

Reflecting news and views

# The Reflector

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

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*District Executive: Kevin Kessler*



Joyous Christmas greetings  
and wishes for a  
Blessed New Year  
from the staff of the  
IL/WI District  
of the  
Church of the Brethren!

**Kevin Kessler**  
District Executive

**Andrea Garnett**  
Administrative Assistant

# #GivingTuesday

#GivingTuesday is a global day of giving fueled by the power of social media and collaboration.

Celebrated on the Tuesday following Thanksgiving (in the U.S.) and the widely recognized shopping events Black Friday and Cyber Monday, #GivingTuesday kicks off the charitable season, when many focus on their holiday and end-of-year giving.

The IL/WI District participated in this special day of giving on Nov. 27. A goal was set to raise \$4,000.00 in a 24-hour period. Within approximately 16 hours, the goal was met and exceeded by \$50.00.

Over the course of another 48 hours, donations continued to roll in pushing the total amount given to \$4,655.00.

District Executive Kevin Kessler expresses his gratitude for your generous support with the following thoughts.

*To everyone who contributed to the IL/WI District on #GivingTuesday, whether giving a donation, or sharing a Facebook post, or forwarding an email, or offering a prayer, THANK YOU!*

*The IL/WI District is possible because of all the dedicated people who make up this district. Maybe you were unable to contribute financially, but contributions come in many forms. Serving in a local food pantry or community garden, working on justice issues in your community, giving time and energy to a local Habitat for Humanity Board or house build, spending a week on a Brethren Disaster Ministries site, singing in the church choir, leading a study group, etc., etc., these are all ways you contribute to not only make this the IL/WI District but how you are the church, the body of Christ, active and vibrant.*

*Through the many ways you contribute, and through all the ways you move into and in the midst of your neighborhoods, whether it is local or global, THANK YOU! Remain connected to the vine and receive all that you need to continue the work of Jesus, peacefully, simply, and together!*

#GivingTuesday is more than providing financial support and meeting a goal. The real purpose is sharing in the mission of a people who wish to make a difference. Your support opens the door for ministers to receive training, provides congregations the ability to fund major brick and mortar projects, empowers people to be involved in new and existing ministry opportunities, and so much more.

You ARE making a difference!

# Camp Emmanuel News

Is God calling you to a ministry that will help introduce children and youth to the love of Jesus Christ? The Camp Emmanuel Board is searching for a husband and wife team who are being called to this ministry to fill the camp manager position beginning March 1, 2019.

Camp Emmanuel serves the Southern Illinois/Wisconsin District of the Church of the Brethren and offers camps for ages K through 12, women, men and families throughout the summer. The managers have a variety of responsibilities including interfacing with the camp deans and counselors, maintaining grounds and equipment, hiring support staff, and interfacing with the community and those who rent portions of the camp for private functions.

For more details, contact Richard Nichols at 217-502-3888 or email at [rwnichols63@gmail.com](mailto:rwnichols63@gmail.com).

# Yearbook Office Announces Changes

The typical Form B will not be sent to congregations this fall. Instead, it will be combined into a later mailing due to forthcoming changes in the way data will be collected.

The end goal is to reduce the collection of information from multiple forms and mailings to a single mailing that will be sent out early each year. The plan also includes providing an online option for congregations to submit their information—something many congregations have asked for. A paper option will still be available for those who prefer it.

The changes will be implemented over the course of a couple of years, hopefully making the process easier for everyone. More details and instructions will be sent to congregations in early 2019.

Yearbook Specialist Jim Miner says, "We appreciate the time and effort you put into completing these forms each year—a vital way for the church to stay connected. Form B and other forms are used to collect directory and statistical information from congregations. Much of it is published in the annual Church of the Brethren Yearbook."

Any question may be directed to the Yearbook Office at 800-323-8039, ext. 320 or [yearbook@brethren.org](mailto:yearbook@brethren.org).

