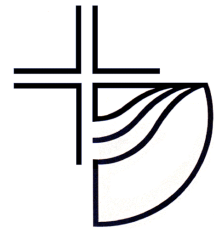


Wabash Church of the Brethren

645 Bond St., Wabash, IN 46992
260-563-5291 • office@wabashcob.org • www.wabashcob.org
Kay Gaier, pastor



Here's what I'm thinking...

I have been fascinated by the number of times in the aftermath of the violent events in Charlottesville, Virginia, I have heard the question, "So how are you doing?" I don't just mean by friends, I mean by newscasters before beginning their reports, in internet articles, and columns written to and for pastors, or more specifically "preachers". There is a broad sensitivity that the open expressions of hatred in recent events call into question the core of our collective humanity. It demands a deeper than normal self—consciousness. There needs to be carefully considered responses to these events because they speak to the core of who we are as Americans. But even more deeply and specifically for the church, who we are a Christians. As I struggle to find words for "how I am," to express my own grief and calling as a follower of Jesus and a pastor, I keep asking myself, "What would Jesus say (preach) and what would he call us to do?"

So here's what I've been thinking... How are you doing and what do you want to do about it? We are fortunate to have strong denominational leaders who are also asking this question and whose wise and faithful reflections ground us in biblical answers. On the CoB Newsline Samuel K. Sarpiya, moderator of the Church of the Brethren Annual Conference, has shared his reflection in response to the events in Charlottesville as the first in a series of reflections on the 2018 Conference theme, "Living Parables". I could just direct you to the CoB Website, but this is so important that I want to make it as easy as possible for you to read his thoughts. I think it is important because it is not just his thoughts or my thoughts about what Jesus might say, it is what Jesus said! PLEASE take a few moments to read his words and his call to action. Then, let us think together about how we want to respond to Jesus' call to love and compassion.

Samuel K. Sarpiya, moderator of the Church of the Brethren Annual Conference, has shared this reflection in response to the weekend's events in Charlottesville, Va. This is the first in a series of reflections on the 2018 Conference theme, "Living Parables":

"Just then a lawyer stood up to test Jesus. 'Teacher,' he said, 'what must I do to inherit eternal life?' He said to him, 'What is written in the law? What do you read there?' He answered, 'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself.' And he said to him, 'You have given the right answer; do this, and you will live.' But wanting to justify himself, he asked Jesus, 'And who is my neighbor?'" (Luke 10:25-29)

And who is my neighbor?

Jesus did not answer this question with a radius measured in cubits. Nor did he reference tribe or ancestral connections. Instead, he told a parable. The parable of the Good Samaritan referenced the "identity politics" and "culture wars" of the day. It is a story that challenges who is doing the holy work of God--the priest, who passed by; the Levite, an assistant to the priest who passed by; or the Samaritan who was only half-Jewish and traditionally did not interact with Jewish people but helped the man who had been robbed.

Continued on page 3...

September
2017

Blessings,

Kay



Worship Schedule

August 27 Be Transformed

Scripture Romans 12:1-5

Message Pastor Kay Gaier

As the troubles of the world get closer and closer to home, the church itself must hear Paul's call to come together to be transformed . Each of us has an important role to bring the kingdom of God among us. It takes a village to save the village.

September 3 More than Enough

Scripture Matthew 14:13-21

Message Beth Sollenberger , District Executive

September 10

Scripture

Message Laura Stone

September 17 Love—an every day thing

Scripture Romans 14:1-12

Message Pastor Kay Gaier

Most of us are willing, even eager, to open our hearts for love and forgiveness at special times. On Sunday mornings we get in touch with the best that is in us and we claim our intention to live as participants in God's kingdom. Carrying that love through the week, though, is tough.

September 24 The unfairness of Grace

Scripture Jonah 3:10-4:11, Matthew 20:1-16

Message Pastor Kay Gaier

As children, we get frustrated with the unfairness of our parent's decisions, rules and punishments. It seems that as adults we still struggle when what we understand as God's righteousness seems so unfair. Some of Jesus parables are hard to take.

