

Church of the Brethren

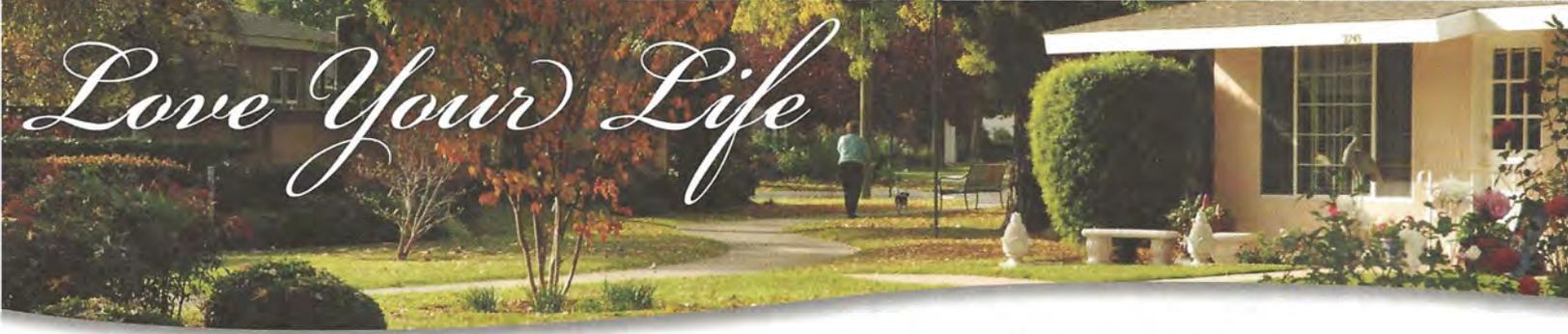
# MESSENGER

NOVEMBER 2012 [WWW.BRETHREN.ORG](http://WWW.BRETHREN.ORG)

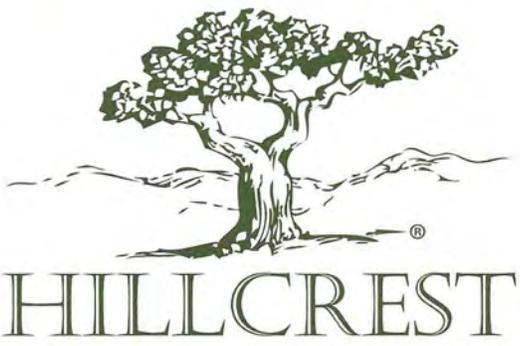


What holds Brethren

*Together*



# Love Your Life



## A Remarkable Brethren Community

- In following our Brethren roots of Peacefully, Simply, Together
- On-site full-time Chaplain, vesper services
- Three Brethren churches within 5 miles of Hillcrest
- University of La Verne is walking distance from Hillcrest and offers senior audit programs
- The Interfaith Festival, Doctor's Symphony and shuttles to cultural art activities
- Community Gardens
- Great location, campus and weather
- Hillcrest offers all levels of care. You will be welcomed with open arms and enjoy the love and comfort of lifelong friends!

## Remarkable Residents



{ Residents Jerry & Berkley Davis }

Jerry and Berkley Davis are very involved at Hillcrest, participating in several aspects of campus life. Jerry heads up Channel 3, the community's in-house television station, while Berkley serves on the management team of the Hillcrest gift shop and assists with the production of "Hillcrest Happenings," the community's resident newsletter. "There is more to do and learn here than one can imagine," says Jerry. "I think we made a good choice in Hillcrest!"



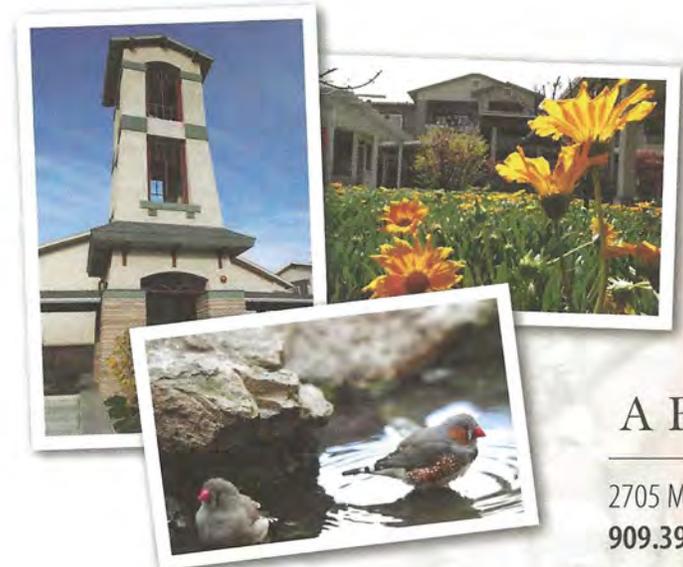
{ Resident Shantilal Bhagat }

"Hillcrest, a model community for retirement: orderly not chaotic, unambiguously secure living with caring residents, friendly responsive associates and staff, top-rated physical facilities for swimming, exercising, dining, nursing and healthcare. You are in experienced hands at Hillcrest, why go anywhere else?"



{ Chaplain Tom Hostetler }

"Hillcrest... what a great place to live and work! As chaplain, I am privileged to participate in the spiritual life of many of the residents and the community as a whole. Opportunities abound for worship at all levels of care; bible studies, phone devotions, sharing and inspiration to meet a variety of needs and expectations. The care for neighbors, the interaction and activity of residents, the desire to learn and grow, and the beautiful facilities and surroundings all work together to make Hillcrest a remarkable place. Come and see!"



## A Remarkable Retirement Community®

2705 Mountain View Dr., La Verne, CA 91750  
909.392.4375 | [www.LivingatHillcrest.org](http://www.LivingatHillcrest.org)



DSS #191501662  
Certificate of Authority #069

“ . . . publish with the voice of thanksgiving, and tell of all thy wondrous works” (Psa. 26:7b KJV).

Church  
of the  
Brethren

# MESSENGER

Editor: Randy Miller Publisher: Wendy McFadden News: Cheryl Brumbaugh-Cayford Subscriptions: Diane Stroyeck Design: The Concept Mill

## DEPARTMENTS

- 2 From the Publisher
- 3 In Touch
- 6 Reflections
- 7 The Buzz
- 17 Poem
- 20 News
- 24 Media Review
- 25 Youth Life
- 26 Letters
- 30 Turning Points
- 32 Editorial

## 8 What holds Brethren together

Plenty of things have threatened to pull Brethren apart in recent years—well, throughout our more than three centuries of existence, actually. And, while there have been divisions in the past, something keeps most of us in the fold. Former Annual Conference moderator Guy Wampler takes a look at those things that keep us from throwing in the towel (and the basin).

## 14 What goes around . . .

What does it mean for us to have dominion over the earth? Does it mean to overcome it and use it for our own needs? And, if so, at what cost? In rising ocean temperatures, shrinking polar ice caps, and devastating storms like Sandy, are we beginning to see the results of our efforts to subdue the planet and claim it as our own? Could our interpretation—or misinterpretation—of what we’ve come to understand as our divine right have repercussions we had not foreseen?

## 18 Rediscovering exile

Despite Jesus’ reminders not to worry, we as Christians are not immune to the anxiety of our times. In fact, even some within Christian circles are quick to prey on our anxieties. “The church is being pushed to the margins,” they say. “We must reclaim our position of privilege.” The first half is partly true, yet the conclusion need not follow.



**ONTHECOVER** Brethren come in all shapes, sizes, and persuasions. They are Democrats, Republicans, and independents. They are conservative and they are progressive. They wear prayer coverings and rainbow scarves. They are as different as zebras and iguanas. And yet these strange bedfellows wash feet, paint walls, break bread, and follow Jesus together. Are they really part of the same big family? They are . . . they truly are.

