

Reflecting news and views

The Reflector

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

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District Executive: Kevin Kessler

Moderator Notes

My uncle, Raymond Haynes, passed on a few years ago and his treasures were divvied out to younger members of the family. My son, Peter, was given Uncle Ray's Bible, which Peter lost little time in showing to me. I was surprised to find it printed in Greek. I was even more surprised at my son's glowing statement that Greek was the language in which Jesus taught and preached. The Talmud teaches the religious rules regarding language in the synagogue, as well as speaking or teaching in public (Jerushalmi: Megilla: I: 5A-5C). Jesus grew up by the rules of the Torah (first five books of the Old Testament), the Talmud (Commentary), and the Mishna (Rules). His entire community lived by these rules. If Jesus committed an unclean act, such as speaking Greek in the synagogue or while teaching, they would not listen. This is because Jesus would be committing the unclean act of godly teaching in an alien language. One of the instructional books for Hebrew says: "A father would do better to teach his son to eat pork than to study the foreign tongue". Jesus' followers in and around Nazareth (Nazritz) would expect to hear scripture read or discussed only in Assyrian. Any other language would be unclean and people would refuse to listen. This rule has not changed: Some worship may be spoken in English, but most scripture must be spoken in Syriac. However, it may be repeated in English afterwards. While in Nazareth and surrounding areas, Jesus only spoke Syriac.

My son, Peter, was upset because at his seminary, modern Hebrew was taught one semester every two years. I was also informed that many Seminaries teach Jesus spoke Greek while teaching in the synagogue. This would not have been possible.

While I was in Washington D.C., I received a huge surprise. I was at the Library of Congress searching for organ music--five volumes, which contained many works of Emma Louise Ashford. I already have three of the five volumes and was searching for the other two. Unfortunately, a Congressman already checked out the entire set and had not returned them. I was out of luck, but they promised to try to find the missing music. Thus, I left the library feeling badly.

I hailed a cab, got in, and told the cabbie where I wanted to go. I noticed the cab's dashboard had a rock and a plastic fish. I said: "The rock that was rolled aside and the fish". The driver smiled and answered: "Are you Nazritzii?" I was surprised beyond measure. I said: "Are there congregations still?" We then engaged in conversation. He was Warden of the Synagogue, and he was also a Christian. He stated that he is "Meshiakhii", or "He follows the Messiah". It is agreed among his friends that one who raises people from the dead is at least a prophet, although some also believe he is the Messiah. I didn't stay long and was disappointed to find out that the closest Nazritzim are in Chicago and in St. Louis. That is most definitely farther than a thousand steps.

It seems that I have lots to keep me busy: organ playing, music digitization for the Music Library of Berlin, studying Syriac, and also writing notes. God be with us all. Also, there is still a need for two piano and organ players for District Conference this upcoming November. If you are interested in playing, please call Carol Kussart at Cerro Gordo Church of the Brethren.

—Paul Kohler

DE Ponderings

I made my way to the church in the early twilight of Easter Sunday, April 1, 2018. It was a clear, crisp morning. The stars were shining. The sun shone brightly through the stained-glass windows during the Sunrise Service and Easter Worship. By the time I made my way back home later in the morning, clouds had filled the sky. About noon, or thereabouts, when I went outside to assist a guest who had arrived at our home for Easter dinner, I noticed in the air a few snowflakes floating gently toward the ground. The cloud cover was light so I assumed a few flurries would be the extent of the snowfall. Well...was I wrong. By evening nearly 3" of the fluffy white ice crystals had accumulated. Was this Mother Nature's April fool's joke? The wintery-look the earth was wearing certainly didn't seem very spring-like.

Mother Nature may play a joke on us occasionally, but the wonder of Easter offers us much more than a foolin'. Easter offers us hope. Easter offers us confidence. Easter offers us courage. Easter offers us strength. No foolin'!

Understand the power of Easter in this way. When Jesus came into this world, he came as Immanuel, God with us. In all of Jesus' life, as an itinerant preacher and teacher, as one who mentored followers, as one who touched and healed many, he was God with us. Jesus practiced in his living the promise of always being present. When crucifixion occurred, that promise seemed to come to an end. But on the third day, what seemed distant and gone was once again close and present. Not even death could keep Jesus from being with us.

Matthew, in the gospel given his name, concludes the book with these words from Jesus: "And surely I am with you, to the very end of the age." Jesus is with us always.

