DRAFT HSTY 6300: History and Theology of the Evangelical Covenant Church /
ECCO 5020 History of the Evangelical Covenant Church

North Park Theological Seminary
Spring 2027, 7:00–8:30pm CT, Thursday
3 credit hours, hybrid virtual (Teams)

"Without the future the past is idolatry, without the past the future is but a continuing and uncertain innovation." (Sigurd Westburg)

INSTRUCTOR

Jonathan Wilson, Adjunct, Church History
jmwilson@northpark.edu | 224-276-1889
Office hours: Immediately following class and by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course provides students a deeper knowledge and appreciation of the history and theology of the Evangelical Covenant Church, from its roots in Sweden to its current multiethnic reality. Students will apply skills of historical research and analysis to their own denominational history and explore the significance of this history to the present mission and identity of the Evangelical Covenant Church.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

1. **Factual knowledge**. Students will explain key figures, events, and themes from the history of the Evangelical Covenant Church.
2. **Historical interpretation**. Students will evaluate and formulate historical arguments on the basis of original source evidence.
3. **Appropriation**. Students will interpret the present life and mission of the ECC in light of its past.
4. **Stewardship**. Students will grow in commitment as stewards of and active participants within their denominational history.

This course contributes toward the following MDiv learning outcomes: (1) Interpret the Christian historical and theological tradition for appropriation in the life and mission of the church; (2) engage diversity and exhibit growth towards inter-cultural competence for ministry reflective of God's global redemptive work.

COURSE STRUCTURE

This is a "hybrid" course with both asynchronous and synchronous learning components:

1. Asynchronous learning (Friday through Wednesday): one hour total (average) of assigned reading and videos of course lectures, and, thirty minutes total (average) of posting discussion in response to weekly themes, or other activities as scheduled.
2. Synchronous learning (Thursday pm): Our 1.5-hour live sessions will be devoted to interactive engagement with the week's content and themes. Some of these periods may include guest speakers on various topics as their schedules will determine.
3. This course is three semester hours. These three hours are accounted for in this hybrid of asynchronous and synchronous engagement. Work on assignments and projects accounts for additional time, in semesters, up to six hours additional per week should be budgeted (two hours for every one hour of class), with more hours per week becoming likely towards the end of the semester as larger projects come due.

4. We have 13 weeks of class contact (schedule is printed below) and three weeks interspersed without contact: Covenant Midwinter (January 21), Spring Break Reading Week (March 11). Holy Week (March 25) Take advantage of these non-attendance weeks to work ahead.

REQUIRED TEXTS

1. Glenn P. Anderson, ed., *Covenant Roots: Sources and Affirmations*, **2nd edition** (Chicago: Covenant Publications, 1999). This collection of documentary and primary sources is found at covbooks.org (here for print version, here for ebook). Get the **second** edition.
2. James R. Hawkinson, ed. *Glad Hearts: The Joys of Believing, the Challenges of Belonging*. This compilation of extracts on various topics from 20th Century Covenant authors is no longer available for sale, however, I have recorded audio files and will make them available on Canvas as alternatives to some print articles.
3. Karl A. Olsson, *Family of Faith: 90 Years of Covenant History* (Chicago: Covenant Publications, 1975). This is our featured historical textbook and will be linked through Canvas to the Frisk Online Archives of Covenant Literature.
4. Articles, chapters, and other materials will be posted on Canvas. Some will be assigned specific for the course number HSTY 6300, and others to course number ECCO 5020. Students are responsible to know into which section they are registered.

COURSE POLICIES

1. **Attendance**. Only two absences are permitted without penalty to your final grade. More than two absences will result in a lowered grade; more than three absences will result in failure. Three late arrivals will be counted as an absence.
2. **Assessment submission**. All assessments are due 11:59pm in your time zone on the date indicated. Submit all work through Canvas links located under the week they are due. You may have a 48-hours no-questions-asked extension on one assignment. Otherwise, work submitted late 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. As preparatory for synchronous sessions, discussion post and responses cannot be submitted after their corresponding session.
3. **Incomplete**. The grade of "incomplete" is only given in exceptional circumstances, such as hospitalization, and requires a completed Incomplete Agreement form with, signatures from instructor and academic advisor, on file prior to the final day of the semester.
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. Please exercise professionalism by including a proper salutation and close.
5. **Meeting with instructor**. Students are welcome to schedule an appointment for a phone or video chat any point. 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 will receive a failing grade on the assignment and 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.
5. Use of ChatGPT or other AI composition software to impersonate individual assignments.

For additional information, see the Seminary Academic Catalog.

ACCOMMODATIONS

Your experience in this class is important to me. North Park is committed to creating inclusive and accessible learning environments consistent with federal and state law. If you have already established your accommodations, please share your accommodation letter with me so we can discuss how your accommodations will be implemented in this course. If you have not yet established services and have a temporary health condition or permanent disability that requires accommodations, please email the Disability Access Specialist or contact by phone (773-244-5737). Student Engagement facilitates the interactive process that establishes reasonable accommodations.

TITLE IX & EQUITY

In accordance with Title IX, North Park employees who become aware of any incident of discrimination, harassment or retaliation based on sex, gender, including pregnancy or related medical conditions, and other protected classes are required by law to notify North Park University's Title IX & Equity Team by submitting a report here. The Title IX Coordinator will respond and manage concerns about students. The Senior Director of Human Resources and Deputy Title IX Coordinator will respond and manage concerns about employees. More information can be obtained here: NPU's Discrimination and Harassment Policy.

INCOMPLETE GRADES

If, due to extenuating circumstances (specifically, pregnancy, illness, personal and family issues, military assignment, etc.), a student anticipates they will be unable to complete course work within the allotted time, that student may request a grade of incomplete from the course instructor before the last week of class clearly stating the reason(s) for this request. Overscheduling and/or lack of self-discipline are not considered extenuating circumstances. If the request is timely and meets the criteria, student and instructor will submit the incomplete grade form and the grade for that class will be listed as "I" until the last day of the following semester. If coursework is not submitted by the last day of the following semester the listing of "I" will automatically be changed to "F." For the full policy, see the Seminary Academic Catalog.

ASSESSMENTS AT A GLANCE (% of final grade)

Course Reflection papers	10%
Reading and class responses	15%
Book Presentation	15%
Mission Friends SWOT Analysis	10%
Oral history, OR, Archive Dive, OR, Site Visit	25%
Final project	25%

Letter grades are assigned according to scale printed in the Seminary Academic Catalog.

Reading and class responses (10% of final grade). For ten weeks of class as scheduled, students will spend 30 minutes writing reflective responses to questions on the week's themes and readings, found in the Canvas weekly modules. Responses should demonstrate familiarity with the week's material. Responses are due prior to the start of each class period as scheduled.

Reflection papers (15% of final grade). Papers should be 5 pages, double-spaced, using 12-point Times New Roman font.
Pre-course reflection: What characteristics constitute essential identity markers of the Covenant? To what degree is Covenant identity grounded in the denomination's history?
Pre-course reflection papers (due 1/16) should be based on your current impressions and knowledge and do not need to incorporate any reading or outside sources.

Post-course reflection: What significance does Covenant history have for Covenant identity and mission today? Does Covenant history belong to every Covenant member? If so, to what degree, but if not, how is our history is becoming irrelevant to who we are?
Post-course reflection papers (due 5/1) should integrate course learning.

Mission Friends SWOT Analysis (due 2/11, 10% of final grade)
SWOT stands for Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats. Using the information from Karl Olsson's *Family of Faith* and other data sources noted on Canvas for this assignment, the student shall construct a SWOT analysis of the pietist Swedish immigrant Mission Friends as a whole in the US (and Canada) 1870-1890. The assignment will include the degree to which the competing visions for the Mission Friends – stick with Augustana, follow the Ansgar vision, become Free, be absorbed into the Congregationalists, form the Mission (Evangelical) Covenant, enlarge on the strengths and opportunities and address the weakness and threats. Students will integrate the historical events and impacts of such things as the creation and immediate split in the Mission Synod, the publication by Waldenstrom of his atonement doctrine, and the assertive posture of the Free Church advocates, on the Mission Friends and on the emergence of the Evangelical Covenant.

