

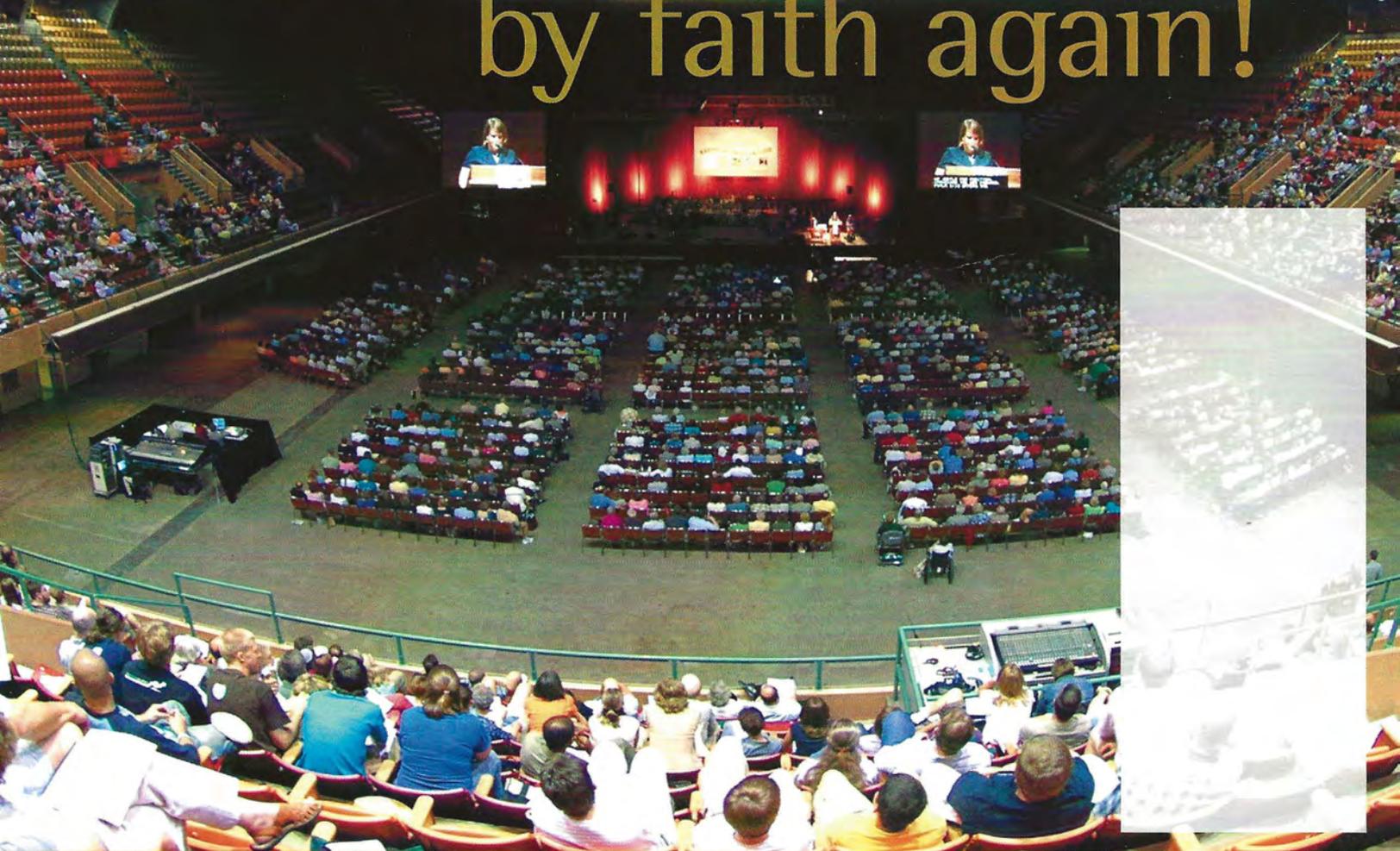
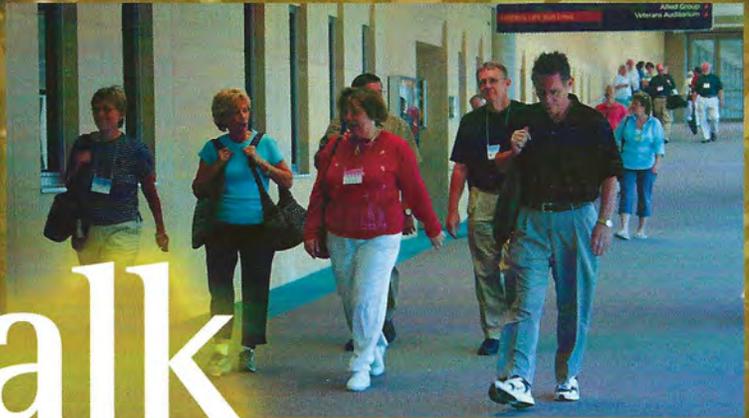
Church  
of the  
Brethren

# MESSENGER

SEPTEMBER 2006 WWW.BRETHREN.ORG

2006 Annual  
Conference

Let's **walk**  
by faith again!



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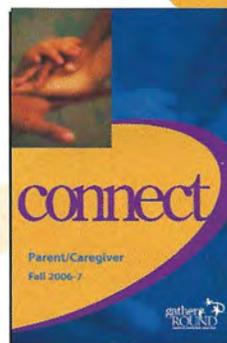
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**I am there**  
among them.—Matthew 18:20

“... publish with the voice of thanksgiving, and tell of all thy wondrous works” (Psa. 26:7b KJV).

Church  
of the  
Brethren

# MESSENGER

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## ONTHECOVER

Perhaps no moment captivated this year's Annual Conference so much as Naperville (Ill.) pastor Dennis Webb's stirring sermon on Tuesday evening. Again and again he urged those gathered, "Let us walk by faith, again!" Conferencegoers did plenty of physical walking during the week in Des Moines, hiking between Conference facilities on the city's skywalk system, but it was the challenge to exercise spiritually on a regular basis that remained ringing in Brethren's ears. Cover photos by Ken Wenger and Regina Roberts (inset).

### 8 Together in Des Moines

A package of stories looks back at this year's Church of the Brethren Annual Conference in Iowa, including a full report on business items handled, elections, and statistics from the gathering. Other articles look at the experience of those who come to Conference without business responsibilities (p. 13), the offerings of the exhibit hall (p. 14), highlights from the week's worship services (p. 16), and the significance of Brethren in Iowa over the years (p. 17).

### 18 Different ways of being 'smart'

The new *Gather Round* curriculum from Brethren Press is built around the concept of "multiple intelligences," a theory that recognizes that people have different approaches to learning. What does that mean for various aspects of the learning environment?

### 20 Proverbs: A daily manual for righteousness

Proverbs is a book of pithy sayings and moral lessons covering many areas of life. Harold S. Martin outlines this rich book and the lessons it taught, and continues to teach today.

## DEPARTMENTS

2	<b>From the Publisher</b>	25	<b>Youth Life</b>
3	<b>In Touch</b>	26	<b>Media Review</b>
6	<b>Reflections</b>	28	<b>Letters</b>
7	<b>The Buzz</b>	31	<b>Turning Points</b>
22	<b>News</b>	32	<b>Editorial</b>

**L**ike many Americans, I am not well-schooled in the complexities of Middle East cultures and politics. As I watch the destruction in Lebanon and Israel from half a world away, I find myself wondering again why peace in that region is so elusive. But, mindful of my ignorance, I recognize the many ways my worldview and my experiences are different from those caught up in the conflagration there—a catastrophe that has developed in the short time since we Brethren gathered at Annual Conference and chose to speak out on both Iraq and Israel/Palestine, but did not know yet to utter prayers for nearby Lebanon.

The photos coming out of Lebanon today look disturbingly like the images of two and three decades ago, but they don't look like the country I saw recently.



WENDY McFADDEN  
Publisher

In December 2004, I sat sipping coffee at an outdoor café in Beirut. My companions and I had wandered a few streets, window-shopping and sightseeing. We poked our heads into a Maronite Catholic church, which sat cheek-to-jowl with an Orthodox church, both of which were just a short walk from the construction site of a large mosque. Enjoying the temperate weather in a picturesque public square were hundreds of people—stylish young adults, children on tricycles, families with balloons. The mood seemed relaxed and comfortable.

One could find an occasional building whose damaged walls bore the scars of the violence of an earlier era. But the five-star hotels, financial institutions, restaurants, and shops showed that Beirut was no longer the battle-scarred place whose name used to be a synonym for violence. Despite a noticeable military presence in some places, I felt safe.

During conversations with a series of religious leaders, we gained a sense of a country that had built its future by including Muslims and Christians in a delicate balance. The houses of worship were a visible symbol of the hard work of a people wanting to live together in peace.

Today, as I read the daily reports of the senseless violence that has erupted in Lebanon and Israel, I try to comprehend what Beirut looks like now. Google Earth allows me to sit at my computer, take a virtual flight around the globe, and zoom right into the city—in fact, I can even see the rooftop of the exact building where I stayed. But the satellite images, taken months or even years ago, don't show what's happening now.

It's not really the buildings that I remember, anyway. Rather, when I think of Lebanon, it is the faces of those church leaders who come to mind and make the news accounts more poignant. Most of these people carried fancy ecclesiastical titles that a plain-speaking Brethren tongue could trip over, but their hospitality was unpretentious and warm. They were brothers and sisters in the faith.

For them and for all those around them, I pray not only for a ceasefire but for real peace. I think their prayers may be the same. Perhaps we're not so different after all.

*Wendy McFadden*

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A free study guide for each issue of MESSENGER is available on the site; go to keyword "MESSENGER" and click on the study guide link.

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# AROUND THE DENOMINATION

Updates and highlights from the Church of the Brethren districts

**Atlantic Northeast:** Lititz (Pa.) Church of the Brethren will be the site of COBYS Family Services' annual Bike and Hike on Sept. 10. Participants have the choice of a 3-mile walk, 10- or 25-mile bike rides, or a 60-mile motorcycle ride. Last year the event brought in \$57,000 for COBYS.

**Atlantic Southeast:** The district's Action for Peace Team is looking for representatives from each congregation to act as a peace advocate. Advocates will communicate between the team and the congregations.

**Idaho:** LaMar Bollinger, long-time historian for the district and a five-time district moderator, died June 3. He helped to begin the Mountain View congregation in Boise.

**Illinois/Wisconsin:** A district women's retreat at Camp Emmaus Aug. 4-6 featured guest speaker Tara Durnbaugh, with Jeanne Davis speaking at the weekend's ending communion service.

**Michigan:** On May 27 Lakeview Church of the Brethren youth director Willie Yopez kissed a cow, and youth from the church played the adults of the church in a softball game in order to send four youth and Yopez to NYC. The day's events raised a total of \$455.15.

**Mid-Atlantic:** The 2006 Mid-Atlantic Disaster Auction held May 6 in Westminster, Md., set a record high total net income of \$77,860.50. The previous high income from an auction was \$70,000.

**Middle Pennsylvania:** The 10th annual "Tour de Dunker" bike ride is occurring this year. Goals are to visit all 55 churches in the district and raise \$10,000 for district ministries. Rides began in May and continue through October in various areas.

**Missouri/Arkansas:** The sale of the Rockingham Church of the Brethren facility was nearing completion this summer following approval of the district board. A local resident purchased the building.

**Northern Indiana:** Pastors and other interested people were invited to a series of discussions over brown bag lunches at the district offices this summer. Topics included a discussion with pastors from Puerto Rico and a talk-back about Annual Conference.

**Northern Ohio:** Fourteen congregations sent 53 volunteers to Inspiration Hills Camp and Retreat Center to complete a number of tasks in preparation for upcoming summer camps. The work project was led by Mort Curie, district disaster coordinator.

**Northern Plains:** A silent auction of table centerpieces at this year's district conference—candles embossed with the conference theme and logo—raised \$906 for the district budget.

**Oregon/Washington:** Peace Church of the Brethren, Portland, Ore., was scheduled to hold both the district board meeting in late August and district conference Oct. 13-15.

**Pacific Southwest:** On June 3, San Diego First Church of the Brethren held "Different Paths to a Common Goal: Peace," an interfaith forum inviting Christians, Jews, and Muslims to discuss how their faith inspires their passion for peacemaking.

**Shenandoah:** CrossRoads (the Valley Brethren-Mennonite Heritage Center) on Aug. 17 hosted a reunion for all conscientious objectors who served in Civilian Public Service during World War II. Speakers were Harold Lehman and Ted Grimsrud.

**South/Central Indiana:** Ron and Harriet Finney did a presentation on the "Together" conversations at a July 19 pastors' and chaplains' gathering, hosted by Kokomo Church of the Brethren.

**Southeastern:** The John M. Reed Home's Golden Years Auxiliary sponsored "Christmas in July," an opportunity for

people to make donations of needed items to the home.

**Southern Pennsylvania:** The district women's camp was held June 5-6 at Camp Eder in Fairfield, Pa., led by Becky Rhodes of Roanoke, Va. Ninety-one women attended the event, hosted by the West York and York First congregations.

**Southern Plains:** District conference in July included a pastors' training session led by John Holderread on the book *God's Original Intent for the Church*.

**Virginia:** This year's district conference site had to be shifted after Victory Stadium in Roanoke, Va., was scheduled for demolition. The conference will now be at a Baptist church in Rocky Mount, Nov. 10-11.

**West Marva:** A Core Values Forum was held at Oak Park Church of the Brethren June 11. People gathered to discuss and give input to a "core beliefs" paper being worked at by a committee.

**Western Pennsylvania:** Somerset Church of the Brethren opened its doors as a place of refuge for some 24 senior citizens when the fourth floor of Somerset Towers caught fire. Residents were provided support by church members and disaster response personnel.

**Western Plains:** Larry Kitzel has begun as district disaster coordinator, taking over for Bill Winter.

**SOUTHERN OHIO:** *On Pentecost weekend, several members of the district board and a few friends travelled to all corners of the district to deliver a message. Balloons emblazoned with "HAPPY BIRTHDAY!" carried cards that invited the district's congregations to celebrate the birthday of the church and to be part of upcoming "Together" conversations. At right, district board chair Patricia Meeks presents a balloon to Ron Sherck II, pastor of Greenville Church of the Brethren.*





Heritage center board vice chair Becky Hunter prepares to cut the ribbon opening the facility's welcome center.

### Seventy-seven get pardons thanks to Montana effort

Students and faculty from the University of Montana worked tirelessly from December 2005 through April 2006 to obtain post-mortem pardons for the 77 individuals convicted of sedition during World War I in Montana. Among the 77 was J.S. Geiser, a Brethren minister at the former Grandview Church of the Brethren in Froid, Mont.

