

Course ID:	Course Title:	Fall 2023
BT 645	The People of God: Ecclesiology in the NT	Prerequisite: N/A
		Credits: 3

Class Information		Instructor Information		Important Dates	
Delivery:	Hybrid	Instructor:	Jonathan W. Lo, PhD	First Day of Classes:	Sep 12, 2023
Days:	Tuesday	Email:	Jonathan.Lo@ambrose.edu	Last Day to Add/Drop:	Sep 17, 2023
Time:	12:45-3:45pm	Phone:	(403) 407-9501	Last Day to Withdraw:	Nov 20, 2023
Room:	A2210	Office:	L2064		
Final Exam:	N/A	Office Hours:	By Appointment	Last Day to Apply for Extension:	Nov 23, 2023
ZOOM Link:	Zoom Meeting Details https://ambrose.zoom.us/j/99523272139?pwd=QWdybCswVVvk5Z2NsVitieEhQY3BOQT09 Meeting ID: 995 2327 2139 Passcode: 658700				

Important Dates and Information

For a list of all important dates and information regarding participating in classes at Ambrose University, please refer to the Academic Calendar at <https://ambrose.edu/academic-calendar>.

Course Description

An exploration of the biblical-theological theme of the Church that traces the New Testament idea of the People of God from its conceptual roots in the Hebrew Bible to its development into the Second Temple period, and finally to the formation of the earliest Christian communities in the Roman world. This course explores how the earliest Christians understood their religious identity via an examination of various NT writings through a biblical-theological lens and the implications it may have for the Church today. Throughout the course, students will engage in critical discussions about relevant biblical texts and robust theological reflections to gain a deeper understanding of the Church's role as a dynamic and transformative agent in society.

The "People of God" is a theme located at the heart of the Bible—it is the theological nexus where Christian convictions about God, beliefs about Jesus, and understandings of one's identity, behaviour, belonging, community, and purpose all converge. "New Testament Ecclesiology" is the study of the Christian Church as understood in the New Testament. In this course, students will be invited to consider the implications of a biblical foundation for the concept of God's People

for understanding the identity and mission of the contemporary Church, as well as current challenges facing the Church, such as globalization, secularization, ethical dilemmas, and the impact of technology on religious life.

Expected Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, the student will be able to complete the following tasks:

1. Trace the development of the concept of the People of God from the Hebrew Bible to the New Testament.
2. Discuss the biblical texts and theologies that form the basis for a canonical understanding of the Church’s origin, identity, proclamation, and mission.
3. Describe the historical development of the earliest Christians and the distinctiveness of early Christianity within the Greco-Roman world.
4. Situate ecclesiology within the theologies of creation, redemption, election/covenant, eschatology, and ethics.
5. Respond to contemporary issues and challenges facing the Church with resources derived from a biblical-theological understanding of ecclesiology.
6. Demonstrate how a biblical-theological view of ecclesiology can both encourage and inform a constructive critique to the global and local Church today.

Required and Recommended Textbooks and Readings

Giles, Peter. *What on Earth is the Church? An Exploration in New Testament Theology*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1995.

Johnson, E. Elizabeth. *Ecclesiology in the New Testament*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2019.

Hurtado, Larry W. “Introduction,” “A New Kind of Faith,” “A Different Identity,” & “A New Way to Live.” In *Destroyer of the gods” Early Christian Distinctiveness in the Roman World*, Larry W. Hurtado, 1-14, 37-104, 143-182. Waco: Baylor, 2016. *Essay available for download via the course Moodle Portal.*

Lim, Timothy H. “Towards a Description of the Sectarian Matrix.” In *Echoes from the Caves: Qumran and the New Testament*, ed. Florentino García Martínez, 7-32. Leiden: Brill, 2009. *Essay available for download via the course Moodle Portal.*

Course Schedule

Date	Lecture	Reading	Assignment
Sep 12	1. The People of God – Definitions, Terminology and the Scope of the Course	Giles, “Opening the Door”, “Jesus as the Founding of the Church”; Johnson, “The People of God”	

