

**HSTY 6300/ECCO 5020: History of the Evangelical Covenant Church**  
**North Park Theological Seminary**  
**3 credit hours**  
**June 1-5, 2026**

*“An acute and honest memory of our heritage, understood in depth, is prerequisite to all forward movement of the Covenant Fellowship.” -Zenos Hawkinson*

**INSTRUCTOR**

Dr. Mark Safstrom, Seminary Lecturer  
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Office hours: by appointment

**PURPOSE**

This intensive course is specifically designed for people who are in various stages of the orientation process to satisfy credentialing requirements for ordination or commissioning within the Evangelical Covenant Church. It is structured to provide students with a knowledge and appreciation of the history of this church, from its roots in Europe to its current multiethnic American context. Students will apply skills of historical research and analysis to their own local congregational history and explore the significance of this history to the present mission and identity of the Evangelical Covenant Church as a whole.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES**

- 1. Factual knowledge.** Students will be able to identify and explain key figures, events, and themes from the history of the Evangelical Covenant Church.
- 2. Historical interpretation.** Students will be able to (1) critically read primary texts; (2) evaluate and formulate historical arguments on the basis of original source evidence, for the purpose of
- 3. Appropriation in the life and mission of the Evangelical Covenant Church.** This includes a growing capacity to (1) interpret the present life and mission of the Covenant Church in light of its past, (2) demonstrate application of historical content and interpretation within their ministry as Covenant leaders.
- 4. Stewardship.** Students will grow in commitment as stewards of their denominational history.

**STRUCTURE**

There are three components to this course:

1. Pre-coursework
2. A week long intensive course, concluding with an exam
3. Post-coursework

## REQUIRED READING

### Acquire copies of these books. Can be purchased online, new or used:

1. Glenn P. Anderson, ed. *Covenant Roots: Sources and Affirmations*. Second Edition. Covenant 1999. (ISBN: 978-0910452465)
2. James R. Hawkinson, ed. *Glad Hearts: Voices from the Literature of the Covenant Church*. Covenant 2003. (ISBN: 978-0910452915)
3. Mark Safstrom, ed. *The Swedish Pietists: A Reader: Excerpts from the Writings of Carl Olof Rosenius and Paul Peter Waldenström*. Eugene, Oregon: Pickwick 2015. (ISBN: 9781625647382)
4. Philip Jacob Spener. *Pia Desideria*. Eugene, Oregon: Wipf & Stock 2002. (ISBN: 1-57910-886-5 or ISBN: 9780800619534)

### Copies of these will be made available in pdf:

1. Karl A. Olsson. *A Family of Faith*. Chicago: Covenant 1975. (Also available used - ASIN: B000LX155A or ASIN: B0030KZO5I)
2. Additional articles (see item 6 under Pre-Course Work)

## COURSE POLICIES

1. **Attendance.** As this is an intensive course and we only meet together on 5 days, it is imperative that all students are present for all synchronous meetings. Missing one day would represent 1/5 of the attendance grade for the course, for example.
2. **Assessment submission.** All assessments are due 11:59pm on the date indicated. Submit all work through Canvas links located under the "Assessment Submissions" module. All work submitted late without prior arrangement will receive a 1/3 grade reduction each day (i.e., an A would receive A- after one day late, B+ after two, etc.). Work submitted over two weeks late will receive a zero.
3. **Incomplete.** The grade of "incomplete" is given in exceptional circumstances only, such as an unexpected hospitalization, and must be arranged through a completed Incomplete Agreement form (including signatures from the instructor and academic advisor) on file prior to the final day of the semester. Busyness does not constitute an adequate cause for an incomplete.
4. **Communication.** Please feel free to email me with any questions and concerns. I will make every effort to respond to your emails within 24 hours, M–F. Before emailing a question, be sure the answer isn't contained in the course syllabus or assessment guidelines (Canvas). Please exercise professionalism by including a proper salutation and close.
5. **Meeting with instructor.** Students are welcome to schedule an appointment to speak in person or by phone or video chat (Google meet) at any point in the semester. If you are having any difficulties in the course, I encourage you to be in contact in the soonest instance so we can problem solve together.

## ACADEMIC HONESTY

In keeping with our Christian heritage and commitment, North Park University is committed to the highest possible ethical and moral standards. Just as we will constantly strive to live up to these high standards, we expect our students to do the same. To that end, cheating of any sort will not be tolerated. Students who are discovered cheating are subject to discipline up to and including failure of a course and expulsion. Our definition of cheating includes but is not limited to:

1. Plagiarism – the use of another’s work as one’s own without giving credit to the individual. This includes using materials from the internet.
2. Copying another’s answers on an examination.
3. Deliberately allowing another to copy one’s answers or work.
4. Signing an attendance roster for another who is not present. For a fuller discussion of academic dishonesty, review the Seminary Academic Catalog, pp. 25–27.

### **ACCOMMODATIONS**

Students with disabilities who believe that they may need accommodations in this class are encouraged to contact the program’s office as soon as possible to ensure accommodations are implemented in a timely manner. For further information, see Seminary Academic Catalog, pp. 19–20 and “Disability Resources” provided through North Park’s Office of Student Enrichment Services and Support.

### **TITLE IX**

Students who believe they have been harassed, discriminated against, or involved in sexual violence should contact the Dean of Students (773-244-5565) or Director of Human Resources (773-244-5599) for information about campus resources and support services, including confidential counseling services. As a member of the North Park faculty, we are concerned about the well-being and development of our students, and are available to discuss any concerns. Faculty are legally obligated to share information with the University’s Title IX coordinator in certain situations to help ensure that the student’s safety and welfare is being addressed, consistent with the requirements of the law. These disclosures include but are not limited to reports of sexual assault, relational/domestic violence, and stalking. Please refer to North Park’s Safe Community site for contact information and further details.

### **ASSESSMENT**

#### **PRE-COURSE**

Five reading logs (reading notes) 25%

#### **INTENSIVE**

Intensive participation 10%

In-class presentations (as scheduled) 10%

One reading log 10%

Exam 10%

#### **POST-COURSE**

Final research project 35%

## PRE-COURSE WORK

**Reading and Note-Taking Assignments.** Since this class is an intensive, with class time confined to one week, it is essential that students complete most of the reading in advance. As these texts vary in nature, note that there are specific instructions for each book. Your notes will be essential in our ability to have productive discussions together in class. **You will find a reading guide worksheet on Canvas for each of the 6 assignments below, as well as a place to submit it once completed.** (*The due dates below are to space out the reading; these assignments will not be counted late until June 1.*)

1. Due May 4 – Olsson, *A Family of Faith*
2. Due May 11 – Anderson, *Covenant Roots*
3. Due May 18 – Spener, *Pia Desideria*
4. Due May 25 – Safstrom, *The Swedish Pietists*
5. Due June 1 – Covenant Affirmations (booklet, 2005) and James Hawkinson, *Glad Hearts*
6. Due June 4: Topical Articles
  - a. Choose 2 articles/documents from each category (6 total) all available on Canvas:
    - i. **Unity in Diversity** – “The Covenant Constitution and Its History”; “The Covenant and the American Challenge”; Safstrom, “C.O. Rosenius and the Reading Culture of the Mission Friends”; Clifton-Soderstrom, “Covenant Freedom: Freedom for All or Free-for-all?” and Responses
    - ii. **Women and Gender** - Women’s Ordination, Special Issue of the Covenant Quarterly; Jean Lambert, “Open Letter to Covenant Women” (1989); Catherine Gilliard, “The Pastor—Catherine Gilliard” (Yes, chapter 16); Mark Tao, “Politics of Abortion”; Rune Dahlén, “Pastoral Education and Controversy in the Mission Covenant of Sweden”
    - iii. **Race and Ethnicity** – Kurt W. Peterson, “Transforming the Covenant, Special Issue of Covenant Quarterly”; Ramelia Williams, “The Evangelical Covenant Church’s Response to the Civil Rights Movement, 1963–1968”; Douglas Cedarleaf, “Thy Kingdom Come, Thy Will Be Done” (1963); Covenant Companion Commentary on the Black Manifesto (1969); Hauna Ondrey, “The 1992 LA Crisis as an Accelerant for Change in the ECC”
  - b. For each article/issue you read, consult the reading guide worksheet to keep a running list of insights, questions, comments, and reflections.
  - c. We will also have a group presentation activity during the intensive in which your group will present on one whole category of these documents, so it will be important to at least briefly glance at all of them beforehand.

