

Foundations of Christian Worship
Theo 7203/Online
Fall 2014

Teacher

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Office Hours: Tuesdays, 9:30-11:30 a.m., Location: TBD

Moodle Hours: Mondays 9:00-12:00 a.m., Wednesdays 2:00-5:00 p.m.

Introduction

This course is about our practice of corporate, gathered worship. The mission of the Triune God is to draw human beings into the eternal life shared by Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Worship is the most basic action for creatures and the most meaningful action of followers of Jesus. The whole life of a Christian is formed by an encounter with God within the worshipping community. We will explore the biblical roots of worship, the development of the practice of Christian worship throughout history, and the contemporary challenges of the worshipping life of the community. We will also spend a good deal of time exploring the practices of worship planning and execution. We come from different worshipping traditions but we share in common our “one Lord, one faith, one baptism.” **The primary goal of this course is to develop a distinct Christian theology of worship as the basis for our practice and learn to shape and evaluate, and execute our worship on those biblical and theological terms.**

Goals

1. To provide an overview of the history, theology and practice of Christian worship.
2. To explore the relationship between corporate worship and the life of faith.
3. To develop a practice of pastoral worship leadership that reflects current praxis and evaluates it using history and theology.
4. To be able to articulate the relationship and distinctions between corporate and private prayer/worship, as well as corporate prayer and evangelism.
5. To develop a personal theology of worship and to shape worship on those theological convictions.
6. To be able to apply this theology to the practice of pastoral rites such as baptism, dedication, eucharist, weddings, funerals and other rites and services of the church.
7. To be able to work in a group to plan and evaluate worship.

Texts and Resources

Required:

Introduction to Christian Worship, Third Edition, James White;

The Worship Architect, Constance M. Cherry;

The New Westminster Dictionary of Liturgy and Worship, Paul Bradshaw, ed.;

Covenant Book of Worship;

The Covenant Hymnal: A Worshipbook.

Readings also drawn from the following:

The Oxford History of Christian Worship, Geoffrey Wainwright and Karen B. Westerfield Tucker, eds.; *Worship Across Cultures*, Kathy Black; *The Conviction of Things Not Seen*, Todd E. Johnson, ed.; *At the Origins of Christian Worship*, Larry W. Hurtado; *African American Christian Worship*, M. Costen. For those in the Chicago area these will be on reserve in the North Park University library. If you are outside of the Chicago area you are encouraged to check local libraries for these works, especially college libraries. If you are unable to find these alternative readings may be arranged.

Accommodations

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 they may need accommodations in this class are encouraged to contact Seminary Academic Services at 773-244-5619 as soon as possible. If desired and necessary, discussion pertaining to documentation and accommodation can take place at another suitable location or by telephone. Further information about the American Disabilities Act Service is found in the Student Academic Handbook by visiting the following website: <http://www.northpark.edu/add>.

Academic Honesty

Students are reminded of the regulations concerning Plagiarism and Cheating which can be found in the Student Academic Handbook. Do not be tempted to plagiarize as a way out of difficulties in completing your assignments. In difficulty, please contact the instructor.

Expectations of the Instructor

Apart from urgent messages, I will aspire to answer all e-mail or telephone enquiries related to the class within 24-48 hours. I will most regularly post on Mondays to give feedback on Discussion Board material, which will mean that posts made in any particular week (Monday through Sunday) should receive any necessary feedback by the following Monday. If this is not possible for any reason I will notify the class in advance. I will aspire to grade tests, papers, and projects within one week. Response posts will not be graded each week but receive a cumulative grade at the end of the term.

Class Requirements

1. Participation in all online classes by making the required postings and engaging in the required discussions and group projects.
2. Visit of, and written reports on, four congregations *outside of your normal experience*. The instructor will post forms for your use in reporting on these visits. They should be posted for everyone in the class to see.
3. Participation in a group to prepare a variety of worship services. The groups will focus on worship planning and on learning to work together with variously gifted people—an important part of pastoral leadership. Each group will be assigned an imaginary church based on a case study created by the instructors. The group will plan worship for this

church for the entire semester. All the people married, baptized, and communed will come from these churches.

