

Vol. 55 • Issue 2

Inside

A Warm Welcome 1

- Dawna Welch 1
- WOW Retreat 2
- Camp La Verne 3
- Pastor Transitions 4
- Speak Peace 5
- Youth Fly High 7
- Pastor Spouse *back*

District Conference

- Housing 3
- Pre Conf Event 4
- Youth Event 4
- Service Proj. 5
- Worship 5
- Registration 6
- Meals 6
- Children 6
- Nursery 6

www.pswdcob.org

Editor: Joe Vecchio
Administrative Assistant
FrontDesk@pswdcob.org

Publisher: Russ Matteson
District Executive/Minister
DE@pswdcob.org

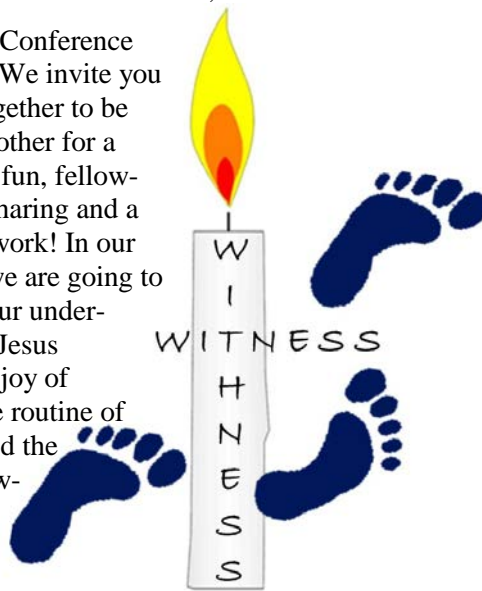
New Life Subscriptions (a \$10 value) are **Free**. New Life, the newsletter of the Pacific Southwest District of the Church of the Brethren, is sent to all of our ministers, church officials, and others who request it.

Address changes to:
Pacific Southwest District
Church of the Brethren
P.O. Box 219
La Verne CA 91750-0219
FAX (909) 392-4056
Voice (909) 392-4049
FrontDesk@pswdcob.org

A Warm Welcome !

November 10-12, 2017

It's District Conference time again! We invite you to gather together to be with one another for a weekend of fun, fellowship, faith sharing and a little bit of work! In our gathering, we are going to witness to our understanding of Jesus through the joy of worship, the routine of business, and the fun of fellowship, hospitality, and service.



Brian McLaren, an author, speaker, activist and public theologian, will speak to us Friday night helping us connect to the importance of our Christian identity as we live in a multifaceted and multi-faith world. Saturday, Moderator Sara Haldeman-Scarr will preside over our business sessions and Saturday evening we will share together in a District Love Feast being with each other around table as we witness to the community and service of basin and towel. Sunday morning Sara Haldeman Scarr will preach as we conclude the 2017 conference.

Want to know what the youth will be doing? Interested in the worship aspects of conference? What insight sessions may be available? Who is preaching when? When is there ice cream and will there be a campfire? That is what you can find in this issue of New Life. Can't wait to be with you and experience the with-ness and witness of Jesus in our lives together!

See you in November at conference!

Sara Haldeman-Scarr,

District Moderator
moderator@pswdcob.org
619-573-5784

Working Conference Schedule

Thursday, November 9

Minister's attending Friday workshop invited to attend ULV's Fasnacht Lecture.

Friday, November 10

- 9:00 to 5:00 - Pre-Conference workshop with Brian McLaren
- 3:00 p.m. - Registration and exhibits open
- 5:30 p.m. - Dinner (pre-purchase required)
- 7:00 p.m. - Opening Singing and Worship (followed by Ice Cream Social)
- 8:30 p.m. - Youth Activities begin

Saturday, November 11

- 8:00 a.m to 10:30 p.m. - Youth Activities
- 8:00 a.m. - Registration and exhibits open
- 8:30 a.m. - Business Session begins
- 12:00 noon - Lunch (pre-purchase required)
- 1:15 p.m. - Business Session resumes
- 5:30 p.m. - All-district Love Feast (included with registration)
- 7:30 p.m. - Evening Fellowship event

Sunday, November 12

- 8:00 a.m. - District Board Reorganization Meal
- 9:45 a.m. - Gathering Singing
- 10:00-11:30 a.m. - Worship and consecration of leadership

Thanks for the Work & Ministry of Dawna Welch

After 6 years of service as the PSWD Youth Advisor, Dawna Welch has submitted her resignation in anticipation of a new ministry calling. Dawna has worked tirelessly as an advocate for our young people, visiting in many of our congregations to strengthen their youth ministry and invite deeper connection to the broader church. She has nurtured the leadership gifts and skills of more than 20 youth who have served on the Youth Cabinet during her tenure. Dawna coordinated the 2016 Western Regional Youth Conference, and has shared her gifts in planning District Conference worship services.



