



January, 2016
Southern Ohio District Newsletter
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Southern Ohio District Listening/Discerning/Visioning Process begins

At the 2015 District Conference, the body voted to have the District conduct a process for Listening/Discerning/Reconciliation utilizing an organization steeped in reconciliation work. The planning of this process has begun. Leslie Frye of the Ministry of Reconciliation has been contacted by District Executive David Shetler and John Kinsel, who has been appointed by the Board to facilitate this process. Upon her recommendation, Bob Gross and Carol Waggle have been retained to conduct a training of volunteers on January 23, 2016. The District Gifts Discernment Team has identified 40 persons as prospective volunteers and is in the process of contacting them for a commitment. After the day of training, the volunteers will go out in pairs to visit with groups from each of the 52 congregations associated with Southern Ohio District. Their task will be simply to listen and bring back appreciations, concerns and suggestions regarding the District expressed by the congregations. This information will be utilized in planning any future next steps for the District. Anyone who is interested in being a volunteer listener or would like to recommend some they know may contact John Kinsel at jbkinsel@gmail.com. Your prayers are also coveted for the ministry.

Youth Winter Adventure

Registration is now open for the Youth Winter Adventure to be held at Camp Willson, near Bellefontaine, over the President's Day weekend, February 13 - 15, 2016. This weekend is open to all youth in the district, grades 7 - 12. We will leave the Troy Church at 1:00 pm, Saturday, and return about 1:00 pm, Monday. The retreat will be led by Jon Keller, pastor of the Troy Church of the Brethren. The weekend planned has a wide selection of activities like skiing, snowboarding, tubing, hiking, horseback riding, crafts, worship, games, and relaxing. The cost of \$220 includes meals, housing, food, transportation, entrance fees, ski lessons, and equipment rentals. The registration forms have been sent to all churches and can be found on the Southern Ohio District Church of the Brethren website. The retreat is limited to 30 participants, on a first come basis. More information and forms will be sent to each person after the registration and fees are received. The registration deadline is January 30, 2016. Scholarships are available. Mail registrations and checks (made out to Southern Ohio District Church of the Brethren, with "Camping and Retreat" on the memo line to:

Karen Dillon
756 Old Springfield Rd.
Vandalia, OH 45377

Cookie Camp

What can 14 people do in four hours with 50 pounds of flour, 7 dozen eggs, 25 pounds of sugar, 20 pounds of margarine, plus various colored sugars, spices, cocoa, sprinkles, chocolate chips, and Hershey kisses? They can make cookies!!! Lots of holiday cookies!

That's exactly what happened at Salem Church of the Brethren on Saturday morning, December 5, 2015, when the Camping and Retreat Committee held its first ever Cookie Camp. As the participants arrived, they chose a cookie type they wanted to bake and began mixing, forming, cutting, rolling, and decorating cookies.

As soon as pans came out of the oven and were cooled, more cookies were sent into the oven to bake. The flurry of activity was exciting to watch. People moved from measuring and mixing stations to tables for rolling and cutting out different kinds of cookies: chocolate crinkles, peanut butter blossoms, lemon cookies, sugar cookies, oatmeal spice, chocolate chip, oatmeal chocolate chip, gingersnaps, and snicker doodles. Cookies were decorated with icing and sugars, sprinkles and cinnamon. Many tastings of the cookies were made to insure a very high quality. Then they were packaged to be ready for sale or delivery. About 4000 cookies were baked that day.

The fellowship and fun the attenders experienced was even more valuable. New and old friends worked together, helping each other in many tasks as they talked and shared stories, jokes, and samples of cookies. The aromas of baking sweets filled the entire church, adding to the richness of the day. Not one pan of cookies was burned during the whole event. What an accomplishment!

In the afternoon, people arrived to purchase the cookies to have over the holidays. Not all the cookies were sold that day, so some of the bakers took them to their churches to be offered for a donation. This first Cookie Camp netted over \$600 to be used in the support of campers and costs in operating next summer's camping season.

Many thanks need to be expressed for the bakers and buyers who made this Cookie Camp such a success. Thank you! Thank you! Thank you!

2016 Annual Conference Update 2016 Annual Conference will be held in Greensboro, North Carolina. Early delegate registration remains the same at \$285. In terms of housing costs, in Greensboro, we will only have one hotel (the convention center and the hotel are all in one building). Our hotel rate is \$109 + 12.75% tax which makes it a total of \$121.75 inclusive. The Sheraton is also giving us free parking and free wi-fi, so there is no additional charge for those. Registration for both delegates and non-delegates will open in February.

2016 Church Planting Conference

Dates: May 19-21, 2016
Location: Richmond, IN – Bethany Theological Seminary
Theme: @HIM #hope #imagination #mission
Website: www.brethren.org/churchplanting

Facebook: [Church of the Brethren Planting Network](#)

Registration: Opens in January 2016, online only
Regular fee: \$129
Early bird, through April 15: \$119
First timer, through April 15: \$99
Bethany or Brethren Academy student: \$79

Housing: This year housing **will not be included in registration fees**
Arrangements have been made to hold rooms at Hampton Inn and Holiday Inn for a special conference rate, but attendees must make their own reservations!!

