

## United Methodist Worship: Form and Freedom

Instructor: Heather Murray Elkins  
Spring Heights

### Course Description

This course is designed to enable those in the United Methodist tradition to evaluate, plan, and lead worship with theological integrity and creativity. The tradition of Methodist worship is one of form and freedom, involving texts and free prayer, ordained elders and lay preaching, congregational song, and worship arts. The goal is to instill the rhythms of presiding and planning for the varieties of United Methodist Worship in the bodies, hearts and minds of course participants.

**Type and Frequency of Class Meetings** This course will consist of practicum work, lectures/presentations, and discussion. Each day will include prayer work involving class members.

Email: [helkins@drew.edu](mailto:helkins@drew.edu)

### Course Requirements

1 <sup>st</sup> reflection paper	Satisfactory/Not Yet
2 essays	20% each (40)
Embodiment/Prayer Work	30%
Teaching Project	30%

### Course Grading Scheme

- A Excellent Work
- B Good Work
- C Satisfactory Work
- D Below Average Work
- F Unsatisfactory Work

### Attendance Principle and Policy

Attendance is required for all sessions during the two intensive sessions.

## Goals

Specifically, the course is designed so that you will:

1. *Gain theological and historical perspectives on the nature of United Methodist worship.*
2. *Demonstrate practical knowledge and experience in: a) presiding/leading in public worship and b) collaborative worship planning.*
3. *Interpret the pastoral rites of Christian marriage, and funerals and be able to lead such services well.*
4. *Learn how to orient worship in relationship to the Christian Year, the daily office and lectionaries.*
5. *Come to a clearer appreciation and knowledge of the ethical and liturgical relationships of sacraments and discipleship*
6. *Gain an understanding of the varieties of worship assemblies and the forms of worship which are appropriate to those contexts.*
7. *Learn about current UM resources for leading worship.*

## Required Texts:

- Robin Knowles Wallace: ***The Christian Year: A Guide for Worship and Preaching***
- Laurence Stookey: ***Let the Whole Church Say Amen!***
- Hoyt Hickman: ***Worshipping with United Methodists: A Guide for Pastors and Church Leaders***
- Swee Hong Lim & Lester Ruth, ***Lovin' On Jesus: A Concise History of Contemporary Worship***
- Gayle Felton: ***This Holy Mystery\****
- Gayle Felton: ***By Water and the Spirit\****
  
- UM Hymnal\*
- Book of Worship\*

## Requirements-Expectations :

Preparation for class:

- You are expected to read *Worshipping with United Methodists*, and *By Water and the Spirit* prior to first session. You are expected to read *The Christian Year* and *This Holy Mystery* prior to second session. *Let the People Say Amen* and *Lovin' On Jesus* will be used throughout the course.
- Embodiment Work: Each person will preside/lead with feedback.
- Write 2 essays during the course.
- Write one reflection paper:  
Seeing with New Eyes 4-5 pages Due: First day of class.

Evaluation: Satisfactory/Not Yet



**Purpose:** To help you to see the familiar patterns of worship where you are as a stranger would experience them. Take note of elements and dynamics of the setting, shape, language (verbal and non-verbal), gestures, and actions of worship from a critical distance.

**Assignment:**

- 1) What do you see as you approach the worship site from a distance? Give a physical description and its setting.
- 2) What happens (or doesn't happen) as you enter the building? Are you greeted, given directions?
- 3) What do the architecture and arrangement of the worship space, including the symbols present, convey about God, earth, and people. Be sure to consider children and those who may have accessibility needs. (hearing, sight, mobility)
- 4) What the movements, actions and gestures that might seem strange if you'd never been in a Christian worship service?
- 5) Is there a particular space or spaces in this structure that are considered more "holy" than other places? Describe them and how they function.

- 2nd essay: "My Christian Initiation". Footnote key insights drawn from the assigned readings in the essay and your own experience. Due 2 weeks after first session.
- 3rd essay: "Serving Christ's Table" Footnote key insights drawn from the assigned readings and the kind of communion service you would like to lead/experience. Due 1 week after second session.
- Teaching Project: Final paper Due 3 weeks after second session.
- Assist in Morning and Evening Prayer
- Follow the lectionary readings each day