This course attempts to connect the theoretical material learned in formal theological education with the lived experiences in the local parish. Specifically, we will be working to apply theological and ethical teachings to congregational life, especially social practices in the student’s own faith community, the parish neighborhood, and the world. During the first several weeks of class, we will investigate ethical theory in the Christian tradition. The remaining weeks will be spent looking at social issues in the local parish, especially through the lens of the theoretical material presented during the early weeks. An additional subject for study will concern how our social actions and practices can sustain a spiritual foundation. Students will study specifics of activism and organizing for making a difference in the social situations of the local parish. We will especially focus on issues which face the individual congregations represented in our class. Sessions will consist of lectures over material not in the readings or expanding on the readings, as well as class discussions applying readings to individual congregations. Most class sessions will also include a small group discussion period specifically addressing issues of involving our congregations in ministry at the margins of society, and what that means for followers of Jesus Christ and leaders of Christian communities.

**Required texts:**
Philip Hallie, *Lest Innocent Blood be Shed*
Eleanor Scott Meyers, ed., *Envisioning the New City: A Reader on Urban Ministry*
Mary Alice Mulligan and Rufus Burrow, Jr., *Standing in the Margin: How Your Congregation Can Minister with the Poor (and perhaps recover its soul in the process)*
Janet Parachin, *Engaged Spirituality: Ten Lives of Contemplation and Action*
Gregory Pierce, *Activism that Makes Sense: Congregations and Community Organization*

**There are also several required articles & articles from books on reserve:**
Max Stackhouse, Tim Dearborn, Scott Paeth, ed., *The Local Church in a Global Era: Reflections for a New Century*
Peggy McIntosh, “White Privilege” in *Race: An Anthology in the First Person*
“Theologians & White Supremacy: An Interview with James Cone” in *America*, Nov. ‘06

**** If you have difficulty affording texts or copies of articles, please see me.

**Expectations:**
Let’s agree to come to class each week. The instructor will be prepared to lecture. You should have assignments read and be prepared to discuss how they relate to your congregation. If you must miss class, make sure to **notify the instructor** beforehand. CTS policy (Student Handbook p. 150) states that “more than 25%” of classes missed will result in a class failure, so keep in touch.

*** As a courtesy to classmates, let’s **turn off cell phones at the beginning of class**.
Grades will be based on:

Class participation, small group discussions*, & eight E.S. responses* 25%
3 page paper describing your congregation \ 
3 - 4 page paper describing the surrounding community and its needs 25% /
4 page paper on how goodness happened in Le Chambon /
12 page research paper on a social issue which affects your local parish 25%
Final exam 25%

* When you break into your small group, most weeks, one person should be responsible for keeping the group on task (a leader) and another person should keep some record of what happened (a recorder). These brief notes should be slipped under the professor’s office door (room 239) at the end of the session. The leader and recorder roles should rotate around the group. The professor will drop in and out of groups.

* Each week, you are required to read one chapter of Engaged Spirituality. After reading the entire chapter, choose one of the “Reflect and Act” suggestions to carry out. Jot down your experience with the suggestion and have it ready to turn in at the beginning of class (about a page should suffice, but make sure it somehow reveals you read the chapter). This is listed in the syllabus as the “E.S. response” each week. *** Note: you are responsible for eight responses out of the ten chapters, although the syllabus notes one due each week. Choose your two “pass” weeks carefully. You may not turn in more than one response per week, and you may only turn in the response assigned for that week. The E.S. responses are graded with a plus, check, or circle. Quality matters. Make sure your C.T.S. box # is on all written work.

Specific instructions for the content of assigned papers will be given in class. You may deviate from the stated page limitation by one page without penalty. Please use standard size font (12 pt. Times New Roman) and 1 inch margins. Papers are to be double spaced.

One out-of-the-building excursion will substitute for a class session (noted in syllabus). You may choose to attend the soup kitchen, Bread & Bowl, at North United Methodist Church, any Tuesday, Thursday, or Saturday before March 2nd, at 11:00, or some other meal program approved by the professor.

