

Reformed Theology

A Christian Educator Certification Course

Date: May 2-4, 2017, beginning at 1:30 p.m. on May 2 and ending at noon on May 4. This is a **hybrid** course; the at-home portion begins on April 3, 2017.

Leader: Dr. Tom James

Event location: Union Presbyterian Seminary: Paisley Hall, 1204 Palmyra Avenue, Richmond, VA 23227

Registration: \$295 includes lunch on Wednesday, May 3, refreshments, and breakfast for those staying on campus

CEUs: 3.0

For: Church educators and members involved in Christian education. Note: You do NOT need to be seeking certification to enroll in this course.

The Presbyterian Church (USA) derives its theological identity from the 16th century reformers, especially John Calvin, and from subsequent Reformed creeds brought together in the *Book of Confessions* as part of the constitution of the Presbyterian Church (USA). Rooted in the Bible and embracing the ecumenical Christian creeds of the early church, Reformed theology developed distinctive Calvinistic theological perspectives throughout Europe, in the United States, and in a variety of international contexts. Knowledge of this rich theological heritage and the role it has played and continues to play in the world today is foundational for effective Christian education in the church.

To register for *Reformed Theology*, [click here](#).

Course Description: This thirty hour hybrid course is designed to provide Christian educators with knowledge of and an appreciation for the theological tradition that is foundational for the Presbyterian Church (USA), its historical contexts, and its contemporary significance for the life of the church. By means of focused reading assignments, on-line exchanges, class lectures, small group curriculum writing exercises, and personal research, students will be able to gain a basic understanding of the Reformed theological tradition.

Course Goals: Satisfactory completion of this course will enable the student to

1. Have a basic theological understanding of the character and historical development of Reformed theology from the 16th century to the present;
2. Become familiar with the principles of Biblical interpretation underlying Reformed theology;
3. Compare the Reformed theological tradition with other theological perspectives; and
4. Develop curricular materials appropriate for teaching and interpreting Reformed theology to the contemporary church.

Course Requirements: Students will have four main responsibilities to complete this certification course:

1. Carefully read the weekly assignments from *Introducing the **Reformed Faith*** by Donald McKim and ***Theology for Liberal Presbyterians and Other Endangered Species*** by Douglas Ottati, and keep a journal of your questions and comments on the reading assignments. All reading assignments must be completed before coming to campus.
2. Post a SHORT selection from your journal on Blackboard at least once each week and respond BRIEFLY but substantively to at least two other students' postings on Blackboard each week.
3. Participate in the on-campus classes and curriculum writing groups.
4. Submit an 8-12 page paper (double spaced 12 point font) describing the curriculum (content, pedagogical strategies, and resources) you would use to teach an adult Christian education class entitled "Reformed Theology 101."

Reading Assignments

Assignment #1. Ottati pp. 10-48, 89-99

Assignment #2 McKim pp. 1-75

Assignment #3 McKim pp. 76-117; Ottati, pp. 49-66

Assignment #4 McKim pp. 118-192

On Campus Class Schedule

There will be six 2-hr sessions on campus (exact times to be determined). The last two sessions will be devoted to curriculum writing in small groups in order to produce a first draft of your final paper. The other four sessions will be as follows:

Session 1: Lecture and discussion of the history and character of the Reformed theological tradition.

Session 2: Lecture and discussion of God our creator and Jesus Christ our redeemer

Session 3: Lecture and discussion of the Holy Spirit our sustainer and the church

Session 4: Lecture and discussion of Reformed theology and culture

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About the Leader:



Tom James is pastor of Covenant Presbyterian Church in Southfield, Michigan. He is a graduate of Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary (M.Div.) and Union Presbyterian Seminary (Ph.D.). From 2008-2012, he served as Assistant Professor of Theology at Union Presbyterian Seminary. He has published articles and reviews in such journals as *Interpretation*, *Zygon*, *The American Journal of Theology and Philosophy*, *Political Theology*, and *Perspectives*. Tom is the author or co-author

of two books, including his latest, *A Philosophy of Christian Materialism: Entangled Fidelities and the Public Good* (Ashgate, 2015), with John Reader and Chris Baker.