Book Presentation (15% of final grade) Each student will read a Covenant theological book (HSTY 6300) or Covenant historical book (ECCO 5020) from the Frisk Online Archives, and then present a 10-minute overview and summary to the class. *Students may choose instead a book on an adjacent North American religious experience that has had historical and theological impact on the emerging Covenant Mosaic outside of ethnic Swedish streams*. It is permitted (encouraged) for the choice of book to dovetail with one's topic for the final project. Depending on class size, the ten minute presentations will either be taken as time-slots in the live class period, or if the class is large, students will post their presentation for the class to engage asynchronously. In the latter case, students may record and post, or compose a three page written report, for the class to engage. Rubrics and details for this assignment are found on Canvas.

Oral History Interview, Archive Dive, or Site Visit (25% of final grade). Each student will add new sources to Covenant historiography by choosing one of three methods for recovering stories from the past: 1) recording an interview with an historical actor (oral history); 2) Sifting sources that are available only in archives or rare book rooms; 3) visiting an historic site that keeps artefacts or documents locally. Details and rubrics of each of the three options are provided in Canvas. It is permitted (encouraged) that this assignment dovetail with one's choice of final research project.

Final Project (25% of final grade, due 5/11). While a research paper is always a valid option projects may also employ equivalent effort in other media, such as Powerpoint ® or Publisher ® narrated slides, or streamed video of the research presented as a lecture, or a documentary film. Instructions, rubrics, details, and proposed topics, are provided in Canvas.

COURSE SCHEDULE

The following abbreviations are used within the schedule: KO=Karl Olsson, *A Family of Faith*; *Roots*=Anderson, ed., *Covenant Roots*; C=Canvas.

1. **Jan 14** – Orientation to Course and Subject
   - **Read** KO, Introduction; [C]; (Audio Files available on all KO assigned)
   - **Watch** designated lecture (see Canvas module for link)
   - **Submit** pre-course reflection paper (1/16)

Jan 21 -Covenant Midwinter Thursday Evening, class will not meet

2. **Jan 28** – German Pietism
   - **Read** KO, pp. 3–9; Spener, *Pia Desideria*, part 3 (1675) [C]; Spener, new life in Christ [C]
   - **Watch** designated lecture (see Canvas module for link)
   - **Upload** first weekly response notes (30 minutes of informed, reflective writing)

3. **Feb 4** – Renewal in Sweden
   - **Read** KO, pp. 9–24; Scott & Rosenius, "What Is a Pietist?" (1842) [C]; Waldenström, "Sermon for the Twentieth Sunday after Trinity" (1872) [*Roots* 101–15]; Safstrom, "C.O. Rosenius and the Reading Culture of the Mission Friends" [C]
   - **Watch** designated lecture (see Canvas module for link)
   - **Upload** weekly second response notes (30 minutes of informed, reflective writing)

4. **Feb 11** – Mission Friends in America: Immigration & Organization
   - **Read** KO, pp. 25–39; *Roots* 7–58; Nyvall on Ethnic Colleges [C]
   - **Watch** designated lecture (see Canvas module for link)
   - **Upload** third weekly response notes (30 minutes of informed, reflective writing)
   - **SWOT Analysis due, SWOT discussion in class**

5. **Feb 18** – Early Identity & Mission
   - **Read** KO, pp. 41–67; *Roots* 74–81; 89–93;
   - Alaska issue of Friends of Covenant History Newsletter [C] ; Audio Alternative *Glad Hearts* selections [C]
   - **Watch** designated lecture (see Canvas module for link)
   - **Upload** fourth weekly response notes (30 minutes of informed, reflective writing)

6. **Feb 25** – Americanization & Generational Change
   - **Read** KO, pp. 69–88;
   - *Roots*, pp. 161–69; Audio Alternative *Glad Hearts* selections [C]
   - **Watch** designated lecture (see Canvas module for link)
   - **Upload** fifth weekly response notes (30 minutes of informed, reflective writing)

