SEMINAR IN WORSHIP ARTS
SYLLABUS

I. Course Description

The arts and the church have had an up and down relationship at least since the
Reformation. Whether or not an agreement can be reached on the exact place of the arts in the
church, this class can expand both interest and comprehension of this subject. In this course,
students will delve into different art forms, learning how they have been and are being used in the
church, understanding how God can be recognized in them, attempting to reveal Him in their own
artistic experience, and exploring how the arts can benefit the church.

II. Course Objectives

A. Cognitive - As a result of taking this course, the student will be able to:
   1. Understand the role of art in the worship of the church.
   2. Learn about multiple art forms.
   3. Consider the potential role of art in the modern church.

B. Affective - As a result of taking this course, the student will:
   1. Grow in deeper affection for their Creator.
   2. Explore the expression of this affection through artistic translation.

C. Behavioral - As a result of taking this course, the student will:
   1. Participate in new art forms as an act of worship.
   2. Plan worship services including art.

III. Course Textbooks


(available online through the library)

Taylor, W. David O. *Glimpses of the New Creation: Worship and the Formative Power

One other book of the student’s choice on arts and the church (suggestions provided)

IV. Course Requirements

A. Reading (15%): Students will complete all readings by the date assigned, in addition
to an assignment on Canvas in which they will outline the main theme of each
chapter read, a point of personal impact, and a question they had after reading.

B. Writing (15%): Students will write one five-page paper on one of the following
topics. The paper is to be researched and thoughtfully presented. It is not simply
an opinion piece.

   Option #1: Choose an artist or a specific piece of art of any genre and
   explore the theological conversation that might be had with the piece or body of
   work. Also, consider how the piece or body of work could be used in a corporate
worship environment.

**Option #2:** Choose a theological topic and explore the theological conversation that might be had on the same topic through multiple pieces of art. Also, consider how the topic might be artistically communicated or engaged in a corporate worship environment.

**C. Creating (15%):** Students will create one piece of art of their choice. Additionally, students will submit a short explanation of their inspiration and how they feel the piece could be used in corporate worship, either in creation or interpretation.

**D. Planning (15%):** Students will build a worship service with art as a vital part. The service will be based either on a given sermon scripture passage or on the church liturgical calendar. The assignment will also include at least two pages of endnotes in which students will explain the thought processes behind their choices and connect them to topics covered in class and in their own research and reading.

**E. Participating (25%):** Student will attend and participate in each class.

**F. Testing (15%):** The final exam will cover the content and the potential application of the topics studied.

**V. Course Policies**

**A. Weight Given to Course Requirements for Grading**

- Reading: 15%
- Writing: 15%
- Creating: 15%
- Planning: 15%
- Participating: 25%
- Testing: 15%

The professor reserves the right to raise a student’s grade by adding points for professionalism, which include progress, teachability, punctuality, and perfect attendance. The professor also reserves the right to deduct points from the class interaction grade for inappropriate use of electronic devices during class.

**B. Class Participation**

The attendance and participation of each student in a course is vital to the learning and growth of all. A student must be present as a creator and as one learning about creation and the arts. Therefore, every student is expected to attend and participate in each class period (as appropriate).

**C. Late Assignments**

In most learning environments, it is better to do work late than not at all. However, to be fair to the other students, late assignments will lose a letter grade (7%) per week they are late. Assignments are due at the beginning of class on their due date. In extenuating circumstances, the professor may waive this penalty, but must be notified before the assignment is due.

**D. Absences**

The absences policy for this class will follow the absences policy as outlined in the Student Handbook. For this once-a-week course, each day is considered to be two class sessions. A student is allowed four absences, which constitutes two class days. Students are responsible for knowing this information.
E. Letter/Numerical Grade Scale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Score Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>99–100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>96–98</td>
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<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>94–95</td>
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<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>91–93</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>88–90</td>
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<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>86–87</td>
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<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>83–85</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>80–82</td>
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<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>78–79</td>
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<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>75–77</td>
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<td>D</td>
<td>72–74</td>
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<tr>
<td>D-</td>
<td>70–71</td>
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<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>0–69</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

G. Gender-Inclusive Language

All written submissions should strive to use gender-inclusive language. While doing so has become standard academic practice, this request is not merely an attempt at political correctness. As a gospel-shaped, gospel-centered community of learning, we have compelling reasons to think, write, and speak in such a way as to insure that none are either intentionally or inadvertently excluded by our use of language. Consider using “humans,” “persons,” “humanity,” or “humankind” rather than “man” or “men” when referring to human beings in general. Consider alternating between the use of “he” and “she” as generic pronouns or substituting the use of the plural (“they,” “them,” “their”) when appropriate.

