

TS5101 Survey of Church History

3 credits.

'A' Livestream

Video on Demand

On Campus with Remote Prof



November 9 – December 18, 2026
Term B / Fall 2026
Days/times: Monday and Wednesday
10AM – 1PM (EST) / 9AM – 12PM (SK)

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Course Goals

Course Description

A survey of the history of Christianity from the early Church through to the present. The course covers the main developments of spirituality, evangelism, worship, organization, and interaction with society.

Relationship to Horizon's Mission

As part of Horizon's mission to prepare competent Christian leaders, this course provides students with historical knowledge and research skills that will help them grow in the following:

- *Contextual Awareness* is demonstrated by a maturing orthodox Christian worldview, a healthy self-understanding, and engagement of people and cultures with wisdom and discernment.

Course Competencies and Learning Outcomes

To demonstrate competency in *Contextual Awareness* students will:

- 1) Identify and describe where and how key events, people, and movements fit in the history of Christianity.
 - *Assessment:* Textbook Quiz; Final Competency Assessment
- 2) Explain how knowledge of Church history is important for ministry and Christian life.
 - *Assessment:* Research Paper; Liturgy/Mass Reflection, Final Competency Assessment
- 3) Analyze a contemporary Liturgy experience in light of Church history.
 - *Assessment:* Liturgy/Mass Reflection
- 4) Research a specific topic in Church history.
 - *Assessment:* Research Paper

Course Work

Textbook for the Quiz and Final Competency Assessment

McGrath, Alister E. *Christian History: An Introduction*. 1st edition. Malden, MA; Oxford: Wiley, 2013.

[DTL](#)

Textbooks for the Short History Assignment and Liturgy/Mass Reflection

Ferguson, Everett. *Church History. Volume One: From Christ to the Pre-Reformation: The Rise and Growth of the Church in Its Cultural, Intellectual, and Political Context*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Academic, 2013.

[DTL](#)

Woodbridge, John D., and Frank A. James III. *Church History. Volume Two: From the Pre-Reformation to the Present Day: The Rise and Growth of the Church in Its Cultural, Intellectual, and Political Context*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2013.

[DTL](#)

Olson, Roger E. *The Story of Christian Theology: Twenty Centuries of Tradition & Reform*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1999.

[DTL](#)

****While students have the benefit of accessing many of their textbooks online through the [Digital Theological Library](#), they will not have access to the Digital Theological Library upon graduation. Therefore, we encourage students to purchase select textbooks to build their personal library.**

1. Textbook Quiz – 20%

You are required to carefully read the entire textbook: **Alister E. McGrath, *Christian History: An Introduction***.

You must demonstrate familiarity with the material in this textbook before you are assessed in the Final Competency Assessment. This will be evaluated through a textbook quiz on Populi.

The quiz is designed to help you:

- Reinforce your knowledge of church history
- Expand your global understanding of church history
- Prepare for other course assignments
- Prepare for the final competency assessment

Quiz Details

- The quiz is open book and will be completed on Populi
- You will have up to **three hours** to complete it

Competency Requirement

To be eligible and prepared for the Final Competency Assessment, students must demonstrate initial competency on the textbook quiz by achieving a score of at least 70% on their first attempt.

- Related learning outcome: #1.
- **Assignment length:** reading + 3 hours for quiz.
- **Due date:** Friday, December 4, 2026

2. Research Paper – 35%

Write a *paper* on a key person, an important movement, or an important event in Church history.

Your work must include:

- A clear thesis statement (must be approved in advance and submitted on Populi under “Research Paper Thesis Statement” by Friday, November 13, 2026).
- An introduction and conclusion.
- Footnotes throughout (for all paraphrasing, summaries, and quotations).
- A bibliography.
- At least two scholarly sources that presents a view contrary to your thesis.

For the first three-quarters of your work, you should:

- Explain who the person was, what the movement was, or what happened in the event.
 - For a **person**, you should situate them historically by noting their time and place, outline key biographical details, and explain their significance, contributions, character, and spiritual life within Church history.
 - For a **movement**, you should describe its historical context and origins, identify key figures and developments, and evaluate its cultural impact, trajectory, and overall importance for the Church.
 - For an **event**, you should explain its background and causes, describe what occurred and who was involved, and assess its outcomes and significance within the broader course of Church history, including a brief personal reflection.

- Describe its historical significance in the development of Christianity.

For the final quarter, you should:

- Provide your personal reflection on the topic's contemporary significance.
- Explain how studying this person/movement/event helps you understand or engage with today's church context.
- You may reflect on current church issues, implications for ministry or Christian life, or practical lessons for the church today.