Would you like to participate in the worship service sometime? If so, you'll find a sign-up sheet outside the office for various positions.



Samuel's letter, continued...

Jesus asks the lawyer, "Which of these three, do you think, was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of the robbers?"

We are still seeking how to answer Christ's question. As the lawyer would have known, the priest and the Levite were following the laws and customs that forbid them touching anything unclean--including the blood of an injured man. Yet, in Jesus' story they are not the hero. That honor goes to the Samaritan, a tribe usually shunned by the "chosen" people as outsiders. As Christians, we often consider ourselves as "chosen" as well. Within our own denomination, we have the awareness to joke about the "Brethren name game" as a way of knowing who is chosen and who is not. Yet, to understand and live into the parable of the Good Samaritan, we must be willing to acknowledge that our neighbors include those who are unclean, those who are from different tribes, and those with whom we might not usually associate ourselves.

The protests in Charlottesville over the weekend, which in turn led to other protests and rallies, have left many in the country struggling with what to do next. Jesus' teachings do not have easy answers, instead we are left with more questions: How do we, as Christians, respond to our neighbors? Who do we see as our neighbors when so many people are injured? Is it easier to empathize for innocent bystanders or the police officers just doing their jobs? Do we want to be neighbors for those who are protesting peacefully? But what about those who came to Charlottesville with guns, batons, and teargas? Are white supremacists who are injured our neighbors? Could we extend the metaphor, so that those who teach others to hate are robbers who have stolen away the ability to love? Are the "Antifa" who intend to stop the neo-Nazis, whatever the cost, our neighbors? Even when they strike back? Are we better when we believe racism is wrong, but stay home? Can we believe that we are neighborly to black people whose day-to-day experiences of racism would name us as perpetrators? How can we be neighbors, when maybe each of us is the priest, the Levite, the man beaten, the robber? Are some robberies and beatings worse than others? How can we condemn the robber or the priest, without condemning ourselves for the violence we perpetrate and the times we have walked past?

We want to be the Samaritan, the good Samaritan. In the words of Micah 6:8 (KJV), "He has shown thee, O man, what is good: and what doth the Lord require of thee but to do justly and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God."

In response to the violence in Charlottesville, the gathering of white supremacists, the increase of hate crimes, and the awareness of social injustices, it is not enough to read the parables. We must connect the words of our faith with our actions. In a faith walk that is humbled before God, we must acknowledge the ways that we are complicit with the powers and principalities and the ways we have benefited from injustice. When we pray for mercy, it is that we might be forgiven as we forgive. In becoming living parables in our towns, our states, and our country, we strive to be like the Good Samaritan by showing mercy and compassion to all, showing our love for God through our love for others.

2017 Church of the Brethren Annual Conference

A Quick Look by Delegate, Carol Horn

Annual Conference exists to unite, strengthen, and equip the Church of the Brethren to follow Jesus. The June 28 to July 2, 2017 conference theme this year was Risk Hope, and the conference was held in Grand Rapids, Michigan. There were 2,329 attendees, plus hundreds of online viewers. Giving included \$55,280 collected for ministries of the denomination, 190 usable pints of blood donated to the host city as well as \$2,420.08, a pallet of office supplies, backpacks, and materials goods given to nonprofits helping refugees and the poor of the city.

Annual conference is a smorgasbord of opportunities for growth in the faith for all ages. Where else could you have, under one roof, worship, music of all kinds, Bible studies, all day children's activities, all day and late evening youth activities, informative exhibits from many aspects of church life and global outreach, 71 insight and equipping sessions to choose from, mutual support groups, lively business sessions, opportunity to purchase books and other items from Brethren Press and other service-oriented displays, and interaction on many levels.

With this in mind, you need to know that annual conference will be close next year in Cincinnati, Ohio, beginning on Wednesday evening July 4 and ending on Sunday morning, July 8, 2018. In 2019, annual conference will be in San Diego, CA. (The annual conference director noted that the conference site at San Diego is a bargain with newly renovated rooms just over \$100 a day.)

