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LS500D Introduction to Christian Worship
Fall, 2021
Syllabus

PURPOSE: The seasons and cycles of our liturgies and church year echo the rhythm and flow of our lives and their daily and seasonal movement. This class will explore the terminology, history, shape and meaning of Christian worship as it both reflects and helps shape these patterns. Students will identify the structure and parts of the liturgy, reflecting theologically and exploring their own and other traditions through these lenses.

PREREQUISITES: None

COMPETENCE OBJECTIVES: Students will be able to identify the seasons of the church year, core liturgical terminology and will be able to create a basic structure for a worship service based on the integration of readings, lectures, seminars and assignments. A capacity to reflect theologically on one's own faith life and practices will be developed and encouraged.

FORMAT AND CONTENT:

Because of the COVID19 pandemic, all fall semester classes will be held on Zoom.

For *synchronous distance students*, work in the course consists of weekly online classes including lectures, discussions and [*such things as: small group exercises; assigned readings; exercises both handed-in and for class discussion and a final exam.*]

For *asynchronous distance students*, work consists of recorded lectures, online discussion groups and [*such things as: small group exercises, assigned readings, exercises both handed-in by email and for online discussion, and a final exam.*]

TEXTS:

Senn, Frank Introduction to Christian Liturgy,

https://www.bookfinder.com/search/?ac=sl&st=sl&ref=bf_s2_a1_t1_1&qj=omosJNKZ.1ZTyCZf9TQ5G9vcpa8_1497963026_1:11:61&bq=author%3Dfrank%2520c%2520senn%26title%3Dintro%2520to%2520christian%2520liturgy

Chittister, Joan. *The Liturgical Year*. Thomas Nelson, Nashville, TN, 2009.

https://www.bookfinder.com/search/?ac=sl&st=sl&ref=bf_s2_a1_t1_1&qj=4wLjt,UehQVTwy7Z04aB2wp7lqI_1497963026_1:3:2&bq=author%3Djoan%2520chittister%26title%3DLiturgical%2520year%2520the%2520spiraling%2520adventure%2520of%2520the%2520spiritual%2520life%2520the%2520ancient%2520practices

https://bookoutlet.ca/Store/Details/9780849946073B?gclid=CjwKCAjwkrbbBRB9EiwAhIN8_HdgqxVoGgG0mkfrQ1gWcKH-22bSKYstQMUPra7HCFrTNTKoxT01NB0CBP4QA vD_BwE

RESERVES

All reserve articles will be available through Canvas and downloads as specified.

“Introduction” from *Liturgy on the Edge: Pastoral and Attractional Worship*. Samuel Wells, ed. Norwich: Canterbury Press, 2018, pp. xv-xxii.

“Liturgical Time” from *Liturgical Year: Supplemental Liturgical Resource 7* from The Ministry Unit on Theology and Worship for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, Westminster/John Knox Press, Louisville, KY, 1992, pp. 19-58.

“Faith, Understanding and Reflection” Chapter 1, *How to Think Theologically*. Howard W. Stone, James O. Duke, Augsburg-Fortress, Minneapolis, 1996, pp.

<http://gordonatkinson.net/essays-fiction/let-the-big-people-say-what-needs-to-be-said>

<http://velveteenrabbi.blogs.com/blog/2013/01/worth-reading-worth-pondering-spirituality-thats-worth-the-effort.html>

“Worship as Metaphor of a New Reality” from *Ordered Liberty, Secondary Sources*. Article by David R. Newman, *A Long and Faithful March: Towards the Christian Revolution, 1930’s-1980’s*, Toronto, CA, United Church Publishing House, 1989, pp. 116-125.

“The Early Church and Our Modern Worship” and Justin Martyr, *Didache*
<http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/0714.htm>

“Bathing the Body” from *Honoring the Body* by Stephanie Paulsell, Jossey-Bass, San Francisco, CA, 2002, pp 35-56.

The Early Church and Our Modern Worship, The Rev. C.C. Richardson from the 1952 Edition of, “The Rotunda,” the College yearbook of Emmanuel College, Saskatoon.

“Writing Theology Well in Its Own Context” Chapter 1 from *Writing Theology Well* by Lucretia B. Yaghjian. Continuum International Publishing, London and New York, 2008, pp. 3-17.

“Singing Our Lives” by Don E. Saliers from *Practicing Our Faith*, Dorothy C. Bass, Editor. Jossey-Bass, San Francisco, 1997, pp.179-193.

“Author’s Note” and “Reading a Church: Preliminaries” from *How to Read a Church* by Richard Taylor. Rider, London, 2007, pp. 12-25.

“Preamble” and “The Door Swings Open” from *The Geometry of Love* Margaret Visser. Harper Collins, Toronto, 2000, pp. 1-26.

“Liturgical Elements in Worship” from *Worship* by Evelyn Underhill. Harper and Brothers Publishers, New York, 1936, pp. 100-119.

