

**Department of Biblical and Religious Studies**  
**Term-Tenure Reading List**  
**October 2019 Revision**  
**(171 pages)**

**Pedagogy**

Crane, Richard D. "Method, MacIntyre, and Pedagogy: Inviting Students to Participate in Theology as a Living Conversation." *Teaching Theology and Religion* 19:3 (July 2016): 222-244. (23 pages)

- *Is it possible to teach undergraduate theology courses in a Christian institution in a way that respects students' own theological convictions while also promoting open academic inquiry? In this essay, theology professor Richard Crane draws on Alasdair MacIntyre's notions of "living traditions" and "tradition-constituted inquiry" to outline a pedagogical approach that holds promise for achieving these two objectives.*

Twenge, Jean M. "Irreligious: Losing My Religion (and Spirituality)," in Twenge, *iGen: Why Today's Super-Connected Kids Are Growing Up Less Rebellious, More Tolerant and Less Happy—and Completely Unprepared for Adulthood* (New York: Atria, 2017), 119-142 (24 pages)

- *Twenge outlines the decreasing religious commitment of the iGeneration (those born after 1995), arguing that iGens not simply less "religious" than previous generations, but also less "spiritual." Some iGen segments are more religious than others, she says—blacks more so than whites, higher socioeconomic status more so than lower SES—but the change transcends race and class divisions. While there is no simple explanation for this decline, Twenge suggests that iGens want "religion to be more positive and less negative, to focus on what to do rather than what not to do, and to accept everyone."*

**Biblical Studies**

Carroll R., M. Daniel. "Latino/Latina Biblical Interpretation," in *Scripture and Its Interpretation: A Global, Ecumenical Introduction to the Bible*, ed. Michael J. Gorman (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Academic, 2017), pp. 311-323. (12 pages)

- *While recognizing the complex hybridity of Latino/a identity and experience, Carroll sees "distinct realities of Latino/a history that can profoundly mark how the Bible is read." Liberation Theologies provide important grounding for interpretive methods that emphasize the experiences of displaced minority peoples.*

Katho, Bungishabaku. "African Biblical Interpretation," in *Scripture and Its Interpretation: A Global, Ecumenical Introduction to the Bible*, ed. Michael J. Gorman (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Academic, 2017), pp. 284-297. (14 pages)

- *Bungishabaku admits that, given the powerful and long-term influence of Western missionaries, biblical interpretation in Africa often represents a continuation of the Western academic approaches to biblical scholarship. Nonetheless, a more distinctive African method is becoming apparent, in particular a method that gives priority to the*

*“interaction between the biblical (con)text and the local community of the interpreter that receives the text.”*

Powery, Emerson and Rodney S. Sadler, Jr. “Summary and Hermeneutical Implications,” in Powery and Sadler, *The Genesis of Liberation: Biblical Interpretation in the Antebellum Narratives of the Enslaved* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2016), pp. 161-172. (12 pages)

- *In this concluding chapter to their book on African-American slaves’ use of the Bible, the authors consider the hermeneutical implications of their findings. While it’s true, they say, that many slaves held the Bible in high regard, their hermeneutical methods were deeply informed by the fact of their enslavement. In the final analysis, they argue, “many African American in the nineteenth century anticipate what many interpreters in the modern pluralistic society now assume: people cannot determine how to live and act ethically only by reading the Bible.”*

Witherup, Ronald D. “Roman Catholic Biblical Interpretation,” in *Scripture and Its Interpretation: A Global, Ecumenical Introduction to the Bible*, ed. Michael J. Gorman (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Academic, 2017), pp. 240-255. (16 pages)

- *Because the Roman Catholic Church views both Scripture and Tradition as sources of divine revelation, any understanding Catholic biblical interpretation must take into account the Church’s official teaching on relationship between Scripture and Tradition. Witherup identifies three principles, and seven accompanying “implications,” inherent to Catholic biblical scholarship. He also notes that, since Vatican II (1962-1965), the Bible has gained a more central role in the life of the Catholic Church, for instance, in its explicit use to support Catholic teaching on a vast number of topics.*

Yeo, K. K. “Asian and Asian American Biblical Interpretation,” in *Scripture and Its Interpretation: A Global, Ecumenical Introduction to the Bible*, ed. Michael J. Gorman (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Academic, 2017), pp. 324-335. (12 pages)

- *Yeo begins by warning readers that “difference surpasses commonality” in Asia, which means “there is very little common ground between biblical interpretations of Asians and Asian Americans and even among Asians themselves.” With that caveat in mind, Yeo notes that Asian biblical interpreters typically “value a practical approach” that honors distinctive contexts but also aims to build a “Christian faith of ecumenical respect and relations.” In addition, Asian biblical interpretations tend to focus on real-life issues of gender, health, and justice. In the course of navigating these issues, many Asian communities have given priority to Jesus’ lived experience as a person living on the margins and siding with marginal groups.*

### **Theology and Ministry**

Hoekema, David A. “A Practical Christian Pacifism.” *Christian Century*, October 22, 1982, pp. 917-919 (3 pages)

- *Calvinists, as well as other non-pacifists, have often criticized Christian pacifists for being politically naïve and having unrealistic assumptions about human nature. In this piece, David Hoekema defends Christian pacifism against a number of these objections, even as he advises pacifists to take their critics seriously.*

Moore, Rebecca. "Churchwomen on the Margins and in the Mainstream," in Moore, *Women in Christian Traditions* (New York: New York University Press, 2015), pp. 129-152. (24 pages)

- *Moore surveys the contributions of Christian women to various twentieth-century reform movements and considers their increasing prominence in formal roles of church leadership (e.g., ordination). While noting the increasing acceptance of women as full-fledged leaders, even in conservative Christian circles, she also notes insidious forms of resistance to their work, including sexual harassment and abuse. She concludes, "With great strides forward on the one hand, and serious steps backward on the other, [twentieth-century church] women have assumed leadership and, at the same time, confronted a number of challenges."*

Wilson-Hartgrove, Jonathan. "Immoral Majority" and "Racial Blindness," in *Reconstructing the Gospel: Finding Freedom from Slaveholder Religion* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 2018), pp. 25-56 (31 pages)

- *Wilson-Hartgrove considers the gospel through the lens of the racial injustice and white supremacy that have characterized much of US history. These two chapters very briefly describe the (primarily evangelical) church's preservation and perpetuation of a "slaveholder religion" in post-reconstruction through contemporary America, connecting American Christianity's "racial blindness" with the 2016 presidential election.*

### **Prompts:**

1. If the work of biblical interpretation and theology is always contextual—what does that mean for teaching theology and biblical studies at a place like Messiah College, where our students come from a wide range of families, churches, and communities?
2. How would you talk theologically and realistically about ministry in the church, given the church's historic involvement in, and its use of the Bible to justify, racism, sexism, and violence?