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Inside

Let Us Pursue ...	1
Ethics Training	8
Parish Paper	2
Camp discounts	4
PSWD Youth	
Youth Cabinet	4
NYC	4
2015 Cabinet	8
Board Chair	5
Moderator	5
District Conference 2014	6
PSWD in Newline Stories	7

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Let Us Pursue . . .

During my years as District Executive, I treasured the opportunity to serve the wider church family. When I retired from district ministry two years ago, little did I know that God was not through with me yet! When the call came forth to serve the wider church family in PSWD as the Interim Executive / Minister, it was like a divine calling, reminiscent of other “calls” during my ministry journey.

The past three months have been a delightful, energizing voyage visiting congregations and pastors, district meetings, traveling from Tucson, AZ, to Sacramento, CA, getting a wonderful sense of the uniqueness of each congregation and minister visited. I see dedicated persons who love the church, its beliefs, and practices, and demonstrate this commitment by providing a significant ministry of volunteerism in the local church, and for district and denominational ministries. I also hear about painful moments in district life, church closings, perceived over-extended authority, abundant over-generalizations, and un-resolved conflicts.

Some persons are cynical about the state of the church at large, and even about the future of PSWD. Yet I ponder - what are the avenues of hope that would guide our denomination and our district into new adventures of faithful living, providing *strength for today and bright hope for tomorrow*, as the beloved hymn suggests?

A short story. Of all the farm chores engaging our family, the one most disliked was picking stones. Each year the spring frost stirred a new crop of stones to the surface. The entire family spent hours picking up fist-sized rocks filling a wagon. Each load was emptied onto a large rock-pile at the edge of the field. I recall thinking that these stones were a real

nuisance. When I complained about the drudgery of the task, dad would firmly say that some day he would need the rocks for other useful things. Dad had a bigger vision.

Eventually, we went back to the rock pile, re-loaded the stones and hauled them back to the barn-yard. We mixed these rocks with cement, gravel, and rebar, to form a solid foundation for a forty-foot silo, a garage, corn-crib, and two pole barns. The stones that I had rejected as being worthless and a nuisance became an important recycled ingredient in forming the foundation and support system for essential farm buildings.

When I think about the present state of the church, I can't help but think of those formative years. That which I disliked and thought was inconvenient, and something of little value, dad had a better plan. Surely God has bigger plans, future plans for the church! Repeatedly in Scripture, God takes that which is regarded as inconvenient, unworthy, broken, a stumbling block; and transforms it into something beautiful, precious, and holy. As Jeremiah (29:11) says, we have a future with hope!

*Continued
on page [6](#)*



Joe Detrick

THE PARISH PAPER

IDEAS AND INSIGHTS FOR ACTIVE CONGREGATIONS

Coeditors: Herb Miller and Cynthia Woolever – www.TheParishPaper.com

February 2014 - Volume 22, Number 2

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A Parable about Pastoral Leadership

Only the wisest of pastors can create a congregational atmosphere where the reins of leadership shift with each new opportunity or crisis. At least four types of leadership—character, focused, transformational, and shifting—are necessary for congregations attempting to navigate their rapidly changing environment. These four types are not a progression, but rather the forms of leadership that typically surface for congregations facing specific challenges.

Character Leadership

Once upon a time, a pastor decided to take the congregation on vacation. On the way to their destination, the plane crashed but landed safely on a deserted island, injuring no one. The congregants knew that it might be quite some time before help arrived. They set out to gather wood, pluck berries, sharpen spears for fishing, and fashion rope for constructing huts. While pursuing these tasks, a few disputes arose among the congregants and they brought those disputes to the pastor for mediation.

The pastor, trained in the art of managing conflict, was quickly able to deal with the minor conflicts. One day a parishioner suggested that many of these disputes could be avoided if all the new island dwellers would simply mirror the temperament and values of the pastor. He argued that this approach would avoid future disputes. This worked. The congregation went about their chores and lived peaceably for the first year of their shipwreck.

