

The Reflector

An e-publication of the Illinois & Wisconsin District of
the Church of the Brethren



The Village ILWIDlot
September 2021

“We shall not cease from exploration, and the end of all our exploring will be to arrive where we started and know the place for the first time.”

I came across this quote by the great 20th-century poet T.S. Eliot during a recent visit to Minneapolis, on a display in Loring Park. It’s long been among my favorites, and it felt appropriate to come across it again now, as it feels like things have come full circle in many ways.

When I left Illinois in 2010 to serve as campus pastor at Manchester University, I didn’t expect that the road would lead back here again. “Way leads on to way,” as another poet, Robert Frost, once said. After I moved back to the East Coast in 2016 to help out with a family health situation, I figured I was probably out that way for the long term. Yet here I am. God’s call does indeed come in mysterious ways.

And as I return to Illinois/Wisconsin in this new role as district executive—arriving back where I started in many respects—I do feel like I know it anew. After the experiences I’ve had along the way and the people I’ve met, my appreciation for the blessings present in this district and its congregations and people and camps and other organizations has grown deeper. I’ve also come to better understand the tapestry of the larger church and how its various pieces work together to carry out ministry. Ministry can be hard, but it’s good, meaningful work.

So I’m eager to jump in as we seek together to continue the work of Jesus in our communities and our world. I’ll be balancing the half-time work of this position with a part-time call as chaplain at Illinois Wesleyan University, eventually splitting my time between Lombard and Bloomington. Sundays, Mondays, and Fridays will be my primary workdays for the district, and I plan to have a “satellite office” at York Center Church of the Brethren (1S071 Luther Ave., Lombard, IL 60148). For these first few months, though, I’ll be doing some of the work virtually as I complete some commitments in Maryland.

Most congregational visits thus will need to wait until late November, but in the meantime, I hope to do some virtual connections with you (including one noted below!), and please contact me via email or phone if you have questions or need anything, or you can contact Andrea at the district office.

As time permits, I want to do some regional meetings and listening groups, either in person or virtually as schedules and the pandemic permit. I also plan to send out a survey to get a better idea of the priorities and needs you see for our district, and the hopes you have. Some exciting events are already lined up for the coming months, and more will be added as ideas and plans come into focus.

Let’s begin the journey.

Walt Wiltschek

Moderator's Musings

by Blaine Miner

Early on in my vocational path, I was a counselor for those individuals who experienced problems with drugs and alcohol. The path eventually led me to be a chaplain, first at a state mental health center, then serving as a chaplain in one state-run juvenile prison, and finally three prisons for men. During that time, I was able to know the difference when a client was genuine about their goals. There was a subtle difference in their tone when they were speaking about what they thought I wanted to hear and what they were going to accomplish.

I have been around individuals in my role as counselor, chaplain and pastor who due to pride do not want to accept charity/aid. Part of this feeling comes from their self-esteem and their self-perception. To accept aid means admitting failure in their ability to be self-sufficient.

I wonder if in our rush to be helpful and in our desire to provide assistance, if we trample over the feelings of those we want to help. Are our reasons for extending charity honest? Because of our many resources which we wish to share, have we developed an attitude of superiority? Have we developed the thought that we are better because we have, and you do not?

Donating to a charity is easy. We can write a check, take items to a pantry, or clothing to a shelter. Taking the time to get to know recipients of our charity takes time and energy. In our rushed society, we look for the expedient and efficient way of completing the task.

What is our purpose in giving? Are we giving because of the tax write-off? Are we giving because it is the thing to do? Or are we giving because we are wanting to be faithful to our commitment to Christ?

When we are authentic it shows. If we are being true to our faith, those we reach out to know the gift is because we care, not that we are showing off or putting them down.

As we strive to be faithful Christians let us remember the lessons Jesus taught in being gracious and righteous with one another.

Changes in the District Office

Most of you know that Walt Wiltschek started as our District Executive on September 1. While we are

quite excited about his coming back to our District in this capacity, we are also extremely grateful for Connie Burkholder's expertise and work as our Interim District Executive. She has done an outstanding job helping us maintain continuity with ministry, programming, and pastoral placement as we are transitioning from Kevin Kessler to Walt.

There will be further changes coming soon: Andrea Garnett, our awesome Administrative Assistant, will be going on a 12-week family leave in the near future, as she will be induced the week of September 19. Doing the office work during Andrea's leave will be Anna O'Brien. Office hours (10 to 15 hours per week) during that time will be up to Anna, as she is a student. Andrea and Anna have already been spending some time together so that Anna knows what to expect before Andrea's leave starts. Anna will be using Andrea's office email address, so please continue to email andrea.garnett@iwdcob.com if you would like to contact the district office. The district phone number (309-649-6008) will also continue to be checked daily.

