

December, 2019
Southern Ohio/Kentucky District Newsletter
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Adopt a tornado victim family

During this season of giving, many congregations look for ways they can reach out to our neighbors and friends who may be struggling. This year, especially, we have families in our backyard who are still reeling from devastating losses during the Memorial Day tornadoes. What many may not understand is if a family's house was made uninhabitable by the tornado their mortgage payments don't stop. Now they have their monthly mortgage payment plus rent for their temporary home or motel bill. FEMA and insurance benefits are running out.

Just imagine if each of our 48 congregations would adopt just one or two families for Christmas what an impact we could make! Thanks to the efforts of Sam Dewey in Pleasant Hill congregation, we will be working with the Trotwood Madison School and the Trotwood School systems to coordinate this outreach effort.

We ask that for each family you wish to adopt this Christmas you send a Christmas card which is signed by your congregation. It is suggested that you also give some sort of personal wish for the family. Whether it is simply to offer prayer support all the way to offers of financial, emotional, and spiritual support. Inside the card you can include any other gifts you wish to give. Because of the need to protect the recipient's identity, we cannot give a specific list of items needed. However, here are just a few suggestions of what you may include:

- ◆ Bus tokens
- ◆ Grocery gift cards
- ◆ Department store gift cards for coats, hats, gloves, boots or to be used for Christmas gifts
- ◆ Gas gift cards
- ◆ Pay a mortgage payment
- ◆ Help with utility bills
- ◆ On the outside of your card, please include attach a list of what is inside.

**** PLEASE NOTE**** The school has asked that we not give money directly to the recipient. If your congregation is willing to give financial contributions for things such as mortgage payments or utility bills, you will need to choose a contact person within your church who can communicate with the school system to determine how much is actually needed and to whom the check should be made out to and mailed to. Then, on the list of items donated, indicate how much money your congregation is willing to donate, and how you would like the money to be applied along with your congregational contact person's name and contact information. The school will be in touch with your contact person about how to move forward with these payments. If your congregation plans to adopt one or more families, please use the following information to deliver the gift.

Trotwood Madison Schools
3594 North Snyder Rd
Trotwood, OH 45426

Northridge Schools
2011 Timber Lane
Dayton, OH 45414
Shane Allison, School Nurse (937) 266-7571
Julie Raiff #(937)902-6383

Longest Night Retreat

7:30-9:30 pm Eastern / 4:30-6:30 pm Pacific Time

Saturday, December 21

The holidays are a difficult time for many people, especially those of us who are grieving a lost loved one or an estranged relationship, or who do not have the means to celebrate in the contemporary fashion of our culture. Entering into the shortest days of the year can also be challenging for those of us who are energized by sunshine and warmth. Yet there is a wisdom also in the darkness: the tomb is also a womb of resurrection and rebirth. We will gather to reach out to one another across the miles and hold each other tight through the darkness, praying and reflecting together with scripture, poetry, images, and music. Both pain and joy are part of the story of Incarnation, and we will be present to and make room for both. Join us in this tender time led by Pastor Bobbi Dykema. Join us at <https://livestream.com/livingstreamcob/Advent2019>

Climate Justice Task Force Meeting

All are invited to the next meeting of the SOK District Climate Justice Task Force which will be held at Salem Church of the Brethren, on Wednesday, January 8 from 7-9pm. Pastor Doug Kaufman from the Mary Lea Environmental Center will join us via ZOOM and hopefully a member of the local Climate Reality group will join us personally.

We also hope to show a video recently done by former Vice President, Al Gore, on the science of climate change and what we might do. We should also have an update on a climate retreat for the Southern Ohio/ Kentucky COB, sometime next fall.

Please be in touch with Mark Lancaster at 510-809-6721 or marklancaster116@gmail.com, if you have any questions.

Looking for a way to make Christmas more meaningful for your family?

Attend a Live Nativity at Potsdam Church of the Brethren on Sat., Dec. 14 from 5:00-7:00 PM.

Come and enjoy the live nativity, delicious homemade cookies and cocoa, and even a visit with Santa!

The event is free and open to the community at Potsdam Church of the Brethren located at 22 E. Cross St. in Potsdam, Ohio. [Click here to download a flyer to use as an invitation.](#)

Nigerian Meal @ Prince of Peace COB

The Prince of Peace COB will be sponsoring and providing a Nigerian Meal on Saturday, January 11, 2020 starting at 12:30 pm. Hassan Dicks and his sister Patricia Amos Doka will be preparing the meal. Reservation will be needed in order to have a count for the meal preparation by January 4, 2020. The cost of the meal will be a donation to help support Nigerian students studying in United States. After the meal, Hassan will be sharing information about the current cultural and religious atmosphere in Nigeria. All are welcome to experience this cultural event. Call Prince of Peace and give your name, phone number and the number of people in your reservation by January 4.

Church's phone number is 937-294-0708 or Email: popcob1956@aol.com
800 E. David Road Kettering, OH

New Carlisle Leadership Academy Presents:

Science Fiction and Theology: Take Two!

