

**St. Mary's Ecumenical Institute
Spring 2021**

Tuesday, 6:00 – 8:00 pm

ES/PT718 Christian Worship – Principles and Practice

Dr. Joseph Donnelly

Course Description

This course serves as an introduction to the history, practices, and theology of Christian worship with particular attention to developments in North American and ecumenical contexts. Attention will focus on the celebration of Baptism, Communion, Proclamation, Daily Prayer and Services of the Word, along with rituals of Marriage, Death and Burial, and Healing–Anointing. Contemporary matters such as Language, African- American traditions, Feminist and Womanist traditions, Art & Aesthetics along with Architecture and Space will be explored in the hope that students will deepen their understanding of the components that shape and form public worship.

Course Requirements

- **Reading:** Students should expect weekly reading usually of no more than 70 pages and should prepare to discuss readings during scheduled class meetings.

- **Writing:**
 - A paper (4-5 pages) analyzing the elements of worship in a congregational setting /what is normative in your tradition/how is your tradition similar and dissimilar than that of other Christian communities (20%)

 - Five single-page participant-observer reflections based on class lecture and discussion (5%)

 - Either one research paper (8-10 pages) or a video presentation as a final project (decided in consultation with the professor prior to choosing topic), due at the conclusion of the semester (25%)

 - A review (2-3 page) of one of the following films which explore a significant aspect of worship: *The Hardest Job: Leading A Parish to Live*, or *On the Use of the Means of Grace*, or *This is The Night* (10 %)

- **Other:** Each student will be expected to select one of the supplemental readings for an in-class presentation of 10-15 minutes; they will be expected to summarize the major ideas and patterns of thought in the assigned reading and lead the class in discussion (25%)

Active participation in class (15 %)

Required Texts:

1. Ruth C. Duck. *Worship for the Whole People of God. Vital Worship for the 21st Century*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2013. 271 pgs. ISBN 978-0-664-23427-0.

2. James F. White. *A Brief History of Christian Worship*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1993. 180 pgs. ISBN 0-687-03414-0.

3. Supplemental readings will be required throughout the semester and will be announced on the first evening of class.