

Lewiston Church of the Brethren Lifestyle August 2005

Our vision: Bound together on a journey of faith, we are a Christ-centered community, prayerfully discovering and sharing God's love.

Our Mission: Knowing Christ and making Him known, through worship, growing in faith, community building and service.

The Measure of our Success

We all set goals in life. We have things we want to achieve within a certain time frame. It might be that we want to retire by the age of 65 or 70. We might want to finish college or trade school and begin a career before we marry and start a family. We might want to build up a nest egg to a particular dollar amount.

One of my goals more recently has been to lose weight. I have a certain weight I hope to achieve by Christmas of this year. And I've had good success on my goal for a while. However, I've hit a plateau—I'm not losing at the rate I had when I first began. Does this mean that I've failed? If I look at the TV program, "The Biggest Loser," then my efforts are puny by comparison and my methods are seriously flawed. The reality is I have not failed; I simply need to change how I go about my weight loss program.

What goals do we have as a church? Are we looking to have a Sunday morning worship attendance and participation where people are lined up out the door, the offering plates are overflowing, and music that makes everyone jump up in praise? Do we want the kind of church like the mega-churches—the ones that look similar to big-box stores, where under one roof you can find a small group on every

conceivable topic? If that's our goal, then our church appears to be a failure—especially when we measure our success in comparison to those radio and TV preachers who have arenas for meeting houses and followers by the thousands.

A more true measure of our success is found in Ephesians 4:12-13. Paul begs us to live a life worthy of the calling to which we have been called. We are to share our gifts, talents, time and offerings "until all of us come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to maturity, to the measure of the full stature of Christ." When we say that we're continuing the work of Jesus, then we welcome the stranger into our midst and share what God has done for us. When we continue the work of Jesus, then we invite people into our homes—not just our family members and close friends. When we continue the work of Jesus, then we acknowledge that all we have is not from our own cleverness and efforts, but rather comes to us as a blessing from God. May we measure our success not by human standards, but by the measure of the full stature of Christ.

-Sister Cara

Brethren Service Center Report on Tsunami assistance

The following list of supplies was shipped from the Brethren Service Center for Tsunami Survivors:

Blankets.....	23,450
Health Kits.....	106,552
School Kits.....	16,545
Kids Kits.....	952
IMA Medicine Box.....	650

Other supplies shipped include water jugs, water filtration supplies, water pump, select clothing and food items.

Value of shipments: \$3.9 Million.

Hold in prayer

...*Lois Hoffert, Joe and family* as Lois recovers from surgery.

...*Dee & Donn Prudoehl* in the death of Dee's mother.

...*Fran Plank*, recovering from surgery.

...*our congregation* as we determine future ministries

...*New church development projects* in our district; *Hands of Christ* in Rochester, *Living Peace* in Sioux City, Ia. and those being proposed

...*National and world leaders* that they seek God's wisdom in their leadership and work for peace and justice for all people.

Because we have different ways of expressing our prayer requests and different needs for expression, we ask that you submit any prayer requests you wish to have listed in the bulletin and in the Lifestyle newsletter to the office in writing or via phone. Also notify the office when you wish to have that request removed or moved to "Thanks be to God" as we celebrate answered prayer. Let us continue to make prayer a priority in our congregational life!

Annual Conference Report

Fixing Our Eyes on Jesus

This year's Annual Conference could easily be described as an uplifting, joyful, spiritual event. Brother Jim Hardenbrook, our conference moderator, had challenged us all to keep our eyes focused on Jesus—and that held true throughout all the reports, business sessions, insight sessions, and worship services. I heard mighty preaching and other presentations through the week that helped all conference goers to appreciate all the ways the Church of the Brethren is continuing the work of Jesus throughout the world.

Registrations totaled 3,341, including 858 delegates from across the country. At the blood drive, Brethren donated 237 units of blood. There were awards given for Ecumenical Citations, Outdoor Ministries, Association of Brethren Caregivers, and Women's Caucus. The Association for the Arts Quilt Auction brought \$21,450 for hunger relief. Bethany Seminary celebrated their 100th Anniversary with a large display area, a special report giving the history of the seminary during the business session, and the 100-member Alumni Choir introduced a hymn/anthem commissioned by the seminary, "A Pilgrimage of Faith."

I had the privilege and opportunity to serve as delegate for you, a task I accept with joy. It was a source of pleasure to catch up with friends I have made throughout the years and make new friends from all across the country and world. It was also a delight to sing in the Bethany Alumni Choir, under the direction of Nancy Faus Mullen. And it was an honor to be called to serve on an insight panel discussion on "Women in Ministry: Opening Hearts, Minds, and Doors."

