

**CHRISTIAN GROWTH INSTITUTE (Shenandoah)**  
**Shenandoah District Church of the Brethren**

**“Belief and Practices of the Church of the Brethren”**

**Dates:** Saturday January 18, February 1 and February 15 2020

**Instructor:** Jim Miller, 106 Hickory Lane, Bridgewater, VA 22812  
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**Goal:** To understand the beliefs and practices of the Church of the Brethren in light of its history and theological traditions.

**Text:** *Required Texts:* Fruit of the Vine, Donald F. Durnbaugh, Brethren Press, 1997. And Brethren Society, Carl F. Bowman, 1995.  
*Supplemental text:* Church of the Brethren: Yesterday and Today, Edited by Donald F. Durnbaugh, Brethren Press, 1986.

Criteria for Evaluation:

- Each learner will be faithful in attendance and participation in all sessions.
- Each learner will demonstrate understanding of the required text through class discussion and written work. There will be a two to three page summary of the required reading (see below) handed in at the beginning of each of the three Saturday classes. Secondary texts and readings will be handed out in class and along with the required reading, will provide the basis for class discussion.
- Each learner shall write a paper of 4-6 pages in length DUE NO LATER than February 15, 2020. Topic: the historical development of a foundational Brethren belief (see the end of this document for more details.)
- Each learner shall be expected to evaluate all material presented in a critical fashion (that is, not “just the facts,” but the learner’s reactions and questions.)

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Reading Schedule. There will be three sessions of this class. The reading assignments shall be done prior to class, and the 2-3 page written comments will be due at the beginning of each class.

January 18, 2020. Session 1:

European Background: 1650-1720 and  
Brethren Beginnings: 1650-1730

Read: "Overview" in Bowman, Brethren Society, pages 1-20

Durnbaugh FV (Fruit of the Vine) Prologue, Chapters 1-10 (through page 218)

Bonus: Bowman (BS) chapters 1-4 (through page 92)

February 1, 2020: Session 2:

1720-1899- Brethren in the New World and in the Time of Civil War  
Origin of Brethren Ordinances  
Nature of Brethren Beliefs

Read: Durnbaugh (FV) pages 45-50

Durnbaugh (FV) chapters 11-18 (through page 412)

Bonus: Bowman (BS) Chapter 14 (Pages 340-381)

February 15, 2020: Session 3:

20th Century Brethren division and cultural absorption;  
Brethren beyond their 300th year

Read: Durnbaugh (FV) chapters 19 to end of book

Bowman (BS) Chapter 15

Bonus: Bowman (BS) Chapters 11-13

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Each learner shall write a paper from 4-6 pages in length due no later than February 15, 2020.

*Topic: The historical development of a foundational Brethren Belief:*

You are to write on the historical development of a foundational Brethren Belief.

- Pick one or two of the foundational beliefs of the Brethren as listed by Donald Durnbaugh in Fruit of the Vine, pages 45-50.
- State the belief
- Research and write about the development of that belief through Church of the Brethren history, following its development, changes and relevancy until today. Make reference to books (and other materials) read in addition to Durnbaugh, Fruit of the Vine.
- How was this belief interpreted in the beginning of the Church of the Brethren?
- What happened to the belief over the 300+ years of history of the Church of the Brethren?
- What is your assessment of this belief today? (Reference to Carl Bowman, Brethren Society: “20th Century Transformations” chapter 14).

If you have any questions, please talk with the instructor early in the development of your project.

## Brethren Academy and CGI Policy on Plagiarism<sup>1</sup>

Integrity is central to life in community. In the Christian academic community, integrity means giving proper credit to people for the ideas and information we receive from them. It also means that the work we submit and represent as our own is really work we ourselves have done. The Church of the Brethren 2008 Annual Conference Ethics in Ministry Paper (2008) Part III Code of Ethics for Ministerial Leaders states: “I will give credit for all sources quoted or extensively paraphrased in sermons and prepared papers. I will honor all copyrights” (p.8, Letter M).

Plagiarism is using the work of other people without giving them credit, whether in written assignments, oral reports and sermons. A glaring example of plagiarism would be submitting an entire essay or preaching a sermon written by someone else and claiming it was your own. It is also plagiarism to use, without giving credit, someone else’s ideas or phrases. This definition applies to words and images, to manuscripts, and to ideas gleaned from spoken communication.

The consequences for plagiarism will vary according to the extent of the offense. These may range from rewriting the assignment, non-crediting the assignment, or non-crediting the course. The instructor will report any instance of plagiarism to the student and to those supervising the instructional programs. Students who wish to challenge the charge of plagiarism could contact their district executive and/or the Church of the Brethren Office of Ministry.

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<sup>1</sup> The Plagiarism policy for this course is taken verbatim from the CGI Handbook.