

Pastor's *memo*

NORTHERN OHIO DISTRICT CHURCH OF THE BRETHREN
JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2019

Hottle Grant Application Deadlines

Hottle Grants are available through the district for:

- ⇒ Project grants within the church to expand the ministry of the church.
- ⇒ Outreach Ministry grants that impact not only the church but the community at large and may include changes to the physical plant.
- ⇒ Program Development grants within the church to stimulate growth or spiritual health and may include changes to the physical plant.

According to the Hottle Distribution procedure approved by delegates at the 2016 District Conference, a 4% draw is available each year for Hottle Grants. In 2019, \$67,516.07 is available and applications will be considered until those funds are depleted.

Applications must be received 30 days prior to District Board meetings in order to be considered at that meeting. Please submit your applications 30 days prior to the District Board meeting where they will be considered. Those dates for 2019 are:

- ⇒ February 7 (for the March Board meeting)
- ⇒ April 18 (for the May Board meeting)
- ⇒ August 22 (for the September Board meeting)
- ⇒ October 10 (for the November Board meeting)

District Calendar

1.12—Sr. High Leadership Series, Inspiration Hills, Burbank, OH

1.19—Buckeye Brethren Institute—Preaching, District Office, Ashland, OH

1.22—Central Committee Meeting, Via Zoom/District Office, Ashland, OH

1.26—Youth Leader Training on Protection, Ashland Dickey CoB, Ashland, OH

1.31—Nominating Committee, Via Zoom/District Office, Ashland, OH

2.1-2—Jr. High Rally, North Bend CoB, Butler, OH

2.2—Buckeye Brethren Institute—Preaching, District Office, Ashland, OH

2.12—Executive Committee Meeting, District Office, Ashland, OH

2.16—Buckeye Brethren Institute—Preaching, District Office, Ashland, OH

2.17-19—Clergy-Spouse Retreat, Days Inn & Suites, Richfield, OH

Background Check Changes

The Church of the Brethren Office of Ministry has recently completed research into various criminal background check companies and the services they provide and has determined, in consultation with the District Executive Ministers, to make a change to National Background Investigations from our current provider. This company will provide better service and a more accurate and thorough check than the

previous provider. If you have a need to use a background check (and all congregations should be screening volunteers and staff who work with children and youth) please contact the District Office for the new permission form. Because this is more thorough, the price has increased. Cost is now \$15 and includes a nationwide and 1 county search (Ohio has no state database).

2019 Mileage Rates Announced

The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) has issued the 2019 optional standard mileage rates:

58 cents per mile for business miles driven (increased from 54.5 cents in 2018)

20 cents per mile driven for medical or moving* purposes (increased from 18 cents in 2018)

*does not apply to moving expenses for clergy

14 cents per mile driven in service of charitable organizations (currently fixed by Congress)

Welcoming Congregations on-line workshop

The spring course offerings from the “Ventures in Christian Discipleship” program at McPherson (Kan.) College will focus around the theme “Welcoming Congregations.” The first class on Biblical Hospitality will explore the scriptural meanings of hospitality and look at practical ways it can be used in the home, church, and community. Of particular interest are the scriptures that pertain to the stranger, the refugee and the foreigner and how they might currently inform our national policy on immigration. The class will be held online Saturday, January 26 at 9 a.m. – 12 p.m. CST and taught by Fred Bernhard. Fred is a long-time pastor who has specialized in teaching biblical hospitality to congregations through workshops and books. He is active in mentoring multiple church staff ministries and is a consultant for congregations through E-3 Ministries. All classes are donation-based and continuing education credit is available for \$10 per course. To learn more about Ventures and to register for courses, visit www.mcpherson.edu/ventures.

Changes in denominational reporting schedule:

Form A, Form B, and Statistical Form will be sent in one mailing. They should arrive by Mid-February. Please complete and return by the deadline indicated on the forms. This information is incorporated into the Church of the Brethren Yearbook – and is helpful for us at the district level as well. Thank you!



Fill out Form

Opportunity to Share with those affected by the California fire

Many have asked about ways to help our brothers and sisters in the Church of the Brethren affected by the fires in California - especially those from the Paradise congregation. The Pacific Southwest District (PSWD) is receiving donations to provide direct support to help with the needs of the pastor and members of the Paradise congregation as they seek to recover from the wildfire that destroyed the church and the homes of members.

We would like to send a gift from our district to theirs. If your church would like to contribute, please send a check made out to Northern Ohio District Church of the Brethren (or NOHCOB) and designate PSWD or "Paradise Fire" on the check. Mail donations by January 28th to:

Northern Ohio District Church of the Brethren
1107 East Main Street Ashland, OH 44805

We will send this on as a collective gift from our churches and our district. We also encourage you to remember all those affected by this fire, and other wildfires, in your prayers.

(The Ashland First congregation donated the amount of the \$261.10 Hottle check that each church received, matched it, and sent that as a gift for our sister district and would like to share that as a possibility for other congregations.)

Ethics Training

The level 201 five-year cycle of ministerial ethics trainings for ordained/commissioned ministers -to be completed by all ministers before renewals at the end of 2020 - will be made available in Northern Ohio District on **Saturday, October 5th, 2019 from 10 am - 4 pm, with a make-up date of March 28, 2020.** Please mark your calendars and plan to attend this event as part of fulfilling your ordination/commissioning renewal requirements.

