

NORTH PARK THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

Course Syllabus

Summer Session, June 15-17 2012

Friday 6.30-9pm, Saturday 9-9 (as necessary) and Sunday 8-Noon (off-site).

COURSE NUMBER: CEDF 7190 "Psalm, Hymns & Spiritual Songs"

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1. Course Description

1. The class will survey themes and metaphors in Scripture, and investigate why some are included in today's music and liturgy, while others have been lost.
2. We will consider the pastoral, doxological and doctrinal impact of this uneven development and depth of vocabulary in the present-day church
3. During the Saturday sessions we will discuss content in our current repertoire, and how to improve its scope and balance.
4. On Sunday morning we will meet off-site to celebrate an act of worship designed and led by the class.

2. Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, the student should

a. *understand* that the quality of musical and liturgical expression in the church has declined; this results in

- i) an imbalanced and incomplete confession of faith in our public worship, and
- ii) a reduction in our manifest doctrine.

b. *be able to dialog* about the reasons for this decline, including

- 1) Services designed with people's need as a priority, rather than the worship of God,
- 2) the belief that evangelism or relevance imply the need to limit style, depth and vocabulary,
- 3) the idea that a balanced, thoughtful flow in liturgy is unnecessary,
- 4) a limited musical language that (unconsciously) limits our vision of God,
- 5) lyrics and extempore prayer that seek to achieve consensus by resorting to a "lowest common denominator" premise of doctrine and providence.
- 6) an increased emphasis on the individual's response to doctrine and faith,
- 7) some lack of respect for the legacy, traditions and practice of the historical church, and
- 8) the growth of commercial music recording and publishing (as opposed to the historical precedent of providing music as a 'disinterested' ministry resource)

c. *develop the analytical skills* to discern such gaps and take restorative measures in representing a broader theological celebration

d. *be able to create a personal and communal framework* for restoring a balanced repertoire to our worshipping community over time.

3. Requirements: (final paper due date tbd)

1. Read the background materials, resources and provided texts carefully.
2. Full participation in class sessions; attendance, participation and completion of assignments.
3. Write a) a 1500-2000 word essay discussing the unbalanced developments in repertoire, and highlighting the way this affects the popular theology of a typical congregation in the students own tradition, **or**

b) a shorter paper, plus at least one devotional hymn or song lyric which addresses a 'gap' in the current repertoire, **or**

c) a detailed, strategic plan to develop a more balanced situation in your own local church ministry.

4. Texts to be discussed

"Fit Bodies, Fat Minds" Os Guinness ©1994 Baker Books ISBN 978-0-8010-3870-9
Reports of worship services of different styles (specifications from Ramshaw p12)
Read and comment on the thematic indices of three Hymn or Songbooks

Readings from:

"Christian Worship" Gail Ramshaw ©2007 Fortress Press ISBN 978-0-8006-6233-2
"The New Worship" Barry Liesch ©1996,2001 Baker Books ISBN 978-0-8010-6356-6

5. Grading

1. Grading in this course is Pass/Fail.
2. Following through successfully with assignments is the criterion for the grade of Pass. If for some reason the student is not able to be with the assigned group or to complete assignments he/she is required to inform the instructor, Geoff Twigg by email gtwigg@northpark.edu or by phone (773) 678-0851
3. Students with unexcused absences from the sessions may fail.

Class Schedule:

Friday 6.30 Introductions and brief syllabus review

Definitions: Psalms – variety of ancient forms of religious song (historical, narrative, devotional, prophetic)

Hymn – topical exposition of related concepts celebrated in a flow

Song – a single idea celebrated in more or less emotional depth

Discuss Gospel song as a hybrid form, a verse hymn with chorus to allow greater emotion (Liesch, pp 19-51)

Sequence and Hymnody; Functional elements in musical or liturgical celebration

Including the use of music in:

Invocation: Come Holy Ghost, our souls inspire (based in plainsong)

Devotion: "Be Thou my vision" (Irish, 8th Century), "Jesus, the very thought of thee"; "O Sacred Head", Draw me close to You" etc.

Credal statements: Luther – "A Mighty Fortress"; "In Christ Alone"; "We believe"; etc Calvin, Wesley and others – using psalms and songs for teaching and celebration; doctrine in song

Celebration and Lament: Metrical psalms; Isaac Watts and the re-introduction of Christian hymnody. Blues settings of the Psalms etc.

A brief overview survey of repertoire including songs by Charitie Lees Bancroft, Nils Fryckman, Lina Sandell, Fanny Crosby, Keith Getty, Matt Redman, Tim Hughes, Paul Baloche, Chris Tomlin, David Crowder, John Mark McMillian, Phil Wickham

Poetry and versification:

John Donne - A Hymne to God, my God, upon my sicknesse

George Herbert - Love III; Teach me, my God and King

Treatments of Psalm 98: 1650 Scottish Metrical setting, Dale Schoening (2 settings), Erik Routley, Dewey Westra, Isaac Watts (& Darlene Zschech's "Shout to the Lord")

Saturday 9am Liturgical shape and structure; Word and Sacrament

Eucharistic, eschatological and missiological functions of liturgy

The structural ideas in Isaiah 6 and Cranmer's Reformed Liturgy

Architecture in the tabernacle and temple, and its relationship to "Vineyard-style" worship

Hebrew poetic structures, "Concept rhyming" and repetition

Problems in concept order and flow (non-western thought, non-sequitur)

The problem of violent thoughts in the psalms

Saturday 11am - Noon, 1.30 – 5pm, evening as required.

The truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth

Introduction: The church has a history; our unique culture of music and song and its relationship to the contemporary music today.

What are we aiming for? Developing a vision for healthy music ministry in the local church

Survey of Christian popular song repertoire (with examples and comments): What themes that have been successfully translated into contemporary song... and what didn't "make the cut"?

"Filling the gap" New songs and hymns from a variety of sources, presented and discussed

How do we restore the balance? An active discussion

Planning our worship Service

Closing remarks and prayer

Sunday 8am – Noon

A “new song”: as a class, we will prepare and engage in a liturgy with music that explores the themes and metaphors so far discovered, and look ahead to developments in our future ministry.

8 – 9.30am arranging our service

10am Service of worship at Trinity Covenant, Oak Lawn Il. (open to the public)