

Gifted by God . . . Called by the Church . . . Empowered by the Holy Spirit

The Council of District Executives is sponsoring a conference for congregational leaders May 14-16 at the Frederick Church of the Brethren in Maryland. The conference entitled, "Gifted by God, Called by the Church, Empowered by the Spirit", is for congregational leaders to provide tools and resources to assist congregations to become healthy, vital, growing communities of faith. Arrangements are being made for CEUs for ordained ministers. We may try to organize a bus to go to this event. Mark your calendars now, and plan to attend this gathering, and encourage several leaders from your congregation to come as well. Watch for more information on the CODE Leadership Facebook page. Annual Conference Hotel Reservations and Non-delegate Registration open on Wednesday, February 25

While delegate registration opened on January 5, registration will open on February 25 for non-delegates at 12:00 noon central time. Hotel reservations for both delegates and non-delegates will also open at noon (central time) on Wednesday, February 25. To register as a non-delegate, go to www.brethren.org/ac and click on "Register Now"

After you have registered as a non-delegate for Annual Conference, you will immediately receive an automatic email that gives you a link to register for the hotel you prefer. This year there are two hotels in the Conference Block: Marriott Waterside (\$109/night) and Embassy Suites (\$114/night including breakfast for one). You can find more details about these two hotels on the Annual Conference website. Please do not telephone the hotels directly; they cannot give you the negotiated conference rate. Please register for Annual Conference and then use the link you will receive to book your hotel room. All delegates who are registered will automatically be emailed the link on February 25 to secure their hotel reservation. If you have any questions please call the Annual Conference Office at 847-429-4365.. If you have any questions please call the Annual Conference Office at 847-429-4365.

Adams County Property Updates

A team has been formed to negotiate the sale of part of our Adam's County property. This team is made up of five members of our District board and five members of the Friends of Woodland Altars. Legal counsel representing each group will also be a part of the team. These twelve people will meet with the Nature Conservancy to firm up details of the sale. These details will be presented for approval at a Special District Conference. The date and location of the Conference has not yet been determined. A blog page has been set up on our District website. If you have any concerns, suggestions, or comments please feel free to [Click here](#) join in the discussion.

Prayers for Nigerian Church and the Kidnaped Girls

Another female suicide bomber struck a marketplace several days ago resulting in several deaths and destruction of property. Tensions remain high as a number of skirmishes continue to take place between Boko Haram and the military coalition in Nigeria and surrounding countries. The Nigerian national elections, originally scheduled for February 14, have been postponed until March 28 adding to the uncertainty and confusion in the country. There is still no news regarding the girls taken over 11 months ago. The Church of the brethren is organizing efforts for temporary housing and supply basic needs; more information on these efforts can be found on the denominational website. Our prayers are still very much needed for this situation.

Donations are still being accepted for the Nigeria Crisis Fund which will be matched by an amount set aside by the Mission and Ministry Board of the Church of the Brethren. Click here to donate online, or make out a check to Emergency Disaster Fund, noting Nigeria Crisis Fund in the memo line. Mail the check to: Emergency Disaster Fund Church of the Brethren, 1451 Dundee Avenue, Elgin, IL 60120.

Disaster Ministry Updates

Congregational Visits

Would your congregation like to learn more about Brethren Disaster Ministries? We welcome the opportunity to come to your church to share about BDM. We are available for programs of varying lengths. For more information or to schedule a visit, please contact Burton Wolf at 937-287-5902 or SouthernOhioBDM@gmail.com.

Sewing Bee and Cleanup Bucket Assembly

On Saturday, March 7 sewers and friends are invited to gather at 9:00 AM at Eaton Church of the Brethren, 1407 N. Barron Street for a Sewing Bee. Sewers need to bring their sewing machine. Others may bring scissors for cutting out baby gowns. We'll also be assembling School Kits, using the bags that have already been sewn. Lunch will be served. Come join in a time of fellowship and service.

