

February, 2025
Southern Ohio/Kentucky District Newsletter
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More information on Disaster Ministry and Camp Sugarwood including complete schedules, registration forms, etc can be found on the district website: www.sodcob.org.

“Faith Working Through Love” The Grief Process
Annual Conference Moderator offers Grief Workshop

Submitted by Dava Hensley, Moderator of Annual Conference 2025

Greetings as we enter this year of 2025. With these new beginnings, our thoughts bring memories of the past, evaluating our present, and looking forward to the newness of life where God is leading us as individuals and as the Church. It is not an easy time, and loss and grief are a part of this process.

Theologian, Howard Thurman, shared in his book, *The Growing Edge*, these words. “ All around us worlds are dying, and new worlds are being born. All around us life is dying, and life is being born. The fruit ripens on the tree. The roots are silently at work in the darkness of the earth against the time when there shall be new leaves, fresh blossoms, green fruit. Such is the growing edge”

We, in the Church of the Brethren find ourselves in this growing edge. I am a firm believer that all the loss and grief unnamed in the church could be the underlying cause of our inability to move forward into God’s continued mission, both now and in the future. In my travels as your Moderator, I have listened to expressions of grief across the denomination.

Grief counselor, Kenneth Doka, shares in his book, *Disenfranchised Grief: New Directions, Challenges, and Strategies for Practice*, “grief work is the work that must be accomplished in order to move through the pain associated with the loss.” Grief is not only the process of mourning the death of loved ones, but the loss of the past or circumstances unfulfilled in their mission.

The losses in the church community are great. The loss of community through death and departure of churches is real. The loss of being and doing church like years past is our reality. There is much grief and sadness associated with these realities and grief does not have an end time. What we can do is learn how to better move through grief and loss. In the coming months, I am planning monthly sessions for one hour to acknowledge our grief together and then share in small groups the grief we are experiencing. We will have an overview of grief, processing loss, and in this process learning ways to move forward in our mission which continues to be sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ!

This series of sessions will take place on Zoom once a month on a Thursday evening at 8:00 p.m. ET / 7:00 p.m. CT / 6:00 p.m. MT / 5:00 p.m. CT. Registration is required. The dates and registration links are listed below:

Grief Workshop #1 – February 6, 2025 https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZl0fuCtrzssEtStr6wNc3fNN5uFLw5RI_XU

Grief Workshop #2 – March 13, 2025 https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/g3M9VOSNSDy1A_mTZ0EQsQ

Grief Workshop #3 – April 10, 2025 <https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/>



[FxiBoFvBQ0yLTbZ-zOyWhA](https://us06web.zoom.us/j/91551111111)

Grief Workshop #4 – May 15, 2025 [https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/nj5YFttoTI6TQPRHnggtCw](https://us06web.zoom.us/j/91551111111)

Grief Workshop #5 – June 5, 2025 [https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/UfVKs1puTKy9xVn23qio0w](https://us06web.zoom.us/j/91551111111)

I look forward to our time together and pray Gods' presence be with us in this difficult, but necessary work.

Camp Sugarwood Updates

Save the Date

A Women's mini-retreat "Nurturing Growth" will be held in the morning of **March 29** at Trotwood CoB. Mark your calendars and plan to attend. More info and registration form can be found here. The **Women's Fall Retreat** at Bergamo will be **October 31-November 1, 2025**. Please mark your calendars and plan to attend. More info to come.

It's time to start dreaming of summer!

The summer camp schedule is as follows.

