

# JOURNAL

Monday, July 11, 2022 – Omaha, Nebraska

## What's New at Brethren Press?

Kathy Fry-Miller and David Doudt, authors of the new Brethren Press children's book, *Maria's Kit of Comfort*, will sign copies Tuesday, 1:30 to 2:30 p.m., at the Brethren Press bookstore. This endearing story is about the Kit of Comfort, a childcare center in a suitcase used by Children's Disaster Services. It is written for children struggling after a disaster, children who care about other children, and adults who want to know how they can best help in these circumstances. Learn more about an essential Brethren assistance program. *And bring along children. There are some nice surprises for them as well.*

**Lori Wolfe** from the New Haven Church of the Brethren (Middleton, Mich.) won the drawing for \$250 worth of books for their church library. Enter the drawing each day at the Brethren Press Book Store.

**International guests** at this year's Annual Conference include Ariel Rosario and Anastacia Bueno from the Dominican Republic; Santos Terrero, Mari-bel Roa, and Welinthon Perez from Spain; and Etienne Nsan-zimana and Theoneste Sentabire from Rwanda.

**Sweet hour of prayer...the Prayer Room** includes many inviting means of prayer, including a labyrinth taped onto the floor. Need a break? Need prayer? Come meet Lucinda Douglas of Sioux City, Iowa, Conference chaplain.

## Leonor Ochoa preaches 'Loving Beyond the Pain'

Leonora Ochoa, of Lancaster, Pa., is a "Pastor-Sower" of Ebenezer Church of the Brethren. Her message this evening is based on Genesis 45:1-15, "Loving Beyond the Pain."

The scripture tells the climactic story of the Joseph saga, when he is revealed and reconciled with the brothers from whom he has been estranged for decades.

"The *reunión* of a family that had not met together for a long time is similar to the situation we find ourselves in. *Nosotros igual*, because it's like us. *Tenemos muchos barreras*. We have not visited at conference for two years. The idea of the sermon is that love is greater than the pain that we have experienced with COVID-19. In addition we are people who come to Conference with pain or brokenness. So many pastors feel like they're alone. So many people have not come back to the church after the pandemic. Through the sermon we want to speak about the reconciling love through Jesus."

Ochoa will also speak to Matthew 11:28, where Jesus tells us that we who are heavy laden may come to him for rest.

Ochoa is an attorney with credentials in the Dominican Republic. She and her husband of 30 years, Eric Ramírez, share three sons and a daughter and one grandson.

In a statement written before Annual Conference Ochoa noted, "I am passionate about people, the afflicted, the needy. I am passionate about being able to take the church to the neighborhood, bring to light the gifts and talents that God puts in people, share God's love through the Word, social outreach, presenting a Risen Christ of love, restoration, freedom, sharing out faith, and our identity as a Brethren church"

— *Weeks ago the editor interviewed Ochoa with husband Eric Ramírez in a conversation that mixed Spanish and English.*



**Leonor Ochoa**

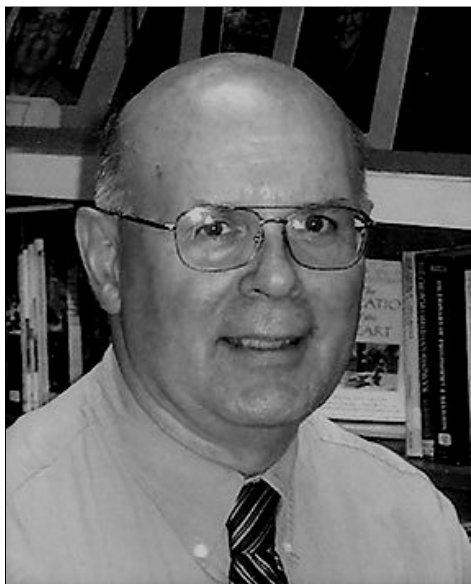
**Monday's offering** will go towards ministerial training for international Church of the Brethren leaders. As believers are drawn to our witness and new congregations are planted, leaders ask for biblical training and instruction on Brethren history, theology, and practices.

Tonight's offering will be used to support local training programs, seminary tuition, and online training. Thank you for your partnership with the global Church of the Brethren.

Last night's offering for Annual Conference ministries was \$6,018.55. Thank you for your generosity.

A reminder, Annual Conference offerings are meant to enhance, not replace budgetary giving.

# Tonight After Worship



## Scott Duffey is the 2022 music coordinator

There were a lot of challenges for Scott Duffey, this year's Annual Conference music coordinator.

"This is a particularly challenged Conference because of COVID, because it's in Omaha, and because NYC is two weeks later, attendance is down—so the pool of people I am aware of musically was smaller for me to draw from.

"I feel real good about the variety of hymns and songs in the list. Everybody has a favorite style and favorite individual songs. Even in the church it's hard to please everybody from Sunday to Sunday. Conference just magnifies that. You've got people from all across the country with different cultural backgrounds. And so when I started to research a list of songs, I was very aware a mix of good old traditional hymns, contemporary songs, and because we've got a growing Hispanic membership I wanted them to feel included. I've also included a Haitian song. I've got some Black gospel. The challenge in getting the variety of music was finding the right people to help lead the songs."

*The Conference Journal is edited by Frank Ramirez, with help from the press team, and is sponsored by the Conference Office.*

What is "The Doctrine of Discovery?" Hint. It's not something thought up by the folks who lived here for centuries before Europeans came on the scene.

Tonight after worship, stick around the Grand Ballroom to see a thought-provoking drama presented by Ted & Co. titled *We Own This Now*, written by Alison Casella Brookins, and performed by Ted

Swartz and Michelle Milne. Brethren have been enjoying the seriously humorous productions brought by Ted Swartz to our Annual Conference and many other gatherings for decades.

In Brookins' drama, Chris and Riley, father and daughter, and descendants of refugees who fled Russia over a century before, come to grips with the fact that the family farm they "own," which came to them through their mother and Oma (grandmother), was occupied long before European clerics and kings devised the Doctrine of Discovery that approved the brutal exploitation of the Native Americans and First Nations as well as the expropriation of their land. "Yours, mine, and ours" takes on a totally different meaning for good, well-meaning folks who themselves were displaced and disregarded decades before. Good humor and good sense combine in this dramatic blessing. Learn how this doctrine is no historical dead letter, but still being used and causing harm today. Nor is this a one-sided conversation. A Talk Back session is Tuesday, 12:30 p.m., at the Hilton Herndon.



**By the numbers. Registrations** as of Sunday, at 10 p.m.—delegates 425; nondelegates 743; virtual nondelegates 139; total 1,307. **Worship attendance:** 866 in person; virtual English stream 375; virtual Spanish stream 15; YouTube 41; Facebook 32.

History is the  
women who marched  
through barriers while  
being ignored.

