



Public Lecture Series 2015

Tuesdays in Steinbach

7:00 – 8:30pm, in the Atrium, Eastman Education Centre, 385 Loewen Blvd.

February 3 – Steinbach February 7 – Winnipeg

“Isaiah on iTunes: Popular Music’s Strange Fascination with the Bible”

Michael Gilmour, Ph.D., Associate Professor of New Testament and English Literature

Listen closely and it is there, sometimes faint, sometimes loud, sometimes really loud. It is curious that an art form often associated with an anti-establishment stance so frequently refers to and draws on the Bible. Because what is the Bible if not the quintessential symbol of hierarchy, structure, morality, order, and the rule of law? But there it is, sometimes the object of critique and ridicule, sometimes the object of affection. Mainstream music presents us with an unusual and diverse illustration of the reception of the Bible in contemporary society. This lecture examines some of the ‘hows and whys’ of this phenomenon.

Michael Gilmour (PhD, McGill University) is the Providence Department Head of Biblical Studies and Practical Theology, and is the author of *Gods and Guitars: Seeking the Sacred in Post-1960s Popular Music* (Baylor University Press, 2009), as well as *The Gospel According to Bob Dylan: The Old, Old Story for Modern Times* (Westminster John Knox, 2011).

February 10 – Steinbach February 14 – Winnipeg

“How English Got so Complicated: A Historical Sketch”

Cathy Rust-Akinbolaji, M.A., Assistant Professor of TESOL

Have you ever wondered why there seems to be an exception to every rule in the English language? And why there are exceptions to the exceptions? English is indeed complicated. We will explore how English got so complicated by looking at its history, development, and evolution. Our timeline will take us from the ancient Celts and Roman Empire through Old and Middle English, all the way to late modern global English.

Catherine Rust-Akinbolaji (M.A., Prairie Graduate School) is the Providence Department Head of Professional Studies, and Chair of the Modern Language Institute. Catherine is known and appreciated among students for her enthusiasm and creativity in classroom teaching.

February 17 – Steinbach February 21 - Winnipeg

"Is Christian Faith Obsolete in a Scientific Age?"

Patrick Franklin, Ph.D., Assistant Professor of Theology and Ethics

Modern scientific theories and methods provide us with powerful models and tools for understanding our world. Riding on the success of the modern sciences as their platform, some popular scientists today downplay the significance of religious questions and attempt to undermine religious truth claims. In their view, science has made religion obsolete. In contrast, the sciences provide us with accurate and effective *but not comprehensive* knowledge about reality. Science serves humanity best when it is practiced within a broader, holistic framework that includes other means of apprehending truth, including religious ones.

Patrick Franklin (PhD, McMaster Divinity College) teaches theology and ethics at Providence. He is also the Coordinating Book Review Editor for *Perspectives on Science and Christian Faith*, the peer-reviewed academic journal of the American Scientific Affiliation and Canadian Scientific and Christian Affiliation.

February 24 – Steinbach February 28 – Winnipeg

“Beauty as a Human Need:

Visual Art as Learning Strategy, Therapy, and Worship”

Elfrieda Lepp-Kaethler, Ph.D., Assistant Professor of TESOL

Visual intelligence is one of eight intelligence types identified by Howard Gardener in his seminal work on multiple intelligences. As a result, educators have discovered a wide palette of teaching and learning strategies that include visual input. Visual art as an integrative catalyst for emotional well-being is a stream within clinical psychology, as illustrated by examples from my work with young offenders. Finally, visual art has historically been an important part of spiritual contemplation and prayer in a variety of faith traditions. What do these three somewhat disparate topics linked to aesthetics tell us about a human need for visual beauty?

Elfrieda Lepp-Kaethler (PhD, University of Nottingham, UK) integrates visual art into her English language teacher training courses. She is the Chair of the Visual Arts Creation Committee at Providence, and leads a church-based team of volunteers in creating visual art with young offenders at the Manitoba Youth Center, Winnipeg.

March 3 – Steinbach March 7 – Winnipeg

"The Postmodern Turn Away from Religion toward Spirituality"

Dennis Hiebert, Ph.D., Professor of Sociology

For much of the twentieth century, most social scientists assumed that modernization would lead inevitably to secularization. Hence the steep decline of traditional, institutional religion in the global north came as no surprise. But the human spirit evidently does not succumb completely to the cold rationality of a disenchanted world. So even while collective, organized religion has been losing its command of society, and more than a quarter of Canadians now identify as religious “nones,” people are seeking personal, spiritual meanings and experiences more than ever before, facilitated by the massive turn of Western postmodern culture toward subjectivity.

Dennis Hiebert (PhD, University of Manitoba) is the Providence Department Head of Arts and Sciences. He is also a past president of the Association of Christians Teaching Sociology, and the author of *Sweet Surrender: How Cultural Mandates Shape Christian Marriage* (Wipf & Stock, 2013).

March 10 – Steinbach March 14 – Winnipeg

“Intersex Realities and the Church: The Unwelcomed, Unwanted Neighbour”

Val Hiebert, Ph.D. (Cand.), Assistant Professor of Sociology

In the midst of the current, often contentious debate within the church about homosexuality, there is a social and biological reality that has gone virtually unrecognized, much less discussed. Intersex people. They are born with ambiguous genitals (i.e. a combination of male and female), and are often shamed into silence or ostracized by social norms that insist on a male-female binary of human sexuality. At birth rates that range from 1 in every 100 to 1,500, the biological fact of their prevalence among us requires our respectful attention. Yet much of the tone of the current debate in the church about homosexuality has added to their shame and silencing, rather than offering welcome and belonging.

Valerie Hiebert (PhD candidate, University of Western Sydney, Australia) teaches in the Sociology Department at Providence, specializing in gender, children and violence, and consumer culture and simpler living. As a community educator, she advocates for greater cultural literacy within the church on numerous social issues.

March 17 – Steinbach March 21 – Winnipeg

"Living in Dying and Modern Health Care"

Randall Holm, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Biblical Studies

On scale, few sciences have made the achievements of modern medicine in the last 100 years. Penicillin, proper sanitation, improved hygiene, and advanced technology have all worked together to raise life expectancy to bold new heights. The good life should never be brighter. Yet here is the dirty little secret - in the measure that we push ahead with these medical miracles, we seem to be regressing in coping with the purest natural component of life: namely death. So we fill our hospitals beyond sustainability in the fiction we can avoid falling apart. Is there no meaning in death? A theologian wades into the conversation.

Randall Holm (PhD, Université Laval) teaches in the field of theology at Providence, and serves as the Associate Dean of Student Affairs. He is married to Olive, who is still working as an ER nurse after 40 years.

A Community Service for the General Public

Free admission – No registration required

For further information: Phone 204-433-7488 ext.272, Website: <http://www.providenceuc.ca/>