Sep 19	2. The Earliest Christianity Christian Communities within the Jewish Sectarian Matrix	Lim, "Towards a Description of the Sectarian Matrix."	
Sep 26	3. Israelite Foundations: Image-Bearers and a Holy People: From Family to Tribe to Nation; Exile, the Remnant and "True Israel"	Giles, "The Meaning of the Word <i>Ekklēsia</i> : Old Testament and Intertestamental Background; Johnson, "A Fraught Metaphor"	
Oct 3	4. The Synoptic Gospels – Jesus and the Restoration of Israel	Giles, "Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John"	
Oct 10	5. John's Gospels – Jesus and the New Temple	Johnson, "God's House and Priesthood"	
Oct 17	6. Acts of the Apostles – The Expansive Vision of God's People	Giles, "The Church in the Book of Acts"	Theological Reflection
Oct 24	7. Paul's Letters – Welcoming Gentiles into the One People of God and Learning to Live Together in the Spirit	Giles, "The Church in Paul's Earliest Epistles", "The Church in Paul's Middle and Later Epistles"; Johnson, "Jesus' Hands and Feet"	
Oct 31	8. Hebrews and the Catholic Epistles – Living the Life of the Elect	Giles, "The Church in the Non-Pauline Epistles and the Book of Revelation";	
Nov 7	<i>NO CLASS: Reading Week</i>		
Nov 14	9. Revelation – The Worshipping Community	Johnson, "Water is Thicker Than Blood"	Church Visit Journal
Nov 21	10. NO CLASS: Watch Prof. Larry Hurtado's Lecture: "Early Christian Distinctiveness in the Roman World" https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tb96kYfk628	Hurtado, "A New Kind of	

		Faith”, “A New Way to Live”	
Nov 28	11. From Jesus to the Church: The Identity and the Mission of the People of God	Giles, “Drawing the Threads Together and the Invisible-Visible Church”	
Dec 5	12. Conclusion and Panel Discussion –Implications for the Church Today	Giles, “The Denomination as Church”	Letter to Home Church
Dec 15			Major Paper

Requirements:

1. Theological Reflection – (2000 words +/- 10%) DUE at 9pm on Oct 17th
 - A: A theological interaction (2000 words max., no footnotes) with a modern book, film, play, musical, or other agreed upon substitute based on some aspect(s) of NT ecclesiology discussed in class.
 - B. A written response to the Downey Lectures (2000 words max., no footnotes) explores the connections between the content and themes from this class and the lecture(s) of Dr. Munther Isaac on “Bible, Empire, and the Holy Land.” <https://ambrose.edu/downey-lectureships>
2. Church Visit Journal – DUE at 9pm on Nov 14th

Students will visit two different church worship services (other than their own) and write a brief report that describes their experiences and insights in relation to the content of the course. A worksheet will be provided that gives prompts to students in terms of what to look for.
3. “A Letter to Your Home Church” – (1000 words +/- 10%) DUE at 9pm on Dec 5th

A letter addressed to the student’s home congregation that contains encouragement, teaching, and recommendations based on insights from the course.
4. Major Paper – (3500 words +/- 10%) DUE at 9pm on Dec 15th

An exegetical or research paper that explores a biblical text or theme on topics related to the broader area of NT Ecclesiology (Community, Ethics, Worship, Missions, Justice and Social Concern, Diversity, Gender, etc.).

Assignments Summary

1. Theological Reflection	20%	(Due Oct 17 th)
2. Church Visit Journal	20%	(Due Nov 14 th)
3. A Letter to Your Home Church	20%	(Due Dec 5 th)
4. Major Paper	40%	(Dec 15 th)

All assignments are to be submitted via the course Moodle platform in PDF format, with the document file name as follows: Name_Assignment_CourseCode.pdf E.g. JonathanLo_MajorPaper_BT645.pdf

Late Policy: Unless an extension is granted at least one week prior to the due date, 5% of the grade will be deducted from late assignments every additional day that it is due. E.g. An assignment that is due on Thursday, but submitted after 9pm on Monday will incur a penalty of 10% (2 days late).

Please document using Chicago style. For assistance with citation and other writing skills, see:

<https://ambrose.edu/learning-services/resources>

<https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/717/03/>

http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide/citation-guide-1.html

If there are any questions about how to submit assignments electronically, the IT department is ready to provide assistance. (helpdesk@ambrose.edu).