# Severe Storms Dec. 1 in Central Illinois

Loren Habegger, District Disaster Coordinator, share the following via email on Dec. 4:

A series of severe storms, including tornados, struck central Illinois on Saturday, December 1. Copied below is a storm report from public media and response activities as reported through Illinois Volunteer Organizations Active in Disaster (VOAD), of which the IL/WI District is a member.

Any information related to damage or injury to IL/WI District CoB church communities, and possible need for assistance can be forwarded to Loren Habegger, the District Disaster Response Coordinator, or to the District office.

Clippings from the Washington Post:  
[www.washingtonpost.com/weather/2018/12/03/rare-december-tornado-outbreak-injures-dozens-illinois/?utm\\_term=.e00b9efb5687](http://www.washingtonpost.com/weather/2018/12/03/rare-december-tornado-outbreak-injures-dozens-illinois/?utm_term=.e00b9efb5687)

A late-season tornado outbreak hit Illinois Saturday, dropping at least 26 confirmed tornadoes and injuring more than two dozen people in Illinois.

Two monster thunderstorms spun up, one in west central Illinois and the other about 75 miles to the east.

The western cluster dropped a total of nine short-lived tornadoes along the banks of the Illinois River from Beardstown to Havana.

Possibly the strongest tornado of the day struck Taylorville, at times a half-mile wide as it plowed

## Leadership Team Re-organizes

The District Leadership Team met Nov. 10, 2018, at Pinecrest Community for the purpose of re-organizing and conducting other necessary business. Serving as co-chairs this year are Mary Dulabaum (Highland Avenue) and Matt Rittle (Franklin Grove). Jan Dietrich (Mt. Morris) is serving as secretary. In addition to Mary and Matt, called members on the Leadership Team are: Prudy Widlak (York Center), Ginny Haney (Mt. Morris), Phyllis Batterton (Woodland), Carol Kussart (Cerro Gordo), and David Roe (Oakley Brick). Ex-officio members of the team are: Leslie Lake, Moderator (Polo); Rick Koch, Moderator-elect (Milledgeville); Ellis Boughton, Treasurer (Yellow Creek); Christine Knotts, Financial Secretary (Peoria), Dennis Webb, Standing Committee delegate (Naperville); and Kevin Kessler, District Executive (Canton).

into the city of 11,000. Fox Illinois reported that 26 people were taken to Taylorville Memorial Hospital after sustaining tornado-related injuries. Six remain in critical condition. The windstorm also severely damaged 100 homes.

Response efforts compiled by the Illinois Volunteer Organizations Active in Disaster (VOAD), of which the IL/WI District is a member:

- 34 homes have been destroyed, 45 have major damage and 400 have minor damage.
- There were 21 injuries with 1 critical. One person suffered a heart attack during clean-up.
- There will be a P.O. D. (point of distribution) for food lost due to the event at the Christian County fairgrounds.
- Donations are being collected at the Taylorville Food Bank. Online donations can go to [www.centralilfoodbank.org](http://www.centralilfoodbank.org).

Current response information is available on the facebook link "Illinois Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (ILVOAD)"

## New Arrival

Andrea Garnett, District Administrative Assistant, and her husband Micah are the proud, new parents of a baby girl, Rosalind Vivienne, born at 10:03pm on Thursday, Nov. 15. She tipped the scales at 6 lbs. even and measured 18 ½ inches. Maternal grandparents are James and Rebecca Christian and paternal grandparents are Tim and Lois Garnett.

Cards and greetings may be sent to: Andrea and Micah Garnett, 915 E. Locust St., Canton, IL 61520.

## Ministry News

**Jack Flores** (Highland Avenue) was ordained Sunday, Nov. 25 in a service of ordination at his church. Rebekah, his daughter, preached during the worship service and anointed Jack as part of the ordination service. A group of folks from a nearby Lutheran congregation where Jack attends a Bible study were also present.

**Bobbi Dykema** (Springfield) officially began duties as the interim minister at the First Church of the Brethren in Springfield. Bobbi, along with husband Tim Bender, come to this district from the state of Washington in the Pacific Northwest District. Bobbi's first Sunday in the pulpit at Springfield was Dec. 2. Welcome, Bobbi and Tim!