But this continual presence is not, in my view, a security blanket that we snuggle under for constant protection and comfort. No, the presence of Jesus is there to give us hope, confidence, courage, and strength to continue the anointed purposes for which Christ came in the first place.

Remember the words of the prophet Isaiah Jesus read in the synagogue?

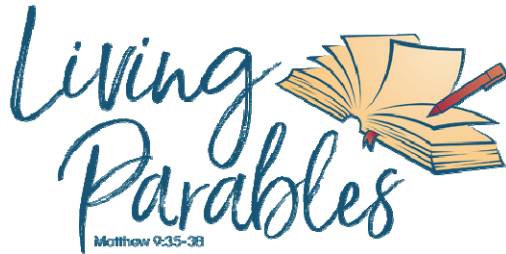
"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,
because he has anointed me
to bring good news to the poor.
He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives
and recovery of sight to the blind,
to let the oppressed go free,
to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."
(Luke 4:18-19)

These are not words indicating a life of luxury and ease. This is an indication of hard work and the need for additional hope, confidence, courage, and strength beyond one's own treasure of these resources.

That Jesus was anointed speaks of the power and presence of God with him to accomplish these purposes. These anointed works are continued through us with the power and presence of Jesus increasing our treasure of personal resources. We, then, have the hope, confidence, courage, and strength to carry on and out what Jesus Christ came to accomplish.

Easter opens us up to this promise. Easter IS this promise. No foolin'!

MODERATOR VISIT



Samuel Sarpiya
2018 Annual Conference Moderator

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: andreas.iwdcob@gmail.com

Two significant leaders for civil rights, one born on April 4, the other assassinated on April 4, provided us with valuable and timeless messages. May their memories and their work continue to guide us in understanding the value and dignity of all of humanity.

Maya Angelou

(April 4, 1928 – May 28, 2014)

...as an activist, she was one of the Civil Rights Movement's most prominent women, who worked with Martin Luther King Jr. and Malcolm X, and devoted her life to being a tireless voice for women and black people — and for an open-hearted vision of humanity where all could find their place. On May 28, 2014, the great Maya Angelou passed away at the age of 86, leaving a legacy that will surely be cherished for many decades to come.

Quote by Maya Angelou:

You may write me down in history with your bitter, twisted lines. You may trod me in the very dirt, but still, like dust, I'll rise.

Link to her poem *Still I Rise*:

www.poemhunter.com/poem/still-i-rise

Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

(January 15, 1929 – April 4, 1968)

...was an American Baptist minister and activist who became the most visible spokesperson and leader in the civil rights movement from 1954 through 1968. He is best known for advancing civil rights through nonviolence and civil disobedience, tactics his Christian beliefs and the nonviolent activism of Mahatma Gandhi helped inspire.

Quote by Martin Luther King:

Peace is not merely a distant goal that we seek, but a means by which we arrive at that goal.

Link to his speech *I've Been to the Mountaintop*:

www.cnn.com/2018/04/04/us/martin-luther-king-jr-mountaintop-speech-trnd/index.html

Events for April:

April 7

District Leadership Team Meeting, 10 a.m., Cerro Gordo

April 9—14:

Bethany DE Gathering

April 14

Ventures in Christian Discipleship

April 19—21

BBT Committee and Board Meetings

April 21

P&A Meeting, Cerro Gordo

April 22

Earth Day

April 23—25

Biblical Authority Event (If you are interested, there is still time to sign up!)

May 2

District Newsletter Article Deadline



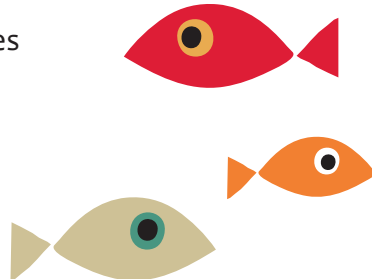
Special Needs. Special Gifts.™

Second Anniversary Celebration & Fundraiser

Saturday, April 28, 2018 from 4–7 p.m.

Imago Creative Studios • 216 Prairie Street, Elgin, IL

- Live music
- Drawings for prizes and giveaways
- Parables celebration video and stories
- Light food and beverages
- Free-will donations will be collected
- *Bring your family and friends!*
Kid-friendly event!



