

The New Vision

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www.office@mountvillecob.org

March 2022

Inside This Issue

Regular Features

- 2-3 - Bits 'n Pieces
- 4 - March Worship Scriptures & Themes
- 5-6 - Inside Outreach
- 5 - Health Ministry Corner
- 6 - 2022 Offerings
- 8 - Birthdays & Anniversaries
- 8 - Members & Friends
- 9 - March Calendar

Around the Church

- 3 - Access to Archived Editions of the *New Vision*
- 3 - New Group Focuses on Support After Loss
- 4 - World Day of Prayer
- 4 - Adult SS Class
- 4 - In Search of Children's Storytellers
- 7 - Brethren Belief's Class
- 7 - Congregational Forum
- 9 - Winter Weather Cancellations

All are invited to participate in our adult and Children's Sunday School Classes at 9:00 a.m. Sunday Worship Service is in house or live stream Sunday mornings at 10:15 a.m.

<https://www.youtube.com/user/MountvilleCOB>

Nursery is available for younger children.

Our Staff:

Angela Finet – Pastor
John Hess – Director of Music
Gloria Hess – Organist
Jackie Sands – Office Administrator
Mary Rudy – Custodian

Mountville Church of the Brethren is located at the corner of College, Hoover, & Clay Streets in Mountville, PA. If you have further questions regarding the Mountville Church, please feel free to call the church office at 717-285-5122 or 717-285-7424 or email :

Love Notes from Pastor Angela

Cast your burden on the LORD, and he will sustain you; he will never permit the righteous to be moved. ~~ Psalm 55:22

Some people have the tradition of “giving something up” for Lent. Some give up chocolate. Some give up coffee (which is impressive). But, after the Lenten season is over, those items of sacrifice are picked back up. Perhaps this year, instead of giving something up, we can collectively release things into the arms of Jesus, with no intention of retrieving them.

This year's Lenten theme is “The Journey of Stones.” We will begin in the book of Exodus, with the tablets of stone, and work our way to the moment of freedom and celebration, when the stone is rolled away!

Each week, you are invited to bring a stone from home, or pick one up as you enter the sanctuary. During the service, we will name that stone something that is weighing us down and separating us from God's loving embrace. Maybe it's a need to forgive. Maybe it's pride or judgement. At the conclusion of each week's worship, we will pray together for God's mercy and help to release these burdens, leaving them behind as we exit.

On Easter Sunday, we will celebrate that the stones have been removed, and we are freed to be fully alive, unencumbered, in Christ. (Note: you will find that the stones have been placed outside at the foot of the cross in our new *Garden of Release*. There will be more information about that in April's newsletter, so stay tuned!)

It is my prayer that this journey together – this time of honest reflection, repentance, and release – will be powerful and life-changing, filling you with joy and awe at the miracle of the empty tomb and the promise of new life.

In anticipation,
Pastor Angela



Bits ‘n Pieces continued

Because of donors like you, The Columbia Food Bank in 2021 assisted 836 households that faced food insecurity. That breaks down to 1,741 men, women and children who were provided with the makings of 41,784 meals. Last year 60,496 lbs. of food was made available and distributed by the food bank to anyone in need; but especially to our neighbors living in Columbia, Mountville, West Hempfield, Manor Township and Washington Boro. Our vision “that no one should know hunger”. Thank you for your generous support of The Columbia Food Bank past, present and future! - Danielle J. Peters, Director

Thank you for supporting and for your generous and sacrificial gift of \$945 to the Global Food Initiative. May the Lord continue to bless you for caring for those who are hungry.

- Jeffrey S. Boshart, Manager, GFI

Greetings, from Dr. Paul E. and Sandy Brubaker, working as volunteer interpreters and fund-raisers for The Haiti Medical Project. We received notice of your generous donations of \$2,966.25 in December, 2021 and want to personally thank you for your support! The Haiti Medical Project is dependent on gifts such as yours, and your support is deeply appreciated. We also give thanks to all who supported the Latrine Project, where the matching funds started slow, but at the end of the year, the match was exceeded. Thanks to all who made this possible!

Access to Archived Editions of the *New Vision*

Did you ever delete your church newsletter from your email, only to need a piece of information from it? Former complete editions of the *New Vision* have been available on the church’s website, www.mountvillecob.org. However, in order to preserve privacy for our congregational family, the newsletters that will be posted on the website from now on will be modified a bit to avoid sharing information such as birthdays, addresses, and references to medical conditions. You will still receive the complete newsletter by email or mail, it’s just the issues posted on the website that will be missing some of the potentially “sensitive” material. Please contact the church office if you need access to a full edition of a past newsletter, since editions prior to February 2022 have been removed from the website. Thank you!

New Group Focuses on Support After Loss



Galatians 6:2 invites us to “Bear one another’s burdens”. A new monthly group at MCOB is designed to do just that. If you have lost a loved one in recent years and would enjoy gathering with others who are living with hope while coping with grief, please join us on **Wednesday, March 9 at 10:00 a.m. in Room 106 (Stitch, Sew & Share Room)** for prayer and conversation. Dr. Ginny Hart, a licensed psychologist, will facilitate the group. Questions? Please contact Ginny at (717) 575-7190 or ginny@paradoxlabs.com.

World Day of Prayer

Join Pastor Angela, and people all over the world, in a time of prayer. We'll gather on **Saturday, March 5, at 9:00 a.m.** in the fellowship hall to pray over local, national, and world concerns. If you'd like to share a prayer request prior to gathering, please email Pastor Angela or leave it in her mailbox.



Jesus says, in Matthew 18:20, that "where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them." So, we gather in this set-apart time of corporate prayer to share our praises and petitions. If you've never prayed out loud, come anyway. Your presence is prayerful. But, perhaps in this place of safety and fellowship, you may find your voice. No pressure - share only as the Spirit leads. You will leave energized from time spent in conversation with our listening God and this loving body.

ADULT Sunday School

Seekers' Lenten Series: The Difficult Words of Jesus

This six-part series, with Dr. Amy-Jill Levine, begins March 6.

Jesus provided his disciples teachings for how to follow Torah, God's word; he told them parables to help them discern questions of ethics and of human nature; he offered them beatitudes for comfort and encouragement. But sometimes Jesus spoke words that followers then and now have found difficult. He instructs disciples to hate members of their own families (Luke 14:26), to act as if they were slaves (Matthew 20:27), and to sell their belongings and give to the poor (Luke 18:22). He restricts his mission (Matthew 10:6); he speaks of damnation (Matthew 8:12); he calls Jews the devil's children (John 8:44).

Amy-Jill Levine shows how these difficult teachings would have sounded to the people who first heard them, how have they been understood over time, and how we might interpret them in the context of the Gospel of love and reconciliation.

In Search of Children's Storytellers

Several times a year our children join us for family worship. It is a joy to welcome them and share in the things they are learning in their own worship time - like the Doxology and the Lord's Prayer.

The worship team would like to add a brief story time for the young (and the young at heart) during family worship Sundays. Might you be a storyteller? Pastor Angela will work with you on a very short message. The upcoming dates are: April 10 (Palm Sunday), May 8 (Mother's Day), and May 29 (Memorial Day). Please see Pastor Angela with your interest and availability.



March Worship Scriptures and Themes

- 6 - Exodus 32:1-24: Written in Stone ("Ash Wednesday" service)
- 13 - Psalm 118, Mark 12:11-12: Rejected Stones
- 20 - John 8:1-12: Sticks and Stones
- 27 - Luke 11:37-52: Hearts of Stone



Inside Outreach



2021 Outreach Giving Surpasses \$90,000!

“...for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.’... ‘Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.’—Matthew 25:35-36, 40b, NRSV

Our congregation made a bold statement last year in our giving to causes of compassion. In 2021, MCOB budgeted \$31,685, more than 11% of our total budget, for Outreach. Throughout the year, faithful congregational giving not only helped us end the year with a \$20,814 surplus, but an additional \$58,365.40 *beyond the budget* was contributed to various Brethren and community organizations aimed at helping local and global neighbors. Funds primarily went to those who are coping with inadequate food, shelter, clothing, clean water, disaster supplies, school supplies, hygiene supplies, firewood, access to agricultural necessities, and safe living conditions. Total giving to Outreach surpassed \$90,150.40 thanks to many joy-filled gifts. This does not include the hundreds of dollars spent on donated supplies and holiday gifts. Thank you for blessing our world in Jesus’ name!

See page 6 for more news from Inside Outreach.

Health Ministry Corner: Progressive Muscle Relaxation

In the 1930’s American physician Dr Edmund Jacobson developed a technique to reduce symptoms of anxiety and stress. He felt that relaxing the muscles could also relax the mind. By decreasing muscle tension, the body responded with lower blood pressure, reduced fatigue and anxiety, and improved sleep.

