

CHURCH HISTORY

Module Five



Episcopal Diocese of Florida

Deacon School

June 2020

Opening Reflection

Reflect on this prior to beginning this Module and again when you complete all assignments.

Consider why the study of history is important. Consider significant historical events in the life of the Church (the Episcopal Church if possible) that have significantly influenced you personally. How do you think future generations will view the present day Church?

Objectives

After completing this module, the Postulant will be able to:

- ✓ Articulate a comprehensive overview of the history of the Church;
- ✓ Display a significant comfort and familiarity with the history of Anglicanism and The Episcopal Church in the United States;
- ✓ Explain the various contexts in which the Ecumenical Creeds of the Church were created; and
- ✓ Have an awareness of essential texts in Church history and know what is available for study of Church history by the laity.



Required Reading

Gonzalez, Justo L., *The Story of Christianity*, Volumes 1 and 2. San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1984 and 1985.

Gonzalez was the youngest person to receive a Ph.D. in historical theology at Yale. His histories of the Christian Church are readable and engaging because he brings to life prominent figures and dramatic events and weaves them into a historical timeline.

Prichard, Robert W., *A History of the Episcopal Church*, rev. ed. Harrisburg, PA: Morehouse Publishing, 1999.

Prichard traces the history of the Episcopal Church in the United States. The revised edition includes information about the Church's renewal efforts, changes in liturgy and struggles with the issue of homosexuality.

Choose one of these DVD series (both available on Amazon.com): *A History of Christianity: The First Three Thousand Years*, by Oxford professor Diarmaid MacCulloch or *Christianity: The First Two Thousand Years*, produced by A&E.

Supplementary Resources

Hein, David and Shattuck Jr., Gardiner H., *The Episcopalians*. Westport, CT: Preager Publishers, 2004.

Hein and Shattuck present the Episcopal Church as an influential denomination that has furnished a large share of the American political and cultural leadership. The authors focus not only on the leadership of the church but also on lay ministry, the form and function of sacred space, the evolution of church theology, relations with other Christian communities, and the evolving ministries of women and minorities.

Holmes, David L., *A Brief History of the Episcopal Church*. Valley Forge, PA: Trinity Press International, 1993.

Holmes traces the history of the Episcopal Church beginning with the Reformation in England, through the colonial period in America, and ending with the Episcopal Church today.

Lyman, Rebecca, *Early Christian Traditions: The New Church's Teaching Series, Volume Six*. Cambridge, MA: Cowley Publications, 1999.

Lyman introduces readers to the world of the early Church and shows how Jewish, Greek and Roman cultures influenced the development of the Church's theology, worship, leadership and moral life. Lyman asserts that the modern Church is again turning to the witness of early Christians for inspiration and instructions.

McManners, John (ed.), *The Oxford History of Christianity*. Oxford: University Press, 2002.

Nineteen leading scholars write essays on topics ranging from the earliest origins to the present day to examine virtually every aspect of the faith and capturing the richness and vitality of Christian thought and culture throughout the ages.

Michener, James A., *The Source*. Random House, 2002.

In this novel, Michener vividly re-creates life in and around the Holy Land and traces the profound history of the Jews, including that of the early Hebrews and their persecution, the impact of Christianity on the Jewish world, the Crusades, and the Spanish Inquisition until at last he arrives at the founding of Israel and the modern conflict in the Middle East.

Moorman, J.H.R., *A History of the Church in England*, 3rd ed. Harrisburg, PA: Morehouse Publishing, 1986.

This authoritative account of the Church in England covers its history from earliest times to the late twentieth century. Includes chapters on the Roman, Celtic, Anglo-Saxon, Norman, and Medieval periods before a description of the Reformation and its effects, the Stuart period, and the Industrial Age, with a final chapter on the modern church through 1972.

Thompsett, Fredrica Harris, *Living with History: The New Church's Teaching Series, Volume Five*. Cambridge, MA: Cowley Publications, 1999.

Thompsett offers a survey of the touchstones of Church history that have shaped the Church as we know it. She examines three of the ways that Anglicans have handled conflict in the past, and discusses how past theological insight can be used to address today's problems.

