All precourse assignments should be emailed to the Course of Study office by April 20, 2015.

Course Description and Outcomes
This course examines worship within The United Methodist Church including liturgy, sacraments, and special services. Attention will be given to the pastor’s role as leader in worship.

Students will be able to:
1. Articulate a theology of worship consistent with the Wesleyan tradition, including reflection on the theology and rhythm of the Christian year.
2. Articulate a Wesleyan theology of the sacraments and be competent in their administration.
3. Interpret theologically the rites of Christian marriage, and of Death and Resurrection, and be able to lead such services well.
4. Construct a worship service, and reflect theologically on the use of hymns, media, contemporary music, and lay leadership.

Required Textbooks
- This Holy Mystery: A United Methodist Understanding of Holy Communion (available at gbod.org/worship)
- By Water and the Spirit: A United Methodist Understanding of Baptism (available at gbod.org/worship)

Precourse Assignments
1. This Holy Mystery: Write a 2-3 page pastoral letter to your congregation explaining a move toward the practice of weekly celebration of Eucharist. Include in your letter the theological basis for this move; the place of Eucharist in worship throughout the year;
and the various meanings of the sacrament. Try to anticipate any concerns of the congregation and address those concerns in your letter as well.

2. **By Water and the Spirit:** In the United Methodist Church, we often ask members of our congregation to ‘remember your baptism, and be grateful.’ Because we baptize infants, many may not have a concrete memory of their baptism. Write a 2-3 page pastoral letter to an infant member of your congregation to be given to them on the day of their baptism (and perhaps imagine them reading that letter on the day they are confirmed in the faith). In your letter, ‘remember’ their baptism for them – explaining the meaning of the sacrament for the individual and for the gathered Body of Christ.

3. **Engaging With God:** Provide a written paper of 5-6 pages that reflects on these particular passages from Peterson’s book.
   
   a. Page 36 - Peterson makes a distinction between the secular understanding of sacrifice ‘*renouncing something valuable so that something even more valuable may be obtained*’ and the ancient understanding of ‘*setting something apart from common usage for the benefit of the gods.*’ How has this distinction informed or challenged your understanding of worship as sacrifice?
   
   b. Page 158 - *Luke-Acts as a whole, therefore, constitutes a powerful encouragement and prophetic call to the church to be a church of prayer; not just to pray for its own perseverance as the people of God under pressure in this age, and for the salvation at the end…but for continued faithfulness in witness to the gospel now, and for fresh in breakings of God’s grace and power now, such as to point to the mercy, glory and power of the ascending Lord until he comes.* Would you categorize your church as a ‘church of prayer’ – how is this evident in your worship services. What types of prayer are practiced in your specific context? Is there evidence of prayer beyond the service of worship itself?
   
   c. Page 160 - *Formality and informality are not theological categories.* Do you agree or disagree with this statement? When might formality be conducive to worship? In what circumstances might informality be more advantageous? Think carefully about how you define these two terms in the context of your own worship style.
   
   d. Page 197 - *If the balance of New Testament teaching is to be preserved, however, there should be some space for the informal contributions of members.* How can this be accomplished creatively in the context of worship? What are the dangers of doing this, and what might be some correctives to these real (or perceived) dangers?
   
   e. Page 188 - *As the century draws to a close, there is generally more interest in congregational life and ministry but a dangerous tendency towards introversion in many churches.*
What does Peterson mean by introversion? How might introversion be evidenced in a worship service? Are there any practices in our worship that are particularly prone to introversion?

f. Epilogue: Read carefully the description of the worship described here. Thinking theologically rather than stylistically, be ready to compare and contrast your current worship setting to this church. What are the strengths of the service Peterson describes? What might be some growing edges for the worship life of this congregation?

4. Worship Journal (Rienstra and Cherry texts)
   Please see the attached guidelines and writing prompts for the Worship Journal beginning on page 5 and continuing through page 9 of this precourse assignment sheet.

Guidelines for Written Assignments
   • All papers should be typed, double-spaced, on 8 ½” by 11” paper, unless the instructor has asked for a different format specifically within the precourse work. Font should be Times New Roman or something similar and no larger than size 12. Margins are to be 1” on all four sides of each page.
   • All papers must include a page number and the last name of the student in either the header or footer of every page.
   • You should note the question you are answering at the beginning of each new section of materials.
   • All papers should provide citations for all quoted material. You may use MLA, Turabain, APA or Chicago Style.
   • Punctuation should be consistent; clarity of meaning is the primary purpose of punctuation. Edit and retype material as needed and check spelling in a standard dictionary.
   • All papers should attempt to eliminate discriminatory language—for example: racism, ageism, sexism, classism, and prejudicial usage concerning handicapping conditions.

