

The Herald

February 2019

NORTHERN OHIO DISTRICT
CHURCH OF THE BRETHREN

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.

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Mount Pleasant CoB

Mt. Pleasant Church of the Brethren was blessed to receive a Hottle Fund Grant for the purpose of hosting a marriage retreat event. This is the fourth year that Mt. Pleasant has been able to sponsor a weekend retreat for married couples. This year's retreat was held Nov. 2 and 3 at the Carlisle Inn, Sugarcreek. Twelve couples from seven churches in the district attended. The curriculum chosen was "What Did You Expect?: Redeeming the Realities of Marriage" by Dr. Paul David Tripp. Four of the ten video sessions in this series were presented with group discussion following each session. Dr. Tripp's teaching from Luke 6: 43-45, Matthew 6: 19-33, and Galatians 5: 19-23 helped couples to understand biblical principles that, when applied to the hearts of both individuals in a marriage, lead to a marriage of unity, understanding, and love. The theme of the event could be summarized this way: "The ultimate purpose of marriage is not personal happiness; it is redemptive holiness." The retreat concluded with couples participating in a service of feet washing.

The goal of each marriage retreat event has been to

Jonah's People Fellowship

Good Shepherd Home constructed new signs in 2018 and Jonah's People was pleased by the space they were given. Pictured is the new sign (the sunlight keeps the digital part of the sign from being pictured) which features our church and the service clubs which meet at Good Shepherd.

The fellowship has been busy with numerous activities that focus on building our membership. Jonah's People staffed a table at the Good Shepherd Bazaar in November, which draws many people from the community. Promotional literature was shared and a number of contacts were made to introduce folks to our ministry. Pastor Barry has been calling on prospective members. The original membership of 21 was reduced to 17 by deaths. With the current efforts we now have 24 members with more potential members on the horizon. Worship attendance has averaged in the 40's with a few Sundays in the 50's.

Members gathered for a stewardship luncheon in October to look at the finances. Pastor Barry educated the group about the grant funding and member giving. The group agreed that member giving needs to increase as grant funding decreases over the last two years of the grant. Giving levels have increased significantly

dedicate time for the purpose of examining, strengthening, and aligning our marriages with the standards set forth in the Bible. At the center of strong churches are strong families, and at the center of strong families are strong marriages. The enemy delights in tearing down and undermining marriages because he knows that those relationships are foundational to the sending forth of the Gospel. By encouraging, educating, and equipping married couples in the district, it is the earnest hope and prayer of the Retreat Planning Team that families, churches and communities are being fortified, and that couples are empowered to live out marriages that glorify God and draw others to Him.

The Hottle Grant funds allowed couples to experience the retreat at a reduced cost by offsetting the expenses associated with renting facilities, overnight accommodations, and purchasing materials. Mt. Pleasant CoB and the Retreat Planning Team are grateful for the support of the district and the grant committee which made this event possible.

since this event. There are still challenges with this issue. The consensus was that building the membership along with ongoing stewardship education would address the challenges.



**Jonah's People Fellowship Sign at
Good Shepherd Home**

Mansfield First CoB

Thank you so much for the \$4,650.00 Hottle Grant that was extended to the First Church of the Brethren, Mansfield. We were granted the funds in March 2018 to be used for a video system that will be used throughout the church.

The A/V system will be used to enhance our worship service and to be used for Christian education purposes. The video system was used last June for the Northern Ohio Pastors Practice in Ministries days and is now being used for an on-going “Congregational Vision in Ministry,” which the team meets once a month to engage in conversation centered around the Annual Conference, “Compelling Vision Statement” of 2018 Annual Conference.

The worship team is introducing the video system to the congregation for worship slowly. This allows the A/V team time to build a custom worship service and to allow the congregation to acclimate and adjust to our new way of worshipping.

The A/V team was able to purchase four 65” monitors, a laptop and a desk for the operating system. Two monitors are mounted to either side of the front of the sanctuary. One monitor is mounted in the back of the sanctuary for the worship participants to see. One monitor was mounted in the basement with the intent for people who may be preparing meals, or if a parent needs to care for a child away from the worship area and still be able to view the worship service.

The four monitors are connected to a central controlling system allowing for the video and sound to be synchronized. The team will continue to build on this basic system.

Thanks again for the Hottle Grant that allows our congregation to grow.