MODULE 5 – ASSIGNMENTS

CHURCH HISTORY

Mentor: The Rev. Reed Freeman

- 1) Read *The Story of Christianity*, Volumes 1 & 2 (now bound in one volume). Spend purposeful time with this work and then list 20 major events in Church History. At least three of these events should be related to the Anglican Communion in general and three more should be related specifically to The Episcopal Church in the United States. Describe briefly the importance of each event.
- 2) Watch one of the DVDs listed in the required reading. Write a seven-page paper on the significance of any particular period of Church history, either in the West or worldwide. Be specific in the references to actions, thoughts, and reactions of the period.
- 3) After reading *A History of the Episcopal Church, rev. ed.*, write a paper tracing the roots of The Episcopal Church in the United States. How and where were the historical roots of The Episcopal Church nourished?
- 4) Who was Henry VIII and how does he intricately fit into the history of Anglicanism? Can The Episcopal Church be called “catholic”? Can The Episcopal Church be called “protestant”? Write an essay, or create a chart or graph, that shows how you would historically explain The Episcopal Church to an outsider.
- 5) Write an essay describing how *The Book of Common Prayer* fits into the evolution of The Episcopal Church.
- 6) There have been “divisions” in the Church throughout the centuries. Schisms have occurred in small and large ways, and often such divisions have caused seemingly irreparable rifts in the “holy catholic church.” Spend some time thinking of the place your church, as denomination, fits as an element of the whole. What things in your congregation can or cannot be changed or compromised and it still remain “The Episcopal Church?” Are there other areas where change can and must continue to occur if the Church is to speak to its age? Record a number of journal-type thoughts on your conviction and feelings concerning these matters.
- 7) Survey the Church heresies. Name the one by which you are most tempted, and explain why in a short essay.
- 8) Define and discuss in a short essay each of the following terms and concepts:
 - a. Hellenism
 - b. Gnosticism
 - c. Ecumenism
 - d. catholic (small c – not Roman Catholic)
 - e. liturgy
 - f. Apostolic
 - g. Anglo-Catholic

- h. Broad church
- i. Low church
- j. Crusades
- k. Protestant

9) **SYNTHESIS** – Compile a number of significant arguments for the need to study Church history. Why is the study of traditions important? What does this have to do with Christianity in the 21st century? Why bother with the past 2,000 years? How will this study inform you as a deacon? You may employ any medium to answer these questions.

Module Five Evaluation

Church History

Postulant: _____

The mentor assess the Postulant's work on each assignment in the module. The mentor will document on this form, whether the assignment was completed satisfactorily. The mentor may add additional comments if desired. If the assignment is not completed satisfactorily, the mentor must add comments regarding the deficiencies. The mentor will review the evaluation with the Postulant and the Deacon School Co-facilitators.

	Assignment	Complete/Incomplete
1	Read <i>The Story of Christianity</i> , Volumes 1 & 2 (now bound in one volume). Spend purposeful time with this work and then list 20 major events in Church History. At least three of these events should be related to the Anglican Communion in general and three more should be related specifically to The Episcopal Church in the United States. Describe briefly the importance of each event.	
2	Watch one of the DVDs listed in the required reading. Write a seven-page paper on the significance of any particular period of Church history, either in the West or worldwide. Be specific in the references to actions, thoughts, and reactions of the period.	
3	After reading <i>A History of the Episcopal Church, rev. ed.</i> , write a paper tracing the roots of The Episcopal Church in the United States. How and where were the historical roots of The Episcopal Church nourished?	
4	Who was Henry VIII and how does he intricately fit into the history of Anglicanism? Can The Episcopal Church be called "catholic"? Can The Episcopal Church be called "protestant"? Write an essay, or create a chart or graph, that shows how you would historically explain The Episcopal Church to an outsider.	
5	Write an essay describing how <i>The Book of Common Prayer</i> fits into the evolution of The Episcopal Church.	
6	There have been "divisions" in the Church throughout the centuries. Schisms have occurred in small and large ways, and often such divisions have caused seemingly irreparable rifts in the "holy catholic church." Spend some time thinking of the place your church, as denomination, fits as an element of the whole. What things in your congregation can or cannot be changed or compromised and it still remain "The Episcopal Church?" Are there other areas where change can and must continue to occur if the Church is to speak to its age? Record a number of journal-type	

	thoughts on your conviction and feelings concerning these matters.	
7	Survey the Church heresies. Name the one by which you are most tempted, and explain why in a short essay.	
8	Define and discuss in a short essay each of the following terms and concepts: a) Hellenism b) Gnosticism c) Ecumenism d) catholic (small c – not Roman Catholic) e) liturgy f) Apostolic g) Anglo-Catholic h) Broad church i) Low church j) Crusades k) Protestant	
9	SYNTHESIS – Compile a number of significant arguments for the need to study Church history. Why is the study of traditions important? What does this have to do with Christianity in the 21 st century? Why bother with the past 2,000 years? How will this study inform you as a deacon? You may employ any medium to answer these questions.	

Signatures:

Mentor:

Postulant:

Date: _____

Date: _____