



October, 2016
Southern Ohio District Newsletter
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2016 Southern Ohio District Conference

Our 162nd District Conference is now a part of history. Approximately 150 folks gathered at the Oakland Church of the Brethren September 30 and October 1 for a delightful time of fellowship, worship, learning, growing, eating and conducting the business of the District.

Jeff Carter, president of Bethany Theological Seminary, led us in some wonderful and insightful sessions on Friday afternoon and Saturday morning, focusing on how we relate to our communities and develop relationships which open the possibilities of sharing the good news of Jesus. Jeff also shared the evening message for the Friday evening worship.

The Reconciliation Team also had us in some visioning sessions and will be sharing with us soon about what they heard.

Due to some persons not sensing a call to be moderator elect, there was not a person called at this conference, but some suggestions have been shared with Gifts Discernment and they will continue their work, with a person to be confirmed by the District Board as soon as possible. Others called to serve include Ty Pyles, Linda Brandon, Jennifer Keeney Scarr, Ron Mack, and Ann Stackhouse to the District Board; P. J. Arndts as clerk, Scott Fitzgerald as treasurer, Barb Saylor to Program and Arrangements, and Fred Bernhard to the Brethren Retirement Community Board. Appreciation was expressed to those whose terms have ended; Mark Bowman as past moderator, Fred Bernhard and Susan Fitze from the District Board, Wendy Noffsinger Erbaugh as clerk, Susan Liller as treasurer, and Seth Hendricks from Program and Arrangements. We also heard reports from our denominational agencies and welcomed visitors from each of the agencies as well as Manchester University and Everence. The main business item was the district budget which was approved after discussion, questions and comments.

We were please to have our new General Secretary, David Steele, with us. David met with some from Southern Ohio on Thursday evening before conference and then with others at the conclusion of conference on Saturday afternoon.

We deeply appreciate the sincere welcome and warm hospitality shown by our sisters and brothers at Oakland and thank them for their sacrifice, as they have been making preparations for this conference for many weeks.

If you have never attended a District Conference, maybe next year will be a time for you to share in this unique experience in the life of the church. Our 2017 theme will be "*Created to Love*". The scriptural basis Matthew 22:37-40 "*Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: Love your neighbor as yourself. All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.*"

Camping and Retreat News and Updates

The Camping and Retreat committee has been working on bringing events to all people of the Southern Ohio District churches. With summer camps over, we focused on adult programing. Women's Retreat was a wonderful, spirit-filled retreat in early September. Five women from different decades gave talks about their lives and how they viewed faith, hope, and love. Jen Scarr, Barb Saylor, Nan Erbaugh, Linda Fuller, and Virginia Crim were our guest presenters. Each painted the pictures of her life through drama, songs, scripture, and memories. Although the information shared was vastly different from one speaker to the next, there remained a clear, united theme that faith, hope, and love are all possible, no matter the personal circumstances. The retreat attendees were

given a unique experience from these courageous and talented women. Our hearts were touched and our souls were refreshed.

Ted Foster has produced an excellent set of 3 DVDs that capture the retreat's spirit and joy. He taped all the speakers and the worship service. With his magic, Ted combined the beautiful singing during the worship service with the pictures and presentations to offer the viewer a true taste of the 2016 Women's Retreat. Anyone wanting the set can contact Karen Dillon (937-890-7388) or Ted Foster (937-833-3336) with name, address, and phone number. We will send the DVDs to those wishing them. The cost is \$15, which pays for the production and delivery of the DVDs.

Adult Bible School was in full swing at Salem. The celebration includes singing, Bible study, crafts, games and a fellowship meal. Troy will offer its Adult Bible School on Oct. 10 - 14. The Bible schools are really just like the ones people remember from their childhood, only now one get to eat lunch as the last activity. Everyone is welcomed!

Upcoming events: Ambassadors' Meeting Oct. 16, 2:00 - 4:00 pm, at Salem Church of the Brethren
Cookie Camp - Saturday, Dec. 10, 9:00 am - 1:00 pm, Salem Church of the Brethren

Disaster Ministry Updates

Sewing Bee – On Saturday, Oct. 8 there will be a Sewing Bee at Greenville COB, 421 Central Avenue. Come at 9:00 AM to sew bags for Church World Service school kits. The S. Ohio District just sent a shipment of 1,701 school kits to the warehouse at the Brethren Service Center. Now we need more bags sewn. There is a great demand in the U.S. and internationally for school kits. Bring your sewing machine and a sack lunch. For more information, call Barb Brower at 937-336-2442. Prior to the Sewing Bee, you're invited to join the women of Greenville COB at the Coffee Pot on Broadway in downtown Greenville. They meet the second Saturday of each month at 8:00 AM for coffee, goodies, and fellowship. [Click here for a flyer with 2017 Sewing Bee dates.](#)

