

The Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg
Chance, Necessity, Love: A Pastoral Theology of Cancer
Leonard M. Hummel, Ph.D.
Professor of Pastoral Theology and Pastoral Care

Rationale:

The science on cancer is as clear and certain as it gets: this disease is one of evolutionary development. That is, cancers progress according to evolutionary principles when cells—“the very fiber of our being” in the language of a Novena to Saint Peregrine—go their own way and, thereby threaten the rest of that “fiber.” While religious perspectives, questions, and arguments abound in church and society regarding evolution in general, remarkably few struggle to make meaning of the evolutionary nature of cancer. Even rarer—and arguably more urgent—is practical theological inquiry into faithful understandings and wise practices by pastoral leaders and pastoral theologians in response to cancer as an evolutionary phenomenon.

Cancer is a disease replete with paradox. On the one hand, it touches the lives of both the more powerful and the less powerful. On the other hand, differences in cancer vulnerability do occur through occasionally inherited predisposition to the disease and through the ways that poverty and social injustice generally affect its incidence and outcome. Cancer also is a disease that may or may not be treated successfully depending on the stage of its detection and on the treatment and aggressiveness of the disease. Still, the occurrence of cancers in particular persons may be prevented through individual and social efforts, and new treatments for care and cure have been and continue to be developed. Therefore, the following assertion is puzzling but it is also quite true: cancer is something that both cannot and can be changed.

The underlying reason for this paradox is located in the nature of the disease itself: cancer evolves through the complex interplay of chance occurrences and law-like regularities that sometimes may be altered and other times not. Furthermore, just as DNA mutations and natural selection for those mutations are involved in the evolution of various species, so also mutational mechanisms and forces of selection are at work in the evolution of individual cancers. This may be said another way, with a more ironic emphasis: while physical operations of chance and necessity promote the evolution of life, so those very same forces drive the development of a disease that may destroy life.

Cancer is a disease whose origin and progression often vex and confuse cancer patients and those who care for them. Those diagnosed with the disease often struggle to understand its possible causes and future course. Family members wonder what they must accept and may hope for. Pastors hear much about cancer: newly suspected causes, new possible cures and new dangers in treatment—and then worry about and hope for their people. The evolutionary chance and necessity at work in the onset and development of cancer perplex people about what can be changed and what cannot be changed about this disease.

In our considering best pastoral practices in response to cancer, our guiding

questions will be these: (1) How may God be preached, taught, and, in pastoral care, understood if the development of life and the development of cancers are linked by evolution? (2) What does pastoral wisdom look like if cancers are something that, as evolutionary phenomena, sometimes can be changed and, at other times, cannot be? (3) What are faithful and wise pastoral responses to social and economic issues generated by and in response to the evolution of cancers? The provisional answers put forth by our community of inquiry will initiate the development of a pastoral theology of cancer and evolution.

OBJECTIVES: FROM LUTHER SEMINARY COURSE

The goals of this course are to enable students:

- (1) to articulate faithful understandings regarding the basic science of cancers
- (2) to demonstrate an understanding of the principles of pastoral care for cancer
- (3) to articulate faithful and wise pastoral responses to social and economic issues generated by and in response to cancers

DEGREE OBJECTIVES:

M. Div:

- Demonstrate engagement in spiritual, Intellectual and ethical formation
- Interpret God's Word faithfully and thoughtfully as public speakers, listeners, and writers
- Analyze cultural contexts of ministry
- Integrate theological conversation and experience in order to collaborate with peers in ministry in an evangelical and ecumenical manner

Diaconal Ministry (M.A.M.S.–Diaconal Ministry)

- Articulate the Word of God in and for a hurting world, using the fruits of biblical, historical, and theological studies
- Carry out a particular service on behalf of the church with credibility in the world
- Equip the baptized for faithful ministry in the world and in the church
- Participate in the community of Word and Sacrament, and in the diaconal communities of their own denomination and the broader church
- Articulate and act out a vision of diakonia that addresses human need

