

BAPTIST HISTORY & POLITY

CH 3XB3/5XB5/6XB6

McMaster Divinity College
Fall Semester 2021

Regular Weekly Online
Occasional Monday Online (4:00-5:00pm)

Instructor: Gordon L. Heath
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Specializations: Christian History Worldview (CW), Pastoral Studies (PS)

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Baptists are one of the world's largest Protestant denominations, numbering close to 100,000,000 adherents. This course is an introduction to the history, doctrine, organization, and style of Baptist congregational life and mission. It begins with the birth of the movement in the early 1600s in England, and continues to the present-day development of a global multi-ethnic movement. Special attention will be given to the development of Canadian Baptist churches, and cultural engagement in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries.

This class is open to anyone, but is required by the CBOQ for ordination.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

Knowing

- To survey the major ideas, personalities and developments in Baptist life.
- To provide an understanding of how the Baptists have grown and developed in a variety of countries and continents.
- To place the contemporary issues Baptists face within a broader historical context.
- To know how Baptists are similar to, and different from, other expressions of Christianity.

Being

- To gain practical insight into the work of being a leader within a local Baptist church.
- To understand the role of Baptist distinctives and practices in the development of effective ministry within the CBOQ.

Doing

- To develop skills in maintaining and nurturing a healthy, effective and personally satisfying vocation.

REQUIRED TEXTS:

- Gordon L. Heath, Dallas Friesen, and Taylor Murray. *Baptists in Canada: Their History and Polity*. Eugene: Wipf and Stock, 2021.
- Sharon Bowler, ed. *Canadian Baptist Women*. Eugene: Wipf and Stock, 2016.
- David Bebbington. *Baptists through the Centuries: A History of a Global People*. Waco, Texas: Baylor University Press, 2010.
- Gordon L. Heath. *Doing Church History: A User-friendly Introduction to Researching the History of Christianity*. Toronto: Clements Publishing, 2008.
- *Common Expression: A Canadian Baptist Manual for Worship and Service*. Mississauga: Canadian Baptist Ministries, 2020.
- Various online primary sources made available in class.

All required textbooks for this class and others at the Divinity College are available from READ-ON Books, and should be purchased at the beginning of the semester when READ-ON Books has its book table at the Divinity College (Room 218). Contact can be made by mail: 304 The East Mall, Suite 100, Etobicoke, ON M9B 6E2; phone: 416-620-2934; fax: 416-622-2308; email: books@readon.ca; website: www.readon.ca.

RECOMMENDED TEXTS (not required for purchasing):

The following books are related to the course material and provide a helpful reading list for those who would like to pursue the course material further. Masters students are NOT required to purchase or read these books.

- Shirley Bentall. *From Sea to Sea: The Canadian Baptist Federation, 1944–1994*. Mississauga: Canadian Baptist Federation, 1994.
- William H. Brackney. *Baptists in North America*. Oxford: Blackwell, 2006.
- Timothy George and David S. Dockery, eds. *Baptist Theologians*. Nashville: Broadman, 1990.
- Stuart Ivison and Fred Rosser. *The Baptists in Upper and Lower Canada before 1820*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1956.
- Robert E. Johnson. *A Global Introduction to Baptist Churches*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010.
- Keith G. Jones and Ian M. Randall, eds. *Counter-Cultural Communities: Baptist Life in Twentieth-Century Europe*. Milton Keynes: Paternoster, 2008.
- Kidd, Thomas S., and Barry Hankins. *Baptists in America: A History*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015.
- Bill J. Leonard. *Baptist Ways: A History*. Valley Forge: Judson, 2003.
- Leon McBeth. *The Baptist Heritage*. Nashville: Broadman, 1987.
- Renfree, Harry A. *Heritage and Horizon: The Baptist Story in Canada*. Mississauga, ON: Canadian Baptist Federation, 1988.

ASSIGNMENTS:

This entire course is online through the avuetolearn system at McMaster. The class will meet “face-to-face” (virtually) a few times throughout the semester, but the majority of instruction will be online through recorded lectures, online posts, etc.

- **Online Engagement (and reading report)**

Students will complete weekly readings and watch lectures, as well as respond to posted comments by other students and professor. This is an important part of the class that allows for interaction and engagement by all. There will also be occasional virtual face-to-face meetings for times of discussion. At the end of the course students will report on how much the texts they have read – and that will also factor into this grade.

- **Biographical Presentation**

Each student will post on avuetolearn a five-minute video summary of a prominent Baptist’s life and contribution. Students will comment on avuetolearn on other presentations.