Workday at Mack Memorial COB– A new project is starting for Brethren Helping Hands, the local arm of S. Ohio BDM. Mack Memorial COB needs help restoring part of their educational wing that suffered vandalism from a rental daycare. Insurance money will buy materials, but labor is needed to get the job done. On Saturday, Oct. 15 there will be a workday beginning at 9:00 AM. Mack Memorial COB is located at 1717 Salem Ave., Dayton, OH. If you are able to help, please call Burt Wolf (937-287-5902) or Pat Via (937-681-3143). They need to know the number of workers for planning the work and lunch. Additional workdays will be scheduled.

2017 Trip Schedule – We now have the dates for the 2017 S. Ohio BDM trips. Some trips are to Columbia, SC and others will be to another site that opens in January. [Click here for the 2017 trip schedule flyer.](#) Please note that the June 11-17 and July 16 – 22 trips are for youth. To sign up for a trip or for more information contact Burt Wolf 937-287-5902 or SouthernOhioBDM@gmail.com

District Women's Bible Study Begins New Series: Women of the Hebrew Bible

Paula Bowser is in the process of creating a People of the Covenant Bible Study Guide on Women of the Hebrew Bible. There are 10 studies on fascinating women like Lady Wisdom, Abigail and the Queen of Sheba who are not as well known as, say Ruth, Esther, Sarah et cetera.

A few weeks ago, Kris Ankeny asked about using the Southern Ohio District Women's Bible Study as a focus/pilot group. Karen Dillon and Brethren Press Managing Editor James Deaton both gave an enthusiastic green light to the project.

The series will begin at 7 p.m. this Thursday, October 6, in the Parlor at the Salem Church of the Brethren, 6037 Phillipsburg Road, Englewood, Ohio, 45322.

The group regularly meets on the first and third Thursday of each month from 7-8:30 p.m. in this lo-

cation.

The first study will be on Lady Wisdom (Proverbs 8 and 9).

If you would like to prepare for the study here is the suggested Preparation Section for Chapter 1

Prepare:

1. Head over to Wikipedia and type in Hagia Sophia and learn about an ancient church dedicated to Holy Wisdom.
2. Before reading the Proverbs text, take some time to slowly read the prologue to John's Gospel (John 1:1-18). Read it again aloud. Now, close your eyes and try to imagine that you are in the time before time with God. Imagine the awesome unfolding of creation and watch as God delights in making light, land, life and humanity.
3. Read Colossians 1:9-19, concentrating on verses 15-19. Notice the role of Jesus in creation and the relationship between Father and Son.
4. Now read Proverbs 8 and 9 and listen for echoes of what you've just experienced in the New Testament readings.

The idea for the focus group is that, in addition to holding a Bible Study using Paula's first DRAFT, members and any visitors could look carefully at the content and offer feedback. This would help Paula to cut out material that is unclear or unhelpful and generate questions and insights that could strengthen the final booklet.

Any women in the Southern Ohio District are welcome to attend.

Books for Nigeria

One of the ways to help Nigerians recover from the violence they have experienced is to support education. This new initiative allows you to partner with EYN as it rebuilds its education programs. There are two focuses of this book drive: children's education and pastoral education. All books must arrive at the Brethren Service Center by November 20, 2016 so they can be sorted and packed for shipment to Nigeria.

Send books to:

Books for Nigeria
601 Main Street
New Windsor, MD 21776

Books for Children: EYN related schools are in need of books for their school libraries and classrooms. Please collect new or used books in good condition for children ages 6 to 16 years old. Specifically requested are paperback chapter books for children, such as those recognized by the Newberry Award (easily found online). Non-fiction books and children's encyclopedias are also requested. All books should be in good condition and published in the last 20 years.

Books for Kulp Bible College: EYN's Kulp Bible College is requesting help supplying their library. They are in need of materials for training pastors including Bible commentaries, reference books, and resource books for pastors as well as books on Christian education, theology, preaching resources, Hebrew and Greek languages, pastoral counseling and ethics. All books should be in good condition and published in the last 20 years. The KBC staff have provided a wish list of specific titles that are needed (found online at brethren.org). For larger donations, call Pat and John Krabacher (937-765-0483). A Southern Ohio District transport.