STM

- Engage in knowledgeable and creative thinking, writing and speaking in the chosen area of research.
- Apply the knowledge gained to other contexts of theology and ministry

STRATEGIES:

- (1) To complete three to four page review of Greaves book and three to four page reviews of any two starred (*) books (Objectives One, Two and Three)
- (2) To complete one-half to one page weekly distance-learning reports reflecting on learning from on-site congregation activities with co-directors

- of the Louisville Project. Reports will be filed weekly for Sessions Seven-Twelve (Objectives One, Two, and Three)
- (3) To complete one group student presentation (Objectives One, Two and Three)

ASSESSMENT:

- Completion of three to four page review of Greaves' book and three to four page reviews of any two starred (*) books. Please turn in hard copies of your reviews and submit electronic copies by email at the beginning of the class period for which the book was assigned (each review is 10% of total grade)
- Completion of weekly distance learning reports that reflect on learning from on-site congregation activities with site pastors (30% of total grade)
- In Class Group Presentation (40 % of total grade)

RUBRICS FOR BOOK REVIEWS:

Rubrics

Superior, A Paper gives **thoroughly lucid account** of (1) authors' intents in writing/editing the book (2) how authors attempted to achieve these intents (3) the success of the authors' attempts to achieve these intents (4) empathic and theologically informed appraisal of the value/worth of the authors' intents. **Thoroughly lucid means** (a) citations employed to all key points of 1-4; (b) grammar, syntax and spelling nearly completely perfect (c) flow of argument from beginning to end of review is clearly and completely apparent.

Good, B Paper gives **moderately lucid account** of (1) authors' intents in writing/editing the book (2) how authors attempted to achieve these intents (3) the success of the authors' attempts to achieve these intents (4) empathic and theologically informed appraisal of the value/worth of the authors' intents. **Moderately lucid means** (a) citations employed in most key points of 1-4; (b) grammar, syntax and spelling usually perfect (c) flow of argument from beginning to end of review is most often clearly and completely apparent.

Sufficient, C Paper gives **occasionally lucid account** of (1) authors' intents in writing/editing the book (2) how authors attempted to achieve these intents (3) the success of the authors' attempts to achieve these intents (4) empathic and theologically informed appraisal of the value/worth of the authors' intents. **Occasionally lucid means** (a) citations employed in some key points of 1-4; (b) grammar, syntax and spelling sometimes perfect (c) flow of argument from beginning to end of review is occasionally clearly and completely apparent.

Failure, F Paper gives **seldom or nearly never gives lucid account** of (1) authors' intents in writing/editing the book (2) how authors attempted to achieve these intents (3) the success of the authors' attempts to achieve these intent (4) empathic and theologically informed appraisal of the value/worth of the authors' intents. **Seldom or nearly never means** (a) citations seldom or nearly never employed in key points of 1-4;

(b) grammar, syntax and spelling very often incorrect perfect; (c) flow of argument from beginning to end of review is not very apparent.

RUBRICS FOR DISTANT LEARNING REPORTS

Superior, A

Students will offers reports with (a) **Clear and completely lucid account** of their activities in congregation;” (b) **extensive use** of theological source material from the class or other theological sources to evaluate their activities in the congregation; (c) grammar, syntax and spelling **nearly completely perfect** (d) flow of argument from beginning to end of review that is **clearly and completely apparent**.

Good, B

Students will offer reports with (a) **moderately lucid account** of their activities in congregation; (b) **moderate use** of theological source material from the class or other theological sources to evaluate their activities in the congregation; (c) grammar, syntax and spelling **sometimes perfect** (d) flow of argument from beginning to end of review that is **most often clearly and completely apparent**.

Sufficient, C

Students will offer reports with (a) **occasionally lucid account** of their activities in congregation; (b) **occasional use** of theological source material from the class or other theological sources to evaluate their activities in the congregation; (c) grammar, syntax and spelling **occasionally perfect** (d) flow of argument from beginning to end of review that is **occasionally clearly and completely apparent**.

