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Boulevard News

September, 2011
Kreston Lipscomb, Pastor

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Christian Approach to the End of Life

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Coming from his own experience of living with life-threatening cancer, Walter Wangerin speaks directly from the heart in a 4-5 session study entitled, *"Confronting Death: A Christian Approach to the End of Life."* Wangerin shares about how cancer has changed his life and how faith has sustained him. He asserts that *Confronting Death* is not for the Christian idealist; it is for every Christian, as we learn how to see the world differently, looking forward to the world to come without dismissing our responsibilities here and now. **We will begin a four to five week small group conversation on this topic beginning Thursday, September 22nd.** The conversation begins at 7 pm.

Walter Wangerin, Jr. currently holds the Jochum Chair at Valparaiso University in Valparaiso, IN. He teaches literature, theology, and creative writing at the university. His *Letters from the Land of Cancer* received the Award of Merit in 2011 from *Christianity Today*.

Readings for Sunday Worship

A general observation of the readings for Sunday worship this month (Sept.) is this: they present a picture of people and individuals who are argumentative, selfish, finicky, and quick to judge. The readings invite us to consider important spiritual matters; forgiveness, mercy, relationships, and restoration. You are invited to read ahead as we prepare to worship together.

Sept. 11: Matthew 18: 21-35

Sept. 18: Jonah 3: 10-4: 11; Mathew 20: 1-16

Sept. 25: Exodus 17: 1-7; Matthew 21: 23-32

Oct. 2: Exodus 20: 1-4, 7-9, 12-20; Philippians 3: 4b-14;

Matthew 21: 33-46

*"Worship is a living joy and an aching wonder...It is found among the communion of saints and in the shelter of God's hand."
-Ruth C. Duck & Maren C. Tirabassi, Preface to "Touch Holiness: Resources for Worship."*

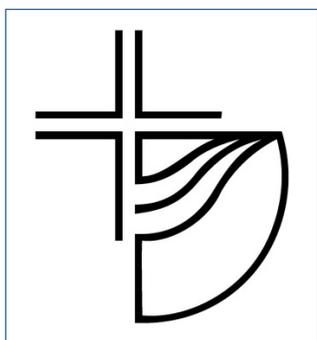
2011 District Conference: Nov. 4-6

Churches are making banners based on the conference theme: "Joined with me and I with you."

The 2011 District Conference will be held at the Lake Williamson Christian Center near Carlinville, IL. The host for the year's conference is the Hurricane Creek congregation. The conference will begin with opening worship on Friday evening and conclude with morning worship on Sunday. There are activities planned for all age groups, including a senior-high retreat. Family activities include a movie night, bonfire and hayrack ride, and swimming. The Illinois & Wisconsin CoB District's business session will be held Saturday morning and afternoon.

Registration forms need to be filled out and payment made to the district by September 30. A variety of options are available to participants. Attendees may register for housing and meals for the full weekend at costs based on single occupancy, double occupancy, or three or more. For those who are able to only attend on a Friday evening or during the day on Saturday there is a small participation fee of \$9.50 for each day. There is no participation fee for closing worship on Sunday. Registration forms are posted on the back table of the sanctuary. Questions may be directed to Roger Ruth, who is on the District's Conference Planning and Arrangements Team or to Pastor Kres. Registrations and payment are due September 30. Late fees are assessed after that date.

At the close of worship on Sunday, November 6th, Fletcher Farrar will be installed as Moderator of the District. He will lead the district through next year's conference in Virden, IL.



Pleasant Hill Village Annual Dinner

The Pleasant Hill Village Annual Dinner and Auction will be held Saturday, October 15th at the Knights of Columbus hall in Virden, IL. The theme is "A Tropical Getaway." Attendees are invited to dress in your favorite tropical attire. Doors will open at 5 pm. Dinner will be served at 6 pm.

A variety of items will be available for auction including hand-crafted items, a specially prepared dinner for eight, and much, much more. This annual fundraiser enables Pleasant Hill Village to fund much needed projects at the Home.

