

May, 2022
Southern Ohio/Kentucky District Newsletter
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National Youth Conference Grants Available

Every 4 years, Church of the Brethren youth from all over the world gather at Ft. Collins, Colorado for National Youth Conference. 2022 is the year!! Many of you are already busy holding fundraisers and making plans attend. The Resource Development Commission and the District Board want to assist you. They have made a \$500 grant available for any youth or adult advisor from this district who is attending.

More information, including how to apply can be found on the District Website. More information about NYC including how to register can be found at www.brethren.org. Early registration ends April 1, 2022. After that date, registrations will have an extra \$50 late fee.

Updates can also be found on the NYC Facebook page.

Micah 6:8 Community: An Invitation to Participate

Your Resource Development Commission would like to invite you to join a new community within the Southern Ohio/Kentucky District. The Micah 6:8 Community (formerly the Ambassador's Club) believes in the message and mission of the Southern Ohio/Kentucky District of the Church of the Brethren and is willing to support this mission financially.

If you have supported our mission in the past, we can't thank you enough. It is only through your generous donations that our ministry continues. Or possibly you have not contributed financially in the past, but have given of your time and talent. Thank you for that very precious gift. Would you now consider making a financial contribution? Your gift of any amount will undergird and enhance the ministry we do together, unleash the power and creativity of God's Holy Spirit in district and congregational ministries, and empower us to respond to God's call to radical discipleship informed by our Brethren heritage.

If you are feeling a call to be a part of the SOKD Micah 6:8 Community, you can mail your donation to the district mailing address at P O Box 785, Greenville, OH 45331. Or you can make a donation online using your credit card.

Annual Conference Quilt Block

If your congregation has created a quilt block for the 2022 Annual Conference Quilts, you are invited to please share a photo and a brief story about its creation. Send the information to Sharon Bledsoe at sbb212@hotmail.com.

Trotwood CoB Offers Scholarships for College Students

The Trotwood Church has five scholarships for college students. You can learn more details and ask for an application form by calling the church office, Tuesday thru Friday, from 9:00 am to 12:00 noon. The amount of each scholarship will be determined by the number of applications, the resources available and the guidelines of each contributor. Office number- 937-837-6604.



Camp Sugarwood 2022 Spring and Summer Events

SOK District Camping and Retreat Ministries have put together some exciting events and summer camps that will engage people of all ages to experience God's abundant love and mercy. Click here for more information about these opportunities to gather in His name for recreation, learning, prayer, adventures, service and renewing spirits.

Summer Camps will be held in person at Cricket Holler this coming summer. There are many types of camps being planned. A complete list of each camp, brochures with printable registration forms, posters with more details for each camp and how to register online can be found on the district website.

Sunday Picnics were popular and well attended last summer. There will be two more Sunday afternoon picnics in June and July. We have the opportunity to just be together to enjoy games, activities, and time of friendly conversations at Salem Church of the Brethren's park-like setting with its ballfield, playground, and picnic shelter. A free, light supper will be provided. Our evening will end after a vesper service and an ice cream bar. The posters give a lot more details, so please place them where people can read all about the picnics. A poster which can be used to advertise or invite can be downloaded on the district website, or inquire at your church office.

Volunteers are a vital part of Camping and Retreat Ministries. Information about signing up to be a volunteer in an area of interest can be found on the district website. The programs and camps cannot exist without volunteers donating their time and energy. Please post the sheets and encourage volunteers to contact us. A volunteer form is available on the district website, or contact your church office to inquire about how to volunteer.

Scholarships are available for all camps. For more information about how to receive a scholarship, contact Karen Dillon.

Southern Ohio/Kentucky Disaster Ministries Updates

Hygiene Kit Assembly – Volunteers are needed on Thursday, May 12 at 6:30 PM to assemble 1,000 hygiene kits for Church World Service (CWS). Come to Mill Ridge Village Community Center, 1000 Mill Ridge Circle, Union. There will be a variety of work – from jobs that are done while seated to carrying and loading boxes of kits. CWS sends the kits to those in need in the US and throughout the world.

Sewing Bee/Prep CWS Items – A Sewing Bee/CWS Prep will be held on Sat., May 28 at 9:00 AM. Come to Greenville Church of the Brethren, 421 Central Avenue. Sewers need to bring a sewing machine for making bags for CWS school kits. Non-sewers will prepare items for school kits and cleanup buckets. All are invited to bring a sack lunch. Contact Barb Brower (937-336-2442) for more information. Visit www.sodcob.org for the 2022 schedule.

BDM Rebuild Sites/ Volunteers – BDM has completed work in Bayboro, NC with repairs on forty-nine homes that were damaged by Hurricane Florence in 2018. Waverly, TN is the location of the new BDM site. The recovery is from flash flooding that occurred in August 2021. Along with rebuilding, there is still cleanup that needs to be done.

