



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



"It's amazing what ordinary people can do if they set out without preconceived notions."

(Charles F. Kettering)

We just returned from a trip across the Northern United States from Peoria to Seattle to Portland and back to Peoria.. When I looked at the odometer it said 5,003 miles traveled in relative ease in an air



conditioned car and using the latest "Garmin" technology to find our way to places that we wanted to visit. The adventure took us to see old friends and to a reunion with people I served with 45 years ago in the Peace Corps in Tanganyika, East Africa. Many times the speed limits were 75 miles per hour, even on the state highways, and we could cover hundreds of miles a day.. We saw the vastness of our country, the wonder of the Rocky Mountains, the open prairies and high deserts, some great rivers, the Pacific coast and we marveled at being able to see these natural wonders..

It got me to thinking about Jesus and how much territory he covered during his years of Ministry.. Jesus was recorded as visiting Jerusalem, Nazareth, Capernaum, Tyre, Caesarea Phillipi, Bethsaida, Bethany and all over Galilee.. The distance from Jerusalem to Tyre is approximately 100 miles, to Nazareth 65 miles, to Capernaum 75 miles and another 25 miles to Caesarea Phillip. Jesus walked these miles most often with his disciples. No Motels with soft beds housed the Master.. No McDonalds popped up for a quick Big Mac.. No nice smooth highways or roads to make his path easy.. He walked, stayed with friends and followers and was fed by Middle Eastern hospitality. I'm sure somebody's calculated how many miles Jesus must have covered in three years of ministry but I'm guessing at least 500 or more.. on foot.. wearing sandals.. and no showers..

And yet He brought his ministry to the people of the countryside, the seaside, the mountain top.. and the center of the temple.. He never once asked who they were, what they believed, what their lifestyle was (except the rich young ruler) and He fed the multitudes without discrimination. Should we do any less? The Church of the Brethren did not begin as a denomination but a way of life. To follow as closely as possible the teachings of Jesus and to follow his life style reflected their intense study of the New Testament. Remember when our word was our bond and our handshake was our contract?

District Conference is close at hand and our theme "We are ONE in the Spirit" continues to hold firm in my head. If we want to be the strong, mission church we once were we must be strong in the Spirit not divided as country or city, liberal or conservative, for or against, or divisive. Remember that we can be One in the Spirit without being the Same in the Spirit. Jesus' friends and disciples were not the same but they went about building the church. What are we building?

GREAT HARVEST CHURCH PLANTING

Planting Churches that Plant Churches



A visit with Dawn Amankwaa

It was an awesome blessing to spend two days with Dawn Amankwaa and her family in Durhamville, New York, just outside Syracuse. Baby Caleb continues to prosper and grow. He is an amazing, beautiful, peaceful baby. Son Sean is a sweet, energetic young man who is looking forward to the start of the school year, enjoying playing on a community football team and is prospering as well during their time in New York. Dawn has been accepted into a Nursing program to complete her course work to be an RN. This was a true miracle in answer to prayer as the program was full and they were not accepting any more students. But room has been made for Dawn in the program. Praise God!

Dawn's parents have been a wonderful support system for Dawn and continue to provide space in their home and assist in raising the children while they wait for the arrival of their father from Ghana. Praise the Lord! A co-sponsor has been located for Benjamin and with all things falling into place; he should finally be reunited with his family by Christmas!

Thank you for your continued prayers for this very special family and the ministry God has prepared for them.



September 2009 New Church Development Prayer Emphasis

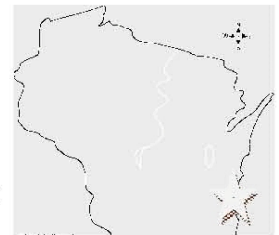
Financial resources to undergird planting

Chicago

Please keep Pastor Ware and Pastor Petracek in your prayers as they work together to build the ministry in the Douglas Park community. Pray for hearts to be opened to the gospel as much needed school supplies are passed out in the community on Sept 4th. Pray that many youth would be blessed through participation in sporting events through the ministry that will provide positive opportunities for fun.

Wisconsin

Please continue to keep the Brethren fellowship gathering in Racine WI in your prayers. The next meeting of the group will take place on September 13th. Please pray that God would provide leading through the Holy Spirit for this group. Pray that the Lord would add to their numbers. If you are aware of someone living in South Eastern Wisconsin that would like to be a part of a Brethren gathering please contact Lynda DeVore by email at lynda@ncdb.org or by phone at 630-675-9740.