Class Sessions

January 20 Introduction to Social Issues in the Local Parish; Some Foundations and Presuppositions for this Class
Assignments for next class: Ammerman, chapter 3 and p. 196-203 (ends mid-chapter), on reserve. Chapter 1 of Standing in the Margin.
Construct 3 page paper describing your local congregation.
January 27  Definitions of Terms; Types of Ethics; Begin Small Groups on Margin Ministry, Time of Commitment.  
Turn in 3 page paper describing your local congregation.  
Assignments for next class: Construct in 3 page paper describing the neighborhood and community surrounding your local church building (this requires spending time walking the area); Read chapter 1 of Engaged Spirituality (E.S. response #1). Begin thinking about socials issue which confront your congregation.

February 3  Continuing lecture on Types of Ethics. Probably no small groups.  
Turn in 3 page paper describing the neighborhood and community surrounding your local church building;  
Turn in first E.S. response.  
Assignments for next class: Read chapter 2 of Engaged Spirituality (2nd E.S. response). Read Cone and McIntosh articles (on reserve). 
Reminder to attend meal program.

Turn in Chapter 2 E.S response.  
Assignments for next class: Read chapter 2 of Standing in the Margin. Read chapter 3 of Engaged Spirituality (3rd E.S. response).

February 17  White Privilege; Small Groups, material from chapter 2.  
Turn in Chapter 3 E.S. response.  
Assignments for next class: Read chapter 4 of Engaged Spirituality. Read Schweiker and Ottley articles in Stackhouse, Local Church (on reserve), p.23-47. Begin reading chapters 1, 7, 8, & 18 in Meyers, Envisioning.

February 24  Formation of Moral Selves; The Inter-Related World We Live in; Small Groups, questions from chapter 2. Confirm social issue research paper topic.  
Turn in Chapter 4 E.S. response. 
Assignments for next class: Read chapter 5 of Engaged Spirituality. Finish chapters 1, 7, 8, & 18 in Meyers, Envisioning. Be reading additional chapters in Meyers which relate to your topic.

March 3  Local Communities of Faith; What Leaders Need to Do; Debriefing Free Meal Experiences.  
Turn in Chapter 5 E.S. response.  
Assignments for next class: Read chapter 6 of Engaged Spirituality. Prepare a bibliography of what you are reading which relates to your topic. Bibliography may include an outline or sketch of your plans for the paper. These will not be graded, but you must turn one in. Keep researching your topic. You will want to begin Pierce book over reading week. Read Chapter 3 of Standing in the Margin.
March 10  Reading Week – No class
You may submit you bibliography via email, to have response by next class.

March 17  Catching up; Thinking about Power and Change; Extended Small Groups, material and questions from chapter 3.
Turn in Chapter 6 E.S. response.
Turn in Bibliography (if you have not yet).
Assignments for next class: Read chapter 7 of *Engaged Spirituality*. Continue reading essays in Meyers text which relate to your topic. Consult additional sources. Read chapter 4 of *Standing in the Margin*. Read Pierce book.

March 24  Class discussion of Pierce book. Organizing for Change; Extended Small Groups, material and questions from chapter 4.
Turn in Chapter 7 E.S. response.
Assignments for next class: Research paper will be due April 7. Read chapter 5 of *Standing in the Margin*.

March 31  Substitute Week – No class
You will want to spend this time working on your research paper.

April 7  Class Discussion of Research Papers; Using the Research Paper as a Teaching Tool; Small Groups, material from chapter 5.
Have Research Paper ready to discuss and turn in.
No E.S. responses accepted today.
Assignment for next class: Read *Lest Innocent Blood be Shed*. Prepare 4 page paper tracing how goodness happened there. Read chapter 8 of *Engaged Spirituality*. If you have submitted a response each week, this is your final one.

April 14  Class Discussion on Hallie Book; Social Justice as Spiritual Discipline (*Engaged Spirituality*); How to Get a Congregation on Board; Small Groups, questions from chapter 5.
Turn in Chapter 8 E.S. response.
Assignments for next class: Read chapter 9 of *Engaged Spirituality* (read the chapter even if you don’t need to turn in E.S. response). Read chapter 6 of *Standing in the Margin*.

April 21  Reading Week – Easter Recess

April 28  What Next? Review; Small Groups, chapter 6 material and questions.
Turn in Chapter 9 E.S. response (if needed).
Assignment: Take home final exam. Directions given in class. Read chapter 10 of *Engaged Spirituality*.

May 5  Final exam due by 3:00pm. If professor is not in 239, make sure the faculty secretary marks the time on your exam.
If you need to submit an E.S. response from chapter 10, it will be accepted.