Tickets are \$30 per person. You may get them locally from Joan Boatz, Patty Brockmeyer, or Allen Krall.

News and Notes

Laura Lipscomb and some friends are working on a new activity that will be geared to children and youth. Tentatively, the idea is to host a two-hour service activity one Sunday a month. Each month a different service project will be selected for the activity. The plan is to hold the activity here at First Church with the service project benefiting the community or a local agency. More details to come.

A Community Potluck will be held following worship on Sunday, September 11. The Nurture Commission invites you to bring a dish to share. Drinks will be provided.

Thanks to Rebecca Lipscomb for her service as our Annual Conference delegate at Grand Rapids, MI. She will continue to serve as delegate through next year's Annual Conference in St. Louis. **Any one interested in serving as delegate for the 2013-2014 term (Charlotte, NC and Columbus, OH are invited to speak to Pastor Kres or a board member.**

A Resolution on War in Afghanistan was passed at this year's Annual Conference. The resolution calls for immediate withdrawal of combat troops, and to invest resources in the development of the Afghan people and infrastructure. It also urges the church to become more engaged in humanitarian aid, alternatives to violence, interfaith and intercultural dialogue, etc.



Springfield/Chatham CROP Walk

The Springfield/Chatham CROP Hunger Walk 2011 will take place on Sunday, October 2, 2011. The 4-mile walk will begin with a 1pm registration at the Old Capitol Plaza. Step-off will be at 1:30 pm.

CROP Hunger Walks are community-wide events sponsored by Church World Service and organized by local religious groups, businesses, schools and others to raise funds to end hunger at home and around the world. Eighty percent of the money raised benefits Church World Service. Twenty percent of the funds are shared with local agencies and food pantries in the Springfield and Chatham area.

Much has been written about how some non-profit organizations use or misuse donations. Church World Service has an excellent history and reputation in channeling donations to people and projects in need. Visit their website at www.churchworldservice.org.

**Impact our
Community and
the World. Walk or
sponsor a walker
on 10/2/2011**

*News and Notes continued
from page 2.*

SCN Pastor's Retreat. "A Circle Ever Wider, A People Ever Free" is the theme for a Supportive Communities Network pastor's retreat. One of the goals of the retreat is to strengthen relationships between the Mennonite and Brethren pastors whose congregations are members of the SCN. The retreat will be held October 17-20 in Michigan.

Steward Commission Planning. The stewardship commission has been working hard on getting information and bids on some possible long-term building needs. These include looking at the need for new carpet and the need for masonry work on our church meetinghouse. Repair work has already been done on and around the tower to stop leaking from the roof.

Peace Witness (from www.cob.org)

The Church of the Brethren has a long history of pursuing peace. Yet the work has not been finished; God's vision of a peaceful and just world is still one we must call into being with each step we take.

Wars continue to rage on in many countries, and violence of all forms is prevalent throughout the world. According to the United Nations, an estimated 300,000 children are being used in over 30 conflicts worldwide as child soldiers. Closer to home, one-quarter of all women will face physical or psychological violence in dating relationship according to the **National Violence Against Women survey**. And 160,000 children miss school every day for fear of bullying, according to the **National**

Crime Prevention Council. Meanwhile in the FY 2011 budget our government spends 13 times more on its military than it does aiding the world's poor. 1.4 billion of whom live on less than \$1.25 a day according to the **World Bank** research.

Looking Ahead

Sunday, November 13 is National Donor Sabbath. Individuals and congregations are encouraged to recognize the gift of life that comes from organ and tissue donation. Currently, nearly 100,000 people are on the national waiting list for organ transplants. Each year, an average of 6,000 people die waiting (statistics provided *Gift of Hope Organ & Tissue Donor Network*).

The Church of the Brethren supports organ and tissue donation. While many of us may have already made the decision to be donors, we are encouraged to share that information with family members and loved ones. It is always easier for our families to know what our wishes are in advance.



Church of the Brethren

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