of Hymns, and your Holy Bible! To these we now turn!**

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**Class Meetings:** Five sessions July 13-17, plus a “take home exam” for two credit hours.

**Texts:** 2008 UMC Book of Discipline, 1980 Book of Hymns; 1992 Book of Worship, Holy Bible; Franks, Tom, *Mission and Polity of the United Methodist Church*.

## PURPOSE

This course is designed to meet the requirements of the General Board of Higher Education and Ordained Ministry of The United Methodist Church for persons seeking ordination as either a Deacon or an Elder; and, membership in an annual conference, first as a Probationer; then in Full Connection three years after seminary. The focus is on parish ministry. **“Polity” should be taken only by students serving under appointment by a UMC Bishop, unless the student is a senior.** The course complements and is complemented by other courses required by the GBHEOM under direction of the General Conference—UMC History, UMC Doctrine, and Evangelism.

## OBJECTIVES

- A. To meet Book of Discipline requirements for persons seeking ordination in the UMC., and to teach the “steps into ordained ministry.”
- B. To enhance the self confidence of local pastors currently serving local churches—“putting it together in the parish.”
- C. To provide a practicum in the pastor’s leadership role as the leader who “orders” the life of the parish—its worship on typical and special Sundays, its occasional services or worship, its business, pastoral care, his/her own management of time, and balancing commitments to both task and covenant.
- D. To inform the student in the philosophy of what it means to be a connectional church, not, as Mr. Wesley said, “for wrath, but for conscience’s sake.”

## Requirements

- A. Attendance at all sessions. Even one absence will affect final grade; attendance means staying for the entire class session. It is unfortunate that this can mean putting seminary before parish but you are a **student** pastor. It is only fair for those who do attend to deduct some for those who do not. (12.5% of grade)
- B. Class participation, showing evidence in your comments of having read the texts and taken notes. (12.5%)
- C. An outline of how the local UMC is to be structured for missional ministry, due on Friday, July 17 reflecting a chosen aspect of material covered the previous class session (25% of grade)
- D. Open book final exam distributed on July 17 and due on July 31. (50% of grade)

## Course Content

### Session I :July 13– Philosophy and Shape of our Connectional Polity

#### **Connectionalism & Itineracy** *(use of Tom Frank's textbook)*

Polity grew out of Wesley's and Asbury's missiology and instructs mission of the local church—"to reform the continent and spread scriptural holiness throughout the land.". Designed to live out theology of "every Christian in ministry" or "general ministry of all Christians with representative ministers to be ordained and itinerate within the connection. Can degenerate into a system of clergy advancement rather than missional deployment. Can encourage maintenance ministry rather than historically intended missional ministry. Clergy join annual conferences, relinquishing local church membership; laity join "this congregation of The United Methodist Church," not just the local church.

#### A. The Conferences

1. General—meets quadrennially to direct the church, edit the Book of Discipline
2. Central Conferences
3. Jurisdictional: NE, SE, NC, SC, W; meet quadrennially to elect bishops
4. Annual: Sixty two of these! Meet annually to ordain, appoint clergy; adopt budget; set pension and insurance policies; set tone of church's mission
5. District—almost extinct; still must meet for District parsonage issues, camps, etc.
6. Church/Charge—required annually and on other occasions

#### B. The Connectional Ministries and Documents

1. The Bishops—literally the "General Superintendents"—elected by peers and laity, consecrated. Once served the whole church; now appointed by Jurisdictional Committees on Episcopacy; may be elected or appointed outside Jurisdiction
2. The District Superintendents—appointed by the Bishop to geographic district
3. The "Traveling Preachers"—probationers and Full Connection members, elected by peers
4. The Ordained—Deacons and Elders; elected by peers, ordained by Bishops
5. The Book of Discipline—edited quadrennially by General Conference; binding throughout connection; social principles are considered "church law"
6. The Book of Worship—a liturgical source book, not a law book
7. Book of Resolutions—compilation of General Conference position papers; not a law book
8. The Hymnal and its various supplements—a liturgical and theological source book, not required Loss of rich heritage if replaced with "praise songs" in contemporary worship