4. All required readings. Students will fill out a reading log at the end of the semester.
5. A midterm. The mid-term (Oct. 10) will be accessible 48 hours before its due date. It is a closed-note/book test, and you should give yourself two hours for its completion. The first section will be identification (50%), where you will be given a term or idea and asked to identify it and give its historical and theological significance in 3-4 sentences. The second section will be two essays. I will give you six possible essays from which I will chose two for the final.
6. Final Project: Each student will plan two services: (a) Sunday morning worship in Advent, Christmas, Lent, Easter, or Pentecost with communion (b) a funeral service, or other special service approved by the instructor (excluding weddings); Students can either prepare these services for the "case study" church or for a church they are currently attending or serving. The project should include the following:
 - i. A complete order of service with rubrics and instructions for participants;
 - ii. A description of the congregation, individual (funeral), and/or situation that is the subject of setting of the service, including the building in which the service is held. Outline the challenges of the place. The sociology and history of the congregation and community must also be taken into consideration including their worship tradition and its liabilities. These can obviously be imaginary people or places.
 - iii. Biblical, theological, historical, and cultural rationale for each part of the service: liturgy, biblical texts, hymns or choruses, etc.
 - iv. Brief sketch of where you would go with the sermon.
 - v. Project will be evaluated on the thoroughness, appropriateness, and creativity of the approach to worship.
7. Grading
 - i. Class Participation, including group projects: 20%
 - ii. Reports on visits to churches: 15%
 - iii. Midterm exam: 20%
 - iv. Reading of assignments: students will be asked to report on their reading at the end of class: 10%
 - v. Final Project: 35%
8. Grade Scale:
 - 94-100 A
 - 90-93 A-
 - 88-89 B+
 - 83-87 B
 - 80-82 B-
 - 78-79 C+
 - 73-77 C
 - 70-72 C-

9. Additional Resources

For research and resources there are three recommended websites containing videos, worship resources, bibliographies and opportunities for online conversation. Links for these sites will be found on the first page of the course site. They are the websites of:

- i. The Brehm Center of Fuller Theological Seminary
- ii. The Calvin Institute of Christian Worship
- iii. The Robert E. Webber Institute for Worship Studies. At this latter site is a comprehensive bibliography created by Dr. Mark Torgerson, a Covenant pastor who teaches at Judson College.

Class Calendar and Assignments

Each week's readings and assignments will become accessible on the Sunday of the week at 12 p.m. (noon). This will ensure that all students are working on the same material for responses/group discussions. Each week will require reading from textbooks and other posted materials. Some weeks will require the completion of group projects. You will be required to write a series of short papers that will be posted for other members of the calls to read and respond to. You will be divided into groups of three or four depending on the size of the class to facilitate this process. Once you have posted your own materials, you are to read and comment on the postings of the other members of your group. You will make one comment and pose one question. This will, I trust, produce a conversation. I will also read and comment on each posting. Each week *your posts are due by midnight on Saturday to give your colleagues time to respond by Tuesday*. Part of your learning, as with any class, is your interaction with one another. For the planning of services you will work with your small group. The instructor will assign you an imaginary church for which you will plan each service.

Week One: What is Christian Worship?

Assignments: White, pp. 17-46; Cherry xi-33

Post a 500-word essay after reading through the materials and exploring the resources on the question: What is worship?

Post in 300-words the typical worship practice of the congregation you attend.

Week Two: History of Christian Worship

Assignments: At the Origins of Christian Worship, Larry Hurtado, pp. 39-97; The Oxford History of Christian Worship, 1-75; Deuteronomy 6:4,5,13,14; Exodus 20:18-21; Hebrews 12:18-29, Acts 2:43-47; 1 Corinthians 11:17-34, 14:1-40; Revelation 4, 5. The Covenant Book of Worship, 3-29, 123-126, 159-160, 185-186, 223-225, 253-256, 397-399; The Covenant Hymnal: A Worshipbook: viii-x; browse through the hymnal and familiarize yourself with its various

resources. If you are not from the ECC, you may explore the worship book and hymnal of your tradition.

Post a 500-word essay on the connection between biblical and Jewish worship and the worship of the early church.

Post in 300-words a reflection on the history of the worship practices in your own congregation. How did you get where you are today? What worship services, hymnals, songbooks, worship books, are typically used in your church?

Week Three: Introduction to the Challenges of Worship Planning

Assignments: Cherry, 35-121; worship planning session; CBOW, 33-46.

Post a 500-word essay critiquing and reflecting on Cherry's approach to "worship architecture." What would you add or subtract from her approach?

Week Four: Service of the Word

Assignment: White, 151-173, "Preaching and Worship," The New Westminster Dictionary of Liturgy and Worship, John A. Melloh, "Word, Services of the", NWDLW, various authors.

Post: Service of the Word: Each group will plan and present a service, giving rationale for all parts of the service. *In this and every subsequent group activity the group will plan worship for the case study church assigned to it. The members of the group are encouraged to get together online to discuss the assignment and assign each other tasks.*

- *Groups will settle on a theme and format for the worship service using the Covenant Book of Worship or other worship resources.*
- *Groups will make individual assignments to work on various parts of the service: liturgy (order of worship), sermon/homily, music, facility.*
- *Group will post their order of worship and rubrics for the analysis and critique of their fellow students.*

Post: a 300 word response to one of the services of another group.