Trinity Church of the Brethren Seeking Accompanist

Trinity Church of the Brethren in Sidney, Ohio is looking for a full time or part time person or persons to play music for worship or as needed at other times such as Christmas Eve / Christmas Day and Love Feast. For more information, please contact either Linda Miller at 1-937-726-5258 or Shirley Stone at 1-937-492-3670.

Potsdam Church Seeking Child and Families Outreach Intern

The Potsdam congregation is seeking an intern with a term at least through the end of this calendar year and possibility of renewal to work with their children and family outreach. Responsibilities include working with the Wednesday Awana ministry, assisting in other church activities such as Children's Church and Summer VBS, coordinating other regularly scheduled activities/programs pertaining to child & families outreach. I have a complete job description if you or someone you know is interested in this ministry.

West Charleston Seeking Music Director

West Charleston Church of the Brethren is seeking a Music Director for their multicultural worship services. The position involves about 10 hours a week and fluency with Spanish language is a plus. Contact the church at 667-3988 or send a resume to w_c45371@yahoo.com.

Greenville Church Choir Request

Jo Ellen Zerkle, choir director for the Greenville congregation, is already working on music for the Christmas season. They are planning on using some of the pieces from the cantata The Winter Rose by Joseph M. Martin published in 2000, but only have a few copies. They recall borrowing copies from another congregation in the district, but don't remember which one. If you have copies they can borrow it would be much appreciated. You can contact Jo Ellen at joellenzerkle@gmail.com

Prayer Needs

A very important way we can be supportive of each other is to lift each other up in prayer. The 2016 Prayer List for Congregations is available on our website.

- Violence continues in various parts of our country and world with shootings and stabbings, bombs and other forms of violence. Racial tension seems to be at an all time high, along with anger at authority, protests directed at injustice or perceived injustice with anger directed at both perpetrators and protesters. Now more than ever, the message of Good News given to us as followers of the Prince of Peace needs to be shared in powerful and effective ways. May we pray to this end, listening and responding when God's call comes for us to speak and act.

- Julie M. Hostetter, executive director of the Brethren Academy for Ministerial Leadership and former Southern Ohio District Moderator, continues rehabilitation and recovery at home with the assistance of visiting healthcare workers. She is improving, making adjustments as needed, and beginning Monday, September 26 has been able to work a few hours each day from home. The cards, CaringBridge.com postings, emails and prayers from friends and colleagues have been a source of care and encouragement and are greatly appreciated!

- Phil Dell (pastor of the Harris Creek congregation) reports that his sister Carolyn Guenther, who lives in Florida, had an apparent stroke and is not able to feel anything on her right side, although there is some improvement in her overall condition. She has a past connection to our district as a former member at West Milton COB, daughter of former pastor Byron Dell, she was at one time licensed to the ministry in our district. Please keep Carolyn and the family in your prayers.

- Rob Raker, who is still dealing with his heart condition and may be facing some important decisions soon, has resigned as pastor of the Bear Creek congregation due to the health issues and disability concerns; he appreciates our prayers as well as prayers for the Bear Creek congregation. Rob is currently undergoing tests in the hospital. I am working with Bear Creek leadership through this time of transition. John Edwards will be assisting with pulpit supply and some other duties for the next several months.

- Jim and Karen Chronister's daughter, Shannon Collins, continues to recover from her brain surgery from earlier this month. In speaking with the Chronisters, this is a "time will tell" situation still in need of our prayers.

- Please keep both Don and Patty King in prayer. Don serves as pastor of the Prices Creek congregation. Don's hip replacement surgery went well and he was able to be with us at District Conference. Patty is undergoing cancer treatment, a fairly strong chemotherapy therapy has begun. Prayers are appreciated for the King's and the Prices Creek congregation.

- Please keep Sie Brock, pastor at Stonelick in your prayers. Sie suffered a heart attack several months ago but is doing well. Sie was at District Conference and expressed appreciation for the prayers these past months.

- May we remember Libby Kee, retired Church of the Brethren minister living in the Columbus area, as she undergoes treatment for breast cancer, Libby reports she is doing quite well.

- May we remember the possibility of a new church starts in various locations in our district.

- There are many issues and situations continuing to face us as we minister in our respective locations, including those who are serving in interim situations and others who are in discernment regarding placement or are considering a move. There are others facing health issues, please keep these situations in prayer.

Please contact me if you know of prayer situations of which I should be aware. May we lift each other in prayer as we work to continue the work of Jesus, peacefully, simply, together.