



Reflecting news and views

The Reflector

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

October 2013 / Volume 10 / Issue 6

District Executive: Kevin Kessler

Renew by Moderator Mark Flory Steury



“Create in me a clean heart, O God;
and renew a right spirit within me.”
—Psalm 51:10

“Restore us to yourself, O Lord,
that we might be restored.”
—Lamentations 5:21

“Do not be conformed to the world, but be transformed
by the renewing of your minds.”—Romans 12:2

Renew. “Renew” is a powerful word. It speaks to us of healing, restoration, beginning anew. As Christians, we long for renewal. We long for our relationship to God to be refreshed- to feel a new sense of closeness to God. As churches, we also long for renewal. The scriptures tell us that God is always open to restoring God’s relationship with us. That is the theme throughout the Old Testament and comes to fullest completion through Jesus Christ in the New Testament.

During district conference this year we are going to focus on the word “renew”. We will be hearing stories about how individuals and congregations are experiencing renewal. Many thanks to the Mt. Morris Church of the Brethren and Pinecrest Community for hosting this year’s conference. I hope you can come and join us for worship Friday evening and the business session on Saturday. I pray that the weekend will be a time of renewal for all of us!

Mark Flory Steury - Moderator



Silent & Live Auctions 2013 District Conference

To benefit a variety of Ministries

This year we are doing things a bit differently. For the Silent Auction **we are asking each Church to provide a basket of goodies with a theme**, such as kitchen, movie night and so on. We are also asking for **baked goods** for the Silent Auction. For the Live Auction we are asking people to provide nice **Arts and Crafts items**, such as wood-working, paintings, maybe pottery. We would like to have a dozen or so items in the Live Auction. If you would like to provide an item, please let me know ahead of time what you are planning to bring.



For more information, please contact Rick Koch at 815-499-3012 or at revrick-dutchtown@jcwifi.com.

Pleasant Hill Village seeking Board Member



Pleasant Hill Village, the Brethren Home of Girard, is seeking a Church of the Brethren member to fill a board seat. Pleasant Hill Village is located in northern Macoupin County,

approximately 30 miles south of Springfield. For more information on term length, meeting times and our vision for continuing to serve the healthcare and rehab needs of seniors, please contact either Kendall Cole 217/965-4039 or Allen Krall 217/585-8599.

DE Ponderings by Kevin Kessler, District Executive



Brad and Amy Herzog traveled the United States stopping in obscure, small communities named Triumph (LA), Love (VA), Inspiration (AZ), Justice (WV), and Glory (GA), to name a few. Brad wrote a book, *States of Mind*, about each of these small towns, offering up a bit of their history, filling us in on their present day status, and rendering insightful comments around the meaning of the town's name.

In writing about Bliss, NY, Herzog opens with a quote from Thomas Wolfe's novel, *Look Homeward, Angel*, which reads: "Each of us is all the sums he has not counted: subtract us into nakedness and night again, and you shall see begin in Crete four thousand years ago the love that ended yesterday in Texas." Herzog used Bliss as an example for many of the towns he wrote about, that they began from years of thought and action on the part of many people, resulting in the formation, existence, and continuation of a bustling, growing community.

Later on in the chapter on Bliss, Herzog writes this:

"It's remarkable how the forces of nature can conspire against a small town's survival. Hundreds of years of concentric circles lead to the formation of a community. A pebble here, a pebble there. And then it can be gone in a heartbeat, a quantifiable day of reckoning. A fire in Bliss, August 10, 1919. A hurricane in Triumph, August 17, 1969. A flood in Love the next day. Sometimes, too, the end is gradual, through perhaps more permanent. Corporate encroachment put an end to Inspiration. Economic stagnation was killing Justice. Old age apparently took old Glory.

"'Each moment is the fruit of forty thousand years.' [Wolfe] Small towns...take years to ripen but just days to rot."

What Herzog writes about small towns seemingly holds true for congregations. The thoughts and actions of many people from a variety of places—geographically, psychologically, socially—connect on various levels over a number of years to form and continue the existence of a body of believers, a congregation. This body joins together to follow a collective call to be in mission where they are planted and beyond. All appears well as the congregation perpetuates its mission. The ripening

fruit metaphor Herzog employs for small towns applies to congregations, that what has taken years to ripen can rot in a matter of days, or at least a relatively short time. A number of factors can cause rot, such as negative economic conditions, rapidly changing demographics, deep-seated conflict, unfocused leadership, to name a few.

