

# *The Scroll*

*Notes and News  
from the  
Brethren Academy for  
Ministerial Leadership*

*Vol. 5, No. 1, August 2009*

## *TRIM / EFSM Orientation July 13-16, 2009*



### *Members of One Family*

On July 13 we gathered for the first time: nine of us, from all parts of the country. We came from Indiana, Michigan, Virginia, Maryland, Nebraska, and California. Our backgrounds were as varied as the places we came from - retired military, school bus driver, ex-police chief, auto salesman, auto parts dealer, schoolteachers and pastors. Some of us were young, and some of us were not so young. Some of us had Brethren genealogies that went back to the very beginning of the Brethren movement, some of us not even a generation.

At first glance it would be easy to look at us and see us as strangers to each other. After all, we came from all parts of the country, different backgrounds, and generations. Most of us had never met before, unless it was at District Conference, Annual Conference, or an other large gathering of the Church of the Brethren.

Strangers? Nothing could have been further from the truth. We all had one thing in common, and maybe it was the most important thing. We had heard "The Call" and had responded. Jesus called; we answered.

#### ***TRIM / EFSM Orientation Participants: (Left to Right)***

**Bill Fisher** – Virgina District  
**Mary Beth Tuttle** –Western Plains District  
**Randy Short** – Michigan District  
**Susan Price** – Pacific Southwest District  
**Thomas Prager** – Michigan District  
**Kim Beares** – Mid Atlantic District  
**David Young** – South Central Indiana  
**David McDaniel** – Shenandoah District  
**Shawn Tanner** –Virgina District



## Members of One Family ...

When I first joined the Church of the Brethren five years ago, I knew it was a small denomination, but I didn't realize how small. There was a part of me that thought I would always be considered an outsider because I was not a cradle Brethren. When I first heard "The Call" I was hesitant to respond, in part because I knew it was a small denomination and appeared almost like a large extended family. I just figured the set-apart ministry was reserved for *real* Brethren. When I could no longer ignore "The Call", I approached my pastor. We talked and prayed. We put the issue before the consistory and the congregation for a vote, and the funniest thing happened! Not only did my congregation confirm "The Call", they *affirmed* it. It would seem the only one to ever consider me an outsider was me.

I know people. Whenever I am going to District or Annual Conference or anyplace there is a gathering of Brethren, people in my congregation tell me to look for this person or that person. When I am at these gatherings, people *always* come up to me and ask me where I am from, and then ask me about people from my congregation. No matter where I go in the Church of the Brethren, I have always been welcomed with the right hand of fellowship and a big hug. No matter where I am, my home congregation or any place else in the church, I always feel welcomed and at home.

For four days (you might as well say nights, too) we were together at the EFSM/TRiM orientation. We would talk in class, on the way to the dining hall, on the way back to class, and after class. We worshiped together, we prayed together; we learned a new form of prayer. It was not uncommon for one to be in the hotel lobby, and to be joined by one, two, three, four, or more. We shared, we witnessed, we praised. Sometimes we laughed until we cried, sometimes we cried until we laughed. It was reassuring to meet others who have the same concerns about our church as I do. It was reassuring to meet others who have the same hopes and dreams.

Strangers? No, not strangers, just brothers and sisters I had never met before.

~~William Fisher, Christian Church Uniting  
(a Church of the Brethren and United Church of Christ affiliated congregation) Virginia Beach, VA

## Congratulations, Graduates!

Kathryn and Mark Bausman from the Community Church of the Brethren in Twin Falls, ID graduated from the Education for A Shared Ministry program this past year. This husband and wife team completed the program under the supervision of Brother Martin Gauby and with the support of their Congregational Training Group. District Executive, Sue Daniel, and representatives from five of the district's churches were present for a worship workshop on Saturday, November 1 and the ordination service that evening. The graduation service took place on Sunday morning with Julie Hostetter, Director of the Brethren Academy for Ministerial Leadership, serving as guest preacher.



Mark, the Standing Committee member from Idaho, was present at the Bethany Theological Seminary Annual Conference luncheon where he and Kathryn were recognized for completing the EFSM program.



