

WEST MARVA DISTRICT MEMO JULY 2016

384 Dennett Road
Oakland, MD 21550
301-334-9270
Kendal Elmore, Executive Minister
J. Rogers Fike, Executive Minister Emeritus
Brenda Harvey, Administrative Assistant
www.westmarvachurches.org



David Steele Named as the New Church of the Brethren Leader

David A. Steele has been named general secretary-elect of the Church of the Brethren by the denomination's Mission and Ministry Board. His appointment was announced May 23, at a called meeting at the Brethren Service Center in New Windsor, Md. "I am humbled to be called," Steele said. "It is a privilege to serve." He added, "obviously it is a daunting call in some respects, given the currents in the life of the church, but it's an exciting call. I look forward to the opportunity of serving in this capacity." David has served as

District Executive Minister of the Church of the Brethren's Middle Pennsylvania District, since 2005. He is to begin his new position, September 1.

The afternoon meeting was led by board chair Don Fitzkee and chair-elect Connie Burk Davis, who chaired the search committee. He is an ordained minister who has held numerous leadership positions in the Church of the Brethren, including serving as moderator of Annual Conference in 2015. He has been a leader in the Council of District Executives, where he has been treasurer and has twice been a member of the Ministry Advisory Council 2009-11 and 2013-14.

He is a 1986 graduate of McPherson (Kan.) College where he earned a bachelor of arts in religion and philosophy. In 1992 he completed a master of divinity degree at Bethany Theological Seminary.

David is to be formally introduced to the denomination as general secretary-elect on July 1, at the Annual Conference in Greensboro, N.C., during the morning business session. An opportunity to meet and greet the general secretary-elect will follow over the lunch break.

He plans to close out his work with Middle Pennsylvania District and collaborate with interim general secretary Dale Minnich to make a smooth transition in denominational leadership.

Beginning on Sept. 1, he will work out of the Church of the Brethren General Offices and will be moving to Elgin, Ill. Initially his family will not move from their home in Martinsburg, Pa.



The Mission and Ministry Board standing with David Steele.

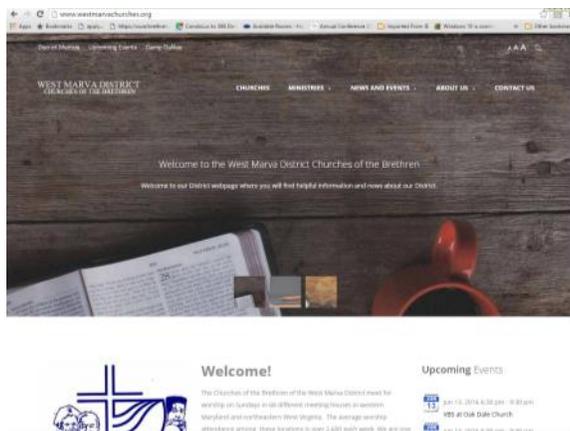
Kendal's Korner Checked Our Web Site Lately?

Have you checked in lately to our District Web-Site? Several thousand persons are recorded each month as they “hit” the site.

WWW.WestMarvaChurches.org has been created to communicate to, from, and within the 67 churches of the West Marva District Church of the Brethren.

There are numerous improvements and upgrades that are in progress. **Volunteer web-master, Matt Bernard** is working to expand and improve the appearance, content, and “user friendly” nature of the site.

Among the features you will find an alphabetical listing of the churches that make up the West Marva District. At this writing, pictures of the various churches were being uploaded as time allowed to be associated with the church information...



Other features include, the following:

- Archived and current copies of the **MEMO** monthly mailing from the office.
- Current news denominationally as well as district wide.
- A “**blog**” of Kendal’s Korner editorials.
- An overview of the Church of the Brethren fellowship of churches, entitled “**Who Are the Brethren?**”
- A section on “**Brethren Practices**” such as Baptism, Love Feast, and Anointing.

- Expanded sections on each of these: **Baptism, Love Feast, and Anointing.** “If you know these things, you are blessed if you do them.” John 13:17 (NRSV)
- A detailed and lengthy section on “**Core Beliefs**” of the West Marva Churches of the Brethren.
- The **Core Beliefs** section is unpacked in sub-sections focusing on beliefs, disciplines (both individual and corporate), and practices.
- A section introducing our **office staff** is also included.

