

# Pastor's Memo

NORTHERN OHIO DISTRICT  
CHURCH OF THE BRETHREN  
OCTOBER 2025

## Men's Retreat

We are excited to announce that our Northern Ohio Men's Fall Retreat is **Saturday, October 18, 2025** at Inspiration Hills Camp from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm. The cost is \$20 per person which does include lunch.

The theme is Rebuilding: Nehemiah 4. Guest speakers are Pastor Mike Conner, Painesville Church of the Brethren and Wayne Kissel, Akron First Church of the Brethren. Come enjoy time of fellowship, prayer, reflective meditation, sharing testimonies, work projects at Camp if interested during the day. This is open to all men. Share with the men in your congregations.

Registration starts at 9:00 am and the program begins at 9:15 am with gathering worship. Scholarships are available.

Register online at: [www.nohcob.org/mensretreat](http://www.nohcob.org/mensretreat) or contact Laura at the district office at [laura@nohcob.org](mailto:laura@nohcob.org) or 419-281-3058. See the attached flyer for additional information.



## In This Issue

|                                         |   |
|-----------------------------------------|---|
| Men's Retreat.....                      | 1 |
| BBI Class.....                          | 2 |
| Pastoral Placement.....                 | 2 |
| District Prayer Calendar.....           | 2 |
| District Nomination Sought.....         | 2 |
| Reading COB Celebration.....            | 3 |
| Giving Through your IRA.....            | 3 |
| Thank you.....                          | 3 |
| National Youth Conference Info.....     | 3 |
| L.E.A.D Conference.....                 | 4 |
| Jubilee Celebration.....                | 4 |
| Fall Area Clergy Meetings.....          | 4 |
| Continuing Education opportunities..... | 5 |
| Interim Round Table Discussion.....     | 5 |
| District Events Calendar.....           | 6 |
| October 2025 Herald.....                | 6 |
| 2026 Clergy Spouse Retreat.....         | 6 |
| 2026 Salary and Benefit Info.....       | 6 |
| 2026 Self-Allocation Reporting.....     | 6 |
| District Hours.....                     | 6 |
| Men's Fellowship.....                   | 7 |
| L.E.A.D Conference.....                 | 8 |
| Annual Conference Nominations.....      | 8 |



## Buckeye Brethren Institute

### Upcoming Classes

#### *New Testament Survey*

*Instructor: Cindy Peel*

**Meeting dates: October 24, November 7 and 21; 9:30am to 3:30pm**

### COURSE OBJECTIVES

By the end of this unit, the student will:

- A. Be able to identify each of the books of the NT in terms of their literary genre, origin in the life of the early church & basic issues or themes.
- B. Be able to describe the formation of the NT canon & its authority for the church's faith & life.
- C. Be able to identify some of the basic features of Jesus' ministry & message & compare the different portraits of Jesus in the 4 gospels.
- D. Be able to place at least 24 key figures & events on a timeline of the era of the Christian origins.
- E. Be able to take a selected text from the NT & demonstrate its use as a resource for a particular area of ministry.

This class is available to those interested in the ministry and to licensed ministers moving towards ordination. Ordained and Commissioned clergy can also take this class for CEU's (1.5 CEU's for attendance at all three Friday sessions) at a cost of \$25.00. And anyone can take this class for personal enrichment.

Visit our webpage [nohcob.org/BBI](http://nohcob.org/BBI) to register or for more information.

## Northern Ohio District

### Pastoral Placement

#### **Congregations actively in the search process:**

**Brook Park-** *Ryan Lopez* serving as interim pastor. Forming search committee.

**Center** – *Joe Routh* serving as interim pastor.

**Jonah's People** – *Mark Self* is serving as interim pastor.

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

**Akron First-** *Wayne Kissel* serving as interim pastor.

**Eden** – *Tom Michaels* serving as transitional pastor.

**Freeburg** – *Ed Wartluft* serving as preacher.

**Owl Creek** – *Charles Barnhill* serving as interim pastor.

**Silver Creek**— *Jason Martin* serving as interim pastor.

**Sugar Creek West** – *Ministry Team* providing pulpit supply.

## District Prayer Calendar

### October Prayer Calendar

#### Churches/Pastors

Owl Creek, Charles Barnhill  
Painesville, Mike Conner  
Paradise, Terry Vaught

#### District Leadership

Shalom Team

#### Sister Districts

Southern  
Ohio/Kentucky

#### National Leadership

Global Food Initiative  
CoB in Dominican Republic

## District Nominations

The District Nominating Committee is asking for your help in identifying individuals gifted to be on the 2026 District Conference Ballot for the following positions:

