



Reflecting news and views

## The Reflector

a publication of the  
Illinois/Wisconsin District of the Church of the Brethren  
District Executive: Kevin Kessler



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### We are one in the Spirit

By Gil Crosby, Moderator –  
Illinois-Wisconsin District

*“If wrinkles must be written upon our  
brows, let them not be written upon the  
heart. The spirit should not grow old.”  
(James A. Garfield)*



Milestones mark the length of our journey or the important places we have been and they seem to be coming faster than those of the past. Proverbs 16:31 says, “Gray hair is a crown of splendor; It is attained by a righteous life.” I believe it also could be obtained just by living a long time. My hair genes are not related to those of Ronald Reagan or a necessarily righteous life.

June 15 passed by like any other day in my life except it added a year to my chronological being. It is a scary number of three score and ten.. 70 to those who knew not Lincoln. Many things have been said about growing older among which it isn't for wimps. I thing Bette Davis once said, “now that I achieved old age I don't have to be nice to people any more.” She couldn't have been more wrong. In the African nation of Tanzania the Swahili word for old person is “mzee”.. it also carries the connotation of wisdom when used. It is a term of respect. Far too many people believe respect is something given instead of earned. Being old doesn't automatically mean people will respect what you have to say.

We old people have accumulated a lot of experience and knowledge in our walk of life. There are parts of it even worth repeating in the hopes someone else doesn't have to experience it themselves. Especially the rough times. Imparting one's opinion should be done with caution and in the spirit of love and caring. Some of the worse ways to begin a sentence are “With all due respect....” or “I really respect you BUT...” You can forget anything said before the “but”.

Religious people come across to others many times as people who have all the answers.. We do NOT have all the answers... we have the source of all the answers. We are not the source. We should avoid the tendency to try and make the source fit what we think the answers should be. Don't tell God how he created the earth.. Don't condemn people for whom Jesus may have other plans. Don't ostracize those with whom Jesus may have lunch.. Look to our own houses and make sure they are in order before trying to reorder someone else's house.

Seventy years doesn't seem that long looking back.. It looks even worse when looking ahead and thinking that becomes the shorter distance of my life. But if I am still here then God surely isn't finished with me and has something left for me to do. My job becomes doing what I can where I am in the shape I'm in..

I'm back at home from a wonderful few days at Annual Conference in beautiful San Diego, California. I had a great time at this national Church of the Brethren event. I was able to:

- connect with folks I see maybe no more frequently than once a year.
- enter into conversation with people to hear what was happening in their lives and in the congregations in which they participate.
- learn about the issues we are facing as a denomination and how we as the body of Christ are living into the joys and challenges these issues bring.
- learn about a district that is creatively doing ministry without any full-time ministers in any of its congregations.
- learn how a church planter in a neighboring district perceives the needs of young adults in our society and how he is helping to meet those needs.
- learn about an intercultural, inner-city Church of the Brethren congregation that is actively engaged in productive missional ministry.
- honor God through acts of corporate worship with brothers and sisters from across the United States representing an array of ethnic, racial, political and social distinctions.
- receive inspiration from prophetic preaching that invited me to examine my inner self and freed me to accept God's grace for my life.
- listen to a lecture about church history that made sense and helped me to understand history's implication on the emerging new trends in religious, social, political and other circles of our times.
- join in moments of fellowship with friends over lunch, or a bowl of ice cream, or at a table waiting for a meal.
- meet Brethren from other parts of the United States whose theological perspective, I assume, was much different than mine, yet I felt at ease in their presence as we shared in conversation with each other.
- gain new and creative perspectives on ways to be a faithful servant of Christ both in the church and to the world.
- accept the challenge to be a more faithful servant of Jesus Christ, lifting up and living the values of the One who came to serve, not to be served.
- receive Sabbath which was a welcome change of pace from the work that steadily vies for my time.



Without a doubt, attending Annual Conference is a major financial commitment. But the benefits, I believe, far outweigh the costs. I consider what I receive from Annual Conference to be priceless, a gift from God. It is a gift I receive not for the purpose of padding my own spiritual and religious bank account, but rather for building up my abilities and gifts to be a more faithful servant of Christ.

