

CANADIAN MENNONITE UNIVERSITY
Christian Worship: Patterns and Practices
BTS-5310M

DRAFT Course Syllabus

Instructor: Dr. Christine Longhurst

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Office: C328 North campus

Classes: May 13-17, 2024, 8:30 AM-4:30 PM (hybrid format)

Last date for voluntary withdrawal without academic penalty: May 17, 2023

I COURSE DESCRIPTION

An introduction to the shape and content of congregational worship, exploring faithful and vital expressions of worship throughout history and in contemporary practice. The course will also examine some of the challenges and opportunities facing worshipping communities and explore recent movements in worship renewal.

II OBJECTIVES

To enable the student to appreciate, plan and evaluate services of Christian worship intelligently and sensitively, and, with this end in view,

to encourage reflective consideration of the nature and patterns of Christian worship in the light of Scripture, theology, and history,

to enable the student to gain an understanding of the elements and practices of worship and reflect on various approaches to their expression.

III REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS

Cherry, Constance M. *The Worship Architect: A Blueprint for Designed Culturally Relevant and Biblically Faithful Services*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2010. (ISBN 978-0-8010-3874-7) 275 pp

Cosper, Mike. *Rhythms of Grace: How the Church's Worship Tells the Story of the Gospel*. Wheaton, Illinois: Crossway, 2013. (ISBN 978-1-4335-3342-6) 203 pp

IV SUPPLEMENTAL READINGS (186 pages)

Note: Fuller bibliographic information included under Select Bibliography below.

Ruth, Lester. "A Rose by Any Other Name: Attempts at Classifying North American Protestant Worship."

https://iws.edu/wpcontent/uploads/2012/06/Ruth_Essay.pdf

Smith, James K.A. "Call to Worship: An Invitation to Be Human" in chapter 5 "Practicing (for) the Kingdom," *Desiring the Kingdom: Worship, Worldview, and Cultural Formation*, 159-166

Robbie Castleman. Chapter 4 "The Shape of Biblical Worship," *Story-Shaped Worship*, 77-94

John Jefferson Davis. "The Fourfold Pattern of Biblical Worship," in *Worship and the Reality of God*, 97-104.

Williams, Stuart Murray. "Multi-Voiced Worship," Anabaptist Mennonite Network at <https://amnetwork.uk/resource/multi-voiced-worship/>

Robbie Castleman. Chapter 10 "Contemporary Patterns for Christian Worship," in *Story-Shaped Worship*, 186-206.

John Jefferson Davis. "Concluding Reflections: Advantages of More Frequent Communion," *Worship and the Reality of God*, 164-170.

Jeff Dunn, "Renewing the Evangelical Worship Service." Internet Monk.

Michael Moynagh, "Innovating the Future." *Future Present*, 14-23.

Mark Labberton, "False Dangers," "Real Dangers," *The Dangerous Act of Worship*, 41-77.

Perez, Adam. Chapter 4 "Rethinking the Planning Process," *Flow: The Ancient Way to do Contemporary Worship*, 39-50.

Christopher Ellis, "Dimensions of Worship." *Approaching God*, 153-166.

Leonard Sweet, "A New Reformation." *Worship at the Next Level*, 102-115.

V SCHEDULE of TOPICS and READINGS

This course will explore the following areas of study. (*A detailed course outline will be made available on Moodle at a later date.*)

- Developing a common vocabulary
- Looking around: where do we find ourselves?
- What does scripture tell us about worship?
- Traditional and contemporary patterns for worship
- Threats to a biblical understanding of worship

- Holding it together: dialectical tensions in worship
- Paths to faithful and vital expressions of worship

VI COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND DUE DATES

Assignments - Summary

- 1 Reading Response (10%); due May 13 by 9:00am
- 2 Participation (10%); due May 17 by 5:00pm
- 3 Reading Log (20%); due June 21 by noon
- 4 Final Project (60%)
 - a. Description/Analysis (20%), due June 7 by noon
 - b. Project Proposal (5%); due June 7 by noon
 - c. Research Paper/Presentation (25%); paper due July 12 by noon
 - d. Practical suggestions (10%); due July 12 by noon

Assignments - Details

1. Reading response (10%)

Read "A Rose by Any Other Name: Attempts at Classifying North American Protestant Worship" by Dr. Lester Ruth.

