

## "Plymouth Brethren" FAQ

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This Frequently Asked Questions list (FAQ) concentrates on the so called "Open Brethren" since this is the background of the author. However, an attempt is made to explain some of the positions of "Closed and Exclusive Brethren". This FAQ should not in any way be considered to be an authoritative document representing the view of any local church or any individual (including the author). At almost every point in this FAQ, you will find Brethren churches that will disagree or differ. Variation is even greater between different countries. The author could probably best be described as from the traditional end of the open Brethren in North America. Suggestions and corrections should be emailed to: [Shawn Abigail](mailto:Shawn Abigail)  
This FAQ now has an official home page! You can see it at:  
<http://www.brethrenonline.org>

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### Contents

- 1) Why are you producing this FAQ?
  - 2) Why don't you like the name "Brethren"?
  - 3) What is the history of the "Brethren"?
  - 4) What is a "Brethren" church service like?
  - 5) What is the doctrinal position of the "Brethren"?
  - 6) Who were some well known members of the "Brethren"?
  - 7) What hymnbooks do the "Brethren" use?
  - 8) What type of church government do the "Brethren" have?
  - 9) How many "Brethren" assemblies are there?
  - 10) What "Brethren" publishing houses exist?
  - 11) What "Brethren" publications exist?
  - 12) What "Brethren" Bible schools exist?
  - 13) What "Brethren" missionary organizations exist?
  - 14) How many missionaries have the "Brethren" sent out?
  - 15) Current issues among the Brethren
  - 16) Theological contributions of the Brethren
  - 17) What books have been written about the Brethren
  - 18) What WWW sites carry Brethren information?
  - 19) Other items of interest to Brethren
  - 20) Are the Plymouth Brethren related to the Quakers?
  - 21) Are the Brethren forbidden to use computers?
  - 22) Do the Plymouth Brethren believe in ...?
  - 23) Where can I get genealogical information about Brethren ancestors?
  - 24) What should I do with the "PB" children I teach?
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### 1) Why are you producing this FAQ?

The so called "Plymouth Brethren" have made important contributions to the evangelical church but many people have never heard of them. This FAQ is intended to let people know who they are. It is not an attempt to get new people to come to any particular church.

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## 2) Why don't you like the name "Brethren"?

This FAQ uses the term "Brethren" or "Plymouth Brethren" in the sectarian manner of many. However, most people inside these assemblies simply prefer to be called Christians.

We feel that titles and denominationalism divides true Christians, is forbidden in 1 Corinthians 1:12, and is probably not all that accurate anyway (as for me, I am an Ottawa brother who has never been to Plymouth 8-). A more recent development is the use of the name Christian Brethren. It seems to be used by those who wish to avoid the connotations of the name Plymouth Brethren but still want to have a denominational title.

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## 3) What is the history of the "Brethren"?

This question is beyond the scope of this FAQ. Some of the books mentioned in Section 17 of this FAQ will answer this question.

In short, during the first part of the 1800's, some Christians began to feel uncomfortable about denominationalism, a clerical hierarchy and certain "compromises" creeping into their churches. They resolved to simply read their Bibles and to try to gather in the same simple manner as Christians did in the New Testament. As some of these Christians began to travel and preach, they found believers in other cities and countries who were doing the same thing. Early gatherings were established in Dublin and Plymouth, from which the term Plymouth Brethren was obtained. Through zealous evangelistic work and church planting, churches were established all over England, Scotland, Europe and North America.

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## 4) What is a "Brethren" church service like?

This is a description that would fit a number of meetings that I have attended in North America:

The Breaking of Bread is our communion service. It is usually about 1 hour in length and is usually held Sunday morning or evening. It is unstructured and non-liturgical. Brothers will rise to their feet to pray, suggest a hymn, or read and expound upon a passage of Scripture. The purpose is worship, not teaching or exhortation, and most comments will address some aspect of the person and work of Jesus Christ.

Often, a theme will develop. Sisters do not offer audible worship, although many will participate in the singing and most wear a headcovering in our services. Their silent participation is valued and certainly sets a tone for the meeting. Usually towards the end, a brother will give thanks for the bread and give thanks for the wine. The emblems are passed around, with all in fellowship participating. This is usually the only meeting at which a collection is taken up.

One or two preaching meetings are usually scheduled for Sunday. Often, one of these will have a gospel emphasis. Usually there will be 20 minutes of hymns, announcements, etc. and a 40 minute sermon. Often baptisms will take place at the Sunday morning meeting (often referred to as the Family Bible Hour or Family Gospel Hour), although some churches will choose to baptize outside. Sometimes brothers from this local church will preach, and sometimes visiting brothers or full-time workers will preach.

