



Reflecting news and views

The Reflector

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District Executive: Kevin Kessler

DE Thoughts by Kevin Kessler

Leviticus 19:33-34

When an alien resides with you in your land, you shall not oppress the alien. The alien who resides with you shall be to you as the citizen among you; you shall love the alien as yourself, for you were aliens in the land of Egypt: I am the Lord your God.

The community of Canton has again this year read a book together through an initiative called Spoon River Reads. The book is a classic authored by Willa Cather entitled *My Antonia*. It is a story about a particular immigrant family from Bohemia who settle in Nebraska, near a little town called Black Hawk. The story depicts the challenges associated with trying to start life in a new country, including the difficulties of learning a new language, developing new relationships, and understanding different customs.

The two main characters in the book are James Quayle Burden, or Jim as he is referred to most often, and Antonia Shimerda. Antonia is the daughter of the Bohemian immigrant family. Jim is a young lad who lived in Virginia but because of the premature death of his parents he goes to live with his grandparents in Nebraska.

The story is actually told from Jim's perspective. He remembers fondly the friendship that he and Antonia forge as they learned to know each other in their new home of Nebraska. Jim also remembers the difficulty and stress the Shimerda's, the immigrant family, endured.

Mr. Shimerda was not a farmer until he came to Nebraska. Learning this new occupation was more than he could handle. The family could not speak English, except for Antonia who spoke a few words. Their one son had a mental disability and the other son was angry. Mrs. Shimerda possessed some rather strange idiosyncrasies. They did not fit in with the other settlers and townspeople, thus they felt alone, isolated, rejected.

The immigrant family was considered alien, strange, foreign, peculiar by their neighbors except for Jim's grandparents, Josiah and Emmaline Burden. This caring, loving couple

looked past the uncommon exteriors of the immigrant family to see the deep needs of a hurting, displaced people. The Burden's understood the imperatives of Leviticus 19:33-34.

Immigration seems to be of such great concern in our country these days that impatient state governments are passing immigration laws pre-empting the work of federal lawmakers. The legislation being enacted seems to be most concerned with economic issues. The fear is that immigrants, primarily illegal immigrants, are getting a larger slice of the social benefits pie than Americans. The concern is more about economic issues than understanding the reasons people come to this country.

What are the needs of immigrants? What difficulties in their homeland may have forced them to move? War? Loss of work and the inability to support a family? Oppression? Hopelessness? From a Christian perspective, is it not unfair to ask immigrants, even those here illegally, to go back to live in the oppression from which they came?

Doesn't Leviticus advise to not oppress the alien/foreigner/stranger/immigrant? Don't these same verses suggest that we are to love the alien/foreigner/stranger/immigrant as we love ourselves? The verses also impress upon us that historically we have all been aliens/foreigners/strangers/immigrants. How were we treated? How would we want to be treated?

Jim and Emmaline Burden give us an example, and an answer.



District Leadership Team Meets in Dixon

The District Leadership Team held their regular meeting at the Dixon Church of the Brethren Sept. 17th. The District Executive, Kevin Kessler, opened the meeting with words from Matthew 5: "You are the light of the world." Members shared, at Kevin's request, about good works they do.

The Visioning Team reported on the progress they are making. Discussions on new Property and Funding, Church Development and a reconstituted Disaster Teams were presented. Another item discussed was the possibility of the LT meeting fewer times during the year but LT members would also serve as liaisons to the different Ministry Teams.

The Team reviewed happenings at the Batavia and Douglas Park Churches. Batavia has ceased holding services and the LT has assumed responsibility for the property. Douglas Park continues to hold Sunday Services and a feeding program under the



direction of Pastors Herman Ware and Shirley Petracek. The LT will be seeking help from area Churches.

The Rockford Community Church has been welcomed as a fellowship of the Church of the Brethren into the District.

The Board will next meet at the District Conference at Lake Williamson.

2001 Youth POWERHOUSE Conference



The **2011 Powerhouse Regional Youth Conference** takes place **Nov. 12-13, 2011**, at **Manchester College** (North Manchester, Ind.) for youth in **grades 9-12** and their advisors. We're excited to have Jeff Carter, pastor of Manassas (Va.) Church of the Brethren, as our keynote speaker, with the theme "Follow: If You Dare."