Consider the following questions as you read:

- What types of classification categories do you hear when people discuss worship?
- With which of the four initial taxonomies in this article are you most familiar? Do you agree with Dr. Ruth's assessment of their strengths and weaknesses?
- How useful do you find Dr. Ruth's new approaches to classifying worship?
- How would you assess your worship according to Dr. Ruth's new methods of classification?

Write a 1200-word response and upload it to the Moodle site before class begins on Monday, May 13.

2. Participation (10%)

Regular attendance and engagement in this course are critical. Classes will frequently be conducted in a seminar format, during which students will be called upon to contribute to the learning of the whole group.

On the last day of classes (May 17), students will be asked to provide a self-assessment of their participation in the classes, based on a tool that the professor will hand out earlier. This self-assessment will provide the professor with a more holistic and objective way of grading each student's participation during the week.

3. *Reading Log (20%); due June 21 by noon*

Students are asked to read widely from among the books listed in the bibliography below (a minimum of 100 pages in each of four different books). Identify the pages read and then offer a 300-word response to each reading, focusing on the following questions:

- What have I learned about worship from this reading?
- What are the implications of what I have learned about worship for my worship setting?

4. *Final project (60%)*

- a. Description/Analysis (20%); due June 7 by noon
- b. Project Proposal (5%); due June 7 by noon
- c. Research Paper/Presentation (25%); paper due July 12 by noon
- d. Practical suggestions (10%); due July 12 by noon

a. Description and analysis (20%); due June 7 by noon

(Note: the groundwork for this assignment will begin in class, May 13-17.)

- i. Outline the movement and general content of a typical worship order in your congregation. It might be helpful to begin by simply listing worship activities in order. For example, “we sing, then we pray, then we read scripture,” etc.
- ii. Look beyond the individual activities to identify the underlying organizational framework or “deep structure” beneath the worship order. What are the foundational movements of your worship services?
- iii. Analyze your worship through each of the following ‘lenses’:
 - the six biblical principles of worship we examined in class. Do you see evidence of each of these principles? What is being done well? What might be missing or undervalued?
 - the various dialectical tensions we identified in class. What insights into your worship do you gain from an analysis of these tensions in your worship context?
 - the potential threats to biblical worship and/or worship music we noted in class (or additional ones you come across in your reading after classes end). Which of these threats might be of concern in your worship context?
- iv. Consider the form your worship services are taking during the pandemic. How has the move to virtual worship impacted the content and “deep structure” of worship in your congregation? What has been gained? What has been lost?

Summarize your observations and analysis in a 9-page (2700 word) paper and submit it via Moodle in .docx format by the due date listed.

b. Research proposal (5%); due June 7 by noon

Based on your observations and analysis, identify a topic you would like to explore further on behalf of your worshipping community. Your topic might relate to a specific worship practice (for example, the role of the Gathering, the practice of the Lord's Supper, the use of scripture, the role of intercessory prayer, the observance of the Christian calendar, the use of silence, specific issues related to worship music, etc.) or a larger issue (for example, the "deep structure" of your service, congregational engagement, God as the Subject of worship, the "story" told in worship, etc.). Try to choose a topic that represents an area of challenge or concern in your worship context.

Write up a 1-page (300 word) proposal which outlines your choice of topic along with a brief rationale. Submit it via Moodle by the due date listed.

The class will meet via Zoom in early June (date/time to be determined together) to share findings and receive feedback on research proposals.

c. Research paper (25%); due July 12 by noon

Write an 8-page paper (2400 words) which explores the topic identified by you in your approved research proposal. Your paper should include careful theological, biblical and historical study, drawing on required readings and additional research. The bibliography below can help guide you. Submit final papers on Moodle in .docx format.

d. Practical suggestions (10%); due July 12 by noon

Based on your research and on your knowledge of your worshipping community, write up a 2-3-page (600-900 word) strategy for how your congregation might successfully engage, strengthen or re-imagine the particular worship practice or principle you have studied. Submit practical suggestions on Moodle in .docx format.

e. Class presentation: The class will meet in mid-July (date and time TBD) to share findings and suggestions. The presentation will form part of your paper grade.

