

BRETHREN HISTORY

A MINISTRY TRAINING COURSE

Class Dates:

Thursday, September 14, 2017
Friday, October 13, 2017
Friday, October 27, 2017
Friday, November 10, 2017

Class Time:
7:00 – 9:00 PM



Location:

Pleasant Hill Church of the Brethren
9002 Orchard Road
Spring Grove, PA 17362

Phone: (717) 225-5838
Call-in: (717) 683-1293

Instructor: Frank Reed

576 West High St.
Manheim, PA 17545

Email: reedfl@dejazzd.com
Phone: (717) 665-2442

Registration: Please contact Joel Sollenberger at joroso@centurylink.net or (717) 328-2639 by September 4, 2017. There is no registration fee, but a freewill donation box will be available. Please indicate if you are a distance student and the above call-in phone number can be used.

SYLLABUS

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Beginning with an overview of the history of the Christian Church we will proceed into the Brethren story. From origins in Europe and development from the Pietistic movement we will consider the various forces that produced the Brethren. In North America, the Brethren found a warm welcome and put down deep roots. The ensuing years found the Brethren dividing into several groups. We will consider these divisions and the groups they formed.

COURSE PURPOSE:

This course is designed to familiarize the student with the place of the Brethren groups in the broader history of the Christian Church. The student will learn to appreciate the unique Brethren beliefs and practices and be able to trace the path from Schwarzenau to the expansion in North America.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

1. Learn about the history of the Brethren.
2. Appreciate the beliefs and practices of the Brethren.
3. Recognize some of the strengths and weaknesses of the Brethren.
4. Observe decisions and practices that caused the Brethren to move in the current direction.
5. Evaluate decisions and practices that led the Brethren away from simple Bible belief.
6. Note the role of powerful leaders in the direction of the Brethren.
7. Evaluate the current Brethren situation and posit Biblical principles to guide the future.

SYLLABUS CONTINUED

REQUIRED RESOURCES:

1. Carl Bowman. *Brethren Society: The Cultural Transformation of a "Peculiar People"*. The Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore and London.
2. William R. Eberly, Editor. *The Complete Writings of Alexander Mack*. BMH Books, Winona Lake, Indiana.

These two books should be read in entirety during the course of the class. References will be made to the contents of these books. They are invaluable to the student of Brethren history.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

1. Donald F. Durnbaugh. *The Brethren Encyclopedia*. Lakeside Press, R. R. Donnelley and Sons Company, Willard, OH.
2. Donald F. Durnbaugh. *Fruit of the Vine A History of the Brethren 1708 – 1995*. Brethren Press, Elgin, IL.

EXPECTATIONS:

1. Attend or access all classes.
2. Read the required textbooks.
3. Incorporate lessons from Brethren History into your messages.
4. Submit completed assignments to instructor via email.

ASSIGNMENTS:

1. Make and keep a file of resources on Brethren history.
2. Write a summary of each class session – due before the next scheduled class.
3. Write a paper on any approved subject on Brethren history.
4. Outline your reading in the textbooks – brief description of the contents.

EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY

One of the fundamental positions held by the CBE is a high view of Scripture.¹ While spiritual gifts and natural abilities contribute to the success of the ministry, we recognize that the Church functions as God intended only as it submits to the authority of God and acts under the direction of the Holy Spirit. We believe that God has given us direction in His Word concerning the proper functioning of the Church. We also believe that it is unwise to deviate from God's Word in any area, regardless of cultural norms, political pressures, or convenience.

We believe that we can only have life and bear fruit as we abide in the True Vine, Jesus Christ, the Word of God. The standards that CBE has established come from what was once a nearly universal understanding of Scripture. The CBE believes that education is valuable in the development of ministers, but that its value can be truly appreciated only as we build on the solid foundation of the Word. The primary purpose of this educational opportunity is the ordination of elders and secondarily continuing education. We also welcome *anyone* who has a sincere interest in deeper spiritual growth to attend these classes.

GUIDELINES FOR PARTICIPANTS

For our purposes here, a student is anyone who seeks credit for completion of the course, either toward ordination or for CEUs. To encourage a class environment where all those present are supportive of the training goals, we may ask for an interview at the time of registration. The interview process is detailed in a later section. All those who desire to be a part of these classes will need to be approved by the CBE Preparation Committee. Following are some general guidelines:

1. While any person is welcome to attend, only men can receive credit as students. (II Timothy 2:2; I Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:6)
2. Anyone who wishes to receive credit cannot be divorced and remarried.
 - Jesus said that divorce was not part of God's original plan. (Matthew 19:8)
 - Paul said that the marriage bond is dissolved *only* when one partner dies. (Romans 7:2-3)
 - Jesus said that anyone marrying one who is divorced commits adultery. (Luke 16:18)
 - Jesus said that in order to gain eternal life, one cannot commit adultery. (Matthew 19:17-18)
3. We ask that attendees dress in good taste. Clothing should be modest and non-offensive. We request that no jewelry be worn. Women should wear a dress or skirt of sufficient length to cover the knees. Let us seek to glorify God by our appearance, rather than ourselves. (I Timothy 2:9-10; I Peter 3:3-4)
4. Since the course material has been developed primarily for ministry candidates, and secondarily for ministers seeking CEU's, we want to caution any female attendees to conduct themselves in a reserved manner, not dominating discussion, and limiting input in class unless it is solicited by the instructor. This policy is not meant to discourage women from attending, but to uphold the principle of male leadership. (I Corinthians 14:34-35; I Timothy 2:11)



¹ See *Council of Brethren Elders Charter Documents*, pg. 1, item 1.a.

GUIDELINES FOR COURSE MATERIAL

1. Fifteen hours of interactive learning time which includes the class sessions (lecture, discussion, homework review, devotional time, etc.) and dialogue with a mentor and/or resource person to discuss assignments or projects related to course content. (I Timothy 2:2)
2. Two hundred fifty to five hundred pages of reading may be assigned. We want the instructors to have freedom to adjust reading requirements based on content and value. Reading can include entire books as well as specific articles and sections.
3. One or more major assignments should be required along with several smaller ones. These may include book reports, research papers, interviews, sermon manuscripts, etc. Assignments integrating work with ministry are especially desirable.
4. A “Course Affirmations” form will be provided by the instructor to students seeking credit. The form should be returned to the instructor upon completion of the course. The instructor will then provide any comments of evaluation and return the form to the student. A copy of the form will also be sent to the student’s ordaining body as a conformation of his work completed.

TRAINING CREDIT

The “Course Affirmations” form will fulfill the purpose of a credit certificate. CBE courses are designed to encourage high academic standards while upholding the truth of God’s Word. Ordained ministers may audit the course for personal growth and continuing education. Upon request CBE will issue CEU certificates.

INTERVIEW

Our interview process is intended to approve candidates for class participation and not to evaluate a candidate's ministry capabilities. The interview will begin with a request for some general information from the candidate so that we can become better acquainted.

The questions may include:

- Overview of call/ personal call
- Family situation/ occupation
- Spiritual life including devotional life

Next, we will shift to a more personal or individual

- Look at education already received
- Past and current ministry and church responsibilities
- View of Jesus Christ, the Church, and Scripture
- Determine reason for interest in class



We may also ask more specific questions based on answers to general inquires. We will also be attentive for special situations that may exist in order to accommodate students who may have difficulty working within our class structure.