Inclusive Language Covenant
   The faculty of Emory Course of Study School has adopted a covenant statement encouraging inclusiveness in the use of language, as follows:

   The Inclusive Language Covenant is designed to create a linguistic environment in which all students, staff, and faculty can grow in understanding and appreciating the rich diversity of God’s people. The COS faculty commits itself—through continued discussion, reflection, and exploration—to using language in such a way that we respond to the fullness of God’s presence among us as much by our choice of words as by our care for one another. Recognizing that our experience with inclusive language is an integral part of theological formation, we invite students and others to share as partners with us in this learning process.

   We understand “covenant” more in terms of its biblical and theological meaning than in a legal or contractual context. Covenant signifies the common commitment of a community of faith in response to God’s revelation and in partnership with one another. The values implied in the covenant have morally persuaded us to try to generate patterns of speech and behavior that bond the members of the community in mutual respect. We expect all members of the community to address issues of diversity constructively. The entire Inclusive Language Covenant can be found on the COS website, and you are encouraged to read the whole covenant.
**Directions to Email Precourse Assignments**

Please read all the directions below before emailing your assignments to the COS Office, any emails received that do not follow the directions below will not be accepted. You will receive an email confirmation of receipt and if your email is not submitted correctly an email indicating you will need to resend your assignments.

1. Email only michelle.levan@emory.edu your precourse assignments, do not email assignments to the instructors. You are encouraged to email the instructors questions about the assignments.

2. Email must be received no later than 11:59pm on the deadline of April 20, 2015.
   a. Please note that the cut off time is EASTERN STANDARD TIME zone, so email your assignments accordingly.
   b. Any precourse work received after April 20th at 11:59pm will be subject to a late penalty.
      • Precourse work received between April 21st – April 26th is 1 letter grade deduction.
      • Precourse work received between April 27th – May 1st is 2 letter grade deductions.
      • You will be drop from any course for which precourse work has not been received by check-in on May 1st.

3. The course number and the phrase “precourse work” should be the subject of your email: Example - Precourse Work 223
   a. You will need to send a separate email for each course you are registered to attend.

4. Precourse work must be sent as an attached document and not in the body of the email.
   a. Any version of Microsoft Word will be accepted; PDF, Word Perfect, and Mac-Pages documents will not be accepted. If you are using another type of word processing program please convert your document to a version of Microsoft Word before sending.
   b. All assignments for each course must be in one document, multiple documents are not acceptable. You should send only one attachment with all course assignments; emails sent with multiple documents will not be accepted.

5. Your FULL name, phone number and email, should all be clearly included at the beginning of your email. See Example

6. Plagiarism Policy and Plagiarism Defined
   The plagiarism Policy and Defined paragraphs below must be included in the body of your email (both are below), not within your precourse work. The inclusion of the policy and definition in the body of the email, verifies that you agree to it and your email will represent your signature (which is a requirement). If the email does not include the plagiarism policy and definition it will not be accepted. Your email, with the plagiarism policy and definition will be printed and used as the cover sheet for your precourse assignments, because it has the verification of date and time received, and your agreement to the plagiarism policy and definition.

   **Plagiarism Policy** - I have read the plagiarism definition below and verify that this assignment represents my own work, except where credit is given.

   **Plagiarism Defined**: “You plagiarize when, intentionally or not, you use someone else’s words or ideas but fail to credit that person, leading your readers to think that those words are yours. In all fields, you plagiarize when you use a source’s words or ideas without citing that source. In most fields, you plagiarize even when you do credit the source but use its exact words without using quotation marks or block indentation” (201-202). Booth, Wayne C. Booth, Gregory G. Colomb, and Joseph M. Williams. *The Craft of Research, Second Edition*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2003.