Week Five: Service of the Table

Assignments: White, 175-201; "Eucharist" in NWDLW, various authors; CBOW 12-14, 159-181; CH selections 942-948, hymns 550-575.

Post: a 500-word essay on your theology of Holy Communion. What is happening at the table?

Week Six: Baptism

Assignments: White, 203-228; "Baptism" in NWDLW, various authors, Matthew 3:1-17 and parallels; Acts 2:37-42, 8:26-40, 10:44-48, 19:1-7 Romans 6. CBW, "Font and Pool", "Blessings" pp. 123-155; examine services and preparatory materials in two additional worship books; CH, explore the hymns in the "Baptism", and "Blessings of a Child" section of the hymnal.

Post: a 500-word essay on your theology of Baptism. Covenant pastors are required to baptize both infants and adults. What is your preference and why?

Week Seven: Sacred Time: The Christian Year and the Lectionary

Assignments: White, 47-80; Cherry, 205-218. NWDWL: "Lectionaries," "Year, Liturgical", CBW, "Celebrating the Christian Year," 253-256; explore resources for the church year in the CBW and two other worship books.

Post: a 500-word essay on the significance of following the church year.

Midterm examination: complete the exam posted in Moodle by 11:59 p.m., Friday, October 10th.

Week Eight: Sacred Space: Where Christians worship.

Assignments: White: 81-109, NWDWL: "Architectural Setting (Historical)", "Architectural Setting (Modern)," "Vestments", "Colours, Liturgical

Post: a 500-word essay on the sanctuary where you worship. How does the space and appearances contribute or distract from the worship of God?

Post: search online for pictures of sanctuaries that you think are particularly conducive to worship and post a picture. You may also post a picture of your own church's worship spaces. Explain why you find it both theologically and aesthetically appropriate—or not!

Week Nine: Sacred Music and Worship

Assignment: White: 111-129, Cherry: 151-177, NWDWL: "Music as Worship"; Cherry, 179-203, 221-257; "Beyond Style", in *Convictions of Things Not Seen*, Todd E. Johnson, ed. 67-81

Post: a 500-word essay on how you approach the issue of style in your thinking and planning for worship? What is the purpose of music in worship as far as you are concerned.

Post: Each group will plan and post the selections of music for a communion service for its assigned church and explain reasons for choosing the particular music and musical style for this congregation. Each student will respond to one of the posts of another group.

Week Ten: Worship in Diverse Congregations

Assignment: NWDWL: "Black Churches' Worship", "African American Worship Practices" in *Worship Across Cultures*, Kathy Black: 21-34, *African American Christian Worship*, Melva Costen, 1-37, 45-78, 120-126; "Promises and Problems of a Multiethnic Church," and "Disconnected Rituals" in *The Conviction of Things Not Seen*, Todd E. Johnson, ed. 53-66, 141-152, NWDWL, "Inculturation," *Worship Across Cultures*, 11-20.

Post: a 500-word essay on the difference between worship that is “acculturated” and “inculturated”.

Post: a 300-word essay on an experience of worship outside of your own tradition. How did it challenge you?

Week Eleven: Seasonal Worship: Advent and Christmas

Assignment: Advent and Christmas: Stookey 105-131, NWDLW: series of short articles on Advent and Christmas; explore resources for Advent and Christmas in the CH and CBW.

Post a 500-word essay on your understanding of the significance of and difference between Advent and Christmastide.

Post a 300-word essay on your own practice of worship during Christmastide.

Week Twelve: Seasonal Worship: Lent and Easter

Lent and Easter: NWDLW: series of short articles on Easter, Lent; explore resources in CBW and CW for Lent and Easter

Post: a 500 word essay on the why you do or do not keep a Lenten fast.

Week Thirteen: Christian Weddings

Assignment: White, 276-286; NWDLW, “Marriage”; CBW, 185-219;

Post: a 500-word essay on your theology of marriage and what that implies about a wedding.

Post: a wedding service planned with your group. You should select a couple from your assigned church, plan the service with the other members of your group explaining briefly your choices. Post the service. Each of you is to respond to a service of another group.

Week Fourteen: Christian Funerals

Assignment: White, 295-303; NWDLW, “Funerals”; CBW 223-250; “Ritual as Pastoral Care”, Will Willimon, in *Conviction of Things Not Seen*, 99-108.

Post: a 500-word essay on your theology and practice of funerals.

Week Fifteen: Personal Worship

Assignment: White, 131-149; NWDLW, “Daily Prayer”; prepare to bring a report to the class on a resource for personal prayer and worship that you particularly appreciate.

Post: a 300-word essay on a resource you recommend for personal worship.

Final Project

The final project is due Dec. 11 at 11:59 p.m.