



# Pastor's *memo*

NORTHERN OHIO DISTRICT CHURCH OF THE BRETHREN

APRIL 2017

## ANNUAL CONFERENCE DELEGATE BRIEFING



Mark your calendar for the upcoming Annual Conference Delegate Briefing and Reception. This important meeting will be held from 3:00-5:00 p.m. at Ashland Dickey Church of the Brethren on June 11, 2017.

Annual Conference Moderator Carol Scheppard will present

information regarding business items for this year's conference. This will be a time for sharing general information about being a delegate as well as meeting other delegates from across our district. To familiarize yourself with business items, you may go to the CoB website, [brethren.org/AC](http://brethren.org/AC) to read through the agenda. Please bring any questions you have to this briefing and reception. Light refreshments will be served.

We encourage delegates and all members of district congregations to attend. Moderator Scheppard will also be preaching at 10:30 a.m. at Ashland First Church of the Brethren and you are welcome to attend. If you have any questions before then, please feel free to contact the District Office (419-281-3058), or one of your Standing Committee Representatives, Ben Polzin (419-770-9347) or Kathy Ballinger (419-606-0859) Until then, "Risk Hope!

## GENERAL SECRETARY DAVID STEELE HOLDING LISTENING SESSIONS IN NORTHERN OHIO

David Steele, the new General Secretary of the Church of the Brethren, is holding listening sessions around the denomination. This is a way for David to listen closely to people within the church. It's a good opportunity for you to meet our new General Secretary. Three listening sessions will be held in the Northern Ohio District. The first will be in the Eastern area on Tuesday, June 6<sup>th</sup> at 2 pm. The second listening session will be held in the Central area on Tuesday, June 6<sup>th</sup> at 7 pm. The third will be held in western area on Wednesday, June 7<sup>th</sup> at 2 pm. More information will follow on the specific location in each area.

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## PASTOR'S WORKSHOPS

*Pastor's Workshops to be held at the District Office*

Plan on attending one of this years' Pastor's Workshops at the District Office

Wednesday, April 26th from 10 am – 3 pm

Saturday, April 29th from 10 am – 3 pm

All clergy – new and not-so-new, retired, and interim – are invited to join the fellowship and practical conversation about sharpening their ministry tools. "Open Forum" topics may include pastoral leadership, sermon preparation, worship planning, visitation, counseling, conflict, or self-care. Lunch will be provided. RSVP to the District Office by Friday, April 21st. Or register online at: <http://nodcb.memberzone.com/events/>. Fellowship time 30 minutes before each meeting.

## CHURCH LAW & TAX

"If you are publishing personal information in a bulletin or email newsletter format, always get permission from the person, never run second-hand information, run the information by a pastor, and be discreet when sharing medical details," says Bonnie McMaken in " Church Bulletin Basics."



## "One Small Piece of the Puzzle"

### Spring Women's Retreat

April 21 and 22, 2017

Inspiration Hills Camp



April 1st is almost here. SISTERS' spring retreat is just around the corner. We are excited about putting the pieces of the puzzle together with "Leah J" Hileman.

Here's a little more information. Registration Friday begins at 5:30 pm; Gathering (including pizza dinner) at 7:00 pm in Cherry Lodge. Saturday morning begins with breakfast at 7:30 am and program start at 8:30 am. For those who would like meal only option is \$10 for Friday supper; \$5 for breakfast; \$10 for Saturday lunch. (Early bird discount only applies to full registration. \$45 by April 1; \$50 after.)

Go to <http://www.nohcob.org/resources/sisters> for complete information and to register. Questions call BJ at 330-418-1148.

## MEN'S FELLOWSHIP – SEEKING LEADERSHIP

The District Fellowship Commission is looking for someone to take the lead on getting the District Men's Fellowship started again. Three men have volunteered who are willing to be part of a planning group, but cannot take the lead position. So many have benefited from this group in the past through the service and fellowship opportunities it provides. It is our hope that this experience can be made available again to the men in the Northern Ohio District.

Please contact a member of the Fellowship Commission (Brenda Ebner, Tina Hunt, Gaylee Hughes, Billi Janet Burkey) or the District Office at 419-281-3058 if you are interested in serving in this way. We are praying there is someone out there who has a calling to do this.



## PASTORAL PLACEMENT

### Congregations actively in the search process:

**Bethel** – Congregational profile completed. Congregation arranging pulpit supply.

**Brook Park** – *Tom Michaels* serving interim. Search Committee working on profile.

**Eden** – *Wayne Scott* serving as interim. Search Committee working on profile.

**Pleasant View** – *Dr. Byron Hawbecker* serving as interim. Interviewing.

### Congregations that have chosen not to seek at this time:

**East Nimishillen** – *Matthew Reed* serving as interim. Congregational profile complete, but not actively seeking at this time.

**Lake Breeze** – *James Washington* serving as interim.

**Lakewood** – *Gene Wyse* serving as interim. Not actively seeking at this time.

**Maple Grove** – *John Ballinger* serving as interim until 2/2018.

**Woodworth** – *John Polanski* serving as interim and beginning the credentialing process.

## THANK YOU

Thank you to those who have completed the Form B's. Information from the following congregations still need to be submitted to the COB General Offices.

