

PT/WO-620 Worship, Ecology, and Social Change

Fall 2015

Tuesdays, 4:00-5:30, hybrid, Gault 140

Dr. Robin Knowles Wallace

rwallace@mtso.edu

740.362.3431

Office Hours: Tuesdays 2-4, Wednesdays 2-4:30, and by appointment

Course Description (from MTSO catalogue)

This course will study worship resources and approaches to worship and pastoral rites (weddings, funerals, times of healing, and public rituals), from the lens of ecology and social change. Prerequisites: PT-500 and WO-500. 3 credit hours.

Course Objectives

As a result of successfully completing this course, students should be able to:

- ❖ As part of an on-going process of learning and of gaining critical perspectives, articulate theological and practical issues at the intersection of worship, ecology, and social change. Assessed through participation in class discussion, exercises, and project.
- ❖ Find, evaluate, edit, and write worship elements for the intersection of worship, ecology, and social change; assessed through exercises and worship service projects.
- ❖ Understand the processes of leading passionate, multisensory and transformative worship; assessed through participation in class discussion, leadership of worship elements, worship service projects, and exercises.
- ❖ To experience oneself, and be experienced, as a capable and grace-filled worship leader. This will be assessed by:
 - Practice of liturgical leadership;
 - Consideration of one's own strengths and growing edges as a worship leader, at the beginning and again at the end of the course;
 - Practice of leading pastoral rites and rituals;
 - Individually planned worship services;
 - Giving thoughtful and constructive feedback to others.
- ❖ Articulation through the embodied and written word will be practiced and assessed throughout the course.

Required Texts

Lathrop, Gordon W. *Holy Ground: A Liturgical Cosmology*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2003.

Stewart, Benjamin M. *A Watered Garden: Christian Worship and Earth's Ecology*. Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2011.

Edwards, Denis. *Ecology at the Heart of Faith*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2006.

Articles as assigned in syllabus

Worship books and hymnals from your denomination. If you are non-denominational or "between denominations", consider using either *Chalice Hymnal* (Disciples of Christ/Christian Church) or *Singing the Living Tradition* (Unitarian-Universalist) for hymnals; *Common Prayer: A Liturgy for Ordinary Radicals* (emerging) or *New Zealand Prayer Book* (The Anglican Church in Aotearoa, New Zealand and Polynesia).

For those of you who have not taken WO 500 Introduction to Worship, the syllabus contains references to Ruth Duck, *Worship for the Whole People of God* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2013) which you may find helpful.

Assignments

1. Attendance and participation are essential, particularly in discussion. Note that the student handbook says that you risk failing if you miss 25% or more of classroom time.
2. Complete readings and exercises before each class; remember that this is a hybrid course and will require more outside-of-class time than a standard 3-hours-in-class MTSO course.
3. Reflecting and responding to each day's readings, find (edit as needed) or write an element for communal worship (hymn, prayer [confession, offertory, scriptural, collect, general], call to worship, benediction) and post on Populi under discussion for the class period (for a total of 10) by Sunday evening at 7 p.m. Students will be assigned to lead ten-minute devotions for each class using selected elements. These first three items are worth 10 points of grade total.
4. Team-planned and team-led worship service for class on December 8 on topic not chosen for project. Worth 30 points; see grading criteria below.
5. Project: an individually planned worship service or congregational study on one of these topics:

- Baptism
- Communion
- Funeral
(Wedding/Covenant)
- Healing or reconciliation
- Public ritual

In-class portion (20 minutes, worth 30 points) will be presented on the topic day as noted in the schedule below, either as worship, presentation, or guided class-time. One week after the in-class portion your write-up (leader's guide for bulletin, paper for presentation), video, or study guide is due; also worth 30 points.

Schedule

August 25 Introduction to the course and each other; major themes; ritual; finding and editing worship resources; writing collects. <http://www.psmag.com/books-and-culture/tale-2-cultures-live-stadium-need-sanctuary-85078>

September 1 Read *A Watered Garden*; read M. B. ter Borg, "Some Ideas about the Persistence of Rituals," *Implicit Religion*, 11:1 (April 2008) available through ATLA; post worship element by Sunday 7 p.m.; respond to one of the end of chapter questions on discussion in Populi from this list:

- Ch. 1, question 4
- Ch. 2, question 2 or 4
- Ch. 3, question 5
- Ch. 4, question 2
- Ch. 5, question 5

September 8 Read *Ecology at the Heart of Faith*, chapters 1-4; read Robin Knowles Wallace “‘For the Beauty of the Earth’: Intersections of Worship and Ecology,” *Journal of Theology* (United Theological Seminary) 110 (Summer 2006) on Populi; post worship element by Sunday 7 p.m.; post a comment or question for discussion.

September 15 Read *Ecology at the Heart of Faith*, chapters 5-8; read Christopher Pramuk, “Silences,” *Worship* 87:4 (July 2013) through ATLA; post worship element by Sunday 7 p.m.; post a comment or question for discussion.