Information will be posted as it becomes available at www.manchester.edu/powerhouse. Registration opens on Sept. 6; all forms and registrations materials will be distributed via the website this year. Cost will be \$50 for youth, \$40 for advisors. We hope you can join us for this **power-packed weekend!** If you have questions, please contact Walt Wiltschek at wjwiltschek@manchester.edu.



November 4th & 5th District Conference Silent Auction

Benefits a Variety of District Ministries

Please bring your donations to District Conference. For more information please contact Rick Koch @ 815-225-7812 or at revrick-dutchtown@jcwifi.com

Some articles that were sent to me for inclusion in the newsletter did not appear. I apologize for not getting them printed timely. Some were for events that had already been held and some were missed because of vacations and a long time between summer newsletters. PLEASE accept my apology and continue to send in articles of events taking place at your Church. We truly need to be a District in touch with each other. Gil Crosby, Editor.

District Conference Letter - Packets



Church of the Brethren

IL/WI District Church of the Brethren

269 E. Chestnut Street • Canton IL 61520

Phone and fax: 309-649-6008

District Executive: Kevin Kessler, kevink.iwdcob@sbcglobal.net
Administrative Assistant: Beth Carpentier, bethc.iwdcob@att.net

August 26, 2011

Greetings in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Have you registered for District Conference yet? Your packet contains all the information that you will need to register you and your family for our District Conference that is being held at Lake Williamson Christian Center in Carlinville, Illinois, November 4-6. Along with our host church, Hurricane Creek Church of the Brethren, we invite you to experience this district-wide event in a setting that offers new possibilities for family activities such as a movie night, bonfire and hayrack ride, swimming, as well as buffet style meals, a love feast, inspirational worship, insight sessions, and new and old business.

In your packet you will find forms for **adult, nursery, children, and junior high registration**, maps, and activity guides. All lodging is on-site. The price per person includes lodging, 4 meals (Saturday and Sunday morning), and the use of the activity center.

Registration and information for youth will be sent in a separate mailing from the district youth advisors. Because the fees are significantly higher for youth this year, the Program and Arrangements Committee is subsidizing the registration fee in the amount of \$70.00 for each youth who attends. Contributions to help cover these costs may be made to the district. If you wish to donate to this effort, please indicate on your registration form the additional amount you are contributing along with the regular fee.

We need **all** registrations by Sept. 30, 2011. Please remember that if you have sent in your registration along with your deposit that the balance is due by Sept. 30, 2011. By registering and paying now, you will avoid paying a \$10 late fee after Sept. 30th. There are still rooms available, but we do have a limited number, so please register as soon as possible.

Start making plans today to experience District Conference in a new place and in a different way!

In Christ's peace,

Kevin Kessler
District Executive for the Program and Arrangements Committee

Go to the District Website for Registration Forms for Nursery – Preschool, Kindergarten, Junior High and Youth.. www.iwdcob.org

**Illinois/Wisconsin District Conference
@Lake Williamson Christian Center
Carlinville, IL**

**Hosted by: Hurricane Creek Church of the Brethren
November 4-6, 2011**

Registration includes: 2 Nights lodging, Meals Sat. morning thru Sun. morning, Worship, Love Feast, Recreation, Insight sessions, Business session, Hayride, Bonfire, Family movie, Live & silent auctions

Family Registration:

Family Members:

First _____ Last _____ Delegate: ___Yes ___No

First _____ Last _____ Delegate: ___Yes ___No

First _____ Last _____ Delegate: ___Yes ___No

First _____ Last _____ Delegate: ___Yes ___No

First _____ Last _____ Delegate: ___Yes ___No

Email: _____

Mailing Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Congregation: _____ Phone number: _____

Registration/Rooming Options: (families will be staying together in one guest room, max 6 people per room)

Single Occupancy: \$144.90 per adult Double Occupancy: \$120.60 per adult

Three or more: \$110/70 per adult Teen 12-17: \$79.20 per child Child 6-11: \$64.35 per child

Adults: _____ X _____ + Children/Teens: _____ X _____
Number of Adults Rooming Option Number of Children Rooming Option

Total Registration: _____

Other:

1. Roommate Request: _____
Would you like us to pair you with a roommate?: ___Yes ___No
2. Handicapped rooms are available, but in a limited number. Please reserve early if you need one of these rooms.
3. Dorm rooms are available: \$94.50 per person. Bring your own linens.
4. RV Camping is available. For this information, please contact the district office.