Andrea plans to continue in her job as Administrative Assistant after her leave. She and Connie have worked well together at a distance, and Walt has expressed confidence that they will have a fine virtual working relationship too. Therefore, the physical District office will remain at the Canton church, and we are thankful for their willingness to let us remain in their space.

Program and Arrangements Committee and the Canton congregation have been working at the details of District Conference planning and paperwork to relieve the load on Andrea and on Anna, who is not familiar with the process.

Our district treasurer, who is currently Ellis Boughton, will be overseeing the financial end of things. However, the financial work that was once delegated to Andrea is now outsourced to Supporting Strategies. Leadership Team felt that it was important to have an outside firm take care of bookkeeping, bill-paying, and payroll. Supporting Strategies started their work in July, and we are still transitioning into this arrangement.

Even with these substantial changes and the care we have tried to take, Leadership Team believes that we can still continue the work of the District and in the District office as we have been. We ask for your prayers and patience during this time.

2021 District Conference Update

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the Program and Arrangements committee has made the decision to hold the 2021 District Conference virtually on November 6, 2021. This decision was made with prayerful consideration, out of an abundance of caution, and for the safety of all concerned. This year's

conference will follow a similar format to the 2020 Virtual District conference which was a shortened format. We will once again use Zoom to connect with one another. We look forward to being able to safely meet in person at the 2022 District Conference. Please watch for more information as it becomes available.

Pastoral Transition

On June 6, the Polo Church of the Brethren voted to call **Jeffrey Davidson** to be their new pastor. Jeff and his wife, Julia Gilbert, have been living in the Washington, DC/Northern Virginia area. The Washington City COB has been their home base for a number of years, and Jeff has been part of the preaching and pastoral care ministry there. Jeff and Julia are both graduates of Bethany Theological Seminary. They will be moving to Polo for Jeff to begin his part-time ministry there on October 1st. We welcome them to Polo and to the Illinois/Wisconsin District! We also give thanks to the Polo Church search committee for their diligent work!

Joyce Person has been serving as Interim Pastor at the Polo Church during this transition time. She stepped in when **Leslie Lake** retired due to health issues. We are grateful for Joyce's ministry during these months. She is looking forward to returning to her musician role at the Dixon Church of the Brethren.

Pastoral Move

Leslie and Bob Lake have moved to West Salem, Ohio as of mid-August. Leslie had pastored the Polo Church for several years before suffering a stroke. We give thanks for her leadership at Polo and within the district over these years. Bob was on the district's Ministerial Leadership Development Team of the District and served as secretary. We give thanks for his faithful service as well, and pray good health and God's blessings for them both as they make this transition back to Northern Ohio District where they had lived and worked previously.

In Our Prayers

A Memorial Service for **Pauline Dulabaum** will be held on Saturday, September 18, 10:30 a.m. at Highland Avenue Church of the Brethren in Elgin. Pauline passed February 22, 2020. Her husband, Willard "Duly" is one of our district's ordained ministers who has served in interim ministry in the district. Nevin Dulabaum, president of Brethren Benefit Trust, is Pauline and Duly's son. Mary

Dulabaum, Nevin's wife, is a member of the District Leadership Team. We extend our Christian sympathy and care as they celebrate Pauline's life and mark her passing.

Office of Ministry makes available documents for 2022 pastor salary and benefits

Church of the Brethren Newsline

July 16, 2021

The Church of the Brethren Office of Ministry has sent out its annual e-packet of documents for the Cash Salary Guidelines and Table for pastors for the upcoming year, 2022. The packet has been provided to the 24 district offices across the denomination, and select documents also are available to download from the Office of Ministry webpage for forms at www.brethren.org/ministryoffice/forms.html.

Some documents included in the packet are:

- A 2022 cover letter from Nancy Sollenberger Heishman, director of the Office of Ministry.
- The 2022 Cash Salary Table and Guidelines, which are also available on the Office of Ministry webpage for forms.
- Documents pertaining to the Employment of Licensed Ministers and to Bethany Seminary student placements.

The annual start-up and renewal agreements for pastors and congregations are not included in the packet but are available online, as downloadable and fillable pdf forms on the Office of Ministry webpage for forms.

For more information or questions contact nsheishman@brethren.org.

Calling the Called Event – October 23, 2021, 9:00 am – 12:00 Noon

The Calling the Called Committee invites all who may be sensing a call from God to ministry to join us for a morning event on October 23 on Zoom. We will explore call stories from the scripture and from the lives of Church of the Brethren leaders, share in some reflection time, and hear some presentations on how to discern God's call and what some next steps may be.

Please see the flyer for other information. Here's a link to register: <https://forms.gle/Z2wFPNEkc9AnEtUC9>

Lisa Fike, Chairperson
Marty Creager
Lynda Willmann
Purvi Satvedi
Walt Wiltschek, District Executive

If you have questions, please contact the District Office or one of the committee members listed below.
We look forward to having you join us!

