The Gospel of John

June 2024

T/W/Th 9:00-12:00 EST

In person at Hartford International University at 77 Sherman Street, Hartford,

and online via Zoom.

Amy-Jill Levine

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This course is an introduction to the Fourth Gospel: content, historical context, and reception history. Readings and discussions will address such matters as Johannine spirituality and Christology; depictions of illness, disability, and death; antisemitic interpretations of the Gospel in antiquity and through the centuries; John’s presentation of women’s roles, gender constructions, and sexuality; connections between the Fourth Gospel and the Tanakh/Old Testament; John’s rereading of the Synoptic tradition; the implications of John’s view of salvation for religious pluralism; “Preaching” the Gospel of John.   
  
**Course fulfills the following curricular requirements:**  
MAIRS - Ministerial Studies : Beliefs and Practices  
MAIRS - Ministerial Studies : Scripture  
MAIRS - Interreligious Studies Elective  
MAIRS - Islamic Studies: Religious Pluralism

Course Objectives

1. Students will read the Gospel of John.
2. Students will experiment with historical-critical, liberationist, post-colonial, personal-spiritual, pastoral, homiletic and other approaches.
3. Students will address how the Gospel functions for good news (*euangellion*) and how that good news can be deformed.

Method:  Class will meet in person and on-line (synchronous). All sessions will be taped for later use. Class time will be a combination of presentation and discussion.

Assignments:

1. Reading the Gospel
2. Class participation.
3. You are encouraged to read widely in Gospel commentaries, volumes on John, and periodical literature.
4. Available to you are articles and videos with various approaches, both scholarly and popular. Please use what you find to be of value.

For credit:

1. 40 points: Class participation during class and/or posted to the website (at least 5 postings).
   1. Web postings can be in reference to class discussion, readings both in class and for the weekend, or comments on other people’s posting.
   2. For all participants: Please limit all postings, except for paper drafts, to 200 words.
2. 10 points: 5 points each: A 200-word (maximum) review of one article and/or one video on the syllabus.
3. 15 points: One presentation, *posted to the website*, on your original reading of a passage in the Gospel, which serves as the basis for your paper/project. Students are encouraged to share their work with me prior to their posting. Since the presentation and discussion will be entirely on-line, we can keep track of all comments.

Postings for 15 points must be submitted by Friday June 20.

1. 35 points: A paper or project designed for people who need to hear what you have to say: -- a homily or sermon (with notes); an academic article [required for Ph.D. candidates]; a church, synagogue, mosque, assisted living, etc. newsletter; a lesson for adults, teens or children; a meditation guide/spiritual direction based on a passage, or anything that will be useful to your intended audience. Artistic projects (installations, musical compositions, etc.) are also welcome. All paper and project topics/ideas must be cleared with Prof. Levine.
2. All students enrolled for credit must meet (by zoom or in person) with Prof. Levine to discuss goals for course and project/paper.

Hartford Values for Collaborative Teaching and Learning

* Showing mutual appreciation and respect for others–modeling the privilege to learn from and partner with each other.
* Engaging in cross-disciplinary content and teaching
* Paying attention to the whole personhood of another – history, race, religion, knowledge, gender, and rank
* Demonstrating how to disagree respectfully and well
* Embodying mutuality – Learning to construct ideas and skills and experiences together

Accommodation:

If you require particular accommodation please let AJ know.

*Pre-course work* --

To keep up with this intensive course, you are advised to start the readings and listening to the podcasts as soon as possible. Take notes, and then use the notes to review for discussion on the relevant days. The readings are also structured so that you should not feel burdened by overly heavy assignments each night.

As soon as the website is open, you are encouraged to post comments and questions.

The website will have separate places for all discussions, passage by passage.

Schedule is subject to change depending on interests of class.

BOOKS:

There are several helpful commentaries on the Gospel. These include: These commentaries are on reserve at the Divinity Library.

1. Warren Carter, *John: Storyteller, Interpreter, Evangelist*, Baker Academic.
2. Francis J. Moloney, *The Gospel of John*. Sacra Pagina. Liturgical Press.
3. Mary Coloe, *The Gospel of John*, Wisdom Commentary Series. Liturgical Press.
4. Sandra Schneiders, *Written that You May Believe. Encountering Jesus in the Fourth Gospel* (paperback), Crossroad; Rev Exp Supp. edition (September 1, 2003).
5. Adele Reinhartz, *Cast Out of the Covenant*. Wipf and Stock.
6. You may also find helpful Reinhartz’s introduction and annotations to the Gospel of John in Amy-Jill Levine and Marc Z. Brettler (eds.), *The Jewish Annotated New Testament*, 2d edition, Oxford University Press, 2017.

