



TENTATIVE SYLLABUS

PT 601 *Theology and Practice of Worship* (3)

Fall 2005

Instructor: Dr. Ken Shoemaker, PhD

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Class Times: Tue. 1:00–3:45 PM

Class Location: Room _____ (TBA)

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Course Description

“This course will expose students to the various traditions of Christian worship; provide them with a biblical, theological, and philosophical framework for the evaluation of the theory and practice of these traditions; and thereby enable them to develop a clear understanding of the nature and practice of corporate worship. It will also give students experience in evaluating, planning, [and leading*] services of worship.”

*Leading: Due to the additional skills and demands required in actually leading such a corporate event (especially in a church context) this component will be encouraged but not required for the course.

Today a person’s worship, both individual and corporate, will likely say a great deal not only about their personal preferences and spiritual habits, but also about their view of God and of a relationship with Him. It will probably indicate important yet subtle theological and philosophical understandings, usually unstated and even subconscious. Moreover, their experience of corporate worship will reflect certain social and cultural values, especially when it comes to choosing a church to attend. How and why they worship as they do will also reflect their general understanding of the nature and goals of the Christian life.

Yet is it fair to say that today, especially in the North American context, much of corporate worship in the church is the result of pragmatic, consumer-driven decisions by church leadership?

Should corporate worship be intended primarily to meet the needs of believers, or should it be designed to attract seekers and others to the Lord?

What is the place of tradition in corporate worship? Are set liturgical forms important? Are they useful? Are they relevant?

To what extent should our corporate worship experience be influenced by matters of individual taste? What place should be given to personal preferences for certain music styles, leadership personalities and sermonic technique?

These questions deserve our serious attention.

This course is designed to help you work through the major issues of worship, both theoretical and practical, individual and corporate, as we experience it especially in the 21st-century North American church context. But we will also examine Christian worship in history. As well, we will investigate contemporary Christian worship today, and seek to place it into its larger global, multi-cultural context. Learning how others worship and why they do so can inform and enhance our own theology and practice of worship.

Course Objectives

In this course you will:

- Discover how worship was understood and practiced in the biblical period, in the early church, and in later church history
- Understand the components of contemporary corporate worship in the Church and why they are considered important
- Develop your own personal philosophy of worship that is biblically and theologically grounded, yet is contemporary and adaptive
- Appreciate the diversity of worship approaches in the Christian Church and important factors that influenced their development
- Be challenged to re-examine your own understanding of worship and to move toward a deeper, more meaningful worship experience personally
- Learn how to design a worship event that is meaningful and nurturing for others

Required Texts

Dawn, Marva J. *Reaching Out without Dumbing Down. A Theology of Worship for This Urgent Time.* Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1995.

Basden, Paul A. *Exploring the Worship Spectrum. 6 Views.* Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2004.

Course Handout Notes (\$8.00)

(Recommended Texts)

Berkeley, James D., Editor. *Leadership Handbook of Preaching and Worship.* Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1992.

Leisch, Barry. *The New Worship.* Expanded Edition. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 2001.

Frost, Michael, and Hirsch, Alan. *The Shaping of Things to Come. Innovation and Mission for the 21st-Century Church.* Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 2003.

Course Schedule

COURSE OUTLINE

- I. Introduction
- II. Worship in the Biblical Period
- III. Traditions: Worship in Church History
- IV. Theological and Philosophical Considerations
- V. Cultural and Psychological Considerations
- VI. Contemporary Worship Styles
- VII. Planning Worship Events
- VIII. Final Matters

CLASS #	DATE	COVERAGE (Tentative)	Assignment Due
1.	Sept. 13	Introduction:	
2.	Sept 20	Intro (Cont'd); Worship in the Biblical Period	
	Sept. 27	[NO CLASS: DAY OF PRAYER]	
3.	Oct. 4	Worship in the Biblical Period	<i>Field Report #1</i>
4.	Oct. 11	Traditions: Worship in Church History	
5.	Oct. 18	Theological & Philosophical Considerations	<i>Field Report #2</i>
6.	Oct. 25	Theological & Philosophical Considerations	[Finish Basden's Book, if possible]
7.	Nov. 1	Cultural & Psychological Considerations	<i>Mid-Term Exam Due</i>
8.	Nov. 8	Contemporary Worship Styles	<i>Worship Plan #1</i>
9.	Nov. 15	Worship Event Planning	
10.	Nov. 22	(TBA)	<i>Worship Plan #2</i>
11.	Nov. 29	Worship Event Planning	
12.	Dec. 6	Worship Event Planning	<i>Personal Philosophy of Worship Paper</i>
13.	Dec. 13	Final Matters	