Assembling 200 Cleanup Buckets for Church World Service will take place in late March or early April. We are now purchasing the needed items, and are uncertain of their delivery date. Watch for an upcoming announcement of the exact date. We appreciate and thank you for your support of this project. Click here to make donations through Southern Ohio website. Checks may be sent to:

District of Southern Ohio Church of the Brethren
2293 Gauby Rd.
New Madison, OH 45346

Volunteer Opportunities

Responses of volunteers have been great for trips to New Jersey for Superstorm Sandy Recovery. The next opportunity is May 24-30. For more information or to volunteer, please contact Burton Wolf at 937-287-5902 or click here to email. Please consider this opportunity and share it with others.

Camping and Retreat Commission Updates

CRC is gearing up for another camping season with camps for everyone. All camps will be held at Cricket Holler, except for Quiting Camp which will return to Bergamo Retreat Center. From Adult/Child Camp to the new Family Camp, plans are being made to provide a special, set apart time to experience what living in Christian community is. Each camp is carefully crafted to fit the campers as they explore God's boundless love and His call in their hearts while they live with others sharing the adventure.

Family Camp is new. We will be sharing the Fourth of July weekend together at Cricket Holler. People can come for a day or the whole weekend. Some can camp in tents, RVs, cabins, under the stars or just return home for their own beds. Lunch, supper, and snacks will be shared together, but breakfasts are on your own. Highlights will include family Bible study, games, free time, swimming, campfires, singing, seeing fireworks, and eating together. What a special time this will be honoring a national holiday with church friends and family! Come and join in the celebration and fun.

Volunteers are NEEDED. Camp counselors, cooks, Bible study leaders, singers, campfire builders, dish washers, crafty people, storytellers, and even warm bodies are all needed to make camp an exciting and wonderful place to be. Volunteers can be used for as little as an hour or as much as a week or more. Kitchen help is really needed to provide delicious, home cooked meals to the campers and leaders who often say they are starving from all of their activities. Please look over the list of dates to find the time you could serve in this vital camping ministry. The rewards are great when one sees the happy faces around the tables as campers and leaders enjoy, food, fellowship, and fun.

Mental Health Workshop

Presented by the Deacon Body/ Transforming Lives Team of the West Charleston Church of the Brethren

March 1, 8 and 15, 2015 -- 7:00 PM to 8:30 PM

John Kinsel will present three sessions related to Mental Health. John will share what we should know about:

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| March 1 | Depression |
| March 8 | Bi-Polar Disorder |
| March 15 | Alzheimer's and Dementia |

This workshop is open to deacons and any others interested in strengthening the emotional and physical health of their congregations.

John D. Kinsel, MS, LPCC-S, has been a Licensed Clinical Counselor in the state of Ohio for over 30 years, working both in Community Mental Health settings and in private practice. Now retired, he continues to remain involved with Mental Health issues through his private consultation and training practice. A life-long Buckeye, John has been married for 42 years to his wife, Beth. Beth works as a Geriatric Social Worker. They have two adult children and one grandchild and are long-time members of the Beavercreek Church of the Brethren.

National Older Adult Conference

September 7-11, 2015, at Lake Junaluska Conference and Retreat Center in western North Carolina.

The NOAC poster is in the March Source packet.

The NOAC registration brochure will be mailed to past NOAC participants, congregations, district offices, retirement communities, and others later this month. A copy of the brochure will be in the April Source packet.

NOAC registration: Brochures have been mailed to past NOAC participants, congregations, district offices, retirement communities, and others. You may register by mail as soon as you receive the brochure or download the form from the website. Registration begins March 2 at 9:00 am CST. Information about lodging reservations is in the registration brochure and will be online. People arrange conference center lodging directly with Lake Junaluska Conference Center. People requesting special consideration due to age (75+) or physical/functional limitations can reserve lodging beginning April 1. All others are asked to wait to reserve lodging until April 16.

