

Syllabus

Exploring Nazarene History and Polity

VA District Training Center

Location of the Course:

Lynchburg First Church of the Nazarene
1737 Wards Ferry Rd
Lynchburg, VA 24502
(In the Cafe)

Course Dates:

Nov. 26th, Dec. 10, Jan. 7, 14, 21, 28, Feb. 4, 11
1:00PM - 3:00PM

Name of the Instructor:

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Module Vision Statement:

This course is specifically designed for the person entering pastoral ministry. However, it would benefit anyone who will be employed by the church or who desires an understanding of the Church of the Nazarene, its history, membership, and how it operates. *History and Polity of the Church of the Nazarene* is a prerequisite and foundation for the doing of ministry. The course is designed to produce understanding of the identity of the Church, what is membership and how one becomes a member, and how the Church operates at its various levels of local, district and general. Theoretical insight and practical knowledge are a must for the wide range of tasks which the pastor faces.

Unit 1 of these lessons considers the historical identity of the Church of the Nazarene. Our understanding of the Church of the Nazarene needs to be grounded in a biblical understanding of

what it means to be the Church. It is both in faithful continuity with the New Testament Church and the result of the creative work of the Holy Spirit in history. As we review the development of key formative influences and doctrines through history, we can observe the particular and distinctive development of the Church of the Nazarene. In this way, we can see the particular and distinctive understanding of who we are and of our place in the broader Church. We also will be able to engage effectively in the ongoing dialogue of our identity. We can examine the core values of our Church: Christian, Missional, and Holiness. We understand ourselves as a Protestant church in the Wesleyan-Holiness tradition that was formed initially as an organization out of the American Holiness Movement. Worldwide adaptations of this section should incorporate materials from their personal world area.

Unit 2 considers the questions of membership in the church. The *Manual* sets forth that membership should be based upon a personal faith in Jesus Christ, a commitment to the distinctive doctrines and practices of the church, and a willingness to work with the administrative structure. Our participation in the Church of the Nazarene is rooted in a profession of personal faith in Jesus Christ. For adults, this profession should be affirmed in the sacrament of baptism. Membership, itself, in the Church of the Nazarene, is a covenant with the church and the commitment of our calling. This includes our doctrines as expressed in our foundational Agreed Statement of Belief and the expanded Articles of Faith. Of central importance to our tradition is the call to a radical commitment to Holiness, life reflecting the likeness of Christ. This call is a biblical imperative to all disciples and the General Rules and the Covenant of Christian Conduct serve to guide and inform our realization of that calling. The work of the church in worship, sacraments, and other means of nurture and spiritual disciplines serve to form our lives into Christlikeness. Every pastor should understand the meaning of our covenant in membership, be personally committed to it, and be able to lead new believers into membership.

Unit 3 discusses the polity or government of the church. The context of our church government has been a representative form of government with shared authority between laity and elder. The office of superintendent has been the primary mode of oversight. Ministry is the responsibility of both laity and elder. The church affirms the divine call for pastoral ministry, recognizes various tracks of ministry, and sets forth a program that leads to ordination. The work within the local church is governed by the *Manual*. The church also operates on a district and general level.

Educational Assumptions

1. The work of the Holy Spirit is essential to any process of Christian education at any level. We will consistently request and expect the Spirit's presence within and among us.
2. Christian teaching and learning is best done in the context of community (people being and working together). Community is the gift of the Spirit but may be enhanced or hindered by human effort. Communities have common values, stories, practices, and

goals. Explicit effort will be invested to enhance community within the class. Group work will take place in every lesson.

3. Every adult student has knowledge and experiences to contribute to the class. We learn not only from the instructor and the reading assignments, but also from each other. Each student is valued not only as a learner but also as a teacher. That is one reason so many exercises in this course are cooperative and collaborative in nature.
4. Journaling is an ideal way to bring theory and practice together as students synthesize the principles and content of the lessons with their own experiences, preferences, and ideas.

Outcome Statements

This module assists the student to develop the following required abilities as defined in the *U.S. Sourcebook for Ministerial Development*. Below each competency are listed specific abilities for the course, which correspond with each particular competency. It must be recognized that the listed abilities below each competency do not necessarily comprehend the entire range of the competency addressed in the lessons.

