Precourse assignments (1&2) should be emailed to the Course of Study office by January 13, 2014.

Course Description
This course analyzes the biblical and theological bases for Christian behavior: personal, professional and social. Emphasis is given to the acquisition of pastoral skills in moral discernment and ethically responsible decision making and action as demonstrated in the life and leadership of the pastor.

Course Objectives
- Exploration of biblical and theological bases for ethical thinking and activity.
- Survey of major approaches to ethical reasoning.
- Examination of the Social Principles of the United Methodist Church as a frame of reference for ethical decision making.
- Exploration of ways to deal with ethical dilemmas inherent in such issues as war and peace, hunger, poverty, political tyranny, immigration, domestic violence, substance abuse, racism, sexism, AIDS, and biomedical technology.
- Reflection on case studies that challenge pastors to examine carefully their ethics and responsibilities.
- Focus on pertinent issues for personal and professional life, with indication of guidelines for ministerial ethics.
- Delineation of and reflection upon essential guidelines for Christian identity and moral behavior.

Required Textbooks (MUST be read prior to first class):
  You are to read this book before our first class meeting since you will be using it to complete your Precourse Assignment. It’s an easy read and is meant for pastors and students in ministry. You’ll find it informative and useful.
  For our second class meeting you are to choose to read FIVE of these chapters. (You are encouraged to read all fourteen but I’m only requiring five.) Of the five read in depth, choose three and answer the Discussion Questions found at the end of these chapters. These responses will be turned into your instructor for review.

Both of these books (Bush & Fortune) should be read prior to the final class. Choose one of these and write a five page response paper summarizing what you see as the book’s major points, especially those that are most helpful to you. Also add a section addressing what you would want to ask and discuss with the author if you were to have an opportunity to visit with them over lunch.

Precourse Assignment to be emailed prior to first meeting – January 13, 2014:

1. BEFORE YOU HAVE READ ANY OF THE BOOKS. Describe a situation taken from your life history that required an ethical decision to be made. This should be a decision of consequence that required some time and reflection on your part before being lived out. (This may have been in your role as a pastor or in your family or work life as a lay person.) After carefully writing out the context and situation, name the various influences and guides that played a part in how you made your decision to act (or perhaps to NOT act.) Help the reader to understand how you came to make your decision. The paper should be at least 5 and no more than 7 pages long. This paper will be kept confidential and not shared with the class without your permission.

2. AFTER YOU HAVE DONE #1. Read the Pastor as Moral Guide book. After you have finished, carefully review the paper you wrote for #1 and write a thoughtful three to four page critique/response to the decision making process you used. Include in your paper a section that asks the following: If the author, Rebekah Miles, was to read your case study, what do you think she would say? What consultation or critique might she offer? Refer directly to the Pastor as Moral Guide book in your paper to underscore your reflections.

Your Teacher
The class is being led by the Reverend Skip Johnson, Ph.D. I am an ordained UM elder in the North Georgia Conference. I have served local church appointments in Texas and the Atlanta area where I have had responsibilities for pastoral care ministries. I am currently an Associate Professor of Pastoral Care at Columbia Theological Seminary in Decatur and also the Training Director for the Care and Counseling Center of Georgia. I am a Fellow in the American Association of Pastoral Counselors and a Licensed Professional Counselor in the state of Georgia. I can be reached at (404) 687-4693 or by email at skipj@mindspring.com.

Guidelines for Written Assignments
• All papers should be typed, double-spaced, on 8 ½” by 11” paper, unless the instructor has asked for a different format specifically within the precourse work. Font should be Times New Roman or something similar and no larger than size 12. Margins are to be 1” on all four sides of each page.
• All papers must include a page number and the last name of the student in either the header or footer of every page.
• You should note the question you are answering at the beginning of each new section of materials.
• All papers should provide citations for all quoted material. You may use MLA, Turabain, APA or Chicago Style.
• Punctuation should be consistent; clarity of meaning is the primary purpose of punctuation. Edit and retype material as needed and check spelling in a standard dictionary.
• All papers should attempt to eliminate discriminatory language— for example: racism, ageism, sexism, classism, and prejudicial usage concerning handicapping conditions.

Inclusive Language Covenant
The faculty of Emory Course of Study School has adopted a covenant statement encouraging inclusiveness in the use of language, as follows:

The Inclusive Language Covenant is designed to create a linguistic environment in which all students, staff, and faculty can grow in understanding and appreciating the rich diversity of God’s people. The COS faculty commits itself—through continued discussion, reflection, and exploration—to using language in such a way that we respond to the fullness of God’s presence among us as much by our choice of words as by our care for one another. Recognizing that our experience with inclusive language is an integral part of theological formation, we invite students and others to share as partners with us in this learning process.

We understand “covenant” more in terms of its biblical and theological meaning than in a legal or contractual context. Covenant signifies the common commitment of a community of faith in response to God’s revelation and in partnership with one another. The values implied in the covenant have morally persuaded us to try to generate patterns of speech and behavior that bond the members of the community in mutual respect. We expect all members of the community to address issues of diversity constructively. The entire Inclusive Language Covenant can be found on the COS website, and you are encouraged to read the whole covenant.
Directions to Email Precourse Assignments

Please read all the directions below before emailing your assignments to the COS Office, any emails received that do not follow the directions below will not be accepted. You will receive an email confirmation of receipt and if your email is not submitted correctly an email indicating you will need to resend your assignments.

1. Email only michelle.levan@emory.edu, do not email instructors precourse assignments.
2. Email must be received no later than 11:59pm on the deadline of January 13, 2014.
   - Please note that the cut off time is EASTERN STANDARD TIME zone, so email your assignments accordingly.
   - Any precourse work received after January 13th at 11:59pm will be subject to a late penalty.
     - Precourse work received between January 14 – January 19th is 1 letter grade deduction.
     - Precourse work received between January 20 – January 25th is 2 letter grade deductions.
     - You will be drop from any course for which precourse work has not been received by the beginning of class on January 25th.
3. The course number and the phrase “precourse work” should be the subject of your email:
   Example - Precourse Work 113
4. Precourse work must be sent as an attached document and not in the body of the email.
   - Any version of Microsoft Word will be accepted; PDF and Mac-Pages documents will not be accepted.
   - All assignments for each course must be in one document, multiple documents are not acceptable. You should send only one attachment with all course assignments.
5. Your FULL name, phone number and email, should all be clearly included at the beginning of your email. See Example
6. Plagiarism Policy and Plagiarism Defined
   The plagiarism policy and defined paragraphs below must be included in the body of your email (both are below), not within your precourse work. The inclusion of the policy and definition in the body of the email, verifies that you agree to it and your email will represent your signature (which is a requirement). If the email does not include the plagiarism policy and definition it will not be accepted. Your email, with the plagiarism policy and definition will be printed and used as the cover sheet for your precourse assignments, because it has the verification of date and time received, and your agreement to the plagiarism policy and definition.
   Plagiarism Policy - I have read the plagiarism definition below and verify that this assignment represents my own work, except where credit is given.
   Plagiarism Defined: “You plagiarize when, intentionally or not, you use someone else’s words or ideas but fail to credit that person, leading your readers to think that those words are yours. In all fields, you plagiarize when you use a source’s words or ideas without citing that source. In most fields, you plagiarize even when you do credit the source but use its exact words without using quotation marks or block indentation” (201-202). Booth, Wayne C. Booth, Gregory G. Colomb, and Joseph M. Williams. The Craft of Research, Second Edition. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2003.
7. If you do not follow the procedure your precourse work WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED!