

Due to the uncertainty of the extent of the ongoing COVID-19 situation, McMaster Divinity College is transferring all Spring 2020 courses ONLINE. Current syllabi will be modified regarding delivery model and timelines. However, you can consult the syllabi for content. Updated, revised ONLINE syllabi will be posted as soon as possible. We will notify students when the final syllabi have been posted. Your patience is greatly appreciated.

McMaster Divinity College Course Syllabus
DPT – 5XW5
MDiv/MTS – MS 3XW3 (Specializations: CW/CC/PS)

WORSHIP IN A POST-CHRISTIAN WORLD

INSTRUCTOR: WENDY J. PORTER, PH.D.

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF MUSIC AND WORSHIP

McMaster Divinity College

Email: porterw@mcmaster.ca

SPRING TERM 2020

Course dates (5 days): Monday, May 4 – Friday, May 8, 2020

Monday afternoon: 12:00 – 4:00 p.m.

Tuesday – Thursday: 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Friday morning: 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Theologically-reflective persons—whether musicians, worship leaders, artists, pastors, scholars, or laypersons—are invited to come together for this one-week course to consider some of the issues, historical practices, new contextual challenges, and relevant approaches for a Christian church at worship in a changing landscape. What should faithful Christian worship look like now? Should it mirror current dominant models or not? Although North America has never been “Christian,” significant changes in its attitudes towards Christianity have been a wakeup call to believers here. Yet the church at worship has thrived in cultures where Christianity is not welcome or simply one of many faiths. In this course, we will think through issues, experiment with faithful ways of worshipping, and consider what a theology of worship that is faithful to Scripture but flexible enough to adapt to new cultures might look like. There is much for us to weigh and some serious work for us to do together as we wrestle with real contemporary issues and practices. This course will be interspersed with active interaction and hands-on participation, as well as space for thoughtful reflection. Assignments in this course have the flexibility to challenge and address wide-ranging interests, whether in the arts, theology, history, biblical studies, cultural contexts, or issues of pastoral care.

Learning Outcomes:

Knowing: By the end of this course, including reading and assignments, you should be able to

- critically analyze the practice of worship in a/your local church;
- identify where a/your church at worship is positioned historically and how its theology of worship influences its capacity for adaptability to new cultural contexts; and
- be able to evaluate what contributions could make a positive difference to a/your church.

Doing: By the end of this course, including reading and assignments, you should be able to

- design and implement ways of worshipping together that are biblically faithful, theologically sound, historically resonant, culturally relevant, and/or artistically generative; and
- research and develop your own theology of worship that is relevant for your context and faithfully aligned with Scripture, theology, history, and culture.

Being: By the end of this course, including reading and assignments, you should find that you

- engage in worship with a greater awareness of God's welcome to each of us and with a deeper capacity for welcoming others into worship; and
- are more attuned to the creative ways of God in our worship.

Tentative Course Schedule

Monday, May 4—Afternoon

12:30 – 1:00

Sign-In and Welcome Gathering

1:00 – 4:00 p.m.

Cultural Context: Where We Are and How We Got Here
(Read: Stringer, *Sociological History of Christian Worship*)

Tuesday, May 5—Morning

9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Hospitality and Worship

Tuesday, May 5—Afternoon

1:00 – 4:00 p.m.

Multi-Voiced Worship

(Read: Kreider and Kreider, *Worship and Mission*)

Wednesday, May 6—Morning

9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Ethnodoxology

Wednesday, May 6—Afternoon

1:00 – 4:00 p.m.

Theology of Worship (Part 1)

Thursday, May 7—Morning

9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Theology of Worship (Part 2)

Thursday, May 7—Afternoon

1:00 – 4:00 p.m.

The Arts and Worship

Friday, May 8—Morning

9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Collaborative Worship Presentations + Participation

Assignments

Note: *Consider taking a thoughtful risk in at least one assignment for greatest personal benefit.*

1. Three Voices—paper or project. Bring together three unlikely voices in a paper or project that explores worship challenges and opportunities for the twenty-first century (from cultural, philosophical, theological, historical, artistic, pastoral, or other perspectives).

Papers: DPT word count: 5000. MTS/MDiv word count: 3000.

Projects must be chosen in consultation with the instructor. Include a 700–1000-word reflection on the completed project and what you learned in the process of creating it.

Note 1: Consider writing/preparing this before the course begins and submit it at the beginning of our week together. This will prepare you to contribute more fully and uniquely to our class interactions (and take pressure off the final assignment).

