

“The mission of Tyndale Seminary is to provide Christ-centred graduate theological education for leaders in the church and society whose lives are marked by intellectual maturity, spiritual vigour and moral integrity, and whose witness will faithfully engage culture with the Gospel.”

Semester, Year	WINTER, 2026
Course Title	HISTORY OF CHRISTIANITY II: REFORMATION TO THE PRESENT AGE
Course Code	HIST 0562 1P
Date	From January 13, 2026 to April 14, 2026 Every Tuesday
Time	From 2:15 PM to 5:05 PM
Delivery Format	IN-PERSON ONLY
Class information	The classes will be IN-PERSON on Tuesdays from 2:15 to 5:05pm.
Instructor	JAMES TYLER ROBERTSON, Ph.D.
Contact Information	Email: jtroberson@tyndale.ca Tyndale Phone Number: (416) 226-6620 Ext. 2274
Office Hours	Tuesdays from 12-2pm. By appointment only.
Course Materials	Access course material at classes.tyndale.ca or other services at Tyndale One . Course emails will be sent to your @MyTyndale.ca e-mail account only.

I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

The excitement and the trauma of the reformation period in Europe extended over two hundred years. Events changed the face of the continent. However, as the period came to an end, Christians emerged with another focus, and it was once again global. Migrations and missions saw them establish their faith around the world. However, intercontinental conditions, coupled with emerging attitudes in Europe and the Americas, stimulated surprising changes. By the middle of the 20th century, the centre of Christian life was shifting from the northern hemisphere to the south. Tracks with these developments and the thought underlying them. Writings from the participants lead students into the fervor of the times.

II. LEARNING OUTCOMES

At the end of the course, students will be able to:

1. Understand major chronological events that have taken place in Christianity from A.D. 1500 up to the present day
2. Identify some of the major people and ideas that have defined the last 500 years of Christian history.
3. Understand the developments that have shaped Protestantism specifically, but also link these ideas to the larger global context, including Roman Catholicism and the various Orthodox Churches.
4. Consider some of the contemporary issues that he/she might be facing in his/her own spiritual walk by bringing their increased historical knowledge into the conversation.
5. Articulate the theological developments that are unique to the modern age of Christianity.
6. Reflect and critique some of the more prevalent theological trends in present-day North America.

III. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

A. REQUIRED READING

Gonzalez, Justo L. [*The Story of Christianity: Vol. 2: The Reformation to the Present Day*](#). San Francisco: Harper Collins, 2010. (ISBN-10: 0-06- 185589-8)
Primary Source Readings (**Available on Course Page**)

B. SUPPLEMENTARY / RECOMMENDED READING AND TOOLS

Tyndale recommends [STEPBible](#) – a free and reputable online resource developed by Tyndale House (Cambridge, England) – for word searches of original-language texts, as well as for topical searches, interlinear texts, dictionaries, etc. Refer to the library for other [online resources for Biblical Studies](#).

C. ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

1. Class Participation. Due Throughout the Semester. Worth 20%.

History is a readers' discipline. I know there is a lot of reading in this course but, as members of a highly literate faith, this is an essential element of our intellectual life. Text readings are expected to be done ahead of class time so that any subsequent discussions can be from a well-informed perspective.

I want this to be an engaging class and that means addressing issues and questions that the lectures and readings will inspire. While the lectures will introduce new content, the class will also offer significant opportunities for informed discussions on a variety of important topics. There will be frequent questions from the text offered in class and the expectation will be that students will bring their understandings of the readings into the class discussions.

Some of you are very comfortable speaking in class and that can help your grade but I also want to be sensitive to those who are deep thinkers but not as comfortable speaking in public. If this is you, the forums are your place to demonstrate your ongoing learning in a manner that better suits your temperament.

