

District Conference *Wrap Up*

NORTHERN OHIO DISTRICT CHURCH OF THE BRETHREN—SEPTEMBER 2023

Thank you Maple Grove!

It was with great joy that people from all over our district gathered at the Maple Grove Church of the Brethren for our Northern Ohio District Conference.

The Maple Grove Church of the Brethren provided such a gift of hospitality from greeting each one at the door to providing opportunities to pray together to the hours spent making the wonderful food they shared. Over 30 volunteers worked together to make this a meaningful event. And while it is impossible to thank each individual that served through the weekend, we will mention several here that put a vast number of hours into making this happen.

Scott Freer served as Maple Grove's on-site Coordinator working to make sure all the on-site details were covered.

Deb Callihan and Nancy Bassett coordinated the planning, cooking, and serving the meals.

Pastor Steve Keib brought greetings and served food!

Peggy Elchert and Donna Kettering coordinated the child care and children's activities.

Travis Kettering, Sue Bradley, Justin Dyer, and Jay Kettering coordinated the audiovisual set-up in multiple locations.

Clyde Benner coordinated the ushers.

Each of these servants had multiple people working with them to accomplish these tasks.

Thank you Maple Grove!



Moderator James Washington

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*2024 Northern Ohio
District Conference
August 9-10*

Tina Hunt, Moderator

District Conference Ballot

2023-2024 District Board

Chair – Terry Baldwin, Lick Creek

Vice Chair – Mark Pollock, Brook Park

Secretary – Agnes Hayhurst, Reading*

Congregational Commission:

Chair – **Beverly Wengerd, Paradise***

Vice Chair – Mike Huffaker, Sugar Creek West

Secretary – Steve Keib, Maple Grove*

Member – Mark Pollock, Brook Park

Connections Commission:

Chair – Jocelyn Siakula, Hartville

Vice Chair – Dean Foster, Black River

Secretary – Sam Luginbill, Dupont*

Member – Crystal Zellers, Freeburg*

Ministerial Commission:

Chair – Steve Simmons, Woodworth

Vice Chair – Bill Holsopple, Lick Creek

Secretary – Bob Simonsick, Jonah's People

Member – Patrick Bailey, North Bend

Stewardship and Finance:

Chair – David Hobbs, New Philadelphia

Vice Chair – Todd Clemens, Poplar Ridge*

Secretary – Bruce Morckel, Akron Springfield

Member – Charlene Kuhn, Richland

Ex Officio Members (without vote):

Kris Hawk, District Executive Minister

Erin Beebe, District Administrative Secretary

Taylor Peterson, District Youth Coordinator

Linda Fry, District Peace/Conciliation Advocate

Shannon Kahler, Camp Executive Director, Paradise

Lisa Snyder, District Treasurer, Ashland First

Cindy McNaull, District Financial Secretary,

Ashland Dickey

Dawn Baldwin, Standing Committee, Lick Creek

Tina Hunt, Moderator, Mansfield First

Mike Conner, Moderator-Elect, Painesville*

Ashley Harris, District Conference Clerk, Freeburg

Linda Smith, Camp Administration Committee Chair,
East Chippewa

* Denotes newly elected at District Conference

Other Election Results

Moderator Elect

Mike Conner, Painesville*

District Conference Central Committee

Deb Rising, Ashland First*

Nominating Committee

Pete Snyder, Ashland First*

**Sandra Washington, Elm Street/Pleasant
View***

Camp Administration Committee

Mark Dickerhoof, Freeburg*

Ashley Steiner, East Chippewa*

Terry Vaught, Paradise*

Conference Statistics

Attendance:

Registrations—193 (188 attended)

Delegates—61

Congregations represented—32

Friday Worship—106

Saturday Worship—76

Insight Sessions—143

Pre-Conference Workshop—48

Offerings:

Friday—\$928.10

(for conference expenses)

Saturday—\$452.00

(for Inspiration Hills Camp)

Total: \$1,890.05

Peace Auction—\$1,468.25

Ashland Pregnancy Center—\$100 + a

car load of donation of diapers, baby
clothing, bottles, etc...