7. **Mar 4** – Conflicts over Biblical Interpretation
    - **Read** Elde, "The Hearth and the Chimney" [C]; Nyvall, "Let Us Keep Our Bible, pt 1" (1925) [C]; Lund, "The Authority of the Holy Scriptures" (1928) [all C]; Lundblad, "The Catalyst—Olga Lindborg" (*Yes*, chapter 4); **Audio alternative,** Glad Hearts selections [C]
    - **Watch** designated lecture (see Canvas module for link)
    - **Upload** sixth weekly response notes (30 minutes of informed, reflective writing)

Mar 11 No Classes, Spring Break "Reading Week"

8. **Mar 18** – World War II; Postwar Change and Conflict
    - **Read** KO, pp. 89–125; "*Biblical Authority and Christian Freedom* (1963): Full Report with Supporting Historical Documents" [C].
    - **Watch** designated lecture (see Canvas module for link)
    - **Upload** seventh weekly response notes (30 minutes of informed, reflective writing)
    - **Student Book Presentations due and discussion**

Mar 25– Maundy Thursday (Holy Week) No Class

9. **Ap 1** - 1960s: Civil Rights Movement & Seeds of Demographic Change
    - **Read** KO, pp. 127–51; Danielson, "Covenant Churches in Larger Metropolitan Areas Since 1930" (1964) [C]; Peterson, "The Transformation of the Covenant" [C]; Williams, "The Evangelical Covenant Church's Response to the Civil Rights Movement, 1963–1968" [C]; "A Pastoral Letter to the Churches of the Evangelical Covenant Church of America," *Covenant Yearbook 1963*, pp. 206–208 [C]; Cedarleaf, "Thy Kingdom Come, Thy Will Be Done" (1963) [C]; *Covenant Companion* Commentary on the Black Manifesto (1969) [C]
    - **Audio alternative,** Glad Hearts selections as indicated
    - **Watch** designated lecture (see Canvas module for link)
    - **Upload** eighth weekly response notes (30 minutes of informed, reflective writing)

10. **Ap 8** – 1970s: Affirmations, Women's Ordination, COLECO II
    - **Read** [all Canvas] Cairns Mann, "The Ordinands—Sherron Hughes Tremper and Carol Shimmin Nordstrom" (*Yes*, chapter 10); Deasy, "Reframing the Issue: Women's Ordination in the ECC"; Proposal for the Hiring & Assignment of Qualified Women Pastors on a Short-term Basis (1983); Lambert, "Open Letter to Covenant Women" (1989); Covenant Affirmations (1976)
    - **Watch** designated lecture (see Canvas module for link)
    - **Upload** ninth weekly response notes (30 minutes of informed, reflective writing)

11. **Ap 15** – 1980s: Church Growth and Evangelism, Multiethnicity, Centennial
    - **Read** [all Canvas] Wettersten, "Chaos or Community: Ethnicity and the Covenant" and responses (1984); Resolution from Latino Pastors (1987); Carter, "The Trailblazer—Flor Retamal" (*Yes*, chapter 15). Audio Alternative, *Glad Hearts* selections
    - **Watch** designated lecture (see Canvas module for link)
    - **Upload** tenth weekly response notes (30 minutes of informed, reflective writing)

12. **Ap 22** – 1990s: Growth & Multiethnicity, cont.

- **Read** Ondrey, “The 1992 LA Crisis as an Accelerant for Change in the ECC” [C]; Sixfold Test [C]; Peterson “Transformation” responses *Covenant Quartery* (2009) [C];
- Yee, “The Unfolding Face of the Covenant” [C]; Gilliard, “The Pastor—Catherine Gilliard” (*Yes*, chapter 16); Audio alternative: *Glad Hearts* selections [C]
- **Watch** designated lecture (see Canvas module for link)
- **Upload** weekly response notes (make-up opportunity)

13. **Ap 29** – History as Resource for the Present
    - **Read** *Covenant Quarterly* 2026 vol. 1 (all) vol. 2 (Wilson, “The Intersection…”)
    - **Watch** designated lecture (see Canvas module for link)
    - **Upload** weekly response notes (make up opportunity)

Final Submissions

- **Submit** final project (5/1 for all graduating seniors; extended, 5/10)
- **Submit** post-course reflection (5/1 for all graduating seniors; extended, 5/10)