- **MODERATOR-ELECT**
- **PROGRAM AND ARRANGEMENTS COMMITTEE**
- **MISSION AND MINISTRY BOARD**
- **PASTORAL COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS ADVISORY COMMITTEE-LAITY**

Details about each position is available on the attached flyer or online at [brethren.org/ac/nominations/](http://brethren.org/ac/nominations/)

**Please see the District Conference  
Wrap Up for details of our 2025  
District Conference**



## Reading Church of the Brethren

### Celebrating 200 Year Anniversary

25148 Georgetown Road

Homeworth, OH 44634

Date: October 18, 2025

Time: 5:00 Meal

6:30 pm Service with Music and  
Message

October 19, 2025, 10:30 am

**RSVP: by October 2, 2025** at [info@reading.org](mailto:info@reading.org) or Face-  
book: Reading Church of the Brethren



### You Are Invited to Center Church's 200<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration Banquet The Foltz Center

224 N Wood St. East Canton, OH 44130

**Saturday, October 25, 2025**

Gathering at 5:30 pm. Dinner at 6:00 pm

Buffet: Glazed Ham. Stuffed Chicken Breast.  
Green Beans. Potatoes. Salad. Rolls. Beverage

(Suggested dinner donation \$25 per person)

Please RSVP to Billie Janet by Oct. 18. 330-418-1148

## Giving Through your IRA

Giving through your IRA is a great way to give and can be a great tax benefit to you, the donor. Those that are 70 ½ or older are eligible to give through an IRA Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD).

A QCD allows you to donate through your IRA while not being taxed on the income withdrawn. The Northern Ohio District Church of the Brethren (NOHCOB) is qualified to receive Qualified Charitable Distributions. QCD from your IRA account are non-taxable.

Those that are 72 and older and are required to take a Required Minimum Distribution (RMD) from their IRA can designate funds from that RMD as a QCD to NOHCOB.

To initiate a QCD gift, contact your IRA custodian and inform them that you would like to make a Qualified Charitable Distribution from your IRA account to NOHCOB. Your custodian will be able to guide you through the process.

You will need to provide your custodian with our name and address.

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

If needed, our EIN (tax ID number) is 34-6549413.

Please ask your custodian to show on the distribution check or check stub:

- that your gift is from an IRA account
- the IRA account owner's name

If you would like to communicate with us about your IRA donation, you can email [lisa@nohcob.org](mailto:lisa@nohcob.org).

## National Youth Conference 2026



**National Youth Conference 2026 will take place July 18-23, 2026, at the YMCA of the Rockies in Estes Park, Colorado!** This year's theme is "Light Within Us."

National Youth Conference (NYC) provides young people in high school and the first year of college (or are age equivalent) and their advisors the chance to gather for a week of fellowship, worship, workshops, recreation and more!

Registration opens Jan. 5, 2026 and closes June 30, 2026. For more information go to <https://www.brethren.org/nyc/>

# Upcoming Events from Discipleship & Leadership Formation Team



**Date:** May 1-3, 2026

**Place:** Ephrata Church of the Brethren, Ephrata, PA

*More info will be coming soon.*



## Key Note Speaker

### Ted Bolsinger

Tod Bolsinger, MDiv, PhD, the co-owner and principal of Sloan Leadership, Inc, an executive coaching and consulting firm that works with church, non-profit, and marketplace leaders in leading change.

