



The New Vision

Vol. 42, No. 2

www.office@mountvillecob.org

February 2024

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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 : Office@Mountvillecob.org

Love Notes from Pastor Angela

Let the words of my mouth and the meditations of my heart be pleasing to you, LORD, my rock and my redeemer.

~~ Psalm 19:14

Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, which this year is also Valentine's Day! It seems fitting, then, that our theme for Lent is: "It's a heart thing!" During the 40 days of Lent, we will examine "the meditations of our hearts" to ensure they beat as one with Christ's.

Each Sunday, we'll consider a different attribute that lies at the *heart* of discipleship: humility, commitment, purpose, graciousness, love, obedience, and joy. We'll consider if, as followers of Jesus, our thoughts, words, and actions reflect the love of Christ – because after all, out of the heart, the mouth speaks (Matthew 12:34).

Lent is traditionally a time of giving something up, so this season, be encouraged to let go of the past, of guilt, and of the things that weigh you down, and cling tightly to Christ, the lover of your soul (Song of Solomon 6:3).

With a joyful heart,
Pastor Angela

February Sermon Topics

Feb. 4 - Matthew 28:16-20 - Jesus as Presence - Sara Haldeman-Scarr preaches

Feb. 11 - TBD - Jan Glass King preaches

Feb. 18 - (Lent begins) - Luke 14:7-14 - A Humble Heart

Feb. 25 - Mark 1:16-20 & Luke 14:25-33 - A Committed Heart
- Joe Buohl's licensing service

Bits 'n Pieces

Congratulations to Aaron and Michelle and Sam & Carol on the birth of their son and grandson, Braydon Austin, born December 19, 2023.

Again our thanks for the Christmas cards and Heidi and Bob Keller for their visit. The cards were a gift full of love and support for us from our church family this Christmas.

- John and Louse

To all wonderful church people who sent Christmas cards and notes of encouragement. We thank everyone for your kindness and generosity. May the peace with Christ be with you.

- Mark and Brenda

Thank you to the Mountville COB members for the many Christmas greetings you sent to us this season. It warms our heart to know that so many have thought of us over the holiday season and we send back our Christmas greetings to everyone. May we all be blessed with hope, peace, joy and love throughout the year. - Gene and Linda

Janice and Harold wish to thank everyone who has offered "comfort and joy" during Harold's recent surgery and recovery. Your Mountville Church of the Brethren friendship has meant the world to us. Thanks also to Tim who has offered his photographic skills during this busy season and hopefully beyond.

A huge thank you to everyone who came to the church Sunday night to play games, drink hot cocoa, eat awesome homemade cookies and sing Christmas carols. We were not going to let the weather nor all the illnesses beat us. We made a short video of everyone singing "We wish you a Merry Christmas" who we are hoping to send to our shut-ins who could not be there. Thanks again everyone for all your help!

Dave and I are most grateful for your many expressions of sympathy and support following the death of my father, Kenneth on December 14. Your prayers, notes, emails, and calls helped us through a difficult time. Thank you for overwhelming us with love and compassion. - Becky

On December 21, about eight from our church caroled and took a Christmas party with treat bags to the residents of Hershey Mill Home. They were so very happy to see us and glad that we spent some time with them around their tables. Please see their note of appreciation on the bulletin board.

Happy New Year! Thank you for your continued support of the Hempfield Area Pantry in 2023 with your donation of \$620! In **November** we served 623 children; 1,084 adults; 490 seniors, for a total of 2,197 people served. Eighteen new families were registered in November. Fifty four volunteers gave 711 hours in November. - Diane Gerlach, Hempfield Area food bank



Amy-Jill Levine's expert exploration of some of the more controversial parables will continue during Faith Formation Classes on February 4 and 11. Our Lenten series will commence on February 18 with Matt Rawles' "Jesus Revealed." This series will dwell on the "I am" statements in the Gospel of John. Join us at 9:00 a.m. in Room 102.

Men's Breakfast & Fellowship

It has been mentioned that there is interest in establishing a Men's Breakfast Fellowship Group. This is the opportunity to do just that. Get together and get to know one another, chat the days events and fellowship together. All over a wonderful breakfast meal at a local diner. I would be pleased to organize the inaugural event for all of us that are interested.

Place: Centerville Diner

Time: 9:30am

Date: Saturday, February 17th

Please RSVP by Monday, February 12th your interest in attending so that a seating count can be provided to the Diner. Contact Tim Wrightson via email: tim3188@icloud.com or call his Cell: 302-740-3968.

Save the Date

Congregational Forum will be held on February 25. Please plan on staying after church for a Potluck Meal. Bring a hot or cold dish to share. Remember we can't cook your food for you but can keep it warm. The Congregational Forum will begin after lunch. Plan on staying to learn about the work of the church.



Outreach Needs

It's a new year! Did you get a new laptop for Christmas? What will you do with your old one? I hope that you'll remember there is always a need for old laptops, even those that are not working. The techs at Alpha & Omega COB Community Center in Lancaster refurbish and repair these and distribute to refugees who need them. Please see Norman Bollinger if you have questions. He is willing to take your lap tops to A & O.