For each chapter or grouping of chapters, you will find required reading posted to the website. Thus, the course does not require you to purchase any reading material.

Schedule (subject to change):

Preparation for class

Please read through John, slowly, to get a sense of the language, plot, Christology (depictions of Jesus), use of “the Jews,” characterization, problems or concerns you might have with the text.

4 June – John 1-2 [don’t worry if you do not complete the readings; they are here for your interest]

1. Adele Reinhartz, “‘And the Word was Begotten’: Divine Epigenesis in the Gospel of John,” *Semeia* 85 (1999): 83-103.
2. Hugo Méndez, “Did the Johannine Community Exist?” *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 42.3 (2020): 350-74.
3. Yohanna Katanacho, “Reading the Gospel of John in the Palestinian Context,” *Ex Auditu* (2019).
4. Michael Curry, “B08: The Second Sunday after the Epiphany, Year B (2015), “Show Us the Way!” sermon on John 1:43-51 at <https://asermonforeverysunday.com/sermons/b08-second-sunday-epiphany-year-b/>.
5. Suggested: Jeannine K. Brown, “Creation’s Renewal in the Gospel of John,” *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 72 (2010): 275-290
6. Suggested: Judith Lieu, “The Mother of the Son in the Fourth Gospel,” *Journal of Biblical Literature* 117.1 (1998): 61-77.
7. Suggested: Daniel Boyarin, “The Gospel of the Memre, Jewish Binitarianism and the Prologue to John,” *Harvard Theological Review* 94 (2001): 288-95.
8. Suggested: Brent Nongbri, “The Use and Abuse of P[papyrus]52: Papyrological Pitfalls in the Dating of the Fourth Gospel,” *Harvard Theological Review* 98.1 (2005): 23-48
9. Suggested: Jean-Bosco Matand Bulembat, “Head Waiter and Bridegroom of the Wedding at Cana: Structure and Meaning of John 2.1-12,” *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 30.1 (2007): 55-73.
10. Suggested: Ritva Williams, “The Mother of Jesus at Cana: A Social-Science Interpretation of John 2:1-12,” *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 59.4 (1997): 679-692.

5 June – John 3-4

1. Jouette Bassler, “Mixed Signals: Nicodemus in the Fourth Gospel,” *Journal of Biblical Literature* 108.4 (1989): 635-646.
2. Stephen D. Moore, “Are There Impurities in the Living Water That the Johannine Jesus Dispenses? Deconstruction, Feminism, and the Samaritan Woman,” *Biblical Interpretation* 1 (1993): 207-27.
3. Teresa Okure, “Jesus and the Samaritan Woman (Jn 4:1-42) in Africa,” Theological Studies 70 (2009): 401-18.
4. Suggested: Will Willimon, “A15: The Second Sunday in Lent, Year A (2023) on John 3:1-17 at <https://asermonforeverysunday.com/sermons/a15-the-second-sunday-in-lent-year-a-2023/>.   
   Suggested: Eugene Baron, “Dancing with Jesus as the incarnate male ‘missionary’ conversant: A homeless groups’ reading of John 4 in dealing with gender-based violence,” *Verbum et Ecclesia* (2019).
5. Suggested: Cornelius Bennema, “The Identity and Composition of *oi Ioudaioi* in the Gospel of John,” *Tyndale Bulletin* 60.2 (2009): 239-263.
6. Suggested: Maarten J.J. Menken, “ ‘Born of G-d’ or ‘Begotten by G-d’? A Translation Problem in the Johannine Writings,” *Novum Testamentum* 51 (2009): 352-368.
7. Suggested: Miroslav Volf, “Johannine Dualism and Contemporary Pluralism,” *Modern Theology* 21.2 (2005): 189-217.
8. Suggested: Dale C. Allison, Jr., “The Living Water (John 4:10-14; 6:35c; 7:37-39),” *St. Vladimir’s Theological Quarterly* 30.2 (1986): 143-57.
9. Suggested: Andrew Arterbury, “Breaking the Betrothal Bonds: Hospitality in John 4,” *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 72.1 (2010): 63-83

