To speak about polity is to explore how groups are organized and governed. In the Church of the Brethren, polity is intertwined with our history, practices, and ecclesiology (who we are as a church). Talking about polity as ministers and members of the Church of the Brethren naturally uncovers who we are, what we do, and how we shape our lives together. In this course, we will engage the current and past polity of the Church of the Brethren in order to understand how it has, and continues to, shape “another way of living.”

Students will:
- Gain an understanding of ecclesiology in the Church of the Brethren and how our particular blend of Anabaptism and Pietism informs our polity.
- Examine the changing nature of organization, polity, and practice in the Church of the Brethren.
- Have a greater understanding of the relationship between congregation, district, and denomination in the Church of the Brethren, as well as the wider church.
- Reflect on and understand the role of congregational and ministerial leadership through the lens of Church of the Brethren polity.
- Explore how polity creates structures of privilege and power within the Church of the Brethren and recognize the importance of ethical leadership in the use of that power within the church and in the secular world.

**Instructor: Torin Eikler**

Torin Eikler has served as the District Executive Minister in the Northern Indiana District since 2014. A graduate of Manchester (College) University with a BA in Biology and Environmental Studies, he is a 6-year veteran of Brethren Volunteer Service, and received an MDiv from Bethany Theological Seminary. Prior to coming to district ministry he served as co-pastor to the Morgantown Church of the Brethren, in Morgantown, WV. He brings a passion for compassionate service and a systems-thinking approach to his ministry in the church. Torin lives in Goshen, Indiana (surrounded by Mennonites, Amish, and other Anabaptists) with his wife, Carrie, and three sons: Sebastian, Alistair, and Patrick.
Required Texts

Required Reading List:
- Bowman, S. Loren. Power and Polity Among the Brethren, chapters 1-2, 9-10. (electronic copies supplied)
- Dumbaugh, Donald F., Church of the Brethren: Yesterday and Today. ISBN: 0871781514
- Additional excerpts and articles supplied by the instructor.

Suggested Reading List:
- Redekop, Benjamin W. & Redekop, Calvin W., Power and Authority in the Anabaptist Tradition. ISBN: 0801866057

Expectations

Online learning requires students to be disciplined in their time management. Students are expected to spend 10 hours per week in course-related work.

For online learning, students will need basic computer skills and access to the internet. If your computer is four years old or less, you should have the capabilities for this class. These capabilities include:

- Modem: Minimum 56 kbps speed is slow but adequate. A speed of 100 kbps (300 recommended) is needed for podcasts and 300 kbps (500 recommended) for videos
- An email account
- An up-to-date web browser, such as Firefox, Internet Explorer or Google Chrome

Church of the Brethren Polity, April 3 – May 28, 2019
Register online or fill out following information and return, along with payment to:
Brethren Academy * 615 National Road West * Richmond, IN * 47374

Name: ________________________________
Address: ________________________________
Best contact phone: _______________________
E-mail: ________________________________

I will be taking this course for: ___ TRIM credit ___ EFSM credit ___ CEUs (2) ___ Personal Enrichment
Course Fee: $295 payable to Brethren Academy
Registration Deadline: February 27, 2019