

Penn West Academy for Ministry  
**Licensed Ministry Curriculum**  
**Introduction to the New Testament**  
**2023-2027**

Instructor: Rev. Dr. George S. Steffey

### **Course Description**

As part of preparation for serving in the United Church of Christ as an authorized licensed minister the **goal** of this course is for students to become equipped to read and apply the New Testament so they can engage with the New Testament as a diverse-yet-unified, coherent witness to Jesus Christ and thereby deepen their grasp of the gospel. This New Testament study will contribute to the assimilating and integrating of the following **Marks of Faithful and Effective Authorized Ministers in the United Church of Christ that find their bases in the New Testament.**

**The goal of the instructor is to seek to create an increased thirst for the Bible.**

Our study will have the following specific **objectives** in mind:

1. Increased understanding of the historical, pastoral, and mission issues related to each of the documents of the New Testament, and the purposes and themes of each of the documents.
2. Increased understanding of the theological shape of the New Testament, as well as its location in the wider theological curriculum (i.e., alongside church history, liturgy, preaching, etc.).
3. Increased skill in interpreting individual passages in the light of the book in which they occur, the context of the author(s)' overall thought, Old Testament reverences, and the readers participation in the passages.

### **Required Texts**

1. A "literal" Bible translation (e.g., RSV, NRSV, NASB, NIV, etc.).
2. The Bible Project website [www.thebibleproject.com](http://www.thebibleproject.com)
3. *Eat This Book* by Eugene Peterson
4. (As we focus on a New Testament book a selected book may be required that is specific to the text.)

### **General Approach**

A primary goal of the course is to create a love and thirst for more in-depth study and application. We will pay detailed attention to the text of the New Testament so that each student is expected to have completed the assignments for the next class. The assigned videos and /or readings will provide key background information, so that the lectures may focus more single-mindedly on the "big picture" of the New Testament documents' structures, themes, theologies and current applications. A combination of lecture and integrated discussion will take up most of each session. The instructional approach is primarily to model and impart a way of study for life-long learning and service. Discussions will facilitate what students have learned from their reading, written

assignments, and personal experiences. We will also look at some specific text to help address the highlights of each book and thoughtful lifestyle participation.

**Course Requirements**

1. Class attending attendance
  2. Class participation.
  3. Complete video presentation, assigned readings, and written homework.
- The content of lectures and our class discussion will largely focus on the “big issues” of content and themes.

**Course Schedule:  
2023-2027**

To facilitate integrating multiple progression of students’ course study, this syllabus is intended to enhance students’ education by providing each other with the opportunity to participate in sharing what they have learned in previous classes. As we go along content will seem repetitive for some. If it does then please share with the class what you learned and/or what your takeaway was from your previous study so we all can benefit from your input.

<b>First Year Students (2023-2024)</b>	
<b>September</b>	Introduction to the New Testament
<b>October</b>	How To Read the Bible
<b>March</b>	Exegesis and Hermeneutics
<b>May</b>	Matthew, Mark, Luke
<b>Second Year Students (2024-2025)</b>	
<b>September</b>	Gospel of John
<b>October</b>	John I, II, III
<b>March</b>	The Life of Paul and his letters
<b>May</b>	I&II Corinthians, I&II Thessalonians
<b>Third Year Students (2025-2026)</b>	
<b>September</b>	Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians
<b>October</b>	Colossians, Philemon
<b>March</b>	I&II Timothy, Titus, I&II Peter
<b>May</b>	Hebrews, James, Jude
<b>Fourth Year Students (2026-2027)</b>	
<b>September</b>	Romans
<b>October</b>	Revelation
<b>March</b>	Acts
<b>May</b>	Marks of Faithful and Effective Authorized Ministers paper

**Course Evaluation:** This is pass/fail course based on class attendance, class participation and satisfactory completion of assignments.