

# CH 3XB3 - BAPTIST HISTORY & THOUGHT

## McMaster Divinity College

Fall Semester 2011

Monday

7:00pm – 9:00pm

Instructor: Dr. Gordon L. Heath

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### COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course is an introduction to the history, doctrine, organization and style of Baptist congregational life and mission. Special attention will be given to the development of Canadian Baptist churches.

### 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.

### TEXTS:

- David Bebbington. *Baptists through the Centuries: A History of a Global People*. Waco, Texas: Baylor University Press, 2010.
- Harry Renfree. *Heritage and Horizon: The Baptist Story in Canada*. Mississauga. Canadian Baptist Federation, 1988.
- Gordon L. Heath. *Doing Church History: A User-friendly Introduction to Researching the History of Christianity*. Toronto: Clements Publishing, 2008.
- Norman H. Maring, *A Baptist Manual of Polity and Practice*. (Revised Edition) Valley Forge: Judson Press, 1991.
- *A Manual for Worship and Service*, Mississauga: All Canada Baptist Publications, 1998.

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](mailto:books@readon.ca); website: [www.readon.ca](http://www.readon.ca).

## ASSIGNMENTS:

- **Choose One: Lesson Plan or Local Baptist Church History** (*this assignment acts as your final exam*)
  - Lesson Plan  
Students are required to prepare an eight-week adult elective course on Baptist history and polity. This assignment requires the student to prepare the complete curriculum for such a course. The target audience for the course would be an adult Sunday School class.
  - Local Baptist Church History  
This assignment requires students to prepare a history of a local Baptist church. It could be for a church that has no written history, or for one that needs an “updating” of an older history. See *Doing Church History* for further instructions.

- **Biography Class Presentation**

Each student will present in class a ten-minute (maximum) summary of a prominent Baptist’s life and contribution. Please keep the following in mind as you prepare for your presentation.

1. You do not need to pass in your notes to the professor – but you do have to show him your notes before the presentation. Please have a handout for the class that includes a bibliography, outline and key information.
2. You will be given ten minutes (eight minutes minimum) to give your presentation. You will be expected to finish at the ten minute mark. If you are not finished at that time the instructor will give you a one minute notice. If you are not finished at the end of that minute you will be cut off. If you prepare and practise ahead of time ending at the ten minute mark will not be a problem.
3. Please be expecting to answer some questions from the class and instructor (as time permits).
4. Feel free to use a variety of creative ways to present your material. Let the instructor know ahead of time if you need anything like an overhead projector, Powerpoint projector, etc.
5. Remember it is wise to have an (a) introduction; (b) main body; and (c) conclusion.
6. See *Doing Church History* for further instructions.

- **One Year Summary**

This eight-page assignment introduces students to the resources of the Canadian Baptist Archives as well as exposes students to the life of the denomination in a particular year. Students are required to read the *Canadian Baptist* for a given year, as well as read the minutes of the yearbook for the same year.

The assignment will require students to record and reflect upon items such as:

- name of editor(s)
- circulation figures
- types of articles
- names of important authors/contributors
- “issues of the day”
- denomination motions passed/failed

This eight-page essay must be typed, double-spaced, 12 point font, 1¼ inch margins, and Chicago-style endnotes (endnotes do not count towards the page count).

- **Position Paper**

Students are to prepare a three-page position paper on the future of denominations. Particular attention is to be paid to Baptist distinctives and the need for a denominational identity (both personally and corporately). Students must be prepared to present, discuss and defend their position in class.

**GRADING:**

- Lesson Plan or Local Church History: 35%
- Biography Class Presentation: 15%
- One Year Summary: 35%
- Position Paper: 10%
- Participation: 5%

**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](http://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. The NRSV and TNIV are examples of the use of inclusive language for human beings. It is expected that inclusive language will be used in chapel services and all MDC assignments.
- 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 3% 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.
- The essay should be handed directly to the instructor. To avoid any potential problems, students are advised to keep their working notes and a copy of their paper until a final mark has been received.
- Unless noted otherwise, all written work must conform to the *McMaster Divinity College Style Guidelines for Essays and Theses*.
- 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 Class & Reformation Era <i>Reading: Heath complete</i>
Sept 19	Baptist Origins and Beliefs
Sept 26	Archives Tour and <i>Canadian Baptist</i> Research <i>Reading: Bebbington complete</i>
Oct 3	How Baptist Churches Work <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Confessions of Faith</li> <li>• Covenant</li> <li>• local church autonomy</li> <li>• role of laity</li> </ul> <i>Reading: Maring complete</i>
Oct 10	No Class (Thanksgiving)
Oct 17	Baptists in America & Canada <i>Reading: Renfree complete</i> <i>*One Year Summary Due*</i>
Oct 24	Baptists around the Globe
Oct 31	Common Baptist Practices <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• worship</li> <li>• baptism &amp; communion</li> <li>• marriage &amp; funerals</li> <li>• new members</li> </ul>
Nov 7	Biographical Presentations <i>*Biographical Presentations Due: Group A*</i>
Nov 14	Biographical Presentations <i>*Biographical Presentations Due: Group B*</i>
Nov 21	Themes: TBD
Nov 28	Themes: TBD
Dec 5	Position Paper Discussion: The Future of Denominations <i>*Position Paper Due*</i>
Dec 12	Exam Week <i>*Lesson Plan or Local Church History Due*</i>

**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.**