



## G212 Worship & the Arts

3 credits. Prerequisites: none.

 Mississauga Campus  Livestream  Video on Demand

January 14-April 17, 2025

Winter Semester

Tuesdays, 6pm-9pm ET

(5pm-8pm SK, switches to 4pm-7pm SK mid-semester)

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*Commenting on the Psalms, Bono (lead singer of Irish rock band, U2) once observed that “The only way we can approach God is, if we’re honest, through metaphor, through symbol. So art becomes essential, not decorative...”<sup>1</sup>*

### **Course Goals**

#### **Course Description**

This course will provide students an introduction to historical and biblical approaches to the arts in worship, along with a framework for cultivating creative expressions in the local church. Students will consider how the arts can serve the Church in community and spiritual formation while revitalizing the mission of the Church.

#### **Relationship to MCS-Horizon’s Missions**

To prepare leaders for ministry, this course helps students consider how the arts can support Christian formation and communicate the Gospel through creative and culturally relevant engagement.

#### **Core Competencies and Learning Outcomes**



To demonstrate competency in *ministry development* students will

1. Identify major biblical and historical perspectives surrounding the arts in worship and their subsequent adaptations in various church contexts.
  - *Assessment:* Reflection Paper

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<sup>1</sup> John Thompson, (2016, April 26). *When Bono met Eugene Peterson. . . | Think Christian*. Think Christian. Retrieved March 2, 2023, from <https://thinkchristian.net/when-bono-met-eugene-peterson>.

2. Analyze the arts' (musical, visual, architectural, poetic, videographic, etc.) unique advantages and limitations for fostering spiritual formation and practices.
  - *Assessment:* Church Field Report Analysis
3. Create a philosophy of worship that incorporates the arts and resonates with one's own strengths and community expression.
  - *Assessment:* Reflection Paper.
4. Develop pathways to encourage artistic engagement in the local church.
  - *Assessment:* Reading Response, Presentation.

## **Course Work**

### **Required Readings**

Taylor, W. David O. *Glimpses of the New Creation: Worship and the Formative Power of the Arts*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2019. ISBN: 978-0802876096  
<https://thetdl.on.worldcat.org/oclc/1122563896>

\*\*While students have the benefit of accessing many of their textbooks online through the [Digital Theological Library](#), they will not have access to the Digital Theological Library upon graduation. Therefore, we encourage students to purchase select textbooks to build their personal library.

### **Course Assignments and Activities**

#### *1. Church Field Report Analysis – 25%*

Students will analyze a worship service, its engagement of the arts, evaluate it, and integrate class content with what they have experienced. To complete this assignment, students will attend a worship service at a church of their choice (preferably one of the church's main gatherings, e.g., Sunday morning). Students will record what they experienced in their visit by taking into account (but not restricted to):

- the worship space - (building facilities (auditorium), furniture, lighting, visual art (if any))
- media - (video used, if any)
- sound - (instruments used, vocalist(s), volume level)
- the worship experience - (congregational participation)
- preaching - (sermon style & content)
- prayer(s) - (who led and at what part(s) of the service?)
- altar ministry - (if any)
- hospitality - (food/beverage & fellowship time)

In your report and analysis (written or video), respond to the following reflection questions:

- 1) What stood out to you about this congregation's worship?
- 2) What would your assessment be of their arts engagement in worship?

- 3) If you had a chance to sit down with the lead pastor, what would you want to know about this church's approach(es) to art forms and expressions within a worship service?
- 4) If you had a chance to get to know the congregation more and they wanted to consult you on taking some steps towards incorporating more artistic expressions, what would you suggest?
  - Related learning outcome: 2.
  - **Assignment length:**
    - If written, 1250 words, about 4 pages *OR*
    - If a video, 10 minutes + 1 pages of notes in an outline
  - **Due date:** February 14, 2025

## 2. *Reading Response* – 25%

Read the course textbook and write your own response to it. Summarize and critique at least five of your favourite chapters. Explain how you might apply this textbook's material to your own ministry context. State on the title page whether you have read the textbook in its entirety or not. Cite page numbers throughout your response.

- Related learning outcome: 4.
- **Assignment length:** 750 words, 3 pages.
- **Due date:** February 21, 2025

## 3. *Presentation* – 25%

Create or choose two pieces of artwork that would highlight the power of prayer as part of an overall Sunday service (such as International Day of Prayer for the Persecuted Church), or a specific prayer service. In your paper answer the following questions:

- 1) Why did you create/choose these particular pieces of art?
- 2) What do their forms uniquely reveal about the topic?
- 3) In what ways might you utilize them within a service (as part of a sermon, or during congregational singing, in quiet reflection, or while entering the building, etc.)?
- 4) How would these pieces enhance the church's worship and engage the congregation?
- 5) Do these creative pieces reference any particular Scripture, and if so, how do they align one's imagination with the passage?
- 6) Do they highlight a particular current event, or Global Church experience that one's local church can be made aware of?
- 7) In what ways might these artworks be limited in its messaging?
- 8) When and how would they need further explanation or elaboration?