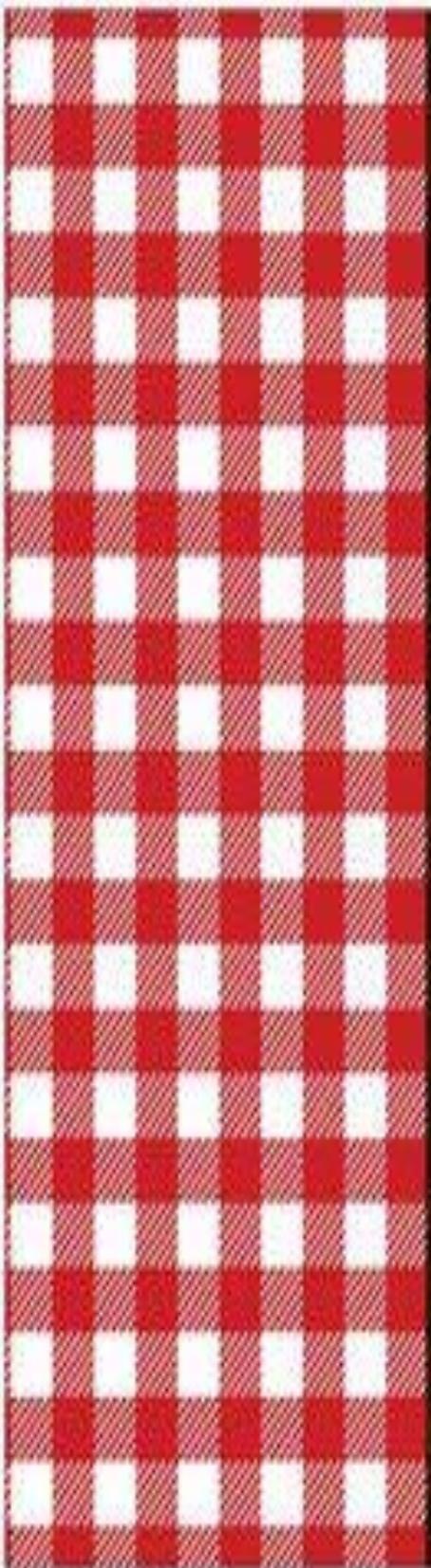
- Extensive information about our **Outdoor Ministries of Camp Galilee and Camp Hope.** (Camp Galilee section also has an introductory video that was completed in 2014.

- There is an introductory section focusing on West Marva history. We are deeply indebted to **Dr. Emmert Bittinger** whose comprehensive study of the district, **Allegheny Passage**, provides a tremendous amount of information on our churches AND many of the families that have shaped the district today.

There are many other features in development going forward. Check in each week, and see what’s new!

The web-site is an excellent instrument for introducing friends and family to the district.

