

**Southern Ohio District Conference
September 30, 2016
Oakland Church of the Brethren**

Friday, September 30, 2016

The afternoon was spent in conversation with Jeff Carter on the theme, "Thy Kingdom Come." Please see the addendum for the responses participants gave to questions Jeff posed to small groups.

Moderator Judy Boles called business to order at 6:30 pm.

NOTE: Reports were available on the District website: www.sodcob.org

Seating of delegates and consecration: Moderator-elect John Kinsel led the consecration of delegates.

Introduction of Guests –Guests included Bob Gross and Carol Waggy (Southern Ohio Reconciliation Team), David Steele (Church of the Brethren General Secretary), Lynnae Rodeffer (Brethren Benefit Trust), Mark Flory Steury (Church of the Brethren Donor Relations Representative), John Hipps (Church of the Brethren Director of Donor Relations), Mark Lancaster (Bethany Theological Seminary), and Bekah Houff (Manchester University Campus Pastor).

Presentation of District Leadership Slate: Mark Bowman presented the slate on behalf of the Gifts Discernment Team. Slates were distributed. Moderator Boles led the group in prayer. The slates were returned.

Director of Camping and Retreat Ministries: Karen Dillon presented her report. This year's camping theme was Fearless Faith. Karen shared stories about the six quilts that were made from squares created by campers and staff at each camp. Seventeen people attended the first of two adult Vacation Bible Schools and seventy-four women attended this year's Women's Retreat. The second adult Vacation Bible School will be held later in the year.

Wide Arms Security Blankets: Brandi Motsinger shared about the non-profit she started that shares blankets with those who need them. Delegates were encouraged to bring blankets to support this ministry.

Refugee Resettlement Task Team: Neal Fitze, the chairperson of this team, gave a brief update on its work. The team was created at the direction of District Conference and includes Paula Bowser, Isaac Zika, Linda Brandon, Ralph Dull, Margo Royer-Miller, and Wendy Noffsinger Erbaugh. They have been researching the refugee resettlement process and making contacts within the community. As they wait to serve a family more directly, the team hopes to present educational programs related to refugee resettlement.

Adjournment for evening worship

Saturday, October 1, 2016

The morning continued the conversation with Jeff Carter on the theme, "Thy Kingdom Come." Please see the addendum for the responses participants gave to questions Jeff posed to small groups.

Recognition of Pastors Anniversaries: Sheila Shumaker and Dave Shetler recognized ordination anniversaries. Congratulations!

5 years – Trent Smith

15 years – Kathy Royer, Richard Shockney

20 years – Jeannie Lamb

25 years – Dan Poole

30 years – Irv Heishman, Kathy Hodges, Ron Sherck, Larry Tyner
35 years – Steve Reid, Burton Wolf
40 years – Mike Hostetter
65 years – Robert Fryman

Reconciliation Team Session: Todd Reish, Carol Waggy, and Bob Gross each led a group of Conference participants in discussing one of the following questions: How can we do more service projects together? How might we engage youth in our District? How can we creatively connect congregations as a way to build deeper relationships? Group responses were going to be passed on to the appropriate individual or group within the District.

Refugee Resettlement Task Force: Dan Ulrich presented a Bible Study on Welcoming Refugees.

Story Sharing: Daniel Fullen shared about God's movement in his life and at Olivet.

Agency Reports: A video was shared highlighting the ministries of denominational agencies. Lynnea Rodeffer (Brethren Benefit Trust) talked about changes to the Brethren Pension Plan, Target Date Funds, the Church Workers' Assistance plans, and BBT insurance plans, investments and workshops. David Steele (Church of the Brethren General Secretary) invited people to a listening session following the close of business. He brought greetings on behalf of Bethany Theological Seminary, On Earth Peace, denominational staff, and the Mission and Ministry Board. Roxane Hill shared an update about the Nigerian church.

Reconciliation Team Report: Team members Bob Gross and Carol Waggy brought this report. They outlined the process the team has used: Listening sessions were held in District congregations. The sessions were summarized and shared in ways that maintained the confidentiality of the responders. Then there were three conversations, each at a different location around the District, between people from the District and District leaders. The brainstorming they led during District Conference is the last step of the process to date, with more steps to come. Written copies of the full report to District Conference were distributed to Conference-goers.

Moderator Boles called the business session to order.

Review of District Conference Minutes: The minutes for the District Conference held on October 9-10, 2015 were approved.

Presentation and Approval of the Agenda: Moderator Boles presented the agenda for adoption. It was approved.

Results of slate: Moderator Boles shared that the District slate had been affirmed.

State of the District Report: David Shetler, District Executive, offered a report on behalf of himself and the District Board. He shared a time of lectio divina using Jeremiah 29:11-13 and Philippians 1:3-6. He noted that we have reason to plan and hope, sharing his thanks for our District. The sale of Woodland Altars is complete. The District Board is now working to find locations for Camping and Retreat ministries and planning and visioning for District ministries. They are working to improve District communication, including research into the One Call Now service. They want to reinstitute a District Deacons program. An archive of District Board minutes and non-confidential District Board reports have been posted on the District website. This coming year, the Board will be working on videos to be distributed to congregations (DVD, You Tube) to help tell ministry stories from around the District.