Sources (minimum 10 [scholarly sources](#))

You must use at least ten scholarly sources. Dictionaries do not count as scholarly sources. Your sources must include:

- Relevant chapters from Alister E. McGrath, *Christian History: An Introduction*
- Relevant chapters from Roger E. Olson, *The Story of Christian Theology: Twenty Centuries of Tradition & Reform*
- Relevant chapters from either:
 - Everett Ferguson, *Church History, Volume One*, OR
 - John D. Woodbridge & Frank A. James III, *Church History, Volume Two*
- At least two encyclopedia or dictionary articles
- At least two academic journal articles.
- At least two relevant primary sources produced by, about, or during the person, movement, or historical event being researched.

As you write your paper:

- Assignment length: 10-12 pages (minimum 2500 to maximum 3000 words), [not including](#) your bibliography, footnotes or title page.
- Students are expected to read 300-400 pages for this assignment. Please document your reading in the paper of your bibliography by indicating specific pages read in each source plus the total for that source.
- Follow the [Horizon & MCS Format Guide](#) for submitting assignments.
- Related learning outcome(s): #2, 4.
- **Assignment length:** 10-12 pages (minimum 2500 to maximum 3000 words).
- **Due date for Thesis:** Friday, November 13, 2026.
- **Due date for final project:** Monday, January 4, 2026.

3. Liturgy/Mass Reflection – 25%

For your liturgy reflection paper, you will first visit an *Oriental (Armenian, Syriac, Coptic) Eastern Orthodox (Bulgarian, Georgian, Greek, Polish, Russian, Serbian, Ukrainian), Eastern rite (Greek) Catholic, or Roman-Catholic Church* for Sunday Worship service (Divine Liturgy/Mass) or for evening vespers (usually Saturday). Base your assignment on a visit that you make during this course (not based on a previous experience). To complete the assignment:

- When you attend, note these issues of respect: Do not “take notes” like a tourist (especially on your phone), but participate as much as you are able. You may wish to take

pictures, with permission only, *after* (not during) the service and include a few with your reflection paper.

- Write a 4–5-page (max 2500 words) *Liturgy/Mass Reflection* paper.
- Include the date (must be after November 27, 2026), time, and location of the service you attended on the title page. In your paper, you must demonstrate historical awareness by relating your experience to what you have learned in this class, using citations from both your class notes and the textbook.
- Footnotes and a bibliography are required when you refer to any source (book, website, email conversation, etc.).

In your *Liturgy Reflection* paper, you will relate your experience to what you have in this class by citing both the course material and the textbook. *Please do not complete your visit until after November 26.* In your reflection you might consider things like (but not limited to) the liturgy, the architecture, the iconography, the sacraments, the music, the theology expressed (in spoken words, written liturgy, image, song, but also in other ways). Do not simply report what you experience – what you liked or didn't like. Rather, you should draw on your knowledge of history to explain why things were the way they were and (perhaps) how they differed or were the same as your typical experience in a church service.

Make sure you engage with the course material, the textbooks, and the church service experience as references for this paper. Include a minimum of ten citations in total: at least four citations from the required textbooks (one from each textbook), at least two citations from class materials, and four citations based on interactions with the service experience or with clergy and/or members of the congregation. All sources must be properly documented using correctly formatted footnotes, and a complete bibliography must be included at the end of the paper.

- Related learning outcome(s): #2, 3.
- **Assignment length:** 4-5 pages (max 2500 words).
- **Due date:** Wednesday, January 13, 2026.

4. Final Competency Assessment – 20%.

The final competency assessment will be based upon all the material covered in class and the readings. It will include both objective questions (e.g., true/false, multiple choice, place in order) and longer essay questions. Visit the “Final Competency Assessment” lesson on Populi to download a detailed study guide. No books, notes, or other sources may be used for this competency assessment; you will be asked to confirm that you did not use any sources on the final question on the competency assessment.

- Related learning outcomes: #1, 2.
- **Assignment length:** 6 hours allowed.
- **Date:** January 15 or 16, 2026.

Video-on-Demand (VOD) Student Requirements

As indicated on the course schedule, this class is offered by VOD. Students taking the course through VOD are required to indicate this during their course registration. While VOD

recordings are available for any student who may be absent from class, non-VOD students are expected to attend class live following the class attendance policy.