WOW Weekend of Wonder PSWD Women's Retreat

May 19-21, 2017 ECCO Retreat Center, Yosemite

The PSWD's Women's retreat at ECCO Retreat Center in Yosemite was a wonderful experience. This was my first woman's retreat. I was a newbie, but not for long! Our District Moderator, Pastor Sara Haldeman-Scarr, led a weekend of fellowship for our group of 15 ladies. We were welcomed with gift bags full of tasty treats, given rooms that were super clean and comfortable. We were surrounded by pine trees... and there was a gorgeous lake with swans, ducks and geese. The winter and spring rains replenished the dry lakes and rivers. The wild flowers were bursting with color, and the waterfalls were breathtaking.



There was a beautiful balance of group activity and free time to explore, rest and relax. My favorite time was the Fellowship which can be summed up in a few words. Joy, Laughter, Relaxing, Sharing, Engaging, Singing (4 part harmony!). All these, and more were plentiful, as well as



L-R Judy Stout, Barbara Brandt, Jennie Bennett Agostini, Donna McAvoy, Dot Hess, Susan Bihlman Terry Kauk, Sara Haldeman-Scarr, Colleen Klee, Cindy Slaughter, Karen Pierson, Deb Waas, Linda Williams, Emily Landes



peace and quiet moments. So much laughter, fun and special moments shared with awesome ladies from all over the PSWD, rejuvenated and revived our bodies, mind and spirit.

My wish is that this weekend of fellowship continues. My hope is that ladies who didn't have had a chance to experience the WOW Weekend of Wonder attend next year. We got to know one another through quiet conversation, sharing and spiritual renewal in a place that encourages peace and relaxation... Oh... and yes, we made S'mores! Discovering the solitude, re-balancing our energy, replenishing our reserves and connecting with these ladies is what made this weekend a profound and a wonderful experience. Thank you all who attended, and I look forward to meeting more ladies of the PSWD at next year's WOW! It is scheduled for ECCO Retreat Center, May 18-20, 2018. I've put it into MY calendar and hope you ladies do the same!

Peace and blessings...

Cindy Slaughter, Glendale, CA

www.pswdcob.org/events/wow



(back row L-R) Susan Bihlman, Linda Williams, Emily Landes, Judy Stout, Dot Hess, Donna McAvoy, Cindy Slaughter, Jessie Marsiglio, Colleen Klee (front row - L-R) Barbara Brandt, Karen Pierson, Sara Haldeman-Scarr, Jennie Bennett Agostini, Deb Waas

District Conference Information

November 10-12, 2017

Hillcrest in La Verne, California

www.pswdcob.org/distconf/reg
Details on the web



Reserve your motel early !

No Special Conference Arranged Rooms. In the past we have been able to secure a block of rooms at a few nearby hotels, but for 2017 the hotels are not offering us this possibility. As has been the case for the last several years, there is a large event at the Fairgrounds the same weekend, so there is competition for rooms. Below is a list of the hotels we have recommended in the past and we encourage you to contact them or another hotel of your choosing, or use other travel apps which might have a better price, to make your District Conference reservations soon. 53rd Auto Club NHRA Finals are the same weekend, so reserve your room early! Please note there is no housing available at Hillcrest during District Conference.

Motel Possibilities	Miles	Phone
Extended Stay America, 601 W Bonita Ave, San Dimas CA 91773	2.6	909-394-1022
Red Roof Inn, 204 Village Ct, San Dimas CA 91773	3.0	909-599-2362
Holiday Inn Express, 485 W Arrow Hwy, San Dimas CA 91773	3.0	909-305-2323
Double Tree, 555 W Foothill Bl, Claremont CA 91711	3.7	909-626-2411

RV Parking: You can explore the suitability of the Fairplex KOA – 2.7 miles from Hillcrest
<http://koa.com/campgrounds/los-angeles/>

On-Line Registration Goes Live: Friday, September 1, two months before conference.
 Wednesday, October 25, two weeks before conference, registration for meals and age level events closes, which allows us time to finalize counselors, nursery care, and more. Prices also go up for web & onsite registration.