CALLING THE CALLED
DISCERNMENT
DISCIPLESHIP
DIRECTION



WHEN
October 23, 2021
9 a.m.—Noon

WHERE
Zoom—link provided by the
district office after registration

Register:
[https://forms.gle/](https://forms.gle/Z2wFPNEkc9AnEtUC9)
Z2wFPNEkc9AnEtUC9

YOU ARE
INVITED TO:

A SPECIAL IL/WI
DISTRICT EVENT
IN CONJUNCTION
WITH THE
CALLING THE
CALLED
COMMITTEE

A TIME TO:
Explore, Reflect, and
Discern the Call
Hear other's stories
Explore pathways to
Ministry

ALSO INCLUDED:
Presentations by
Interim DE Connie
Burkholder and future
DE Walt Wiltschek
Sharing of Call stories

A Story of Stewardship

Jesus told his followers to give what they could to further God's work here on earth. We are asked to give ten percent of our earnings. The Cerro Gordo congregation decided to sell its parsonage, and to tithe ten percent of the proceeds from that sale. At our May council meeting, our members voted to give half of that tithe to the District of IL/WI and the other half of the tithe to Brethren Disaster ministries. This amount is in addition to Cerro Gordo's annual pledged monies to the District. During the past year-plus of restrictions due to COVID-19, the Cerro Gordo congregation has been blessed by the faithful giving of its members and by the successful sale of the parsonage. We are called to share these blessings and, as a congregation, we felt we should do just that. The District of IL/WI not only needs our mental and spiritual support, but it needs our financial support as well. Our District connects each of our congregations in these two states and connects us to the larger church. We encourage each congregation to support our District financially to the fullest support that it can. Thank you for doing so.

Carol Kussart, board chair, Cerro Gordo
District Leadership Team Chair

Position of Executive Director of institutional Advancement Open at Bethany Seminary

If you or someone you know might be interested in applying, please see the link below:

<https://bethanyseminary.edu/jobs/executive-director-of-institutional-advancement/>

Link to Church of the Brethren video report

- from Nancy Miner

The video report of the Church of the Brethren ministries is now available at <https://youtu.be/MwlypFFe7DM>. We hope that you will be able to share this video during your district conference.

This video report, as well as the written and pictorial Annual Report, is also posted on the Church of

the Brethren website at <https://www.brethren.org/about/annualreport/>. We would be grateful if you would share these links with members of your district via your district newsletter or your website.

2021 Peace Essay Contest Winners



Bethany Theological Seminary has selected the winners in its 2021 Peace Essay Contest. Funded by the Jennie Calhoun Baker Endowment, the contest is open to students in graduate school, college, or high school. Cash prizes are awarded to the top three entries. This year's contest solicited entries on the theme, "Civil Resistance and Nonviolent Social Change in an Increasingly Virtual World."



Matthew Wiley, of Chicago, earned the \$2000 first prize for his essay "Spirit, Flesh, and the Algorithm." Wiley is a PhD student at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, where he is researching ecclesial division and unity. He also works as an editor at the Henry Center for Theological Understanding. He and his wife belong to Boulevard Presbyterian Church, where they lead the youth ministry.



The \$1000 second prize was awarded to **Izaza Izeowayi**, a 24-year-old Nigerian writer and poet, for his essay, “Knowledge, Action, and Hashtags: The Effective Means to be Involved in Nonviolent Social Change in an Increasingly Violent and Virtual World.” Izeowayi is currently completing an undergraduate degree program in marketing at the University of Port Harcourt. He lives and writes in the City of Port Harcourt.



Carol Davis, of Canton, Ill. was awarded the \$500 third prize for her essay, “The Stories Will Rise.” Davis earned a Master of Arts in Theopoetics and Writing from Bethany as well as master’s degrees from Illinois State University and the University of Missouri. She recently retired as a vice president of Spoon River College where she continues serve as an adjunct instructor and artistic director of a community performing arts troupe. She has a background as a playwright and journalist.

“We were very pleased with the three winning essays, and we offer congratulations to these writers,” says Scott Holland, Slabaugh professor of theology and culture, who directs Bethany’s Peace Studies program. He organized the competition with assistance from a student, Susu Lassa. “We are grateful to all the writers who took time during a very challenging year to write about this important topic.”

Wanted: Jesus in the neighborhood stories

- From Newsline

We want to hear your “Jesus in the Neighborhood” stories! How is your congregation living “Jesus in the Neighborhood”? How are your members acting as Jesus’ hands and feet?

The Church of the Brethren congregations webpage at www.brethren.org/church now features stories about congregations from *Messenger* magazine and Newsline. Take a look for some instant inspiration.

We welcome photos, write-ups, or links to what your church is doing and being. Send materials to cobnews@brethren.org. Your submissions may be included in an upcoming issue of Newsline and/or *Messenger*, or may be posted to the congregations page.

