



Reflecting news and views

The Reflector

a publication of the Illinois/Wisconsin District of the Church of the Brethren

September 2018 / Volume 15 / Issue 6

District Executive: Kevin Kessler

Moderator Notes

As for me and my house, I am continuing to learn to read and write Syriac Eastern Archaic. As you may remember, this was Jesus' native language and only language for most of the Naziritii, citizens of Nazareth of synagogue members, he taught. You may also remember that speaking in any language other than Syriac while in the synagogue was forbidden.

Aramaic is a subset of the dialects of Hebrew selected as a polyglot, or many dialects jammed together. Aramaic is not generally used by Linguists but is useless for dialectic research. One denomination may include Syriac or versions of Hebrew but another may not. Example: Mashiachii, or messiah follower, is from Syriac Eastern Dialect and located in the Syriac Eastern area, but Mashiachim, also meaning Messiah follower, marks the word as being used in the Jerusalem area. As a general rule 'ii' suffix comes from Nazareth and 'im' is used Jerusalem. Even the names of the twenty two alphabetic characters are changed with location. Precise research is possible if your lexicon (dictionary) is sensitive to the dialects. Aramaic research as to location and time is not possible using the Aramaic polyglots nor is Aramaic supported at King's College. We are indeed fortunate that Dr. George M. Lamsa spent several years finding the nuances of and publishing a lexicon of just the two Syriac principal dialects. It is now possible to research both the old and the new Syriacs, and one of Lamsa's students did a similar research with Arabic and both Syriacs. Dr. Lamsa's publication of the lexicon was in 1935, and was listed by linguists the same year and in the intervening time through 2012. Only two pages of corrections have been published.

The Peshitta, or the New Testament translated to Greek, and the Peshitto, or the New Testament translated to Arabic, show large diversions when compared. The Peshitto is in closer agreement to the

sayings of Jesus' gospels. There are gatherings of Mashiachii in many cities, and gatherings of the followers of the Messiah meeting in the local synagogue.

Question of the week: Absolute truth is needed in this day and time! Where and How is absolute truth found?

Thank you for your prayers for our church. Think - if we as a church need to have things that are absolute truth, do we need God's works, or miracles, to testify? In the bible, does the production of miracles in the presence of a teacher testify to God as well? They are the evidence that God has His hand in what Jesus does.

Bless you and all of your house,

—Paul Kohler

District Conference 2018 at Cerro Gordo Church of the Brethren

Mark your calendars to the 2018 District Conference! The IL/WI District will hold its annual conference on November 3 and 4 at Cerro Gordo Church of the Brethren. The Moderator is Paul Kohler, of Champaign Church of the Brethren. There will be a pre-conference continuing education event for ministers from Thursday evening to Friday. Be on the lookout for more information!

DE Ponderings

In 1992, the second Sunday of October was designated as Clergy Appreciation Sunday, evolving into October as Clergy Appreciation Month.¹ Doing a Google search on Clergy Appreciation Month provides about 140,000 results ranging from information about the celebration to ways which clergy can be appreciated, to clergy writing about their dislike of the observance to clergy offering essays on why it's a bad idea.

I reviewed a small portion of this Internet material but admit that I was affected more by the negative responses to the observance. I certainly understand the value of recognizing and honoring clergy who give unselfishly of their time and talents. I even encourage congregations to consider ways in which they can share appreciation appropriately. However, to enter this time of celebration without giving it diligent consideration may lessen its anticipated impact. Articles and stories about the negative side of this observance offer insight.

Eric Geiger wrote a blog in 2014 about gifts to not give your pastor during clergy appreciation month.² An easy way to show appreciation is with a gift. Geiger suggests it be the right gift otherwise the minister may feel less than appreciated. Trinkets, such as a set of praying hands, may be thoughtful but is it needed? Or, a good book on leadership may be a good read, but is the intent that the pastor become a better leader? Rather than a book, Geiger recommends a gift card from a major bookseller. Gifts are great when chosen wisely.

