

To enroll in or to view our courses, go to:

Agape-Restoration-Society.org/enroll

...or simply click on the course link "**Social Ministry of the Church**" on the slider menu of this website.

Then click the "**LOGIN**" link, type the Username "**guest**", Password "**TryMe**", and click the **Login** button.

To enroll, read the Intro and scroll down to check the "**YES, I PROMISE**" button, enter your name, email address and phone number. Then click on "**Send.**"

Most of these courses were written by Cheryl K. Hosken, B.S.N., M.S. Psych., drawing on many years of nursing and rehabilitation counseling experience.

The course "A Biblical Theology of Ministry" is adapted from the doctoral dissertation of Robert D. Hosken, M.Min., D.Min.

These courses have been translated into Russian, Chinese and Portuguese, and have been taught around the world for the past 20+ years. We teach them free of charge (but you're welcome to make a donation to cover our operating expenses).

Robert and Cheryl Hosken have spent 20 years in foreign missionary work including 17 years in Russia, and another 20 years leading a mission support agency. They are now semi-retired and live in the Pittsburgh, PA area. They have two children and four grandchildren.



Robert and Cheryl have volunteered at FOCUS+Pittsburgh as employment counselors, and Cheryl as a nurse at the FOCUS Free Medical Clinic.

Robert is fluent in Russian and German, and served as General Editor of **Agape-Biblia**, a revision of the Russian Synodal translation of the Bible, the first hypertext Bible in Russian (1996) for the Windows operating system.

He's webmaster at www.Agape-Biblia.org and the other websites listed on the top menu there.

Social Ministry of the Church

Six free online courses!

As Orthodox Christians, we are taught to care for the poor, sick and elderly because we are all created in the image of God.

Jesus Christ first proclaimed that His ministry would be to "*the poor, the maimed, the lame and the blind*" (Luke 4:18-21), He taught the people to do the same (Luke 14:12-13 and 21), and He put it into practice: "*Jesus went about all the cities and the villages,*

teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every disease and every sickness among the people"
(Mat. 9:35).

Then He showed His disciples how to preach the Gospel and minister to the sick, handicapped and poor (Luke 5:12-15). Next, He sent them out two by two and they practiced what He taught (Luke 9:1-2): to preach the Gospel, care for the needy and heal the sick. And in the Great Commission, Jesus commanded His disciples to make more disciples and teach *their* disciples to do ("observe" but not just watch) everything He had taught *His* disciples to do (Mat. 28:18-20). Now they knew what were supposed to do!

So the Apostles selected seven deacons to carry out *diakonia*-ministry to the sick, poor, widows, etc. "...and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem exceedingly" (Acts 6:1-7).

St. Paul taught that the bishops, pastors and deacons should "*equip the saints*" to do the work of *diakonia*-ministry "*to the building up of the body of Christ*" (Eph. 4:12).

This is not just dry *theoria* or theology: it is *praxis*, practical hands-on *diakonia*-ministry that helps the Church grow!

This "**Social Ministry of the Church**" program consists of six courses spread over one academic year. In our first course, entitled "Intro: Ministry to the Handicapped and Poor," it tells us -

"The fathers of the church frequently studied medicine along with their general and spiritual education. These priest-physicians served the court and wrote textbooks on medicine. As a result of this type of education, hospitals were established. The most famous of these early hospitals was Basilius established by St. Basil of Caesarea in Cappadocia. St. John Chrysostom established several of them in Constantinople. Usually, the hospitals contained a house for the elderly, disabled, for contagious and acute diseases, and travelers. Oftentimes, a church or cathedral was part of the group of buildings where people came for healing and rest."

But with the advances of Islam, and later the scourge of communism, the Church was forced to abandon its social outreach ministries, and could only conduct worship services for its own people. The growth of secularism in the West has similarly led the Church to give over to the state its ministry in society.

We need to reclaim this social ministry as our rightful area of outreach, incarnating the life and ministry of Christ in His Church today!

Our "**Social Ministry of the Church**" program will prepare you to do home health care or work in our future **Agape Restoration Communities**.

Here is our 2023-2024 course schedule:

Sep. 4 – 30, 2023 (4 weeks):
"**Intro: Ministry to the Handicapped and Poor**"

(no break)

Oct. 2 – Nov. 8, 2023 (5.5 weeks):
"**Rehabilitation of Children with Disabilities**"

(4-day break)

Nov. 13 – Dec. 20, 2023 (5.5 weeks):
"**Foundations of Psychology**"

(2-week break)

Jan. 8 – Feb. 18, 2024 (6 weeks):
"**A Biblical Theology of Ministry**"

(1-week break)

Feb. 26 – Apr. 7, 2024 (6 weeks):
"**Care for Various Health Conditions**"

(1-week break)

Apr. 17 – May 26, 2024 (6 weeks):
"**Vocational Rehabilitation**"

Upon completing all 6 courses, you can receive a Certificate of Completion.