Reportedly Geiser said in a sermon that "All war is wrong. It is all wrong to buy Liberty bonds or thrift stamps. It is wrong to kill one's fellow man. . . . I believe that one who buys Liberty bonds and thrift stamps to aid in the support of war is as bad as those who hire gunmen in the City of New York to kill their fellow man." Due to strict sedition laws in place at the time, Geiser, along with many others, was fined. Others did various jail sentences.

UM students started the Montana Sedition Project to obtain pardons for the 77 seditionists after the release of professor Clem Work's book *Darkness Before Dawn*, about the sedition trials of Montana. Students and faculty began their work last December with Work, who helped with the genealogy research, and Jeff Renz, a legal professor who took care of legal issues, as faculty advisors for the project. Work said one of the main goals of the project was "to seek a measure of justice for the families whose ancestors were wrongly and unjustly convicted," and to "make a point that free speech is important in our society today, and issuing pardons for these people underlines the importance

of that principle."

The Montana Sedition Project was successful, as Montana Gov. Brian Schweitzer granted post-mortem pardons to all 77 seditionists on May 3.—**Jake Blouch**

### Virginia heritage center officially opens its doors

On the warm afternoon of June 18, board vice chair Becky Hunter and assistants cut the ribbon to officially open the "CrossRoads" Valley Brethren-Mennonite Heritage Center's newly renovated welcome center near Harrisonburg, Va., to the public. Board president Robert Alley, pastor of

Bridgewater (Va.) Church of the Brethren, welcomed everyone to the event.

Program committee chair Norman Shank then thanked those who helped make the dream a reality—particularly the Daniel Myers family, who donated the Burkholder-Myers House where the center is now housed and paid to have it moved up the hill.

Representing the Shenandoah District of the Church of the Brethren and the Virginia Conference of Mennonite Church USA at the dedication were James Miller and Steve Carpenter, respectively.

After a dedicatory prayer by Alley, guests browsed the new displays in the center, viewed a video on Brethren-Mennonite life in the valley, visited other buildings on the site, reflected on historic artifacts, and enjoyed refreshments.—**J. Allen Brubaker**

*Elsewhere in the Shenandoah Valley, the historic home and farmland of 19th century Brethren leader Elder John Kline is expected to be for sale soon. The Mennonite owners are giving Brethren first right of refusal on the property before selling it to developers. Linville Creek Church of the Brethren pastor Paul Roth is organizing a group with interest in purchasing the property. Contact Roth at [proth@bridgewater.edu](mailto:proth@bridgewater.edu) or 540-896-5001.*

Leonard Matheny



Members of Illinois/Wisconsin District came together to help the Panther Creek congregation with a variety of work projects this spring.

### Illinois Brethren come together for work project

More than 50 people from 13 congregations met at Panther Creek Church of the Brethren, Roanoke, Ill., on April 29 for an Illinois/Wisconsin District work day, helping the church with a variety of projects.

Work began following a breakfast provided by the Peoria (Ill.) congregation and a brief history presentation about Panther Creek. Some volunteers put up drywall and built stairs; others worked on cleaning or scraping, painting, plumbing, and caulking. The group took a break at lunchtime for food and fellowship.

"I felt fulfillment, satisfaction, and a sense this is what Jesus taught us to do," volunteer Jane Bicksler wrote in the district newsletter after the event.



**Independence buys a water buffalo**

The Sunday school class of 7- 8-year-olds at Independence (Kan.) Church of the Brethren recently attained their goal of \$520 for Heifer Project International. With this money they will be able to purchase one water buffalo, one sheep, one pig and one hive of honeybees. Pictured are, back row left to right, teacher Betty Godsey, Ryan Lang, Cysalee Somers, Jordan Rutledge, and Kaitlyn Price; front row, Travis Smith, Andrew McCarty, and Micah Delamarter.

**LANDMARKS & LAURELS**

- **Chiques Church of the Brethren**, Manheim, Pa., in August celebrated 150 years of worship with two special services, a historical display, and a series of Sunday school lessons on church history. An Aug. 13 old-style service had Don Fitzkee and Becker Ginder preaching the "long" and "short" sermon, respectively. A "150th Anniversary Celebration of Music" was held that evening.
- **Tucson (Ariz.) Church of the Brethren** will celebrate its 50th anniversary on Oct. 8. The church's first full-time pastor, Dean Miller, will give the message. A lunch, special music, and historical displays will follow worship.
- **Good Shepherd Church of the Brethren**, Silver Spring, Md., will hold its 50th anniversary celebration Sept. 16-17. The 16th will feature a light meal and fellowship, followed on Sunday by morning worship with speaker Lamar Gibble, a meal, and an afternoon celebration with music.
- **Masons Cove Church of the Brethren**, Salem, Va., dedicated a new addition June 11. The facility will provide added space for fellowship, study, and meals.
- **Valley Pike Church of the Brethren**, Maurertown, Va., was profiled in the May 24 edition of *The Shenandoah Valley-Herald*. The congregation's history and outreach efforts were highlighted.
- The **Brethren Mennonite Council** for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Interests (BMC) marked its 30th anniversary during a "Together in Toronto" conference held in Canada July 27-30.
- Author/illustrator **Chris Raschka**, profiled in the July/August issue of MESSENGER, has a new book out. Titled *Five for a Little One*, it is aimed at young readers and examines the five senses.
- Manchester College physics and astronomy professor **Christer Watson** is among nine scientists chosen for a team that is using NASA's \$733 million orbiting Spitzer Space Telescope for a 3-D infrared study of the Milky Way.

**REMEMBERED**

- **Thurl Metzger**, 90, a former executive director of Heifer International, died July 26 in Little Rock, Ark. Metzger served Heifer for about 30 years in all, beginning in 1953. A new Thurl Metzger Education Center was dedicated on Aug. 4 at the Heifer Ranch in Perryville, Ark. A fuller report on Metzger's life and ministry will appear in the October issue.
- **Jean Wine**, 85, a former Church of the Brethren missionary in Nigeria, died May 24 at Brethren Village in Lancaster, Pa. Wine and her husband, Jacob Calvin (J.C.) Wine, served from 1949 to 1956 as boarding school houseparents at Hillcrest School in Jos, Nigeria, where J.C. also was headmaster for a time. She attended Bethany Bible School and George Peabody University, and Millersville State College. Born in East Petersburg, Pa., she was an active member of Hempfield Church of the Brethren and taught in the local schools.
- **June Swann Hoal**, 79, of Roanoke, Va., died June 10. She had served Virlina District as a former co-manager of Camp Bethel in Fincastle, Va. Hoal was a lifetime member of First Church of the Brethren in Roanoke where she was a deacon and served in many other leadership capacities.

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# A woman I know

**S**am Trueblood is my attorney. Sam is a dear friend and a Quaker with strong ties to Earlham College. We were talking a few months back about ministry. He said his father used to tell him how much he appreciated Sam's "ministry." Sam thought that strange at first—being a lawyer, what was his ministry? His father told him we all have an opportunity to minister; no matter what our job may be, it's how we serve others. Ministry, he explained, was how we showed our faith, how we live our faith. Ministry is much more than pulpit preaching.



LARRY O'NEILL

I have been told that I can deliver a powerful sermon. I believe in the message God has called me to deliver. My sermons of words, however, pale next to the sermon of life a woman I know delivers. My sermons are delivered from the pulpit. Brothers and sisters come to me afterward and tell me what the messages meant to them and how inspirational they found them. But with this woman I know, her sermon is

delivered 24 hours a day, seven days a week. There are times when her friends do come and tell her what she means to them, but for the most part they just look, watch, and absorb. Her sermons are much more powerful than mine will ever be.

She is an extremely bright person, with an MBA from a leading school in her field, but chose to turn away from corporate

**Her sermon has a powerful message: God is good, and the true joy we receive from knowing God is not the joy of lips turned upward every day of our lives, but rather the joy of knowing we are in God's care.**

America and raise her children at home. She was a "stay-at-home mom," years before the phrase became popular.

This woman, however, has had her share of problems. It's easy to be full of faith and to be a good Christian when everything goes right. But this woman I know hasn't always had that opportunity. She dealt with sadness and disappointment growing up. She lived through the bitter divorce of her parents, bringing an end to a difficult and trying childhood. Her mother and only sibling have their differences and rarely speak, though she is open and loving to both. She always had faith to carry her through those days.

Her husband dropped out of college, was drafted into the Army during Vietnam, and struggled for many years to make a substantial living. She was his encourager, urging him to pursue what he felt he was being called to complete. She was the one who introduced their family to the Church of the Brethren many years ago, and would tell her husband, "You were always Brethren, you just didn't know it."

They have two children, boys, and raised them with love and care: bright, intelligent children who had a home full of love and attention. They were a family who traveled together by car many times throughout the East, from Florida to Maine and all points in between. They would go as a family, because this woman I know believed family was so very important.

She runs the children's Sunday school at her church. She drives other women to art classes and teaches art both to young children at day camps and to those who are unable to travel. She sings in the choir and was a deacon at her previous church, constantly visiting and calling on others to share God's love for them. She helps with women's fellowship, cooks for shut-ins, and continues to pray for her family and her church.

She has had her share of physical setbacks. She has had three cases of double pneumonia, a fire at work, and recently some extensive medical tests herself. She faced them all with the message she delivers, with conviction and confidence: "Thy will be done."

She balances all this while continuing to work and go to art classes herself. She supports a variety of church organizations and mission work. She manages that within her family budget, juggling tuitions and medical bills. She does this all, through the turmoil she has experienced, with joy in her heart and a faithfulness beyond compare.

Her sermon has a powerful message: God is good, and the true joy we receive from knowing God is not the joy of lips turned upward every day of our lives, but rather the joy of knowing we

are in God's care, and he promises us he will be with us now, so we can be with him later, forever.

That is a message we all need to hear. It's a message some need more than others, but a message we all need to hear sometime.

Sam's father was correct. We all are called to the ministry. We can live a life full of faith, love, forgiveness, and encouragement, and deliver our sermons daily. There are so many who need to see that sermon.

This woman I know presses on, as Paul writes to the Philippians and as he continues in Philippians 3:13: "forgetting what is behind and straining toward the goal." She has a message of hope and survival, a sermon that, it could be said, is one about Christianity—that Christianity "is not just a religion," it is a way of life.

Her life, her sermon. Yes, I know a woman; in fact, I know her very well. She is my wife, my partner, and my minister—Barbara. **W**

Larry O'Neill is pastor of Skippack Church of the Brethren in Collegeville, Pa. He served as moderator of Atlantic Northeast District for 2005. He and his wife live in Oaks, Pa., and have two sons.

QUOTE WORTHY

“We have to survive and hope the future will be better.”

—Palestinian refugee from Deheishe camp, quoted in the On Earth Peace summer newsletter. On Earth Peace sent a delegation to the region last winter.

“I think God does still come in burning bushes, but it’s to those willing to immerse themselves in the silence long enough to hear it and see it.”

—Bob Etzweiler, speaking at the Church of the Brethren Young Adult Conference opening worship

“I had thought I knew what it meant to embrace diversity until I was the minority. It was scary and uncomfortable.”

—Ben Leiter, a 2006 Manchester College graduate and a member of Union Bridge (Md.) Church of the Brethren, speaking at Manchester’s baccalaureate service. Leiter was reflecting on an internship experience in Washington, D.C.

“Our hard experiences with war motivate us to focus on peace. Non-violence is the only way for long-term peace.”

—Adnan Hasanbegovi, a former soldier now working for the Sarajevo-based Center for Non-Violent Action, reflecting on his experience in the Balkans wars. (MCC News Service)

“Clergy are well-versed in grief counseling. They learn that in seminary. What American faith leaders haven’t been trained for is how to deal with the trauma that can follow a massive, community-wide disaster.”

—Dr. Alan Baroody, co-leader of a series of “Caring for Caregivers” workshops held this summer in the Hurricane Katrina disaster zone. The workshops, sponsored by Church World Service, focused on self-care for clergy and other caregivers.

“I was blessed to finally glimpse the expanse and beauty of the table to which Jesus calls us. I was blessed to know more clearly the ways in which I can contribute to the body. I was welcomed to the table.”

—Church of the Brethren young adult Margo Royer-Miller, reflecting on her experience as a steward at the 2005 National Council of Churches General Assembly

“Peace must come soon or it may not come to either people for a long time.”

—from a World Council of Churches executive committee statement on the Israeli/Palestinian conflict

CULTUREVIEW

• Church World Service in late June joined more than 30 non-governmental organizations from 20 countries in sending a letter to United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan and members of the UN Security Council, calling for a peaceful, binding resolution on the **Southeast Asian country of Burma**. The crisis in Burma has escalated in recent months with a brutal military offensive by the Burmese regime against Karen villagers, displacing up to 20,000 civilians.

• More than three dozen faith organizations have joined the recently formed **National Religious Campaign Against Torture** (NRCAT). Leaders and congregation members are signing up to support the campaign at the NRCAT website, [www.nrcat.org](http://www.nrcat.org). “The issue of torture by the United States has been of concern to Americans of

faith and of conscience since the first pictures of Abu Ghraib were transmitted around the world,” wrote the Rev. Dr. Bob Edgar, general secretary of the National Council of Churches (NCC). Information is at [www.quit-torture-now.org](http://www.quit-torture-now.org). A statement titled “Torture Is a Moral Issue,” signed by 27 national religious leaders, was placed as an advertisement in the *New York Times* in June.

• **The Rev. Garland F. Pierce**, an African Methodist Episcopal clergyman with years of experience in the ecumenical movement, was named associate general secretary of the National Council of Churches USA for the Education and Leadership Ministries Commission on May 22. He succeeds the Rev. Patrice Rosner, who had held the position since 2000.



JUST FOR FUN: TOP 10

**MIND YOUR BUSINESS** The top 10 ways to entertain yourself during an Annual Conference business session:

10. Get a bag of M&M’s and eat one every time someone says “recommendation.”
9. Start a giant game of telephone and see what the message sounds like by the time it gets up to the tellers’ table.
8. Rate the offerings of the exhibit hall, giving each booth one to five stars and creating a handy guidebook that you can post online.
7. Brainstorm new and exciting flavors of ice cream for the evening buffets, preferably combining the Brethren love of potlucks and dairy products. Green bean casserole ripple, anyone?
6. Fold handouts into paper airplanes and see how close you can get them to the officers’ table. Ten points if you can fluster the Annual Conference secretary.
5. Play Brethren BINGO, trying to be the first to find five prayer coverings or five bald heads in the same row or column. Diagonals also count.
4. Keep a tally of all the speakers at the microphones and see which districts and which individuals make the most appearances.
3. Try to guess all the future Annual Conference sites through 2050. (Hint: Grand Rapids, Mich., was announced as the 2011 site.)
2. Jump up and do a Chinese fire drill around one section of chairs on the floor. For added fun, have a friend race you around an adjacent section. You might even get a stamp in your “Passport to Wellness.”
1. Write a limerick about the moderator that you can share at later meal events. But a warning: “Beachley” is really hard to rhyme.



Keith Hollenberg

New Annual Conference leaders were consecrated for 2007: moderator Belita D. Mitchell, pastor of First Church of the Brethren in Harrisburg, Pa. (kneeling left); moderator-elect James M. Beckwith, pastor of Annville (Pa.) Church of the Brethren. The 2006 moderator, Ronald Beachley (standing center) took part in the consecration service.

# Let's **walk** by faith again!

2006 Annual Conference

## Discerning in Des Moines

*'Doing Church Business,' Iraq war, divestment head business agenda*

A full business agenda faced delegates to the 2006 Annual Conference in Des Moines, Iowa, July 1-5. Major business items included a report from the Doing Church Business Study Committee, a resolution on the Iraq war, and a resolution on divestment from companies selling products used as weapons in Israel and Palestine, among several others.

Business sessions were chaired by moderator Ronald D. Beachley, executive minister of Western Pennsylvania District.

### Doing church business

Delegates referred the report of the Doing Church Business Study Committee to a Program Feasibility Study Committee of Annual Conference. Next year the delegate body will address the paper in light of the feasibility study, taking up

the item at the point at which this year's action left off.

The paper's recommendations have potential to make significant changes in the format of Conference and the way delegates address business. "There is a clear need for significant change in order to enhance and model a discerning Christian community and the reign of God," the paper said.

"We recognize the complexity of this undertaking," said committee member Matt Guynn, who asked delegates to recognize the capacity for creativity in doing Conference business. The committee's presentation highlighted key recommendations and explained some of the thinking behind them.

Many who spoke to the paper affirmed its intent, but concerns were raised about implementation and cost.

### Resolution on end to war in Iraq

A resolution calling for an end to the war in Iraq was adopted. The resolution from the General Board petitions for troops to be brought home and calls on the global community to implement a nonviolent plan to bring peace and security in Iraq.

## CONFERENCE CHOOSES BECKWITH AS MODERATOR FOR 2008

Topping election results in Des Moines was the choice of James M. Beckwith, pastor of Annville (Pa.) Church of the Brethren, as moderator-elect. He will serve as moderator of the 2008 Conference celebrating the 300th anniversary of the Brethren movement.

Other election results included:

**Annual Conference Program and Arrangements Committee:** Scott L. Duffey.

**Pastoral Compensation and Benefits Advisory Committee:** Philip Hershey.  
**Committee on Interchurch Relations:** Rene Quintanilla.

**Association of Brethren Caregivers:** Verne Wetzell Greiner, Dave Fouts. Nominees William Cave, Gayle Hunter Sheller, Tamela Kiser, and John Kinsel were affirmed.

**Bethany Theological Seminary, representing col-**

**leges:** Jonathan Frye; **representing laity:** Rex M. Miller.

**Brethren Benefit Trust:** Eunice Culp. Nominee Harry S. Rhodes was affirmed.

The Brethren Benefit Trust board also chose 2006-2007 officers: Harry Rhodes, chair; Jan Bratton, vice chair; Wilfred E. Nolen, secretary; Darryl Deardorff, treasurer.

**General Board, at large:** Hector E. Perez-Borges.

**District nominees** were confirmed: David Bollinger,

Atlantic Southeast; Barbra S. Davis, Missouri and Arkansas; Kenneth Geisewite, Southern Pennsylvania.

In a reorganization meeting, the General Board chose a new executive committee: Jeff Neuman-Lee, chair; Tim Harvey, vice chair; Vickie Samland; Angie L. Yoder; Dale Minnich; Ken Wenger.

**On Earth Peace:** Madalyn Metzger. Nominees Verdona Lee and Phil Miller were affirmed.



**“One of the ways to strengthen our connectedness is through prayer. We can lift each other up daily in our prayer time.”**

Sunday morning speaker Ron Beachley, Hollsopple, Pa. (2006 moderator)

Ray Hileman makes a few points during the report of the Intercultural Study Committee.

“As disciples of Christ and members of one of the three historic peace churches, we cannot ignore the death, destruction, and violence in the war in Iraq,” it says.

At the microphones to support the resolution were family members of soldiers either currently in Iraq or returned from Iraq. “Let them come home. We want our children back home,” pleaded a mother from Atlantic Northeast District. A Navy veteran of the first Iraq war echoed the sentiment: “I say it’s time to bring our men and women home.”

A sizeable minority voted against the resolution. Some said that bringing the news of such a resolution home to their congregations would be an unwelcome task.

Standing Committee’s recommendation included a hope that all Brethren agencies and congregations will publicize the resolution.

### Resolution on divestment

The Conference expressed appreciation for “Resolution: Divestment from Companies Selling Products Used as Weapons in Israel and Palestine,” and thanked Brethren Benefit Trust (BBT) for its efforts to dialogue with the Caterpillar Corporation.

In acting on the item, delegates also urged “Brethren agencies and individuals and other people of faith to review their own investments and refrain from investing in businesses that profit from war and violence, and to give faithful witness to Jesus Christ as the Prince of Peace in financial matters as in all other matters.”

The resolution had asked BBT in particular to divest from Caterpillar Corporation “and any other company that sells products that are used routinely as weapons of destruction or death in Israel and Palestine.”

After the resolution was sent to Annual Conference by Pacific Southwest District, the stocks at issue were sold by BBT’s fund managers simply as a financial decision unrelated to the resolution, the Conference was told. BBT no

longer owns stock in Caterpillar, which manufactures bulldozers and other heavy equipment.

BBT’s initial approach to the issue was not to divest but to use the shares it held to speak to Caterpillar, BBT president Wil Nolen said. Referring to the Caterpillar D9 bulldozers made to military specifications, he said that “our approach was to directly inquire of Caterpillar how this . . . conforms with their own Worldwide Code of Conduct.”

### Commitment of accessibility

The delegate body welcomed and adopted a resolution on “Commitment of Accessibility and Inclusion” from the Association of Brethren Caregivers. The resolution urges “each congregation, agency, institution, facility, and



Regina Roberts

The full business agenda offered much food for thought for the delegate body. Here Roma Jo Thompson, a Standing Committee member from Pacific Southwest District, consults with Joe Schechter of La Verne, Calif.



A group of drummers helped lead a protest walk against the war in Iraq. The protest that included a march to a downtown Des Moines park and a rally with several speakers, was organized by the Brethren Witness/Washington Office of the General Board.

### DELEGATES GET A TASTE OF TOGETHER CONVERSATIONS

"When we talk together, we are changed by Christ," said Brian Maguire, introducing the Conference to the denominational study process "Together: Conversations on Being the Church." "In a place like this, we listen to what God is saying to one another," Maguire said.

He and Lisa Hess, a Presbyterian clergy couple, facilitated four half-hour sessions of Together conversations for the delegate body. Hess is a professor at United Theological Seminary in Ohio, and Maguire is pastor of Westminster Presbyterian Church in Xenia, Ohio.

The sessions focused on the nature of the church and gave an opportunity for participants to share personal experiences of church. In each half-hour segment, the delegate body and observers were invited to form small groups to discuss questions from the Together study guide published by Brethren Press.

Together was initiated in 2003 by the district executives, who identified fragmentation in the Church of the Brethren and called for conversation "concerning who, whose, and what we are." Since then, a group of leaders and staff of Annual Conference agencies and representatives of the district executives have planned a denomination-wide discussion.

From its beginning, the broad intent of the work is to help bring about a renewal of the church.

Together conversations continue in regional and district gatherings through the fall, and a culminating event is planned for the 2007 Annual Conference. For more information and resources go to [www.togetherconversations.org](http://www.togetherconversations.org) or [www.conversacionesjuntos.org](http://www.conversacionesjuntos.org).

gathering" in the denomination to recommit to becoming fully accessible and to including every person in its ministry.

The resolution states that the barriers are not only architectural, but also "attitudes that reflect a lack of sensitivity or understanding, which deny persons with disabilities the right to a life of dignity and respect."

### In other business

• "A Call to Reduce Global Poverty and Hunger" was adopted without discussion. The resolution from the General Board calls Brethren to pursue the Millennium Development Goals laid out by the United Nations in 2000, including universal primary education, reduction of child mortality, improvement in maternal health, care for the environment, combating infectious diseases, and empowerment of women.

• Delegates approved the concerns of a query titled "Call to Stewardship Education," and referred it to the General Board, noting that much work in this area is already occurring.

• The direction of revisions to the Articles of Organization of Brethren Benefit Trust (BBT) was affirmed. Among other

things, the revisions allow BBT to provide more services to Brethren Medical Plan participants, add language to acknowledge BBT's recently taking on oversight of the Church of the Brethren Credit

Regina Roberts



Doris Abdullah, a member of the board of On Earth Peace, was one of several who shared stories about congregational activities for peace during a session for Living Peace Church reports.



*The Doing Church Business recommendations were presented by committee members including Matt Guynn, coordinator of peace witness for On Earth Peace.*

**“Most of us live with so many preconceived opinions, we’re less open to God’s instruction than we care to admit.”**

Saturday evening speaker Kelly Burk, Richmond, Ind.

Union, and balance representation on the BBT board from different constituent groups. Proposed language to allow BBT to solicit donations and seek grants and other funding was withdrawn by the BBT board after Standing Committee perceived it to open the agency to possible conflicts of interest and privacy violations.

- Conference approved a 4.2 percent cost-of-living increase for 2007 for the minimum pastoral salary table, at the recommendation of the Pastoral Compensation and Benefits Advisory Committee.

- Interim reports were received from the Review and Evaluation Committee, the 300th Anniversary Committee, the Brethren Medical Plan Study Committee, and the Intercultural Study Committee. Other reports included the five Annual Conference agencies—the Association of Brethren Caregivers, Brethren Benefit Trust, Bethany Theological Seminary, the General Board, and On Earth

Peace—as well as the Committee on Interchurch Relations, Brethren representatives to the National Council of Churches and the World Council of Churches, a report on the denomination’s activities in ministry to the poor, and Living Peace Church reports.

- Six new fellowships were welcomed: Christ Connections Community, Oswego, Ill.; Faithful Servants, Frederick, Md.; Family Faith, Enid, Okla.; Journeys Way Ministries, Fairhope, Pa.; Naples (Fla.) Haitian; and Ramey Flats, Clintwood, Va.

- The Program and Arrangements Committee announced that the 2011 Annual Conference will be held in Grand Rapids, Mich., on July 2-6. [WU](#)

The report on Annual Conference business was prepared by General Board news services director Cheryl Brumbaugh-Cayford and other members of the Annual Conference news team: Jake Blouch, Kathleen Campanella, Karen Garrett, Clara Glover, Jill Kline, Frank Ramirez, and Frances Townsend.

## COUNCIL ANNOUNCES ANSWERS TO ISSUES OF SEXUALITY AND MINISTRY

The Annual Conference Council reported answers to the 2003 query, “Clarification of Confusion.” Concerns of the query from Michigan District had been referred to the council by the 2003 Conference. The query followed the previous year’s Conference action declaring it “inappropriate” to license or ordain individuals “engaging in homosexual practice.”

The council’s answers noted that the 2002 action was a policy decision that was based on polity, which “requires that ordination be reserved for those who will support the actions of Annual Conference.” The council said the action did not change the 1983 Statement on Human Sexuality, and that present polity

for licensing and ordination is sufficient.

This year’s answers followed an initial response from the council in 2003, that “no one known to be engaging in homosexual practices will be licensed or ordained in the Church of the Brethren.”

Jim Hardenbrook read the answers to the Conference as past moderator and chair of the council. He said the council’s response also has included visits of Annual Conference officers to Michigan, meetings with district leaders, work on the issues in other settings (including by staff of the General Board’s Ministry Office and the Council of District Executives), and a listening session at the 2004 Conference.

The council’s answers were received by Conference delegates as a report, without opportunity for discussion or questions. However, Hardenbrook’s report to pre-Conference meetings of Standing Committee sparked much discussion and an action directing the council to distribute its answers to the delegate body.

The 2003 Conference had not requested a report back from the council when it referred the query, noted Conference secretary Fred Swartz. It was the first query submitted to the council, newly formed five years ago, for a response. Many Standing Committee delegates expressed the understanding that the council’s answers close the issue.



Regina Roberts

Bethany Theological Seminary sponsored an ice cream social, with members of the faculty and staff helping to serve hungry Conference-goers.

**THEIR JUST DESSERTS**

Brethren have a history of eating ice cream at Annual Conference. One hundred years ago Brethren consumed 795 gallons of ice cream at the Annual Meeting in Springfield, Ill. In addition, Brethren were served 1,734 pounds of cookies and 1,763 pies. This information is from the records of the Annual Meeting Locating Committee for the 1906 Conference.—Ken Shaffer

Ken Shaffer is archivist for the General Board's Brethren Historical Library and Archives.

Tricia Ziegler was one of the youth who took the opportunity for an impromptu dip in a fountain on a hot day in Des Moines.



Sarah Kovacs

**Why do all these people come?**

*Non-delegates flock to Annual Conference as a gathering place*

by **Jake Blouch**

About 3,000 people attended Annual Conference this summer in Des Moines. However, fewer than 800 of those people were delegates. This leaves some 2,200 people. Of course, there are the various agency and organization staff, people leading workshops, and those providing child care and youth activities. But even with all these people taken into account, there are definitely hundreds of people at Annual Conference who are there with no specific duties.

Why would someone spend hundreds of dollars on transportation, lodging, and food to come to a conference where they are not required to be? Who are these people, and what keeps them coming back to Annual Conference?

"Annual Conference has always been a part of my life," says Dennis Brown of Virginia. "It's a source of inspiration and reaffirmation, really." Brown has been coming to

Conference for many years and plans to keep coming. Brown said one of his favorite parts of Conference is

relating to the staff of the Brethren Witness/Washington Office and helping them out with their duties.

In fact, relating to people and fellowship is what keeps most people coming back. "It's fun being around a lot of people," says Alex Bache, a fifth-grader from La Canada, Calif.

Many people share Bache's sentiments—a fact that Annual Conference Program and Arrangements Committee has wisely noted.

Annual Conference offers a number of opportunities for socialization and fellowship, reconnecting with old friends, and making new ones. Ice cream socials, insight sessions, breakfasts, luncheons, dinners, and even sitting in on business sessions are among the things that people without duties can do to keep themselves entertained.

For those in grades K-12, Annual Conference has provided

**TIDBITS FROM DES MOINES**

- **Attendance** totaled 3,003.
- The **blood drive** received 253 pints for the American Red Cross.
- Top finishers at the Brethren Benefit Trust **Fitness Challenge** were runners Jerry Crouse and Corinne Lipscomb, and walkers Don Shankster and Bev Anspaugh.
- The **quilt auction**, sponsored by the Association for

- the Arts in the Church of the Brethren, raised \$13,240 for hunger relief.
- In **service projects**, youth helped out at the Special Olympics in nearby Ames, and the single adults served a meal at a shelter for homeless youth.
- Brethren took to the streets in a **protest of the Iraq war** on July 3, led by staff of the Brethren

- Witness/Washington Office.
- Conferencegoers who were in Des Moines in **1958 for the 250th Brethren anniversary** gathered for a photo opportunity (download a copy at <http://www.brethren.org/AC2006/Sunday.html>).
- Brethren Volunteer Service presented its first **Partners in Service Award** to Community

- Church of the Brethren in Hutchinson, Kan.
- The Committee on Interchurch Relations presented the **ecumenical citation** to Hanover (Pa.) Church of the Brethren.
- **Outdoor Ministries Association recognitions** included a Lifetime Achievement Award to Bill and Betty Hare, directors of Camp Emmaus in Mount



Regina Roberts

*A couple of Virginians enjoyed a moment of respite during a busy Annual Conference: (from left) Roy Turpin of Willis, and Richard Thomas of Floyd.*



*The young adult activities included a boisterous evening of karaoke including (from left) Cyndi Fecher of Grand Rapids, Mich., and Jill Kline of Milwaukee, Wis.*

a special array of activities. Grades K-5 this year went on trips to Living History Farms as well as the Science Center of Iowa, a new addition to Des Moines. Junior highs also went on the science center field trip, along with trips to the Neal Smith National Wildlife Refuge and Altoona Waterpark. Senior highs had the privilege of seeing *Superman Returns* on the IMAX screen at the science center, as well as a trip to the Des Moines YMCA and volunteering at a Special Olympics event in nearby Ames.

Possibly the age demographic with the most people who come to Conference just to be there are young adults. Young adults, especially younger young adults, are in an age bracket where they are able to travel long distances without parents, but have not yet reached an age where many of them are delegates or in agency staff positions. But many young adults—who enjoyed such evening activities as ice cream, games, karaoke, and watching fireworks in Des Moines—feel a strong passion for the Church of the Brethren, and will travel long distances to reconnect with old Brethren friends and be a part of the church in general.

“It’s my vacation. I come out to have fun with Brethren folk,” says Nick Kauffman of Goshen, Ind., a sophomore at

Manchester College. “Brethren are the coolest people ever.” Kauffman was able to hitch a ride to conference with his youth pastor and share a room with an agency staff member.

For Kauffman, the most important part of Annual Conference is the opportunity for gathering and fellowship. He spent a lot of time at Conference relaxing and talking with other young adults, and he was certainly not alone.

The Brethren colleges exhibit was a place where many young adults and others met to relax on the comfortable couches or to play cards. That’s where Dave Hoffman was enjoying fellowship with family and friends. Hoffman says he wanted to come to Conference to meet new people; his favorite part was “the interaction with peers.” This was his second Annual Conference. His first was in St. Louis in 1988.

Non-delegates of all ages come to Annual Conference for the fun, fellowship, and community that comes along with each year’s gathering. Don’t be surprised if these non-delegates play a crucial role in the life of Annual Conference for years to come. ❗

Jake Blouch served as a Ministry Summer Service intern with MESSENGER this past summer. Currently a sophomore at University of the Arts in Philadelphia, he is from Hershey, Pa., and a member of Spring Creek Church of the Brethren.

Morris, III.; Volunteer Staff Recognition Awards to Alvin Walbridge of Camp Mardela in Denton, Md., Lynn and Betty Kreider of Camp Alexander Mack in Milford, Ind., and Art and Shirley Crane of Camp Peaceful Pines in Dardanelle, Calif.; and the Four Horsemen Award to Nancy Knepper in honor of a lifetime of service and

leadership development in outdoor ministries.

• **“Salt for the Church: A Service of Hope”** was held by the Brethren and Mennonite Council for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Concerns (BMC) in the exhibit hall July 2. Serving communion from a “table of welcome” constructed at last year’s Conference, the council invit-

ed members and friends to “unapologetically claim this space as a part of our church.” Some 200 people participated. Black cloths covered some booths that symbolically closed that afternoon at the invitation of BMC.

• A **“Passport to Wellness”** was offered by the new Wellness Ministry of the Association of Brethren Caregivers, Brethren Benefit

Trust, and the General Board. Passports listed 20 activities such as miniature golf, blood pressure screening, or prayer walking that were available in the exhibit hall. Those completing 12 or more received a t-shirt.

• Conferencegoers consumed **63 pounds of M&M’s** at the booth of the 300th Anniversary Committee.



Mary Dulabaum

Two of the first Conference-goers to complete the Passport to Wellness challenge collect their t-shirts from the Association of Brethren Caregivers.

**"Our calling is to be faithful and to run on together: to listen, to learn, to heal, and to grow together as a community."**

Wednesday morning speaker Brian Maguire, Beaver Creek, Ohio

## Putting and percolating, passports and patchwork

*Annual Conference exhibit hall offers variety of diversions, information*

by Jake Blouch

It's Annual Conference and you are bored. What to do with your boredom? You could sit in on business and play Brethren Business Bingo, trying to get a diagonal, vertical, or horizontal row of five bald heads or prayer coverings (see "Just for Fun" on page 7 for more ideas). You could beg for scraps of food from people coming out of the various luncheons, or go around the Des Moines convention complex recruiting people to be a part of a new study committee on boredom.

Perhaps the most popular option for a person in this situation, however, is to explore the various displays around the Annual Conference exhibit hall. With free massages, a well-stocked bookstore, and an eight-hole miniature golf course, there was plenty to do in the exhibit hall this year.

The popular mini-golf course consisted of eight holes, each representing a different ministry of the General Board: Emergency Response, Gather 'Round curriculum, Cross-Cultural Consultation and Celebration, "Our extended Christian family" featuring the church's ecumenical work, Wellness Ministries, Sudan Initiative, Youth/Young Adult workcamps, and Brethren Volunteer Service (BVS).

The course was designed by General Board staff member Dave Ingold and built by Joel Brumbaugh-Cayford and Ed Woolf. "I think the response has been really positive," says Becky Ullom, director of Identity and Relations for the General Board and the coordinator of the exhibit. "Hopefully it's just gotten more visibility for the General Board."

While playing the course, Sarah Durnbaugh, of Decatur,

Ind., commented that "It's neat to see what the General Board is up to, and it's a fun way to look at it, too."

Right next to the mini-golf course, another booth had plenty to offer. The Brethren Witness/Washington Office (BW/WO) booth, one of an array of General Board ministry booths surrounding the golf course, was littered with literature on everything from the environment to the conflict in Sudan.

BW/WO also offered a small recycling center and a number of bumper stickers, along with a new product: a DVD and study guide series on conscientious objection, its history in the Church of the Brethren, and how to declare CO status. The DVD, compiled by David Sollenberger and Phil Jones, played continuously at the booth throughout Conference. "It's a very helpful resource for youth in our denomination," says Josh Sollenberger, a Ministry Summer Service intern with the office. "It offers a very comprehensive way that, in the event of a draft, they (young men) will be granted a conscientious objector status."

Right next to BW/WO was another organization pursuing social justice, Equal Exchange—an inter-faith, 100 percent fair trade company specializing in the sale of coffee, tea, chocolate, and cocoa. Equal Exchange, begun as a coffee company in 1986, is now a \$20 million-per-year company.

"We're trying to expand our chocolate and tea lines," says Amy Wisehart, Equal Exchange's representative at Annual Conference. Equal Exchange started as a Church of the Brethren congregational project in 2001 and now has a partnership with 90 churches across the country. The booth had people visiting constantly due to the free product samples being handed out. Literature was also offered about the various programs.

Also specializing in fair trade products in the exhibit hall was A Greater Gift, better known by its mother company, SERRV. A Greater Gift features products from artisans across the globe, selling everything from musical instruments to fair trade coffee to nativity scenes. SERRV goes into developing countries and helps people set up and buy



Quilters (from left) Janet Ryman of Goshen, Ind., and Margaret Weybright of Syracuse, Ind., worked to finish the Annual Conference pieces in time for the annual quilt auction, which this year raised \$13,240 for hunger relief.

Members and friends of the Brethren and Mennonite Council for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Concerns (BMC) led a procession around the exhibit hall and a communion service at a "table of welcome."



One of the larger presences in the hall was the Association of Brethren Caregivers, which joined other agencies in promoting an activity called "Passport to Wellness" in conjunction with the new "Lighten Up Brethren" emphasis.

When people completed various activities around Annual Conference, such as praying with a friend, donating money to build houses, played a round of mini-golf, or climbing as many stairs as there are in the Eiffel Tower, they got a stamp on their passport. After 12 stamps, the passport could be turned in to receive a free t-shirt.

Another unique service offered by the ABC booth was the opportunity to sign up for a free massage. According to at least one visitor at the booth, the massage therapist was "very good, very good." After having his back and knees worked on, he added, "I'd recommend him coming back if he could."

Certainly the largest display with the most materials was the Brethren Press bookstore. The bookstore offers everything from Brethren logo keychains to Donald Durnbaugh's historical books, books about Christianity and politics to books about Christianity and yoga. The bookstore also had a large display promoting Brethren Press' new curriculum "Gather 'Round." (see story, p. 18). The *Gather 'Round* display featured examples of the curriculum itself, along with temporary tattoos and a *Gather 'Round* archway and computer displaying the curriculum's website.

"I always come in and check to see what I don't have," says Anita Smith Buckwalter of Lansing, Mich. "Its always interesting to see which things I'm drawn to."

They came, they saw, they learned. Whether they left with a new book or a cup of coffee, hopefully attendees left with greater knowledge and a deeper connection to the wider church. **W**

Jake Blouch served as a Ministry Summer Service intern with MESSENGER this past summer. Currently a sophomore at University of the Arts in Philadelphia, he is from Hershey, Pa., and a member of Spring Creek Church of the Brethren.

the equipment to make the various products.

"We teach them everything," says Ferne Steckman of Palmyra, Pa., a Brethren Volunteer Service worker and volunteer coordinator for SERRV. SERRV helps poor artisans get enough money to buy food, and fulfill other needs. "It's a dream just to send their kids to school," Steckman says.

Rowene Sales of Adair, Ill., said, "We love SERRV," while shopping with her friend Lorane Henderson from Citronelle, Ala. According to Henderson, "It's a little pricy, but it goes to a good cause."

Another good cause, and arguably the biggest event of the week in the exhibit hall, is the Association for the Arts in the Church of the Brethren quilt auction. Each congregation is invited to send a quilt square to Annual Conference, and the various squares are quilted together to make a larger quilt. Ladies are always sitting around quilting at the AACB booth at Conference.

"We come every year and quilt," says Martha Flora of Rocky Mount (Va.) Church of the Brethren. "Most of us are here all the time except for worship," adds Ginny Mason of the Germantown Brick congregation, also in Rocky Mount. All proceeds from the auction, which totaled \$13,240 in 2006, go to hunger projects of the Church of the Brethren.

"What it does is alleviate hunger in the world," says Tara Hornbacker, one of the administrators of AACB. "That's so Brethren, isn't it?" she says, laughing, "People are just miraculously generous."



Regina Roberts

**“There seems to be no way to modernize faith, to make it more savvy, more consumer-friendly. . . . You still have to walk by faith again.”**

Tuesday evening speaker Dennis Webb, Naperville, Ill.

## Together . . . to worship

### *Preachers offer words of challenge and encouragement*

Amid the business and the insight sessions, the meals and the other activities, worship remains at the heart of Annual Conference. Five times during the week, the gathered body comes together in song and prayer. Manassas (Va.) pastor Jeff Carter last year described it as a time when “an arena becomes a church.”

Worship had a more traditional tone this year than in some recent years, but a lineup of strong preachers remained a constant. That lineup included two women and three men; four were Brethren, one Presbyterian; they came from the East Coast, the Midwest, and West Coast.

Worshippers were asked to stand during most scripture readings, to give “full attention to the reading of God’s Word.” Other pieces included drama, litanies, solos, choirs, lighting candles, audiovisuals, and even a puppet.

Following are some excerpts from the thoughts shared during this year’s Annual Conference worship in Des Moines.—**Walt Wiltschek**



Regina Roberts



Regina Roberts

**“We come to the Word with diverse experiences that encourage us to ask different questions. And for that, let’s be thankful! Not afraid.”** Saturday evening speaker Kelly Burk, Richmond, Ind.

**“We make the most telling strokes with our lives when we pause the longest—in prayer.”** Sunday morning speaker Ron Beachley, Hollsopple, Pa. (2006 moderator)



Regina Roberts



Keith Hollenberg

**“I’ve concluded that our spiritual exercises need to include aerobics of the heart . . . but, like most aerobics, they may stretch us out of our comfort ZONE.”** Monday evening speaker Myrna Long Wheeler, San Dimas, Calif.

**“We face new challenges, like relevance. People pick their churches like underarm deodorant: Which one has the best packaging and makes me feel good about myself when I’m done using it?”** Wednesday morning speaker Brian Maguire, Beavercreek, Ohio



Conference-goers who were in Des Moines for the church's 250th anniversary celebration in 1958 gathered for a photograph. The crowd was so large that it filled an entire stairway in Hy-Vee Hall.

Dennis Webb, pastor of Naperville (Ill.) Church of the Brethren, was one of the dynamic speakers at Annual Conference 2006.

## The Brethren in Iowa: A tradition of growth

*Conference returns to site of previous significant gatherings*

by Madalyn Metzger

Following Sunday morning worship at the 2006 Annual Conference in Des Moines, Iowa, a group of people gathered for a photo session—a reunion of those who attended the 1958 Annual Conference, also held in Des Moines.

"I was just a junior high kid at the 1958 Conference," said Roger Schrock, who grew up in the Northern Plains District and is now pastor of Cabool Church of the Brethren in Missouri. "It was a real unifying celebration."