Although congregations formed over long periods of time can, like small towns, experience demise quickly, I believe the imminent end can be avoided. Foremost in avoiding ruin is early recognition of negative factors. Being vigilantly aware of what is happening in the surrounding environment is important. Everyone can be engaged in this process but especially key leaders within the congregation. Then, as pertinent information about environmental changes becomes known, efforts can be initiated to live into healthy transformation, continuing the vision of yesteryears' pioneers.

Yes, difficulties emerge, but with vigilant attention, vibrant life can continue.

ENGAGE with Bethany

Do you know people you'd like to encourage to explore their faith more deeply and consider theological education? Here are suggestions to pass along. Click the links for details.



November 1, 2013

Sponsored by the Admissions Office

A day of options designed for exploration of the Bethany experience with others interested in theological education

- Worshiping together
- Participating in classes
- Meeting with staff, faculty, and current students
- Discovering what makes Bethany distinctive

Views of Vitality – The first in a series of articles

The Church Revitalization and Development Team believes congregations comprising the IL/WI District are alive and sharing vital ministries in their respective contexts. Each newsletter will feature the vitality of a congregation, providing evidence that faithful followers are continuing the work of Jesus...peacefully...simply...together.

Freeport Church of the Brethren



The Freeport Church of the Brethren Facebook page states that they are “a church for all generations.” Included on the Facebook page is their statement of faith which reads, “Our denominational faith statement is ‘**Continuing the work of Jesus; Peacefully, Simply, Together.**’ By practicing ‘**What Would Jesus Do?**’ we work to serve humanity.” Clearly the Freeport congregation has a heart for people, in the community they serve and beyond.

The Freeport congregation puts their faith into action. Every second Saturday of the month, the congregation provides a dinner for the community. No fee is charged and the meal is open to anyone who wishes to attend, although the emphasis is on serving families in need. From 25 to 100 people are served at each of these events.

This summer, the congregation observed *Be the Church Sunday*. Sunday school classes were dismissed on a particular Sunday and participants

in the event went into the community passing out water, bread, and cookies. Not only did this activity increase congregational visibility, the community received a taste of the missional emphasis of the congregation.

On an ongoing basis, the Freeport congregation participates in the Meals-on-Wheels program. The congregation also supports the Freeport Area Church Cooperative (food pantry and clothing store) with volunteers and by collecting items for the pantry monthly. A “**Pennies from Heaven**” collection is taken monthly as well and given to the Freeport Area Church Cooperative and the Salvation Army. In the fall of the year, the congregation participates in Operation Christmas Child, filling shoe boxes with various items to be sent to children in underprivileged areas.

Mission is definitely important to the Freeport congregation. In order to be the best they can be in witnessing to their community, they understand the need to be spiritually mature. Therefore, the congregation became involved in the Vital Ministry Journey process, a 60-day emphasis of prayer and scripture study. During this time, participants met in small groups, responded to leading questions, studied specified passages of scripture, and spent time in focused prayer. Those participating found renewal and encouragement through the process and have decided to continue meeting in groups for ongoing spiritual nourishment and growth.

Lisa Fike provides pastoral leadership for the congregation. Her creativity combined with the support of members is ensuring the viability and vitality of the Freeport congregation. Those who are part of this body of servants are intentional about their work to serve all—peacefully, simply, together.

Illinois & Wisconsin District Conference 2013



Friday Evening, November 1st

- 5:30 – 7:15 Registration open – Lobby
- 6:00 – 7:30 Exhibits open – Fellowship Hall, Lower Level
- 6:00 Silent Auction begins – Fellowship Hall, Lower Level
- 7:10 – 7:30 Hymn Sing – Sanctuary
- 7:30 – 8:30 Worship – Sanctuary
- 8:45 – 9:15 Registration open – Lobby
- 8:45 – 9:30 Ice Cream, Lower Level
- 8:45 – 9:15 Breakout Sessions
 - A. Talk Back with Jonathan Shively
 - B. BBT

Saturday Morning, November 2nd

- 7:45 – 8:20 Continental Breakfast – Lower Level
- 8:00 – 8:30 Registration Open – Lobby
- 8:00 – 5:00 Exhibits open – Fellowship Hall, Lower Level
- 8:15 – 11:25 Nursery & Pre-kindergarten – Crib Room #208
- Kindergarten – 5th Grade – Nursery Room
- 8:20 – 8:30 Opening Music & Meditation – Sanctuary
- 8:30 Business Session – Sanctuary
- 10:00 – 10:15 Drinks & Snacks available – Narthex and Parlor
- 11:25 Pick up Children for lunch
- 11:30 – 1:30 Lunch – Pinecrest Grove