He is also the Executive Director of the De Pree Center Church Leadership Institute a Senior Fellow of the De Pree Center for Leadership, and Associate Professor of Leadership Formation at Fuller Theological Seminary, was the founder of the Fuller Leadership Platform, an innovative approach to online formation and leadership development, and served as a Vice President of Fuller Seminary for six years.

Prior to his educational career, he served as a pastor for 27 years. Tod is the author of five books, including the Outreach Magazine Resource of the Year in pastoral leadership, *Canoeing the Mountains: Christian Leadership in Uncharted Territory*, the Christian Book Award Finalist, *Tempered Resilience: How Leaders are Formed in the Crucible of Change*, and *The Practicing Change Series*.



## Intercultural Jubilee Celebration

**THEME:** Embracing Being Together & Awakening Our Paths to the Future (Rev 7:9)

Join us for a day or three days of worship, fellowship, study, and rejoicing, celebrating in nature with good food. A special gathering of being in the presence of God, where all of us Brethren are enjoying one another's culture, peacefully, simply and together. All are welcome ❤️

**NOVEMBER 18 - 21, 2025**

2037 Hempel Ave, Gotha, FL  
**CAMP ITHIEL**

Registration will be opened soon.  
Early bird registration 5/20/2025 and  
Regular Registration is 9/1/2025  
Early Registration: \$100 & Regular  
Registration \$150 per person to defray  
expenses.



For more information:  
<https://www.brethren.org/intercultural/>



**Church of the Brethren**  
*Continuing the work of Jesus. Peacefully. Simply. Together.*

**COME JOIN US!**

## The Fall Area Clergy Meetings

**The Fall Area Clergy meetings** are scheduled for November 11th-13th. The first 1/2 hour is gathering, announcements and sharing, followed by 2 hours of a workshop for 0.2 CEUs. More information will be sent out next week.

Tuesday, November 11th, 9:30 am - 11:30 am - (Western area) Defiance CoB

Tuesday, November 11th, 5:30 pm - 8:00 pm - (Western area) Silver Creek CoB

Wednesday, November 12th, 9:30 am - 11:30 am - (Eastern area) Akron First CoB

Wednesday, November 12th, 5:30 pm - 8:00 pm - (Central area) Paradise CoB

Thursday, November 13th, 9:30 am - 11:30 am - (Central area) District Office

Thursday, November 13th, 5:30 pm - 8:00 pm - (Eastern area) Freeburg CoB

# Continuing Education Opportunities



## *Cultivating an Everyday Faith*

Online

January 21 – March 17, 2026

Instructor: Joan Dagget

Credit: MS, FCR

Registration Deadline: **December 10, 2025**

Course Brochure Coming Soon

## *Introduction to Preaching*

Online Hybrid (Bethany Theological Seminary)

February 17 – 20, 2026 (Zoom 2 weeks before and 2 weeks after)

Instructor: Dawn Ottoni-Wilhelm

Credit: BTS, MS, FCR

Registration Deadline: **January 6, 2026**

Course Brochure Coming Soon



The Ventures in Christian Discipleship program at McPherson (Kan.) College has announced its next courses for this fall.

### • “Immigrant Solidarity in Jesus’ Name”

TUESDAYS, OCTOBER 21 & 28, 2025  
6:30 – 8:30 PM CENTRAL TIME

Presenters: *Founa Badet & Matt Gynn*  
.4 CEU credit

### • “Making Sense of God’s Violent Behavior in the Old Testament”

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 8, 2025  
10:00AM-1:00PM CENTRAL TIME

Presenter: *Eric Seibert*  
.3 CEU credit

Continuing education credit is available for \$10 per course. During the registration process, you will have the opportunity to pay for CEUs and give an optional donation to the Ventures program. Learn more and register for courses at [www.mcpherson.edu/ventures](http://www.mcpherson.edu/ventures)

## INTERIM/Transitional Ministry Round Table Discussion

**Zoom Session: Thursday, October 23rd 7:30 – 8:30 pm EST**

Perhaps you are a pastor interested in interim ministry or a member of a congregation that is facing change.

