



Salem Church of the Brethren

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

Salem Church of the Brethren

August 2019 Issue

Greetings Brothers & Sisters

Genesis 19:25-26 - The Lord destroyed these cities, the entire valley, everyone who lived in the cities, and all of the fertile land's vegetation. When Lot's wife looked back, she turned into a pillar of salt.

I have a lot of sympathy for Lot's wife. Her story is connected to the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. Because of the words Sodom and Gomorrah, we are immediately flooded with all types of thoughts and baggage. Perhaps too much. Often, we are unable to see past the words Sodom and Gomorrah and we don't spend enough time walking a mile in Lot's wife's shoe. Let's do that now.

Here is what we know about her: She is married to Lot. Her husband was a prophet to the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah. Those cities are being destroyed as she is walking away. She is turned to stone. There. That's it. That's about all we know. We don't get her name, we don't get any kind of thoughts about her relationship with Lot or the people of Sodom and Gomorrah. We don't even hear what her thoughts were when the angels came to visit Lot and his house. We know so very little.

If we know so little, then why aren't we more curious about her? If we know so little, why have so many scholars, preachers and Sunday School teachers used her two passages to render judgment upon her. We see what God did to her for looking back, but before we jump to that answer, we have to pause and admit something; we are just as guilty as she is.

We are people of stories, and stories that have happened are of particular importance. They help shape our character, our understanding of the world, our hopes and dreams. We all look back. We call it nostalgia. Do we see looking back as a sin? You might respond here that verse 17 carries the command to not look back, which Lot's wife did. There is no teaching from God that we should not look back. In fact, there could be quite a compelling argument to say that the knowledge learned from the past is what we call wisdom. Yet when Solomon asked for wisdom, God gave it with the idea not of looking back, but of going forward. Looking at Lot's wife, there is so much that we don't know that we are invited to step into her shoes and try and walk her story. The cities, broken and sin-filled though they were, are where she called home. She had made memories there. She had had children there. She had lived there. And now, behind her, it is being destroyed.

Her home is being destroyed and her escape was so quick and haphazard that she could not have felt prepared when they left. Appointments and plans that were scheduled for the following week were, quite literally, being destroyed. Everything about her life is being burned. Do we pause to think about that? Or do we see that she was turned to stone and skip over her. I invite you to not skip over her. Sit at her feet and think. How much of us do we see in her? How often are we caught up in the past that we can't see past the past. We call it history, we call it culture, we call it many things, but it is the past.

And we can't ignore the past, because as mid 20th century philosopher George Santayana rightly stated, "Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it."¹ But the past can help inform our future. The the past should not define our future. Perhaps that was Lot's wife's mistake. Maybe she was missing the life of the past, the life that was being destroyed, and she was not able to accept the reality in front of her and going forward. So she looked back, and never stopped looking back.

I don't know. But I do have sympathy for her. I am not going to judge her for her actions. It is not my place to judge. I will hear her story, I will try and learn from it. I think that is all we can do; try and learn, so that we can have the wisdom to not be stuck in the past failures or successes, and keep moving forward into the new creation of God.

Blessings
Pastor Lee Saylor

¹ https://en.wikiquote.org/wiki/George_Santayana

Those Serving in August

Greeters: August 4--Diana H. & Doris S., August 11--Jayne S. & Sue W., August 18--Jane E. & Joy M., August 25--Gary & Dawn S.

Acolytes: August 4--Eric B., August 11--Rachel P., August 18--Colin H. August 25--Ryan F.

Ushers: Stan M., Tom W., Jr., Randy S.r, Brian P.

Worship Leaders: August 4--Tom H., August 11--Deo S., August 18--Sue W., August 25--Diana B.



Mark Your Calendars

Deadlines

Next Newsletter Deadline: Sunday, August 18, 2019

Bulletin Articles: Thursday, 10:00am

Board Meeting

Thursday, August 8, 7:00pm

Shepherding Prayer Group

Tuesday, August 20 7:00pm

Sunday Worship

August 4	from Genesis 18:20-32 "For the sake of..."
August 11	from Colossians 2:6-19 "Qualified"
August 18	from Luke 12:13-21 "Treasurers of God"
August 25	<i>Annual Conference Report</i> from 2 Corinthians 5:13-21 "Reclaiming Christs Passion"

Sunday Sermons

August Birthdays-Happy Birthday!!

