

**WM/CH672 Women in World Christianity**  
**Spring 2020, 9:35am–11am**  
**Room: TBA**

Professor: Gina A. Zurlo

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### **Course Description**

World Christianity has been described as a “women’s movement” and the historical missionary movement from the United States estimated as two-thirds female or more. Historians have also indicated that Christianity has always been majority female: women were the last at the cross, the first at tomb, and make up the majority of Christians today. Many revitalization movements – both historically and currently – are led by women. This course unpacks these statements about women and the world church by investigating the historical contributions to the development of Christianity and also diving into the realities women face today in their ministry contexts worldwide. The course takes a historical approach in covering women from roughly the 19<sup>th</sup>–21<sup>st</sup> centuries; a geographical approach in specifically focusing on women in Asia, Africa, Latin America, and Oceania; as well as an ecclesial approach by focusing on Catholic, Orthodox, Protestant, and Pentecostal women. Issues covered range from sexual and gender-based violence and oppressive patriarchies to women-led revival movements and successful non-profit organizations and mother's unions. This course introduces students to a global history of women's involvement in the church and makes the case for the centrality of women's contributions to global Christianity, both past and present.

### **Learning Objectives**

This course introduces students to women in World Christianity from historical, missiological, and theological perspectives. As a result of taking this course, students will be able to:

- Develop a historical framework for the impact of women on the church from roughly the 19<sup>th</sup>–21<sup>st</sup> centuries.
- Reflect missiologically on the contributions of women in the growth of Christianity worldwide.
- Think theologically about the uniqueness of women’s experiences worldwide and how those experiences impact the creation of feminist and womanist theology.
- Understand the differences among women’s church-based experiences in various geographic and ecclesial contexts worldwide.

### **Assignments**

All assignments are due the day and time indicated below and should be submitted on Canvas.

- Class participation (10%)
  - Attendance at weekly classes is crucial to get the most out of this course. Students are expected to complete the weekly readings on time and come to class prepared to discuss the readings. We will often work in small discussion groups where all students are expected to participate and self-reflect and self-theologize on course material.

- Each student on the Hamilton campus is **required** to visit the Center for the Study of Global Christianity in D building and meet with Dr. Zurlo at least once during the semester. Students taking the class virtually can meet with Dr. Zurlo over Zoom.
- Biography project of a women in Christian history (20%)
  - Choose a woman in Christian history and write a 4–5 page **biography** of her life, including (but not limited to) her Christian influences, theological leanings, and key contributions to mission or World Christianity. More details on this assignment are available on Canvas.
  - **Due Friday, February 28 at 5pm on Canvas.**
- Theological reflection on a female theologian from the global South (20%)
  - Choose a female theologian from Asia, Africa, Latin America, or Oceania. Choose **one book** (or a series of articles with approval from the professor) of hers to read in its entirety and write a 5–6 page summary/reflection paper on key points of her theology. More details on this assignment are available on Canvas.
  - **Due Friday, March 27 at 5pm on Canvas.**
- Final paper and presentation (50%)
  - 15–20 pages, plus footnotes and bibliography (double-spaced, 12-point Times New Roman font) investigating a subject in women and World Christianity outside of the student’s own context (e.g., if you are an American Baptist from Kansas you **cannot** write about American Baptist women from Kansas). You may take a historical, theological, or social scientific approach in your paper. More details on this assignment are available on Canvas.
  - You must communicate your paper topic with Dr. Zurlo by **Friday, April 3**. This is not a formal written assignment, but you must email or speak with her about your topic to ensure you choose something that is researchable in the time given.
  - Each student will provide a brief presentation (with PowerPoint) to the class during the last week of class on their chosen paper topic (either April 28 or April 30, we will assign dates by splitting the class alphabetically by last name).
  - **Final paper due Monday, May 4 at 5pm on Canvas.**
- Special instructions for students taking this course to substitute for WM601:
  - You must substitute **one** of the papers worth 20% of your grade for an analytical reflection paper on the following texts (more details available on Canvas):
    - Dana L. Robert, *Christian Mission: How Christianity Became a World Religion* (Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009) (**entire book**)
    - David Bosch, *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2011), **the following sections only** (more if you so choose!):
      - Part 1: New Testament Models of Mission (chapters 1, 2, 3, 4)
      - Conclusion to the anniversary edition, p533–550
    - **Due on the original due date for the paper you substituted.** If you substituted the biography paper, then your due date is February 28. If you substituted the theology paper, then your due date is March 27.
- Grading scale: A+ 97-100; A 94-96; A- 90-93; B+ 87-89; B 84-86; B- 80-83; C+77-79; C 74-76; C- 70-73; D+ 67-69; D 64-66; D- 60-63; F 0-59.
  - Assignments will be docked half a letter grade each day they are late.

