Enscripturation was brought into the public consciousness through an online article which Lance Wallnau wrote during the 2016 Republican leadership race. According to Wallnau, the Lord told him that while there were, at the time, many evangelicals running for the Republican leadership, the Lord would ask someone from outside of the fold--Donald Trump--to lead them back to the promised land, just as the Lord had anointed the pagan King Cyrus to shepherd his people Israel and rebuild Jerusalem and the temple. Wallnau’s claim found defenders and detractors across various social media platforms in the build up to the 2016 election, and once Trump was in office, it was even picked up by President Benjamin Netenyahu of Israel. Netenyahu stated that the people of Israel would steadfastly honour Donald Trump as they continue to honour Cyrus the Great, since Trump moved the American embassy to Jerusalem, and recognized Israel’s claim to Jerusalem and the Golan Heights.

Those who have considered the claim that Trump is Cyrus have variously interpreted it as prophecy, typology, simile, or metaphor. On one hand attributing the epithet “Cyrus” to the President is a matter of applying the Scriptures to today. But it is more than just that. It is a matter of placing the President within the Scriptural story in order to make a particular claim about providence, what God is doing in and through Mr. Trump. The idea that Trump is Cyrus, or at least that he was asked to lead as Cyrus, continues to be deeply held by some Americans, just as it continues to be vehemently denounced by others. Yet--whether we decide to approve of this particular appellation or reject it--we must recognize that it is just the tip of the iceberg, or at the very least, a piece of sea ice that has been broken off of the larger mass. God’s people have consistently enscripturated themselves and others since Old Testament times. And now that Christianity is a truly global religion, enscripturation is practiced wherever the waves of the sea wash up on the shore.
In this seminar course students will read and respond to colorful examples of this practice from the early Church, the Medieval Church, Anglicanism, and Global Pentecostalism in order to understand the work that Scripture has done in the lives of Christians over the course of time. They will consider whether there are guidelines for the practice of enscripturation, and whether pursuing it self-consciously can be a means of Christian ministry today.

II. COURSE OBJECTIVES

In this course students will:

1. Dig deeply into primary sources which exemplify the historic practice of enscripturation.
2. Work with secondary documents to develop a framework to appreciate and critique the primary sources.
3. Consider the contemporary practice of enscripturation and its potential use in Christian ministry

These objectives will be facilitated through:

Weekly Readings
Preparation for and participation in weekly class discussions
Seminar Presentations
Final Essay and Presentation

III. LEARNING OUTCOMES

The learning outcomes for Trinity School for Ministry are:

1. The student will recognize and identify the biblical theology evident in the course work. CH/BI 825 will equip students to consider historical documents as biblical theologians. With the aid of secondary sources, students will reflect upon how interpreters have received, worked with, and transmitted the Bible.

2. The student will be able to articulate an Anglican understanding of biblical, historical, systematic, and pastoral theology. CH/BI 825 students will consider what it means to study history as Christians and whether there is a properly “Anglican” reading of the documents in question. Students of other traditions, especially those in the Lutheran
and Presbyterian programs, should be able to articulate the theological perspective of their own tradition.

3. **The student will be able to effectively communicate the Christian message to a diversity of people in order to advance the mission of God.** The study of enscripturation presupposes that the Bible has worked upon interpreters as they have worked to understand it. Taking inventory of this work which the Bible has done is an important part of understanding how it continues to impact people today.

4. **The student will be prepared to effectively lead in a variety of Christian communities.** The study of enscripturation promises to provide conceptual tools that can be deployed in almost all facets of Christian ministry.

---

**IV. REQUIRED TEXTS**


Students will also photocopy and read historical (primarily narratival) examples of the practice of enscripturation to be read each week.

---

**V. ASSESSMENTS**

*Attendance and Class Participation.* As the TSM Student Handbook states, “Students who miss more than three classes in one term may forfeit credit for the class and may be in danger of failing the course. As a matter of courtesy, students who must miss any classes should notify their professors, ahead of class.” Attendance and class participation are worth ten percent of the final grade.

*Discussion Questions.* Doing primary and secondary readings ahead of the class is basic to participation. Students will prepare simple reading reviews, which answer some basic questions about the primary and secondary readings. Students must come to class prepared, with a hard copy of their answers in hand. The reading reviews will serve as the basis of our class discussions together. Reading reviews will be marked on a pass / fail basis and are worth twenty percent of the final grade.

*Discussion Leadership.* Students will lead the class discussion on at least one day during the semester, depending on the number of students that sign up for the course. They will provide a summary of the materials and lead the discussion on them.

*Seminar Final paper.* Students will be asked to write a final paper which studies a select topic in Anglican and Episcopal history in relation to Scripture, submitted as a Google doc.
on the course online platform. They will also present their tentative findings to the class in order to solicit input. The paper is worth thirty percent of the final grade.

VI. EVALUATION

Trinity School of Ministry has the following grade scale: A = 100-95; A- = 94-90; B+ = 89-87; B = 86-83; B- = 82-80; C+ = 79-77; C = 76-73; C- = 72-70; D = below 70; F = below 60. As per The Association of Theological Schools (ATS) requirements, several samples of student work may be randomly selected and used as a class artifact as part of an ongoing assessment of courses and degree programs. Students’ names will be removed from any work used for this purpose.

Your written work will be evaluated according to the following criteria: clarity and charity of thought and expression, accuracy of information, and breadth and depth of discussion. I will use letter grades or their equivalent to mean the following:

A (90-100): The material is exceptional. Usually, this means that it is not only clear and accurate but also develops the topic in breadth and depth beyond what is necessary for a good understanding of it. Such material is often, though not always, marked also by creativity, exceptional insight, and/or relatively extensive research.

B (80-89): The thought and expression are clear and the information is accurate. The discussion is broad and deep enough to indicate a solid understanding of the issue. By “broad” I mean that sufficient aspects of the topic are covered, and by “depth” I mean that enough supporting and illustrating material is offered to flesh out the basic thought.

C (70-79): The material shows an adequate grasp of the topic, but at points, the discussion is unclear, inaccurate, narrow or shallow.

D (60-69): The material shows something close to an adequate grasp of the topic but is notably defective according to one or more of the criteria.

F (below 60): The material does not indicate that the student has an adequate grasp of the topic, or it is severely defective according to the criteria.

In the liberal arts, there is always a subjective element in grading insofar as grades reflect qualitative work rather than quantitative measures. For historical and theological work, a number of factors enter into grading: competence in understanding and summarizing material; insightful comments; thoughtful argumentation in addition to summarizing and commenting. Generally, the more of these factors that are present, the higher the grade, but other factors will also be taken into account, for example, organizational coherence, narrative flow of argument, lucidity. (Longer is not necessarily better.)
As per The Association of Theological Schools (ATS) requirements, several samples of student work may be randomly selected and used as a class artifact as part of an ongoing assessment of courses and degree programs. Students’ names will be removed from any work used for this purpose.