

*Draft Syllabus: Full Syllabus to Follow*

**Foundations of Christian Worship**

**THEO 5120, J-Term 2023**

**North Park Theological Seminary – School of Restorative Arts**

(3 credit hours, \*syllabus subject to minor changes)

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*\*preferred method: barring any unforeseen circumstances, I will respond to any emails within 48 hours.*

**Class Description:**

An Introduction to Christian Worship examines the history, theology, and practices of Christian worship from an ecumenical perspective. The main goals of the class are to: (1) introduce the discipline of liturgical studies; (2) develop foundations and skills for worship leadership; and (3) foster theological/pastoral reflection and evaluation of the liturgical life of faith communities.

**Learning Objectives:**

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

1. Demonstrate a theology and practice of Christian worship that is historically, liturgically, and culturally coherent;
2. observe and constructively critique one's own tradition of Christian worship on the basis of the historical, theological, cultural, and practical norms of Christian worship;
3. articulate key issues (historical, theological, ecumenical) pertaining to the sacrament of baptism and the eucharist;
4. describe the theological, historical, and practical connections between word and sacrament;
5. illustrate the connection between the worshiping life of the church and its theological beliefs and ethical actions;
6. design a rite of passage that takes into account historical, theological, social/pastoral, and cultural factors;
7. analyze the main components of liturgical inculturation and engage the diversity of Christian worship.

**Accommodations**

North Park is committed to creating an inclusive learning environment. If you anticipate or experience any barriers to learning in this class related to a disability, contact the SRA program director.

## **Academic Honesty**

In keeping with our Christian heritage and commitment, North Park University is committed to the highest possible ethical and moral standards. Just as we will constantly strive to live up to these high standards, we expect our students to do the same. To that end, cheating of any sort will not be tolerated. Students who are discovered cheating are subject to discipline up to and including failure of a course and expulsion.

Our definition of cheating includes but is not limited to:

1. Plagiarism – the use of another's work as one's own without giving credit to the individual. This includes using materials from the internet.
2. Copying another's answers on an examination.
3. Deliberately allowing another to copy one's answers or work.
4. Using one's own work from previous assignments or other class assignments without permission.
5. Signing an attendance roster for another who is not present.

In the special instance of group work, the instructor will make clear his/her expectations with respect to individual vs. collaborative work. A violation of these expectations may be considered cheating as well.

For further information on this subject you may refer to the Academic Dishonesty section of the University's online catalog, pp. 25-27.

## **Incomplete Policy**

If, due to extenuating circumstances (specifically, illness, personal and family issues, or military assignment), a student anticipates she will be unable to complete course work within the allotted time, that student must submit the request form for a grade of incomplete to the course instructor before the last week of class clearly stating the reason(s) for this request. If the request is timely and meets the criteria, the grade for that class will be listed as "I" until the last day of the following semester. If coursework is not submitted by the last day of the following semester the listing of "I" will automatically be changed to "F."

## **Required Texts**

1. Duck, Ruth. *Worship for the Whole People of God: Vital Worship for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2013.

2. Stookey, Laurence Hull. *Calendar: Christ's Time for the Church*. Nashville: Abingdon, 1996.
3. Cone, James. *The Spirituals and the Blues*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1991.
4. Black Catholic Reader (articles and chapters put together by professor).
5. Pedrito Maynard-Reid, *Diverse Worship: African-American, Caribbean, and Hispanic Perspectives*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2000.
6. Other articles as assigned and provided by instructor.

## Assessments

### Grading

The grading scale for the course will be as follows:

A	100-93%
A-	92.9-90%
B+	89.9-87
B	86.9-83
B-	82.9-80%
C+	79.9-77%
C	76.9-73%
C-	72.9-70%
D+	69.9-67%
D	66.9-63%
D-	62.9-60%

### Late Policy

With exceptions for sickness and emergencies, assignments turned in late will be penalized 1/3 of a letter grade (e.g., a B will drop to a B-) for each day over the deadline. After a week, the highest score you can receive on an assignment is 50%.