**O**n the Sunday that Superstorm Sandy was finished with the Caribbean and began roaring up the East Coast of the United States, it happens that the choir anthem in my congregation was called "Shelter in the Storm."

The gospel piece by Joel Raney incorporates one of my favorite hymns, "Precious Lord." When I sing this hymn, I recall the Annual Conference 20 years ago when it was sung by guest soloist Tony Brown as part of the launch of *Hymnal: A Worship Book*. This hymn also reminds me that some of the most profound music of the church has been born out of the human struggle with tragedy and grief.



WENDY McFADDEN  
Publisher

"Precious Lord" was written by gospel songwriter Thomas Dorsey after his wife and baby died during childbirth. "When Peace, Like a River" was written by Horatio Gates Spafford after his four daughters perished at sea. "Sleepers, Wake" was written by Philipp Nicolai, pastor of a church ravaged by the bubonic plague. About 1,300 of his parishioners died within six months. (These and other stories are recounted in *Hymnal Companion*, published in

1996 by Brethren Press, Faith and Life Press, and Mennonite Publishing House.)

Raney's "Shelter in the Storm" was inspired by the efforts of rescue workers after Hurricane Katrina, one of our own national tragedies. Katrina is recent enough that the Church of the Brethren response concluded only a short time ago. While Sandy and Katrina are quite different, we can be sure that it is usually the poorest people who suffer the longest when storms rage.

In this season of thanksgiving, I am grateful for many things. And at this moment, for two in particular: a church that helps those who need physical shelter, and artists whose words and music give us spiritual shelter. At this year's Thanksgiving table, our definitions of family and home will be expansive, and so can our prayers of gratitude.

*Wendy McFadden*

## HOW TO REACH US

**MESSENGER**  
1451 Dundee Avenue  
Elgin, IL 60120

**Subscriptions:**  
dstroyeck@brethren.org  
Phone: 800-323-8039 ext. 327  
Fax: 847-742-1407

**Advertising:**  
messengerads@brethren.org  
Phone: 800-323-8039 ext. 308  
Fax: 847-742-1407

**Editorial:**  
messenger@brethren.org  
Phone: 800-323-8039 ext. 376  
Fax: 847-742-1407

Subscription rates:  
\$17.50 individual rate  
- \$32 for 2 years  
\$14.50 gift rate  
\$14.50 church club rate  
- \$27 for 2 years  
\$ 1.25 student (per month)

If you move, clip address label and send with new address to MESSENGER Subscriptions, at the above address. Allow at least five weeks for address change.

Connect electronically: For a free subscription to Newline, the Church of the Brethren e-mail news report, write [cobnews@brethren.org](mailto:cobnews@brethren.org).

Visit MESSENGER online at [www.brethren.org/messenger](http://www.brethren.org/messenger).

A free study guide for each issue of MESSENGER is available at this site, along with other information.

MESSENGER is the official publication of the Church of the Brethren. Member of the Associated Church Press. Biblical quotations, unless otherwise indicated, are from the New Revised Standard Version. Copyright © November 2012, Church of the Brethren.

MESSENGER (ISSN 0026-0355) is published 10 times a year by Brethren Press, Church of the Brethren. Periodicals postage paid at Elgin, Ill., and additional mailing offices.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to MESSENGER, 1451 Dundee Ave., Elgin, IL 60120-1694.



Printed on recycled paper  
(20% post consumer)

**CONGREGATIONCLOSE-UP**

# Monthly meals served in Mt. Morris

Last year, members of the Community Outreach Team of the Mt. Morris (Ill.) Church of the Brethren began planning monthly breakfasts to be held at Pinecrest Grove in Mt. Morris. The purpose was to offer a good hot meal to those in the community with limited income and to get Mt. Morris community groups together to help serve the breakfast.

The first monthly pancake and sausage breakfast was held in July 2011. Since then nearly 20 breakfasts have been served. Twenty-four separate community groups have helped serve, including former high school classes, businesses, fraternal organizations, clubs, church groups, boards of the village, the library, and the Post Office. Nearly 150 workers from the community have participated. More than 30 members of the Mt. Morris congregation planned, organized, and cooked, many every month.

No set charge is made for the breakfast but donations are accepted. So far contributions have exceeded expenses, with the surplus going to the Pinecrest Good Samaritan Fund, the Loaves and Fish food pantry, an Eagle Scouts playground project, and toward programming at the local library. The local fire and police departments served breakfast in October, with donations going to the local Toys for Tots Program.

What began as a simple idea for reaching out to the community has done much to bring members of the community together in a wonderful spirit of service.



*Members of the Mt. Morris (Ill.) Church of the Brethren who volunteer for the monthly breakfasts include: Frank and Dianne Swingel, Steve Haney, Mary Lou Garrison, pastor Ginny Haney, Brenda Nevenhoven, Marge Powers, Anastasia Gordon, Jim Rosenberger.*

---

Do you have district or congregational stories that might be of interest to MESSENGER? Short items with a photo are best. Send them to MESSENGER, c/o In Touch, 1451 Dundee Ave., Elgin, IL 60120 or messenger@brethren.org.



## YOU SAID IT

**"I would like to see the University of La Verne be a destination for anyone who wants to follow the [Brethren] values that drew me here."**

—Devorah Lieberman, new president of the University of La Verne, speaking about the Brethren qualities and values she has observed at the school.

## BY THE NUMBERS

# 4,200

Days of service Brethren volunteers working in the Pulaski County, Va., area have given since two devastating tornadoes struck there in 2011.

*Phill Carlos Archbold served as moderator at the 2001 Annual Conference.*

Walt Wittschek



**REMEMBERED**

**Phill Carlos Archbold**, 76, a past moderator of the Church of the Brethren Annual Conference and a prominent pastor in Atlantic Northeast District, died Oct. 1 at Brethren Village in Lancaster, Pa., following a long struggle with cancer. Archbold served as moderator of the 2001 Annual Conference in Baltimore, Md. He was retired from long-term pastoral service at Brooklyn (N.Y.) First Church of the Brethren, where he began as associate pastor for Hispanic and special ministries and also was a youth minister. His years at the church helped lead the congregation in significant ministries providing service to older

adults in the congregation, as well as to the poor and those in need in the neighborhood where he was involved in a special ministry of visitation and care for the homeless, drug users, and in particular those suffering illnesses related to HIV and AIDS. His work for the district and denomination included involvement with the former General Board's urban ministry program and service on the Atlantic Northeast District board as well as other leadership in the district, where he was a popular speaker. He also was chaplain for many years at Bailey House, a hospice for people with AIDS.

Archbold grew up in Colon, Panama, and as a young man did

volunteer work for the chaplain of Fort Davis, a US military base. After coming to the US, he was drafted and went to Vietnam as General William Westmoreland's secretary. It was while setting up a chapel room for the general that he met Earl Foster, who was to become

## Women stitch, sew, and share in Pennsylvania

It all started in October 2005 when a group of women from Mountville (Pa.) Church of the Brethren decided to hold an arts and crafts show to display the many different talents of their members. Shortly after this successful show the group received closets full of brand new yarn. They wondered how to use this gift to do the most good and show God's love. One member noted that *Guideposts* magazine's "Knit for Kids" program may be the answer. It was.

A volunteer offered knitting lessons and many took advantage of it. The Mountville Church of the Brethren

Stitch, Sew, and Share program was born. The group meets at the church the second and fourth Wednesday of each month. In addition to sweaters they now produce hats, scarves, mittens, and baby blankets. Recently some in the group began working on sewing school kit bags. This year they presented the church with 300 hand-sewn bags.

Every August, as part of their church outreach program, they send school supplies to New Windsor, Md., for the Church World Service School Kits program. The group also has sent several quilts to the annual Atlantic Northeast Disaster Relief Auction.

