

Kurios Course Descriptions

Kurios is guided by 9 core values, and while many of our courses overlap we have arranged them by the core value we feel they best fit. Most of these courses/seminars will be presented by invited guests from among leaders and pastors in the family of Canadian Baptists of Western Canada.

Core Value: Scripture

How do we live out the Bible?

Key Objective: We will develop a love for scripture through reading and study, gaining an understanding of its overall story and themes, while learning to put it in context for today.

Bible Reading:

Kurios Participants will develop a personal habit of daily Bible readings. Several reading plans will be provided, from which participants will choose one that fits their goals. We recommend a custom Kurios Bible Reading plan which aligns with our course work and enables us to read most of the Bible during our 28 weeks together. Participants are encouraged to journal after reading, noting insights, questions, frustrations, and joys as God reveals Himself to us through His Word. Key is the development of a personal habit of daily Scripture reading.

Most weeks we gather as a community for a 1-hour Bible Reading Seminar, where participants bring their journals and are provided opportunity to share their insights, questions, and thoughts about what they have read. This time also gives us the opportunity to hold one another accountable and encourage one another as we read God's Word. We pay particular attention to responding to the readings with our heart, soul, mind, and strength, as well as discussing how each reading helps us love our neighbour.

Introduction to the Old Testament:

"Introduction to the Old Testament" is the equivalent of a three-credit post-secondary course at an introductory level. Kurios participants will learn the structure, history, and composition of the Old Testament. They will learn to understand the various types of literature and the historical context of the various individual books, along with being introduced to various approaches to read and understand the Old Testament and its

themes. The primary goal of the course will be to build a solid foundation from which they might live out the Bible.

Instructor: Dr. Brad Penner

Text: NIV Cultural Backgrounds Study Bible. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2016.; and Hill, Andrew, and John Walton. A Survey of the Old Testament. 3rd Edition. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2009. 3hrs/wk fall term.

Gospels and Acts:

"Gospels & Acts" is the equivalent of a one and a half-credit (1.5) post-secondary course at an introductory level. Kurios participants will learn the structure, history, and composition of the Gospels and Acts. They will learn to understand the various types of literature and the historical context of these various individual books, along with being introduced to various approaches to read and understand the Gospels and Acts and their themes. The primary goal of the course will be to build a solid foundation from which they might live out the Bible

Instructor: Dr. Brad Penner

Text: NIV Cultural Backgrounds Study Bible. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2016.; and 2.) Gladd, Benjamin. Handbook on the Gospels. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2021. 3hrs/wk for 6 weeks during the winter term.

Scripture Seminars:

Throughout both terms, Kurios participants will take part in numerous seminars looking at portions of Scripture in a deeper way. We ensure that we take a closer look at all the major sections of the Bible. Specifics include:

The Epistles: A overview of the letters written in the New Testament, with specific attention paid to the cultural context in which they are written as well as how they inform our living out of the Bible today.

Apocalyptic Literature: An introduction to Revelation, including understanding the type of literature, original context, ways these themes have been historically interpreted, and the hope we have of God's ultimate restoration. This seminar will help participants learn to think critically and carefully about how we live out the Bible today.

Core Value: Evangelism

How do we share God's story?

Key Objective: We will learn to proclaim the Gospel freely to everyone, so that everyone would declare Jesus their Saviour and Lord.

"Evangelism" often carries negative connotations; we learn to re-frame how we share the Good News we have found in a loving Creator who deeply desires a relationship with us, in inviting and winsome ways. A key text is True Story: A Christianity Worth Believing In, by James Choung (IVP, 2022). We also have seminars on topics such as "How to have a good conversation" and we regularly pray together for those we know with whom we can talk about spiritual things.

Core Value: Prayer

How do we hear God speak?

Key Objective: We will explore the fullness of what it means to communicate with God and will grow to embrace prayer as a way of living, rather than a task to be carried out.

Morning and Evening Prayer

Kurios Participants will explore the richness of a growing prayer life through the discipline of gathering for morning and evening prayer. One of Kurios' driving principles is to help participants establish habits and passions for a lifetime of following Jesus as Lord, and a daily practice of prayer and Scripture reading is fundamental. We will explore prayer as dialogue, and use this daily structure as an opportunity to learn to pray by praying, exploring various types, postures, and approaches.