3-Joey S.	18-Paul H.
4-Carla D.	18-Dominic S.
7-Kyle S.	27-Ashley S.
8-Chad P.	
9-Jill P.	
12-Helen H.	
16-Carson W.	
17-Jennah Hu.	



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Carrie Smith, Administrative Assistant
Office Hours 9:00am-12:00noon, M-F
Karen Dillon, Director of Christian Ed.

Sunday Morning Schedule

9:00am Adult, Young Adult, and High School Sunday School with Childcare
10:00am Morning Worship
10:15am Children's Sunday School
Nursery (ages 2 and under)

Wednesday Meal & Activities

Fellowship meal and activities will resume on
September 11, 2019
JOIN US!!

In Our Prayers

Barbara C., Shirley C., Janet H., Leon & Waneta M., Jayne S.

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

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



This & That & Special Events

Thanks from St. Vincent de Paul! Thank you so much for the recent donation in support of our neighbors in need. We are appreciative of the effort you have invested in organizing and gathering handmade quilts for our shelters. Thank you!

All-Church Game Night! Saturday, August 3, 7:00pm in the Fellowship Hall. Join us! Bring a snack and a friend!

If you have a **prayer request** you'd like to go through the prayer chain One Call, please call Sue Wampler at 286-4590. If she cannot be reached, please call Pastor Lee at 836-6145.

The next **Shepherding Prayer group** meeting will be Tuesday, August 20 at 7:00pm in the parlor.

We will have a playground maintenance/workday August 19, 9:00am-12:00pm. (Rain date is August 26.) Plan to attend so we can make sure the playground is safe and fun for all! Any questions please contact Gary Strain.

Wednesday fellowship meal and activities & Sew What will resume later this Summer/Fall. **Wednesday meal & activities will resume Wednesday, September 11.**

The Annual Denominational Mission Offering will be taken on **September 15.** This offering allows the Church of the Brethren to support missions here in this country as well as all over the world.

September 15 is Bring-A-Friend Sunday! Watch for more information for this fun event!

International Day of Peace is September 21, 2019.

Mark your calendars now for **September 23-27 for Adult Bible School.** More information to come.

Mark your calendars now for **CROP WALK on October 6.** Watch for more information.

August 24, 3:00-6:00pm at
Centennial Park in Englewood

Volunteer, donate, or just come and connect with the community at this free event. Invite your friends, neighbors, and family to join in the fun!



District News

Some articles adapted/taken from the district newsletter. You can email sodcob@brethren.org to receive the district newsletter.

Working Together...Empowering Disciples.

The District Newsletter for May is available at sodcob.org or hard copies are available on the narthex table.

13th Annual Ice Cream Social – On Saturday, August 3, plan to attend the annual BDM Ice Cream Social. It will be from 4:00 – 7:00 PM at Happy Corner COB. Come for supper, ice cream, and fellowship. This is the major fundraiser for S. Ohio/KY BDM, raising funds for rebuilding trips and Church World Service kits.

Golf Scramble – On Saturday, August 10 at 8:00 AM, a golf scramble will be held at Turtle Creek Golf Course located in Greenville. Now is the time to register or to become a hole sponsor. Registration/sponsorship forms are available on the district website or ask at your church office. All proceeds benefit S. Ohio/KY BDM and Camping & Retreat Ministries.



**Dessert and Dialogue: Sharing Together with District Leadership
August 13, 2019 at 1:00 PM**

Good Shepherd Church of the Brethren

Many times when we gather together, we feel like our time is limited. Our times together as a District are infrequent and there is much to be shared. Due to time restrictions, leadership is not able to hear adequately from YOU. Your District Leadership hopes this event will provide a venue which will give opportunity for you to share your thoughts and reflections, joys and concerns, etc. The event will be casual and relaxed over coffee and desserts. A few guiding questions may be provided but it is hoped that you will direct the conversation. There may be one big conversation, or many smaller ones, depending on attendance. Everyone is invited!!!! But don't feel badly if it's too far away or you can't make it, this is a quarterly event that will change locations each quarter. We hope you will join us as we strive to continue the work of Jesus . . . peacefully, simply, together.

