



Out & About

Sept. 8 — Northwest Ohio Ministers Fellowship and Pastor Peer Meeting

Sept. 9 — Stark Pastor Peer Meeting at Camp Luz

Sept. 10 — Central Ohio Pastor Peer Meeting at Oak Grove (West Liberty)

Sept. 11 — Columbiana Pastor Peer Meeting at North Lima

Sept. 23 — Leadership Team Meeting in Upper Sandusky



Travels and News
from Transitional Conference Leader George O'Reilly
September 2015
pastorgeorgeoreilly@gmail.com

A good beginning

A good beginning — As the very recently hired Transitional Conference Leader for Ohio Conference, I find myself amid a flurry of activity and a considerable range of complexities! And yet I can say without reservation that for me this has been a good beginning!

I have already begun to sense how much graciousness and warmth will characterize my relationships in my work with Ohio Conference. This begins with the Leadership Team and staff. These dedicated folks display welcoming and transparent patterns of communicating with one another and, in my early encounters and meetings, with me. I had come hoping to find persons gathered to work at "discerning together" how to aid Ohio Conference in moving forward, and those hopes have not been disappointed. We have been able to speak openly with one another and to listen thoughtfully to varied perspectives from one another. I fully anticipate that this will give a strong basis for continuing effectiveness as we partner together in leadership in Ohio Conference.

My first "official" meeting occurred Sept. 2 in Bellville at the All-Ohio Conference Pastors' Meeting with around 80 Ohio Conference pastors in attendance along with the Leadership Team and staff. Again I experienced another good beginning with these pastors especially as we came together to talk about things of considerable concern for pastors and churches of Ohio Conference. As I fully expected, I discovered a group of truly committed persons, fully professional in the very best sense of the word, ready to engage one another respectfully despite some significance differences in perspective and desires around the meeting time together.

Such "work" is inherently challenging, and the persons present met that challenge in ways which started these discussions moving in productive directions. Differing perspectives were expressed and heard, various frustrations were voiced and acknowledged, people again spoke openly and listened helpfully.

As many may have noted from other news items about the event, some possible steps forward were identified through several activities from table groups and the full assembly. Most notable to me was the quite evident expression that the collected pastors overwhelming identified their perception that the preference of the congregations they represented would be to retain connection with valued relationships within Ohio Conference. Admittedly, other complexities of present concerns brought out quite different options for moving forward either with continuing connections together or with some "drawing of new boundaries" which might include new relational and organizational realities.

What I strongly appreciated was a sense that graciousness and respectfulness would not be lost or abandoned in the necessary discussions and discernments of future steps. I do truly pray that this will continue to be the pattern following this second "good beginning." For my part, I express again my thankfulness for this opportunity to work together with you to discover God's desires for Ohio Conference and to discern the leading of the Holy Spirit in the choices and actions that will bring Ohio Conference to the next era of being God's Kingdom People together by our Lord's grace and strength!

May our Lord bless and guide as we seek together to love God and one another as disciples of our Lord Jesus in his service together!

