

Reflecting news and views

The Reflector

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

February 2018 / Volume 15 / Issue 2

District Executive: Kevin Kessler

Moderator Notes

Thinking about teaching!

Skill Level Behavioral Objectives (SLBO) are widely used in education as an aid to both the teacher and the student. While simple in structure, they allow the teacher to be specific about the changes that are to be expected in student behavior and allow the student to know specifically what performances constitute success for each objective. Each SLBO has a statement of an experience and a set of behavior(s) that satisfy the SLBO. In the SLBO format it is intended that both the leader/teacher and the student/client know what knowledge and ability are expected. Boredom is eliminated by making the objective relevant to the student/client. One of the objectives in the use of SLBO's in the classroom is the reduction in or elimination of boredom. One such example is: "When the student/client is presented with a computer running a windows operating system with a standard word processor, the student/client is able to compose and print a simple assigned sentence." Following are several of the ministries of the Champaign leadership and one or more SLBO for each, specifying a goal which is shown to the client and for which mastery is shown by the student/clients performance.

Book Exchange: Champaign has a recreational library of about four thousand books, which is run as an exchange library. Students or adults may have up to five books at a time without charge.

SLBO: After reading a book, the client is able to discuss the static content (low level: Names and situations) and/or (high level: morals and ethics) Book content.

Computer Internet Laboratory: Champaign has about fifteen Windows computers and several Debians.

SLBO: (Fluency with and command of Basic Word Processors) When the student/client is presented with a computer running a windows operating

system with a standard word processor, the student/client is able to compose and print a simple assigned sentence.

Community Craft Closet: Champaign has a large assortment of craft items and manipulation of them is of value to clients. The client sorts the items of the collection and selects items to be fixed to correct the situation and is then able to explain what was done. The client is also able to state a rule for the assembly of the components. The underlying concept is the ability to identify and assemble resources, then plan production

Ministries of the Champaign, Illinois Church of the Brethren:

(With one or more SLBO's topics for each)

- Sunday, Worship (Reading and commenting on what was read)
- Sunday Shul (Listening skills)
- Tuesday Prayer Meeting (Relationships to God and clients)
- Wednesday Bible Study (Depth of study, Contribution)
- Reference Books Usage (Find information, organize as assigned)
- Culture Club After School (Relate to self and others, locate resources)
- Food Pantry (Organize and produce balanced diet for self or others)
- Clothing Closet (Sort and organize: for work, or play, or school, or employment)
- Rhythm Drumming (Read music for rhythm, mimic performance)
- Community Garden (Many skills needed, Production of food, herbs, decorative plants)
- Recipe use and cooking (Given recipe, assemble required materials, produce food)
- Amateur Radio Licensing Classes (answer FCC Exam Items: Tech, General, Extra exams)

DE Ponderings

So then, putting away falsehood, let all of us speak the truth to our neighbors, for we are members of one another. Be angry but do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, and do not make room for the devil. Thieves must give up stealing; rather let them labor and work honestly with their own hands, so as to have something to share with the needy. Let no evil talk come out of your mouths, but only what is useful for building up, as there is need, so that your words may give grace to those who hear. And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with which you were marked with a seal for the day of redemption. Put away from you all bitterness and wrath and anger and wrangling and slander, together with all malice, and be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ has forgiven you.

—Ephesians 4:25-32 (NRSV)

Pick any topic, according to Dr. Steve Ambrose, and there will always be another strong opinion. Ambrose names a few of these topics in an article he wrote and published on LinkedIn: guns, kneeling for the national anthem, pronouns, President Trump, Hillary Clinton, Fox, CNN, company leadership decisions, selling tactics, best investments, what TV shows to watch, the best way to cook steak. Other subjects to add to this list could be: the Bible, sexuality, creation care, theology.

Ambrose contends, and I agree, that strong opinions are not wrong. However, the ability to navigate these differences with civility is a problem agreed upon by 95% of Americans (a statistic Ambrose conveys). Ambrose and his wife, Nellie, have created a movement to bring back civil discourse called Walk the Ridge. The movement logo, pictured here, captured my attention, especially the explanation of it.

