

LONG BEACH CHRISTIAN COLLEGE, MTI (SPRING/SUMMER 2026)

**HIS 140** CHURCH HISTORY I (UNITS 3) 7-WEEK COURSE



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**Course Syllabus Mondays, April 27 – June 8, 2026 | 7-9pm**

**WELCOME LBCC SCHOLARS** to Church History I open to all academic levels. The course lectures are designed to expand your knowledge and understanding of the first 2,000 years of Christian church history. *“The church both shapes the world and is shaped by it” (C.W. Powell).*

**Meeting Information:** All meetings for this course will be conducted via **Online, Zoom Video**. In terms of academic credit, these are semester-length courses but offered over an intensive 7-week format (**approx. 12-18 hours/week**).

**Zoom link will be sent to registered students only**

**Course Timeline:** Orientation during class 7:00-7:30pm (Monday, April 27, 2026) course syllabus, texts, materials, reading prerequisites and timelines. **Classes will meet on Mondays for “Seven Weeks,” April 27 - June 8, 2026.** Students should check appropriate (separate) course Syllabus, if enrolled “Back-to-Back” in both Church History I & II courses. **Course content may be changed without notice.**

*“It is said that those who are ignorant of history tend to repeat it. While I do not know if that is always true. I do know that it is important to have knowledge of church history.” Gene Taylor (A Study of Church History)*

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#### SYLLABUS—LECTURE, READING, ASSIGNMENTS & DISCUSSION

**Professors:** Dr. Mary Butler, Ph.D. and Dr. Elizabeth “Lisa” Cooper, D. Min.

**Virtual Classroom Format:** The course is a continuous study encompassing both Church History I & II. In this learning environment teachers and students can present and view course materials, lessons, engage, and interact with one another. Each class will consist of lectures, readings, student presentations, videos and/or current events.

**Required Course Texts:** (1) Nelson’s Christian Cornerstone Series, Exploring Church History, Author Howard F. Voss; *LBCC professors will make pdf version available via email attachment* (2) Christian History Made Easy, by Timothy Paul Jones, PhD; Rose Bible Basics Series, Rose Publishing ISBN-13 978-159636-328-1, (2009). Note: professors may also provide miscellaneous course materials for study

**Required Background Readings:** “Life of Christ” [Story of Jesus Christ: His Birth, Life, Death, and Resurrection \(gospelway.com\)](#); [Church History in Brief | Christian History Magazine \(christianhistoryinstitute.org\)](#)

**Recommended Literature (but not required):** (1) Christian History Time Line (2) Christianity Cults & Religions (3) Denominations Comparison—Rose Publishing; all pamphlets. The Story of Christianity Volume 2: The Reformation to the Present Day, Justo L. González, (paperback, 550 pages), ISBN 978-06-185588-7

**Prerequisites:** The Acts of the Apostles, New Testament; Chapter 2:1-41

**Course Description:** This course will present an examination (survey, summary) of Christian Church History, groups, institutions, and major figures beginning in the early first-century into the modern age. Exploration will involve studies of religious thought, creeds, rise of denominations, and movements and analysis of how churches are founded, established, and organized. Students will examine the mission, structure, and growth of the church through the lens of Scripture, historical movements, major figures, and key institutions.

Special emphasis will be given to standard theological themes, studied in their historical context, with people, places, and events, as well as the spread of the church into Asia Minor, Africa, Europe, and America. Students will be exposed to the foundational questions of how, why, where, when, who and what shaped both the expansion and decline of the church across various periods. Building on this foundation, students will engage in an in-depth study of Christian thought, creeds, denominational rise, and significant church movements.

**Course Goals:** To present a series of lectures, readings, terms, timelines, definitions, and facts to help students get the most out of Christian Church History. Identify challenges, evaluate religious thought, social beliefs; review truths based on Biblical evidence.

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Ensure students familiar with the church fathers, men both orthodox and heretic, whose ideas shaped the church, defended it from its enemies, and brought about doctrinal and ethical development. Most importantly, involve students in virtual discussions.

**Course Objectives:** As a result of completing this *7-week course*, students will be able to understand (articulate), explore, debate, and discuss each of the following:

- Facts as they were recorded in the historian's minds, in dispensation of times, and how they changed within the dispensation of time to maintain their existence.
- Studies of religious thought, creeds, rise of denominations, movements, and analysis from the time of Christ to the Church today.
- Synoptic (general view) of the formation of creeds, doctrines, cults, occult, priest, elders, pastors, bishops, and the pope.
- Major issues, controversies and challenges facing Christianity today, and
- Properly explain the origin of many religions and cults.
- Origin, doctrines and the founding fathers behind each organization and the purpose of their existences.