VI. Course Supplemental Information

Work that has been done (or is being done) for other classes may not be used to earn credit in this class. Because the goal of seminary training is service to the Lord God, it is expected that work be done honestly and submitted with integrity. That includes reading. If students have already read an assigned textbook, they should check with the professor to choose an alternate text for the course, so they might get the maximum benefit from the class.

DTS does not discriminate on the basis of disability in the operation of any of its programs and activities. To avoid discrimination, the student is responsible for informing the Coordinator of Services for Students with Disabilities and the course instructor of any disabling condition that will require modifications.

VII. Course Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Assignment Due</th>
<th>Class time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8/27</td>
<td>Nothing due – first day of class</td>
<td>Go over syllabus. Get to know the class Arts in Worship/Defining Worship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/3</td>
<td>Read Schaeffer (Ch. 1) Reading Response #1 Working Definition of Worship</td>
<td>Art and the Church, Historically and Biblically Music: Traditional and Contemporary Worship</td>
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<tr>
<td>9/10</td>
<td>Read Taylor (Intro, Ch. 1–2) Reading Response #2</td>
<td>Guest Lecturer</td>
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<tr>
<td>9/17</td>
<td>Read Taylor (Ch. 3–4) Reading Response #3</td>
<td>Guest Lecturer</td>
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<tr>
<td>9/24</td>
<td>Read Taylor (Ch. 5–6) Reading Response #4</td>
<td>Guest Lecturer</td>
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<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Activity</td>
<td>Instructor</td>
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<tr>
<td>10/1</td>
<td>Read Taylor (Ch. 7–8)</td>
<td>Guest Lecturer</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Reading Response #5</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Writing Assignment Due</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>10/8</td>
<td>Read Student’s Choice</td>
<td>Guest Lecturer</td>
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<tr>
<td>10/15</td>
<td>Read Student’s Choice</td>
<td>Guest Lecturer</td>
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<tr>
<td>10/22</td>
<td>Read Student’s Choice</td>
<td>Guest Lecturer</td>
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<tr>
<td>10/29</td>
<td>Read Student’s Choice</td>
<td>Guest Lecturer</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reading Response #6</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Creating Assignment Due</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>11/5</td>
<td>Read Begbie (Intro, Ch. 1)</td>
<td>Guest Lecturer</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reading Response #7</td>
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<tr>
<td>11/12</td>
<td>Read Begbie (Ch. 2)</td>
<td>Guest Lecturer</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reading Response #8</td>
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<tr>
<td>12/3</td>
<td>Read Begbie (Ch. 3)</td>
<td>Guest Lecturer</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reading Response #9</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>12/10</td>
<td>Read Begbie (Ch. 4 and Conclusion)</td>
<td>Wrapping Up</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reading Response #10</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Week</td>
<td><strong>Planning Assignment Due</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Wrapping Up</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Annotated Bibliography**

*Art and Architecture*

Judith Dupré. *Churches* (HarperCollins Publishers, 2001). An introductory interview with architect Mario Botto opens Churches. Structures from The Patheon in Italy, Beta Ghiorgis in Ethiopia, St. Basil’s Cathedral in Russia, Thorncrow Chapel in the U.S., to Santa Maria in Portugal, and many places in between, are presented to the reader. Included on each are photos, architectural drawings, quotes by viewers or artisans, and informative descriptions. A prayer bar with scripture texts runs across the top of each page.