- ◆ **June 6-8 Winning Character Camp:** a time to enjoy games and fellowship for youth and mentors, not just drawing up characters who win at tabletop games, but winning for ourselves the virtues of Christian character as we grow as disciples of Jesus. (completed 7th grade)
- ◆ **June 8-14 Trailblazers** (formerly Senior Creative Arts Camp): traditional camp full of swimming, group games, Bible study, worship, workshops, and service projects. For those who have completed 7th grade through 12th grade.
- ◆ **June 8-14 Pathfinders** (formerly Junior Creative Arts Camp): traditional camp full of swimming, group games, Bible study, worship, workshops, and service projects. For those who have completed 3rd grade through 6th grade.
- ◆ **June 8-10 Exploration Crew** (formerly Junior Discovery Camp): for those who have completed 2nd grade through 4th grade to get a taste of camp. Enjoy all that the traditional camp week offers in a shorter time.
- ◆ **June 16-19 Sewing and Crafting Day Camp** for those who have completed 6th grade through Adults. This is a time of working on your own projects or learning how to make new projects from our leaders as well as having plenty of time for fellowship and Bible study.
- ◆ **June 20-21 Buddy Camp** (formerly Adult Child Camp) A first taste of camp experience for those 3yrs-7yrs with an adult buddy (parent, grandparent, etc).
- ◆ **June 22 District Picnic** This will be held at **Cricket Holler**. 4:00 Games 5:30 Free Meal 6:30 Vespers. This will be a time of fellowship and enjoyment of the camp grounds.
- ◆ **June 23-25 Adult Vacation Bible School** A day camp for all adults. Come enjoy fellowship, Bible study, crafts, and other activities. 9am-3pm each day.
- ◆ **June 25-28 Woodworking Camp** A new camp to learn woodworking skills, safe tool use, Bible study, and fellowship. Grow in faith while growing woodworking skills. (more info to come).
- ◆ **August 5-8 Pieceful Quilt Camp** at **Maria Stein Retreat Center**, bring your quilting projects to work on and enjoy times of fellowship, games, Bible study, and learning or relearning new techniques.





Camp Volunteers are the Heart of Camp!

Many hands and hearts are needed to make the summer camps successful. If you would like to volunteer please contact Carrie Drees at cdrees23@gmail.com, 937-564-7346 or Charlene Foster at charbyclark@aol.com, 937-572-2882.

Volunteers are needed in various areas. Here are the main areas volunteers help and what they do.

- ⇒ **Kitchen Helpers** help prepare breakfast, lunch, and supper for campers. Breakfast prep starts at 7am, lunch prep at 10am, and supper prep at 4:00 (times may be adjusted depending on the menu). Kitchen helpers also wash dishes after each meal.
- ⇒ **Counselors** get to hang out with the campers all day and all night. Each counselor is assigned a group of campers for which they are responsible for. Counselors also help lead group activities, devotions, morning watch, vespers, and meal time prayer. Counselors are needed for Trailblazers, Pathfinders, Exploration Crew the week of June 8-14 and Woodworking Camp June 25-28.
- ⇒ **Dean:** the dean is responsible for the schedule of the camp, assigning counselors vespers/morning watch/prayer times. The dean also leads vespers, morning watch and a bible study session. Camper medications are distributed by the dean. Campers' workshop choices are assigned by the dean.
- ⇒ **Camp-set up** is also another time to volunteer. Camp set up at Cricket Holler involves several activities. Volunteers may help bring camp items from the storage unit to Cricket Holler. Volunteers also help clean the lodge by wiping out cupboards, cleaning the fridge and oven, sweeping all the floors, and putting camp supplies away. Cabins are also cleaned and checked as well as stocked with toilet paper, soap, and paper towels.
- ⇒ **Bible Study leaders** lead an hour long Bible study Monday through Thursday of camp.
- ⇒ **Workshop leaders** lead the campers in 45 minute workshops teaching them various crafts and activities. Some that we have had recently were: woodworking/making stilts, card making, origami, learning to crochet, making and launching bottle rockets, seashell creations. Anything that is fun, interesting, or a life skill can be a workshop. In previous years, communion bread has been made and check writing has been taught. The sky's the limit for creative workshops.
- ⇒ **Other areas** you could participate in are leading songs or telling stories at a campfire. Perhaps lead a drumming circle or teach the campers a special way to pray. Do you participate in a special ministry of the church? You can come share that ministry with the campers. We have recently had Bethany Seminary present their opportunities to older campers. Or perhaps there is a service project you know of that the campers could participate in. **If you have an idea to share, I'd love to hear it!**