A mid-week prayer meeting is also held. In addition to the prayers, a shorter sermon is often given. Some churches have replaced their mid-week meeting with small group fellowships. It is interesting to note that some churches have their mid-week meetings on a Tuesday rather than in the middle of the week on a Wednesday, because many of these churches at one time had 2 mid-week meetings (Tuesday and Thursday). Sometimes sermons will be preached at a mid-week meeting (in addition to prayer) and sometimes a discussion study is held with no predecided topic.

Although not really considered church meetings, many will also have a Sunday school, youth meetings, ladies Bible study and coffee hour. Many will also have special evangelistic meetings. Some churches will put together special meetings in nursing homes or prisons.

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## 5) What is the doctrinal position of the "Brethren"?

A number of doctrines and positions generally characterize the "Brethren". Again, this should not be taken as applying to every "Brethren" church or every individual who fellowships in one of these churches. Very briefly stated, the doctrines and positions are:

- verbal, plenary inspiration of the original manuscripts of the Bible
- pretribulational, premillennial and dispensational
- non-charismatic, but recognizing the "non sign" gifts
- no salaried ministry. Gifted brothers minister as they are able. Gifted sisters will often minister among each other at ladies Bible studies, conferences, etc. However, we do not believe in an "every man" ministry (that is to say, we believe that every believer has a ministry but not every believer is called to be a preacher), but only ministry by those who are gifted
- church government by a plurality of elders who meet the qualifications of 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1
- some have deacons to attend to physical ministry (e.g. taking care of the chapel). Deacons are not in a decision making position.
- often, the meetings are unstructured. This is especially true of the breaking of bread (communion service), but can also apply to Reading Meetings and Open Meetings
- clear evangelistic witness
- most open assemblies hold a middle of the road position with respect to election and free-will. Some can be found at either extreme. Most exclusive meetings hold to election.
- trinitarian
- most hold to the doctrine of Eternal Security
- believers baptism by immersion. A significant number of brethren in the "non-open" assemblies believe in and practise Christian household baptism.
- eternal sonship of Jesus Christ

Some booklets that outline the distinctive position of the Brethren on the local church include:

- Assembly Distinctives by Harold Mackay (Everyday Publications)
  - Scriptural Principles of Gathering by A.P. Gibbs (Walterick)
  - God's Order by Bruce Anstey (Christian Truth Publishing, Richmond BC)
- 

## 6) Who were some well known members of the "Brethren"?

- Anderson, Sir Robert - Scotland Yard detective and writer. Anderson was associated at various times and various ways with the "Brethren"
- Brenton, Sir Lancelot - translator of what is probably the most widely available Greek-English edition of the LXX.
- Bruce, F.F. - Bible commentator and former editor of the New International Commentary on the New Testament series.
- Darby, John Nelson - inaccurately referred to as the founder of the "Plymouth Brethren". This former Church of Ireland clergyman preached, wrote, planted churches and translated the Bible into English, German and French. He also wrote a number of hymns.
- Elliot, Jim - Missionary martyred in Ecuador. Well known for his statement, "He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain what he cannot lose."

- Francis, S. Trevor - composed the hymn "Oh the Deep, Deep Love of Jesus".
- Groves, A.N. - pioneer missionary in India
- Ironside, H.A. - well known Bible commentator. Ironside started with the Salvation Army, became a "Brethren" worker and finally the pastor of Moody Memorial Church.
- Kelly, William - authored many Bible commentaries
- MacDonald, William - author of the Believers Bible Commentary which has just been printed by Thomas Nelson
- Mackintosh, C.H. - wrote "Notes on the Pentateuch" and "Miscellaneous Writings"
- McCulley, Ed – one of the 5 Martyrs of Ecuador
- Miller, Andrew - author on Church history
- Muller, George - lived in Bristol England and ran a chain of orphanages which operated on the principle of faith
- Newberry, Thomas - well known for the Newberry Reference Bible, which uses a system of symbols to explain verb tenses
- Scriven, Joseph - composer of "What a Friend We Have in Jesus"
- Tregelles, Samuel - noted scholar of Biblical languages
- Vine, W.E. - author of "Vines Expository Dictionary" and numerous commentaries
- Wigram, G.V. - author of "Wigrams Hebrew/Chaldee Concordance" and "Wigrams Greek Concordance"

More information about early Brethren workers can be found in "Chief Men Among the Brethren" published by Loizeaux Brothers.

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## 7) What hymnbooks do the "Brethren" use?

