

BAPTIST HISTORY & POLITY

CH 3XB3/5XB5

McMaster Divinity College
Fall Semester 2022

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), Church and Culture (CC)

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. Of course, you can purchase your books anywhere, but I encourage you to support our local bookstores by purchasing from READ-ON Books. 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.

BIBLIOGRAPHY (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. 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.

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

This entire course is online through the avenuetolearn 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) (30%)

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 (20%)

Each student will post on [avenuetolearn](#) a five-minute video summary of a prominent Baptist’s life and contribution. Students will comment on [avenuetolearn](#) on other presentations.

- Resolving Board Issues (20%)

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 (30%)

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.

- 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.

- Church and Culture

Research for this specialization pays attention to issues related to the church and culture, such as aspects of Baptists influencing (or being influenced by) culture.

- 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.

COMMENTS ON ASSIGNMENTS (DPT):

Along with taking part in online lectures and discussions, DPT students will complete the following requirements:

- 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 6 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 3 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. It is due December 1 and will constitute 40% of the course grade.

- Class Participation (10%)

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 12: 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 19: Baptist Origins

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

Week Starting Sept 26: Baptists in America & Canada

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

Week Starting Oct 3: 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 10: How Baptist Churches Work

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

Week Starting Oct 17: Biographical Presentations

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

Week Starting Oct 24: *Intensive Hybrid Week (no class)*

Week Starting Oct 31: 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 7: Baptist Distinctives

Week Starting Nov 14: 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 21: Baptist Organizations

Week Starting Nov 28: Research Paper Presentations

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

Week Starting Dec 5: 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.