Deposit Policy:

\$50.00 per person deposit is required by August 12, 2011 when you register for this event.

The remaining balance is due by: Sept. 30, 2011

Failure to pay in full by: September 30, 2011 will result in a \$10.00 late fee.

Deposit Enclosed: \$ _____ Cash ___ Check # _____ Amount Due: \$ _____

Office Use:

Registration Received: _____ Deposit Received _____ Paid in Full _____

15th Annual Pleasant Hill Village Benefit Dinner & Auction

"A Tropical Getaway"

Saturday, October 15, 2011 at
Knights of Columbus Hall in Virden

You are invited to spend an enjoyable evening with us while helping to raise funds for the residents of Pleasant Hill Village. The fundraiser will feature appetizers, a silent auction, dinner, a live auction, theme-oriented activities, a cake walk and more! You can bring friends and make new ones as you enjoy fellowship and bid against one another during the auction. Feel free to wear your favorite tropical attire.

Our goal is to raise \$20,000 for projects which will include:

Healthcare - an otoscope with a rechargeable base, vinyl reclining chairs, a hydraulic chair for our Beauty Shop, a pulse oximeter, a waterproof shower radio and six resting chairs, two for each hallway.

Residence - exercise equipment and an emergency transport chair for the stairways. We would also like to clean out the campus' pond and make it more enjoyable for residents and community members.



Ways you can help us reach our goals:

Purchase tickets - At \$30, the price includes a \$15 donation.

Donate Auction Items - Examples of possible donations include sporting event tickets, theme gift baskets, hand-crafted items, service items or use of a condo.

Cash Donations - We have various Sponsorship levels, which include recognition of donors.

For additional information call Paulette at 217-627-2181



Pleasant Hill Village Quilt Raffle

This machine-quilted Queen Sized Quilt has beautiful colors and scalloping that makes it attractive on both sides. It would make a beautiful addition to any home. The quilt is 96 inches x 108 inches, and it can be yours!

Ticket Donation: \$5 or 5 for \$20

The drawing will be held at Pleasant Hill Village's Benefit Dinner & Auction October 15. The winner need not be present to win. Please complete this form and return it with payment to:

Pleasant Hill Village
1016 W. North Street
Girard, IL 62640

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/Zip Code: _____

Phone Number: _____

Thank you for your support!

Brethren Disaster Ministries needs Volunteers



The month of October will find Willard Dulabaum in Ashland City, Tennessee, serving as a project leader for Brethren Disaster Ministries. Duly and Pauline trained to serve as a team, giving

leadership to house reconstruction and providing food and household management for volunteers, who come by the week. Project leaders serve a month at a time, and because of Pauline's health, Duly will be working alongside other leaders in work supervision.

In May of 2010, as much as **20 inches of rain fell in three day's time** northwest of Nashville, submerging thousands of homes in the worst flood in Tennessee history. Often by the time rebuilding efforts get under way following a disaster, the actual event causing the destruction has faded from our memories. That's because it takes considerable time for clean-up, followed by assessment, and determining which families need assistance in rebuilding. So the Ashland City project opened on January 30, 2011, and the nearby Bellevue/Brentwood effort began this past June.

District Deacons Meet by Conference Call

The District Deacons met by conference call Sept. 8th. Much of the discussion focused on the 2012 District Pot Luck which is sponsored by the Deacons. The event will be held in Peoria on April 28th. Some of the subjects to be presented are Deacon's Ministry, Spiritual Formation, Scripture Memorizing, Story-telling and others. A committee for the 2013 District Pot Luck is being formed with Gil Crosby representing the Deacons on that committee.

The Deacons discussed requests from Churches who have sought Deacon support and guidance.

A report for the District Conference will be written by Chairman, Judd Peter. Those present for the conference call were Kevin Kessler, DE, Judd Peter, Chm., Gil Crosby, Sec., Jim & Claren Dunn, Leon Swigart, and Ginny Haney.