A wide variety of hymnbooks may be used in different assemblies. However, a number of hymnbooks are in common use:

- Hymns of Worship and Remembrance - often used at the Breaking of Bread Meeting
- Hymns of Truth and Praise - often used at meetings other than the Breaking of Bread
- Choice Hymns of the Faith

Hymns of Worship and Remembrance, Hymns of Truth and Praise, and Choice Hymns of the Faith were originally published by "Gospel Perpetuating Fund/Publishers -Fort Dodge, Iowa - USA" NOW they are published by "Truth and Praise Publishers - 201 Schlieff Drive - Belle Chasse, LA. (Louisiana) - USA". Phone (Good News Book Store): (504) 394-3087 e-mail (Good News Book Store):

ibelievegodsllove@juno.com

- Spiritual Songs
- Little Flock Hymns
- Echoes of Grace Hymnbook
- Believers Hymnbook
- Hymns of Light and Love

Some non-English hymnbooks include:

- Geistliche Lieder (Spiritual Songs - German)
- In the Netherlands the used hymnbook is 'Geestelijke Liederen' (same meaning as the German) and, in some assemblies 'Lichtbundel' (meaning 'Collection of light', same word as 'Lightbeam', referring to the Light coming through the songs from God(?)).
- Himnario Mensajes del Amor de Dios (Spanish -used in over 125 assemblies in Spain and Latin America - mainly Exclusive meetings)
- Himnos y Canticos del Evangelio (Spanish - used in over 1000 assemblies in Latin America)
- Cantici Cristiani (used by Italian "open" assemblies in Italy and the United States)
- Inni e Cantici Spirituale (used by Italian "non-open" assemblies in Italy)

- Hymnes et Cantiques (used by French "non-open" assemblies in France, Belgium, Switzerland, French Africa, and French Canada. Originally edited by Dr Henri Rossier, co-laborer of JN Darby's.) Most of these hymns have been issued in cassette and CD (6 or 7 volumes) recorded by the ChoerEvangelique de Lausanne, Switzerland)

In addition to these, some Brethren churches will use the chorus and song books produced by major evangelical publishers. Others have collections of choruses taken directly from Scripture.

Note: Mr John Sinclair has produced a French hymnbook of songs suitable for the breaking of bread. Contact me for more information.

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## **8) What type of church government do the "Brethren" have?**

The "Open Brethren" churches are completely independent. Each church will have a number of Elders who meet the qualifications set forth in 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1. From time to time, they will ask additional men who meet these qualifications to join them. Deacons may be appointed, but they have no governmental role. Teaching responsibilities fall upon all brothers who are gifted, and gifted sisters will often minister at ladies meetings, ladies conferences, etc. Despite the completely independent nature of these churches, there is a large degree of cooperation and fellowship between them.

"Closed and Exclusive Brethren" do not like the idea of independence and have circles of fellowship. There is no governmental body over a circle of fellowship, but rather it is a tie between those of like mind. Many of these churches believe the church is in ruins and thus they do not feel they can recognize Elders. Instead a number of "leading brothers" take many of the responsibilities of Elders.

Alexander Strauch's defense of biblical eldership, entitled *Biblical Eldership* (3d. rev. ed., Littleton, Colorado: Lewis and Roth Publishers, 1995, 337 pp. Also available are a Study Guide and a Mentor's Guide. Contact: Lewis and Roth Publishers, P. O. Box 569, Littleton, Colorado 80160, U. S. A. Phone: 1-800-477-3239. International phone: (303) 794-3239) may be a helpful introduction to this topic for many people.

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## **9) How many "Brethren" assemblies are there?**

There is really no way of knowing. Most large cities in North America have a "Brethren Assembly" and some small towns have several. At some point the dividing line between "Brethren Assembly" and "Independent Bible Church" gets blurred. An address book has been published by Walterick which lists 195 assemblies in the Canadian province of Ontario (population 9 million). I haven't bothered counting for all of North America. There would certainly be hundreds of these churches in England and Scotland, and some African countries also have hundreds. The Australian periodical *Tidings* lists 261 assemblies in their country.

There are many assemblies in Latin America. Besides whatever "open" meetings there are there, there are 85 assemblies in Bolivia, 110 in Peru, 8 in Argentina, 33 in the Dominican Republic, more than 8 in Brazil, and about 28 in Mexico in fellowship with the "TW" (exclusive) meetings. Mexico has approximately 150 meetings in total. In total, Brazil has about 800 assemblies (including Open meetings). There are at least 30 Gospel Halls in Chile.

The February 1996 issue of *MISSIONS* magazine (from CMML), indicates there are 230 open assemblies and 300 exclusive assemblies in Germany.

There are about 83 English speaking assemblies in Malaysia with another 25 Chinese, 29 Malay, and 5 Tamil speaking Assemblies. More information can be found at <http://www.geocities.com/andyabel/Malaysia.html>

There are 232 assemblies in South Korea.

The southern most state of India, called Kerala, with a population of 29 million has more than 400 assemblies. In the neighboring state of Andhra Pradesh also there will be not less than 500 Assemblies. Tamil Nadu may have around 400 assemblies while Karnataka may have 200 assemblies. (thanks to John Abraham for this information).

