

CEDF 7190: Incorporating Children in Worship

North Park Theological Seminary

January 7-11, 2013

8:30am-4:30pm

(3 credit hours, *Syllabus subject to minor changes)

Instructors:

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Course Description

This course delves into the theological and practical dimensions of children in the church's worship life. The approach is biblical, theological, historical and practical, and the course addresses such topics as mystery, vocation, spirituality, participation, incorporation, and sacraments as they pertain to children and Christian worship. Some attention will also be given to youth. This course fulfills the interdisciplinary core requirement. Prerequisite: Theo 6330 recommended.

Learning Objectives

1. Describe the role and place of children in the history of the church's worship.
2. Analyze children's participation in worship theologically and as it communicates the gospel of Jesus Christ.
3. Present ways that worship includes or impedes children's participation
4. Articulate a theology of the vocation of children/youth as it pertains to worship
5. Engage children in worship at the sacramental level.
6. Synthesize biblical, theological, and practical dimensions to create worship services that incorporate children and that demonstrate pastoral leadership.

Reading

1. Elizabeth Francis Caldwell, *Come Unto Me: Rethinking the Sacraments for Children*, United Church Press, 1996. ISBN: 0829811192
2. Martin Marty, *The Mystery of the Child*, Eerdmans, 2007. ISBN: 0802817661
3. Terence Fretheim and Beverly Roberts Gaventa, eds., *The Child in the Bible*, Eerdmans, 2008. ISBN: 9780802848352
4. Kathleen Chapman, *Teaching Kids Authentic Worship*, Baker Books, 2003. ISBN: 0801091535
5. John D. Witvliet, ed. *A Child Shall Lead: Children in Worship*, Choristers Guild, 1999. ISBN: 1929187130
6. Book of worship from your ecclesial tradition (e.g., Covenant Book of Worship, African American Hymnal, Lutheran Book of Worship, etc.)

Assignments (*To be completed *before* course begins on Jan. 7. Presentation below is due the week of class, so you may want to also complete that before course starts.)

*1. Complete all course readings, and submit reading log the first day of class.

Due: Jan. 7

Weight: 5%

*2. Critical reflection. Come to class with a 1500 word critical reflection paper on children or youth in a particular worship context. Write the reflection as though you were going to present this to your church's worship committee. You may choose to reflect a current or previous ministry experience, your church of origin, or your current church context. Please reflect on a church context in which you have worshipped over a period of time (not just a few visits). Be prepared to summarize this in class. In your reflection paper, please address the following:

A. In no more than a page, describe a worship service including the ethos, parts of worship, persons involved in the service, etc.

B. Discuss and evaluate the ways that children and/or youth participated or not, using the 3-fold test.

*How are children participating?

*How are children engaged?

*How do children have voice?

C. What gaps or deficiencies surrounding their participation do you note? Analyze reasons for these.

D. Suggest ways that you would challenge this particular congregation to grow in its inclusion of children and youth in worship.

Due: Jan. 7

Weight: 15%

3. Class Participation. Attend all class sessions and be prepared to discuss the readings.

Note: You cannot have any unexcused absences and pass the course.

Weight: 10%

4. Class presentation. Offer a 15mn presentation on the topic of the vocation of the child/youth as it serves the church's worship. In your presentation, attend to the following: What are key aspects of the child's/youth's priestly vocation? What cultural assumptions are operating in your context? What are the theological and practical or developmental grounds for this? Does your articulation of the vocation of childhood have historical support? How does this vocation serve the worship life of the church? The research for your presentation should include at least one source from the required reading list and one source from the recommended bibliography. Prepare a one-page handout of your presentation for distribution and submit a 1500 word written version of your presentation.

Due: Presentation Jan. 10 (written can be turned in Jan. 18)

Weight: 25%

5. Final Project. Examine worship traditions in your cultural context and create an order of worship with commentary for 4 worship services. Two of the services must be Easter and Christmas, and at least one should include the sacraments. You may choose the remaining two. In your project include theological support for your worship plans, a description of the practical aspects of implementing the service, and the specific ways that the service

incorporates children. Introduce your project with a description of the church you are pastoring (theoretically or actually) and ways you hope to challenge them. Please utilize terminology from the course, course readings, your tradition's book of worship, and at least 3 outside sources. Prepare these orders of worship for an actual worship committee in a church. We will edit and offer suggestions as needed before you distribute them to the committee.

