



Salem Church of the Brethren

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

Salem Church of the Brethren

November 2019 Issue

Greetings Brothers & Sisters

As the leaves finally change colors, succumb to gravity, the snowbirds begin their migration south, and the harvest is being brought in, we recognize that we are not far away from the cold and lifeless look of winter. This is not meant to depress you. I know that for some, winters are a real struggle. The less sun time, the tendency to hibernate to protect from the cold, the view that there is no life anywhere are very real observations. “He led me through them all around, and I saw that there were a great many of them on the valley floor, and they were very dry. He asked me, ‘Human one, can these bones live again?’ I said, ‘Lord God, on you know.’ He said to me, ‘Prophecy over these bones, and say to them, Dry bones, hear the Lord’s word!’” (Ezekiel 37:2-4 CEB)

Ezekiel’s famous sermon was made to a place where death not only won, but had won so much that there was not even moisture on the bones, suggesting that there had been no life in the valley for a very, very long time. We know nothing of the valley that was the final resting place of these bones. All we know is that Ezekiel is a prophet who is working in a time in which Israel is not in a good way. Ezekiel is alive during the captivity of Babylon, which is also the time of the destruction of the temple and the Jewish home. The valley of dry bones would have likely been understood to be an analogy of the community of Israel. The ones who wrestled with God and man, feel as though they have been overcome, and that where they once believed life to be, now there is only long term death.

And then something absurd happens. Ezekiel is told to speak with the dead bones. And he does. Before we even look at what happens, which we know, let’s pause for a minute and reflect on what Ezekiel did. He preached to a place and people who were no longer people, or a place that others wanted to go too. Be honest, if you were driving, and you saw a middle aged man talking to a bunch of bones, you wouldn’t be calling that a man of faith. I know I would worry about them.

To loosely borrow from 1 Peter 2:8, these actions of Ezekiel are a stumbling block, because there is nothing to suggest that Ezekiel’s actions will succeed. He hears a call, he hears a direction, and he follows. That is what he does. For the past year, I have been actively praying for wisdom for the vision for our community and trying to interact and engage with our community to determine what our call is, what our future will be, or at least could be. Shortly, the product of that prayer and conversations will be composed into a document for you to review and consider. This document is intended to help us structure what goals and actions we feel God calling us to do. Call it a Document of Vision if you would like.

This Document is not a hard and fast itinerary designed to tell us what to do and when to do it. Rather, it is intended to help us focus who we are and who we hope to become. I have observed that churches who are working towards a goal, a clearer understanding of what they are doing and what they are to be about, are able to become healthier and vital places of God’s peace. I do not look at our community and see dry bones. I look at our community and see people seeking to follow God’s call, even if it may seem a bit weird, crazy or absurd to others.

The result of Ezekiel’s preaching is stunning, and nearly as hard to believe as seeing a man preach to the soon to be dust. The bones come together, flesh reappears and they are presented to Ezekiel as the people of God. God tells Ezekiel, “I will put my breath in you, and you will live. I will plant you on your fertile land, and you will know that I am the Lord. I’ve spoken, and I will do it. This is what the Lord says.” (Ezekiel 37:14) This fertile land, this breath of God happened because someone followed what seemed silly, impossible, impractical, and just a waste of time. God provided the vision and Ezekiel followed, and life grew. Like I said earlier, I don’t see a valley of bones in our community, I see a community of Ezekiel’s. AMEN

Blessings

Pastor Lee Saylor

Those Serving in November

Greeters: November 3—Diana H. & Doris S., November 10—Carla D. & Tom D., November 17—Jane E. & Joy M., November 24—Dawn & Gary S.

Acolytes: November 3—Thomas S., November 10—Finn H., November 17—Aiden B., November 24—*needed*

Ushers: Tom H., George S., Gary S., Tom D.

Worship Leaders: November 3—Diana H., November 10—Diana B., November 17—Joe B., November 24—Tom H.



Mark Your Calendars

Deadlines

Next Newsletter Deadline:

Thursday, NOVEMBER 14, 2019

Bulletin Articles: Thursday, 10:00am

Congregational Fall Business Meeting

Sunday, November 10

Executive Committee Meeting

Thursday, November 14, 7:00pm

Shepherding Prayer Group

Tuesday, November 19, 7:00pm



Sunday Worship

November 3 *from Luke 19:1-10*
“A Wee Man, A Large Story”

November 10 *from Luke 21:5-19*
“When Will It End?”

November 17 Pat Krabacher, guest preacher
from Luke 18:15-17
“Children: Serpa’s of God’s Kingdom”

November 24 Hussan Dicks, guest preacher

Sunday Sermons

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

Office Hours 9:00am-12:00noon, M-F

Karen Dillon, Director of Christian Ed.