In the past seven years, as needs have arisen, the group has continued to respond. The realization that some members and friends were in need of comfort created the desire to make prayer shawls, fleeces, and scarves. This successful ministry continued to grow because the shawls embrace, comfort, protect, warm, and show caring. A printed prayer goes with each item.

Requests for these items come from members, the pastor, and friends. Items made and blessed have been shipped as far as Hawaii. Closer to home, they are delivered to graduates each year.

This group is often thanked but is most happy knowing they are helping send God's love to those who are meeting challenges in their lives. Stitch, Sew, and Share is a place to come to meet others, learn something new, and share with those in need.



senior pastor at Brooklyn First Church of the Brethren. Archbold's professional career also included hospital administration. In 1990, at the age of 54, he was named youth leader of the year by "Group" magazine. In an interview with "Group" he told the magazine that he spent eight years as a youth ministry volunteer at Brooklyn First before entering the pastoral ministry as a full-time youth worker. His comment on leaving a high-paying job for youth ministry: "I made a lot of money as a hospital administrator. . . . Now everything is less. But the joy is so much more. I see lives being changed."

**Ralph A. Royer**, 80, who spent many years in mission work in Africa with his first wife, Florence ("Flossie") Royer, died Oct. 14 in North Manchester, Ind. Royer was born in Nigeria to missionary parents Harold ("Red") and Gladys Royer, and attended Hillcrest School in Jos, Nigeria. A graduate of McPherson College, Royer and Flossie spent 35 years working for the Church of the Brethren in Nigeria and Niger. He served as director of Church World Service (CWS) in Niger for 11 years, and during retirement, the couple served again with CWS in Liberia.

Since his retirement, Royer served on a delegation to Haiti with Christian Peacemaker Teams, served on the

Grant Review Panel for the Global Food Crisis Fund, participated in church workcamps and disaster relief projects, and organized reunions of Hillcrest School alumni. Flossie Royer died in 2005, and in 2006 Ralph married Barbara (Peters) McFadden, who survives him. He also is survived by daughters Linda Shankster, Roxane Hill, and Sylvia Taussig, 11 grandchildren, and 11 great-grandchildren.

**Mary Blocher Smeltzer**, 95, died at home in La Verne, Calif., on Oct. 8. Her long life of service and peace witness included teaching in the Manzanar internment camp for Japanese Americans during World War II with her late husband Ralph Smeltzer. They were among several teachers who volunteered to join their students in the camps after 110,000 people of Japanese descent were incarcerated following the attack on Pearl Harbor. Ralph went on to become director of peace and social education and later Washington Office representative for the Church of the Brethren. He died in 1976.

In recent decades Mary was active in many peace and justice efforts including founding Womaen's Caucus, which she served for several years as co-chair and which has instituted an award in her name; serving in the Peace Corps in Botswana; serving as host at the World Friendship Center in Hiroshima, Japan, 1981-82; and in 1985 addressing a Brethren



Mary Blocher Smeltzer

gathering during the tying of a Peace Ribbon around the Pentagon. In 1983 she was the denomination's delegate to the World Council of Churches Sixth Assembly. In her 70s, she was arrested for civil disobedience at the Nevada nuclear test site. In 2010 "Brethren Voices"—a cable television show produced by Portland (Ore.) Peace Church of the Brethren—featured her work at Manzanar. In 2005 at age 89 she was among 200 educators honored by the Japanese American National Museum. Interviewed by the *Los Angeles Times* on that occasion, she was asked why she reached out to internees. She said, "It's just part of me. It's just part of being a Christian, being a peace person, part of doing what I think is right."

**Robert G. "Bob" Greiner**, 94, passed away on, Oct. 3, at Timbercrest Healthcare in North Manchester, Ind. A native of Manheim, Pa., Greiner attended Elizabethtown (Pa.) College for two years, later graduating from Northwestern University with a bachelor's degree in accounting and business law.

After being drafted in 1941, Greiner chose to enter Civilian Public Service (CPS). He served first at Camp Lagro, Ind., and after a year was transferred to the Treasurer's Office of the Church



Robert G. Greiner

of the Brethren General Board in Elgin, Ill., where for the next three years he was the accountant for the CPS camps throughout the nation. From 1945-1952, Greiner was assistant treasurer of the Church of the Brethren General Board. He was then appointed treasurer, serving until his retirement in 1981. In 1993, Greiner and his wife, Edna, moved from Elgin to Timbercrest in North Manchester. Edna preceded him in death in 2004.



Ralph Royer on a mission trip to Nigeria in 2003

# Following the river

**G**rowing up, one of my favorite places was a spring that bubbled from the ground not far from my grandparents' home. On hot summer days I'd walk through fields and woods to the place where water came flowing out of the rock. I'd lose track of time wading around in the pool, flipping over rocks to watch another spurt of water jump up.

If you follow the water, that small stream grows deeper



BEN BARLOW

and wider and flows through pastures and farms. It makes its way to Bridgewater, where its cold water meets the warm water of Dry River. Deeper, wider, past Bridgewater College, it meets other streams and becomes the Shenandoah River. It churns on to Harper's Ferry, W.Va. There, joining a couple friends, it becomes the Potomac and races through Washington, D.C., down the Chesapeake, past Norfolk, and into the Atlantic Ocean.

I think about that river's journey when I read Ezekiel's vision of the River of God (Ezekiel 47).

To recap, Ezekiel is walking with his measuring-stick-wielding guide through the City of God when they come upon a stream trickling from just south of the temple altar. Ezekiel and his guide exit the city and follow the water as it gets deeper and wider, walking a little over 500 yards and crossing the stream of then ankle-deep water. They walk another 500 yards and cross, but the water has gotten knee-

brings life no matter how shallow the stream. As we walk, the stream grows wider and deeper. Life becomes abundant, and we eventually get to the place where the water is so deep and wide that all we can do is swim, giving up our grip on the ground and yielding control to the water, bobbing along as it empties into the salty sea, completely changing the environment into which it flows.

I think my problem, and maybe our problem, is that sometimes we quit walking. We might feel overwhelmed by the journey. The water might be moving smoothly, but the ground along the banks can get rough. Maybe we take a break, and that break becomes so long that we focus on the ground under our feet and forget about the river, let alone the journey.

Then we get in groups that have taken a break and sit looking at the water, and we eventually think that where we are is as deep as it gets. We may remember stories of swimming in the river, and we still might use that "deep water" language, but somewhere along the way we've convinced ourselves that we are in the deep water.

The passage in Ezekiel tells me that our destination is the place where the river bottom is too deep to reach. It is a spiritual journey from a place where we see the trickle and walk beside it to the place where we are all in.

As much as I love that spring at my grandparents', if my destination is the ocean, I have to keep walking. Though I can lose myself watching fish swim on my cousin's farm, if my destination is the ocean, I've got to keep moving. As beautiful as it is as it skirts Harper's Ferry, goes by D.C., and runs through the Bay, I have to remember that the water

**REALLY, AS LONG AS I AM SUPPORTING MY OWN WEIGHT, AS LONG AS I AM SHY OF COMPLETE SURRENDER, I'M NOT AT THE DEEP WATER AND HAVE TO KEEP MOVING ON.**

deep. After another 500 yards, they cross and the water is waist deep. Another 500 yards brings Ezekiel to where he "could not cross, because the water had risen and was deep enough to swim in—a river that no one could cross." The guide tells Ezekiel that the water brings life wherever it goes, and that the river is so powerful that when it empties into the sea "the salty water becomes fresh." That is some river. I think it says a lot to us as a church, and as fellow travelers on the road.

The river of faith starts as a trickle from the temple and

gets deeper.

Really, as long as I am supporting my own weight, as long as I am shy of complete surrender, I'm not at the deep water and have to keep moving on. Whatever we're going through personally, as a family, as a congregation, even as a denomination, the water gets deeper.

