



Salem Church of the Brethren

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Continuing the work of Jesus: Peacefully. Simply. Together.

Salem Church of the Brethren

May 2020 Issue

Greetings Sisters and Brothers in Christ

On March 13, 2020, I uploaded a video that I sent out informing you that we were postponing services for 3 weeks. That has since extended until...well...I don't know yet. I went back and reviewed the video and in it, I highlighted a couple things: isolation, faithful creativity, faithful bravery, new ways to connect, and concern for others. Ever since that time, the new quarantine and physical distancing realities are becoming our temporary normal. We don't know when this temporary normal will end, but we know that it will. The question then that I keep mulling over is what will we be about when we get back together again?

Because of our experiences during this time, to assume that we will be like how we were is probably not a reality. We have slowed down. And within this slowed down time, I have witnessed a wide range of human responses (or reactions), and not surprisingly, they have mirrored our behaviors before. Or have they? I have seen people provide care to others, random acts of kindness, intentional workings toward social justice and care. I have also seen yelling, arguing, protesting, and political rallies that protest the actions of the states. Perhaps there is an underlying reason for all of these actions: perhaps people are afraid. I admit that I have some aspects of fear that I continue to wrestle with that are related to the pandemic.

I am afraid that when we are able to get back together again, there are some who may not want too. I fear that the work that we have been doing as a community for the past 3 years will need to be "reset" and the work will be lost. I worry that the political turmoil that rumbles like thunder will further divide our world, creating long lasting pockets of isolation long after the pandemic passes. I worry about those who will get sick from this, and those that will die from it. I read an article last night about a Miami Township woman who died on April 8¹ from this virus, and my heart broke for the family whose mourning is very real, even when others claim that this pandemic is a "false flag." I worry about the potential overreach of the government. I worry about what would happen if we didn't take this seriously, as history has borne witness to many instances of tragedy when people are defiant against recommendations. But I also worry that we would be so driven by the recommendations, that we lose the witness we are to have for God. I have worries. I have fear. It would be irresponsible to act as though I am not afraid.

Fear has its place in life. Fear can be a tremendous tool to survive. Thomas has struggled with this home-crisis-schooling. He is a very social butterfly, and not being around people, especially friends, is difficult for him. Recently, I had a conversation with him about trying to use his fear and anxiety in a way that creates responses, not reactions. I explained that reactions are instincts, things that happen without us really having to think about it. Reactions and reflexes are similar, I explained. But a response takes the think that caused the reaction, the reflexes and pauses a moment. It looks around at what else is present and asks, "What is the best I can do with this?" I want him to respond. I want to have our community respond. I want to have the world respond.

Here is my point to all of the rambling: I don't know what the future will hold. I have suspicions, educated guesses, hunches and others. I worry about what the impact will be on people because of the limitation of work and engagement like we are used too. I worry what would have happened if others did not comply with the warnings. No matter what I worry though, I trust that God's wisdom will be near in times of great trouble. That's why, though I am nervous, and I have fear, I will not react out of fear, but out of the trust that the Lord's safety is resilient and determined, no matter what humans do.

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In Our Prayers



Barbara C., Shirley C., Janet H., Bill L., Leon & Waneta M., Earl M.

Long Term Needs: Elois C., Aaron M., Sam P., Chad P., Reta S.

Churches and more: Our district churches, Trinity Presbyterian Church, Church of the Brethren in Nigeria (Godiya Bitrus), Bethany Theological Seminary

Worship

You can access previous worship services and services to come via YouTube. The link is below. Simply copy the link in your internet browser. If you would like a CD or DVD of any worship service, please contact Pastor Lee.

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCy2IR7-Re6vMQ092LxcLvyA>

During the month of May Pastor Lee will be engaging the book of James during worship. Join us online!

A **heartfelt thank you** to all who have contributed or participate in online worship services! A special thank you to Randy Schaurer, Pastor Lee, and Ashely Saylor for making the communion elements available for Love Feast.

March & April Offering

You can still mail in your offering. Your offering continues the work of Jesus in our community and world!

Sunday Morning Schedule

We are continuing to follow the State and Federal guidelines for this pandemic. This is a fluid situation and we will continue to communicate and make changes as necessary. We look forward to when we can meet face to face again!

email: salemcob@gmail.com

Lee Saylor, Pastor

Office Hours 9:30am-12:00noon, Tues.-Fri.