Richard Giles. *Re-Pitching the Tent* (Liturgical Press, 1999). A practical guide for worship committees asking practical questions. Exercises are assigned to help them explore issues of space redesign, including a look at education and neighborhood issues that come into play.


*Art and Interior Worship Space*

Robin M. Jensen. *The Substance of Things Seen: Art, Faith, and the Christian Community* (Eerdmans, 2004). Six essays “open the conversation” on art and spiritual formation, visual exegesis, idol or icon, moving beyond decorative and didactic, distinction of place and space, and a conversation on taste and religious value.

James F. White and Susan J. White. *Church Architecture: Building and Renovating for Christian Worship* (Abingdon Press, 2002). In its second printing, this book has been a standard work in the area of church architecture. This is a must-read for those thinking of building or reorganizing their worship space. The authors discuss six distinct spaces: gathering space, movement space, congregational space, choir space, altar-table space, and baptismal font-pulpit space, to see how space functions as an essential agent in forming the worship life of the congregation.

Sandra Bowden, ed. *Images of Faith* (CIVA, 2009). An interactive application of images and essays centered on biblical themes. It contains 100 images by contemporary artists to be used for projection in teaching, preaching, and devotional purposes by churches, colleges, and seminaries. The interactive application brings you to the current websites of the artists to explore their work further.

Constance Cherry. *The Music Architect: Blueprints for Engaging Worshipers in Song*. Aida, MI: Baker Academic, 2016. A leading music work expert offers comprehensive guidance to leaders seeking a deeper, richer way to employ worship music in engaging ways for contemporary worshipers. This work helps leaders think theologically and act pastorally about worship music in their churches.

Pamela Hardiman and Josephine Niemann. *Raise the Banners High!: Making and Using Processional Banners* (Liturgy Training Publications, 2002). A banner book for beginners as well as for advanced textile artists and their pastors. The first chapter begins where we all should begin, asking “Why.” Why do we celebrate and use banners in worship? How do we bring together elements of worship and make a coherent whole from all of the parts? A look at the liturgical year is included. The second half of the book is about the process. Design patterns, complete instructions, pole and hanging guides, and even a banner stand are described in detail.


John W. De Gruchy. *Christianity, Art and Transformation: Theological Aesthetics in the Struggle for Justice* (Cambridge University Press, 2001). This work explores the historical and contemporary relationship between the arts and Christianity with reference to the transformation of society. Major themes include the power of images, the relationship between aesthetics and ethics, the nature of beauty and its redemptive capacity, aesthetic existence and Christian discipleship, and the role of art in the public square and in the life of the church.

Sarah Hall. *The Color of Light: Commissioning Stained Glass for a Church* (Liturgy Training Publications, 1999). With beautiful photographs, The Color of Light introduces the materials, techniques, design and installation of stained glass. A brief review of early uses to 20th century church windows shows the development of the art form. Most helpful for churches interested in stained glass installations are the sections covering design (choosing a designer, a studio, a style, reviewing and approving a design) and commissioning (very helpful committee “to do lists,” and questions a committee should be asking). Appendices include information on maintenance and restoration, resources, and a glossary.


Cecelia Gonzalez-Andrieu. *Bridge to Wonder: Art as a Gospel of Beauty* (Baylor University Press, 2012). An exploration in theological aesthetics that seeks to engage art in order to reveal its religious significance and to mine the depths of creative beauty and discover variegated theological truths that enable greater communion with each other—and the One source of all that is beautiful.

*Art and Scripture*


Christopher R. Brewer. *Art that Tells the Story* (Gospel Through Shared Experience, 2011). An exploration of biblical stories within overarching themes of creation, fall, redemption, and consummation. The stories are told through reflections, scripture, and contemporary art work seen in full color.

Chittister and John Swanson. *There is a Season* (Orbis Books, 1995). Theologian and artist meet with these reflections (in text and image) on the book of Ecclesiastes.

Graham Lorenz and Ashley Bryan. *How God Fix Jonah* (Boyd's Mills, 2000). Bible stories of Jonah, Daniel and Ruth told in a lyrical idiom of West Africa. These verses have the rhythm of drums and can therefore be enjoyed best when read out loud.