Kendal ☺



You're Invited to Our
Community Picnic &
Awaken Small Town Tour

@

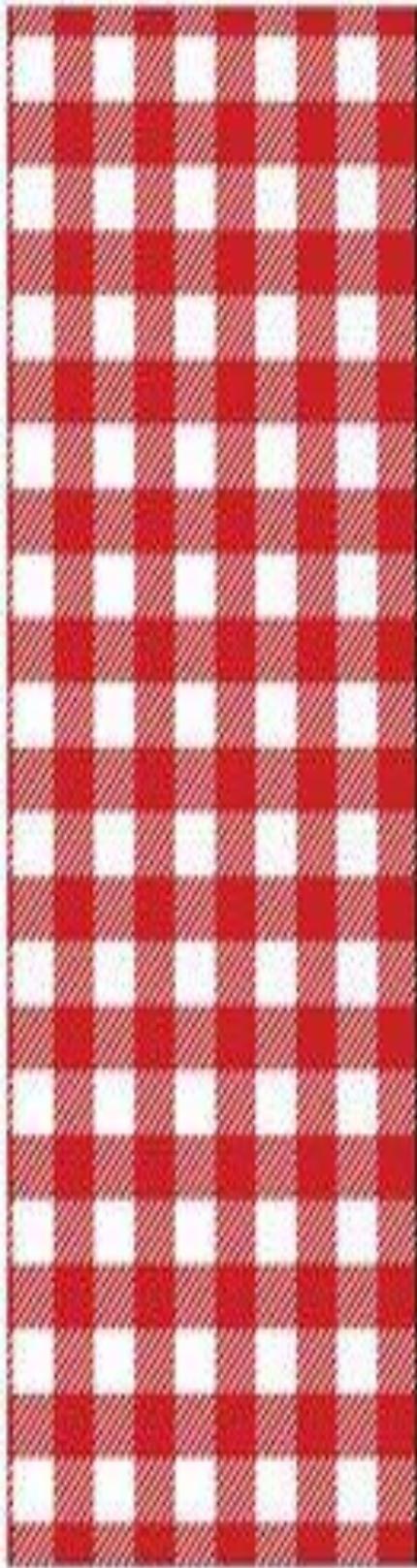
Moorefield Community Park

July 16, 2016 from 4-8 pm

Free: BBQ Pit, Pulled Pork, Hot Dogs,
Cotton Candy, Sno-Cones, Face
Painting, Live Music, Moon Bounces,
Games, Kids Activities, Guest
Speakers, Giveaways, and More!!!!

Bring a Lawn Chair or Blanket and Enjoy
an Evening of Christian Fellowship.

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION CONTACT DAVID ZILER AT
301-785-6271
OR pastordavid@danvillecob.org



You're Invited to Our
Community Picnic &
Awaken Small Town Tour

@

Welton Park, Petersburg, WV

July 30, 2016 from 4-8 pm

Free: BBQ Pit, Pulled Pork, Hot Dogs,
Cotton Candy, Sno-Cones, Face
Painting, Live Music, Moon Bounces,
Games, Kids Activities, Guest
Speakers, Giveaways, and More!!!!

Bring a Lawn Chair or Blanket and Enjoy
an Evening of Christian Fellowship.

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION CONTACT DAVID ZILER AT
301-785-6271
OR pastordavid@danvillecob.org

West Marva District Women's Retreat

Wednesday August 10th & Thursday August 11th 2016

Camp Galilee, Terra Alta WV



Theme: Do You Have a Pioneer Spirit?

“Remember the days of old, consider the years of many generations:

Deuteronomy 32:7

What kind of spirit did our ancestors possess to lead the way in laying the foundation of the church? What was their vision? How far were they willing to travel and how were they able to endure the hardships and difficulties that arose as they prepared the way for others? Come join us as we look at some of the faith heroes in the Bible and also in our Brethren heritage that had a pioneering spirit and stepped out as trailblazers into the unknown on an adventure for the Lord.

On **Wednesday** registration begins at 4:00PM and supper at 5:00PM with scheduled activities following. Everyone is invited to spend the night in a cabin free of charge or you may travel home and return in the morning!!

Morning Devotions and Breakfast will start the day on **Thursday** at 7:45 – 8:00 AM with a full schedule of activities for the remainder of the day beginning at 9:00AM. Following supper at 5:00PM that evening we will have a program to wrap up our retreat and will close at 7:30PM.

Our **Service Project** this year will be **Hygiene Kits**. The supplies needed to assemble each kit are: Hand towel measuring approximately 15”x 28” to 16” x 32” (no fingertip, bath, dish towel or micro-fiber), washcloth, wide-tooth comb, fingernail or toe nail clipper, bath size bar of soap in the wrapper, toothbrush in the package, and (10) standard size Band-aids. Please bring any donations of supplies that are needed to assemble kits and our offering this year will go to Church World Service to cover the \$2 processing fee per kit.

IN ORDER TO HAVE A COUNT FOR MEALS PLEASE PRE-REGISTER BY CALLING: 301-334-9270 by August 1st. Fees will be \$7.00 for each meal that you are present for (\$28.00 for entire Retreat).