While on that page, check your church listing and send updates to yearbook@brethren.org. Recently, the congregations page at www.brethren.org/church has been viewed hundreds of times per week. Don’t miss the opportunity to offer updated links and contact information for your congregation or fellowship to those visiting the page.

Questions about “Find a Church” or the congregations webpage can be directed to cobweb@brethren.org.

Brethren Academy for Ministerial Leadership announces latest listing of courses

Church of the Brethren Newsline
May 27, 2021

Following is the latest listing of upcoming courses offered by the Brethren Academy for Ministerial Leadership, a collaboration between the Church of the Brethren’s Office of Ministry and Bethany Theological Seminary.

Unless otherwise noted below, find more information about these upcoming courses and register at www.bethanyseminary.edu/brethren-academy.



Oct. 13-Dec. 7: **“Introduction to the New Testament”** is offered as an online course taught by Matt Boersma. Registration deadline: Sept. 8.

Oct. 22-24 plus Oct 14 and Nov 4, from 6-8 p.m. (Eastern time): **“Technology and the Church”** is offered as a Zoom intensive taught by Dan Poole, faculty at Bethany Seminary. Registration deadline: Sept. 17.

Oct. 31: **“Kingdom Building in Worship”** is offered by the Susquehanna Valley Ministry Center (SVMC). Currently planned to be in-person at Stone Church of the Brethren in Huntingdon, Pa., it will be taught by Cindy Laprade Lattimer, Marty Keeney, and Loren Rhodes. Said a description: “Sundays are relentless. Worship happens every...single...week. It is a spiritual, cognitive, emotional, and sensory experience. But without careful planning, worship can easily become stale, unimaginative, and bland. This seminar is designed for anyone who has a role in planning worship: pastors, music leaders, lay ministers. We will use both presentations and workshop components to support attendees in developing a process for planning worship that is meaningful, Christ-centered, cohesive, thoughtful, and sensitive.” To register, go to <http://events.r20.constantcontact.com/register/event?oeidk=a07ehj4eg4pe32f3e5a&llr=adn4trzab>.

Winter/Spring 2022:

First two weeks of January 2022: **“A Place of Refuge: Urban Ministry”** is offered in Atlanta, Ga., as an intensive taught by Josh Brockway of the staff of the Church of the Brethren Discipleship Ministries. Registration deadline will be announced.

Feb. 2-March 29, 2022: **“Church of the Brethren History”** is offered as an online course taught by Denise Kettering-Lane of the Bethany Seminary faculty. Registration deadline: Dec. 20.

March 25-26 and April 29-30, 2022, Fridays 4-9 p.m. and Saturdays 8 a.m.-4 p.m. (Eastern time): **“Pathways for Effective Leadership, Part 1”** is offered as a Zoom intensive through the SVMC, taught by Randy Yoder. Registration deadline: Feb. 25, 2022. To register, contact Karen Hodges at hodgesk@etown.edu.

April 27-June 21, 2022: **“Heaven, Hell, and the Afterlife”** is offered as an online course taught by Craig Gandy. Registration deadline: March 23, 2022.

New Ventures Season Begins with Course on “Christ, Culture, and God-talk for the Coming Church”

The Ventures in Christian Discipleship program at McPherson College begins its 2021-2022 season with an evening course on “Christ, Culture, and God-talk for the Coming Church.” The course will be held online on Tuesday, September 14 at 5:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m. Central Time and presented by Scott

Holland.

The statistics cannot be disputed about our shifting religious demographics in North America. We are not only witnessing the end of “white Christian America,” but a numerical spike of those who identify as Nones, those who no longer identify with a religious institution or denomination yet still profess faith, and the Dones, those who are finished with religion. At the same time, some sociologists of religion suggest the number of persons who confess they are “spiritual but not religious” is the fastest growing “religious” demographic in the United States. Many are looking for new ways to name themselves and render God’s name in history. Our Anabaptist forebearers composed a compelling theology for the 16th century as they exited the organized church. Our Pietist spiritual ancestors offered a creative corrective to Anabaptist visions and voices in the 17th and 18th centuries. Do we have an equally engaging God-talk for our 21st century cultural and spiritual contexts and possible coming church? We will explore this question together as we also ponder a meta-question that begs to be addressed in this season of church and culture wars: “What is the purpose of religion?”

Scott Holland is the Slabaugh Professor of Theology & Culture and Director of Peace Studies at Bethany Theological Seminary. He also directs Bethany’s growing programs in Theopoetics and Writing. He has pastored Church of the Brethren and Mennonite congregations in Ohio and Pennsylvania. He writes and speaks about public theology in ecumenical and interfaith classrooms, congregations and conferences.