**Current Events/Field Trips/Discussions:** At the beginning of each class meeting, there will be a discussion period during which the class will work to compare, and contrast historical events and people related to the current course topic. Please come prepared to share at least one current event on Christianity and religious life with the class—professor will advise.

Your current event must come from a news report aired or published by a credible (avoid fake news), professional news organization. Make sure you watch documentaries, online news articles, social media, magazines, newspapers and/or field trips to art museums, historical church sites, people, etc. Come to class ready to talk. Your performance during the current events discussion will be part of your participation grade.

Each current events discussion will begin with the stories shared by student volunteers. After that, the instructor might begin "cold calling" students. Be prepared for the instructor to ask follow-up questions about the current events you share. Your fellow classmates might have some follow-up questions for you, as well.

**Course Assignments:** Over the course of the semester, lecture, textbook readings, student presentations (current events, field trips, discussions), and Scriptural approaches to learning may be employed—an effort to establish open, critical, and exciting online meeting environments. Students are expected to become familiar with Church History II by organizing material according to lectures and assignments.

**Classroom engagement:** Participation is strongly encouraged in the learning and evaluation process. Come to class prepared to discuss the assigned readings for each week. Again, at the conclusion of this course, students should have developed their own materials according to assignments. *You have up to 7 weeks to complete this course.*

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Since a course such as this may have students from a variety of denominational backgrounds, a proper respect for differing views is to be consistently maintained. Inappropriate behavior will not be tolerated and will be dealt with accordingly.

Reading and research are “*absolutely*” essential and fundamental to the work of 7-week courses! **For Course Assignment Schedule refer to page “Six.”**

**Requirements and Course Assignments**—based on assigned texts listed above.

- Classroom participation, discussion/dialogue, active attendance (20%)
- Required textbook reading, approximately 50 - 75 pages per week (20%)
- Current Events/Field Trips (20%)
- Reflection Paper, no longer than two pages (20%)
- Short Project (20%)

**All assignments and/or any exams are to be completed by the deadlines announced in this syllabus or during class.**

**Criteria for Course Grading:**

- **A** 100-90% = exceptional work
- **B** 89-80% = superior work
- **C** 79-70% = average work
- **D** 69-60% = poor work
- **F** 59-0% = unacceptable/non-passing work

**Attendance:** Regular attendance is required and necessary to achieve success in this 7-week class. Do not miss except for emergencies. Students are expected to arrive via Zoom for meeting (virtual classroom) and stay until the end of class. Each student is responsible for contacting the instructor or the Registrar’s office regarding any attendance matter.

**Student Honesty/Plagiarism Statement:** Plagiarism (intellectual theft) is seen as a shameful act and is not acceptable at LBCC. Each member of the academic community should do one’s own work. In essence, be careful when using another writer or speaker’s material (work). Give credit!

**Expectations:** All students are expected to produce college-level work.

1. Please turn cell phones off (vibrate) prior to coming to virtual classroom.
2. Respect other students no food or drink in virtual classroom (will allow water bottles).
3. Bring appropriate materials to every meeting/virtual classroom.
4. Read the required text/handouts, come prepared for each class.
5. Participate in discussion (dialogue), be attentive (listen), “Don’t be camera shy.”
6. Work should have student name and date, be completed (typed), turned in on time

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#### Official Withdrawal Deadline:

- Deadline for Withdrawal from a course is at the end of the first week of class.
- Failure to submit a timely Notice of Withdrawal (email) request at that time could result in an *Incomplete grade* listing on Student Transcript.
- Failure to submit the required Notice of Withdrawal (email) before the deadline could result in students remaining **academically and financially responsible for the class.**

#### Refund Policy:

- Refunds to students will be determined (prorated) based on date Notice of Withdrawal processed through LBCC website.
- 100% refund for payments made before or during week one (1) of Class.
- 0% refund - for payments made during and beyond week two (2) of class.

