

“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	SPRING/SUMMER, 2026
Course Title	HISTORY OF CHRISTIANITY I
Course Code	HIST 0561 1A
Date	From May 4, 2026 to June 12, 2026
Delivery Format	ASYNCHRONOUS ONLINE
Class information	The course is web-based asynchronous with no fixed class time.
Instructor	TAYLOR MURRAY, PhD Email: tmurray@tyndale.ca
Office Hours	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

Long before the year 1500, global Christianity stretched from Iceland and Ireland to Mongolia and south to Ethiopia. Across this vast area, people of faith confronted dramatically differing and constantly changing circumstances. They made decisions about culture, political power, the spiritual life, the canon of Scripture, and doctrine, decisions that shaped the flow of human history, and they experienced both success and loss on the grand scale. The narrative of the course and the reading from materials they wrote carries students into the dynamism of early Christian life.

II. LEARNING OUTCOMES

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

1. Acquire comprehensive knowledge of the global history of Christianity from the Apostolic Age to the Protestant Reformation.
2. Evaluate critically and reflectively the events, people, themes, and issues encountered in the course.
3. Synthesize and relate the historical insights with contemporary realities.
4. Analyze critically and comparatively primary and secondary sources.
5. Conduct independent research and communicate complex content in clear academic writing.

III. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

A. REQUIRED READING

Gonzalez, Justo L. [*The Story of Christianity, Volume One: The Early Church to the Reformation*](#). Revised and Updated. HarperCollins: New York, 2010.

Hamman, Grace, and Beth Allison Barr. *Jesus through Medieval Eyes: Beholding Christ with the Artists, Mystics, and Theologians of the Middle Ages*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Reflective, 2023.

Primary Source Readings

The Primary Source Readings will be located on the course resource page at classes.tyndale.ca.

B. SUPPLEMENTARY / RECOMMENDED READING AND TOOLS

Heath, Gordon L. *Doing Church History*. Toronto: Clement, 2008.

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. Discussions and Interactions: Due every assigned week; 30% of final grade

On the weeks with discussion forums, Dr. Murray will offer questions and themes for class discussion in an online forum. Each student is expected to interact with the ideas presented by the instructor and the other students in order to advance the discussion and synthesize the various ideas presented in that week's lessons. There will be three forums in total. The student's initial post should be no more than 500 words. If there is "no post" after 11:59 pm on the second Saturday of the forum, the student will receive a "zero" for that forum. The goal of these online discussions is to assess each student's grasp of concepts, ability to integrate ideas, and comfort with conversing on the topics in a satisfactory manner. There is a lot of information to take in during each week and this part of the class is designed to help the students synthesize all the information they are presented with in manageable ways. (Note: It is recommended that students submit their initial posts by the end of the first week in order to allow time to interact with comments and other posts.)

Students will be randomly divided into groups for these discussion forums. Forums will be open for two weeks, during which time students are expected to post and interact with one another.

Grades will be assessed as follows: 5% for the original post; 5% for interactions with other students.

2. Church Visit Reflection Paper: Due on May 23 at 11:59pm; 20% of final grade

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 some of the following: Which language was utilized in the worship? How was the music structured? Did people sing along? Were the songs more contemporary/modern in tone or were they more ancient? Was there a sermon or homily? Did the teaching differ from what you might hear in your own church? What kind of imagery did the church feature? Was the church architecture different? How involved were the laity? Overall, what differed from your tradition? What was the same? 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.

3. “Jesus Through Medieval Eyes” Reflection Paper: Due June 6 at 11:59pm; 20% of final grade

Each student will read *Jesus Through Medieval Eyes* by Grace Hamman and write a 1500-word reflection paper comparing medieval perceptions of Jesus to those of modern Christians today. Using Hamman’s work as a jumping-off point, each student will need to answer the following question: *How would a medieval person view modern depictions/understandings of Jesus?* In order to successfully answer this question with nuance and sophistication, consider how Jesus is depicted in today’s world.

- What dominant images or ideas do we have about Jesus today?
- How do those differ from the images/ideas that you encountered in the medieval perspective? Which ideas of Jesus do you believe are very similar?
- How do you see medieval ideas still influencing present-day beliefs about Jesus?
- If a medieval Christian could travel into the future and visit us now, what kind of critiques would that person have regarding Christian perspectives today?

It is not required to use sources beyond Hamman’s work; however, if it helps the student better understand the historical context or discussion, the student is encouraged to engage with other material. The purpose of this assignment is to help the student get into the mindset of the medieval Christian and begin to understand the difference between modern and medieval worldviews. The style of bibliography/footnotes will follow the Chicago/Turabian style.

4. Research Paper OR Historical Sermon: Due June 28 at 11:59pm; 35% of final grade

Research Paper: The student will compose a 1500-word research paper on a person, event, or idea of particular interest to the student. The paper must be on a person or event from the time period covered in this class (up to the year 1500). This paper should include an explanation of the topic, it should include research with both primary and secondary sources and should summarize why the topic is important to the development of Christianity. A good general rule is two sources per page and a bibliography is to be included at the end. The style of bibliography/footnotes will follow the Chicago/Turabian style.