Present your findings to the class and be ready to respond to a few questions from fellow students. If you find it helpful, you can distribute material with a short description of the artwork to participating students.

- Related learning outcome: 4.
- **Assignment length:** approximately 750 words (3 pages), including 5 – 10 minute presentation
- **Due date:** Tentatively March 18 or 25, 2025 (dates will be confirmed in class)

#### 4. *Reflection Paper* – 25%

This paper will summarize your learning experience from the textbook and class material. Reflect on how your perspective has changed (or not) about the integration of arts in the worship service and space. Try and answer the following questions during your writing:

- What has been your experience of art in your local church setting so far in your spiritual journey?
- What art forms have primarily formed your relationship with God and your spiritual disciplines?
- What are three new ideas from this course about artistic expression that have expanded your understanding of worship?
- What theological support would you give about the necessity to communicate, contemplate, and celebrate God's eternal character and actions in human history through various art forms in the Church?

In addition

- Include your own definition of worship, and approaches to congregational engagement within an imagined ministry context.
- End your paper by writing about your own philosophy of worship and the arts (two pages).
- Use a conclusion to summarize your thoughts.
- Include footnotes and a bibliography.
- Related learning outcomes: 1 and 3.
- **Assignment length:** approximately 1250 words, 4 to 5 pages
- **Due date:** April 4, 2025.

#### **Video-on-Demand (VOD) Student Requirements**

As indicated on the course schedule, this class is being offered by VOD. Students taking the course through VOD are required to indicate this during their course registration. While VOD recordings are available for any student who may be absent from class, non-VOD students are expected to attend class live following the class attendance policy.

- **For this course, VOD students have the same assignment due dates as in-class students.**
- For the **Assignment #3 class presentation** VOD students will either join the class via live-stream to make their presentation live on the due date or submit a link to a video recording of their class presentation **three days before class due date.**
- By Saturday at 11:59pm each week, VOD students are required to watch and engage with all lecture content and in-class activities from the previous week's classes.
- By Saturday at 11:59pm each week, VOD students will submit a 2-3 minute video report on Padlet that 1) affirms you have watched the required recording for the last seven days, 2) summarizes one thing you learned that week that will help you reach the course learning outcomes, and 3) explain at least one question you had after watching the class recording.
- **VOD Padlet Report Due Dates:**
  - Week 1 Lecture & Report due by 11:59pm on Sat Jan 18, 2025
  - Week 2 Lecture & Report due by 11:59pm on Sat Jan 25, 2025
  - Week 3 Lecture & Report due by 11:59pm on Sat Feb 1, 2025

- Week 4 Lecture & Report due by 11:59pm on Sat Feb 8, 2025
- Week 5 Lecture & Report due by 11:59pm on Sat Feb 15, 2025
- Week 6 Lecture & Report due by 11:59pm on Sat Feb 22 2025
- Week 7 Lecture & Report due by 11:59pm on Sat Mar 15, 2025
- Week 8 Lecture & Report due by 11:59pm on Sat Mar 22, 2025
- Week 9 Lecture & Report due by 11:59pm on Sat Mar 29, 2025
- Week 10 Lecture & Report due by 11:59pm on Sat April 5, 2025
- Week 11 Lecture & Report due by 11:59pm on \*Fri April 11, 2024

In order to pass the course, VOD students must submit all of their weekly video reports. These submissions are marked pass/fail based on whether or not they demonstrate thoughtful engagement with the lecture content and in-class activities.

**Estimate of Time Investment** (individual time investments may vary)

Classroom time	33hrs	N/A	<b>Assignment Weighting</b>
1. Church Field Report Analysis	11hrs	Feb 14	25%
2. Reading Response	30hrs	Feb 21	25%
3. Presentation	8hrs	TBD, March 18 or 25	25%
4. Reflection Paper	8hrs	April 4	25%
Total =	90 hrs		

All assignments are due at **11:59pm ET time**, unless otherwise indicated.

**Assessment Rubrics**

Assignment rubrics can be found on Populi. Click on the name of the assignment to access each rubric.