Jon Quitt, pastor for Vineyard Community Church, Tuscaloosa, AL, thinks Clergy Appreciation Month is a bad idea.³ Quitt indicates that better than gifts once a month is a for all-time culture of appreciation. He quips that gifts have the capacity to validate the giver more than appreciating the one who receives. So, it is okay to put aside the gifts and continually offer appreciation through a strong, sincere, and authentic relationship.

I was unable to locate another article that indicated gifts pastors receive may be given by the person who is most disgruntled with the pastor's leadership. In this case, the gift may seem disingenuous.

Show appreciation wisely, sincerely, and often. How might you offer appreciation more than one month out of the year? By what manner can you show appreciation? A handwritten note of thanks? A kind word?

And, too, while it is good to appreciate clergy, all who are part of the church are ministers. It stands to

reason, then, that all who are actively engaged in the life of the church, in ministry, are candidates for appreciation. As we approach October, may we consider the ways we can be appreciative always and of everyone who selflessly serves for the glory of God and the good our neighbor.

1. <https://corporate.hallmark.com/holidays-occasions/clergy-appreciation-month/>
2. <http://ericgeiger.com/2014/09/get-pastor-pastor-appreciation-month/>
3. <https://relevantmagazine.com/article/im-a-pastor-and-i-think-pastor-appreciation-month-is-a-bad-idea/>

Service Project for District Conference

In keeping with our Church of the Brethren values of service, the host congregation for District Conference, Cerro Gordo, suggested having a service project for the conference. The Program and Arrangement Committee heartily agreed. See the details below.

Cerro Gordo is asking those who wish to participate in a service project to bring completed hygiene kits to District Conference. Here is what you need for each kit:

- One hand towel measuring approximately 15" x 28" to 16" x 32" (no fingertip, bath, dish towel or micro-fiber)
- One washcloth
- One wide-tooth comb removed from the package
- One fingernail or toenail clipper removed from the package
- One bath-size bar of soap in the wrapper
- One toothbrush in the package
- Ten standard size Band-Aids

All items need to be packed inside a one-gallon plastic zipper closure bag. Remove the excess air from the bag and seal.

Do NOT add any extra items or toothpaste. A tube of extended expiration date toothpaste will be added to each hygiene kit just prior to its final journey.

Monetary donations to cover shipping costs will also be gratefully accepted. A box will be provided at Conference for your donations.

From Church of the Table newsletter:

Preaching in jail is just so much fun.

Church at Cook County Jail happens in a few different places in the building, depending on how many officers are available. If they are short staffed we have church in



between a row of bunks and a wall, very similar to the banner above. It's cramped and it smells like a locker room. If they have an officer to spare then we get to go into the rec room. That is a gift. The rec room is spacious and quiet and more guys can fit in there. Also sometimes it smells like clean laundry. #blessed

Last week 34 guys came to church. That's 10% of dorm 2. They sang so, so poorly. It was cacophonous. I told them that Jesus saves everyone, but no one can save their singing abilities, not even God incarnate. They laughed, thankfully.

We talked about hate, how you can be living freely in society but be in a prison of your own hate, or how you can be incarcerated but be so completely free with love. Someone can be driving down the road, a free person, but be so filled with rage at, say, your boss, that you are no longer free. And someone can be living in Cook County Jail, in as locked down of a facility as there is, but have so much love for self, for God, and for their brothers and your sisters, that he or she is more free than ever before.

They got it and they were into it. They think about freedom all the time. Can't blame them. I should think about it more, too.

After jail church about 20 of the guys came up to me to say thanks or chat a bit, and we went through the motions of those awkward handshake/clasp/pull in/one arm hug/fist bump/down-low-too-slow thing. I am so awful at all of it. I look like a toddler who has yet to gain control of his limbs. They were gracious, and they laughed as they walked away from me.

I prefer full hugs. They are easiest.

Church happens in a lot of places. It's been my experience that it really thrives in the places where it shouldn't. But that's just me. Your mileage may vary.