“A History in Brief” from *The Sacred Meal* by Nora Gallagher. Thomas Nelson, Nashville, TN, 2009, pp. 97-107.

COURSE POLICIES

1. **Attendance** For a weekly course, VST requires at least 80% 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** Inclusive language is expected in speaking and writing 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”) with 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.
 - Individual assignments within a course are given narrative evaluations, that is, APP (Approved) or INC (Incomplete) with narrative comments, based on the competencies and expectations set for that assignment. One re-write is allowed on any assignment that is INC. The re-written assignment is due two weeks after the work is returned. The final evaluation for an assignment can be APP or NAPP after a re-write.
 - For a passing grade in the course, all assignments must be Approved.
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.

CALENDAR

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| Sept. 15 | Introduction to course and themes
READ: Chittister, pp. xv-22; Senn, pp. 1-16, 213-230
from Reserve list: Yaghjian, “Writing Theology Well in Its Own Context” and Stone and Duke, “Faith, Understanding and Reflection.” |
| Sept. 22 | History and Culture of Liturgy |

READ: Senn, pp. 17-41, Chronology of Events and Documents pp. 213-222 and **from Reserves:** “The Early Church and Our Modern Worship” Justin Martyr, Didache <http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/0714.htm>; and Visser, “Preamble” and “The Door Swings Open” from *The Geometry of Love*, pp. 1-26; “A History in Brief” from *The Sacred Meal*, Nora Gallagher, pp. 97-107.

- Sept. 29 Structure of the Liturgy**
 READ: Senn, Chapter 3 pp. 43-73; Chittister, Chapters 4-5, pp. 23-38, From reserve list: Underhill, Liturgical Elements in Worship, pp. 100-119.
- Oct. 6 Liturgy and Time**
 READ: Senn, Chapter 4 pp. 75-96; Chittister Chapters 6-7, pp. 39-57; and from Reserve list, Bass,
- Oct. 13 The Liturgical Year - Advent, Lent, Holy Week, Easter and Pentecost**
 READ: Senn Chapters 5-8 pp. 97-155, Chittister Chapter 8-15, pp. 49-99 (You may want to read ahead 10-28 pp. 63-181 as these chapters connect with this week’s particular focus but will also connect with the general overview of the course as we go along).
- Oct. 20 Life Passages – Baptism, Confirmation, Marriage, Funeral**
 READ: Senn Chapter 9, Paulsell, “Bathing the Body.”
- Oct. 27 Reading Week**
- Nov. 3 The Liturgical Arts**
 READ: Senn, Chapter 10 (pp. 177-188), “Singing Our Lives” by Don E. Saliers (14 pages), “Author’s Note” and “Reading a Church Preliminaries” by Richard Taylor, *Geography of Love* by Margaret Visser.
- Nov. 10 Participation in Worship (Embodied Prayer)**
 READ: Senn, Chapter 11, 189-212. Jane E. Vennard, “Our Bodies Teach us to Pray” from *Praying with the Body* pp. 9-26; Warren’s “Brushing Teeth from *Liturgy of the Ordinary*, pp. 37-49.
- Nov. 17 Contemporary Challenges and Trends in Worship**
 READ: Susan White’s “Contemporary Challenges to Christian Worship”, pp 152-173. From Reserves: <http://www.christianweek.org/seeking-place-ancient-liturgy-21st-century-church/>
- Nov. 24 The Liturgy of Life, the Life of Liturgy – Integration of Themes, Readings and Learnings.**
- Dec. 1 FINAL EXAM**

Dec 8 End of Term; last day for submission of all written work for term

WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS AND EXAM

1. **Personal Book of Hours** – A Book of Hours is a devotional for personal use. It often includes Psalms, hymns, favourite prayers and readings that help create a rhythm and pattern of prayer for the user. The ancient hours might shape a book of hours, but less elaborate structures can also work well. A longer handout for this assignment, along with examples and resources will be shared the first day of class. We will do some of the work on this assignment in class. **1 -2 pages Due September 30.**

2. **Paper 1** Attend an on-line or in person Christian service of worship different from your own tradition and reflect on what you encountered. VST chapel services do not fulfill this requirement – choose something that engages your questions and stretches you.

Create a 5-7 minute presentation for classmates on your visit:

- A. What cultural differences did you encounter, did they help or hinder your personal worship?
- B. How was the structure similar or different from your own? What areas overlapped?
- C. Where would you place the service in the historical scope of liturgical development?
- D. What was the worship space like? (Use Taylor's *Reading a Church*, Visser's *Geography of Love* for guidance.)

Remember to use language that makes space for other traditions to be seen as faithful reflections of the ways they have encountered holy, while also observing what you encounter as objectively as possible **Due October 21.**

3. **Paper** Choose a particular rite of the church (funeral, wedding, baptism, confirmation or Feast Day) that had particular meaning for you, positive or negative, and describe and interpret that experience. Include how the service was shaped, what was significant to you, how others engaged and shared in the liturgy. Incorporate a brief overview of the historical, liturgical and theological development of the particular rite you have chosen.