- For this course, VOD students have the same assignment due dates as in-class students.
- By Saturday at 11:59PM each week, VOD students are required to watch and engage with all lecture content and in-class activities from the previous week's class. VOD students will submit a 2–3-minute video report that 1) affirms you have watched the required recording, 2) summarizes one thing you learned that will help you reach the course learning outcomes, and 3) explains at least one question you had after watching the class recording.
- VOD submission dates:
 - **Week 1:** Lectures from November 9 and 11 – due by November 14
 - **Week 2:** Lectures from November 16 and 18 – due by November 21
 - **Week 3:** Lectures from November 23 and 25 – due by November 28
 - **Week 4:** Lectures from November 30 and December 2 – due by December 5
 - **Week 5:** Lectures from December 7 and 9 – due by December 12
- Students registered to attend by VOD will fulfill the course attendance requirements through their video report submissions. They must submit their VOD reports on time to be registered as present for class.

Estimate of Time Investment (individual time investments may vary)

	<i>Time (approx.)</i>	<i>Due Date</i>	Assignment Weighting
Class Engagement	30 hours	n/a	
1. Textbook Reading Quiz	25 hours	Dec. 4	20%
2. History Paper	35 hours	Jan. 4 (Thesis Nov. 13)	35%
3. Liturgy/Mass Reflection	20 hours	Jan. 13	25%
4. Final Competency Assessment	10 hours	Jan. 15 or 16	20%
TOTAL	120 hours		

All assignments are due at 8pm ***ET time***, unless otherwise indicated.

Class Plan

1. **Introduction**
 - a. Introduction to the course: Why is history important?
 - b. Overview of the course and syllabus clarification
2. **The World Before Christ**
 - a. The Hellenistic Oikoumene
 - b. The Pax Romana
 - c. The Hebrews and Judaism
3. **The Beginning of the Church – Apostles and the Apostolic Fathers**
 - a. The Acts of the Apostles: The Early Church after Jesus
 - b. The Early Establishment of the Church
 - c. The Hebrews and Judaism
4. **The Church Under Pressure**
 - a. Early Persecution and Conflict

- b. The Apologists and Heresies
 - c. The Formulation of Doctrine
- 5. **The Imperial Church**
 - a. Further development of the Doctrine
 - b. Constantine and the New Empire: Christendom
 - c. Councils and Creeds
- 6. **The Medieval Church**
 - a. The Early Medieval Church
 - b. The Divided Church
 - c. The Late Middle Ages
- 7. **The Protestant Reformation**
 - a. Preconditions for the Protestant Reformation
 - b. The Protestant Reformation and the Peace of Westphalia
 - c. Colonization and Missionary Work
- 8. **The Enlightenment**
 - a. Preconditions for the Enlightenment
 - b. The Enlightenment Project
 - c. The Enlightenment and Christian Theology
- 9. **The Brave New World**
 - a. Fragmentation
 - b. Modernity: The Era of Certainty and Further Fragmentation
 - c. The Great Awakenings
- 10. **Christianity After the Holodomor and the Holocaust**
 - a. The Rise of Ideologies and the Two World Wars
 - b. The Sexual Revolution and the Fall of the Iron Curtain (Late 20th Century)
 - c. Christianity in the Early 21st Century

- Assignments will not be accepted after January 18, 2026.

Academic Policies

General Guidelines for the Submission of Written Work

Please see the [Horizon](#) & [MCS](#) Format Guide for assignment submission, grammar, and formatting guidelines. The length of papers should fall within +/- 10% of the stated length. Papers that fall outside the length guidelines may not be graded. Assignments should be submitted via Populi under *Submissions* (not *Comments*). The resource at this [link](#) explains how to submit assignments on Populi.

Late Assignments and Extensions

Please contact the professor well in advance if you would like to request an adjustment to any of your due dates. No extensions will be granted beyond the end of the course unless approval is granted by Horizon's Assistant Academic Dean.

A late penalty will be assessed for all overdue assignments: 1-3 calendar days late, penalty of 10%; 4-6 calendar days late, penalty of 20%. After six days late, an assignment receives a grade of 0.

Grading

Grade	Percentage	GPA	Descriptor
A+	97-100%	4	Exceptional
A	93-96%	4	Excellent
A-	90-92%	3.7	Excellent
B+	87-89%	3.3	Good
B	83-86%	3.0	Good
B-	80-82%	2.7	Good
C+	77-79%	2.3	Satisfactory
C	73-76%	2.0	Satisfactory
C-	70-72%	1.7	Satisfactory
D+	67-69%	1.3	Minimal Pass
D	63-66%	1.0	Minimal Pass
D-	60-62%	0.7	Minimal Pass
F	<60%	0	Failure

Academic Integrity

Students learn best when practicing academic integrity. A lack of integrity is displayed in acts such as deception, abuse of confidentiality, cheating, inappropriate collaboration, or plagiarism. Plagiarism occurs when a student presents the words or ideas of another person or an artificial intelligence (AI) tool in such a way as to give others the impression that it is their own words or ideas. In academic writing, there should be no doubt which words or ideas are the student's and which are drawn from other sources or AI. Students are expected to submit their own original work and give due recognition to sources from which all substantial phrases, sentences, or even ideas are drawn. Note also that you may not submit work done in one course to satisfy the requirements of another course (unless both instructors agree beforehand to accept such work). See [here](#) for examples of plagiarism and further guidelines in the [Student Handbook](#).

