



Reflecting news and views

The Reflector

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District Executive: Kevin Kessler

Thoughts from the DE - Kevin Kessler



Hit the Ground Running?

"Let's jump right in to get things done!" is a statement often made when wanting to accomplish something new. Arguing against this philosophy of

action is difficult. Action is required if we hope to reach our goals.

An idiom suggesting immediacy of action we frequently use is "hit the ground running." A common meaning of this phrase is "to start working on something (activity, task, project) immediately and successfully." (1) I thought it would be interesting to put this idiom into a word picture. Imagine a marathon runner who is encouraged to run an unfamiliar route. The athlete is toned for the race and expected to be a contender for finishing first. Would this expert marathoner agree to run without studying the route or, so to speak, "hit the ground running" without first going over the course? I have my doubts. My knowledge of running a marathon is very limited. What understanding I do have is a result of conversation with a friend who participates in triathlons. Before participating in an event, he goes over the course gaining familiarity with it. Otherwise, obstacles on the course, such as potholes that need to be avoided, could hinder his successful completion of the race.

Would it not be wise to "chart the course" in all other matters of importance when encouraged to "hit the ground running?" Reading from Kenneth J. McFayden's book *Strategic Leadership for a Change: Facing our Losses, Finding our Future* (Alban, 2009) pointed me in the direction of answering this question in the affirmative. McFayden writes:

"Many congregations feel a sense of urgency to grow." The motive for growth, though, is important to understand. Frequently, McFayden claims, a congregation's motive for growth is primarily "to increase membership numbers." This motive will hopefully contribute toward the ever-diminishing budget, help find Sunday school teachers, and provide a larger base of volunteers needed to fill leadership positions. But does a motive only to increase numbers really get at what is needed for an increase to really happen?

Let's assume that a congregation has a strong desire to grow. They "hit the ground running" with the goal of increasing attendance by 20% over a 3-year period. Their success of attaining the goal may very likely be contingent upon how well they "chart the course." In other words, what are the true motives to achieve growth? What does the course look like in order for growth to occur?

Taking the time to understand the course is an important factor in realizing hoped-for results. What motives would be more helpful? Desired growth, McFayden offers, more fully "emanates from a vision of serving as a faith community for potential members, or of sharing the good news of a living, sovereign, and graceful God who creates, redeems, and sustains." More simply stated, motives for growth will focus more on what can be done for those we reach rather than what those we reach can do for us. McFayden simplifies it in these words: "...if our message were more focused on how you want to grow in faith and mission, through worship and education, I could get excited about joining your church. And if I joined, *then* (emphasis added) I would contribute money and might consider teaching Sunday school."

Hit the road running? Sure, after studying the course and making sure good, attractive motives are leading us to the finish line!

(1) <http://www.betterspokenenglish.com/idioms-hit-the-ground-running>

Leadership Team meets at Neighborhood Church

The Illinois-Wisconsin District Leadership Team met January 14th at the Neighborhood Church of the Brethren. We were sorry to hear that Jim Lehman's mother had passed away and the Team extends its condolences to Jim and family.

The Team Chairperson, Anna Lee Hisey Pierson, read from John 15 and asked that we hear it with new ears, feel it with new hearts and with a new spirit. She suggested a book for the team to consider by Sarah Young titled "*Jesus is Calling*." She quoted an excerpt that says "God's riches are sufficient for my needs." She then opened the meeting with prayer.

The Team reviewed the Visioning Statement as presented by Kevin Kessler, DE. Many times we move forward mechanically like we have done before but we need to seek what God is asking us to do. There is great joy in receiving what God gives and has given us. The DE then challenged the LT to be able to recite the Mission Statement from memory. The LT will be bringing the Vision and Mission Statements to the District Ministry Teams throughout the year as they visit in their Liaison capacities. The Liaison positions were revised with Leadership members assigned to each of the Ministry Teams.

