

COURSE TITLE:

Indigenous Christian Theology: A Sacred Journey of Spiritual Renewal, Faith and Hope
Course ID BTS5700J

CANADIAN MENNONITE UNIVERSITY, course location St. John's College UM

Course Syllabus –preliminary draft copy

Instructors:

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Date: Fall term 2021: Sept 8 – Dec 7 2021

Lecture times: Fall term Tuesday evenings 6pm-9pm

Dates: Sept 14, 21, 28, Oct 5, 12, 19, 26, Nov 2, 16, 23, 30, Dec 7.

Note: no class on Nov 9th Reading week.

Exam: no exams

Last date for voluntary withdrawal without academic penalty: November 16, 2021

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This 3-credit hour course will provide students with a foundation of understanding of the spiritual knowledge of Indigenous peoples, on the Land that we find ourselves today. Indigenous instructors will examine Indigenous wisdom within the context of Christian belief, while honouring Indigenous and Christian ways of knowing God. Students will have the opportunity to enhance their own theological understanding of Indigenous spiritual practice, while respectfully affirming Indigenous beliefs within God's creation and love manifest through the grace of Jesus Christ.

OBJECTIVES

Upon the successful completion of this course, students should be able to:

- understand basic components of Indigenous sacred spirituality and have had the opportunity to hear Indigenous story, values, and importance of symbols.
- learn how Old Testament Scriptures link to Indigenous wisdom and teachings.
- understand the integration of spirituality within the whole of the Indigenous experience.

- learn about Indigenous Anglican self-determination within the Anglican Church of Canada.
- explore modern challenges that are still in front of us on this path of reconciliation.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOK(S)

Sinclair, Niigaanwewidam James, and Warren Cariou, **Manitowapow: Aboriginal Writings from the Land of Water**, (Highwater Press, Winnipeg MB, 2011).

This anthology of Aboriginal writings from Manitoba takes readers back through the millennia and forward to the present day, painting a dynamic picture of a territory interconnected through words, ideas, and experiences. A rich collection of stories, poetry, nonfiction, and speeches, it features: Historical writings, from important figures. Vibrant literary writing by eminent Aboriginal writers. Nonfiction and political writing from contemporary Aboriginal leaders. Local storytellers and keepers of knowledge from far-reaching Manitoba communities. New, vibrant voices that express the modern Aboriginal experiences. Anishinaabe, Cree, Dene, Inuit, Métis, and Sioux writers from Manitoba. Created in the spirit of the Anishinaabe concept *debwe* (to speak the truth), The *Debwe Series* is a collection of exceptional Aboriginal writing from across Canada. *Manitowapow*, a one-of-a-kind anthology, is the first book in The *Debwe Series*. *Manitowapow* is the traditional name that became Manitoba, a word that describes the sounds of beauty and power that created the province.

Friesen, John W. **Aboriginal Spirituality & Biblical Theology: Closer than You Think**, (Calgary Alberta, Detselig Enterprises Ltd, 2000).

The dawning of the twenty-first century has witnessed a more global philosophical outlook among North Americans. A healthy curiosity has motivated investigations into wider parameters of philosophical thought, including Aboriginal spirituality. This book not only offers an in-depth look at First Nations' theology, but parallels its key themes with Old Testament Hebraic thought, which comprises the roots of Christianity. The first chapters of the book outline the common tribal histories of North American Indians and Old Testament Jews. Key doctrines central to both Aboriginal and Biblical theology are then compared and contrasted in language readily understood by the layman. These include the doctrine of God, anthropology, epistemology, soteriology, deontology and eschatology. Parallels in the way spiritual leadership is viewed by Aboriginal Peoples, Hebrews and Christians are drawn, and the final chapter features a special case study of the Stoney Nation.

Additional Readings in the form of articles will be provided.

- *First Peoples Theology Journal, Volume 4, No 1, June 2006*
- *First Peoples Theology Journal, Volume 2, No 1, September 2001*
- *First Peoples Theology Journal Special Edition, 2010*
- *One Church Many Tribes: Following Jesus the Way God Made you, 2000*
- *Various website articles and links*

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND DUE DATES

METHOD OF EVALUATION:

Participation 10%

Journal Submission 5X10% = 50%

Final Paper 40%

Grading Scheme:

1. **Informed Participation: (10%)**

Students are expected to have read the required reading material prior to each class and expected to contribute actively and knowledgeably to the class-room discussion. 10% participation grade, students must give evidence of having read the material with care and insight.