Camp La Verne Needs Help

Camp La Verne is in need of people to help. Money is good but people are better. We need people to be on the board, we need people to volunteer to help get the camp ready for campers and that need is year round. We need people to volunteer as the registrar, to schedule weekend rentals, to volunteer to be a kitchen helper, to chop wood, make repairs, help run camps. We still need a cook for two of the summer camps, we also will need people to help take the food up to the mountains for the cooks.

Right now everything is being done by only a handful of people, who are themselves volunteers. The camp does not have money to hire full time staff. We need people who care about keeping the camp going and are willing to take on some of the work. If you are interested in being apart of Camp La Verne please contact Sara Davis or Kathy Doramus at 909-593-8836.

PSWD Conference, 2017

Saturday, interspersed with Business

- * **Insight sessions** Saturday before and after lunch will offer a mix of opportunities to interact with our denominational agencies on topics that matter to us, opportunities to explore conference business, and sessions that enhance specific ministries in meaningful ways! *Make your choices when registering for conference on-line.*
- * **Business** will bring reports from local, district and national church leaders. Be ready to call new volunteers to the district's boards, commissions and committees. Your church has at least 4 delegates to consider and vote. Come be a part of the larger body as we work together.

Are you intrigued? Reserve the dates now, and plan to be *surprised, renewed, and enriched* as we gather!

Brian McLaren will lead the Pre-Conference Event



“The Witness and With-ness of Jesus” will provide the focus for author, speaker, activist, and public theologian Brian McLaren as he provides leadership for the Friday, November 10, pre-conference event which provides a professional growth opportunity for ministers, and a time of learning for congregational leaders and interested persons. Participation in the full workshop will generate 0.6 CEUs in Pastoral Leadership.

The focus of the workshop will be on how we deepen our understanding of bringing our Christ-centered witness in a gracious and confident manner into a with-ness with others in both the interfaith ministry setting and the variety of understandings of Jesus within the Christian faith. We will be invited to explore our with-ness in relating to the interfaith community and our with-ness with those congregations and Christian traditions that we may find ourselves in tension with. Knowing who we are as followers of Jesus and claiming our identity is essential as we try to stand united in working/being together with each other in service and respectful in those area of theology where they clash.

Brian McLaren is a former college English teacher and pastor. He is an Auburn Senior Fellow, a contributor to We Stand With Love, and a leader in the Convergence Network, through which he is developing an innovative training/mentoring program for pastors and church planters. The Ministry Commission is bringing Brian to District Conference in partnership with the University of LaVerne where he will bring the Fasnacht Lecture on Religion and Society on November 9.

Check-in for the Friday event open at 8:30 a.m. and the event begins at 9:00 a.m., concluding at 5:00 p.m. The registration cost is \$25 and includes lunch. Childcare will be provided for children age 6 and under at no cost, but participants must register for childcare by October 25.

www.pswdcob.org/events/ministers

Pastor Transitions



Erin Matteson concluded her service at the **Modesto** congregation at the end of March following more than 13 years of ministry. She is beginning a ministry of Spiritual Direction, writing, and retreat leadership.

District Conference Youth

an event for grades 6-12

District Conference will be at Hillcrest in La Verne this year, so that is where you are going to want to be November 10-12, 2017! Join us for a great weekend of fellowship, fun and activities with youth from around the Pacific Southwest District! Register for conference (\$60) and Youth Activities (plus all meals Saturday and Sunday breakfast) are included. Our time together will include catching up with friends, participating in an awesome Saturday Love Feast, and more events just for the YOUth!

On-site housing will be available for High school aged Youth. If there are more than 3 youth from a congregation your church needs to register an adult advisor who will be present at all youth events through the weekend, (including, potentially, an overnight sleep over).

Questions? Call or email Erik Brummett, interim Youth Advisor at 317-694-2883
PeacefulPastor@gmail.com

Visit: www.pswdcob.org/distconf/reg/youth
for updated information as it becomes available.



Pastor Transitions

Mike Fletcher has concluded his service as the interim pastor at the **Glendale** congregation, and will begin in late July as the interim pastor for the **Modesto** congregation while they are in a search for new settled leadership.



The **Glendale** congregation has called **Randy Short** to serve as their new pastor. Randy comes to PSWD from the Michigan District where he served as pastor of the Living Peace congregation near Detroit. Randy and his wife Kathy will be arriving in Glendale in July, and his installation will take place on August 13. Welcome Randy and Kathy!





Service Project for District Conference

This year's service project at PSWD District Conference, The Witness and With-ness of Jesus!, will benefit many people through Inland Valley Hope Partners. They have suggested we aid them with "T-shirts to Bags." This is a project we can do on-site at Hillcrest during District Conference.