Failure, F

Students will offer reports with (a) **never or nearly never lucid account** of their activities in congregation; (b) **Never or nearly never use** of theological source material from the class or other theological sources to evaluate their activities in the congregation; (c) grammar, syntax and spelling **nearly never perfect**; (d) flow of argument from beginning to end of review that is **never or almost never clearly and completely apparent**.

RUBRICS FOR GROUP STUDENT PRESENTATION

SUPERIOR, A

Participants evidence in their presentation: (a) **Full disclosure** of resources used for presentation; (b) **Clear and compelling critical analysis and clear warrant** for the use of resources for presentation; (c) Presentation of material in which flow of argument from beginning to **end is clearly and completely apparent**.

GOOD, B

(a) **Mostly clear disclosure** of resources used for presentation; (b) **Mostly clear and compelling** critical analysis and clear warrant for the use of resources for presentation; (c) Presentation of material in which flow of argument from beginning to end **is mostly apparent**.

SUFFICIENT, C

(a) **Occasional disclosure** of resources used for presentation; (b) **Occasionally clear**

and compelling critical analysis and clear warrant for the use of resources for presentation; (c) Presentation of material in which flow of argument from beginning to end is **occasionally apparent**.

FAILURE, F

(a) Infrequent or no disclosure of resources used for presentation; **(b) Infrequent or no** critical analysis and clear warrant for the use of resources for presentation; **(c) Presentation of material in which flow of argument from beginning to end is infrequent or not at all apparent.**

Student Assignments in Pastoral Sites

Beginning with Session Eight during the week of November 2nd and ending with Session Twelve during the week of November 30th, students will spend nine-ten hours per week related to their work in Pastoral Sites. These nine-ten hours will include time for transportation to and from sites, reading, activities at the site, and reporting on-line their activities. Activities will vary from site to site but may include: (1) worship; (2) group and individual meetings with site pastor; (3) educational forums; (5) meetings with congregants and others; (6) pastoral visitation with congregants and others; (7) other ministerial activities arranged between student and site pastor.

Class sessions seven through twelve will not be held on campus during the Monday time. Students will post weekly "Distant Learning Reports," the rubrics for which are noted above, regarding their activities in pastoral sites.

The purpose of the site visits and work associated with these sites is to provide students learning and information so that they may make a final in-class group presentation that addresses the following:

Given our experiences at this pastoral site, this is what we have learned about

(1) Congregational ministry (e.g., worship, preaching, education, pastoral care, and other congregational activities) for persons with cancer, their families, the church and the community

(2) Pastoral wisdom regarding cancers as evolutionary phenomena that sometimes can be changed and, at other times, cannot be

(3) Faithful and wise pastoral responses to social and economic issues generated by and in response to the evolution of cancers

COURSE TEXTS ON RESERVE AND FOR PURCHASE

*Jann Aldredge-Clanton, Counseling People with Cancer (Louisville: Westminster-John Knox, 1998)

*William A. Fintel and Gerald R. McDermott, Cancer: A Medical and Spiritual Guide for Patients and their Families (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2004)

*Mel Greaves, Cancer: The Evolutionary Legacy (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000)

*Rebecca Skloot, The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lachs (New York: Crown Publishing, 2010)

*Deanna Thompson, Hoping for More: Having Cancer, Talking Faith, and Accepting Grace. (Eugene, Oregon: Cascade Press, 2012)

*Walter Wangerin, Letters from the Land of Cancer (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan, 2010)

