

Congregations to share stories at regional gatherings



Regional Gatherings

As part of Ohio Conference's *Gathered & Sent* initiative, the Conference is holding four regional gatherings this fall.

These gatherings are in place of our traditional fall cluster meetings and are intended not just for pastors and delegates but for all persons from our congregations who want to learn about the exciting things

that are going on in the congregations around them and throughout the Conference. The gatherings will also be a time of fellowship with our brothers and sisters in Christ.

All regional gatherings will begin at 6:30 p.m. and last about 90 minutes. Locations are as follows:

- Oct. 22 — Huber Mennonite Church, New Carlisle
- Oct. 24 — Friendship Mennonite Church, Bedford Heights
- Oct. 29 — Martins Mennonite Church, Orrville
- Nov. 5 — Salem Mennonite Church, Waldron, Michigan

Ohio Conference bulletin inserts are published six times per year by Ohio Conference of Mennonite Church USA.

For more information about the Ohio Conference, see the Conference website: www.ohiomennoniteconference.org

Ann Leaman, editor: ohioevangel@gmail.com



OCTOBER 2019

Hesston's Weekend College to offer Bib Lit course to congregations

Hesston, Kansas — As Hesston College prepares its new church leadership program — the Center for Anabaptist Leadership and Learning (CALL) — it is also offering its famous Biblical Literature course to congregations and other groups across the country in an arrangement called Weekend College.

Instead of requiring people to travel to Hesston, Weekend College will bring Hesston College professors to congregations for a weekend-long course.

"Weekend College is a non-credit educational experience for congregations or other groups in their own setting where Hesston College Bible and Ministry faculty teach on



Hesston College faculty member Nick Ladd will teach *The Bible as Story*, a Weekend College course. Nick served on the pastoral team of Salem Mennonite Church in Waldron, Michigan, for several years before joining the Hesston College faculty in 2018.

a variety of topics," explained Jessica Schrock-Ringenberg, director of the CALL program.

Continued on page 2

Supporting
healthy, growing
congregations

Weekend College

Continued from page 1

The Weekend College will launch with *The Bible as Story*, a weekend devoted to helping congregations and conferences put Bible stories together as one big story, expanding biblical literacy and understanding. The resourcing event is based on Hesston's Biblical Literature course — or Bib Lit as it is more commonly known. A former Ohio Conference pastor, Nick Ladd, will be the instructor for this course.

Bib Lit started at Hesston in 1986, created by longtime Bible professor Marion Bontrager, as a way to ensure that students would receive biblical teaching from an Anabaptist perspective as part of their core curriculum. Bib Lit takes a unique approach to teaching the Bible when compared to many other Bible classes — revealing the Bible as a narrative of God and the people of God instead of a compilation of individual stories.

In its more than 30 years of existence, Bib Lit has become iconic to both the Hesston College student experience and known in the wid-

er church as providing sound foundational context to understanding the biblical narrative.

In 2016, the Bib Lit course was transformed from a course manual of loose-leaf sheets of paper contained in three-ring binders to a textbook — *The*

Bible as Story: An Introduction to Biblical Literature co-authored by

Hesston Bible professors Bontrager, Michele Hershberger and John Sharp, who had more than 45 years of combined experience teaching the course.

Hesston's Bible professors have taken Bib Lit on the road for several years by special request, but

Weekend College provides a more formalized approach. The course will be taught by professor Nick Ladd, a 2014 Hesston College

“The Bible as Story course changed my life and faith, helping me to see God’s same mission from Genesis to Revelation.

“It is my passion and a true blessing to be able to share it with others and watch them come to new realizations about God and their own faith stories.”

— **Nick Ladd**

Weekend College

Continued from page 2

Pastoral Ministries graduate who spent about four years on the pastoral team of Salem Mennonite Church in Waldron, Mich., before returning to Hesston on the Bible faculty in 2018.

“The Bible as Story course changed my life and faith, helping me to see God’s same mission from Genesis to Revelation,” said Ladd. “It is my passion and a true blessing to be able to share it with others and watch them come to new realizations about God and their own faith stories.”

Hesston College can also provide the Weekend College experience using other themes, including peace and justice and “Five-fold Church Leadership” or “5Q,” which

organizes the life and ministries of the Church around the Ephesians 4 ministries: Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Shepherds (Pastors) and Teachers.

“5Q shows how the particular callings of the people of God make up the necessary ministries of the body of Christ,” said Schrock-Ringenberg, who has been trained by the 5QCollective as a trainer in the five-fold ministries, and leads Hesston’s “Five-fold” program.

Weekend College typically lasts from Friday evening through Sunday morning, but can also be customized to fit a congregation’s needs. The cost is \$2,000 plus travel, lodging and meal reimbursement for the course presenter. Churches and communities who cannot afford the full rate may be eligible for a discounted rate.

To learn more about the Weekend College experience, go to hesston.edu/weekend-college or contact Director of Alumni and Church Relations Dallas Stutzman at 620-327-8110 or dallas.stutzman@hesston.edu.