Right now, only the NOAC home page is online (www.brethren.org/NOAC), including a PDF of the registration brochure, but very soon all the conference information will be available there.

We often hear that people don't want to attend NOAC because they aren't old! This conference is for people age 50 and older, and many younger people—those in their 20s and 30s—love coming to NOAC to help the conference run smoothly. The younger adults don't understand why people age 50, 60, 70, and even older don't want to go to NOAC. The young adults encourage those over 50 to give it a try!

Oakland Dinner Theatre

The Oakland Church of the Brethren, 8058 Horatio-Harris Creek Road, Bradford (2 and a half miles north of Gettysburg, Ohio) will be presenting *When Bullfrogs Sing Opera* by Carl L. Williams (produced by special arrangement with Eldridge Publishing Co.), as their 2015 Dinner Theater production. The play centers around two sisters who grew up in Bullfrog Waller, but Millicent left the country for the big-city life while Coreen stayed in the country as a cornbread and grits kinda' girl. Now meeting again, Millicent continues to make plans to advance up the social ladder while trying to keep her embarrassing past a secret. Coreen is now thinking of leaving Bullfrog Waller. Come and hear the bullfrog sounds as deceit and conceit ultimately reveal not just secrets but what matters most in this award-winning comedy.

Oakland's annual dinner theater is well known throughout the community. Those who attend are warmly greeted with valet parking, a wide variety of freshly prepared salads, entrees and desserts as well as wholesome entertainment that highlights the talents that exist within the congregation. John Dillon is the director. Nan Hottle is the producer. Rochelle Holsapple is dinner coordinator. The cast members are Amanda Sgro, Betty Byrd, Mike Hogg, Lynne Hanes, Joseph Helfrich, Holden Klingler, and Alison Helfrich.

The dates will be March 6, 7, 13, and 14 at 6:00 pm, cost of the dinner buffet and play will be \$22.00. On Sunday, March 8, dessert only will be served at 2:00pm with the play to follow at 3:00pm, cost of \$12.00. Cost for children 10 and under will be half price.

Reservations may be made from 4-8 pm with Brenda Coblentz at 937-548-1895.
Proceeds from the dinner theater production will help support Oakland's outreach projects.

In Memory . . .

On October 11, 2014, 10 members of Ted Studebaker's family gathered at Manchester University to honor Ted and his mission for peace. A plaque in Ted's honor was placed on the Memory Wall in the Gladys Muir Peace Garden. It reads,

Ted Studebaker '67 - 1945-1971 - Pacifist, Conscientious Objector, Social Worker - Agricultural Worker in Vietnam - "Above all, Christ taught me to love all people, including enemies, and to return good for evil and that all men are brothers in Christ."

Ted, the son of Stanley and Zelma Studebaker, grew up on a farm south of West Milton, and was a member of the West Milton Church of the Brethren. Ted's brothers, Gary Studebaker and Doug Studebaker, had traveled to Vietnam for 3 weeks in May of 2012 in order to visit the areas where Ted had lived, worked and died and to pay tribute to his life. Doug spoke on behalf of the family at the Manchester event. He closed with these words,

"During our amazing journey, we spoke with many who freely and often quite emotionally shared insights of what Ted's life meant to them. These meditation were frequently joined by a shared perception that our brother had lived so simply and yet so joyfully among a people who were victims of human suffering in a war-ravaged country. Ted understood that this life is about understanding and showing love for one another. Several of Ted's colleagues shared a belief expressed by one - that his good nature, quiet commitment and sense of purpose epitomized "what we all hoped to achieve through our VNCS experience." Ted was our brother. We were honored to be on this journey with him and we can bear witness that his quietly directed life was truly a positive force. It was a force for peace, for greater understanding and reconciliation. Ted's life and his message still resonates forcefully forty-one years after his death."

Robert McFadden, another Southern Ohioan was also honored that day. Bob grew up in the Troy Church of the Brethren when his father, Glenn McFadden, was pastor there.