Course Syllabus
God in the Old Testament: A Study in Dialogue
Walter Brueggemann

The course will engage us in exploring the ways God is characterized in the Old Testament.

Our Learning Goals include the following:

1. Acquire a sense of the ancient theological conversation under way in the Old Testament.
2. Engage with major themes and major problems in that conversation.
3. Gain discerning access to some textual specificity in the Old Testament.
4. Connect textual specificity to the current conversation among scholars.
5. Reflect on this conversation in relation to the faith and practice of contemporary faith communities.

Our Final Assignment, due the last week of class:

Select three texts (full rhetorical units) for different parts of the Old Testament canon that are unfamiliar to you. Study them and articulate from them a characterization of the God of the Old Testament as though we had only these three texts.

Texts:

Primary:


Supplementary Readings (to be put on reserve for the course):


Course Schedule:

Week
1. Locating our study in current interpretive conversation
   Read Leo Purdue, Biblical Theology: Introducing the Conversation, 55-136
Week

2. God in Dialogue
   Read Brueggemann, *An Unsettling God*, 1-17
   Focal text: Exodus 32:10-14

3. Israel as God’s Partner
   Read Joel Kaminsky, *Yet I Loved Jacob*
   Focal text: Jeremiah 31:31-34

4. Israel’s as God’s partner
   Focal text: Deuteronomy 10:12-22

5. Israel as God’s Partner
   Read Brueggemann, *An Unsettling God*, 35-56
   Focal text: Isaiah 54:4-10

6. Human Persons as God’s Partner
   Read Brueggemann, *An Unsettling God*, 57-97
   Focal text: Psalm 103

7. Human Persons as God’s Partner
   Read Winnicott, *The Maturational Processes and the Facilitating Environment*, 140-152
   Focal text: Psalm 51

8. The Nations as God’s Partner
   Read Brueggemann, *An Unsettling God*, 99-136
   Focal text: Isaiah 47:5-11

9. The Nations as God’s Partner
   Read Klaus Koch, *The Prophets: The Assyrian Period*, 105-156
   Focal text: Isaiah 19:19-25

10. Creation as God’s Partner
    Read Brueggemann, *An Unsettling God*, 137-160
    Focal text: Hosea 4:1-3

11. Creation as God’s Partner
    Read Fretheim, *God and the World in the Old Testament*, 1-89
    Focal text: Psalm 104:24-30

12. Creation as God’s Partner
    Read Fretheim, *God and World in the Old Testament*, 91-198
    Focal text: Jeremiah 4:23-27
13. The Drama
   Read Brueggemann, *An Unsettling God*, 163-176
   Focal text: Job 39:19-40:5

14. Jewish and Christian Claims in a World of Secular Liberalism:
   The Possibility of Faith and the Problem of the Church