#### C. The Representative Ministry

1. Candidacy for ordained ministry: inquiring, declared, recommended(by local church); certified(by District)
2. Local Pastor—a license, not ordination; all rights of clergy including annual conference
3. Ordained Deacons
4. Ordained Elders

D.. Effective polity rises out of contextual missiology as a continuing emergent factor

1. Preachers: Three levels:

- a. Local Pastors who are laity licensed as Local Pastors with provisional clergy rights and authority. Appointment optional. *Note: The Local Pastor is now a member of the annual conference and her/his name should be transferred from the local church where member resides to the Annual Conference*
- b. "Traveling Preachers" who are either commissioned in Probationary Membership or elected to Full Connection and ordained as Elders; both are committed to "go where you are sent."
- c. Deacons who are ordained to Word and Service, but not sacrament. Full clergy rights and privileges except administration of sacraments. Appointment is not guaranteed; location is determined by the Deacon, not the Bishop

2. Pastoral Charges—"A church for every pastor and a pastor for every church and a developed congregation for every geographic, sociological, or ethnic parish"

F. Role and Rights of "pastor in charge"

1. Self discipline
2. Time management
3. Free pulpit, building access, housing, etc.
4. Cannot "resign," "be fired," or "retire"—once in full connection, your location of service is the prerogative of the Bishop.

## Session II : July 13 "Definition and Duties of A Pastor" 2008 Book of Discipline, ¶340

A. Word and Ecclesial Acts:

- a. To preach the Word of God, read and teach the scriptures, lead in worship
- b. To perform the ecclesial acts of marriage and burial
- c. To counsel those with ethical, spiritual, or personal struggles
- d. To visit in homes of congregation and community at large (Ezekiel 2:15b; 34)
- e. To maintain all confidences, including confessional confidences except in cases of child abuse or cases where mandatory reporting is required by civil law.

B. Sacrament (to be covered on Friday, July 17)

C. Order:

- a. The pastor as leader, a role beyond manager! Discovering the power of vision (Habakkuk 2:2-4)
- b. Equipping the laity to fulfill their calling as ministers
- c. To administer the temporal affairs of the church in accordance with the Discipline
- d. To promote the mission of the church and the apportioned funds
- e. To maintain accurate records of membership and finances
- f. To participate in denominational training
- g. To lead the congregation in racial and ethnic inclusiveness.
- h. To promote stewardship as a spiritual discipline

D. Service:

- a. Practice servant leadership and missional service, embodying the teachings of Jesus
- b. Build the body as a caring and giving faith community, never sowing seeds of divisiveness
- c. To engender a missional ministry which "reaches out and touches the world," beginning in your neighborhood and going to the ends of the earth.

E. Unique United Methodist polity issues!

- a. **YOU ARE SENT**: You cannot resign; cannot be "fired"; cannot select church or field of service
- b. Cannot engage an evangelist not in good standing in The United Methodist Church without written permission of the District Superintendent .
- c. Congregation nor pastor can discontinue worship without consent of Charge Conference and D.S.
- d. Pastor cannot arbitrarily organize a new church
- e. Pastor cannot hold religious services in the bounds of another UMC parish

- f. Pastor cannot maintain relationships or behavior which interferes with or undermines the ministry of another pastor(including your successor!!!!)(¶2702.3j)
- g. Pastor cannot teach doctrines contrary to the established standards of doctrine of the UMC(¶2702.3d)

F. Warnings

- a. You must discipline yourself to plan your work and work your plan regarding hours and days you work, visitation when you don't want to visit, getting dressed for work if your study is in the parsonage, etc. Set daily goals for visits. Put in at least forty hours of real work each week.
- b. You must take some time off for self care and your spouse or children. That can include taking the phone off the hook, taking a day off, taking your vacation, etc. Remember that Jesus went fishing, went "to the other side of the lake," and did not spend all his time working miracles!
- c. **Remember that you are a professional; dress like one. Casual attire is more acceptable than it once was, but sloppiness is never in!**
- d. **UMC in North Carolina and Virginia now has an oversupply of clergy. This makes "getting in" more demanding and retaining an appointment more dependent on pastoral effectiveness.**