937-540-4533; iamleebob@gmail.com

Carrie Smith, Administrative Assistant

Karen Dillon, Director of Christian Ed.

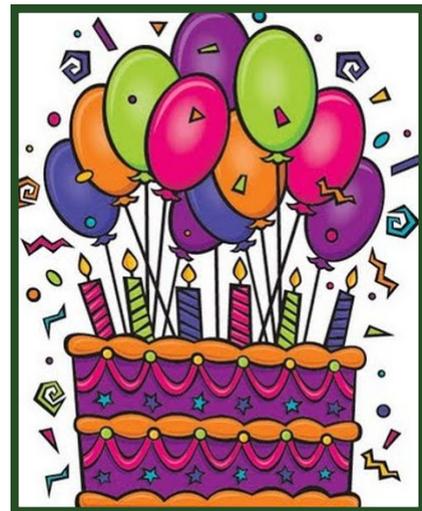
Tom Hissong, Board Chair 937-931-3099; Tanger15@aol.com

Randy Schauer, Deacon Chair; 937-231-7627

Pastor Lee and Carrie, the secretary are working mostly from home. Email and phone messages are checked regularly. Please don't hesitate to call Pastor Lee or Randy Schaurer if you need anything.

May Birthdays-*Happy Birthday!!*

3-Norma H.
6-Robert D.
8-Jim D.
16-John E.
18-Thomas W.
22-Taco C.
24-Sandy S.
25-Jenna Moore
L.
28-Scott F.



PASTOR'S NOTE CONTIUED...

The previous paragraph was written with Psalm 46 in mind. It is a Psalm that I often read from during memorial and funeral services. My intention in those space is not to silence anxiety and fear, but to respond to it with God's grace and love. In this time of pandemic and political wrangling, squabbling blaming, human suffering, illness and injustice, may we not only take comfort in our God, but also be the comfort of our God to others. I would encourage you to look at Psalm 46 closer this month. What does it mean to rely on God as a refuge and strength? What does it mean to be faithful while having fear? Can we respect the differences of thoughts of one another, and still be a present help in times of great trouble? Sisters and Brothers, until we meet again.

Blessings,

Pastor Lee Saylor

This & That

Worship, Sunday School, Sew What, Wednesday meal & activities, District events, etc. will resume per the State guidelines. We look forward to joining together again. Until then, connect with your church family via phone calls, One Call, emails, and Facebook. You can view the Sunday worship services via YouTube. You can also access the services through our Facebook page.

<https://www.facebook.com/salembrethren/>

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCy2IR7-Re6vMQ092LxcLvyA>

Below is the link for the **Wednesday Zoom check-ins**. All are welcome to join each Wednesday or whichever Wednesdays you are available. It's simply a chance to say hi to other Salem friends and connect online. The link below will work for each Wednesday! Join us! If you have any questions, please contact Pastor Lee. Wednesday Night Check in from 7:00-8:00pm each Wednesday

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85143803031?pwd=MXlCZHI1S092TzIzbVklM01Bb0dkZz09>

Meeting ID: 851 4380 3031

Password: 022471

Keep up to date with various information by having your number added to our **One Call system**. Announcements, meetings, and special events are communicated through One Call. Contact Carrie in the office at 836-6145, if you'd like to be added.

If you have a **prayer request** you'd like to go through the prayer chain One Call, please call Randy Schaurer at 231-7627. If he cannot be reached, please call Pastor Lee at 836-6145. If you'd like to get prayer requests, please let Carrie in the office know.

Did you know?? **The District sends a monthly newsletter via email.** You can sign up at sodcob.org or pick up a hard copy on the narthex table (or call Carrie in the office).

The Church of the Brethren sends out news and such via email. You can sign up for a number of communications by going to brethren.org .

Does Carrie in the office have your **updated email address**? Email her at salemcob@gmail.com to stay informed.

What is Salem up to?



Bonnie Warner

One of the projects I have been doing is going through old photo albums. I've sent copies of pictures to family members and friends. Also, going through them to double check names and dates of photos. I also completed this puzzle.