Horizon has a subscription to software that ensures the originality of academic writing, verifies the proper citation of all sources, and detects AI-generated content. When you submit an assignment, you will automatically receive a summary on Populi that includes your submitted files along with an originality score (a high originality score is positive).

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Usage

In keeping with the Academic Integrity policy above, students must disclose on the title page of all assignments whether or not they have used AI and how they have used it. If the assignment has no title page, the student must disclose this to the instructor by some other means, such as in a comment on Populi. Students are expected to follow the policy for acceptable use of AI that is published in the [Student Handbook](#).

Accessible Learning Services Information

Horizon is committed to provide safe and inclusive learning environments which equalize the opportunity for students with disabilities to meet the requirements of the institution, programs, and courses. The application for Academic Accommodations begins with a student disclosing a medical diagnosis or professionally documented learning disability during the application process. Enrolled students may contact Horizon's Academic Accommodations Coordinator,

Richelle Bekkattla at rbekkattla@horizon.edu. All Academic Accommodations will adhere to the Guiding Principles listed in the [Student Handbook](#). Students with documented accommodations on file pertaining to accessing course readings in alternate formats are encouraged to contact the librarian for assistance with as much advanced notice as possible.

Class Attendance

Students should attend all classes in order to facilitate competency development. Students are expected to be present through the delivery method that they registered for. Students registered to attend on-campus or via livestream must be present for the full duration of a class period to be marked as present for the class. Students registered to attend by VOD must submit their VOD reports on time to be marked as present for class. In the case of illness or other unforeseen circumstances, students may miss up to twenty percent of the total class time (e.g., one day of a module course, two 3-hour classes, etc.) without academic penalty. Students who are absent for more than this will automatically fail the course. Students wishing to be exempted from this policy due to extenuating circumstances may make an academic appeal, where they will need to document and verify those circumstances. Students who miss a class are responsible to get missed notes or handouts from another student, rather than from the professor.

Livestreaming Etiquette

Students taking the course through livestreaming are required to indicate this during their course registration. While livestreaming access is available for on-campus students who are unable to attend class due to illness, on-campus students are expected to attend class in person following the class attendance policy.

If attending class online via livestream, in order to be marked present for class, you must keep your camera on and stay present and attentive throughout the class session, extending the gift of full engagement. Access your class with a computer (preferably) or tablet, not a cell phone. Arrive to class on time, and dress as you would if you were attending class on campus. Join the class from a quiet space with minimal background noise, and mute your microphone until you wish to speak to the class.

Use of Technology

Horizon encourages the use of electronic devices in the classroom to enhance learning. Careful consideration must be given to privacy issues, copyrighted materials, and the general care and concern for others. Please respect the following classroom policies:

- Please use online access for course learning only. This is a matter of respect for the instructor's teaching, your own learning, and fellow students who may be distracted by other uses.
- Students should secure permission from the instructor to record any teaching material. This includes PowerPoint slides, white board illustrations, notes, and any form of audio or video.
- Student feedback is a valuable input for course improvements. Please resolve any classroom grievance about the instructor or course with the instructor personally, through the Horizon College and Seminary grievance procedures, or the Populi-based course evaluations. It is inappropriate to air classroom grievances on a social media platform.
- When instructors use recording mechanisms in the classroom, recorded materials will be used for the sole purpose of instruction (potentially including future online video courses)

and cannot be released to any social media outlet without the written consent of the students whose images have been recorded.

- In general, it is not acceptable to share photographs or videos of students in the classroom setting without permission from those whose images appear in such media.

Library Support and Research Assistance

Library staff are available to meet with students (online or in person) who need assistance with

- citing sources and identifying credible resources;
- developing research and information literacy skills;
- searching DTL and other library resources.

Bibliography

Web Pages

Christian Classics Ethereal Library. Accessed June 19, 2026. <http://www.ccel.org/>.

History of Christianity Virtual Reading Room. Accessed June 19, 2026.

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Encyclopedias and Dictionaries

Benedetto, Robert, ed. *The New Westminster Dictionary of Church History. Volume One: The Early, Medieval, and Reformation Eras*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2008.

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Farmer, David Hugh. *The Oxford Dictionary of Saints*. 5th revised edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011.

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Jackson, Samuel Macauley, ed. *The New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge*. 13 vols. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1949–1954.

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Core Texts

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