Rubric for Grading Written Assignments:

Elements of an Excellent Essay	Argument Contents of the essay directly address the research question	Reasoning Evidence of Critical Thinking	Originality Evidence of Independent Thinking	Research Use of Sources (Sufficient, Relevant, Accurate, Engaging)	Writing Clarity, Structure/Transitions, Style/Mechanics, Formatting
100% Total	20%	20%	20%	20%	20%

Attendance: Unexcused absences will be considered when calculating a student's final grade.

Grade Summary:

Grade		Interpretation	Grade Points
A+	100	Mastery: Complete Understanding of Subject Matter	4.00
A	96-99		4.00
A-	91-95		3.70
B+	86-90	Proficient: Well-Developed Understanding of Subject Matter	3.30
B	81-85		3.00
B-	76-80		2.70

Because of the nature of the Alpha 4.00 system, there can be no uniform University-wide conversion scale. The relationship between raw scores (e.g. percentages) and the resultant letter grade will depend on the nature of the course and the instructor's assessment of the level of each class, compared to similar classes taught previously.

Please note that final grades will be available on student registration system. Printed grade sheets are not mailed out.

Bibliography

- Achtemeier, Paul. *The Quest for Unity in the New Testament Church: A Study in Paul and Acts*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1987.
- Banks, Robert. *Paul's Idea of Community: The Early House Churches in their Historical Setting*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980.
- Burke, Trevor J. *Adopted into God's Family: Exploring a Pauline Metaphor*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2006.
- Bockmuehl, Markus and Michael B. Thompson, eds. *A Vision for the Church: Studies in Early Christian Ecclesiology in Honour of J.P.M. Sweet*. Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1997.
- Collins, Raymond F. *The Many Faces of the Church: A Study in New Testament Ecclesiology*. New York: Crossroad Publishing Company, 2003.
- Evans, Craig A. *From Jesus to the Church: The First Christian Generation*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2014.
- Flew, R. Newton. *Jesus and His Church: A Study of the Idea of the Ecclesia in the New Testament*. London: Epworth Press, 1960 (1938).
- Freyne, Sean. *The Jesus Movement and Its Expansion: Meaning and Mission*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2014.
- Giles, Kevin. *What On Earth is the Church? An Exploration in New Testament Theology*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1995.
- Brower, Kent E. and Andy Johnson, eds. *Holiness and Ecclesiology in the New Testament*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007.
- Howard-Brook, Wes and Sharon H. Ringe, eds. *The New Testament – Introducing the Way of Discipleship*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2002.
- Harrington, Daniel J. *The Church According to the New Testament: What the Wisdom and Witness of Early Christianity Teach Us Today*. Franklin, WI: Sheed & Ward, 2001.
- Hurtado, Larry W. *At the Origins of Christian Worship: The Context and Character of Earliest Christian Devotion*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999.
- Johnson, E. Elizabeth. *Ecclesiology in the New Testament*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2020.
- Johnston, George. *The Doctrine of the Church in the New Testament*. Cambridge: University Press, 1943.
- Kloppenborg, John S. *Christ's Associations: Connecting and Belonging in the Ancient City*. New Haven: Yale University, 2019.
- Kysar, Robert. *Stumbling in the Light: New Testament Images for a Changing Church*. St. Louis, MI: Chalice Press, 1990.

Minear, Paul S. *Images of the Church in the New Testament*. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1960.

Noll, Mark A. *Turning Points: Decisive Moments in the History of Christianity*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 1997.

Schnackenburg, Rudolf. *The Church in the New Testament*. Trans. W.J. O'Hara. New York: Herder and Herder, 1968 (1965).

Seitz, Oscar J. F. *One Body and One Spirit: A Study of the Church in the New Testament*. Greenwich, CT: Seabury Press, 1960.

Ambrose University Important Policies & Procedures:

Registration

Registration is the process of selecting and enrolling in classes for upcoming semesters. Only students who are registered will be permitted to attend class and receive a grade for the course. You are responsible for ensuring that the courses you take are appropriate for your program, that they do not have any scheduling conflicts, that they have the necessary prerequisites and that they meet all degree requirements.