Many blessings Paul Wymer—Leadership Chair

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)

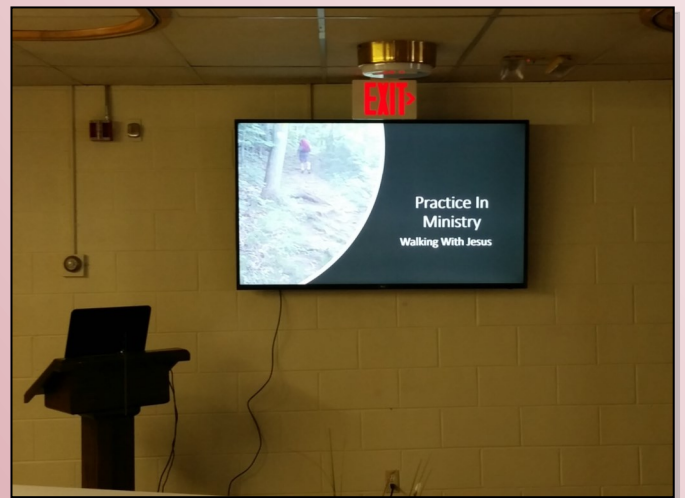
20 cents per mile driven for medical or moving* purposes (increased from 18 cents in 2018)

*does not apply to moving expenses for clergy

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



**Mansfield First Church of the Brethren
Sanctuary with new A/V Equipment**



**Mansfield First Church of the Brethren
Fellowship Hall with new A/V Equipment**

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).

Ethics Training

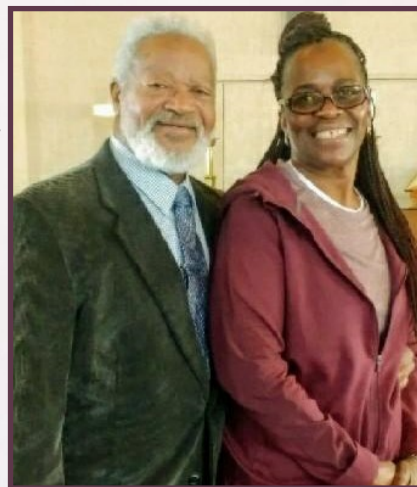
The level 201 five-year cycle of ministerial ethics trainings for ordained/commissioned ministers - to be completed by all ministers before renewals at the end of 2020 - will be made available in Northern Ohio District on **Saturday, October 5th, 2019 from 10 am - 4 pm, with a make-up date of March 28,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

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.

Pleasant View calls James Washington as Pastor

James Washington was installed as Pastor of the Pleasant View congregation on Sunday, January 6th. He was ordained as a deacon in 1968 and ordained in the Church of the Brethren in 1978 in Pomona, California.



He was the pastor **James & Sandra Washington,** and founder of Bethel **Pleasant View CoB** Temple CoB where

he pastored for 13 years. More recently he served as Interim Pastor at the Lake Breeze Church of the Brethren and currently serves on the District Congregational Commission where he shares his passion for evangelism. James studied theology at the University of La Verne and pastoral counseling at Claremont School of Theology. James and his wife, Sandra, have nine adult children and 23 grandchildren.

Pastoral Placement

Congregations actively in the search process:

Akron Springfield (full-time) – Search Committee interviewing candidates. **George O'Reilly** serving as interim.

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

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

Maple Grove (full-time) – **Stephen Keib** called as pastor and will begin 3/1/2019.

Zion Hill – Search Committee 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

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)

February 24—March 2

Freeburg CoB (Pastor Mike Zellers) and Hartville CoB (Pastor Anthony DiMarco)

March 3—March 9

Jonah's People Fellowship (Pastor Barry A. Belknap) and Lake Breeze CoB (Interim Stephen McLaughlin)

March 10—March 16

Lakewood CoB (Interim Gene Wyse) and Lick Creek CoB (Pastor Bill Holsopple)

March 17—March 23

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

District Event Calendar

2.6—Western Area Pastors Lunch, The Barn Restaurant, Archbald, OH

2.9—Shalom Team Training, District Office, Ashland, OH

2.12—Eastern Area Pastors Lunch, Front Porch Café, Hartville, OH

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

2.13—Central Area Clergy Breakfast, Tim Hortons, Ashland, OH

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

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

3.6—Western Area Pastors Lunch, The Barn Restaurant, Archbald, OH

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

3.9—District Board Meeting, Defiance CoB, Defiance, OH

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

3.12—Eastern Area Pastors Lunch, Front Porch Café, Hartville, OH

3.13—Central Area Clergy Breakfast, Tim Hortons, Ashland, OH

Shalom Team

Conflict

The church is supposed to be a peaceful, accepting sanctuary for its members. However, the members of any church are people from different interests, backgrounds and different points of view. These differences can sometimes lead to conflict between individuals and conflict within our churches. But remember that conflicts are a very normal part of the human condition and that conflict is not “bad” or “good”, but the way we handle or work through conflict can lead to separation and brokenness or to growth and a broader perspective. Conflict can help us widen our perspective and help us to grow by getting us to think about and better understand our own beliefs and points of view as well as considering and beginning to understand other points of view. The way conflict is handled can make the results of a conflict either be an opportunity for growth and understanding or a cause of separation, brokenness, and misunderstanding.

