

District Executive Minister Report
District Board Meeting - February 2, 2019 - Harris Creek Church of the Brethren

It is critical that we continue to consider our mission statement - Working Together, Empowering Disciples - in the midst of all that is happening within our district and the denomination. Even as we work at a compelling vision together, there are those who are skeptical of the process and still others who feel they can no longer remain in the Church of the Brethren. Still others are excited and energized about what is happening in their congregations while others are on the verge of losing hope for the future of their congregation. As the district board, part of our role is to assist congregations in discovering and living out their mission, to find a vision that allows, even encourages, working together to be empowered to be the people God is calling us to be. There is certainly evidence of this ministry being carried out; as we support the various ways our congregations are working together, the beginning of an urban ministry team, a new congregational survey designed to help define and encourage congregational mission, our camping and retreat ministries, Brethren Disaster Ministries, Brethren Retirement Community, the ministries led by our commissions, congregations discovering new life. As we continue to serve and work together in ministry and mission here in Southern Ohio/Kentucky, may we seek the guidance of the Spirit, be inspired by the love of Jesus, and be filled with the grace of God. Even as we face uncertain times in our world, our country and even in our denomination, there are these encouraging signs of God's movement within us, may we be faithful.

I continue to meet with congregations either as a preacher or for ongoing relationship contact or for various issues. Since my last full board report in September,

- * met numerous times with Brookville leadership as we worked through pastoral issues and transition.
- * met several times with Good Shepherd leadership culminating with an interim pastoral services agreement with Carla Gillespie.
- * met with the New Carlisle congregation to share about their upcoming pastoral transition; also met with New Carlisle leadership as we interviewed an interim pastor. Tara Hornbacker will serve in this role when Pastor Andrew Wright retires at Easter.
- * met with the Urban Ministries steering team as we continue to gear up for this new ministry.
- * preached at Eversole as Pastor Mark Bowman was on vacation.
- * led the licensing service for Roxane Hill at Potsdam.
- * preached at Potsdam while Pastor Carl Hill and Roxane attended their daughter's wedding in Texas.
- * met with Happy Corner leadership regarding pastoral staff as Seth Hendricks announced his acceptance of a new position in South Central Indiana.

- * met with Beech Grove leadership regarding their pastoral transition.
- * preached at Cedar Grove as Pastor Tony Price was on vacation.
- * preached and conducted the pastoral installation service for Prince of Peace; their new pastoral team is Katie and Tim Heishman.
- * met with the Eaton congregation regarding the withdrawal process. Several of us have also met with Eaton leadership twice as we continue conversations regarding this process.
- * preached at Beavercreek while Pastor Barb Sayler was away.
- * preached at Cincinnati and led licensing and installation for their new associate pastor, Staci Williams.
- * participated in 20 year anniversary celebration of Pastor Nick Beam's service at Pleasant Hill.
- * Along with some members of the District Board, led worship for the BRC chapel service.
- * met with Oakland's finance team regarding staff agreements.
- * met with Oakland's young adult group to plan for upcoming Sunday School sessions.
- * along with two others from the District Board, met with White Cottage leadership regarding their pastoral transition.
- * met with Happy Corner leadership retreat especially for the survey results report.
- * worshiped with Good Shepherd and led an evaluation for pastoral services agreement.
- * along with others from the District Board met with the Bradford congregation regarding the withdrawal process.

We currently have several congregations in some stage of pastoral search. Good Shepherd is continuing an interim pastoral services agreement with Carla Gillespie; Painter Creek is being served by regular pulpit supply by Phil Reynolds as a partnership with Oakland is being explored; Beech Grove is considering interim possibilities and is using pulpit supply for the time being; Fred Bernhard is serving as interim at Brookville; White Cottage is working on their profile and is using pulpit supply for the time being. I express appreciation to each of these persons as they assist in ministry in these congregations and we send best wishes to those pastors beginning new ministries. I have had numerous contacts with pastors and other church leaders on a variety of topics related to their ministries and/or role within the district. I've also met with minister's groups as they gather for study and fellowship. John Warner from BRC and I continue our relationship and friendship as we share in ministry together. I also met with my colleague from the Brethren in Christ as we work together at East Dayton and explore other ways to support each other.

My duties on the Council of District Executives are now serving on the Ministry

Advisory Committee and maintaining the Counsel's website. I attending the Council's winter meetings in January as we worked together on the compelling vision, the withdrawal process, received updates from MMB and Annual Conference agencies, and other networking and sharing. The Council continues to be a place for us to support each other in our common work.

I continue to meet with our commissions as often as possible to share in the ongoing work. Our teams continue their fine work of ministering to the pastors and congregations of the district in addition to ministry for the district at large. I deeply appreciate the dedication, energy and commitment of those serving on our commissions, as well as other committees and the board in roles throughout the District. It is important that we express our appreciation for one another as we serve together. Appreciation is also expressed to our paid and volunteer staff for all their hard work; we have a great team working together for Southern Ohio/Kentucky.

It continues to be an honor and privilege to serve for and with you all in Southern Ohio/Kentucky, even and especially in the midst of these rather uncertain times. As Marcia and I each lost a parent since our last regular meeting, I express our deep appreciation for the expressions of support and care. It is truly a blessing to be part of such a caring and loving district. Our teamwork in ministry is such an inspiration as we seek to be faithful followers of Jesus. May we be ever mindful that we need to proceed in an attitude of prayer, of openness to God's Spirit and of continuing the journey as the people of God, filled with grace, love and peace. May we be aware of the presence of God as we seek to fulfill the mission God has given us.

Blessings!

Dave Shetler, District Executive Minister
Southern Ohio/Kentucky District Church of the Brethren