Embedded in the logo is a peace sign, promoting civil discourse in daily personal and online interaction with others. Under the peace sign is the ridge of a mountain, the place we come to when we choose to rise above that which keeps us separate. The Ambrose's contend that when people of differing opinions walk the ridge together, they can see the valley from which the other came and understand more deeply their perspective, and, in fact, can see the beauty on both sides. Two faces, each a different shade of purple, appear in the logo representing the conversation between two people of diverse ideological views. The logo is purple, a combination of red and blue, colors that often divide us. This color represents healthier communication and respectful disagreement among those with different views.

And, the phrases, the core values of Walk the Ridge, are visible in the logo: I See You, I Hear You, I Respect You.



I appreciated the explanation of the core values on their website. I See You: SEEING people means seeing them as humans first. We all laugh, we all cry, we all have joys, we all have sorrows. It's about seeing people for who they really are, not the box we put them in when their opinions or beliefs are different than ours. I Hear You: HEARING is the ability to become a more active listener. Having the desire to recognize why people think the way they think—and how their values have shaped them. It's about listening to understand, instead of listening to respond. I Respect You: RESPECT means acknowledging an individual's values and opinions—without being forced or compelled to change your own. To restrain from name calling, shaming, judging, and belittling. To honor the right of others to express their opinions, while maintaining your right to respectfully disagree with civility.

The Ambrose's, from what I can tell, refrain from connecting their understandings to any faith related values. Thus, I would not be surprised by concerns raised that their intentions are seen as anything other than moving us to just get along with one another and all will be well. I would offer alternative thoughts. To climb the mountain, to leave our own comfortable valleys to see the other side is not easy work. Real commitment is necessary and it requires strength beyond our own to reach the ridge, to leave behind for a moment our sacred valley, and to respectfully view the valley on the other side of the ridge. In a number of ways, the Ambrose's thoughts connect well to Ephesians 4. By not grieving the Holy Spirit, which will happen when we intentionally listen and honor the other with respect, that same Holy Spirit will give us the power we need to reach the ridge and find some beauty in the other valley.

None of this requires us to change our minds. But it does require of us that we speak with care, that we practice kindness, that we dignify the other with the respect we show to them. And in all this hard work—walking the ridge, if you will—we'll see the work of God in Christ in our lives and our living.

Are we ready to walk the ridge...together?

Church of the Table: A New Church Plant



Joshua Longbrake, an ordained minister in the Church of the Brethren, recently relocated from the Pacific Southwest District to Chicago. Joshua is excited about church planting and provided a proposal to the District Leadership Team to begin the Church of the Table. The Leadership Team has enthusiastically endorsed Joshua's proposal and gave approval by consensus for the ministry to move forward.

Church of the Table will be a Chicago-based, Church of the Brethren affiliated, church plant scheduled to begin in May and will meet, rent-free, in St. John's Episcopal Church in the Irving Park neighborhood of Chicago. Theologically, the church will be devoutly Trinitarian with a high Christology and a firm belief in the importance and reality of the cross, burial, and resurrection of Jesus and its modern day relevance and impact. There will also be an emphasis on the traditional ordinances: baptism, communion, and the washing of feet.

Church of the Table will be service-oriented and outward-focused, adhering to Jesus' call to go into the world and make disciples.

The name, Church of the Table, comes from the idea that everything leads towards and away from the table, from communion, from the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus. All are fed by Jesus and enough is available for any person who sits with the church. The table is open for everyone.

To learn more about Joshua and this new emerging ministry, visit www.churchofthetable.com and www.facebook.com/churchofthetable.

National Youth Conference – IL/WI Youth

Matt Rittle, Pastor of the Franklin Grove congregation, has volunteered to coordinate efforts for the IL/WI District Youth to attend National Youth Conference in Ft. Collins, CO, July 21-26, 2018. Matt would be interested in knowing about youth in our district congregations so that he can send information and make contacts as needed. He has set up a google.doc seeking your help in making connections. You can access the google.doc at <https://goo.gl/forms/TqDspEnyZs4Aj7KI2> and complete it to help Matt serve the district youth.

For more information about NYC visit www.brethren.org/yya/nyc/.

District Conference 2018

It's not too early to begin making plans to attend District Conference this fall!

The Conference will be held at the Cerro Gordo Church of the Brethren, Cerro Gordo, IL, Nov. 2-3.