We buy our hygiene kit supplies in bulk at greatly reduced prices, but if your dentist gives you a tooth brush and you don't plan to use it, please donate it for our hygiene kits. Remember the brushes must be individually wrapped / packaged. Just place them in mailbox #11 anytime.



A Short Explanation of Our Outreach Budget Recipients

Page 3 of a series of 4.

Stitch Sew and Share - A Fabric Arts Ministry called Stitch, Sew, and Share is a group that gets together once a week to make several different items such as: mittens, gloves, hats, NICU blankets, prayer shawls, and lap robes. They also assemble: Hygiene kits, School kits, Clean-up buckets, etc. Prayer shawls, blankets and lap robes are usually given to members first who are ill or have a new baby. The other items are distributed to designated areas where they are needed.

New Community Project - David Radcliff, who is the Director, and an Advisory Board decide which project receives the funds we send, unless we designate. NCP is a small non/profit organization with a big goal to change the world. Their focus is environmental sustainability and social justice, both of which are essential for a peaceful human community. NCP welcomes and works with anyone who shares their commitment to a world of peace, justice, and sustainability. NCP works with grass root groups in East and Southern Africa, Nepal, and Myanmar, in South Asia, the Dominican Republic, and native communities in the Ecuadorian Amazon, Alaska, and the Dine Reservation in New Mexico.

Publicity - This fund is used to help us be “Jesus in the Neighborhood” and to publicize MCOB. Some examples of items covered: Christmas Eve banner, Community Prayer Box, bookmarks, church brochure, chip clips, and any other publicity items.

Brethren Housing Association - This is a Social Services organization in Harrisburg, PA in the Allison Hills area. Their mission is to help individuals and families, (mostly single mothers) who are experiencing homelessness, achieve their God given potential by providing a holistic program of stable housing supportive services and loving relationships. We are notified when they need our help for the Adopt-an-Apartment project, and we respond with donations. We often help to clean and paint and help move in furniture. Our budgeted funds are used where needed.

Thank you for your faithful, and generous giving to Mountville Church of the Brethren Outreach! I hope you find this report helpful. - Dianna L. Zimmerman, Outreach Chairperson.

Congratulations, Joe!

On Sunday, February 25, as part of worship, Joe Buohl will be consecrated into the Licensed Ministry of the Church of the Brethren. This is the next step in Joe's faithful pursuit of his call. Licensed ministers, under the supervision of an Ordained mentor, may perform several ministerial functions as they continue exploring their education and call toward Ordained ministry. It has been a privilege to walk alongside Joe and prayerfully support his training and discernment. Make it a point to be here as the Atlantic Northeast District Executive, Pete Kontra, conducts Joe's vows and consecration prayer.



God loves you and so do I – Reflections and a Challenge

- by Harold

Hopefully, many of you will recall Pastor Angela's sermon when she challenged us to greet strangers with the phrase "God loves you and so do I". It struck me as an interesting idea and I have been practicing it since then with some remarkable responses – not one of them negative. Well, that's not exactly correct – two had the potential to be negative but guess what – they turned out positively.

I'd like to share several encounters with you and suggest that even though Lent is quite a bit away, you might give this practice a try – doing something proactive rather than trying to give up chocolate for 40 days.

As many of you know I had my share of hospital experiences in 2023 and during those stays, I have to admit, I was terribly down about being away from my home, my dear wife Janice and our cat, Penny. It was a struggle to be positive but I remembered Pastor Angela's suggestion of brightening someone else's day by telling them "God loves you and so do I."

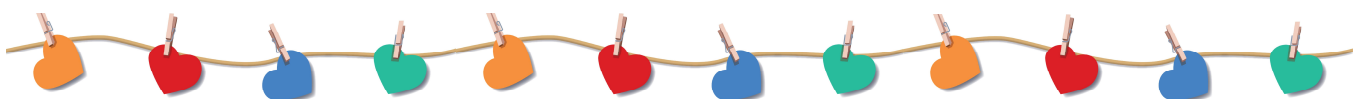
I recall one night when a young man came into my room to check my vitals and after he completed his tasks I thanked him and said "God loves you" He thanked me and left. Several hours later he came in again and asked if he could speak with me. He asked me if I was a Christian and explained that he was a lapsed church goer. He wanted to know if I believed in heaven and I said I trust that my loved ones will greet me there someday. Then, with tears in his eyes, he asked if I thought his beloved dogs would go there, too. How do you answer this? It meant so much to him. I said "yes, I do" and I do. There was a look of relief on his face as he turned to leave. Before he closed the door he said to me "Thank you" and "God loves you and so do I." I'm hoping he passes it forward.

On Christmas Eve I was particularly sad about being alone after Janice and her son, Brian had visited. A young nurse came in looking very weary and I asked her if she was okay. She said that after her shift ended at midnight she would be driving four hours to be with her sister on Christmas. I asked her to let me pray for her safe travel ending our prayer with "God loves you and so do I." She smiled and said goodbye and I didn't expect to see her again. Still awake at 11:50, there was a knock on my door. It was the nurse who stopped to say thank you, goodbye and to me "God loves you and so do I."