COURSE TEXTS ON RESERVE

Pamela N. Brown, Facing Cancer Together: How to Help Your Friend or Loved One (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1999)
Laurel Arthur Burton and George Handzo, eds., Health Care Chaplaincy in Oncology (New York: Haworth Press, 1992)
John Claypool, Tracks of a Fellow Struggler: How to Handle Grief (Waco, TX: Word Books, 1974)
John J., Dawson, The Cancer Patient (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1978)
Lynn Eib, When God & Cancer Meet: True Stories of Hope and Healing (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 2002)
Jessica L. Gregg, Virtually Virgins: Sexual Strategies and Cervical Cancer in Recife, Brazil (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2003)
Siddhartha Mukherjee, The Emperor of All Maladies: A Biography of Cancer (New York: Scribner, 2010)
James T. Patterson, The Dread Disease: Cancer and Modern American Culture (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1987)
Reynolds Price, Letter to a Man in the Fire: Does God Exist and Does He Care? (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1999)
Reynolds Price, A Whole New Life: Illness and Healing (NY: Atheneum, 1994)
Gilbert H. Welch, Should I Be Tested for Cancer? (Berkeley: Univ. of CA Press, 2004)
Sidney J. Winawer and Moshe Shike, Cancer Free: The Comprehensive Cancer Prevention Program (Simon & Schuster, 1995)

COURSE TEXTS THAT MAY BE DOWNLOADED

World Cancer Report, (Lyons, IARC Press, 2008) & World Cancer Report, Edited by B.W. Stewart, P. Kleihues (Lyons: IARC Press, 2003)

<http://www.iarc.fr/en/Publications/PDFs-online/World-Cancer-Report>

M. Kogevinas, N. Pearce, M. Susser and P. Boffetta, eds., Social Inequalities and Cancer, (Lyons, France: International Agency for Research on Cancer Scientific Publications, 1997)

PDF Download: <http://www.iarc.fr/IARCPress/pdfs/sp138/index.php>

Useful Web-Links

Center for Evolution and Cancer: <http://cancer.ucsf.edu/evolution>

International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC): <http://www.iarc.fr/>

International Union Against Cancer (UICC): <http://www.uicc.org/>

American Cancer Society: <http://www.cancer.org>

National Cancer Institute: <http://www.cancer.gov/>

NCI Cancer Bulletin: <http://www.cancer.gov/ncicancerbulletin>

COURSE TEXTS AT LEONARD HUMMEL'S OFFICE IN WENTZ LIBRARY

Joan Austoker, A History of the Imperial Cancer Research Fund, 1902-1986 (Oxford Univ. Press, 1988)

J. Michael Bishop, How to win the Nobel Prize: an unexpected life in science (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2003)

Claudia Clark, Radium Girls: Women and Industrial Health Reform, 1910-1935 (Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina Press, 1997)

Barbara Clow, Negotiating Disease: Power and Cancer Care, 1900-1950 (Toronto: McGill-Queens Press, 2001)

Mary K Deshazer, Fractured Borders: Reading Women's Cancer Literature (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2005)

Patrick J. Fitzgerald, From Demons and Evil Spirits to Cancer Genes: The Development of Concepts Concerning the Causes of Cancer and Carcinogenesis (Washington, D. C.: American Registry of Pathology, 2000)

Kirsten E. Gardner, Early Detection: Women, Cancer and Awareness Campaigns in the Twentieth-Century United States (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006)

Jordan Goodman and Vivien Walsh, The Story of Taxol: Nature and Politics in the Pursuit of an Anti-Cancer Drug (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001)

Jessica L. Gregg, Virtually Virgins: Sexual Strategies and Cervical Cancer in Recife, Brazil (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2003)

James T. Hamilton and W. Kip Viscusi, Calculating Risks: The Spatial and Political Dimensions of Hazardous Waste Policy (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1999)

M. Alfred Haynes and Brian D. Smedley, eds., The Unequal Burden of Cancer: An Assessment of NIH Research and Programs for Ethnic Minorities and the Medically Underserved (Washington, D. C.: National Academy Press, 1999)

David J., Hess, Evaluating Alternative Cancer Therapies (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers Univ. Press, 1999)

David J., Hess, Can Bacteria Cause Cancer: Alternative Medicine Confronts Big Science (New York: New York University Press, 1997)

Eric S. Juhnke, Quacks and Crusaders: The Fabulous Careers of John Brinkley, Norman Baker, and Harry Hoxsey (Univ. Press of Kansas, 2002)