*Maybe your pastor has resigned, your attendance numbers have changed, or you’ve made the decision to sell your building.*

While the future of each congregation is unique for every setting, congregations moving through transitions have the opportunity to experience that season as a time of transformation and growth.

*Discerning the best steps forward during a season of change is an intentional process, grounded in God’s leading.*

Come to learn more about the possibilities of interim ministries, to ask questions about ways to navigate transitional times, and discuss your current challenges with others who share the same journey.

JOIN US for support and Information using this link: <https://tiny.cc/COB-Interim>

This discussion will be presented by members of the Interim Ministry Working Group and sponsored by the Church of the Brethren Ministry Office.

You’ll be in conversation with:

**Tara Hornbacker** – Current Interim Minister, retired Bethany Theological Seminary faculty. Taught Brethren Academy’s Interim ministry class. Currently interim in SOH/KY district.

**Christy Dowdy** – Interim Ministry leadership with 2 different congregations and retired pastor; Completed BTS Interim Ministry class.

**Enten Eller** – Currently serving as the transitional interim pastor at the Ridgeway Community Church of the Brethren (Harrisburg, PA). He has been certified for interim ministry through the Interim Ministry Network.



Church of the Brethren  
Ministry Office



## District Events Calendar

- 10.16 Ministerial Commission Meeting at 6:00 pm
- 10.18 Men's Fellowship Retreat from 9:00 until 3:00 at Inspiration Hills
- 10.21 Northern Ohio Pastor's Gathering at 10:00 am
- 10.23 CAC Meeting at 6:00 pm
- 10.24 BBI-New Testament at 9:30 am at District Office
- 10.28 Central Committee Meeting at 6:00 pm at District Office
- 11.05 Western Area Pastors Gathering at 12:30 pm
- 11.07 BBI-New Testament at 9:30 am at District Office
- 11.08 District Board at 10:00 am at Center CoB
- 11.13 Central Area Clergy Breakfast at 9:00 am at District Office
- 11.13 Eastern Area Pastors Gathering at 12:00 pm

\*To see meeting and event times go to our website  
<https://www.nohcob.org/>

## 2026 Clergy & Spouse Retreat

February 15-17 -  
Wilmot, OH

Will be held at :

Amish Door Village  
1210 Winesburg Street  
Wilmot, OH 44689



\*All ordained, commissioned, licensed clergy, Interims, and spouses are invited for a time to laugh, time to learn, time of worship, quiet time, social time, free time.

\*More information will be coming soon.

## Articles for The Herald, Fall Issue Due October 15—Stories to Share

The Northern Ohio District Office will soon begin drafting the Fall Issue of The Herald. If you have an article you would like to contribute to The Herald, October 2025 Fall Issue, please send it to the District Office no later than October 15, 2025. Please keep your article between 150-200 words and provide a couple of pictures (digital preferably) to accompany the article if you like. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the District Office 419-281-3058 or email [laura@nohcob.org](mailto:laura@nohcob.org). Thank you!

## 2026 Salary and Benefit Information

The 2026 Pastoral Salary and Benefit information packet has been emailed to pastors, church board/leadership team chairs, and church treasurers. It can also be found online at <https://www.nohcob.org/resources/pastors-resources/2021-salary-guidelines-and-table>

If you would like paper copies of the information, please contact the District Office at 419-281-3058.

## 2026 Self-Allocation Reporting

The Church of the Brethren has discontinued their process of churches reporting their self-allocation pledges. It is important that our district still receives your pledges, as we work at budgeting responsibly. So we will be sending information to each church on how to report your budgeted pledges to the district and to Inspiration Hills.

## District Office Hours

The District Office regular hours are Monday—Friday from 9 am to 2 pm.

District Executive Minister, **Kris Hawk** takes Monday as her day off. She can be reached at 330-612-2086 or [krishawk@nohcob.org](mailto:krishawk@nohcob.org).

Administrative Secretary, **Laura Huffaker** is in the office Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. She can be reached at 419-281-3058 or [laura@nohcob.org](mailto:laura@nohcob.org).