I encourage everyone here to attend and participate in next year's Annual Conference at Des Moines, Iowa. You will find yourself richly blessed by the event that helps to make us uniquely Brethren, continuing in the work of Jesus—peacefully, simply, together.

--Sister Cara

Women's Fellowship to meet

The August meeting of Women's Fellowship will be held at the home of Fran Bockenbauer with a breakfast potluck on Saturday, Aug. 13th at 9 am.

We will do some planning for our annual Christmas Party and learn what we can do to help with the Missions Bake Sale at Gladiolus Days in St. Charles on Aug. 27.

August Birthdays & Anniversaries

- 2 Doug and Lynda Plank
- 3 Randy Lee
- 4 Terry and Karen Bollinger
- 9 Beth Cage
- 10 Larry Mundt
- 14 David Dahl
Willem & Corrine du Preez
- 15 Paula Hoffert
Steve Mill
- 18 Roger and Gracie Lee
- 19 Lori LaBrec
- 28 Clifford Babcock
Marilyn Sanders

Serving us in August

- Ushers: Sanders Family
- Greeters: Bockenbauer
- Jr. Ushers: 7 Parker Cage
14 Bethany Dahl
21 Elizabeth Lee
28 Daniel Dahl
- Worship Leader: 7, 14, 21 & 28 Roger Peckover
- Worship Team: 7 Diane, Linda, Jess
14 & 21 Judy, Roger, Karen
28 Diane, Linda, Jess
- Special Music: 14 Jess Hoffert
28 Linda Risser
- Children's Story: 7 Gordon Hoffert
- Children's Church: 14 & 28 Gordon Hoffert
- Nursery: 7 Linda Risser
14 Beth Cage
28 Fran Bockenbauer
- Fellowship Meal: Lasagna lunch provided after Outdoor Worship

District Conference 2005

District Conference will be held August 5 - 7 at UNI, Cedar Falls. Tim Peter, pastor of Prairie City Church of the Brethren and 2005 District Moderator, has chosen "With Christ: Without Fear" based on Mark 4:35-41 as our Conference theme. He says: "War! Terrorism! Outsourcing! Downsizing! Shrinking congregations!

"These are the words that sometimes cause my stomach to do anxious little flip flops. These are other words on that list. Undoubtedly, you have your own list. We live in a world with problems. Big problems. And big problems create big fears. Do we have to live in the constant fear that the problems of the world will destroy us?

"There is hope. Jesus is our calm and peace in the midst of the storms of life. We can lay hold of that calm and courage. We can live with Christ, without fear."

Pastor Cara, Todd Cage, Joyce Peckover and Penny Wilson are our delegates. But everyone is invited and welcome to attend!

Joseph Helfrich, musician & storyteller from Ohio, will be a guest leading worship and an insight session. Other events include Milestones in Ministry presentations, a Saturday afternoon benefit auction,, a blood drive (with a goal of 75 units), Insight Sessions, Worshipful Work, great singing and fellowship. It's a way to connect with others in the body of Christ – specifically in the Church of the Brethren, and to encourage and inspire one another to continue the work of Jesus...peacefully, simply, together.

JULY ATTENDANCE AND OFFERING

Date	S. School Attendance	SS offering Offering	Worship Attendance	Worship Offering
3rd	10	64.00	27	\$649.00
10 th	13	28.05	30	1,281.00
17 th	7	10.00	34	613.00
24 th	10	\$23.02	30	\$953.50

\$6,584.00—projected need for our ministries each month.
\$3,814.00 received during first 4 Sundays of July
Our current deficit -\$10,073.00

God is able to do exceedingly abundantly—above what we can imagine.

Seeking Peace: The Courage to be Nonviolent

This conference will be held September 8-11, 2005 in Indianapolis, Indiana, and is hosted by members and friends of the Church of the Brethren, Mennonite Church USA and the Society of Friends and is warmly open to persons of all faiths. It is designed to be an energizing, multi-faceted, intergenerational gathering, with opportunities to build mentoring relationships and explore practical and intellectual approaches to peace and peacemaking.

