

# WO 500 Introduction to Worship

J-term 2016, Tuesdays, January 5, 12, 19 (make-up day Jan. 26), 8:30-4:30, L-200  
Hybrid: Online work (equivalent of 14 hours) done asynchronously but due by times noted in syllabus

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Office hours by appointment

## Course Description

A theological, historical and practical study of worship in the church. Students will practice leading a variety of worship experiences in class.

## Course Objectives

As a result of successfully completing this course, students should be able to:

- As part of an on-going process of learning and of gaining critical perspectives, articulate the theological and practical issues facing worship in the church today. Assessed through participation in class discussion, exercises, and final exam.
- Engage the broad history and various traditions of Christian worship as foundational to Christian worship today, seeing both common factors and divergences. Assessed through class discussion, exercises, worship leadership, and final exam.
- Begin to see oneself as part of a particular Christian tradition and denomination, by beginning to articulate one's denominational theology and practice of the sacraments and becoming familiar with denominational worship resources. Assessed through exercises, paper on sacraments, and the worship service project.
- Begin intentional work toward the M.Div. outcome #13 of leading passionate, multisensory, and transformative worship, assessed through participation in class discussion, leadership of worship elements, worship service project, and exercises.
- Begin to experience oneself, and be experienced, as a capable and grace-filled worship leader; learn to critically and gracefully assess worship leadership. This will be assessed by:
  - Practice of liturgical leadership and scripture reading
  - Consideration of one's own strengths and growing edges as a worship leader, at the beginning and again at the end of the course
  - Practice of leading baptism and communion rituals
  - Individually planning a worship service
  - Giving thoughtful and constructive feedback to others
- Articulation through the embodied and written word will be practiced and assessed throughout.

## Required Texts

Duck, Ruth C. *Worship for the Whole People of God*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2013.

Mitchell, Nathan D. *Meeting Mystery: Liturgy, Worship, and Sacraments*. Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis, 2006.

Wallace, Robin Knowles. *The Christian Year: A Guide for Worship & Preaching*. Nashville: Abingdon, 2011.

Your denominational hymnal. If you are non-denominational or "between denominations," consider using either *Chalice Hymnal* (Disciples of Christ/Christian Church), *African American Heritage Hymnal* (ecumenical), or *Singing the Living Tradition* (Unitarian-Universalist).

Your denominational book of worship. If you are non-denominational or "between denominations," consider using either *The Book of Common Prayer* (Episcopal, available online at [www.bcponline.org](http://www.bcponline.org)), *The Africana Worship Book* (Nashville: Upper Room), or *Common Prayer: A Liturgy for Ordinary Radicals* (emerging).

## Assignments and Schedule

**Before January 5**, the first class day, do these six things:

- On the information page, under files, find the Student Information piece, fill it out, and send it to me by e-mail.
- Read the first three chapters in *Worship for the Whole People of God* by Ruth Duck: “Understanding Christian Worship,” “Participatory Worship,” and “Diverse Worship.” Note any questions you have for class on Jan. 5.
- Find your three favorite songs in your current hymnal/songbook and make a note of them. Bring to class on Jan. 5.
- Prepare to read a favorite scripture aloud in class. Length: 1-3 minutes; introduce and close as you would in your congregation.
- Read Costen, Ch. 1, “A Theology of African American Worship” from *African American Christian Worship* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1993), on Populi under Information/files.
- Read “Keeping the Sabbath” from *Singing the Lord’s Song in a New Land: Korean American Practices of Faith* by Pak, Lee, Kim, and Cho (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2005), on Populi under information/files.