There will be five (5) text-focused forums opened at random times on the course page for you to answer during the class. These questions will ask one (1) question from the text reading that will require a thoughtful response. NOTE: these are “pop up” in style so you will not know when or what the question is until class time. Each question will be marked out of four (4) possible marks that will break down as follows:

- 4-you exceeded expectations and clearly demonstrated a knowledge of the material
- 3-you satisfied expectations and demonstrated a satisfactory knowledge of the material
- 2-you came close to expectations but did not demonstrate satisfactory knowledge of the material
- 1- you did not demonstrate satisfactory knowledge of the material
- 0 - no answer given

Because these are marks I want to give away freely, if you miss a class in which a question was asked, you can supplement these marks through in-class participation. If you are engaging in discussions and debates, if you are asking questions of me and your colleagues, and if you are able to engage with the material during class times, your grades in this area will reflect that. If you are actively participating in the classes, you can skip these written forums altogether and still receive a good participation grade.

It is up to each student to decide how he/she wants to earn this grade: through in-class discussions or through written forum responses or through a combination of both.

NOTE: *abusive or threatening language utilized in class discussions will not be tolerated. This is a history course that examines numerous expressions of Christian thinking/belief and that means we are not going to agree on every topic (in fact, it is better if we experience diversity in thought in this academic setting). Demeaning, offensive, or belittling language/tones will result in loss of grades for participation. My classroom is dedicated to challenging and compassionate discussions with room for numerous perspectives.*

2. There You Stand: Theses for the Present Age. Due February 14. Worth 20%.

In this assignment, the student is invited to share in the struggles of Martin Luther—and other Reformers—as they communicated their concerns to their churches. This is not an assignment in which you “dump” your complaints on your chosen community; it is an assignment that requires you assess your community through a thoughtful, critical, and faithful series of issues you have witnessed. Theses can include concerns over practice, theology, leadership, and/or ethos/culture. You can bring up issues that you believe need greater clarification, issues around

your community's understanding or implementation of scriptural mandates, or simply issues you believe are incorrect, oppressive, or unbiblical. Like Luther, posit your theses as challenges, but also invite future and mutually beneficial conversations around the issues you have raised.

You **must** write to **one** of the following three groups:

1. **Your specific Christian community/church.** Not “the church” in general, a former church of which you were a member, or your denomination (NOTE: if you want to critique your denomination, it must come from the perspective of your local faith community. For example: “our denomination follows open communion and I think we should have more restrictions based on the belief that only confessed members of the church should be allowed to take communion”)
2. **A Christian Organization of which you are an active participant** (for example: a food bank, Bible study group, Sunday School, or some form of recognized para-church organization)
3. **Tyndale University**

In the assignment you must answer the following in this order:

- **Intended Audience:** To whom are you writing? Be very specific by explaining the identity of the group (from the list above), including—but not limited to—the name of the group, age range, ethos, cultural composition, and your role in the community. This should be relatively short but should let me know exactly who your audience is so that I can grade the effectiveness with which you are communicating.
- **The Wittenburg Door:** What format will best get your message across? Luther nailed his theses on the castle door of Wittenburg because that was how people in his age informed the intended audience. Therefore, you need to identify how best to get your theses into the hands of your intended audience. Are you going to send out an email? Compose a letter to be read on Sunday or to the leadership in a meeting? Produce a podcast or some form of audio file to be shared? A PowerPoint presentation? Each of these are acceptable as long as you clearly defend why you believe this format is the “Wittenburg Door” for your intended audience.
- **Theses:** You will compose 5 (five) theses detailing the issue you are raising, why you believe it is important to the integrity of your audience/designated community, offer an alternate way of viewing the issue and/or a potential solution based on scripture and/or established tradition. If written, each thesis should be no longer than one (1) paragraph; if spoken, each thesis should be no longer than sixty (60) seconds; if sung, each thesis should be no longer than one (1) verse. You can rank them in importance or simply in the order that makes sense to you. Each one should be able to stand on its own, but forming connections between theses is permitted as well.