Moral: Modeling behavior is one of the most powerful forms of leadership. This can be seen in a pastor who launches a building program or organizes a community dinner.

Focused Leadership

Early in the second year of their existence on the island, a congregant who regularly fished in the cove noticed that the ocean's water level seemed to be rising steadily each week. When news of this discovery reached the pastor, the pastor quickly

declared, "We must move to the highest point on the island!" Because the pastor took meditative walks, he knew where the highest point was and announced that it was only a three-day journey.

Preparing for the journey, however, took much longer than three days. The pastor appointed someone to officially monitor the water level, while also organizing others into working teams dedicated to disassembling the camp and preparing for the move. Because these preparations took several weeks, the pastor could make several scouting trips to the new location to map out the location. The team's plans united into one seamless design that transpired like clockwork.

The days of year two seemed to fly by as each person was fully dedicated to their acquired task, trusting that the new location would allow the congregation to survive the hastening tide. Finally, the day of the big move arrived, and at the end of the three-day journey the congregation arrived safely in their new abode where they celebrated their safety during the final week of the second year of their shipwreck.



"THE PASTOR SAID WE'RE FREE TO EXPERIMENT AS LONG AS WE DON'T CHANGE THE ORDER OF WORSHIP, MUSIC STYLE, OR SANCTUARY TEMPERATURE."

Moral: Focused leadership gets the congregation from point A to point B. This can be seen in the pastor who takes the lead on a new mission goal, constructing a long-term plan and delegating tasks, all while monitoring progress.

Transformational Leadership

It did not take long for the pastor and congregation to figure out that this new location was a terrible place to live. Although the new geographic coordinates did indeed provide safety from the rising tide, scouring and damaging winds came daily just before sunset. Then, sunset brought plummeting temperatures, much colder than any temperature that the congregants had experienced before.

The fact that everyone knew who picked the new site—the pastor—prevented their public display of remorse. But covert and increasingly passive-aggressive resistance grew each day. The pastor knew not what to do but pray.

Soon others joined in prayer, breaking the isolated pattern of pastoral discernment, intercession, and disclosure that had characterized their first two years on the island. Along with prayers, they came to the discovery of new gifts and new insights into the problem at hand.

“I could have told you that this would be a terrible place to live,” said the meteorologist who came to the prayer group one day. “I concur,” said the geologist who also held a degree in global climatology. Soon a new team assembled to study the best place to live on the island, drawing from the various gifts of the congregants.

Still, convincing the congregation that they must move again to a new location proved much more difficult. Dreadful as the conditions were, many had grown accustomed to them.

The pastor appointed a second leadership team to listen to the grumblings of the new faction that had emerged among the congregants who were considering staying at their existing location. Listening helped. By addressing their concerns and listening, new insights emerged from the curmudgeon group. During the final week of their third year on the island, the congregation moved to a much more suitable location.

Moral: Empowering a team to guide and assist the pastor helps the congregation move from point A to point B. Although the movement is still linear, the required pastoral skills are completely different from focused leadership.

Drawing on multiple gifts and forming a new

vision is the crux of transformational leadership, such as can be seen when groups are empowered to effect real changes in the congregation.

Shifting Leadership

As pleasant as these new conditions were, they were not safe. The congregant responsible for tracking the rising tide consulted with the leadership team. Together they concluded that no location on the island would be safe. Within six months, the entire island would be under water. For a while, this catastrophic news catapulted the congregation into chaos.

However, slowly amidst the disorder, varying groups began to emerge to address the needed change. Shipbuilders commenced a project, food gatherers sought out less perishable food, and another group constructed sails. Completely unknown to any of these teams, a rogue group began to build beds and eating tables that would minimize the effects of the swaying sea.

Although teams seemed to be operating independently of one another, the pastor knew that seeking more control over the work teams might slow their progress and spell doom for the congregation, and so he merely stepped in at times to remind the groups to meet their deadline. Within six months, just before the daily high tide reached the sleeping quarters of the congregants, they successfully launched out into the sea.

