

SYLLABUS J TERM 2020
Monday-Friday, 9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. Jan. 6-10 and 13-17

Title of Course:

The Art of Presence: Creative Worship for the People of God

Instructors: Mark Goodman-Morris, DMin
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Course Description

How can we spark dead, dry bones to jump up and dance, full of life? How can we gather ancient words, printed on parchment thin pages, and infuse them with such life that our worship services snap and crackle with Good News? In a safe, creative workshop environment, students will actively engage in studies of scripture that ignite their imaginations and equip them to develop liturgical and artistic skills to bring those scriptures to vibrant life. Employing these skills, students will work in ensemble teams to design and participate in worship experiences based in the Reformed and/or their own worship traditions that speak to the deep longings of their communities and their own hearts.

Learning Outcomes

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

- *Reflect theologically and imaginatively on scripture chosen from the common lectionary and build theme-based worship services that engage mind, body, and spirit.**
- *Creatively integrate a variety of art forms into worship experiences.**
- *Identify the elements of good storytelling and performance, and develop the skills to a) tell a good story and b) bring a Biblical character to life.**
- *Articulate a basic understanding of the elements of Christian worship.**
- *Name several prayer practices and employ them in community and in personal practice.**

The foregoing outcomes correlate chiefly with SLOs 1 and 5.

Method

Classes will open with meditative prayer, warm ups, and focus exercises. Be prepared for moderate movement, and dress comfortably! The morning will be partly devoted to inductive study of New Testament stories, with art/prayer forms informing/enhancing the study. The mornings will also incorporate theater games and performance skill techniques. Afternoons will be devoted to workshop/rehearsal blocks and class worship presentations. We will meet 5 days a week, Mon-Friday, Jan. 6-17, from 9 a.m.-12 p.m. and 1-4 p.m.

Requirements and Grading

Students will keep regular written reflections to be gathered in a digital journal which the instructors will review at the end of the class:

- A minimum of one page on each biblical text that is studied in detail in class.
- One page each day on their involvement with the performance part of the course.
- A 3-5 page paper that will chart biblical theological insights and growth in performance skills achieved during the class, in which students link biblical study with theological interpretation through performance/worship leadership.

In Class Work:

- Each student will participate in morning meditations, inductive Bible study, and technique training.
- Each student will present a 3-5 minute monologue based on a biblical character.
- Each student will design and lead worship experiences individually and in small ensemble teams based on the biblical texts studied in class.

Grade Calculation

Regular and informed participation	50%
Completed Journal	20%
Worship Leadership and Monologues	30%

Means of Evaluation

Students are expected to arrive on time, attend all classes, and be prepared for discussion and other assigned activities. Absences on account of illness or other emergencies should be cleared with the instructor ahead of time. All written material should be collected in a digital folder to be checked by the instructors at the end of the course. The course will be taught on a pass/fail basis.

In Preparation

Reading

Read *Worship for the Whole People of God: Vital Worship in the 21st Century*, *Transforming Bible Study*, and *African American Christian Worship* ahead of classes beginning. As class progresses, we will also ask you to read *Telling the Truth*, *the Gospel as Comedy*, *Tragedy*, and *Fairytales*.

Storytelling/Monologue Work

Pick a biblical character you are drawn to or repelled by, a character to whom you have a strong reaction or connection. This will be the character you use to develop a short monologue. You do not need to do anything with the character at this point, only have him/her in mind on the first day of class. Below are some suggested texts, or you may choose any New Testament character. Be prayerful in your discernment, and use your imaginations!

