

BUCKEYE BRETHREN INSTITUE

SYLLABUS: Introduction to the New Testament

FALL TERM 2025

INSTRUCTOR: Cindy Peel; Address: 4281 Osage St. Stow, OH 44224

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DATES & TIMES: (2025—Fridays) October 24; November 7 & November 21; 9:30am - 3:30 pm
with an hour planned for lunch at approximately 12 noon.

LOCATION: NOCOB District Office, 1107 E. Main Street, Ashland, Ohio 44805. This class
will be taught with in-person and Zoom options available.

PURPOSE: To develop an overview of the background, structure and purpose of the books of the New Testament with the goal of applying its concepts to the practical tasks of pastoral ministry in the Church of the Brethren.

OBJECTIVES: By the end of this unit, the student will:

- A. Be able to identify each of the books of the NT in terms of their literary genre, origin in the life of the early church & basic issues or themes.
- B. Be able to describe the formation of the NT canon & its authority for the church's faith & life.
- C. Be able to identify some of the basic features of Jesus' ministry & message & compare the different portraits of Jesus in the 4 gospels.
- D. Be able to place at least 24 key figures & events on a timeline of the era of the Christian origins.
- E. Be able to take a selected text of the NT & demonstrate its use as a resource for a particular area of ministry.

REQUIRED TEXTS:

- The Bible
- HTRTBFAIW - How to read the Bible for all its worth. By Gordon Fee & Douglas Stuart.
- HTRTNTBBB – How to read the New Testament, book by book. By Gordon Fee & Douglas Stuart
- ADGTTB – A Dunker's Guide to the Bible. From Brethren Press.
- Articles: *What Is the History of Galilee and Why Was it Important to Jesus?*;
Cultural Influences on Paul;

These are not required reading, but have been used in preparation for this class. Books I will be referring to and drawing on for class discussion are:

- Reading the New Testament: An Introduction, Third Edition by Pheme Perkins; Paulist Press, 2012.
- Encountering the New Testament, Fourth Edition by Walter A. Elwell & Robt W. Yarbrough; Baker Academic Group; 2022.
- "A Compact Guide to the Whole Bible" Ed. by Robt W. Wall and D. R. Nienhuis; Baker Academic, 2015.

GENERAL COURSE REQUIREMENTS: -attendance at all classes -engaged participation in all class activities -complete reading assignments as scheduled -complete the writing assignments to be submitted as scheduled -complete a reading log documenting all reading done for this class.

In case a participant needs to miss a class (due to illness or scheduling), to receive credit for the class the participant will need to watch the class recording (all classes are recorded off Zoom). Additionally, they will have to choose three (3) points of class discussion to react to and share their reaction in a paper.

If a participant has to miss more than one class (2) they will not receive credit for the course and will be required to retake the course.

CLASS OUTLINE:

1. OUR FIRST CLASS: (October 24, 2025)

In our first class, we will discuss: Background to the New Testament and the Gospels.

2. OUR SECOND CLASS - (November 7, 2025)

In our second class, we will discuss: Acts and Paul's Epistles.

3. OUR THIRD CLASS – (November 21, 2025)

In our third class, we will discuss: The General Epistles & Revelation.

ASSIGNMENTS:

SESSION 1 due October 24

1. Reading Assignments: HTRTBFAIW pp 22-27; pp 132-158; pp165-167; HTRTNTBBB pp 21-67; ADGTTB pp 141-156; Read article: *What Is the History of Galilee and Why Was it Important to Jesus?* By Meg Bucher (Megs) Crosswalk.com.

2. Writing Assignment: Read thru your assigned gospel at least twice in different translations. (You will receive your assignment once registered).

- A. Outline the gospel.
- B. Summarize one or more surprises, questions or insights that came to you as you read through the book.
- C. In light of the gospel you read, in a paragraph, how would you describe Jesus' value to a non-Christian?

SESSION 2

1. Text Reading Assignment: HTRTBFAIW pp 57-73; HTRTNTBBB pp 71-143; ADGTTB pp 157-200; Read the book of Acts; Read article: Cultural Influences on Paul;

2. Writing Assignment due November 4 via email or USPS

- A. Review each of Paul's letters & complete the graph (the graph will be given to you at the 1st session).
- B. Choose 1 passage from Paul's epistles & analyze it paragraph by paragraph as instructed on p. 67 of HTRTBFAIW. "Trace the argument of the passage & in a sentence or two, explain the point of each paragraph in supporting the argument of the passage as a whole." Choose from one of the following passages:

- a. 1 Corinthians 15:35-58 b. Ephesians 4 c. Philippians 1:12-30
d. Colossians 2:20-3:17 e. 1 Thessalonians 2 f. 2 Timothy 2

C. Using your chosen passage, write a children's story or a devotional using an analogy from current times. How does this passage reinforce at least one aspect of Brethren focus & life?

Session 3

1. Text Reading Assignment: HTRTBFAIW pp 258-278; HTRTNTBBB pp 144-190; ADGTTB pp 201-224; Read 1&2 Peter; 1,2,3 John, Jude in at least two different translations or paraphrases.
2. Writing Assignment: **due November 18 via email or USPS**
Create an interactive Bible study from either Hebrews 10:19-39; Hebrews 13:1-9; James 1:19-27; or James 5:12-20 and include:
 - a) An outline of the passage.
 - b) Questions to get the students involved in the text.
 - c) At least one scenario that the students could face in modern life related to the passage.
 - d) How does this connect with Church of the Brethren belief & practice?

All assignments, including a log recording everything read and used for research, will be due the week after the last class.

ETHICS AND EXPECTATIONS:

This course complies with the Brethren Academy and BBI Policy on Citation Style and Plagiarism as described: "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 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. 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."

Instructor's instructions and expectations for papers

- Use a 12pt font. (Times New Roman, Calibri, Ariel)
- Double space all documents and indent each new paragraph.
- Demonstrate your understanding of the material—do not merely rehash.
- Cite all sources within the document.
- Putting quotes around a bunch of words without attribution is unacceptable.

Bio: Cindy Peel is a dual career person who has worked both as a Registered Respiratory Therapist and an ordained minister in the Church of the Brethren. She has a degree in Respiratory Therapy from Ohio State University and an MDiv from Bethany Seminary. She served as full-time pastor at Marion 1st Church of the Brethren for 11 ½ years; part-time pastor at the Woodworth COB, the Akron Eastwood COB as interim twice, and the Akron Springfield COB as interim. She has preached in many congregations in the district and served in a number of capacities at the church's national, district & local level. Her passion is being a faithful servant of the Lord Jesus wherever called.