



PATH8304: Critical Issues in Church Revitalization

A Professional Doctoral Seminar
New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary
OCT 11-13, 2022

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NOBTS Mission Statement

New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary and Leavell College prepare servants to walk with Christ, proclaim His truth, and fulfill His mission.

Course Description

The purpose of this seminar is to explore and examine critical issues of churches experiencing plateau and decline. The seminar will identify common factors, specific implications, and strategic solutions involving church revitalization, utilizing case studies, reading assignments, demographic evaluations, and research applications.

Student Learning Outcomes

1. Students will become familiar with significant church revitalization resources.
2. Students will analyze their ministry context in order to select appropriate church revitalization strategies.
3. Students will develop essential leadership skills necessary for revitalizing churches experiencing plateau and decline.
4. Students will develop specific action plans for revitalizing churches experiencing plateau and decline.
5. Students will explore biblical and theological foundations for church revitalization.

Required Textbooks

Malphurs, Aubrey and Gordon E. Penfold. *Re:Vision: The Key to Transforming Your Church*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2014.

McIntosh, Gary. *There's Hope For Your Church: First Steps to Restoring Health and Growth*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2012.

Pre-Seminar Assignments

1. Each student will read the textbook: Malphurs and Penfold. *Re:Vision: The Key to Transforming Your Church*. In addition to the contents of the book, complete the Audits/Indicators/Surveys in Appendixes A – I. After reading the textbook and completing the Audits/Indicators/Surveys, write a personal **Leadership Assessment**, to include the following components: (1) the book is divided into three parts. Write a two-page reaction to EACH Part, discussing four key insights and four challenges from each Part. (2) Utilizing a synthesis of

Appendixes A – I, write a two-page, single-spaced assessment of your strengths and weaknesses as a revitalization leader. The Leadership Assessment is to be single-spaced, a space between each single-spaced paragraph, and no paragraph indentions, 8 pages total, informal writing style, first person allowed.

2. Each student will read ONE (1) of the textbooks listed below, and compose an **Annotated Analysis**, to involve the following components: (1) a one-page summary of the contents of the book, including strengths and weaknesses, (2) a two-page discussion of five [5] key insights and issues addressed in the book related to church revitalization, (3) a two-page synthesis of five [5] implications of the book for 21st century church revitalization. The Annotated Analysis is to be single-spaced, a space between each single-spaced paragraph, no paragraph indentions, and must utilize formal style according to Turabian, regarding cover page, margins, pagination, headings/subheadings, etc. Instead of footnotes, quotations can be referenced with end notes. No first person allowed.

Students are to email Dr. Rice (brice@nobts.edu) their first choice, second choice, and third choice. Dr. Rice will make the assignments, in the order of the emails received.

Barrett, Desmond. *Revitalizing the Declining Church*. Eugene: Wipf&Stock, 2021.

Bolsinger, Tod. *Tempered Resilience*. Downer Groves, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2020.

Cheyney, Tom. *Church Revitalization in Rural America: Restoring Churches in America's Heartland*. Orlando: Renovate Publishing Group, 2018.

Clifton, Mark and Kenneth Priest. *Rubicons of Revitalization: Overcoming 8 Common Barriers to Church Renewal*. Littleton, CO: Acoma Press, 2018.

Croft, Brian. *Biblical Church Revitalization: Solutions for Dying & Divided Churches*. Scotland: Christian Focus Publications, 2016.

Davis, Andrew. *Revitalize: Biblical Keys to Helping Your Church Come Alive Again*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2017.

Henard, Bill. *Can These Bones Live? (Revised Edition): a Practical Guide to Church Revitalization*. Athens, TN: ReClaimed Church Publishing, 2021.

Henard, Bill. *Reclaimed Church: How Churches Grow, Decline, and Experience Revitalization*. Nashville: B&H Books, 2018.

Kentucky Baptist Convention. *Lead to Revitalize: 15 Practices of a Church Revitalization Leader*. Abbotsford, WI: Aneko Press, 2020.

Kotter, John P. *A Sense of Urgency*. Boston: Harvard Business Press, 2008.

Mancini, Will, and Cory Hartman. *Future Church: Seven Laws of Real Church Growth*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2020.

McIntosh, Gary. *Taking Your Church to the Next Level: What Got You Here Won't Get You There*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2009.

Rainer, Sam. *The Church Revitalization Checklist: A Hopeful and Practical Guide for Leading Your Congregation to a Brighter Tomorrow*. Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale Momentum, 2021.

Rainer, Thom. *The Post-Quarantine Church: Six Urgent Challenges and Opportunities That Will Determine the Future of Your Congregation*. Caol Stream, IL: Tyndale Momentum, 2020.

Stetzer, Ed and Mike Dodson. *Comeback Churches: How 300 Churches Turned Around and Yours Can, Too*. Nashville: B & H, 2007.