Delegates Challenged

The delegates were firm in their support of Inspiration Hills as they passed a deficit budget for 2024. This was with the understanding that the district would need to make up the difference out of the reserve funds. Reports from the Camp Administration Committee and the Camp Strategic Planning Committee stressed the needs for both increased volunteer and financial involvement from the local churches to help the camp move forward as they continue to recover from the pandemic and other challenges.

District Conference Worship and Activities

Forty-eight attended the Pre-Conference Workshop on “Achieving the Vision of ‘Separate No More’” presented by Rev. Belita Mitchell, retires pastor of the Harrisburg Church of the Brethren and 2007 Annual Conference Moderator.

Conference officially began with the meal on Friday evening, followed by opening worship. James Washington (Moderator) introduced the conference theme with a powerful message from 1 Corinthians 3:10-11 on “Challenging the Status Quo.” Worship music was provided by Jim Frado (Richland Pastor), Tina Hunt (Mansfield First Pastor and Moderator-elect), and Terry Kochheiser (Richland).

Saturday evening, the Fourth Street Baptist Praise Team from Lima led in worship, and provided back-up as Moderator James Washington sang an original song, “Touch of the Painter’s Hand.” Belita Mitchell spoke on “The Great Scope of the Great Commission” challenging us to live into the Revelation 7:9 vision of “a great

For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ.

1 Corinthians 3:11

multitude...from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and before the Lamb.” The service concluded with the consecration of the 2024 conference officers: Tina Hunt, Moderator and Mike Conner, Moderator-elect.

Fellowship opportunities included multiple insight sessions, hanging out at the Peace Auction and display area, an ice cream social, and much time for informal conversation. A “roar” of conversation and laughter could be heard throughout the area anytime there was a break in the business session (and sometimes during the business session!) and between events.

It was indeed joy to gather together!

Conference Business Items

It was a full day the delegates worked their way through the business agenda on Saturday at District Conference. In addition to receiving reports from the board, commissions, treasurer, camp, and national representatives, and others, the delegates:

1. Approved the 2024 District Budget as recommended by District Board in the amount of \$195,233—\$4,713 less than the 2023 budget
2. Approved the 2024 Inspiration Hills budget as presented in the amount of \$370,305, a reduction over the 2023 budget, but with a projected deficit of \$68,305. This passed with the understanding that camp “staffing costs and structure will be changing and will need to be reevaluated when new staff are in place.”
3. Approved the motion to close the Ross Church of the Brethren. A time of remembering the legacy of the congregation concluded with prayer.
4. Approved the motions to finalize the withdrawal from the denomination of the County Line, Mohican, Mt. Pleasant, and Zion Hill churches. A litany of blessing forward reminded us that we continue as brothers and sisters in Christ, even as the churches are no longer part of our district. Prayer was offered for the ministries of these church and of our district as move forward.



Installation of Tina Hunt as Moderator, Mike Conner as Moderator elect



District Conference Youth Activities



District Youth Update

August 2023

Taylor Peterson, District Youth Coordinator

After a year of rebuilding the youth program in the district, we were finally able to gather at district conference for a weekend of growth and fellowship. Seven youth from five different congregations attended district conference and participated in activities throughout the weekend.

We started our time at Maple Grove CoB where we enjoyed dinner, games and of course we took part in the ice cream social. Friday night and most of the day Saturday we were at Camp Inspiration Hills.

Saturday morning we spent time talking about how God is moving in their lives as they start back into another school year. We talked about what it means to want “instant gratification” in today’s society and how that is not the way that God has called us to live. I pray that the youth going back to school can remember these things and be a light in the darkness this school year. To finish up our time at camp we participated in various service projects around camp to help clean up after a busy summer of camps.

To finish our time at district conference we went back to Maple Grove. The youth listened in on the BVS insight session and learned about ways they can serve after they graduate. To finish our time at conference we participated in worship and the closing session with the delegates.



I believe our time at District Conference was a great time of fellowship and growth in our walk with Jesus. I am so thankful for the ways I have been able to build relationships with the youth in the district over this past year. Though we are a small group at present, we can still make an impact for God’s Kingdom.