# A report from Pacific Southwest District and district executive Russ Matteson

The Camp Fire in Butte County in northern California overran the town of Paradise and other smaller communities on Thursday, Nov. 8. Lost in the fire were all of the buildings on the property of Paradise Church of the Brethren, which includes the main church facility and sanctuary, the parsonage, a youth building, and two rental cottages.

All persons who were a part of the congregation did get out of Paradise safely and are now living with relatives in other parts of northern California. The congregation's membership was very small, as was the case with the Rock Fellowship, which had been renting space from the church and sharing in worship and ministry for the last many years.

In the face of this devastation the congregation has let the district know that they will not continue in ministry.

Rains over the Thanksgiving weekend helped firefighters reach 100 percent containment and extinguish the Camp Fire. Joel Price, district Stewards Chair, and district executive Russ Matteson visited pastor Melvin Campbell and his wife, Jane, on Nov. 28. As is the case with so many of those displaced, they are trying to figure out what steps to take next. At this time, residents are still not being allowed back into Paradise to see if anything can be salvaged from homes that have been destroyed.

There is a need to provide support in spiritual and material ways to the Brethren who were affected by the fire. People have lost their homes and their possessions because the fire moved so quickly that there was no time to grab much before evacuating. The district is receiving donations to provide direct support to help with the needs of the pastor and members of the Paradise congregation as they seek to recover. Checks can be sent to:

**Pacific Southwest District of the Church of the Brethren**

P.O. Box 219  
La Verne, CA 91750

Please note "Paradise Fire."

Mail donations to support the Children's Disaster Services (CDS) response and Brethren Disaster Ministries plans for a long-term recovery response to the Camp Fire to:

**Emergency Disaster Fund**

Church of the Brethren  
1451 Dundee Ave.  
Elgin, IL 60120.

Please note "Camp Fire Response."

Continue to hold these church members in your prayers as they move forward and seek healing and answers. We encourage you to remember all those affected by this fire, and other wildfires, in your prayers. Also, keep in your prayers the first responders who continue to fight fires, ensure safety, search for the missing and deceased, and so much more.

## District Conference 2018 in the Books

The 2019 IL/WI District Conference was held Nov. 2-3 at the Cerro Gordo Church of the Brethren under the banner "Preach the Word" led by Moderator, Paul Kohler. The conference opened Friday evening with a rousing hymn sing led by Bob Lake (Polo) and accompanied by Jocelyn Watkins (Peoria). Worship followed with Tim Laird (Pastor, Cerro Gordo) serving as worship leader and Paul Kohler (Champaign) preaching. An ice cream social was held after worship.

Saturday was a full day of business with a variety of reports being presented by district and denominational leadership. One important item of interest reported was the creation of an endowment. The funds to open the endowment were given to the district through the Francis Senger Trust. Francis was a long-time member of the closed Astoria congregation.

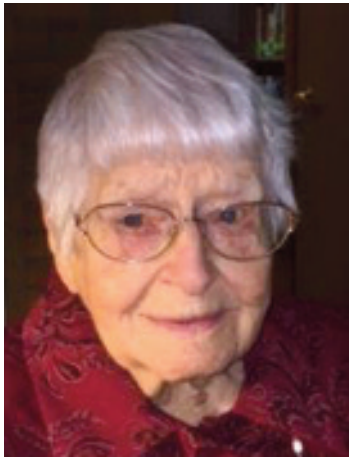
As has become tradition, both a silent and live auction were held. Not only do the auctions raise funds for the general administration of the district, but it has become one of the highlights of conference providing a time for a bit of levity amidst the heaviness of business.

The host congregation extended gracious hospitality. They are commended for a job well done.

If any negative emerged from the conference it was the foggy conditions Saturday morning. Driving to the conference site was challenging and treacherous. Thankfully everyone arrived safely although a little frazzled from a taxing trip and the business was not clouded at all.