6 June – John 5-6

1. J. Albert Harrill, “Cannibalistic Language in the Fourth Gospel and Greco-Roman Polemics of Factionalism (John 6:52-66),” *Journal of Biblical Literature* 127.1 (2008: 133-158.
2. Louise J. Lawrence, “‘Take Up Your Mat and Walk’: [Dis-]Abled Bodies of Communication and Early Christian Wandering,” *Biblical Theology Bulletin* 53.4 (2023): 263-71.
3. Rolf Jacobson, “B37: The Eleventh Sunday after Pentecost, Year B (2015) on John 6 at <https://asermonforeverysunday.com/sermons/b37-the-eleventh-sunday-after-pentecost-year-b/>.
4. Suggested: Nahshon Szanton, “Ritual Purification and Bathing: The Location and Function of Siloam Pool and Solomon’s Pool in Second Temple Period Jerusalem,” *‘Atiqot* 113 (2023).
5. Suggested: John Christopher Thomas, “‘Stop Sinning Lest Something Worse Come upon You’: The Man at the Pool in John 5,” *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 59 (1991): 3-20.
6. Suggested: Tom Thatcher, “The Sabbath Trick: Unstable Irony in the Fourth Gospel,” *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 76 (1999): 53-77.
7. Suggested: Kerry H. Wynn, Johannine Healings and the Otherness of Disability,” *Perspectives in Religious Studies* 34.1 (2007): 61-75

11 June – John 7-8

1. Gail O’Day, “John 7:53-8:11: A Study in Misreading,” *Journal of Biblical Literature* 111.4 (1992): 631-40.
2. Chris Keith, “The Claim of John 7.15 and the Memory of Jesus’ Literacy,” *New Testament Studies* 56 (2009): 44-63.
3. Suggested: Debbie Hunn, “Who are the ‘They’ in John 8:33,” *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 66.3 (2004): 387-99.
4. Suggested: Paul M. Hoskins, “Freedom from Slavery to Sin and the Devil: John 8:31-47 and the Passover Theme of the Gospel of John,” *Trinity Journal* 31 n.s. (2010): 47-63..
5. June – John 9-10
6. Adele Reinhartz, “Judaism in the Gospel of John,” *Interpretation* 63.4 (2009): 382-393.
7. Julia Watts Belser and Melanie S. Morrson, “What No Longer Serves Us: Resisting Ableism and Anti-Judaism in New Testament Healing Narratives,” *JFSR* (*Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion*)27.2 (2011): 153-170.
8. Suggested: Michael Renninger, “A24: The Fourth Sunday of Easter, Year A (2017) on John 10:1-10 at <https://asermonforeverysunday.com/sermons/a24-fourth-sunday-easter-year/>.
9. Suggested: Will Willimon, “Not My Favorite Sunday,” B22: The Fourth Sunday of Easter, Year B (2015) on John 10:11-18 at <https://asermonforeverysunday.com/sermons/not-my-favorite-sunday/>.
10. Suggested: Mandy England Cole, “B22: The Fourth Sunady of Easter, Year B (2018) on John 10:11-18 at <https://asermonforeverysunday.com/sermons/b22-2-the-fourth-sunday-of-easter-year-b/>.
11. Suggested: Michel Segatagara Kamanzi, “*Oi Ioudaioi* (The Jews) in John’s Gospel: An African Reading,” *Religion*s 14 (2023).

13 June – John 11:1-12:8

1. Dorothy Lee, “The Gospel of John and the Five Senses,” *Journal of Biblical Literature* 129.1 (2010): 115-127.
2. Thomas Long, “It’s About Time,” First Presbyterian Church of Wheaton (3 November 2019) at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=45c8CMP38mk>.
3. Scott Spencer, “A18: The Fifth Sunday in Lent, Year A (2020) on John 11:1-45 and 12:1-11 at <https://asermonforeverysunday.com/sermons/a18-the-fifth-sunday-in-lent-year-a-2020/>.
4. Lauren Winner, “A18: The Fifth Sunday in Lent, Year A (2023) on John 11:1-12:8 at <https://asermonforeverysunday.com/sermons/a18-the-fifth-sunday-in-lent-year-a-2023/>.
5. Suggested: Mary Ann Beavis, “Reconsidering Mary of Bethany,” *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 74.2 (2012): 281-97.
6. Suggested: Sandra Schneiders, “Death in the Community of Eternal Life: History, Theology and Spirituality in John 11,” *Interpretation* 41 (1987): 44-56.
7. June – John 12:9-13:38
8. Mary Coloe, “Welcome into the Household of G-d: The Footwashing in John 13,” *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 66 (2004): 400-415.
9. Suggested: Roger Aus, “The Judaic Background of the ‘Beloved Disciple’ in the Gospel of John,” *JJMJS* [*Journal of the Jesus Movement in its Jewish Setting*] 7 (2020): 74-92.
10. Suggested: Judith Kovacs, “‘Now Shall the Ruler of This World Be Driven Out’: Jesus Death as Cosmic Battle in John 12.20-36,” *Journal of Biblical Literature* 114.2 (1995): 227-47.
11. Suggested: William R. Wright, “Greco-Roman Character Typing and the Presentation of Judas in the Fourth Gospel,” *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 71.3 (2009): 544-559.
12. June – John 14-17
13. Dorothy A. Lee, “Emotion, Beauty and the ‘Sublime’ in the Gospel of John,” *ABR* (*Australian Bible Review*) 71 (2023): 1-14.
14. Jason Ripley, “Atonement and Martyrdom in the Gospel of John,” *Horizons in Biblical Theology* 42 (2020): 58-89.
15. James Alison, “Show Us the Father,” (Sermon for the 5th Sunday of Easter (John 14:1-12). House of Mercy, St. Paul, Minnesota, 24 April 2005).
16. Suggested: Lauren Winner, “A Little Trite”: B24: The Sixth Sunday of Easter, Year B (2015) on John 15:9-17 at <https://asermonforeverysunday.com/sermons/b24-the-sixth-sunday-of-easter-year-b/>.
17. Suggested: Amy Butler, “C19: The Second Sunday of Easter, Year C (2016) on John 14 and 20:19-31 at <https://asermonforeverysunday.com/sermons/c19-the-second-sunday-of-easter-year-c/>.
18. Suggested: Sue Eaves, “B23: The Fifth Sunday of Easter, Year B (2018) on John 15:1-8 at <https://asermonforeverysunday.com/sermons/b23-2-the-fifth-sunday-of-easter-year-b/> (warning: references to suicide).
19. Suggested: Christopher W. Skinner, “Ethics and the Gospel of John: Toward an Emerging Consensus?” *Currents in Biblical Research* 18.3 (2020): 280-304.
20. Suggested: Sang-il Kim, “Jesus’ Friend, Jesus as Friend: An Asian American Reading of John 15:12-17,” SBL 2016 Contextual Biblical Interpretation Group.
21. Suggested: Harold W. Attridge, “How Priestly is the ‘High Priestly Prayer’ Of John 17?” *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 75.1 (2013): 1-14.
22. Suggested: George L. Parsenios, “‘No Longer in the World’ (John 17:11): The Transformation of the Tragic in the Fourth Gospel,” *Harvard Theological Review* 98.1 (2005): 1-21.