**NOTE:** Students who drop a class after the second week will be charged full tuition for the class. Students may seek approval to transfer a percentage of paid tuition to a class, to be taken in **the following semester, but approval is not guaranteed.**

**Course Assignment | below page 6**

## LONG BEACH CHRISTIAN COLLEGE, MTI (SPRING/SUMMER 2026)

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#### Course Assignment Schedule | Mondays

The Lectures/Readings/Videos are *designed to provide LBCC learners with a "Survey of the Study."* The information below is provided as a guide for reading and discussion.

**IMPORTANT:** Participation, completion of assignments, and examinations will affirm that you have done the required readings. Read this Introduction [Church History in Brief | Christian History Magazine \(christianhistoryinstitute.org\)](#)

#### First Day of Instruction & Introduction to Church History

**WEEK ONE:** Monday, April 27

#### Part 1—THE CHURCH IN THE APOSTOLIC AGE

**Chapters 1** Life of Christ (Century of Jesus and the Apostles)

- Apostolic Age (30-100 AD)
1. The Beginnings, Historical Backgrounds – Philosophy and Empire
  2. Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection, Ascension (c. 30 AD)
  3. Pentecost (Power) the Coming of the Holy Spirit, sometimes known as the Birthday of the Church (Origin of the Church); the Gospel went everywhere, Ethiopian Eunuch and others took gospel to Africa (Acts 8)

#### Church History II Focus (Lecture, students read and/or watch video)

4. Apostolic Fathers, Missions, Conversion of the Roman World
5. Council of Jerusalem (Acts 15), Gentile Churches accepted alongside those in the Jewish tradition
6. Widespread Roman Persecutions, Israel, and Empire. Nero sets fire to Rome, blames Christians (64 AD); early church struggles to survive
7. Close of Apostolic Age

Early Christianity is generally reckoned by church historians to begin with the ministry of Jesus (c. 27–30) and end with the First Council of Nicaea (325). It is typically divided into two periods: **the Apostolic Age (c. 30–100, when the first apostles were still alive) and the Ante-Nicene Period (c. 100–325).**

Christianity was mainly an urban movement meeting in homes for worship, fellowship, and teaching. Expanding in Southern Europe and reaching Britain

**WEEK TWO:** Monday, May 4

#### Part 2—THE CHURCH IN EARLY DEVELOPMENT (Century of the Church Fathers—Expansion)

**Chapters 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9** Christianity is Authentic – The Age of the Christian Roman Empire

- Ante Nicene Age (100-325 AD)
1. Strengthening Believers - The Apostolic Fathers
  2. Defense of the Faith - The Apologists
  3. Attacks Against Error - *The Polemicists*
  4. Early Development of Theology – *The Scientific Theologians*
  5. Attacks Without – *The Persecutions*

The Third Century (201-300) was era of Great Persecutions—Monasteries begin as church suffers severe persecution. Embrace the world or be distinguished. *The Blood of the Martyrs is the seed of the Church* Tertullian.

**"The Word of God will Enhance the Quality of Your Life"**

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#### Church History II Focus (Lecture, students read and/or watch video)

6. Attacks from Within - Early Heresies, Doctrinal Controversies: Legalism/Judaizing, Ebionism, Gnosticism, Docetism, Montanism, Novatianism, Manicheism, Marcionism, Eutyches "Eutychianism," Nestorianism
7. Monarchical Episcopate, Monarchianism
8. Roman Emperor Constantine the Great Rules—converts to Christianity.

Constantine calls first ecumenical Council at Nicaea (c. 312 AD). *This council maintained that Christ is both divine and human. In him divinity became man in order that we might become like him. Christianity became official Roman religion 380.*

#### Part 2 – Continuation

Nicene Age  
(325-600 AD)

1. Arianism denounced by Catholic, Protestant, Orthodox Churches
2. The "Catholic" Church
3. The Papacy, Growth of the Clergy
5. The Nature of Christ

#### Church History II Focus (Lecture, students read and/or watch video)

6. Changes in Worship, Changes in Doctrine
7. Augustinianism
8. Books for the New Testament, Formation of the Canon
9. Theological Debate, Councils and Early Creeds
10. Final Struggles

**WEEK THREE:** Monday, May 11

#### Part 3—THE CHURCH IN THE MIDDLE AGES—Medieval Europe

Chapters 10, 11, 12, 13, 14

#### Byzantine Christianity-The Supremacy of the Papacy, Episcopacy, Sacerdotalism

The Middle or  
Dark Ages-Decay  
(600-1500 AD)