Join a BDM crew! Volunteers are needed for May 15-21, July 17-23, and Sept. 4-10 in Waverly, TN. Transportation, housing, food, and tools are provided. To volunteer, contact Burt Wolf at SouthernOhioBDM@gmail.com or call/text 937-287-5902. All of the 2022 trip dates are on the district website. .

Volunteer in Dayton, OH – Work continues in Dayton on “Tornado Survivors Pathways to Home Ownership” houses. Volunteers are needed throughout May. The preference is for volunteers to work Monday - Friday, but working partial weeks is possible too. The work is with a partner of Brethren Disaster Ministries, the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). Their disaster response group is called “Week of Compassion.” Visit the district website to learn more and for registration information.



Updates from Lower Miami Asylum Project

As spring arrives, Karen and Luciano are beginning to plan for the time when they get work authorization and can find jobs. That will come by June 15. They will be looking for steady work with a living wage and an affordable place to live. In the meantime, they are trying to stay busy and continue their study of English.

They continue to lead Spanish classes for Lower Miami members and have volunteered to clean the church on a weekly basis. The Spanish class is planning a Spring Fiesta for the congregation, complete with Luciano's delicious flan and Latin music and dance. Speaking of flan, please remember Luciano is ready and willing to make more flan and offer an 8x8 pan for a suggested donation of \$20. All proceeds go to support the asylum project, helping to pay the family's legal expenses and some daily needs.

Honduran asylum seekers, Karen, José and their sons, who have been in survival mode in Tijuana since last November regularly express their thanks to God and to us for the bit of help we have been able to give so they can have secure housing. Karen is working in a factory but José continues to struggle with hypertension, requiring ongoing meds to be functional. His condition is not stable enough for him to return to regular construction work. After months of school-by-telephone, the boys are glad to be in person in reopened Tijuana schools. Their parents report that it is not safe for them to play outside after school hours.

The CDC and the Biden administration have ended Title 42 effective May 23. This Covid safety measure has been used since March of 2020 to prevent asylum seekers, including our Honduran friends, from asserting their rights to apply for asylum in the US. Most often they have been detained and returned to the unsafe streets of border towns, as was Karen's family. We await the family's decision about their next steps. In the meantime, Lower Miami CoB and Miami Valley Immigration Coalition Asylum Working Group are committed to accompanying them as best we can from this distance.

Please consider helping to support these two families who cannot safely return to their home countries. You can most easily contribute financially through the MVIC at <https://www.mvicdayton.org>. Click on the Donate button and designate your contribution to asylum/sanctuary. If you have questions, contact Gale Stephenson at (513) 314-1616 or scrapper042002@yahoo.com. If you or your congregation would like to know more about Lower Miami's asylum project or how you might accompany asylum seekers, contact Jan Futrell at peacepathsteps@gmail.com or 859-358-8152.

Prayer Needs

A very important way we can be supportive of each other is to lift each other up in prayer. The 2021 Prayer List for Congregations can be found on the District website.

- For the people in Ukraine living in fear, for the families who have lost loved ones, and for those who have been displaced because of the invasion.
 - Pastor Lee Saylor, Thomas and Isaac and the Salem congregation in prayer for the death of Ashley Saylor.
 - Ken Oren and family as Ken has begun treatment for leukemia.
 - Scott Fitzgerald (district treasurer), death of mother
 - Carrie Smith—death of father just 2 months after death of mother
 - Melissa Johnson-rejection of organ transplants
 - Graham and Carla, homeowners in NC that BDM recently helped. Carla fell and broke her neck--in trauma unit.
 - Mark Ashworth family and the Beech Grove Congregation—death of Mark.
 - We are thankful that COVID cases are coming down and pray that it will continue. Please be aware of the changing mask requirements in different settings. Brethren Retirement Community continues to experience nearly daily changes. If you plan on visiting at BRC, please make sure that you will be able to do so. In addition, many businesses including healthcare are experiencing worker shortages; we need to lift up the employment situation in our world.
 - May we remember those congregations in pastoral transition:
 - **Oakland**--Andrew Wright, interim
 - **Brookville**--Mike Trott begins serving
 - **White Cottage** continues their agreement with a neighboring congregation to supply pastoral services during a time of transition and discernment.
 - **New Carlisle**--Tara Hornbacker, interim
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- ***Prince of Peace***-- John Sgro, interim
- ***Trotwood*** -- Rusty Curling, interim
- ***Lower Miami***--Tracy Knechel Sturgis, interim
- ***Beavercreek*** -- Sandy Jenkins, interim pastor
- ***Donnels Creek*** -- Jim Chronister providing pulpit fill
- ***Pleasant Hill*** -- Fred Bernhard, interim

- There are many issues and situations continuing to face us as we minister in our respective locations, including those who are serving in interim situations and others who are in discernment regarding placement or are considering a move. There are others facing health issues, please keep these situations in prayer.

Please contact Nick if you know of prayer situations of which we should be aware. May we lift each other in prayer as we work to continue the work of Jesus, peacefully, simply, together.