

Church 101: Lutheran and Episcopal Theology



I don't feel that it is necessary to know exactly what I am. The main interest in life and work is to become someone else that you were not in the beginning. If you knew when you began a book what you would say at the end, do you think that you would have the courage to write it? What is true for writing and for [love] is true also for life.

Michel Foucault

We will not find life by refusing to let go of our precious, protected selves.

Rowan Williams

Thus we see then, that we are nothing with all our gifts, be they never so great, except God assist us.

Martin Luther

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Class Description

Tyson House is an ecumenical ministry, a work of cooperation between two denominations: the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America (PECUSA or, simply, the Episcopal Church) and the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America (ELCA). Both denominations are considered one of “seven sisters of American Protestantism” and scholars position them somewhere in the Protestant mainline. (What each of these terms mean will be the subject of at least one of our conversations.) While the Episcopal and Lutheran churches are, thus, similar in theology and practice when one looks at the big picture – they are, after all, in “full communion” with one another – they each claim an impressively rich and unique heritage, reaching back through the German and English reformations to the early church. Our task is to acquaint ourselves with this history, placing ourselves within living traditions. Through this, we hope to better understand how our identities as Lutherans and Episcopalians inform our being Christ in and for the world.

Class Mentors

Church 101 is led by a group of mentors who are, themselves, invested in the process of learning. That is to say, class mentors serve to lead discussions and to teach from their own experiences while still remaining students. Ideally, all participants will be active teachers, learners, and seekers. The three mentors for the fall 2010 class are:

Justin Crisp, Senior in English and Religious Studies, justincrisp@me.com

Zack Nyein, Senior in Music Education, zacknye@gmail.com

Emilie Casey, Junior in Music Education, emiliecasey@bellsouth.net

Format

The Church 101 class meets on select Monday evenings from 6:30 to 7:45 pm. As seen on the course schedule, the curriculum is arranged topically, though substantial overlap between topics is to be expected. Each session will be divided between Episcopal and Lutheran perspectives on a given issue, while attempting some measure of mutual understanding at the end.

There are two tracks for the course in terms of class preparation; not surprisingly, one is Lutheran and the other Episcopal. One may opt to do either or both. This is to enable students to better prepare for confirmation in one of the denominations, though one does not have to be considering confirmation to participate in the class. On the course schedule, the two tracks are indicated by (EC) and (LC).

Church 101 is the first class to use the new *Tyson House Education Online* system. To fully participate, you'll need to visit <http://education.tysonhouse.org>, register an account, and join the group for “Church 101: Introduction to Lutheran and Episcopal Theology.” You'll find the online coursepack

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(readings), this syllabus, the autobiography assignment, and MP3 recordings of class sessions posted under “Documents.” This website will also serve as a home-base, from which mentors will send announcements regarding class events, time or location changes, and so forth.

Finally, in light of the “choose your own adventure”-nature of Church 101, all participants are encouraged to discuss their goals and course plans with one of the class mentors.

Texts

Barbara S. Wilson and Arlene Flancher. *The Episcopal Handbook*. New York, Church Publishing, 2008.
Kristofer Skrade and James Satter. *The Lutheran Handbook*. Minneapolis, Augsburg Fortress, 2005.

Church 101 Coursepack (available online and in class), includes selections from
The Book of Concord: The Confessions of the Lutheran Church. <www.bookofconcord.org>
Justin Crisp. “The Frozen Chosen?” Essay for the completion of the Bachelor of Arts degree. UTK.
Roger Ferlo. *Opening the Bible*. Cambridge, Cowley Publications, 1997.
Michel Foucault. “What is an Author?” Trans. Bouchard & Simon. New York: Cornell UP, 1977.
Mark Hulsether. *Building a Protestant Left*. Knoxville, University of Tennessee Press, 1999.
Martin Luther. *The Freedom of a Christian*. Minneapolis, Fortress Press, 2008.
Martin E. Marty. *Lutheran Questions, Lutheran Answers*. Minneapolis, Augsburg Fortress, 2007.
Martin E. Marty. “Letter Regarding *Called to Common Mission*.” 14 Nov. 1998.
A. S. McGrade. “Richard Hooker on Anglican Identity.” in *Anglican Theological Journal* 91.3.
John Tirro. “Response to *CCM*.” Essay for the completion of the Master of Divinity degree. YDS.

Class Schedule

October	11	Introductions Prep: Complete the “Writing ourselves” activity Foucault, “What is an Author?” (Optional)
	25	A Short History of Anglicanism and Lutheranism Prep: McGrade, “Anglican Identity” (EC) Evolution of <i>Thirty-Nine Articles</i> (EC/LC) Marty, <i>LQ, LA</i> Part 1 (LC)
November	8	Approaches Toward Theology Prep: Ferlo, <i>Opening the Bible</i> (EC) Luther, <i>The Freedom of a Christian</i> (EC/LC) Marty, <i>LQ, LA</i> Part 2 (LC)
	15	The Art and Practice of Liturgy Prep: Wilson and Flancher, <i>The Episcopal Handbook</i> (EC) Skrade and Satter, <i>The Lutheran Handbook</i> (LC)
	22	Lutherans and Episcopalians on Contemporary Issues Prep: Crisp, “The Frozen Chosen?” (EC) Hulsether, <i>Building a Protestant Left</i> (EC/LC) Marty, “Letter Regarding <i>CCM</i> ” (EC/LC) Tirro, “Response to <i>CCM</i> ” (LC)