Due: Feb. 1

Weight: 45%

Policies

Grading in this course will follow the standards of the *Student Academic Handbook*, which sets A as the mark for exceptional or excellent work, B as the mark for meritorious or above average work, C as the mark for "work that is without marked merit or marked defect" in fulfilling the assignment, D as the mark for deficient work that nonetheless partially fulfills the assignment, and F as the mark for no work or for work that does not even partially fulfill the assignment. Academic dishonesty will produce failure on a given assignment or failure of the entire course.

Absences beyond the third will lower your course grade. Students who miss more than six class sessions should not expect to pass the course. Make every effort to notify an instructor ahead of time about any absence. Being habitually late is both discourteous and poor training for ministry. Students who are consistently tardy should expect a grade penalty.

Late Papers. Students may have a one week extension on one paper without grade penalty. All other late papers will be reduced one letter grade per day.

North Park Theological Seminary provides services for students with documented disabilities to ensure equal access to programs, services, facilities, and activities. Students with a disability who believe that they may need accommodations in this class are encouraged to contact Seminary Academic Services as soon as possible. If desired or necessary, discussion pertaining to documentation and accommodation can take place at another suitable location or by telephone. Further information about the American Disabilities Act Services is found in the Student Academic Handbook.

Bibliography of Recommended Reading

Anderson, E. Byron. "Liturgical Catechesis: Congregational Practice as Formation." *Religious Education* 92 no. 3 (Summer 1997) 349-62.

Apostolos-Cappadona, Diane, ed. *The Sacred Play of Children*. New York: The Seabury Press, 1983.

Bakke, O. M. *When Children Became People: The Birth of Childhood in Early Christianity*. Trans. by Brian McNeil. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2005.

Berryman, Jerome W. *Godly Play: An Imaginative Approach to Religious Education*. Augsburg Fortress, 1991.

Cavalletti, Sofia. *The Religious Potential of the Child 6 to 12 Years Old: A Description of the Experience*. Trans. by Rebekah Rojcewicz and Alan R. Perry. Chicago: Liturgy Training Publications, 2002.

_____. *The Religious Potential of the Child: Experiencing Scripture and Liturgy with Young Children*. Trans. by Patricia M. Coulter and Julie M. Coulter. Chicago: Liturgy Training Publications, 1983.

Devries, Dawn. "Toward a Theology of Childhood." *Interpretation* 55, no. 2 (April, 2001): 161-73.

Gundry-Volf, Judith. "The Least and the Greatest: Children in the New Testament." In *The Child in Christian Thought*, edited by Marcia J. Bunge, 29-60. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2001.

Horn, Cornelia B. and John W. Martens. "*Let the Little Children Come to Me*": *Childhood and Children in Early Christianity*. Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 2009.

Jensen, David H. *Graced Vulnerability: A Theology of Childhood*. With a Foreword by Bonnie J. Miller-McLemore. Cleveland: The Pilgrim Press, 2005.

Kavanagh, Aiden. "Teaching through the Liturgy." *Notre Dame Journal of Education* 5 (1974) 35-47.

Lenton, Sarah. *Creative Ideas for Children's Worship Year A*. Morehouse Education Resources, 2011.

Lillig, Tina. *The Catechesis of the Good Shepherd in a Parish Setting*. Chicago: Liturgy Training Publications, 1998.

May, Scottie, Beth Posterski, Catherine Stonehouse, and Linda Cannell. *Children Matter: Celebrating Their Place in the Church, Family, and Community*. Eerdmans, 2005.

Mercer, Joyce Ann. *Welcoming Children: A Practical Theology of Childhood*. With a Foreword by Bonnie J. Miller-McLemore. St. Louis: Chalice Press, 2005.

Miller-McLemore, Bonnie J. "Jesus Loves the Little Children? An Exercise in the Use of Scripture." *Journal of Childhood and Religion* 1, no. 7 (October 2010) 1-35.

_____. *Let the Children Come: Reimagining Childhood from a Christian Perspective*. With a Foreword by Lisa Sowle Cahill. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2003.

Sandall, Elizabeth J. *Including Children in Worship: A Planning Guide for Congregations*. Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress Press, 1991.

Scanlan, Audrey and Linda Snyder. *Rhythms of Grace: Worship and Faith Formation for Children and Families with Special Needs*. Morehouse Education Resources, 2010.

Taffke, Freya. *Celebrating Festivals with Children*. Edinburgh: Florish Books, 2011.

Webber, Robert. *Worship is a Verb*. Waco: Word Books Publisher, 1985.

Weber, Hans-Ruedi. *Jesus and the Children: Biblical Resources for Study and Preaching*. Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1979.

Willimon, William H. *The Service of God: How Worship and Ethics are Related*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1983.