Note 2: MDiv or MTS students should align at least one major assignment with their specialization (Christian Worldview / Church and Culture / Pastoral Studies) and include a paragraph that indicates how this assignment contributes to it.

Marks: 35%

Due: Preferably Monday, May 6. Latest date: May 22, 2020 (two weeks after the course).

2. Nimble Theology of Worship —paper or project. Develop a thoughtful theology of worship—whether comprehensive or with a specialist focus—that is nimble enough to adapt to a culture that has no frame of reference for Christian worship. Your theology of worship must be biblically faithful and theologically sound but should have an adaptive flexibility that does not require faithful worship to look exactly like your church’s tradition or format. Choose either a formal paper or a project. Use your selected theology of worship book(s) as a frame of reference or as a partner for dialogue, but also show evidence of having interacted with Kreider and Kreider, *Worship and Mission*, as well as Stringer, *Sociological History of Christian Worship*.

Papers: DPT word count: 5000. MTS/MDiv word count: 3000.

Projects must be chosen in consultation with the instructor. Projects include a 700–1000-word reflection on the completed project and what you learned in the process of creating it.

Note: MDiv or MTS students should align at least one major assignment with their chosen specialization (Christian Worldview / Church and Culture / Pastoral Studies) and include a paragraph that indicates how this assignment contributes to it.

Marks: 35%

Due: June 5, 2020 (four weeks after the course).

3. Leading In-Class Worship. Prepare and lead a collaborative approach to worship on the final morning of our course that addresses our class as though we were a culture or community that is, at most, only vaguely familiar with Christian practices of worship. Give details of your focus group and provide all materials necessary for our participation. Submit a written reflection on what you learned in the process (750–1000 words). This reflection may be submitted up to a week after the presentation. Timing to be determined on the basis of class size.

Marks: 30%

Due: Friday morning, May 8 (during the final day of our course week).

DPT students should expect to write approximately 10,000–12,000 words per course. Use at least 12–15 academic resources in formal papers (including academic papers from scholarly journals). DPT students are expected to research, write, and discuss at the doctoral level in all their assignments and participation in the course.

MDiv/MTS students should expect to write approximately 6,000–7,000 words per course. Use at least 10–12 academic resources in formal papers (including academic papers from scholarly

journals). MDiv/MTS students are expected to research, write, and discuss at the master's level in all their assignments and participation in the course.

Required Textbooks

Kreider, Alan, and Eleanor Kreider. *Worship and Mission after Christendom*. Harrison, VA, and Kitchener, ON: Herald, 2011. Read this book with an open mind to how these authors have envisioned a way forward in the 21st century and how their insights and vision provide an impetus for formulating your own insights and vision for worship for the current and coming era. If possible, read both books prior to the beginning of the course.

Stringer, Martin D. *A Sociological History of Christian Worship*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2005. Explore this insightful journey through the history of Christian worship with a view to how it gives us a framework for insights into the contemporary situation, and consider what you would write if you were asked to contribute the next chapter. If possible, read both books prior to the beginning of the course.

Theology of Worship Book(s) – Your Choice

Choose at least one theology of worship book to consult in developing your own theology of worship. You may choose one that represents your church tradition, or one that sits well outside that tradition, or one that highlights specific elements that you wish to explore (e.g. a focus on the arts, or the Lord's supper, or a theology of disability, etc.). Some fairly complete theologies of worship are included in the bibliography below (e.g. Peterson, *Engaging with God*, a biblical theology; Wainwright, *Doxology*, a systematic theology) but there are other choices, so do your own search for those that are relevant for you. Please be in touch with me about your selection.

Selected Bibliography

Note: *This bibliography includes a wide range of specialist, generalist, and practical resources. Any book on this list could inspire a very productive search for other related books that are of interest to you. Remember that all MDC students also have access to many academic articles through the library, so be creative and diligent in searching out high-quality articles by topic or author. Many are available for you to download. See, e.g., the article by Swinton, below.*

Allen, Holly Catterton, and Christine Lawton Ross. *Intergenerational Christian Formation: Bringing the Whole Church Together in Ministry, Community, and Worship*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2012.

Anderson, Cameron J. *The Faithful Artist: A Vision for Evangelicalism and the Arts*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2016.

Barker, Margaret. *Temple Themes in Christian Worship*. London, UK: T. & T. Clark, 2007.

Beale, G. K. *We Become What We Worship: A Biblical Theology of Idolatry*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2008.