2019 Prayer and Worship Summit

The 2019 Prayer and Worship Summit titled "Praying for the Vision" will be on March 29 and 30, in Harrisonburg, VA. Brothers and sisters will come from all over the nation to devote time for worship and prayer over the visioning process. This Summit is open to everyone, and as in the past, there will be no business conducted. It is an event to come together to worship and pray for our denomination, asking God to help us recapture our vision. The event is free, but folks need to register early as space is limited. Saturday's lunch will be provided free as well. Again, early registration will help planners to prepare for the necessary food services for the event. Find a poster attached to this email. For more information check out the website at www.brethrenprayersummit.com or see attached flyer.

Healthy Congregations Workshop

April 12-13, 2019 at Maple Grove CoB
Friday: 6:30pm-9:00pm/Saturday: 9:00am-4:30pm

As churches seek to bring others into God's kingdom, it is essential that we live together in ways that are different than the ways of the world. The Healthy Congregations Workshop gives pastors, church leaders, and all congregation members practical skills that bring health to a congregation so that others can be drawn to the light of Christ.

Leadership will be provided by Richard Blackburn, Executive Director of Lombard Mennonite Peace Center in Lombard, IL. Richard is a trainer and mediator, with broad experience in serving as a consultant to conflicted churches.

This workshop will help you learn how you as a leader can influence the health of your congregation—how to detect and avoid unhealthy patterns of living together in community; learn how to keep anxiety from becoming infectious; gain confidence in responding to challenges and opportunities; learn how to put limits on invasive behavior, manage reactivity, and overcome sabotage; discover how leaders can function as the congregation's immune system; learn to focus on strengths, resources, options, and the future. These skills can make a difference not only in the church but also in our families, our workplaces, and our communities.

Registration fee is \$25 per person (includes manual and lunch), or \$35 for a couple (sharing one manual; two lunches). Preregistration deadline is April 2nd, after which the registration fee increases to \$35 per person or \$45 per couple. For every 4 registrations from one congregation, the 5th one is free. Register by mail with the form provided to congregations or online at www.nohcob.org/healthy.

Pastoral Placement

Congregations actively in the search process:

Akron Springfield (full-time)– Search Committee looking at pastoral profiles. *George O'Reilly* serving as interim.

Brook Park (3/4-time)–Search Committee interviewing. *Tom Michaels* serving as interim.

Elm Street (15 hrs/week)– Search Committee completing profile. *Dr. Byron Hawbecker* serving as interim.

Maple Grove (full-time)– *Stephen Keib* called as pastor and will begin 3/1/2019. *John Ballinger* serving as interim through 1/13/19.

Pleasant View (part-time)– *James Washington* installed as pastor January 6th.

Zion Hill – Search Committee formed. Church leadership arranging pulpit supply, seeking Interim Pastor.

Congregations that have not yet begun the Search Process or have chosen not to seek at this time:

Lake Breeze – *Stephen McLaughlin* serving as interim.

Lakewood – *Gene Wyse* serving as interim and beginning the credentialing process.

District Prayer Calendar

January 6—January 12

Bethel CoB (Pastor David Wyant) and Black River CoB (Pastor Mark Teal and Associate Pastors Dean Foster and Cullen Thompson)

January 13—January 19

Bristolville CoB (Pastor Fred Keener) and Brook Park Community CoB (Interim Tom Michaels)

January 20—January 26

Center CoB (Pastor Mark Kell) and Chippewa CoB (Pastor Bill Eley)

January 27—February 2

County Line CoB (Pastor Chris Ewing) and Defiance CoB (Pastor Gene Yenser)

February 3—February 9

Dupont CoB (Pastor Steve Heilshorn) and East Chippewa CoB (Pastor Brad Kelley)

February 10—February 16

East Nimishillen CoB (Pastor Jim Lee) and Eden CoB (Pastor Wayne Scott)

February 17—February 23

Elm Street CoB (Interim Dr. Byron Hawbecker) and Faith in Action CoB (Pastor Jim Gorrell)

Clergy-Spouse Retreat – Registration deadline February 8th

Plan on joining us for the upcoming Clergy-Spouse Retreat February 17-19, 2019 at the Days Inn & Suites, Richfield, OH. Presenter: Dr. Lee Wetherbee, PHD, LP, LPCC-S This year's theme is: "Working with Difficult People - Without becoming difficult yourself!"

This is a time for relationship-building, renewal, learning, and rest. A new location promises that the food and facilities will be great, but the fellowship is even greater! Single and married clergy and their spouses are encouraged to attend.

Dr. Lee Wetherbee is a Professor of Counseling at Ashland Theological Seminary (ATS). He blends knowledge and humor together as he teaches in ways that change lives. The ongoing gift of mentoring and training Clinical Counseling students is something Dr. Wetherbee counts among his most fulfilling achievements in life.

Dr. Wetherbee received his PhD in Counseling Psychology from the University of Akron, MEd in Community Counseling from Kent State University, and a BA in Psychology/Sociology from Malone University.

You may register online at www.nohcob.org/retreat or mail in the Clergy-Spouse Retreat flyer attached. Costs are \$325.00/Couple (3 days/2 nights, plus 6 meals); \$250.00/Single (3 days/2 nights, plus 6 meals); \$40.00/Single One Day Registration (Monday Lunch, Dinner and Sessions). Single clergy who may want to share a room can save money at the couple rate. Please indicate your request under "comments".