

May, 2021
Southern Ohio/Kentucky District Newsletter
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Reskilling Workshops

Presented by Southern Ohio/Kentucky District Climate Justice Task Team

You are invited to join the District's Climate Justice Task Team for a series of "Reskilling Workshops" to recapture some of the helpful skills our parents and grandparents used to practice and help save the planet in the process.

Please set aside, Saturday, May 22nd, between 9am and 11:30am, at the "Big Tent" at West Charleston Church of the Brethren, 4817 Ohio Route 202, Tipp City, Ohio. Our goal is to have four sets of reskilling workshops running over this two-hour period. We will have two choices for each hour and have a brief opening and closing worship for the day together. There will be a children's area for kid's activities so feel free to bring your little ones. A flyer with more information about the workshops and speakers is available on the district website or ask in your church office.

This event is free and open to the public. Please make sure to wear your mask.

Please contact Pastor Mark Lancaster at Good Shepherd Church of the Brethren, should you have questions. Phone: 937 667 3476 or 510 809 6721/ Email: marklancaster116@gmail.com

Nigeria School Bus Appeal

As most of us are aware, with kidnappings on the rise in Nigeria and with an ever-increasing number of girl children being abducted to become child brides for members of Boko Haram and other terrorist groups, more precautions are necessary to keep them safe.

You may also be aware that Covid-19 has wreaked devastating havoc on the participation of all Nigerian children, especially girls, in formal education. Parents have often not been able to work and bring in income for many months. Even the little that it might cost to pay for their children to ride public transportation to school is no longer affordable. Even if such public transport could be afforded, it has become more and more dangerous for younger children to take such transportation. A deep concern is that if children fear going to school, the entire society will begin to unravel. And as we all know, when you educate children, especially girls, you change the world for the better. The opposite can also be true. Our lack of support for such education initiatives in places like Nigeria becomes not just benign neglect but active participation in the crippling of entire societies.

Musa Mambula's daughter, the head of school at the TCNN primary school has recently communicated with Pastor Mark Lancaster, Good Shepherd CoB. Musa was an interim pastor for two years in our District and was the provost for a time at TCNN in Jos, which was founded by EYN in Nigeria as a seminary.

They are requesting funds to purchase a bus that would allow them to pick up and return girls and boys to school safely. The total cost of the bus is \$10,500. We are reaching out to you, the congregations in the Southern Ohio/Kentucky District of the Church of the Brethren hoping and praying that we can work together to raise funds. The Good Shepherd Church of the Brethren has particularly committed itself to raising funds for this school bus initiative. The Global Women's Project of the Church of the Brethren has also committed \$500 toward this effort and Brethren World Mission has given \$2500, along with \$700 from our congregation. I hope and pray that you will join us in this effort. An offering of any size that you might consider would be

greatly appreciated.

Please do not hesitate to contact Mark Lancaster if you have questions. If you or your congregation would like to participate in this effort, please write your check payable to: Good Shepherd Church of the Brethren and send it to: Pastor Mark Lancaster, 4519 Sweet Potato Ridge Road, Englewood, Ohio 45322. Be sure to write "Nigerian bus appeal" in the memo line.

Move in Our Midst

An Invitation to Participate

By Glenn Timmons

What song do you find yourself singing?

I never learned to read music. I am grateful God gave me a "good ear." It enabled me to learn to "read" the hymns we sang in the church in which I grew up – a congregation that was gifted with singers that sang four-part harmony. Singing was my first voice.

When I was old enough to drive, I drove to West Milton on Sunday afternoon to sing with a larger body of Christ to sing the Messiah and other major compositions, all under the direction of Perry Huffaker. Of course, we always ended with hymn singing, which included the hymn "Move In Our Midst" written by Kenneth Morse, music by Perry Huffaker. It would become a hymn that took on the nature of an anthem for the Church of the Brethren.

Singing is a spiritual experience for me. It brings me closer to God and others with whom I am singing. Singing four-part harmony is music to my ears. When I sing "Move In Our Midst", I sing it as a plea for and expression of God in our midst and the community of faith God is calling into being.

This hymn was copywritten in 1950, seventy plus years ago. We still sing it as if it were written yesterday. Not that there is not other music we sing. But for me, this hymn is foundational and formational, something I am reminded of every time I sing it.

God is still calling us into being, as individuals, as the Body of Christ. Here in Southern Ohio/Kentucky District, God is moving in our midst. Can you not sense it in the love of God felt in the life of Christ, see it in the eyes of those in the pews who sing with you, in the faces of neighbors in need, in the call and vision of a new world?

