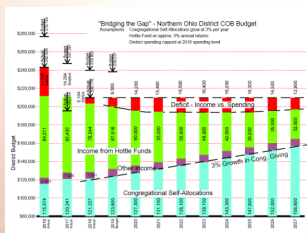


Pastor's *memo*

NORTHERN OHIO DISTRICT CHURCH OF THE BRETHREN
MARCH/APRIL 2019

Church Improvement Loan

The Northern Ohio District exists to support our congregations in all aspects of ministry and church growth. Sometimes congregations are held back by building limitations or are overwhelmed by the cost of maintaining aging structures. Loans are now available for church Improvements/maintenance projects at 0% interest from the District. The District Board voted to set aside \$350,000 from the sale of the Water Street property for this purpose as they established a new "Church Improvement Loan Fund". Access the Guidelines and Application form at nohcob.org/loan.



Bridging the Gap

The District Board spent a considerable amount of time looking at the finances of the District at the March 9th Board meeting. Our expenditures were about

\$4750 more than our income last year, even though we spent considerably below the budget approved by the delegates. This year, the Hottle draw designated for district operating expenses is \$8400 less than in 2018. Reserved funds are there to cover the difference, but that is obviously just a short-term plan. We have not had a balanced budget for decades but are planning differently for 2020. See pages 4-5 for details.

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Pastor's Workshop

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The Pastor's Workshop will be held on Wednesday, March 27th from 10 am - 3:00 pm at Ashland Dickey Church of the Brethren. **This is a change in date** so that our morning speaker, Chelsea, can join us (I am withholding her last name due to the nature of what she will be sharing.) We hope to be able to offer an evening session with the speaker, but do not yet have a date for that. Our tentative schedule is as follows:

9:30 am - 10:00 Fellowship time
10 am - 10:30 am Devotions, District and Denominational updates
10:30 am - 12:00 pm **"Breaking the Silence: Hope for Healing"**

Chelsea will share openly about sexual abuse in her family - and in her church - and the about the transforming, healing power of God. She has a powerful message that every minister should hear.

Lunch (provided)

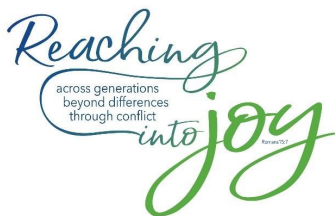
12:45 pm - 3:00 pm All clergy – new and not-so-new, retired, and interim – are invited to join the fellowship and practical conversation about sharpening their ministry tools. "Open Forum" topics may include pastoral leadership, sermon preparation, worship planning, visitation, counseling, conflict, or self-care among others. 0.4 CEU's provided. Please RSVP to the District Office by Friday, March 22nd or register online at: www.nohcob.org/events. Fellowship time begins at 9:30 am.

NOAC

Church of the Brethren
National Older Adult
Conference
September 2-6, 2019

Lake Junaluska, North Carolina

See attached flyer for more information or go to brethren.org/noac to register online.



Prayer & Worship Summit

March 29-30, 2019

Harrisonburg, VA

Go to brethrenprayersummit.com for more information.

BBI-Intro to Theology

March 30, April 6, and April 27, 2019

Paul Bozman, Instructor

This course will discuss the basic doctrines of the Christian Faith, as well as, some variation on those beliefs. Throughout the course, the historically Brethren/Anabaptist position will be emphasized where it is distinguishable from other traditions.

See attached flyer for more information or register online at nohcob.org/registerBBI.

Stephen Keib Commissioned and Installed as Pastor at Maple Grove



March 3, 2019 was a special day for the Maple Grove congregation as Stephen (Steve) Keib was Commissioned in the Church of the Brethren and installed as Pastor.

Steve has been active in ministry for 20 years, serving in both children's and youth ministries, as a Minister of Music, and as an Associate Pastor. Most recently Steve completed his role as the Children's Pastor at the Crosspoint Church in Bangor, Maine coordinating ministries for over 140 children each week. He has a Master's Degree in Religion and Biblical Studies.

