

DS 522 WORSHIP: REFLECTIONS AND TRADITIONS IN THE UNITED CHURCH OF CANADA

Fall 2016 November 4-5 Intensive

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PURPOSE: One of the most powerful ways a community of faith understands itself is through our spiritual practices and our articulation of the work and vision of God in our liturgy. The United Church of Canada finds its identity in the reformed tradition and in the contextually relevant ways it expresses praise and relationship to the divine. Evident in United Church worship and spiritual practice is both a respect for the tradition that has formed us and a commitment to open up that tradition with creative expression that is inclusive and accessible.

In this course we will supplement students' understanding of foundations in liturgy by deepening students' familiarity with the worship traditions and practices of the United Church of Canada.

The purpose of the course is to stimulate reflection on the nature and practice of United Church worship and in developing skills and knowledge regarding planning and practice of worship leadership.

PREREQUISITES: There are no course prerequisites. It is strongly recommended that you have a United Church worshipping community in which to attend, observe and practice your leadership.

COMPETENCE OBJECTIVES:

Competence will be demonstrated through a student's capacity to:

- communicate knowledge of history and theology of United Church worship
- articulate current and historical 'form' of United Church worship
- Situate the understanding of United Church liturgical practice within the broader Christian tradition
- Integrate personal and communal theology with the task of worship planning
- practice liturgical leadership particularly in prayer and in the sacraments
- show familiarity with resources used for worship planning
- Pay attention to the variety of variables at play in preparing and leading worship
- Show familiarity with United Church music and hymnody.

FORMAT AND CONTENT:

The course will examine and explore a history of UCC worship including a review of primary and secondary sources, a theology of reformed worship and free church as well as build on our understanding of what it means to have “Ordered Liberty” as our defining identity.. It will address the specifics of sacraments, funeral rites, preaching, history of hymnody, music selection, just language, aesthetics in worship and contextual interpretation. It is a 10 hour intensive over a Friday evening and Saturday day. (November 4th and November 5th) and is a 1.0 credit denominational studies course. Work in this class will include class participation, summary reflections, worship preparation and leadership.

Each student is required to prepare and preside at a worship service within the VST community. This will normally be during United Church Worship on Tuesday afternoons in Spring term (Jan-April). However those preparing for community worship may utilize that opportunity. This liturgy should demonstrate a solid knowledge of United Church form. It should include attention to context, theme, “audience” and emphasis on reformed tradition. It should include creative expression (theme, gesture, drama, words, aesthetics, media etc.). After worship there will be a time of structured constructive feedback on the liturgy by peers and the instructor and or the Director of Denominational Formation.

In the United Church Student Retreat, September 9th we will be exploring a history and analysis of United Church hymnody.

TEXTS:

Kervin, William S. *Ordered Liberty: Readings in the History of United Church Worship*. Toronto, UCPH 2011. (ordered online at UCPH)

COURSE POLICIES

1. **Attendance** For an intensive course, VST requires 100% attendance.
2. **Reading and assignments** Students are expected to read all required assignments before class and to complete all assignments as outlined in the syllabus within the specified dates of the course and term.
3. **Academic honesty** Students are expected to adhere to VST’s requirements for academic honesty as published in the Student Handbook.
4. **Inclusive language** In speaking and writing, inclusive language is expected when making reference to humans and a variety of metaphors are anticipated when making reference to God.
5. **Assignment and Course Evaluation**
 - Course evaluations at VST combine a letter grade system (A+ to B-; course failure is “Not Approved”) including narrative comments based on the competencies of the course. No number grades or weights of assignments are calculated, nor are final grades given numerical equivalents.
6. **Late assignments**

Submission of assignments on time is a part of academic, professional and pastoral competence and a part of every course at VST. All assignments in courses are due on the dates specified in the syllabus. Failure to submit an assignment on time will

be noted in the narrative evaluation of an assignment. Repeated failure to submit assignments on time may affect the final grade for the course.

7. Limitation on use of social media

Ordinarily, the use of electronic devices in the contexts of classrooms or meetings will be to support the learning, formation, or agenda at hand.

- 8.** VST is committed to creating safe space and an inclusive learning environment. If you have a diagnosed or suspected learning disability, chronic condition, mental health concern, or physical requirement which you anticipate may impact your participation in this class, you are encouraged to discuss your needs with the instructor and the Dean within the first week of classes.

EXPECTATIONS, ASSIGNMENTS AND EVALUATIVE CRITERIA

1. Class participation: Students are expected to participate in class discussions, and do adequate preparation of in-class discussion exercises. Evaluative criteria: comments and questions show adequate preparation, an understanding of the assigned readings and exercises, and a readiness to apply readings to interpretive questions and insights.
2. **Completion of worship leadership as described above in Format and Content**

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Caron, Charlotte. *Eager for Worship: Theologies, Practices, and Perspectives on Worship in the United Church of Canada*. Etobicoke: The United Church of Canada, 2000.

Celebrate God's Presence: A Book of Services for The United Church of Canada. Etobicoke: UCPH, 2000.

Harding, Thomas R. *Patterns of Worship in the United Church of Canada, 1925-1960*. Toronto: Evensong Publications, 1994.

MacLauchlan, Brenda *Just Language: A guide to Inclusive Language in The United Church of Canada*. Etobicoke, UCPH, 1997. (will be posted on Moodle)

Sparks, David. *A Good Ending: A Compassionate Guide to Funerals, Pastoral Care, and Life Celebrations*. Toronto: UCPH, 2014. (available in ebook format)

The United Church of Canada. *A Sunday Liturgy for optional use in The United Church of Canada*. Toronto, ON: Working Unit on Worship and Liturgy, Division of Mission in Canada, 1984.

Voices United: Hymns and Worship Book of The United Church of Canada. Etobicoke: UCPH, 1996

More Voices: Supplement to Voices United. Toronto: UCPH, 2007, Kelowna: Woodlake Publishing, Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press.