Withdrawal From A Course

Prior to the Add/Drop deadline: through the student registration system whereby course(s) will be removed with no academic or financial penalty. After the Add/Drop deadline and until the Withdrawal deadline: through submission of the 'Withdrawal from Course' form whereby course(s) will remain on the permanent academic record/transcript with the symbol 'W'. (See ambrose.edu/registrar/request-forms.) Students who withdraw from more than 30 credits attempted at Ambrose University will be required to withdraw from their program. Students considering withdrawing from courses are encouraged to discuss with their Faculty Advisor and/or the Office of the Registrar questions relating to their withdrawal decision specifically relating to financial assistance, study permit requirements, prerequisites for subsequent courses, readmission, and/or graduation timeline. Students who do not formally withdraw from a course are still considered registered in the course, even if they are no longer attending classes. In this case, students will be assigned a grade based on coursework completed as per the course syllabus and are responsible to pay the tuition and fees assessed for the course. Under extenuating circumstances, students may request from the Office of the Registrar a course(s) withdrawal after the Withdrawal deadline and until the last day of classes. Extenuating circumstances typically consider situations such as medical emergencies, compassionate grounds, or unforeseen conditions/situations beyond the students' control that arise after the start of the semester and are considered on a case-by-case basis. Supporting documentation from a physician or Registered Health Professional must accompany this request.

Coursework Extensions

Should a request for a time extension on coursework exceed the end of the term, a *Coursework Extension Application* must be completed and submitted to the Office of the Registrar. The extension (if granted) will be recorded on the student record. Extensions are granted at the discretion of the instructor and registrar. If granted, time extensions do not excuse you from a final examination where one has been scheduled for the course. More conditions apply.

Exam Scheduling

Students who find a conflict in their exam schedule must submit a *Revised Final Exam Time Application* to the Office of the Registrar by the deadline noted in the Academic Calendar. Requests will be considered for the following reasons only: 1) the scheduled final examination slot conflicts with another exam; or 2) the scheduled final examination slot results in three consecutive examination periods. Travel is not considered a valid excuse for re-scheduling or missing a final exam.

Communication

Your Ambrose email account is the University's primary and official mode of communication with you. Information delivered to your Ambrose email is considered official notification. Ambrose University is not responsible for your failure to receive important information delivered to your Ambrose email.

Lecture Recording

The recording of lectures or any other classroom academic activity, other than an audio recording as an accommodation, is prohibited except at the discretion of the instructor. Any use other than that agreed upon with the instructor constitutes academic misconduct and may result in suspension or expulsion. Permission to allow a lecture recording is not a transfer of any copyrights, so such recordings may be used only for individual or group study with other students enrolled in the same class and may not be reproduced, transferred, distributed or displayed in any public or commercial manner. Student must destroy recordings in any, and all formats at the end of the semester in which they are enrolled in the class. All students recording lectures, must sign the Permission Form to audio record lectures which is available through the Office of the Registrar.

Standards of Behaviour in the Classroom Setting

Learning is an active and interactive process, a joint venture between student and instructor and between student and student. Some topics covered within a class may lead to strong reactions and opinions. It is important that Students understand that they are entitled to hold contradictory beliefs and that they should be encouraged to engage with these topics in a critical manner. Committing to this type of "active learning" significantly increases the learning experience for both teacher and student, and reflects the Christian imperative to pursue truth, which lies at the heart of the Ambrose educational experience. However, active discussion of controversial topics will be undertaken with respect and empathy, which are the foundations of civil discourse in the Classroom Setting. Primary responsibility for managing the classroom rests with the instructor. The instructor may direct a student to leave the class if the student engages in any behaviour that disrupts the classroom setting. If necessary, Ambrose security will be contacted to escort the student from class.