CN 24 Ability to describe the general story line of church history and the development of major doctrines and creeds

CN-27 Ability to identify the formative influences of the American Holiness Movement and the Church of the Nazarene.

- To understand and explain the historical groups that influence and form the heritage of the Church of the Nazarene, especially Protestant, Wesleyan, and Holiness.
- To understand the events and issues that caused the formation of the Church of the Nazarene at the beginning of the 20th century.
- To understand and explain the place of the Church of the Nazarene within the Christian community.

CN-28 Ability to identify and explain the significance of the major figures and events of the Church of the Nazarene.

- To understand and evaluate the identity of the Church of the Nazarene.
- To understand and articulate the rationale for having a specific organization to promote the message of holiness.
- To understand the core values of the Church of the Nazarene that form its identity.
- To understand the events and issues that concern the Church of the Nazarene and forms its identity within the 20th century.
- To understand the current issues that concern the future of the Church of the Nazarene.
- To understand and examine local and regional histories of the Church of the Nazarene.
- To trace the values that have given identity to the Church of the Nazarene.

CN-29 Ability to identify the directives of the *Manual* of the Church of the Nazarene that pertain to the organization and ministry of the local church and to the responsibilities of the pastor at the local and district levels.

- To understand what it means to be a member of a particular church.
- To understand a profession of faith.
- To have a clear experience and personal faith.
- To understand the Agreed Statement of Belief and Articles of Faith.
- To be able to explain the biblical foundation for the doctrinal statements.
- To be in agreement with the doctrinal statements.
- To understand and be able to explain the covenant of membership, especially to holiness, a transformed life of Christlikeness.
- To be committed to spiritual formation.
- To understand and explain the relationship of crisis and process in pursuit of holiness.
- To be familiar with the General Rules and Covenant of Christian Conduct, and understand how they serve to guide and enable holy living.
- To understand and explain the corporate and personal practices of spiritual discipline.
- To be practicing spiritual disciplines.
- To understand the process of bringing people into membership and be able to do that.
- To understand and explain the process of becoming a minister from the divine call to ordination.
- To understand and explain the meaning, expectations, and responsibilities of ministry for both clergy and laity.
- To be committed to the responsibilities of ministry.

CN-30 Ability to explain the governance systems of the church at local, district, and general levels.

- To understand and explain the *Manual* stipulations on the administration of the local church.
- To understand and explain the responsibilities of the laity in the pastoral review process.
- To understand the function of the district and district superintendent, and the local pastor's responsibilities to both.
- To understand the procedure for pastoral relations to the local church from the call extended by the church, to the pastoral review process.
- To understand the international partnership of the church.
- To understand how the church functions at the general level.
- To be committed to the district and general Church of the Nazarene.

CX-9 Ability to apply historical analysis to the life of a local congregation in order to describe its historical and cultural context.

- To understand and examine local and regional histories of the Church of the Nazarene.
- To understand and evaluate the identity of the Church of the Nazarene.
- To understand the current issues that concern the future of the Church of the Nazarene.

OUTCOME STATEMENTS

- Ability to articulate the collective conscience of the Church of the Nazarene and how it is to be communicated to our generation.
- Ability to understand and communicate the distinctive identity and mission of the Church of the Nazarene, to provide a rationale for its existence, and to explain why it came into existence in its present form.
- Ability to understand and communicate the identity the Church of the Nazarene shares with the universal church.
- Ability to understand who can become a member of the Church of the Nazarene, what it means to be a member, and how one can do so.
- Ability to plan and lead a membership class.
- Ability to explain and function within the governmental structures of the church at the local, district, and general level.
- Ability to understand the meaning of ministry, the call and responsibilities of a minister, and the process of becoming ordained within the Church of the Nazarene.
- Ability to use the *Manual* in the service of the Church.

Recommended Reading

Church of the Nazarene. *Manual*, (current edition). Kansas City: Nazarene Publishing House. This book is required for this course.

Course Requirements

1. **Class attendance, attention, and participation** are especially important. Students are responsible for **all** assignments and in-class work. Much of the work in this course is small-group work. Cooperative, small-group work cannot be made up. That makes attendance imperative. Even if one does extra reading or writing, the values of discussion, dialogue, and learning from each other are thwarted. If one lesson is missed, the instructor will require extra work before completion can be acknowledged. If two or more classes are missed, the student will be required to repeat the whole module.