Moderator Paul Kohler is leading the conference with the theme, Preach the Word, based on John 1:1,14.

Auctions are planned again this year! Stayed tuned for additional information as the Program and Arrangements Committee makes known its plans for conference, which will be published in future issues of the district newsletter. Watch for information as it is published on the district website (www.iwdcob.org) and Facebook page (www.facebook.com/iwdcob). Information will also be sent to church offices within the next few months. If you do not see information in any of these places, please contact the district office and we'll be glad to share conference material with you. Conference is a great time to catch up with friends from across the district, to worship together, and to learn about the good ministry in which we are involved!

Disaster Relief Work

South Central IN, Illinois/Wisconsin districts along with Beth-EL Mennonite from PA had a beautiful and productive week working side by side in Eureka, MO. Thanks to all for joining hearts and hands to help recovery in Eureka! Special thanks to Loren Habegger, Jason Barrett & Gary Haney sharing the photos.



VENTURES IN CHRISTIAN DISCIPLESHIP: Upcoming Course **Empowering Small Congregations**

Mar. 17, 2018, 9am-Noon CST

Presenter: Bobbi Dykema, Pastor and Professor serving in the Pacific Northwest District of the Church of the Brethren

Subject: Revitalizing Worship through the Arts

Imagine a worship service where any or all of the pieces—from the call to worship to the benediction—contained new surprises: words, images, sounds, and experiences that would engage the scripture and the congregation, all ages, in new ways. Now imagine these exciting new ways of being church happening in your congregation!

Creativity is a God-given birthright to all of God's children, and scripture calls us to bring our best before the Lord. The challenge of crafting innovative worship doesn't have to take a lot of time or money, just joyful open hearts. Join us to learn how!

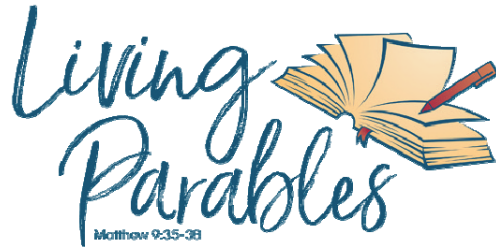
Pre-Annual Conference Pilgrimage **Diakaios and Discipleship**



Congregational Life Ministries is sponsoring a pre-conference pilgrimage beginning July 3 and continuing through July 5 exploring parts of Cincinnati near the Ohio River. This event will consider themes of civil rights, liberating stories, and the Underground

Railroad. For more details and registration materials, please visit www.brethren.org/dikaios.

MODERATOR VISIT



Samuel Sarpiya
2018 Annual Conference Moderator

Samuel Kefas Sarpiya is the lead pastor and church planter of Rockford Community Church (IL/WI District) and the co-founder Center for Nonviolence and Conflict Transformation, Rockford Illinois. As a church planter and community organizer, Samuel is passionate about the intersection between peacemaking and the gospels as taught by Jesus Christ. He also has training in the principles of Kingian nonviolence of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s which inspires Samuel's continued conviction for practical peacemaking.

Drawing from Jesus' teaching on nonviolence and peace; as a pastor, Samuel is making his pastoral presence by impacting the Rockford school systems, by training the local Rockford police department's command staff and management in nonviolent principles. With several community partners, Samuel has developed The Mobile Tech Lab and the Mobile Art Lab in Rockford IL was also first established as educational community hub with a modern twist for at-risk youths in Rockford IL to provide mentorship, teach nonviolence and productive skill sets for the future.

For his local and international work, Samuel received the 2016 Jane Addams Peace award from the Rockford Housing Authority in 2016. Samuel is a graduate of the University of Jos, Nigeria with a Diploma in Social Work and holds a Master's of Divinity in Conflict Transformation from Bethany Theological Seminary. Samuel is currently a Doctoral candidate in Semiotics and Future Studies at George Fox University, in Portland Oregon. Samuel is married to Gretchen Sarpiya and they are blessed with three beautiful girls, Anna 14, Ella Joy 12, and Deborah 10. Their multicultural family has roots in Nigeria and South Africa, has lived in Hawaii.

When: Sunday, May 6, 2018

Where: Dixon Church of the Brethren, 215 N. Court St, Dixon, IL

Time: 4:00pm

Open to everyone! Refreshments provided! No cost!

