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Spirituality of Worship LS/SP510
Spring, 2024
Course Description

PURPOSE: This course explores the connections between spiritual disciplines, gathered worship, and lived discipleship. Students will survey biblical, historical, theological, and cultural foundations of Christian worship to help design prayers and devotional liturgies that contribute to spiritual formation and nurture the faith of Christians. There will be a special focus on how a robust spirituality of worship supports and sustains outward expressions of worship both traditional gathered worship and more broad understandings that would encompass social engagement. Students will commit to exploring some spiritual disciplines throughout the term. The focus of assignments will be the creation of prayers, liturgies, and rituals that may be used for individuals or groups in a variety of worship settings.

PREREQUISITES: None

COMPETENCE OBJECTIVES:

Students will

- Reflect on worship formation (theological and cultural) and present practices that are life-giving or challenging.
- Recognize biblical and historical roots of present-day worship practices.
- Assess cultural and contextual dynamics that form the setting and the content of worship and spiritual formation.
- Identify basic worship vocabulary needed for their context with a running list of working definitions.
- Demonstrate skills and perspectives necessary for leadership in ministry practices and faith/discipleship formation.
- Grow in spiritual depth and breadth displaying awareness of self and others.

FORMAT AND CONTENT:

This course meets from 2-5 on Monday afternoons. For on-campus students, work in the course consists of classes including lectures, discussions and small group exercises, some prepared before class. Distance students will participate through Zoom either synchronously at the same time as class, or asynchronously through recordings of class. Synchronous attendance is encouraged but not required during the weeks when classmates are leading their worship resources. Additional expectations for distance students will be spelled out in the syllabus.

TEXTS:

Claudio Carvalhaes, *Liturgies from Below: Praying with People at the End of the World*, (Abingdon, 2020.)

Barbara Holmes, *Joy Unspeakable: Contemplative Practices of the Black Church* 2nd ed. (Fortress, 2017).

Gerald Liu and Khalia Williams, *The Worship Workbook* (Abingdon, 2021.)

Sybil MacBeth, *Praying in Color* expanded edition (Paraclete, 2019.)

James KA Smith, *You Are What You Love*, (Brazos, 2016).

Lauren Winner, *Mudhouse Sabbath* (Paraclete, 2003).

EXPECTATIONS, ASSIGNMENTS AND EVALUATIVE CRITERIA

Assignments include:

Worship Formation Reflection Paper

About 3-4 pages, responding to questions to help students reflect on prior worship experiences, if one has not had worship experiences students can reflect on collective experiences and cultural liturgies.

Personal goals in the course

This is part of a “get to know you” worksheet to help guide where we put our energies in the class and to help students have some intentionality in shaping assignments. Part of the course will be the opportunity to experiment with some different devotional practices that will be outlined in class and in readings, students will have a chance to choose practices that align with their goals.

Written Prayers

Students write their own collects, pastoral prayers, laments, and blessings. These can be used in your later worship assignment.

Written Reflections on Spiritual Disciplines

Around 1 page about experience practicing spiritual disciplines, these will be used for conversations with a partner in class.

Worship Outline Draft

1-2 pages, a minimum of having selected your worship theme, context, scripture text, and a short bibliography of at least 5 resources beyond course texts. We will discuss in class to give advanced feedback.

Planning and Leading Worship Resource

20-30-minute collective worship or devotional experience (this is intentionally elastic—there’s room for creativity here) using the PWR method (Plan, Worship, Reflect.). You will record the service in a setting of your choice and we will watch the video together in class. This can be done

individually or with another student as a partner. Students may involve friends to help, however those enrolled in the class need to oversee the vision, planning, and leading.

Worship Vocabulary

A list of concepts and terms will be distributed to be filled out from readings, lectures and activities throughout the course. Students can add additional words as needed. This will be turned in at the end of the course

Participation and Peer Feedback

Active participation is expected in class activities and discussion. Peer feedback is an important part of learning for those giving and receiving. Students will give oral feedback (if synchronous) or written feedback (if asynchronous) for classmates' worship assignments.

Self-assessment of personal goals

Brief check-in, one page at the end of the course to see how personal goals were met and what next steps might be helpful.

Full details will be described in syllabus.

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Constance Cherry, *Worship Architect* 2nd ed. (Baker, 2021).

Melva Wilson Costen, *African American Christian Worship*, 2nd edition, Abingdon, 2007.

Ruth Duck, *Worship for the Whole People of God* 2nd ed. (WJK, 2021).

Mary McClintock Fulkerson, *Places of Redemption: Theology for a Worldly Church* (OUP, 2010.)

Hickman, Saliers, Stookey, and White, *The New Handbook for the Christian Year*, 1992.

Sarah Johnson and Andrew Wymer, *Worship and Power: Liturgical Authority in Free Church Traditions* (Cascade, 2023.)

Krahn, Karman and Leslie James, *Proclamation by Design: The Visual Arts in Worship*.
Scottsdale: Herald Press, 2008.

Swee Hong Lim and Lester Ruth, *Loving on Jesus: A Concise History of Contemporary Worship*, Abingdon, 2017.

Bonnie Miller-McLemore, *Wiley Blackwell Reader in Practical Theology* (John Wiley and Sons, 2019).

_____, *Wiley Blackwell Companion to Practical Theology* (John Wiley and Sons, 2014).

Psalms for All Seasons: A Complete Psalter for Worship (Faith Alive Resources, 2012).

Rebecca Spurrier, *The Disabled Church: Human Difference and the Art of Communal Worship* (Fordham, 2019)

Lauren Winner, *The Dangers of Christian Practice* (Yale UP, 2018).

World Council of Churches, *Baptism, Eucharist and Christian Ministry*

Helen Lewis, “How Social Justice Became a New Religion” *The Atlantic*

<https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2022/08/social-justice-new-religion/671172/>