Reuben Welch School of Theology & Christian Ministry

BIB 1002-4 – New Testament History & Religion

3 Units

Spring 2026

Meeting Time: MWF 8:30 – 9:25a

Meeting Location: Rohr 109

Final Exam: Monday, May 4th 7:30-10:00a

INFORMATION	SPECIFICS FOR THE COURSE
Instructor title and name:	Dr. Josh Roach
Phone:	N/A
Email:	Jroach@pointloma.edu
Office location and hours:	By Appointment (Please Email Me)

PLNU Mission

To Teach ~ To Shape ~ To Send

Point Loma Nazarene University exists to provide higher education in a vital Christian community where minds are engaged and challenged, character is modeled and formed, and service is an expression of faith. Being of Wesleyan heritage, we strive to be a learning community where grace is foundational, truth is pursued, and holiness is a way of life.

General Education Mission

PLNU provides a foundational course of study in the liberal arts informed by the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. In keeping with the Wesleyan tradition, the curriculum equips students with a broad range of knowledge and skills within and across disciplines to enrich major study, lifelong learning, and vocational service as Christ-like participants in the world's diverse societies and culture.

Course Description

Catalog Description: "Within the context of Christian origins, an overview of the canonical literature of the New Testament with special attention to its literary history and theological themes."

This course is designed to introduce academic study of the New Testament as a form of intellectual worship and spiritual formation by engaging with its texts in their social, historical, literary, and theological context. We will explore the collection chronologically, the order, as best we can apprehend, of its historical production. By doing so, we will think alongside the authors as they think. The chronological approach highlights that the Gospels are announcements of the presence of the crucified and risen Christ proclaimed in accordance with the Scriptures (Old Testament). In no way is this approach intended to undermine the normativity of the canonical context (the order we now read in the Bible); in fact, it will allow us to experience the canonical structure as advantageously ordered toward the formation of human beings in the image of Jesus. The New Testament is the exhilarating and exhausting record of human beings rearranging their lives around the story of the crucified and risen Jesus. It is the intention of this course, and my prayer, to inspire us to do the same.

Program and Course Learning Outcomes

1. Articulate and describe the gospel of Jesus Christ;
2. Articulate and identify the unity of the New Testament in its historical and canonical contexts within the diverse literature of the Christian canon;
3. Articulate and appreciate the ways in which the Bible, understood as given by divine inspiration, functions as the church's central norm for Christian discipleship, faith and practice; and
4. Articulate the basic content of the books of the New Testament and the methods appropriate to the interpretation of those books.

General Education Learning Outcomes

This course fulfills GELO 3: You will demonstrate an understanding of Christian Scripture, Tradition, and Ethics, including engagement in acts of devotion and works of mercy.

Signature Assignment

Focusing on the understanding of Christian Scripture portion of this learning outcome, you will respond in writing to a question in a way that applies a reading of New Testament texts to an issue of theological importance, citing Scripture responsibly. This will commence during the "Essay Response" section of the Final Exam.

Required Texts and Recommended Study Resources

Students are responsible for having the required course textbooks prior to the first day of class.

All supplemental materials posted on this course site (including articles, book excerpts, or other documents) are provided for your personal academic use. These materials may be protected by copyright law and should not be duplicated or distributed without permission of the copyright owner.

1. Powell, Mark Allan. *Introducing the New Testament: A Historical, Literary, and Theological Survey*, 2nd ed. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2018.
2. Hays, Richard B. *Reading Backwards: Figural Christology and the Fourfold Gospel Witness*. Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2014.
3. T*he New Interpreter's Study Bible: New Revised Standard Edition with Apocrypha.* Ed. Walter Harrelson. Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2003.

Recommended Study Resources (Not Required)

1. Behr, John. *In Accordance with the Scriptures: The Shape of Christian Theology*. Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2025.