## Session III : September 14 --Organizing the Local Church for Mission—

### The Church or Charge Conference

- A. Definition—the link between local church and "the connection"; legal nature for certain transactions
  - a. Presiding officer is D. S. or an Elder appointed by D.S. for Charge or Church Conference
  - b. Advantage of **Annual Church Conference** for setting pastoral compensation, apportionments, electing officers and recommending certified lay speakers and candidates for ordination.
  - c. **Special** occasions when Church Council must refer business to a Charge Conference
  - d. **Special** occasions when Church Council must refer business to a Church Conference
- B. Determining who is eligible to vote; who can attend, and agenda
- C. Notification—who calls; how publicized, amount of time required
- D. Agenda

### The Church Council

- A. Definition—the only name in the Book of Discipline(2004) for the governing body of the local church.
- B. Purpose—
  - a. First, to provide a missional ministry of nurture, outreach, and witness. These are comprehensive terms, and in a middle sized or larger church, should not be a limiting model of organization. They are umbrellas to guarantee a balanced program ministry.
  - b. Secondly, to provide for the administrative and temporal life of the church.
  - c. Amenable only to the Charge or Church Conference. **Trustees, PPRC/SPRC, and Finance committees are amenable to the Church Council; they are not autonomous.**
- C. Membership (should not be limited to the minimum; consider reinstatement of traditional office of STEWARD
- D. Required Meetings—at least quarterly; quorum is those present and voting.

## Session IV—July 14 Organizing the Local Church for Mission—Nurture, Outreach, Witness as we "follow Jesus, make disciples, and transform the world."

- A. Nurturing Ministries ("education" implies imparting knowledge; "nurturing" implies ministering to persons
  - a. Sunday School and other small group ministries
  - b. Discipling classes—Bible, Prayer, Spirituality, Lay Academy courses
  - c. Congregational care—Stephen, Care groups, Recovery groups, Support Groups
  - d. preaching
- B. Outreach Ministries
  - a. Ministries of presence—'exposure/reflection', serving in ecumenical ministries, "cup of water", AIDS, overseas relief, disaster relief, building teams, sports

- b. Ministries of proclamation—websites, teaching, worship on such “high-holy days” as Advent, Christmas Eve, Ash Wednesday, Lent, Holy Thursday, Easter, Pentecost; preaching missions, editorials, advocacies in public arenas, radio/TV, youth witnessing in other cultures, sub-cultures, etc.
  - c. Ministries of persuasion-----one-on-one connecting with the pre-Christian and unchurched and de-churched, prison ministries, websites; propositional evangelism such as revivals, lay witness missions, etc.
  - d. preaching
- C. Witness Ministries
- a. Worship for/with persons of differing needs, lifestyles, tastes
  - b. Retreats
  - c. Stewardship
  - d. Preaching
  - e. Relational evangelism

## Session V: July 15 Organizing the Local Church for Mission--Administrative Committees--

### “Committee on Nominations & Leadership”

This committee was formerly named “Nominations Committee” and is still called that by most laity; you will need to clarify when you list its meeting in the bulletin or newsletter! It should have at least three meetings, even in the smallest church! Pastor is chair! Cf. ¶259 BOD(2004)