2. **Journal 10% per entry X 5 submissions (50%) submitted electronically**

Students will write five journal entries on the topics covered during class.

- All assignments should have a title page containing all of the pertinent information, Student Name, Student Number and email contact information
- Pdf file name should begin with the student's surname and designate the particular assignment (e.g. J. Smith Journal Entry 1.doc)
- Each Journal entry will be sent to the designated facilitator by email as a pdf attachment.
- Journal entries should be three pages in length, (750 words, double spaced, Times New Roman Format, font 12 and in Chicago Style format.)
- The student should offer a theological/spiritual reflection upon the material that they have encountered in the previous class. Explore holding Indigenous Spirituality and Christian Faith in relationship, using the Indigenous ways of knowing God as an important base to your reflection.
- Submissions: **Sept 28th, Oct 12th, Oct 26th, Nov 16th, Nov 30th, 2021.**

3. **Final Research Paper (40%) December 7th 2021**

Provide a ten-page research essay (minimum 2500 words, double spaced, Time New Romans font 12, Chicago Style format). The title page will include the title of your paper, course number, your full name and student number. The topic should be on the challenges and opportunities in worship/spiritual practices that combine Indigenous and Christian sources. Consider both theological and biblical arguments for such practices. A bibliography should also be provided, with at least eight sources. Please submit the final paper by email to t.kolisnyk@uwinnipeg.ca by the due date of December 7th 2021. Upon receipt, an email response will be sent to you to confirm your submission.

4. Limitation on use of social media

Please note, any and all materials from the zoom classes, including screen capture pictures of fellow students or professors and Elders cannot be posted on Facebook or any other social media without the express consent of the effected individuals.

LATE SUBMISSION POLICY

Deadlines for journal entry submissions are non-negotiable, except in emergency situations. Extensions may be granted but only before the due date and with a valid reason, at the instructor's discretion. Should a student be absent on the day of the submission deadline, the assignments are to be submitted electronically, therefore, they will still be due on the date indicated.

If the Final Research Paper is not completed and submitted by the deadline, due to circumstances beyond a student's control, the student will need to follow CMU policy in regard to their appeal policy for Incomplete Term Work appeals, obtaining permission from the registrar's office.

NOTE: Grades are not final until vetted and approved by the Dean's Office.

STYLISTIC REQUIREMENTS

All written work is to be size 12 Times New Roman font, double spaced with one-inch margins on all sides. For citation style, please follow Chicago Manual of Style 17th Edition.

CMU has adopted the following as its standard guide for all academic writing:

Hacker, Diana. *A Pocket Style Manual*. Eighth edition. Boston and New York: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2018.

ON-CAMPUS HEALTH GUIDELINES

Being on campus

As a general assumption, students, staff, and faculty are encouraged to be on campus according to their regular schedule when they are well and while symptom free, and to not be on campus when they are not well. This means not attending when a person:

- a) Is sick with a cold or flu, or having other COVID-19 like symptoms
- b) Is immuno-compromised or otherwise at health risk
- c) Lives with a child or a family member who is at health risk
- d) Is facing discomfort related to pandemic risks
- e) Learns online given inability to come from another country
- f) Has COVID-19 impacted childcare responsibilities

Students who meet one or more of the criteria listed above and seek exemption from attending classes in person all semester must complete the online studies form available at www.cmu.ca/onlinestudiesform.

Notification Protocol

For purposes of potential contact tracing, students, staff, and faculty are required to submit the online notification form available on the CMU website when they will not be present on campus for class, work, or any other regularly scheduled activity. The form may be found at www.cmu.ca/notificationform.

Self-Screening

To reduce the potential risk of COVID-19 to the community, students, staff, and faculty must complete the Manitoba Health COVID-19 online screening tool daily before they come onto campus or leave their residence room. Recommendations from the shared health screening tool must be followed. The Manitoba Health COVID-19 online screening found at <https://sharedhealthmb.ca/covid19/screening-tool>.