On Christmas Day, late in the afternoon, I was really homesick and I wanted to go home but couldn't. A heart doctor (Dr. X) who I had seen before and didn't particularly care for because of his condescending attitude, came in and asked why I was upset. When I told him he essentially said "too bad" and proceeded to leave. As he exited I muttered, half reluctantly, "God loves you and so do I." No response. However, the next morning as I was getting ready for a heart catheterization, a heart group nurse came in to check my vitals. Afterwards, she said, "By the way, Dr. X wanted me to tell you that he is sorry for the way he treated you last night." I was moved.

And finally, on our way back from NOAC last Fall, we stopped at a fast food restaurant for lunch. On our way out I noticed a rather large and burly man, dressed in work clothes, approaching us. He looked as if he was upset and I felt a "God loves you and so do I" would be appropriate. As I finished saying it, he clenched his fist, raised it, and I was sure I might be in trouble. Much to my surprise, he wanted to fist bump me, and said "Back atcha my brother." Go figure?

I would encourage you, my fellow MCOBers, to give it a try. You never know how this simple phrase might make someone's day a bit brighter. Here's hoping you might get a "back atcha."





Thoughts from the Pastoral Care Team: *

*That we may obtain this faith, the Ministry of Teaching the Gospel
and administering the Sacraments was instituted."*

Augsburg Confession, Art. V

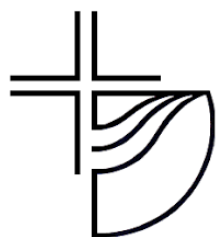
Pastoral ministry is a vocation with unique blessings and challenges. As we share in life and ministry in the wider church, here are some things to know about pastors:

1. they love God and you a lot. (be mindful.)
2. they are painfully limited human beings. (be realistic.)
3. they probably have a pretty low view of their "performance". (be kind.)
4. they wish they were a better preacher. (be awake.)
5. they really do want God's best for you and your family. (be open-hearted.)
6. their work knows no time or locational boundaries. (be patient.)
7. they hear much more negative information than positive. (be encouraging.)
8. they have chosen a vocation in which few remain. (be praying.)
9. they have chosen a highly leadership-intensive call. (be lead-able.)
10. they need help. (be available.)
11. their God-given vision is bigger than themselves and the church. (be faith-filled.)
12. they want to personally meet all the needs, but know they can't. (be understanding.)
13. they are going to say some dumb things every now and then. (be forgiving.)
14. they are greatly encouraged by your faithfulness. (be there.)
15. they are passionate for God's word to be made practical to you. (be hungry.)
16. they long for church to be your spiritual oasis. (be loving.)
17. they dream for you and your family's spiritual health. (be receptive.)
18. they need to hear that you pray for them. (be interceding.)
19. they are just regular people. (be real.)

*Pastoral Support Team: Ginny Hart, Lois Silver, Walt VanderHeijden.
(From Sundries, Fans of John Shelby Spong, FB)

Brethren Belief's Class

Are you new to our family of faith? Have you been around awhile and never had a behind-scenes-tour? Would you like to know more or have your knowledge refreshed 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, February 24 from 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 in the fellowship hall. This is a no pressure opportunity to expand your knowledge. Please RSVP to the church office so Angela can prepare enough materials. Those wishing to place membership with our family of faith will be received during worship on Sunday, March 3.



FEBRUARY SERVERS

Worship Leaders

4 - Walt VanderHeijden
11 - Forrest Collier
18 - Harold Ulmer
25 - Holly Mele

Ushers

Norman Bollinger
Jerry Bushong
Barry Lauver
Harry Light

Greeters

4 - Tom & Gail Druck: Upper Narthex
- Walt VanderHeijden, Connie Renn
11 - Harold & Janice Ulmer
18 - Sara Wagner, Gina Baustita
25 - Forrest Collier, Connie Renn

Children's Worship

4 - Joyce Kerns, Tess Wolford
11 - Joyce Kerns, Gina Bautista
18 - Betsy Thomas, Tess Wolford
25 - Joyce Kerns, Sue Beiler

Nursery

4 - Joan Boshnaugle
11 - Betsy Thomas
18 - Joyce Kerns
25 - Regina Schulz

Mountville COB December 2023 Tithes & Offerings



For General Fund	\$ 30,188.68
Designated	\$ 20,743.50
Christmas Eve	\$ 5,970.25

Thank you for your faithful gifts!

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 Jerry Bushong or Barry Lauver. 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. If worship is cancelled, watch for an email about an online alternative at a later time.



LOOKING AHEAD

February 24: 9:00 a.m. - Brethren Belief's Class

February 25: 10:15 a.m. - Joe Buohl's licensing service

: 11:30 a.m. - Congregational Forum

February 17: 9:30 a.m. - Men's Breakfast & Fellowship

March 28: 7:00 p.m. - Love Feast

March 31 - Easter Sunday

*Deadline for the February 2024 New Vision articles is **Sunday, January 14, 2024.***



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

**Address Service Requested
Dated Material Enclosed**