



Church History: Reformation

Dr. Fritz Harms

January 30 – February 3, 2017

Riga, Akas street 13, 18:00-21:00.

In English, with translation into Latvian.

PROFESSOR

Dr. Fritz Harms (1960) was born in Utrecht, the Netherlands. He came to the USA in 1982 for study and preparation toward ordained ministry in the local church (1994). Harms is a minister in the United Reformed Churches in North America and graduated from Westminster Theological Seminary-west (1989) and from the Theological University of Apeldoorn, the Netherlands, (Ph.D.-2009). Harms served as a pastor of Bethlehem Christian Reformed Church (Freeman, South Dakota) and New Haven United Reformed Church (New Haven, Vermont) between 1993 - 2006. Currently, Harms is the senior chaplain at Bethany Nursing Home in Ripon, California. Dr. Harms is an avid enthusiast of soccer.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course studies the Protestant Reformation in the sixteenth century with an emphasis on persons, issues and developments (historical, political, social and ecclesiastical). This five-fold course begins by offering the necessary historical context (Late Middle Ages, Renaissance/Humanism/Church Reform) to understand the reason and character of the Reformation. Next students are introduced to a selection of four of the main representatives of the Reformation period (Luther, Zwingli, Calvin and the Anabaptist Menno Simons). The course continues with an overview of the English & Scottish Reformation, and ends with the Catholic 'Counter Reformation'.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

This course assumes that the student has prior knowledge of the history of Western civilization or European History. The lectures are designed to introduce the student to the (Protestant) Reformation in the sixteenth century. Specifically, the students should be able to interpret primary texts sources, and correctly identify persons, dates, issues and ascertain their importance for development of the Reformation movement. Furthermore, students should be able to discuss and evaluate the message of the Reformation and relate this to the contemporary world-and-church situation. Finally, the student will give an account of the material studied through a final examination.

REQUIREMENTS FOR CREDIT

- 1) Class attendance
- 2) Required reading: Use either hard copy if available or use online sources printed below
 - John Calvin's 'preface' to his commentary on the Psalms.
 - John Calvin: The Institutes of the Christian Religion (Preface: address to the King of France)
 - R.W. Godfrey, Reformation Sketches. Insights into Luther, Calvin, and the Confessions. (ca. 140 pages)
 - Martin Luther: The Freedom of a Christian (27 pages) www.lutheranonline.com
 - Luther's Small Catechism [bookofconcord.org/smallcatechism.php].
 - Lewis W. Spitz, The Renaissance and Reformation Movements (vol.2). pp. 411-440.4)
- 3) Final examination

ABOUT THE CLASSES:

Auditors welcome. Participation fee is 14 EUR (includes materials and coffee breaks).

Signing up for the course and additional information : Janis Perkons, phone +371 26356030, janis@brts.edu.lv