Small-Group Work. Nothing is more important in this course than small-group work. The class members will be assigned to groups of two to four students each. The group members will serve as study partners for explorations and discussion.

1. **Assignments**

Journaling: The only ongoing assignment for this module is your journal. It is to be used regularly, if not daily. On at least one occasion during the term, the instructor will check the journals. In each lesson a journal assignment is included.

The journal should become the student's friend and treasury of insights, devotions, and ideas. Here the integration of theory and practice occurs. The spiritual life nature of the journal helps guard against the course of study being merely academic as you are repeatedly called upon to apply the principles studied to your own heart and your own ministry situation.

This journal is not a diary, not a catchall. It is, rather, a guided journal or a focused journal in which the educational experience and its implications are selected for reflection and writing.

The framers of this curriculum are concerned about the way that students fall into learning "about" the Bible, or "about" the spiritual life rather than learning—that is coming to know and internalize the Bible and spiritual principles. The journaling experience ensures that the "Be" component of "Be, Know, and Do" is present in the course of study. Be faithful with all journaling assignments.

Daily Work: This module has regular homework assignments. It is called daily work because even though the class may only meet once a week, the student should be working on the module on a "daily" basis. Sometimes the homework assignments are quite heavy. The assignments are important. Even if homework is not discussed in class every session, the work is to be handed in. This gives the instructor regular information about the student's progress in the course. The normal time for homework to be handed in is at the beginning of each class session. **All** assignments are to be completed.

The lesson homework assignments are designed to prepare the students for each upcoming lesson. Since the original directive for this module requires that it be "textbook" independent, the homework assignments serve to acquaint the student with key material for the upcoming lesson, as well as involve the student in critical interaction with the material.

Student sharing from the product of their homework assignments has been integrated into the structure of many lessons. All assignments should be typed or written out, and brought to class the session in which they are due.

Course Outline and Schedule

This module contains 17 lessons designed for sessions of approximately 1.5 hours each, making a total of 25.5 hours of class time. (An individual teacher may decide to lengthen the number of sessions on which they focus on a particular topic to meet their own special needs.) Enter the meeting dates and times in the chart.

Session Date	Time	Lesson
11/26/18	1:00PM - 3:00PM	Unit 1: Who We Are: Nazarene Identity in History 1. Nazarenes and the Church 2. Historical Development: Reformation and the Wesleyan Movement
12/10/18	1:00PM - 4:00PM	3. Formation of the Church of the Nazarene 4. Church of the Nazarene in Local and Regional History 5. Defining Issues of the 20th and 21st Centuries
1/7/18	1:00PM - 3:00PM	Unit 2: Membership: What it Means to be Part of the Church of the Nazarene and the Procedure for Uniting with the Church 6. Becoming a Disciple 7. Membership as Covenant in Community
1/14/18	1:00PM - 3:00PM	8. Commitment to Shared Vision of Lifestyle 9. Becoming a Member
1/21/18	1:00PM - 3:00PM	Unit 3: How the Church Functions: Polity of Governance 10. How the Church Functions 11. Lay Ministry
1/28/18	1:00PM - 3:00PM	12. Pastoral Ministry 13. Local Church: Pastoral Relations
2/4/18	1:00PM - 3:00PM	14. Local Church Administration 15. The District Church
2/11/18	1:00PM - 3:00PM	16. The General Church 17. What Is the Church of the Nazarene?

Course Evaluation

The instructor, the course itself, and the student's progress will be evaluated. These evaluations will be made in several ways.

The progress of students will be evaluated with an eye for enhancing the learning experience by:

1. Carefully observing the small-group work, noting the competence of reports, the balance of discussion, the quality of the relationships, the cooperation level, and the achievement of assigned tasks
2. Careful reading of homework assignments
3. Completion of all homework assignments

4. Journal checks

The course materials and the teacher will be evaluated by frequently asking and discussing the effectiveness and relevance of a certain method, experience, story, lecture, or other activity.

Some evaluation cannot be made during the class itself. Some objectives will not be measurable for years to come. If students encounter the transforming power of God at deeper levels than ever before, learn devotional skills and practice them with discipline, and incorporate the best of this course into their own ministries, the fruit of this educational endeavor could go on for a long time. In truth, that is what we expect.