There are about 22 Brethren Assemblies in Singapore. (thanks to Benjamin Ho for this information) In Jamaica there are over 240 assemblies, and about 10 Gospel Halls in St Kitts, and 13 Gospel Halls in Barbados. A book has been written about the assembly work in Barbados: by S.R. Catwell, ***The Brethren in Barbados- Gospel Hall Assemblies 1889-1994***, McNaughton & Gunn, Michigan.

Information about assemblies in the UK can be found at:

<http://www.geocities.com/Athens/2394/assemblies.html>

From some of the information in the book Operation World together with some educated guesses and Canadian census data, there are about 1,000,000 people in the world who would call themselves or be called Plymouth Brethren.

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## 10) What "Brethren" publishing houses exist?

### **Walterick Publishers**

Walterick Publishing  
6549 State Ave,  
Kansas City, KS  
66102

[Walterick](#)

Publishes a number of books.

### **Gospel Folio Press**

304 Killaly St. West  
Port Colborne, Ontario L3K 6A6  
905-835-9166

[Gospel Folio Press](#)

Publishes books, tracts and several magazines, as well as the Choice Gleanings calendar of daily readings

### **Believer's Bookshelf Canada Inc.**

5205 Regional Road # 81, Unit # 3  
Beamsville, Ontario  
L0R 1B3

Canada

Ph# 905-563-4929

Fax# 905-563-5811

E-mail: [bbcan@vaxxine.com](mailto:bbcan@vaxxine.com)

Web Address: [www.bbcan.org](http://www.bbcan.org)

Contact: Rodger Sheets, Manager

### **Everyday Publications**

310 Killaly Street W.

Port Colborne, ON

Canada, L3K 6A6

Tel: 905-834-5552

Fax: 905-834-8045

[everyday@everyday.on.ca](mailto:everyday@everyday.on.ca)

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**Loizeaux Brothers**

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Neptune, NJ,  
U.S.A., 07753-0277

Orders: 1-800-526-2796

Possibly the largest Brethren publisher, Loizeaux prints the commentaries of H.A. Ironside.

**Moments With The Book**

PO Box 322  
Bedford PA 15522 USA  
Phone: 814-623-8737  
Fax: 814-623-2727

Web: <http://www.mwtb.org>

E-Mail: [gospel-lit@mwtb.org](mailto:gospel-lit@mwtb.org)

**Believers Bookshelf, Inc.**

Box 261  
Sunbury, PA  
U.S.A., 17801  
1-570-672-2134

web: [Believers Bookshelf USA](#)

Prints a number of books by older Brethren authors, as well as some modern ones.

**Believer's Bookshelf Canada Inc.**

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Beamsville, Ontario  
L0R 1B3  
Canada

Ph# 905-563-4929

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Web: [Believers Bookshelf Canada](#)

Email Address: [bbcan@vaxxine.com](mailto:bbcan@vaxxine.com)

Contact: Rodger Sheets, Manager

**Bible Truth Publishers**

PO Box 649  
59 Industrial Road  
Addison IL 60101-0649  
1-630-543-1441 phone  
1-630-543-1476 fax

Prints a number of books by older Brethren authors.

**John Ritchie Ltd.**

40 Beansburn,  
Kilmarnock, Scotland

**Precious Seed Publications**

P.O. Box 8  
Neatch, West Glamorgan,  
UK, SA11 1QB

**Gospel Tract Publications**

411 Hillington Road,  
Glasgow, Scotland,  
UK, G52 4BL  
Phone: 041-882 4697

**Grace & Truth, Inc.**

210 Chestnut St.  
Danville, IL 61832 USA  
Phone: 217-442-1120  
Fax: 217-442-1163  
E-mail: [gtpress@gtpress.org](mailto:gtpress@gtpress.org)

WWW: <http://www.gtpress.org>

Gospel tracts in 10 languages; booklets and a monthly magazine for believers.

**PRESENT TRUTH PUBLISHERS**

274 East Veterans Hwy,  
Jackson NJ 08527

<http://presenttruthpublishers.com>

**R. Brockhaus Verlag Wuppertal**

P.O. Box 22 20  
42766 Haan (Gruiten)  
Germany  
+49-2104-968611

**Ediciones Biblicas (Spanish publications)**

1166 Perroy (Vaud)  
Switzerland  
41-21-825-3151

**Verdades Biblicas (Spanish publications)**

see Bible Truth Publishers above  
(publishing affiliates in Bolivia, Ecuador and Peru)

**Verdades Vivas (Portuguese publications)**

Caixa Postal 147  
cep 13480-970  
Limeira, SP, Brazil

**Bibles & Publications (French publications)**

5706 Monkland  
Montreal QC H4A 1E6  
Canada  
1-514-481-6335 phone  
1-514-486-9701 fax  
Toll free long distance 1-800-387-6335  
WWW Page: <http://bibles.qc.ca>