Please RSVP by April 27, 2018, by calling or sending email:

Dist. Office ph.: 309-649-6008 Dist. Office email: andreag.iwdcob@gmail.com

Newsline

-- A series of "Pilgrimage Bible Studies" for the World Council of Churches' Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace are available as free, online resources. "Seven pastor-scholars have crafted new Bible studies to enable congregations everywhere to wrestle with biblical insights into their journey of faith and the imperatives of contemporary discipleship that lie behind the Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace," said a WCC release. Susan Durber, a Reformed minister in the United Kingdom and moderator of the WCC's Faith and Order Commission, commented that the Bible studies "provide food for the journey.... As the pastor of a small local congregation...I need so much to have the Bible in my 'knapsack' for the journey of faith and for my own pilgrimage, with others, on the path of justice and peace. It is a repeated wonder and blessing to me that even the most familiar passages so often bring new light into my days and open up new paths for these tired pilgrim's limbs. I need daily bread for body and soul, and in reading the Bible with others I find food for the journey." The Bible studies are a project of a Theological Study Group of the WCC, written by pastors and scholars from Indonesia, Italy, Korea, the Netherlands, Tonga, the US, and the United Kingdom. One of the authors, European Mennonite scholar Fernando Enns, has worked with Brethren to encourage the WCC to focus on peacemaking issues over the years. Currently seven Bible studies are posted online, the first of a dozen that will be issued during 2018, the 70th anniversary of the founding of the WCC. Go to www.oikoumene.org/en/what-we-do/pilgrimage-of-justice-and-peace/bible-studies.

-- Annual Conference moderator Samuel Sarpiya will be a special guest at the Gathering Chicago on Sunday, Feb. 11, at 5 p.m. The Gathering is a local and global prayer center ministry and new church plant of Illinois and Wisconsin District, based in Hyde Park. Participants will gather for a dinner and prayer service, "praying especially for our Church of the Brethren friends, congregations and ministries globally and locally," said an invitation. "In particular, we ask you and your churches and ministries to be welcome to send your prayer requests and prayer petitions by Feb. 9 to gatheringchicago@gmail.com that we may join in prayer with and for you.... If you are able to join us in person, please let us know." LaDonna Sanders Nkosi is the convening pastor for the project.

Peace in Retreat

By Joyce Person

The warmth of the sun, a path in the woods,
yellow faces of daffodils, chirping of birds in the trees
uninterrupted by the sound of a lawnmower,
surrounded by God's creation and a peace that
shuts out a world of turmoil!

Wind rippling the pond water as geese float serenely
by, tree branches bending low as if to reach into the
water.

The sound of rushing water under the bridge
as it hurries to escape the pond, becomes
a rapidly flowing brook. I spied an ant hill as a
scolding squirrel,
rudely startled as I passed by, let me know I had
interrupted his quest.

As I continued on the path, a magnificent stand of
pine trees
was reaching high above the mossy path that I follow.
Where does it lead? Where am I going?

The aroma of the trees seemed to be at one
with a blanket of fragrant pine needles on the path.
Ah, now the trail winds to the right and there across
the path

is a downed tree trunk!
Is it meant to stop me, or a challenge to continue?
I crossed it, hanging onto a branch, lest I fall.

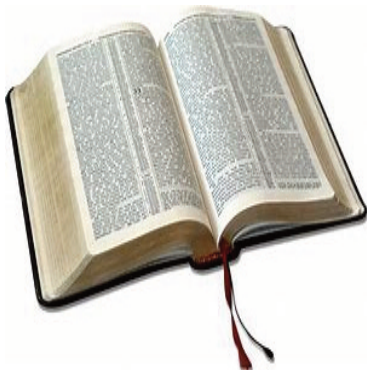
Now I am on my way.
The distant sound of the lawnmower reassures me.
I am headed in the right direction.

I haven't found Emerson,
but I have communed with God's creation.

(This poem was created during the Spring 2017 clergy continuing education event on Theopoetics led by Bethany Theological Seminary professor, Scott Holland.)

