

The New Vision

Vol. 41, No. 9

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September 2023

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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.
Summer Children's Worship gathers in room 124 between 10:00-10:15 a.m.

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

*Do all that you can to live in peace with everyone.
~~ Romans 12:18*

Each year, on the third Sunday of September, the Church of the Brethren celebrates Peace Sunday. And every year, at the beginning of that worship service, I say “I feel like *every* Sunday should be Peace Sunday.” And, I mean it.

This year, I'm taking baby steps to meet that desire, naming September “Peace Month”! For the first three weeks of September, we will be exploring together the Spiritual Disciplines that foster peace – inner peace and peace with others.

If you are unfamiliar with the idea of Spiritual Disciplines, consider this explanation: “From its beginning, the church linked the desire for more of God to intentional practices, relationships, and experiences that gave people space in their lives to keep company with Jesus. Those practices, relationships and experiences are known as Spiritual Disciplines.”*

On September 3 (Labor Day Sunday), we will consider the Spiritual Disciple of Rest. How does rest allow you to open yourself up to God? How might this experience help you find a source of inner peace?

On September 10, we'll cover the Spiritual Discipline of Peacemaking. What does it mean to proclaim Christ as peace, and how might that impact our relationships with others?

And, on September 17, we'll delve into the Spiritual Discipline of Unity. What does it mean to be “as one” with our neighbors? What does it mean to be “at peace” with our enemies? How does “justice” fit into it all?

It is my prayer that you find this topic intriguing and extremely relevant to our lives today. Join me in my desire to let there be peace on earth. Join me in the Spiritual Disciplines that God uses to transform us into people of peace.

In Christ's peace,
Pastor Angela

* Calhoun, Adele Ahlberg. *Spiritual Disciplines Handbook: Practices that Transform Us*. (InterVarsity Press: Downers Grove, IL, 20005)

Bits 'n Pieces

I would like to thank all the people who prayed for me over the last couple of years. I have osteoarthritis and use a walker. I can go out to eat, go to church, and do lots of reading. Thank you for your care. Sincerely, Julie

In **July**, we served 531 children; 847 adults; 380 seniors...for a total of people served 1,758 ! 42 volunteers served 616 hours! Requested items for September: Elbow pasta, Mac and cheese, noodles, Raman noodles, cereal, canned carrots, canned mixed vegetables, canned green beans, large peanut butter and large jelly. - Diane Gerlach, The Hempfield Area Food Pantry

Thank you for your faithful giving to support the ministries of the Atlantic Northeast District. With sincere gratitude, we acknowledge your congregation's prayerful and financial support given to date.

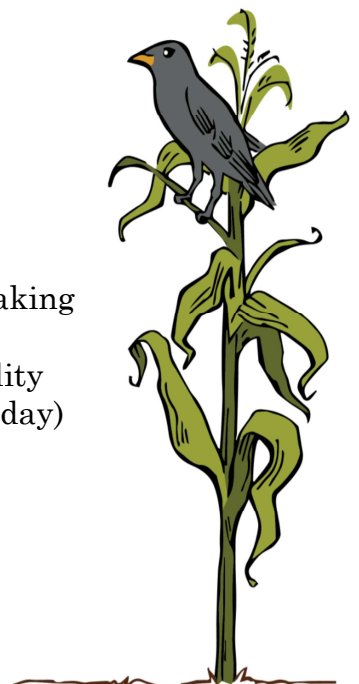
Sometime all that stands between a person facing hunger, eviction or loneliness is one simple act of kindness. Thank you for your donation of \$165 and the 100 lbs. of hot dogs and supplies. Danielle Peters, Director, The Columbia Food Bank

On behalf of the Alpha and Omega Community Center, board and staff thank you for your generous gift of \$500. This donation will help us to move forward and to cover the expenses of the driveway we built to facilitate the food bank operations. - Rev. Joel Pena, Director

Thank you for your gift of \$90 in honor of COB Annual Conference 2023 which brings hope to parents and children in need. Thank you for your support of families experiencing homelessness. - Stacey Burge, President & CEO, Found House

September Sermon Topics

Sept. 3:	Matt. 11:28-30	The Spiritual Discipline of Rest
Sept. 10:	Matt. 18:15-20	The Spiritual Discipline of Peacemaking
Sept. 17:	Romans 12:14-21	The Spiritual Discipline of Unity
Sept. 24:	Romans 15:1-17	The Spiritual Discipline of Hospitality (New Member Sunday)



Pastoral Care Extended to the Pastor

"In the light of recent denominational recommendations, and our own commitment for care, clarity, and appreciation for our pastor, a Pastoral Support Team has been formed. Lois Silver, Ginny Hart, and Walt VanderHeijden will serve to foster healthy communication, and education, about the roles that pastors in general, and our Pastor Angela in particular, fulfill in the spiritual life and leadership of the Church.

