

HISTORY OF CHRISTIANITY IN CANADA

CH 3XC3/5XC35/6XC6

McMaster Divinity College

Fall Semester 2023

Tuesday ~ 4:00-5:50pm

In Person and Livestream

Instructor: Gordon L. Heath

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Specializations: Church and Culture, Pastoral Studies, Christian Worldview

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course is a historical study of the growth, organization, personalities, development, and struggles of Christianity in Canada. Attention will be given to all three major streams of Christianity (Roman Catholic, Orthodox and Protestant), however the primary focus of the class will be on Canadian Protestantism.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

- Knowing
 - to provide students with an understanding of how Canadian churches initially developed in the Canadian context
 - to examine various ways in which churches have attempted to respond to the significant social and religious changes since the 1960s
 - to help students understand the process of theological development (especially as it relates to church-culture and church-state issues)
- Being
 - to explore (and ultimately appreciate) the different expressions of spirituality as practiced by the churches
 - to create an awareness of the breadth and diversity of the Canadian churches, and provide a sense of “place” within the many church traditions
- Doing
 - to develop in each student an ability to assess documents and situations from an historical perspective
 - to be able to communicate in a culturally relevant way in the Canadian context

REQUIRED TEXTS:

- Robert Choquette. *Canada's Religions: An Historical Introduction*. Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press, 2004.
- Gordon L. Heath. *Doing Church History: A User-friendly Introduction to Researching the History of Christianity*. Toronto: Clements Publishing, 2008.
- One denominational history text - preferably a book that focuses on your own denomination. Please see professor before acquiring a text (not all books are created equal).

All required textbooks for this class are available from the Hurlburt Family Bookstore located beside the entrance to the Nathaniel H. Parker Memorial Chapel of McMaster Divinity College. To purchase in advance, you may contact the bookstore manager, Bernice Quek, by phone at 416-620-2934 or 416-668-3434 (mobile); or by email at books@readon.ca. The Hurlburt Family Bookstore also carries other books and merchandise and is open throughout the academic year during posted hours. Of course, you can purchase your books anywhere, but I encourage you to support our local bookstores.

COMMENTS ON ASSIGNMENTS (MDIV/MTS/DIPLOMA/CERTIFICATE):

- **Participation (in class and reading) (10%)**

Students are expected to read the texts and attend and participate in all classes. A summary of what percentage of reading has been completed will be required at the end of the semester.

- **Position Paper (10%)**

Students are to write a two-page paper on whether or not they think Canada is a Christian nation. And state why, or why not. Be ready to discuss this in class.

- **Biographical Paper (and presentation) (20%)**

Students are to write a five-page biographical paper on a Canadian church figure. This paper should address issues such as life and legacy. They are also to prepare a five-minute video summary to be posted on [avenuetolearn](http://avenuetolearn.com).

- **Denominational Video (20%)**

Students are to prepare a five-minute video on the history of a denomination in Canada. Ideally, they will study their own denomination's history in Canada, but they are free to select any denomination. A one-page handout that includes an outline and bibliography is required.

- **Research Paper (and presentation) (40%)**

Each student will write a five-page research paper on a topic related to their specialization. The topic of this paper will be determined by the student's specialization and developed in

consultation with the professor. Results of research will be shared with the class at the end of the semester. A one-page handout that includes an outline and bibliography is required for the presentation.

- ***Church and Culture Specialization***

The interplay between Christian theology and culture should be a critical part of this analysis. Select an issue related to an aspect of Canada's past or present and analyze how the church and culture interacted. The focus should be relatively specific, rather than scattered (eg. "the influence of 1960s feminism on attitudes to women's ordination" rather than "how Canadian churches viewed women").

- ***Pastoral Studies***

The research for this specialization should focus on the intersection of pastoral care with the church in the Canadian context. Attention to specific issues, or more general trend and trajectories is fine – students can talk to the professor if they are not certain about a focus.

- ***Christian Worldview Specialization***

Research for this specialization should focus on a construction of one's theological position regarding an aspect of Christians and the State, or Christians and culture (eg. developing a theology of Christendom - rejection, acceptance).

Students will also be expected to turn this five-page paper into two short written works, a two-page blog (for popular audience) and a two-page article for a denominational paper.

COMMENTS ON ASSIGNMENTS (DPT):

- Literature Review and Commentary (25% & 25%)

The student will develop an annotated bibliography of approximately 15-20 resources (4000 pages) related to the topic of the course and write a 100-word annotation for each one. The required and recommended texts for the course can be included as part of the book list. The literature review will be approximately 2,000 words. This assignment is due October 1 and will constitute 25% of the course grade.

A commentary paper will also be prepared that summarizes the key learnings from the annotated bibliography and provides a cogent foundation for a theology and practice of the topic of the course. The paper will be approximately 3,000 words. It is due November 1 and will constitute 25% of the course grade.

