

Andover Newton Theological School
CMWO 625
THE PRACTICE OF WEEKLY WORSHIP
Spring 2011

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

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CLASS MEETINGS

Fridays, 9-11:50

THE COURSE

An introduction to planning weekly worship, including preparing an order of worship, writing and editing for worship, working with leaders/committees and other ministers in planning and coordinating worship, and negotiating local worship custom and controversy.

GOALS

The course aims to help the student:

1. Articulate and embrace the spiritual, ethical, pastoral and practical challenges of creating, shaping, and leading worship in the local church;
2. Acquire an appreciation for the knowledge, skill, pastoral awareness, planning, and prayer required for excellent worship in the local church;
3. Acquire and practice some of the skills necessary for faithfully and creatively shaping local church worship;
4. Ponder the issues and choices that need to be negotiated weekly and over the course of the church year in preparing to celebrate with the community, and to practice deciding them through case studies and real-life scenarios.

A NOTE ABOUT THE SYLLABUS

The session outline in this syllabus is meant to be indicative of the subject matter we will engage, but it is not definitive. Like life, it is subject to change.

REQUIRED BOOKS

- ❖ Carol Doran and Thomas Troeger, *Trouble at the Table, Gathering the Tribes for Worship*
- ❖ Melva Wilson Costen, *African American Christian Worship, 2nd ed.*

- ❖ Laurence Hull Stookey, *Let the Whole Church Say Amen! A Guide for Those who Pray in Public*
- ❖ Ruth Duck, *Finding Words for Worship, A Guide for Leaders*
- ❖ Gail Ramshaw, *Liturgical Language, Keeping It Metaphorical, Making It Inclusive*
- ❖ Wayne Arneson and Kathleen Rolenz, *Worship that Works, Theory and Practice for Unitarians*

ALSO REQUIRED

[NB: See #3 COURSE ASSIGNMENTS AND PROJECTS, before purchasing.]

- ❖ Norma deWaal Malefyt and Vanderwall, *Designing Worship Together, Models and Strategies for Worship Planning*
- ❖ Robert Webber, *Planning Blended Worship, the Creative Mixture of Old and New*
- ❖ Barbara Day Miller, *Encounters with the Holy, A Conversational Model for Worship Planning*
- ❖ Dan Kimball, *Emerging Worship, Creating Worship Gatherings for New Generations*

RECOMMENDED

- ❖ Brian Blount and Leonora Tubbs Tisdale, *Making Room at the Table, An Invitation to Multicultural Worship*
- ❖ Thomas Long, *Beyond the Worship Wars: Building Vital and Faithful Worship*
- ❖ Howard Vanderwell, ed., *The Church of All Ages, Generations Worshipping Together*
- ❖ Melva Wilson Costen, *In Spirit and In Truth, The Music of African-American Worship*
- ❖ David R. Ray, *Wonderful Worship in Smaller Churches*

EXPECTATIONS

Attendance

More than 2 absences may jeopardize a passing grade.

Format and Participation

The class will combine lecture, discussion, small group work, and student leadership. It is expected that all students will find ways to make thoughtful contributions.

Deadlines

Students will try not to request incompletes and extensions unless prompted by real emergencies. The instructor will try not to cave.

Adherence to policies and community standards (e. g., inclusive language, plagiarism)

Students should read the Student Handbook carefully (see ANTS website). Failure to follow ANTS policies and guidelines cannot be attributed to ignorance.

Cell phones

Cell phones must be turned off during class, unless a student is expecting a call because of a serious situation at home or at work, and has informed the class beforehand.

Written Assignment Format

All written assignments should be in 12-point type, in Times or Times New Roman font, standard margins and double-spaced.

Grading

All will receive letter grades unless otherwise requested. Grading will be as follows:

A Range

Exceptional work. Attentive to and transcending the purposes of the assignment. Thoughtful and insightful. Contributes something new or furthers the conversation. Shows awareness of the interconnections among various topics of the course. Well-written, coherent, clear and interesting style, with evidence of originality. and free of grammatical and spelling errors.