**Women's Retreat Announced
September 27-28, 2019 at Bergamo Center**

Theme: Love Like an Ocean

Watch for more information!

Announcing: 2019 Southern Ohio/Kentucky District Conference

Theme "God provides"

October 11 & 12, 2019 at Happy Corner Church of the Brethren

Watch for more information!

Gifts Discernment-- 2019 District Slate

The Gifts Discernment Commission will soon be meeting to begin work on the 2019 District slate to present to District Conference. You are encouraged to offer suggestions for the various district offices that come open this year. A list of positions and a form to offer suggestions are available on the district website.

Denominational News

Some articles adapted/taken from Church of the Brethren Newslines. You can sign up online to receive these newsletters at brethren.org.

Peacefully. Simply. Together.

Junior high conference inspires youth to be strong and courageous

By Frank Ramirez

With the theme song “Strong and Courageous” by Kyle Remnant and Jon Wilson still ringing in their ears, 281 Brethren who had come together for National Junior High Conference prepared to leave Elizabethtown (Pa.) College. The event took place June 14-16. The theme “Strong and Courageous” was taken from God’s charge to Joshua as he prepared to take up the mantle of leadership and guide his people. Worship, music, drama, small group workshops, table fellowship, and recreation worked together to inspire strength and courage among this new generation of Brethren-leaders-to-be. Read more at www.brethren.org/news/2019/junior-high-conference-inspires-youth.html



Peace Day 2019: Making the case for peace

By Jen Houser

On Earth Peace announces its 13th annual campaign to promote Peace Day, the International Day of Peace, on Sept. 21, 2019. The theme for Peace Day 2019 is “The Case for Peace.” This year’s campaign helps participants build the case for peace from a Christian perspective. Read more at www.brethren.org/news/2019/peace-day-2019-announcement.html

Compelling vision conversations were the highlight of the 2019 Annual Conference held July 3-7 in Greensboro, N.C. Other business was set aside--except necessary items such as elections and reports--to make time for the process intended to help the Church of the Brethren discern a compelling vision to guide the denomination into the future. Large amounts of data were collected from some 120 table groups of delegates and nondelegates. The Conference was presided over by moderator Donita Keister, moderator-elect Paul Munday, and secretary James Beckwith. Keister and Munday were among those presiding over the love feast that followed the conversations, and was open to all present. It was the first time in decades that love feast has been celebrated by the full Conference. Read more at www.brethren.org/news/2019/2019-annual-conference-in-greensboro-nc/conference-focuses-on-compelling-vision.html

‘We love each other despite our differences’: The story of ND9 at Annual Conference

“We shared what was on our hearts, the words that were needed,” said Bob Johnson, one of those seated at Nondelegate Table Number Nine--known in the common parlance of the 2019 Annual Conference as “ND9.” By the close of compelling vision conversations, this table that had a “rocky start” marked by feelings of isolation over their differences had become a group that “wanted to love each other.” ND9 offered to share their story publicly because the group felt their transformative experience could be helpful to others and demonstrates the possibilities of the process. Read more at www.brethren.org/news/2019/2019-annual-conference-in-greensboro-nc/we-love-each-other-despite.html

Church of the Brethren reaffirms its historic commitment to opposing the death penalty

On July 25, 2019, Attorney General William Barr announced that the federal government would resume the use of the death penalty, after a 16-year halt, and directed the Federal Bureau of Prisons (FBP) to schedule the executions of five inmates currently on death row. In the wake of this troubling announcement, the Church of the Brethren reaffirms its decades-long theological and moral opposition to the death penalty. Read more at www.brethren.org/news/2019/church-of-the-brethren-reaffirms-opposition-to-death-penalty.html