Steve and his wife Sarah have three children—Austin, Brianna, and Evan. Steve grew up in Galion, Ohio where his father is still a pastor as well. (Pictured: Stephen Keib with Lynda Kysor, Maple Grove Church Board/Search Committee Chairperson)

Pastoral Placement

Congregations actively in the search process:

Akron Springfield (full-time) – Search Committee interviewing. *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.

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

March 17—March 23

Mansfield First CoB (Pastor Vaughn Loose) and Maple Grove CoB (Pastor Stephen Keib)

March 24—March 30

Marion CoB (Pastor Rick Hicks) and Mohican CoB (Pastor Paul Bartholomew and Associate Pastor Chad Palmer)

March 31—April 6

Mount Pleasant CoB (Pastor Bruce Jacobsen) and New Philadelphia CoB (Pastor Max Canfield)

April 7—April 14

North Bend CoB (Pastor Patrick Bailey) and Owl Creek CoB (Pastor Charles Barnhill)

April 15—April 22

Painesville CoB (Pastors John & Sondra Bocchieri) and Paradise CoB (Pastor Terry Vaught)

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Mark Your Calendar

3.10, 24, 31 and 4.7—Eastern Area Lenten Services and Festival of Choirs, Reading CoB, Center CoB, Eden CoB, Akron First CoB, Akron Springfield CoB

3.19—District Conference Central Committee Meeting, District Office/Zoom, Ashland, OH

3.21—Jonah's People Steering Committee Meeting, Good Shepherd Home, Fostoria, OH

3.23-24—Sr. High Leadership Series, Inspiration Hills, Burbank, OH

3.27—Pastor's Workshop, Ashland Dickey CoB, Ashland, OH

3.27—Constitution Committee Meeting, Via Zoom

3.29-30—Prayer and Worship Conference, Harrisonburg, VA

3.30—Buckeye Brethren Institute—Intro to Theology, District Office, Ashland, OH

3.30—Youth Central Area Event, Alice Noble Ice Arena, Wooster, OH

SiSTERS Spring Retreat

“Clothe Yourselves In Christ”
Colossians 3:12-14

April 26 & 27, 2019

Inspiration Hills Camp, Burbank, Ohio

Meal Cost: \$7 Breakfast and \$7 Lunch

Room Cost: \$8 day only or \$25 overnight

Registration Friday 6:30 pm

Breakfast Saturday 8:00 am

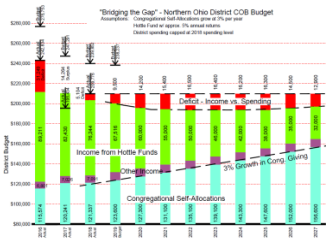
Closing Saturday 2:30 pm

To register go to nohcob.org/sisters, or email sistersnorthernohio@gmail.com

Questions: call Billi Janet at 330-418-1148

What messages do we wear...do they reflect that Christ lives in us?

See attached flyer for more information.



Bridging the Gap

The District Board spent a considerable amount of time looking at the finances of the District at the March 9th Board meeting. Our expenditures were about \$4750 more than our income last year, even though we spent considerably below the budget approved by the delegates. This year, the Hottle draw designated for district operating expenses is \$8400 less than in 2018. Reserved funds are there to cover the

difference, but that is obviously just a short-term plan. We have not had a balanced budget for decades but are planning differently for 2020.

Background

At the 2016 District Conference, delegates voted to increase the amount that was drawn from the Hottle Memorial Fund each year to provide increased grant money for churches and operating funds for the district and the camp. This action included the caution that this would involve drawing from the principal of the account and that funds available would decrease each year. The expectation/hope was that giving from the churches to the district would increase as the Hottle draw amount decreased. Contributions have increased by 8% since 2015 and we are grateful! But this has not “bridged the gap” with the decreasing Hottle monies being distributed.

What the District Board is doing:

Praying – for the work of the district and for wisdom as we seek God in all these things.

Working to hold the 2019 spending at 2018 actual expenditure amounts. The 2019 budget approved at District Conference was for \$238,237. Our actual 2018 expenditures were \$209,779.61. Pay increases for the staff* previously approved for 2019 will make this number a little higher this year (Kris Hawk took a voluntary reduction in pay back to the 2018 level), but we have cut the number by 10% over the approved 2019 budget.