David also spends time working with churches on placement, filling pulpits, etc. This year, Potsdam called Carl Hill to be its pastor and Olivet called Daniel Fullen. Rob Raker resigned from Bear Creek due to health problems. Fred Bernhard and Susan Fitze went off the District Board. Mark Bowman ended his term as Past Moderator, Wendy Noffsinger Erbaugh ended her term as District Clerk, Susan

Liller ended her term as District Treasurer, and Seth Hendricks ended his term with Program and Arrangements Team. David concluded his report with a time of prayer.

Review of District Conference Reports: The reports for the 2016 District Conference were accepted.

2017 Budget

Carl Eubank, chair of the Resource Development Team, presented the proposed District budget for 2017. A written financial report from the District Treasurer was available in the delegate packet. This year, the District Board held two informational sessions about the proposed District Budget ahead of District Conference. Carl walked delegates through the budget packet. He highlighted the moneys from the sale of the two portions of Woodland Altars, expenses for One Call Now, and the Empowering Congregations, Empowering Leadership and Empowering Emerging Ministries endowment funds. He noted that the District Board considered three other budget possibilities (in the budget packet) before deciding upon the proposed District budget.

A time for questions and comments followed. It was suggested that campers might go to Camp Mack for a few years to save money for the Camping and Retreat Commission. The request was made that the District use only the interest from the endowment created by the sale of Woodland Altars, not the principal. Concerns were raised that we are drawing from our reserves, that the budget does not work toward solving problems faced by the District, and that we should not further cut District ministries. The question was asked about what the District Board was doing to connect with congregations not financially contributing to the District.

Action: The vote was taken by paper ballot. The budget passed.

Conference Wrap Up

2016 Moderator-Elect John Kinsel adjourned business of the 162nd Southern Ohio District Church of the Brethren District Conference at 5:04 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,



Wendy Noffsinger Erbaugh
District Clerk

Addendum

Notes from Conversation with Jeff Carter
District Conference
September 30 and October 1
Oakland Church of the Brethren

Responses from Friday, September 30

1. What does your neighborhood look like? Your neighbors?
 1. BRC - Gray and silver hair (or dyed)
 2. a lot of school buses, bedroom community for Dayton and Wright Patt AFB, some touchiness about the peace witness, right across from the High School
 3. 25-30 kids walk by every day
 4. rural, lots of parks, less than 200 houses, very small town with big city problems
 5. Hispanic neighbors
 6. rural
 7. heroine addicts
 8. changing neighborhoods
 9. NA, AA, HUGS groups
 10. people who commute
 11. surrounded by subdivisions, racial diversity, beginning to see changes in the neighborhood's affluence
 12. everything from idyllic little towns to cornfields
 13. elderly neighborhoods
 14. isolated and hungry people
 15. food desert because of lack of grocery store options
 16. farmers, animals, green, schools
 17. suburban and urban
 18. affluent neighborhood that is deteriorating, children in danger of going hungry, no jobs close by
 19. a Muffler Brothers, pottery store, many rental homes, some home owners, blue collar workers, teachers, nurses, retirees, factory workers, racially diverse
 20. children who do not have enough food to make it adequately through the weekend
 21. Appalachian culture
 22. a metro park, edge of Dayton, Jefferson township, no town so community gathers around the school, poverty, high percentage of children needing free or reduced lunch, large African-American population
 23. rural poor

2. What needs are present in your neighborhood?
 1. crime and drug problems, mental health issues
 2. need for food, help for heroine addicts and the families needing support
 3. instability due to people moving in and out of the community, children having only one caregiver, and drugs
 4. burnout related to overcommitment
 5. missing sense of community related to individualism
 6. immigrant families need support getting documentation in order and legal assistance as they work through the immigration process
 7. lack of caregivers – helping people get to doctor and specialist appointments as well as helping people in their homes, transportation
 8. fear, need to feel safe
 9. community policing that ethnically reflects the citizenry it governs and builds relationships daily
 10. homelessness and human trafficking
 11. places to belong and contribute

3. What are your churches strengths/gifts?
 1. good food
 2. desire to serve meaningfully
 3. pastors that are involved in the community
 4. deep relationships with each other
 5. service
 6. our heritage, remembering where we came from
 7. music, family that is larger than genetics, valuing people
 8. diversity of ages and ethnicity, great facility, experienced leadership
 9. generosity and global relationships/connections

Responses from Saturday, October 1

1. How much do your relationships look like you?
 1. quite a bit like me (typical European, Caucasian person)
 2. "I don't know"
 3. our families and workplaces are growing more diverse
 4. age segregated society
 5. surface relationships are easiest because people feel safe. It takes more intentionality to build relationships where we have to risk parts of ourselves
 6. geography can make it difficult to build diverse, multicultural relationships. Diversity encompasses more than ethnicity
 7. depends on how much you have moved around geographically. Easier to have relationships that look a lot like you when you live in the same place for a long period
2. What do you risk in reaching out?
 1. fear that our spiritual foundation/identity will be changed
 2. certainty. Assumptions. Prejudices. Facing personal ignorance
 3. losing what we thought we believed
 4. living with ambiguity
 5. needing to become more knowledgeable and connected
 6. safety and security for self and family
 7. having to identify and give up long-held behaviors and assumptions
 8. having our hearts broken from the pain that is felt so deeply by people who are struggling
 9. not experiencing joy
3. What is one thing you can commit to doing today?
 1. to listen
 2. to not speak too soon after listening
 3. to teach the young men in the community how to interact with police
 4. prayer
 5. love
 6. to ask the question more frequently, "What is required of me to love the "other?"
 7. to commit to commitments