Let's go for a swim. **W**

Ben Barlow is chair of the Church of the Brethren Mission and Ministry Board and lives in Ellicott City, Md.

**“A lot of people are very spotty in their attendance at worship, but if we have a mission project, they’re here.”**

—Eileen W. Lindner, former editor of the Yearbook of American and Canadian Churches, on a new study that shows a dramatic rise in the number of Americans with no religious affiliation

**“The people we see needing to know Christ are not going to attach to us just because we go to church. They are going to need to see us live out Christ’s attributes. Being a 21st Century Pharisee won’t cut it.”**

—Georgia R. Markey, acting district executive, Southern Pennsylvania District, Church of the Brethren

**“If you take Jesus Christ seriously, you know he’s stronger than any force of evil. We don’t need to be afraid of Halloween because our God is stronger.”**

—The Rev. Kim Skilling of Afton Presbyterian Church in St. Louis, quoted by the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* during a Halloween “trunk or treat” party in the church parking lot

**“God’s work is alive and well and operating in the present tense, empowering us to do our work in the present tense with persistence, effort, and great productivity.”**

—Paul Munday, senior pastor at Frederick (Md.) Church of the Brethren

**“Who better than a group of women who have consecrated their lives to the Almighty to remind us that our decisions in November have ethical consequences? Those who serve the impoverished, the sick, and the dying know rather a lot about what matters — in life, and in elections.”**

—*Washington Post* columnist E.J. Dionne, writing about the Nuns on the Bus who are criss-crossing the country advocating for the poor in the federal budget debate

➔ **Representatives from churches, ecumenical organizations, and other partners** from around the world came together in Crete in early October to assess the work of the World Council of Churches (WCC) on care for creation and climate justice and to strategize for the future. The group evaluated outcomes of the UN Conference on Climate Change (COP 17) in Durban, South Africa, and the UN Conference on Sustainable Development in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. They stressed the need to overcome frustration at poor outcomes of the conferences, and to enhance cooperation among ecumenical partners in support of responsible and effective international climate and sustainability negotiations.

➔ **The number of Americans who do not identify with any religion continues to grow at a rapid pace.** One-fifth of the US public—and a third of adults under 30—are religiously unaffiliated today, the highest percentages ever in Pew Research Center polling. In the last five years alone, the unaffiliated have increased from just over 15 percent to just under 20 percent of all US adults.

➔ **A coalition of evangelicals** is calling on fellow Christians to support access to family planning across the world, saying it does not conflict with evangelical opposition to abortion. The centrist New Evangelical Partnership for the Common Good released a 15-page document Oct. 16 calling for “common ground” support of family planning and the health of mothers and children. “The use of contraceptives is a responsible and morally acceptable means to greater control over the number and timing of births, and to improve the overall developing and flourishing of women and children,” said the Rev. Jennifer Crumpton, one of the advisers to the group. The NEP document does not include abortion in its definition of “family planning.” It emphasized that access to contraception prevents unintended pregnancies and reduces abortion, and stressed the need to avoid “confusion of family planning with abortion” that has led some religious groups to oppose both.



**JUST FOR FUN: RANKING**

**CLASS IS IN SESSION** Voters for the Electoral College are chosen this month via the US presidential election, and the Electoral College votes in mid-December. Rank the states below from the one that has the most electoral votes to the one that has the least.

**NORTH CAROLINA**

**IDAHO**

**TEXAS**

**FLORIDA**

**KANSAS**

**WISCONSIN**

**PENNSYLVANIA**

**VIRGINIA**

**INDIANA**

**CALIFORNIA**

**OHIO**

**CONNECTICUT**

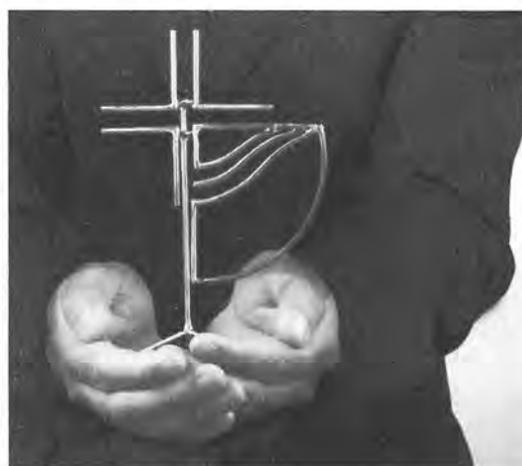
**DELAWARE**

**LOUISIANA**

ANSWERS: 1. California (55); 2. Texas (38); 3. Florida (30); 4. Pennsylvania (20); 5. Ohio (18); 6. North Carolina (15); 7. Virginia (13); 8. Indiana (11); 9. Wisconsin (10); 10. Louisiana (9); 11. Connecticut (7); 12. Kansas (6); 13. Idaho (4); 14. Delaware (3).



Regina Holmes



by Guy E. Wampler

# What holds Brethren together

**H**istory shows that there have been only two major splits in the Church of the Brethren: the two-fold separation in 1881-83 and the Dunkard Brethren departure in 1926. Some individuals have left along the way, including Conrad Beissel in 1728 and the individuals who followed him, and a few congregations have withdrawn here and there across the years. But the main body of the Church of the Brethren has divided only two times during our 304 year history. Something holds Brethren together.

Some fear that the current conflict over homosexuality may tear the church apart. A Hispanic minister once asked me: "Do you think that the Church of the Brethren is going to split?" I said, "No. I think we Brethren can work our way through the current controversy. We probably will not reach agreement about homosexuality in this decade, but we may

gain better perspective so that this one emotional issue no longer looms so large that it drives us apart."

I meant to say more, but when I paused for a breath, the driver of our car—also a Brethren minister—spoke up. To my surprise, he said, "Maybe I'm too pessimistic. I think the church might split." This level-headed, perceptive, conservative minister began to tell the other two of us about several strong congregations where trouble is brewing. Then he and the Hispanic minister began to talk about several districts that were in the midst of taking official action urging Annual Conference officers and committees to rescind a decision they had made pertaining to this year's Conference in St. Louis.

After that conversation, I read Harold Martin's article entitled "An Apostate Church—Stay in or Leave?" in the March/April 2012 Brethren Revival Fellowship newsletter. (I'll say

The last year has been tough for progressives and conservatives. Some have wondered whether the Church of the Brethren will remain intact. **So just what is it that holds Brethren together?**

Regina Holmes



more about that article later, because Brother Harold came out on the side of “stay in.”)

Conservatives are not alone in considering separation. Charles Boyer, a former Annual Conference moderator, pastor, and national staff leader, described the acceptance and affirmation of gays and lesbians in his congregation in La Verne California. Then Chuck proposed that Brethren consider “creating two denominations and encouraging both to love each other as we go our separate ways.” Brother Chuck died the same month his article was published, September 2010, but his message in *MESSENGER* is widely remembered.

One or two leading members of the Beacon Heights Church of the Brethren in Fort Wayne, Ind.—the congregation that originated the Annual Conference query pertaining to same-sex covenantal relationships—have drifted away (for the time being at least), disappointed by the action Conference took last summer and disturbed by an anonymous death threat against one of their members. Pledges to the Beacon Heights unified budget dropped from \$361,000 in 2011 to \$261,000 for 2012, a \$100,000 reduction from one year to the next. The congregation downsized its pastoral staff.

The last year has been tough for progressives and conservatives. Some have wondered whether the Church of the Brethren will remain intact.

So just what is it that holds Brethren together?

## Our tribe

Tribalism is one force that, like gravity, keeps Brethren from flying apart. Disparaging words have been spoken about tribes; let me say a positive word based on the biblical perspective. The Hebrew people belonged to tribes. Even in the New Testament, Jesus was of the tribe of Judah. Paul was “a Hebrew of the tribe of Benjamin.” We are Christians of a tribe named Brethren.