Assessment and Grading

Grades will be based on the following:

Sample Standard Grade Scale Based on Percentages

A	B	C	D	F
A 93-100	B+ 87-89	C+ 77-79	D+ 67-69	F Less than 59
A- 90-92	B 83-86	C 73-76	D 63-66	
	B- 80-82	C- 70-72	D- 60-62	

Grading: The student's grade will be based on a combination of class participation, reading, assignments, and exams as follows:

Possible Points & Assignments

50	Personal Essay (5%)
300	12 Reading Quizzes (30%)
100	In-Class Discussions (10%)
150	Mid-Term Exam (15%)
100	Group Presentation (10%)

300	Final Exam (30%)
25	*Extra Credit Essay (+2.5%)*

The **Personal Essay** (collectively worth 5% of total grade) will provide you an opportunity to reflect upon your experience of faith, theology, and the church. What has your experience of faith been? If you were raised in faith, what tradition were you raised in? If you were not, what has your experience of it been (personally, culturally, etc.)? What has faith meant to you? What have you seen it mean to others? What questions have you had regarding the Bible, the New Testament particularly, or theology?

Quizzes (collectively worth 30% of total grade) will focus on significant characteristics, unique content, and theological concepts drawn from the weekly lectures and assigned readings, including the textbook(s), supplemental essays, and the New Testament. There will be twelve quizzes occurring throughout this course, each one due on Canvas by Sunday, midnight of each week. Each quiz will be open book, open Bible, and open note. Quizzes will help students have an idea of the material and question forms that will appear on examinations.

In-Class Discussions (collectively worth 10% of total grade) will include break-out groups and occur intermittently. These break-out groups will be composed of the same students each week and be the same group with which the students present (see Group Presentation). Each group will have the chance to discuss amongst themselves one or all of the following questions: 1) What was something that stood out to us in the material that we hadn't known before? 2) In what way does this meaningfully impact how we see or interact with the world? 3) What question(s) are we left with afterwards? The group will elect a different person each week to share a distillation of their discussion with the class. <u>Discussions are graded as your attendance grade.</u>

The **Mid-Term Exam** (worth 15% of total grade) will be a closed book (but open Bible) examination administered during class time (see Course Structure) and will cover: The Pauline Epistles, the development of the Canon, and the nature of a Gospel. It will be 50 questions drawn from class lectures, assigned readings, and the New Testament. The exam will be composed of some multiple choice, true/false, and matching questions. A study guide will be distributed digitally at least one week before the exam.

Group Presentation (worth 10% of total grade). The purpose of this group is to research and teach on a book of the New Testament not formally covered in class (e.g. Jude, 1 John, 2 Thessalonians, etc.), or a section of a book only briefly talked about (e.g. the latter half of Acts). Each group must prepare a slideshow and teach the class about their respective book in 7–10 minutes. They must cite three academic sources, excluding the textbook, relevant to their topic. All group members will receive the same grade at the discretion of the professor.

The **Final Exam** (worth 30% of total grade) will be a closed-book (but open Bible) examination administered on Monday, May 4th 7:30-10:00a covering the books of the New Testament formally addressed in class, all class lectures, and material from the textbook(s). This exam will resemble the Mid-Term, but will be larger (75 questions) and include an essay response. As with the Mid-Term exam, a study guide will be distributed at least one week before the exam.

The **Extra Credit Essay** (+2.5%) will consist in an individual essay completed alongside your group presentation. You will write a research paper compiling and explaining the scholarly research you performed for your chosen New Testament book in an essay format.

Final Examination Policy

Successful completion of this class requires taking the final examination on its scheduled day. The final examination schedule is posted on the Traditional Undergraduate Records: Final Exam Schedules site. If you find yourself scheduled for three (3) or more final examinations on the same day, you are authorized to contact each professor to arrange a different time for one of those exams. However, unless you have three (3) or more exams on the same day, no requests for alternative final examinations will be granted.

Content Warning

I acknowledge that each of you comes to PLNU with your own unique life experiences. This contributes to the way you perceive various types of information. In New Testament History & Religion, all of the class content, including that which may be intellectually or emotionally challenging, has been intentionally curated to achieve the learning goals for this course. The decision to include such material is not taken lightly. These topics include violence, war, slavery, execution (martyrdom), economic oppression, gendered oppression, and class relations. If you encounter a topic that is intellectually challenging for you, it can evoke feelings of discomfort. In response, I encourage you to come talk to me or your friends or family about it. Class topics are discussed for the sole purpose of expanding your intellectual engagement in the area of the New Testament, and I will support you throughout your learning in this course.

Incompletes and Late Assignments

All assignments are to be submitted/turned in by the beginning of the class session when they are due—including assignments posted in Canvas. Late submissions are accepted; however, for every late assignment, unless determined otherwise, a 10% deduction will be applied for every day late after the due date to the maximum of 50%.

