

**American Baptist Churches of New York State
Lay Study Program**

BAPTIST HERITAGE

A Brief Course Description

This course is designed to introduce the student to:

- Baptist History: Beginnings, development, and key leaders
- Traditional Baptist practices of local church life, organization and structure
- American Baptist Characteristics: the principles that identify us in the context of the larger Church
- The Origins and development of American Baptist denominational life and structure

Expected outcomes

Students will have a basic overview of Baptist History

Students will have a basic understanding of the core Baptist characteristics and practices.

Students will be familiar with the range of theological beliefs present in American Baptist churches.

Students will be familiar with the various models of local church structures and organization.

Students will have a basic understanding of the origins and development of the American Baptist denomination

Students will have a basic understanding of the structure of the American Baptist denomination and how we relate to the wider Christian Church

Students will become acquainted with the various resources that are available for researching Baptist history and polity

Class Expectations

Students will read the assigned readings and participate in class discussions.

Students taking the course for credit will attend at least eight of ten classes.

Students who are taking the course for credit will create and hand in and/or present the written assignments and/or complete projects, designed by the instructor, which may include paper/s on particular subjects, presentations, etc.

Classes

The expectation is there will be 20 hours of class time. The course is usually set up as ten classes which are two hours long. A short break may be included in the middle of the class time. Classes may be designed to include a variety of learning experiences, including but not limited to: interactive lectures, presentations, and group discussions. Modifications to this structure may be done at the discretion of the instructor.

Suggested Resources

Baptist Ways by Bill J. Leonard. Valley Forge: Judson Press, 2003.

A Baptist Manual of Polity and Practice. 2nd revised edition by Norman H. Maring and Winthrop S. Hudson. Edited by David Gregg. Valley Forge: Judson Press, 2012.

The Baptist Identity/ Four Fragile Freedoms by Walter B. Shurden. Macon, GA. Smyth & Helwys. 2013.

Other Resources

Handouts and links provided by the instructor during the course.

Baptists in America by Bill J. Leonard. Columbia Contemporary American Religious Series. New York. Columbia University Press, 2005.

Baptists in North America: An Historical Perspective by William H. Brackney. Religious Life in America Series. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2006.

Down by the Riverside: A Brief History of Baptist Faith by Everett C. Goodwin. Judson Press, 2002.

10 Facts You Should Know About American Baptists. Office of Communications/General Ministries/ABCUSA. <https://www.abc-usa.org/10facts/> Free.

We Are American Baptists. <https://www.abc-usa.org/resources/resources-available-to-order/> Free.

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