Saturday Afternoon

- 1:30 – 4:45 Nursery & Pre-kindergarten – Crib Room #208
- Kindergarten – 5th grade – Nursery Room
- 1:30 Business Session – Sanctuary
- 2:30 – 2:45 Drinks and Snacks available – Narthex and Parlor
- 4:05 Commissioning Newly Elected
- 4:25 Silent Auction results – Sanctuary
- 4:30 End of Business Session
- Live Auction – Sanctuary
- 4:45 Pick up all children from Childcare

REGISTRATION FORM INSTRUCTIONS (Read Carefully)
ILLINOIS/WISCONSIN DISTRICT CONFERENCE
NOVEMBER 1 & 2, 2013
HOSTED BY: MT. MORRIS CHURCH OF THE BRETHREN
MT. MORRIS, IL



- 1) Please complete this form for ALL members of your family attending District Conference (Your congregation will NOT do this for you). Complete appropriate forms (in this packet), pay any fees and then return finished forms to the District office.
 - Please register all children - junior high as no childcare/programs will be planned unless registration is received by Sept. 14th.
- 2) Delegate fees are included in the congregational assessment each church pays for District Conference. A letter indicating the assessment amount will be sent to your congregation's treasurer. You may assist by confirming with your church treasurer that appropriate fees have been paid. No fee is assessed for non-delegates.
- 3) It is important for all participants, delegates and non-delegates, to register for insurance purposes.
- 4) The only meal being offered this year is the Saturday noon meal which will be served at Pinecrest Grove. The Pinecrest Grove is located within walking distance of the Mt. Morris church, with parking spaces available also. A shuttle service between the church and dining hall will be offered. Please mark if you will be buying the buffet and any special dietary needs that you may have and return the \$10.00 fee per person with your registration.

Registration:

Delegate:

First Name: _____	Last: _____	Yes _____	No _____
First Name: _____	Last: _____	Yes _____	No _____
First Name: _____	Last: _____	Yes _____	No _____
First Name: _____	Last: _____	Yes _____	No _____

Email: _____

Mailing Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Congregation: _____ Phone Number: _____

Meal Registration:

Lunch Buffet.....\$10.00 per person

Vegetarian _____

Gluten-free _____

Special dietary restrictions? _____

Totals:

K-5th grade registration fee _____ @ \$10.00 \$ _____

Lunch Buffet _____ @ \$10.00 \$ _____

Submit one check for the total amount due. Check # _____ \$ _____

Make check payable to Illinois & Wisconsin District Church of the Brethren.

Submit this form, appropriate children's forms and payment **no later than Sept. 14, 2013.**

Mail to: IL/WI District Office Church of the Brethren, 269 E. Chestnut St., Canton, IL 61520

The Great Multitude

A Symposium bringing us together

From every nation, from all tribes and peoples... Rev. 7:9

Continuing the work of Jesus as we become a more intercultural church

I am excited to welcome you and those in Illinois-Wisconsin to the "Great Multitude Symposium":

When: October 25-27 2013

Where: Skelton Retreat Center, Wirtz, Virginia

Why: Because we are called to continue the work of Jesus peacefully, simply and TOGETHER!



With CEUs (1.1!) for pastors, a lecture on COB intercultural history, a panel about the Hispanic church, hands-on training sessions, and a bilingual worship concert, there really is something for everyone at this gathering. We invite you to participate in the on-going dialogue about being in an intercultural denomination, living in multicultural communities, and what Jesus teaches us about how to live with and love all our neighbors.

Virlina District & Intercultural Ministries Church of the Brethren

For more Information contact: Gimbya Kettering, gkettering@brethren.org PH: 847-429-4387

This event is being co-sponsored by the Virlina District and Intercultural Ministries and co-hosted by the Roanoke First Church of the Brethren.

Emmaus Auction Raises \$1,000+ for Camp Scholarships



Bidding on artwork, T-shirts, jewelry, bracelets, and other items, the youth and staff at this year's senior high camp at Camp Emmaus in Mount Morris, Ill., raised more than \$1,000 for camper scholarships.

An auction has become an annual tradition at the camp, starting about seven years ago. Proceeds each year go to aid a different charitable cause. Past beneficiaries have included a Honduras workcamp led by Camp Emmaus manager Bill Hare, a camper undergoing cancer treatments, and the Church of the Brethren Global Food Crisis Fund. Campers and counselors donate the sale items.

Items ranged from the traditional, such as Camp Emmaus T-shirts, to the imaginative, such as a soda can holder featuring an image of Hare riding a dinosaur. Campers and counselors created many of the items, including framed photographs, paintings, hand-knit scarves, and a duct-tape wallet. Bidding was spurred on by incentives for reaching various levels: the director being thrown in the pool, a counselor wearing a bright pink shirt for the day, and another counselor's mustache being colorfully dyed.