B Range

Good solid work. Attentive to the purposes of the assignment. Few new insights, but offers evidence that the student has learned some things and has grasped the important dimensions of the subject and how things hang together. Clearly-written, without major errors in grammar, spelling, punctuation.

C Range

Average work that responds to the requirements of the assignment, shows some learning, but shows little insight into the importance of the subject or its relationship to other aspects of the class. Insufficient attention paid to composition. Distracting errors of grammar, syntax and spelling.

D Range

Responds only superficially to the purposes of the assignment. No evidence of serious thought or study. Badly-written, or careless. Gets some things right but does not show that the student has learned much.

F

Misses the point, or skims the surface, or shows evidence of “blowing off” the work. Student has committed plagiarism, or has failed to hand in the assignment, or has passed in the assignment late without permission or notification. Assignment unintelligibly written.

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS AND PROJECTS

1. PRELIMINARY ASSIGNMENT TO DO BEFORE CLASS 2 (Feb. 11)

Interview your minister/pastor/priest/worship leader. Tell him or her that

- ❖ this is an assignment for a course you are taking;

- ❖ you are interested in finding out what happens “on the ground” in weekly worship preparation in a real church; and that
- ❖ his or her name will not be used, nor will the name of the church.

If you plan to record the interview, get permission first.

Please also ask permission to share with the class a Sunday bulletin from a “regular” Sunday service (we will white out the name of the church).

In addition to other things you inquire about, be certain to ask:

1. What is the process of getting the order of service ready, choosing and/or writing texts, music [hymns, anthems, responses, etc.], prayers, children’s time/sermon, statements of faith, testimonies, sermon, sacrament/ordinance/ritual, visuals, altar call, special blessings, announcements, other?
2. Who leads the service? How are decisions made about who does which parts?
3. How do the planners make decisions about including non-worship-specific items in the service (e. g., a special skit for the stewardship drive, or acknowledgements of all the people who worked hard on the bake sale, or a longer than usual announcement about an issue facing the church to be decided at next month’s annual meeting, etc.)?
4. Who is involved in weekly worship planning, and in what ways are they involved?
5. How long does it take to plan the service each week?
6. If there is more than one service each week, how is planning for multiple services handled?
7. Is there reflection on/evaluation of the service from week to week? If so, when and how is it done, and by whom? What use is made of the learning from the evaluation?
8. How does the process of planning for weekly worship stack up against time devoted to other pastoral tasks and to other activities/ministries of the church?
9. What would he or she do differently in weekly planning, if only... [fill in the blank]?
10. Does the process of weekly planning differ from the process used to plan for big annual celebrations or observances (e. g., Advent-Christmas-Epiphany, Lent-Easter-Eastertide-Pentecost)? If so, describe the differences.

Prepare a summary of the most salient points from your conversation and be ready to share them in our class discussion in session 2 on Feb. 11. You will hand in this summary after using it as a basis for discussion.

Please also bring 5 copies of a Sunday bulletin from a “regular” Sunday worship service of the church you featured. **Remember to disguise the name of the church and the minister, pastor, priest, worship leader.**

2. REVISED AND ANNOTATED WORSHIP ORDER

Guidelines to be distributed later by instructor. Due date TBA.

3. TEN COMMANDMENTS FOR WORSHIP PLANNING

Guidelines to be distributed later by instructor. Due date TBA.

4. GROUP PRESENTATION: PLANNING MODELS & STRATEGIES

You will be divided into 4 groups. Each group will be assigned one of the books in the “Also Required” list above. All group members must read and master the author’s approach to worship planning. At least one meeting of your group should be devoted to a general discussion of the book, to be certain that all the members are on the same level of understanding of the material.