Anne S. Kasper and Susan J. Ferguson, eds. Breast Cancer: Society Shapes an Epidemic (NY: St. Martin's Press, 2000)

Evelyn Fox Keller, The Century of the Gene (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2000)

Nikolai Krementsov, The Cure: A Story of Cancer and Politics from the Annals of the Cold War (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002)

Ellen Leopold, A Darker Ribbon: Breast Cancer, Women, and Their Doctors in the 20th-Century (Boston: Beacon Press, 1999)

Barron H. Lerner, M.D., The Breast Cancer Wars: Hope, Fear, and the Pursuit of Care in Twentieth Century America (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001)

Michael Lerner, Choices in Healing (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1994)
 Ilana Löwy, Between Bench and Bedside: Science, Healing, and Interleukin-2 in a Cancer Ward (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1996)
 Lenny Moss, What Genes Can't Do (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2003)
 Ralph W. Moss, The Cancer Industry (Brooklyn: Equinox Press, 1999)
 James S. Olson, Bathsheba's Breast: Women, Cancer, and History (Baltimore, Johns Hopkins Press, 2001)
 Leif E. Peterson and Seymour Abrahamson, eds., Effects of Ionizing Radiation: Atomic bomb Survivors and Their Children (Washington, D. C.: Joseph Henry Press, 1998)
 Robert N. Proctor, The Nazi War on Cancer (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000)
 Robert N. Proctor, Cancer Wars: How Politics Shapes What We Know and Don't Know about Cancer (New York: Basic Books, 1995)
 Theodore A. Stern and Mikkael A. Sekeres, eds., Facing Cancer: A Complete Guide for People with Cancer, Their Families and Caregivers (New York: McGraw-Hill Publishers, 2004)
 W. Kip Viscusi, Smoke-Filled Rooms: A Postmortem on the Tobacco Deal (Univ. of Chicago Press, 2002)
 J. Samuel Walker, Permissible Dose: A History of Radiation Protection in the Twentieth Century (Berkeley: University of Californian Press, 2000)
 Margaret J. Wooddell and David J. Hess, Women Confront Cancer: Making Medical History by Choosing Alternative and Complementary Therapies (New York: NYU Press, 1998)
 Robert A. Weinberg, One Renegade Cell (New York: Basic Books, 1998)
 Diane Weiner, ed., Preventing and Controlling Cancer in North America: A Cross-Cultural Perspective (Westport: Praeger Press, 1999)
 John H. Woodburn, Cancer: The Search for its Origins (NY: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1964)

OUTLINE OF CLASS SESSIONS

Session One/September 14: Introduction: Purpose and Goals of the Course.

Pastoral Theology and Pastoral Care: Some Definitions

Leonard M. Hummel, "Pastoral Care" in Cambridge Dictionary of Christianity Daniel L. Patte, General Editor (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

Session Two/September 21: Cancer as an Evolutionary Disease "Cancer as an Evolutionary Disease" Presentation by Jennifer A. A. Gubbels, Assistant Professor of Biology, Augustana College, Sioux Falls, SD 57197

Additional Resources:

Cancer and Evolutionary Medicine: prepared for Summer Institute, July 22nd - 25th, 2002, Johns Hopkins Medical School Campus, by Arthur Renkwitz and Douglas Becker;

http://www.fastol.com/~renkwitz/evolution_cancer.htm

World Cancer Report, (Lyons, IARC Press, 2008) & World Cancer Report, Edited by B.W. Stewart, P. Kleihues (Lyons: IARC Press, 2003)

<http://www.iarc.fr/en/Publications/PDFs-online/World-Cancer-Report>

Nature Milestones Cancer

<http://www.nature.com/milestones/milecancer/index.html>

J. Michael Bishop, How to win the Nobel Prize: an unexpected life in science (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2003)

David J. Hess, Can Bacteria Cause Cancer: Alternative Medicine Confronts Big Science (New York: New York University Press, 1997)