Continuing education credit is available for \$10 per course. During the registration process, you will have the opportunity to pay for CEUs and give an optional donation to the Ventures program.

To learn more about Ventures in Christian Discipleship and to register for courses, visit www.mcpherson.edu/ventures.

‘How has the pandemic changed your worship habits?’

Yearbook takes survey

Church of the Brethren Newslines

August 19, 2021

By James Deaton

COVID-19 affected the ways in which we worship. Many congregations responded by offering ways to gather online, and this shift will change how worship attendance is counted and then reported to the Church of the Brethren Yearbook Office.

All Church of the Brethren congregations—whether they offer online worship or not—are encouraged to complete this 5-minute survey.



Survey results will guide denominational staff as we improve Yearbook forms and the ways in which we collect worship attendance. We also hope to better understand how our congregations have responded to the pandemic.

Please complete the survey by Sept. 10. Results will be announced in a future report. Thanks for your participation!

Go to the survey at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/COVID-19-worship-habits>.

If you have questions, contact Jim Miner, Yearbook specialist, at 800-323-8039 ext. 320 or yearbook@brethren.org.

— *James Deaton is managing editor of Brethren Press. Find out more about the Church of the Brethren Yearbook at www.brethren.org/yearbook. Purchase a copy of the current Yearbook at www.brethrenpress.com/ProductDetails.asp?ProductCode=1654.*

District Leadership Team Meeting Places 2021

October 9, 2021: 9 a.m., Zoom

November 13, 2021: 9 a.m., Zoom

District Leadership Team

Moderator (1 year term): Blaine Miner, Dixon

Contact: blaineminer86@gmail.com

847-404-6635

Moderator-elect (2 year term): Harold Rose, Canton

Contact: hrose@cantonusd.org

309-357-3590

Clerk (3 year term): Kristi Kellerman, Highland Ave.

Contact: kristi.kellerman@gmail.com

815-814-1360

Recording Secretary: Jan Dietrich, Mt. Morris

Contact: jdiet220@hotmail.com

815-738-2365

Standing Committee (3 year term): Dennis Webb, Naperville

Contact: djkrwebb@hotmail.com

630-236-8166

Financial Secretary (3 year term): Christine Knotts, Peoria

Contact: knotts.christine@gmail.com

309-253-6802

Treasurer (3 year term): Ellis Boughton, Yellow Creek

Contact: ellis.boughton@live.com

815-864-2049

Interim District Executive: Connie Burkholder

Contact: crburkholder56@gmail.com

620-245-4600

Andrea Garnett, Administrative Assistant

Contact: andreag.iwdcob@gmail.com

309-649-6008

Carol Kussart, Chair; Cerro Gordo

Contact: ckussart@gmail.com

217-855-3258

Phyllis Batterton, Vice-chair; Woodland

Contact: pjbatterton@gmail.com

309-759-4897

Ed Watkins, Peoria

Contact: watrkinsedwardjc@gmail.com

309-397-2401

Mary Dulabaum, Highland Ave.

Contact: mdulabaum@gmail.com

847-695-2652

Kyle Brinkmeier, Yellow Creek

Contact: brinkky@hotmail.com

815-291-4664

Jonathan Shively, Highland Ave.

Contact: shively.jonathan@gmail.com

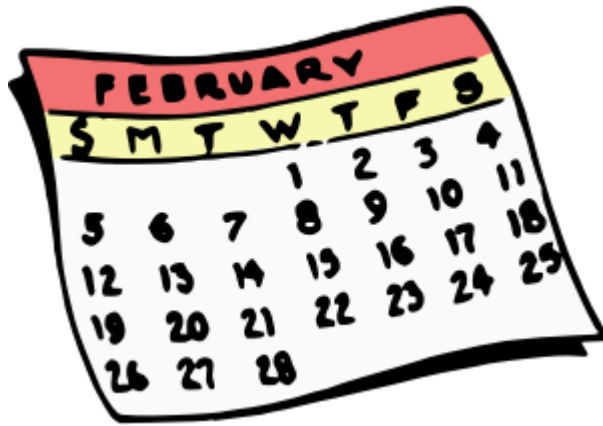
847-644-1174

District Website

When is the last time you visited the [IL/WI District Website](#)? There you'll find helpful information about your district including but not limited to:

- [District Calendar](#)
- [Eco-Stewardship](#)
- [District Newsletter](#)
- [Ministries](#)

Don't delay! Check it out! See what you can learn about your district!



Upcoming Events

September 21, 7pm: P&A Meeting, Zoom
September 25, 9am: CRDT Meeting
October 2, 9am: MLDT Meeting
October 9, 9am: Leadership Team, Zoom
November 13, 10 am: Leadership Team
January 11, 9 am: District Potluck Meeting

Newsline

— **Bobbi Dykema**, pastor of Springfield (Ill.) Church of the Brethren, has written an article on “Visual Arts: Protestant” for the *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Religion*. A summary is online

at <https://oxfordre.com/religion/view/10.1093/acrefore/9780199340378.001.0001/acrefore-9780199340378-e-804>. Access to the full article is available for a fee.