From the scarcity of pastoral candidates, and the decreasing enrollments in seminaries, it is clear that the Church universal is experiencing a pastoral ministry crisis. The role of Pastor is challenging and often lonely. The role can overwhelm through lack of boundaries. It can confuse through lack of clarity. It can disorient through lack of balance. The Pastoral Support Team hopes to facilitate love, boundaries, clarity and balance, so that God's Call continues to manifest Pastor Angela's presence in preaching, in public and private ministry, in study, and in prayer.

To this end, and in conversations with Pastor Angela, we will be including articles and "understandings" in the newsletter and bulletin to help us grasp the role of Pastor in the life of the congregation. Understanding, for instance, that pastoral presence, prayer, leadership, and service is not limited to physical office presence, but also occurs beyond what we can see. It happens in ministry among "God's flock." It happens in study, and sermon preparation. It happens in prayer. For all this to happen sustainably it requires respite, time to recharge, time away, time for self care. As Christ said in Mark 6:31, "Come away to a deserted place by yourselves and rest awhile." For us, it requires a respect for that separation, a respect for vacations and days off, an awareness of closed office doors, an assent to not text past particular time limits or when to use emails and when to use texts.

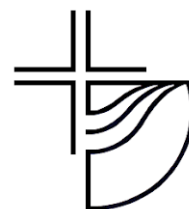


We invite you to address questions or issues to any one of us about the pastoral role, and we hope the articles will shine a light on God's gift of ministry, the grace we derive from a shepherd to lead and care for us, and the role we play in a priesthood of believers.

God's Grace Be with Us,
Pastoral Support Team."

Brethren Belief's Class

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 as well as the history and structure of the Mountville congregation on Saturday, September 16 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. We will be receiving new members into our family of faith on September 24.



About Our Ongoing Ministry of Fabric Arts: Stitch n' Sew n' Share

by Lois Silver

Each Wednesday afternoon, from September through May, the MCOB Stitch 'n Sew 'n Share group meets to promote the ministry of Fabric Arts. For those unfamiliar with the term "fabric arts", it includes knitting, crocheting, sewing and creatively using fabrics.

Stitch n' Sew n' Share has a history of members working together, giving time, and giving generously. In the past, women who were skilled in quilting would set aside one day of the week to complete quilts for congregation members. Laura Marcus Green, an expert on the personal benefits of these traditional arts, says: "Handworkers...report that stitching is akin to meditation. Because of its relaxing and meditative qualities, the artistic process becomes a form of prayer." Simply said, this means that we enjoy sharing this spiritual time together, producing things for others.

Stitch 'n Sew 'n Share has lovingly made baby blankets to welcome new members to the church community. And, as members of MCOB were facing illness or medical uncertainties, gifts of prayer shawls were knitted or crocheted as a blessing for those in need.

In just a few weeks, Stitch 'n Sew 'n Share will begin a new year of projects, many of which will reflect our tradition of service through outreach. Local hospitals, as well as COBYS, and Hospice and Community Care have all expressed a need for more handwork items. If you have an interest in joining this spiritually focused fiber arts program, please join us on **Wednesdays from 1:00-3:00 p.m. in Rm. 106.**

Attendance is voluntary, and skill sets are on a bring-what-you-know basis. Members are more than willing to help you develop skills. Or maybe you'd just like to sit and chat with some of MCOB's members in a very informal setting. We look forward to sharing time with you. See Lois Silver with questions, or call me.



Great Expectations!!!

Starting Sunday, September 10 at 9:00 a.m. the fall Sunday School sessions will begin for the adults with Pastor Angela presenting a report on annual conference. All are invited to attend. Children's Sunday school will begin September 17.

ADULT Sunday School

We will begin **Seekers Adult Faith Formation** on September 10th at 9:00 a.m. Our first session will be a discussion of the Annual Conference. Pastor Angela and congregation members who attended the Conference will lead the presentation. This will be followed by five sessions on Peace and Pacifism from September 17 through October 15. This series will discuss the book "Choosing Against War," by John D. Roth. He considers how Christians might look on the world differently if they actually believed that God's love is indeed stronger than our fears? Roth shares his convictions about Christian pacifism, inviting others to consider this approach, while humbly admitting the difficulties. We hope you join us for this new beginning and for the rest of the year."



Report from Annual Conference: Your Delegate

by Joe Buohl II

2023's Annual Conference was held in Cincinnati, OH. And a great time of fellowship was had. Alas all was not fun, the business sessions did get long and drawn out. This is to be expected when great numbers of persons with differing opinions get together. As a newcomer to the experience, I loved it all!

As a Bethany Theological Seminarian, I thoroughly enjoyed meeting and seeing both my professors and fellow students in person (as I have only seen them via Zoom). It was great to spend time with my fellow future leaders of the church. One such classmate who lived in the Cincinnati area took myself, my wife, Kristen and another classmate and showed us around Cincinnati on Friday afternoon/evening. That is the kind of bonding that doesn't happen in the classroom!