Anyone who can cut with scissors, and tie knots qualifies to help with this service project. Individuals and/or churches are asked to collect T-shirts (preferably used, may be stained, but clean), to donate for this endeavor. It would be helpful if individuals who have good sewing scissors would bring them to use. T-shirts need to be cut first, then tied.

Hope Partners needs these reusable bags to pack groceries, clothes, household items, school supplies, etc. needed for those who come to Hope Partners for help.

Questions? Call Moderator-Elect Karen Pierson 661-792-6447



Earlier this year, 10 participants at the University of La Verne made 178 bags! How many will we make?

www.inlandvalleyhopepartners.org

Speak Peace: A Daily Reader

A Collection of Stories, Musings, and Historical Writings on Peace
 Edited by Cheryl Brumbaugh-Cayford

"Let me hear what God the Lord will speak, for he will speak peace to his people." – Psalm 85:8a NRSV

A commitment to peacemaking is made anew every day. In a broken world that's a daunting calling. But God surrounds us with a cloud of witnesses, past and present—women and men of faith who testify to the power of speaking peace. They speak to us through their words, and also through their living. Their brave voices and testimonies challenge us to let our lives speak as well.

This book is a collection of 366 daily readings—stories, musings, and historical writings. Many are rooted in the Church of the Brethren, known for its longstanding commitment to peace making. Cost \$24.00

www.brethrenpress.com (800-441-3712)

Read peace. Speak peace. Pursue peace. Make peace.



2017 District Conference Come Worship with us

Celebrating the Witness and With-ness of Jesus is done in community! The highlight of this District Conference is going to be how we are together (with-ness) as a community of faith sharing the faith stories (witness) that give us hope and empower us to be Christ in the world! Worship is just one of those ways!

Worship will begin with gathering singing, led by our Conference Music Director, Deb Wass. Our voices will lift us into the presence of God as we sing our heartfelt praise to our Creator.

Friday evening's service will be a treat as Brian McLaren, author, speaker, activist and theologian, speaks to us from his heart sharing the gospel Jesus' inclusion and love that helps us formulate a strong Christian identity in a multifaceted and multi-faith world.

Worship Saturday will begin 30 minutes after Business concludes as we enter into our unique gathering of the body of Christ we call Love Feast. Through scripture, questions and song we will



bear witness to Jesus' love in community celebrating the basin, towel, bread and cup as symbols of service! Take time to reconcile yourself to God in the light and life of confession! Enjoy a moving interpretative point dance by Elizabeth Storne-Piazza of Michael Card's "Basin and

Towel!" Wonder with the voices of the youth as they share questions of faith that lead us through our time together! Join us as we conclude with bread and cup, symbols of the ultimate witness and with-ness of Jesus. Love Feast will be our evening meal and it is included for everyone with registration.



Sunday morning our weekend will come to its conclusion is worship! 2017 Moderator Sara Haldeman-Scarr will preach on her conference theme of "The witness and With-ness of Jesus" providing thoughtful sharing that will empower us to continue the work of Jesus being with each other, and "other" in ways that can invite everyone to proclaim their faith in the God of Creation.

God invites us to worship! Open your hearts, your minds, and offer your spirits as we celebrate the witness and with-ness of Jesus.

Sara Haldeman-Scarr,

moderator@pswdcob.org

District Conference Meals

Dining opportunities during conference will include lunch and dinner Friday and lunch on Saturday served in Hillcrest's Maury Smeltzer Lounge. Sign up for these meals when you register. Saturday evening there will be a simple meal served as part of the evening worship service in the Hillcrest Meeting House. This meal is included in the registration cost. Saturday's Love Feast should end by 7:00pm.



As always everyone is welcome in the Hillcrest Dining Room for breakfast, lunch and dinner and the Hillcrest café for lunch on a Pay-as-you-go basis.

Two Part Delegate Registration

- 1) Congregation fills out an on-line "Delegate Credential Card" for each delegate, but does not register them for District Conference. No cost for the Delegate Credential Card.
- 2) Each delegate registers online: You are responsible for completing your \$90 registration by the October 25, 2017 deadline (meals & lodging extra).

Registration Cost

includes Saturday evening's simple meal.

1. \$90 delegates (meals & lodging extra)
2. \$60 adults (meals & lodging extra)
3. \$60 youth grades 6-12 (activities included)
4. \$30 children grades K-5 (activities included)
5. Children under 5 are free (lodging is extra)

Children's meal discount:

- Ages 5-10 half price, under 5 free.