PLEASE POST ON BULLETIN

A WORKDAY AT NEW WINDSOR

Ephesians 6:6-8 Amplified Bible (AMP) ⁶ Not in the way of eye-service [as if they were watching you] and only to please men, but as servants (slaves) of Christ, doing the will of God heartily *and* with your whole soul;

WHAT: A workday for the women (and men) of West Marva District

Sponsored by the West Marva District Women's Fellowship Witness Commission

WHERE: New Windsor Brethren Service Center, New Windsor MD

WHEN: August 22, 2016 9:00a.m. - 3:30pm

We plan to carpool from local church communities. Each lady riding is being asked to pay your driver \$10.00 to help defray expenses. (Approximate mileage to New Windsor is 150 miles). **DRIVERS WILL BE NEEDED!**

An accurate number of people planning to attend is imperative! The Brethren Service Center needs to know whether to schedule additional help for the day.

You will also gain access to the Marketplace, where seconds and outlet items are available at greatly reduced prices to volunteers. Also there will be a complimentary lunch served at noon.

Any church preparing "Gift of the Heart Kits" for the Fall Women's Rally may want to take the kits directly to New Windsor (please make sure you turn this number in at the Fall Rally so you can be included in our totals)

Please fill out and return by August 15, 2016

District Women's Trip to New Windsor Brethren Service Center

August 22, 2016 9:00 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.

Name _____ Church _____

Address _____ Telephone _____

Number attending _____ Can drive _____ Need a ride _____

Return the above information to: **Witness Commission c/o Mery Berg, 3469 Jordan Run Road, Maysville, WV 304-749-7588** or contact the District Office.

BRETHREN BITS from Betty's Desk . . . MT DALE Plans Celebration in 2016

Recently some interesting information was sent to me about the **Mt. Dale Church** which was built in 1896. This is one of our small churches which often remains quietly in the background. While attempting to discover how many of our district churches would be "celebrating" during 2016—other than Oak Dale, I received a call from Brenda Harvey about Mt. Dale. Quickly I assured her it would be delightful to learn some historical information. Each time I submit a "Brethren Bits" for our readers, I use ***Allegheny Passage*** as my guide book an absolute favorite research tool.

Dr. Bittinger had only the information he and those who assisted him in getting factual materials collected during the late 1980's. In the case of Mt. Dale, we are happy to add more to what has been printed. Therefore, thanks to Allen and Nancy Miller for sharing the program printed for the **100th Anniversary Service held on August 4, 1996 at Mt. Dale** and telephone interviews thus we are able to learn more about their history.

"Some history of Mt. Dale Brethren Church which was told by the old Brethren who built the church in 1896 ... and furnished by Frank Rodeheaver, born on December 30, 1896." ... "Mr. Isaac Rodeheaver owned sixteen hundred acres of farming and timber land in Pleasant District of Preston County until his death in 1890. This property was subdivided by his children. Allen Rodeheaver was one of those who inherited from this estate. He gave a small plot of ground to build the Mt. Dale church where it now stands, three miles south east of Hazelton. Before the 1896 structure was built, services were held in two school houses—one was the Boyer school.

The original church was 28 x 40 x 14 feet, besides the kitchen, and was built by members of the Brethren faith. Materials were donated by several of the members, except the finished lumber which was paid for by donations—with the labor being furnished by the church members. In fact, it is recalled there were several who assisted with the building. Windows, doors and the finished lumber amounted to about \$800.00.

The church was dedicated in the fall of 1896 and was free of any debt. It is located at 94 Big Bear Lake Road, three miles southeast of Hazelton.

The first three pastors were Elder Joseph Gutherie, Elder Jeremiah Thomas and Elder George Vansickle. " In the past, services were held only two Sundays a month. Other younger ministers were Walter Vansickle Chester Thomas. Those known to have served Mt. Dale are Russell Showalter, first salaried pastor of the Sandy Creek congregation from 1940-1944, followed by Robert Strickler, George Jeffrey, Owen Horton, Earl Dietz, Bobby Phillips, and Eugene Matthews who held services there from 1946 for thirty years.

Dennis Dawson, Mike Fike and Lewis Beachy served the church from 2005 until 2007 sharing preaching duties on first and third Sundays. From 2007 until now, Lewis has been serving Mt. Dale. In 2010 Mt. Dale changed from being part of the Sandy Creek Congregation and Lewis Beachy, representing Mt. Dale was recognized as a separate congregation at the Annual Conference in Grand Rapids, Michigan.