Intro to Prayer

Kurios Participants will explore the many dimensions of prayer in this introductory course during the fall semester. The focus is on ways to engage in conversation with God, including a variety of types of prayer, approaches to prayer, and traditions of prayer. We will primarily learn the practice of prayer through morning and evening prayer each day, augmented by peer-led weekly sessions. These are designed to create a deeper appreciation for prayer and an opportunity to dialogue and reflect together. The key text for this is Prayer: Experiencing Awe and Intimacy With God. By Timothy Keller. Penguin Books, USA. 2014

Deepening Prayer

As we understand Prayer as dialogue with God, the question quickly becomes “how do I hear and recognize God’s voice?”. We explore this dynamic of prayer using Dallas Willard’s book Hearing God: Developing a Conversational Relationship with God. (IVP, 2021). During the winter semester we engage in weekly peer-led seminars as we journey through this resource chapter by chapter.

Core Value: Church

What is true worship together?

Key Objective: We will wrestle with what it means to “worship together” globally, locally, and individually; building a model of church centred on what we have to give to, and receive from God. Living in Jasper enables us to join with the Jasper Park Baptist Church for worship, fellowship, community, and opportunities to explore and develop our gifts.

Church in Context

A seminar putting our 21st century church in context (historical as well as present day), including attention to why we are Baptists. We trace the story of the church from its roots in the Old Testament, to the coming of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost, and then through the past 2000 years of history. We also explore the community of Jasper where we live in order to see the church today in our immediate context.

Church in Guatemala

A major focus of our 5+ week mission project to Guatemala is in seeing how God’s church exists in another culture. This broadens our understanding of the church and gives us another perspective from which to see ourselves, helping us distill the fundamentals of the Kingdom of God and how it is culturally expressed.

Core Values: Relationships and Identity

Where do I belong? Who am I?

Relationships Key Objective: We will be challenged and equipped to develop deep, meaningful, healthy relationships with others.

Identity Key Objective: We will understand that our identity is centred in being created in the image of God and being “in Christ.” We will discover our unique giftedness, passions and weaknesses.

Community Living

Kurios will use numerous tools to help build healthy relationships and identity. Many of these themes will overlap other areas and will be reinforced by the way we learn to communicate, value one another, and see who we are as defined by the Lord through Scripture. In addition, specific seminar topics may include Emotional Intelligence, Listening skills workshop, How to be a good friend, Healthy boundaries and resolving conflict, and Skills for affirming and challenging. Selected personality inventories may also be used.

Mentored Reading Seminar

A weekly reading seminar is part of these core values. Participants will choose one book in consultation with their home church pastor or a mature Christian mentor. They will read this book and reflect on its content with that person, and each participant will present what they have learned with the other Kurios participants. 1-2 hours per week spring semester.

Core Value: Authenticity

How does faith impact life?

Key Objective: We will learn that faith is meant to be lived out in every area of life. We will gain a deeper knowledge of what it means to follow Jesus and will have opportunities to live it out in practical ways.

Modeling and Mentoring Authenticity

Living authentic Christian lives is not a course to be taught, but rather a value lived out through all we do. Kurios will remain attentive to the call of the Spirit to deeper authenticity with ourselves and with others, reflecting on grace and forgiveness as we live in community and support one another in our lives. This value will be modelled by all of our leaders.

Core Value: Christian Leadership

How do we make a difference?

Key Objective: We will gain the tools we need to lead like Jesus through intentional training and leadership opportunities.

Various Seminars

Seminars will include spiritual gifts, practical assignments, and a habit of reflection on how God is using us in service to His Kingdom.

Core Value: Autonomy and Responsibility

What does it mean to grow up?

Key Objective: We will grow toward adulthood as we experience guided opportunities for independence and freedom in conjunction with given responsibility.

Living in Community Together

This value is mostly lived out, as opposed to "taught" in a course-type setting. We will do this as we live together in community. Tasks of life such as cooking and cleaning will be shared, with teaching and mentoring in practical skills such as safe food handling, how to cook healthy, nutritious, and enjoyable meals, and how to properly clean. This value includes taking the time as a community to invest in the conversations required to share those tasks together.