— **Updated submission information for *Messenger***, the Church of the Brethren magazine, has been posted at www.brethren.org/messenger/submissions. The information may help those who would like to submit articles for consideration by the magazine’s editorial team. Subscribe to the magazine by contacting your congregation’s *Messenger* representative or go to www.brethren.org/messenger/subscribe.

— **Manchester University in North Manchester, Ind., has announced an estate gift of \$1.2 million** that will provide scholarships to students. “The widow of a 1947 Manchester graduate has left a \$1.2 million gift to the University in memory of her husband,” said a release. “The Keith Kindell Hoover Memorial Scholarship Fund will provide scholarships to any worthy Manchester students at the direction of Gerda W.

Hoover, who died in 2019.” Keith Kindell, who died in 2003, studied communication studies at Manchester, earned a bachelor of divinity from Bethany Theological Seminary and a doctorate in psychology from Northwestern University, and studied at the University of Hamburg, Germany. It was there that he met Waltraud Gerda Wolff and they married in 1952, settling in Lombard, Ill. He maintained a clinical psychology therapy practice and taught college-level classes. Gerda Hoover earned a master’s degree in German literature from Northwestern and taught high school and college German. She also published four books of poems and stories. For more information call the Manchester University Office of Advancement at 260-982-5412.

— **Brethren Disaster Ministries is seeking a long-term disaster project leader to serve on a volunteer basis**, working at various domestic disaster recovery projects. This person will become part of the recovering community by helping to foster good relationships with short-term disaster response volunteers and the disaster survivors. The volunteer will work with other disaster project leaders as part of a leadership team. The office manager disaster project leader is responsible for supporting the volunteer housing site and office management. This includes working in Microsoft Office and Google Workspace, and being a primary source of project communications by phone, in person, and via email. Responsibilities also include tracking and reporting of finances and paperwork for volunteers and clients as well as completing other project responsibilities as needed, building relationships with local partners, coordinating scheduling, and supporting incoming volunteer groups and leaders. Must be at least 21 years old, willing to move around the country depending on assignment, and willing to represent the Church of the Brethren and to be a Christian witness. The length of service will be discussed but at least seven months is preferred. Other requirements include good interpersonal, communication, organizational, and problem-solving skills; flexibility; and a valid driver’s license. Housing, meals, and transportation are provided. A stipend is available, as needed. A detailed position description is available. Contact Brethren Disaster Ministries director Jenn Dorsch-Messler for more information or questions at jdorsch-messler@brethren.org or 410-635-8737. A detailed position description is available.

— **A collection of historical photos of the construction of the Church of the Brethren General Offices** in Elgin, Ill., has been posted online by the Illinois Digital Archives. The photos were provided by the Brethren Historical Library and Archives. Gail Borden Library, the public library in Elgin, also was involved as part of its project to collect and digitize historical photos of various parts of the city. View the collection at www.idaillinois.org/digital/collection/newgailbord01/id/38806

— **Bethany Theological Seminary in Richmond, Ind., seeks an executive director of Institutional Advancement** to manage the overall operations of development, alumni

relations, local community relations, and institutional communications. This position strategizes and actively works to build relationships with a variety of constituents, enlists financial support for the seminary, and serves as a member of the president's Leadership Team. For details and how to apply, go to <https://bethanyseminary.edu/jobs/executive-director-of-institutional-advancement>.

— **Registration is now open for the “Mediation Skills Training Institute for Church Leaders”** at the Lombard Mennonite Peace Center, to be held on Oct. 11-15 and Nov. 15-19. The two identical sessions will be held online via Zoom. “This workshop is designed to help church leaders deal more effectively with interpersonal, congregational, and other forms of group conflict,” said an announcement. For a complete list of training events offered by the center, including a one-day “Conflict Transformation Skills and Healthy Congregations” training, go to www.lmpeacecenter.org/all-events.

— The Office of Peacebuilding and Policy is pleased to welcome **Galen Fitzkee** on staff as this term's Brethren Volunteer Service worker! Galen recently graduated from Messiah University with a degree in Peace and Conflict Studies and minors in politics and Spanish. He hopes to use these strengths to engage on issues related to Latin American Policy and Immigration, among other things. Galen is originally from Lancaster, PA and is a member of the Lancaster CoB.

— The following three BVSers have served in Elgin, IL over the past year and are finishing their terms of service this month.

Kara Miller has served through BVS for the last two years in Elgin, IL – first as Assistant Workcamp (now FaithX) Coordinator and most recently as Assistant Orientation Coordinator in the BVS Office. Her last date of service will be August 12, 2021.