The detailed planning that it takes to make this conference, and pre-conference for pastors, function so smoothly is just amazing! The many, many on-site volunteers play an important part during the actual conference. The aspect that Dennis did in this regard was singing in the choir for worships. It was beautiful. Our grandson's volunteering took the form of ushering.

We faithfully went to conference when our children were younger, and this time we had the joy of having our 16-year-old grandson with us. Although he was at the many youth activities all day and then again after worship in the evening, we could check in at the evening meal and before going to bed to share our day's happenings. My regret is that we did not see if other youth wanted to go along. So, even though we will not be delegates next year, we could still go and take youth, OR parents could go and take youth and children.

In our table facilitator training, Moderator Carol Sheppard reminded us that the goal of the conversation at the tables during parts of the business session was learning, not lobbying. At my table, there were 8 of us, all from different districts and with a gender balance. I had an online and on-site training for table facilitation, and we did have good sharing to get to know each other and our faith journeys, and then respectful sharing during business-even though we had very divergent views on items of business. We were reminded early on that we agree to differ, we resolve to love, and we unite to serve.

To gain further help in dealing with differences, I went to an insight session put on by On Earth Peace on forbearance. Forbearance is said to not require one to accept what another believes, but it does require one to listen and try to understand what another believes without demeaning, personal attacks, or acting to disenfranchise the other person.



Continued Page 5

AC Report, continued

Business sessions also included reports, often with visuals, from the Church of the Brethren, Bethany Theological Seminary, Church of the Brethren Benefit Trust, On Earth Peace, Annual Conference Program and Arrangements Committee, Pastoral Compensation and Benefits Advisory Committee, Christian Churches Together in the USA, National Council of Churches of Christ in the USA, and World Council of Churches. Five new congregations were introduced, and we heard about emerging Church of the Brethren mission programs in Venezuela, Spain, Haiti, Dominican Republic, Brazil, South Sudan, and Burundi, Rwanda, and the Democratic Republic of Congo. The 2017 annual report/calendar has such beautiful visuals, along with scripture, depicting the work of the church. (see table in the back of the sanctuary)

There were hearing sessions, such as one on the authority of annual conference and districts regarding the accountability of ministers, congregations, and districts, to help us get background on upcoming business. These had some strong emotion moments, but again respectful. The fireworks were not so much in the business session, but we certainly had fireworks right outside the building windows where the city of Grand Rapids gathered for their July 4th celebration. The firefighters even hosed down the roof of the building as a protective measure, which was not reassuring really, and did cause the lights to go off and alarms to ring during the worship sermon on Saturday night.

A very brief business summary is as follows:

- 1) On Earth Peace retains agency status, as delegates make decisions on the Review and Evaluation Committee report
- 2) Delegates adopt report from Leadership Team and CODE, approve new vision effort
- 3) On Earth Peace call for new polity for agencies is acted on by the Conference
- 4) Delegate body receives insights from 'Patient Hope in Matters of Conscience'

A number of business items were carried over to 2018 because of lack of time.

We always find insight sessions to be some of the most valuable parts of annual conference, and now as I think back to sessions describing the servant work of the small Flint Church of the Brethren and the African American church that also meets in their building, I see where the work of Jesus continues in seemingly impossible situations. When Dennis gained practical insights about fake news and when I think back to the session on examining conditions of childhood in the US and looking at racism as a part of this, I see application to ongoing and current events. On Friday afternoon, business sessions were suspended, and Jubilee afternoon gave conference goers many opportunities for service and growth, and tours.

There were 168 persons nominated for the many positions to be filled at the national level. 74 accepted and all were considered. These results and many other summaries of annual conference can be found on the national website. Newline can come to your computer mailbox each week, if you so desire and sign up, so that past and current information and stories can be a part of your ongoing faith journey.

To sign up for Newline, and other interests, visit <http://www.brethren.org/add-interests.html>

CAMP MACK

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Email: info@campmack.org

Website: www.campmack.org

Mark your calendars to attend the Camp Mack Festival on Saturday, October 7th. Invite your neighbors, friends, and family to attend this community event. Free admission and parking.