Many of you are aware Mt. Dale has long been associated with the **Sandy Creek** congregation. In fact they were yoked together at times, with Salem, Hazelton, Clifton Mills and Mountain Grove & Shady Grove.

October 20, 1946 the members recognized 50 years of services. Then on August 4, 1996 the 100th anniversary was again cause for celebration. **Plans are being made once more this year to celebrate 120 years with a special service and the annual church picnic to be held on Sunday, August 7th. Everyone in the district is welcome to come celebrate with Mt. Dale on that day! There will be plenty of food and fellowship as members participate in this very special anniversary. Watch the MEMO for more information as August 7th approaches.**

The original building with a kitchen remains after all these years. The old structure is very strong. Imagine—the original metal roof that was put on when the church was built in 1896 was replaced in 2010—even though it wasn't leaking. *However, we need to note:* the new roof, only in place six years does leak!

Over the years several improvements have been completed including new benches—now padded, a furnace was installed, and new carpet covers the original floors. A new addition was added with a basement for Sunday school classes and there are rest rooms. Siding now covers the exterior. Actually the original windows were replaced with stained glass ones in the 1980's.



Many of these members have long been associated with this church and faithfully work toward showing Christian love. Some families mentioned in the 100th Anniversary Service as assisting with the construction work and continued support of Mt. Dale include John Reckarts, John Guthrie, Dolph Guthrie, Rufus Rodeheaver, Benton Rodeheaver, Charles Rodeheaver, Hosea Rodeheaver, Newton DeBerry, Clyde DeBerry, Thomas Feather, the Guthries, Frazees and Wendalls from the Cranesville area. The Robert Lawson, Howard Matthews and Fuller Slater families need to be mentioned also. Over the past six or seven decades persons such as Clayton Rodeheaver who has held many offices in the church and Shirley Friend who has been a Sunday School teacher for more than fifty years and very active, have left their mark on Mt. Dale—but there have been many, many faithful workers for the Lord involved in this group.

Interesting to note, earlier only two churches of the Salem congregation were equipped to hold the Love Feast services. In addition to Salem, the Mountain Dale church had this type facility. In past history, as many as 160 persons have taken part at Mt. Dale communion and love feasts. Those were the days before attendance at our Love Feasts began dropping all across the district.

Although Mt. Dale is not one of the larger congregations, they are an active group in reaching out to help each other with repairs in their community, as well as participating in the Operation Christmas Child project, and have adopted a cabin at Camp Galilee, to mention a few of their endeavors.

IN LOVING MEMORY

Elmer Cosner, 87, of Oakland, MD, went home to be with the Lord on June 3, 2016 at his home. Elmer is survived by his wife, Shirley Ann (Lee) Cosner; two sons Richard and Philip and one daughter Liane. Services were conducted on Monday, June 6th at 11:00 a.m. at Locust Grove Church with John Walker officiating/

Elmer served as pastor of the Red Creek/Bethel Church, Canaan Valley, WV. Elmer was licensed in 1996 at the Fairview Church and was ordained in 1998 at the Red Creek/Bethel Church. He worked with the Revitalization Team and the Commission on Witness (Mission and Evangelism Team) to see that the Red Creek/Bethel Church was once again an active house of worship. He and Shirley gave many, many hours of their time as they worked to improve the church grounds and building and to visit in the community. Elmer and Shirley attended the Locust Grove Church.



Elmer was so well known for his sweet, loving spirit and his zeal to see souls brought to Christ. He will be greatly missed.

Cards of sympathy can be sent to his wife Shirley at 266 Mason School Road, Oakland, MD 21550.

2016 WEST MARVA DISTRICT CONFERENCE

The West Marva District Conference is scheduled to be held September 16-17, 2016 at the Moorefield Church of the Brethren. Our conference moderator this year is Carl Fike, pastor of the Oak Park Church. The theme for our conference will be “Stir Up The Gift” with the scripture text taken from II Timothy 1: 6-7. Our speaker for the Friday evening worship service will be Don Fitzkee, Chairman of the Church of the Brethren Mission and Ministry Board.