- A. Definition and strategic role—“engage in Biblical and theological reflections on the mission of the church, discernment of personal gifts, assessment of skills, attention to team-building.
- B. Membership—elected and ex officio
- C. Meetings:
  - a. First meeting(early in calendar year) is to welcome new members, orient and alert committee to “definition and strategic role” **Evaluate effectiveness of some groups—should they be continued—and need for new elected groups. In short, early in year review your organizational model for missional efficiency. Minimize committees, groups, and meetings that have no missional need! They are dinosaurs of time and are covertly disenchanting.**
  - b. Second meeting(late summer)review all officers, noting those who are rotating off or resigning. Agree on Rotation policy! Note that only trustees are elected for three year terms; others are placed in rotating classes but are subject to annual review as to attendance at worship, attendance at previous meetings, etc. Distribute copies of membership and ask members to be in prayer about emerging lay leaders.
  - c. Send letter to all incumbents, including committee and Council members stressing need for a covenant of attendance and participation.
  - d. Third meeting(week-ten days later) is to begin by creating a “pool of potential leaders” with special consideration for new members, younger members, and diversity; go as far as you can on nominating replacements. Follow meeting with notices to all who have been nominating; itemizing expectations and asking their permission to nominate at Church or Charge Conference. Include organizational model of church governance, missional work. **Never say “not much to it”; “almost never meets,” or “we don’t expect any surprises next year.”**
  - e. Fourth meeting (week, ten days later) --complete the nominations and notification process
  - f. Last meeting is to report who has accepted and who has not; make new nominations if necessary, have a “reserve” if in doubt. Nomination of class to succeed rotating class off CCLL
  - g. Report to the committee by mail the entire slate; and, unless there are objections, agree that pastor will present complete list to the Charge/Church Conference. Do not “elect” at Church Council meeting; this is illegal.
- B. Report of the Pastor as CCLL Chair to the Charge or Church Conference
- C. Nominations from the floor; elections, effective the ensuing January 1
- D. Filling vacancies during year

## Session VI—July 15 Organizing the Local Church for Mission--Administrative Committees:

### “PASTOR(STAFF) PARISH RELATIONS COMMITTEE”

- A. Definition and role with the pastor(s); with any employed staff, with the membership; with judicatory authority(D.S., Bishop)
- B. Membership: elected and ex officio
- C. Meetings: .Required and optional occasions for meeting; called meetings and by whom
- D. Dealing with confidentiality
- E. Conflict Management: Recurring Crises or “sticky” situations; sexual harassment, abuse, molestation
- F. Preparing Position Descriptions, Hiring, evaluating, terminating lay staff
- G. Setting recommended remuneration for pastor and other staff; subsequent role of Finance Committee and Charge/Church Conference
- H. The Pastor and IRS—how to define, record, and report total compensation package
- I. To move or not to move
  - a. Case for longer pastorates
  - b. Determining when it seems in best interest of pastor or church for a change—what to do, how to do it, when to do it; how to express grace theology in the midst of pain
  - c. When it seems in best interest of pastor and church to recommend a return of pastor, even when this means an inordinately long pastorate
  - d. When there is a circuit and different churches have differing opinions!
- J. Working with the D.S. and the Bishop/Cabinet
- K. Leaves: Incapacity, Family, Voluntary, Involuntary, Sabbatical
- L. Honorable Location, Retirement, Transfer, surrender of credentials
- M. Complaints and Chargeable offenses

### Board Of Trustees--

- A. Definition and role-relation to Church Council and Charge/Church Conference
- B. Membership: no ex officio members, no not one!!!!
- C. Election of Chair in January; required meetings; called meetings and by whom
- D. Scope of typical concerns: maintenance schedule , insurance, repairs, security, safe sanctuary
- E. Advantages of incorporation with State
- F. Relationship to a Building Committee for capital improvements
- G. Dealing with shared property such as a parsonage, ethnic congregation, etc.
- H. Borrowing money, buying and/or selling property
- I. Setting up funds outside the current budget
- J. Cemetery Board of Trustees(*avoid if possible!*)
- K. Meaning of the Trust Clause; free pulpit; inclusive membership; open itineracy; closure; sale of property
- L. Personal trustee liability(i.e. lack thereof!)
- M. Receiving bequests, wills, and legacies; managing invested funds
- N. Furnishings and equipment—negotiations with program ministry Teams
- O. Option of creating an amenable Property Committee or Cemetery Committee