The reports from District Conference were very positive and Moderator Lisa Fike and the Program and Arrangements Committee were commended for a great job. The opening Love Feast set the tone for the whole meeting and produced a good feeling for District Conference.

The Leadership Team will be meeting at different Churches throughout the year. We want to invite the host congregations and neighboring Churches to feel free to attend LT meetings. We really appreciate the Churches of the District hosting our meetings and especially would like to share ideas with the congregations in the District.

The LT discussed the events that have transpired at the Batavia Church of the Brethren. (New Beginnings congregation) They have ceased functioning and passed on responsibility to the District. The Leadership Team has been paying the bills with resources from the parsonage rental. We have been working with a Title company to clear the title which is in the name of the German Baptist Brethren. It will be changed to The Church of the Brethren and then the property will be sold. The LT proposes a closing



Worship Service and auction of the contents of the Church on March 3rd, 2012. Brethren Churches are invited to participate in the service and auction. The Team recognized Bill Jacobs who has been very diligent in caring for the property during the period of inactivity and will present him a gift of thanks.

We need candidates for Treasurer because the current Treasurer, Pat Heid, has faithfully served the two terms allowed in the constitution. If she were asked to serve longer the Constitution would need to be amended to modify any term limits. Pat is to be commended for the outstanding work she has done the past 6 years. The Gifts Discernment Team will be asked to submit names for consideration.

Kevin proposed that the District Directory and District Conference booklet be distributed electronically which would save the District several hundred dollars. Another advantage would be ease of updating the documents. Beth Carpentier, Administrative Assistant, and Kevin will be working with Program and Arrangements to pursue this further.

The 2012 District Conference will again be held at Lake Williamsville and be hosted by the Virden Church who celebrate their 100th anniversary this year. The theme comes from District Moderator, Fletcher Farrar, citing "**The Courage of Daniel**." Events will be held at Lake Williamson, the Virden Church and Pleasant Hill retirement center. Program and Arrangements are looking for a dynamic speaker for the Sunday Service and entertainment for Saturday evening. All suggestions are welcome.

The meeting closed with prayer by Moderator, Fletcher Farrar.

Closing Service and Auction at New Beginnings Fellowship, Batavia



The New Beginnings Fellowship congregation at Batavia is no longer meeting together. The District Leadership Team has assumed responsibility for the property in accordance with Church of the Brethren polity. At the most recent District Leadership Team meeting held January 14, 2012, a decision was made to sell the church property in Batavia. There are some things that need to be cared for prior to initiating a sale. It seems important to bring closure to the congregation, therefore a **brief closing service** will be held at the New Beginnings Fellowship meeting-house located at 613 N. Van Buren St. in Batavia on **Saturday, March 3, 2012, at 2:00pm**. Additionally, contents in the building such as hymnals, kitchen utensils, some furniture, Sunday school supplies, and other items need to be disposed of appropriately. This will be done through an **auction** that will be held immediately following the closing service.

We hope you will be able to attend this special event to support those who have been associated with the congregation as they say their final farewells. And, we hope you will find items in the auction that you can use personally or in your congregation.

The proceeds of the auction will be deposited in the Batavia Fund of the District's resources. Following the sale of the property, the Leadership Team will determine how to best utilize all proceeds to best support the ongoing work and ministry of the district.

Note: This is not a public auction. It is open only to Church of the Brethren congregations, members, and associated persons.

Annual Conference Registration

Congregational delegate registration for **Annual Conference** opened on January 2. Be sure to go to www.brethren.org/ac to register your congregation's delegate.

Non-delegate registration and housing reservations will open at 12:00 Noon central time on Wednesday, February 22, 2012. You will also be able to register for age group activities, purchase meal tickets and conference booklets, as well as sign up for choir and volunteering opportunities.

All information regarding Annual Conference in St. Louis, Missouri is now posted online at www.brethren.org/ac. Click on the "Information Packet" link. Congregations and delegates will not be mailed the Information Packet CD this year.

We look forward to seeing you in St. Louis!