District Conference delegate registration forms have been sent to all pastor/contacts electronically who have e-mail addresses. All other pastor/contacts without e-mails should have received these forms by regular mail. These forms should be returned to the District office no later than July 1, 2016.

**RESERVATIONS FOR DISTRICT CONFERENCE
SEPTEMBER 16-17, 2016**

The lunch served on Saturday will be on a pre-pay basis and you must have a meal ticket in order to receive your lunch the day of conference. It is extremely difficult to prepare a meal when you don't have a number to work with. The menu will consist of: Chicken, ham, mashed potatoes and gravy, noodles, green beans, corn, coleslaw, rolls, tea, lemonade and coffee and desserts. Meal prepared by the Moorefield Church. Reservations need to be in by September 8, 2016 along with a check made payable to West Marva District, 384 Dennett Road, Oakland, MD 21550.

Person sending reservations:

From congregation: _____

Phone number (if needed for contact) _____

MEAL RESERVATIONS:

Number of persons: _____ Saturday noon (cost of meal \$10.00)

**MEAL TICKETS MUST BE PICKED UP AT THE
REGISTRATION TABLE
ON SATURDAY MORNING**

DISTRICT CONFERENCE MOTEL ACCOMODATIONS:

Motel reservations should be made directly, arranging with the following public accommodations:

In Moorefield: South Branch Inn (304)538-2033 Rt. 220 North Honors AAA & AARP If your church has a tax exempt number bring a copy of it with you to be tax exempt	In Petersburg:(20 to 25 minutes away) Fort Hill (304)257-4717 Hermitage Motor Inn (304)257-1771 Virginia Avenue
--	--

Evans Motel (304)538-7771
N. Main St.

Homestead Inn, Rt. 55 (304)257-1049

2016 Church Planting Conference: “Hope, Imagination, Mission” ...

was the theme of the Church of the Brethren new church planting conference May 19-21 in Richmond, Ind., hosted by Bethany Theological Seminary--prompted a new call to the whole church to develop its imagination and foster a new hope in the gospel of Jesus Christ. Some 100 people participated in worship, keynote presentations, workshops, and a special training track in Spanish. The conference was sponsored by Congregational Life Ministries.

Keynote speakers **Efrem Smith** and **Mandy Smith** (no relation) emphasized the power of developing a holy imagination, and the way it leads to an increase in hope and therefore in discipleship. Efrem Smith is president and CEO of World Impact, an inner-city missions organization dedicated to planting churches among the unchurched, urban poor in the United States. Mandy Smith, originally from Australia, is lead pastor of University Christian Church, a campus and neighborhood congregation in Cincinnati, Ohio.

A touchstone scripture for the conference came from **Revelation 7:9**, which also is a key text for the intercultural movement in the Church of the Brethren: *“After this I looked, and there was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, robed in white, with palm branches in their hands.”*

Efrem Smith challenged the gathering to stir their imaginations to ask, “Who are we to be as the church?” Referring to Revelation 7:9, and to the current national conversation about race, he answered with more questions: *“What does it mean for the church to be a force for reconciliation? ... What does it mean to be the church robed in Christ, reconciled in Christ? ... To be reconciled to each other across class, across race? ... To bear one another’s burdens in Christ Jesus?”*



For the church to sustain hope and develop a godly imagination in an upside-down world, Smith said that worship is the imperative. “Sustain the worship!” he urged. “It is an identifying mark on the church. ...I don’t care how dark the hour, the church must sustain its praise!” How does the church do that? He answered: “Through knowing how empowered we are.... We must lean into the invisible spiritual forces that God surrounds us [with]. They empower us, right now.... We are not alone.”

His advice to church planters was direct and specific: “God sees those who are in trouble.... We know there is

“I’m not just talking about the inner city, there are rural areas and small towns that need the church now more than ever.”Efrem Smith

triumph on the other side of tribulation.... We should look for the people who are in tribulation and great trouble and bring the church to them.” Likening the church to “a bridge over troubled waters,” he continued: “We need to plant churches everywhere. I’m not just talking about the inner city, there are rural areas and small towns that need the church now more than ever.”