May you, friend, know freedom from hate this month. May you be as free as some of those incarcerated men who are doing their best to live in love and peace.

Joshua Longbrake
Pastor, Church of the Table

The Dutchtown Church (Milledgeville Church of the Brethren) is celebrating its 160th anniversary.

The origin of the Dutchtown congregation can be traced back to Schwarzenau, Germany, in the year 1708. Due to religious persecution that was going on in Europe at the time, small groups of people began the migration to America. By 1735, the migration was complete and the majority of the "Brethren" settled in Pennsylvania under the control of William Penn, a Quaker. They eventually started pushing further west to the Mississippi and on to the West Coast. Brethren from the East settled in Northern Illinois around 1842 and established the first Church in this area at Arnold's Grove, near Mt. Carroll. This congregation was the parent congregation for Dutchtown, Cherry Grove, and Hickory Grove. It was in the fall of 1858 that the congregation was organized and the first Love Feast was held.

Pastor Richard "Rick" Koch has pastored Dutchtown for 28 years. A special Sunday service will be held on September 9th with worship at 9:30 a.m. and a Hog Roast/Pot Luck meal to follow. All are welcome to attend and help us celebrate.

Dutchtown is located at 25257 Dutchtown Road, Milledgeville. Phone: 815-225-7812

Compelling Vision Process Sessions

Registration Form

Samuel Sarpiya, Facilitator

The IL/WI District **invites you to attend** on the of the Compelling Vision Process Sessions listed below. The Compelling Vision Process is designed to hear many voices from across the denomination to develop a vision for the Church of the Brethren. This vision includes energy, enthusiasm, and excitement for sharing ministry together far into the future. Every voice is important to this process. Please share this information in your congregation and encourage as many who can attend to engage in this important and compelling conversation! ***This opportunity is yours to help shape the future of the Church of the Brethren. Every voice counts, and every thought is important!***



1) Locations:

- ✚ Mt. Morris COB: September 16, 2018
- ✚ Decatur COB: October 14, 2018
- ✚ York Center COB: October 21, 2018

2) All sessions will start at 4 p.m. with a tentative end time of 6 p.m., depending on discussion and the needs of those attending.

3) Beverages and cookies will be provided.

4) **Please RSVP to the District Office by:**

- ✚ Mt. Morris COB Session: September 9, 2018
- ✚ Decatur COB Session: October 7, 2018
- ✚ York Center COB Session: October 14, 2018

Registration:

First Name: _____ Last: _____

Mailing Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Congregation: _____

Mail or e-mail form to:

E-mail: andreag.iwdcob@gmail.com

Mail: IL/WI District Office Church of the Brethren
269 E. Chestnut St.
Canton, IL 61520

-Laptops will be available to input responses

-Smartphones may be used to input responses, as well

Explained during event

Fall Ventures Courses to Focus on Trauma Informed Care

The October and November course offerings from the “Ventures in Christian Discipleship” program at McPherson (Kan.) College will be a two-part series focusing on Trauma Informed Care. (Part 1 not required to take Part 2)

Part 1 of the series, “Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)”, will be held Saturday, October 13 online at 9 a.m. – 12 p.m. CST. The science of the past 30 years is painting a clear picture—when kids are exposed to overwhelming, unsupported adversity (abuse, neglect, domestic violence, etc.) there is profound effect for them and for all of us. This class will introduce the ACE findings, briefly discuss the neurobiology of stress and propose simple solutions that promote hope and healing. There will also be time at the end of the presentation for a dialogue regarding the implications for Ventures participants.

Part 2 of the series, “Trauma Informed Care (TIC)”, will be held Saturday, November 17 online at 9 a.m. – 12 p.m. CST. We will briefly review and highlight the ACEs findings and dig deeper into the core concepts of TIC. We will focus specifically on the core concepts of regulation, relationship and reason to be as critical components of a connected and healthy world. We will also discuss how response to overwhelming adversity and trauma tends to create dysregulation, relational skepticism and pursuit of purpose that is often superficial and absent of meaning. The strategies discussed that create regulation, relationship and reason to be are also relevant for managing conflict and other relevant challenges of modern life.