Camp Sugarwood Scholarships

Have a heart for the camping ministry, for children, and teens but cannot volunteer? Would you be able to support our camping ministry by contributing to scholarships needed for many of our campers? About ten to twelve campers each year need your help to experience the life-changing impact of our summer camps and Winter Blast. While some churches offer partial scholarships, many families cannot afford the remaining cost. Your donation will directly support these children, providing them with opportunities for spiritual growth, personal development, and unforgettable memories. Please donate today at sodcob.org or mail your gift to SOKD CoB Camping and Retreat Ministries PO Box 785 Greenville, OH 45331. Thank you for your generosity!

Disaster Ministry Updates

CDS Volunteers Serve – In January five volunteers from the S. Ohio/KY District served a 2-week deployment with Children’s Disaster Services (CDS). Two responded with the CDS Critical Response Care Team to New Orleans after the incident on New Year’s Eve, which killed and injured many people. Three volunteers have served in the Los Angeles area due to the wildfires that have left thousands homeless. CDS sets up childcare centers that offer creative, imaginative play that is designed to encourage the healing process in the aftermath of chaos. Please pray for all involved in these tragedies and for those working to help them.

Rebuilding Trips – Join a rebuilding crew in 2025! S. Ohio/KY BDM has a rebuilding trip scheduled for most months. Lynn Evans, Office Manager, recently shared: “We are firmly established at our new site in Letcher Co. KY. It has been a beginning with challenges. But there is no question that we are having an impact here. In 4 months, we have worked on 7 rehab projects for homeowners who needed repairs done. We have also worked on 6 new builds with one finishing up this month. The community has been very welcoming and the work with our partner, HOMES, very rewarding.”

A flyer with trip dates can be found on the district website or check with your church office. Transportation, housing, food, tools, and leadership are provided. Call/text Helen Wolf at 937-902-3475 or SouthernOhioBDM@gmail.com to join a crew.

Intergenerational BDM Trip – July 20-26 is a BDM trip for adults and youth. It’s an opportunity for grandparents/youth (15 yrs. +), parents/youth (14 yrs.+) to work together rebuilding homes for disaster survivors. A two-page flyer with additional information can be found on the district website, or check with your church office. Call/text Helen Wolf at 937-902-3475 or SouthernOhioBDM@gmail.com to register.

Sewing Bee/CWS Prep – The first sewing bee of 2025 will be held on Saturday, February 22 at 9:00 AM at Greenville COB. Sewers need to bring a sewing machine to make school bags for Church World Service (CWS). Non-sewers will prep items for school kits and cleanup buckets. All are invited to bring a sack lunch. A flyer with the 2025 schedule can be found on the district website, or check with your church office.

Trotwood CoB Offers Scholarships for College Students

The Trotwood Church of the Brethren has five scholarships for college students. For more details and to ask for an application form, please email the church at office@trotwoodcob.com or call 937-837-6604 to leave a message. The amount of each scholarship will be determined by the number of applications, the resources available and the guidelines of each contributor. Applications will need to be turned in by April 1, 2025.



Prayer Needs

A very important way we can be supportive of each other is to lift each other up in prayer. The 2025 Prayer List for Congregations is available on the district website.

May we remember those congregations in pastoral transition -

- ◆ **New Carlisle**--Tara Hornbacker, Interim.
- ◆ **Prince of Peace**--John Sgro, Interim.
- ◆ **Donnels Creek**-- Jim Chronister, Interim—resigned December 31, 2024
- ◆ **Pleasant Hill**—
- ◆ **Eversole** — Brent Driver, Interim
- ◆ **Good Shepherd** -- Dennis Delk, Interim
- ◆ **Circleville**--open position

- There are many issues and situations continuing to face us as we minister in our respective locations, including those who are serving in interim situations and others who are in discernment regarding placement or are considering a move. There are others facing health issues, please keep these situations in prayer. Please contact Nick if you know of prayer situations of which we should be aware. May we lift each other in prayer as we work to continue the work of Jesus, peacefully, simply, together.