- Major Research Paper (40%)

The paper should include four key sections. First a brief, but clear explanation of how the paper is rooted in a Practice Led-research approach, second an exploration of the challenges and problems that provoke this study (i.e. why does this ministry practice need to be addressed? What are the problems that you want to identify?) Third, a consideration of a foundational theology of the practice of ministry under consideration in this course and a deep consideration

of how new approaches to this practice can be employed in helping to address and improve ministry practice in this area. Fourth some reflection on the application of these ideas to the students own ministry context (both in terms of the local church and also their ministry beyond the local church). The paper should be approximately 8,000 words. This assignment is due December 1 and will constitute 40% of the course grade.

- Class Participation (10%)

ASSIGNMENTS (MA/PhD):

- Literature Review and Commentary (25% & 25%)

The student will develop an annotated bibliography of approximately 15-20 resources (6000 pages) related to the topic of the course and write a 100 word annotation for each one. The required and recommended texts for the course can be included as part of the book list. The literature review will be approximately 2,000 words. This assignment is due October 1 and will constitute 25% of the course grade.

A commentary paper will also be prepared that summarizes the key learnings from the annotated bibliography and provides a cogent foundation for a theology and practice of the topic of the course. The paper will be approximately 3,000-4,000 words. This assignment is due November 1 and will constitute 25% of the course grade.

- Major Research Paper (40%)

This paper is a major research paper. Ideally the student aims to prepare something for publication such as a journal article. Regardless, the work must be on a subject mutually agreed upon between professor and student. The paper should be approximately 8,000-10,000 words. This assignment is due December 1 and will constitute 40% of the course grade.

- Class Participation (10%)

GENERAL COMMENTS:

Academic dishonesty is not qualitatively different from other types of dishonesty. It consists of misrepresenting the ownership of written work by deception or by other fraudulent means. In an academic setting this may include any number of forms such as: copying or using unauthorized aids in tests, examinations; plagiarism, i.e., submitting work that is not one's own (regardless of the means of its production) but passing it off as if it is; submitting work for credit in a course for which credit is being or has already been given, unless the previously submitted work was presented as such to the instructor of the second course and has been deemed acceptable for credit by the instructor of that course; aiding and abetting another student's dishonesty; giving false information for the purposes of gaining admission or credit; giving false information for the purposes of obtaining deferred examinations or extension of deadlines; forging or falsifying McMaster University or McMaster Divinity College documents.

In accordance with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA), the content of this course is intended to be accessible to all students who are enrolled in the course, including those with disabilities. If a student requires accommodation to participate fully in this course, that student is to contact SAS at McMaster University, who will then work directly with the McMaster Divinity College Registrar to negotiate reasonably appropriate accommodation for the student. The MDC Registrar will communicate with faculty regarding necessary accommodations. Please note that an accommodation is not retroactive and must be requested in advance to allow sufficient time for implementation.

McMaster Divinity College uses inclusive language for human beings in worship services, student written materials, and all its publications. It is expected that inclusive language will be used in chapel services and all MDC assignments. In reference to biblical texts, the integrity of the original expressions and the names of God should be respected, but you will need to use gender-inclusive language for humans, and you will need to quote from a gender-inclusive version such as, for example, the following: NRSV (2021), NCV (1991), TEV/GNB/GNT (1992), CEV (1995), NLT (1996), NIV (2011), and the CEB (2011).

Online engagement does not require conformity to the MDC styleguide. Further instruction for online engagement will be provided in class.

Unless noted otherwise, submitted written assignments requires conformity to the MDC styleguide.

Essays must be handed in at the beginning of the class on the day they are due. All other essays will be considered to be late. Students may be exempted from the late penalty of 5% per day (not including weekends) if they attach to their essay a letter explaining the genuine emergency that delayed them. Late assignments (even ones with an extension) will not receive comments and constructive criticism from the professor and may not be returned at the same time as the papers submitted on the due date. Submit an electronic copy on the due date or a hard copy before the due date if you are unable to be in class on the due date because of a foreknown absence.

Please turn off your cell phone and/or pager before the class begins.

Please do not attend class if you are ill and contagious (e.g. the flu).

CLASS SCHEDULE:

Sept 12	Introduction to the Class
Sept 19	The Arrival and Establishment of Christianity <i>*Position Paper Due</i>
Sept 26	Arrivals, Advances, Diversity, Tensions
Oct 3	Church Unions and National Visions
Oct 10	Reading Week – No Class

Oct 17	Biographical Presentations <i>*Biographical Presentations Due</i>
Oct 24	Indigenous Churches, Domestic and Foreign Missions
Oct 31	Social Gospel and Social Reforms
Nov 7	Modernism and Fundamentalism; World Wars <i>*Denominational Video Due</i>
Nov 14	The Wheels Fall Off: Postwar Boom and Bust
Nov 21	Indigenous Churches, Diaspora Churches, Reverse Mission Churches
Nov 28	Research Paper Presentations <i>*Research Paper Due</i>
Dec 5	Looking to the Future: Responses, Theorists, and Models for Ministry

This syllabus is the property of the instructor and is prepared with currently available information. The instructor reserves the right to make changes and revisions.