Childcare & Children's Activities

These 3 options are only available until October 25th so we can plan for enough volunteers based on registrations.

(1) Friday workshop & all worship services

Nursery: infants through 6 year olds

- All meals times are with parents, so pickup your child.
- \$0 registration / activity fee = FREE for the weekend.

(2) Saturday business & insight sessions

Nursery: infants through Pre-K, age 6 in option (3)

- Saturday 8:15 a.m. – 5:15 p.m. (lunch with parents).
- All meals times are with parents, so pickup your child.

(3) Saturday Children's Activities

K through 5th grade, includes 6 year olds

- Saturday 8:15 a.m. – 5:15 p.m. including lunch.
- \$30 registration activity fee = \$30 including Saturday lunch (other meals can be reserved at half price)
- Activities may include: Exploration of the conference theme, Bible stories, games, crafts.

Advanced Registration by Web / On-Line:

- Opens September 1 at 9:00 a.m.
- Changes October 25 at midnight.
- Saves you money!
- More choices in activities and insight sessions.
- Reserve special meals at the church.

After October 25 Web & On-Site Registration:

- Your options are limited and more expensive.
- On October 25 the **price increases** \$25 for individuals and \$50 for families.
- On October 25 meal registration and age group activities close and will not re-open.
 - NO nursery or childcare registrations
 - NO youth activity registrations
 - NO meal availability

Activities Included in Registration:

Youth activities, Friday after worship through Sunday morning, includes 3 meals Saturday & breakfast Sunday. (Friday meals are *extra*)

Children's Saturday activities (K-5). During Business and Insight Sessions. Lunch is included.

Saturday Nursery Care (infant-pre-K). During Business and Insight Sessions. *Lunch is not included*, parents pick up their children for lunch.

Activities are **not included with late registration**.

District Youth Fly High

by Erik Brummett, Interim District Youth Advisor
317-694-2883 – PeacefulPastor@gmail.com

Greetings brothers and sisters,

Nine youth (and three advisors) gathered in Bakersfield April 21-23, 2017, for the Spring Fling! Hosted by the Bakersfield Church of the Brethren, the youth came from north and south for a time of fellowship, worship, study and play. Friday night the youth took the opportunity to get to know one another, worship, and get comfortable with each other.



Saturday was spent at the California Living Museum where we participated in the Condor Challenge, which included games, a climbing tower, and a high ropes course. The games were designed to get the youth to communicate, strategize, get creative, and trust one another. One game saw the youth separated amongst three islands with two boards as resources. Each youth had to get to a different island and they couldn't end on the island on which they began. In this game, different youth passed around leadership working to hear and use the best ideas to solve the problem. The youth also excelled at the high ropes course that required intense listening and attention to ensure the safety of each participant.



After the Condor Challenge, we had a picnic lunch followed by a photo scavenger hunt in the zoo with 25 riddles or clues that when solved would lead the youth to the animal they need to find and photograph. After they completed the scavenger hunt, they were to find a place to sit, reflect on what they had seen and experienced, and explore how their ideas of creation care and dominion are affected by the weekend's experiences and discussions. We made our way back to the church, had free time and dinner, and entered into a time of worship and study.



Sunday morning we shared our goals concerning creation care that they would work towards daily. One youth had a goal of feeding the birds. Another wanted to educate his peers on the destruction of the rainforests and how they can be saved. Another wanted to combat world hunger. Then the youth worshiped with the Bakersfield congregation and presented them thank you posters before we parted ways to return home with the objective of responsibly caring for our dominion on Earth and respectfully caring for all of God's creation.



New Life

Pacific Southwest District of the
Church of the Brethren
P.O. Box 219
La Verne CA 91750-0219

NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
SAN DIMAS, CA
PERMIT NO. 78

Address Service Requested

Pastor / Spouse Retreat

Second week of June in Malibu, CA



Under the theme “Personality, Spirituality, and the Beatitudes” a group of District pastors (and spouses as appropriate) gathered for four days of renewal of body, mind, and spirit. Leadership was provided by Reba Herder, founder and director of Everylight, who led the group through a study of the enneagram and the beatitudes as a way to deeper spiritual renewal. Times of worship (opening night led by District Moderator Sara Haldeman-Scarr), fellowship, rest and daily yoga filled out the gathering. Plans are underway for the 2018 gathering. This event is sponsored and supported by the PSWD Ministry Commission and its budget.



Speaker Reba Herder

Discover more about
District Conference
November 10-12, 2017
on the pages
within this
newsletter



Sara Haldeman-Scarr leading worship