I hope as congregations build their budgets for 2010, that consideration will be given for including a line item allowing for pastors and delegates to attend Annual Conference. Count the cost. What value does attendance at Annual Conference have for your congregation, and those who attend, in comparison to the cost of not attending? Look at values not in dollars and cents, but in the return you'll receive on the investment of sending persons to this national event. Some investments, such as attendance at Annual Conference, have potential for perpetual growth. Go ahead! Invest!



## **NOAC BUS STILL AVAILABLE -**

The deadline of July 1<sup>st</sup> has past. There were still some places available. **Call** Marvin Thill for more information and availability of seats on the bus...

**From:** NOAC Bus Coordinator and Host

Marvin W. Thill

8040 US Highway 20

Stockton IL 61085

Tel. 815-947-3197 Email: [bettyandmarvin@gmail.com](mailto:bettyandmarvin@gmail.com)

NOAC Bus Transportation has been confirmed for 57 passengers with Dixon/Meyers Bu Company of Rochelle. Passengers are asked to bring only two pieces of luggage--one for the baggage hold and the other (smaller) for overhead in the coach.

Departure will be at 7:00 a.m. Sunday, September 6 in the Mt. Morris Church of the Brethren parking lot. Stops will be arranged to pick up passengers, specifically; Elgin IL, Sycamore IL, Timbercrest in Indiana, and Dayton, Ohio.

We will stay overnight en route and returning at the N.W. Dayton Best Western Motel. Each room may be shared at the same price by two. The motel has an elevator and provides breakfast and free coffee.

We ask that you send a refundable deposit of \$125.00 by July 1, 2009. (You may pay the full amount if you wish.) Transportation and double motel occupancy is \$260.00 or for single occupancy, \$340.00. The total will be due August 15, 2009. Checks should be payable to NOAC Bus Trip.

Send this reservation form to Marvin W. Thill (above)

Name/Names \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone and/or Email \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Motel: I request single accommodation

☐ I/We wish multiple accommodation: (Please list or request assignments)

1 \_\_\_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_\_\_



GREAT HARVEST CHURCH PLANTING



## Annual Conference Praise Report

Annual Conference celebrated four new fellowships this year. In addition the insight sessions on new church development were well attended. As many new ideas are shared the passion level continues to grow in our denomination for starting new communities of believers.

## Local Mission Sunday July 19<sup>th</sup>

New Church Development has set apart three Sundays this year as Local Mission Sundays to raise awareness of our church planting efforts in the district and to raise support partners for the work. July 19<sup>th</sup>, September 27<sup>th</sup> and December 13<sup>th</sup> have been designated Local Mission Sundays. Each congregation will receive special bulleting inserts and envelopes for a special offering to be taken for Local Missions. Please keep July 19<sup>th</sup> in your prayers, that much needed support would be raised for our mission points.

## Things are heating up in Rockford!

We give praise that Samuel and Gretchen Sarpiya have been licensed to ministry in the Church of the Brethren. Pastor Samuel reports that he now has five committed core team members of diverse ethnic origin. They are meeting regularly to pray and further seek the Lords leading in fulfilling the vision for a multi-ethnic church in Rockford. Please continue to keep Rockford and this team in your prayers.

## July 2009 New Church Development Prayer Emphasis

*Pray for district church development committees, teams, and boards.*

## Chicago West Side Mission Point

Please pray for Pastor Ware, the Douglas Park community and the Douglas Park steering committee that has been formed to advance the work of our mission point on the West side of Chicago.



## Continue to Pray for Southeast Wisconsin

The three families that have expressed interest in stating a group meeting in the Southeast portion of Wisconsin will meet for the first time on July 26<sup>th</sup>. Please keep this meeting in your prayers as they seek the Lords leading to start a group meeting in that area.

## Pastor Benjamin Amankwaa

We request prayers for Pastor Benjamin Amankwaa as he continues to seek a co-sponsor so that he can obtain his visa and begin his work here in the USA.