Spiritual Care

Please be aware PLNU strives to be a place where you grow as whole persons. To this end, we provide resources for our students to encounter God and grow in their Christian faith.

If you have questions, a desire to meet with the chaplain or have prayer requests you can contact your professor or the Office of Spiritual Life and Formation.

State Authorization

State authorization is a formal determination by a state that Point Loma Nazarene University is approved to conduct activities regulated by that state. In certain states outside California, Point Loma

Nazarene University is not authorized to enroll online (distance education) students. If a student moves to another state after admission to the program and/or enrollment in an online course, continuation within the program and/or course will depend on whether Point Loma Nazarene University is authorized to offer distance education courses in that state. It is the student's responsibility to notify the institution of any change in his or her physical location.

PLNU Copyright Policy

Point Loma Nazarene University, as a non-profit educational institution, is entitled by law to use materials protected by the US Copyright Act for classroom education. Any use of those materials outside the class may violate the law.]

PLNU Recording Notification

In order to enhance the learning experience, please be advised that this course may be recorded by the professor for educational purposes, and access to these recordings will be limited to enrolled students and authorized personnel.

Note that all recordings are subject to copyright protection. Any unauthorized distribution or publication of these recordings without written approval from the University (refer to the Dean) is strictly prohibited.

PLNU Academic Honesty Policy

Students should demonstrate academic honesty by doing original work and by giving appropriate credit to the ideas of others. Academic dishonesty is the act of presenting information, ideas, and/or concepts as one's own when in reality they are the results of another person's creativity and effort. A faculty member who believes a situation involving academic dishonesty has been detected may assign a failing grade for that assignment or examination, or, depending on the seriousness of the offense, for the course. For all student appeals, faculty and students should follow the procedures outlined in the University Catalog. See Academic Policies for definitions of kinds of academic dishonesty and for further policy information.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Policy

The use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools (e.g., ChatGPT, iA Writer, Marmot, Botowski, GrammarlyGo, Perplexity, etc.) is prohibited in this course for any aspect of your work, including idea generation, drafting, editing, or final submissions. The student of the New Testament is challenged to cultivate his/her faculty of attention as the mode by which s/he loves God and loves the cosmos, something educational AI use habitually circumvents. This course is designed to assess your independent critical reflection, writing, and research skills without the assistance of AI technologies. Consequently, violations of this policy will be treated as breaches of academic integrity.

PLNU Academic Accommodations Policy

PLNU is committed to providing equal opportunity for participation in all its programs, services, and activities in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Students with disabilities may request course-related accommodations by contacting the Educational Access Center (EAC), located in the Bond Academic Center (EAC@pointloma.edu or 619-849-2533). Once a student's eligibility for an accommodation has been determined, the EAC will work with the student to create an Accommodation Plan (AP) that outlines allowed accommodations. Professors are able to view a student's approved accommodations through Accommodate.

PLNU highly recommends that students speak with their professors during the first two weeks of each semester/term about the implementation of their AP in that particular course. Accommodations are not retroactive so clarifying with the professor at the outset is one of the best ways to promote positive academic outcomes.

Students who need accommodations for a disability should contact the EAC as early as possible (i.e., ideally before the beginning of the semester) to assure appropriate accommodations can be provided. It is the student's responsibility to make the first contact with the EAC. Students cannot assume that because they had accommodations in the past, their eligibility at PLNU is automatic. All determinations at PLNU must go through the EAC process. This is to protect the privacy of students with disabilities who may not want to disclose this information and are not asking for any accommodations.

Language and Belonging

Point Loma Nazarene University faculty are committed to helping create a safe and hospitable learning environment for all students. As Christian scholars we are keenly aware of the power of language and believe in treating others with dignity. As such, it is important that our language be equitable, inclusive, and prejudice free. Inclusive/Bias-free language is the standard outlined by all major academic style guides, including MLA, APA, and Chicago, and it is the expected norm in university-level work. Good writing and speaking do not use unsubstantiated or irrelevant generalizations about personal qualities such as age, disability, economic class, ethnicity, marital status, parentage, political or religious beliefs, race, gender, sex, or sexual orientation. Inclusive language also avoids using stereotypes or terminology that demeans persons or groups based on age, disability, class, ethnicity, gender, race, language, or national origin. Respectful use of language is particularly important when referring to those outside of the religious and lifestyle commitments of those in the PLNU community. By working toward precision and clarity of language, we mark ourselves as serious and respectful scholars, and we model the Christ-like quality of hospitality.