Moral: If the transformational leader refrains from overusing his or her gifts, the phenomenon of shifting leadership can ensue. Leaders drawing on this leadership form articulate where a group is going, but not how it will get there. For example, the pastoral leader sets people free to innovate and experiment when reaching out to a radically changing neighborhood.

The Moral of the Parable

Because differing conditions call for different styles of leadership, the right form of leadership at the right time yields the greatest dividends. Each of these leadership styles are appropriate at different times, and none of them are better than the others. Few things are worse for a congregation than a leadership approach that refuses to leave the helm even after the ship has sailed.

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Sign up for Summer Camp!

Before the discounts end.

- Camp Peaceful Pines has a 10% discount if you register and pay in full by May 15, 2014.
- Camp La Verne has a \$75 discount if your payment is postmarked 2 weeks before camp.

Camp Peaceful Pines

6,500 feet on Sonora Pass in the Sierras
Contact Garry Pearson for information
530-758-0474

www.camppeacefulpines.org

Schedule

June 6-8, 2014 – Men's Retreat Camp
June 20-22, 2014 – Women's Retreat Camp
June 22-27, 2014 – (to run concurrently)
Junior Camp – Jr High Camp – Youth Camp
July 18-25, 2014 – Family Camp
July 25-30, 2014 – Discovery Camp
August 9-10, 2014 – Beginners Camp
August 15-17, 2014 – Married Couples Weekend

Camp La Verne

6,900 feet above San Bernardino, CA
Contact Kathy Doramus
909-593-8836

www.camploverne.org

Schedule

July 13-19, 2014 – Junior Camp (grades 3-5)
Director: Janet Hart Short
July 20-26, 2014 – Jr High Camp (grades 6-8)
Directors: Ron Hart & Jeff Pence
July 27-Aug 2, 2014 – Sr High Camp (grades 9-12)
Directors: Erica Schatz Brown & Kevin Schatz

PSWD Youth . . .

Dawna Welch, PSWD Youth Advisor
Youth@pswdcob.org



Youth Cabinet hard at work ?



Twenty-four youth from the PSWD enjoyed a snowless Winter Camp up at Camp La Verne in February. Participants enjoyed plenty of fun activities coordinated by Directors Erica Schatz Brown and Kevin Schatz including crafts and time for reflection. During the weekend the 2013/2014 outgoing youth cabinet scheduled time to talk about upcoming events, like NYC and District Conference, 2014 as well as encouraging those youth gathered to consider their own growing leadership by applying for a position on the 2014/2015 Youth Cabinet.

NYC — Now is the time!

www.pswdcob.org/nyc

Time, *specifically the lack thereof*, may be the greatest factor effecting youth participation in Sunday school and larger church life not to mention personal spiritual reflection. Faith development is precariously balanced with the demands of school, friends and the social pressures of living in the 21st century!

That is why National Youth Conference, in Fort Collins, Colorado is an event you do not want your youth to miss out on. Not only can participants count on experiencing God in the beauty of the Rocky Mountains but they will have the opportunity to experience God through energetic worship services and engaging workshops, service projects and Fellowship with thousands of other Brethren youth from around the country.

So far, the PSWD has 47 youth and advisors registered to attend NYC and ride the 55 seat district bus! Final registrations are due by April 30 for both.

Bus reservations: www.pswdcob.org/youth

PSWD Board . . .

Marye Martinez, PSWD Board Chair
boardchair@pswdcob.org



Friends in Christ:

Our new year started with a few twists and turns to deal with, but we are grounded and moving forward.

We are fortunate to have Joe Detrick as our interim district executive minister. With his experience and the continued outstanding leaders in Pacific Southwest District, we are not only maintaining what is necessary but have taken the reins for the future.

All of our staff, commissions and committees are immersed in their various tasks. We are in the process of moving the offices to another facility within Hillcrest. John Gingrich is representing the Policy Board with PSWD and Hillcrest staff involved in the relocation.



Team building at the April board meeting photo by Erin M.

