

Northern Texas Northern Louisiana Synod

Parish Lay Mission Academy

Instituto Académico de Laicos

Course Syllabus

Spring 2025

Course: New Testament

Instructor: Rev. Kendra Mohn, PhD

Dates: March 8, April 12, May 10

Instructor Contact Information:

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Course Descriptions: This course is a (very) broad overview of the diverse texts that make up the New Testament. Students will be introduced to issues and concepts that surround the composition and interpretation of these texts, and then engage with selected sections to deepen the application of those concepts.

Course Objectives:

- Students will become familiar with the literary forms, theological perspectives, and historical (Roman imperial) contexts that characterize the New Testament Texts.
- Students will be exposed to different methodological tools available, and begin to develop their own skills, for spoken and written theological interpretation.
- Students will identify and utilize Lutheran hermeneutical perspectives in the interpretation of Scripture, particularly Law/Gospel dialectic.
- Students will engage one particular text in a focused manner, incorporating the learning from this course.

Course Texts:

1. Bible. Your choice. Preferably a NRSV Study Bible (can be used alongside whatever you personally use). A good option is the SBL Study Bible (Society of Biblical Literature) ISBN: 0062969439 (\$45 on Amazon)
2. *Introducing the New Testament: A Historical, Literary, and Theological Survey*. 2nd Edition. Mark Allan Powell. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2018. ISBN: **978-0801099601** (hardcover, paperback, used, and electronic versions available at varying price points)

3. *Seven Events That Shaped The New Testament World*. Warren Carter. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2013. ISBN: 978-0801039164 (Paperback, used and new, available on Amazon and other retailers)

Session I: Introduction to the New Testament and its Context

Topics:

- Overview of the New Testament: Structure and Themes
- Historical Context: The Jewish and Greco-Roman Worlds
- Discussion of Powell's Chapters 1-3

****Assignment 1**** On the first day of class, we will do an in-class “quick-write,” where you answer the question: Where did the New Testament come from? There is no right answer to this, and no particular format is expected. It is intended to start the process of exploring your engagement with the NT texts in a different way. The point is to get a sense of where you come from and where you are in your engagement with the NT.

Session II: Key Events and Their Impact on Early Christianity

Topics:

- Exploration of the Seven Key Events from Carter's Book
- The Life and Ministry of Jesus: Implications for the Early Church
- Discussion of Powell's Chapters 4-6

****Assignment 2**** Choose one of the seven events discussed in Carter's book and write a 1-2 page paper on its significance for the development of early Christian thought and practice. Include references to both Carter and Powell. This paper is due the day of our second meeting

Session III: The New Testament's Message and Its Relevance Today

Topics:

- Theological Themes in the New Testament: Law and Gospel
- The Role of Community in the Early Church
- Discussion of Powell's Chapters 7-9 and Conclusion

****Assignment 3**** **Option A:** Use the NTNL Chatbot to ask a question about a NT biblical text. Interact with their interpretation in a 1-2 page essay. What did it get right? How would you change the answer? **Option B:** Write a 1-2 page essay discussing how the historical context of the New Testament enhances our reading of the text today. This assignment is due the day of our third meeting.

The Solace NTNL AI Bot is a 24/7 on-demand digital assistant, currently in beta, curated around Lutheran doctrines and NTNL/ELCA social statements, that supports deeper theological research and reflection throughout your PLMA journey. The link is: <https://ntnl.solace-ai.com/>