

March, 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.



Southern Ohio/Kentucky Disaster Ministries Updates

BDM Rebuilding Opportunities – BDM is working in Bayboro, NC through April with recovery from Hurricane Florence (Sept. 2018). A new site will open in May, and volunteers are needed for May 15-21 and July 17-23. The location hasn't been announced, but will likely be in Tennessee. To volunteer, contact Burt Wolf at SouthernOhioBDM@gmail.com or call/text 937-287-5902. A flyer containing all the 2022 trip dates can be found on the district website.

Volunteer in Dayton, OH – Work will continue in Dayton on “Tornado Survivors Pathways to Home Ownership” houses. 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.” Due to Covid, the starting date has been delayed repeatedly. It is currently scheduled to begin on March 6. More information, including how to register, can be found on the district website.

CWS Goals – Based on the needs of Church World Service (CWS), S. Ohio/KY BDM has set goals for our 2022 response. We plan to assemble 528 Emergency Cleanup Buckets, 1,000 Hygiene Kits, and 2,500 School Kits.

Sewing Bee/Prep CWS Items – A Sewing Bee/CWS Prep will be held on Sat., March 26 at 9:00 AM. Come to Greenville COB, 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 clean-up buckets. All are invited to bring a sack lunch. Contact Barb Brower (937-336-2442) for more information. The 2022 sewing bee schedule can be found on the district website.

Upcoming Book Study: *Me and White Supremacy* by Layla F. Saad

The Southern Ohio and Kentucky District Racial Justice Team is inviting congregations and/or individuals to a **six-week** book study using the book *Me and White Supremacy* by Layla F. Saad.

This book invites participants to explore in depth their own racial conditioning through reading and responding to reflective journaling prompts. In addition to the journal reflections, facilitators across the district will be hosting weekly discussion groups where participants can reflect and discuss the week's reading.

The study promises to be challenging as participants take a hard look at the ways in which white privilege, that is embedded in our institutions, affects each of us. Layla's invitation is for us to “Create the change the world needs by creating change within yourself.”

Online Zoom Group

Group Facilitator: Bruce Rosenberger

Start Date: Thursday, March 10th

Meeting Time: Thursday mornings 10:00 am

In-Person Group

Group Facilitator: Jon Keller

Starting Date: Tuesday, March 8th

Meeting Time: Tuesday evenings 6:45 -7:45 PM

Meeting Location: Troy Church of the Brethren

If you would like to join a group, we encourage you to purchase a copy of the book: *Me and White Supremacy: Combat Racism, Change the World, and Become a Good Ancestor* by Layla Saad. To sign up to join one of the groups above, please email Jon Keller at: jon.keller82@gmail.com.

The District Racial Justice Team also has facilitators who are willing to come to your church to lead a group to study and process this book.

If you would like to invite a facilitator to come to your church please email Jon Keller at: jon.keller82@gmail.com.

An Update on Asylum Seekers

In response to the Miami Valley Immigration Coalition's call for sanctuary churches, Lower Miami Church of the Brethren in Dayton declared sanctuary in 2020 and agreed to offer housing for a family with the understanding that MVIC's Sanctuary and Asylum Working Group would help to organize support for daily needs. Lower Miami members, Jan and Dick Futrell, stepped up to sponsor a family, often a necessary part of being able to enter the US and apply for asylum. With sponsorship, a family of four from Honduras entered under the process known as HUISHA that was created specifically for families who were previously deported without receiving any of the protections required by US immigration laws. Despite this permission, when they presented themselves at the border in August, they were detained and deported once again. Due to the trauma of two experiences in immigration jail, they are afraid to assert their rights and try to once again to enter the US. Thanks to contributions from Brethren friends, we continue to accompany this family by sending funds to help them with housing in the very dangerous town of Tijuana, Mexico.

With the living space at Lower Miami once more available, another asylum-seeking family from Columbia who were already in the US found us. On November 1, 2021, Luciano, Karen and their two sons moved into the church's walkout basement. Because they are not safe in Columbia, they have applied for asylum in the US and are in the waiting period for work authorization (likely 6 months). A late fall arrival and cold winter is a shock for a family from coastal Columbia where it is sunny and HOT. But, even in this time of Covid, they are determined to stay positive and have quickly become an integral part of the church and MVIC communities. The boys have been welcomed into their school and joyfully played in their first snow. Karen and Luciano are taking English classes and focusing on knowledge they need to thrive in Dayton. They are offering beginning Spanish classes to Lower Miami members and sharing delicious flan (Luciano's mom's recipe) with friends. We often remind each other that huge, tough challenges in our lives call for us to move forward step by step and that we are all in this together. Luciano expresses that as "Paso por paso. Juntos Adelante." These new friends are an amazing witness to us as they thank God (Gracias a Dios) for every small positive happening and pray without ceasing for their family members in Columbia, for all their new friends here and for the future of their family as they find their way in their new homeland.

Lower Miami CoB and the Working Group are part of the MVIC, a coalition that connects all who are working for immigrant justice. We invite you to check out the Coalition on the website mvicdayton.org and join our FaceBook group. Contributions can be also made via the website. If you or your church would like to know more about sponsoring asylum seeking individuals or families or other ways in which you can join us in of this work of welcoming the stranger, contact Jan Futrell at peacepathsteps@gmail.com or 859-358-8152.

Continue to next page for prayer needs.

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.

- Nick Beam beginning service as Interim District Executive Minister.
 - Pastor Lee Saylor, Thomas and Isaac and the Salem congregation in prayer for the death of Ashley Saylor.
 - Carrie and Trent Smith from the Happy Corner congregation--death of Carrie's mother this past week.
 - The Bridgewater College community and the families of Officer Painter and Officer Jefferson.
 - Ken Oren and family as Ken has begun treatment for leukemia.
 - Becky Maurer, Standing Committee Delegate, hip replacement surgery February 22, 2022
 - 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.
 - As the situation with the coronavirus seems to be getting a bit better, may we continue to remember those still affected by this 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. Let's pray for the numbers to continue to go down so that we may return to a life of less restrictions. 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
 - ***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.