Another Policy Board member, Marlin Heckman, has been reviewing the records accumulated from the closure of the Fresno Church and preparing them for storage.

A Transition Team is in place and working at their frequent meetings. Their first official meeting was held the first part of January. They are evaluating and will recommend where we go from here now that Don Booz has retired. The Denominational liaison/leader is Mary Jo Flory-Steury. District members are: John Gingrich, (La Verne); Marlin Heckman, (La Verne); Mauricio Iacueli, (Circle of Peace); Jim LeFever, (Glendale); John Price, (Empire); Becky Zapata, (Principe de Paz/Santa Ana) and Marye Martinez, (Modesto).

Being the Board Chair is a new call for me and an understatement that it's challenging but surprisingly rewarding and easier since we are blessed with many committed people who have made themselves available and willing to serve. We share the goal of making sure our district thrives.

Please take the time to go to the PSWD web site. There you will find a list of committees, commissions, calendar of activities and minutes of the district board which highlight the many groups that do the work of PSWD.

Marye Martinez, Executive Board Chair

Spirit of God . . . REALLY Moving

Erin Matteson, PSWD Moderator
Erin@modcob.org



As we move further into April and 2014, I want to thank you for many gracious invitations to come visit, sing, preach and more at your churches! I sense the *Spirit of God*, indeed, *Moving* in so many ways, in our congregations, and in our district as a whole!

I am still hoping to visit more of you. My calendar is filling up! If you would like me to come and visit this year, please be in touch. If you happen to have a mid-week meal, or another annual event of some kind coming up that would be an alternative to Sunday morning visits, let me know that, too.

If you have not had a chance yet, go to the PSWD web-site www.pswdcob.org and "click" on the "D.CONF" tab, and then where it says "Moderator's Blog" and take a peek.



Erin with Pastor Rita Flores at Cristo Sion BLOG photo

That is where I am reflecting on visits and Spirit – Moving experiences in our churches, or on meetings that I hope will encourage your reflection on ministry, or on theological themes beyond the particulars there. The BLOG can also be a helpful and meaningful way for you to get a richer sense of some of the ministry/leadership happenings in the life of our congregations and district right now. If there is ever anything you would like to know more about, please, contact me directly at 209-484-5937 or erin@modcob.org

It is a privilege serving you!

Moderator Erin Matteson

Erin with Pastor Robert Aguirre and Roxanne at Cornerstone CoB in Reedley



BLOG photo pswdcob.org/moderator

On the front lines with the District Conference Program Committee

I can't tell you how excited we are as your committee planning District Conference! We are agreed that our goal is to work toward all of us coming together not simply to *talk* about the theme, but to have ***an experience of The Spirit of God Moving!*** Here are a few pieces that are falling into place, and questions/possibilities we are holding. If you have ideas, hopes, dreams, affirmations, concerns for conference, ***NOW IS THE TIME TO SHARE THEM!*** Just call or e-mail me as chair, or any of our committee members! We meet the third Monday of each month on conference call, and meet in person at the Policy Board meetings the first weekends in April and August. Erin Matteson 209-484-5937 or erin@modcob.org

- *Mary Kay Ogden* will be joining Linda Hart as a Co-Coordinator of District Conference. Mary Kay will serve for 2 years, first with Linda, who has served for years, and then take the "lead" Coordinator position in 2015 with another co-coordinator. We hope that new coordinator would come from Northern California ideally, where conference will go in 2016.
- Moderator Erin Matteson will be preaching at one service & our youth, fresh back from National Youth Conference and riding the shirt or dress tails of *The Spirit of God MOVING* will lead and engage us in Saturday evening worship. Get ready! (Our third service of worship we are still discerning.)
- We are discussing how we might structure the weekend and create opportunities for service or fellowship that might engage families in coming whether or not they are delegates.
- We want our children to have creative, fun, enticing activities.
- We are exploring how insight sessions and all of conference can help persons go home with ministry ideas, renewal, and other tools for local life going with them.
- We are exploring how business can be infused with a sense of the spirit moving through music, meaningful dialogue and sharing, scripture, silence, candles/worship centers and more. We want to use the "Worshipful Work" model and are pulling out the "Doing Church Business" paper from Annual Conference not too many years ago.
- We are talking about possible meal events that can help educate and engage us as God's people together. (Women's Clergy breakfast? Intercultural Meal? Picnic? Hmmm!)