In progressive muscle relaxation, you tense a group of muscles as you breathe in, and you relax them as you breathe out. People who have anxiety are frequently tense, and by practicing progressive muscle relaxation a person can learn how a relaxed muscle feels different from a tense muscle. Focusing on tightening, then relaxing specific muscle groups one by one in sequence helps to increase awareness of body and physical sensations. Progressive muscle relaxation can also reduce certain types of chronic pain according to psychologists at Johns Hopkins University, who teach patients progressive muscle relaxation to help with pain related to rheumatoid arthritis.

Many people report that progressive muscle relaxation done at bedtime while lying in bed helps them to fall asleep. If you find this information interesting, watch for next month’s Health Ministries article, which will include specific details on how to use this technique to help you relax.





Inside Outreach

Who Was the Lady with the Bucket?

While packing cleanup buckets for Church World Service in MCOB's fellowship hall after church in January, Heidi Keller reflected on the importance of the buckets as she remembered an encounter from fifty years ago.

In June of 1972, Hurricane Agnes was making devastating history in Pennsylvania. I had stayed up all night sitting crosslegged on my old cedar chest in my new apartment in Manheim watching the Chiques Creek rise next to my apartment. The weatherman said 11 more inches were expected. We were in deep trouble.

I moved the chairs, photo albums, and family Bible upstairs and waited. When the water started to come in my back sliding glass door, I grabbed my little puppy and purse and stepped out the front door into knee deep water. Due to high water and detours, I had to drive 52 miles in order to reach a family member's home about 1 mile north of Manheim.

The next day, I drove partway into Manheim on Main Street to see if my apartment was still there. There were 18 inches of water on the first floor of my apartment and no electricity.

When the water receded, men came with big, flat grain shovels to scrape the mud out of the apartment rug. Then it happened: I heard a gentle knock on the front door. When I opened it, there stood a lady holding a bucket. I do not remember seeing her face at all. She asked if I needed any help. I had never needed this kind of help before, so I started to say, "No", but shook my head and said, "Yes". That was hard to say.

She came in to help me clean my apartment. When she left, I never saw her again. It was like she was an angel with a bucket who came to impress upon me the need to be humble enough to accept help. - Heidi Keller (as told to Nancy Hess)

Did you know?

Since 2008 MCOB has donated 439 cleanup buckets for Church World Service. The cleanup buckets bless folks recovering from natural disasters in the United States and around the world. Thank you for your generous help through donations and labor. CWS values each bucket at \$75. Our contributions over the years are valued at almost \$33,000—although we spend much less by buying in bulk and on sale.

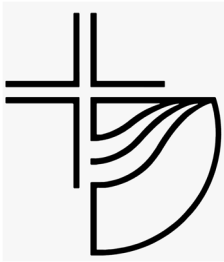


Mountville COB January 2021 Tithes & Offerings

For General Fund	\$ 38,733.00
Designated	\$ 25,730.00

Thank you for your faithful gifts!

Don't Forget:



Brethren Beliefs Class

March 19, 2022

Would you like to know more about the Church of the Brethren globally, and Mountville Church of the Brethren specifically? Since 1708, Brethren have had a unique way of engaging with God and neighbor, and a rich history of service to each other, and to the world! Join Pastor Angela for conversation around these topics on Saturday, March 19 from 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 in the fellowship hall. This is a no pressure opportunity to expand your knowledge. Please RSVP to Angela so she can prepare enough materials.



SET YOUR CLOCKS
Ahead!

**Before you go
to bed!**

**Saturday,
March 12,**

Winter Weather Cancellation Policy

In the event that bad weather requires us to cancel church activities or worship services, these are the ways you will be notified:

1. Mountville Church of the Brethren website
2. Facebook notice.
3. Church email
4. A phone call **IF and only if** you have requested a personal call.

If you would like a call if worship is cancelled and have not yet contacted our church office, please do so today.

Cancellation notices will be posted no later than 8:00 a.m. If you are unable to access any of these methods, please call Angela Finet, Jerry Bushong, or Nancy Hess.

The decision is made after carefully considering the weather forecast and the condition of the roads in Mountville and our parking lot.

It is our hope that all persons will give priority to their health and safety when making a decision about traveling to church activities and worship services when the weather and road conditions are not optimal. Every attempt will be made to provide an online alternative.



*Deadline for the April 2022 New Vision articles is **Sunday, March 13, 2022.***



**Address Service Requested
Dated Material Enclosed**