### **Introduction to Worship, January 5, 8:30-4:30**

Morning Prayer for Epiphany

A working definition of worship

Opening the Word

Music

The Collect (working toward individual project)

Worship planning begins for small group presentations

A Community Epiphany Celebration

### **Between Jan. 5 and 12—all online work will be related to Lesson, Jan. 12, on Populi**

- By 9 p.m. on Sunday, January 10, read Mitchell, ch. 1 “Ritual’s Roots” and ch. 2 “Ritual’s Roles and Risks.” Choose one of the reflection questions at the end of each chapter to write at least a paragraph on in the Populi discussion; then also respond to someone else, either on the same question or a different one for each chapter.
- Read Chapters 4-8 and 14 in *Worship for the Whole People of God*: “Planning and Leading Worship,” “The Arts in Worship,” “Vivid Words for Worship,” “Forms of Prayer and Worship,” “The Word Is Among You,” and “Vital Worship for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.” Note any questions you have for class on Jan. 12.
- Read Mitchell, ch. 3, “Ritual’s Rules,” and ch. 4, “Ritual’s Realm.”
- Read Chapter 1 in *The Christian Year*. Read the rest of the narrative of the book, skimming the resources, and record on “The Christian Year” discussion something that was new or interesting or that you might try in your congregation. Drawn on this text for your team-planned and led service.
- Read and listen to the following and post a learning, comment, or question on the general comments/questions discussion for the day by 7 p.m. on Jan. 11
  - a. Listen to “Curating Worship” from Jonny Baker on Populi under Lesson.
  - b. Listen to “A Methodology of Congregational Musicking as Local Theology” from instructor on Populi under Lesson.

- c. Read White, “Liturgical Space Forms Faith” from *Christian Worship in North America* (Collegeville, Minn.: The Liturgical Press/A Pueblo Book, 1997), on Populi under Lesson.
- d. Read “Nairobi Statement on Worship and Culture,” available online at [http://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/LWF\\_Nairobi\\_Statement\\_1994.pdf](http://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/LWF_Nairobi_Statement_1994.pdf) (accessed 12/31/14)
- With a group (sign-up and planning begun on Jan. 5), prepare worship for a day in the Christian year; about 20 minutes (no sermon, but scripture, song, prayer, worship setting, and . . .); all persons in group music be involved in leadership; draw on *The Christian Year* and Duck’s Appendix 2; present on January 12 during class; be scriptural, theological, embodied, multisensory, and creative (see grading for presentations below); worth 15 points.

## Worship Planning and Leading, including Prayer and the Arts, January 12

A journey through the liturgical year, using Appendix 2 from *Worship for the Whole People of God* and *The Christian Year*

Learning from readings

The arts in worship

Children in worship

## Between January 12 and 19

- Read BEM on baptism and communion (<http://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/wcc-commissions/faith-and-order-commission/i-unity-the-church-and-its-mission/baptism-eucharist-and-ministry-faith-and-order-paper-no-111-the-lima-text.html>, accessed 12/31/14), along with one document about baptism and one about communion from your denomination (see bibliography under Lesson, Jan. 19), and read *Worship for the Whole People of God*, chapters 9-13, on sacraments.
- Share something you learned or heard in a new way about baptism on the Baptismal Learning discussion on Populi and a question you still have on Baptismal Question discussion on Populi **before noon on Monday, Jan. 18.**
- Read Long, “Appendix on Difficult Funerals” from *Accompany Them With Singing: The Christian Funeral* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2009), on Populi.
- Read McClain, “The African American Church and Sacraments: But Can We Still Get Our Circumcised” from *Companion to the Africana Worship Book* (Nashville: Discipleship Resources, 2008), on Populi.
- Share something you learned or heard in a new way about communion on the Communion Learning discussion on Populi and a question you still have on Eucharistic Question discussion on Populi **before noon on Monday, Jan. 18.**
- Read Mitchell, ch. 5 “The Book of the Body,” ch. 6 “Ritual Speech and the Logic of Metaphor” and ch. 7 “Parts and Participation.” Choose one of the reflection questions at the end of one of the three chapters to write at least a paragraph on in a Populi discussion; then also respond to someone else, either on the same question or a different one for the same or another chapter.
- Memorize a brief scriptural benediction and be ready to share in class on Jan. 19.
- **Due January 19 by 8 a.m.** in your Populi Assignment dropbox: a worship service for a particular day of the liturgical year; worth 25 points.
  - Individually plan worship for a particular congregation/setting; including creative work on space, arts, and texts. All of the points below need to be included in your work for this assignment. In addition to demonstrating what you have learned in class, this assignment will be assessed for the following criteria: ability to plan worship appropriate for a congregational context; ability to

plan worship that is passionate; and ability to plan worship that is transformative, that is, toward living into God's kin-dom.