**Course Outline**

Jan 14	Course Intro and Syllabus Overview, Worship and the Arts – Definitions, Influences, Historical Viewpoints
Jan 21	Worship Paradigms – Missional, Spiritual Formation, Dynamic Encounter
Jan 28	Worship and Artistic Expressions in the Bible
Feb 4	Worship and the Musical Arts
Feb 11	Worship and the Visual Arts <i>Due Feb 14 – Church Field Report Analysis</i>
Feb 18	Worship and the Architectural Arts <i>Due Feb 21 – Reading Response</i>
Feb 25	—No class: Reading Week—
Mar 4	—No class: Module Week—

Mar 11	Worship and the Poetic Arts Worship and the Narrative Arts
Mar 18	Worship and the Theatre Arts Worship and the Kinetic Arts <i>To be confirmed: due Mar 18 or 25 – Presentation</i>
Mar 25	Worship and Technical Arts
Apr 1	Worship and the Arts in Multi-Ethnic Contexts (Ethnodoxology introduction) <i>Due April 4 – Reflection paper</i>
Apr 8	Course Evaluation Worship and the Arts Engagement in the Local Church

- First submissions of assignments will not be accepted after April 11, 2025.
- Revision week is April 14-17, 2025. Your instructor may also request revisions on some assignments before revision week.
- No resubmission of assignments will be accepted after April 17, 2025.

## **Academic Policies**

### **General Assignment Guidelines**

Please see the [MCS-Horizon](#) Format Guide for assignment submission, grammar, and formatting guidelines.

### **Late Assignments and Extensions**

Students are expected to submit work by the assigned due dates, as part of their development of the Leadership and Administration competency. To submit extension requests, students must submit the *Assignment Extension Request Form* on Populi and *before the due date*. Professors may grant extensions in the case of extenuating circumstances, such as significant illness or a family emergency. Furthermore, no extensions will be granted beyond the final day of a term or semester unless approval is granted by the Associate Academic Dean (MCS) or Assistant Academic Dean (Horizon).

Late submissions will be tracked across each student's program. If a student incurs multiple instances of late submissions, it will result in academic discipline, such as required tutoring, academic probation, failure of the course, or failure to qualify for graduation. Similar to standard human resource employment practices, students will receive warnings and conditions with increasing severity of academic discipline. If one assignment is submitted more than five days late, the student will fail the course.

### **Assignment Completion**

Professors usually will not accept assignments that have not been completed according to the instructions given in the syllabus. If a professor informs a student that a submitted assignment is

incomplete, the student will be given the opportunity to complete and resubmit the assignment quickly. If this is not possible, the assignment will be regarded as submitted late.

### Assignment Revisions

Students can generally submit up to two revisions for each assignment, although a professor may accept more revisions if the professor determines the student is addressing all of the professor's instructions and making significant progress toward achieving competency.

### MCS-Horizon College Assessment of Student Work

The goal of courses is to help students develop their competency, not earn letter grades. Assignments are the means by which instructors evaluate development of competency by assessing learning outcomes as outlined in the syllabus and each assignment rubric. Once a student's assignment has met all competency requirements, the professor will assign a grade for that assignment. Likewise, a final course grade is not calculated until the end of the course. Students pass a course (with a B- or higher) only after they have demonstrated that they have *met or exceeded all competency requirements* for that course and, therefore, only after they have passed all assignments.

MCS-Horizon CBE Scale		Descriptor	Letter Grade	Grade Point	U of S Equivalency
E	Exceeding expectations	Student demonstrated <b>exceptional</b> achievement of the learning outcomes.	A+	4.0	90-100
			A	4.0	85-89
			A-	3.7	80-84
M	Meeting expectations	Student demonstrated <b>good</b> achievement of all learning outcomes.	B+	3.3	77-79
			B	3.0	73-76
			B-	2.7	70-72

If the student does not meet all competency requirements in a course and, therefore, does not pass all the assignments in a course, the course will not be sufficient to fulfill their program requirements at MCS-Horizon. Nevertheless, for transferability purposes, the student will receive a letter grade of C+ or below according to the scale below.

BTM	Beginning to meet expectations	Student was <b>beginning to meet</b> one or more learning outcomes.	C+	2.3	67-69
			C	2.0	63-66
			C-	1.7	60-62
NYM	Not yet meeting expectations	Student made <b>insufficient progress</b> toward meeting learning outcomes.	D+	1.3	57-59
			D	1.0	53-56
			D-	0.7	50-52
			F	0.0	0-49

### Academic Integrity

Students learn best when practicing academic integrity. A lack of integrity is displayed in acts such as deception, abuse of confidentiality, cheating, inappropriate collaboration, or plagiarism. Plagiarism occurs when a student presents the words or ideas of another person or an artificial

intelligence (AI) tool in such a way as to give others the impression that it is their own words or ideas. In academic writing, there should be no doubt which words or ideas are the student's and which are drawn from other sources or AI. Students are expected to submit their own original work and give due recognition to sources from which all substantial phrases, sentences or even ideas are drawn. Note also that you may not submit work done in one course to satisfy the requirements of another course (unless both instructors agree beforehand to accept such work). See [here](#) for examples of plagiarism and further guidelines in the Student Handbook.

