Liberation Theology: From Preaching to Praxis

A Doctor of Ministry Focus Group

led by

Bishop John Richard Bryant, Mentor
Dr. Ray Hammond, Mentor

Fall. Semester begins
August 17-21, 2015
The Doctor of Ministry Program at Payne Theological Seminary

THE PTS DOCTOR OF MINISTRY PROGRAM

The Doctor of Ministry program at Payne Theological Seminary is a process model of adult continuing education that is heavily influenced by Transformative Learning\(^1\) and Action Research\(^2\). The educational philosophy undergirding the program is a student-centered approach to transformative learning defined with a dialogical approach to a problem-posing curriculum as suggested by Paulo Freire\(^3\). The process uses Social Constructivism\(^4\) so that learning takes place best as students are actively engaged in a perpetual movement of discovery and invention.

The epistemological assumptions underlying the PTS Doctor of Ministry Program are that learning takes place through experience in context, through action/reflection within a peer group of learners, and also through theoretical understanding. For this reason, the PTS student will engage in collaborative learning with a Program Learning Committee from within the context of ministry, through action/reflection with members of the Peer Focus Group seminars and through readings and discussion from the academy. To implement this approach to learning, the PTS DMin program uses a three-tier curriculum for the DMin program.

The PTS DMin Peer Focus Group

A Focus Group\(^5\) is generally thought of as a qualitative research technique whereby a small (normally 6 to 12) group of participants are led by a moderator to explore the success of a particular commodity. The moderator would guide the participants through a series of questions to explore nuances of the commodity. Payne Theological Seminary will use this technique in exploring ministry issues in *Liberation Theology: From Preaching to Praxis*. The mentors of the cohort, Bishop John Bryant and Dr. Ray Hammond, will serve as moderators of the focus group and the DMin students will serve as the participants. Each participant will approach his or her context through a *Liberation Theology* lens to address ministry issues within the context. It is therefore anticipated that the DMin projects the students will work on will fall under the aegis of *Liberation Theology: From Preaching to Praxis* but approached through different context and from different perspectives. In this way, the


student will be able to explore his or her passion while at the same time, providing new and different perspectives on Liberation Theology: From Preaching to Praxis.

At the end of the three year program, it is expected that a book on Liberation Theology: From Preaching to Praxis will be published with Bishop John Bryant and Dr. Ray Hammond serving as the editors and the DMin students serving as contributors to the book. This, of course, means that the work of the student must be of publishable quality. It also means students will be published when completing this program.

Liberation Theology: From Preaching to Praxis

This Doctor of Ministry Focus Group is designed to provide a critical review and assessment of the historical roots and development of liberation theology as manifested in the history of African American denominations. Historical as well as contemporary examples of liberation theology preaching are examined to focus on principles of prophetic proclamation with an objective of salvation as well as liberation.

Students will grapple with four elective courses that look at liberation theology through the lens of:
- Principles
- Preaching
- Praxis
- Promise

The group will focus on ministries intended to have an impact on 1) individual persons, 2) intuitions and communities, and 3) societal policies. Special emphasis will be devoted to small and medium-sized congregations as agents of liberation ministry. The cohort will engage in dialogue between African American and Latin American liberation theologians with a critical assessment of the responsibility of African Americans to share the liberation story in carrying out the global mandate of the Great Commission and the Acts1:8 call to carry this message into all the world.
Who should be in this Group?

The Doctor of Ministry program represents formal preparation for and enrichment of the practice of ministry. It presupposes a Master of Divinity with three years of ministry experience. The goal of the Doctor of Ministry degree is to provide a level of knowledge, theoretical clarity, and competence of practice commensurate with the highest earned degree for the profession and practice of ministry. Persons seeking to enter into a Doctor of Ministry program must have a clearly definable context of ministry. The degree is designed to deepen the basic knowledge, skill, and research in ministry, so that one can engage in the practice of ministry with increasing professional, intellectual, and spiritual integrity. The Doctor of Ministry degree at Payne is designed to train leaders for the Church in various areas of ministry. The expected time of study is three years or six semesters. Students attend the one week Intensives and peer seminars. Additionally, web support is a part of the program. Through Blackboard and webinars, students are allowed to remain in their context of ministry on a full time basis while earning their degree.

Cost

Application Fee
  non-refundable ($75)

Background Check
  non-refundable ($30)

Semester Fee
  Intensive Registration ($375)
  Tuition ($4350)
  Technology ($160)

Other Fees
  Candidacy Review ($250)
  Graduation ($750)
  DMin Project Continuation ($2500)
  Matriculation Maintenance ($550)

Deadline

The cut-off date for fall 2015 applicants is July 15, 2015
About the Mentors

Bishop John Richard Bryant

Bishop John Richard Bryant is Senior Bishop and Presiding Prelate of the Fourth Episcopal District of the African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church. He is the son of the late Bishop Harrison James Bryant and Edith Holland Bryant. John Bryant was elected and consecrated the 106th Bishop of the African American Episcopal Church at the 1988 General Conference in Fort Worth, Texas. He has taken seriously the words “Study to show thyself approved . . .” Bishop Bryant received his B.A. in 1965 from Morgan State University, a Master of Theology in 1970 from the Boston University School of Theology and was a Martin Luther King, Jr. Fellow receiving his Doctor of Ministry degree from the Colgate Rochester Divinity School in 1975.