**Can't make the party?
You can still donate!**

Scan this QR Code
with your smart phone:



Or visit:

www.parablescommunity.org

Or mail a check to:

Parables Community
1 South 071 Luther Avenue
Lombard, IL 60148

Parables Community is a church where everyone belongs and everyone serves.
We believe each person has gifts to share for the benefit of all.

parablescommunity@gmail.com • 630-991-0473

From *Newsline*

The Church of the Brethren e-mail news service, to subscribe go to cobnews@brethren.org

The following two open positions at Bethany Theological Seminary are in the Admissions and Student Services Department and have immediate start dates.

Admissions Recruiter to oversee direct contact with potential students to help generate robust enrollment at Bethany Theological Seminary and work with students to complete the full application process. This person will engage in face-to-face interactions and must be able to demonstrate excitement and enthusiasm in a wide variety of recruitment situations. This position requires extensive travel within the United States. Salary will be commensurate with qualifications. Qualifications include admissions experience and a bachelor's degree in a theological field, preferred; a bachelor's degree in a nontheological field with admissions experience is acceptable. Affinity with the values and mission of the seminary is required and an understanding of the Church of the Brethren, in the Anabaptist-Pietist tradition, is preferred. Applicant should demonstrate knowledge of multicultural competency and the ability to communicate and interact with potential students. Communication will be needed with individuals at all levels of denominational involvement as well as higher educational structures (e.g., program chairs, school officials and faculty). Applicants should demonstrate strong interpersonal and oral and written communication skills, a collaborative working style, self-motivation, and task-management skills. The use of social media and electronic communication is expected.

Director of Student Development and Alumni Relations to have primary responsibility to design, implement, and review a student development plan and a retention plan for Bethany students. The director will lead a vibrant program to engage Bethany alumni, collaborating with the Institutional Advancement Department when appropriate. This is an opportunity for a person with strengths in caring for details and supporting colleagues in the mission of the Admissions and Student Services Department. Qualifications include a minimum of a master's degree; a master of divinity is preferred. Affinity with the values and mission of the seminary is required. Qualified applicants will be personable and able to be self-directed, manage a complex workload with attention to details, offer support to colleagues, and have the ability to connect with current students

as they become alumni. Multitasking skills are needed to manage the current student development needs while working to connect with alumni, regionally and nationally, in various ways.

For a complete job descriptions, visit www.bethanyseminary.edu/about/employment. Application review will begin immediately and will continue until appointments are made. To apply send a letter of interest, resume, and contact information for three references to recruitment@bethanyseminary.edu or by mail to Attn: Lori Current, Bethany Theological Seminary, 615 National Road West, Richmond, IN 47374. Bethany Theological Seminary's policy prohibits discrimination in employment opportunities or practices with regard to race, gender, age, disability, marital status, sexual orientation, national or ethnic origin, or religion.

Bethany Theological Seminary is seeking a director of student development and alumni relations. This person will have primary responsibility to design, implement, and review a student development plan and a retention plan for Bethany students. The director will lead a vibrant program to engage Bethany alumni, collaborating with the Institutional Advancement Department when appropriate. This is an opportunity for a person with strengths in caring for details and supporting colleagues in the mission of the Admissions and Student Services Department. Eligible applicants will hold the minimum of a master's degree; a master of divinity is preferred. Affinity with the values and mission of the seminary is required. Qualified applicants will be personable and able to be self-directed, manage a complex workload with attention to details, offer support to colleagues, and have the ability to connect with current students as they become alumni. Multitasking skills are needed to manage the current student development needs while working to connect with alumni, regionally and nationally, in various ways. This position has an immediate start date. For a complete job description, visit www.bethanyseminary.edu/about/employment. Application review will begin immediately and will continue until an appointment is made. To apply, send a letter of interest, resume, and contact information for three references to recruitment@bethanyseminary.edu or Attn: Lori Current, Bethany Theological Seminary, 615 National

Road West, Richmond, IN 47374. Bethany Theological Seminary's policy prohibits discrimination in employment opportunities or practices with regard to race, gender, age, disability, marital status, sexual orientation, national or ethnic origin, or religion. Bethany Theological Seminary equips spiritual and intellectual leaders with an Incarnational education for ministering, proclaiming, and living out God's shalom and Christ's peace in the church and world.

