

Hedgerow Fall 2020 The Mercy of God for a Planet in Peril

In this video course Elizabeth Johnson rethinks and reimagines the mystery of God in our unfinished world and fraught times. Her book *Creation and the Cross* engages us seekers in critical and creative dialogue with Anselm's feudal satisfaction theology that makes Jesus' death necessary to restore his Father's honor. In our culture today satisfaction theology turns God into an abusive father and makes Jesus, a victim.

Instead, Johnson places Jesus' death and resurrection in today's evolutionary and cosmic context, connecting human suffering with the suffering of all creation. What are we experiencing as Covid-19 has disconnected us from each other, made racism visible in health care and housing, raised havoc with people's livelihoods.

What do we experience in the protests that seek justice for all who know the knee on the neck that killed George Floyd. Protest litanies insist we say his name and the names of those killed before and since. Black Lives Matter. How do the brokenness and suffering embedded within the lands, waters, and the shared lives of beings in our planetary ecologies speak to us? How do we live resurrection, the mystery of God's life-giving surprise? Our virtual class will zoom with Professor Johnson for questions on November 9.

On Zoom, Mondays, 6:30-8:30 pm, September 28-December 7, 2020

Instructors: Colleen Carpenter, PhD.; Nancy Victorin-Vangerud, PhD, Andrea Pearson Tande, MA; Joan Mitchell, CSJ, PhD

Text: *Creation and the Cross: The Mercy of God for a Planet in Peril*, Elizabeth Johnson, CSJ, Also excerpts from *Ask the Beasts: Darwin and the God of Love*, *Friends of God and Prophets: Quest for the Living God* by Elizabeth Johnson CSJ

- | | | |
|------------------------|---|----------------------------|
| Sept 28
Joan | Book I: Wrestling with Anselm
Introduction to Anselm's theological understanding that Jesus' death on the cross was necessary to satisfy God's honor.
Questions: Why has this view that Jesus died to payback for our sins lasted eight centuries? Participants can surface questions and arguments for/against this understanding from their experiences, liturgy, catechisms. | Read pp. 1-30. Joan |
| Oct 5
Joan | Book II: The Creator God Who Saves.
The God of the Old Testament is slow to anger, merciful, faithful, compassionate. The God of Israel and the Hebrew Testament is Jesus' God and ours.
Questions: What do the exodus and return from exile reveal about who God is? How does the prophet interweave Earth and its earthlings interwoven in his vision of return from exile? | Read pp. 31- 63. |
| Oct 12
Nancy | Book III: Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews—the History.
How can we understand Jesus' death and resurrection as life-giving to human beings and to all creation? What do we celebrate at Easter?
Questions: What does Jesus' life and ministry reveal about who he is and who God is? What do we learn from other Christians in our time who face death? | Read pp 64-106. |

- Oct 19**
Andrea
Book IV: Interpretations Blossom: the Power of Metaphor. Read pp. 113-157.
Questions: What insights into God and into our own seeking selves do metaphors offer? What new metaphors serve us today? What is salvation? Why did Jesus die? The resurrection. God's seal of approval in the resurrection.
- Oct 26**
Colleen
Book V: God of All Flesh: Deep Incarnation. Read pp. 158-194
Questions: What does Jesus' life, death, and resurrection as one of us mean to all of creation? What metaphors speak to you? What is deep incarnation? What does the context of the evolving cosmos add to who Jesus is for us?
- Nov 2**
Colleen
Book VI: Conversion of Heart and Mind: Us. Read pp. 195-226.
Our course invites us to experience conversion to the broadest possible view of God's mercy to all of creation, using five thought experiments to help us realize everything is connected in life and in affection and we need to love our neighbors other than human as well as human. "Us" includes the whole Earth community, expanding our circle, saving all who are in life together.
Questions: What questions do we want to ask Elizabeth Johnson next week?
- Nov 9**
Colleen
Elizabeth Johnson joins our class for the first hour. Bring your questions
***Ask the Beasts*, Chapter 10, The Community of Creation**
How does the paradigm of dominion differ from the paradigm of community?
- Nov 16**
Colleen
***Ask the Beasts*, Chapter 7, All Creation Groaning**
How is the living God in solidarity with all creatures that suffer?
- Nov 23`**
Joan
***Friends of God and Prophets*, Chapter 12, Communion of Saints**
Whose memory is important to you? How do you experience their presence?
Come prepared to name and describe one person in a concluding prayer circle.
- Nov 30**
Andrea
***Quest for the Living God*, Chapter 9, Creator Spirit in the Evolving World**
Who do you include in the charge to love your neighbor as yourself?
- Dec. 7**
Creative Projects: Where has this course taken you in relation to G*d and your hopes for yourself and the Earth Community?