February 24-35, 2020

Steve Schweitzer, Leader

Steve Schweitzer writes, "Science Fiction is extremely popular in our wider culture. It engages theological themes and raises questions that our culture is asking. Based on a course I teach at Bethany, this workshop will explore key themes in popular SciFi series: The Matrix Trilogy, Star Trek, and the Marvel superhero movie Black Panther. Each one asks deep questions about the nature of existence, what it means to be human, the nature of violence and peace, and our responsibility to our communities and to the wider world."

Steve Schweitzer (PhD, Notre Dame) is Academic Dean and Professor at Bethany Theological Seminary. He regularly teaches a graduate seminar on Chronicles-Ezra-Nehemiah and a course on Science Fiction and Theology. Steve has preached, taught, and led workshops for several congregations and districts, including Bible studies and Insight Sessions at Annual Conference. Steve and his wife, Jill, have 3 children. They attend Cedar Grove Church of the Brethren in the Southern Ohio/Kentucky district.

Friday evening registration is free. Saturday registration is \$25.00 which includes lunch.

CEU's are available. See Registration Form for more information.

Registration deadline is Friday, January 17, 2020.

Need more information or have questions, call or email Vicki Ullery at (937)845-1428, newcarlislec-ob@gmail.com.

Southern Ohio Disaster Ministries Update

Local Tornado Response – BDM continues to meet with the Long Term Recovery Group and Volunteer Coordination Committee. With our partners we've prepared homes for winter and delivered furniture. Trainings have been held for assessors and estimators. Case managers have been hired, but more are needed. Volunteer opportunities are posted on MVStrong.org. Please go there to learn of opportunities and to register to help.

Project Updates – Our newest site, Jacksonville, FL, will be open until mid-December, and will then relocate to the Tampa, FL area. The Tampa site is scheduled to be open January 12, 2020 through April 4, 2020. Work will continue in Lumberton, NC through April 2020. The site in Castaner, Puerto Rico has been extended through May 2020.

2020 Trips – Click here to see the 2020 trip schedule. The January 19 – 25 and February 9 – 15 trips are to Lumberton, NC, where BDM is working on recovery from Hurricane Matthew (2016) and Hurricane Florence (2018). The March 14 – 22 trip is to Tampa, FL which is recovery from Hurricane Irma (2017). Invite a friend to join you! Sign up by calling or texting Burt Wolf at 937-287-5902 or SouthernOhioBDM@gmail.com.

2020 Sewing Bees – Sewing Bees are scheduled for sewing school bags for Church World Service. They will be held at Greenville Church of the Brethren and Eaton Community Church in 2020. Attached is a flyer showing the dates and locations. The next sewing bee will be in Greenville on Saturday, February 22. For more information call Barb Brower at 937-336-2442.

Kroger Rewards – In 2019 BDM has received \$733.29 through Kroger Community Rewards. Sign up using #KN085 for S. Ohio/KY BDM to receive rewards. Register online at krogercommunityrewards.com or by phone (800-576-4377).

Young Adult Gathering

December 21 @ 7 PM at Carillon Park
January 25, 2020 Paint Night at Happy Corner CoB

All young adults ages high school graduates through 39 are welcome. Email Laura Brown if you have any questions.

Prayer Needs

A very important way we can be supportive of each other is to lift each other up in prayer. The 2019 and 2020 Prayer List for Congregations is available on the website.

--The Constance congregation continues to worship in space graciously provided by the nearby Hebron Lutheran Church. Our prayers for these sisters and brothers during this time of transition are appreciated.

- May we continue to lift Mary Sue Rosenberger, as she continues to deal with various health issues. MarySue Rosenberger has been receiving care from Hospice since April 2019 because of Pulmonary Fibrosis which had been first diagnosed in the fall of 2017.

-- Rob Raker, former pastor, continues to deal with the heart condition that has plagued him for some time now. He is hoping for a new procedure which may alleviate some of the issues he has been facing. Doctors continue to work with Rob as these heart struggles continue. Rob appreciates our prayers.

- May we remember those congregations in pastoral transition - Beech Grove has completed their profile and is in pastoral search and now has a pastoral candidate, Larry Tyner is serving as interim; Fred Bernhard is serving as interim pastor at Brookville during this time of transition; the search team is working on their profile. White Cottage's interim pastor Ricci Arthur, a retired United Methodist pastor, is leaving for another assignment at the end of the month. Tara Hornbacker is serving as interim at New Carlisle, their search team is working on their profile. Mel Smith, pastor at Charleston, has announced that he will be retiring this year. The Bear Creek congregation has voted to close with the official date being the end of the year. May we offer our prayers of love and support for the members of this congregation as they seek new church homes.

- May we remember the possibility of a new church starts in various locations in our district as well as the urban ministry team for revitalizing some of our urban churches.

-- 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 Dave if you know of prayer situations of which he should be aware. May we lift each other in prayer as we strive to continue the work of Jesus, peacefully, simply, together.