## (cl-621) earth ministry for ecological renewal

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**office hours:** by appointment
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**class time:** mondays, mondays, 6:30-9:30pm

### Course Description

The purpose of this course is to orient students to emerging approaches in ecological ministry.

We will study eco-ministry in relation to matters of soul, soil, and culture.Together we will explore what it means to minister, lead, and live in a time of climate grief and ecological collapse, attending to the practical and spiritual tools that sustain collective regeneration.

Through readings, practice, and conversation, we will:

- engage place-based and bioregional approaches to ministry and theology;
- explore embodied responses to climate anxiety, grief, and trauma;
- cultivate spiritual disciplines with the Land as devotional practices;
- reflect on justice-oriented approaches to food, energy, and land; and
- consider how our callings are shaped by our particular places, histories, and relations.

Class sessions weave together short lectures, ecological devotions, and dialogue with activists, farmers, theologians, and artists who model diverse forms of ecological leadership.

### Course Learning Outcomes

Students who graduate from this course will be able to:

1. Articulate how their bioregional origins and current contexts inform their theologies of creation, renewal, and leadership.
2. Evaluate diverse place-based approaches to ecological ministry, identifying strengths, assumptions, and limitations.
3. Formulate a personal or congregational theology of ecological care that integrates spiritual practice, justice, and community action.
4. Reflect critically on their own leadership or ministry callings within broader movements for ecological, racial, and economic justice.

**Major Assignments**

| Assignment | Description | Weight |
|---|---|---|
| **Weekly Reflections** | 250–300 word reflections linking readings to practice and place. | 20 % |
| **Community Praxis Project** | Participate in or plan a small-scale ecological action (garden blessing, community meal, clean-up, etc.) and submit a 5-page blog post/news report that reflects on the action and lessons learned. | 20 % |
| **Bioregional Leadership Reflection (Mid-term)** | 10-15 page paper analyzing how your ecological context shapes your theology, ethics, and ministry. | 25 % |
| **Final Ritual or Devotional Practice** | In small groups, design and lead an ecological ritual or liturgy; include an interpretive essay 5-10 pages. | 25 % |
| **Participation & Presence** | Attentive, generous engagement with peers and materials. | 10 % |

**Required Course Texts**

Buy used or digital copies when possible; collaborative reading and sharing are encouraged. I strongly recommend creating a shared Google/Microsoft Drive folder for reading engagement, collective annotations, and course lecture notes so that we can learn from one another's insights and questions throughout the term.

You won't be asked to read every book in full. Each week we'll engage selected chapters, excerpts, and essays that speak to the themes we're exploring together. You are, of course, welcome to read more if a particular author, story, or idea calls to you. The goal is not to finish everything, but to read deeply and relationally—to listen, question, and linger with the voices that shape this work.

***Required Texts***

- *Kaitlin Curtice, Everything Is a Story: Reclaiming the Power of Stories to Heal and Shape Our Lives (2024)*
- *Sofía Betancourt, Ecowomanism at the Panamá Canal: Black Women, Labor, and Environmental Ethics (2022)*
- *Leanne Betasamosake Simpson, As We Have Always Done: Indigenous Freedom through Radical Resistance(2017)*
- *Leah Penniman, Farming While Black: Soul Fire Farm's Practical Guide to Liberation on the Land (2018)*
- *Robin Wall Kimmerer, Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge and the Teachings of Plants(2013)*
- *Max Liboiron, Pollution Is Colonialism (2021)*
- *Sarah Jaquette Ray, A Field Guide to Climate Anxiety (2020)*
- *Margaret Wheatley, Who Do We Choose To Be? Facing Reality, Claiming Leadership, Restoring Sanity (2nd ed., 2023)*
- *Nick Mayhew-Smith, Landscape Liturgies: Resources to Celebrate and Bless the Earth (2021)*

***Recommended / Supplemental Texts***

- *Pope Francis, Laudato Si'*
- *Winona LaDuke, All Our Relations*
- *Chelsea Mikael Frazier, "Black Feminist Ecological Thought: A Manifesto" (Atmos)*
- *Marisol de la Cadena, Earth Beings: Ecologies of Practice Across Andean Worlds*

**Closing Note:**

Ecological renewal is not only about saving the earth but being in right relation — with land, water, ancestors, and futures yet to arrive. This class invites you to listen deeply, move slowly, and practice ministry as a form of collective tending.