Then, together, prepare a 30-minute presentation in any format or style you agree on, as long as the manner of presentation feels congenial to the group as a whole and is not designed to make your classmates’ eyes glaze over. Although each member of the group may be responsible for different part of the presentation, all members must contribute to creating the presentation’s overall format and agree on the particular content to be shared. Presentations will take place during the last 4 classes of the semester (see Course Outline, below).

The presentation must include at least:

1. A summary of the overarching goal or aim of the model, and of its basic features, its “system”
2. An explanation of the theology of worship, or the worship principles behind the model (as stated by the author and as inferred by you, the readers)
3. An evaluation of the author’s approach to worship planning: the model’s strengths, weaknesses, challenges, benefits; and further questions the group had about the approach that were not addressed or satisfied by the author.

After the 30-minute presentation, your group will have an additional 15-20 minutes to respond to questions, comments and observations from the class and the instructor about what we have learned from you. Your presentation must involve each member of your group in some evident way.

COURSE OUTLINE

Feb 4 Class 1

Introductions and Syllabus

Class Discussion: What does it mean to say that worship is at the heart of the church’s life? For Christians. For UUs.

Assignment for Class 2, Feb. 11

Trouble at the Table, pp. 93-136

African-American Christian Worship, Preface, and pp. 1-12, 79-126

Finding Words for Worship, pp. 119-132

Worship that Works, pp.33-82, 87-94

At www.uua.org/spirituallife/worshipweb, click on “Leading Congregations.” Read the short essays under that heading.

Prepare to share your interview findings

Feb 11 Class 2

Discussion of worship planning interviews

Issues in planning worship: FORM: classical elements of Christian worship; options in UU worship structure; worship structure in Black Church traditions; coherence, flow, proportion, appropriateness, theme

Assignment for class 3, Feb. 18

Trouble at the Table, pp. 11-46

Worship that Works, pp. ix-32, pp.50-54, 122-129, 141-164

Browse some or all of the following websites:

www.thecrossingboston.org

www.theooze.com

www.emergentvillage.com

www.sacramentis.com

www.ancientfutureworship.com

http://www.taize.fr/en_rubrique12.html

At www.reformedworship.org go to back issue #76 [June 2005, vol. 20], and check out a variety of theoretical and practical articles about multigenerational worship; see also Issue #77 “The Emerging Church: A Guide for the Perplexed,” by Jamie Smith; and Issue #66, “Celtic Connections,” by Paul Rack

Feb 18 Class 3

Sharing and discussion of the assignment for today

Issues in planning worship: STYLE: Traditional, Contemporary, Blended, Emergent, Segmented, Multigenerational, Jazz, Taize, Iona, Celtic, Alternative, and so on!

Assignment for Class 4, Feb. 25

African-American Christian Worship, pp. 45-64

Excerpt from *The New Handbook of the Christian Year*, by Hickman, Saliers, Stookey and White, to be provided by the instructor.

Worship that Works, pp. 83-86

Aaron McEmrys, “Living Liturgy: A Unitarian-Universalist Liturgical Theology in Theory and Practice,” *Journal of Liberal Religion*, online at

http://meadville.edu/LL_JLR_v6_n1_McEmrys.htm

Fred Anderson, “Protestant Worship Today,” in *Theology Today*, at

<http://theologytoday.ptsem.edu/apr1986/v43-1-article6.htm>

Browse www.houseforall.org for an example of an “emergent” [Lutheran] church observing the classical Christian Year in ancient and new ways.