Alton Higgs has served as an Assistant FaithX (formerly Workcamp) Coordinator in the BVS Office, and his last date of service will be August 13, 2021.

Chad Whitzel has served as an Assistant FaithX (formerly Workcamp) Coordinator in the BVS Office, and his last date of service will be August 13, 2021.

We thank them for their volunteer service and wish them well in their future endeavors.

— Church of the Brethren would like to announce a new open position for Database Support Specialist. This position could be based at the General Offices in Elgin, IL or Brethren Service Center in New Windsor, MD. Please read the attached posting for further details. Interested applicants should send their resume to COBApply@brethren.org.

— **Dana Cassell** has resigned as the program manager of the Thriving in Ministry Initiative for the Office of Ministry. She will conclude her work with the Church of the Brethren effective September 16. Dana has served in this role since January 7, 2019. She continues in her role as pastor of Peace Covenant Church of the Brethren in Durham, N.C., and plans to increase her engagement with local community ministries as she continues to serve multi-vocationally.

The Church of the Brethren and the Office of Ministry are deeply grateful to Dana for her exceptional service and wish her well in her future endeavors.

— **The Church of the Brethren seeks a database support specialist** to fill a fulltime hourly position based either at the denomination's General Offices in Elgin, Ill., or at the Brethren Service Center in New Windsor, Md. The major responsibility is to oversee and supervise the use of the organization's database system and to enter and edit data that is collected across the whole organization, in consultation with the director of Information Technology. Skills and knowledge required include a positive customer service attitude, ability to work collaboratively, excellent communication skills, strong analytical critical thinking and problem-solving skills, strong understanding and knowledge of relational databases, and a working knowledge of Raiser's Edge or comparable software, database infrastructure, Microsoft 365 Office Suite, Microsoft Access and Excel, among others. A minimum of two years of significant relational database experience and a minimum of a bachelor's degree in information technology, computer science, database administration, or related field are required. Advanced training certifications may be advantageous. Applications are being received and will be reviewed on an ongoing basis until the position is filled. Send a resume to COBApply@brethren.org. The Church of the Brethren is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

— **Michael Brewer-Berres** began work as the new Orientation Assistant for Brethren Volunteer Service on Monday, August 23rd, and is living in the Elgin BVS House. She was part of the summer orientation unit 325 in 2020. Following orientation, Michael served through BVS at Quaker Cottage in Belfast, Northern Ireland. Michael attended Alma College in Alma, MI and graduated with a Bachelor's degree in English in 2018.

— **Atlantic Southeast District seeks a half-time district executive minister.** The district territory includes Florida and Georgia, although there are currently no churches in Georgia. In Florida there are 18 congregations: 9 English speaking, 7 Kreyòl speaking, and 2 Spanish speaking. These congregations span the geography of the state, minus the panhandle, with churches from north to south on both coasts and in the center of the state. The virtual district office is located wherever the district executive lives within the

district. There is no administrative assistant. Camp Ithiel, located just outside of Orlando, is the camp affiliated with the Church of the Brethren, and one of the congregations is located on the campgrounds. This half-time position of approximately 100 hours per month requires travel both within and outside of the district. Responsibilities include directing, coordinating, managing, and leading the district ministries as authorized by the District Conference and implemented by the district board; working with the congregations in calling and credentialing ministers and in the placement, call, and evaluation of pastoral staff; providing support and counsel for ministers and other church leaders and sharing and interpreting program resources for congregations; providing an important link between the congregations, district, and denomination by working collaboratively with the Council of District Executives, the Annual Conference, the Conference agencies, and their staff. Qualifications and required experience include ordination within the Church of the Brethren with commensurate educational background, which includes at least one of the following: Master of Divinity, Doctor of Ministry, TRIM/EFSM certificate; clear commitment to Jesus Christ and New Testament values; knowledge of and adherence to Church of the Brethren faith and heritage; respect for diverse biblical interpretation consistent with Church of the Brethren beliefs and practices; demonstrated leadership skills in organization, administration, and communication, including ability to supervise a district staff that includes four part-time staff positions; understanding and valuing the district's unique diversity with the aim of including all congregations in developing and carrying out the mission to grow and revitalize congregations. Pastoral experience preferred. Apply by sending a letter of interest and resume to Nancy Sollenberger Heishman, director of ministry for the Church of the Brethren, via email to officeofministry@brethren.org. Applicants are requested to contact three people to provide letters of reference. Upon receipt of a resume, a candidate profile will be sent that must be completed and returned before the application is considered complete. Applications will be accepted until the position is filled. Translation of documents into Spanish or Haitian Kreyòl can be provided upon request. La traducción de documentos al español se puede proporcionar a pedido. Tradiksyon dokiman an kreyòl ap disponib si gen yon demand.