Celebrating Ministerial Service

Celebrating Ministerial Service

While each year of ministry is something to be celebrated, in the Northern Ohio District we take time at District Conference to publicly celebrate the completion of the first year of ordination, the 5th year, then every 5 years after that. We also recognize annually those who been ordained more than 50 years. Those recognized this year:

- Steve Heilshorn** (Poplar Ridge – 5 years)
- Dave Wyant** (Bethel – 5 years)
- Ben Polzin** (Poplar Ridge – 10 years)
- Kris Hawk** (Akron Springfield – 15 years)
- Paul Joe Routh** (Black River – 25 years)
- Terry Vaught** (Paradise – 30 years)

Seen in the picture above:
 Front Row: Terry Vaught, Ben Polzin, James Washington.
 Back Row: Steve Simmons, Kris Hawk, Paul Myers, Delbert Kettering, Joseph Routh, Donald Earlenbaugh, Terry Baldwin

- Jim Lifer** (Owl Creek – 35 years)
- James Washington** (Elm Street/Pleasant View - 40)
- Don Earlenbaugh** (Ashland Dickey – 55 years)
- Paul Myers** (Maple Grove – 57 years)
- Delbert Kettering** (Maple Grove – 66 years)
- Carl Cawood** (Ashland First – 68 years)
- Clyde Fry** (Mansfield First – 68 years)

Celebrating Buckeye Brethren Institute (BBI) Graduates

In addition to recognizing years of ordained ministry, we were also blessed to celebrate two of our pastors who completed all the requirements of the Buckeye Brethren Institute ministerial training program.

Mike Conner, Pastor at the Painesville Church of the Brethren and **Brian Layman**, Pastor at the Ashland First Church of the Brethren were presented with certificates by **Paul Bozman**, our District Ministry Education Director and members of the Ministerial Commission. Completion of BBI, a Brethren Academy Certified training program, meets the educational requirements for ordination in the Church of the Brethren. Congratulation to Mike and Brian for passing this educational milestone!



Mike Conner



Brian Layman

Thank You 2023 Central Committee and 2023 Conference Personnel

District Conference Central Committee

James Washington, Moderator (Elm Street/Pleasant View)

Tina Hunt, Moderator-elect (Mansfield First)

Brian Layman, Past-Moderator (Ashland First)

Ashley Harris, Clerk (Freeburg)

Chrissy Harkless, Member (Elm Street)

Jane Matz, Member (Ashland Dickey)

Pam Hoffman, Member (Mansfield First)

Linda Fry, Conference Manager (Mansfield First)

Cindy Peel, Conference Registrar (Akron Springfield)

District Conference Personnel

Worship Coordinator: Jim Frado (Richland)

Music: Jim Frado, Fourth Street Baptist Praise Team

Junior High / Youth Activities Coordinator: Taylor Peterson

Children's Program Coordinators: Donna Kettering, Ronda Hinkle, Peggy Elchert (Maple Grove)

Display Coordinator: Kim Morckel (Akron Springfield)

Hospitality Coordinator: Jane Matz (Ashland Dickey)

Time Keeper: Wayne Kissel (Mansfield First)

Sound & Media Technicians: Travis Kettering, Sue Bradley, Justin Dyer, Jay Kettering (all from Maple Grove)

Counting Supervisor: David Bassett (Pleasant View)

Tellers: Nominating Committee Members

Maple Grove Church On-Site Coordinator: Scott Freer

Peace Auction—35 years!

As followers of Jesus and as one of the Historic Peace Churches, we are committed to teaching Christ's message of peace – peace within ourselves as we make our peace with Jesus; peace within

our families, our congregations, and with our friends; peace in our communities; and peace in the world with our friends and those we may call enemy.

The Peace Endowment Fund was established in 1982 to support efforts in the District to teach the things that make for peace.

This year marked the 35th Annual silent auction for the Peace Endowment Fund.

Since the first auction in 1988, over \$65,000 has been raised for peace education.