Conference goals:

- * to feed the soul of the peacemaker with practical resources
- *to energize the peacemaker through workshops and dynamic, biblical worship
- *to build up the community of peacemakers by providing a place to share stories and to create networks
- * to address issues of peace and justice and how to maintain a healthy peace witness and community

Topics and themes:

- * thoughts and preparation for long-term work
- *history of the peace churches and peace movements
- *alliances, long term assets and energy
- *healthy peacemaking communities based in knowledge, connections and relationships
- *new realities and perspectives
- *the work of principalities and powers
- *media
- *consumerism

Registration and information about the conference is available online at: www.plowsharesproject.org/php/HistoricPeaceChurchConference.php. Also see informational postcards in narthex.

Outdoor Weekend – August 20-21 Good Earth Village

Come on out to Good Earth Village, 6 miles north of Spring Valley on County 8, on **Saturday, August 20th** for lots of fun and fellowship!

(Because of a scheduling conflict with Ironwood Springs, we have the opportunity to explore new possibilities!)

Camp opens at 1 pm

1-2 pm – Wagon ride

2-3 pm – Challenge Course

3-5:30 pm – free time to enjoy hiking, fishing, playing lawn games, visiting, etc.

5:30 pm – Supper provided by camp staff

6:30-8pm – Session with Duane Grady to review survey information; Special games and fun for kids

8pm –Campfire service and s'mores

What to bring:

Lawn chairs

Blankets

Campfire forks

Beverages

Insect repellent

Outdoor games

Directions to Good Earth Village: In Spring Valley, turn left onto Farmer St just past the Good Earth Village road sign. Follow Farmer St. out of town (it becomes County Rd 8) for about 6 miles. Good Earth Village entrance is on the right side of the road.

Sunday, August 21:

9:30am – outdoor worship on the church lawn; bring your lawn chairs

11- Talent show – show off your stuff!

Noon – Lasagna lunch provided

Fees for the weekend meals and events will be free-will donations. Come on out and enjoy fun and fellowship!

Deacon Corner

The Doctor will see you now...

While at the Brethren Press store at Annual Conference I noticed a book by Alice Mann titled *Can our Church Live?* At the time I had to leave without buying it, only to find that it was gone when I returned. I have been assured that Brethren Press does not bring single copies of materials to conference, so this must have been a very popular title. The popularity of this book really does not surprise me as the Northern Plains District alone has closed two churches in the past five years, and another is slated for possible closing this year. The question we have to ask ourselves is can we be far behind?

Not having looked at the book, I can only speculate as to what the signs of a dying congregation are, but here are a few observations. Our windows are rotting. This is not a problem that happened overnight or even in the past two years. This is a process that has taken years of neglect to manifest itself. There are some who can make the case that a rotting infrastructure is a sign of neglect, illness or even death. Our financial situation has really not changed despite cutting down on expenses and moving to a part time pastorate. Many of our young people have moved to other "vibrant" congregations.

There are rumors that people are dissatisfied with the pastoral leadership. I know that we have said again and again that we do not place any stock in rumors, but they do continue to persist. As we look at our summer study on the Sermon on the Mount, is there something that we can learn about the spreading of rumors? What about Matthew 18 where Jesus tells us that if you have a problem with someone, you are to take it to them? If you don't feel comfortable with that, you have been provided with a Pastoral Relations Team to voice your concerns to. For whatever reason we find it is easier to tell others, both inside and outside the congregation, about our problems than those people who can make a difference. What we forget is that in the end, it's not about the pastor it's about us. If we as a congregation are not healthy and honest with each other, how can we expect that anyone will want to join us?

When Duane Grady visited us in May, we took a survey about our congregation as part of a process called Natural Church Development. He explained that the purpose of the survey was like going to the doctor for a checkup. At our outdoor event on August 20, Duane Grady will give us the results of our checkup. I know that going to the doctor isn't something most consider fun, and neither is talking about congregational health. But, like it or not, we go to the doctor so we can remain healthy and receive treatment when we're sick. Think about the outdoor retreat as a time for healthy and open communication with each other, a chance to explore the possibilities that our future holds. Remember that because of Jesus, we really do not need to fear anything, even those dreaded words "the doctor will see you now."

-Todd Cage

Bake Sale -Saturday, August 27

Calling all pastry chefs! Here's a chance to create your most delectable desserts to sell at our Gladiolus Days stand in St Charles. Crafts, plants, etc. are also welcome. Proceeds will benefit our missions outreach. Contact Beth Cage for details.

Bread and Cup Communion

Our worship service on August 14 will include a time of celebrating our abundant life in Christ with bread and cup communion. Also, Jess Hoffert will present scripture in Powerpoint and provide special music.