If you are not presently part of a worshipping community, speak with the professor about an alternate way to do this the assignment.

Notes:

1. Although not all these assignments are strictly academic in genre (e.g. reflections, proposals), all assignments should conform to academic standards of formatting and of citing sources (see details below).
2. Grades are not final until vetted and approved by the Dean's Office.

VII STYLISTIC REQUIREMENTS

All written assignments should conform to the Chicago Manual of Style (online at www.cmu.ca/library [click on 'MORE' at the bottom of the page, then look under the heading 'Writing Assistance'] and summarized in Diana Hacker's *A Pocket Style Manual*, seventh edition, which is available in CMU's bookstore). These resources specify details for formatting (e.g. 1-inch margins, formal fonts in 10- to 12-point font size, double-spacing) and for citing sources.

Excellence in terms of format, spelling, grammar, sentence and paragraph construction, etc. are assumed. Frequent and persistent errors will result in lower assessments. Formal title page, footnotes or endnotes, bibliography, skilled paragraphing, etc. are essential for academic writing. Where the length of an assignment is defined in a range, be aware that 'exceptional' and 'excellent' grades are more likely to be awarded for work that is closer to the maximum length than the minimum (unless the work is especially outstanding).

VIII OTHER REQUIRMENTS

Academic Integrity—All material referred to in any assignment must be appropriately referenced. Plagiarism is a serious matter. Students should be aware of CMU Academic Policies, particularly those regarding academic misconduct (plagiarism and cheating), which apply to all University courses. These are detailed on CMU's website (<http://www.cmu.ca/students.php?s=registrar&p=policies>) and in the CMU Calendar. If you still have questions about appropriate referencing and what plagiarism is, a useful tutorial can be found here: <http://www.indiana.edu/~istd/>.

Students are expected to be familiar with CMU's academic policies, as published in the Academic Calendar—Graduate Studies (online at www.cmu.ca). Sections of particular relevance include "Extensions and Incompletes," "Email Submission of Assignments," "Multiple Submissions of the Same Work," "Attendance in Classes," "Students with Disabilities," "Academic Misconduct," and "Appeals."

The last day for voluntary withdrawal from this spring-summer course without academic penalty is Friday, May 17 before 5 PM.

Attendance: If a student must miss class due to illness or other extenuating circumstances, it is the student's responsibility to talk with the professor as soon as possible about missed material. Students who miss more than 5 hours (i.e. the equivalent of 2 weeks of classes) run the risk of being barred from further class attendance.

Extensions: The professor has full discretion in granting extensions. Extensions must be requested *before* the due date of an assignment—normally at least one week before the assignment's due date.

Submission of assignments: All assignments submitted after the specified due date and time will be penalized one letter grade for each day late (e.g. from B to B-). No assignments will be accepted or graded if the professor receives them more than five business days after the due date (unless an extension has been granted prior to the due date).

All assignments are to be submitted directly to the Moodle platform as Microsoft Word documents (.docx). Other word-processing formats and PDF's will not be accepted. Assignments will be returned on the same platform.

Communication: Students are welcome to engage the professor outside of class hours. Given the intensive nature of the course and pandemic restrictions, email and phone contact will likely work best. See contact information above.

For more information on CMU policies regarding grades, academic misconduct, appeals, and other matters, please see CMU's *Academic Calendar*.

IX ACCESSIBILITY

CMU strives to provide a fair and supportive learning environment for academically qualified students with disabilities. The University will seek ways to develop and provide services that support students with disabilities. The Disability Services office coordinates with the Academic Office to provide academic accommodations to eligible students. If you are eligible for these services or have questions about becoming eligible, please contact Sandra Loeppky, Coordinator of Disability Services at sloepky@cmu.ca or 204-487-3300 ext. 340.