I was assigned to Table 34 of 60 plus tables. There were 3 non-delegate tables. At my table sat **Bonnie** from Canton, OH; Table Facilitator/Standing Committee Representative, **Myron** from Missouri; **Anna Mae** from Maryland; **Gayle** from VA; Michelle from Indiana; and **Rob** from Johnstown, PA. We had rousing discussions on various topics and although we didn't always agree on viewpoints, all were respectful in love of each other's opinions and positions.

I found the Bible Studies at the start of each Business Session to be thought provoking and uplifting. The delegate body voted on **6 New Business** items. The first item of business was to commission a committee to study calling Denominational Leaders. We elected a 3 person committee to conduct this study. Second item was a Cost of Living Increase for Pastors. The third item was concerning Continuing Education requirements for Clergy. The fourth agenda item was a "Statement of Lament Re: Doctrine of Discovery." The fifth issue was concerning Recommendations regarding Nominations from the Floor. One who wants to nominate someone from the floor must now present a reason for the nomination. And lastly, we voted on updating Eder Financial's Articles of Organization. All passed.

The delegate body also passed **2 Unfinished Business** items. The first item of unfinished business was a report from the committee for Standing with People of Color. The delegate body heard a motion to extend this committee's study from two to three years. It passed. The second item was a **report** from the committee to address Breaking Down Barriers in attendance and participation with AC.

On July 5, Kristen and I attended both the Outdoor Ministries Association Breakfast and the Discipleship Ministries Dinner. At breakfast, we heard how camp participation is down and either not rebounding or slowly rebounding after Covid. At dinner, we learned of all the places that God is moving in the COB. On **July 6**, we attended the Bethany Theological Seminary Luncheon, where Kristen and I sat with Dean Steven Schweitzer and fellow students (Harold Boyd, Meredith Owensby, and Mark Cripe). It was utterly enjoyable to sit and talk about upcoming classes and schedules with them. For **July 7**, we started with a Breakfast with Brethren World Missions. Here we learned of how the COB has come along side of East and Central African churches. Lunch was a chance to compare Bridgewater College with Juniata and Elizabethtown Colleges, both of which are courting Riley, our youngest son, as a sophomore going into his junior year in HS.

I attended 2 equipping sessions: one with Professor Joelle Hathaway on "The Holy Spirit and Artistic Creativity." The other was by Professor Maggie Elwell on "Why Peacemakers Have to Start with Violence". I was unable to attend the Brethren Chaplain Gathering as it conflicted with my duties as a delegate.

It was nice to see Nancy and Steve Hess. Steve and Cindy Heisey took Kristen to the Cincinnati zoo. Overall, it was a thoroughly enjoyable time of worship and fellowship with Brethren all over! If you'd like to hear more, I'd be happy to share with you individually.

SEPTEMBER SERVERS

Worship Leaders

3 - Dave Serfass
10 - Cathy Funderwhite
17 - Patrick Snyder
24 - Holly Mele

Ushers

Wendy Allshouse
Dave Fuchs
Joel Musser
Daryl Strine

Greeters

3 - Carl & Louise Harnish
10 - Lynn Landis, Molly Mitchell
17 - Holly Mele, Mark Yoh
24 - Cindy Heisey, Walt VanderHeijden

Children's Worship

3 - Joyce Kerns, Tess Wolford
10 - Betsy Thomas, Connie Renn
17 - Margie Musser, Becky Fuchs
24 - Nanette Bushong, Beth Hess

Nursery

3 - Joan Boshnaugle
10 - Regina Schulz
27 - Regina Schulz
24 - Joyce Kerns

Mountville COB July 2023 Tithes & Offerings

5 Sundays

For General Fund	\$ 28,223.00
Designated	\$ 2,012.00

Thank you for your faithful gifts!



Love Feast has been changed to **Sunday, October 8, 2023, 6:00 p.m.**

Congregational Forum has been changed to **Sunday, November 5, 2023**

Mental Health Resources

Crisis Text Line:
National Suicide Prevention Lifeline:
Preventing Suicide in PA:
Coping with COVID-19 Stress:
PA's Support Helpline:
Disaster Distress Helpline:
Veterans in crisis:
COVID-19 resources:

Text 'PA' to 741741
1-800-273-8255
preventsuicidepa.org
bit.ly/covid-coping
855-284-2494
800-985-5990
veteranscrisisline.net
mhanational.org/covid19





LOOKING AHEAD

September 10: Consecration of Christian Education
Staff, 10:15 a.m.

September 16: Brethren Belief's Class

September 22-23: Brethren Disaster Relief Auction
Lebanon Fair Valley Expo

September 24: New Member Reception following Church

October 8: Love Feast, 6:00 p.m.

*Deadline for the October 2023 New Vision articles is **Sunday, September 10, 2023.***



*"Your young . . . shall see Visions -
your old . . . shall dream Dreams."
- Acts 2:17-21*

**Address Service Requested
Dated Material Enclosed**