Course Requirements

1. Mid-Term Exam (30%) Due Nov. 1
This will be a closed-book, take-home exam, based only on the material covered in class. The exam will be handed out on Tuesday Oct. 25 and is due at the beginning of the next class, Tuesday, Nov. 1.

2. Field Reports (10% Each; Total: 20%)

Report #1 Analysis of Home Church Worship Event (10%)

Due: Oct. 4

Report #2 Analysis of a Different Church Worship Event (10%)

Due: Oct. 18

These two papers, each 8-12 pages in length, will analyze and evaluate two very different corporate worship expressions which you will experience first-hand. The first paper will analyze a corporate worship event at your own home church. The second paper will analyze a worship event of a tradition different from your own. (For example, if you are a Protestant, consider visiting a Roman Catholic or Eastern Orthodox worship service. If you are evangelical, you may want to visit a non-evangelical mainline church. If you are non-charismatic, you may wish to visit a Pentecostal or Charismatic church.)

Factors to Cover:

- Physical surroundings: especially any worship-enhancing or worship-inhibiting aspects.
- Atmosphere / Mood: Summarize the atmosphere that you experienced before, during and after the event. If you can, use a one-word descriptor for each of these periods, then elaborate.
- Components of the Event: Itemize them in order; What explanations were given to help the audience understand those components? How much time was allotted for each? etc.
- Coherence and Flow of the Event: Theme, pace, transitions; “dead space,” awkward moments.
- The Worship Leader(s): Capability, demeanor, effect.
- Music: Composition of the musicians and Instruments; congregational participation; Major themes of the lyrics; Mood(s) created by the beat, etc (e.g., uplifting, contemplative, energizing, boring, etc.) How did the music affect you? (E.g., did it help you to worship more meaningfully?)
- From what you observed, what can you deduce about this congregation’s understanding of “worship,” of “church,” and of “the Christian life?” Are there any theological positions especially significant to these people that you noticed?
- Psychological effect(s) upon you at the time.

- Spiritual effect(s) upon you at the time.
- Post-event Evaluation: As you now process your experience, what have you learned? Identify any advantages / disadvantages that this type of worship experience offers to contemporary needs.

3. Worship Event Design (20%)

Plan #1: A Creative, Special Worship Event (10%) Due Nov. 8

Plan #2: A Regular Sunday Corporate Worship Event (10%) Due: Nov. 22

Plan #1 is a creative experiment. It can be as innovative and unusual as you wish, as long as it is done tastefully and meaningfully. Bear in mind that you are leading others into the presence of God. Your goal is to nurture the participants spiritually.

Make sure this worship experience is realistic. (As interesting as it might be to worship God while suspended from the outside ledge of the Calgary Tower with several dozen people at an Easter Sunrise service, this is hardly do-able.) Ideally, you will be able at some future time to lead a group in this worship experience. Visualize how it will happen.

In addition to the details listed below, submit a detailed script of what exactly will be said. Plan for the event within a 15-20 minute time limit.

Instructions for both papers:

Write in complete sentences, and give sufficient detail to enable the reader to understand exactly what and how you think the event will happen. Make sure you cover these areas:

a. Orientation

1. Who: How many leaders will be involved; what are they to do? Who is the intended audience? What is the makeup of the audience (e.g., age, gender, cultural background, etc.)?
2. Where: Where does this take place? Does the setting require any special features (e.g., lighting, props, etc)?
3. When: If this is important, explain any pertinent issues
4. Your Intentions

What theme(s) will you use to give the event continuity and shape?

What mood do you hope to create, and what aspect of God will this help your audience focus on?

Intended response: What responses do you want your audience to have / do as a result of this event (e.g., spiritual and emotional responses, actions of commitment, resolve, behavior, lifestyle change, etc.)?

b. The “Order of Service”

Components: Describe in sufficient detail what exactly will happen and by whom; Briefly explain why you are including each component, and what specifically you hope to achieve with that component.