7. If you do not follow the procedure your precourse work WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED! You will receive a confirmation of receipt within 24 hours or notice to resubmit following the process.
WORSHIP JOURNAL DESCRIPTION AND WRITING PROMPTS

Your journal will consist of a total of 16 entries as follows:

1. Eight reflections on worship services
   a. There are 12 ‘worship prompts’ taken primarily from the Rienstra text that you are to choose from for most of your reflections.
   b. One of these reflections (hospitality) is required and MUST be from a service other than your own worshiping community. See the guidelines in the prompt marked ‘Hospitality’

2. Eight reflections on Constance Cherry’s The Worship Architect
   a. Choose eight of these series of questions upon which to reflect; be sure to include the Chapter number and title as indicated.

Writing prompts for each section are found below.

Remember that you will be submitting this journal electronically. For each entry in your journal, please copy the bold-faced title above your reflection. For example:

RIENSTRA 2.1 Sunday, November 30, 2014: St. Paul United Methodist Church, Palm Coast, Florida (bulletin attached)
Today I came to worship desperately needing to say to God, ‘help me to find hope during this season of Advent.’…..

Chapter 4: The Gathering
I remember a time when I was in college and I attended a Roman Catholic Church that was near to the campus. I did not know that this was a very formal church, that the service was bi-lingual, and that the expectation was to dress up...

In anticipation of the question, ‘How long do my reflections have to be?’ I will say this: make them as long or as short as they need to be in order to be helpful to you for your own formation and use once this class is over. Obviously I am looking for thoughtful integration of material, but I am not counting words or pages. Some days you will find your reflections to be fairly short, other days more lengthy. Also, because this is informal writing – I will NOT be grading on style, grammar, etc. This is more for your spiritual formation than anything else.

WORSHIP JOURNAL PROMPTS

Part One: Rienstra: Words for Worship – Choose 8 to complete
Note: These do not need to be completed in any specific order. You will choose eight of the following prompts upon which to write.

Please note that each of these prompts requires your particular attention in a service of worship. You should include for each reflection a scanned copy of the worship bulletin along with your reflection, and each reflection MUST be from a different worship service.
Remember that the prompt marked ‘Hospitality’ is required, and is the only one that must be completed in a church other than your own. All other reflections may be from your home church.

Those prompts adapted from the Rienstra text and exercises are so noted so that you might review that material. Example: **RIENSTRA 1.2** is found in chapter one; the second exercise. Again, please include this title on your reflection page.

**HOSPITALITY:** You are to visit a worship service (other than your home church) and reflect as completely as possible on the various elements of hospitality as you best understand this term in the context of worship. Remember to consider both the ‘stuff’ and the ‘spirit.’ What practices of this congregation enhanced the spirit of hospitality? What can you affirm? Were there any practices that ran counter to the spirit of hospitality? What would you change?

**RIENSTRA 1.2/3**
During this worship service, pay particular attention to the four dimensions of worship words (aesthetic, expressive, instructive, memorial). Comment on each element of worship and what type of language prevailed. Considering the entire service, was there a balance, or did one or two types of language dominate? Reflect on those dimensions of worship words that are most comfortable for you, and which are most uncomfortable.

**RIENSTRA 2.1**
What do you wish to say to God in worship today? What do you wish God would say to you today? What did you actually say to God during the course of this service? What did God actually say to you? What was the role of worship leadership in making that experience possible?

**RIENSTRA 2.2**
Make a list of each element in the worship service you attend. Then, decide upon the direction of the dialogue for each one (God to us; us to God; us to each other), remembering that a single element might have multiple directions. Later, consider the balance of this particular service, both in terms of how you perceived the balance and the ‘charted’ balance.

**RIENSTRA 3.1/2**
At what points of this worship service did you experience words that were particularly substantive and real for you? What is it about those words that gave them power or meaning? At what points did you experience words that were mere chatter? Can you reflect on changes that might be made to strengthen the chatter into more meaningful words?

**RIENSTRA 4**
During this worship service, pay particular attention to those things that are repeated from week to week, and especially those things that the congregation knows by memory. Make a list of those things you would like your worshiping community to be able to recite/perform by memory – prayers, scriptures, hymns, etc. As a personal discipline this week, challenge yourself to memorize something and reflect on that experience.
RIENSTRA 5.4
During your worship service, pay attention to those words that might be unfamiliar or confusing to someone attending worship for the first time. Make a list of those words and reflect on whether they should or should not be simplified or replaced. Also, think about words that have been used so often that they have lost the power of their meaning to the community. Reflect on how you might be able to recapture the power of these words.

RIENSTRA 6.1
During your worship service this week, listen for any metaphors for sin/salvation and for the kingdom. Also, make note of how far your worshiping community goes in the use of inclusive language. What are your feelings about the use of inclusive language – how far do you go in this area?