Possible Texts and Characters to consider for monologue preparation:
Matt. 14:22-23 (*Peter*), Mark 7:24-30 (*the Syrophenician Woman*), John 4:1-42 (*The Woman at the Well*), Luke 1:26-38 (*Mary* or *Gabriel*), Luke 10: 38-42 (*Mary* or *Martha*), Luke 18:18-23 (*The Rich Young Ruler*), John 2:1-12, John 3:1-6 (*Nicodemus*), John 10:1-18 (*Mary Magdalene*), Luke 19:1-10 (*Zacchaeus*), Luke 22:54-62 (*Peter*), John 5:1-18 (*Man at the Pool*), Luke 8:43-48 (*Woman with the Flow of Blood*)

Required Reading

*Ruth C. Duck (2013). *Worship for the Whole People of God: Vital Worship in the 21st Century*. Westminster John Knox Press. ISBN 0664234275

*Melva Wilson Costen (1993). *African American Christian Worship*. Updated Edition. Abingdon Press, Nashville. ISBN 978-0-687-64622-7

Walter Wink (2009). *Transforming Bible Study: A Leader's Guide*. Wipf and Stock Publishers. ISBN-13: 9781606086650. ISBN-10: 1606086650

Frederick Buechner (1977). *Telling the Truth: The Gospel as Tragedy, Comedy, and Fairy Tale*. Harper San Francisco. ISBN-13: 9780060611569 ISBN-10: 0060611561

Suggested Readings:

Keith Johnstone (2012). *Impro: Improvisation and the Theater*. Routledge. ISBN - 13: 9780878301171

Viola Spolin (1963). *Improvisation for the Theater: A Handbook of Teaching and Directing Techniques*. Northwestern University Press. ISBN-13: 9780810140080. ISBN-10: 081014008X

Daniel B. Wessler and Jenelyn Wessler (1976). *The Gifts of Silence*. Ergode-books – AbeBooks. ISBN-13: 9780804216135. ISBN-10: 080421634. (Out of print. We can bring copies.)

Walter Wink (2003). *Jesus and Nonviolence: A Third Way*. Fortress Press. ISBN-13: 9780800636098. ISBN-10: 0800636090

Iona Community. (2017). *The Iona Abbey Worship Book*. Wild Goose Publications. ISBN-13: 9781849525138. ISBN-10: 1849525137

Calendar of Topics

January 6 The Baptism of Jesus

January 7 The Temptation

January 8 The Paralytic

January 9 The Sermon on the Mount, Part 1:
Go the Extra Mile, Give Your Cloak, Turn Your Cheek

January 10 The Wedding of Cana

January 13 The Sermon on the Mount, Part 2:
On Anger, Make Your Peace at the Altar

January 14 The Mustard Seed

January 15 The Prodigal

January 16 The Anointing at Bethany

January 17 Road to Emmaus/The Baptism of Jesus Revisited

Please Note: While most of the above texts will be studied in class, there may be a variation or two at the discretion of the instructors.

LPTS Policies

Use of Inclusive Language

In accordance with seminary policy, students are to use inclusive language in class discussions and in written and oral communication by using language representative of the whole human community in respect to gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, age, and physical and intellectual capacities. Direct quotations from theological texts and translations of the Bible do not have to be altered to conform to this policy. In your own writing, however, when referring to God, you are encouraged to use a variety of images and metaphors, reflecting the richness of the Bible's images for God. More discussion about inclusive language can be accessed from the Academic Support Center and from the section of the LPTS web site with information for current students.

Academic Honesty

All work turned in to the instructors is expected to be the work of the student whose name appears on the assignment. Any borrowing of the ideas or the words of others must be acknowledged by quotation marks (where appropriate) and by citation of author and source. Use of another's language or ideas from online resources is included in this policy, and must be attributed to author and source of the work being cited. Failure to do so constitutes plagiarism, and may result in failure of the course. Two occurrences of plagiarism may result in dismissal from the Seminary. Students unfamiliar with issues related to academic honesty can find help from the staff in the Academic Support Center. For more information, see the Policy for Academic Honesty in the Student Handbook.

Special Accommodations

Students requiring accommodations for a documented physical or learning disability should be in contact with the Director of the Academic Support Center during the first two weeks of a semester (or before the semester begins) and should speak with the instructor as soon as possible to arrange appropriate adjustments. Students with environmental or other sensitivities that may affect their learning are also encouraged to speak with the instructor.

Internet and Cell Phones

The use of laptop computers during class is discouraged. Cell phones are to be turned off. Exceptions may be requested from the instructor.