### ***Upcoming Academy Level Courses:***

#### **2009:**

\* **“Passions of Youth, Practices of Christ”** Codorus (PA) COB, Instructor Russell Haitch, September 24-27 (MS) or (BT) Registration Deadline: August 24, 2009

**“Judges”** *on line* Instructor Susan Jeffers, September 28 – November 6 (SVMC) (BT)  
<http://www.read-the-bible.org/SVMC-Judges.htm>

**“Healthy Relationship/Spirituality in a Small Membership Congregation”** Jim Kinsey, a certified trainer/consultant in the Healthy Congregations National Network will be offering this Academy Level course. It will be scheduled for either October or November in Iowa. (MS) Registration Deadline: October 5, 2009

**“Brethren Polity and Practice”** Young Center on the campus of Elizabethtown College, Instructor Warren Eshbach, November 20-22, call SVMC for further details. (MS)

#### **2010 Projections:**

**“Gospel of John”** Bethany Theological Seminary, Richmond, IN, Instructor Daniel Ulrich, January 11-15 (BT) Registration Deadline: December 11, 2009

**“Pastoral Care”** *on line*, (MS)

**“II Corinthians”** *on line* Instructor Susan Jeffers, February 8 – March 19, 2010 (SVMC) (BT)  
<http://www.read-the-bible.org/SVMC-2Corinthians.htm>

\***“Rituals, Ordinances and Worship”** Bethany Theological Seminary, Instructor Dawn Ottoni Wilhelm, May 10-14 (MS) Registration Deadline: April 9, 2010

\***“Church Planting”** Bethany Theological Seminary, Instructor TBA, course to be held before or following Church Planting Conference which will be May 20-22, 2010 (MS)

**“Exploring Urban/Cross Cultural Ministry”** Scott Holland, Associate Professor of Peace Studies and Cross Cultural Ministries at Bethany will be the instructor for this course which will meet either before or following Annual Conference 2010 in Pittsburgh PA. (MS)

\*Bethany Experience

\*\*Brethren College Experience

Courses noted as “SVMC” need to be registered for through the  
Susquehanna Valley Ministry Center at [SVMC@etown.edu](mailto:SVMC@etown.edu), 717-361-1450

Courses are open to TRIM students, pastors (earn 2 CEUs,) and all interested persons  
TRIM designations: BT (Bible/Theology credit) MS (Ministry Skills credit)

*Please note the Registration Deadlines. While we continue to accept students beyond the deadline, on that date we determine whether we have enough students to offer the course.*

Registration brochures for these and other training opportunities are available through the  
Brethren Academy for Ministerial Leadership  
by emailing [academy@bethanyseminary.edu](mailto:academy@bethanyseminary.edu)  
or calling 1-800-287-8822, ext 1824.

## **Online Academy Course Highlights**



It was about 11:30 a.m. on February 4, 2009, (my birthday - no kidding! I've got proof!!), when I sat down at my desk and opened the cover of my laptop. I clicked on the "favorites" icon and chose Bethany Seminary from the drop down menu. Immediately, through the miracle of modern technology, I entered the class site of my most recent TRIM class: *The Church's Ministry with Children*. I instantly noted that six of the 15 other students participating in this class had already entered the site and posted their initial welcome and introductions. It's always an anxiety settling moment to recognize familiar faces in the class, as well as a great joy to welcome new ones. After reading through and responding to current posts, I posted my own introduction and welcome. With a small sigh of relief, I moved on to reviewing the class syllabus, assignments and required reading list for the twentieth and final time.

*The Church's Ministry with Children* was one of those very rare, but much needed ministry skills class offered online in the TRIM program. During this course, my eyes were opened, in a new way, to an incredibly gifted and talented treasure of our church—our children! The potential and possibilities became incredibly clear as we began our journey in children's ministry discussing our first scriptural reference, 12 year old Jesus teaching in "His Father's house" (Luke 2:41-51). After this initial step, instructor Rhonda Pittman Gingrich gently, skillfully and carefully guided each of us along our step-by-step journey, blending Scripture, online resources, personal reflections, discussion forums, personal interaction with a child and selected required readings. I found the following projects during our class not only to be creative, yet extremely meaningful and helpful in developing my own ministry:

