



January 8-10, 2026

For all Pastors, Ruling Elders, Deacons, CRE-CPs and others interested

Pastoral Care and Counseling



Joel Mackey is a therapist counseling individuals, couples and families. Joel is also an ordained minister in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A) participating in congregational life as a parish associate. He has worked for many years in the nonprofit sector as an executive director, board member, and university instructor. Joel is also an attorney licensed in California and Illinois.

Duncan Smith started his vocational life as a social worker and now has nearly 40 years of service as a congregational, transitional and regional minister. Currently he works stewarding the denominational health plan sponsored by Mennonite Church USA. He is also trained in intercultural competency and mediation.



When: *Thursday and Friday, January 8 and 9 – 7:00 pm to 9:00 pm; on Zoom only*
Saturday, January 10 – 8:30 am to 11:30 am; 1:00 pm to 4:00 pm at Presbytery
Offices: 545 Ashbury Avenue, El Cerrito, CA 94530

Cost: *\$100 for credit* for Commissioned Ruling Elder Candidates
\$40 to audit and open to all

Registration: <https://presbyteryofsf.churchcenter.com/registrations/events/3303433>

Class Description:

This is a survey course on pastoral counseling for persons who are wanting to minister within the church. The course will also explore the basic techniques and approaches of pastoral counseling, along with practice, placing pastoral counseling in the context of congregational ministry. This course includes an Overview of Pastoral Counseling in the Church; Boundary Identification; Cultural Awareness; Congregational Systems; Counseling Contexts and Foundational Skills; Counseling Contexts. Students are encouraged to seek further training and supervision before doing Pastoral Counseling.

Pastoral Care and Counseling Syllabus, continued

Required Reading:

[Basic Types of Pastoral Counseling](#) Resources for the Ministry of Healing and Growth by Howard Clinebell, Updated by Bridget Clare McKeever (**Read Chapters 2 - 5**)

Suggested Reading:

[Contemplation and Counseling](#) *An Integrative Model for Practitioners*
Christian Association For Psychological Studies Books by P. Gregg Blanton

[Hope-Focused Marriage Counseling](#) *A Guide to Brief Therapy*
by Everett L. Worthington Jr.

[Counseling Couples in Conflict](#) *A Relational Restoration Model*
Christian Association For Psychological Studies Books by James N. Sells and Mark A. Yarhouse

[Christian Counseling Ethics](#) *A Handbook for Psychologists, Therapists and Pastors*
Christian Association For Psychological Studies Books, Edited by Randolph K. Sanders

[Treating Trauma in Christian Counseling](#)
Christian Association For Psychological Studies Books, Edited by Heather Davediuk Gingrich and Fred C. Gingrich

[Evidence-Based Practices for Christian Counseling and Psychotherapy](#)
Christian Association For Psychological Studies Books
Edited by Everett L. Worthington Jr., Eric L. Johnson, Joshua N. Hook, and Jamie D. Aten

[Skills for Effective Counseling](#) *A Faith-Based Integration*
Christian Association For Psychological Studies Books
by Elisabeth A. Nesbit Sbanotto, Heather Davediuk Gingrich, and Fred C. Gingrich

[The Integration of Psychology and Christianity](#) *A Domain-Based Approach*
Christian Association For Psychological Studies Books by William L. Hathaway and Mark A. Yarhouse, Foreword by Stephen E. Parke

[Generation to Generation](#) *Family Process in Church and Synagogue*
by Edwin H. Friedman (Guilford Press)

Pastor Counseling Syllabus continued next page

Pre-course Assignment:

Basic Types of Pastoral Counseling Resources for the Ministry of Healing and Growth by Howard Clinebell, Updated by Bridget Clare McKeever (**Read Chapters 2 - 5**)

Final Assignment: This will be an in-class assignment where you will practice contextual counseling skills that you have learned based on four case studies presented: 1) Grief Counseling; 2) Individual Counseling; 3) Couples Counseling; 4) Family Counseling.

Course Requirements

1. Attendance at all classes
2. Pre-assignment reading and reflections
3. The final assignment

Questions: Contact Mary Biasotti, CRE/CP Coordinator, mbiasotti@sfpby.org