## **CHAMPAIGN CHURCH CALLS PETER KOHLER TO SERVICE IN PHILIPPINES**

Peter Kohler completed his internship and training and is serving as a Missionary in Digos City, Philippines. Peter answered a call extended by the Champaign Church of the Brethren. He serves as co-pastor of the Digos City Christian Church and was given charge of the northern mission point in Digos City. The Digos City church has five mission points, a clothing and supply point in the downtown business district, a drop-in center for counseling and legal assistance. They provide food and emergency assistance points at the church (1 mile east, 1.5 miles north and 1.2 miles southwest of the downtown area.) The extreme poverty means people live on an average daily wage of \$0.60 and \$0.80 cents per day (30 to 40 Philippine pesos per day). Congregations wishing to assist in the relief effort and to support Peter's mission should contact the treasurer of the Champaign congregation: [mkohler@illinoisalumni.org](mailto:mkohler@illinoisalumni.org). Peter currently lives on \$300 per month.

## **NEW CHURCH DEVELOPMENT TEAM**

Plans progress to raise support for our church planters. Plans were presented to the funding advisory committee June 13<sup>th</sup> Starved Rock. Progress goes on as cooperation continues to take place between Leadership Team and NCDT as we continue to prepare for the development of new congregations in the Illinois/Wisconsin District. NCDT continues to search for Brethren interested in assisting the church planting process for our district. Those Interested in working as a team member planting new congregations should contact Lynda DeVore, Apostle for the New Church Development Team. [Lynda@ncdt.org](mailto:Lynda@ncdt.org)

## **MARIAN PATTERSON**



MILLEDGEVILLE - Marian Ruth Patterson, age 80, of Milledgeville, died Monday, June 1, 2009, at OSF St. Anthony Medical Center, Rockford. Marian was born Nov. 20, 1928, in Barnum, Minn., the eldest daughter of Christian Hope and Ruth (Schwoch) Nelson. She married Carl E. Patterson on Sept. 25, 1948. He preceded her in death on Oct. 6, 1990.

Carl and Marian owned and operated Milky Way Farm for more than 30 years and entertained many guests from around the world. Marian was an active member of Milledgeville Church of the Brethren, where she served on many local and district level committees, taught Sunday school, and was a regional disaster coordinator.

Marian was a 4-H leader for 20 years and was very active in the Carroll County Extension Program. She also served on the Milledgeville Development Commission and was secretary of the Rock River Valley International Committee.

She is survived by four children, Rene (Vicki) Patterson of Seneca, S.C., Lorna (Mick) Weber of Daniels Island, S.C., Beth Patterson of Columbus, Ohio, and Ted (Elizabeth) Patterson of Milledgeville; three sisters, Myrtle (Lyle) Adolph, Dorothy (Alfred) Adolph, and Viola (Clarence) Lursen, all of Worthington, Minn.; five granddaughters, Megan, Haley, and Kylie Patterson, Jamie Miller, and Jessica Harker; and many nieces and nephews.

She also was preceded in death by her parents; and one sister, Margaret Nelson.

Memorial services were, June 4, at Milledgeville Dutchtown Church of the Brethren with the Rev. Rick Koch officiating. At the family's request, in lieu of flowers, memorials may be made to Hospice of Northwest Illinois, the American Cancer Society, or a charity of the donor's choice.

*Sterling Gazette, June 2, 2009*

## PEORIA AREA PASTORS MEET AT ASTORIA

Greg Beach, Pastor for Woodland Church of the Brethren, hosted the area pastors Wednesday June 17 at his home in Astoria. This was the second meeting of the area group to fellowship, study and worship together, not to mention an excellent lunch provided by Greg's wife.

We have chosen to read and discuss a book, "**Finding Our Way Again: The Return of the Ancient Practices**" by Brian McLaren. Our next meeting will be at Canton Church of the Brethren August 19. We will be skipping July because of Annual Conference and vacations. We will discuss part one of the book which includes the first 8 chapters.