Prepare now to support the Camp Mack Festival – provide a food or crafts booth, auction donations, share a demonstration, and/or offer to work a shift at Children’s Activities, the Welcome Booth, or Parking.

Labor Day Family Camp offers something for the entire family. Weekend includes age-appropriate classes and discussion groups, community worship, swimming, boating, crafts, and more. Cost is \$98 per family with additional fees for lodging and meals. Friday, September 1 to Monday, September 4.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

Labor Day Family Camp	Sept. 1-4
Sailing 201, Lake MI	Sept. 9
Pallet Crafts	Sept. 9
Bible Art Journaling	Sept. 9
Camp Mack Festival	Oct .7

PRAYER REQUESTS: Camp leaders, campers returning home, and Family Camps.

District Conference Updates September 15-16 ~ Camp Mack

Friday: Bethany CoB

1:30-5:00 Deacon Workshops

5:30 Fellowship and Appetizers

6:00 Dinner

Friday: Camp Mack

7:30 Campfire with the Boomer Boys, followed by s'mores and popcorn. Bring the family and spend the night!

Saturday: Camp Mack

7:30 Breakfast in John Kline Welcome Center

8:15 Worship in Quinter Miller Auditorium

9:00 Business begins

Non-delegate registration forms are available on the district website conference page (<http://www.scindcob.org/mission.html>) or by contacting the district office.

Overnight lodging is available at Camp Mack (see rates below). Hotels are available in Warsaw (30 minutes away). Reservations must be made directly with Camp.

Camp Mack will serve breakfast Saturday morning for \$8. Reservations must be made directly with Camp; contact Mike@campmack.org or 574-658-4831.

Each congregation is asked to bring one dessert item to be auctioned off (proceeds are shared between the district general fund and the ministerial leadership fund).

The Friday workshops are open to everyone, not just deacons!

Progressive Dinner—Friday September 29

With so many of our family in new houses, we thought we'd make a fun and easy way for everyone to welcome them! We will have our first Progressive Dinner on Friday Sept. 29.

Itinerary:

5:15pm —Meet at the church at 5:15pm if you wish to carpool, leaving at

5:30pm.

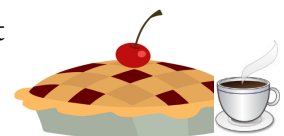
5:45pm—First Stop—Larowe House (590 Fairfield Dr. Wabash) for hors d'oeuvres.

6:45pm—Second Stop— Martin House (105 Ross Ave. Wabash) for our main course.

7:45pm— Last Stop—Roudebush House (111 E. Grant, La Fontaine) at 7:45pm for desserts and coffee.

If you would like to help contribute to the evening in some way, please contact Michelle Roudebush or Kay Gaier for more information.

Reservations to the church by September 22 would be helpful in planning the menu.



RELIEVE EDITORIAL STRESS:

**TURN IN
YOUR ARTICLES
EARLY!**

R E M I N D E R :

**DEADLINE FOR
NEWSLETTER
ARTICLES IS
15th of every month**

Need to use the **Prayer House**? It has moved to the old WC Mills school building. Hours are Monday 12-4pm, Tuesday 8am-10am, and Thursday 8am—8pm. Called Shirley Neal at 563-0047 to reserve.

Loon Creek CoB

The members of Loon Creek CoB have voted to disband their congregation. Neighboring congregations are invited to share their thoughts as they consider options for the property/building (State Route 5, south of Huntington). Please send ideas to the district office.

DID YOU KNOW...

The bulletin board articles get changed out every couple of weeks. Be sure to check it out for all the latest news from:



- ⇒ Manchester University
- ⇒ District Offices
- ⇒ Brethren Disaster Ministries
- ⇒ Global Food Crisis
- ⇒ Church of the Brethren, Nigeria
- ⇒ General Offices
- ⇒ Bethany Seminary
- ⇒ BVS The Volunteer
- ⇒ And many more!

Help with Stamps!