The tribe to which I belong has become a basic part of who I am. I support my tribe with continuing loyalty—not blind loyalty but steadfast loyalty—to the highest and best within the tribe. That tribe gives me an identity and serves as a source of my deepest convictions.

Scattering forces in the 20th and 21st centuries weaken tribes: mobility, individualism, anti-institutionalism, and globalization. Despite these challenges, tribes have remained. *Newsweek* magazine, as recently as April 9, declared, “everyone, no exception, must have a tribe. . . . And so it has ever been.” The writer of that article, entitled “What’s Your Tribe?” traced the formation of tribes in ancient history, described their function, and then analyzed how evolution has built tribalism into the makeup of the human species. The article concludes: “Individual selection tends to favor selfish behavior. Group selection favors altruistic behavior and is responsi-



ble for the origin of the most advanced level of social behavior, that attained by ants, bees, termites—and humans.” We human beings, like termites, have a built-in inclination to become part of something bigger than ourselves individually.

Tribalism is not a sufficient reason to stay Brethren. Tribes can become ingrown, dated, apostate. The early German-speaking Brethren preferred a different word: *gemeinschaft*. Michael Frantz of the Conestoga Church of the Brethren in Leola, Pa., in a document written in 1747 at the request of Germantown, extolled *gemeinshaft*. When Brethren historian Don Durnbaugh published Frantz’s statement, he translated *gemeinschaft* not as “community” (a common translation), but as “communion,” connoting a deeper unity of spirit among brothers and sisters in Christ (*The Brethren in Colonial America*, pp. 447-459). Brethren value *gemeinschaft*.

Do not dismiss tribes as a thing of the past. Brethren, even today, are not just *individuals*. We, by God’s grace, are a *people*. As we were coming to Annual Conference this year, my wife, Linda, remarked at the Philadelphia Airport, “There go two Brethren on their way to Conference.” I asked, “How do you know?” She said, “They look like Brethren, a ‘salt of the earth’ people.” We belong to a *communion*. We are a tribe. This collective identity draws us together.

## Leadership

A corollary to tribe is leadership. Brethren call leaders who embody basic Brethren values: humility, honesty, reconciliation, and deep devotion to Jesus Christ. Such leaders enable Brethren to work out differences and to preserve love for one another. That has been true across the centuries, going back to colonial America.

Alexander Mack, Jr., or Sander Mack as he was commonly known, is said to have been the greatest leader among the Brethren in Colonial America. Brethren historians who gathered at the Young Center for Anabaptist and Pietist Studies in June to celebrate the 300th anniversary of the birth of Sander Mack called Mack a reconciler. After scrutinizing his letters, historical notes, and diary; his poems, hymns, and devotional thoughts; his manuscript of a written debate with a prominent Lutheran theologian, these scholars described Sander

Mack as a forthright leader who was gracious and gentle in spirit. Here are two examples.

When Catherine Hummer’s visions and heavenly visitations excited some Brethren but disquieted others, Mack became the mediator judging by Catherine’s correspondence with him (*Brethren in Colonial America*, pp. 263-266). Apparently influenced by Mack, the Annual Meeting cautioned Catherine’s father against excesses, but did not pronounce judgment on the merits of Catherine’s visions, leaving room for individual opinions rather than pushing the issue to the point of division. Peace prevailed. Sander Mack’s name appears among the signatures on that Annual Meeting decision in 1763.

When the timing of feetwashing at love feast became a matter of great contention—whether the feetwashing should be done before the meal or after the meal—Mack made every effort to harmonize the Gospel accounts to find the correct order. He wanted Brethren to do it right, but rather than impose his understanding of the Gospels, Mack relied upon patient, gentle persuasion. He wrote, “Oh, how Satan could mock us if we were to quarrel about the time when the feet should be washed and love would be destroyed. Therefore, dear brethren, let us watch and be careful, and above all preserve love, for thus one preserves light.”

Sander Mack lived to be 91 years old. Historians agree that he shaped the soul of the church in the last half of the 18th century. He modeled a style of leadership that preserved unity, not just during his long life, but in the centuries that have followed him.

Enough about a great leader in the past. What about now? Where is our Sander Mack when we need him in the 21st century?

Let me speak an encouraging word. When dispirited Brethren said to Raymond Peters, who had become an elder statesman in the church, “We don’t have great leaders in the church anymore,” he replied, “In difficult times, people often think their leaders are inadequate. We have great leaders in the church now. You just don’t recognize them.” I heard those words a generation ago; I remember them to this day.

When I was a young pastor, we had Dan West, but he was too idealistic; M.R. Ziegler, but he was a maverick; Harold Row, but he was a bureaucrat. Abraham Lincoln was called a

Brethren call leaders who embody basic Brethren values: humility, honesty, reconciliation, and deep devotion to Jesus Christ. Such leaders enable **Brethren to work out differences and to preserve love for one another.**



baboon because of his long arms, and his reelection to a second term was in serious doubt almost until the day the votes were counted. No leader is a perfect specimen.

Certainly not Abraham the laugher, Jacob the swindler, Moses the murderer, and David the adulterer. Certainly not Jefferson and Hamilton, who fought like cats and dogs. God has used fallible men and women to lead people forward.

That is true today. Harold Martin, a key leader within the BRF since its founding in 1959, in an article already cited, states outright that the Church of the Brethren has become an apostate church. He lists eight grievances that tear at his heart. So, does Brother Martin urge his conservative friends and colleagues to abandon the apostate church? No. He counsels them to remain steadfast. Both he and Craig Alan Myers, current president of BRF, remind the readers of that March/April newsletter that there is “no absolutely pure church” and “those who feel they are going to find a paradise in another denomination will be in for a real surprise.” Martin warns: “One thing we should not do is to start multiple independent congregations that tend to become in-grown and dominated by one or two strong personalities who tend to ‘run things’ their own way.” Brother Martin and Brother Myers advocate revival within, not separation from, the Brethren. That is leadership in 2012.

Stan Noffsinger and Mary Jo Flory-Steury called a leadership summit last spring near the peak of the conflict. Most of the 31 participants came knowing which side they were on but left with a deeper understanding of one another and a better rapport with one another. Calling that meeting was a creative, well-timed plan. That is leadership at a critical time.

For several months I disagreed with a leading Brethren individual, whom I have known for a lifetime, about an action related to a gay church leader. He became agitated and tried to set me straight. Our conversation broke off because our meeting had ended and people were heading home. I ran into him a month later at another event. I asked him, “Are we still friends?” He smiled and said, “We are still friends.”

Who can say for sure whether or not the Brethren will split in this generation? Sometimes divisive leaders pop up. Conrad Beissel belonged to the Brethren only four years but created havoc. One hundred and fifty years later Henry Holsinger came along. His grandmother was the grand-

daughter of Sander Mack. Yet, unlike his ancestor, Holsinger was abrasive and condescending. Don Durnbaugh said that the split in 1881-1883 had more to do with Holsinger’s personality than with issues. Within a generation the main body of the Church of the Brethren had become more progressive than the Progressive Brethren who broke off. If only Henry Holsinger had inherited his great, great-grandfather’s patience and humility.

Choose your leaders carefully. Some leaders foment discord, demonizing their opponents. Other leaders foster unity, appealing to our nobler instincts. Overall, and to a remarkable degree, Brethren have called leaders who, like Sander Mack, express strong convictions with grace and humility. Michael Wolfe, Jr., from the western Brethren, John Kline from Virginia, James Quinter from Pennsylvania, Anna Mow who got around so much she seemed to be from almost everywhere, and many other wise, capable, forward-looking men and women helped lead the church forward even in times of dissension.