If you (or someone you know) have experienced other forms of discrimination, you can find more information on reporting and resources at www.pointloma.edu/nondiscrimination.

Sexual Misconduct and Discrimination

In support of a safe learning environment, if you (or someone you know) have experienced any form of sexual discrimination or misconduct, including sexual assault, dating or domestic violence, or stalking, know that accommodations and resources are available through the Title IX Office at pointloma.edu/Title-IX. Please be aware that under Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, faculty and staff are required to disclose information about such misconduct to the Title IX Office.

If you wish to speak to a confidential employee who does not have this reporting responsibility, you can contact Counseling Services at counselingservices@pointloma.edu or find a list of campus pastors at pointloma.edu/Title-IX.

If you (or someone you know) have experienced other forms of discrimination or bias, you can find more information on reporting and resources at www.pointloma.edu/bias

PLNU Attendance and Participation Policy

Regular and punctual attendance at all class sessions is considered essential to optimum academic achievement. If the student is absent for more than 10 percent of class sessions, the faculty member will issue a written warning of de-enrollment. If the absences exceed 20 percent, the student may be de-enrolled without notice until the university withdrawal date or, after that date, receive an "F" grade.

Note: The information below must be included under the "PLNU Attendance and Participation Policy" Section if you are teaching an Online or Hybrid course.

Lomabooks Instructions for Students:

This course is part of our course material delivery program, **LomaBooks***. The bookstore will provide each student with a convenient package containing all required physical materials; all digitally delivered materials will be integrated into Canvas.*

You should have received an email from the bookstore confirming the list of materials that will be provided for each of your courses and asking you to select how you would like to receive any printed components (in-store pick up or home delivery). If you have not done so already, please confirm your fulfillment preference so the bookstore can prepare your materials.

For more information about **LomaBooks,** *please go: HERE*

Course Structure and Assignments

*Have readings completed by the relevant class time

Week 1 – Introduction (Jan 12th)

Mon. – Why Theology? Contemplation & Attention
Readings:

1. "The Greatest Drama Ever Staged" by Dorothy Sayers
2. "What is Theology?" by Rowan Williams from *Discovering Christianity*

Wed.– The Canon is a Human Being
Readings:

1. "Interpreting the New Testament" by Robert Louis Wilken
2. Powell, Ch. 3

Fri. – The New Testament: The Story in Its World
Readings:

1. Powell, Chs. 1–2

PERSONAL ESSAY DUE BY SUNDAY AT MIDNIGHT

Week 2 – Beginning with the Beginning: Pauline Epistles I (Jan 19th)

Mon. – NO CLASS (MLK Jr. Day)

Wed. – Paul: A Sketch
Readings:

1. Acts 9:1–31
2 . Powell, Ch. 12

Fri. – 1 Thessalonians
Readings:

1. 1 Thessalonians

READING & LECTURE QUIZ DUE BY SUNDAY AT MIDNIGHT

Week 3 – Galatians & 1 Corinthians (Jan 26th)

Mon. – Galatians I
Readings:

1. Galatians 1–3;
2. Acts 15
3. Powell, Ch. 16

Wed. – Galatians II
Readings:

1. Galatians 4–6

Fri. – 1 Corinthians I
Readings:

1. Corinthians 1–8

2. Powell, Ch. 14

READING & LECTURE QUIZ DUE BY SUNDAY AT MIDNIGHT

Week 4 – 1 & 2 Corinthians (Feb 2nd)

Mon. – 1 Corinthians II
Readings:
1. 1 Corinthians 9–16

Wed. – 2 Corinthians I
Readings:
1. 2 Corinthians 1–6
2. Powell, Ch. 15

Fri. – 2 Corinthians II
Readings:
1. 2 Corinthians 7–13

READING & LECTURE QUIZ DUE BY SUNDAY AT MIDNIGHT

Week 5 – Romans (Feb 9th)

Mon. – Romans I
Readings:
1. Romans 1–4
2. Powell, pp. 271–77

Wed. – Romans II
Readings:
1. Romans 5–8
2. Powell, pp. 277–87

Fri. – Romans III
Readings:
1. Romans 9–16

READING & LECTURE QUIZ DUE BY SUNDAY AT MIDNIGHT

Week 6 – The Prison Letters (Feb 16th)