**Gospel Literature Outreach**

78 Muir Street  
Motherwell, Scotland  
ML1 1BN

**Bibles et Publications Chretiennes**

Valence, France

**Il Messaggio del'Amore de Dio (Italian publications)**

Casella Postale 22  
87070 Sibari (Cs)  
Italy

**Bible Light Publications**

Hong Kong

**Verlag Ernst Paulus**

Haltweg 23  
673 Neustadt/Weinstrasse

Germany

Prints a number of books and pamphlets by older brethren authors

**Messages of God's Love - Multilingual**

Federal Way WA

Publishes Spanish, Telegu (India) and Portuguese evangelistic publications

**Editions Bibles et Traités Chrétiens (French)**

Vevey, Switzerland

Publishes many books and tracts by older and current brethren writers

**Chapter Two**

1Chapter Two Trust

Fountain House

1a Conduit Road

Woolwich

London SE18 7AJ

United Kingdom

www.chaptertwobooks.org.uk

e-mail chapter2uk@aol.com

tel 020 8316 5389

their bookstore is at

Chapter Two Bookshop

199 Plumstead Common Road

Plumstead Common

London SE18 2UJ

Tel 020 8316 4972

Publishes and republishes many books and tracts by older and current brethren writers

<http://chaptertwo.org.uk>

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**11) What "Brethren" publications exist?**

**Believer's Magazine**

(through John Ritchie)

**Precious Seed**

(through Precious Seed Pub.)

**Christian Shepherd** (formerly Christian Treasury)

PO Box 57471

Des Moines, IA 50327-2189

free of charge to mailing addresses in North America, (and overseas as the Lord enables)

**COME AND SEE**

64 Hills Road

Ajax, Ontario

Canada, L1S 2W4

Bi-monthly Bible Study Magazine

A Nathanael Publication (Kelly Meetings) available free of charge. Just write for your copy.

**Counsel Magazine**

COUNSEL MAGAZINE

PO Box 427

St. Catharines, ON

Canada L2R 6V9

In the USA

COUNSEL MAGAZINE

c/o Uplook Ministries  
PO Box 2041  
Grand Rapids, MI  
USA 49501-2041

In the UK  
COUNSEL

c/o W. A. McCulloch  
"Bethany", 113 Bech Hill  
Haywards Heath,  
UK RH16-3TS  
Founder; Robert McClurkin  
Editor; J. Boyd Nicholson  
70 Crestdale Ave.  
St. Catharines, ON  
Canada L2T 3B5  
Price: Voluntary

**Green Pastures** (Monthly Newsletter)

J. Melough,  
102 Fairfield Beach Rd  
Fairfield, CT  
USA, 06430

Price: \$10/USA \$12/Canada

sent unsolicited to many assemblies

**INTEREST MINISTRIES** (Magazine, Organization)

This magazine is no longer published

**Milk & Honey** (Newsletter)

Ministry of Spread the Word, Inc  
2721 Oberlin Dr.  
York, PA  
USA 17404

**Present Truth Publishers**

411 Route 79  
Morganville, New Jersey  
USA 07751

Bi-monthly magazine called "Thy Precepts" is available free of charge.

<http://presenttruthpublishers.com>

**UPLOOK Magazine**

U.S.A.:

UPLOOK  
P.O. Box 2041  
Grand Rapids, MI  
USA, 49501-2041  
www.uplook.org

Canada:

UPLOOK  
Uplook Ministries  
P.O. Box 427  
St. Catherines, Ontario  
Canada, L2R 6V9

Price: Voluntary donation

**Rightside Up**

Formerly published by UPLOOK, this magazine is no longer being published.

**Treasury Magazine**

edited by Rex Dearlove

Monthly magazine for NZ Brethren

Published by GPH Society, PO Box 74, Palmerston North, NZ

tel (64 6) 359 8180 Fax 3570281

GPH is also a book retailer (2 stores) and wholesaler. It also houses Rally Supplies and Missionary Services (NZ).

General Manager Campbell Fountain

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Fax 02 9874 4877

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**BIBLE & LIFE Newsletter**

c/o David Dunlap

16207 Pebblebrook Dr.

Tampa, FL 33624

(813) 961-8474

**Wholesome Words for Spiritual Guidance**, bimonthly

R. M. Goatley, Editor

P.O. Box 353

Taree, N.S.W.

2430 Australia

Price: Free. A gift is welcome.

**Assembly Testimony**, bimonthly

B. Currie, Editor

Price: Free. A gift is welcome.