## No force in religion

Now let us turn from the dynamics of tribe, communion, and leadership, to several principles that hold Brethren together. “No force in religion” gives Brethren room to disagree strongly and yet remain in love and fellowship with one another.

To be accurate historically, we must acknowledge that the Church of the Brethren has a checkered history in its practice of *no force*. Sander Mack’s daughter Sarah was excluded from the “kiss of love” and communion because she married someone outside the brotherhood (*Brethren in Colonial America*, p. 239). A century later, Brethren became preoccupied with hairstyles, beards, and bonnets. Obedience and church discipline took precedence over freedom of conscience.

It was not until the end of the 19th century—1899, to be exact—that Martin Grove Brumbaugh in his *History of the Brethren* elevated the maxim “No exercise of force in religion,” and expanded it to mean not only freedom from government oppression, but also freedom within the church



Glenn Riegel



(*History of the Brethren*, 1899 edition, pp. 3-5). He wrote that our church is false to its history when it oppresses any human soul and false to its vital spirit of Christian toleration when it persecutes any human soul (*Brethren Society* by Carl F. Bowman, p. 253).

Brethren resonated with Brumbaugh's insight. They began to proclaim "no force in religion" as a Brethren principle. "A Resolution Urging Forbearance," adopted by Annual Conference during the 300th anniversary year, states: "For at least a hundred years we have recognized that being open to the Holy Spirit sometimes requires us to accept differences in the body of Christ and to practice forbearance with one another."

Harold Martin pointed to another dimension of *no force*: the freedom of congregations. He noted: "... there is great freedom at the local level for the congregation to be as biblical as it wants, without fear of interference from denominational leaders. . . ." He described this freedom of congregations as one of the benefits of continuing within the Church of the Brethren. A great variety of Brethren agree. They thrive in their local church so long as their congregation is free to be as biblical as it wants to be.

Emery DeWitt, a relatively new Brethren, wrote: "... when Brethren come together remembering our historic commitment to *no force*, we can engage each other and learn from each other in an atmosphere of mutual respect and tolerance" (*A Dunker Guide to Brethren Beliefs*, p. 62). No force in religion holds Brethren, new and old, together.

When Brethren join hands to serve others in the name of Christ they draw closer to one another and to Christ. **The basin and towel symbolize this unifying service.**

## No creed but the New Testament

Closely associated with *no force* is the principle "no creed but the New Testament." The New Testament, as understood by Brethren, portrays a way of life. All denominations gravitate toward favorite biblical passages that shape their communion. Brethren turn to the Gospels most frequently, to the stories about Jesus: his lessons in the Sermon on the Mount about humility, honesty, reconciliation, and simplicity; his portrayal of simple deeds of compassion in Matthew 25 and the parable of the Good Samaritan; his own life: healing the sick, washing the feet of his disciples, suffering on the cross. The Brethren orthodoxy centers on practice, not doctrine.

Let's be clear: Turning to the New Testament will not eliminate discord. I've heard conservatives say about homosexuality, "The Bible is clear. All we need to do is turn to the Bible." Paradoxically, I've heard progressives say, "We need to learn biblical scholarship, including how the Bible came into being and how to understand texts in light of context and cultural differences." Both of these endeavors are important, but Brethren, don't you know that the Bible, our supreme authority, has to be interpreted by fallible human beings? Interpretations vary and that is where the rub comes in.

I don't think that the Bible will change the minds of most Brethren about homosexuality. I think culture and experience will, because our daily experiences influence our understanding of the Bible.

Let me illustrate. Baptists in the South favored slavery,

Glenn Riegel



Like Peter, we discover that the Holy Spirit descends in unexpected places and brings new light as **we search the scripture together.**

...This principle, this way of life, holds Brethren together.



quoting verses from Genesis, Leviticus, and the writings of Paul (the same books of the Bible cited today in the conversations about homosexuality). They supported slavery so adamantly that the church split into Southern Baptists and Northern Baptists in 1845. Sixteen years later Southern Baptists defended slavery so vehemently they went to war to fight for it.

One hundred and fifty years later, Southern Baptists apologized officially for their past support of slavery. What changed their minds about slavery? The Bible did not change. Those verses in Genesis, Leviticus, and the writings of Paul are still there. Southern Baptists believe that the Bible is inerrant. What changed? Culture changed. Experience changed. The Spirit of God works in unexpected and mysterious ways.

Peter went to the house of Cornelius, although Jews were not supposed to visit Gentiles, after his vision of the white sheet (Acts 10). He even ordered the Gentiles there to be baptized. When he returned to Jerusalem, circumcised believers criticized him. Peter told them about what he had experienced, about the white sheet and the Holy Spirit descending upon the Gentiles. He said, his face aglow, "When the Holy Spirit fell upon them . . . who was I to hinder God?" When the circumcised believers heard this, they were silenced. And they praised God (Acts 11:17-18).

Like Peter, we discover that the Holy Spirit descends in unexpected places and brings new light as we search the scripture together. This sense that our creed, the New Testament, has a dynamic quality is expressed in the principle "No creed but the New Testament." This principle, this way of life, holds Brethren together.

## Service

Finally, service in Christ's name draws Brethren together. Volunteers from Lancaster (Pa.) Church of the Brethren, considered a liberal congregation in Atlantic Northeast District, joined volunteers from White Oak Church of the Brethren, from Lititz, Pa. (not considered a liberal congregation), at an out-of-state disaster relief project. Those volunteers came back home talking about how much they enjoyed working together. The Lancaster Brethren tend to be hard workers.

The White Oak Brethren tend to be good cooks. That is a great combination. (The White Oak volunteers were skilled workers also.) Mutual efforts to serve bring Brethren together in body and in spirit.

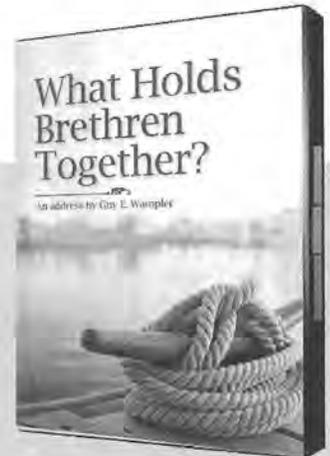
The big Disaster Relief Auction sponsored jointly by Atlantic Northeast and Southern Pennsylvania districts is a great occasion where Brethren of all stripes mingle. When Brethren join hands to serve others in the name of Christ they draw closer to one another and to Christ. The basin and towel symbolize this unifying service.

A tug of war goes on between scattering forces and unifying forces. It is not clear which side will prevail. The whole country, not just the church, is polarized now.

We belong to a tribe—more deeply, to a communion. The character of our leadership is reconciling. *No force in religion* gives us room for unity without requiring uniformity. *No creed but the New Testament* has about it a dynamic quality that encourages us to keep growing in our understanding of Christ's saving grace. *Serving* others in Christ's name brings us together and establishes a bond among us.

You, no doubt, could add to this list of positive influences. Blest be the ties that bind our hearts in Christian love. ❧

Guy E. Wampler lives in Lancaster, Pa., where he retired as pastor in 2002. He served as Annual Conference moderator in 1987 and as chair of the Annual Conference study committee that developed the 1983 statement on human sexuality.



The accompanying article was adapted from an address given by Guy Wampler at the Brethren Press/Messenger Dinner at the Church of the Brethren Annual Conference in St. Louis this summer. In it, Wampler navigated through church-wide and societal differences as he reflected on what holds Brethren together. A DVD of Wampler's address is available from Brethren Press. For information, go to [www.brethrenpress.org](http://www.brethrenpress.org).



# WHAT GOES AROUND...

Photos and article by David Radcliff

**“I won’t be here much longer—but even when I’m gone, I’ll be with you in spirit.”**

Little did we know that our group would be the last outsiders to see 90-year-old Vitoriano alive.