### Assessments:

#### Attendance and Participation (10%)

Regular attendance and participation in class discussion is expected. Any absences over two will reduce your participation grade. Note: part of your participation grade will include completing all of the required readings. You will be asked to sign a reading log at the end of the class detailing the approximate percentage of reading done.

Assignments turned in late will be penalized 1/3 of a letter grade (e.g., a B will drop to a B-) for each day over the deadline.

#### Essay: What Is Christian Worship? (15%) – [Due Jan. 6](#)

Write a two-part essay (1000-1250 words total):

1. Part I (500-750 words) – Describe the worship tradition(s) you have been a part of in your life. What was the congregation's demographic (race, age, class, etc.)? What did a typical worship service look like from beginning to end? What

were some of the typical characteristics of worship? If you have not been a part of a worship tradition, what type of worship service would you like to be a part of (answering the same questions above)?

2. Write an essay (500 words) that give your initial definition of Christian worship based on the introductory readings and personal experience. This definition should focus on *communal* worship (normatively occurring on Sundays), not individual devotion.

### **Book Review: Worship, Theology, and Ethics in Cone's *Spirituals and the Blues* (20%) – [Jan. 10](#)**

Write an essay (800-1000 words) first presenting the main arguments of James Cone's *Spirituals and the Blues* and then, based on previous class readings and discussion, elaborating how spirituals might influence the theology and ethics of a church who regularly sung them in worship and devotion. You should use at least two other sources (class lectures count as one) in your essay.

### **Worship Observation and Inculturation (25%) – [Jan. 20](#)**

Analyze the Black Catholic worship tradition through secondary sources and two service observations (via Zoom). In light of your findings on the cultural tradition, describe adaptations that could be made in your own culture's worship traditions that you described in your initial essay that would help incorporate this tradition into the worship life of your own worship tradition described in your initial essay.

There are three parts to this assignment:

1. Research secondary sources on Black Catholic worship practices to ascertain its main characteristics/distinctives. You will cite at least four sources from the Black Catholic Reader and other class materials.
2. During class, you will observe two worship services via Zoom/YouTube in the Black Catholic Tradition.
3. Write a paper (maximum 1500 words) that gives a brief summary of secondary source research on Black Catholic worship practices, compares and contrasts this secondary research with what you observed in the worship services, and compares and contrasts the two services themselves. Finally, give several adaptations that your own cultural community would possibly make in worship/ritual to incorporate people from the Black Catholic churches you observed. (1500 word maximum)

### **New Annotated Rite of Passage (20%) – Due: Feb. 28**

Students, in teams of three, will create a rite of passage for a life-cycle event or other important transition in the community. The event/rite of passage will be chosen by your group in consultation with your professor. This could include: important milestones (e.g., significant birthdays or anniversaries), beginning of educational programs, graduations, births or deaths of family members outside, etc. The rite of passage should include:

1. An introductory paragraph explaining the rite and the context in which it would be celebrated.
2. Two original prayers
3. At least one central scriptural passage
4. Two songs (or other musical/artistic expression)
5. Objects/symbols (e.g., use of a ring in a marriage ceremony or candles at funeral)
6. embodied action/physical movement (e.g., processing; dancing; kneeling; etc.)

The service should also have rubrics (i.e., instructions) so that anyone who was given your rite could be able to perform it based on the instructions your group gives for both leaders and participants.

In addition, each element of the service should be annotated, telling the instructor why the particular element was chosen and how it relates to the rest of the elements and overall purpose of the rite.

### **Individual Analysis of Rite of Passage (10%) – Due: Feb. 28**

Each member of the group will submit an **individual** 1000-word analysis of the ritual. You will describe the ritual, explain why this rite is needed and what pastoral purpose it serves, demonstrate how the rite moves the participant(s) from separation through the transition/liminal phase to reincorporation, and define your individual contribution to the group assignment.