Subscriptions:

William Neill

"Beth Asher"

109 Lurgan Road, Banbridge,

Northern Ireland BT32 4NG

ph (018206) 24238

**Truth & Tidings**, monthly

Dr. A. J. Higgins, Editor

2148 Creglow Drive

Jackson, MI, U.S.A 49203\_3814

Price: \$10.00 US; \$12.00 Can; #5.00 UK

Subscriptions:

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99 Blamora Drive

Stoney Creek, ON Canada L8G 4A0

Subscriptions UK:

Elwood Russell

14 Toberhewny Lane, Lurgan

Craigavon,

Northern Ireland BT66 8AH

**Words in Season**, monthly

Matthew J. Brescia, Assoc. Editor & Publisher

66 Connecticut Boulevard

East Hartford, CT 06108

Price: \$9.00 US; #5.00 UK

Subscriptions:

Words in Season

100 Center Street

Windsor Locks, CT 06096

Subscriptions UK:

Elwood Russell

14 Toberhewny Lane, Lurgan

Craigavon,

Northern Ireland BT66 8AH

**Grace & Truth Magazine**

(through Grace & Truth, Inc. - see publishing houses for the address)

Monthly "Food for the Family of God",

12 regular departments.

Donation - \$7 USA; \$8 other.

**Truth and Testimony**

(through Chapter Two - see publishing houses for the address)

**The Emmaus Journal**

A semiannual publication of the faculty and alumni of Emmaus Bible College devoted to the exposition of the Bible, biblical doctrines, and practical issues from a biblical perspective. Volume 5, Number 1 is currently available. Subscription rates: One year, \$7 in U.S. or \$10 in Canada (Canadian funds). Other foreign countries, \$10 per year in U.S. funds. One free complimentary copy is available upon request.

Write: The Emmaus Journal, 2570 Asbury Rd., Dubuque, IA 52001.

**Offene Türen (Open doors)** (News from Missionfields)

Missionshaus Bibelschule Wiedenest(MBW)

Olper Straße 10

51702 Bergneustadt

Germany

+49-2261-4092-0

Price: free , but a gift is welcome

Note: Missionshaus Bibelschule Wiedenest has a web site at: <http://www.wiedenest.de>

**Die Botschaft** (Magazine)

R. Brockhaus Verlag Wuppertal

P.O. Box 22 20

42766 Hann (Gruiten)

Germany

+49-2104-968611

Price: Germany DM 48,-

**"En Tu Juventud"**

Casilla 17-10-7013

Quito, Ecuador

Semi-annual Bible study magazine in Spanish especially for young people sent free of charge to about 8000 addresses in Latin America and the USA and Canada

**"Palavras de Edificacao Exortacao e Consolacao"**

Bi-monthly Bible study magazine in Portuguese for believers. Available from Verdades Vivas in Brasil.

**Escudrinando (Searching)**

A ministry magazine published bi-monthly by Temas Biblicas, Apartado Postal 4972, Santo Domingo, in

the Dominican Republic, sent free of charge, commenced January-February 1997. Editors, Gines and Manuel Adames

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## **12) What "Brethren" Bible schools exist?**

### **Kawartha Lakes Bible College**

Box 1101  
Peterborough, Ontario,  
Canada, K9J 7H4  
(705) 742-2437  
1-800-388-5522 (1-800-388-KLBC)  
[mail@klbc.ca](mailto:mail@klbc.ca)  
[www.klbc.ca](http://www.klbc.ca)  
Offers one and two year programs.

### **Mt Carmel Bible School**

4725-106 Avenue NW  
Edmonton, AB, Canada  
T6A 1E7  
Phone: (403) 465-3015  
Fax: (403)4 466-2485  
Free: (800) 561-6443  
[carmel@worldgate.com](mailto:carmel@worldgate.com)

### **Discipleship Intern Training Program/Fairhaven Leadership Training Program**

The Discipleship Intern Training Program is no longer running. However, it is being replaced by the Fairhaven Leadership Training Program. Contact Fairhaven Bible Chapel (<http://www.fbc-sl.org>) for more information.

### **Emmaus Bible College**

2570 Asbury Road,  
Dubuque IA 52001  
ph 319-588-8000  
<http://www.emmaus.edu>  
Offers 4 year degrees. Extensive selection of popular level correspondence courses in a number of languages

### **New Zealand Assembly Bible School**

Principal: Doug Hewlett tel (64 9)818 5112  
20 Palmer Ave, Kelston, Auckland tel (64 9) 818 5112

### **GLO (Gospel Literature Outreach) Bible School**

New Zealand  
This no longer exists.