- ❖ Personal Interaction with a child. After securing parental permission, I was blessed to have 12-year-old Caleb agree to work with me as my class partner. It was an amazing faith-forming experience as together each week we engaged in conversations and relationship building activities. The greatest thing Caleb taught me was a need I had to rejuvenate and revitalize my personal prayer life. Together, what we both initially labeled "boring" became an exciting and highly anticipated shared time as we incorporated many of the prayer techniques outlined in *Children and Prayer: A Shared Pilgrimage* in our prayer life. Caleb and I both grew closer together and more importantly, closer to God.
- ❖ The Magic Visit Bag. An idea from *The Pastoral Care of Children* was incredibly fun. My bag was large with bright colorful patches like a crazy quilt. Initially it only included what I believed to be child appropriate: crayons, paper, play dough, finger paint and a blanket for tent making. The turning point came when I decided to include balloons. I realized I love balloons. Everybody loves balloons. Every "child of God", young and old, loves balloons. Every "child of God" deserves to experience a little silly fun on a pastoral visit, so I modified my Magic Bag contents to be child and adult friendly!
- ❖ Creation of a discussion and activity guide from a children's book. This project was based on examples from *Children Learn What They Read: Seeing the Presence of God through Selected Storybooks*. Being a great Dr. Seuss fan, I naturally chose *Horton Hatches the Egg*. For me, it was a unique way to teach biblical principles of loyalty, honesty, trust, integrity and commitment through secular children's literature. The project was fun and interactive as the children also learned to make Horton masks during the class.



*The Church's Ministry with Children* class helped me to recognize and deal with presuppositions, misconceptions and prejudices I inadvertently held concerning children in the church. Our children are a blessing, no one will deny that; but they are also an intelligent, gifted and talented resource anxiously waiting to learn how to serve Jesus and His church. They have a desire to learn and to know God on a personal level, but they need our help to get there. Brothers and sisters in Christ, I encourage each and every one of you to take that first step in relationship building with a child. It will be an exciting and life - changing journey for both of you. It certainly was for Caleb and me!

In closing, I would like to share a few personal thoughts about online learning. I entered the TRIM program in March 2007. I have experienced both online and onsite classes. Currently pastoring in Idaho, my selection of Brethren onsite learning centers are few and far between. Coupling this with travel costs, time constraints, and pastoral and family responsibilities, I have found the online classes to be invaluable in my continued education, spiritual development and the formation of a supportive peer group. There is a level of disconnectedness involved with online discussion, but in my personal experience I have always found discussions and personal sharing to be honest, passionate and caring. Online classes have afforded me the opportunity to develop professional and personal relationships with brothers and sisters in Christ around the country. Together we have "walked arm in arm" through trials and tragedies. Together we have celebrated accomplishments and joys. Together we have prayed and grown closer to Christ. In every sense of the word, through God's blessing of online technology, we are a family, seeking to prepare ourselves to serve our Lord in faith and obedience. I invite you to join us. It's always a great joy to welcome new faces into our online family!

~~ Don Morrison, Fruitland COB, Fruitland, ID

### ***On site Academy Course Highlights***



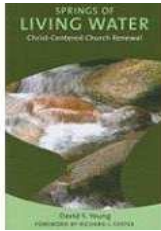
***Distinctive Marks of the Brethren***  
on site class held at  
McPherson COB June 11 –14, 2009

***Right to Left. Row One: Elaine Fleenor, Brent Freed, Sandee Kitzel, Kay Billhimer, Joshua Leck.***

***Row Two: Marilyn Koehler, Marie Froman, Barbara Wise Lewczak, Sharon Heien, Diane Mason, Carolyn Schrock, Instructor Kate Eisenbise, Tricia Crumley, Karen Eis.***

***Row Three: Darrell Barr, Jon Tuttle, Sarah Mason. Photographer and not pictured: Diana Smith***

## ***Current Book Review***



### ***Springs of Living Waters***

By David S. Young

“...but those who drink of the water that I will give them will never be thirsty.” John 4:14

As the title suggests, *Springs of Living Water* has its origin in God. What started out as David Young’s D. Min project has developed into a living, breathing resource that incorporates the wisdom gained from his reflections and feedback from the pew and classroom. The book underscores David’s own grounding in spiritual practices over a period of the Church’s life in a culture that can be characterized as fluid, ever changing.