New Community Project has taken Learning Tours to the Ecuadorian Amazon since 2004, and every year we’ve heard mention of Vitoriano, one of the handful of older native shamanic leaders remaining in that part of the rainforest. With each passing year, it seemed less and less likely that we’d ever meet him—he was getting older, was reported to be losing some mental capacity, and rarely entertained visitors.

Shamans of his stature are spiritual and political leaders of their people, as well as medicine men who turn to the forest as a pharmacy, drawing from it cures for everything from headaches to snake bites. On this same trip, our Learning Tour group had stumbled upon—or over—a hive of wasps in a dead tree we were crossing on a jungle walk. Several of our group were stung, but our host, Delio, himself a 60-year-old shaman, quickly located the vine whose leaves serve as an antidote to such stings, applied it, and before long the swelling and pain abated.

These leaders also uphold the culture of their people and seek to protect them from outside forces. As leader of the Siona people of the Ecuadorian Amazon for much of the past five decades, Vitoriano had seen his and their world

transformed: Over that period the Siona had lost 99 percent of their traditional hunting grounds and their population had shrunk by nearly as much. And those left—some 650 souls in seven communities in the east of Ecuador—find the forest around them disintegrating.

So when our partner, SELVA (*Vida Sin Fronteras*), told us they had arranged an audience with the aged sage this past June, we were filled with anticipation. Assured that we weren’t tourists, he agreed to 10 minutes with us. As it turned out, we were with him nearly half an hour.

After greeting us warmly, Vitoriano’s first words (translated from Siona to Spanish to English) were: “Our priority must be to stop the drilling. Because of the petroleum companies, we can no longer drink from the river—we must collect rainwater. The explosions (from seismic tests to locate the oil fields) have driven away the animals. We are having sicknesses we have never had before. It is urgent—we must call on God to help us protect the future of our children.”

His pleas were dignified but urgent. We responded that we would continue to do our best to oppose oil drilling, purchase and protect rainforest, visit schools and colleges and churches to tell about him and his people and the forest they depend on, and remind people that our lives are connected to the rainforest by everything from the air we breathe to the medicines we use to the climate we share, and that it’s a



*There are hundreds of unlined toxic waste sites in the Ecuadorian Amazon, where over 4 million gallons of oil production waste is dumped daily. Our hands aren't clean on this: the US imports 100,000 barrels of Ecuadorian oil daily—the vast majority comes from the Amazon.*

**“Because of the petroleum companies, we can no longer drink from the river—we must collect rainwater. . . . We are having sicknesses we have never had before. It is urgent—we must call on God to help us protect the future of our children.”**

*—Vitoriano, a 90-year-old leader of the Siona people of the Ecuadorian Amazon (pictured at left).*

place one can't help but marvel at the Creator's hand.

The conversation turned to health problems his wife had been having, and a nurse in our group had a look at her. When it came time to go, he seemed to feel good about our visit.

Being with Vitoriano that morning was a little like being with royalty, a little like being with a mythic character from the Lord of the Rings, and a little like a visit with a sagacious great-grandfather. And it turned out literally to be a once-in-a-lifetime experience: a week after our return home, we learned that Vitoriano had died.

**L**ike Vitoriano, the Amazon rainforest is a remarkable, eons-old and extremely valuable—and vulnerable—resource. It is as large as the USA west of the Mississippi, and its attributes include producing 18 percent of the world's oxygen, being a catchment for 20 percent of the world's fresh water, serving as home to one-third of the world's terrestrial species (including 2,500 different snake species!), being a virtual dispensary of medicines derived from its flora and fauna, and offering one of our last places of wildness and wonder. Looking up at the canopy, it seems thick as a carpet in some places—but looks can be deceiving. The trees' branches rarely touch; they've learned that not touching keeps insects in one tree from attacking a

neighboring tree. Thanks to this, some rainforest trees harbor their own unique insect species.

Another extremely important trait of the rainforest is its ability to soak up (or sequester) our excess carbon dioxide. We create plenty of that these days thanks to our fossil fuel combustion (oil, gas, coal) and our cutting of the world's forests. The Amazon absorbs about 2 billion tons of this gas annually, about 6 percent of the world's total emissions. Or, put another way, it takes in about as much carbon dioxide as vehicles in the US put out.

Except when it doesn't.

The rainforest has experienced two intense droughts in the past seven years. Scientists believe these unusual dry spells are a result of the warming of the North Atlantic due to climate change, which in turn affects rainfall patterns in the Amazon (which in turn affects the weather in the US Midwest). During these drought years, when sections of the rainforest dry out, die, and even catch on fire, the Amazon contributes up to 10 tons of carbon dioxide to the atmosphere.

Of course, that's not the only problem facing the rainforest these days. As Vitoriano noted, oil companies continue to do their dirty business there. Cattle ranchers, soy farmers, palm oil and cacao plantations, and incursions by poor settlers continue to chop away at it.

They say it could be gone by the end of this century. I



**Forty percent of the world's people depend on run-off from mountaintop glaciers for their dry season water supply. These glaciers are disappearing on every continent, including in the western US, the Andes, and the Himalaya (as here in Nepal), thanks to a warming climate. Some speculate that the Chinese occupation of Tibet is in part to gain access to the water from glaciers on the Tibetan plateau.**

guess if you interrupt the hydrological cycle enough, a rainforest can flip to become savannah. There's nothing wrong with elephants and wildebeest, but a savannah is no match for the fecundity and global ecological value of a rainforest.

**G**od has created a circular world. No, this is not a revisit of the "earth is round" debate, but rather the recognition that in God's world processes move in loops, not lines, creating a dance of sustainability: from predator/prey relations to hydrological cycles to the role of ice at the top of the world, one part of the system connects to many other parts in a way that sustains and enhances life. When humans break the circle, things go awry.

- When we kill off predator species such as wolves or sharks, this has an impact on the rest of the ecosystem beneath them in the food chain. Not having wolves in Yellowstone Park for nearly 75 years led to overpopulation of elk, which in turn overgrazed streamside vegetation, affecting habitat for beaver and fish, and food sources for bears and birds.
- Swamps and wetlands are more than sets for scary movies—they purify water, stem erosion, serve as nurseries for all manner of aquatic species (including many we eat), soak up excess run-off, protect inland areas from tsunamis and tropical storms. Yet we have drained half the world's wetlands in the name of "development"—houses, golf courses, shopping malls—and then complain when our basements flood during a rainstorm.
- As human-induced climate change heats up, polar ice sheets continue to melt. This, in turn, threatens polar bears and other inhabitants of the region while also curtailing the cooling properties of the ice fields and opening up more sunlight-absorbing dark seawater, exacerbating our already-warming world.

Regardless of what we may think, humans don't live outside of this circle, but squarely within it. A generation ago, eco-economist E. F. Schumacher (author of *Small is Beautiful*) reminded us that everything we do in human society is secondary to the planet that provides for us—if it doesn't stay healthy, neither will we. Rainforests are but one ex-

ample of the way our misbehaviors will someday come back to haunt us. Coral reefs—the "rainforests" of the ocean—are near collapse. When they go, so will all the fish that originate there; so will the billions in tourist dollars they generate; so will their ability to protect coastal areas from storm surges; so will their striking beauty. Water supplies from the heights of the Himalaya to the depths of the Ogallala (the once-much-more-massive aquifer underlying the Great Plains and irrigating one-third of our grain cropland) are in jeopardy, thanks to pollutants, climate change, over-population, and over-pumping. Soil—quite literally that upon which civilization stands—is being lost much more rapidly than it is being replaced in the US and around the world.