## Required Texts

- Dorothy Hodgson, *The Church of Women: Gendered Encounters Between Maasai and Missionaries* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2005). **(E-book available through Goddard Library)**
- Dana L. Robert, ed. *Gospel Bearers, Gender Barriers: Missionary Women in the Twentieth Century* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2002).
- Reports, articles, and selections of books available on Canvas.

## Helpful Digital Resources

- Center for the Study of Global Christianity ([www.globalchristianity.org](http://www.globalchristianity.org))
- Dictionary of African Christian Biography ([www.dacb.org](http://www.dacb.org))
- Boston University School of Theology missionary biographies ([www.bu.edu/missiology/missionary-biography](http://www.bu.edu/missiology/missionary-biography))
- The Global Church Project ([www.theglobalchurchproject.com](http://www.theglobalchurchproject.com))

## Schedule of Classes (subject to change)

Readings are due the day they are assigned. **There is indeed reading due the first day of class.** It is a good practice to take notes when you read so you are ready to discuss the reading during class.

*January 28*

Why women and World Christianity?

- Introduction to women's history, gender and mission, and World Christianity

Readings

- Dana L. Robert, "World Christianity as a Woman's Movement," *International Bulletin of Mission Research*, 30, no 4 (October 2006).

*January 30*

Was early Christianity a feminist movement?

- Vignettes of women in the Bible and the early centuries of Christianity

Readings

- Anne Braude, "Faith, Feminism, and History," in *The Religious History of American Women: Reimagining the Past* ed. Catherine Brekus (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 2007).
- Bernadette J. Brooten, "Early Christian Women and their Cultural Context: Issues of Method in Historical Reconstruction," in Adela Yarbro Collins, eds., *Feminist Perspectives on Biblical Scholarship* (Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1985).

*February 4 & February 6*

Women in the history of Christian mission

- American women in mission
- Bible women in the spread of Christianity worldwide

## Readings

- Dana L. Robert, “Women in World Mission,” chapter 5 in *Christian Mission: How Christianity Became a World Religion* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2009).
- Selection from Susan E. Smith, *Women in Mission: From the New Testament to Today* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2007).
- Robert, *Gospel Bearers, Gender Barriers*, chapter 1

## February 11 & February 13

### Women in Asia

- History, theology, mission, contemporary issues

## Readings

- Sheela Jeyaraj and Evangeline Anderson-Rajkuman, “Gender,” in *Christianity in South and Central Asia*, edited by Kenneth R. Ross, Daniel Jeyaraj, and Todd M. Johnson (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2019).
- Part 5: Jesus and Women, in Kenneth E. Bailey, *Jesus Through Middle Eastern Eyes: Cultural Studies in the Gospels* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2008).
- Robert, *Gospel Bearers, Gender Barriers*, chapter 12 & 13

## For reference:

- "18 Asian Female Theologians You Should Know About," The Global Church Project, <https://theglobalchurchproject.com/18-asian-female-theologians/>

## Reading week: February 17–21

## February 25 & February 27

### Women in Latin America

- History, theology, mission, contemporary issues

## Readings

- Selection from María Pilar Aquino, *Our Cry for Life: Feminist Theology from Latin America* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1993).
- Gender article TBA from *Christianity in Latin America* (Edinburgh University Press, forthcoming).