OR

Historical Sermon: The student will pick one of the Primary Readings (cannot use one that was used for the analysis assignment) located at the top of the Course page. Using that document, the student will provide a recorded 20-minute sermon explaining the person, event, or idea contained within that primary reading to a contemporary audience. (NOTE: If the student wishes to focus on some other historical figure/event not contained in the posted primary sources, they may do so; however, please check with Dr. Murray to ensure it is suitable for the assignment.)

The sermon needs to include an explanation of the topic, evidence of research with both primary and secondary sources, and should 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 present-day Christians should know. The student must also submit a written document to the course page that includes the following: An introduction that explains the intended audience for this sermon and why the student believes this is an important sermon for this particular audience; an outline of the sermon; and an annotated bibliography of no less than 10 sources with a one to two sentence description of how each source informed the sermon. Do not go over the 20-minute time limit. Remember: you must submit the video AND the written document noted above in order to receive full marks for this assignment.

D. SUMMARY OF ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

Evaluation is based upon the completion of the following assignments:

Assignment	Due	%
1. Discussion Forums	Various	30 %
2. Church Visit Reflection Paper	May 23	20 %
3. "Jesus Through Medieval Eyes" Reflection Paper	Jun 6	20 %
4. Research Paper OR Historical Sermon	Jun 28	30 %
Total Grade		100 %

IV. COURSE SCHEDULE, CONTENT AND REQUIRED READINGS

Class 1:

- Introduction to History and the World of Christ
Gonzalez: Chs. 1–2
- The Earliest Christians
Gonzalez: Chs. 3–4, 7, 9

Class 2:

- Imperial Christianity
Gonzalez: Chs. 5–6, 8, 10–14, 19
- Dissident Christians
Gonzalez: Chs. 15–18, 20

Class 3:

- Fall of Rome
Gonzalez: Chs. 21–24, 27
- Global Spread of Christianity
Gonzalez: Chs. 25–26, 28

Church Visit Reflection Paper Due May 23

Class 4:

- Rise of Islam
- Investiture and Reform
Gonzalez: Ch. 29–30

Class 5:

- Crusades
Gonzalez: Ch. 31
- Changes in Global Christianity

“Jesus Through Medieval Eyes” Reflection Paper Due June 6

Class 6:

- Christendom
Gonzalez: Chs. 32–33, 35
- Proto Reformers
Gonzalez: Chs. 34, 36–38

Research Paper/Historical Sermon Due June 27

V. SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Asbridge, Thomas. *The First Crusade: A New History*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005.
- Christiansen, Eric. *The Northern Crusades*. 2nd ed. New York: Penguin, 1998.
- Cobb, Paul. *The Race for Paradise: An Islamic History of the Crusades*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014.
- Duffy, Eamon. *Saints and Sinners: A History of the Popes*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006.
- Evans, G. R. *John Wyclif: Myth and Reality*. Downers Grove: IVP, 2005.
- Ferguson, Everett. *Backgrounds of Early Christianity*. 3rd ed. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003.
- Firnhaber-Baker, Justine. *House of Lilies: The Dynasty that Made Medieval France*. New York: Basic, 2024.
- Gabriele, Matthew and David M. Perry. *The Bright Ages: A New History of Medieval Europe*. New York: Harper, 2021.
- Gonzalez, Justo L. *Church History: An Essential Guide*. Nashville: Abingdon, 1996.
- Hillenbrand, Carole. *The Crusades: Islamic Perspectives*. New York: Routledge, 1999.
- Holcomb, Justin S. *Know the Heretics*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2014.
- Kee, Howard Clark. *Who are the People of God? Early Christian Models of Community*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995.
- MacCulloch, Diarmaid. *Christianity: The First Three Thousand Years*. New York: Penguin, 2010.
- MacMullen, Ramsay. *Christianizing the Roman Empire (AD 100–400)*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1984.
- Madden, Thomas F. *The New Concise History of the Crusades*. Updated Student Edition. Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield, 2005.
- Madigan, Kevin. *Medieval Christianity: A New History*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2015.
- Meeks, Wayne A. *The Moral World of the First Christians*. Philadelphia: Westminster, 1986.
- Muir, Elizabeth Gillan. *A Women's History of the Christian Church: Two Thousand Years of Female Leadership*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2019.
- Pegg, Mark Gregory. *Beatrice's Last Smile: A New History of the Middle Ages*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2023.
- Pelikan, Jaroslav. *The Emergence of the Catholic Tradition (100–600)*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1971.
- _____. *The Growth of Medieval Theology (600–1300)*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978.
- Philips, Jonathan. *The Fourth Crusade and the Sack of Constantinople*. London: Penguin, 2004.
- Riley-Smith, Jonathan. *The Crusades: A Short History*. 3rd ed. New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2014.
- Rosenwein, Barbara H. *A Short History of the Middle Ages*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2009.
- Tyerman, Christopher. *God's War: A New History of the Crusades*. London: Penguin, 2007.

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](#).