An example of a thesis:

Our church teaches that salvation comes only once the sinner's prayer has been recited and is evidenced by the baptism of the Holy Spirit, specifically manifested in the gift of tongues. I propose that we need to examine our definition of the term “salvation” based on the biblical accounts of Cornelius and the thief on the cross, both of whom provide contrary

evidence to our specific definition of salvation. I believe that salvation is a gift offered by God alone and our church is called to act only as stewards to the spiritual needs of its adherents but is not called to be the gatekeepers who determine what proper salvation looks like.

- **Conclusion:** Summarize your hopes and intended goal for your theses. Do not introduce any new ideas as the goal of a summary is to simply reiterate the themes present in the body of your work.

3. Church Visit Reflection. Due March 21st. Worth 30%. 1000 Words

Each student will visit a church Sunday worship service outside his/her tradition and compose a 1000 word reflection on that experience. If the student is a Protestant, he or she is asked to attend the worship service of a Roman Catholic Church, Eastern Orthodox Church, or Oriental Church, not another Protestant denomination/church; the same holds if the student is Catholic or Orthodox-he/she must attend a Protestant Church or one other tradition not his/her own. The student will then write a reflection from a personal and historical lens by explaining the following:

- Which language was utilized in the worship? Was it in English, an ecclesiastical language (like Latin) or in the language of the church tradition (e.g. Ukrainian)
- How was the music structured? Did people sing along or was there a choir that sang to the people? Were the songs more contemporary/modern in tone or were they more ancient?
- Were written prayers utilized and, if so, where were these prayers found (Bible, Tradition)?
- How many passages were read from Scripture? Did they include books from the Old and New Testaments? Did they include books the student had never read or heard of before? How was Scripture reading presented throughout the service?
- Was there a homily of some sort that united the worship time with the present lives of the worshippers?
- Were Creeds utilized in the service? If so, which ones?
- Describe the physical structure of the building. What kind of art and/or visual symbols were present? Were there icons, stained-glass, screen with projected images? What is your opinion of the role of these images?
- How involved were the laity in the worship service?
- In your observation, what was the central element of the worship service? HINT: There is always one element that all the other elements point to...always. Pay attention and you will notice it.

The reflection will be graded on the level of in-depth (1) observation, (2) appreciation (things you liked), and (3) challenges (things you disliked or disagreed with) the student will offer.

Try to include images of the church, its bulletin, and literature, including any website (if available) as appendices of the paper (if possible).

NOTE: *Be respectful of the church you choose to attend and dress and act accordingly. You are there to observe and participate (as much as you feel comfortable) in another version of Christian worship. You are NOT there to evangelize people and/or invite them to your church, tradition, or beliefs.*

4. Research Paper OR Historical Sermon. Due April 14. Worth 30%.

The discipline of history offers many useful tools for engagement and understanding, well beyond the realms of historiography. Essentially, this discipline seeks to correct the very human penchant for using the words of others to validate, or advance, present-day goals/beliefs. Sermons, personal discussions, and debates frequently fall into the trap of “reading backwards” by using the norms of today to interpret the messages of the past. In so doing, well-meaning people do violence to our ancestors by aligning them with issues they may not have supported. To become more proficient in combatting this impulse, the student will choose one (1) of the Primary Sources located on the course page and present one of the two following options:

Research Paper

Using the chosen primary source, the student will compose a 2000-2500word research paper on a person, event, or idea contained within that primary reading. The paper **MUST** include secondary research to support the student’s arguments/analysis/thesis (the research paper should include 10-20 sources; failure to meet this criterion will result in substantial deduction in grade). Other primary sources from the person or time period being explored can also be contained within the paper.

