Catalog Description
An examination of the Reformed understanding of the nature and purpose of Christian worship. This examination will include a study of the history of worship in Scripture and in the church with a focus on the history of worship in the Reformed churches. Topics include the regulative principle, the place of the Word and Sacraments, catechizing, prayer, music, and family worship.
The purpose of this course is to provide the student with an understanding of the importance of God-centered worship.

Course Overview
Lectures. This course will begin with an overview of worship, its nature, role, elements and implications in the context of the Old and New Testaments. We will consider the significance of worship from the Garden of Eden to the New Jerusalem. This survey of the history of redemption will trace the development of worship at each stage of that history, noting in particular the relationship between the progressive nature of redemptive revelation and the nature and understanding of the worship of God appropriate to each stage of its unfolding. Consideration will then be given to the background, history and theology of worship in the Reformation and post-Reformation Church.

Workshops. Within this context the class time will be punctuated by a series of “hands-on” workshops in which class members will participate and share, examining and discussing how biblical thinking shapes and informs the worship of the church in all aspects of worship, individual, family, and corporate.

Required Reading:
The following works should be considered required reading:

Robert Bruce, *The Mystery of the Lord’s Supper*, Christian Focus Publications
Samuel Miller: *Thoughts on Public Prayer* (1849, reprinted 1985), Sprinkle
D.W.H. Thomas, & J.L. Duncan (eds):
Assignments

1. **Response Papers.** The following papers should be written—maximum length two pages single spacing, responding to the following questions, and written specifically with another pastor in view. These must be written prior to the class and brought to the class for discussion.

**Paper 1:** Collect worship bulletins (or print out orders of service if no bulletin is used) from your church for the following:
- Four worship services (including one each with the Lord’s Supper and Baptism).
- Two evening worship services if your congregation gathers on Sunday evening
- Two funeral or memorial services

In each category write a short description of the theology expressed by the order of service, rationale for it, appreciation of it (or otherwise), and developments you are (or would like to be) considering.

**Paper 2:** In the light of points made by Samuel Miller, assess public prayer in your own ministry, and in other contemporary ministry in different contexts.

**Paper 3:** Consider and assess the different style of approach in the two books for families by Ferguson and Johnson, and in particular assess the value or otherwise of catechisms.

**Paper 4:** Choose one chapter from *Give Praise to God* that you find to be particularly influential on your thinking (whether positively, negatively, or both) explaining why it has had this impact on you and what its practical implications might be for your ministry.

**Paper 5:** Write a brief letter to, or tract for your congregation entitled: *What Happens at the Lord’s Table?*

2. **Term Paper.** This paper is to apply what has been learned from the assigned readings, the lectures, and class discussions of this course to the local situation in which the student serves. Some description of the ministry situation in which you serve should be included. The paper should develop a biblical philosophy of worship fine-tuned by way of application and implications to your specific local context. In particular this should reflect on three questions:
   1. Where are we now in our congregation relation to the topic (e.g. corporate worship, or family worship, the Lord’s Supper etc.)?
   2. In what ways, do we need to develop, grow, and if need be reform in this/these areas?
   3. What, if any are the obstacles to, and means of development involved in this?

The paper should be grounded in a biblical theology of worship, and informed by a sensitivity to the lessons of history and ecclesiology. The paper should be between fifteen and twenty pages in length, including footnotes or endnotes. Note that the length is itself part of the exercise. The final date for submission is May 10, 2012.