Jon Kobel, Conference Assistant,
1451 Dundee Avenue, Elgin, IL 60120,
800-323-8039, x229, jkobel@brethren.org

DISTRICT POTLUCK



Don't Forget the Date
APRIL 28, 2012

*Insight Sessions, Worship,
Singing, Fellowship*

Peoria Church of the Brethren
4714 N. Sheridan Rd., Peoria, IL 61614

Children's Disaster Training

A training event for **Children's Disaster Services** will be held at the Cerro Gordo Church of the Brethren, 102 E. Durfee St., Cerro Gordo, IL, on Friday and Saturday, March 23-24, 2012. For additional information and to register for the event call the New Windsor Disaster Response Office at 800-451-4407. It is not necessary to be a part of the Church of the Brethren to participate in this training event. Questions about the event can be directed locally to Rosie Brandenburg at (217) 763-6039 or samrosie@ctiwireless.com. *Rosie would be glad to receive invitations to come to speak at your church or organization*

Top Ten Reasons to work with Brethren Disaster Ministries

10. We get to wear cool red caps.
9. We get to play with fun power tools.
8. We get free food and sometimes pretty good beds.
7. We get to work closely with some fine people from throughout the denomination.
6. It keeps retired folks busy and off the streets.
5. My parents' farm was wiped out by a tornado in 1965, and
I understand the value of a helping hand from friends and neighbors.
4. The Church of the Brethren teaches us to be Good Samaritans to those in need.
3. My Pastor says we should try to be like Jesus, and he was a carpenter.
2. Life has been good to me and giving back feels good.
1. I encourage you to volunteer so you provide your own reason why this is a good thing for our denomination, our local congregations, and for you personally.

from Loren Habegger



Position Opening at On Earth Peace



On Earth Peace, an agency of the Church of the Brethren, is seeking a full-time Executive Director. The Executive Director has the overall strategic and operational responsibility for On Earth Peace's staff, programs, expansion, and execution of its mission. S/he will have a

deep knowledge of the organization's core programs, operations, and business plans. Interested applicants may check the On Earth Peace website for details of the mission and program: www.onearthpeace.org

The responsibilities and duties will include long-term strategic planning, rigorous program evaluation, and consistent quality of finance, administration, fundraising and resource development, marketing, and communications.

The Executive Director will engage and energize On Earth Peace staff, board members, volunteers, donors, and partnering organizations, and represent OEP to the larger church and ecumenical gatherings. S/he will develop and implement fundraising and revenue generating plans and goals, and establish and maintain relationships with top donors and volunteers.

Qualifications and experience: Bachelor's degree required; advanced degree preferred; at least 10 years of experience in nonprofit senior management, including in the areas of human resources, marketing, public relations, and fundraising/resource development; solid business and financial experience, including the ability to set and achieve strategic objectives and manage a budget; strong marketing, public relations, and fundraising experience with the ability to engage a wide range of constituents; and knowledge of the Church of the Brethren denomination desired. Skills will include excellent oral and written communication skills and computer literacy.

The deadline for applications is February 29, 2012. Send a cover letter and resume to Ralph McFadden, Search Consultant, oeppsearch@sbcglobal.net. Or contact Ralph on his home / office phone 847.622.1677.

Position Available at Pinecrest Community

Director of Advancement/Marketing, Pinecrest Community



General Purpose: Develops, coordinates and monitors overall fundraising strategy for solicitation, cultivation and closing of major and planned gifts and manages relationships with donors, congregations and prospects; Oversees capital campaigns, direct mail and social media appeals, and advancement communications; Maintains and expands 50-60 major donor relationships; Expands the Century II Club, the planned giving society of Pinecrest Community; Active leader in the organization as part of the administrative team and works closely with the Board of Directors, Foundation Board and community volunteers.

Requirements:

Education/Experience: Minimum Bachelor's degree; Preferred five years of fundraising experience with two years supervisory experience and understanding of retirement and long term care communities.

