

January, 2022  
Southern Ohio/Kentucky District Newsletter  
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## Happy New Year one and all!

### A message from Interim District Executive, Nick Beam

I must admit I feel a bit like Abraham as he left his homeland in obedience to God's call. He had no idea where he was heading only that God had called him and promised to accompany him on his journey.

As I think back to this time last year I never would have guessed in a hundred years that I would be writing this message today as your new Interim District Executive. But that just proves that God's thoughts are not our thoughts and God's ways are not our ways. I am truly humbled that there are those in our district who think I'm qualified for this position, and I will do my absolute best with God's help and your prayers to fulfill this call.

Abraham's journey was full of challenges and blessings and I'm sure it will be the same for me. These are indeed challenging times for us all. We don't know how 2022 will unfold which is why we must cling to our faith in God and our love for one another to help us meet the challenges. No matter what, Abraham remained faithful and so must we. I know we as a district can address the challenges because there are many good people living out their faith each and every day, not always in the same way but with the same passion. That is indeed a blessing!

I look forward to getting around the district to the different churches and meeting you. As we work together in 2022 may God bless us as we faithfully follow where God leads.

## You are invited!!!

### Retirement Celebration for Dave Shetler

The District Board of Southern Ohio/Kentucky District Church of the Brethren would like to invite all to a retirement celebration in honor of Dave Shetler on January 23, 2022 at the Salem Church of the Brethren from 2-5 PM. Donations in Dave's honor can be made to the district Brethren Disaster Ministries, Camping and Retreat Ministries or to the Brethren Retirement Community.

Please join us as we honor Dave's 11 years of ministry to our district as District Executive. If you have any questions, feel free to contact Todd Reish, District Board Chair at 937-621-4172.

## 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.



Micah 6:8 reads: "He has shown you, O Mortal, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? to act justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God." [Click here](#) to download a brochure which gives a few examples of how SOKD strives to fulfill this verse.

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.

## Lower Miami Congregation Hosts Asylum Seekers

The first two weeks of life in Dayton have been amazingly full and productive for Karen and Luciano and their children, Nicola and Gianluca. Since they come from the tropical coast of Columbia, the wintery weather is a big shock. The boys are happily in school at Blairwood School in Jefferson Township and both parents have signed up for ESL classes that will start after Thanksgiving.

Asylum papers have been filed on behalf of Karen and the family. Gianluca celebrated his 6th birthday and Nicola his 10th in their first week in this strange new place. Lots of love surrounded them. Snow on his birthday, his first ever, was an answered prayer for Nicola. The boys built a big snowman!

Congregation members, neighbors and the Miami Valley Immigration Coalition team are all practicing whatever words of Spanish each one has and our guests are wonderfully gracious and patient with us. Basic needs have been met and we have paid the retainer fee for the lawyer. Luciano and Karen are determined to be as independent as possible but there will be ongoing needs. If you would like to contribute financially to the process or have other questions, contact Gale Stephenson at (513)314-1616 or [scrapper042002@yahoo.com](mailto:scrapper042002@yahoo.com). If you are in the Dayton area and can help with transportation to ESL classes or for other needs, please contact Jan Futrell at (859)358-8152 or [peacepathsteps@gmail.com](mailto:peacepathsteps@gmail.com).

## Southern Ohio/Kentucky Disaster Ministries Updates

***BDM Rebuilding Opportunities in 2022*** – BDM is working in Bayboro, NC through April 2022 with recovery from Hurricane Florence (Sept. 2018). Volunteers are needed for March 13-19 and April 10-16. Transportation, housing, food, tools, and leadership are provided. To volunteer, contact Burt Wolf at [SouthernOhioBDM@gmail.com](mailto:SouthernOhioBDM@gmail.com) or call/text 937-287-5902. A flyer with all the 2022 trip dates can be found on the district website, or contact your church office.

**KY Tornadoes/ Response** – Some of the recent tornadoes were within the boundaries of our S. Ohio/ KY District, but not near our Church of the Brethren congregations. With the impacted area being about six hours from Dayton and having no local contacts, we aren't able to lead a response like we did when tornadoes hit Dayton in May 2019. BDM's early response to a disaster is typically through Children's Disaster Services (CDS), and workers helped one day in Missouri. CDS is staying in close contact with Red Cross and will respond as needed. National BDM states, "Given the initial damage assessments, recovery will likely take years, and BDM is prepared to support rebuilding homes and lives. Please pray for the people who were impacted by the Dec. 10-11 tornadoes." Support the Winter Tornado response at [www.brethren.org/give-winter-tornados](http://www.brethren.org/give-winter-tornados).

S. Ohio/KY BDM is in communication with our partners in the Dayton area. Below is information shared by Declare, a group that we worked with in the Dayton recovery. There are certainly more organizations serving, but this is one that we know about.

Volunteer Response: We have been able to connect with the Churches of Christ Disaster Relief team (<https://www.churchesofchristdrt.org/>, based out of the Greater Dayton / Tipp City area and do this regularly) that is

providing volunteer coordination in Mayfield, Kentucky. They have established a response station out of two of their partner churches in Mayfield, are already prepared to house volunteers and process them using this form (<https://www.churchesofchristdrt.org/volunteersignup>).

**2021 Data** – S. Ohio/KY BDM had 15 rebuilding trips with 101 volunteers. These trips were to Bayboro, North Carolina and Dayton, Ohio at a cost of \$4,032. Twenty individuals also supported the Dayton site, working partial weeks that totaled 139 days. For Church World Service (CWS), 528 Cleanup Buckets and 2,227 School Kits were assembled for \$29,600. At nine Sewing Bees, 91 participants sewed bags for school kits or prepped items for CWS buckets/kits. This year we had two volunteers care for children through Children’s Disaster Services (CDS). Support to S. Ohio/KY BDM was given in many forms: as a rebuilding volunteer, CDS volunteer, sewing school bags, assembling CWS kits, helping with fundraisers, financial contributions, and prayer. All are greatly appreciated as together we bring hope and share God’s love with disaster survivors.

**Sewing Bees/Prep CWS Items** –Sewing Bees will be on the fourth Saturdays of the month, February through October. The location will alternate between Greenville COB and Eaton Community Church. The next Sewing Bee will be at Eaton Community Church on Sat., Feb. 26 at 9:00 AM. A flyer with the 2022 schedule can be found on the district website, or contact your church office.

## *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.

-- Heather Fullen, wife of Daniel Fullen who is the pastor of the Olivet Church of the Brethren, has asked for prayer as she deals with Covid.

- May we lift Dottie Woodard surgery on her ankle.

- We lift up Nick Beam as he begins service as Interim District Executive Minister. We also remember the Pleasant Hill congregation as they will be going through a pastoral transition.

- Those affected by the recent tornadic activity with lost lives, damaged properties and homes, and other effects.

- There continue to be reports of shootings and planned shootings in the news as well as other expressions of violence. May we pray for an end to such violent responses.

- Those affected by the coronavirus outbreak. There are many changing directives, regulations and recommendations affecting our country and way of life, may we remember all those adjusting to this changing world.

- employment situation in our world

- Those congregations in pastoral transition - **Oakland:** Andrew Wright Interim

**Brookville:** Mike Trott installed as pastor this Sunday

**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

**Prince of Peace:** John Sgro, interim

**Trotwood:** Rusty Curling, interim

**Lower Miami:** Tracy Knechel Sturgis, interim

**Beavercreek:** Sandy Jenkins, 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