



## MU1525-F6 -- Fall 2007

### Ecumenical Hymnody

Luther Seminary course

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A brief survey of hymnody with attention to the traditions of hymnody from the psalms, to the most contemporary songs of praise. Attention is paid to the use of hymns in the worship service, as well as the lives and work of several foundational hymn writers or epochs, e.g., Ambrose, Luther, the psalm tradition of Geneva, Wesley, black and white spiritual traditions, contemporary hymn explosion. Students write short papers on one hymn a week, using the set of questions below, and a final paper on one topic. There will be a lab component in which the music of the hymns will be sung.

#### COURSE OBJECTIVES

Students will learn about

- the major traditions of Christian hymnody
- the characteristics of each major movement in Christian hymnody
- how to choose appropriate hymns for various services
- how to find the information about the hymns they are using

#### COURSE FORMAT

**This course is offered on campus with an online component.**

In order to get the class started right, EVERYONE must have begun the work in the first week of the course. Since there are only six weeks in the course, if you are not ready to discuss course material in the first week, you will already have missed an important segment of the class. For all students, this means reading the materials and being ready for meaningful discussion at the first meeting of the class.

#### When questions arise.

Please consult this syllabus. If the question persists, please ask.

- Contact a Luther SOS agent for *general* seminary and course navigation questions. If they cannot answer your question, they will help direct you to someone who can.
- Contact Professor Grindal with any course specific questions.
- Ask questions early. In a six-week course one doesn't have the luxury of "waiting to see if."

#### TEXTS

##### Required:

**Any recent mainline denominational hymnal** (1995-present)  
William Reynolds, **A Survey of Christian Hymnody**

##### Optional:

**The Hymnal Companion to the Lutheran Book of Worship**

good resource on reserve in the library and available in the LS bookstore.

**Companions to hymnals and hymn traditions**

Many other hymnal companions can be found in the library or on the web.

**Hymnuts** <http://hymnuts.luthersem.edu/hymnal.htm>

Students can also access much of the necessary material on my Hymnuts website and other web sources

**Other resources:**

[Era Scenarios](#) to help as you visualize and consider each week's materials

[Hymnody Group Blog](#) for submitting your "Hymn of the Week" materials

[Model set of answers](#) to help guide your work

[MyLutherNet](#) > Course Documents > for additional resources and links from instructor

**ASSIGNMENTS:** (full instructions provided week-by-week in MyLutherNet)

**1) Hymn of the Week and online posting**

*This exercise will help you understand how a hymn from the period being discussed each week represents the tradition in which it appears--the theory being that one hymn will reveal much about the others in the same tradition.*

The organizing idea behind the course is that every new spiritual movement needs its own song, and that hymnody emerges from the previous tradition with some difficulty, and often has a difficult relationship with the past which it usually attacks, critiques, or ignores while it does its own thing. This means essentially that every age has to deal with contemporary hymnody, which traditionalists usually dislike, but which the next generation after the conflict will take into its next hymnal and make the new movement a part of the tradition.

a) **GATHER Basic Information** on the hymn you choose to study each week

**REPORT your findings via a course blog each WEDNESDAY**

Students will answer a standard set of questions about the hymn in their blog entry each week.

b) **POST INITIAL thoughts on the material** (inside MyLutherNet)

**by 9:00 a.m. each Thursday** (before class)

**THIS IS A REQUIRED ACTIVITY**

ONLINE DISCUSSION is optional (*The BONUS is your own edification/learning/instruction*)

**2) Movie/Book Review**

Write a brief review of a movie or a novel

either the story of a hymnwriter or one in which a hymn or a hymnwriter is central.

*purchase or borrow from a library—many titles available in our own Luther Seminary Library*

*Utilize the "ASK a Librarian" link on the course navigation tools.*

Review should include: How the hymn is used and what it demonstrates about how hymnody works in the lives of the people.

**POST your 1-3 paragraph review** in the course discussion forum area provided **any time during the 6-week period but no later than Monday October 16**

**3) Singing/Teaching the Hymns**

Because this is a hymnody course, singing the hymns is a natural part of our syllabus.

Hopefully, you will all be inspired to see the hymns as teaching resources or sermon illustrations.

As theologians, we will be looking at the texts as theological interpretations of scripture

As biblical scholars, we will understand hymnody as midrash

As preachers we will understand what it is preaching

**ALWAYS bring your hymnal to class** as we will be singing the hymns each time we meet.

**FINAL PAPER** 5-10 pages

The final paper will examine one hymn in one of the Christian traditions we have discussed. Use the same 13 questions to begin developing your research, but be much more expansive in this paper, elaborating on these points. For example, don't simply say the author is Fanny Crosby, tell something about her, her life and work, and place in American hymnody. Then look for the first English version of your chosen hymn and compare it to later versions, including the most recent version you can find printed in a hymnal. Note what has been changed, revised or edited in the text, which stanzas have been dropped, etc. Why do you think the editors of the hymnal made those changes? Do you think this is a faithful editing?

Final paper should be sent to the instructor via email.

## **PARTICIPATION**

Participation in the course means that you have read the textbook, done your assignments; that you post your materials in full and on time, and that you respond thoughtfully in class, and that you are able to discuss how your hymn fits into the movement from which it emerged.

## **SCHEDULE**

### **WEEK 1**

Reading: Reynolds, Introduction-ix—Chapter I pp. 1-16  
Intro hymn forms, conventions, Psalms, Canticles/Ambrose/Liturgical Latin early, medieval

### **WEEK 2**

Reading: Reynolds, Chapter II and III—pp. 17-47  
Hymns of the Reformation: Indigenization  
Luther and Calvin

### **WEEK 3**

Reading: Reynolds, Chapter IV—pp. 49-72  
Methodist/English/American  
Wesley, Montgomery, Lowell Mason

### **WEEK 4 (updated)**

Reading: Reynolds, Chapter VI—91-112  
Evangelical revivals  
Black spirituals, Gospel

### **WEEK 5 (updated)**

Reading: Reynolds, Chapter V—pp. 73-92  
Ecumenical hymnody  
beginning of hymnals that use materials from the ecumenical church  
The first ecumenical hymnal: *Hymns Ancient and Modern (HAM)*

### **WEEK 6**

Reading: Reynolds, Chapter VII—pp. 113-148.  
Contemporary worship and the global hymn explosion