Rockford

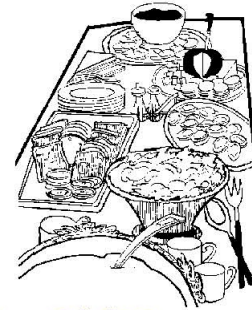
Please continue to pray for the Rockford mission point. Regular Friday evening meetings will start in two weeks for a group of about 10 adults with about 9 children. Continue to keep Pastor Samuel in prayer as he ministers through a local mission serving breakfast to many in the community who need help in these tuff economic times. Pray that these simple acts of service open the door to many spiritual conversations and conversions. Pray for Anna and Ella Joy Sarpiya as they begin the new school year.

DISTRICT POTLUCK



MAY 1, 2010
at

Peoria Church of the Brethren



WORSHIP WORKSHOPS FELLOWSHIP FOOD

LEADERSHIP WILL INCLUDE JONATHAN SHIVELY, KEVIN KESSLER, ANNA LEE HISEY PIERSON, DANA MCNEIL, AND OTHERS.

Registration from 8:00 – 9:00 a.m.

Registration Fee --- \$5.00

More registration information will follow later.

The day's schedule will be from 9:00 a.m. to 3:20 p.m.

Plan now to attend this exciting event. Bring your favorite potluck dish to enjoy with others from across the district. Drinks and table service will be provided. Share this information with others in your church. There will be something for everyone including pastors, music leaders, deacons, computer people, and those who simply want to learn, worship, and enjoy wonderful fellowship. So, bring a car load. More details about workshops coming later.

This one-day event is being planned by your **District Deacons** on behalf of the Leadership Team of the District.



Illinois-Wisconsin District Conference

November 6 – 8, 2009

Naperville Church of the Brethren



The Naperville congregation will provide an International dinner Saturday evening. Chris Bowman is the featured speaker for Sunday Worship.. Pastor Dennis Webb and Naperville Men's Glee Club sing for us

Saturday evening followed by an Ice Cream Social sponsored by the District youth..

Doors open Friday Evening at 5:00 PM for registration.

Friday Evening Service begins at 7:00 PM

With Orlando Redekopp as worship leader and

Gil Crosby, Moderator as evening speaker.

INSIGHT SESSIONS; Sunday Morning at 9:15 AM

On Earth Peace presents "Peace to new believers."

Jonathan Shively – Congregational Life Ministries Director will present information about the denominational

reorganization

Carol Wise – BMC – "The Cost of Exclusion."



We are ONE in the Spirit

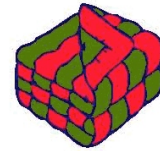
Join us at District Conference where the Body of Christ meets to discern what God wants us to do.

SILENT AUCTION

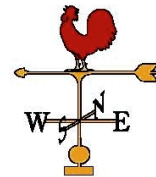
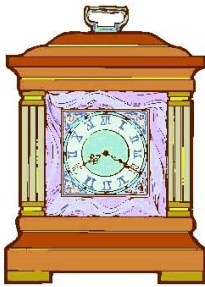
AT
NAPERVILLE COB DISTRICT CONFERENCE



WANTED



**Items for the Silent
Auction at the District
Conference in
Naperville..**



**Bring all sorts of
Saleable items.**



**Including
Pies, Cakes, antiques
Crafts, pictures,
Tools, dinners, outings,
quilts, toys, etc.....**



**Rich Koch, Coordinator
815-225-7812
ricbeckkoch@mchsi.com**



1ST ANNUAL ICE CREAM SOCIAL AT THE HURRICANE CREEK

54 community and church people enjoyed the 1st Annual Ice Cream Social at the Hurricane Creek Church of the Brethren, Saturday, August 29, 2009. Attendees ranged from 8 months to 80 plus years of age. All enjoyed delicious home made ice cream, pies and cakes. Ten gallons of ice cream were available in a variety of flavors: vanilla, lemon, peach, chocolate, strawberry and blackberry. Pie flavors included: peach, cherry, apple and blueberry. Cake choices included: Texas, angel food, strawberry layer with strawberry icing, yellow, pumpkin and Swedish pan all with cream cheese icing, mini confetti cupcakes, fruit pizza and brownies. Coffee, iced tea and ice water were also served. Activities included hand cranking ice cream, sitting on lawn chairs to visit in the cool, fresh air, bean bag, crochet, and washer toss games, face painting and helium balloons. Church members wore polo and t-shirts in a variety of colors, all embroidered with the church name.



DISTRICT CALENDAR

2009

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|------------|---|
| 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 |

NOTE FROM THE PAST EDITOR:

It is with bitter sweetness I write this. I have been a part of this District Ministry for six years and now it is time for me to edit my last newsletter. Sisters and Brothers, I have loved sharing your stories and articles with our entire district. I have seen God at work in Illinois and Wisconsin. Jesus has been present in our lives. I pray that the Holy Spirit will continue to be the comforter for the IL & WI Church of the Brethren. May God bless each and everyone.

"Be still and know that I am God" Psalm 46:10
In Christ Service and Love, Leonard Matheny