### **Accessible Learning Services Information**

MCS-Horizon aims to provide an accessible learning environment for all our students. If you would benefit from learning accommodations due to temporary or ongoing physical or mental health conditions or learning disabilities, please contact us as soon as possible to schedule a conversation. In all cases we ask that you provide current documentation of the disability or condition you wish to disclose. MCS-Horizon takes appropriate care to ensure confidentiality about any such disclosures. For more information, contact Wendy Holmes, MCS's Director of Academic Success ([wendy.holmes@mcs.edu](mailto:wendy.holmes@mcs.edu)), or Richelle Bekkattla, Horizon's Library Technician and Academic Accommodations Coordinator ([library@horizon.edu](mailto:library@horizon.edu)).

### **Class Attendance (On Campus or Livestreaming)**

Students should attend all classes in order to facilitate competency development. Students are expected to be present through the delivery method that they registered for, either on campus or through livestreaming with their camera on. A student must be present for the full duration of a class period in order to be registered as present for the class. In the case of illness or other unforeseen circumstances, students may miss the equivalent of six hours of class (e.g., one day of a module course or two three-hours classes) without academic penalty. Students who are absent for more than this will automatically fail the course. Students wishing to be exempted from this policy due to extenuating circumstances may make an academic appeal, where they will need to document and verify those circumstances. Students who miss a class are responsible to get missed notes or handouts from another student, rather than from the professor.

### **Livestreaming Etiquette**

Students taking the course through livestreaming are required to indicate this during their course registration. While livestreaming access is available for on-campus students who are unable to attend class due to illness, on-campus students are expected to attend class in person following the class attendance policy.

If attending class online via livestream, in order to be marked present for class, you must keep your camera on and stay present and attentive throughout the class session, extending the gift of engagement. Access your class with a computer (preferably) or tablet, not a cell phone. Arrive to class on time, and dress as you would if you were attending class on campus. Join the class from a quiet space with minimal background noise and mute your microphone until you wish to speak to the class.

### **Use of Technology**



MCS-Horizon encourages the use of electronic devices in the classroom to enhance learning. Careful consideration must be given to privacy issues, copyrighted materials, and the general care and concern for others. Please respect the following classroom policies:

- Please use online access for course learning only. This is a matter of respect for the instructor's teaching, your own learning, and fellow students who may be distracted by other uses.
- Students should secure permission from the instructor to record any teaching material. This includes PowerPoint slides, white board illustrations, notes, and any form of audio or video.
- Student feedback is a valuable input for course improvements. Please resolve any classroom grievance about the instructor or course with the instructor personally, through the grievance procedures, or the Populi-based course evaluations. It is inappropriate to air classroom grievances on a social media platform.
- When instructors use recording mechanisms in the classroom, recorded materials will be used for the sole purpose of instruction and cannot be released to any social media outlet without the written consent of the students whose images have been recorded.
- In general, it is not acceptable to share photographs or videos of students in the classroom setting without permission from those whose images appear in such media.

## **Bibliography**

- Begbie, Jeremy, Daniel Train, and W. David O. Taylor. *The Art of New Creation Trajectories in Theology and the Arts*. Westmont: InterVarsity Press, 2022.
- Begbie, Jeremy, and Steven R. Guthrie. *Resonant Witness: Conversations between Music and Theology*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: W.B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 2011.
- Fujimura, Makoto. *Art and Faith: A Theology of Making*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2020.
- Hawn, C. Michael. *One Bread, One Body: Exploring Cultural Diversity in Worship*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2003.
- Ingalls, Monique Marie, and Amos Yong, eds. *The Spirit of Praise: Music and Worship in Global Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity*. University Park, Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2015.
- Krabill, James R., Frank Fortunato, Robin P. Harris, and Brian Schrag. *Worship and Mission for the Global Church: An Ethnodoxology Handbook*. Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 2013.
- Taylor, W David O. *Glimpses of the New Creation: Worship and the Formative Power of the Arts*. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2019.
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*Worship*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2023.

Packiam, Glenn. *Worship and the World to Come Exploring Christian Hope in Contemporary Worship*. Westmont: InterVarsity Press, 2020.