Related Links

Government of Manitoba's "About COVID-19," including notable symptoms:
<https://www.gov.mb.ca/covid19/updates/about.html>

Government of Manitoba Screening Tool, including contact info for Health Links:
<https://sharedhealthmb.ca/covid19/screening-tool/>

[CMU Education and Operations 2020-21 Framework](#)

CMU's COVID-19 Updates and Resources: <https://www.cmu.ca/covid-19/>

Student FAQ regarding COVID-19: <https://www.cmu.ca/covid-19/faq-students.php>

CONTINUITY PLANS DURING COVID-19

If a hybrid model is needed, please refer to
<https://moodle.cmu.ca/mod/url/view.php?id=15314>

Faculty at CMU will do our best to accommodate learning when individuals need to remain absent from campus for reasons listed above, under "On-Campus Health Guidelines." In order to facilitate this, **all individuals should plan to follow the *Continuity Plans for Individuals as defined below***.

In addition to this, **individuals that anticipate needing to stay off campus for the duration of the semester** should note your situation to Academic Office as soon as possible. The VPA's office will work with the Academic Office, Information Technology and the Coordinator of Accessibility programs and the relevant faculty members to accommodate remote learning.

Continuity plans for individual students: what to do if you can't come to class

If the circumstances are that you cannot attend class, please send an email prior to the beginning of the class. Send the email to t.kolisnyk@uwinnipeg.ca Indicate your name, student number and date of absence and circumstances. Every effort will be taken to provide notes from the class. Please note that the class has experiential learning pieces that cannot be captured by notes alone. Zoom technology may be an on-line tool that will help during these circumstances.

Continuity plans for the course if the instructor cannot come to class

If the circumstances are that the instructors cannot be in class, class materials will be sent to you for your review by email. You will be notified by email if the class is cancelled. Please note that the class has experiential learning pieces that cannot be captured by notes alone. Zoom technology may be an on-line tool that will help during these circumstances.

Continuity plans for the course in the event of campus closure

If the circumstances are that the campus is closed due to circumstances beyond our control, you will be notified by email. Please note that the class has experiential learning pieces that cannot be captured by notes alone. Zoom technology may be an on-line tool that will help during these circumstances.

OTHER REQUIRMENTS

Academic Integrity—All material referred to in any assignment MUST be appropriately referenced. Plagiarism is a serious matter. Students should be aware of CMU Academic Policies, particularly those regarding academic misconduct (plagiarism and cheating), which apply to all University courses. These are detailed on CMU's website (<http://www.cmu.ca/students.php?s=registrar&p=policies>) and in the CMU Calendar. If you still have questions about appropriate referencing and what plagiarism is, a useful tutorial can be found here: <http://www.indiana.edu/~istd/>.

For more information on CMU policies regarding grades, academic misconduct, appeals, and other matters, please see CMU's *Academic Calendar*.

ACCESSIBILITY

CMU strives to provide a fair and supportive learning environment for academically qualified students with disabilities. If you are eligible for these services or have questions about becoming eligible, please contact Sandra Loeppky, Coordinator of Accessibility Programs at sloepky@cmu.ca or 204.487.3300 x.340.

In recognition of individuals with asthma, allergies and severe environmental/chemical sensitivities, CMU is striving to become a scent-free campus. Students, staff and guests are asked to refrain from wearing fragrances and scented personal care products at CMU. This includes perfumes, colognes, aftershave and scented hair products. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated by those affected.

SUPPORT SERVICES

Academic

Student studying, tutoring, and the Peer Assisted Learning (PAL) program are offered to CMU students free of charge in the Marpeck Mezzanine.

Counselling

University students face many challenges and at times may benefit from having a trained professional to talk to. There are qualified counsellors at CMU who volunteer their services free of charge to students on the CMU campus. Students wishing to book an appointment with a counsellor are asked to contact the North Side Receptionist at 204.487.3300 or info@cmu.ca. Confidentiality is maintained at all times.

Counselling office: C365 (north side)

Cost: Free for CMU students

GRADE SCALE

Letter Grade	Percentage	Grade Points	Descriptor
A+	95-100	4.5	Exceptional
A	88-94	4	Excellent
B+	81-87	3.5	Very Good
B	74-80	3	Good
C+	67-73	2.5	Satisfactory
C	60-66	2	Adequate
D	50-59	1	Marginal
F	0-49	0	Failure

Scheduled Topics and Readings: Note additional articles provided and Elder's Teachings

TOPIC	Articles	Resources
Land Acknowledgements		
Indigenous Symbols		
Sacred Medicines		
Traditional Wisdom	The Doctrine of God Role of Prophets and Elders pp99-107	Aboriginal Spirituality & Biblical Theology; Closer than you think John Friesen, 2000 Detselig Ent Ltd.
Traditional Wisdom	Traditional Systems of Writing in Manitowapow pp 7-16	Manitowapow: Aboriginal writings from the land of water/edited by Niigannawewidam James Sinclair and Warren Cariou, 2011 Highwater Press, Wpg MB
Smudge Ceremony - teaching		
Connection to the Land	An Indigenous Theology of Place and Land, Archbishop Mark McDonald	https://journalofmissionalpractice.com/Indigenous-land/
Sacred Places	The Land is not merely soil pp53-71, Sacred Places pp76-96	Aboriginal Spirituality & Biblical Theology; Closer than you think John Friesen, 2000 Detselig Ent Ltd.