# Men's Fall Retreat:

## Rebuilding:Nehemiah 4

**Theme:**  
Rebuilding: Nehemiah 4

**Where:**  
Inspiration Hills Camp  
4819 W Easton Rd  
Burbank, Ohio 44214

**When:**  
October 18, 2025

**Time:**  
9:00am-3:00pm

**Cost:**  
\$20/per person  
fee includes lunch at camp

**Register online at:**  
[www.nohcob.org/mensretreat](http://www.nohcob.org/mensretreat)  
or contact Laura Huffaker  
[laura@nohcob.org](mailto:laura@nohcob.org)  
419-281-3058

Our Guest Speakers will focus on  
Rebuilding:

*Pastor Mike Conner*  
*Painesville Church of the Brethren*  
and  
*Pastor Wayne Kissel*  
*Akron First Church of the Brethren*

Come enjoy time of fellowship,  
worship, prayer, reflective meditation,  
sharing testimonies, work projects at  
Camp if interested during the day.

Registration starts at 9:00am and the  
program begins at 9:15am  
with gathering  
worship.  
Scholarships available.





### ► Humble Leadership

June 19

Rev. Dr. Dennis R. Edwards serves as Dean and Vice President of Church Relations at North Park Theological Seminary, after having previously been Associate Professor of New Testament.



### ► The Pastor as Outfitter

October 16

Paul Munday is a minister, consultant, and writer. He has served as a church leader for over 45 years in various roles, including pastor, church administrator, denominational officer, workshop leader, denominational staff member, and teacher.



### ► Adaptability in Leadership

January 15

Jeremy Ashworth has been the pastor of Circle of Peace Church of the Brethren for over 10 years.



### ► Discipling Leaders

March 19th

Pastor Lidia Gonzalez has been a church planter since the young age of 17 and has served the Church of the Brethren for 26 years.



**REGISTER HERE:**

[www.brethren.org/thirdthursday](http://www.brethren.org/thirdthursday)

There is no cost to attend a webinar  
CEU credits available



Church of the Brethren

Sponsored by Discipleship & Leadership Formation  
For information email: [DLF@brethren.org](mailto:DLF@brethren.org)

### A Call for Annual Conference Nominations

The Nominating Committee is calling on all of us to make nominations for the Annual Conference ballot in 2026. Please review the open positions, discern qualified candidates, and go to [brethren.org/ac/nominations](http://brethren.org/ac/nominations) to make your nominations or find more information.

#### Moderator Elect

One person, 3-year term  
*Ineligible (past 4 Moderators): David Sollenberger, Tim McElwee, Madalyn Metzger, Dava Hensley*

#### Program and Arrangements Committee

One person, 3-year term  
*Ineligible (member completing a term in 2026): Gail Heisel*

#### Mission and Ministry Board

Representative from Area 3: Atlantic Southeast, Shenandoah, Southeastern, Virgina, West Marva  
One person, 5-year term

Representative from Area 5:

*Idaho, Pacific Northwest, Pacific Southwest*  
One person, 5-year term  
*Italics indicates no representation in 5 years*

#### Pastoral Compensation and Benefits Advisory Committee-

##### Laity

One person, 5-year term  
*Ineligible (member completing term in 2026): Robert "Bob" McMinn*



The L.E.A.D. (Listen – Equip – Adapt – Disciple) Conference Planning Team has now planned for quarterly webinars, with the goal of providing church board members, pastors, deacons, Sunday School teachers and any other local church leaders tools to grow in their leadership abilities. CEU are available.

October 16 at 6 p.m. Central, Dr. Paul Munday will present on “The Pastor as Outfitter: Equipping Disciples for the Adventure of Mission.”

Paul Munday is a minister, consultant, and writer. He has served as a church leader for over 45 years in various roles, including pastor, church administrator, denominational officer, workshop leader, denominational staff member, and teacher.

[Learn more about the webinar series and speaker Paul Munday here.](#)

You may register below:

<https://vimeo.com/event/5179041/register>