Begbie, Jeremy S. *A Peculiar Orthodoxy: Reflections on Theology and the Arts*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2018.

Begbie, Jeremy S. *Voicing Creation's Praise: Towards a Theology of the Arts*. Edinburgh, Scotland: T. & T. Clark, 1991.

Best, Harold M. *Unceasing Worship: Biblical Perspectives on Worship and the Arts*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2003.

Black, Kathy. *Worship across Cultures: A Handbook*. Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 1998.

- Blackwell, Albert L. *The Sacred in Music*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 1999.
- Branson, Mark Lau, and Juan F. Martínez. *Churches, Cultures, and Leadership: A Practical Theology of Congregations and Ethnicities*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2011.
- Brown, Sally A., and Patrick D. Miller, eds. *Lament: Reclaiming Practices in Pulpit, Pew, and Public Square*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2005.
- Byars, Ronald P. *What Language Shall I Borrow? The Bible and Christian Worship*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2008.
- Carroll, Jackson W., and Wade Clark Roof. *Bridging Divided Worlds: Generational Cultures in Congregations*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2002.
- Castleman, Robbie F. *Story-Shaped Worship: Following Patterns from the Bible and History*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2013.
- Chandler, Paul-Gordon. *God's Global Mosaic: What We Can Learn from Christians around the World*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1997, 2000.
- Cianca, Jenn. *Sacred Ritual, Profane Space: The Roman House as Early Christian Meeting Place*. Montreal, PQ: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2018.
- Clark, Chap. *Adoptive Church: Creating an Environment Where Emerging Generations Belong*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2018.
- Cohen, David J., and Michael Parsons, eds. *In Praise of Worship: An Exploration of Text and Practice*. Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2010.
- Dawn, Marva J. *A Royal "Waste" of Time: The Splendor of Worshiping God and Being Church for the World*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1999.
- Dawn, Marva J. *Keeping the Sabbath Wholly: Ceasing, Resting, Embracing, Feasting*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1989.
- Day, Juliette, and Benjamin Gordon-Taylor, eds. *The Study of Liturgy and Worship*. Collegeville, MN: Pueblo, 2013.
- Farhadian, Charles E. (ed.). *Christian Worship Worldwide: Expanding Horizons, Deepening Practices*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2007.
- Frame, John M. *Worship in Spirit and Truth: A Refreshing Study of the Principles and Practice of Biblical Worship*. Phillipsburg, NJ: P. & R., 1996.
- Hawn, C. Michael. *Gather into One: Praying and Singing Globally*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2003.
- Heaney, Maeve Louise. *Music as Theology: What Music Says about the Word*. Princeton Theological Monograph Series. Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2012.
- Hicks, Zac. *The Worship Pastor: A Call to Ministry for Worship Leaders and Teams*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2016.
- Inge, John. *A Christian Theology of Place*. London, UK: Routledge, 2003.
- Kinnaman, David. *UnChristian: What a New Generation Really Thinks about Christianity*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2007.
- Krabill, James R., ed. *Worship and Mission for the Church: An Ethnodoxology Handbook*. Littleton, CO: William Carey Library, 2013. (See accompanying manual under Schrag, *Creating Local Arts Together*.)
- Lathrop, Gordon W., and Timothy J. Wengert. *Christian Assembly: Marks of the Church in a Pluralistic Age*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 2004.
- Long, Kimberly Bracken. *The Worshiping Body: The Art of Leading Worship*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2009.
- Long, Thomas G. *Beyond the Worship Wars: Building Vital and Faithful Worship*. Durhan, NC: Alban Institute, 2001.
- Myers, Jacob D. *Curating Church: Strategies for Innovative Worship*. Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 2018.