Des Moines has a rich tradition of hosting Brethren from across the country, most recently for this year's Annual Conference, and previously also for the denomination's 250th anniversary in 1958 and 200th anniversary in 1908. But the history of Brethren in Iowa began well before then. The first Brethren families arrived in 1838, attracted by the rich farmland.

"In fact," said Connie Burkholder, district executive for Northern Plains, "the railroads recruited Brethren to go west to settle farmland on the frontier."

It didn't take long for the first Church of the Brethren con-

gregation to be organized near Libertyville, Iowa, in 1844. And more congregations soon followed.

"When the Brethren first started coming to Iowa, they were very evangelistic," said Marlene Neher, a member of the Ivester congregation in Grundy Center. "They started a lot of churches in their communities."

Many of these church plants met in country schools located every few miles, each served by a larger congregation.

"A church served a number of different stations," said Betty Jo Buckingham, a member of the Prairie City congregation. The congregations most likely had several members serving as lay ministers, whose efforts were geared toward church plants.

While the original settlers sought out new lives on the open frontier, more people today are seeking out urban areas where new opportunities exist. With this shift in population, Brethren in the Northern Plains District are noticing a decline in membership overall. But despite these statistics, the district sees hope as new congregations continue to flourish.

"We have three new church projects," Burkholder said, "and our newest congregation is growing and holding its own."

The vision of the first Brethren in Iowa still exists in today's congregations—continuing the tradition of church growth in the region. **■**

Madalyn Metzger is a member of Elkhart (Ind.) Valley Church of the Brethren. She is a communication manager for MMA (Mennonite Mutual Aid) and lives in Bristol, Ind., with her husband, Kris Brownlee.

### A LIGHT IN DES MOINES

Stover Memorial, the only Church of the Brethren congregation in the city of Des Moines, began in 1942. A group of "Brethren Girls" (wives of servicemen) and others met at the YMCA until the church building was dedicated in July 1949. The name honors Brethren missionaries Wilbur and Mary Stover.

The initial group of 50 members grew to

244 in 1970. With an average attendance of 19, the congregation is still vibrant even though more than one-third of active participants are over 90 years old. The congregation shares its facility with First Friends Church, holding services simultaneously in separate areas of the building and joining together for social events, work projects, and special services.

The congregation also participates in ecumenical and district events and often hosts other organizations or events. Members participate in activities of Shepherd's Center, an ecumenical project providing a life-enriching program for senior citizens that has an office and classrooms in the church building.—**Clara Glover**

Clara Glover is pastor of Stover Memorial Church of the Brethren in Des Moines

# BEING SMART



Visual-Spatial



Logical-Mathematical



Verbal-Linguistic



Bodily-Kinesthetic

## New Gather 'Round curriculum addresses a variety of learners

*"You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might. Keep these words that I am commanding you today in your heart. Recite them to your children and talk about them when you are at home and when you are away, when you lie down and when you rise" (Deut. 6:5-7).*

**O**ne hour of God-talk each week was not enough to set children on God's path during Bible times. It still isn't. Parents were instructed to talk with their children about God's ways at many times, in many places, and in many ways. How will we teach our children to know, love, and follow God in the 21st century? A new curriculum titled *Gather 'Round* aims to help.

Prior to the introduction of Sunday school classes, a significant amount of children's Christian education happened at home. Nowadays, Sunday school may be the only place many children learn about God. The *Gather 'Round* curriculum, however, is intentionally designed to help parents and caregivers join in teaching their children about God.

A parent/caregiver class and a resource called the "Talkabout," designed to stimulate family discussion and activities at home, are ways that *Gather 'Round* invites adults to take an active role in their child's Christian education. Adults study the same biblical text that their children learn about in Sunday school; the adult is then ready to continue the child's education at home during the week.

In order to make this learning most effective for both adult and child, the parent/caregiver guide and the children's unit offer a variety of learning activities, appealing to many different ways of learning. These different approaches to learning are called "multiple intelligences."

Frank Ramirez, pastor of Everett (Pa.) Church of the Brethren and author of "Connect," the parent/caregiver guide for year one, describes the multiple intelligences: "There are different ways of being smart. . . . (People) come to school or church, and we expect them to only be smart in one or two ways. By using the multiple intelligences, the Sunday school hour becomes an hour when we can celebrate everybody's way of being smart."

### Multiple intelligences in the writing process

Multiple intelligences are part of *Gather 'Round's* overall educational theory. They also guide the writing process. The curriculum writers strive to incorporate many kinds of activities into each lesson, ensuring a balanced class that will engage every child.

Phyllis Davis is an educational consultant and member of the North Winona (Ind.) congregation. She is currently writing the year two middler lessons (grades 3-5). She creates lessons designed to appeal to the various learning styles but becomes especially intentional when she writes the responding activities. The writers include three of these in every lesson.

Davis may at first develop a set of activities but then realize they appeal to the same approaches to learning. She then finds other ways to present the same message—ways that reach out to more children through a greater variety of methods.

She finds that writing for some of the intelligences comes more naturally to her than others. She consults friends at church for suggestions when she needs help.

"Writing this way," Davis says, "it gets you out of your own box."

### Multiple intelligences in the teaching process

The multiple intelligences also shape the way that teachers teach and learners learn.

Davis remembers her own Sunday school classes as a child. Sunday school was geared much more for the whole group. Classes were less hands-on, more verbal, more reading, more



Cheryl Brumbaugh-Cayford

Sunday school teachers Heather Kingery and Kim Bickler participate in a *Gather 'Round* training event for churches in the Chicago area.



**Musical-Rhythmic**



**Intrapersonal**



**Interpersonal**



**Naturalist**

discussion. She believes those are still valuable ways of learning.

"But in this curriculum we are trying to expand that in ways that will speak to the children where they are in their own lives," Davis says.

She sees her job as helping children find ways to discover what God has for them. She hopes they will learn how to really want to follow God's ways.

"It's an attitude—to set your mind on God," Davis says. "We want to teach them this attitude and do it in a way the children find important and relevant."

The preschool material Susan Fuentes has written for year one is an example of how to make learning important and relevant. A member of Living Faith Church of the Brethren in Concord, N.C., Fuentes is an elementary teacher and former Christian education director for Manchester Church of the Brethren in Indiana.

Fuentes retells Bible stories at a level children understand. She includes movement and opportunities for talk-back during the story. These techniques honor the ways young, active children learn. In one of her sessions, for example, the children do a treasure hunt to find the meaning of Jesus' parables, actually digging to discover their meaning.

Anna Speicher is director and editor of *Gather 'Round*, a joint project of Brethren Press and Mennonite Publishing Network. She says *Gather 'Round* encourages teachers to offer a variety of approaches to each Bible story. But these activities must be designed to help children better understand the story's meaning.

"We wouldn't build an altar for the sake of building an altar, but to reinforce the faith focus of the story," Speicher explains.

Many of these new methods are more hands-on and active than traditional educational techniques. *Gather 'Round*, however, uses them not to entertain but to help children learn to follow Jesus.

"If children are offered meaningful ways to enter the stories of faith," says Brethren Press publisher Wendy McFadden, "those stories will take root in their lives."

She hopes teachers will look to Jesus' example. Jesus told stories and used visual aids to demonstrate his points. He appreciated and reached out to people where they were.

"If we want to be followers of Jesus," McFadden says, "why not imitate his teaching?"

## ABOUT GATHER 'ROUND

*Gather Round* is a Christian education curriculum grounded in Anabaptist heritage. It includes print materials for specific age groups as well as multi-age materials and a web-based downloadable youth unit. Jointly published by Brethren Press and Mennonite Publishing Network, the curriculum is being launched this fall. Several other denominations have become "cooperative users," making the curriculum widely available in their denominations, as well. For more information, visit [www.gatherround.org](http://www.gatherround.org) or call Brethren Press at 800-441-3712.

## MULTIPLE INTELLIGENCES

More than 20 years ago, research psychologist Howard Gardner developed the theory of multiple intelligences. Applied to education, it means that the most effective learning happens when people use their own preferred ways of learning. Some ways we learn, according to Gardner:

**Visual-Spatial:** arranging, visualizing and using objects

**Logical-Mathematical:** reasoning, logic, and abstract thinking

**Verbal-Linguistic:** spoken and/or written word

**Bodily-Kinesthetic:** movement, balance, eye-hand coordination

**Musical-Rhythmic:** music, rhythms, and patterns

**Interpersonal:** working and talking with others, peacemaking

**Intrapersonal:** self-awareness, self-discovery, self-reflection

**Naturalist:** observing, collecting, categorizing; being in nature

## Multiple intelligences in the community-building process

Dianna Ullery of Lacey (Wash.) Community Church homeschools her three children and has a background in environmental education. She is author of the middler material for year one.

Ullery believes that using the multiple intelligences ultimately strengthens our faith communities. When teachers offer many kinds of activities, children grow in their faith instead of having it imposed upon them.

"Choice is another aspect that's important in this curriculum," says Ullery. "It's designed not to tell the teachers what to do, but to give the teachers choices . . . and also so that the teachers can give the children choices of what to do."

Ramirez also speaks of respect for the learner.

"This curriculum assumes we're going to trust the process and the people working with the materials," Ramirez says. Rather than laying out pat answers, he says, the curriculum invites learners to ask questions and make the lessons more personally meaningful.

Churches benefit when adults show that kind of respect for children. Children know that their communities support and value their growth.

The multiple intelligences are tools to help reach out to every child. With these tools, *Gather 'Round* seeks to help churches grow disciples and build community. 

Audrey Osborne Mazur is a member of Black Rock Church of the Brethren in Glenville, Pa. She lives in Hanover, Pa.





## Proverbs: Book presents brief

**P**roverbs was the Hebrew manual for daily righteousness. It is an anthology of wise sayings. Many were written by Solomon, who was widely known for having composed 3,000 proverbs and 1,005 songs. In Proverbs, readers are taught to be honest, industrious, self-reliant, good neighbors, model spouses—and above all, to walk uprightly before God.

Proverbs are short, concise sentences that convey moral truth. They are short sentences drawn from long experience. They are laws of heaven for life on earth. They are simple, concise, self-evident truths that are easily remembered.

We use expressions such as “Look before you leap.” That simple proverb teaches the wisdom of considering the consequences of one’s actions. The biblical proverbs are a God-inspired collection of pithy sayings designed to give instructions about how to live a life that pleases God. They cover many aspects of life—including the importance of serving God, maintaining strong family life, resisting temptation, avoiding laziness, and guarding the tongue.

Proverbs are general principles and guidelines that do have exceptions. Note the statements in 17:6, 18:22, and 22:15. Some upright people do starve (10:3), and some who fear God are visited with evil (19:23)—but the general truth is that the person who seeks to follow God’s ways fares better than the wicked person whose life eventually ends in ruin. An exception to the stated principle does not mean there is an error in the text, but only that the nature of a proverb is to have exceptions.

. . .

# A manual for daily righteousness

truths containing deep wisdom

by Harold S. Martin

## A general outline of the book of Proverbs can be given in three parts:

1. Wisdom and folly contrasted (1:1—9:18)
2. Miscellaneous proverbs of Solomon (10:1—29:27)
3. Words of Agur and Lemuel (30:1—31:31)

The book of Proverbs opens with a series of discourses concerning wisdom and folly. Wisdom is godly conduct; folly is wickedness. The “simple” (1:4, 22, 32) is one who is open to influ-

ence, whether good or bad. The “wise” is one given to upright conduct. The “fool” is one who lives as if there is no God. At various places in the first section wisdom is personified as a noble lady who calls upon the young man to give heed to her instruction (8:1-21), and folly is personified as a seducing harlot who would lead one astray (9:13-18).

The large middle section of Proverbs contains 375 proverbs of Solomon.

Chapters 25-29 contain some of Solomon’s proverbs that were collected and copied in King Hezekiah’s time (200 years after Solomon). The book of Proverbs was not completed in Solomon’s day, but was finalized at a later date.

Most of the proverbs in chapters 10-29

example of an antithetic parallelism.

The final two chapters of Proverbs are attributed to Agur and to King Lemuel, about whom nothing is known. In chapter 30, Agur discloses the error of arrogant extortioners by describing some things never satisfied; in chapter 31, Lemuel ends the book with his observa-

**The biblical proverbs are a God-inspired collection of pithy sayings designed to give instructions about how to live a life that pleases God. They cover many aspects of life—including the importance of serving God, maintaining strong family life, resisting temptation, avoiding laziness, and guarding the tongue.**

are stated as couplets (two successive lines of poetry) that are parallel in thought. The first line contains a truth; the second line expands, specifies, or draws out the meaning of the first (called a *synonymous parallelism*). Sometimes the second line states a negative that makes the original line even more striking (called an *antithetic parallelism*).

Proverbs 16:18 is an example of a synonymous parallelism; Proverbs 15:1 is an

example of an antithetic parallelism. It is a tasteful description of how such a woman conducts herself in a fitting manner. 

Harold S. Martin is an ordained minister in the Church of the Brethren and editor of Brethren Revival Fellowship’s *BRF Witness* newsletter. He lives in Lititz, Pa.

MESSINGER’S “Journey through the Word” series will provide a brief overview of a different book (or books) of the Bible each month through December 2009. Coming in October: Ecclesiastes, by David Leiter.

## PROVERBS: A CLOSER LOOK

**Author:** Solomon and others

**When written:** Date of final editing is uncertain

**Famous chapter:** The eulogy of the good wife (31:10-31) is an acrostic of 22 sayings, each verse beginning with a letter of the Hebrew alphabet in order. It includes praise of the ideal wife, and advice for would-be husbands in choosing a life partner.

**Well-known verses:** “Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not rely on your own insight” (3:5); “Train children in the right way, and when old, they will not stray” (22:6); “If your enemies are hungry, give them bread to eat; and if they are thirsty, give them water to drink” (25:21).

**Other notes:** A good way to study the Proverbs is to find a number of verses that deal with the same topic and bring them together, noting how they relate to each other and how they differ. For example, under the theme of “cultivating friendship,” one might list the following verses: 17:17, 18:24, 19:6, 27:6, 27:9 (KJV), and 27:17 (KJV).

## Brethren receive record-breaking dividend from Brotherhood Mutual

A dividend check of \$126,290 for the year 2005 was received by the Church of the Brethren from Brotherhood Mutual Insurance Company, through its Partnership Group Program. Mutual Aid Association (MAA) is the sponsoring Brethren agency for the program; more than 400 Brethren churches, camps, and districts are part of the program.

