

# United Methodist Worship: Form and Freedom

Instructor: Heather Murray Elkins  
Spring Heights  
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## Course Description

The tradition of United Methodist worship is one of form and freedom shaped by the ministry of the baptized and the ministry of those called to Word, sacrament, and order. Discipleship, spirituality, evangelism and scriptural holiness are formed in worship. This course is designed to enable COS members to lead their community in worship with theological integrity, pastoral sensitivity and creativity. The class will study and demonstrate skill in leading worship in diverse settings, teaching congregational prayer, presiding at the sacraments, conducting weddings and funerals. Mutuality of ministry is the core value of this work.

**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.

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## 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 in a variety of settings 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, daily prayer and scriptural formation.*
5. *Come to a clearer appreciation and knowledge of the 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.*

## Course Requirements

1 <sup>st</sup> reflection paper	Satisfactory/Not
2 essays	25% each (50 % total)
Worship Work	15%
Teaching Project	35%

### 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.

### Required Texts:

- UM Hymnal\*
- Book of Worship\*
- 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*
- **A Theology of the Sacraments Interpreted by John and Charles Wesley**, edited by ST Kimbrough, Jr. and Dean B. McIntyre

### Required Online Sources:

Gayle Felton, *By Water and the Spirit*

<https://www.umcdiscipleship.org/resources/by-water-and-the-spirit-full-text>

Gayle Felton, *This Holy Mystery* <https://www.umcdiscipleship.org/resources/this-holy-mystery-a-united-methodist-understanding-of-holy-communion>

Taylor W. Burton-Edwards, *Living Into the Mystery*

- <https://bookstore.upperroom.org/Products/DRPDF9/living-into-the-mystery.aspx> )

### Additional Suggested Resources:

Updated baptismal vows: <https://www.umcdiscipleship.org/resources/a-collection-of-the-services-of-the-baptismal-covenant-revised-2008>.

Membership Vows in The United Methodist

Church <https://www.umcdiscipleship.org/resources/our-membership-vows-in-the-united-methodist-church>

The Meaning of Baptism in The United Methodist

Church: <https://www.umcdiscipleship.org/resources/the-meaning-of-baptism-in-the-united-methodist-church>

- The Meaning of Holy Communion in The United Methodist

Church: <https://www.umcdiscipleship.org/resources/the-meaning-of-holy-communion>

## Requirements-Expectations :

Preparation for class:

- You are expected to read *Worshipping with United Methodists*, and *By Water and the Spirit* **before** the first session. You are expected to read *Living into the Mystery* and *This Holy Mystery* **before** the second session. *The Christian Year* and *Let the People Say Amen*, and *A Theology of the Sacraments Interpreted by John and Charles Wesley* will be used **throughout** both sessions of the course.
- Worship/Work: Each person will participate with one of two COS worship services and assist in daily prayer.
- Read the lectionary readings for Lent before the start of the first session and review those readings during the two sessions.
- You will be asked to share a story about a baptism as part of our opening work in the class. The story can be about your baptism, or another's that you were present for or participated in. The story should be no longer than 5 minutes.

In Class:

Handouts will be given throughout the class and are to be used in discussions.

Review of readings and worship planning will be done in small groups.

Participation in designing and leading one of the two COS worship services.

Written work Required:

- Write one reflection paper in preparation for first class: Seeing with New Eyes
- Write 1 essay on Christian Initiation.
- Write 1 essay on Serving Christ's Table.
- Develop a Teaching Project for your community as the final assignment.

## First Assignment

### Seeing with New Eyes

**Due: First day of class.**

*Evaluation: Satisfactory/Not Yet*

Length: 4 pages

Format: Printed, double-spaced

Style: COS guidelines.

Purpose: To help you to see the familiar patterns of worship where you are serving through the eyes of a stranger or someone unchurched. Take note of physical dynamics of the setting, the language (verbal and non-verbal), gestures, and actions of worship.

Assignment:

- 1) What do you see as you approach the worship site from a distance? Give a physical description of its setting.
- 2) What happens (or doesn't happen) as you enter the building? How are you greeted, given directions, made welcome?
- 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.