— **Camp Blue Diamond in Petersburg, Pa., seek a gifted individual with a passion for outdoor ministry to serve as program director.** The camp is a 238-acre retreat facility, summer camp, and family campground nestled within the Rothrock State Forest, affiliated with the 55 congregations of the Middle Pennsylvania District of the Church of the Brethren. The mission of Camp Blue Diamond is to encourage discipleship of Jesus Christ and to facilitate growth and healing in each person's relationship with God, others, themselves, and the created world. The main role of the program director is to oversee all aspects of programming, managing and supervising summer staff, organizing retreats, helping to coordinate rental groups, assisting with kitchen and housekeeping duties during

Outdoor School, and participating in Camp Board meetings, church visits, and the American Camp Association. Outdoor ministry at Camp Blue Diamond requires flexibility and teamwork. In this spirit, the program director may be called upon to provide help in other areas of camp as needed, and is accountable to the executive director and the board of directors. Qualifications include strong interpersonal skills as well as leadership, organization, and communication, along with a basic knowledge of program development, computer skills, and marketing. A bachelor's degree is required, along with camp leadership experience. The applicant should be a Christian and a member of the Church of the Brethren or have an appreciation and understanding of Brethren beliefs and values. This fulltime, salaried position includes health benefits, a generous PTO/holiday package, and onsite housing and utilities. Review of applicants will begin Oct. 1. It is expected that an appointment will be made in November with an anticipated start date in January 2022. For a full position description and information about how to apply, visit www.campbluediamond.org/openings%2Fapplications. Or contact Jerri Heiser-Wenger, executive co-director, at campbluediamond@verizon.net or 814-667-2355.

— **The Church of the Brethren Office of Ministry has published a newsletter** highlighting recent developments in the office and updates on programs such as Part Time Pastor/Full-Time Church and the work of the Pastoral Compensation and Benefits Advisory Committee, among other topics. Find the newsletter linked at www.brethren.org/ministryoffice.

Supporting Your District

The IL/WI District is active in a variety of ministry and mission efforts, both directly and indirectly. For these efforts to continue, resources are needed. Assets available to keep ministry and mission moving along include you (people serving people), tools (tool trailer w/ tools for disaster response work), knowledge and wisdom (years of experience and access to institutions of learning), and, of course, money (endowment, reserves, congregational and individual giving, bequests).

Assets are abundant but unless these gifts are cared for there is potential for depleting them. Therefore, district teams and the combined efforts of many work diligently to ensure asset sustainability.

Still, it is important to know where gaps exist, or a little extra boost would be helpful. For instance, our district has deep interest in and long-standing support of disaster relief efforts. A separate fund is established to assist folks who give of their time and travel great distances to assist. The district's Disaster Relief Fund is hovering around \$1,000.00. Sending a team to serve on a disaster response

site can cost nearly \$500 or more. To ensure the sustainability of this important ministry, designated gifts to this fund are welcomed and deeply appreciated. Having funds available to assist with travel may be the difference of someone sharing their gifts or staying home. Consider making a contribution!

Other options are available for contributing, as well, including the following:

- Endowment Fund
- Mission and Mortar Fund
- General Fund
- Emerging Ministries
- Ministry Training

Every gift regardless of size is a significant boost to the abundance of assets in our midst. All contributions ensure that our district goes beyond the plateau of survival to the pinnacles of thriving, providing ample opportunities to serve faithfully.

GIFTS DISCERNMENT AND CALL COMMITTEE

The Gifts Discernment and Call Committee (GDCC) is commissioned to discern the gifts of persons for the purpose of inviting and calling them in to positions of leadership and team/committee participation. The GDCC delves into this work based on the names and information available to them. The likelihood is that gifted persons are not invited and called to serve because the GDCC lacks names and information. If you feel compelled to serve in the district and have not been asked, you can connect to the district [webpage](#) and learn how to share your name and information with the GDCC. Simply complete the online profile form after clicking on the “online profile form” link in the website article. Or call the district office (649-6008) and a profile form will be emailed to you.

Do you know someone you believe has gifts to serve at the district level? Invite them to visit the district webpage or share their name with the GDCC or district office.

Serving is rewarding!

District Mission and Mortar Grant/Loan Program

Is your congregation beginning a new mission outreach program but a little short on cash? Is your congregation faced with a major repair or capital improvement project that exceeds your

congregation's capacity to pay for it? Did you know that the district has a program to assist with your needs? It's called the Mission and Mortar Grant/Loan Program and is available to help meet the needs mentioned above.

Grants are available up to \$2,500.00 and non-interest bearing loans up to \$5000.00. A congregation that applies must provide financial data and be a regular contributor to the district. Applications are considered on a first-come first-served basis and are reviewed/approved by the district Leadership Team.

If you would like more information or wish to apply, visit the [district website](#). Send completed applications to the IL/WI District Office, 269 E. Chestnut St., Canton, IL 61520.