Book Clubs:

1. **Bruce Baker: When I Was a Child I Read Books by Marilyrne Robinson**

   The author of Gilead (2004) and Home (2008), Marilyrne Robinson offers what one reviewer called “a collection of essays to engage our toxic culture of diminishment, arguing that as our view of society shrinks, public discourse dies, corruption spreads, education is undermined and science denigrated when spirituality and loving kindness are siphoned from public dialogue and we dismiss religion.” Bruce Baker will lead a discussion of this engaging book and share ways to take Robinson’s challenges to modern discourse on ideas and faith into the classroom.

2. **Daniel Castelo: Holiness as a Liberal Art by Daniel Castelo (ed.)**

   As a university grounded in the Holiness tradition what does it mean to see this rich theological heritage worked out across our academic disciplines? In this edited volume by Daniel Castelo and other members of the School of Theology, they suggest ways that the Holiness tradition can find a place in our course work as well as our scholarship. This book group will discuss ways we can find faith engagement in our specific academic disciplines through various ways of addressing Holiness as both a personal and social responsibility.


   Based upon a central question in Methodist class meetings, how is it with your soul?, this book, written as the 2014 spiritual growth study for United Methodist Women, brings into balance the inner and outer dimensions of the Christian life. Organized around four verbs--pray, learn, mentor, and transform--the book will challenge you to become a more vibrant disciple of Jesus Christ. The verbs--pray and learn--communicate the power of inspiration, receiving, inbreathing. The verbs--mentor and transform--communicate the power of action, giving, reaching out.

4. **Jeff Keuss: Night of the Confessor: Christian Faith in an Age of Uncertainty by Tomas Halik**

   Considered by some to be one of the leading public theologians in Europe today, Fr. Tomas Halik is only now gaining wider attention in the West. A Czech priest who was secretly ordained in Germany in the 1970s during the communist regime in Czechoslovakia and later advisor to Vaclav Havel in the transition to the Czech Republic, Halik has continued to speak on issues of secularization in western culture and the need to reclaim a robust Christian faith in the 21st century that gives hospitality to an ever pluralizing culture. His book Night of the Confessor is a challenging look at Europe today through the eyes of a passionate public intellectual that is both intellectually engaging and heartfelt in its devotion to the person and work of Jesus.

Discussion and Visioning Groups:

1. **Rick Steele: The Faculty Faith Statement and what it means to be Orthodox, Ecumenical, Wesleyan and Evangelical**

   The [SPU Statement of Faith](#) describes our academic community as “historical orthodox,” “clearly evangelical,” “distinctively Wesleyan,” and “genuinely ecumenical.” This workshop will explore the meaning of each of these terms taken individually, the ways in which the meaning of each qualifies the meaning of the other three, and the ways in which they collectively shape the religious identity and mission of the university. The workshop will also discuss how faculty and staff who might not ordinarily use all four of these terms to describe their own personal faith can nevertheless thrive in and contribute to the spiritual health of a community that uses all four to map its spiritual life and distinctive approach to Christian higher education.
2. **Kathleen Braden, Patrick McDonald and Lane Seeley: Catholicism at SPU: Making our Ecumenism Meaningful**

Three Catholic faculty will discuss their experience in light of SPU’s expression to be “genuinely ecumenical”. As Catholics, how do we incorporate this statement of identity meaningfully into our curriculum, our mentorship of students, and our relationships with other faculty and staff? Participants will be invited to reflect on their own experiences and thoughts on the topic. The organizers invite all faculty, Catholic and non-Catholic, to join us for a challenging discussion.

3. **Stamatis Vokos and Steve Layman: Lectio as Faculty Spiritual Development**

Over the past few years SPU had embarked on a quarter-by-quarter commitment to a close reading of the Christian scriptures in relation to the CBTE Lectio. Stamatis Vokos and Steve Layman will lead a session introducing faculty to the Lectio through a close reading of biblical text, discuss how being in a faculty Lectio has formed them and what it could mean for faculty to commit to a Lectio group this coming year.

4. **Sara Koenig, Jennifer McKinney and Karen Snedker: Research in Community: Accountability and Discipline**

With our busy teaching schedules, it can be a challenge to make time for research during the quarter. For the past few years, the three of us have set aside time each week to meet one another off campus and do non-teaching related work. Meeting together has provided accountability, and doing it weekly has turned into a discipline. And the community, of three, has been a place of encouragement and support. We will discuss the importance of forming research support, what works and what doesn’t.


This session will provide an overview of Tent City 3, an encampment of individuals experiencing homelessness who will be hosted by SPU in Tiffany Loop during Winter Quarter. We will draw connections between this act of hospitality and SPU’s academic and social mission by having faculty colleagues share ideas for academic engagement with TC3, as well as their own experiences from the 2012 encampment. TC3 host committee members will also answer questions about logistics, campus programming, and service-learning.


SPU was founded in many respects in 1891 as a mission school focused on equipping and sending men and women both near and far for the sake of the Gospel. As we have grown and changed into the 21st century, this calling to being ‘global’ has always been part of our story. How does the new Global Initiative led by Ross Stewart build on this heritage and give us new vision for the world in which our university is called to? This session will be an opportunity to hear from Ross as to his work on the Global Initiative and ways faculty can contribute to our work as a global academic community.

7. **Gaile Moe: The First Year Curriculum, Writing and Learning**

In what ways does the first year experience for our students frame and sustain the mission of the university? In this session Gail Moe and her task force will discuss the proposal they have set forward and provide a forum to listen to faculty as we look to this fall and a new vision for undergraduate writing, learning and the first year experience.