The Baptist Movement: Heritage & Polity
MPL 311 — Fall 2016

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                      Office Hours: Mondays 4:00-6:00 pm in Room 307 or by appointment

Summary
Baptists generally lack official theology or ecclesiology. So questions of identity and practice cannot be settled by appeal to official dogma. A more inductive method is required: by studying the history of church-craft in Baptist communities and their underlying values we learn to operate creatively in contemporary Baptist structures and to provide leadership going forward in churches, mission societies, associations, conventions, and denominations.

Goals
1) Explore the evolution of Baptist theology and practice and how this heritage shapes contemporary Baptist church life.

2) Learn to “think like a Baptist” regarding questions of church craft, navigating the tensions inherent in the traditions regarding central questions of identity and authority.

3) Satisfy the history and polity requirement for ordination in a Baptist denomination.

Assignments and Course Requirements
1) Response Papers: Due every Saturday, except as noted: a response paper, 1-2 pp., distributed to instructor and all class participants via the course Moodle site. The response paper should identify one theme or issue from the week’s readings and contrast at least two points of view exemplified. The Saturday due date gives participants two days to read them before class.

2) Attendance and Participation: Students should arrive prepared to discuss all assigned readings as well as all classmates’ response papers. Although discussions will generally proceed in a voluntary way, the instructor reserves the right to call on participants to respond.

3) Course Paper: a 10-15 pp. paper analyzing a text as illustrative, formative, or significant as a Baptist document: What is its “Baptistness?” How does the text illustrate a particular strain of or moment in the Baptist tradition? How does it help shape the tradition in its evolution? The text should be either a selection from the “course paper texts” list (found later in this syllabus) or a text approved ahead of time by the instructor. This paper is due to the instructor Monday, November 21 via Moodle.

4) Final Paper: a 2-3 pp paper answering the “Baptist polity” question from the ordination examination of the student’s denomination. If the student is not currently a member of a Baptist denomination, or if their denomination has no formal ordination exam, then respond to the question:

“What would you identify as the primary challenge of being a Baptist leader today? How will you respond to that challenge in your ministry, given your understanding of Baptist history and polity?”

This paper is due to the instructor Friday, December 9 via Moodle.

About written assignments: Students are invited to think creatively and synthetically about the topics raised in the course. Generally, there are no “right answers” in a tradition defined by debate, conflict and oppression. At the same time, students are expected to produce work meeting
generally accepted academic standards, conventions, and formats. Proper use and citation of sources is required.

**Schedule of Meeting Topics & Reading Selections**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Reading Selections</th>
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<tr>
<td>Sep 12</td>
<td>Course Introduction, 16th Century Precursors</td>
<td>No response paper due.</td>
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<td><strong>But please read the following before the first meeting…</strong></td>
<td><strong>Baptist Roots:</strong> #3 &amp; 4 (Hubmaier &amp; Sattler)</td>
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<td><strong>Baptist Ways:</strong> ch 1 &amp; 2</td>
<td><strong>A Baptist Manual:</strong> ch 1</td>
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<td>Sep 19</td>
<td>17th Century (English &amp; Colonial Baptists, Associations)</td>
<td><strong>Baptist Roots:</strong> #8, 9, 11-14 (Smyth, Helwys, Bunyan, Milton, Williams, Hutchinson)</td>
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<td><strong>Baptist Ways:</strong> ch 3 &amp; 4</td>
<td><strong>Baptist Roots:</strong> #8, 9, 11-14 (Smyth, Helwys, Bunyan, Milton, Williams, Hutchinson)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sep 26</td>
<td>18th Century (Great Awakening, Religious Liberty, Missions)</td>
<td><strong>Baptist Roots:</strong> #17, 19, 20, 25 (Carey, Corbin, Leland, Davis)</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Baptist Ways:</strong> ch 5 &amp; 6</td>
<td><strong>Baptist in the Balance:</strong> pp 286-310 (Dunn, Rogers, Thomas)</td>
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<td><strong>Online:</strong> Edwards</td>
<td><strong>Baptist Ways:</strong> ch 3 &amp; 4</td>
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<td>Oct 3</td>
<td>19th Century (Civil War, Development)</td>
<td><strong>Baptist Roots:</strong> #24, 26, 28-30 (Spurgeon, Wayland, Carroll, Turner, Perry)</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Baptist Ways:</strong> ch 8 &amp; 9</td>
<td><strong>Baptist Roots:</strong> #24, 26, 28-30 (Spurgeon, Wayland, Carroll, Turner, Perry)</td>
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<td>Oct 10</td>
<td>20th Century (Controversies, African American Denominizations)</td>
<td><strong>Baptist Roots:</strong> #31, 39 (Johnson, Lester)</td>
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<td><strong>Baptists in the Balance:</strong> pp 124-138 (Hastey)</td>
<td><strong>Online:</strong> Reeve, Fosdick</td>
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<td><strong>Baptist Ways:</strong> ch 11 &amp; 16</td>
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<td>Oct 17</td>
<td>Reading Week, no class meeting or response paper due.</td>
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**Local Church Polity**