## For reference:

- “18 Latin American Female Theologians You Should Know About,” The Global Church Project, <https://theglobalchurchproject.com/18-latin-american-female-theologians-know/>

## February 28: Biography paper due by 5pm on Canvas

## March 3 & March 5

### Women in Africa

- History, theology, mission, contemporary issues

## Readings

- Isabel A. Phiri and Chammah J. Kaunda, “Gender,” in *Christianity in Sub-Saharan Africa*, edited by Kenneth R. Ross, J. Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu, and Todd M. Johnson (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2017).
- Michele Miller Sigg, “Carrying Living Water for the Healing of God’s People: Women Leaders in the Fifohazana Revival and the Reformed Church in Madagascar,” *Studies in World Christianity* 20, no 1 (2014): 19-38.
- Please have read all of Hodgson, *The Church of Women* by week 6.

For reference:

- Lists of African female theologians TBA

*March 10 (March 12 no class)*

Women in Oceania

- History, theology, mission, contemporary issues

Readings

- Gender article TBA from *Christianity in Oceania* (Edinburgh University Press, forthcoming).
- Choose one:
  - Lee Miena Skye, “Australian Aboriginal Women’s Christologies,” in *The Strength of her Witness: Jesus Christ in the Global Voices of Women*, ed. Elizabeth A. Johnson (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2016).
  - Judith Vusi, “Lord of the Insignificant: A Christ of Ni-Vanuatu Women,” in *The Strength of her Witness: Jesus Christ in the Global Voices of Women*, ed. Elizabeth A. Johnson (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2016).

For reference:

- Lists of female theologians from Oceania TBA

*Reading week: March 16–20*

*March 24 & March 26*

Orthodox women

- History, theology, contemporary context and challenges

Readings

- Donna Rizk, “Gender,” in *Christianity in North Africa and West Asia*, edited by Kenneth R. Ross, Mariz Tadros, and Todd M. Johnson (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2018).
- Selection from Leonie B. Liveris, *Ancient Taboos and Gender Prejudice: Challenges for Orthodox Women and the Church* (Farnham: Ashgate Pub., 2007).

**March 27: Theological paper due by 5pm on Canvas**

*March 31*

Special session on women in World Christianity for the GCTS conference on the *World Christian Encyclopedia*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition

#### Readings

- Robert, *Gospel Bearers, Gender Barriers*, chapters 9–11

*April 2*

Catholic women

- History, theology, contemporary context and challenges

#### Readings

- Part on Catholic mission from Dana L. Robert, *American Women in Mission: A Social History of Their Thought and Practice* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1997).
- Selection from Paul Hofmann, *The Vatican's Women: Female Influence at the Holy See* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2013).

**April 3: Due date to discuss final paper topic with Dr. Zurlo**

*April 7 & April 9*

Protestant women

- History, theology, contemporary context and challenges

#### Readings

- Selection from Ann Braude, *Sisters and Saints: Women and American Religion* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008).
- Article on Protestant women in Europe, TBA
- Robert, *Gospel Bearers, Gender Barriers*, chapters 2 & 3

*April 14 & April 16*

Pentecostal/Charismatic/Evangelical women

- History, theology, contemporary context and challenges

#### Readings

- Selection from Judith Casselberry and Elizabeth A. Pritchard, eds. *Spirit on the Move: Black Women and Pentecostalism in Africa and the Diaspora* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2019).
- Aída Besançon Spencer, “Evangelicals and Gender,” in Brian C. Stiller, Todd M. Johnson, Karen Stiller, and Mark Hutchinson, *Evangelicals Around the World: A Global Handbook for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2015).
- Robert, *Gospel Bearers, Gender Barriers*, chapters 4–8, 14

*April 21 & April 23*

Global contemporary issues

- Gender-specific religious persecution
- Global migration: trafficking, domestic workers

## Readings

- Helene Fisher and Elizabeth Lane Miller, “WWL 2019 Gender-Specific Religious Persecution: Analysis and Implications,” report by World Watch Research, February 2019.
- Selection from Anneke Companjen, *Hidden Sorrow, Lasting Joy: The Forgotten Women of the Persecuted Church* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 2005).