## INTENSIVE

**Intensive Class Schedule:** The class will be held on North Park's campus **June 1-5, 2026**, each day **between 8:00 am and 5:00 pm (CST)**. A more detailed outline of topics and activities will be distributed prior to the start of the intensive.

## EXAM

**An exam** will be given on the last day of the intensive. This will involve key word identification (short answer or multiple choice questions) and a couple short essay questions.

## POST-COURSE WORK

**Final project, due July 7 at noon (Central Time)** – This project enables you to pursue an in-depth research project on Covenant history in a way that is relevant to your scholarly interests and/or ministry context. You may choose one option from those listed below. All options must incorporate both original research and application. As part of your submission, you will include **a minimum of 10 sources** (should include course materials), with at least one of these being from the Covenant Archives and Historical Library online collections.

### 1. Academic Option – Research Paper

- **A research paper** on a focused theme within Covenant history. Papers should be 10–12 pages (3000 words) double spaced, 12 pt. font, Times New Roman, and use footnotes and bibliography for citations. Limit the use of lengthy quotations. In the final section of your paper, address the contemporary relevance of your research to Covenant life, mission, and identity. Excellent papers may be recommended for publication in the *Covenant Quarterly*, subject to acceptance of and further revision requested by its editor.

### 2. Applied Ministry Option – Portfolio

**Choose 3 of the options below** (total word count of all 3 together should equal at least 3000 words):

- **A 4-week adult education series on Covenant history**, including desired learning goals and outcomes, an overall outline, and detailed lesson plans/lecture notes for 2 of the 4 weeks. Include reference to the readings that your series is based upon, such as any readings that you will have the participants complete together and discuss, or the historical quotes or excerpts that you will show in your presentation and have the participants discuss.

- **A series of web pages** for your congregation's website, explaining Covenant identity for a general audience. You will supply information on your congregation's history in a way that explains how your congregation fits within

the broader Covenant story. The content should incorporate historical images from your congregation (at least 6) with captions.

- **A manuscript of a sermon** to be preached on Covenant Founders' Day (on or near Feb. 20). Accompanying the sermon should be the **order of worship** including the scriptures selected, prayers appropriate to the day, and at least 3 musical and liturgical selections from *The Covenant Hymnal* (1996) or the *Covenant Book of Worship* (use the CBW for guidance in shaping your order of worship, as well). As part of your submission, please include notes (in red) to the instructor explaining your rationale in including each of these elements in the service.

- **"Making connections" book review** – write a review of one of the following books by contemporary Covenant authors and set that book in historical context. As you review the book, you should address these questions: How are theological and ecclesiological issues that are relevant to Covenant identity discussed? As these books are not about Covenant history explicitly, how can these books be seen as reflecting themes from a Covenant context, whether complementary or critical? To the extent that these connections are only indirectly discussed by the author (or not at all), how might you add to this discussion in a way that draws from Covenant history to make explicit connections and move the conversation forward? How might you use this book in your congregational context?

Books may include the following:

Michelle Clifton-Soderstrom, *Angels, Worms and Bogeys: The Christian Ethic of Pietism*

Dominique DuBois Gilliard, *Rethinking Incarceration*

Chris Gehrz and Mark Pattie, *The Pietist Option*

José Humphreys, *Seeing Jesus in East Harlem*

Brenda Salter McNeil, *Credible Witness or Becoming Brave*

Al Tizon, *Whole and Reconciled*