

**MN 524 – Conflict and Christian Community (2 credit hours)**  
**Wednesdays, 2:00-4:00 p.m.**  
**Spring, 2010**

**Faculty Information:**

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**Questions to be addressed in this course:**

1. Why is there so much conflict in the church?
2. How are the massive social and cultural changes in our era related to church conflict?
3. What is your “theology of conflict?”
4. What must Pastors do to be effective leaders amidst congregational tension and anxiety?
5. What is your “default” style in responding to conflict and what implications does that have for you as a leader?
6. Can change in congregations be accomplished without conflict?
7. How may conflict be redeemed to bring positive growth?

**Overview/Course Description**

This course will provide a framework for understanding the underlying causes of conflict in congregations. You will learn about the correlation between types of change and conflict. Insights from family systems theory will be introduced. You will assess the efficacy of your own personal response to different levels of conflict. You will learn ways that conflict can serve as a means of grace and spiritual deepening.

**M. Div. Curricular Objectives Fulfilled by this Course**

- Engage contemporary theological and ethical issues with insight and humility;
- Integrate theology and practice in all areas of life and ministry;
- Provide pastoral care for individuals and congregations in daily life and moments of transition and crisis.

**Required Texts**

Tickle, *The Great Emergence: How Christianity Is Changing and Why*  
Steinke, *Congregational Leadership in Anxious Times: Being Calm and Courageous No Matter What*  
Brubaker, *Promise and Peril: Understanding and Managing Change and Conflict in Congregations*  
Leas, *Discover Your Conflict Management Style*

**Recommended Text**

Bonhoeffer, *Life Together*

**Evaluation** (Letter grade or credit/no credit)

1. Three cumulative take-home examinations – 60%
2. Assessment of personal conflict management style and implications for ministry –30%
3. Attendance, participation – 10%