*April 28 & 30 (final exam week)*

Student PowerPoint presentations of final paper research

## **May 4: Final paper due on Canvas by 5pm**

### **ADA Accommodations**

Gordon-Conwell is committed to creating a learning environment that meets the needs of its diverse student body. If you have a special need or disability, please meet with the Dean of Students (Jana Holiday, jholiday@gcts.edu) to request an official accommodation through the Request for Accommodations form. Students who receive an accommodation are asked to meet with the Dean of Students to discuss the provisions of their accommodation as soon as possible.

### **Other Accommodations**

This course is heavy on research and writing. Please reach out to Dr. Zurlo for help if you struggle in these areas. She can help you with the writing process, organization of research, finding resources, time management, etc. Dr. Zurlo is open to other kinds of academic accommodations if necessary.

### **Extension Policy**

Students who wish to submit coursework after the last day for written work must receive prior approval from the Student Life Office upon formal petition. Additional time will be granted to students who have lost time for unforeseen reasons. Students should consult the full extension petition and policy, located in the Registration Hub in Canvas for detailed instructions. Petitions must be filed before the last day for written work as specified in the Academic Calendar. Students who require ongoing extensions for medical or physical reasons should review the Disability Accommodations Policy outlined in the Policies & Procedures section of the handbook and consult the Dean of Students.

### **Select Bibliography on Women in World Christianity**

- Abrams, Minnie F. *The Baptism of the Holy Ghost & Fire: Mat. 3.11*. 2nd ed. Kedagon: Pandita Ramabai Mukti Mission, 1906.
- Amoah, Elizabeth. *Where God Reigns: Reflections on Women in God's World*. Accra-North, Ghana: Sam-Woode Ltd., 1997.
- Bednarowski, Mary Farrell. *The Religious Imagination of American Women*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1999.
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- Brekus, Catherine A. *The Religious History of American Women: Reimagining the Past*. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2007.
- Brock, Sebastian P., and Susan Ashbrook Harvey. *Holy Women of the Syrian Orient*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998.
- Brusco, Elizabeth E. *The Reformation of Machismo: Evangelical Conversion and Gender in Colombia*. Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 1995.
- Buck, Jennifer M. *Reframing the House: Constructive Feminist Global Ecclesiology for the Western Evangelical Church*. Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2016.
- Burdick, John. *Blessed Anastacia Women, Race and Popular Christianity in Brazil*. Routledge, 2013.
- Clark, Elizabeth A. *Women in the Early Church*. Wilmington, DE: M. Glazier, 1983.
- Cohick, Lynn H. *Women in the World of the Earliest Christians: Illuminating Ancient Ways of Life*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2009.
- Companjen, Anneke. *Hidden Sorrow, Lasting Joy: The Forgotten Women of the Persecuted Church*. London: Hodder & Stoughton, 2005.
- Cruikshank, Joanna, and Patricia Grimshaw. *White Women, Aboriginal Missions and Australian Settler Governments: Maternal Contradictions*. Leiden: Brill, 2019.
- Dah, Ini Dorcas. *Women Do More Work than Men: Birifor Women as Change Agents in the Mission and Expansion of the Church in West Africa (Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana)*. Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock Publishers, 2018.
- Falk, Nancy Auer., and Rita M. Gross. *Unspoken Worlds: Women's Religious Lives*. 3rd ed. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth/Thomson Learning, 2001.
- Fialka, John J. *Sisters: Catholic Nuns and the Making of America*. New York: St. Martin's Griffin, 2004.
- Fiedler, NyaGondwe. *History of the Circle of Concerned African Women Theologians 1989-2007*. Mzuni Press, 2017.
- Filter, H., and S. Bourquin. *Paulina Dlamini, Servant of Two Kings*. Durban: Killie Campbell Africana Library, 1998.
- Gebara, Ivone. *Longing for Running Water: Ecofeminism and Liberation*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2001.
- James, Carolyn Custis. *Half the Church: Recapturing God's Global Vision for Women*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2010.
- Johnson, Elizabeth A. *The Strength of Her Witness: Jesus Christ in the Global Voices of Women*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2016.
- Johnson, Mary, Mary L. Gautier, Patricia Wittberg, and Thu Do. *Migration for Mission: International Catholic Sisters in the United States*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2019.
- Jones, Ian, Janet. Wootton, and Kirsty. Thorpe. *Women and Ordination in the Christian Churches: International Perspectives*. London: T & T Clark, 2008.
- Jones, Serene. *Feminist Theory and Christian Theology: Cartographies of Grace*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2000.
- Karssen, Gien. *Her Name Is Woman*. Colorado Springs, CO: Navpress, 1977.
- Knoll, Benjamin R., and Cammie Jo Bolin. *She Preached the Word: Women's Ordination in Modern America*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2018.
- Kraemer, Ross Shepard, and Mary Rose. D'Angelo. *Women & Christian Origins*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1999.
- Kwok, Pui-lan. *Hope Abundant: Third World and Indigenous Women's Theology*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2010.