- **Resolving Board Issues**

Students are to prepare papers that resolve “board issues” discussed in class. Particular attention is to be paid to Baptist distinctives and context. Students will post their papers online and respond to comments from other students.

- **Research Paper**

This ten-page research paper provides an opportunity for students to pursue an area of research that intrigues them. The topic for the paper should relate to the student’s specialization. Results of research will be shared with the class at the end of the semester by way of a five-minute video and class discussion.

- o Christian History and Worldview

The research for this specialization should focus on developing critical knowledge of Baptist history, or a deeper awareness of Baptist theology/worldview.

- o Pastoral Studies

Research for this specialization can go in a number of directions. It can focus on a theological construction of one’s theological position in regard to an issue related to Baptist history and polity. It can deal with developing a strategy for dealing with issues related to Baptist history and polity. It can deal with Baptist resources for pastoral ministry. And so on.

PhD/MA and DPT students will meet with the professor to discuss additional and augmented assignments for the course that are an added 20-25 pages (12,500-15,000 words).

GRADING:

Weekly Online Engagement (and reading summary): 30%

Biographical Class Presentation: 20%

Resolving Board Issues: 20%

Research Paper: 30%

GENERAL COMMENTS:

Academic dishonesty is a serious offence that may take any number of forms, including plagiarism, the submission of work that is not one's own or for which previous credit has been obtained, and/or unauthorized collaboration with other students. Academic dishonesty can result in severe consequences, e.g., failure of the assignment, failure of the course, a notation on one's academic transcript, and/or suspension or expulsion from the College. Students are responsible for understanding what constitutes academic dishonesty. Please refer to the Divinity College Statement on Academic Honesty ~ www.madciv.ca/regs/honesty.php.

McMaster Divinity College uses inclusive language for human beings in worship services, student written materials, and all of its publications. In reference to biblical texts, the integrity of the original expressions and the names of God should be respected. It is expected that inclusive language will be used in chapel services and all MDC assignments.

Assignments must be submitted by 11:59pm on the day they are due. All other assignments will be considered to be late. Students may be exempted from the late penalty of 3% per day (not including weekends) if they attach to their assignment 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.

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.

CLASS SCHEDULE:

Weekly Online Instruction Accessed Through "avenuetolearn": avenue.mcmaster.ca.

Occasional Face-to-Face Accessed Through <https://mcmaster.zoom.us/j/6185125107>

Week Starting Sept 13: Introduction to Class & Reformation Era

- Monday Face-to-Face (4:00-5:00pm): <https://mcmaster.zoom.us/j/6185125107>
- Reading: Heath, *Doing Church History*, all

Week Starting Sept 20: Baptist Origins

- Reading: Heath, Friesen, Murray, *Baptists in Canada*, ch.1

Week Starting Sept 27: Baptists in America & Canada

- Reading: Heath, Friesen, Murray, *Baptists in Canada*, ch.2

Week Starting Oct 4: Baptists around the Globe

- Monday Face-to-Face (4:00-5:00pm): <https://mcmaster.zoom.us/j/6185125107>
- Reading: Bebbington, *Baptists through the Centuries*, all

Week Starting Oct 11: How Baptist Churches Work

- Reading: Heath, Friesen, Murray, *Baptists in Canada*, chs.3-7

Week Starting Oct 18: Biographical Presentations

- Biographical assignment to be submitted by 11:59pm, Tuesday, Oct 19

Week Starting Oct 25: *Reading Week (no class)*

Week Starting Nov 1: Baptist Distinctives

- Monday Face-to-Face (4:00-5:00pm): <https://mcmaster.zoom.us/j/6185125107>
- Reading: Bowler, ed., *Canadian Baptist Women*, all

Week Starting Nov 8: Baptist Distinctives

Week Starting Nov 15: Baptist Distinctives

- Monday Face-to-Face (4:00-5:00pm): <https://mcmaster.zoom.us/j/6185125107>
- Resolving Board Issues assignment to be submitted by 11:59pm, Tuesday, Nov 9

Week Starting Nov 22: Baptist Organizations

Week Starting Nov 29: Research Paper Presentations

- Research paper assignment to be submitted by 11:59pm, Tuesday, Nov 30

Week Starting Dec 6: Looking to the Future

- Monday Face-to-Face (4:00-5:00pm): <https://mcmaster.zoom.us/j/6185125107>
- Reading: Heath, Friesen, Murray, *Baptists in Canada*, ch.8

This syllabus is for information only and remains the property of the respective professor. This syllabus is prepared with the best information available, but the professor reserves the right to change the content and format of the course.