If this is the kind of world you want, the vision you have, then we would ask you join those of us who are still singing "Move In Our Midst," a hymn that is both the root and fruit of the Gospel. You can help make this vision more real by sending your financial support to the SO/K District and the Ambassador's Club. To date, 49 persons have made a contribution totaling \$22,355 of a \$50,000 goal. Be prepared to be surprised by our singing the harmonies of hymns and the continued work of Jesus in SOK District.

What song do you find yourself singing?

Please consider making a pledge, or a donation in one of the following ways.

1. Go to the district website at www.sodcob.org and click on the "Ambassadors for Christ" link to make a commitment for a future donation.
2. Donate now by check. Please mark Ambassador's Club on the memo line. Send your check via mail to:
Southern Ohio/Kentucky District Church of the Brethren,
P O Box 785
Greenville, Ohio 45331
3. Contribute monthly by going to the district website at www.sodcob.org and click on the donate now tab. This will walk you through the process of making a monthly deposit using your credit card.
4. You also can make a one time donation using your credit card in the same manner.



Spring District Women's Gathering

May 21, 2021 7-8:30

by Zoom from the comfort of your home

Be ready to offer a musical talent, a poem, a good story, creative ideas, helpful hints, craft ideas, something funny, a dance routine, or cherished memories. Show off your creativity. To register contact Karen Dillon at crimdill@aol.com and say, "I'm coming" to join the evening gathering and receive the Zoom link.

2021 Camp Registration is open!

The Camping and Retreat Ministries have opened registration for the summer camp season. Everyone can come to camp from the safety of their homes. No masks are required on the Zoom connections. It will be great to see friends and have an exciting time together learning about God's creation and ways we can build up our communities. There will be Bible study, music, games, activities, crafts, and special surprises at each camp. Camps begin on June 7, 2021 and end the week of July 30, 2021, taking a break the week of Annual Conference.

Pre K to 2nd Grade Camp will meet on Mondays, at 10:00 am. Get ready to investigate light and ways we are the light of the world to others. We will work with water and the shape of our Earth. Exploring seasons and changes in God's world should be interesting. Together we will see how animals and people are a big part of creation. Through our games, study, crafts, and play, camp will help us all feel inspired to care for creation and each other.

3rd to 5th Grade Camp meets on Tuesdays, at 10:00 am. This camp will work on seeing God's light in new ways. How do we use God's living water is a question we will explore. Can campers make a mandala? We will learn about praying with movement when talking with God. Would someone like to learn to make origami animals? Who is a super hero in your life? Questions like this will be the spark of discussions and activities. This camp will also help us see ways to serve others in God's creation.

6th to 8th Grade Camp meets Wednesdays, at 10:00 am. Campers will explore ways to find light. Can campers create artwork by spilling outside the lines? Earth and plant connections should capture our thinking. We may learn how to pass a prayer. Can campers be challenged to change? What are things we have in common with animals? Did God give campers gifts? How can campers make life a little cleaner? These questions and others will be tackled as we learn many new ideas and skills at camp.

9th to 12th Grade Camp gets together at 4:00 pm, on Thursdays. We will look at light being an invitation and a counterbalance to darkness. Stewardship of Earth will also be a topic to explore. Maybe we will see if we can form prayers from clay. Can we learn from others through sharing joys and concerns? Campers will have the chance to study ecosystems and food-to-plate ideas. Ancient creation stories will present food for thought to this group. Throughout this camp, participants will catch hold of the awe and wonder of God's creation.

College and Careers Camp is our new camp which will meet at 7:00, on Tuesday evenings. This camp is for campers who are out of high school and in the workforce or college. The evenings will give campers a place to discuss God's leading in their lives. Together we will explore how choices we are making impact creation. By gathering together, campers can reflect on daily ups and downs or changes being faced. Self-expression will be encouraged with water colors, clay, crafts, and creative writing. This new and very special camp will have fun finding the fascinating ways creation is speaking to us.

Family Camp is Friday evenings at 7:00. This intergenerational camp calls all families, no matter the number of people in a family or age. Single people are encouraged to join in the fun and activities. As we gather together, we will have time to discover Jesus as God's light in the world. We'll explore the importance of water in our life and spirits. Our Family Camp will help us recognize what creation may be telling us. Through creative play, we will see how God is with us through all seasons. Some lessons will uncover the ways we are interdependent with creation, and challenge us as caretakers of Earth. Everyone one will have the opportunity to express their own ideas in crafts, activities, and art.