Origin Stories	James Redsky - The Creation of Man page 107-108	Manitowapow: Aboriginal writings from the land of water/edited by Niigannawewidam James Sinclair and Warren Cariou, 2011 Highwater Press, Wpg MB
Story Telling	The Significance of Storytelling pp114- 119	Aboriginal Spirituality & Biblical Theology; Closer than you think John Friesen, 2000 Detselig Ent Ltd.
Gospel Based Discipleship		
NOTE: 1st Journal Entry Submission due Sept 28th		
Trickster Stories	"Niskesis and the Little People: Alex Grisdale pp85-86	Manitowapow: Aboriginal writings from the land of water/edited by Niigannawewidam James Sinclair and Warren Cariou, 2011 Highwater Press, Wpg MB
Trickster Stories	The Origins of the Wetigo - Elders of Moose Lake pp141-142	Manitowapow: Aboriginal writings from the land of water/edited by Niigannawewidam James Sinclair and Warren Cariou, 2011 Highwater Press, Wpg MB
Indigenous Ways of Governance	Spiritual Leadership, Indigenous, Old Testament, New Testment pp139- 149	Aboriginal Spirituality & Biblical Theology; Closer than you think John Friesen, 2000 Detselig Ent Ltd.
Indigenous Ways of Governance	Changing the Colonial Hierarchy model: Archbishop Mark McDonald	www.anglican.ca/im/files/2010/11/11.02-ACIPconceptpaperonIndigenousGovernance.pdf
Sharing Circle: Talking Stick Teaching		-
Doctrine of Discovery	Theological Comparisons and Contrasts: Christopher Columbus pp132- 133	Aboriginal Spirituality & Biblical Theology; Closer than you think John Friesen, 2000 Detselig Ent Ltd.
Doctrine of Discovery	Message from the Grand Chief David Courchene Sr, pp 127- 131	Manitowapow: Aboriginal writings from the land of water/edited by Niigannawewidam James Sinclair and Warren Cariou, 2011 Highwater Press, Wpg MB
Smudging Prayer in a Christian/Indigenous observance		
Note: 2nd Journal Entry Submission due Oct 12th		

Trigger Warning: the content reviewed today focuses on the difficult issue of Residential Schools and can trigger painful memories for some, especially those who have experienced trauma in their own lives.		
Residential School Legacy	Killing the Indian in the Child, Ted Fontaine pp 176-180	Manitowapow: Aboriginal writings from the land of water/edited by Niigannawewidam James Sinclair and Warren Cariou, 2011 Highwater Press, Wpg MB
Residential School Legacy	Generations Ends/Beginning, Graphic Novel by David Robertson pp379-383	Manitowapow: Aboriginal writings from the land of water/edited by Niigannawewidam James Sinclair and Warren Cariou, 2011 Highwater Press, Wpg MB
Residential School Legacy	Reminiscences of St. Paul's Industrial School, Middlechurch pp77-79	Manitowapow: Aboriginal writings from the land of water/edited by Niigannawewidam James Sinclair and Warren Cariou, 2011 Highwater Press, Wpg MB
Residential School Legacy	Statement to the Pope - Phil Fontaine Ft. Alex Indian Res Sch pp193-196	Manitowapow: Aboriginal writings from the land of water/edited by Niigannawewidam James Sinclair and Warren Cariou, 2011 Highwater Press, Wpg MB
Residential School Legacy	A Mother's Promise - Residential generation impact pp 400-401	Manitowapow: Aboriginal writings from the land of water/edited by Niigannawewidam James Sinclair and Warren Cariou, 2011 Highwater Press, Wpg MB
Gospel Based Discipleship		
Generational Impact of Residential School	Suicide in First Nations People - Senator Murray Sinclair pp234-245	Manitowapow: Aboriginal writings from the land of water/edited by Niigannawewidam James Sinclair and Warren Cariou, 2011 Highwater Press, Wpg MB
Generational Impact, 60's Scoop	Come Walk with me - 60's scoop - impact warning pp 225-229	Manitowapow: Aboriginal writings from the land of water/edited by Niigannawewidam James Sinclair and Warren Cariou, 2011 Highwater Press, Wpg MB
Sacred Circle	Life Together, pp5-6, Journey pp10-11, The Gospel for Turtle Island pp15-16	http://rupertslandnews.ca/november-magazine-2015/
Sharing Circle		
Note: 3rd Journal Entry Submission due October 26		

