Reformed Theological Seminary
Jackson Campus

DM823: Theology of Worship
Mark E. Ross, Ph.D.
Visiting Professor

Monday – Friday, 9:00 am – 3:55 pm
January 14-18, 2013

CONTACT INFORMATION

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CATALOG DESCRIPTION
In this course, we will discuss the history and principles of public worship in Scripture, giving particular attention to the role of Scripture in regulating worship, the nature of God-centered and Christ-centered worship, and the importance of edification and communication. We shall also consider issues concerning worship leadership, “parts” of worship, the tone of worship, the place of congregational responses, confessions, music, dance, drama, and choirs. The course will include analysis and evaluation of the controversy concerning the use of contemporary culture, especially music, in worship. 3 hours

COURSE OVERVIEW
The main question before us in this week will be: “What has God revealed to us about how he should be worshiped?” To answer this question we will survey what the Bible has to say about the worship of God. Allen P. Ross, Recalling the Hope of Glory, will be a guide to help us traverse the whole of the Biblical canon. We will then turn our attention to how major figures and movements in the church have responded to the Biblical teaching in the ordering of public worship for their own time. The chapters in Bard Thompson, Liturgies of the Western Church, will be the basic plan for this portion of the week. Our goal is to find that way of worship which is pleasing to God.

REQUIRED READING
4. Old, Hughes Oliphant. *The Patristic Roots of Reformed Worship*. American edition (Worship Press, 2004). Note: this book can only be obtained from the publisher. Contact Craig Bulkeley at Worshippress.net, or mail a check for $35.00 with your request to P. O. Box 627, Black Mountain, NC 28711. Identify yourself as a member of the class at RTS to get free mailing.


**ASSIGNMENTS**

1. **Two short papers for classroom presentation.** Each of these papers will be worth 10 points of your final grade. Be prepared to present these papers to the class during the week. These papers are due in hard copy at the beginning of class on the first day. The papers are designed to be incorporated into the term paper. They should be about 5 pages in length, not more. They are intended to open our classroom discussion of the topics. Students should contact the professor as soon as possible for an assigned topic for each of these papers. Topics will be assigned “first come, first served.”

   a. The first paper will be a critical response to one of the first nine parts in Allen P. Ross, *Recalling the Hope of Glory*, along with part 10 which summarizes the principles of worship which the author derives from the Scriptures. The paper should summarize the material in that part of the book, and evaluate it in the light of the Scriptures, consulting commentaries and other resources for assistance.

   b. The second paper will be on one of the major figures (e.g. Calvin) or movements (e.g. Puritanism) treated in the assigned readings. The chapters in Bard Thompson’s *Liturgies of the Western Church* will be used as the basic plan for covering the history of worship. Papers will be assigned for one of these chapters, with the expectation that parallel reading from the other assigned books will be incorporated into the paper. The paper should summarize the teaching on worship found in that figure or movement, and evaluate it in the light of the Scriptures.

2. **A Term Paper.** This paper is to develop and present a theology of worship in about 15 pages, along with an appendix of about 5 pages. The theology portion of the paper should be developed from the Scriptures and in dialogue with the assigned readings and additional research. Some additional research beyond the assigned readings should be included, but extensive research is not a requirement since the reading assignments for the class are substantial. The paper should be exegetically grounded, as well as historically and theologically informed. Scripture references should be given inline, not in footnotes. Quotations and references to the readings and other sources should be done by footnotes. The appendix is to include an order of service for your local church and an explanation of it suitable for a new member who has little or no background in Christian worship of any sort. It too should include support from the Scriptures but the use of quotations from other sources should be minimal. Each paper should provide an annotated bibliography, including a brief paragraph on the each of the sources cited (including all the assigned readings) that would provide a reader with a snapshot of the content and value of the source. The due date for the term paper is April 30, 2013.