

Abingdon and Holston Presbyteries

Syllabus—Training for Commissioned Lay Pastors/Ruling Elders

Month One

- Introductions to one another, to the program, and to resources
- Reformed Worship—Theology and Order, Leadership and Participation, The Christian Year

Videos

- Theocademy
 - Reformed Worship Section— www.theocademy.com/reformed-worship
 - Lesson 1: The Meaning of Life...and Worship
 - Lesson 2: Service of the Lord's Day
 - Lesson 4: Leadership and Participation
 - Lesson 5: The Christian Year
 - Ordered Ministry Section—
www.theocademy.com/lessons-for-ruling-elders-and-deacons
 - Lesson 10: The Dynamics of Worship

Readings

- Book of Order
 - Directory for Worship (W)
 - Preface
 - Chapter One: The Theology of Christian Worship
 - Chapter Two: The Ordering of Reformed Worship
 - Chapter Three: The Service for the Lord's Day
 - Read W-3.01 until W-3.03, then W-3.05
 - Form of Government (G)
 - Chapter Two: Ordered Ministry, Commissioning, and Certification
 - Read G-2.01 through G-2.04, and G-2.10 and G-2.11

Preparation

- Watch the videos—take notes of key questions or topics to discuss
- Read the Book of Order selections--take notes of key questions or topics to discuss
- Write about your experiences participating in or leading worship (1/2 page)
- Make a list of your 3 favorite parts of a worship service, and a list of your 3 least favorite
- Begin journaling your daily prayer life for our next meeting

Month Two

- Reformed Worship—Sacraments, Baptism, and the Lord’s Supper
- Reformed Worship—Other Services
- Reformed Worship—Christian Life and Daily Prayer

Videos

- Theocadmy
 - Reformed Worship Section— www.theocademy.com/reformed-worship
 - Lesson 2: Service of the Lord’s Day (review Lord’s Supper section, which starts at 17:30)
 - Lesson 3: Baptism
 - Lesson 6: Daily Prayer
 - Ordered Ministry Section—
www.theocademy.com/lessons-for-ruling-elders-and-deacons
 - Lesson 12: The Sacraments in Worship
 - Lesson 13: Prayer and Song in Worship

Readings

- Book of Order
 - Directory for Worship (W)
 - Chapter Two: The Ordering of Reformed Worship
 - Read W-2.0303 and W-2.0304
 - Chapter Three: The Service for the Lord’s Day
 - Read W-3.04
 - Chapter Four: Pastoral and Occasional Services
 - Chapter Five: Worship and Christian Life
 - Read W-5.01

Preparation

- Watch the videos—take notes of key questions or topics to discuss
- Read the Book of Order selections—take notes of key questions or topics to discuss
- Write about your experiences participating in the sacraments (1/2 page)
- Reflect on the biblical aspects of the Christian Life—what scriptures are powerful to you?
- Journal your daily prayer life from our last meeting until this one

Month Three

- Reformed Theology—Introduction
- Reformed Theology—Eschatology and Grace, God and Creation, Humanity
- Reformed Theology—Who and What Is the Church?

Videos

- Theocademy
 - Reformed Theology Section— www.theocademy.com/reformed-theology
 - Lesson 1: Introduction
 - Lesson 2: Eschatology and Grace, God and Creation, Humanity
 - Ordered Ministry Section—
www.theocademy.com/lessons-for-ruling-elders-and-deacons
 - Lesson 3: Who Is the Church?
 - Lesson 4: What is the Church?

Readings

- Book of Order
 - Foundations of Presbyterian Polity (F)
 - Chapter One: The Mission of the Church
 - Form of Government (G)
 - Chapter One: Congregation and Their Membership
 - Chapter Two: Ordered Ministry, Commissioning, and Certification
 - Read G-2.05 through G-2.09
 - Directory of Worship (W)
 - Chapter Five: Worship and Christian Life
 - Read W-5.02 through W-5.04

Preparation

- Watch the videos—take notes of key questions or topics to discuss
- Read the Book of Order selections—take notes of key questions or topics to discuss
- Write about your questions from the theological concepts presented (1/2 page)
- Reflect on what the Church is? What is Christ's role? What is our role?