RIENSTRA 7.3
During the worship service you attend, observe whether the congregation is worshiping the Trinity. Are all three persons of the Trinity somewhere named in songs, prayers, liturgical words, sermon? Are the persons of the Trinity related to each other or named separately at different points without reference to the relational nature of God? Which person of the Trinity seems dominant in the worship of this assemble? How might this affect the people’s worship and their Christian life as a whole?

RIENSTRA 8.2
In the worship service you attend, reflect on the instances of remembrance that were present this week. Are the redemptive works of God celebrated? Are there elements of your worship taken from past generations? Did you feel a part of a larger story as you worshiped? Why or why not?

RIENSTRA 9.3
In the worship service you attend, observe and reflect upon any practices that are indigenous to your local congregation. Was there any art or music created by members of the community. What function does indigenous material play in your community of worship?

RIENSTRA 10.2
In the worship service you attend, observe whether the rest of the church (that is, the world church) is ‘present’ in the language of worship. Does anyone pray for the wider church and the rest of the world? Are there any worship elements that come, intentionally welcomed, from other parts of the world? How are you affected as a worshiped by the presence, or lack thereof, of attention the church beyond the congregation itself?

RIENSTRA 11.2
Think about three or four people who attended worship with you today who are going through a difficult period. What in your service of worship today would have spoken to their emotions? How were these feelings affirmed or confronted? How was Jesus present to these people through your worship today?
RIENSTRA 12.3
Think about the way time was allotted in your worship service this week. What received the most time? The least time? Were there elements of worship that received too much temporal attention? Elements that received too little? How does the time spend on various elements of worship speak about their importance to the worshiping community.

Part Two: Constance Cherry The Worship Architect: Choose eight
In her book The Worship Architect, Constance Cherry invites the reader to EXPLORE the topic addressed even prior to reading her material. We will use these questions as the second part of your journal reflections. Please choose eight of these series of questions to reflect upon in your journal.

Chapter 3: Four Rooms for Encountering God
1. Does your worship service typically have large, primary sections? If so, how would you describe them?
2. Does the Bible explicitly teach a detailed worship order to use?

Chapter 4: The Gathering
1. Think about a time when you attended an event (church or otherwise) to which you did not feel welcomed. What caused you to feel that way?
2. Think about a time when you attended an event (church or otherwise) to which you really felt welcomed. What made the difference?
3. How long does it usually take for you feel comfortable in a group of strangers?

Chapter 5: The Word
1. Read Nehemiah 8:1-8; pay attention to those words that indicate that the reading of the law was highly valued.
2. Reflection: How does this correspond to your present experience of the public reading of Scripture?
3. If you could choose only one thing, what would you like to suggest for improvement to the person who reads Scripture at your church?

Chapter 6: The Table of the Lord
1. Describe an experience of Holy Communion that was especially meaningful for you. Use ‘who, what, when, where, how, why’ to help describe its meaning.
2. If you could change one thing about the way Communion is celebrated in your church, what would it be and why? What would it take to make this change?

Chapter 7: Alternative Response to the Word
1. Read Acts 2:1-47; paying particular attention to verses 37-47, list all of the emotions or actions taken by the crowd.
2. Are these emotions/actions reflected in your own worship?

Chapter 8: The Sending
1. Make a list of various types of events (civic events, sporting events, social gatherings, etc.) and note how each typically concludes. Would any of these be a good way to conclude worship? Why or why not?
Chapter 9: Encountering God in Prayer
1. Who stands out in your mind as an effective public pray-er? Why?
2. If you could change one thing about public prayer in your church, what would it be and why? What would be the process for making this change?

Chapter 10: Encountering God in Music
1. For one day, pay attention to all the music you hear – make a list. Then make a list of other types/situations where music is present?
2. How did these examples of music function?
3. How does music function in your worship?

Chapter 12: Encountering God in the Christian Year
1. Make a list of all the personal events you celebrate annually and reflect on the amount of planning that goes into each event.
2. What about your church? What specific annual events are celebrated? What is the effect on the community?

Chapter 13: Principles of Worship Style
1. If a church wanted to change its worship style, on what basis would it be appropriate to do so? Why do you think that worship style is such a contentious issue in the church?

Chapter 14: A More Excellent Way
1. How would you go about making choices for worship elements if style was the last consideration?