The church’s renewal is discussed in the book as more a process than a program; the reader looking for a quick fix rather than “drinking deeply at the well” will be disappointed. At the same time you will need to resist the temptation of a linear, step-by-step approach suggested at points through out the book. In addition to this book, which is a resource all its own, Young points to a plethora of other resources that illustrate both the inner and outer dimensions of congregational renewal.

One thing we would like to have seen in the book was an explanation of and a rationale for a congregation’s continual study of its ministry context. Knowing and understanding those whom you are called to serve is an integral part of the missional church. The art of deep listening, below the surface where people often live, is crucial for helping them to be come receptive to the living waters in a “Kool-Aid” culture.

For the person who is fearful and anxious about the current conditions of his or her congregation, “drinking from the well” may seem irrelevant. Yet this is precisely where Young invites us to begin, with the spiritual practices of study and reflection on scripture, the discernment of what God is saying to the reader and God’s vision for the church and her mission. The book seeps with intentionality for moving from vision to a plan and implementation. While Young’s practice of congregational consultation includes the strengthening of a congregation’s ties where shared learning can occur, we would like to have seen a theological framework for such connectedness. Also, a segment on a congregation’s continual internal evaluation and assessment, of learning from the “lived experience” of the congregation’s journey, would have been helpful.

Young correctly points to being spiritually grounded as a pre-requisite for the renewal of the church. Transformation of the church will not happen without its leadership experiencing transformation. This truism is still true: “You cannot lead what you do not know anymore than you can come back from where you have never been.”

*Reviewed by Linda and Glenn Timmons  
Coordinators for the Sustaining Pastoral Excellence program*

### ***Two New District Executives Have Brethren Academy Connections***

➤ Gene Hagenberger began serving as district executive minister of Mid-Atlantic District on August 1. He brings more than 27 years of pastoral experience to the position. Since June 1998 he has served as pastor of Easton (Md.) Church of the Brethren, and previously served churches in Pennsylvania, Virginia, and Maryland.

His district leadership has included service as chair and vice-chair of the Mid-Atlantic District Leadership Team, and on the Visioning Committee and Constitution and Bylaws Review and Revision Committee. He has represented the district on Standing Committee.

Hagenberger is a graduate of Elizabethtown (Pa.) College, attended Drew Theological Seminary, and earned a degree from Western Maryland College with a concentration in Counseling. He holds a certificate in Clinical Pastoral Education from the Shore Health System in Easton, and **he has completed the Advanced Foundations of Church Leadership program of the Brethren Academy for Ministerial Leadership.**

➤ Sonja Sherfy Griffith will serve as district executive of Western Plains District in a half-time position beginning January 1, 2010. She also will continue as part-time pastor of First Central Church of the Brethren in Kansas City, Kan., where she has served for the past 12 years.

Griffith's leadership in the district has included service as district moderator, as a member of the District Board, as chair of the Witness Commission, as a member of the Transformation Steering Team, and as an Area Minister. She has been active denominationally as a founding member and a continuing presence on the Cross Cultural Ministries Team.

She attended McPherson (Kan.) College and is a graduate of the University of Kansas School of Nursing and holds a degree in Public Health Nursing from the University of Minnesota. During her nursing career, she served as a public health nurse and as a college nursing faculty member for more than 30 years. **She has completed the Training in Ministry program of the Brethren Academy for Ministerial Leadership** and has earned a master of theology degree from St. Paul School of Theology.

*This information was first published in the Church of the Brethren Newslines, a free e-mail news service (go to [www.brethren.org/newslines](http://www.brethren.org/newslines) to subscribe)*

*Congregational Dynamics* -  
Celia Cook-Huffman

*Relational Evangelism* -  
Charles Arn

*Technology and Church Ministry* - Enten Eller

*Peer Pastoral Coaching* - Ron Faus

*Six Trends & Micro-Trends Impacting Churches* - Stan Dueck

***Upcoming Online Continuing  
Education Events  
Fall 2009 – Spring 2010***

For additional information,  
please contact:

Stan Dueck  
Church of the Brethren  
Director for Transforming  
Practices  
717-368-0404 (cell)  
[sdueck@brethren.org](mailto:sdueck@brethren.org)

Upcoming Topics: (Leaders being confirmed) *Missional Leadership*  
*Interim Ministry*



*From the Director's Desk*

*God the Spirit, Guide and Guardian, wind-sped Flame and hovering Dove,  
Breath of life and Voice of prophets, Sign of blessing, Power of love:  
Give to those who lead your people fresh anointing of your grace.  
Send them forth as bold apostles to your church in every place.*

*Christ our Savior, Sovereign, Shepherd, Word made flesh, Love crucified,  
Teacher, Healer, suffering Servant, Friend of sinners, Foe of pride:  
In your tending may all ministers learn and live a shepherd's care.  
Grant them courage and compassion shown through word and deed  
and prayer.*

*Text by Carl P. Daw, Jr., 1987*

*from Hymnal: A Worship Book, #632*

In a series of visits to pastors in 2000-2001 conducted by members and staff of the General Board of the Church of the Brethren, the following were identified as things that drain pastoral energy:

- ❖ *Negative attitudes*
- ❖ *Unhealthy exercise of power*
- ❖ *Lack of numeric and spiritual growth*
- ❖ *Apathy*
- ❖ *Unrealistic and/or unclear expectations*
- ❖ *Gender barriers in placement (difficulty for women)*
- ❖ *Ambiguity of the pastor's role*

In the midst of the questions and challenges there were also signs of health and hope. Pastors spoke of those things that energized them:

- ❖ *Renewal, energy and hope through spiritual nurturing and personal development*
- ❖ *Preparation for and leading worship*
- ❖ *Seeing the difference their ministry makes in the lives of people*
- ❖ *Congregations taking new initiatives*
- ❖ *Ministry growing out of a sense of vision*
- ❖ *Denominational gatherings – Annual Conference & National Youth Conference*

Information, ideas and insights from these visits, ecumenical studies and other sources were used as the foundation for the proposal for the Sustaining Pastoral Excellence program begun in 2004. In 2008, a survey was distributed as part of the assessment process for the ongoing SPE program.

The Brethren Academy for Ministerial Leadership and its ministry partners, the Church of the Brethren and Bethany Theological Seminary, with input from the District Executives/Ministers, undertook this Pastoral Study Project. Its purpose was to better understand the needs, concerns and effectiveness of pastors. Christian Community, Inc. conducted the survey, compiled the information and analyzed the results.



Steve Clapp, director of Christian Community, Inc., stated that the study revealed:

- Overall clergy morale in the denomination is higher than reflected in previous studies.
- There are reasons to be concerned about our congregations relative to membership/attendance, hospitality and stewardship matters.
- Clergy rate their effectiveness relatively high in preaching, worship leadership, pastoral care, and knowledge of the Bible and theology. They do not give themselves high ratings in handling conflict, stewardship, work as change agents, evangelism and church growth or dealing with sexuality issues.
- Clergy have a close connection with their districts but do not feel as connected with church entities beyond the local level.
- The majority of pastors felt that ministry has been a blessing to their lives, but a significant minority note that it has not been a blessing to their spouses or children.
- Most rate their physical health as good or excellent, but a significant number do not exercise on a regular basis and do not have the healthiest eating habits.
- The Sustaining Pastoral Excellence program has had a positive impact on those who participated in the two tracks (Vital Pastors and Advanced Foundations of Church Leadership) and on the denomination as a whole.

Areas covered in the Study Project include compensation, insurance and sabbath rest; clergy role and morale; concerns about the future; skills for ministry; health and well-being; denominational connections; the Sustaining Pastoral Excellence program and concluding observations. You may peruse the 2008 Pastoral Study Project Final Report at:

<http://www.bethanyseminary.edu/brethren-academy>

The Brethren Academy, Bethany Seminary, the CoB Office of Ministry, districts, denominational agencies and groups of pastors will review and discuss the Study Project to determine future direction and programming for addressing pastoral needs and continuing education. Please contact me to share feedback and suggestions as the Academy supports pastors in their *learning and living a shepherd's care, shown through word and deed and prayer.*



A ministry training partnership of the  
Church of the Brethren  
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