- Kwok, Pui-lan. *Postcolonial Imagination and Feminist Theology*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2006.
- Lagerwerf, L. 'They Pray for You.': *Independent Churches and Women in Botswana*. Leiden: Interuniversitair Instituut voor Missiologie en Oecumenica, 1982.
- Leach, Fiona E., Sarah Hartwig, Elizabeth Renner, and Susanna Klein. *Reclaiming the Women of Britain's First Mission to West Africa: Three Lives Lost and Found*. Leiden: Brill, 2019.
- Lederleitner, Mary T. *Women in God's Mission: Accepting the Invitation to Serve and Lead*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Books, 2018.
- Lernoux, Penny, Arthur Jones, and Robert Ellsberg. *Hearts on Fire: The Story of the Maryknoll Sisters*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1993.
- Lienemann-Perrin, Christine, Atola Longkumer, and Afrie S. Joye. *Putting Names with Faces: Women's Impact in Mission History*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2012.
- Lindley, Susan Hill. *You Have Stept out of Your Place: A History of Women and Religion in America*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1996.
- Lindsay, Elaine, and Janet Scarfe. *Preachers, Prophets & Heretics: Anglican Women's Ministry*. Sydney: University of New South Wales Press, 2012.
- Loy, Gary Edwin. *La Teologia Mujerista: A Christian Minister Examines the Mujerista Theology of Ada Maria Isasi-Diaz*. Raleigh, NC: Lulu, 2009.
- MacHaffie, Barbara J. *Her Story: Women in Christian Tradition*. Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Fortress Press, 2003.
- Martín, Luis. *Daughters of the Conquistadores: Women of the Viceroyalty of Peru*. Dallas: Southern Methodist University Press, 1989.
- Martin, Phyllis M. *Catholic Women of Congo-Brazzaville: Mothers and Sisters in Troubled Times*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2009.
- Montgomery, Helen Barrett. *Western Women in Eastern Lands*. Nabu Press, 2010.
- Moore, Rebecca. *Women in Christian Traditions*. New York: New York University Press, 2015.
- Muir, Elizabeth Gillan. *A Women's History of the Christian Church: Two Thousand Years of Female Leadership*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2019.
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- Njoroge, Nyambura J., and Musa W. Dube Shomanah. *Talitha Cum! Theologies of African Women*. Pietermaritzburg: Cluster Publications, 2001.
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- Oduyoye, Mercy Amba. *Beads and Strands: Reflections of an African Woman on Christianity in Africa*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2004.
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- Oladipo, Caleb Oluremi. *The Will to Arise: Theological and Political Themes in African Christianity and the Renewal of Faith and Identity*. New York: P. Lang, 2006.

- Phiri, Isabel Apawo., Devarakshanam Betty. Govinden, and Sarojini. Nadar. *Her-Stories: Hidden Histories of Women of Faith in Africa*. Pietermaritzburg, South Africa: Cluster Publications, 2002.
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