Since we as a church, believe that conflict is a very normal part of the human condition, we are trying to help individuals and congregations deal with conflict in constructive rather than in destructive ways. When conflicts develop in a church one of the resources the Northern Ohio District provides is the Shalom Team. The Shalom Team is a group of individuals trained in conflict management that can work with churches to provide healthy communication and be a guiding presence to help the church work through conflict and help keep it a positive and a growing opportunity. The Northern Ohio District Shalom Team has recently reorganized and new members have been appointed. The Team has gone through step one of the conflict management training back on December 1. The Team is made up of the following people:

Fred Brinkman, Sugar Creek West; Bill Eley, Chippewa; Scott Freer, Maple Grove; Jason Harsh, Zion Hill; Kay Powell, Hartville; Deb Rising, First Church Ashland; Mike Zellers, Freeburg; and ex-officio members Linda Fry, District Peace Worker; and Kris Hawk, District Executive Minister. Additional training is scheduled under the guidance of Tom Michaels in February to help prepare these individuals for their new role as Shalom Team members.

The Shalom Team is set up to help churches rather than individuals positively work through conflicts. Basic “rules of operation” are being developed, but to begin enlisting the aid of the Shalom Team a church board needs to contact the District Executive Minister, Kris Hawk.

The Shalom Team, when engaged by a congregation, is not charged with “solving” or “fixing” the conflict, but to be a resource in helping the congregation work through the conflict. The guidance and mentoring provided by the Team may include training the congregation in listening and communication skills, helping discern and define the real issue that is causing the conflict, or in facilitating listening sessions where everyone’s point of view can be heard in a safe and open forum. All work and communication by the Shalom Team is completely confidential between the team and the congregation.

For additional information on Shalom Teams, read the “The Shalom Team” report presented to and adopted by the 2002 Annual Conference.

Article written by: Mark Pollock, District Congregational Commission

Clothe Yourself In Christ



Retreat flyers will be sent via email, U.S. mail and posted on Facebook the first week of February. Visit www.nohcob.org/SISTERS for more information.

N. Ohio SISTERS (Women's) Retreat April 26 & 27, 2019, Inspiration Hills Camp

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)

Download guidelines and application at:

www.nohcob.org/grant

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. It is very important to fill these forms out and send them in by the deadline. The accuracy of our district membership depends on these forms! This number is used to determine the assessment amount our district pays to Annual Conference each year. Thank you!



Fill out Form

Give Me Jesus

**NORTHERN OHIO DISTRICT CONFERENCE
MOHICAN CHURCH OF THE BRETHREN**

AUGUST 2-3, 2019

District Conference 2019 August 2-3

Mohican Church of the Brethren, West Salem, OH

Theme: Give Me Jesus, Moderator: Doug Price

Guest Speaker: Paul Munday, Ordained Minister, Mid-Atlantic District and Moderator-elect Church of the Brethren

Each church should plan to send 2 delegates (one additional delegate for church over 200 members)

Annual Conference Delegate Briefing

with Annual Conference Moderator, Donita Keister
May 5, 2019—3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Location TBD

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.



Water Street Building Sold

The Water Street Church of the Brethren in Kent, Ohio ceased meeting in early 2016 and the delegates approved the closing of the church at the 2016 District Conference. The District Board made the decision to sell the building/parsonage/property and the sale closed in October of 2018. On the recommendation of the Stewardship and Finance Commission, the District Board approved the following use of the funds from the sale of the building:

Gross sale:	\$550,000
Closing costs, lawyer and realtor fees (estimated – actual costs were not this high)	\$100,000
10% of gross designated for Camp capital improvements	\$ 55,000
District Office improvements:	\$ 10,000
Repay Church Ext. Fund for Water St. maintenance prior to sale	\$ 25,000
Repay Church Ext. Fund for amount borrowed in 2016	\$ 25,000
All remaining funds designated for a new Church Improvement Loan Fund (estimate)	\$335,000

Stewardship and Finance Commission is drawing up guidelines for the newly created Church Improvement Loan Fund, which will provide 0% interest loans to churches for improvements and repairs to their main ministry property. Our hope is that this legacy to the Water Street Church will be a blessing to our churches for many years to come. More information will be available after the March 9th District Board meeting.