Mon. – Philemon
Readings:
1. Philemon
2. "Nobody Here But Us Bondsmen" by Sarah Ruden from *Paul Among the People*

Wed. – Philippians
Readings:
1. Philippians

Fri. – Colossians & Ephesians
Readings:
1. Colossians and Ephesians
2. "Letter to the Colossians" by Dennis R. Edwards from *The New Testament in Color*

READING & LECTURE QUIZ DUE BY SUNDAY AT MIDNIGHT

Week 7 – James & the Fourfold Gospel (Feb 23rd)

Mon. – James
Readings:
1. James
2. Powell, Ch. 25

Wed. – New Testament Afterlives I: Melito of Sardis & the Opening of the Scriptures
Readings:
1. Hays, Ch. 1

Fri. – The Fourfold Gospel / What is a Gospel?
Readings:
1. "Prologomena" to The Fourfold Gospel by Francis Watson

READING & LECTURE QUIZ DUE BY SUNDAY AT MIDNIGHT

Week 8 –The Gospel According to Mark (March 2nd)

Mon. – Mark I
Readings:
1. Mark 1–8
2. Hays, Ch. 2

Wed. – Mark II
Readings:
1. Mark 9–16

Fri. – MIDTERM EXAMINATION

Week 9 – NO CLASSES (March 9th–13th: SPRING BREAK)

Mon. – NO CLASS: SPRING BREAK

Wed. – NO CLASS: SPRING BREAK

Fri. – NO CLASS: SPRING BREAK

Week 10 – The Gospel According to Matthew (March 16th)

Mon. – Matthew I
Readings:
1. Matthew 1–7
2. Hays, Ch. 3

Wed. – Matthew II
Readings:
1. Matthew 8–20

Fri. – Matthew III
Readings:
1. Matthew 21–28

READING & LECTURE QUIZ DUE BY SUNDAY AT MIDNIGHT

Week 11 – The Wiley Lectures & the Gospel According to Luke (March 23rd)

Mon. – Luke I
Readings:
1. Luke 1–8
2. Hays, Ch. 4

Wed. – Attend Wiley Lecture by Dr. Catherine Keller, "Hope: Embracing Planetude." 8:30–9:20a, Crill Performance Hall

Fri. – Luke II
Readings:
1. Luke 9–24

READING & LECTURE QUIZ DUE BY SUNDAY AT MIDNIGHT

Week 12 – The Gospel According to John & Easter Recess (March 30th)

Mon. – John I
Readings:
1. John 1–14
2. Hays, Ch. 5

Wed. – John II
Readings:
1. John 15–21
2. Hays, Ch. 6

Fri. – NO CLASS: EASTER RECESS

READING & LECTURE QUIZ DUE BY SUNDAY AT MIDNIGHT

Week 13 – EASTER RECESS & PRESENTATIONS (April 6th)

Mon. – NO CLASS: EASTER RECESS

Wed. – PRESENTATIONS

Fri. – PRESENTATIONS

Week 14 – Acts & Hebrews (April 13th)

Mon. – Acts I
Readings:
1. Acts 1–14
2. Powell, Ch. 10

Wed. – Acts II
Readings:
1. Acts 15–28

Fri. – Hebrews
Readings:
1. Hebrews
2. Powell, Ch. 24

READING & LECTURE QUIZ DUE BY SUNDAY AT MIDNIGHT

Week 15 – The Revelation of Jesus (April 20th)

Mon. – The Revelation of Jesus I
Readings:
1. Revelation 1–7
2. Powell, pp. 531–37

Wed. – The Revelation of Jesus II
Readings:
1. Revelation 8–14
2. Powell, pp. 538–551

Fri. – The Revelation of Jesus III
Readings:
1. Revelation 15–22

READING & LECTURE QUIZ DUE BY SUNDAY AT MIDNIGHT

Week 16 – Conclusion (April 27th)

Mon. – *Guest Lecture by Rev. Dr. Brian Hughes*

Wed. – New Testament Afterlives II: Origen of Alexandria & the First Gospel
Readings:

1. Origen of Alexandria's "Preface" to his *Commentary on John*

Fri. – Finals Preparation

READING & LECTURE QUIZ DUE BY SUNDAY AT MIDNIGHT

FINAL EXAM – Monday, May 4th 7:30-10:00a