- Describe in one paragraph the congregation/setting, including demographic information, for which you will prepare this service; can be an actual congregation or your ideal one
- Pick a day in the upcoming Christian year and its appropriate scriptures—Lent 2, 2016, or after. If you are in charge of an upcoming service you may use this assignment to prepare; using a previously prepared service is not acceptable.
- Prepare either a bulletin (clarity more important than layout) or power point (with leader's guide) for the service, including scripture readings, hymns/songs, and prayers, referencing sources for each.
- As part of the service include an original collect, original confession with pardon, original benediction, and two original hymn stanzas, as taught in class.
- Using information gained from the Canterbury Dictionary of Hymnology, hymnary.org, or your hymnal companion, write one paragraph on the background of one of the chosen hymns in your service as an introduction or brief church newsletter piece. Cite your source/s.
- Describe in one paragraph how you would include persons in the congregation in leadership and participation.
- Describe in one paragraph how you would prepare the worship space and the use of art within the service.

## **Sacraments, Ordinances, and Rituals, January 19**

Baptism

Communion

Weddings and Covenant Services

Funerals

Exercise/exam: Putting into practice; worth 15 points.

- As part of an on-going process of learning and of gaining critical perspectives, articulate the theological and practical issues facing worship in the church today.
- Engage the broad history and various traditions of Christian worship as foundational to Christian worship today, seeing both common factors and divergences.

**Due Monday, January 25, by 11:59 p.m. in your Populi Assignment Dropbox:** A paper on baptism and communion, describing the meaning and function of these rites in your denomination's theology and worship, and the meaning of these for you personally. Worth 45 points. 2,000-2,750 words, double-spaced. Begin the paper with a description of sacrament or ordinance within the Christian tradition and then ordinance or sacrament in your particular denomination. Reference at least five sources, including your denominational documents (books of worship, service books, and church statements; beginning with the recommended list on Populi), using footnotes, endnotes, or parentheses; include a bibliography of works cited. This is a general, researched statement of your denomination's position on this sacrament/ordinance as you would articulate it for your board of ministry, association, or synod on the meaning and significance (why it matters for Christians and you yourself to participate) of this practice. If you are Unitarian Universalist or are not studying for parish ministry, see instructor for suggestions.

## **Grading Criteria for Class Presentations**

As: Presentation is excellent, clear, engaging, creative, and focused; ideas and content are richly developed with details and examples; vocabulary is rich. Organization and manner of presentation enhance the central theme; everyone in the group is involved and the leadership is integrated. Ideas are presented coherently; along with interpreting the material accurately and compellingly, the class is challenged to think; various learning styles are evoked. Outstanding work.

Bs: Presentation is solid, reasonably clear, focused, and supported; ideas are adequately developed with details and examples. Organization and form are appropriate, and ideas are generally presented in a coherent manner. The form of presentation does not interfere with understanding or distract from meaning; everyone in the group is involved. The material is interpreted accurately, and some learning styles are evoked. Good work.

C's: The presentation has some focus and support; ideas and content are developed with limited details and examples. The presentation may be somewhat disorganized; the leadership of the group is not evident; vocabulary is limited. Presentation errors may reduce understanding and interfere with meaning. The content of theoretical information is limited and large generalizations are made. Work meets minimal standards.

D's: Presentation has little focus and development; ideas and content are supported by few details or examples. Presentation lacks direction and purpose, in itself and by the leaders; its tone is flat. Awkward grammar and vocabulary interfere with understanding. The form of presentation makes the work difficult to understand. Often large portions of the work are given to rambling of experiences without informational context. Work does not meet minimum requirements of the assignment.

## **Grading Criteria for Written Work**

A's: Work is excellent, clear, engaging, original and focused; ideas and content are richly developed with details and examples. Organization and form enhance the central idea and theme; ideas are presented coherently to move the reader through the text. The voice of the writer is compelling and conveys the learner's meaning through effective grammar. The learner integrates theoretical concepts, experience and critical analysis. Outstanding work.