September 22 Read *Holy Ground*, Section 1, chapters 1-3; watch Verna Myers “How to Overcome our Biases” https://www.ted.com/talks/verna_myers_how_to_overcome_our_biases_walk_boldly_to_ward_them; post worship element by Sunday 7 p.m.; post a comment or question for discussion.

September 29 Read *Holy Ground*, Section 2, chapters 4-6; post worship element by Sunday 7 p.m.; post a comment or question for discussion.

October 6 Read *Holy Ground*, Section 3, chapters 7-9; post worship element by Sunday 7 p.m.; post a comment or question for discussion.

BREAK

October 20 Baptism: Re-read *A Watered Garden*, ch. 2 and reflect on questions 3 and 5; re-read *Holy Ground* ch. 4; (*Worship for the Whole People of God*, ch. 9 and 10); read John J. O’Brien “Baptismal Waters and the Waters of Life,” *Proceedings* (North American Academy of Liturgy) 2007 on Populi; Therese B. DeLisio, “Considering the Cosmos as Primary Sacrament: A Viable Basis for an Ecological Sacramental Theology, Liturgy, and Ethics?” *Proceedings* (North American Academy of Liturgy) 2006 on Populi; presentations; practice baptism; post worship element by Sunday 7 p.m.; post a comment or question for discussion.

October 27 Embodiment, Death, and Christian Funerals: Re-read Ch. 5 of *A Watered Garden* and reflect on questions 4 and 6; read Kathleen Winters, “Liturgy and the Lessons of the Body,” *Doxology* 17 (2000) on Populi; read pg. 122 of *Holy Ground* for funeral references; read your denomination’s order of worship for funeral or services of death and resurrection; (*Worship for the Whole People of God*, pgs. 216-229, ch. 12); beginning with SimpleLivingWorks.org search the web for some alternative practices of funerals that are more compatible with the environment (can we begin a listing for other students and churches of such practices and helpful organizations?); presentations; post worship element by Sunday 7 p.m.; post a comment or question for discussion.

November 3 (Williams Lecture and RKW in Richmond VA); Weddings and Covenants: Re-read *Holy Ground*, pages 86-88 and 122-123; beginning with SimpleLivingWorks.org search the web for some alternative practices of weddings (from engagement through wedding and reception to honeymoon) that are more compatible with the environment (can we

begin a listing for other students and churches of such practices and helpful organizations?); (*Worship for the Whole People of God*, ch. 12); post worship element by Sunday 7 p.m.; online exercise/s to be announced

November 10 Eucharist/Communion: Re-read ch. 4 in *A Watered Garden* and reflect on questions 3 and 4; re-read *Holy Ground*, ch. 5 and 8 (sermons); re-read ch. 7 in *Ecology at the Heart of Faith*; read Izunna Okonkwo, "Liturgical Theology: An Environmental Concern," *African Ecclesial Review* 53:2 (2011) through ATLA; read David N. Power "Worship and Ecology" *Worship*, 84 no 4 Jul 2010, (*Worship for the Whole People of God*, ch. 9 and 11); presentations; practice communion; post worship element by Sunday 7 p.m.; post a comment or question for discussion.

November 17 Healing and Reconciliation: Re-read *Holy Ground*, pp. 220-226; re-read ch. 8 *Ecology at the Heart of Faith*; read Sigurd Bergmann, "Climate Change Changes Religion," *Studia Theologica* 63 (2009), 98-118; read Susan Marie Smith, "Severance, Separation and Divorce: Offering Healing rites in Times of Unexpected and Unwanted Change," *Liturgy* 27:4 (2012); post worship element by Sunday 7 p.m.; post a comment or question for discussion; presentations; practice anointing.

BREAK

December 1 Public Rituals: Read Leigh Eric Schmidt, "Conversation, Ecology, and Worship in American Protestantism: From Arbor Day to the Environmental Sabbath," *Doxology* 9 (1992) on Populi; presentations; post worship element by Sunday 7 p.m.; post a comment or question for discussion.

December 8 Team-led worship services

Grading Criteria for Class Presentations

As: Presentation is excellent, clear, engaging, creative, and focused; ideas and content are richly developed with details and examples; vocabulary is rich. Organization and manner of presentation enhance the central theme; everyone in the group is involved and the leadership is integrated. Ideas are presented coherently; along with interpreting the material accurately and compellingly, the class is challenged to think; various learning styles are evoked. Outstanding work.

Bs: Presentation is solid, reasonably clear, focused, and supported; ideas are adequately developed with details and examples. Organization and form are appropriate, and ideas are generally presented in a coherent manner. The form of presentation does not interfere with understanding or distract from meaning; everyone in the group is involved. The material is interpreted accurately, and some learning styles are evoked. Good work.