August Mission: Association of Brethren Caregivers

Our mission emphasis for August is Association of Brethren Caregivers. They foster the ministry of giving and receiving care, as modeled by Jesus and embraced by the Church of the Brethren, through development of resources, programs, events and leadership that connect and undergird persons and communities in their lifelong journeys toward wholeness.

“Lighten up, Brethren!” is a program of their Wellness Ministry. It is a challenge for the Church of the Brethren members to adopt healthy living and behaviors for wellness in body, mind and spirit.

The wellness ministry professes that every person is a treasure, every life a sacred gift, every human being a unity of body, mind and spirit.

Ministry areas of the Association of Brethren Caregivers include:

- Brethren Chaplains Network
- Church and Persons with Disability Network
- Deacon Ministry
- Family Life Ministry
- Fellowship of Brethren Homes
- Health Education and research Ministry
- Wellness Ministry
- Older Adult Ministry

Our offering to support Association of Brethren Caregivers will be received on August 14th during worship.

“Lighten up, Brethren!”

The following is a sample message from the “Lighten Up, Brethren” electronic list serve. To subscribe go to brethren.org and ABC’s link.

Good morning. I awoke this morning in a fog; I start slowly in the morning, but my dog celebrated my shoe tying and his joy of anticipation got me out the door. We took our morning walk and I was enchanted by some wildflowers that I had not noted before. I have walked the same route for the last five years or so, and I still see new details almost daily. I love the natural world that God has given us for our human home. My walks are also time of meditation, and especially this morning, for praising God for his many gifts to us. I was somewhat begrudging of being thankful for the horsefly that took a bits of my leg, but it served as a reminder that I need to keep moving.

My health tip for today is to be careful of the heat. The older one grows, the less tolerant of extremes in temperatures one becomes. If the temperature is in the upper 80’s or more, especially if there is high humidity, watch out. Taking plenty of water is always appropriate, but even feeling a breeze or staying in the shade may not be protective, especially with physical activity.

My biblical reflection this morning is from Psalm 139:13 “For it was you who formed my inward parts; you knit me together in my mother’s womb. I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made.”

-Vernne Greiner, M.D.

Faith Ramblin's

Who we are in Christ

Have you noticed that the aging process is a constant reminder of the limitations of our humanness? Have you ever felt that no matter how hard you try, you can't measure up to what you perceive is expected of you? Do you remember the lyrics to that old song, "You can't cut the mustard anymore."

"The flesh is like a puff of smoke on a blade of grass," here for a very short period of time and not very stable. God knows it and has no problem with it, because He is willing to work through us and show Himself strong in our weakness. Actually, the Bible states that God's strength shows itself most effectively in our weaknesses in 2 Corinthians 12:9. God has no problem with the knowledge of what we lack; we are the ones who have problems with it. We have a difficult time admitting to ourselves or anyone else that we are anything less than perfect. It is important for us to know what we can do, but even more important for us to know what we cannot do. We need to face our weaknesses, not feel bad about them.

Jeremiah had problems just like we do. When God saw Jeremiah, He did not see perfection, but He obviously did see someone with a right heart who believed in Him. He saw those two main ingredients in pleasing God: 1) faith in Jesus and 2) a deep desire to please Him. Although Jeremiah was not perfect, he did submit to the call of God on his life.

Jeremiah, despite criticism, unpopularity, and attacks against him, faithfully delivered God's message to the nation of Judah.

God tells us to get up every day; love God; and do your best. He will do the rest! Remember, God is not surprised by our inabilities, our imperfections, or our faults. He has always known everything about you and me and that we are just now finding out, and He chose you and me on purpose for Himself. Jesus will present you blameless and faultless to God, if you place your trust in Him.

When we face our fears, we can find our freedom. In John 8:32 Jesus said, "The truth will set you free." The word FEAR means to run away from. We don't have to run from anything; we can confront all things in the power of the Holy Spirit. It is time to stop running, to "stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord."

Our greatest strength is the knowledge of who we are in Christ. What we are in Christ is very different

from what we are in ourselves. In and of ourselves we are absolutely nothing of any value, but "in Christ" we partake of everything He deserved and earned.

Once we understand how God sees us through Christ, we can refrain from caring what people think about us, and feeling bad about ourselves. We don't have to be concerned about their approval because we already have God's. We can stop living under condemnation or constantly looking for the approval of others. We can accept ourselves; and when we do so, others will begin to accept us also. Look to God for what you need, not to people. Parts of this article were taken from Joyce Meyer's book "Approval Addiction."

--Linda Risser