Schedule: The conference begins with registration at 8:00 a.m. on Thursday, May 19 and concludes at noon on Saturday, May 21.

Meals: Lunch on Thursday and Friday will be provided. All other meals are at the participant's expense

More info: Brochure available online. Contact Randi Rowan at rrowan@brethren.org for printed copies. Feel free to duplicate on your own.

New Offering: *Discernment Event* – following this year's conference, a 24 hour discernment retreat will be held for people considering church planting. Led in part by Stan Dueck, this will be a time of personal reflection and self-assessment around the call to become a leader for church planting. Details will be forthcoming, but think of individuals that might benefit from this extra time to further consider their call. The timeframe will be to begin around noon on Saturday, May 21 and conclude by 2:00 p.m. on Sunday, May 22. An additional fee will be charged. Attendance will be limited.

Our goal is to have 150 church planters and supporters in attendance!

Police and Clergy Together Academy

The Dayton Police Department is now accepting applications for the fourth Police and Clergy Together Academy. This initiative will continue to partner our faith-based community with our Dayton Police Officers. After graduating the academy, PACT members will focus on three things:

1. Praying for our Dayton Police Officers as well as our community.
2. Building and improving relationships with our Dayton Police Officers.
3. Serving citizens and officers in need through critical incident callouts.

To be a part of the PACT initiative, you must attend the PACT Academy hosted by the Dayton Police Department, which will consist of three hour training sessions held on Thursday afternoons from 1:00-4:00 PM, beginning February 4, 2016, and concluding on April 28, 2016 with graduation (no class will be held on March 24, 2016). More information can be found on our website.

Disaster Ministry Updates

Urgent Need for Volunteers - Volunteers are needed **January 3-9** in Spotswood, NJ. We already have two volunteers planning to go, and are hopeful for more! Volunteers will also be there from the W. PA district. If you are able to volunteer or for more information, please contact Burt Wolf at 937-287-5902. BDM has just three weeks in January to finish its Superstorm Sandy recovery.

New BDM Project Opening in Harts, WV – West Virginia was hit repeatedly with major flooding in March, April and July of 2015. With many of the counties unable to recover on their own due to high unemployment rates and poverty levels, Brethren Disaster Ministries will open a long-term recovery project in February, 2016. BDM will assist with the rebuilding of both homes and washed out bridges. **S. Ohio's first trip will be February 14-20, 2016. Volunteers are needed, including heavy equipment operators.** Contact Burt Wolf at 937-287-5902 to join the crew.

A full **2016 BDM schedule**, which is formatted so it can be used as a bulletin insert is available on our website. Please share this with your congregation.

Jan. 9 Sewing Bee – Mark your calendar for Saturday, Jan. 9 at 9:00 AM for our next Sewing Bee for Church World Service. It will be at Eaton Church of the Brethren, 1407 N. Barron Street. Sewers need to bring their sewing machine for sewing school bags for CWS kits. **If you want to sew, but don't have a portable machine, we do have two sewing machines that can be used. Please call Barb Brower at 937-336-2442 to reserve a machine.** Lunch will be served.

Church of the Brethren General Secretary speaks out Against Anti-Muslim Rhetoric

Church of the Brethren General Secretary, Stanley J. Noffsinger, has issued a statement against the current escalation of rhetoric that seeks to demonize Muslims. Citing Jesus' commands to love God, and love neighbor as self, and the parable of the Good Samaritan, the statement also calls church members to revisit portions of the 1991 Annual Conference statement "Peacemaking: The Call of God's Peace in History" that directs the church to "explore avenues of interfaith dialogue leading toward a visible expression of God's plan for human unity." The full statement as well as a YouTube video is available on the Church of the Brethren website, brethren.org.

Prayer Needs

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

- We offer our prayers for the ongoing racial unrest across our country with recent demonstrations and protests on college campuses. May the peace of God guide us toward whole and healthy relationships among all people.
- Stonelick Congregation building broken into on Christmas Eve
- Oakley Brick Church of the Brethren in Illinois suffered significant weather related damage
- Judy Cupp reoccurrence of cancer
- Daniel Fullen, serving as interim pastor of Olivet along with beginning a full time chaplaincy in Newark, OH
- Tom Bowser, interim pastor of Good Shepherd
- Dean Garrett, providing pulpit supply and other ministry as needed for Emmanuel congregation
- Jim and Linda Vandermark's daughter, Amanda, breast cancer
- Olivet Congregation, discerning next steps.
- Wolf Creek Congregation, preparing for restart.
- Possibility of new church start in Lexington, KY.
- 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.