Biblical Authority Conversations

April 23 – 25, 2018
Hueston Woods Lodge and Conference Center
College Corner, Ohio



Biblical Authority Conversations is open to pastors and ministers, other congregational leaders, and interested church members.

We will be offering 1.0 CEU to those who participate in the entire conference. The cost is included in your registration.

Conference planners:
Torin Eikler
Kris Hawk
Kevin Kessler
David Shetler
Beth Sollenberger

We are grateful for support from:
Illinois/Wisconsin District
Michigan District
Northern Indiana District
S/C Indiana District
Northern Ohio District
Southern Ohio District
Ministry Excellence Project

Schedule

Monday

4:00 Registration
7:00 Welcome
7:30 Worship
8:30 Fellowship

Tuesday

Breakfast (Included)
8:30 Morning Devotions
9:00 The Bible and the COB
Morning Conversations:
The Bible I cherish and the Bible that challenges.
Lunch – On your own
Afternoon
Forward together when my cherished is your challenge?
6:00 Dinner (Included)
7:30 The Big Story

Wednesday

Breakfast (Included)
8:30 Morning Devotions
Morning Conversations:
Why the conversation counts
11:30 Prayer and Sending

Keynote Speakers

The Rev. Jason Barnhart serves as the director of Brethren Research and Resourcing at the Brethren Church National office in Ashland, Ohio. He has experience as a pastor and university chaplain and is completing doctoral work at LaSalle University in Philadelphia, Pa.

The Rev. Karoline M. Lewis is the Marbury E. Anderson Chair in Biblical Preaching at Luther Seminary; she previously taught at Candler School of Theology, Columbia Theological Seminary and Augsburg College. Lewis is the author of *SHE: Five Keys to Unlock the Power of Women in Ministry* and is a regular preacher and presenter at the Festival of Homiletics.

Conversation Facilitators

Denise Kettering Lane, Associate Professor of Brethren Studies & Director of the MA Program at Bethany Theological Seminary.

Dan Ulrich, Wieand Professor of New Testament Studies at Bethany Theological Seminary.

Drama

Ted Swartz of Ted and Co. combines scripture, story and humor. Both theater and seminary trained, he has found a unique and entertaining discovery: at the intersection of humor and biblical story is at least a different and often a greater understanding of the text. Ted will perform "The Big Story" bringing Old and New Testament characters to life in unexpected and entertaining ways.

Worship Leadership

Michaela Alphonse is in pastoral ministry at the Miami First Church of the Brethren in Miami, Florida. She also coordinates the theological training and student scholarship programs for Mission Evangelique des Eglises des Frères D'Haiti and is a program volunteer for Global Mission and Service. She is our Monday evening preacher.

Registration

Name _____

Address _____

Email _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Diet Restrictions _____

Include a check made out to South/Central Indiana District for \$75.00. Please mark BA Conference on the memo line.

Check if you would like CEUs.

Send to:
S/C Indiana District
604 N. Mill St.
North Manchester, IN 46962

Housing

Housing **MUST** be arranged directly with Hueston Woods. Double rooms are \$115.09/night including tax. Call 513-664-3510 before March 15 to make your reservation.

IL/WI District Calendar

Feb. 181st Sunday in Lent
Feb. 19Presidents' Day (District Office Closed)
Feb. 252nd Sunday in Lent
Feb. 285:30 p.m.: Property & Asset Management Team Meeting
March 310 a.m.: Gifts Discernment & Call Committee Meeting
March 43rd Sunday in Lent
March 7District Newsletter Articles Due
March 9-12Mission & Ministry Board Meeting, Elgin, IL
March 11Daylight Saving Time Begins
 4th Sunday in Lent
March 12District Potluck Planning Meeting
March 178 a.m.: Ministerial Leadership & Development Team Meeting
March 185th Sunday in Lent
March 25Palm Sunday
March 29Maundy Thursday
March 30Good Friday
April 1Easter Sunday
April 4District Newsletter Deadline
April 710 a.m.: District Leadership Team Meeting, Oakley Brick COB
April 149 a.m. - noon: Ventures in Christian Discipleship
April 19-22Brethren Benefit Trust Committee and Board Meetings
April 2110 a.m.: Program & Arrangements Committee Meeting, Cerro Gordo COB
April 22Earth Day
April 23-25Biblical Authority Conference