Month Four

- Reformed Theology—Sin and Christology, The Trinity
- Reformed Theology—Salvation and the Christian Life
- Reformed Theology—The Confessions

Videos

- Theocademy
 - Reformed Theology Section— www.theocademy.com/reformed-theology
 - Lesson 3: Sin and Christology
 - Lesson 4: The Trinity
 - Lesson 5: Salvation and the Christian Life
 - Ordered Ministry Section—
www.theocademy.com/lessons-for-ruling-elders-and-deacons
 - Lesson 5: Being a Confessional Church
 - Lesson 6: The Confessions

Readings

- Book of Order
 - Foundations of Presbyterian Polity (F)
 - Chapter Two: The Church and Its Confessions
- Book of Confessions
 - Confessional Nature of the Church Report – pages v-xxv
 - Assessment of Proposed Amendments – pages xxvi-xxxii

Preparation

- Watch the videos—take notes of key questions or topics to discuss
- Read the Book of Order and Book of Confessions selections—take notes
- Write about your experiences with creeds and confessions (1/2 page)
- Reflect on your understanding of salvation, sin, and Christ (1/2 page)

Month Five

- Biblical Interpretation for Preaching and Teaching
- The Old Testament
- The New Testament

Videos

- Theocademy
 - Interpretation Section— www.theocademy.com/interpretation
 - Lesson 1: Presuppositions
 - Lesson 2: Hermeneutics 101
 - Lesson 3: Ways of Seeing the Text
 - Lesson 4: Strategies of Interpretation
 - Ordered Ministry Section—
www.theocademy.com/lessons-for-ruling-elders-and-deacons
 - Lesson 11: The Word in Worship
 - Old Testament Section— www.theocademy.com/old-testament
 - Lesson 1: Canons, Terminology, and Divisions
 - New Testament Section— www.theocademy.com/new-testament
 - Lesson 1: What Is the New Testament?

Readings

- Book of Order
 - Foundations for Presbyterian Polity (F)
 - F-1.0203 – Christ’s Will
 - F-1.0401 – Basis for Presbyterian Government
 - Directory for Worship (W)
 - W-3.0103 – Centrality of Scripture
 - W-2.0304, W-3.0301, W-3.0305 – Preaching
 - W-1.0302 – Inclusive
 - W-1.0202 – Use of Lectionaries

Preparation

- Watch the videos—take notes of key questions or topics to discuss
- Read the Book of Order selections—take notes of key questions or topics to discuss
- Write about your experiences interpreting scripture in general (1/2 page)
- Make a list of your 3 favorite OT passages and 3 favorite NT passages

Month Six

- Old Testament: Pentateuch, Creation, Exodus, Settlement, Prophets, Kings, Exile
- New Testament: Five Narratives, Apostle Paul and Followers, Letters/Sermons, Revelation

Videos

- Theocademy
 - Old Testament Section— www.theocademy.com/old-testament
 - Lesson 2: Constructing the Pentateuch
 - Lesson 3: Creation, Exodus, and Settlement
 - Lesson 4: Prophets and Kings
 - Lesson 5: Divided Monarchy, Exile, and Diaspora
 - New Testament Section— www.theocademy.com/new-testament
 - Lesson 2: The Five Narratives
 - Lesson 3: Apostle Paul and His Followers
 - Lesson 4: Letters and Sermons
 - Lesson 5: The Revelation of John

Readings

- Old Testament
 - Read 1 book each from the Pentateuch, the Histories, the Prophets, and 10 Psalms
- New Testament
 - Read 1 book each from the Gospels, a Letter, a Sermon, and Revelation

Preparation

- Watch the videos—take notes of key questions or topics to discuss
- Write some reflection of the book(s) of the Bible that you read (1/2 page)
- Journal about HOW you read the Bible for this class; what was different than usual?
- Pray before and after each scripture you read; model this in worship this week!

Month Seven

- Polity of the Presbyterian Church (USA)
- Heritage of the Presbyterian Church (USA)
- Conducting Session Meetings!

Videos

- Ordered Ministry Section—
www.theoacademy.com/lessons-for-ruling-elders-and-deacons
 - Lesson 2: Being Leaders
 - Lesson 8: Principles of Order and Government
 - Lesson 9: Councils of the Church
 - Lesson 7: A Brief Statement of Faith

Readings

- Book of Order
 - Form of Government
 - Chapter Two: Ordered Ministry, Commissioning, and Certification
 - Read G-2.10 and G-2.11
 - Chapter Three: Councils of the Church
 - Read G-3.01 through G-3.05
 - Chapter Four: The Church and Civil Authority
 - Read G-4.01 through G-4.03
 - Chapter Five: Ecumenicity and Union
 - Read G-5.01 through G-5.05
- Book of Confessions
 - Apostles Creed
 - Nicene Creed
 - A Brief Statement of Faith

Preparation

- Watch the videos—take notes of key questions or topics to discuss
- Read the Book of Order selections—take notes of key questions or topics to discuss
- Read the Book of Confessions selections (plus any others you like)—what surprised you?
- Reflect on participating “decently and in order” as a practice of faith and witness
- Write your own personal statement of faith (1 page)
- Be ready to hold a mock Session meeting!