All Pastors, licensed Ministers and chaplains are welcome to join us in August

## **POSITION OPENING - DIR. FOR YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULT MINISTRIES** *PAST NEWS FYI*

The Church of the Brethren seeks an individual to fill the role of Director for Youth and Young Adult Ministries. The full time position is part of a dynamic team of leaders in the office of Congregational Life Ministries and will be integral in nurturing the church's relationship with youth and young adults.

Responsibilities of the director for Youth and Young Adult Ministries includes leading the Church of the Brethren in cultivating dynamic relationships with youth and young adults, developing creative responses to the challenges and opportunities of contemporary youth culture and it's relationship to the Christian faith, planning and overseeing major denominational events for youth and young adults, working collaboratively as part of a denominational team to pursue a common vision, and serving as a mentor to volunteers and planning teams. The preferred candidate will demonstrate Christian character, commitment to the values and practices of the Church of the Brethren, a disciplined spiritual life, biblical rootedness, the flexibility to work collaboratively within a wide variety of contexts, experience in leading new initiatives, and the ability to follow an idea through from conception to implementation.

The preferred candidate will have expertise in some combination of the following areas: Jr. High ministry; Sr. High ministry; young adult ministry; cultural trends; stages of faith development; faith and technology; service ministries; event planning; congregational vitality. Excellent communication skills and strong interpersonal competency are required. The selected candidate will work as part of a team, utilize a variety of computer and digital technologies, represent the Church of the Brethren, attend to self-care and continuing education, efficiently manage a complex workload, develop and manage a detailed budget, participate in regular processes of review and priority-setting, and understand this position as part of a larger vocational commitment.

This position reports to the executive director of Congregational Life Ministry and is based at the Church of the Brethren General Offices in Elgin, IL.

Applications will be received beginning **June 3, 2009 and will be reviewed beginning June 17, 2009, with interviews commencing in late June and continuing until the position is filled.** Qualified candidates are invited to request the application form and complete job description, submit a résumé and letter of application, and to request three references to send letters of recommendation to:

Office of Human Resources, Church of the Brethren,  
1451 Dundee Avenue, Elgin, IL 60120-1694, Phone: 1-800-323-8039, Ext. 258;  
E-mail: [kkrog@brethren.org](mailto:kkrog@brethren.org)

## **ADDRESS CHANGE**

Vernon & Edna Dean's new home address for the "Called to Serve" section of the District directory - page 33 - is: 315 N Spring Street, Franklin Grove 61031-9541.



## NYC SPEECH CONTEST

This is your chance to share your message and be heard!! Two youth speeches will be chosen to speak during worship at NYC. We need enthusiastic youth that will be able to inspire others with their words.

The NYC theme scripture, II Corinthians 4:6-10, 16-18 (The Message) reminds us that God does great things through each person. In troubled times we are challenged not to lose heart because God is the rock that will help us overcome. Even though we may seem like simple jars of clay, with God's light we are more that meets the eye.

### Requirements:

- ★ Only youth attending NYC 2010 (July 17-22) are invited to enter the Youth Speech Contest.
- ★ The topic of the speech should center on The theme, "More than Meets the Eye."
- ★ Entries must include a written and audio copy of the speech and should be 500-700 words (about 10 minutes spoken) and sent to the NYC Office by January 1, 2010.
- ★ The top two entrants will give their speeches during a worship service at NYC.

### Send entries to:

NYC Office, 1451 Dundee Avenue, Elgin, Illinois 60120

(800) 323-8039 E-mail address: [2010nyc@brethren.org](mailto:2010nyc@brethren.org) Website: [www.2010nyc.org](http://www.2010nyc.org)

## FLIP FLOP - BACKWARDS CAMP 2009

Women's camp was held at Camp Emmanuel -. Close your eyes and think about camp, see happy faces, hear women's laughter and singing, taste delicious food, smell the wood smoke, feel the warmth and camaraderie and know that God was with us all at Camp Emmanuel June 5-7<sup>th</sup> 2009.