This paper should include an explanation of the topic, substantial research with both primary and secondary sources, and should summarize why the topic is important to the development of Christianity. The paper **must** answer the following:

- Who is writing this and why?
- When was this written?
- Who was the intended audience?
- What was the context of this writing?
- Is there a specific incident the reading is discussing? If so, what is it?
- When these have been answered, move on to explain/defend the legacy of this writing over subsequent Christian thought/practice as you understand it.
- Finally, does this document inform any of the perceived issues being faced in the present age? Put another way: what can Christians of today learn from the document you chose?

A bibliography **MUST** be included at the end. This assignment is designed to give you more experience interacting with historical documents, tools to prevent historical eisegesis (reading backwards), and hearing historical voices with attention paid to the research element that is normally involved in such a task.

The style of bibliography must follow the Chicago/Turabian style (No APA). For information on that see the CAE tutorial videos located at the top of the course page.

NOTE: Do not go over the word count. Many people think this impresses the professor but one of the most important aspects of writing is the ability to self-edit. Make sure your writing only includes aspects central to your main argument and avoid repetition or going down “rabbit trails” that, while interesting, have little to do with the point you are making.

OR

Historical Sermon

Using the Primary Reading, you will provide a 20-minute sermon explaining the person, event, or idea contained within that primary reading to a contemporary audience. The sermon needs to include the following:

- Explanation of the topic
- Evidence of research with both primary and secondary sources
- Summarize why this topic is important to the development of Christianity
- The sermon needs to connect the person/event/idea chosen with a contemporary audience and explain how this person/event/idea displays an element of Christianity (for good or ill) that their intended audience should know.

Written Portion: A script of the sermon is not required (as this assignment is designed for those who prefer speaking to writing) but there is a written element that must be submitted. You cannot pass this assignment if you do not submit **both** the written and visual components of this assignment.

In the designated assignment portal, you must submit a written document that includes the following:

- An introductory paragraph that explains who the intended audience for this sermon is and why you believe this is an important sermon for this particular audience
- An outline of the sermon so that I can follow along and offer notes/comments that are related to the spoken material
- An annotated bibliography of at least 10 sources consulted for the sermon. Because frequent quotes in a sermon can be “clunky” and hard to do in a spoken medium, you must include a one to two sentence description for each source describing how it informed your sermon. I do not want a standard summary of the source; I want to know how the source impacted you and your message specifically.

Do not go over the 20-minute time limit

Technical requirements: You must have the technology to record yourself in both an audio and visual format to a satisfactory level (use of cell phone is permitted). Including visual aids (like PowerPoint slides) is encouraged but not required.

Make sure that you have technological understanding (or that you have access to someone who does) sufficient enough to record and upload the video for this option.

The sermon needs to be recorded in advance and submitted to the professor by the due date. If you have a YouTube page you can simply copy and paste the link to your video in the written portion of your submission. As a Tyndale student, you have free access to OneDrive and, once you upload your sermon there, you can also cut and paste the link into your written document. Other similar storage programs are permitted as long as the link is easy to access.

NOTE: Make sure to adjust your settings so that I can access your material. If a link does not open, I will email you but it will be up to you to make sure it works. For every day that I am unable to access your work, you will be deducted the standard amount for late submissions.

*For every **week** late, the grade will be reduced by 5 %, a half a letter grade (i.e. one week late: 82 % A- becomes 77 % B+; two weeks late, 82 % becomes 72 % B-, etc.). Please note that the deduction is accumulated **weekly**, not daily, and so a student will receive the same penalty whether the assignment is one or six days late.*

Extensions will be considered only in cases such as a death in the family, the hospitalization of yourself or a member of your immediate family, or an illness for which you require treatment by a physician. Reference to heavy workload, other assignments, professional or ministry obligations, or holidays do not constitute legitimate grounds for an extension.

Requests for extensions must be submitted in writing to the instructor explaining the reason why the extension is needed. Such requests need to be submitted at least 72 hours prior to the due date.

All assignments must be handed in by the last day of exams. No assignments will be accepted after that date, unless the student has a valid reason for an extension. In that case, the student must apply for an extension to the Registrar and not to the professor.