Adrian	Jonah's People
Ashland First	Marion
Black River	New Philadelphia
Defiance	Pleasant View
East Nimishillen	Ross
Eden	Silver Creek
Elm Street	Sugarcreek East
Faith In Action	Water Street
Freeburg	Zion Hill

## SEARCH COMMITTEE

The District Executive Search Committee is preparing to begin interviews. We hope to announce the new DE at District Conference. Updates will continue to be posted in the upcoming Pastor's Memos and District Bulletin handouts. Thank you!

## DISTRICT PRAYER CALENDAR

### March 26—April 1

Pleasant View CoB (Interim Dr. Byron Hawbecker) and Poplar Ridge CoB (Pastor Ben Polzin)

### April 2—April 8

Reading CoB (Pastor Larry Bradley) and Richland CoB (Pastor Jim Frado)

### April 9—April 15

Ross CoB (Pastor Keith Stoller) and Silver Creek CoB (Pastor Terry Baldwin)

### April 16—April 22

Sugar Creek West CoB (Pastor Michael Huffaker) and Sugarcreek East CoB (Pastor Dick Marshall)

### April 23—April 29

Swan Creek CoB (Pastor Dick Neuwirth) and Water Street CoB (Pastor Denny Fox)

## MARK YOUR CALENDAR

- April 7-8—Sr. High Spring Rally, County Line CoB, Harrod, OH
- April 11—Executive Committee Meeting, District Office, Ashland, OH
- April 21 & 22, Women's Spring Retreat, Inspiration Hills, Burbank, OH
- April 26 & 29—Pastor's Workshops, District Office, Ashland, OH
- May 20, District Board Meeting, East Chippewa CoB, Orrville, OH
- June 6 & 7—Listening Sessions with David Steele, General Secretary, Eastern, Central & Western Area (see Page 1)
- June 11—Delegate Briefing, Ashland Dickey CoB, Ashland, OH
- June 28-July 2—Annual Conference, Grand Rapids, MI
- July 28-29—District Conference, Hartville CoB, Hartville, OH

## JONAH'S PEOPLE REDEDICATION

Good Shepherd Home and Jonah's People Fellowship invite you to the Rededication Service for the renovated chapel at Good Shepherd on Wednesday, April 5, at 3:30PM. The chapel is located at 725 Columbus Ave, Fostoria, OH 44830. 419-937-1800



**Two VENTURES webinars are coming up in the month of April.**

In a course postponed from November 11th, **Dr. Steve Schweitzer**, Academic Dean and Professor at Bethany Theological Seminary, will be the presenter for the next course, 9 a.m. to noon (CDT), Saturday, April 8th. His topic will be "**The Book of Chronicles and the Church: Theology, Continuity, Innovation, and the Kingdom of God.**" While the book of Kings explains why the people of Israel ended up in exile, the book of Chronicles was written after the exile, in the midst of significant cultural shifts, to provide a way forward. Participants will explore several central themes in the book and think together about how Chronicles might help the Church to be faithful in the midst of cultural change. Registration information is available at [www.mcpherson.edu/ventures](http://www.mcpherson.edu/ventures)

Ventures in Christian Discipleship is an online program of McPherson College, designed to equip church members with skills and understandings for faithful and dynamic Christian living, action and leadership. All courses are free, but donations are welcome to help continue this effort.

**SUNDAY SCHOOL IS NOT OBSOLETE!** On Saturday April 22nd, 9 a.m. to noon (CDT), **Rhonda Pittman-Gingrich** will challenge participants to engage in a course entitled "Beyond Sunday School: Trans/forming Faith Formation. Sunday School is not obsolete, but given the reality of declining attendance patterns, it cannot be a stand-alone enterprise when it comes to nurturing the spiritual lives of our children, youth, or adults. She will emphasize that we must create communities of practice that nurture and trans/form faith in holistic ways across the lifespan. Participants will explore various ways and resources to undergird a more holistic approach to faith formation, including lessons from Scripture and the concept of Spiritual styles. Rhonda is an ordained Church of the Brethren minister involved in a ministry of teaching, consulting and writing. Her doctoral thesis focused on the use of spiritual practices to nurture the spiritual lives of children. Registration information is available at [www.mcpherson.edu/ventures](http://www.mcpherson.edu/ventures)

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## WATER STREET CELEBRATES MINISTRY

It was a day of joy and celebration at Water Street Church of the Brethren on March 26<sup>th</sup> - even in the midst of sadness and grief. The worship was a rich experience. The Praise Team sang, the congregational music was beautiful, and Pastor Denny Fox delivered a powerful message on praising our wonderful God - and how essential it is to do that with other believers. Denny and his wife Brenda are retiring and moving to a rustic cabin out of the area (they invited everyone to visit, so they might need a bigger addition!). This was their last Sunday at Water Street. It was also the last Sunday that the Water Street (Kent) church would meet together as a congregation after over a century of ministry.

The fellowship meal and sharing time after worship were a celebration of Denny and Brenda's ministry at Water Street. There was a hymn-sing and many spoke words of affirmation for Denny and Brenda. Invitations had gone out and many were there who had been impacted by Water Street's ministry, both recently and decades ago. Over 50 participated in this day together. It was a time of reconnecting for many - hugs and stories, laughter and tears.

God's blessings on each as they move into new congregations, sharing the light of Christ they received at Water Street.



Pastor Denny and Benda Fox receive a special gift presented by Renee Ruley, who coordinated the events of this special day of celebration.