1. Early Developments in the Middle Ages
2. Gregory the Great (becomes pope), Successors, Rising Papal Power
3. Church vs. State Alliance (800-1073), The Political Papacy
4. Beginnings of the Holy Roman Empire, Boniface takes gospel into Germany, Iconoclastic Controversy (c. 701-800 AD)
5. Emperor Charlemagne encourages learning all over Europe (800)

#### Church History II Focus (Lecture, students read and/or watch video)

6. Islam begins—Challenge (Muhammad writes the Koran and Islam spread rapidly in North Africa and Asia Minor).
7. Crusades – were made to dislodge the Muslims
8. The Great Schism—Eastern and Western Churches (Byzantium) formerly separate (1054), **split the main faction of Christianity into two divisions, Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox.**
9. Cistercians began (1098)
10. The Medieval Papacy at its Height (1073-1305)
11. John Wycliffe translated the Bible into English
12. Decline of the Medieval Church

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*At the end of Tenth Century 50% of former Christian areas were under Islam. Christianity expanded into Norway and Greenland and the Ukraine.*

#### Part 3 – Continuation

##### Church History II Focus (Lecture, students read and/or watch video)

13. Scholasticism
14. The Inquisition - infamous for the severity of its tortures and its persecution of Jews and Muslims.
15. Different Religious Approaches\*
16. Renaissance – Rediscovery (1401-1500 AD)
17. Decline of the Papacy, Medieval Church
18. The Babylonian Captivity
19. Early Reformers, Papal Reform and Decline
20. The Spanish Inquisition - guarded the orthodoxy of Catholicism in Spain, chiefly by the persecution of Jews and Muslims

\*The church in East and West begin to separate over difference in emphasis and practice. The teaching of the church in the West had a more judicial focus while the teaching of the church in the East is more relationship focused.

**WEEK FOUR:** Monday, May 18

#### Part 4—THE CHURCH IN THE REFORMATION- Luther discovered verse in Romans 1:17 Chapters 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21

- |                                   |  |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| The Reformation                   | 1. Forerunners of the Reformation - Beginnings   |
| Age and Revival<br>(1500-1600 AD) | 2. Europe on the Eve of the Reformation  |
|                                   | 3. Triumph of Lutheran Reformation – Martin Luther (1483-1546)                         |
|                                   | 4. The Swiss Reformation, National Reformations;                                       |
|                                   | 5. France and England, Scotland and Netherlands, Calvinism, Anti-Calvinistic Doctrines |

##### Church History II Focus (Lecture, students read and/or watch video)

6. The Church of England, English Sects - Final Protestant Struggles
7. Counterattack (*The Counter-Reformation and Thirty Years War*)

**WEEK FIVE:** Monday, May 25 (**Memorial Holiday**)—no meeting in person, Zoom class recording

#### Part 5—THE CHURCH IN MODERN EUROPE

**Chapter 22 The Seventeenth Century (1601-1700)** - The church expands by emphasizing personal encounter with the Living Christ

- |                                  |  |
|----------------------------------|--|
| The Modern Age<br>(1600-2000 AD) | 1. An Age of Orthodoxy, Philosophic Influences   |
|                                  | 2. Intra-Church Movements  |
|                                  | 3. John Smith began to teach adult baptism in England; this would in time lead to the formation of the Baptist churches (1608) |
|                                  | 4. King James Version published (1611)   |

##### Church History II Focus (Lecture, students read and/or watch video)

5. Pilgrims sailed New England, establish Christian Community (1620)
6. George Fox, began Quaker Movements (1647)
7. The age of reason and revival (1648-1789)

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*Philip Spencer brings revivals to the Lutherans by teaching people to personally read the Scriptures and meet together in small groups for prayer and fellowship.*

#### **Part 5 Continuation**

#### **Church History II Focus (Lecture, students read and/or watch video)**

**Chapter 23 The Eighteenth Century (1701-1800)** - Protestant Revivals begin emphasizing Personal holiness and Devotion to Christ.

8. An Age of Rationalism, Spiritual Revivals
9. New Organizations and Philosophies
10. Count Nickolas Zinzendorf (Moravians), John Wesley, Charles Wesley, George Whitfield (Methodism), Jonathan Edwards,
11. Restoration Movements, Protestantism
12. The Sunday School Movement begins in 1780
13. Revivals, Missions (1789-1914)

**Chapter 24 The Nineteenth Century (1801-1900)** - The Church faces the advent of new ideas in the form of deism humanism, and scientific rationalism. And the century of Missionary endeavors including Revivals, Missions, and Holiness.