### Finance Committee

- A. Definition and role in budget building
- B. Relationship to PPRC, Trustees, Church Council
- C. Membership and meeting schedule
- D. Role in “accepting” individual Conference apportioned funds
- E. Suggested format for receiving recommendations for budgeted items from Program Teams, SPRC, Trustees, etc; evaluating fiscal situation in the church and recommendations of Finance Committee to Church Council. Finance Committee can have voice; cannot have veto.
- F. Adoption of budget following congregation’s opportunity to underwrite budget
- G. Role in stewardship campaign

- H. Special Funds outside the budget; Building or Capital Improvement Fund, etc.
- I. Designated giving vs. “unified budget”
- J. Dealing with other churches in jointly-owned parsonage
- K. Deciding bank accounts
- L. Determining how money is counted, deposited, disbursed
- M. Determining how bills are paid, what to do when money is short
- N. Bonding treasurer and financial secretary
- O. Monitoring cash flow; factoring in “pre-payments” on pro-rated basic, not all in January!

## **Session VII—July 16 Every Seven Days!--Preparation for and leadership of worship.**

- A. Introduction to the Book of Hymns and Book of Worship
- B. The long view of planning the worship year within the Christian calendar and in the context of the parish.  
(note: “*Culture*” according to Dr. Lovett Weems is “*the way we do things here.*” That cannot be ignored)
  - a. Leadership role of Worship Program Team; weekly role of staff planning
  - b. Other leaders of worship—music, sacristy preparations, laity in worship, etc.
  - c. Defining and determining the ethos— traditional; contemporary, Word & Table
  - d. “High, Holy Days”—All Saints’ Day, Advent, Christmas, Baptismal Renewal, Lent, Holy Week, Pentecost, etc.
- C. Planning weekly worship—regimen with joy!
  - a. The Altar Guild—and how to organize it if one does not exist—acolytes, crucifer, paraments, etc.
  - b. The choir or Music director—processionals, cantatas,
  - c. The ushers
  - d. The sermon
  - e. Special liturgical events—baptisms, confirmation, new members, dedications, etc.
  - f. Special community/secular events—Scout Sundays, Independence Day, Memorial Day, Thanksgiving
- D. Preparing and delivering the sermon as a climactic dimension of liturgy
  - a. Time with the text
  - b. Timing and context
  - c. Preparation
  - d. Delivery
  - e.
- E. The Worship Bulletin

## **Session VIII : July 16 The Sacraments**

### **The Lord’s Supper:** Theology of the Eucharist(or Lord’s Supper)

- A. Modes of the sacrament of communion for United Methodists
- B. Occasions and settings, celebrants and servers for administration of sacrament
- C. A laboratory experience in which the class is served the Sacrament with annotated comments ; students from other classes may attend this session.

### **Baptism:** Why UMC theology of baptism precludes re-baptism(doctrine of prevenient grace)

- A. Occasion and counsel: when baptizing infants, children, adults
- B. Modes—sprinkling, pouring, immersion
- C. Logistics—how to prepare for; use of acolyte; recognition of historic baptismal gowns, presentation of baby
- D. Certificates, candles, rolls: Baptized Members; Professing members
- E. When combined with Confirmation
- F. “Private” baptisms
- G. Service of Baptismal re-affirmation

**Session IX: July 17 --catch up from previous session agendas**

**Session X: July 17 Impending Constitutional Amendments and Issues that face us—Is the Ice Cube Melting?**

- A. Operation “Rethink”
- B. The impending Constitutional Amendments and their potential impact
  - i.* Regional Conferences
  - ii.* Expanded rights of Local Pastors
  - iii.* Other global, legal and structural concerns
- C. Issues that divide us—social issues, polity issues, pensions, medical insurance
- D. Need to restructure charges—extended parishes, larger parishes, group ministries
- E. Soliloquy by instructor: Dr. Haynes speaks his mind!!!
- F. Class discussion

**-- Open Book Exam due July 31 in hard copy, not an attachment!--**