20 June – John 18 – drafts of papers/projects posted to website today by midnight.

1. Suggested: Jane Heath, “‘You Say that I am a King’ (John 18.37),” *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 34.3 (2012): 2320253
2. Suggested: Andreas Köstenberger, “‘What is Truth?’ Pilate’s Question in its Johannine and Larger Biblical Context,” *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 48.1 (2005): 33-62.
3. Suggested :Jeffrey L. Staley, “Subversive Narrator/Victimized Reader: A Reader-Response Assessment of Text-Critical Problems, John 18.12-24,” *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 51 (1993): 79-98.

25 June – John 19

1. Jennifer A. Glancy, “Violence as a Sign in the Fourth Gospel,” *Biblical Interpretation* 17 (2009): 100-117.
2. Jason Ripley, “Glorious Death, Imperial Rome and the Gospel of John,” *Journal of Greco-Roman Christianity and Judaism* 15 (2019): 31-76.
3. Suggested: Sophia Park, “The Galilean Jesus: Creating a Borderland at the Foot of the Cross” (Jn 19:23-30,” *Theological Studies* 702. (2009): 419-36.
4. Suggested: Sandra Schneiders, “The Lamb of G-d and the Forgiveness of Sin(s) in the Fourth Gospel, *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 73.1 (2011): 1-29.

26 June – John 20

1. Dorothy A. Lee, “Partnership in Easter Faith: The Role of Mary Magdalene and Thomas in John 20,” *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 58 (1995): 37-49.
2. Tina Pippin, “‘For Fear of the Jews’: Lying and Truth-Telling in Translating the Gospel of John,’ *Semeia* 76 (1996): 81-97.
3. Suggested: David A. Carson, Syntactical and Text-Critical on John 20:31: One More Round on the Purpose of the Fourth Gospel,” *Journal of Biblical Literature* 124 (2005): 693-714.
4. Suggested: Reginald H. Fuller, “John 20:19-23: From Exegesis to Sermon Composition,” *Interpretation: Expository Articles*.

27 June – John 21

1. Suggested: Alan R. Culpepper, “Peter as Exemplary Disciple in John 21.15-19,” *Perspectives in Religious Studies* 37.2 (2010): 165-78.
2. Suggested: David F. Ford, “The Gospel of John and Contemporary Society: Three Major Theological Contributions,” *Religions* 14 (2023).
3. Suggested: Andrew T. Lincoln, “The Beloved Disciple as Eyewitness and the Fourth Gospel as Witness,” *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 85 (2002): 3-26.
4. Suggested: David Shepherd, “ ‘Do you love me?’ A Narrative-Critical Reappraisal of *Agapao* and *Phileo* in John 21:15-17,” *Journal of Biblical Literature* 129.4 (2010): 777-792.