Patrick J. Fitzgerald, From Demons and Evil Spirits to Cancer Genes: The Development of Concepts Concerning the Causes of Cancer and Carcinogenesis (Washington, D. C.: American Registry of Pathology)

Evelyn Fox Keller, The Century of the Gene (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2000)

Lenny Moss, What Genes Can't Do (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2003)

L. J. Rafter, The Genesis of Cancer: A Study in the History of Ideas (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1978)

Robert A. Weinberg, One Renegade Cell (New York: Basic Books, 1998)

Session Three/September 28 Congregational Pastoral Care for Cancer

Presentations and Discussion Panel with Congregational Site Pastors:
Reverend David Albertson, Living Grace Lutheran Church, 3520 Sugarloaf Parkway, Suite F-03, Urbana, MD 21704; Reverend Stephen Herr, Christ Lutheran Church, 30 Chambersburg Street, Gettysburg, PA 17325; Reverend Susan J. McCarthy, Benders Evangelical Lutheran Church, Biglerville, PA, 17307; Reverend Terry McCarthy, Saint Paul's Luther Church (Broadway), 1214 Broadway, Hanover, PA 17331;

Session Four/October 5 Cancer as an Evolutionary Disease, Continued

Assigned Viewing: "The Phylogenomics of Cancer" <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OaR1YLTgQVo>
"DNA 4/5 Curing Cancer" PBS Documentary
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r-BRcktorKE&playnext=1&list=PL70D5DD17671A639C&feature=results_video

In Class Viewing, "Darwinian Ideas about Cancer," Prof Howard Varmus, Director, National Cancer Institute, Bethesda, MD

Session Five/October 12: Chance, Necessity, Love: An Evolutionary Theology of Cancer, Part One. Readings from Chance, Necessity, Love: An Evolutionary Theology of Cancer, Chapter Four: "No exclusion of Chaos and Suffering: Acceptance in a World with Cancers"; and Chapter Five: "Something More: Hope in a World of Cancer Chance and Necessity."

Greaves Book Review Due

Session Six/October 19: Chance, Necessity, Love: An Evolutionary Theology of Cancer

Readings from Chance, Necessity, Love: An Evolutionary Theology of Cancer, Chapter Six: "Chance, Necessity, Love: A Theology of Cancer"; and Chapter Seven: Redeeming Love: Making Meaning of the Disease of Cancer"

Submission of Proposal for Site Pastoral Learning Due

Session Seven/Week of October 26: Fall Academy Week

Session Eight/Week of Nov. 2: The Very Fiber of Our Being: A Pastoral Theology of Cancer

Meeting of study groups at pastoral sites. Moodle-room Distance Learning Reports.

Second Book Review Due

Session Nine/Week of November 9: The Very Fiber of Our Being: A Pastoral Theology of Cancer

Meeting of study groups at pastoral sites. Moodle-room Distance Learning Reports

Session Ten/Week of November 16: The Very Fiber of Our Being: A Pastoral Theology of Cancer

Meeting of study groups at pastoral sites. Moodle-room Distance Learning Reports

Session Eleven/Week of November 23: The Very Fiber of Our Being: A Pastoral Theology of Cancer.

Meeting of study groups at pastoral sites. Moodle-room Distance Learning Reports. Wrap-up and Assessment of work via Moodlerooms. **Third Book Review Due**

Session Twelve/Week of November 30: The Very Fiber of Our Being: A Pastoral Theology of Cancer.

Meeting of study groups at pastoral sites. Moodle-room Distance Learning Reports. Wrap-up and Assessment of work via Moodlerooms

Session Thirteen/December 7: Two Student Group Presentations

Session Fourteen/December 14: Two Student Group Presentation/Wrap-up and Assessment of class

SAMPLE DESCRIPTIVE REPORT:

- Completion of three to four page review of Greaves book and three to four page reviews of any two starred (*) books (each review is 10% of total grade)
- Completion of weekly distance learning reports that reflect on learning from on-site congregation activities with pastors of congregations (30% of total grade)
- In Class Group Presentation (40 % of total grade).