- Okholm, Dennis. *Learning Theology through the Church's Worship: An Introduction to Christian Belief*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2018.
- Peterson, David. *Engaging with God: A Biblical Theology of Worship*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1992.
- Porter, W. J., ed. *Rediscovering Worship: Past, Present, and Future*. McMaster New Testament Studies. Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2015.
- Rice, Jesse. *The Church of Facebook: How the Hyperconnected Are Redefining Community*. Colorado Springs, CO: David C. Cook, 2009.
- Rordorff, Willy. *Sunday: The History of the Day of Rest and Worship in the Earliest Centuries of the Christian Church*. London, UK: SCM, 1968.
- Ross, Allen P. *Recalling the Hope of Glory: Biblical Worship from the Garden to the New Creation*. Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel, 2006.
- Saliers, Don E. *Worship as Theology: Foretaste of Glory Divine*. Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 1994.
- Sayers, Dorothy L. *Christian Letters to a Post-Christian World: A Selection of Essays*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1969.
- Schrag, Brian. *Creating Local Arts Together: A Manual to Help Communities Reach their Kingdom Goals*. James R. Krabill, ed. Littleton, CO: William Carey Library, 2013. (See the main handbook under Krabill, ed., *Worship and Mission for the Church*.)
- Smith, James K. A. *Desiring the Kingdom: Worship, Worldview, and Cultural Formation*. Cultivating Liturgies, 1. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2009.
- Smith, James K. A. *Imagining the Kingdom: How Worship Works*. Cultural Liturgies, 2. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2013.
- Spinks, Bryan D. *The Worship Mall: Contemporary Responses to Contemporary Culture*. Alcuin Club Collections, 85. London, UK: SPCK, 2010.
- Sundberg, Walter. *Worship as Repentance: Lutheran Liturgical Traditions and Catholic Consensus*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2012.
- Swinton, John. "From Inclusion to Belonging: A Practical Theology of Community, Disability, and Humanness." *Journal of Religion, Disability, and Health* 16.2 (2012) 172–90. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/15228967.2012.676243>.
- Swoboda, A. J. *Subversive Sabbath: The Surprising Power of Rest in a Nonstop World*. Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos, 2018.
- Tickle, Phyllis. *The Great Emergence: How Christianity Is Changing and Why*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2008.
- Voke, Christopher J. *Creation at Worship: Ecology, Creation, and Christian Worship*. Milton Keynes, UK: Paternoster, 2009.
- von Allmen, J.-J. *Worship: Its Theology and Practice*. London, UK: Lutterworth, 1965.
- Wainwright, Geoffrey, and Karen B. Westerfield Tucker, eds. *The Oxford History of Christian Worship*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2006.
- Wainwright, Geoffrey. *Doxology: The Praise of God in Worship, Doctrine, and Life: A Systematic Theology*. London, UK: Epworth; New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1980.
- Werner, Eric. *The Sacred Bridge: The Interdependence of Liturgy and Music in Synagogue and Church during the First Millennium*. New York, NY: Da Capo, 1979.
- White, James Emery. *Meet Generation Z: Understanding and Reaching the New Post-Christian World*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2017.
- White, James Emery. *The Rise of the Nones: Understanding and Reaching the Religiously Unaffiliated*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2014.
- Willimon, William F. *Worship as Pastoral Care*. Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 1979.

MDC Policies

A. Textbook Purchase

All required textbooks for this class are available from the College's book service, READ On Bookstore, Room 145, McMaster Divinity College. Texts may be purchased on the first day of class. For advance purchase, you may contact READ On Bookstore, 5 International Blvd, Etobicoke, Ontario M9W 6H3: phone 416.620.2934; fax 416.622.2308; email books@readon.ca. Other book services may also carry the texts.

B. Academic Honesty

Academic dishonesty is a serious offence that may take any number of forms, including plagiarism, the submission of work that is not one's own or for which previous credit has been obtained, and/or unauthorized collaboration with other students. Academic dishonesty can result in severe consequences, e.g., failure of the assignment, failure of the course, a notation on one's academic transcript, and/or suspension or expulsion from the College. Students are responsible for understanding what constitutes academic dishonesty. Please refer to the Divinity College Statement on Academic Honesty: <https://mcmasterdivinity.ca/rules-regulations/>.

C. Gender Inclusive Language

McMaster Divinity College uses inclusive language for human beings in worship services, student written materials, and all its publications. It is expected that inclusive language will be used in chapel services and all MDC assignments. In reference to biblical texts, the integrity of the original expressions and the names of God should be respected, but you will need to use gender-inclusive language for humans, and you will need to quote from a gender-inclusive version such as the following: NRSV (1989), NCV (1991), TEV/GNB/GNT (1992), CEV (1995), NLT (1996), TNIV (2005), and the Common English Bible (CEB 2011).

D. Style

All stylistic considerations (including but not limited to questions of formatting, footnotes, and bibliographic references) must conform to the McMaster Divinity College Style Guidelines for Essays and Theses <http://mcmasterdivinity.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/mdcstyleguide.pdf>. Failure to observe appropriate form will result in grade reductions.

Disclaimer

This syllabus is the property of the instructor and is prepared with currently available information. The instructor reserves the right to make changes and revisions up to and including the first day of class.