Pieceful Quilting Camp Is Back! August 18 - 21 is all set for our Pieceful Quilting Camp at Bergamo Center. This is the only in-person camp this summer. Bergamo has strict rules including the wearing of face masks, keeping a safe distance apart, and only single sleeping rooms. But we get to be “together” again for quilting camp. The costs have increased due to many factors. It will be \$400, per person which includes three nights lodging, eight meals, and the use of the Darby Room. Pack all those fabrics, sewing machines, needles, and snacks. There will be the customary service project as well as new ideas presented. Don't forget the show-and-tell projects on which you have been working. It might take us two nights to share all the things completed (or started). We will have another wonderful time together. More information will be coming for those who register online.

Southern Ohio/Kentucky Disaster Ministries Updates

Volunteer Opportunities in Dayton –The BDM site in Dayton fully reopens on May 2, after a pause during the winter months. The volunteer housing site at the former Memorial Presbyterian Church, 1541 S. Smithville Rd., Dayton, will be open and volunteers will be coming from other districts. The first house that is being rebuilt is on Marlin Avenue in Trotwood. S. Ohio/KY volunteers gutted this house and put on a new roof in April. Sammy Deacon and Rex Miller are providing leadership for the project. It is anticipated that the work will continue until October.

Four volunteers are needed May 16-22. Three volunteers are needed June 6-11. Volunteers of all skill levels are welcome! Leadership and tools will be provided. Lodging and meals are provided at the housing site. If volunteers prefer, they may spend nights at home and join the crew each morning. Volunteers need to be at least fifteen years old, unless they go with a parent or legal guardian, and then they may be fourteen. To volunteer or for more information, call/text Burt Wolf at 937-287-5902 or SouthernOhioBDM@gmail.com.

S. Ohio/KY BDM has volunteer opportunities throughout the year. Click here for a flyer with all the 2021 trip dates.

Sewing Bee – There will be work for both sewers and non-sewers at the May 22 Sewing Bee. It will be held at 9:00 AM at Eaton Community Church, 813 Camden Road. Sewers will be making school bags for Church World Service school kits. Bring your sewing machine and an extension cord. Non-sewers will be preparing school kit items for the assembly this summer. Bring a sack lunch and come for a time of service and fellowship. For more information call Barb Brower at 937-336-2442. Click here for a flyer showing all the 2021 Sewing Bee dates and locations.

BDM Meeting – Our next BDM meeting will be Thursday, May 6 at 7:00 PM. It will be an in-person meeting at Happy Corner COB. Please enter at the front door, and there will be signs directing you to the meeting room. We will wear masks (except when seated) and keep 6' physical distancing. There will also be a Zoom option. Contact Burt Wolf for more information at 937-287-5902 or SouthernOhioBDM@gmail.com.

Pleasant Hill 50th Anniversary Celebration Date Change

The Pleasant Hill Church of the Brethren is changing the date of its 50th Anniversary Celebration. It was originally planned for June 6 but because of ongoing concerns about meeting in person and a few other things, we have decided to move it to August 29. August 29, 1971 was the actual date of the initial dedication of the new building so it will be 50 years to the day when we celebrate the 50th anniversary.

Trotwood Church of the Brethren Offers Scholarships

The Trotwood Church of the Brethren has five different scholarships available for students of all ages in the Southern Ohio/Kentucky District. For more information including how to apply for these scholarships, contact the church at office@trotwoodcob.com .

Prayer Needs

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

- ◆ David Balmer, who pastors Flat Creek and Mud Lick congregations in a team with Dwayne Yost, is doing well and thanks all for prayers over the last month.
- ◆ Larry Lutz, pastor of the Piqua congregation, requesting prayer for his niece, Angela Kesauer. Angela had surgery for a cancerous brain tumor a few months ago. Angela came through her surgery and the rest of the family is over COVID but still feeling tired.
- ◆ Staci Peterson, associate pastor at Cincinnati -- idiopathic pulmonary fibrosis and lupus.
- ◆ As a ministry affiliated with the District we have a longstanding and close relationship with the Brethren Retirement Community (BRC). Due to circumstances in the community and regulations, testing continues among residents and staff. Procedures are being conducted to keep our residents and staff safe. Some visitations have resumed with protocols in place. 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, 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.
- ◆ May we remember those congregations in pastoral transition - the **Constance** congregation is exploring a yoked arrangement with **Cincinnati** with the Cincinnati pastors providing leadership for the next few months. Andrew Wright is serving as interim at **Oakland**. **Donnels Creek** is using pulpit supply at this time. 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**.

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 we should be aware. May we lift each other in prayer as we work to continue the work of Jesus, peacefully, simply, together.