



Iona School for Ministry

Homiletics V: Prophetic Voice

Midders, All Tracks

February 7, 2021

The Rev. Deacon Mary Lenn Dixon

Class Objectives

At the end of this class students should be able to:

1. Articulate the meaning, purpose, and appropriate uses of prophetic preaching;
2. Create a statement about the relationship between prophetic preaching and the prophetic ministry of the church;
3. Recognize pitfalls of what is often considered prophetic preaching;
4. Have some tools for preparing prophetic sermons

Class Description

Through Bible study, instructor presentation, small-group work, and class discussion, this class will help students prepare for the task of preaching prophetically and linking that to the prophetic ministry of the church.

Class Schedule

I. What does prophetic preaching mean to you?

II. The Prophetic Task

- Seeing God as the central actor
- Naming the denial-despair-hope cycle
- Hearing the hope from the margins
- Preaching with our lives

III. Prophetic Preaching as Social Justice Sermons

- “Christian citizenship”: prophetic citizen, prophetic church
 - Baptismal covenant, Scripture, Life—inviting the tension
- The Purple Church and Christian unity
 - Fear in the Purple Church
 - Sermons in the context of dialogue and teaching
- Needs, Concerns, and Hopes of the World

IV. Silence Preaches Too

V. Practical Pointers

- The inner scold
- The ground of trust

The escape clause
The transformative Aha
The power of story, poetry, song, and humor

VI. Prophetic Church: speaking truth to power in love

Quotes from Presiding Bishop John Hines

“Justice is the corporate face of love.”

“To be engaged with the world costs somebody something.”

“Preaching is effective as long as the preacher expects something to happen—not because of the sermon, not even because of the preacher, but because of God.”

“You can dance around a cross if you want to, but you can’t dance around a cross when a man is on it.”

VII. Conclusion: What does prophetic preaching mean to you?

Recommended Reading

Brueggemann, Walter. *The Prophetic Imagination*. 40th Anniversary Edition, Fortress Press, 2018.

_____. *The Practice of Prophetic Imagination: Preaching an Emancipating Word*. Fortress Press, 2012.

Cressman, Lisa. *The Gospel People Don’t Want to Hear: Preaching Challenging Messages*. Fortress Press, 2020.

Doyle, C. Andrew. *Citizen: Faithful Discipleship in a Partisan World*. Church Publishing, 2020.

Fisher-Stewart, Gayle, ed. *Preaching Black Lives (Matter)*. Church Publishing, 2020.

Kesselus, Kenneth. *John E. Hines: Granite on Fire*. ETSS, 1995.

Markham, Ian S., and Crystal J. Hardin, eds. *Prophetic Preaching: The Hope or the Curse of the Church?* Church Publishing, 2020.

Moss III, Otis. *Blue Note Preaching in a Post-Soul World: Finding Hope in an Age of Despair*. Westminster John Knox, 2015.

Schade, Leah D. *Preaching in the Purple Zone: Ministry in the Red-Blue Divide*. Rowman & Littlefield, 2019.