C's: The presentation has some focus and support; ideas and content are developed with limited details and examples. The presentation may be somewhat disorganized; the leadership of the group is not evident; vocabulary is limited. Presentation errors may reduce understanding and interfere with meaning. The content of theoretical information is limited and large generalizations are made. Work meets minimal standards.

D's: Presentation has little focus and development; ideas and content are supported by few details or examples. Presentation lacks direction and purpose, in itself and by the leaders; its tone is flat. Awkward grammar and vocabulary interfere with understanding. The form of presentation makes the work difficult to understand. Often large portions of the work are given to rambling of experiences without informational context. Work does not meet minimum requirements of the assignment.

Grading Criteria for Written Work

A's: Work is excellent, clear, engaging, original and focused; ideas and content are richly developed with details and examples. Organization and form enhance the central idea and theme; ideas are presented coherently to move the reader through the text. The voice of the writer is compelling and conveys the learner's meaning through effective grammar. The learner integrates theoretical concepts, experience and critical analysis. Outstanding work.

B's: Work is solid, reasonably clear, focused, and supported; ideas are adequately developed with details and examples. Organization and form are appropriate, and ideas are generally presented in a coherent manner. The voice of the writer contributes to the writer's meaning through appropriate grammar. The form of presentation does not interfere with understanding or distract from meaning. Integration of theory, experience and critical analysis is underdeveloped. Good work, above average.

C's: Work has some focus and support; ideas and content are developed with limited details and examples. The work may be somewhat disorganized. The voice of the learner is generally absent; basic sentence structure and limited vocabulary convey a simple message. Presentation errors may reduce understanding and interfere with meaning. The content of theoretical information is limited and large generalizations are made. Critical analysis is absent from the paper. Work meets minimum requirements.

D's: Work has little focus and development; ideas and content are supported by few details or examples. The work lacks direction and purpose. The tone of the work is flat. Awkward grammar and vocabulary interfere with understanding. The form of presentation makes the work difficult to understand. Demonstrated critical analysis is absent, and often large portions of the work are given to rambling of experiences without theoretical context. Work does not meet minimum requirements of the assignment.

Please note the following academic policies, which apply to all MTSO courses. You will find details about all of these policies in the MTSO Student Handbook.

Class attendance: Regular attendance is expected in all classes. During unavoidable absences, students are responsible for missed work. An excessive number of absences may result in grade reduction or course failure, despite successful completion of all assigned work. Use of Skype or similar technology is not a substitute for attendance in class. In most cases, a student will not be allowed credit for a course if he or she is absent for 25% of the class sessions. In relation to blended courses, students may not be allowed credit if they are absent for 25% of class meetings or if 25% of online course work is not completed.

Pass/Fail: The decision to exercise this option must be made before the end of the second week of the course by completing the appropriate form available through the Registrar. To receive a grade of "pass" the student must do at least the equivalent of C minus work in the course.

Incompletes: To receive a course grade of Incomplete, students must submit the petition form from the Registrar with all signatures to the Dean's Office before the last day of regularly scheduled classes. See Student Handbook for intensive term deadlines. Any petition submitted without a due date for outstanding work will be denied. If work is not complete by the due date the Registrar will record the grade of F for the course.

ADA: MTSO seeks to remove barriers to inclusion in its learning communities. Students who feel they may need an accommodation based on the impact of a documented disability should contact the instructor privately to discuss their specific needs at the beginning of the semester. Please contact the Director of Student Services to coordinate reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities. Any accommodation must be agreed upon prior to the due date of the affected course requirement.

Electronic Devices: Turn mobile devices off or "vibrate only" during class. Browsing the Internet or engaging in email or social network conversations during class is discouraged. Instructors have the right to impose grading penalties for disruptions due to electronic devices.

Inclusive Language: In accordance with MTSO's policy on inclusive language, all students are expected to use gender inclusive or gender neutral language in their writing and in the classroom discussions when referring to human beings.

Plagiarism: Plagiarism is a serious matter of academic, professional, and personal integrity. All students at the master's level are expected to understand the requirement to provide attribution when the work of others is used. Students are also expected to be familiar with and understand the school's policy on Academic Misconduct found in the Student Handbook. If a student has questions about attribution, citation, and how to avoid plagiarism they should consult the course instructor, the school's writing instructor, or library staff. When in doubt it is better to provide attribution even if one is uncertain about the proper citation form. Plagiarism is a form of academic misconduct that results in disciplinary actions per the Student Handbook that may range from failing an assignment or course to expulsion

Human Subjects Research: Research by MTSO faculty, students, or affiliated personnel that collects non-public information from and/or about living individuals or contemporary organizations/groups for purposes of publication or public presentation (including class assignments) must be approved by the Human Subjects Research Committee. MTSO faculty, students, or affiliated personnel should err on the side of caution and apply for committee approval of any activity that may fit this description.