Flip Flop camp started Friday evening with everyone introducing themselves backward and forward. Some of the ladies wore outlandish backward outfits. It was a fun opening and the fun continued with a humorous DVD by Anita Renfroe. We laughed until we cried.

We dove into bible study several times throughout the weekend. With the main focus being: To realize we cannot go forward in our lives by going backwards, but to go forward with God we have to listen, pay attention and obey. The bible studies were intense and thought provoking.

Even with all the bible studies and fun we made some pillowcases for the ConKerr Cancer - A Case for Smiles project. We made 28 pillowcases in all. Our pillowcases will go to St. John's Children's Hospital in Springfield.

Saturday evening's Flip Flop beach event showed off everyone's new summer flip flops. We laughed and cried and even moved mountains! On Sunday we finished camp with a heartfelt praise and worship service to carry us forward with God.



Flip Flop - Backwards Women's Camp 2009



### COB NATIONAL WORKCAMPs: "Bound Together, Finely Woven"...

The 2009 Workcamp Coordinators wish to thank those participants from the Illinois/Wisconsin District for their participation and service. The following congregations have sent these people in service to our fellow brothers and sisters.

<u>Congregation</u>	<u>Particiapants</u>	<u>Project</u>
Freeport	Elizabeth and Wendy Boettner	Indianapolis
Highland Ave.	Matt Witkovsky	Ashland, IL, Oak Grove Custom
	Michelle Gibble-Keenan	Dominican Republic
	Sharon Flaten	ECHO, Keyser
	Nora Davies	Myrtlewood
	Caleb Nofsinger	Myrtlewood
	Tim Stauffer	Northern Ireland
	Chris Douglas	Putney, IL
Lanark	Austin Steen	Elgin* *Jr. High
	Amanda Rahn	Elgin*
	Brian Rahn	Elgin
	Peyton Sturtevant	Elgin*
	Korissa Blasing	Elgin*
	Devin Steen	Elgin*
	Blake Steen	Elgin*
	Kadie Lindsay	Elgin*
	Jacob Dickman	Elgin*
	Carrie Smith	Elgin *
	Rachel Riley	Elgin*
	Trey Sturtevant	Elgin*
Mt. Morris	Mary Lou & Ed Garrison	Ashland, IL
Rockford	Sharon Beesley	Brooklyn Jr. Hi
St. Peter's	Mary Claire Beesley	Brooklyn Jr. Hi
York Center	Renee Neher	Dominican Republic
	Beth Gunzel	Dominican Republic

[www.brethrenworkcamps.org](http://www.brethrenworkcamps.org)

### DECATUR CHURCH EXPANDS WORSHIP SERVICES

Decatur congregation created a second worship service on Friday evenings at 7 PM. The sanctuary fills with praise music provided by Decatur's own band, *Nameless Ones*. The praise and prayer worship service brings a short message and lots of good music. The Friday evening worship plans to continue through the summer months and into the fall, with the possible development of an additional Non-Traditional worship service on Sunday mornings. We invite area Brethren, local youth and young adults to join us Friday evenings.

The ladies of the church may provide a light supper before the worship and praise service. They notice young worshipers seem to be hungry too.



# Plant Generously, Reap Bountifully



*I (Paul) planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth.*

—1 Corinthians 3:6

**A movement is gaining energy for  
new mission points and church starts  
throughout the Church of the Brethren.**

**Such a movement requires a  
strong foundation of prayer.**

**Will you pray with us this year?**

Some resources to assist your prayer:

Detach the prayer card and use it with  
your daily devotional materials.

Go to [brethren.org/churchplanting](http://brethren.org/churchplanting) and  
register for the church planting prayer group.  
You will receive detailed monthly prayer requests.

Visit [brethren.org/churchplanting](http://brethren.org/churchplanting) for news  
on what's happening with new church starts.

Invite your friends, family, Bible study,  
Sunday school class, discipleship group, and  
worshiping community to join in these prayers.