Continued from page 1.



As the church continues to struggle with present-day issues, do we reject these "stones" that the cultural frost nudges to the surface and relegate them to the rock pile outside the church? Or, do we welcome these "stones" as an essential part of the conversations that surround the formation of our faith, bound and strengthened by the unifying "cement" of the Spirit?

Two questions to ponder: How can we conduct ourselves in our churches and within our district, in ways that display our best understanding of what the New Testament would expect from us as members of a community of faith? How do we "hold one another in love and fellowship" as we wrestle with the weighty stone-like issues of the day? These are important questions because the answers will determine how we serve one another and welcome those whom God sends to us, and how we do business together at all levels of the church. Paul says it best – *Let us pursue the things that make for peace and for mutual up-building.* (Rom. 14:19)

As we venture forward in faith within PSWD, how we treat one another in moments of both gentle agreement and vigorous challenge will illustrate the extent we are guided by God's Spirit. What may seem to be stones or issues of inconvenience may become stones that strengthen and bond we Brethren together within PSWD and the larger church family.

I am excited and feel blessed to be serving within this District, even for a short time. I continue to witness an abundance of creativity, energy, and hopefulness as the Spirit of God continues to move within and without! May we continue to prove our love for God in the character of our relationship to our sisters and brothers (from Tucson to Paradise) in moments of joyous fellowship and in moments of firm disagreement. These are actions that give Christians hope in a challenging world because of the hope that is within us (1 Pet. 3:15). As followers of Jesus, we can do no other!

(Adapted from MESSENGER Reflections article written for the May, 2012 edition).

Blessings on the Journey,

Joe Detrick

Interim District Executive/Minister

de@pswdcob.org

909-392-4052

PSWD in Newslines

www.brethren.org/news

Newsline 2/15/2014: – Bidding process brings Annual Conference back to Ohio and California

The Conference office has announced the locations for upcoming Annual Conferences. In 2018 the annual meeting of the Church of the Brethren will return to Cincinnati, Ohio, where it has been held in previous decades; and in 2019 the event returns to the Town and Country Resort in **San Diego, Calif.**, where it was held in 2009. Other upcoming locations already have been announced: Tampa, Fla., in 2015; Greensboro, N.C., in 2016; and Grand Rapids, Mich., in 2017. Read the full story at:

www.brethren.org/news/2014/upcoming-annual-conference-locations-announced.html

Newsline 2/7/2014: – By Becky Ullom Naugle – Members of the 2014 Youth Peace Travel Team have been announced. The team is sponsored each year by the Youth and Young Adult Ministry of the Church of the Brethren, the Ministry Office, the Office of Public Witness, the Outdoor Ministries Association, and On Earth Peace. They will spend the summer at camps across the denomination, teaching about peace, justice, and reconciliation. The 2014 team includes a PSWD young adult, **Chris Bache of La Cañada, Calif., and La Verne Church of the Brethren.**

As the team spends time with youth this summer at camps across the Church of the Brethren, they will teach about peace, justice, and reconciliation, all core values throughout the church's more than 300-year history. Follow the ministry of the 2014 Youth Peace Travel Team by visiting www.brethren.org/youthpeacetravelteam.