Hare said he was impressed by the campers' generosity, which will provide scholarships to attend camp for children and youth who could otherwise not afford to do so.

About three dozen youth attended this year's senior high camp during the last full week of July, one of six age-group camps offered by Emmaus this past summer. The camp also holds family camps over Memorial Day and Labor Day weekends, a women's camp, and other events. It is one of 29 Church of the Brethren-affiliated camps located across the US.

www.campemmaus.org

2013 Fall District Youth Retreat



*Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds
Romans 12:2*

November 1st - November 3rd , 2013
Camp Emmaus, Mt. Morris

Where: Camp Emmaus is located near highway 64 between Mount Morris and Oregon, Illinois.
www.campemmaus.org.

When: Registration will begin at 7 pm on Friday Night. Retreat participants will be dismissed on Sunday around 11:30am. Note that District Conference will end on Saturday, please indicate if you will be picking up your youth on Saturday evening or on Sunday.

Who: Everyone currently in 9th through 12th grades during the 2013-2014 school year. Friends and advisors are welcome.

Cost: \$40 for youth no charge for advisors. Make checks payable to *Illinois/Wisconsin District Youth*

What to Bring: Bible, Games, Sleeping Bag, Snacks to share, Towel, and Work clothes.

Registration Deadline: October 18th, 2013; please register early to help with our planning.

Return completed registration form, covenant and check to: Beth Carpentier, 269 E. Chestnut; Canton, Illinois 61520

Questions: Contact Ralph Miner at (847) 742-0918 (847) 742-0918 FREE evenings, or via e-mail: rminer151@earthlink.net

On Earth as it is in Heaven
Stories from the Garden

"The LORD will bring about justice and praise in every nation on earth, like flowers blooming in a garden."
Isaiah 61:10-11

POWERHOUSE 2013

A regional conference for Church of the Brethren Midwest youth
Nov. 16-17

Keynote speakers:
Audrey and Tim Hollenberg-Duffey

NEW LOCATION!
Camp Alexander Mack
Milford, Indiana

Watch for more details in early fall.

www.manchester.edu/powerhouse

Manchester University

It's time for the fourth year of **Powerhouse**, the regional youth conference for youth in the Midwest. This year the conference will try out a new site, going to

Camp Alexander Mack in Milford, Ind., **Nov. 16-17**. We hope you can join us for this exciting weekend! Opportunities will also be available to visit and tour the Manchester University campus (about 45-50 minutes from Camp Mack) before or after the conference.

At www.manchester.edu/powerhouse, you will find a variety of information and forms needed for each participant to register. All forms must be completed for participants to attend. Forms should be downloaded, printed, and mailed to the university when completed; make enough copies so that each participant has one copy of each form.

Cost this year will be \$65 for youth, \$60 for advisors (for extenuating circumstances, please contact us). With our new location, everyone will have a bed to sleep in, and the camp will be preparing our meals.

The keynote speakers for our three worship times will be Audrey and Tim Hollenberg-Duffey, students at Bethany Theological Seminary. They will lead us in an exploration of our theme, "**On Earth As It Is in Heaven: Stories from the Garden.**" We want it to be a weekend full of energy and inspiration!

If your group is coming from a distance and needs a place to stay in the area Friday night, please contact us and we can help you make arrangements at Manchester University or with congregations in the area. Please be in prayer for this event and, encourage your youth and advisors to attend.

Pinecrest Manor Hosts Leadership Team



The Leadership Team of Illinois-Wisconsin met in Mt. Morris at Pinecrest Manor on August 10. Many thanks to the people at Pinecrest who made the meeting a most enjoyable event.

Those present were Kevin Kessler, DE,, Bob Champlin*, Chairman; Jim Lehman*, Asst. Chair; Bill Pocklington*, Carol Novak*, Pat Heid, Joel Kline, Mandy Rahn*, Purvi Satvedi* and Stan Rodabaugh, Moderator Elect. (* voting members) Bob opened with devotions on the subject of Friendship. "Faithful friends are a sturdy treasure." After devotions Bob called the meeting to order.

The first order of business was to approve the minutes of June 8.

Pat Heid sat in for treasurer Gordon Heid and confirmed that our current financial situation is good. She was asked about income vs expense. In 2012 our income was \$54,055 and expenses this year are at \$52,861 already. Church allocations are coming in a little above budget. Investments are doing well and \$20,000 was transferred from investment to General Fund. The transfer came from interest earned.