Academic Integrity

We are committed to fostering personal integrity and will not overlook breaches of integrity such as plagiarism and cheating. Academic dishonesty is taken seriously at Ambrose University as it undermines our academic standards and affects the integrity of each member of our learning community. Any attempt to obtain credit for academic work through fraudulent, deceptive, or dishonest means is academic dishonesty. Plagiarism involves presenting someone else's ideas, words, or work as one's own. Plagiarism is fraud and theft, but plagiarism can also occur by accident when a student fails or forgets to acknowledge to another person's ideas or words. Plagiarism and cheating can result in a failing grade for an assignment, for the course, or immediate dismissal from the university. Students are expected to be familiar with the policies in the current Academic Calendar that

deal with plagiarism, cheating, and the penalties and procedures for dealing with these matters. All cases of academic dishonesty are reported to the Academic Dean and become part of the student's permanent record.

Academic Policies

It is the responsibility of all students to become familiar with and adhere to academic policies as stated in the Academic Calendar. The academic calendar can be found at <https://ambrose.edu/academics/academic-calendar>

Privacy

Personal information (information about an individual that may be used to identify that individual) may be required as part of taking this class. Any information collected will only be used and disclosed for the purpose for which the collection was intended. For further information contact the Privacy Compliance Officer at privacy@ambrose.edu.

Academic Success and Supports

Accessibility Services

Academic accommodation is provided to Ambrose students with disabilities in accordance with the Alberta Human Rights Act and the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Provision of academic accommodation does not lower the academic standards of the university nor remove the need for evaluation and the need to meet essential learning outcomes. Reasonable accommodations are tailored to the individual student, are flexible, and are determined by considering the barriers within the unique environment of a postsecondary institution. It can take time to organize academic accommodations and funding for disability-related services. Students with a disability who wish to have an academic accommodation are encouraged to contact Accessibility Services as early as possible to ensure appropriate planning for any needs that may include accommodations. Staff can then meet with students to determine areas to facilitate success, and if accommodations are required, ensure those accommodations are put in place by working with faculty.

Ambrose Writing Services

Ambrose Writing services provides academic support in the four foundational literacy skills—listening, speaking, reading, and writing. It also assists students with critical thinking and the research process. Throughout the academic year, students can meet with a writing tutor for personalized support, or they can attend a variety of workshops offered by Academic Success. These services are free to students enrolled at Ambrose University. Academic Success serves all students in all disciplines and at all levels, from history to biology and from theatre to theology. To learn more, please visit <https://ambrose.edu/sas/writing-services>

Ambrose Tutoring Services

Ambrose Tutoring Services provides support in specific disciplinary knowledge, especially in high-demand areas such as chemistry, philosophy, math and statistics, and religious studies. These tutors also coach students in general study skills, including listening and note-taking. During the academic year, Ambrose Tutoring Services

offers drop-in tutoring for courses with high demand; for other courses, students can book a one-to-one appointment with a tutor in their discipline. These services are free to students enrolled at Ambrose University. To learn more, please visit <https://ambrose.edu/tutoring>.

Mental Health Support

All of us need a support system. We encourage students to build mental health supports and to reach out when help is needed.

On Campus:

- Counselling Services: ambrose.edu/counselling
- For immediate crisis support, there are staff on campus who are trained in Suicide Intervention Skills and can help you access mental health support. See <https://ambrose.edu/student-life/crisissupport> for a list of staff members.
- For additional wellness resources go to the Ambrose wellness page: <https://ambrose.edu/wellness>

Off Campus:

- Distress Centre - 403-266-4357
- Alberta Mental Health Helpline - 1-877-303-2642 (Toll free)
- Sheldon Chumir Health Care Centre - 403-955-6200
- Emergency - 911

Sexual Violence Support

We are committed to supporting students who have experienced gender based sexual violence in the past or while at Ambrose. Many of the staff, faculty, and student leaders have received Sexual Violence Response to Disclosure training. We will support you and help you find the resources you need and you can access information about reporting. Information about the Sexual Violence policy and on and off campus supports can be found on our website— ambrose.edu/sexual-violence-response-and-awareness.

Off Campus:

- Alberta's Oneline for Sexual Violence - 1-866-403-8000 call or text
- Clinic: Sheldon Chumir Health Centre - 403-955-6200
- Calgary Communities Against Sexual Abuse - 403-237-5888
- Chat: www.calgarycasa.com

Note: Students are strongly advised to retain this syllabus for their records.