November Birthdays-*Happy Birthday!!*

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

6:00pm Meal, with activities following

4-Kendra B.	20-Rachel P.
5-Bryan D.	22-Brian P.
8-Mark S.	27-Jake S.
12-Lori D.	29-Stephanie S.
18-Jane C.	29-Kent W.
20-Don B.	30-Nicole S.
20-Samantha D.	30-Stacy W.

In Our Prayers

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

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



This & That & Special Events

FALL FESTIVAL

Come and join Salem, Happy Corner, Trotwood and Lower Miami for our Fall Festival



on **November 10** from **4-7** at **Salem Church of the Brethren**. We will have a kickball game and a tractor ride. Guests are asked to bring food items based on their last name: **G-M main dish, N-S side dish, A-F dessert, T-Z drinks**. Bring Corn-hole, Ladder ball, or other outdoor games to share. If the weather looks like it won't be very good, we will move the event inside the Rec Hall and ask for people to bring their own Pumpkins and tools to enjoy some pumpkin decorating. If you have any questions, please reach out to Pastor Lee.

Dear Salem Church of the Brethren, Sue and I would like to **thank you** for the totally surprising and unexpected recognition and celebration of John's 40th anniversary of ordination. Wow! You really took us by surprise. Thanks to all of you for your tender Christian love and support. Love in our Lord,
John & Sue Edwards

Brothers and Sisters in Christ,
It's been a busy summer:

2 BDM trips to North Carolina, 2500 school kits, 500 clean up buckets, 66 days of local response, 3 fundraisers...

THANK YOU for your support! Donations like yours help make it possible. Serving Christ by serving others together. -Burt & Helen Wolf

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.

Sew What is at 9:00am on Wednesdays. No experience needed! Just come and tie, sew, and press, blankets and quilts to be donated to people around the world. Bring a packed lunch. See Carol Shroyer with any questions.

Wednesday Meal & Activities-Join us at 6:00pm on Wednesdays for a meal and activities. All ages are invited to join us. See Karen Dillon with any questions!

The **Fall Congregational Business** meeting is on November 10. Plan to attend!

The next **Shepherding Prayer Group** meeting is Tuesday, November 19 at 7:00pm in the parlor. Please mark your calendars and plan to attend.

We will have a **potluck lunch and hanging the greens on Nov. 24**. Join us as we decorate for the Advent season and fellowship with a meal.

The board would like to replenish the **Home Emergency Fund**. A **soup and salad lunch is planned for Sunday, December 1** after worship with donations going towards this fund. If you'd like to help with the luncheon see Ashley Saylor.

The **Women's Christmas Banquet** will be on Thursday, **December 5 at 6:00pm** in the fellowship hall. Mark your calendar now! Sign up sheets are posted on the narthex bulletin board. You can also call the church office at 836-6145 if you plan to attend.

Men and boys, please consider serving for this special event. There is a sign-up sheet on the narthex bulletin board if you can serve! Thanks!

The Special Church of the Brethren **Advent Offering** will be taken on Sunday, **December 15th**. Mark your calendars now.

District Conference 2019 Recap

Working Together...Empowering Disciples.

The 2019 Southern Ohio/Kentucky District Conference was held at Happy Corner on October 11th & 12th.

- Moderator Carl Eubank began the Friday sessions with an address on the theme of “God Provides”.
- Workshops/insight sessions made up the day on Friday with sessions being led by staff from Brethren Benefit Trust, the Ecumenical Stewardship Center, and resource persons from our own district.
- Meals and other hospitality was provided by the host congregation. Appreciation is expressed to Happy Corner for this ministry to conference attenders.
- Friday evening worship began with a concert by a men’s choir with various selections. Part of the concert was in memory of Jim Moore who passed away since the last District Conference. Jim has served the district in various ways including as a member of the District Board and Discipleship and Reconciliation Committee as well as sharing his love for music in the Community of Song group.
- Worship continued as planned by the Program and Arrangements Committee. Various persons from across the district shared in this ministry and Brian Messler, current pastor of the Ephrata congregation in Pennsylvania, was the guest speaker. Brian had been on pastoral staff at Happy Corner and had also served the district while in seminary as district youth minister.
- Saturday brought the business items before the delegates and included one more workshop slot.
- Gifts Discernment presented the slate for district offices for the coming year with those presented being affirmed. Those called for the coming year were Nick Beam as moderator-elect; Jennifer Keeney Scarr, Ron Mack, Ann Stackhouse, Mike Yingst, and Jill Schweitzer to the District Board; Barb Sayler to the Program and Arrangements Committee; Fred Bernhard as Standing Committee delegate; and PJ Arndt as District Clerk.
- Andrew and Debi Wright were introduced as District Mission Ambassadors who will be sharing the district mission with congregations and gathering stories from congregations to share.
- Burt and Helen Wolf shared a BDM update.
- Various denominational representatives were introduced including Jay Wittmeyer of Ministry and Mission Board staff, Loyce Borgmann of Brethren Benefit Trust, Gail Connerley of Bethany Seminary, Carla Gillespie of the On Earth Peace board, and Nyampa Kwabe International Scholar-in-Residence at Bethany. Gail and Carla shared brief reports from their agencies and Professor Kwabe led our prayer for the lunch meal.
- We celebrated the completion of the Training in Ministry program for Dave Balmer (Flat Creek and Mud Lick), Jon Keller (Troy), Larry Lutz (Piqua) and Mike Yingst (Covington). TRIM is one of the approved training tracks for set-apart ministry in the Church of the Brethren.
- Fifteen ministers were recognized for ordination anniversaries.
- The District Young Adult Ministry was highlighted by Laura Brown who is coordinating this ministry.
- Various other ministries were highlighted including the Together magazine, District Deacons, partnership with the Ecumenical Stewardship Center, and the work of the District Board and commissions.
- 2018 Financials were presented along with an update of 2019 to date. The 2020 District Budget was presented and following significant conversation regarding the budget, it was approved by the delegates with the understanding that the board will be working on the future financial viability of district ministries.
- A recognition service and sending of the three withdrawing congregations was shared, led by board chair Jen Scarr.
- Delegates approved the request of the Bear Creek congregation to be disorganized (closed) by the end of the year. Prayer for the Bear Creek delegates and other congregational members was shared by Moderator-elect Sandy Jenkins.
- Several grant recipients from the Empowering Congregations, Empowering Leadership and Empowering Emerging Ministries grants shared stories of the impact of these grants.
- Moderator Carl Eubank passed the gavel and service cup to Moderator-elect Sandy Jenkins who shared a closing word with the delegates and attenders. Next year’s conference theme is “Christ’s Ambassadors” and will be held at the New Carlisle church on October 9-10, 2020.