Kevin reported his very busy schedule working with several churches on pastor placement. He also spent time with the Church Revitalization Team where they shared missions happening in their individual churches. A Vital Mission report will be featured in the Newsletter each month. Kevin told of meeting with people at Annual Conference and networking at the CODE meeting. He gave an overview on the new Property & Management Team organization.

Several vacancies need to be filled in Program and Arrangements, Leadership Team, NYC bus planner and a Global Mission Advocate for the District.

Some time was spent discussing the Douglas Park property and mission. It has been reported the property is in need of repair, tenants are arrears on rent and attendance is very low. After a long discussion the LT adjourned and reconvened as the Douglas Park LT. A vote was taken to pursue the sale of the Douglas Park property. It passed unanimously. The Douglas Park LT also voted to terminate the employment of Pastor Herman Ware. The District LT is the LT of Douglas Park.

The LT reconvened as the District of Illinois-Wisconsin LT and continued with the regular business meeting.

Kevin passed out a report on Sabbaticals which is a time of rest and rejuvenation and is a policy of the Church of the Brethren. His Sabbatical begins July 7, 2014 and concludes September 7. Contact persons will be LT Chairman, Bob Champlin and the Administrative Assistant, Beth Carpentier. A professional growth grant will be considered for Kevin at the next meeting.

The new Property and Asset Management Team met to review their commission. The Teams role is to recommend management of assets and manage properties that revert to the District. They report directly to the Leadership Team. Members are Wil Nolen (1 yr.), Fletcher Farrar (2 yr.), Jocelyn Watkins (3 yr.). The terms were approved by the LT.

Other business included signing an agreement for the Rock Community Church so they can place a District covenant in their deed. The LT approved \$500 for attorney's fees to help Samuel Saripya with his visa application which was rejected earlier. A proposed Budget was reviewed by the LT for 2014 and will be presented to the District Conference for approval. A small increase is recommended for the District Executive and the Administrative Assistant. A professional growth line item was created with funding of \$1,000. The total budget to be presented will be \$117,000.

The Leadership Team approved the Ordination of Terry Link, the Chaplin at Pleasant Hill in Girard.

The next meeting will be at Neighborhood Church of the Brethren on October 12.

Brethren Gather at Camp Emmaus



On Sunday, August 4, many of the Brethren churches from Northwest Illinois got together at **Camp Emmaus** to share a time of

worship and fellowship. It was a perfect summer day as more than 120 people from the Freeport, Yellow Creek, Dixon, Polo, Mt. Morris, Franklin Grove, and Cherry Grove congregations lifted their voices in song and their hearts in prayer. And then being good Brethren, they joined in that staple of any good church meeting – the bountiful potluck. Getting acquainted, renewing old friendships, and sharing lots of smiles and laughter were also on the menu. The afternoon was rounded off with swimming in the brand new camp pool for those brave enough to jump into the cool waters. Future events are being planned to continue to strengthen ties between the Brethren churches in the area as we strive to serve God – **peacefully, simply, TOGETHER.**

WCC leader preached at Illinois congregation, visits Church of the Brethren General Offices



World Council of Churches general secretary Olav Fykse Tveit brought the Sunday morning message at Neighborhood Church of the Brethren in Montgomery, Ill., on Sunday, Aug. 11.. Tveit is on a trip to visit various Christian groups in the United States, traveling from the World Council of Churches headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland.

On Monday and Tuesday, Aug. 12-13, Tveit was in Elgin, Ill., visiting the Church of the Brethren General Offices.

Reprinted from Newslines, a Church of the Brethren e-news service.

2013 Calendar

October

Domestic Violence Awareness Month

- 6World Communion Sunday
- 12Leadership Team Meeting, Neighborhood
- 18–21 ..Mission & Ministry Board, Elgin, IL
- 24World Disarmament Day
United Nations Day
- 27Reformation Sunday
- 31Halloween

November

- 1–2Ill.-Wisc. District Conf., Mt. Morris
- 3National Junior High Sunday
Daylight Savings Time Ends
- 9Leaf Raking at Camp Emmaus
- 11Veteran's Day
- 15–16 ..Leadership Team Retreat, Camp Emmanuel,
Mt. Morris, IL
- 24Christ the King Sunday
- 27Hanukah Begins
- 28Thanksgiving

December

- 1First Sunday of Advent
World Aids Day
- 8Second Sunday of Advent
- 15Third Sunday of Advent
- 21First day of Winter
- 22Fourth Sunday of Advent
- 25CHRISTMAS DAY
- 31New Year's Eve