The World Council of Churches (WCC) seeks a director for the Commission on World Mission and Evangelism, a position located in Geneva, Switzerland. Starting date is Sept. 1. Contract duration is four years. Objectives are to lead, inspire, and direct the work of Mission and Evangelism, sustaining and developing close relationship with the commission and promoting programmatic work conducted within the framework of the WCC towards the visible unity of church. Responsibilities include to support the work of the commission, prepare its meetings and coordinate reporting follow up; give leadership to the mission and evangelism team, ensuring the planning, monitoring, evaluation and reporting projects and activities and the implementation of plans within the approved WCC budgets and policies; help churches and missionary bodies or movements to dialogue on each other's understanding and practices of mission and evangelism, with a view to enhance common witness and mission in unity; develop a network of relationships with persons and bodies responsible for and/or involved in mission and evangelism within the WCC's member churches, affiliated bodies and a wider constituency, including Evangelical and Pentecostal churches and movements; be responsible for training in mission and evangelism, and for organizing seminars on these and related topics in different parts of the world, if needed in cooperation with the Ecumenical Institute in Bossey; inspire theological reflection on the ecumenical understanding and practices of mission and evangelism through regular publication of the International Review of Mission; work together with staff in other programmatic and transversal areas ensuring an integrated approach in the council's work. Qualifications include a university degree in theology, preferably in missiology; a minimum of five years of experience and a strong track record in project management, preferably in an international, ecumenical, and/or church-related environment; ability to represent, interpret, and communicate the positions of the WCC to partners, intergovernmental organizations,

other stakeholders, and WCC constituencies; excellent command of written and spoken English; knowledge of other working languages of the WCC (Spanish, French, and/or German) is an asset; sensitivity to multicultural and ecumenical settings with respect to gender, race, disability, and age diversity; prepared to travel up to 20 percent of work time. The deadline for applications is April 30. Full applications (curriculum vitae, motivation letter, application form, copies of diplomas, and recommendation letters) are to be sent to recruitment@wcc-coe.org. The application form is available at www.oikoumene.org/en/get-involved/job-openings. The WCC is an equal opportunity employer. The sole criteria for recruitment, training, and career opportunities are qualification, skills, experience, and performance to all its staff members.

The leadership team of Illinois and Wisconsin District has approved moving forward with Joshua Longbrake in developing the Church of the Table, a new church plant in Chicago, Ill. Church of the Table will begin meeting on Saturday, May 26, at 5:30 p.m. at St. John's Episcopal Church (3857 N. Kostner Rd, Chicago). Services will be held on Saturdays weekly thereafter. Find out more at www.churchofthetable.com.

A new Dunker Punks Podcast Episode has been uploaded. "Where does social power come from? Laura Weimer joins us again to go in depth on privilege and power and some new insights she's gained through studying social work. She asks some challenging questions for us to reflect on," said an announcement. The Dunker Punks Podcast is an audio show created by more than a dozen Brethren young adults from across the country. Listen to the latest on the episode page: http://bit.ly/DPP_51 or subscribe on iTunes: http://bit.ly/DPP_iTunes.

The Mission Alive conference will be webcast, announces the Global Mission and Service office. "We are only four weeks out from Mission Alive 2018, your chance to celebrate and explore the global Church of the Brethren!" said the announcement. "For those not able to attend in person, you can experience the conference via webcast. The webcast will include worships, keynote speakers, and selected workshops." Find a link on the conference website. Registrations are still being accepted at www.brethren.org/missionalive2018.

“Brethren Go Baroque” was the name of a group who represented the Church of the Brethren General Offices at a “Bach Around the Clock” event at First United Methodist Church in Elgin, Ill. Led by flautist Emily Tyler of the Workcamp Ministry and pianist Nancy Miner of the General Secretary’s Office, the group included Brethren Press publisher Wendy McFadden, Youth and Young Adult Ministry director Becky Ullom Naugle, Annual Conference assistant Jon Kobel, and News Services director Cheryl Brumbaugh-Cayford, with Joel and Chris Brumbaugh-Cayford filling out the bass line. One of their pieces was a hymn text written by Brethren founder Alexander Mack Sr., set to music by Bach.

In the latest episode of the Dunker Punks Podcast, Manchester College student Nolan McBride shares his search for a church-going experience similar to that of the Church of the Brethren while he studies abroad in the United Kingdom. Nolan compares and contrasts his experience in the UK to his experiences being raised in the Church of the Brethren. The Dunker Punks Podcast is an audio show created by more than a dozen Brethren young adults across the country. Listen to the latest on the episode page at bit.ly/DPP_Episode52 or subscribe on iTunes at http://bit.ly/DPP_iTunes .