Skills and Abilities: Coordinate and/or direct a variety of complex tasks and assignments simultaneously, excellent oral and written communication skills; superior management skills; ability to deliver individual and group presentations; energy and vision to take the advancement function to the next level; able to motivate self and others with strong relationship skills; able to work individually and/or collaboratively; working knowledge of general business operations in a nonprofit, social service or similar environment; responsible for departmental budget; fluent in fundraising software; working

knowledge of MS Office; Pinecrest Community offers a competitive salary and comprehensive benefit package.

Ralph G. McFadden, 352 Shiloh Ct, Elgin, IL 60120,
Phone 847-622-1677 Cell 847-347-1677,
Email ralph.mcfadden33@gmail.com
oeppsearch@sbcglobal.net

2012 National Young Adult Conference



Are you between the ages of 18 and 35? If so, then you are invited to the NYAC in Knoxville, TN. This event will be a chance for young adults to gather and create a loving community, have engaging conversations about our role in the denomination and also enjoy various speakers.

NYAC takes place on **June 18 – 22, 2012** at the University of Tennessee Knoxville. Our theme is **"Humble, yet Bold: Being the Church,"** based on Matt. 5: 13 – 18, "Being Salt for the Earth" and "A light for the world."

Online registration begins Jan. 6 at 8 PM at www.brethren.org/yac. The cost for the event will be \$375 and includes housing, programming and meals. The Young Adult Steering Committee encourages congregations to offer NYAC scholarships in their 2012 budgets. NYAC gift certificates may be purchased by friends and families.

DON'T MISS THIS OPPORTUNITY to be part of the community that will be created

during these five days in Knoxville. Join us on Facebook on "Young Adults of the Church of the Brethren."

For more information call 800-323-8039 ext. 281 or E-mail NYAC2012@brethren.org.



2011-2012 Calendar

JANUARY

- 1New Year's Day
- 14Leadership Team Meeting - Neighborhood
- 16Martin Luther King Jr. Day
- 25Peoria Area Pastor's Meeting
- 29-Feb 17.....BVS Winter Orientation

FEBRUARY

- 14Valentines Day
- 20President's Day
- 22Ash Wednesday
- 26First Sunday of Lent

MARCH

- 2World Day of Prayer
- 10-12 ..Mission & Ministry Board, New Windsor
- 11Daylight Savings Time Begins
One Great Hour of Sharing

APRIL

- 1Palm Sunday
- 6Good Friday
- 7First Day of Passover
- 8Easter
- 23-May 4.....BVS Older Adult Orientation
- 28DISTRICT POT LUCK at Peoria CoB

MAY

- 1Labor Day
- 3National Day of Prayer
- 6National Youth Sunday
- 13Mother's Day
- 17-19....New Church Dev. Conf. , Richmond, IN
- 27Pentecost Sunday
- 28Memorial Day

JUNE

- 10-29 ..BVS Summer Orientation
- 16-22 ..National Young Adult Conf., Knoxville
- 17Father's Day

JULY

- 6-7Ministers Assoc. Pre-Conf., St. Louis, MO
- 7-11ANNUAL CONFERENCE, St. Louis, MO
- 7Mission & Ministry Board, St. Louis, MO

AUGUST

- 20-30 ..BVS/BRF Orientation, New Windsor

SEPTEMBER

- 3Labor Day
- 16-Oct 5.....BVS Fall Orientation
- 17Rosh Hashanah
- 21International Day of Peace
- 26Yom Kippur

OCTOBER

- 7World Communion Sunday
- 20-23 ..Mission & Ministry Board, Elgin, IL
- 28Reformation Sunday

NOVEMBER

- 4National Jr. High Sunday
Daylight Saving Time Ends
- 16-18 ..Mission Alive, Lititz, PA
- 22Thanksgiving Day
- 25First Sunday of Advent

DECEMBER

- 2First Sunday of Advent
- 9First Day of Chanukah/Hanukkah
- 25Christmas Day
- 31New Year's Eve