Read the full story at:

www.brethren.org/news/2014/youth-peace-travel-team-announced.html

Newsline 2/8/2014: – By Tim Heishman – The National Youth Conference (NYC) Office awarded about 100 intercultural scholarships last week to youth and advisors from around the denomination. NYC has offered scholarships for many years to congregations that have a membership that is majority intercultural. Scholarships were awarded to youth and advisors from 12 churches in 5 districts. **PSWD churches Glendale CoB, Empire CoB, Cristo Sion CoB in Pomona, and Príncipe de Paz CoB in Santa Ana received scholarships.** Read the full story at: www.brethren.org/news/2014/nyc-offers-intercultural-scholarships.html

Newsline 2/15/2014: – Young adults to study Jeremiah 29:11 at www.brethren.org/yac – the Church of the Brethren **Young Adult Conference (YAC)**. It will be held **May 23-25, 2014** at Camp Brethren Woods near Keezletown, Va. With the words from Jeremiah 29:11 as a focus, participants will address the theme “*Coming Home: For I Know the Plans I Have for You.*” PSWD young adults attend each year. Read the full story at:

www.brethren.org/news/2014/young-adults-to-study-jeremiah.html

Newsline 4/4/2014: – In response to a request from its partners, over the past six months New Community Project has raised \$33,500 to construct a girls' boarding school in Nimule, South Sudan. “Surpassing the initial goal of \$10,000, the additional funds will come in handy: demand has exceeded expectation and the school has been expanded to house 400 girls,” said a release from director **David Radcliff (Circle of Peace)**. “According to NCP colleague Agnes Amileto of the Girlchild Education and Development Association, the school is needed to allow girls to focus on their studies (they are worked so hard at home that there is little time for homework), to keep girls from unplanned pregnancies (a frequent occurrence in mixed-gender schools), and to allow better access for disabled girls and girls coming from a distance.” For more information go to www.newcommunityproject.org

Newsline 2/15/2014: – **Imperial Heights CoB** received this year's Energy Efficiency Participation Award from Edison International. “By replacing more than 80 incandescent lamps and fixtures the church was able to reduce its energy consumption and lower its energy bills,” said a release. Read the Edison International post at <http://newsroom.edison.com/stories/l-a-county-district-attorney-jackie-lacey-urges-audience-to-keep-the-dream-alive-for-future-generations-at-sce-s-black-history-month-celebration>

Newsline 2/8/2014: – Co-sponsored by the Intercultural Ministries of the Church of the Brethren and **Pacific Southwest District**, the next intercultural gathering in the Church of the Brethren will be held March 28-30 at **Iglesia Príncipe de Paz** in Santa Ana, Calif. The gathering's focus is “Unity Is More Than a Statement”

www.brethren.org/intercultural/unity2014

Read the full story at:

www.brethren.org/news/2014/next-intercultural-gathering.html

New Life

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PSWD Youth Cabinet 2014 / 2015

Applications for the 2014/2015 Youth Cabinet will be available in May at www.pswdcob.org/youth including instructions and deadlines for youth applications.

- Is there someone in your congregation who has demonstrated leadership skills and is ready to serve district youth?
- Is there someone you think has the heart of a servant but needs a little help developing their leadership skills?

**Why not encourage them to apply and
let's see how the spirit moves!**

Questions? Call or email Dawna Welch
909-267-5477 youth@pswdcob.org



The new Cabinet will help plan the 2014 District Conference Youth Activities
2013 conference photo

Healthy Boundaries: Ministerial Ethics Training

Church of the Brethren, ordination credentials are reviewed by the Ministry Commission every five years for renewal. One requirement for ordination renewal is completion of approved training in ministerial ethics during the five year period. Licensed ministers and active retired ministers are also expected to complete the training. (*Only inactive retired ministers are exempt.*)

Three training events are being scheduled in PSWD to fulfill this requirement. Ordained and licenced ministers should set aside the dates of October 20-23, 2014 to attend training in Arizona, Northern or Southern California. Final dates and event sites will be available soon.

Julie Hostetter (Executive Director, Brethren Academy for Ministerial Leadership), will lead the workshops. In addition, your Interim District Executive will share the history and background of the ordination renewal process and requirement that ethics training be completed for renewal.

There is a \$10 per person cost for the training manual to be paid at the event. CEU's will be granted based on the instructional time involved. If you have any questions related to this, please contact me at 909-392-4052 or de@pswdcob.org

Together In Ministry,
Joe Detrick, Interim District Executive Minister