Self Determination of Indigenous People in the Church	Indigenous Anglicans in Canada: A New Agape and the Path to Self-determination	https://winnspace.uwinnipeg.ca/handle/10680/15/browse?type=author&value=Kolisnyk%2C+Tanis
		http://rupertslandnews.ca/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/FINAL-full-MARCH-9-2015-TK.pdf
Metis History Red River Resistance	People of Rupert'sLand and the North West - Louis Rielpp39-42	Manitowapow: Aboriginal writings from the land of water/edited by Niigannawewidam James Sinclair and Warren Cariou, 2011 Highwater Press, Wpg MB
Modern Resistance First Nations	The Seventh Generation - Clayton Thomas Muller, pp367 - 369	Manitowapow: Aboriginal writings from the land of water/edited by Niigannawewidam James Sinclair and Warren Cariou, 2011 Highwater Press, Wpg MB
Smudging Prayer in a Christian/Indigenous observance		
In an effort to become the people that God intended us to be, as equal partners in a new shared journey of healing, how do we move forward towards wholeness and justice?		
Mutual Respect	The Doctrine of God in Traditional Plains First Nations' Theology pp 97-104	Aboriginal Spirituality & Biblical Theology; Closer than you think John Friesen, 2000 Detselig Ent Ltd.
Various Apologies/efforts of Canadian Christian Church	ACC, ELCIC, RC, MB, UCC etc	
National Inquiry	MMIWG2S+ Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women & Girls & 2 Spirit + initiatives	https://www.mmiwg-ffada.ca/final-report
Indigenous Christian Evening Prayer Service	Epiphany Indigenous Anglican Church resource	
Note: 4th Journal Entry Submission due Nov 16		

Reconciliation Efforts	United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People (UNDRIP)	
	Truth and Reconciliation Commission: 94 Calls to Action	
	From Chief Pequis and His Descendants pp109-112	Manitowapow: Aboriginal writings from the land of water/edited by Niigannawewidam James Sinclair and Warren Cariou, 2011 Highwater Press, Wpg MB
	The Challenge, Awareness, Indian Act pp 20-22	Aboriginal Spirituality & Biblical Theology; Closer than you think John Friesen, 2000 Detselig Ent Ltd.
	What Canada means to me: Elijah Harper pp200-204	Manitowapow: Aboriginal writings from the land of water/edited by Niigannawewidam James Sinclair and Warren Cariou, 2011 Highwater Press, Wpg MB
Indigenous Evening Prayer Service		
Incorporating Indigenous Ways of knowing God into Christian Services	A New Agape Resource	https://www.anglican.ca/im/foundational-documents/anewagape/
	Group Work with various templates and Demonimational resources.	
	What are various denominations doing, remember the TRC calls to action?	
Gospel Based Discipleship		
Note: 5th Journal Entry Submission due Nov 30		
The Way Forward	Highlighting Healing for Indigenous People in their communities and Urban centres	
Indigenous Teachers	Thanks, Mr. Paul, for All Your Help, page 254-356	Manitowapow: Aboriginal writings from the land of water/edited by Niigannawewidam James Sinclair and Warren Cariou, 2011 Highwater Press, Wpg MB

Language	Aabiding E-niibing Gichi- mookomaanakiing, Once on the Summer pp229- 234	Manitowapow: Aboriginal writings from the land of water/edited by Niigannawewidam James Sinclair and Warren Cariou, 2011 Highwater Press, Wpg MB
Reflections from within the Indigenous Community	Our Beloved Land and You, Poet Bernelda Wheeler page 152-155	Manitowapow: Aboriginal writings from the land of water/edited by Niigannawewidam James Sinclair and Warren Cariou, 2011 Highwater Press, Wpg MB
Sharing Circle		
FINAL ESSAY DUE Dec 7		
Cultural Celebration	Food, Music, Ceremony	

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Land. Page 11-15, Minneapolis, MN: Indigenous Theological Training Institute, July 2000.

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