Bishop Bryant has pastored three (3) churches: Bethel A.M.E Church, Fall River, MA, St. Paul A.M.E Church, Cambridge, MA, and Bethel A.M.E Church, Baltimore, MD. In his pastoral ministry, ninety-nine (99) men and women have entered the Christian Ministry. With an emphasis on church growth, community development, and political empowerment, he has preached and/or taught on more than thirty-five (35) college campuses, preached on five continents, and was a Peace Corps volunteer in West Africa from 1965 to 1967. Bishop Bryant has through the years, served as one of the primary evangelists for the World Methodist Council in England, Brazil, Israel, India, Greece, Cuba, and Kenya. Bishop Bryant lives a life of service. He serves on the boards of the Interdenominational Theological Center (ITC), Turner Theological Seminary, Payne Theological Seminary, and the National Church advisory Council of the American Bible Society. He is Vice President of the North American Section of the World Methodist Council Division of Evangelism. He serves on the advisory board of the Institute of Church Administration and Management (ICAM), he is also a member of the Board of Trustees and Chairman of the Statistics and Finance Committee of the African Methodist Episcopal Church and a Commissioner on the Chicago Planned Commission Board.

In 1988, Bishop Bryant was named Bishop of the AME Church's 14th Episcopal District, which included 101 churches in West Africa. In 1991 the 10th Episcopal District, including Texas and the Southwest was also assigned to him. In 2000, the Episcopal Committee of the 46th General Conference assigned Bishop Bryant to the 5th Episcopal. In 2008, at the 48th Quadrennial Session of the General Conference, Bishop Bryant became the Senior Bishop of the African Methodist Episcopal Church and was assigned at the Presiding Prelate of the Fourth Episcopal District, where he currently serves. His purview includes superintendenting churches located in seven states: Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota, South Dakota, and three Canadian provinces; Nova Scotia, Ontario, and Quebec. In addition, Bishop Bryant is responsible for expanding the African Methodist Episcopal Church onto the continent of Asia. Also in 2008, at the General Conference, Bishop Bryant made the application that the work of newly founded churches in India would be officially received into the AME Church family, which was voted on and accepted. In 2009, Bishop Bryant was asked by the AME Council of Bishops to provide Episcopal supervision to the India Conference. At the present time, there are forty-one (41) AME churches in southern India. Bishop Bryant is the recipient of many honors and awards: including the Ebony Magazine's Honor Roll of Outstanding African American Preachers and Ebony's list of the 100 Most Influential Black Americans. He has published a collection of sermons entitled, “God Can: Sermons of Encouragement from the Life of Elijah.” He and his wife, The Rev. Dr. Cecelia Williams Bryant, have co-authored a new book, Healing For Wounded Vows. Bishop Bryant and the Reverend Dr. Cecilia Bryant are the parents of the Reverend Dr. Jamal Harrison Bryant, pastor of Baltimore's Empowerment Temple, and Dr. Thelma Simone Bryant Davis, a psychologist, poet, dancer, and minister, continue the family tradition of spiritual leadership.
About the Mentors

Rev. Dr. Ray Hammond, M.D., M.A.

Pastor Ray Hammond was born and raised in Philadelphia, PA, the eldest son of a Baptist preacher and a schoolteacher. He was educated in the public schools of Philadelphia and went on to graduate from Harvard College and Harvard Medical School. He completed his surgical residency at the New England Deaconess Hospital (Boston, MA) and joined the Emergency Medicine staff at the Cape Cod Hospital (Hyannis, MA).

Pastor Hammond accepted the call to the preaching ministry in 1976 and completed his Master of Arts degree in the Study of Religion (Christian and Medical Ethics) at Harvard Graduate School of Arts and Sciences in 1982. In 1988 he was called to be the founder and pastor of Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Boston.

Pastor Hammond has a long history of involvement with youth and community activities. He is Chairman and Co-Founder of the Ten Point Coalition—an ecumenical group of Christian clergy and lay leaders working to mobilize the greater Boston community around issues affecting high-risk youth; Executive Director of Bethel's Generation Excel program; Executive Committee Member, Black Ministerial Alliance; Chair of the Boston Opportunity Agenda; a member of the Strategy Team for the Greater Boston Interfaith Organization; a member of the Boston Green Ribbon Commission; and a trustee of the Yawkey Foundation, the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, the John F. Kennedy Library Foundation, BMC Health System, Inc. and the Math and Technology Public Charter High (MATCH) School. He is a former chairman of the Boston Foundation. He continues to work in local and district youth activities in the AME Church.

Pastor Hammond is the author of several papers and articles on a range of issues including academic achievement, diversity, and violence prevention. He is a Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and is also the recipient of numerous honors including honorary doctorates from Boston University, Cambridge College, University of Massachusetts – Boston, Lesley College, Northeastern University, Boston College, Emmanuel College, Notre Dame University and AME University (Monrovia, Liberia).

He is the proud husband of the Rev. Dr. Gloria White-Hammond (a pediatrician and co-pastor to whom he has been happily married since 1973); the blessed father of two daughters, Mariama and Adiya, and a son-in-law, Turahn Dorsey; and the proud grandfather of Ella. He counts as his greatest blessing the love of a God who has made it possible for him to accomplish and receive more than he could have ever thought or asked.