Vaters, Karl. *100 Days to a Healthier Church: A Step-By-Step Guide for Pastors and Leadership Teams*. Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2020.

Note: Each student will make a 12-15 minute presentation, verbal and/or visual, to the class regarding the annotated analysis of the book assigned.

3. Each student will read: McIntosh. *There's Hope For Your Church: First Steps to Restoring Health and Growth*. Develop a **Congregational Case Study** of your current church context, utilizing Chapter 13 of the textbook and the Stages in Church Revitalization Chart (Figure 18, page 164). The Case Study should contain the following components: (1) a one-page assessment of the church's current context (location, community profile, and a five-year average of worship attendance, budget receipts, baptisms, and other additions.) (2) a two-page discussion of the church's current stage of revitalization (Investigation, Development, Introduction, or Implementation), (3) of the 12 components (book chapters), discuss the three most challenging to accomplish in the current church context (three pages). The Congregational Case Study can be written in informal style, first person allowed; single-spaced, a space between each single-spaced paragraph, no paragraph indentions.

Note: Assignments #1, #2, and #3 are to be posted in Canvas no later than 11:59pm, October 10, 2022.

During the Seminar Assignment:

Each student should be prepared to be involved in class discussion and dialogue regarding the pre-seminar assignments.

Post-Seminar Assignment:

Each student will develop a **Church Revitalization Strategy** for their church. The Strategy must utilize all of the seminar textbooks and class discussions. Specific instructions regarding the format, structure, and components of the Strategy will be given by the professor prior to the end of the seminar. **The Church Revitalization Strategy paper is to be posted in Canvas no later than November 18, 2022. The Strategy paper will be graded by the Writing Assessment Coordinator for Turabian 8th edition form and style. After posting the paper in Canvas email it to Mrs. Phyllis Garrett, prodoproject@nobts.edu in a WORD document format.**

Course Evaluation

In Residence Seminar Students:

Leadership Assessment	20%
Annotated Analysis	20%
Congregational Case Study	20%
Church Revitalization Strategy	30%
Seminar Discussion & Dialogue	10%

Attendance Policy

Intensive and Weekend Hybrid Classes: Students are expected to attend and participate in the class sessions. Because of the nature of the intensive, students who miss any portion of the class may receive a grade of "F" for the course.

Technical Assistance

For assistance regarding technology, consult ITC (504-816-8180) or the following websites:
1. Selfserve@nobts.edu - Email for technical questions/support requests with the

Selfserve.nobts.edu site (Access to online registration, financial account, online transcript, etc.)

2. Canvas.NOBTS.com Click on the "Help" button for technical questions/support requests regarding the NOBTS Canvas System. You can also email questions to Canvas@nobts.edu.

3. ITCSupport@nobts.edu - Email for general technical questions/support requests.

4. www.NOBTS.edu/itc/ - General NOBTS technical help information is provided on this website.

Help for Writing Papers at "The Write Stuff"

NOBTS maintains a Writing Center designed to improve English writing at the graduate level. Students can receive writing guides, tips, and valuable information to help in becoming a better writer. A copy of the approved NOBTS Style Guide can be found in the course Canvas shell, or can be located online at the Writing Center's page on the seminary website at: https://www.nobts.edu/_resources/pdf/writing/StyleGuide.pdf

Plagiarism on Written Assignments

NOBTS has a no tolerance policy for plagiarism. Plagiarism in certain cases may result in expulsion from the seminary. See the NOBTS Student Handbook for definition, penalties, and policies associated with plagiarism.

Selected Bibliography

- Barrett, Desmond. *Revitalizing the Declining Church*. Eugene: Wipf&Stock, 2021.
- Bolsinger, Tod. *Tempered Resilience*. Downer Groves, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2020.
- Cheyney, Tom. *Church Revitalization in Rural America: Restoring Churches in America's Heartland*. Orlando: Renovate Publishing Group, 2018.
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- Davis, Andrew. *Revitalize: Biblical Keys to Helping Your Church Come Alive Again*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2017.
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- _____. *Reclaimed Church: How Churches Grow, Decline, and Experience Revitalization*. Nashville: B&H Books, 2018.
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- Kotter, John P. *A Sense of Urgency*. Boston: Harvard Business Press, 2008.
- Malphurs, Aubrey and Gordon E. Penfold. *Re:Vision: The Key to Transforming Your Church*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2014.
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- _____. *There's Hope For Your Church: First Steps to Restoring Health and Growth*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2012.
- Rainer, Sam. *The Church Revitalization Checklist: A Hopeful and Practical Guide for Leading Your Congregation to a Brighter Tomorrow*. Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale Momentum, 2021.
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- Stetzer, Ed and Mike Dodson. *Comeback Churches: How 300 Churches Turned Around and Yours Can, Too*. Nashville: B & H, 2007.
- Vaters, Karl. *100 Days to a Healthier Church: A Step-By-Step Guide for Pastors and Leadership Teams*. Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2020.