

**November, 2020**  
**Southern Ohio/Kentucky District Newsletter**  
**Printable Version**



## **2020 District Conference**

*"We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God." 2 Corinthians 5:20*

Another Southern Ohio/Kentucky District Conference is now a part of our history. And now we know that yes, we can have a virtual district conference. A heartfelt thank you goes to Andrew Wright (Interim Pastor at Oakland CoB) and Mike Sievers (Brookville CoB) for putting together all of the pieces for the Friday night worship. Thank you also to Pastor Lee Saylor, (Salem CoB) and our Zoom Guru for compiling and playing all of the various reports that made up the conference as well as setting up all of the technology required to make the conference work.

Even though we were not able to be in the same room, it was good to see everyone on our screens and share together all of the ministry that has happened in SOKD even in the midst of a global pandemic.

On Friday, pastors and church leaders were given two opportunities for learning. In the morning Dana Cassell spoke about the challenges and rewards for congregations and pastors who are in a part time pastorate. In the afternoon, a panel of leaders shared ideas and experiences of leading a church during a pandemic.

Friday night worship featured an inspiring message from Moderator Sandy Jenkins and an original song by Mike Sievers about being an Ambassador for Christ. The worship service was recorded and is available for any who wish to watch it at <https://youtu.be/LypcP6kJEF4>

On Saturday morning delegates affirmed the 2021 Slate, and heard reports for our District Commissions, District Staff and Denominational Agencies. The 2021 Budget was passed in the afternoon. The conference concluded with passing the gavel to next year's Moderator, Nick Beam. Our 2021 theme will be "Move in Our Midst, Thou Spirit of God."

## **Annual Conference Moderator Hosts Zoom Q & A**

Annual Conference Moderator, Paul Munday is hosting a ZOOM session in districts, focusing on the "state of the church". Both laity and clergy are urged to participate. The ZOOM session will use a Q&A format: any and all questions are invited. Joining Moderator Paul will be the other Annual Conference Officers: Dave Sollenberger, Moderator Elect and Jim Beckwith, Annual Conference Secretary.

The Moderator's District Q&A sessions for the Southern Ohio/Kentucky District will be Wednesday, November 18, at 10 AM and 7 PM. Contact your church office to obtain links to these meetings.

## **Who Still cares about climate change? Congregational responses to denial and despair**

This weekly virtual seminar, began mid-October. The first two sessions are completed and can be viewed at <https://vimeo.com/468709080/060ca5eeca>. Doug Kaufman of the Center for Sustainable Climate Solutions and Mark Lancaster of Bethany Theological Seminary are collaborating to bring Brethren and Mennonites in Ohio and the Midwest to engage with climate change. Dr. Sibonokuhle Ncube, former director of Compassionate Development Services of the Brethren in Christ Church of Zimbabwe, is one of several speakers. Co-sponsored by the Climate Justice Task Team of the Southern Ohio/Kentucky District of the Church of the Brethren. There is still time to register if you would like to participate live in the last three sessions live. A registration form is available on the district website.

# PowerHouse 2020 Regional Youth Conference--A VIRTUAL event!

On November 13 and 14 we will gather on Zoom for three one hour events including worship, games, and a virtual campfire! Youth grades 9-12 and their advisors are welcome to attend this free event. Our keynote speaker is Pastor Jody Gunn from Bethany Church of the Brethren in Delaware. She will speak on John 14:27 "Do not let them be afraid". You will receive Zoom links to attend the events after you register. This is sure to be a weekend of learning and growth, fun and silliness, and you can even win prizes! For more information and to register go to [www.manchester.edu/powerhouse](http://www.manchester.edu/powerhouse)

## Southern Ohio/Kentucky Disaster Ministries Updates

### *Site Updates from the BDM Office:*

**2020 Sites** – There are currently two BDM rebuilding sites open. One site is in Dayton, Ohio, continuing with the tornado (2019) recovery. The other is the Coastal NC project in Pamlico County, N.C., completing Hurricane Florence (2018) recovery. Both sites are planned to stay open through the end of 2020. Lower numbers of volunteers open to traveling means there are still openings most weeks.

**2021 Sites** - While there are still many uncertainties about the coming year, one thing we do know is that help is needed on both sites. The complicated balance that BDM and other organizations are adapting to now is the lower availability of weekly volunteers and leaders, as well as the unknown of how the pandemic will affect funding in the new year and beyond.

Primarily due to the lower numbers of weekly volunteers and leaders comfortable going out right now, we will only be able to sustain one rebuilding site for the beginning of 2021. After weighing many dynamics on both sites, the only option for serving on a BDM national site for January, February, and March 2021 will be at the Coastal NC site.

The national BDM Dayton, Ohio, site will be paused during those three months, though there are local BDM volunteers and other local groups who plan to continue to work as the weather allows. In April we will plan to close the Coastal NC site and resume the national site in Dayton, with the expectation for the work there to continue at least through the end of 2021.

**Volunteer Now!** – S. Ohio/KY BDM has a trip scheduled to the Dayton site for November 15 - 20. There are currently openings for two more volunteers. If you're available a different week, there is a possibility that you may serve. Contact Burt Wolf at 937-287-5902 or [SouthernOhioBDM@gmail.com](mailto:SouthernOhioBDM@gmail.com).

## *Prayer Needs*

A very important way we can be supportive of each other is to lift each other up in prayer.

- John Edwards, retired pastor, had hip replacement surgery early this morning. Sue reports all went well and there's a strong possibility that John will be home this evening or tomorrow. Prayers for continued healing during this time of recovery are welcome.

- Nearly every day there are new reports of injustice and violence, with growing unrest and protests continuing, may we lift this situation in prayer. Racism is still a force of hatred, violence and anger in our country and in our world; we are compelled by the gospel to work to overcome injustice and hate. May our prayers this day be for peace and understanding.

- As a ministry affiliated with the District we have a longstanding and close relationship with the Brethren Retirement Community (BRC). Testing continues among residents and staff. Procedures are being conducted to keep our residents and staff safe. There have been a few positive cases and special care is being offered. May we all hold the entire BRC family (residents and their families, staff and their families, BRC Board members and their families) in the light of God's grace, mercy, wisdom, and healing in the coming days.

--As the situation with the coronavirus continues with rising cases across our country and state, may we remember those affected by this outbreak. There are many changing directives, regulations and recommendations affecting our country and way of life, may we remember all those adjusting to this changing world. As some reopening is occurring, may our prayers be for keeping everyone as safe as possible.

--The Constance congregation continues to discern space needs, although temporarily on hold during the pandemic. Our prayers for these sisters and brothers during this time of transition are appreciated. I will be meeting with the congregation by Zoom this coming Sunday.

--May we remember those congregations in pastoral transition - Andrew Wright is serving as interim at Oakland. Donnels Creek is using pulpit supply at this time. Mark Lancaster is serving as interim at Good Shepherd; Fred Bernhard is serving as interim pastor at Brookville during this time of transition; their profile has been posted. White Cottage has entered an agreement with a neighboring congregation to supply pastoral services during a time of transition and discernment. Tara Hornbacker is serving as interim at New Carlisle. Mel Smith, pastor at Charleston, has retired.

- 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 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.