There is an urgent need for more volunteers at the Bellevue/Brentwood project, with the weeks beginning October 2 and 9 being completely open at this writing, though the volunteer roster at Ashland City is slated full. Also, volunteers are needed at a new project in Pulaski County, Virginia, which opens October 1 in response to two devastating tornadoes this past April 8. If you are interested in serving at any time, call Jane Yount at Brethren Disaster Ministries, 410-635-8731 or 800-451-4407. Duly and Pauline welcome your prayers or inquiries regarding the work in October, and for all those who are serving.

Neighborhood Church presents "Cotton Patch Gospel"

The Neighborhood Church of the Brethren hosted the musical "Cotton Patch Gospel" on **Saturday, September 17, at 7:00 p.m.** This one-man musical was presented by Phillip Kaufmann, a Mennonite performer. The "Cotton Patch Gospel" was originally a book written by Clarence Jordan of



Koinonia Farms in Georgia. It was adapted into a play by Tom Key and Russell Trez. Harry Chapin then produced the play into a musical, writing both music and lyrics. Neighborhood members and friends enjoyed an exciting and inspirational evening. The Neighborhood Church of the Brethren is located at 155 Boulder Hill Pass, Montgomery, Illinois.

DISTRICT POTLUCK

APRIL 28, 2012
at



Peoria Church of the Brethren



WORSHIP WORKSHOPS FELLOWSHIP FOOD

**LEADERSHIP WILL INCLUDE DONNA KLINE, CHRIS DOUGLAS, GENIE FIFER,
DENISE NICHOLS, JOHN SGRO AND OTHERS.**

Registration Fee --- \$5.00

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, Christian education teachers, deacons, spiritual advisors, 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.



2011 Calendar

OCTOBER

- 2World Communion Sunday
- 8Yom Kippur
- 8Program & Arrangements
- 10Columbus Day
- 15Leadership Team - Peoria
- 22Camp Emmanuel Fall Work Day

NOVEMBER

- 4-6District Conference, Lake Williamson
- 6Daylight Savings Time Ends
- 12Camp Emmanuel Board Meeting
- 18-19 ..Leadership Team Retreat - Emmaus
- 24Thanksgiving
- 27First Sunday of Advent

DECEMBER

- 21Hanukkah
- 25Christmas
- 26Kwanzaa

Banners For District Conference



Our Moderator Lisa Fike and the Program and Arrangements Team asks each fellowship/ Church to make a small banner using the conference theme “**Joined with me and I with you**” from John 15:5 You may also use your Church theme or logo. Banners should be finished size 12” X 15” and include a means of hanging.

They can be made of any material and can be any color. Please include your Church name in some manner. The banners will be the back drop for worship and business services. At conference end the banners will be re-distributed. Each church will receive the banner of a sister church and are encouraged to hold this sister congregation in your prayers throughout the next year.

We please ask that you send the banners to the District Office or give to one of the members of the Program and Arrangements Committee by September 15, 2011. *Members are: Roger Ruth – Springfield, Joyce Person – Dixon, Twila Habegger – York Center, Lisa Fike, Fletcher Farrar, Bill Williams and Kevin Kessler are members Ex-officio.*

Neighborhood Church begins “Angel Ministries”



The Neighborhood Church of the Brethren begins a new ministry this fall called “Angel Ministries”. This ministry is planned for persons with disabilities and their families. The vision for this ministry provides a safe space where families can worship with the congregation while their family member with disabilities is cared for by trained volunteers. The family member with disabilities will enjoy a Christian environment through song, prayer, story telling and engaging activities. At Neighborhood Church of the Brethren, we describe individuals with disabilities as an **ANGEL (All Need God’s Everlasting Love)**. We believe ANGELS are created by God for a purpose. We exist to make access to worship, ministry and fellowship a reality. We are also here to offer support for the people surrounding the ANGELS and their families. An **open house** for Angel Ministries was **Saturday, September 11, 4:00-5:30 p.m.** Starting date for the ministry is Sunday, September 25. Contact Bob Hamlin at 630-957-8144 for preregistration.