We will gather again in 2019, Nov. 1 & 2, at the Dixon Church of the Brethren.

# Esther E. Frey (1918-2018)



Esther E. Frey, age 100, on Tuesday November 13, 2018 passed away in Pinecrest Manor Nursing Home, Mt. Morris, IL. Esther was born April 29, 1918 in Fresno County, CA the daughter of William H. & Johanna (Horn) Meyers. She graduated from Caruthers Union High School in California; she earned a

BA in 1939 from La Verne College and she went on Bethany Theological Seminary receiving a MRE in 1950.

Esther married Orlin Frederick Frey on July 22, 1950 in Raisin, CA and he preceded her in death on July 4, 1970. Esther was a Minister's wife for 11 years; before and after that she taught school. In Fresno County, CA she taught in one-room and in a two-room school, teaching various subjects in 6-8 grades during WWII. In Kansas and Illinois she taught High School English, the last 21 years in Dixon, IL, retiring after 37 years. For several years Esther did adjunct teaching for Sauk Valley Community College and Oregon Bible College. Esther spent time in Zimbabwe and did volunteer work for the Adult Literacy Organization of Zimbabwe during that country's first year of independence.

Esther has been in 48 of the 50 states, missing only Vermont and Louisiana, with her children she joined a Mennonite historical tour group to Switzerland, Holland, Austria, and Germany; she visited the Holy Land, and was on a English teachers' study tour of England. Esther served in both district and denominational work for the Church of The Brethren. Esther did curriculum writing for children and youth, some for the Mennonite Church, and some for the Church of The Brethren.

Esther is survived by her children: Samuel V. (Susan E.) Frey, Golden, CO and Mary Jo (Donald E.) Griffin, Oregon, IL; grandchildren: Kenneth (Rozalynn) Frey, Matthew (Cora Ogden) Frey, Jeremy Hegge, Daniel (Bethany) Griffin, Jessica (Matthew

Hart) Griffin, Erica (Steve) Bell, James (Sara) Griffin, Kate (Sean) Triana, and Kristine (Chase Wearne) Frey; great grandchildren: Cooper, Carter, Caris Frey; Lily Rae, Keaton, Porter Griffin; Colton, AshLee, Ryan, Briggs Griffin, Avalyn Henry; Erin, EmilyGrace, Sadie Bell, Oliver Triana; sister: Eva M. Simmons, Parkville, Maryland.

Esther is preceded in death by her parents, husband: Orlin; son: William O. Frey; great-grandchild: Memphis Bree Griffin

A memorial service was held on Saturday November 24, 2018 at 2:00 P.M. in the Mt. Morris Church of The Brethren.

Memorials to the Brethren Disaster Ministries, Pinecrest Manor Nursing Home, Mt. Morris Church of The Brethren, and Serenity Hospice and Home.

## From *Newsline*

**Nominations for denominational offices** appearing on the ballot at the 2019 Annual Conference are sought, with a deadline of Saturday, Dec. 1. "You can help shape the future of the church!" said an announcement from the Conference Office. "Each member of the Church of the Brethren is invited to recommend possible nominees for the 2019 Annual Conference ballot. As you pray about this, who comes to mind? Whom will the Lord prompt you to nominate?" A list of open positions, forms, and more information about the nomination process are at [www.brethren.org/ac/nominations](http://www.brethren.org/ac/nominations).

**Bethany Theological Seminary has announced a new podcast series, "Like a Mustard Seed."** Faculty, staff, students, and guests are being invited to share perspectives on a variety of theological, global, and cultural topics. Initial episodes feature Bethany president Jeff Carter; Rebecca Dali, a member of Ekklesiyar Yan'uwa a Nigeria (EYN, the Church of the Brethren in Nigeria); and Dawn Ottoni-Wilhelm, Brightbill Professor of Preaching and Worship. New episodes will be created and posted about twice a month when semesters are in session. Go to [www.bethanyseminary.edu/events-resources/podcasts](http://www.bethanyseminary.edu/events-resources/podcasts).