Elizabeth Steele Halstead. *Dwelling with Philippians: A Conversation with Scripture through Image and Word* (Eerdmans, 2010). This volume illumines Paul’s letter to the Philippians
through juxtapositions of visual images, poetry, and other worship-related arts, with theological reflections, prayers, and more.

Anneke Kaai and Eugene Peterson. *The Psalms: An Artist's Impression* (InterVarsity Press, 1999). Twenty-five paintings from Dutch artist Anneke Kaai, who explains the imagery and color symbolism she uses to express the psalm on which each painting is based. Extracts from *The Message* allow the reader to encounter and meditate on a contemporary rendition of the scripture passages.

Kenneth Lawrence, Susan Blain and Sharon Gouwens. *Imaging the Word* (Volumes 1–3) (United Church Press, 1994–1996). A combination of images, writings (quotes, sayings, poetry and prayers), with the scripture readings organized on the Lectionary (the volumes have a scripture index for churches that do not follow the lectionary cycle).


Ron O’Grady. *Christ For All People: Celebrating a World of Christian Art* (Orbis Books, 2001). Christ for All People provides a historical overview of depictions of Christ and focuses on contemporary artistic interpretations of the life of Christ from every continent of the world.

Marilyn McEntyre. *Drawn to the Light* (William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2003). Through McEntyre’s poems, based on observing Rembrandt’s paintings, readers encounter anew not only the mystery of the interplay of light and dark in Rembrandt’s masterpieces but of the connection to our own lives which the Word still holds for us today.


N. T. “Tom” Wright. *The Case for the Psalms.* (HarperOne, 2016 reprint [from 2013]). Prolific New Testament scholar Wright fears that the contemporary praise-song have replaced the Hebrew prayer-songs that have traditionally informed Christian worship. Wright uses quotations and personal anecdotes to build his case for using the psalms in worship.

*The Father & His Two Sons: The Art of Forgiveness: Images of the Prodigal Son from the Larry and Mary Gerbens Collection* (Eyekons, 2008). The parable of the Prodigal Son is one of the most powerful and evocative stories Jesus told. This book includes original art inspired by the story along with reflections on the work and some collector’s notes on the stories behind the artwork.

Art and Worship


Christopher Irvine and Anne Dawtry. *Art and Worship* (Liturgical Press, 2002). A theological look at the arts in the church. Beginning with a brief history, the authors then turn to guidelines for placing art in churches, for viewing art, and for understanding art for worship. Resource list, references with furthering reading list, and index.


Catherine Kapikian. *Art in Service of the Sacred* (Abingdon Press, 2006). Art in Service of the Sacred encourages congregations to take seriously the role of visual art in worship and in the broader life of the church. Case studies are used to explore the dynamics between art, artist, and the church. A DVD is included to show before and after pictures of space installations, vestments, etc. in color.

Regina Kuehn. *A Place for Baptism* (Liturgy Training Publications, 1992). Drawing on scripture, history and contemporary liturgy, the author sees the baptism rite and its participants and its timing and the spatial context of its unfolding.


Oakham, Dennis. *Learning Theology through the Church’s Worship*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2018. 256 pp. This book takes readers to the intersection of theology and liturgy, showing that Christian believe and worship are extricably related and that learning theology apart from worship undermines both.


W. David O. Taylor. *Glimpses of the New Creation*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2019. Taylor argues that the arts form us in worship by bringing us into intentional and intensive participation in the aesthetic aspect of our humanity—that is, our physical, emotional, imaginative, and metaphorical capacities. In so doing they invite the people of God to be conformed to Christ and to participate in the praise of Christ and in the praise of creation, which by the Spirit’s power raises its peculiar voice to the Father in heaven, for the sake of the world that God so loves.
Janet R. Walton. *Art and Worship: A Vital Connection* (Liturgical Press, 1991). An excellent resource to begin studying connections between art and worship—looking to the past, listening to the church and listening to artists in addition to thinking about the future with principles for partnership between the artist and the church.

*Worship and Music*


Wright, N. T. *The Case for the Psalms.* (HarperOne, 2016 reprint [from 2013]).