Feb 25 Class 4

Sharing and discussion of the assignment for today

Issues in planning worship: THE LITURGICAL YEAR AND RITUAL LIFE: The shape of the year; Lectionary, no Lectionary; Frequency of sacraments/ordinances; Planning the ritual dimensions of worship in Christian and UU congregations

Assignment for Class 5, Mar 5

Finding Words for Worship, pp. 20-44, 63-87, 90-94

Browse through and familiarize yourself with then workbook, *Let the Whole Church Say Amen!*

Worship that Works, 108-117

For some brief beginning considerations about appropriating the symbols and rituals of other cultures and religious traditions, go to:

<http://www.uua.org/leaders/idbm/multiculturalism/misappropriation/index.shtml>

and

<http://www.uua.org/leaders/idbm/multiculturalism/misappropriation/23371.shtml>

Mar 4 Class 5

Sharing and discussion of the assignment for today

Issues in planning worship: CONTENT: “Prayerbook” worship and “Free Church” worship; To write or edit? Resources for worship (for editors); resources for worship (for writers); The genres of worship; cultural appropriations and misappropriations

Assignment for Class 6, Mar. 18

Read in its entirety: *Liturgical Language*

For tips for writing the different worship elements in the UU tradition, see some suggestions at: <http://www.uua.org/spirituallife/worshipweb/theory/171038.shtml>

Mar 11 Class 6

Sharing and discussion of the assignment for today

Issues in Planning Worship: CONTENT Cont'd: Writing for worship; more on genres, prayers for Communion and other rituals

Assignment for Class 7, March 18

Trouble at the Table, pp. 47-92

Finding Words for Worship, pp. 102-118

Worship that Works, review pp. 54-60. Read also 103-107

Paul Westermeyer, “The Practical Life of the Church Musician” at:

<http://www.religion-online.org/showarticle.asp?title=893>

Norma deWaal Malefyt and Howard Vanderwell, “Members, Methods, and Mandates: Guidelines for forming a worship committee,” at

http://www.reformedworship.org/magazine/article.cfm?article_id=827

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Mar. 18 Class 7

Sharing and discussion of the assignment for today

Issues in planning worship: MUSIC: Working with music directors/ministers of music, music committees

Assignment for Class 8, Mar 25

Worship that Works, pp. 42-44

Kathleen Kline-Chesson, “The Living Word: Dance as a Language of Faith” at

<http://www.religion-online.org/showarticle.asp?title=1106>

From the Calvin Institute, “Visual Arts in Worship: From Either/Or to Both/And,” at

<http://worship.calvin.edu/resources/resource-library/visual-arts-in-worship-from-either-or-to-both-and/>

Matt Frise, “How to Humanize A Worship Space,” from an article posted on

www.danwilt.com, handout to be provided by instructor

Browse through the articles in Issue #75 dedicated to Christian art and symbolism, at www.reformedworship.org, click on back issues

Mar 25 Class 8

Worship Planning Presentation, Group #1

Issues in planning worship: OTHER ARTS: dance, movement, visual art, adornment and the question of a “beautiful” environment; colors, vestments, symbols and props of worship

No assignment for Class 9, Apr 8

APR 1 NO CLASS—SPRING BREAK

Apr 8 Class 9

Worship Planning Presentation, Group #2

Issues in planning worship: LEADING—effective leadership do’s and don’ts
When do I get to worship? The pastor’s worship life

Assignment for Class 10 TBA

Apr 15 Class 10 Instructor away

Class session and leader TBA

Assignment for Class 11, Apr 29

Excerpt from Marva Dawn, *A Royal "Waste" of Time*, pp. 301-313, handout to be provided by instructor

“Create Worship Renewal, Not Worship War: Six tips on how to talk about worship” and “Evaluating our Worship Life (Bible Study)” at

<http://cicwupbeat.calvin.edu/resources/resource-library/create-worship-renewal-not-worship-war-six-tips-on-how-to-talk-about-worship/> and

[http://cicwupbeat.calvin.edu/resources/resource-library/evaluating-our-worship-life-bible-study-/](http://cicwupbeat.calvin.edu/resources/resource-library/evaluating-our-worship-life-bible-study/)

APR 22 GOOD FRIDAY—NO CLASS

Apr 29 Class 11

Worship Planning Presentation Group #3

Issues in planning worship: EVALUATING WORSHIP

No assignment for Class 12, May 6

May 6 Class 12

Worship Planning Presentation Group #4

Concluding reflections