Tom Hissong

I have been out everyday enjoying nature's wonders! I have taken several photos over the past month.



Ditmer Family

Lots of crafting and walking happening in the Ditmer home :)



Smith Family

We're enjoying hiking, doodling, and just being together.



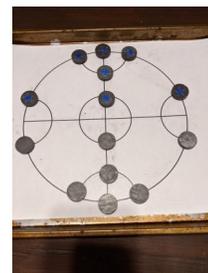
What is Salem up to continued...

Saylor Family

The Saylor's have been staying busy, even from home! Ashley is still working (only occasionally outside the house) and Lee has been working hard to find creative ways to keep us all connected as a church family even though we can't give hugs and handshakes! Thomas is doing school remotely and Isaac is hanging out and keeping us all busy and on our toes! We try every day to remember what we are grateful for - hikes, pretty sunshine, fun new games, and a video Love Feast are just a few that we count in the column of blessings! We pray for you all daily, and remember that these times are opportunities for us to take stock of what is important, what we



have, what we need, and how very loved we are by our Father and you all-our family. Know that this season is just that-a season. Seasons change us, just as they change what is growing outside. We look forward to meeting you all again and until then, we love you and hold you in His Light and Peace!



Joy Moore

I have been busy teaching from school and home remotely, which has been a challenge. Evenings and weekends have allowed me to work on my secret deck garden in my front yard and get it ready for warmer days. I've also enjoyed weeding and observing beautiful bulbs, These were planted in memory of special people in heaven and are from past Easter celebrations.

Teri Stebbins

Since I no longer have to commute to work and I'm working from home, I've had time to start a garden. I have lettuce, cantaloupe, tomatoes, peppers, onions, carrots, peas, and cucumber. In the picture, you can see the lettuce, cantaloupe, tomatoes and peppers. The peppers were slow to start, but they are just beginning to pop through the soil. You would think that I do this every year since I'm married to a farmer. But, I've never had much interest in growing my own food. But, now that I'm confined to my home, it's been kind of fun to watch them grow.



District News

Some articles adapted/taken from the district newsletter. You can email sodcob@brethren.org to receive the district newsletter. There are also hard copies available on the narthex table.

Working Together...Empowering Disciples.

Most District events have been suspended or cancelled. Check out sodcob.org for information.

Camping and Retreat summer camp! *As of now, Summer Camp is on!* Brochures and registration forms for Summer Camp are on the district website at www.sodcob.org. Please contact Karen Dillon with any questions.

Denominational News

*Some articles adapted/taken from Church of the Brethren Newline.
You can sign up online to receive these newsletters and other communications at brethren.org.*

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April 11, 2020

Paul Munday, moderator of the Church of the Brethren Annual Conference, is writing a quarterly letter to the church under the heading "Trail Thoughts." This spring letter addresses the topic of "Upheaval." The letter begins, "COVID-19. Unprecedented. Maddening. Extraordinary. Surreal. But also: upheaval. It's as if everything has suddenly been disrupted, causing the "train of life" to careen, ready to derail. If it's any consolation, this is not the first pandemic to threaten the trajectory of life. There was the 1918 influenza outbreak, the 2015-2016 Zika occurrence in Central/South America, the 2002-2003 SARS incident, and the 2014-2015 Ebola eruption in West Africa. In each instance, there were deadly results; but in time, healing returned." Find the reflection, discussion starters/questions, and resources to dig deeper at www.brethren.org/ac/2020/moderator

April 20, 2020

A pastoral message from Church of the Brethren general secretary David Steele extends Christian greetings to the whole church, gratitude to our pastors, and a message of Easter hope and encouragement. This video message is posted on the Church of the Brethren YouTube channel at <https://youtu.be/IGRBXeVIP7g>

April 21, 2020

It is still our hope to gather on July 1-5, 2020 for the Church of the Brethren Annual Conference. Please register and plan to be with us! We are carefully monitoring guidelines from the Centers for Disease Control, the World Health Organization, and authorities in Michigan. The health and safety of attendees, volunteers, and partners is our first priority. Be assured also there is a generous refund/cancellation policy for Annual Conference, should it be necessary. So if you go ahead and register now, you will have time to reconsider up until one week before Conference begins.