D. SUMMARY OF ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

Assignment	Due	%
1. Participation	Weekly	20%
2. There You Stand-Luther Assignment	Feb 14	20%
3. Church Visit	Mar 21	30%
4. Research Paper OR Historical Sermon	Apr 14	30%
TOTAL GRADE		100%

IV. COURSE SCHEDULE, CONTENT AND REQUIRED READINGS

DATE	LECTURE	READINGS	ASSIGNMENTS DUE
January 13	Earth: Trickster History & Elemental Themes for this Semester	Gonzalez Chapters 1-2	
January 20	Lightning: Luther's Life In, and Break From, Catholicism	Gonzalez Chapters 3-4	
January 27	Lightning II: John Calvin's International Reform & Zwingli's Stand	Gonzalez Chapters 5 & 7	
February 3	Fire: The Beginnings of the English Reformation	Gonzalez Chapter 8 & 11	
February 10	Fire II: The Bible Becomes English	Gonzalez Chapters 12 & 18	There You Stand Assignment Due
February 17	READING BREAK	NO CLASSES	
February 24	Water: Protestantism Around the Globe	Gonzalez Chapters 13, 29-30	
March 3	Water II: Slavery & Doctrine of Discovery	Gonzalez Chapters 28 & 33	
March 10	Water III: Christianity Enters the New World	Gonzalez Chapters 25-27	
March 17	Air: Early 20 th Century North American Christianity	Gonzalez Chapters 31-32 & 35	Church Visit Due
March 24	Air II: Later 20 th Century Christianity	Gonzalez Chapters 34, 36	
March 31	Wifi: Faith in the Age of Technology	Gonzalez Chapter 37	
April 7	Wifi II: 21 st Century Christianity...where have we been & where do we go	Gonzalez Chapter 38	Research Paper OR Historical Sermon Due in One Week

V. SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

A selected bibliography will be uploaded to your class page on classes.tyndale.ca.

VI. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS FOR ALL COURSES

A. EQUITY OF ACCESS

Students with permanent or temporary disabilities who need academic accommodations must [contact](#) the [Accessibility Services](#) at the [Centre for Academic Excellence](#) to [register](#) and discuss their specific needs. *New students* must self-identify and register with the Accessibility Office at the beginning of the semester or as early as possible to access appropriate services. *Current students* must renew their plans as early as possible to have active accommodations in place.

B. REQUIREMENTS FOR LIVESTREAM INTERACTION (*SYNCHRONOUS ONLINE COURSE ONLY*)

- Livestream attendance for the entire duration of the class at announced times
- Headphones (preferred), built-in microphone, and web-camera
- Well-lit and quiet room
- Stable high-speed internet connection, preferably using an Ethernet cable over Wi-Fi
- Full name displayed on Zoom and Microsoft Teams for attendance purposes*
- A commitment to having the camera on to foster community building*

**exceptions with permission from professor*

C. GUIDELINES FOR INTERACTIONS

Tyndale University prides itself in being a trans-denominational community. We anticipate our students to have varied viewpoints which will enrich the discussions in our learning community. Therefore, we ask our students to be charitable and respectful in their interactions with each other, and to remain focused on the topic of discussion, out of respect to others who have committed to being a part of this learning community. Please refer to “Guidelines for Interactions” on your course resource page at classes.tyndale.ca.

D. GUIDELINES FOR THE SUBMISSION OF WRITTEN WORK

Grading Rubric

Please consult the rubric provided for each assignment on your course resource page at classes.tyndale.ca.

