

In the Mystery: Community and Creed in Process Hedgerow Seminar, Spring 2018

Evolution is our story; Earth, our common home, where we are part of an interconnected, unfolding whole. New science and theologies help us name our experience, probe our questions, and direct our prayers. In our new framework we find God, long imagined above and apart, now more immanent—with, in, and among us.

New questions provoke new language to open our theological imaginations to fresh insights. This course journeys toward the 25th anniversary of the transformative 1993 Re-Imagining Conference using texts by ecofeminist theologian Elizabeth Johnson, CSJ, and process theologian Catherine Keller. Johnson nourishes the Creed with living tradition of her book *She Who Is* and helps us recognize the Spirit in our experience. Keller leads us beyond the binary, the absolute and the dissolute, to the resolute, to commitment and action.

Untangle the God you believe in. Seek the way of the resolute as the medieval mystic Hadewijch describes:

*Since I gave myself to Love's service,
Whether I lose or win,
I am resolved:
I will always give her thanks,
Whether I lose or win;
I will stand in her power.*

Primary Texts:

Elizabeth Johnson, *She Who Is: The Mystery of God in Feminist Theological Discourse* (Crossroads 1992) and Catherine Keller, *On the Mystery: Discerning Divinity in Process* (Fortress Press 2008).

Instructors: Joan Mitchell, CSJ, PhD; Mary Kay Medinger, MA, Reverend Barbara Lund; Nancy Victorin-Vangerud, PhD; MA and guest lecturers.

Feb 12 What is your Creed?, with Joan Mitchell
Seeking the Living God, Nourishing Faith with the Living Tradition,
Myser Lecture 2008, Elizabeth Johnson, CSJ.

Feb 19 Revisiting *She Who Is: The Mystery of God in Feminist Theological Discourse*, "Spirit Sophia, Jesus Sophia, Wisdom Sophia," Chapters 7-9, with Mary Kay Medinger

Feb 26 *She Who Is: "Triune God: Mystery of Relations,"* Chapter 10, with Joan Mitchell

- *Freeing Theology, "God in Communion with Us",* Catherine LaCugna, 81-201.
- *Quest for the Living God, "Creator Spirit in the Evolving World" (divine agency),*, Chapter 9, 181-201. (Johnson)
- *Ask the Beasts, "The Dwelling Place of God",* Chapter 5, 122-153. (Johnson)

- *Ask the Beasts*, “Free Empowered Creation,” Chapter 6, 154-180. (Johnson)

Mar 12 *She Who Is: “One Living God: She Who Is,”* Chapter 11, “Trinity, the Living God of Love,” Chapter *Quest*, Johnson, Chapter 10, 202-225, with Mary Kay Medinger.

Mar 19 NO CLASS

Mar 26 Introduction to the seven theological tensions Catherine Keller explores in *On the Mystery: Discerning God in Process*, “Prologue; Seven Signs” and “Come, My Way: Theology as Process.” Chapter 1.

Explore the mirror dance of the absolute and the dissolute where the resolute arises!, with Colleen Carpenter from St. Catherine’s Theology Department.

April 2 Catherine Keller, *On the Mystery*, with Nancy Victorin Vangerud from Hamline University.

“Come, My Way: Theology as Process.” Chapter. 1

“Pilate’s Shrug: Theology as Truth” Chapter 2

Holding on to mystery and performing the truth we have.

April 9 Catherine Keller, *On the Mystery*, with Nancy Victorin Vangerud.

“Be This Fish, Creation in Process,” Chapter 3

Swimming within the depth (the chaos) that bears and births us.

April 16 *Rambunctious Garden: Living in a Post-Wild World*, with Emma Marris and Jill Welter, A biologist and a nature writer look at our evolving, overheating world.

“The Community of Creation,” *Ask the Beasts*, Johnson 260-286

April 23 Catherine Keller, *On the Mystery*, “After Omnipotence: Power as Process,” Chapter 4 and “Risk the Adventure: Passion in Process,” Chapter 5. Love opens a space of becoming. The divine lure. Living the way of the resolute.

- Also, *Dancing with God*, Karen Baker Fletcher, Chapter 7, “More Than Suffering: the Healing, Resurrecting God.”, with Joan Mitchell.

April 30 Catherine Keller, *On the Mystery*, “Sticky Justice: Compassion in Process,” Chapter 6. Persistence in love and forgiveness. “Jesus the Parable: Christ as Process,” Chapter 7, with Colleen Carpenter.

Also, we’ll review Sue Monk Kidd’s book, *The Secret Life of Bees*.

May 7 Keller, *On the Mystery*, “Open Ending: Spirit in Process,” Chapter 8, with Barbara Lund.

- “Creator Spirit in the Evolving World,” *Quest*, Chp 9, 181-201.

- *Dancing with God: The Trinity from a Womanist Perspective*, Karen Baker Fletcher, “The Breath of God, Providing, Nurturing Spirit,” Chapter 3. “The Pulse of God, The Passionate Spirit of God,” Chapter 6.
- “Trinity: The Living God of Love,” *Quest for the Living God*, Johnson, 202-228.

May 14 Creative Sharing: Options for Integration