The dividend is the largest ever in the history of Brotherhood Mutual, a record-breaking amount figured upon the Brethren group's favorable loss expe-

rience last year, said MAA president Jean Hendricks. The Brethren dividend for 2004 of \$109,835 also broke a record, Hendricks added.

Decisions about use of the dividend were made by the agency executives. Among other programs, the dividend will support the work of the 300th Anniversary Committee (\$43,000); help the Germantown Trust prepare the "mother church" of the denomination for 300th anniversary activities (\$15,000); and support the Church Member Profile Study of Elizabethtown (Pa.) College and the Young Center for the Study of Anabaptist and Pietist Groups (\$10,000). A sum of \$50,400 has gone to the Mutual Aid Association Share Fund Inc., which provides matching funds to congregations for meeting human needs following a natural disaster or other emergency.

This is the third year in a row that the Church of the Brethren has received a dividend from Brotherhood Mutual. In 2003, MAA used the dividend to bolster its operations including the Share Fund. In 2004, \$50,000 of the dividend was returned directly to Brethren congregations and agencies insured through MAA, with the rest allocated to the 300th Anniversary Committee and Together: Conversations on Being the Church; some 400 congregations received amounts ranging from \$25 to \$3,000, depending on their insurance premiums.



Cheryl Brumbaugh-Cayford

*Dan Book of Brotherhood Mutual Insurance Company, left, presented a check for \$126,290 to the Church of the Brethren, representing a dividend for the year 2005. Mutual Aid Association is the sponsoring Brethren agency, represented by president Jean Hendricks (second from left). The check was received by the executives of the Annual Conference agencies including (from right) Stan Noffsinger, general secretary of the General Board, Barbara Saylor and Bob Gross, co-executive directors of On Earth Peace; Wil Nolen, president of Brethren Benefit Trust; and Lerry Fogle, executive director of Annual Conference.*

## Disaster Child Care cares for children evacuated from Lebanon

Disaster Child Care helped care for children of American families evacuating from the war in the Middle East in late July. A Disaster Child Care center was set up at Baltimore-Washington international airport (BWI) to care for children of US citizens evacuated from Lebanon, at the request of the Central Maryland Chapter of the American Red Cross.

"During the nine-day response, 23 child care volunteers provided a safe, secure space for 231 scared, confused, and weary children while parents were guided through US Customs, and given the opportunity to apply for assistance, arrange connecting flights, or contact family members in the US," coordinator Helen Stonesifer reported. Disaster Child Care is a ministry of the Church of the Brethren General Board.

BWI was designated as a "repatriation center" by Maryland Gov. Robert L. Ehrlich Jr. for Americans fleeing Lebanon, Stonesifer said. Nineteen flights of evacuees from the Middle East were received, bringing a total of 4,492 people.

"The children were relieved to be far away from the window-

shattering bombs and fiery explosions" of the war, Stonesifer said.

Many church organizations, including Church World Service, the US National Council of Churches (NCC), and the World Council of Churches (WCC) have appealed for a cease-fire and other peace initiatives in the

Middle East, and for a "safe channel" for humanitarian response.

WCC general secretary the Rev. Dr. Samuel Kobia called the situation a "major tragedy." The WCC planned to send a pastoral delegation to Lebanon when security concerns permitted it. Church World Service announced a \$1 million fundraising appeal for the region; thousands of health kits have already been sent. And the NCC set up an online prayer site, at [www.seasonof-prayer.org](http://www.seasonof-prayer.org).



Kimberly Kirkwood

*Disaster Child Care volunteer Martha Domer cares for American children evacuated from Lebanon, at a child care center at Baltimore-Washington International airport.*

**E-town Young Center director arrested in sting operation**

On July 20 David Eller, chair of the Religious Studies department and director of the Young Center for Anabaptist and Pietist Studies at Elizabethtown (Pa.) College, was arrested and charged with attempted unlawful contact with a minor and criminal use of a computer. Eller is an ordained minister in the Church of the Brethren. The Pennsylvania attorney general announced July 21 that Eller was arrested by agents of a Child Predator Unit as part of an ongoing undercover Internet "sting" investigation. He was arrested after allegedly making contact over the Internet with several undercover agents, and allegedly arranging to

meet an undercover officer who assumed the online identity of a young girl. Eller was initially placed on administrative leave by the college, which has been cooperating fully with the authorities. Elizabethtown requested prayer for the difficult situation. "Please join me in praying for the Eller family in this very difficult time," said Allen Hansell, director of church relations for the college. "The Young Center has appreciated your support and asks your patience as future steps are determined for ensuring its long-term vitality." Don Kraybill was named interim director of the Young Center. Kraybill is a senior fellow at the college and has a long history of service to the college and the center.

**Walk Across America heads for home, for now**

Don Vermilyea, a Brethren Volunteer Service (BVS) worker who began a "Walk Across America" in February 2002, has ended his walk, for now. He set out from Arizona with the goal of walking to every Church of the Brethren congregation that extended an invitation. The walk has been sponsored by BVS and the Brethren Witness/Washington Office of the General Board.

In mid-June, Vermilyea ended the walk in Burlington, W.Va., where he planned to stay with friends to rest and recuperate. "I am whopped and wore out," he said, "I can't tell you how much I need a rest."

"It's been a tremendous journey for Don and for all of us," BVS director Dan McFadden said. "He has made connections with congregations on a personal level that many of us would like to do if we had the time. I don't know if there is a way to measure the impact of the walk, both on local congregations and the denomination."

The walk was about Jesus Christ, Vermilyea said. On the way, he spent more than four years on the road from coast to coast, walked more than 19,172 miles, visited and made presentations in numerous con-

gregations, raised close to \$8,000 for hunger and disaster relief in money picked up along the road and in donations, and spent more than 730 nights "homeless" and more than 820 nights "cared for by humanity," according to his website.

"Thanks to the many who have loved me across the USA," Vermilyea said. "It has been my pleasure and my blessing to spend time with y'all." For more information go to [www.brethren.org/genbd/witness/Walk.html](http://www.brethren.org/genbd/witness/Walk.html).



A map shows the route of Don Vermilyea's Walk Across America for Jesus, which has ended—for now. Vermilyea walked more than 19,000 miles in four-plus years, visiting Church of the Brethren congregations across the US.

**UPCOMING EVENTS**

**Aug. 28-Sept. 1 Brethren Volunteer Service retreat**

**Sept. 4-8 National Older Adult Conference**, Association of Brethren Caregivers, Lake Junaluska, N.C.

**Sept. 15-16 Northern Indiana District Conference**, Camp Alexander Mack, Milford, Ind.

**Sept. 15-16 South/Central Indiana Conference**, Salamonie Church of the Brethren, Warren, Ind.

**Sept. 15-16 Southern Pennsylvania District Conference**, New Fairview Church of the Brethren, York, Pa.

**Sept. 15-16 West Marva District Conference**, Moorefield (W.Va.) Church of the Brethren

**Sept. 15-17 Missouri-Arkansas District Conference**, Roach, Mo.

**Sept. 22-23 On Earth Peace Board of Directors meeting**, Brethren Service Center, New Windsor, Md.

**Sept. 24-Oct. 13 Brethren Volunteer Service orientation**, Brethren Service Center, New Windsor, Md.

**Sept. 29-Oct. 1 Association of Brethren Caregivers Board meeting**, Church of the Brethren General Offices, Elgin, Ill.

## Brethren star in episode of 'History Detectives'

Calls requesting information on artifacts are normal for Ken Shaffer, director of the Brethren Historical Library and Archives, but not calls from the "History Detectives."

"History Detectives," a public television show, helps people find out the story behind artifacts they may have. Last year, a collector of World War II memorabilia from Aiken, Ga., brought the detectives two \$5 certificates with "Brethren Service Committee" written at the top. The detectives thought this might indicate someone trying to buy their way out of serving in World War II, and they set out to find if this was really the case. That's when they called Shaffer.

Shaffer got the call from the producer in November 2005, mainly looking for preliminary information to see if they wanted to make this lead into an episode. The certificates turned out to be receipts given to people by the church after they

donated money to Civilian Public Service (CPS), an organization set up by the historic peace churches for conscientious objectors to serve their alternative service during the war.

"They had no idea what the Church of the Brethren was, what CPS was," Shaffer says. "I spent a lot of time explaining background and why the Church of the Brethren would be doing this during World War II." Shaffer ultimately spent 150 hours doing research for the show, as well as sending them numerous photos, pamphlets, films, and books from the archives.

The Brethren Service Center in New Windsor, Md., also hosted cast and crew members Feb. 24-25 when they interviewed Harry Graybill, a CPS worker who served four years in the program. "History Detectives" did filming and interviews at Elizabethtown (Pa.) College and other locations, as well. The episode of "History Detectives" aired July 10 on PBS.

### PERSONNEL MOVES

• **Bradley Bohrer** begins Sept. 11 as director of the Sudan mission initiative of the Church of the Brethren General Board. He has served as pastor of Brook Park (Ohio) Community Church of the Brethren for over 22 years. For the past four years he also has been an advisor to doctor of ministry students and an instructor at Ashland Theological Seminary, and has worked in Northern Ohio District as director of pastoral continuing education. From 1995 to 1997 he taught at Kulp Bible College in Nigeria.

• **Kim Ebersole** of North Manchester, Ind., started Aug. 1 as director of Family and Older Adult Ministries for the Association of Brethren Caregivers. She will continue the Older Adult Ministry program and forge a new emphasis on Family Life Ministry. Ebersole most recently directed social services for Peabody Retirement Community of North Manchester. She has also worked for a hospice as a social worker and bereavement coordinator, and has directed an AIDS service organization.

• **Nadine Pence Frantz** has resigned as professor of theological studies at Bethany Theological Seminary to accept an appointment as director of the Wabash Center for Teaching and Learning in Theology and Religion at Wabash College in Crawfordsville, Ind., effective Jan. 1, 2007. Frantz is a graduate of Bethany and holds a doctorate from the University of Chicago. She joined the Bethany faculty in 1992 and

has focused her research and writing in the areas of christology, theology, the visual arts, and feminist theology.

• **Julie L. Garber** of North Manchester, Ind., has been appointed part-time editor of *Brethren Life and Thought* by the Brethren Journal Association. Garber is director of Plowshares at Manchester College and has served the college as associate dean for Academic Affairs and assistant to the academic dean. In other service to the church, she has edited books and curriculum for Brethren Press. She holds degrees from Manchester College, Bethany Theological Seminary, and the University of Chicago Divinity School.

• **Mary Lou Garrison** began Aug. 1 as part-time director of Wellness Ministries for the Association of Brethren Caregivers. The collaborative position also is supported by Brethren Benefit Trust and the General Board. Garrison will promote wellness and the goals of the church's Wellness Ministry in congregations, districts, and agencies, with special attention to those enrolled in the Brethren Medical Plan. She will also develop a resource bureau of Brethren with expertise in health education. Garrison resigned July 28 as director of human resources for the General Board.

• **Tom Hurst** started in mid-July as campus minister for McPherson (Kan.) College. He most recently served as Mid-Atlantic Regional Field Manager for AFS Intercultural Programs. He also has been executive director of On Earth Peace,

pastor of Downsville Church of the Brethren, Williamsport, Md., and an area representative for Heifer International. He holds degrees from Manchester College, Ohio University, Bethany Theological Seminary, and Temple University.

• **Ed Leiter** has resigned as director of Information Services for the General Board effective by Dec. 31. He has worked for the board from New Windsor, Md., since 1988. He began at the Brethren Service Center in 1984 as a programmer, then later as lead programmer and analyst. He assumed his current role in June 2004.

• **Jewel McNary** resigned in June as director of marketing and sales for Brethren Press. She had held the position since September 2003. Prior to that she was part-time promotion consultant for MESSENGER and had provided temporary assistance in Brethren Press customer service over the previous four years.

• **Donna McKee Rhodes** has been appointed executive director of the Susquehanna Valley Ministry Center, a ministry education partnership of Bethany Theological Seminary and five districts in the Northeast with offices located at Elizabethtown (Pa.) College. Rhodes served the past five years as dean of certificate and continuing education programs at the center. She is a graduate of Juniata College in Huntingdon, Pa., holds a Training in Ministry certificate through the Brethren Academy for Ministerial Leadership, and is an ordained minister.

## ONCAMPUS

### **Bridgewater College** (*Bridgewater, Va.*)

The Bridgewater Eagles were ranked No. 13 in the *USA Today Sports Weekly* Division III Preseason Top 25 poll. The ranking appeared in *USA Today Sports Weekly's* College Football Preview publication, a special edition that hit newsstands June 26.

### **Elizabethtown College** (*Elizabethtown, Pa.*)

Elizabethtown's Young Center for Anabaptist and Pietist Studies is honoring the scholarship of the late Brethren historian Donald F. Durnbaugh by creating the Durnbaugh Legacy Endowment. Contributed funds will help meet a \$2 million challenge by the National Endowment for Humanities. The endowment will support the collection of reference materials, teaching, and other activities.

### **Juniata College** (*Huntingdon, Pa.*)

Juniata presented five alumni-related awards June 3 during Alumni Assembly. Jodie Monger Gray of McLean, Va., was awarded the Harold B. Brumbaugh Alumni Service Award; Miriam Wetzel of Casco, Maine, the Alumni Achievement Award; Erin Sheets of Port Matilda, Pa., the Young Alumni Achievement Award; and Kenneth Van Antwerp of Somerset, Pa., the William E. Swigart Jr. Alumni Humanitarian Award. The college also awarded the Health Professions Alumni Appreciation Award to Randy Kochel of Lancaster, Pa.

### **University of La Verne** (*La Verne, Calif.*)

Ngoc Bui, associate professor of psychology, announced that the La Verne chapter of Psi Chi National Honor Society won one of the three best chapter website awards for its site (<http://clubs.ulv.edu/~psichi>). Bui was also named Western Region Faculty Advisor of the Year for 2005-2006.

### **Manchester College** (*North Manchester, Ind.*)

Manchester has given a guarantee that students who cannot land a job within six months of graduation can return to school for another year, tuition-free. In a recent survey, the college found that almost 97 percent of the Class of 2005 were working or continuing their education within six months of commencement.

### **McPherson College** (*McPherson, Kan.*)

McPherson's automotive restoration program was featured June 11 in the national edition of the *New York Times* in an article titled, "A Classics Curriculum With a 4-Wheel Degree." Established in 1976 with an initial donation from Gaines "Smokey" Billue, the program is celebrating its 30th anniversary this year.