(Note: For the message component, you need not submit an entire script. However, give us the topic of the message and an idea of what will be covered.

c. Value and Advantage of This Event

What are the particular advantages of this event that you believe will lead to a difference in the lives of the participants?

Collaboration is encouraged: If you choose, you may collaborate with another student in the course for these two assignments. You must equally share the work on all components of the assignment, and you will share the same final grade for that assignment.

Each student will be assigned to give a verbal critique of another’s submission.

4. A Personal Philosophy of Worship (20%) Due: Dec. 6

This document, 15-20 pages in length, should be viewed as a “work in progress.” It need not be your final definitive position statement on worship (indeed, it should not be!). Rather it is an articulation of your present views, particularly as they have been informed by this course.

Be sure to include at least these elements. Where and how you address them is up to you:

- The meaning, purpose and goals of worship
- Essentials of true worship

- Biblical, theological and philosophical guidelines
- Individual and corporate worship: comparisons, contrasts
- Connections: The relationship of worship to life; to other fields of endeavor
- What you personally value in worship and why
- Advice on how to handle worship diversity, especially if it is divisive
- What you believe is important for the church today concerning worship

5. Course Participation (15%)

Because this course deals so much with personal opinion (after all, the Christian life is a very personal experience), you need to be engaged in lively dialogue for everyone's benefit. This will be achieved through two avenues: blogging and classroom interaction.

- Blogging Interaction on the chapter readings of Marva Dawn's *Reaching Out Without Dumbing Down* (See Blogging Schedule below)

Twice a week you will log on to a blog website. (Details of website and access will be provided in the first class)

1. On Mondays, you will submit a 3-4 sentence response (not a summary) of the assigned reading in Marva Dawn's provocative book. State what you liked / disliked or where you agreed / disagreed with her, and briefly why. Everyone else in the class will do this, and their views will be posted for you to read.

PLEASE: THIS MONDAY ASSIGNMENT IS TO BE ONLY A SHORT CONVERSATION STARTER. ALL EXTENDED INTERACTION TAKES PLACE IN THE SECOND SEGMENT OF THAT WEEK'S BLOG ASSIGNMENT.

2. By Friday of that week, at the latest, post a response to at least one other student's views. Hopefully this will spark some lively interchange among our classmates that will inspire sharper thinking and personalized learning for us all. Keep your interactive comments civil and constructive.

INTERACTIVE BLOG SCHEDULE

MATERKAL: Dawn, ROWDD	YOUR INITIAL RESPONSE <u>DUE BY MONDAY:</u>	YOUR INTERACTIVE RESPONSE TO OTHERS' REMARKS <u>DUE BY FRIDAY:</u>
Ch. 1, 2 (pp. 3-16; 17-40)	Sept. 19	Sept. 23
Ch. 3, 4 (pp. 41-56; 57-72)	Sept 26	Sept. 30
Ch. 5 (pp. 75-104)	Oct. 3	Oct. 7
Ch. 6 (pp. 105-128)	Oct. 11 (Tue)	Oct. 14
Ch. 7 (pp.129-161)	Oct. 17	Oct. 21
Ch. 8 (pp.165-204)	Oct. 24	Oct. 28
Ch. 9 (pp. 205-240)	Nov. 1	Nov. 4
Ch. 10 (pp. 241-278)	Nov. 7	Nov. 14
		(The Following Monday)
Ch. 11 (pp. 279-296)	Nov. 14	Nov. 18
Ch. 12 (pp. 296-305)	Nov. 21	Nov. 25

- Classroom participation

At times you will be asked to verbally interact with a viewpoint or with other students' work.

Course Grade Summary

Mid-Term Exam 25%

Field Reports (20%)

Worship Event Designs (20%)

Personal Philosophy of Worship (20%)

Participation (15%)

Important Notes

- Last day to enter course without permission and/or voluntarily withdraw from course without financial penalty: Sept. 16
- Last day to voluntarily withdraw from course or change to audit without academic penalty: Nov. 16
- It is the responsibility of all students to become familiar with and adhere to CTS Academic Policies, such as the policy on Academic Dishonesty, which are stated in the current Catalogue.