PR 712: Preaching in the Emerging Church: A Critical Engagement
Dr. Nicholas Gatzke
January 4-8, 2010

Contact Info
Email: Nick@Ostervillebaptist.org
Phone: 508.681.9655

Course Description: This course will explore the phenomenon of the Emerging Church movement. We will discuss some of the theological, philosophical and hermeneutical underpinnings of the movement while also describing and analyzing some of the motives and reactions that have played a role in its formation. Most importantly, our time will be focused on what all of these things mean for preaching. We will look at a variety of different preaching methods, the core values of many Emerging Church preachers and engage with the proposed methods for preaching in the postmodern context.

The approach of the professor will be that of a sympathetic outsider. We will engage in both positive and negative critique with the ideas of sophisticated theologians, popular writers and the Emerging Church pastors, because all three have contributed significantly to the movement. An atmosphere of debate and exchange of ideas in the classroom will be promoted.

Course Objectives
i. To obtain an accurate understanding of the Emerging Church Movement based on primary material rather than popular characterizations and thus be able to see the benefits and liabilities of the ideas promoted therein.
ii. To engage in the discussion about the dynamics of preaching in the postmodern context.
iii. To develop a well-rounded understanding of the issues of authority, sermon form, dialogue, and the creation of an experience as they relate to sermon construction.
iv. To gain further skills in evaluating the important elements in sermons and thus be able to better evaluate one’s own preaching.

Evaluation
1. Final research paper: 12-15 pages; Topic must be suggested by the student and approved by the instructor on the final day of class. Options can include: *My Personal Theology of Preaching*, *What is “The Word of God”?*, *Preaching Method in a Missional Community*, *Prospects for and the Value of the Creation of an Experience in the Sermon*, *The Relationship of Epistemology and Preaching*, *The Dangers of the New Homiletic in my Current Church Context.*
   Weight: 40%
ii. **Sermon Analysis**: Each student must pick two of the four sermons from Emerging Church practitioners uploaded at http://www.sermonplayer.com/ngatzke and write a 2-5 page sermon analysis of them. Examine the strengths and weaknesses and answer the questions:
   o Where was the authority placed in this message?
   o What was the sermon form?
   o What did the preacher do to intentionally create an experience?
   o In your opinion, was this an effective sermon? Why or why not?
   **Weight: 20% (10% Each)**

iii. **Book Reviews**: Each student must write a 2-4 page critical book review of Doug Pagitt’s *Preaching Re-Imagined* (Due Wed., 1/6) and Brian McLaren’s *A Generous Orthodoxy*. These reviews should engage with the strengths and weaknesses of the each author’s argument as well as a theological analysis.
   **Weight: 20% (10% Each)**

iv. **Course Reading – Weight: 10%**

v. **Class Participation – Each student must engage in the class discussions. Because of the nature of a week-long intensive course and nature of the content covered, classroom participation is vital to maximize the learning experience.**
   **Weight: 10%**

Your writing will be graded on the clarity of argument and depth of analysis. No late work will be accepted.

**Required Reading:**

**To be completed before the first day of class:**
*Pages 3-56*


**To be completed by Wednesday, January 6th**

**To be completed by Friday, January 8th**
To be completed by the course due date for work:


Emerging Church Reading Packet. (Various Articles)

**Recommended Reading:**


Course Schedule:

Class will meet from 9:00a.m.-12:00p.m. and 1:00p.m.-4:00p.m everyday.

Monday, January 4
- Introduction
- Emerging Church Background
- Missional Living
- Discuss The Emerging Church

Tuesday, January 5
- Theological and Homiletical backgrounds on the issue of Scripture and Authority
- Non-Foundationalism
- Sermon Analysis of Emerging Church Practitioner
- Discuss Beyond Foundationalism

Wednesday, January 6
- Theological background and Homiletical practices of Dialogue
- Sermon Analysis of Emerging Church Practitioner
- Discuss Pagitt; Preaching Re-Imagined Book Review Due

Thursday, January 7
- Sermon Form and Narrative Theology
- The Goal of the Creation of an Experience
- Sermon Analysis of Emerging Church Practitioner

Friday, January 8
- Benefits and Liabilities of the Emerging Approach
- Meet with Professor to Approve a Research Topic
- Discuss Listening to the Beliefs of Emerging Churches