### **New Zealand Emmaus**

<http://www.EmmausNZ.com>

**Emmaus Bible School**

PO Box 234  
Epping NSW 2121  
(Australia)

**Missionshaus Bibelschule Wiedenest (MBW)**

Olper Strasse 10  
51702 Bergneustadt  
Germany  
+49-2261-4092-0  
<http://www.wiedenest.de> <http://www.wiedenest.de> (former Director was Erich Sauer)

**Northland Bible College**

Northland Bible College is no longer running. <http://www.northlandbible.org/nbcnews.html>

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**13) What "Brethren" missionary organizations exist?**

It should be noted that in addition to the organizations listed, many missionaries from Brethren churches serve as missionaries with other evangelistic ministries.

**Christian Missions in Many Lands**

P.O. Box 13,  
Spring Lake, NJ,  
U.S.A. 07762  
ph 732-449-8880  
fax 732-974-0888  
prayer line: 732-449-2333

**MSC Canada**

509 - 3950 14th Avenue  
Markham, Ontario L3R 0A9 Canada  
+1.905.947.0468 (voice)  
+1.905.947.0352 (fax)  
Email: [msc@msc.on.ca](mailto:msc@msc.on.ca)

**Echoes of Service**

124, Wells Road,  
BATH,  
BA2 3AH  
United Kingdom  
Telephone 01225 310893  
E-mail [echoes@echoes.org.uk](mailto:echoes@echoes.org.uk)  
Website [www.echoes.org.uk](http://www.echoes.org.uk)

**Missionary Services NZ**

PO Box 744  
Palmerston North New Zealand

Tel. (64 6) 35 78 388

**"Malaysian Missionary Services"**

55, Jalan PJS11/9, Bandar Sunway 46150 Petaling Jaya Selangor

MALAYSIA

fax 603 734 7811

FAO Ernest Poon

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**14) How many missionaries have the "Brethren" sent out?**

Again, there is no way to know. It has been estimated that 1% of the total number of individuals in fellowship in "Brethren" churches are on the mission field. By 20th century standards, this is in excess of almost every denomination (although by 1st century standards I suspect this is rather poor). The book Operation World says that the Brethren churches in Canada, USA, UK, Australia and New Zealand together have 1223 missionaries. This would not include workers sent to parts of their own countries, indigenous mission work and missionaries sent from various countries not listed above. There are likely several thousand missionaries currently working.

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**15) Current issues among the Brethren**

Like most groups of people, there are a number of issues currently under debate among the Brethren. These include:

- should we hire a pastor or guarantee salaries to workers?
- should the sisters participate audibly in the meetings? (note that in most "Open" meetings, the sisters do sing audibly)
- should elders be elected or appointed, and for how long?
- should we have musical instruments in our meetings?
- should we have more modern music
- should we form a recognized denomination?
- should we use only the KJV, or permit modern translations?
- should we receive visitors to the breaking of bread openly, or only those who carry letters of introduction?
- should we have ties/links to denominational churches?

Again, it should be pointed out that each church differs and what might be a very contentious issue for one church could be a settled and accepted matter for another.

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**16) Theological contributions of the Brethren**

A number of doctrines that are now widely held within evangelical circles were first discovered by the Brethren or were promoted and propagated by the Brethren. In no particular order these include:

- pre-tribulational rapture
- dispensationalism
- priesthood of all believers
- difference between the Church and Israel
- lack of a clergy/laity division

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## 17) What books have been written about the Brethren

An excellent treatment of the history of the Brethren is given in "An Historical Sketch of the Brethren Movement" by H.A. Ironside. It is published by Loizeaux Brothers. Although I have not read them myself, others have suggested F. Roy Coads, A History of the Brethren Movement (2nd ed. Exeter: Paternoster, 1974) and H. H. Rowdons, The Origins of the Brethren (1967). Because of the close connection between the life of John Nelson Darby and the early history of the "brethren" movement, another helpful source might be "John Nelson Darby, A Biography" by Max S Weremchuk, Loizeaux Brothers, 1992. Also, Napoleon Noel's 2-volume "History of the Brethren" is of interest, edited by W. F Knapp. It has recently been reprinted by Chapter Two in England. A small volume, "The Brethren (so-called): Their Origin, Progress and Testimony" by Andrew Miller is of interest. Robert Baylis has written a history of the Open Brethren entitled My People (Harold Shaw Publishers). A short book by Bill Conard called Family Matters has been published by Interest Ministries (but is now out of print). "Robert C. Chapman, A Biography." by Robert L. Peterson has been published by Loizeaux. In German, there is "Die Brüderbewegung in Deutschland" Volume I-III (The Brethren Movement in Germany) Gerhard Jordy, R. Brockhaus Verlag Wuppertal. Also printed was Open Brethren: "A brief history of the Brethren" by Ian McDowell, published by Victory Books, 1968

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## 18) What WWW sites carry Brethren information?

The following lists a number WWW Home pages that carry Brethren information. This is not intended to be a comprehensive listing of web pages by those in Brethren fellowship, but rather a means of finding more information by and about the Brethren. For reasons of time and space, I intend to be selective about the Home Pages I list in this section, so please, only send me the URL for your Home Page if it contains a large amount of material of interest to Brethren. I am particularly interested in sites that carry writings by and about Brethren, especially the older writers.