Reducing 2020 budget by an additional 5% over the 2018 actual expenditures in all categories possible. Again, Kris will reduce her salary. Spending in the other staffing categories will remain at 2019 levels. Because 65% of the budget is salaries, if further reductions are necessary in following years staff hours will need to be cut.

What we are asking the churches to do:

Pray – for the work of the district, for wisdom for district leadership as they seek God in all these things, for what God may be calling you to do in response to this need.

Examine the amount your church gives to the district (self-allocation amount). Can your church do more to support the vital ministries offered by our district? We know that many churches are in a difficult place financially also and understand that. We are only asking that you prayerfully and seriously consider the possibility.

Make sure that your self-allocation form is completed. This information allows us to budget more effectively. Please call the District Office if you need another form or instructions on how to complete it.

Examine your membership list. This number is reported to the denomination with your annual report. The district is assessed 0.65/each active member to help with Church of the Brethren programming on the national level. The number used is the last number reported, even if a church hasn't reported for years. If your church has an attendance of 50, but a membership list of 150, that costs the district an additional \$65 that could be used in other ways.

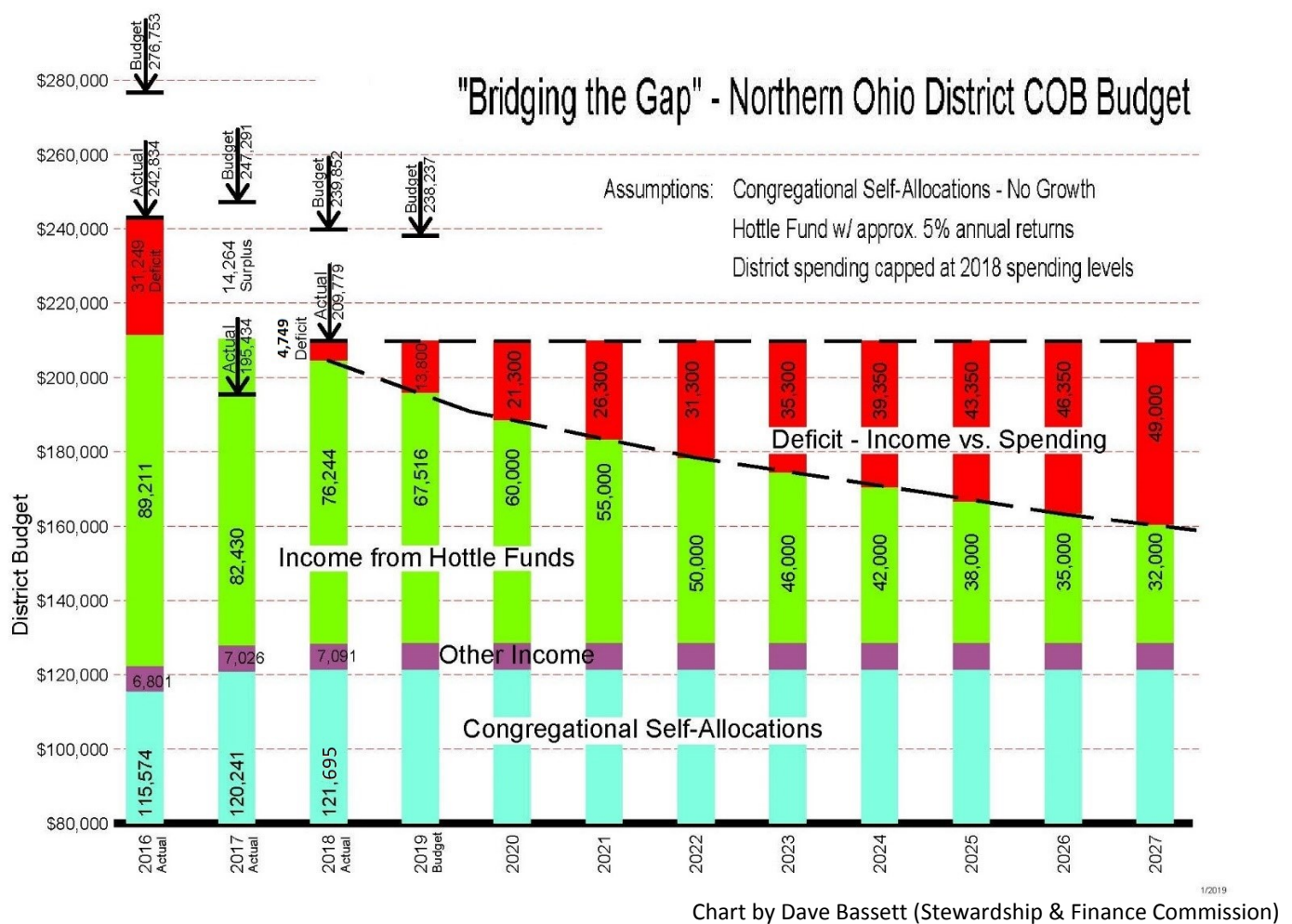
What we are asking you to do as an individual:

Pray – for the work of the district, for wisdom for district leadership as they seek God in all these things, for what God may be calling you to do in response to this need.

Encourage your church to examine the amount given to district ministries and increase that amount as possible.

Give an individual donation to the district above your giving to your church. This can be through a designated offering at your church or sent directly to the District Office. These are tax deductible donations and you will receive a receipt.

*Paid District staff paid for from the budget include 1) District Executive – full-time; 2) Administrative Secretary – 30 hours/wk.; 3) Youth Coordinator – 20 hours/wk. The Peace/Conciliation Advocate – 10 hours/week – is paid from the Peace Endowment Fund set up for that purpose.



Blue is income from churches giving to the district (self-allocation) assuming no increase.

Green is income from the Hottle fund that decreases each year. **Red** is the budget deficit predicted over time with spending maintained at the 2018 level. Numbers beyond 2018 are projected.

Please contact a member of the Stewardship and Finance Commission (Maria Nichols, Dave Bassett, Charlene Kuhn, Ed Chase) or the District Office for more information.

A separate mailing with more financial information will be sent to Pastors, Church Board Chairs, and Treasurers.

Ethics Training

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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 at Camp Inspiration Hills.

For those that can't make that date, a repeat session will be held March 28, 2020

(location still to be determined).

Please mark your calendars and plan to attend this event as part of fulfilling your ordination/commissioning renewal requirements. Go to nohcob.org/ethics to register online.

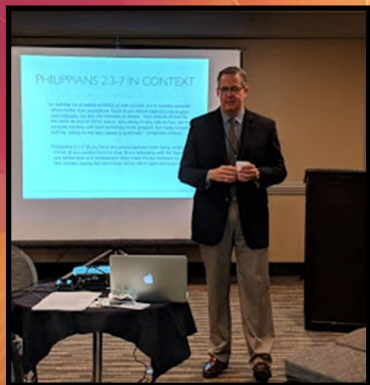
Meet the Moderator/Delegate Briefing

Mark your calendars for Sunday May 5th at 3:00pm. Donita Keister, Annual Conference Moderator, will hold our Annual Conference Delegate Briefing at Mansfield Church of the Brethren. This session is for Annual Conference delegates, pastors, and all who would like to know more of what will be happening at Annual Conference this year in Greenboro, North Carolina on July 3rd-7th. Come hear of the Compelling Vision process that be the focus of this year's gather, the fellowship and learning opportunities, and Donita's vision for this Conference. Sister Donita will also be preaching at Mansfield on Sunday morning and you are welcome to attend.



Donita Keister is an associate pastor at Buffalo Valley Church of the Brethren in Southern Pennsylvania District. During this Annual Conference she concluded a term of service on the denomination's Mission and Ministry Board, where she also served on the executive committee. She has been a teacher, choir director, women's ministry leader, children's ministry leader, retreat leader, deacon, and ministry team leader. In her district, she has served on the Program and Arrangements Committee for the district conference, has been on the ethics assessment team, and has been a Training in Ministry (TRIM) coordinator. Her professional career has included owning a baking business.