OR Attend a service “emerging” in nature – Salal and Cedar, St. Brigid’s Vancouver, or another you have discovered and explore how the building blocks of worship help shape the service – include what’s different from traditional worship (based on your experience). Include how others responded to the service based on your observation and include an overview of how you see the readings we’ve done relate. **5 Pages. Due Nov. 11**

4. **Liturgical Year Reflection** Craft a paper around the liturgical year and how you have experienced those seasons in your life. An example of how this might be done will be shared in class. Questions to help you get started: Where and when have I

been in a season of Advent? Lent? Ordinary Time? What Feast Days turned up in surprising ways? Incorporate our class readings and your own research for this assignment. Grading will be based on an integration and understanding of scriptural themes, liturgical dynamics and services and capacity to demonstrate how the liturgical year resonates with one's own life story. **1-2 pages. Due Nov. 20**

There will be one exam reviewing liturgical terms and reflecting on the cycle of the church year, the history and elements of worship including the Eucharist and Baptism, and how the people of God shape liturgy and how liturgy shapes the people of God.

EXPECTATIONS, ASSIGNMENTS AND EVALUATIVE CRITERIA

1. Class participation: Students are expected to participate in class discussions and to prepare ahead for in-class discussions. Evaluative criteria: comments and questions that demonstrate adequate preparation, an understanding of the assigned readings and exercises, a readiness to apply readings to interpretive questions and insights and a capacity to speak and listen with respect, openness to self and other.
2. 2 reflections, 2 five-page papers and 1 exam as specified and due as specified.
3. Final exam: identification, short answer essays, long essay. Evaluative criteria: answers are correct, comprehensive, insightful and clear. (Further instructions for the exam distributed in writing later in the course.)
4. Audit students are required to do all the reading and participate in the class discussions and exercises.
5. Certificate students are required to do all the reading, participate in the class discussions and exercises, and to do the *Personal Book of Hours* reflection.

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Bass, Dorothy C. *Receiving the Day: Christian Practices for Opening the Gift of Time*. San Francisco, CA, 2000.

Blount, Brian & Tisdale, Leonaora Tubbs (eds), *Making Room at the Table: An Invitation to Multicultural Worship*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2001

Bradshaw, Paul F and Maxwell E. Johnson. *The Origins of Feasts, Fasts and Seasons in Early Christianity*. London: SPCK Publishing, 2011.

Davis, J.G. (ed.). *A Dictionary of Liturgy and Worship*. London: SCM Press, 1972.

Gallagher, Nora. *The Sacred Meal*. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2009.

Kavanagh, Aidan. *On Liturgical Theology*. Collegeville, Minnesota: A Pueblo Book, The Liturgical Press, 1992.

- Klein, Patricia S. *Worship Without Words: the Signs and Symbols of our Faith*. Brewster, MA: Paraclete Press, 2000.
- Marshall, Michael. *Free to Worship*. London: Marshall Pickering, 1996.
- Martlins, Stuart M., Arthur J. Magida. *How to be a Perfect Stranger: The Essential Religious Etiquette Handbook*. Jewish Lights Publishing, 2015.
- Mikloshazy, Attila, S.J. *Benedicamus Domino! Let Us Bless the Lord!* Ottawa, ON: Novalis Press, 2001.
- Price, Charles P. and Louis Weil. *Liturgy for Living*. Toronto: The Anglican Book Centre, 1979.
- Ramshaw, Gail. *Christian Worship: 100,000 Sundays of Symbols and Rituals*. Fortress Press, Minneapolis, 2009.
- Sacraments and Worship*. Maxwell E. Johnson, Editor. London: SPCK, 2012.
- Stone, Howard W. and James O. Duke. *How to Think Theologically*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1996.
- The Study of Liturgy*. Editors: Cheslyn Jones, Geoffrey Wainwright, Edward Yarnold, SJ. London: SPCK, 1983.
- Underhill, Evelyn. *Worship*. New York, NY: Harper Torchbook, 1957.
- Warren, Tish Harrison. *The Liturgy of the Ordinary*. Grover, IL: Intervarsity Press, 2016.
- Wells, Samuel. *Liturgy on the Edge*. Canterbury: Canterbury Press, 2018.
- Wolf, Miroslav and Dorothy C. Bass. *Practicing Theology: Beliefs and Practices in Christian Life*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2002.
- White, James F. *Introduction to Christian Worship*. Nashville: Abingdon, 2000.
- White, Susan J. *Foundations of Christian Worship*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2006.
- Yaghjian, Lucretia B. *Writing Theology Well*. New York: Continuum International Publishing Group, Inc., 2006.