Additional Information

A reasonable effort to assist every student will be made. Any student who has handicaps, learning disabilities, or other conditions that make the achievement of the class requirements exceedingly difficult should make an appointment with the instructor as soon as possible to see what special arrangements can be made. Any student who is having trouble understanding the assignments, lectures, or other learning activities should talk to the instructor to see what can be done to help.

Instructor's Availability

Good faith efforts to serve the students both in and beyond the classroom will be made.

Journaling: A Tool for Personal Reflection and Integration

Participating in the Course of Study is the heart of your preparation for ministry. To complete each module you will be required to listen to lectures, read books and articles, participate in discussions, and write papers. Content mastery is the goal.

An equally important part of ministerial preparation is spiritual formation. Some might choose to call spiritual formation devotions, while others might refer to it as growth in grace. Whichever title you place on the process, it is the intentional cultivation of your relationship with God. The module work will be helpful in adding to your knowledge, your skills, and your ability to do ministry. The spiritual formation work will weave all you learn into the fabric of your being, allowing your education to flow freely from your head through your heart to those you serve.

Although there are many spiritual disciplines to help you cultivate your relationship with God, journaling is the critical skill that ties them all together. Journaling simply means keeping a record of your experiences and the insights you have gained along the way. It is a discipline because it does require a good deal of work faithfully to spend daily time in your journal. Many

people confess this is a practice they tend to push aside when pressed by their many other responsibilities. Even five minutes a day spent journaling can make a major difference in your education and your spiritual development. Let me explain.

Consider journaling time spent with your best friend. Onto the pages of a journal you will pour out your candid responses to the events of the day, the insights you gained from class, a quote gleaned from a book, and an 'ah-ha' that came to you as two ideas connected. This is not the same as keeping a diary, since a diary seems to be a chronicle of events without the personal dialogue. The journal is the repository for all of your thoughts, reactions, prayers, insights, visions, and plans. Though some people like to keep complex journals with sections for each type of reflection, others find a simple running commentary more helpful. In either case, record the date and the location at the beginning of every journal entry. It will help you when it comes time to review your thoughts.

It is important to chat briefly about the logistics of journaling. All you will need is a pen and paper to begin. Some folks prefer loose-leaf paper that can be placed in a three-ring binder, others like spiral-bound notebooks, while others enjoy using composition books. Whichever style you choose, it is important to develop a pattern that works for you.

Establishing a time and a place for writing in your journal is essential. If there is no space etched out for journaling, it will not happen with the regularity needed to make it valuable. It seems natural to spend time journaling after the day is over and you can sift through all that has transpired. Yet family commitments, evening activities, and fatigue militate against this time slot. Morning offers another possibility. Sleep filters much of the previous day's experiences, and processes deep insights, that can be recorded first thing in the morning. In conjunction with devotions, journaling enables you to begin to weave your experiences with the Word, and also with module material that has been steeping on the back burner of your mind. You will probably find that carrying your journal will allow you to jot down ideas that come to you at odd times throughout the day.

It seems we have been suggesting that journaling is a handwritten exercise. Some may be wondering about doing their work on a computer. Traditionally, there is a special bond between hand, pen, and paper. It is more personal, direct, and aesthetic. And it is flexible, portable, and available.

With regular use, your journal is the repository of your journey. As important as it is to make daily entries, it is equally important to review your work. Read over each week's record at the end of the week. Make a summary statement and note movements of the Holy Spirit or your own growth. Do a monthly review of your journal every 30 days. This might best be done on a half-day retreat where you can prayerfully focus on your thoughts in solitude and silence. As you do

this, you will begin to see the accumulated value of the Word, your module work, and your experience in ministry all coming together in ways you had not considered possible. This is integration—weaving together faith development and learning. Integration moves information from your head to your heart so that ministry is a matter of being rather than doing. Journaling will help you answer the central question of education: “Why do I do what I do when I do it?”

Journaling really is the linchpin in ministerial preparation. Your journal is the chronicle of your journey into spiritual maturity as well as content mastery. These volumes will hold the rich insights that will pull your education together. A journal is the tool for integration. May you treasure the journaling process!

Bibliography

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Pastor's Report. The General Secretary's office electronically mails an address to the local pastor, who then files his or her local church report online annually. The 2001 address was <http://nazmrc.nazarene.org/dup>. The address may change each year. For a paper copy of the report contact either the General Secretary's office or a district office.

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- “Christian Perfection” (Sermon 40)
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