Becky Ullom

*Marlys Hershberger delivered a creative message during one of the 2006 Young Adult Conference's many worship times.*

## A 'transforming' Young Adult Conference

About 100 young adults and leaders from around the nation met at Camp Swatara in Bethel, Pa., May 26-28 for this year's Young Adult Conference (YAC). The conference focused on Romans 12:2 with the theme "Transformed."

"Only when we allow ourselves to be transformed are we able to recognize, accept, and respond to what God wants from us," YAC coordinator Emily Tyler noted.

Bob Etzweiler and Hannah Serfling were the featured young adult speakers. Etzweiler opened the weekend with a challenging assessment of the ways in which Christians, as the body of Christ, must transform daily lifestyle choices into faith statements. Serfling focused on the transformation that takes place by seeking forgiveness from sin.

Other speakers included Marlys Hershberger, pastor of Hollidaysburg (Pa.) Church of the Brethren, who centered on the idea that each person is called to be a "reflector" of the love of Jesus Christ. Craig Smith, executive minister of Atlantic Northeast District, spurred conference-goers to "go and do likewise" after a message describing what transformation looks like in individuals and the church. Worship services also included communion and anointing.

When not worshiping, young adults participated in *padare* (workshop) sessions on topics ranging from storytelling to Bible study to immigration reform; in "Joyful Noise" sessions that gave participants a chance to sing favorite hymns while learning a few new tunes; and in small groups, called community groups, that met several times throughout the weekend.

A coffeehouse displayed a variety of young adult talents. Musical numbers included driving rhythms, rich guitar chords, and lyrics in at least two languages. Humor was a frequent guest in the room as well.

Next year's YAC is again set for Memorial Day weekend, at Camp Harmony near Hooversville, Pa. A larger National Young Adult Conference is being planned for the following year—Aug. 11-15, 2008, in Estes Park, Colo.

### Bits and pieces

- The Church of the Brethren **National Youth Conference** took place July 22-27 in Fort Collins, Colo., with more than 3,600 people attending. A full report on this energetic and worship-filled event will appear in the October issue.

# 'Playing with Fish': Book encourages broader vision

**G**race is leaving your doors unlocked, so a drunk neighbor doesn't freeze to death on your porch during the middle of an Alaskan winter. Wisdom is knowing that you don't play with fish. Safety means remembering you don't talk about bears out loud, or even think about them too much.

There's a tendency for folks to think that their personal customs are the laws of the universe. It's good for us to get out into God's world to discover how the diversities of habitat and humanity combine in endless ways to demonstrate how very different we are, and how very much alike we can be. And when

I can't travel out there to get a look myself, I rely on great authors to take me where I haven't been before. When the author is Brethren it's a double blessing.

*Playing With Fish and Other Lessons from the North* is just such a book. In 1979 author Bob Wolfe faced a personal crisis. A self-described member of the "Pacific Slope Brethren" with a Ph.D. in anthropology, a job at a major university, but a marriage that was falling apart, Bob took a job with the Fish and Game Department in Alaska studying the

needs of Native Americans who relied on subsistence fishing.

For 20 years he lived in a different world that is somehow still our world. He flew upstream to distant villages where life depends on the fish and game that are caught and preserved. He learned that while it may be hard to detect what effect a butterfly sneeze in China has on markets in Dayton, it's possible to scientifically measure what the loss of most of California's wetlands has had on the goose population that nests in Alaska. He had guns waved in his face and worried, in the cold, if he was about to lose a toe. He proved that one letter to the editor can change the political landscape of a capital city. He remarried, started a new family, listened, and learned.

Those of us who read his book have a chance to learn as well. We live in a world where the experts know everything and are never, ever wrong. Some in government cannot think of a single instance when they have made a mistake. But Bob's book reminds us that God's world is varied and abundantly diverse, and that the assumptions of one group may be totally different yet totally right for them. Wisdom comes from accepting reality, rather than trying to force reality to fit your preconceived notions of what you insist the world ought to be. This latter viewpoint is part of the reason wars come into being.

Surprisingly, it is the Brethren values of peace, simple living, nonconformity, and love for humanity that stand Bob in

good stead when learning to live in this strange and wonderful society. As a child growing up in a rapidly changing Los Angeles, and later as an adult adjusting to the strange and wonderful environment of Alaska, Bob makes the claim that although he was one of "... the wayward Brethren oddly misplaced in the West" it was at least in part this heritage that taught him it is important to "build lives on solid rock."

I have served as a Brethren pastor in one urban and two rural settings. I have learned to love living near a small town, but if I am alarmed about anything it is the fact that some people assume that their way of life is the natural, even only way to live.

My favorite chapter of the book is titled simply "Grace." Bob recounts experiences, both his own and others', that have ended in life and death. From the voice that assures him all will be well, even as the car he is driving with his young family is hurtling through the air towards a terrible crash, we learn the difference between life and death is razor-thin. "We live under grace, unearned chances sometimes given to the living for unknown reasons," he notes. The fragility of life when stretched across the skein of stark situations reminds us how precious is this gift that comes from God.

What a world is opened up to us. Imagine a potluck with tables groaning from the weight of seal blubber delicacies and blackfish stew. Delight in the discovery of the northernmost lemon tree, growing sheltered inside the house of a couple determined to remain independent of the world. Learn what it means when dances forbidden by well-meaning missionaries are finally restored.

Discover why Alaskans who respect the fish upon whom their livelihood depends are aghast at the practice of some sport fishermen who catch and release. You don't play with fish, Alaskan children are taught. Yet catch-and-release fishing is, for some, a hallmark of conservation. Same planet, different worlds.

Real life doesn't allow itself to be tied together in neat little bows with tidy morals. But it's worth remembering that for Brethren the Wolfe family has always been one of pioneers. Once, in the 19th century, the Brethren from the East reconnected with the Wolfes and other Brethren in the West and were aghast because they performed love feast differently. It turned out the "western" Brethren had preserved the original mode, and it was the entrenched eastern Brethren who had strayed.

Maybe we're the ones, once more, who have strayed. Bob Wolfe's book reminds us that although we've a story to tell to the nations, we can't possibly tell it well if we aren't ready to listen first. **W**

Frank Ramirez is pastor of Everett (Pa.) Church of the Brethren.



FRANK RAMIREZ



## ABOUT THE BOOK

*Playing With Fish and Other Lessons from the North*, University of Arizona Press

**Author:** Robert J. Wolfe. **Pages:** 152. **List price:** \$15.95.

Books reviewed in MESSENGER can be purchased through Brethren Press; call 800-441-3712.

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# Pontius' Puddle



## Scattered Anabaptists stay connected

We thoroughly enjoyed the article on Brethren vs. Mennonites by "flip-flopping" Kathy Reid [May 2006], but some of us can't flip-flop and are just happy to be able to cling.

In Connecticut, Brethren and Mennonites gather once a month for fellowship and song. There are no more than 20 of us, so we really enjoy the chance to come together to talk about the good old days in Lancaster or Indiana. We would be eager to hear of other such fellowships, and please join us if you are traveling through on the first Sunday of the month.

**Carol and Dan Wade**

Connecticut Monthly Meeting of Anabaptists  
New Haven, Conn.

## Time to learn from Nigeria?

As usual, I was deeply impressed by what I found in MESSENGER, this time in the June issue. Brother Filibus Gwama, president of the Church of the Brethren in Nigeria (EYN), "reported on EYN with nearly 160,000 members and more than 200,000 people attending worship. . . . The church continues to grow because members talk about their faith."

From the *Church of the Brethren Yearbook* I observe that we Brethren in this country



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**Mennonite  
Central  
Committee**

have four-fifths as many members as the Nigerian church, but their church attendance is about three times as much as ours. I'm glad that our Annual Conference moderator is calling on all our members to "become more vocal in sharing their faith."

After about 45 years of year-by-year decline in church membership and attendance, this may be the time for us American Brethren to learn from our brothers and sisters in Nigeria! As our moderator said, "If we're excited about our faith, then we should be able to share what Jesus means to us."

**Olden Mitchell**  
North Manchester, Ind.

### Stem cells not major issue

In the commentary (July/August) on the use of stem cells, two corrections need to be made, plus one redirection.

In Linda Dooly's article is the statement that the Bible makes no differentiation "as embryo or fetus." It needs to be remembered that the microscope and related studies did not come until hundreds of years after the Bible was written. Of course the Bible does not refer to knowledge that came later.

In addition, she states, "People have invented the terms 'embryo' and 'fetus' to dehumanize unborn babies." This is simply not true. Biologically the term "embryo" has been used to refer to the first three months of gestation, and "fetus" from three months to birth. (At least these were the terms used since 1947 when I studied human development.) Stem cell research was not a usual discussion in 1947.

Now, how do we get focused on major issues?: The US is destroying the people of Iraq and Afghanistan. US soldiers are dying, and many more are permanently maimed—both physically and mentally. The US is subverting our justice system. Torture, kidnapping, and murder are excused, if not done within our boundaries. We are lied to by our administration. My understanding is that Jesus would have spoken out. Where are the Brethren on issues vital to our lives?

**Marvin E. Blough**  
Melba, Idaho

*The opinions expressed in "Letters" are not necessarily those of MESSENGER. Readers should receive them in the same way as when differing views are expressed in face-to-face conversation.*

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Those interested in this position should send a resumé, including qualifications, to Allen Murlin, HC 75, Box 138-A, New Creek, WV, 26743. All inquiries will be kept in strict confidence. The position will be available September 1, 2006.

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Please send information to be included in *Turning Points* to Jean Clements, 1451 Dundee Ave. Elgin, IL 60120; 800-325-8039 ext. 206; jclements\_gb@brethren.org. Information must be complete in order to be published. Information older than one year cannot be published.

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**Beacon Heights, Fort Wayne, Ind.:** Megan Fetters, Sue Warren

**Black Rock, Glenview, Pa.:** Leah Shisler, Cody Shaffer, Nick Redding, Adam Covatt, Katie Weaver, Kirsten Hartlaub, Cathy Brant, William W. Hartman, Jr.

**Cabool, Mo.:** Roger Crosbie, Louise Crosbie, Gordon Crosbie, Karen Roberts

**Cerro Gordo, Ill.:** Austin Brandenburg, Luke Jackson, Jordan Johnson, Danielle Kelley, Camille McRae, David Powell, Jennifer Powell, Michael Powell, Clayton Shay

**Chiques, Manheim, Pa.:** Matthew Nolt, Laura Kreiser

**Columbia, United Christian, Columbia, Md.:** Jerry Crane, Jill Crane, Christina Cox, Tami Franklin, Karen Helfrich, Tracy Lynge, Carol Mann, Paul Misner, Lisa Shaughnessy

**Eastwood, Akron, Ohio:** David Hajba, Debbie Hajba, Jennifer Hall, Fran Hunsicker, Patty Klingensmith, Dara Law, Ashley Markland, Eugene Nolt, Julie Rochon, Caroline Royers, Norma Shaffer, Christen Stockdale, Thomas Stockdale, Geneva Tritle

**Elizabethtown, Pa.:** Lynden Bedenbaugh, Dylan Engle, Sarah Fairbanks, Max Hockley, Sydney Musser

**Nokesville, Va.:** Yuri Bart, Barbara Deemer, David Deemer, Brenda Ashley Hanna, Manuel Gonzalez, Malissa Cornwell

**Olympic View Community, Seattle, Wash.:** Anden Hormann, Kate Miller, Lew Fortin, Doris Tanning, Nancy Green, Mark Stewart

**Peace, Portland, Ore.:** Hal Shellar, Gayle Shellar, Craig Thom, Pat Thom

**Peoria, Ill.:** Eva Kathryn Reese, Lois Jean Mintah

**Duncanson, Earl and Dolores, Lewiston, Minn., 60**

**Engle, Kenneth and Ruth, Purgitsville, W.Va., 60**

**Evans, Ross and Betty, Mechanicsburg, Pa., 55**

**Geib, Harold and Cora Mae, Sebring, Fla., 55**

**Grisham, Stan and Mary Ruth, Sebring, Fla., 50**

**Heffner, Stephen and Edna, Keedysville, Md., 60**

**Johnson, Ray and Fonda, Polo, Ill., 60**

**Judy, Roy and Jean, Greenwood, Del., 55**

**Kensinger, Robert and Roberta, Roaring Spring, Pa., 50**

**Kessel, LeRoy and Maxine, Fisher, W.Va., 55**

**Kessler, Phillip G. and Maralea P., League City, Texas, 55**

**Koznoskie, Jim and Margie, Harrisburg, Pa., 50**

**Landis, Ken and Gloria, New Lebanon, Ohio, 50**

**Ludwick, Bill and Mary, Fairfax, Va., 50**

**Moser, Lewis and Grace, Sebring, Fla., 55**

**Owen, Roy and Edythe, Modesto, Calif., 60**

**Palsgrove, Gene and Lenore, Modesto, Calif., 60**

**Pennell, Bill and Grace, Baltimore, Md., 55**

**Petry, Larry and Alice, Lakemore, Ohio, 50**

**Prillaman, Jim and Vivian, Roanoke, Va., 60**

**Riggelman, Orvil and Juanita, Slanesville, W.Va., 60**

**Sanbloom, Robert and Joan, West Lafayette, Ind., 50**

**Schwanninger, Eugene and Anna Mae, Trappe, Md., 70**

**Shanholtz, Wayne and Zettia, Moorefield, W.Va., 50**

**Sink, J. Howard and Dorothy, Roanoke, Va., 60**

**Soper, Paul and Shirley, Union Bridge, Md., 50**

**Swope, Clarence and Geraldine, Manheim, Pa., 55**

**Thompson, Hubert and Irene, Greenville, Ohio, 65**

**Tobias, Galen and Peggy, Uniontown, Ohio, 50**

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**Whitecomb, Richard and Helen, Mechanicsburg, Pa., 60**

