



THEOLOGY OF WORSHIP

Instructor: Dr. Jordan Stone
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Mondays from 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

COURSE DESCRIPTION & PURPOSE

Theology of Worship examines the history, theology, and practice of Christian worship from a confessionally Reformed perspective. The aim is to equip students to worship God in spirit and in truth, and to lead congregations accordingly.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

- To acquaint you with the biblical foundations of Christian worship.
- To introduce you to the history of Reformed worship.
- To prepare you to lead worship with celebratory reverence.
- To equip you with resources needed to design Christ-centered worship services.
- To assist you in understanding the contemporary controversies over Christian worship within Reformed churches.

REQUIRED TEXTS

Gibson, Jonathan, and Mark Earngey, eds. *Reformation Worship: Liturgies from the Past for the Present*. Greensboro, NC: New Growth Press, 2018.

- You are not required to read all 700+ pages of *Reformation Worship*. You must read **eight** of the book's seventeen chapters: chapters 1–3, and five additional chapters of your choice.

Old, Hughes Oliphant. *Worship: Reformed according to Scripture*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2002.

The Westminster Directory of Public Worship. Edited by Mark Dever and Sinclair Ferguson. Ross-shire, Scotland: Christian Focus, 2008.

Helopoulos, Jason. *Let the Children Worship*. Ross-shire, Scotland: Christian Focus, 2016.

- Students will submit a reading report at the end of the semester. In the Canvas assignment, simply enter the percentage read of the required texts.



COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Short Essays (40%). To assist the student in their preparation for ordination, ministry, and life, as well as to provide a meaningful outlet for interaction with the materials, philosophies, and issues in this course, each student will submit two essays:

1. ***Church Liturgy:*** Discuss the use and views of church liturgy, the “church calendar,” and “contextualization” from a biblical as well as historical-theological standpoint. The student will be sure to include benefits and difficulties with various understandings and practices.
2. ***Theology of the Sabbath.*** Describe and defend your view of Sunday as the Christian Sabbath. Makes sure to discuss the relevant Scripture passages and portions from the Westminster Standards.

The best essays will include careful use of scripture, theologians, and creedal statements. Be sure to reference and interact with both the lectures and assigned readings for this course.

Please submit your essays using the following formatting:

- Font: Times New Roman, size 12
- Margins: 1”
- Spacing: Single-spaced
- Length: 1,000–1,200 words per essay

Bulletins (30%). The student will create six complete orders of service, one for each of the following:

- Funeral
- Wedding
- Lord’s Day Morning with the Lord’s Supper
- Lord’s Day Morning with a Baptism

Format should be appropriate and conducive to the worship service. Be sure to include all elements of a Reformed Worship service (call to worship, benediction, etc.). Students should consult the various liturgies compiled in *Reformation Worship*. Students may also consult their own church bulletin for helpful samples, but make sure the work is your own (avoid plagiarism).

The professor will provide a Word document of a sample bulletin in class.

Worship Service Comparison (30%). The student will attend three different worship services, one from each of the following traditions:

- PCA



- Anglican or Episcopalian
- Baptist or Non-Denominational

Recognizing that some students are pastorally-bound to a church on the Lord's Day, such students should consider attending a church with either a Saturday evening or Sunday evening service. The professor can provide a list of suggested churches for the student's consideration on this project.

The completed comparison should have four parts. Parts 1–3 will describe and evaluate each worship service (one part for each worship service). Part 4 will offer a series of lessons the student learned from the exercise that are applicable to their current/future ministry.

Please submit your comparison using the following formatting:

- Font: Times New Roman, size 12
- Spacing: single spaced
- Margins: 1"
- Length: The final comparison should be 2,000 words in length.

CLASS EXPECTATIONS

Students are required to attend all classes. If a student is “provisionally hindered” from attending class, please notify the instructor. It is expected that students will keep current in their reading and assignments on time. Failure to comply with these standards will result in grade reduction, unless other arrangements have been made.

TECHNOLOGY POLICY (Adapted from Dr. Michael Allen)

Computers, tablets, and smart-phones are not allowed in class. Think we're over-reacting? Think you're a master of multitasking? You are not. No, you really are not. Notes taken by hand are almost always more useful than typed notes, because more thoughtful selectivity goes into them; plus there are multiple cognitive benefits to writing by hand. And people who use laptops in class see their grades decline—and even contribute to lowering the grades of *other people*.

SUPPLEMENTAL BIBLIOGRAPHY

- *Worship by the Book* edited by D. A. Carson
- *Gospel-Centered Worship: Letting the Gospel Shape Our Practice* by Bryan Chapell
- *Does God Care How We Worship?* by Ligon Duncan
- *Give Praise to God* edited by Dunan, Ryken, and Thomas
- *A Method for Prayer* by Matthew Henry
- *Worshipping with Calvin* by Terry Johnson
- *Serving with Calvin* by Terry Johnson
- *Worshipping with the Reformers* by Karin Maag



- *Thoughts on Public Prayer* by Samuel Miller
- *Leading in Prayer* by Hughes Oliphant Old
- *Engaging with God: A Biblical Theology of Worship* by David Peterson
- *Recalling the Hope of Glory: Biblical Worship from the Garden to the New Creation* by Allen Ross