We collect canceled stamps, selling them to benefit Compañeros en Ministerio, a mission project in Mexico. In order to continue this project, a volunteer is needed to sort the stamps. If you are interested in providing this service, contact Rachel at the district office (982-8805)

Manchester University VIA Series

Keeping the Faith

9/5 at 3:30pm, Kim Schultz, Rohina Malik and Susan Stone are exceptional storytellers who will share stories from their own faiths – Christian, Jewish and Muslim – to transcend differences through shared belief in the power of compassion. This event is sponsored by the Peace Studies Institute through the generous support of the Paul A. and Rachel Hartsough Phillips Endowment Fund.

Manchester's Vietnam War

9/7 at 7:00pm, Location Cordier Auditorium - A collaboration between Manchester University and PBS 39, this event includes a special preview screening of one episode of "The Vietnam War," a 10-part, 18-hour documentary from Ken Burns and Lynn Novick. Following the screening, a panel with veteran Mike Krause, draft resistor Bob Gross and David Waas, MU professor emeritus of history, will speak about their experiences during the war, followed by Q&A.

The Conundrum of Campus Conflict

9/14 at 7:00pm, Location Jo Young Switzer Center, upper level—Theresa Onderko, director of the Education for Conflict Resolution-MU collaboration, and MU students trained in conflict resolution will lead a live (mock) conflict, followed by an overview of key causes of conflict and discussion about how to deal with conflict. When managed constructively, conflict is one of the driving forces behind change, growth and transformation.

The Federalist Society and the Supreme Court

9/17 at 7:00pm, Location Jo Young Switzer Center, upper Level. Constitution Day Attorney Jonathan Watson discusses the history and philosophy of the Federalist Society – focusing on such concepts as separation of powers, federalism, judicial restraint and constitutional interpretation (textualism/originalism). Through an examination of the Constitution's Appointments Clause, learn about how understanding those concepts can help one fathom controversies surrounding the judicial nominations of Merrick Garland and Neil Gorsuch.

Moonlight

9/28 at 7:00pm, Screening of the award-winning 2016 film, followed by discussion. The film features themes related to love, identity, family, sexuality, gender, race and class. It includes profound, humane exploration of the lives of LGBTQ people of color. Jillian "Jay" Watts, director of the new CARE Initiative at MU, will introduce the film, which is sponsored by the Philosophy Department. This is a Pride Week event.

Brethren Leadership Institute

Evangelism/Outreach ~ Sept 30, Oct 28, Nov 4 9:00-4:00 ~ Marion CoB

Taught by Nate Polzin, District Executive of the Michigan District and pastor of The Church in Drive In Saginaw.

Contact Tina at scincob@gmail.com for registration information.

Special Offering—Mission Offering—September

The Church of the Brethren Mission Offering supports ongoing international partnerships with brothers and sisters in Nigeria, Haiti, South Sudan, and many other places around the world. It also helps fund Brethren Volunteer Service, the Youth Peace Travel Team, workcamps, and other ministries that provide opportunities for people of all ages to proclaim the Good News of Jesus through action. Other crucial ministries that exist to train and support mission-minded leaders in the church are also supported by this offering: Ministry Summer Service, the Office of Ministry, and Church Planting and Deacon ministries, to name a few.

Please give generously to support these and many other life-changing ministries of the Church of the Brethren.

Retirement Party

Mike Kauffman has announced his retirement after serving Camp Mack for 38+ years. August 31, 2017 will be his last day. An open house to honor Mike and his ministry at Camp Mack will be held in the John Kline building on August 27th from 2-4:30pm.

Recitals

9/17 at 3pm, Location Wine Recital Hall

Pamela Haynes, piano; Elizabeth Smith, violin; Robert Lynn, cello

Performing:

Mozart – Piano Trio in C major, K. 548 and Brahms – Piano Trio in C major, Op. 87

9/22 at 7:30pm Location Wine Recital Hall

The Manchester University Department of Music presents Scott Workman in a program including works by Luis Milan, J.S. Bach, Fernando Sor, Isaac Albeniz and Carlo Domeniconi, as well as his own compositions. It is free and open to the public.