Mandy Smith focused the meeting’s attention on the question of how to find hope amid the struggles and challenges faced by church leaders, and church planters in particular. She told her own personal story of discovering the truth of the Apostle Paul’s teaching, that God’s power is made known in our human weakness. In moments of failure, she told the group, she has heard God’s voice telling her: “In your weakness, I am strong.”

“Can we have bad days sometimes?” she asked, noting that the promise of God is not an excuse to be lazy or not work our hardest, but a help for the moments of despair when life seems to be beyond our control. “Can we show weakness sometimes? ...Can I cry, and still have people respect me? ...Can I show joy?”

“We ask, God, that you would heal our hope ...that nothing limits you.”

Using the symbol of emptiness as a sign of God's presence, she encouraged the conference, "If only we let our emptiness be seen.... As human beings let themselves be human, God can be seen to be God."

Characterizing weakness as a "limitless ministry resource," she said that the best Christian ministry grows from a reliance on God. Our culture holds up perfection as the ideal, denying the reality that humanness is brokenness. Instead of trying to live up to some impossible standard that does not exist in reality, she called church leaders and church planters to have the faith to trust that God is found in dark places, through confession of our imperfections, and in weakness.

"How do you delight in these things that seem to disqualify?" she asked. "Invite God to redeem your imagination in how he delights."

Mandy Smith prayed for the gathering: "We ask, God, that you would heal our hope...that nothing limits you."

The conference also featured worship, numerous workshops, a panel discussion responding to the themes, and a time for story sharing by people involved in brand new church plants as well as those celebrating the success of church plants that are maturing into established congregations.

A group of students in the Spanish-language ministry training track of the Brethren Academy for Ministerial Leadership, SeBAH-CoB, shared with the conference.

Special guests were **Rachel and Jinatu Wamdeo**, former general secretary of Ekklesiyar Yan'uwa a Nigeria (EYN, the Church of the Brethren in Nigeria). He gave a short presentation on the current situation of EYN, and shared the gratitude of the Nigerian Brethren for the assistance received from American Brethren. **"The Church of the Brethren and EYN is one," he said. "We are not Church of the Brethren in Nigeria and you are not Church of the Brethren in America, we are one church in Jesus Christ. Thank you, thank you, thank you."**



An intercultural dinner featured a presentation reviewing ways slavery and racism historically have divided the Christian church in the United States.

Technology... not always a wonderful gift!

The West Marva District Executive Committee has reluctantly instructed the office staff to discontinue providing a toll free (800) phone number to reach the office. We realize that this may cause inconvenience to some who must pay a toll charge to call the office. We are hopeful, that persons might be able to take advantage of using a cell phone, or arrange with their telephone service provider for long distance calls with no charge. We have discovered that our 800 number has been abused by persons who appear to be deliberately running up expenses for us by calling for upwards of 40 minutes per call during the wee hours of the morning and filling our voice mail inbox with numerous advertisements.

When we have sought to identify these "phantom callers," we found that their identities were hidden, so that we are unable to learn who they are. Additionally, when we tried to call the numbers, the calls were prevented from going through... We apologize for any inconvenience this may cause any of you.

**Church of the Brethren
West Marva District Office
384 Dennett Road
Oakland, MD 21550
July 2016 Issue**

**NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION
U. S. POSTAGE
PAID
OAKLAND, MD
PERMIT NO. 68**

Address Service Requested

IN GOD WE TRUST

UPCOMING EVENTS

- June**
- 18 65th Anniversary Celebration—Elkins COB**
 - 29-July 3 Annual Conference, Greensboro, North Carolina**
- July**
- 4 District Office Closed—4th of July**
 - 16 Community Picnic & Awaken Small Town Tour—Moorefield Community Park 4:00-8:00 p.m.**
 - 30 Community Picnic & Awaken Small Town Tour—Welton Park, Petersburg WV 4:00-8:00 p.m.**
- August**
- 7 Mt. Dale—120th Year Celebration**
 - 10-11 District Women's Camp at Camp Galilee**
 - 13 Community Picnic & Awaken Small Town Tour—Creekside Park, Westernport, MD 4:00-8:00 p.m.**
 - 22 District Women's Workday at New Windsor**
- September 16-17 - District Conference, Moorefield Church of the Brethren**