Clergy-Spouse Retreat 2019



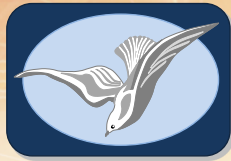
Fifty-eight gathered at a new location in the Richfield area for the 2019 Clergy-Spouse Retreat February 17-19. This was a time for renewal and rest, laughter and learning. Dr. Lee Wetherbee, professor of counseling at Ashland Theological Seminary held several sessions focused on "Working with Difficult People without Becoming Difficult Yourself". Dr Wetherbee brought humor to a challenging topic – and many suggested that we invite him back to speak to us again

next year. Worship time together was rich – and the singing was beautiful! The Ministerial Commission wants to thank all that made this event so worthwhile with special appreciation to Laura Kell (Center) who coordinated the logistics for this event.



District Conference/Peace Auction Information

Coming At District Conference!



A Silent Auction For the Peace Endowment Fund

Support District Peace Education Efforts!



The Peace Task Team organized the auction to raise money for the District Peace Endowment Fund. This fund supports peace education efforts in the District.

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!

We Need YOU!

- to bring handmade items and goodies (handcrafted items, artist's work, homemade food) for the auction!
- to come prepared to bid on the donated items in the auction!

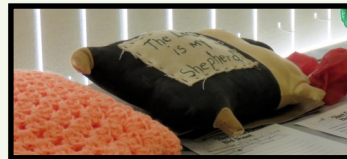
Donate by:

- Bringing your donated items to the Exhibit Area Friday, August 2 by 5 p.m.
- Giving us an estimate of their value
- Noting what a minimum starting bid should be

How to Bid:

- The Silent Auction runs from 5 p.m. Friday to 6:30 p.m. Saturday.
- The person with the highest bid on an item at 6:30 p.m. Saturday takes the item home in return for their contribution to the Peace Endowment Fund!
- All items should be picked up on Saturday evening.

We appreciate all those who support peace education efforts by donating items or by bidding in the auction!



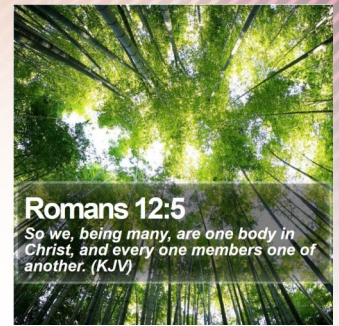
- ⇒ **August 2-3, Mohican Church of the Brethren West Salem, Ohio**
- ⇒ **Theme: "Give me Jesus"**
- ⇒ **Moderator: Doug Price, Ordained Minister, Northern Ohio District**
- ⇒ **Guest Speaker: Paul Munday, Ordained Minister, Mid-Atlantic District and Moderator-elect Church of the Brethren**
- ⇒ **Pre-Conference Workshop with Paul Munday**
- ⇒ **Youth Activities**
- ⇒ **Insight Sessions**
- ⇒ **Peace Auction**
- ⇒ **Ice Cream Social**
- ⇒ **Follow us on Facebook @nohcobconference**

Healthy Congregations Workshop

Preregistration deadline is April 2nd. Register by then for the discounted rate.

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.

Preregistration 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.



District Staff Hours

The District Office is open Monday through Friday from 9 am – 3 pm.

District Executive Minister, **Kris Hawk** will be at the Prayer and Worship Summit March 29-30, in Elgin April 1-3, and in Lombard, IL April 8-10 for training. Kris takes Monday as her day off. She can be reached at 330-612-2086 or krishawk@nohcob.org.

Administrative Secretary, **Julie Watson** is in the office Monday through Friday, 9 am—3 pm. Julie will be at the District Administrative Assistant's training in Elgin, April 1-3. She can be reached at 419-281-3058 or julie@nohcob.org.

Youth Coordinator, **Esther Harsh** is in the office on Mondays. She can be reached at 330-880-7161 or esther@nohcob.org. Thank you!