**Whitman, Slim and Jerry, Middleburg, Fla., 65**

**Witters, Donald and Faye, Bridgewater, Va., 50**

**Zigler, Hiram and Hardenia, Bridgewater, Va., 60**

## Deaths

**Adair, Brenda Myers, 46, Warrenton, Va., May 15**

**Adams, Phyllis, 81, Sebring, Fla., April 21**

**Allinson, Sandy, 62, Central Point, Ore., April 5**

**Anderegg, Martha G., 90, Portage, Mich., May 8**

**Anderson, Doreen, 85, Champion, Pa., April 14**

**Armstrong, Nancy Beth, 55, Elizabethtown, Pa., April 1**

**Bailey, Carol E., 79, Morrill, Kan., June 7**

**Ballinger, Arwilda K., 70, Portland, Ore., April 28**

**Barger, Denver, 85, Maysville, W.Va., April 17**

**Belser, Vernon, 69, Elizabethtown, Pa., May 15**

**Belton, Jesse L., 84, Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio, Feb. 14**

**Bennett, Denny, 54, Glen Campbell, Pa., May 26**

**Berger, Geraldine, 88, Sebring, Fla., May 3**

**Berkebile, Esther J., 75, Johnstown, Pa., May 12**

**Berkey, John, 87, Roaring Spring, Pa., May 25**

**Bernhardt, Agnes H., 96, Franklin Grove, Ill., April 3**

**Best, Arlington R., 87, Waynesboro, Pa., Feb. 21**

**Bollinger, W. LaMar, 90, Nampa, Idaho, June 3**

**Botkin, Wilmer Eugene, 72, Sugar Grove, W.Va., April 11**

**Breidenbaugh, Christian P., II, 71, Aberdeen, Md., May 3**

**Bridges, Mamie Charlotte, 77, Singers Glen, Va., April 11**

**Brown, Harman Miller, 93, Broadway, Va., April 19**

**Brown, Karl, 96, Somerset, Pa., May 16**

**Carlin, Jack P., 77, Moundridge, Kan., Feb. 16**

**Carter, Carrie, 78, Knoxville, Md., Feb. 15**

**Chandler, Ruby Elizabeth, 91, Bridgewater, Va., May 15**

**Coffman, Grace C., 89, Fincastle, Va., June 11**

**Corle, E. Grace, 69, Martinsburg, Pa., Nov. 22**

**Cosner, Toney Aldine, 80, Rig, W.Va., June 6**

**Courtright, Duffy, 65, San Antonio, Texas, July 29, 2005**

**Croushorn, Paul G., 84, Harrisonburg, Va., May 12**

**Cullers, Hazel Marie, 70, Timberville, Va., June 5**

**Cullers, Marvin Lee, 86, Broadway, Va., March 27**

**Delawder, George Washington, 85, Quicksburg, Va., April 28**

**Dickison, Corabelle, 76, Goshen, Ind., June 13**

**Dixon, Martha Belle Tobias, 81, Akron, Ohio, April 6**

**Dodd, Opal, 87, Baltimore, Md., June 4**

**Double, E. Ruth, 94, Lancaster, Pa., March 22**

**Dove, Brosie Lee, 95, Broadway, Va., April 7**

**Driver, Donald J., 51, Lima, Ohio, May 25**

**Eckard, Isaac Kermit, 95, Bridgewater, Va., March 21**

**Garrett, Jeffrey, 57, North Manchester, Ind., Oct. 17**

**Gasparato, Debra Pritt-Gordon, 50, Windber, Pa., Feb. 14**

**Geisel, Edward, 81, Windber, Pa., Jan. 22**

**Ginder, Tekla, 91, Mount Joy, Pa., Feb. 27**

**Harman, Elizabeth, 81, Harman, W.Va., March 11**

**Higdon, Eugene, 74, Knoxville, Md., March 22**

**Higdon, JoeAnn, 71, Knoxville, Md., May 16**

**Hofecker, Glen Melvin, Jr., 76, Franklin, W.Va., March 19**

**Hoffman, Leora, 99, Windber, Pa., March 20**

**Hovis, Thelma M., 95, Waynesboro, Pa., March 30**

**Hummel, Harold Lee, 75, Bridgewater, Va., March 19**

**Fisher, Gletha Mae, 97, North Manchester, Ind., Jan. 14**

**Jarrell, Hollis Warfield, 79, Elkton, Va., April 21**

**Jett, Roger Lee, 65, Woodstock, Va., March 27**

**Kauffman, Adin, 84, Columbiana, Ohio, May 20**

**Keplinger, Deborah Louise, 55, Harrisonburg, Va., June 2**

**Kessell, Gary, 70, Gathersburg, Md., May 9**

**Kibler, Dorothy Estella R., 85, Woodstock, Va., April 9**

**Kimmel, Ray E., 76, Somerset, Pa., Dec. 7**

**Kline, Della T., 94, Timberville, Va., March 14**

**Knechel, Martha J., 89, North Manchester, Ind., July 15, 2005**

**Knupp, Isley Frederick, 91, Harrisonburg, Va., April 13**

**Koser, James E., 74, Perry County, Pa., June 19**

**Kreiser, John, 95, Palmyra, Pa., June 2**

**Kurfis, Dorothy E., 85, Lima, Ohio, June 16**

**Larson, Stephen R., 64, Portland, Ore., April 7**

**Lattimer, Ruth, 59, Thornville, Ohio, April 1**

**Lee, E. Vincent, 83, Wilmington, Del., May 26**

**Leer, Dean, 83, Goshen, Ind., April 24**

**Lewis, Elisabeth, 92, Duncansville, Pa., June 4**

**Lichty, Wayne, 84, Waterloo, Iowa, June 14**

**Liskey, Margaret P., 90, Bridgewater, Va., May 30**

**Liskey, Reuel, 92, Nokesville, Va., April 17**

**Lucas, Ray E., 86, Brunswick, Md., Jan. 18**

**Marshall, Lois, 91, Brookville, Ohio, May 12**

**Martin, Lillian Frances Derrer, 95, Harrisonburg, Va., March 21**

**Martzall, Ivan, 84, Ephrata, Pa., April 21**

**McFerrer, Sally A. Bragunier, 69, Mont Alto, Pa., May 15**

**McSpadden, Dale, 78, McPherson, Kan., June 8**

**Metzger, Eleanor, 84, Martinsburg, Pa., June 1**

**Miller, Elvin Lawrence, 79, Dayton, Va., April 3**

**Miller, Glenna Kathleen, 78, Bergton, Va., April 6**

**Miller, Lois, 85, Somerset, Pa., March 27**

**Miller, Violet, 97, Indian Head, Pa., March 17**

**Miller, William, 83, Somerset, Pa., April 8**

**Millhouse, Arthur F., 66, Drumore, Pa., April 17**

**Moeckly, Hazel, 90, Ankeny, Iowa, June 15**

**Morris, Julian H., 87, Harrisonburg, Va., June 18**

**Moyers, Richard Raymond, 78, Moorefield, W.Va., April 17**

**Muck, Mary L., 87, Fayetteville, Pa., Nov. 21**

**Myer, Donald E., 94, North Manchester, Ind., Oct. 15**

**Myers, Bee, 89, Linville, Va., March 16**

**Myers, Carolyn Lillie Landes, 61, McGaheysville, Va., May 18**

**Myers, Roy C., 84, Altoona, Pa., June 3**

**Peters, Evelyn, 75, Johnstown, Pa., Nov. 18**

**Reading, Marie Virginia Harpine, 86, Charlottesville, Va., June 25, 2005**

**Refner, Kenneth, 81, Roaring Spring, Pa., June 5**

**Richard, Mary Virginia Clark, 72, Middletown, Va., May 21**

**Riggelman, James Andrew, 79, Broadway, Va., April 3**

**Riggs, Ardeth Moberly, 83, LaGrande, Ore., June 12**

**Roberts, Lois M., 86, Cerro Gordo, Ill., May 18**

**Sarver, Terry, 59, Ocean City, Md., Jan. 14**

**Schall, Jerry, 76, North Manchester, Ind., May 10**

**Shaw, James Paul, 60, Danville, Va., March 2**

**Sheffer, John Paul, 79, Mount Solon, Va., May 22**

**Shelly, J. Harlan, 79, Manheim, Pa., June 10**

**Sherman, Neva Mae, 83, Goshen, Ind., June 22**

**Shifflett, Jane Patricia, 70, Harrisonburg, Va., May 6**

**Shifflett, John E., 56, Verona, Va., May 28**

**Shoemaker, Alma Elizabeth Layman, 85, Linville, Va., June 25**

**Shoemaker, Fannie Lee, 90, Woodstock, Va., May 6**

**Short, Richard Edward, 69, Brandywine, W.Va., May 1**

**Simpson, Willard N., 86, Fort Valley, Va., April 4**

**Slifer, Betty Miller, 69, Harrisonburg, Va., June 19**

**Smith, David Lee, Sr., 72, Broadway, Va., April 22**

**Smith, Harvey Richard, 89, Nokesville, Va., Jan. 29**

**Snively, George W., 95, Palmyra, Pa., May 2**

**Snyder, Donald B., 93, Waynesboro, Va., June 25**

**Snyder, Larry Eugene, 54, Harrisonburg, Va., May 27**

**Snyder, Marian E., 86, Cleona, Pa., May 9**

**Snyder, Treva Daisy Bare, 87, Thomasville, Pa., June 19**

**Spitzer, Carl W., 87, Crimora, Va., June 7**

**Summers, Helen Elizabeth, 92, Middletown, Md., May 4**

**Speck, Joanne L. Uplinger, 63, York, Pa., May 26**

**Steffey, R. Scott, 48, Harrisonburg, Va., March 20**

**Stoneberger, Leonard Daniel, 66, Stanley, Va., May 1**

**Summers, Helen Elizabeth, 92, Middletown, Md., May 4**

**Teter, Russell, Jr., 85, Bridgewater, Va., April 8**

**Todd, Lawrence Benard, 73, Waynesboro, Va., June 11**

**Todd, Leonard Bryan, 82, Harrisonburg, Va., May 3**

**Tritapoe, Edward, 81, Knoxville, Md., May 16**

**Tritapoe, Rhoda E., 102, Knoxville, Md., Feb. 7**

**Ulrey, Esther, 88, North Manchester, Ind., April 14**

**Vance, Vernie Sally, 99, Dorcas, W.Va., April 5**

**Via, Elizabeth Batton, 97, Staunton, Va., April 1**

**Wadel, Ralph, 80, Scotland, Pa., March 20**

**Walker, Charles, 85, New Carlisle, Ohio, Jan. 16**

**Weller, David, 99, Windber, Pa., Oct. 11**

**Werner, Shirley J., 85, Astoria, Ill., Nov. 27**

**Wilkins, Ray Deway, 70, Winchester, Va., March 7**

**Wineland, Clarence, 100, Martinsburg, Pa., Jan. 17**

**Wood, Winifred Swank, 84, Nokesville, Va., Dec. 28**

**Wymer, Margaret Louise Starkey, 71, Reliance, Va., March 27**

## Anniversaries

**Adams, Wayne and Betty, Union Bridge, Md., 50**

**Batts, Curtis and Deloris, Sebring, Fla., 50**

**Burket, Kenneth and Mildred, Martinsburg, Pa., 65**

**Calloway, Bob and Verna, Queen Anne, Md., 55**

**Cart, Harold and Margaret, Avon Park, Fla., 60**

**Cassel, Paul, Jr. and Velda, New Oxford, Pa., 50**

**Coleman, John H. and Irma G., Telford, Pa., 55**

**Cox, Raymer and Mary, Cushing, Okla., 50**

**Cripe, Harold and Sherry, Goshen, Ind., 50**

**Dickerhoof, Robert and Marjorie, Goshen, Ind., 50**

# Scary stuff

**L**eaders at this year's Ministry Summer Service orientation—a General Board program in which college students explore church vocations for nine weeks—asked the gathered interns and mentors to each share something about the upcoming summer that excited them.

Most of the answers were what one would expect: Meeting new people, trying new things, seeing new places, and so on.

Then one of the interns gave a more unexpected response: "I'm excited to be scared."



WALT WILTSCHKEK  
MESSENGER Editor

He said he was looking forward to being pulled outside his comfort zone and going across the country into unfamiliar territory. He wanted to try out some untested skills and venture down that unknown path so often involved when God calls. He was a bit nervous, but he was ready.

Excited to be scared. It's a novel thought, especially when so many in the church seem to be gripped by fear.

Richmond (Ind.) pastor Kelly Burk touched on this in her opening worship sermon at Annual Conference: "As Christians, as Brethren, fear has become so pervasive in our faith that we are increasingly disconnected from who we are and who God calls us to be," she said. She named areas such as fear of each other, of becoming extinct, of uncertainty, and of differ-

ences interpreting scripture. As Jewish writer Noah benShea put it, "Fear is the pain before the wound."

The sort of fear that Kelly described is a paralyzing one, a sort of religious rigormortis. The church ends up doing exactly what the opening words of the 2002 National Youth Conference theme song cautioned against: "When I get comfortable here in my routine, when I stick to the safe and the sure..."

It's a temptation at any time to settle into a pattern and stay there. When we feel that we're on uncertain ground, though, or even under attack, it becomes that much easier to circle the wagons.

An Annual Conference item this year called for some significant changes in the way we do business as a church, allowing more room to listen to each other and for the Spirit to work. Immediately, a host of caution flags went up. The item was ultimately referred to a "feasibility study committee" for further scrutiny on matters of cost and implementation. Hopefully we're just a little wary and need some time for processing and perfecting. As one delegate said during the debate, "I believe God is always calling us into newness."

That's the essence of what that 2002 NYC song went on to say, too: "When I convince myself this is all that I am, Lord, you say there's so much more. . . . Whatever may come, whatever may be, if it's your will, move, move in me."

That Conference item is just one example of where God may be calling the church into bold and creative new

approaches. The same could be said for our worship, our outreach, our demographics, or our

**It's a temptation at any time to settle into a pattern and stay there. When we feel that we're on uncertain ground, though, or even under attack, it becomes that much easier to circle the wagons.**

ences interpreting scripture.

There's no denying it. Our denomination, like many more "mainline" denominations in this country, is shrinking. Our congregations, districts, and agencies are facing a variety of financial challenges. We are becoming more diverse in a number of dimensions. We are discovering that some of our old paradigms don't work well any more.

So what do we do? Students in public speaking classes, among other settings, are often advised on the difference between healthy and unhealthy fear: Being a little scared can keep you from becoming overconfident and actually enhance your performance; too much fear, however, can paralyze you.

relationships. "Far better it is to dare mighty things," former President Teddy Roosevelt once said, "than to . . . live in a gray twilight that knows neither victory nor defeat."

It's natural, even healthy, to be scared. But when we cease to face it with excitement and instead let it grow into fear that numbs the mind and spirit, it strangles us. As God spoke to Paul, "Do not be afraid" (Acts 18:9).

I hope that intern had one wonderfully scary summer out in Virginia. I hope he scared the congregation where he was serving a bit with some new ideas and possibilities, too. And who knows what God has in store for the rest of our church. Exciting, isn't it?—Ed.

**COMING IN OCTOBER:** Full-color coverage of National Youth Conference 2006, exploring Ecclesiastes, book review, poetry, and more.

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...in mission



Bob Krouse

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because  
he has anointed me to **bring good  
news to the poor.** Luke 4:18



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