Church of the Brethren

New Church Development Advisory Committee  
[Churchplanting\\_gb@brethren.org](mailto:Churchplanting_gb@brethren.org)

## Monthly Prayer Card

*Plant Generously,  
Reap Bountifully*

### May 2009

God-given vision for  
church planting through the  
Church of the Brethren

### June 2009

New projects, fellowships  
and congregations

### July 2009

District church  
development committees,  
teams, and boards

### August 2009

Courageous pastors and  
disciples to plant churches

### September 2009

Financial resources to  
undergird planting

### October 2009

Established congregations  
with a passion for supporting  
new church plants

### November 2009

Openness to creative  
possibilities for new mission

### December 2009

Seeing and receiving Jesus  
in unexpected places

### January 2010

Assessment process for  
identifying gifted planters

### February 2010

National new church  
advisory committee

### March 2010

Newly emerging projects  
and fellowships

### April 2010

Preparation for the  
May 20-22 conference – leaders,  
participants, and planners

### May 2010

Conference impact, safety  
for travelers, fresh vision  
and renewed passion, deep  
insight and broad wisdom

*Specific information for each  
month's prayer focus is available  
at [brethren.org/churchplanting](http://brethren.org/churchplanting)*

## LEADERSHIP TRAINING FOR DISTRICT PASTORS

The District of Illinois and Wisconsin is offering to its Pastors two sessions of Leadership training that will not only provide valuable tools to our District Pastors as they serve their churches, but also provide C.E.U's to our Pastors without them having to leave the District. And an extra-added bonus is that it all comes at **NO cost**, except the materials you will need.

So here are the details. The District Leadership have asked Dana McNeil and Rick Koch who recently graduated from the Advanced Foundation of Church Leadership program to put together two sessions of some of the most important lessons they have learned over their two years of classes and offer that learning to other Pastors in our District. The two of them along with Jonathon Shivley, who at the time was the Coordinator of the Vital Pastors program at Bethany and is now the Denomination's Congregational Life Team leader have working on such sessions and are ready to present them to you. Other outside Leadership will also be used to guide our work together. The dates of the two sessions are Saturday, October 3<sup>rd</sup> and Saturday, February 6<sup>th</sup>. Both sessions will be held at the First Church of the Brethren of Peoria and will last from 9:00 AM - 3:30 PM. During each session there will be required reading ahead of time of one book per session. A bibliography of other books around the topic of Pastoral Leadership will also be provided. It will be necessary to attend both sessions. There will also be a little work that needs to be done prior to the first session. For attending these sessions you will receive 1.5 C.E.U's. And last, but not least, did we say, this is **FREE!** If you are interested in participating please contact Dana or Rick for further details. To register yourself for this learning event contact Rick at [revrick-dutchtown@netzero.net](mailto:revrick-dutchtown@netzero.net) or call 815-225-7812. We look forward to seeing you in October.

Rick Koch & Dana McNeil

## DISTRICT CALENDAR

Jul. 11	IL/WI District Leadership Team meeting, Polo
Aug. 8	Program and Arrangements Committee meeting, Naperville, 10am
Aug. 8	Gifts Discernment and Call Committee meeting, Naperville, 1pm
Aug. 15	IL/WI District Leadership Team meeting, Cerro Gordo
Sep. 7	Labor Day
Sep. 26	IL/WI District Leadership Team meeting, Douglas Park
Oct. 3	District Deacons meeting, Peoria, 10am
Oct. 10	Program and Arrangements Committee meeting, Naperville, 10am
Oct. 10	Gifts Discernment and Call Committee meeting, Naperville, 1 pm
Oct. 12	Columbus Day
Oct. 25-27	Midwest DE's gathering, Camp Mack, Milford, IN
Oct. 31	IL/WI District Leadership Team meeting, Stanley
Nov. 1	Daylight Saving Time Ends
Nov. 6-9	District Conference, Naperville
Nov. 11	Veteran's Day
Dec. 5	Joint IL/WI District Leadership & New Church Development Team meeting, Peoria
Dec. 24	Christmas Eve
Dec. 25	Christmas Day
Dec. 31	New Year's Eve