Denominational News

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

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The gift continues: Puerto Rican Brethren host celebration of Heifer's 75th anniversary

By Cheryl Brumbaugh-Cayford, with contributions from Peggy Reiff Miller

The 75th anniversary of Heifer International was celebrated Oct. 5, in Castañer, P.R., hosted by Puerto Rico District of the Church of the Brethren, the Castañer congregation, and Castañer Hospital. (For photos of the celebration and other views of Puerto Rico go

www.brethren.org/news/2019/the-gift-continues-pr-hosts-heifer-75th-anniversary.html.) Puerto Rico was the destination of the very first shipment of animals made by the Church of the Brethren's Heifer Project in 1944. The 17 heifers--female cows pregnant with their first calf--left Mobile, Ala., on June 7 and arrived in San Juan, P.R., on July 22, 1944. Of the 17 cows, 16 survived the voyage. Read more at www.brethren.org/news/2019/the-gift-continues-pr-hosts-heifer-75th-anniversary.html

The 2020 budget for denominational ministries was a key item at fall meetings of the Church of the Brethren Mission and Ministry Board on Oct. 17-21 at the General Offices in Elgin, Ill. Meetings were led by chair Patrick Starkey, assisted by chair-elect Carl Fike and general secretary David Steele. The board approved a total budget for all denominational ministries of \$8,527,880 income and \$8,584,200 expense, resulting in an anticipated net expense of \$56,320 for 2020. The decision included budgets for the six major ministry areas of the Church of the Brethren: Core Ministries, Brethren Disaster Ministries, Brethren Press, Conference Office, Global Food Initiative, and Material Resources. Read more at www.brethren.org/news/2019/mission-and-ministry-board-fall-2019-meeting.html

Office of Peacebuilding and Policy participates in NCC observance, 'A Day of Remembrance and Lament'

By Alexandra Toms

This year, 2019, marks the 400-year anniversary of the first enslaved African persons being brought to North America. In 1619, a ship carrying the first group of enslaved people from Africa arrived on the shores of what is now known as Virginia. According to records, there were "20 and odd Africans" on board the ship who, upon arrival, were forced into slavery or indentured servitude. The National Council of Churches, an ecumenical partner for the Church of the Brethren's Office of Peacebuilding and Policy, held a service of commemoration. Director Nathan Hosler helped to plan the event titled "A Day of Remembrance and Lament." Read more at www.brethren.org/news/2019/office-of-peacebuilding-and.html

"We are so excited to bring you the locations for workcamps summer 2020!" said an announcement from the Church of the Brethren Workcamp Ministry. The announcement urged Brethren of all ages to "explore the possibilities of service." "Voices for Peace" (Romans 15:1-6) is the theme. In a new venture, Rwanda is the location for a workcamp for ages 18-plus on May 28-June 8. Read more at www.brethren.org/news/2019/workcamp-locations-include-rwanda.html

The logo for the 2020 Annual Conference of the Church of the Brethren has been released, accompanying the theme "God's Adventurous Future." Next year's Conference will take place on July 1-5 in Grand Rapids, Mich., with moderator Paul Munday presiding. Read more at www.brethren.org/news/2019/annual-conference-2020-logo.html

