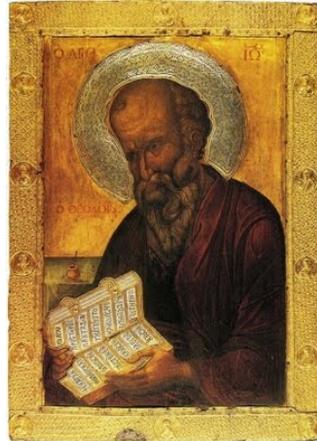


# Christian Liturgy in Late Antiquity

The development of the Liturgy of the Church from the Apostolic Age to Fall of Rome



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St. John's Church, Charlotte, Michigan

Wednesdays in Lent, AD 2013

12:00-2:30

Worship and Lunch Included

## I: Worship in the Pre-Christian World

Here, we explore the roots of Christian Worship in the religious practices of the Jewish people at the time of Christ, along with those of the larger Hellenistic World. Here, the Sacramentality of the Temple of Jerusalem, the Congregational life of the early Synagogues, the public religion of Rome, and the Mystery Cults of the Mediterranean World are discussed as contexts of the worship in which the Early Church developed.

## II: Jesus and His Disciples: The Formation of the Worshipping Church

Here, the life of Jesus in mission and ministry with his Disciples is discussed from the perspective of an intentional and practical founding of a new worshipping Church. While many subscribe to the popular belief that the Church was not so much founded by Jesus as it was by some of his disciples, with Paul and others who came later, indeed, we can see an intentional planting of the Church as a practical and worshipping organization even in the life that Jesus led with his Disciples.

## III: The Worship of the Pre-Constantinian Church

In this section, we explore the worship of the Church before Emperor Constantine gave it his Royal Imprimatur. Here, the popular perspective that the early liturgies must also have been primitive is challenged, as the meaning and value of the 'search for the first liturgy' are also questioned. Rather, a view of the worship of the early church as complex and varied is considered, with a movement towards a convergence of practices and the theological perspectives.

## III: The Establishment of the Church of Christ with Constantine and Beyond

In this section, we discuss the contexts and consequences of Constantine's decision to give the Church his Royal Imprimatur. Though the Emperor did not make the Church the 'official religion of Rome,' his public preference for the Church, and his enormous patronage of it, with land and wealth, helped to set the Church on the course towards the Western hegemony it would soon know. In so doing, the Church was transformed from the popular faith that it already was, to a mass religion, the consequences of which would change the very nature of religious thought and practice centuries to come.