14. An Age of Science, The Restoration Movement, 1, 2, 3
15. David Livingstone went to Africa, Hudson Taylor went to China
16. Salvation Army, Parachurch organizations YMCA, Major Cults
18. Trends into 20<sup>th</sup> Century

**WEEK SIX:** Monday, June 1

#### **Part 6—THE CHURCH IN AMERICA**

#### **Chapter 25 An Era of Settlement - The Seventeenth Century (1601-1700 AD)**

*Twenty slaves of African descent are sold in Jamestown, Virginia—the first Africans sold on American shores (1619). Less than a decade later, the first slaves are brought into New Amsterdam (later, New York City). By 1690, every colony has slaves.*

#### **Chapter 26 Breaking of Ties and Revival - The Eighteenth Century (1701-1800 AD)**

The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts (SPG) begins missionary work among Native Americans, later African slaves (1701), *John Wesley to Georgia, Native Americans, African slaves (1730)*

1. The Great Awakening (George Whitefield's preaching)
2. The first recorded black congregation (1758), Black Baptists (1773), Methodists denomination requires all its itinerate preaches to set their slaves free (1780)
3. Jarena Lee known for her powerful preaching, missionary work (1783)
4. Absalom Jones, Richard Allen leads small group of Africans out of St. George church after being forced to give seats to white congregants (1787)
5. The Slavery Issue—U.S. Constitution declares slaves "three-fifths persons (1789)

#### **Chapter 27 Revival Social Concerns, and Liberalism - The Nineteenth Century (1801-1900)**

6. Approximately 75, 000 slaves escape to the North using the Underground Railroad (1831-1861)
7. Charles G. Finney, Dwight L. Moody

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8. The Civil War begins (1861)
9. Abraham Lincoln issues the Emancipation Proclamation, free all slave in rebelling states (1863)
10. Protestantism, Pentecostalism
11. The Confederate States surrender, and the United States passes the Thirteenth Amendment, which abolishes slavery, except for convicted criminals (1865)

#### Church History II Focus (Lecture, students read and/or watch video)

The Age of Ideologies (1914-Present) **Twentieth Century 1901-2000 AD.** The Holy Spirit comes afresh to the church bringing expectancy and empowerment. Pentecostal groups began to teach that evidence of the baptism of the Holy Spirit was speaking in Tongues.

12. Charles Parham and William Seymour
13. Azusa Street Revival (1906)
14. Cameron Townsend founded Wycliffe Bible Translators
15. Billy Graham began his evangelistic ministry (1948)
16. Martin Luther King, Jr. (1929-1968) and others set up Southern Christian Leadership Conference, a leading engine of Civil Rights Movement
17. Charismatic renewal movement across denominations (1960s)
18. Jesus movement young people won to Christ (1960s and 1970s)

People began to be able to communicate over vast distances through radio and television. Oral Roberts, C. S. Lewis, and Mother Teresa began to live the Christian life in front of a worldwide audience.

**WEEK SEVEN:** Monday, June 8

#### Part 7—THE CHURCH IN THE CONTEMPORARY WORLD

#### Church History I, II Final Focus, Brief Lecture (All Assignments Due)

#### Chapters 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37

1. External Opposition to Christianity
2. Developments Within Christianity (*Ecumenical Efforts*)
3. Developments Within Christianity
4. Developments within Christianity (*Evangelical Advance*)
5. Response to the Gospel (*Europe, The Far East, Africa, the Muslim World, and Latin America*)
6. Doctrinal Developments
7. The Challenge Before the Church

Students need to have a storehouse of the facts of the church's history and to be able to arrange those facts in terms of principles. Our mission is to take the Gospel to the world; our discipline is to be diligent that what we take is the truth.

In Christian theology, **Ecclesiology** is the study of the Church, the origins of Christianity, its relationship to Jesus, its role in salvation, its polity, its discipline, its eschatology, and its leadership. Use this Resource: [A BRIEF CHURCH HISTORY.pdf \(toknowchrist.com\)](https://www.toknowchrist.com)

Review Optional—Choose from these: Athanasius, Augustine, Tyndale, Luther, Calvin, Bunyan, Edwards, Brainerd, Newton, Simeon, Judson, Spurgeon, Paton