Anglicanism: A Very Short Introduction
Mark Chapman

Anglicanism: A Very Short Introduction highlights the diversity of contemporary Anglicanism by exploring its history, theology, and structures. Although originally united by location and a common belief, Anglicanism has gradually lost its pre-eminence as the English state religion due to increasing pluralism and secularization. Whilst there are distinctive themes and emphases which emerge from its early history and theology, there is little sense of unity in Anglicanism today. Putting the history and development of the religion into context, this VSI reveals what holds Anglicanism together despite the recent crises that threaten to tear it apart.

The Book of Mormon: A Very Short Introduction
Terryl L. Givens

The Book of Mormon: A Very Short Introduction examines the Book of Mormon primarily in terms of the claims that its narrators make for its historical genesis, its purpose as a sacred text, and its meaning for an audience which shifts over the course of the history it unfolds. Five governing themes — revelation, Christ, Zion, scripture, and covenant — serve as vectors for analysis of the Book's central doctrines and teachings, particularly in relation to familiar nineteenth-century religious preoccupations. This VSI samples characters and representative passages from the Book and surveys its contested origins and addresses questions of the record's historicity.

Calvinism: A Very Short Introduction
Jon Balserak
Calvinism: A Very Short Introduction explores major ideas associated with the Calvinist system of thought. Beginning during the Protestant Reformation in cities like Zurich, Geneva, and Basel, Calvinism—also known as Reformed Theology—spread rapidly throughout Europe and the New World, eventually making its way to the African Continent and the East. This VSI examines how Calvinism spread and took root, helping shape church, society, and much of contemporary thought, especially Western thought, on everything from theology to civil government, economics, the arts, work and leisure, education, and the family. The common misconceptions and objections to Calvinism are examined, along with a Calvinist understanding of God, the world, humankind, and the meaning of life.

Catholicism: A Very Short Introduction
Gerald O'Collins

Despite a long history of external threats and internal strife, the Roman Catholic Church remains a vast and influential presence in our modern world. But what were its origins, and how has it changed over the centuries? Catholicism: A Very Short Introduction covers the history of the Catholic Church and considers some of the key issues facing Catholicism today, such as the recent clerical abuse scandals and the impact of the growth of Islam. It also shows how Catholics are being increasingly challenged by tensions between their traditional Christian values and rights endorsed by the secular world, and considers the future for the largest and oldest institution in the world.

Martin Luther: A Very Short Introduction
Scott H. Hendrix

Martin Luther: A Very Short Introduction details Luther's life, writings, world, and legacy. It explains the religious reformation and his importance, emphasizing the political and cultural forces that led the reformation down paths Luther could neither foresee nor influence. How do historians view Martin Luther? What effect did his self-righteous attitude have on contemporaries? What place did his anti-Judaism play in Nazi propaganda? This introduction presents Martin Luther as historians now see him and emphasizes the context in which Luther worked, the colleagues who supported him, and the opponents who adamantly opposed his agenda for change.
Methodism: A Very Short Introduction
William J. Abraham

Methodism: A Very Short Introduction traces Methodism from its origins in the work of John Wesley and the hymns of his brother, Charles Wesley, in the 18th century, right up to the present, where it is one of the most vibrant forms of Christianity. Considering the identity, nature, and history of Methodism, it provides a fresh account of the place of Methodism in the life and thought of the Christian Church. Describing the message of Methodism, and who the Methodists are, it also considers the practices of Methodism and discusses its global impact and its decline in the homelands. Finally, looking forward, this VSI considers the future prospects for Methodism.

Mormonism: A Very Short Introduction
Richard Lyman Bushman

Mormonism: A Very Short Introduction sets out to examine a religion with over 12 million adherents that still baffles outsiders nearly 170 years after the founder’s death. How can twenty-first-century Americans believe in a prophet who translated gold plates and claimed constant revelations? The emergence of eminent Mormon politicians, business leaders, and entertainers only deepens the mystery. Sane, useful, upright members of society hold beliefs that others find difficult to understand, much less believe. The jarring contradiction raises the questions: Why does Mormonism exercise such a powerful influence on the lives of Mormons? How can a religion that runs against the grain of modern secularism evoke such strong loyalties?

Orthodox Christianity: A Very Short Introduction
A. Edward Siecienski

To many in the West, Orthodoxy remains shrouded in mystery, an exotic and foreign religion that survived in the East following the Great Schism of 1054 that split the Christian world into two camps—Catholic and Orthodox. However, as the second largest Christian denomination, Orthodox Christianity is anything but foreign to the nearly 300 million worshippers who practice it. For them, Orthodoxy is a living, breathing reality. Whether they are Greek, Russian, or American, Orthodox Christians are united by a common tradition and faith that binds them together despite differences in culture. Orthodox
Christianity: A Very Short Introduction explores the enduring role of this religion, and the history, beliefs, and practices that have shaped it.

Pentecostalism: A Very Short Introduction
William K. Kay

Pentecostalism: A Very Short Introduction outlines the origins and growth of Pentecostalism, looking at the theological aspects of the movement and also the sociological influences of its political and humanitarian viewpoints. In religious terms Pentecostalism was probably the most vibrant and rapidly-growing religious movement of the 20th century. Starting as a revivalistic and renewal movement within Christianity, it encircled the globe in less than 25 years and grew in North America and then in those parts of the world with the highest birth-rates. Characterised by speaking in tongues, miracles, television evangelism and megachurches, it is also noted for its small-group meetings, empowerment of individuals, liberation of women, and humanitarian concerns.

Protestantism: A Very Short Introduction
Mark A. Noll

Protestantism: A Very Short Introduction presents a history of Protestantism beginning with the founding of Lutheran, Reformed, Anglican, and Anabaptist churches in the 16th-century Reformation. What importance do Martin Luther and John Calvin have on the story? What part does the recent expansion of Protestant movements in Africa, China, India, and Latin America have on the on-going and rapidly expanding story of Protestantism worldwide? Why have Protestant energies flagged recently in the Western world yet expanded so dramatically elsewhere? Protestant commonality includes the message of Christian salvation, reliance on the Bible, and organization through personal initiative, which explains Protestantism's extraordinary diversity and durability.

Puritanism: A Very Short Introduction
Francis J. Bremer

Puritanism: A Very Short Introduction traces the development, triumph, and decline of the Puritan world and examines the Puritan legacy in American history. It charts the rise of Puritanism in the English Reformation, the struggle of the reformers to purge what they
viewed as the corruptions of Roman Catholicism from the Elizabethan church, and the struggle with the Stuart monarchs that led to a brief Puritan triumph under Oliver Cromwell. It also explores puritan theology, views on family and community, beliefs about the proper relationship between religion and public life, the limits of toleration, and the balance between individual rights and one's obligation to others.

The Quakers: A Very Short Introduction
Pink Dandelion

The Quakers: A Very Short Introduction charts the history of Quakerism and its present-day diversity, and outlines its approach to worship, belief, theology and language, and ecumenism. It explains the origins of the Quakers: how they emerged from the social unrest of the English civil war and constantly adapted themselves thereafter to new theological insights and new social settings. It examines their influence through their continued stance against war and the pioneering work for penal reform and against slavery which emerged from their idea of spiritual equality. Quakers' distinctive methods of worship are explored, by which they believe they achieve a direct encounter with God.