B's: Work is solid, reasonably clear, focused, and supported; ideas are adequately developed with details and examples. Organization and form are appropriate, and ideas are generally presented in a coherent manner. The voice of the writer contributes to the writer's meaning through appropriate grammar. The form of presentation does not interfere with understanding or distract from meaning. Integration of theory, experience and critical analysis is underdeveloped. Good work, above average.

C's: Work has some focus and support; ideas and content are developed with limited details and examples. The work may be somewhat disorganized. The voice of the learner is generally absent; basic sentence structure and limited vocabulary convey a simple message. Presentation errors may reduce understanding and interfere with meaning. The content of theoretical information is limited and large generalizations are made. Critical analysis is absent from the paper. Work meets minimum requirements.

D's: Work has little focus and development; ideas and content are supported by few details or examples. The work lacks direction and purpose. The tone of the work is flat. Awkward grammar and vocabulary interfere with understanding. The form of presentation makes the work difficult to understand. Demonstrated critical analysis is absent, and often large portions of the work are given to rambling of experiences without theoretical context. Work does not meet minimum requirements of the assignment.

Please see **Student Handbook** for sections providing policy details on the following:

**ADA**—MTSO seeks to remove barriers to inclusion in its learning communities. Students who feel they may need an accommodation based on the impact of a documented disability should contact the instructor privately to discuss their specific needs at the beginning of the semester. Please contact the Director of Student Services to coordinate reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities. Any accommodation must be agreed upon prior to the due date of the affected course requirement.

**Class attendance**—Regular attendance is expected in all classes. During unavoidable absences, students are responsible for missed work. An excessive number of absences may result in grade reduction or course failure, despite successful completion of all assigned work. In most cases, a student will not be allowed credit for a course if he or she is absent for 25% of the class sessions. As it relates to blended courses, students may not be allowed credit if they are absent for 25% of class meetings or if 25% of online course work is not completed. Use of Skype or similar technology is not a substitute for attendance in class.

**Electronic Devices**—Turn mobile devices off or “vibrate only” during class. Browsing the Internet or engaging in email or social network conversations during class is discouraged. Instructors have the right to impose grading penalties for disruptions due to electronic devices.

**Human Subjects Research**—Research by MTSO faculty, students, or affiliated personnel that collects non-public information from and/or about living individuals or contemporary organizations/groups for purposes of publication or public presentation (including class assignments) must be approved by the Human Subjects Research Committee. MTSO faculty, students, or affiliated personnel should err on the side of caution and apply for committee approval of any activity that may fit this description.

**Inclusive Language**—In accordance with MTSO’s policy on inclusive language, all students are expected to use gender inclusive or gender neutral language in their writing and in the classroom discussions when referring to human beings.

**Incompletes**—To receive a course grade of Incomplete, students must submit the petition form from the Registrar with all signatures to the Dean’s Office before the last day of regularly scheduled classes. See Student Handbook for intensive term deadlines. Any petition submitted without a due date for outstanding work will be denied. If work is not complete by the due date the Registrar will record the grade of F for the course.

**Pass/Fail**—The decision to exercise this option must be made before the end of the second week of the course by completing the appropriate form available through the Registrar. To receive a grade of "pass" the student must do at least the equivalent of C minus work in the course.

**Plagiarism**—Plagiarism is a serious matter of academic, professional, and personal integrity. All students at the masters level are expected to understand the requirement to provide attribution when the work of others is used. Students are also expected to be familiar with and understand the school’s policy on Academic Misconduct found in the Student Handbook. If students have questions about attribution, citation, and how to avoid plagiarism they should consult the course instructor, the school’s writing instructor, or library staff. When in doubt it is better to provide attribution even if one is uncertain about the proper citation form. Plagiarism is a form of academic misconduct that results in disciplinary actions per the Student Handbook that may range from failing an assignment or course to expulsion.

Updated 8/13/14