Academic Integrity

Integrity in academic work is required of all our students. Academic dishonesty is any breach of this integrity and includes such practices as cheating (the use of unauthorized material on tests and examinations), submitting the same work for different classes without permission of the instructors; using false information (including false references to secondary sources) in an assignment; improper or unacknowledged collaboration with other students, and plagiarism (including improper use of artificial intelligence programs). Tyndale University takes seriously its

responsibility to uphold academic integrity, and to penalize academic dishonesty. Please refer to the [Academic Integrity website](#) for further details. Students must review the policies and procedures regarding Artificial Intelligence (AI) outlined in [Academic Calendar](#) and consult guidance from their course instructors.

For proper citation style, consult [Citation Guides](#) for different styles. Students are encouraged to consult [Writing Services](#).

Students should also consult the current [Academic Calendar](#) for policies and expectations on Attendance and Classroom Expectations, Academic Honesty, Gender Inclusive Language in Written Assignments, Late Papers and Extensions, Return of Assignments, and Grading System.

Turnitin Text-Matching Software

Tyndale has a subscription to Turnitin, a text-matching software that ensures the originality of academic writing and verifies the proper citation of all sources. The instructor for this course will use Turnitin for assignments submitted through your course resource page at classes.tyndale.ca. Upon submission, you will receive a summary that includes your submitted files along with a similarity report generated by Turnitin. Please be aware that Turnitin can also detect AI-generated content from tools like Grammarly, so students should be mindful of when using such software. It's advisable to confirm with your instructor before using any AI tools into your assignments. Below are some useful resources:

- [Student](#) Guides for Turnitin via classes.tyndale.ca course resource page
- Interpreting Similarity ([Guide](#), [Video](#), [Spectrum](#))

Research Ethics

All course-based assignments involving human participants requires ethical review and may require approval by the [Tyndale Research Ethics Board \(REB\)](#). Check with the Seminary Dean's Office (seminaryoffice@tyndale.ca) before proceeding.

Late Papers and Extensions Policy

All papers and course assignments must be submitted by the due dates indicated in the course syllabus. Unless the instructor already has a policy on grading late papers in the course syllabus, grades for papers submitted late without an approved extension will be lowered at the rate of two-thirds of a grade per week or part thereof (e.g., from "A+" to "A-," from "B" to "C+"). Please note that some programs, such as cohort-based or intensive courses, may follow a different policy due to the nature of the program.

Faculty may not grant an extension beyond the last day of exams for the semester. Requests for extensions beyond this date must be addressed in writing to the Registrar by filling out the [Extension Request Form](#). The application will be considered only in cases such as a death in the family, medical emergency, hospitalization of oneself or immediate family member or

prolonged illness requiring treatment by a physician. Factors such as assignments for other courses, holidays, and technology-related difficulties are insufficient grounds for requesting an extension.

A temporary grade of incomplete (“I”) may be granted by the Registrar. Once an extension is granted, it is the student’s responsibility to contact the instructor and make satisfactory arrangements to complete the outstanding work. A grade of “F” will be recorded for students who do not complete the outstanding work by the deadline.

E. COURSE EVALUATION

Tyndale Seminary values quality in the courses it offers its students. End-of-course evaluations provide valuable student feedback and are one of the ways that Tyndale Seminary works towards maintaining and improving the quality of courses and the student’s learning experience. Student involvement in this process is critical to enhance the general quality of teaching and learning.

Before the end of the course, students will receive a MyTyndale email with a link to the online course evaluation. The link can also be found in the left column on the course page. The evaluation period is 2 weeks; after the evaluation period has ended, it cannot be reopened.

Course Evaluation results will not be disclosed to the instructor before final grades in the course have been submitted and processed. Student names will be kept confidential, and the instructor will only see the aggregated results of the class.

F. LIBRARY RESOURCES

[Tyndale Library](#) supports courses with [e-journals](#), [e-books](#), and the [mail delivery of books](#) and circulating materials. See the [Library FAQ page](#).

G. GRADING SYSTEM & SCALE

For each course’s grading rubric, please refer to your course syllabus or classes.tyndale.ca. For general grading guidelines, refer to Seminary [Grading System & Scale](#).