Both classes will be taught by Tim Grove, chief clinical officer at SaintA, Milwaukee, Wis., and serves as the senior leader responsible for the trauma informed care initiatives across all agency programs. He was responsible for the implementation of

SaintA’s trauma informed care philosophy and practices., is a Mentor with the Child Trauma Academy, and is a Master Trainer in Dr. Rob Anda and Laura Porter’s ACE Interface curriculum. Tim and the training team at SaintA have trained more than 50,000 people from diverse disciplines over the past 10 years.

All classes are donation-based and continuing education credit is available for \$10 per course. To learn more about Ventures in Christian Discipleship and to register for courses, visit www.mcpherson.edu/ventures.

Pleasant Hill Village – Looking Back and Looking Beyond

Pleasant Hill Village of Girard, IL invites you, along with North Macoupin County area residents, to come out for a community gathering. At 3:00pm on Sunday, September 9th, we will gather on our front lawn to give God thanks for the many days of loving care we have been able to provide for the least among us. We will say goodbye to the skilled HealthCare operation and have time to share our common grief over the loss we feel. Remembrances of our connections to the Home and the ministry at Pleasant Hill are invited to be shared by all. Now that the second era of our ministry has now ended, we need to look beyond and acknowledge that a third era has already begun. And to top it off, refreshments and ice cream are generously being provided as we reminisce and look to the future together.

Please come join us.
Terry Link, Chaplain

2019 Annual Conference Registration Fees Increase

The denominational Program and Arrangements Committee met in August and set delegate fees for the 2019 Annual Conference to be held on Greensboro, NC. The advanced registration fees will increase \$10 to \$295 for delegates and \$115 for non-delegates. The complete fee structure follows:

Registrations in Advance (March 1 through June 5)

Delegate

Advance Delegate Registration \$ 295.00

Non-Delegate

Adult – Full Conference \$ 115.00

Adult – Daily Rate \$ 40.00

Post-High School to Age 21 – Full Conference \$ 30.00

Post-High School to Age 21 – Daily Fee \$ 10.00

Current high school and younger Free*

Active BVS** \$ 0.00

Registrations On-Site

Delegate

On-site Delegate Registration \$ 370.00

Non-Delegate

Adult – Full Conference \$ 150.00

Adult – Daily Rate \$ 50.00

Post-High School to Age 21 – Full Conference \$ 50.00

Post-High School to Age 21 – Daily Fee \$ 15.00

Current High School and younger Free*

Active BVS** \$ 0.00

Conference Booklet

Full Conference Booklet \$ 13.00 each

Advance Booklet Mailing (optional) \$ 5.00 per booklet

Choir Music

5-Anthem Choir Packet \$ 15.00

*registration fees for age group activities still apply

**If registering as an agency staff member the full, non-delegate registration rate applies.

From *Newsline*

The Church of the Brethren e-mail news service, to subscribe go to cobnews@brethren.org

—**A new Dunker Punks podcast** features Laura Weimer interviewing Melody Fitzgerald Foster, who attended the “Families Belong Together” march in Washington, D.C. The two discuss how protesting, politics, and faith intertwine. The podcast is created by more than a dozen Brethren young adults across the country. Listen at http://bit.ly/DPP_Episode64 or subscribe on iTunes: http://bit.ly/DPP_iTunes.

—**Everence is announcing the availability of the Safe Church Grant**, which was introduced in July. The grants help “to reimburse churches for costs they incur to keep people in their care safe from sexual or other forms of abuse,” a release stated. Churches can receive help in those goals from organizations such as Dove’s Nest or GRACE, although Everence said it doesn’t endorse any particular consultant. Churches with an Everence Stewardship Advocate can apply for the one-time grant of up to \$350 to reimburse program expenses incurred in the past 12 months. It can be used to develop policies, do training, or implement programs. Call 800-348-7468 for more information or visit everence.com/safe-church-grant.