Brethren Benefit Trust (BBT) seeks to fill two positions:

A client manager for the Brethren Foundation. The primary function is to provide field presence and backup support for the director of the Brethren Foundation and the manager of Brethren Foundation Operations. This position will allow for increased capacity of servicing clients and will provide backup support for Foundation staff. The ideal candidate will have an undergraduate degree in business and a strong working knowledge of investments. The successful candidate may be required to obtain additional financial credentials. This position requires a person who enjoys working with people; is detail oriented and has the ability to prioritize workloads; is proficient with computer systems and applications; and possesses exceptional organizational skills. Impeccable follow-up abilities are a must. BBT seeks candidates with strong verbal and written communications skills, proficiency in

Microsoft Office Suite, demonstrated track record of providing superior customer service, and a willingness and ability to expand knowledge and effectiveness through classes and workshops. Current and active membership in the Church of the Brethren is preferred; current and active membership in a faith community is required.

A retirement planning consultant. The primary function is to provide financial education and appropriate resources to members in our Pension Plan and Insurance Plans, aiding them in their goals to get them to and through retirement. Duties include creating and administering a financial planning program that empowers members in their retirement readiness preparations. Identifying and promoting appropriate financial planning tools (i.e. pension recordkeeping interface, Money Tree software, and other planning tools), while supporting participants in meeting their personal financial goals. The ideal candidate will have an undergraduate degree in business and a strong working knowledge of financial planning/investments. Additional designations will be required to obtain (i.e. CRPC or CFP). This position requires a person who enjoys working with people; is detail oriented and has the ability to prioritize workloads; proficient with computer systems and applications; and exceptional organizational skills. Impeccable follow-up abilities are a must. BBT seeks candidates with strong verbal and written communications skills, proficiency in Microsoft Office Suite, and a demonstrated track record of providing superior customer service and a willingness and ability to expand knowledge and effectiveness through classes and workshops. Current and active membership in the Church of the Brethren is preferred; current and active membership in a faith community is required. This position requires some business travel.

These are full-time, exempt positions based at the Church of the Brethren General Offices in Elgin, Ill. Salary and benefits are competitive with organizations of comparable size and scope of services. A full benefits package is included. Send a letter of interest, résumé, three professional references, and salary-range expectation to Donna March at 1505 Dundee Ave., Elgin, IL 60120, or dmarch@cobbt.org . For more information about Brethren Benefit Trust visit www.cobbt.org .

National Youth Sunday materials are now available online at www.brethren.org/yya/national-youth-sunday.html . The suggested Sunday for youth leadership in worship is May 6. The theme for this year is the National Youth Conference (NYC) theme, inspired by Colossians 3:12-15: "Bound Together: Clothed in Christ." Materials include original worship resources such as prayers, calls to worship, invocations, scripture jams, a children's story, music suggestions, and a sample sermon, among others.

Highland Avenue Church of the Brethren in Elgin, Ill., is hosting and co-sponsoring a performance of "This Evil Thing," a one-man play written and performed by Michael Mears. The performance is scheduled for April 13 at 7:30 p.m. Co-sponsors are Brethren Volunteer Service (BVS) and the Center for Conscience and War. The play tells the story of English conscientious objectors during World War I. "'This Evil Thing' is the compelling, inspiring and rarely told story of the men who said no to war; and the men and women who supported them," said an announcement, "involving a dizzying journey from a chapel in Yorkshire to the House of Commons; from an English country garden to a quarry in Aberdeen; from a cell in Richmond Castle to a firing squad in France. With military conscription still in force in many countries today, and prisoners of conscience still languishing in jails, the questions posed are as relevant and urgent as they were 100 years ago." A free-will offering will be received.

In the latest episode of the Dunker Punks Podcast, Emmett Witkovsky-Eldred shares his interview with Krisanne Vaillancourt Murphy of the Catholics Mobilizing Network(CMN). Learn more about how CMN is working to abolish the death penalty and hear thoughts on Christian advocacy in the political scene. Listen on the episode page at http://bit.ly/DPP_Episode53 or subscribe to the podcast on iTunes at http://bit.ly/DPP_iTunes .