THEO 650 B/SP 650 B – Pneumatology

Spring 2026

Classroom/In-Person
Feb 20-21, Mar 13-14, Apr 17-18
Fri 2:00-7:00PM and Sat 10:00AM-3:00PM

Instructor: Dr. Nancy E. Bedford
Email: nancy.bedford@garrett.edu
Office phone: 847-866-3931

Prerequisites: THEO-500

Note: This is not the syllabus. This is a description of the class so you can decide whether or not it is for you. I will hand out the detailed syllabus on the first day of class.

Course description:

In this course we will both explore the living presence of the Holy Spirit (spirituality) and try to articulate some of the implications of the presence and work of the Spirit among us (theology). In our face-to-face weekend sessions we will strive to cultivate a counterhegemonic contemplative presence. To that end, **our meetings will be a fully analog experience, with no presence of screens or electronic devices whatsoever** during class time.[1] Come prepared to write with pencil or pen on paper and to experience the presence of God, of other humans, and of creation.

Topics to be covered:

I. Weekend One: February 20-21- Mother, Midwife, Avian Presence

1. Our relationship to the Spirit
2. The urgency of pneumatology
3. The biblical roots of pneumatology
4. What does it mean to pray in the Spirit?

II. Weekend Two: March 13-14 – Breath, Fire, Water, Earth

1. The Cappadocians and the Council of Constantinople (381): The Spirit is Truly God
2. Augustine: Interiority and exteriority of a life in the Spirit
3. The Desert Fathers and Mothers and beyond: Embodied holiness
4. Hildegard: Fire on our heads for the greening of the world

[1] You are welcome to check your devices during breaks; otherwise they will need to be put away.

III. Weekend Three: April 17-18 – Renewer of the Face of the Earth

1. Contemporary articulations of pneumatology
2. Pentecostality and ecclesiality: Fruit and Gifts of the Spirit today
3. Ecology and pneumatology
4. Justice and hope by the Spirit

What resources do I need for the course?

This will be as fully an analog course as possible. That means that there will be no screens in class, no electronic posts, and no final papers to upload. The only "artifact" you will produce is a handwritten journal, containing all your class notes, all the annotations from readings, all the exercises for class, and so on. Each week (until the week of our final session) there will be assignments for you to complete and write about in your journal. On the first day we meet, I will provide precise instructions for working in the notebook as well as the rubric I will use to grade it. Your first assignment in the journal will be taking copious notes during our class session together.

What you will therefore need to procure before our first meeting is a fairly fat journal (not spiral bound) or composition notebook you think you will enjoy (think of aesthetic and tactile pleasure as you choose it), as well as pleasing pens/pencils for writing by hand.[2] There will be no final paper for this class – in fact, there will be no papers in a conventional sense at all.[3] On the final moment of the last day of class (April 18) you'll hand in your notebook, and that will be it.[4] The grade will be based on class participation and on the contents of the notebook. Nobody but the instructor will see your notebook. Please provide a self-addressed and stamped package for me to mail it back to you after I've read it.[5]

Also: bring your Bible to class with you, preferably a good study Bible.

As mentioned above, there will be weekly assignments for you to work through in the journal. The assignments will vary. Some examples are: taking notes on a reading, working through a biblical passage, reflecting on a painting, being a participant-observer in a worship service, working through the book of your choice (see below), listening attentively to music and writing down your thoughts, and so on. With one exception, I will provide the readings for class, either as hard copies handed out during our live sessions, or sent via email as a pdf.

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[2] If you are nervous about losing your journal in the course of the semester, you can document the pages by taking pictures of them as you fill them, but I don't want a copy of the electronic version save in case of emergency.
[3] An exception will be made if you desire to write a paper because you want to produce academic writing on pneumatology. In that case, please let me know before the first day so we can plan together accordingly.
[4] If you have explicit accommodations according to which for documented reasons you cannot do handwritten work, please contact me before the first day so we can develop an alternative plan.
[5] USPS has flat-rate boxes that would probably be a good option for this.

The one exception (mentioned above) is the book I'm asking you to acquire and engage with, which you will choose from the list below. I'd suggest getting a hard copy of it that you can underline and annotate it, but that is not obligatory. An e-book or a library book would also work. You will use said book in the segment of the class that will run between March 15 and April 16.

In summary, you'll need:

1. A hefty **journal** or composition notebook (not spiral bound) and pen(s);
2. A **Bible**;
3. **One** of the books from the list below (to be used after March 14).

List of books (choose **one**):

- Karen Baker-Fletcher, *Dancing with God.*
- Leonardo Boff, *Come Holy Spirit. Inner Fire, Giver of Life and Comforter of the Poor.*
- Jonathan Calvillo, *When the Spirit is your Inheritance.*
- Daniel Castelo, *Pneumatology. A Guide for the Perplexed.*
- Sarah Coakley, *God, Sexuality, and the Self: An Essay on the Trinity.*
- Dennis Edwards, *The Breath of Life. A Theology of the Creator Spirit.*
- Steven R. Guthrie, *Creator Spirit. The Holy Spirit and the Art of Becoming Human*
- Robert Davis Hughes III, *Beloved Dust. Tides of the Spirit in the Christian Life.*
- Toar Hutagalung, *Toward an Embodied Decolonial Pneumatology.*
- Jürgen Moltmann, *The Spirit of Life*
- Clark H. Pinnock, *Flame of Love. A Theology of the Holy Spirit.*
- Jamie Pitts, *Organizing Spirit. Pneumatology, Institutions, and Global Imagination*
- Ben Quash, *Found Theology. History, Imagination and the Holy Spirit*
- Eugene Rogers Jr., *After the Spirit. A Constructive Pneumatology from Resources Outside the Modern West*
- Mark I. Wallace, *When God was a Bird. Christianity, Animism and the Re-Enchantment of the World*
- Amos Yong, *The Spirit Poured Out on All Flesh.*
- Koo Dong Yun, *The Holy Spirit and Ch'I (Qi). A Chiological Approach to Pneumatology.*

If all of this makes sense to you (or you are at least willing to suspend judgement), if you can commit to being present at **all the weekend sessions**,[6] and if you want to deepen your connection to the Holy Spirit, this class would probably be a good fit for you. Feel free to email me if you have questions.

[6] People sometimes have conflicting obligations, which is understandable, but with a compressed weekend course such as this one we all need to commit to being present during our face-to-face meeting times.