In recognition of individuals with asthma, allergies and severe environmental/chemical sensitivities, CMU is striving to become a scent-free campus. Students, staff and guests are asked to refrain from wearing fragrances and scented personal care products at CMU. This includes perfumes, colognes, aftershave and scented hair products. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated by those affected.

X GRADE SCALE

Letter Grade	Option E	Grade Points	Descriptor	Definition
A+	90-100	4.5	Exceptional	Exceeds expectations
A	85-89	4.25	Excellent	
A-	80-84	4.0		
B+	77-79	3.5	Very Good	Clearly meets expectations
B	73-76	3.25	Good	
B-	70-72	3.0		
C+	67-69	2.5	Satisfactory	Adequately meets expectations
C	63-66	2.25	Adequate	
C-	60-62	2.0		
D	50-59	1	Marginal	Below expectations but minimally acceptable
F	0-49	0	Failure Inadequate	Does not meet minimal expectations

XI SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY

* required textbooks

Castleman, Robbie F. *Story Shaped Worship: Following Patterns from the Bible and History*. Downers Grove, Illinois: IVP Academic, 2013. (Optional textbook)

*Cherry, Constance M. *The Worship Architect: A Blueprint for Designing Culturally Relevant and Biblically Faithful Services*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2010. (Required textbook)

Cherry, Constance M. *The Music Architect: Blueprints for Engaging Worshipers in Song*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2016.

*Cosper, Mike. *Rhythms of Grace: How the Church's Worship Tells the Story of the Gospel*. Wheaton, Illinois: Crossway, 2013. (Required textbook)

Davis, John Jefferson. *Worship and the Reality of God: An Evangelical Theology of Real Presence*. Downers Grove, Illinois: IVP Academic, 2010.

Dearborn, Tim A. and Scott Coil. *Worship at the Next Level: Insight from Contemporary Voices*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2004.

- Doran, Carol and Thomas H. Troeger. *Trouble at the Table: Gathering the Tribes for Worship*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1992.
- Dyrness, William A. *A Primer on Christian Worship*. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2009.
- Labberton, Mark. *The Dangerous Act of Worship: Living God's Call to Justice*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Books, 2007.
- Long, Kimberley Bracken. *The Worshiping Body: The Art of Leading Worship*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2009.
- Long, Thomas G. *Beyond the Worship Wars: Building Vital and Faithful Worship*. Alban Institute, 2001.
- Mitman, F. Russell. *Worship in the Shape of Scripture*. Cleveland, Ohio: The Pilgrim Press, 2001.
- Morgenthaler, Sally. *Worship Evangelism: Inviting Unbelievers into the Presence of God*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1999.
- Parry, Robin. *Worshipping Trinity: Coming Back to the Heart of Worship*. Milton Keynes, UK: Paternoster Press, 2005.
- Pinson, J. Matthew, ed. *Perspectives on Christian Worship: 5 Views*. Nashville: B&H Academic, 2009.
- Plantinga, Cornelius and Sue Rozeboom. *Discerning the Spirits: A Guide to Thinking about Christian Worship Today*. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2003.
- Rognlien, Bob. *Experiential Worship: Encountering God with Heart, Soul, Mind, and Strength*. Colorado Spring, Colorado: NavPress, 2005.
- Ross, Allen P. *Recalling the Hope of Glory: Biblical Worship from the Garden to the New Creation*. Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 2006.
- Ruth, Lester. *Flow: The Ancient Way to do Contemporary Worship*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2020.

Schmit, Clayton J. *Sent and Gathered: A Worship Manual for the Missional Church*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2009.

Smith, James K.A. *Desiring the Kingdom: Worship, Worldview, and Cultural Formation*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2009.

Ward, Pete. *Liquid Church*. Peabody, Massachusetts: Hendrickson Publishers, 2002.

Webber, Robert E. *Ancient-Future Worship: Proclaiming and Enacting God's Narrative*. Grand Rapids: BakerBooks, 2008.

Yoder, June Alliman, Marlene Kropf and Rebecca Slough. *Preparing Sunday Dinner: A Collaborative Approach to Worship and Preaching*. Scottdale, PA: Herald Press, 2005.