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Reading Selections</th>
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<tr>
<td>Oct 24</td>
<td>Nature &amp; Administration of the Local Church</td>
<td><strong>Because of the off week, there is double reading for this session.</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Church Administration in the Black Perspective</strong> (entire)</td>
<td><strong>A Baptist Manual:</strong> ch 3-5</td>
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<td>Oct 31</td>
<td>Theological Foundations for the Church, Its Ordinances, and Ordination</td>
<td><strong>A Baptist Manual:</strong> ch 2, 6, 8</td>
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<td><strong>Online:</strong> ABCUSA Ministers Council Code of Ethics</td>
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VALUES IN TENSION

Nov 7 Authority in a Relational Polity
_Baptists in the Balance:_ pp 141-150, 260-272 (Marshall, Ammerman)
Online: Harrison, Everton, Marty, “Autonomy and Interdependence”
_A Baptist Manual:_ ch 10

Nov 14 No class meeting; course paper work

Nov 21 Thanksgiving break, no class meeting. **Course Paper due to instructor via Moodle.**

Nov 28 Evangelism and Justice, “Orthodoxy and Progressivism”
_Baptist Roots:_ #23, 35, 36, 44, 45, 48, 50 (Armstrong, Montgomery, Rauschenbusch, Mays, King, Costas, Yoder)
_Baptists in the Balance:_ 326-329 (Lotz)
Online: Morikowa, Gibson, Moulton

DENOMINATION

Dec 5 Regional, National, and General Structures
**No response paper due.**
_A Baptist Manual:_ ch 9, 11*, 12
*The chapter 11 reading may be substituted with other material.
Online: http://www.abc-usa.org/missiontable/ (view online)

Dec 9 End of term. **Final Paper due to instructor via Moodle.**

Primary Texts

Freeman, Curtis, James McClendon, and Rosalee Velloso Ewell, eds. _Baptist Roots: A Reader in the Theology of a Christian People_. (Judson Press, 1999)


Course Paper Texts - select one

Benjamin Keach. _Instructions for Children: or, The Child’s and the Youth’s Delight_ (online).
Anna Trapnel. _The Cry of a Stone_ (online).
John Bunyan. _The Pilgrim’s Progress_, first part.
Mechal Sobel. _Trabelin’ On: The Slave Journey to an Afro-Baptist Faith._
Edwin Gaustad. _Baptist Piety: The Last Will and Testament of Obadiah Holmes._
Eva LaPlante. _American Jezebel: The Uncommon Life of Anne Hutchinson, the Woman Who Defied the Puritans._
Kenneth S Greenberg. _The Confessions of Nat Turner; and Related Documents._
Charles Haddon Spurgeon. _An All-Round Ministry._
Helen Barrett Montgomery. _The Empire of the East._
Walter Rauschenbusch. _For God and the People: Prayers of the Social Awakening._
Howard Thurman. *Jesus and the Disinherited*.
Kyle Haselden. *Mandate for White Christians*.
Nancy Ammerman. *Baptist Battles: Social Change and Religious Conflict in the Southern Baptist Convention*.

*American Baptist Quarterly*, Volume XII no 2 (June 1993) - Jitsuo Morikowa.

**Other References to Know About**


† ———. *Down by the Riverside* (Judson Press, 2002).

Harrison, Paul M. *Authority and Power in the Free Church Tradition*.


† Great books for adult education in the local church.