

**United Theological Seminary of the Twin Cities**  
**CL482: Nurturing Your Spiritual Life as a Religious Leader**  
 January 2009

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**Course schedule**

*On campus:* 1:00 p.m.-4:15 p.m. Jan 5 M, 7 W, 8 Th, 9 F, 12 M, 13 T, 15 Th, 16 F  
*Retreat at ARC Retreat Center:* Jan 22 Thurs (10:00 a.m.) to 23 Fri (11:30 a.m.)

**Course description**

The purpose of this course is to engage students in a variety of practices in the spiritual life that will encourage a deepening of their relationship with God. This elective will be taught from a Christian perspective, and will include readings, presentations, discussions, papers, and practices of spiritual disciplines. Using primary texts and contemporary materials, the course will explore historical roots and current practices of the spiritual life within the Christian tradition. Students will engage in spiritual disciplines that are both familiar and new, preparing them to nurture both their spiritual lives and lives of others.

**Course objectives**

The course is being taught around the themes of *prayer, discernment* and *call*.

By the end of the course, students will

- have examined their own understandings of the spiritual life
- have begun to develop their theology of prayer
- have explored their sense of call through the lenses of prayer and discernment

**Required texts**

- Sandra Levy, *Imagination and the Journey of Faith*, Eerdmans
- Elizabeth Liebert, *The Way of Discernment*, WJK
- Marjorie Hewitt Suchocki, *In God's Presence*, Chalice Press
- Corinne Ware, *Discover Your Spiritual Type*, Alban
- Richard Foster and James Bryan Smith, eds., *Devotional Standards*  
Harper San Francisco
- Danniell Homan and Lonni Pratt, *Radical Hospitality*, Paraclete Press
- Henri Nouwen, *The Wounded Healer*

**Requirements**

*The course is offered as pass-no credit, only.* Written assignments must be completed to pass the course. Papers must be double-spaced, typed, and properly footnoted, following Student Handbook guidelines; in addition, note the definition of "plagiarism." We will not read or grade material that has not been properly prepared and edited. Evaluation will be based on attendance and class participation, engagement in discussions, full participation in course retreat. Assigned readings are discussed on date assigned; expect to be involved in discussions of readings and course material. More than 2 absences from class will affect your course evaluation; the whole retreat must be attended.

## Assignments

1. **Practice of Discernment:** Liebert, *Way of Discernment*.  
Please purchase a journal (even an inexpensive notebook) for this assignment. As seen on the class schedule, we will work our way through the book. You are free to work ahead, but we will stay with the assigned chapter for class discussion. We will discuss the *process of discernment* in class on Friday, Jan 16. Bring your journal to class. (Your actual discerning is part of your final paper)
  
2. **Prayer:** Following our discussion of Suchocki and Keely, write a 3-page paper presenting your personal theology of prayer. This is due **Monday, Jan 12**.
  
3. **Spiritual classics:** Foster and Smith, *Devotional Classics*
  - Read the *Introduction* and the one-page introduction to each Tradition of
  - Choose two readings, one each from two different Traditions. Everyone will choose different readings the first day of class.
  - Write a one-page synopsis of each reading, identifying the key ideas and how it might help one grow in the spiritual life. Write a one page reflection of the Traditions and which engage your spiritual life
  - Be prepared to (1) discuss the different traditions and (2) present and discuss your readings in conversation with the ones your colleagues have read.

**Due January 15**
  
4. **Retreat preparation:** write a 6-7 page paper in which you
  - describe your understanding of the spiritual life and prayer
  - explore how the spiritual life might be integrated into your call to ministry
  - reflect on the process of discernment you have in your journal and how it helps to guide or clarify your call. (This will remain confidential with BAK.)
  - We will draw upon these papers during the retreat. Bring a second copy of it to give to BAK at the beginning of the retreat.

Monday, January 5 Introductions; what do we mean by 'spirituality' and 'call'  
*Reading:* Ware

Wednesday, Jan. 7 Theologies and practices of prayer  
*Reading:* Suchocki (BAK will present another theology of prayer)

Thursday, January 8 Discernment  
*Reading and practices:* Liebert: *Introduction, Part 1 (ch. 1 & 2)*

Friday, January 9 Imagination  
*Reading:* Levy  
*Practices:* Liebert, ch. 3

Monday, January 12 Hospitality  
*Reading:* Homan and Pratt, *Radical Hospitality*  
*Practices:* Liebert, ch. 4

Tuesday, January 13 The Call of Ministry  
*Reading:* Nouwen  
*Practices:* Liebert, ch. 5

Thursday, January 15 Classic Traditions  
*Reading:* Read 2 classics; see requirement #3  
*Practices:* Liebert, chapter of your choice (6-10)

Friday, January 16 Discerning a call  
*Reading:* Complete reading of Liebert  
*Practices:* Liebert, ch. 11

**Retreat:** at ARC ( north of Cambridge, MN; 90 minutes from UTS)

Thursday, January 22 (10:00 a.m.) through Friday, January 23 (11:30 a.m.)

- Bring the course textbooks, your Bible, and your written material for the course.
- Towels & bedding furnished.

Arc Retreat Center: [www.arc retreat.org](http://www.arc retreat.org)  
 1680 373rd Ave NE  
 Stanchfield, MN 55080  
 (763) 689-3540