### **Darbys Synopsis in HTML Format**

<http://ccel.wheaton.edu/darby/synopsis>

### **Some Modern Writings**

<http://www3.sympatico.ca/jrm>

### **Publishers/Book Distributors**

<http://www.vir.com/bp/bp.htm>

<http://www.uplook.org/index.html>

### **Emmaus Bible College**

<http://www.emmaus.edu>

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## 19) Other items of interest to Brethren

Brother J.L. Hodgett has produced 7 CD-ROMs of interest, which are also available for free download. See [www.stempublishing.com](http://www.stempublishing.com)

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## 20) Are the Plymouth Brethren related to the Quakers?

I have never heard this question brought up, but it does appear in the FAQ for the Quakers (Society of Friends). The answer is, no. There is no relationship or tie. Likewise, there is no relationship between the "Plymouth Brethren" and the "Grace Brethren" or any of the Mennonite Brethren groups.

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## **21) Are the Brethren forbidden to use computers?**

I have spent about a decade with Brethren churches and have only just come across this idea. The Brethren are in no way anti-technological. The author of this FAQ is a computer programmer by trade, and would say that most of the Brethren I know either have at home or use at work, a computer. However, there is one small group that does forbid the use of computers, and this bears some explanation. After the original split between the Open Brethren and the Exclusive Brethren, the Exclusives had many more splits. Doctrinal purity was their most absolute consideration, so whenever a difference of doctrine came up, they split. One of the branches, referred to as the Raven Brethren (after Mr Raven) denied the Eternal Sonship of Christ. They believed that He existed in eternity past, but that he only became the Son at His Incarnation. For this reason, most of the rest of the Brethren avoided the Raven Brethren. Some of the Raven Brethren then followed a teacher by the name of Mr James Taylor and some of those followed his son, Mr James Taylor Jr. This group fell into what most other Christians would feel to be doctrinal and moral excesses. Most Plymouth Brethren have never heard of the Taylor group. Most of those who have heard of them consider them to be a cult. They number several thousand as compared to approximately 1,000,000 people worldwide who would be considered to be Plymouth Brethren. Among the followers of Mr James Taylor Jr., there are some who forbid the use of computers.

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## **22) Do the Plymouth Brethren believe in ...?**

Again, I cannot speak for every individual assembly, but this has been my experience:

- Blood Transfusions? - no restrictions
- Injections/Organ Transplants? - no restrictions
- Television/Movies? - individual conscience
- Union Membership? - individual conscience
- Military Service? - individual conscience\*
- Communal Living? - no
- Distinctive Clothing? - no\*\*
- Keeping O.T. Law Required? - no
- Baptism Necessary for Salvation? - no

\* note that many of the early Plymouth Brethren from 130

years ago were former military men who left the military  
for the sake of conscience

\*\* during church meetings, many sisters will choose to wear  
some form of headcovering or hat. Many of the churches I  
have encountered like to see the men wearing jackets and  
ties, but I suspect this attitude occurs in many North  
American churches.

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### **23) Where can I get genealogical information about Brethren ancestors?**

I know of no central repository for this information. Individual assemblies or Christian workers may have their own records, but these are largely inaccessible.

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### **24) What should I do with the "PB" children I teach?**

Several times a year, I get an email from a teacher who has several children in his/her class who are from a "Plymouth Brethren" background. These children are not permitted to eat with other children, use computers, read some of the standard books in the curriculum, etc. The teachers are asking me for information about their religion and advice for what to do with the children.

First of all, let me say that this is not descriptive of most "Plymouth Brethren" families, open, closed or exclusive. I suspect that the families involved are part of the "Taylor Exclusive Brethren" group. My advice is that you respect the religious beliefs of these families, and treat them as you would any group that believes in extreme separatism from the world (such as the Amish or the Old Order Mennonites). Any attempt to push them to be more "outward looking" is likely to meet with suspicion and resistance. If you seek to work with these families to find alternative curriculum and activities for the children, you will reduce the suspicion, and increase the chances that these children will be able to stay in school beyond the minimum required by law.

As a parent, I understand the desire to shield my children from a lot of bad influences in the world. I also would like my children to learn to think for themselves and to pursue as much education as they themselves deem useful (I personally hold two bachelor's degrees - one in Genetics and one in Computer Science). While I personally would like to see some of the more "inward looking" groups take a broader vision of things, I try to respect their religious freedom - and if a religion is permitted to exist, but is not permitted to be seen, not permitted to be heard of, not permitted to proselytize and not permitted to do anything which might in any way offend the majority, then clearly religious freedom does not exist.