It is arrogant—and foolish—to put ourselves outside the circle of life God has created for this planet, yet this is often our attitude. Many of those who do, do so out of religious belief—thinking that God has somehow put us over-and-above the rest of the creation and not beholden to its divinely done order. Reading the creation stories, it is clear God had something else in mind. Depending on the version, the Creator either encircled us with or arranged ahead of us the rest of creation as the context for our life—it is here for us, we are here for and dependent on it. God even went so far as to fashion *adam* (human) from *adamah* (humus).

In the New Testament, Jesus invited us not to exploit nature but to emulate it in the way its creatures live within their context, enjoying the rhythms of life God so lovingly and thoughtfully established. God warned us against focusing on material consumption to the detriment of our relationship with God, yet many Christians in our society seem assured they can have both their mammon *and* their God. That's not how Jesus saw it. He also said we would finally be judged on how we share the earth's bounty—food, water, shelter—with others, another kind of circularity.

We are all—humans and humus—in this together here on planet Earth. Warp drive illusions aside, simple geography tells us we have no chance of escape to a distant galaxy. (Traveling at the speed of the Voyager spacecraft—now reaching the outer limits of our solar system after its launch 35 years ago—it would take 70,000 years just to reach the next star). Our lives are bound up with our human neighbors by the way we share the goodness of the earth. We are

likewise linked to the Amazon, to coral reefs, to aquifers and Arctic ice sheets by what we do to them, and by what they in turn can do to or for us.

If the parable of the rich man and Lazarus is the most striking biblical example that our human lives are interrelated and that we disregard this connectivity at our peril, Jesus' reference to the birds and lilies in the Sermon on the Mount may be our clearest guide to how our lives should relate to God's creation. If instead of exploiting it we were to emulate it as Jesus suggested, what are some things we might do differently?

- We'd reexamine the concept of waste. God doesn't make trash—nor does nature; only humans create solids, liquids, and gases not readily reintegrated into the natural system. How can we, like nature, keep everything circulating?
- Nature lives off current sunlight, while our consumption of "ancient sunlight" (fossil fuels) is wreaking havoc with the climate—not to mention our health and our foreign and military policy. How can we return to a use of today's sunlight as our primary energy source?
- All other creatures "eat locally." Even migratory birds and fish eat only what is produced around them—even if they traveled to another hemisphere to get it. We, on the other hand, have the ability to reach far beyond ourselves to secure the foods and other products we crave. This has an enormous cost in terms of energy use and pollutants, as well as food security for our neighbors (African farmland is being snapped up by distant nations as a hedge against those nations' future food needs). How can we learn to be more content with what is close at hand?
- Every other aspect of God's creation must remain attentive to and adapt to the world around them—this is the key to their survival. We've grown lazy, with little interest in or need for staying tuned to our local or global environment. Meanwhile, spring is coming earlier; songbirds

are disappearing at an alarming rate (pesticides will kill over 60 million this year in the US); the picturesque stream running through a cow pasture is in reality a dead zone, thanks to warmer water (lack of shade and a broader, shallower course), manure runoff, and no native plants and insects to feed any fish that might still live there (is there a stream near you that you'd drink from?); and the rainforest is getting away from us at 20,000 square miles every year.

- We'd be willing to face the prospect of limits. In our hubris, we've come to believe that God's earth is as limitless as our appetites—that all we have to do is drill a little deeper, cast our nets a little farther, reconfigure a few more plant genes, come up with a silver-bullet energy source, and the party will never end. No other creature gets away with over-consuming or thoughtlessly destroying its resource base without repercussion; we won't either. That's why God gave us the double mandate: "to till and to keep," to glean and to guard, to produce and to protect. We fool ourselves if we don't see that ignoring these limits by consuming or fouling God's creation won't continue to lead us to war over what's left and bring suffering on those without the power to grab their piece of a diminishing pie.

Finally, we'd rediscover the concept of symbiosis: that even as—or only as—we look out for God's earth, it can and will care for us. On our walks through the rainforest, our hosts always show us a "lemon ant tree" (*Duroia hirsuta*) seemingly living in a small clearing all its own. There's a reason for that: the plant has protectors—lemon ants living in its pods. In exchange for housing, the ants drive off other insects that might do "their" plant harm, and produce a natural herbicide to maintain a flora-free zone around it. This gives the plant—and the ants living on it—the best chance of survival.

Why bother? It's the only home they have—and they've decided it's up to them to take care of it. Maybe that's a lesson for us as well. **W**

David Radcliff is director of New Community Project and a member of the Circle of Peace Church of the Brethren in Peoria, Ariz.



**Composting is a simple example of keeping things in the system. Not only does it keep organic material out of landfills (where food waste is the third leading source of refuse), but it puts this rich humus back on our yards or gardens, where it enriches the soil, invites worms, and fertilizes our plants.**

Moses views the Promised Land by Frederic Leighton



# Rediscovering exile

by Joshua Brockway

**It didn't take long.** Their feet were barely dry from crossing the Red Sea when the Israelites began looking back to Egypt with a strange fondness.

But, as we find in Exodus 16:3, their nostalgia had a dark tenor: "The Israelites said to them, 'If only we had died by the hand of the Lord in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the fleshpots and ate our fill of bread; for you have brought us out into this wilderness to kill this whole assembly with hunger.'" Then later, in Numbers 11:4-6, a similar complaint arises: "the Israelites also wept again, and said, 'If only we had meat to eat! We remember the fish we used to eat in Egypt for nothing, the cucumbers, the melons, the leeks, the onions, and the garlic; but now our strength is dried up, and there is nothing at all but this manna to look at.'"

Nostalgia can provide powerful perspective. Somehow, even in the midst of God's redemptive activity, we can

turn our eyes to days when we were more at home, more comfortable. It isn't a problem just for the emancipated Israelites. We too can find ourselves wistfully recalling fonder times while God is working out new things among us.

In an election year such as this it is common to hear people talk of days gone by. Politicians invoke the memories of significant leaders to establish their own credibility, and people look back to more familiar days to measure the current culture. Nostalgia is a strong motivator, especially as times change.

Students of culture have said that this time in history is marked by rapid change. It is a time when the values, ideas, and events feel as though they are disconnected from the things of yesterday. So it isn't just change, but what has come to be known as discontinuous change. These rapid and unpredictable shifts produce anxiety. We don't know what will come next, or if it will even make sense.

Leaders frequently prey on this anxiety. It is much easier to convince people to follow when you have a story to explain what is happening and have envisioned a way out of the chaos. The rhetoric is simple: "Times are crazy now, but if you listen to me I can take away the worry."

Despite Jesus' reminders to not worry, we as Christians are not immune to the anxiety of our times. In fact, even some within Christian circles are quick to prey on our anxieties. "The church is being pushed to the margins," they say. "We must reclaim our position of privilege." The first half is partly true, yet the conclusion need not follow.

It is becoming more evident that Christian ideas and practices no longer define our cultural landscape. Studies reveal that church membership, regardless of denomination or affiliation, is in decline. While once we might have assumed that most people had encountered a biblical story at some time in their life in a movie, play, or book, we cannot take for granted that people have even heard of Mary and Joseph. We are in a time when the church is losing its centuries-long domination of American culture.

While Christianity is still the dominant religion by the numbers, that majority of population does not translate into cultural privilege as it once did. British Anabaptists have helped us to identify this reality as post-Christendom. As Stuart Murray puts it, "We are one community among many in a plural society."

The effects of the post-Christendom shift are beginning to show, especially in the anxious tone within

days gone by, but the ways of life in the presence of God continue regardless of location or dominant culture. Settle in, God says, this will be a while. Our natural instinct is to mobilize and begin changing the circumstances in which we find ourselves. Advocate for new laws and confront the onslaught of new values and practices. So even for a church founded in the distinction between the government and the church, we look toward Christendom with expectations of political and cultural privilege for the church. In other words, we begin to lobby for "our" values and practices. Or, put another way, as James Davidson Hunter states, embracing partisan politics is a way of saying "that the problems should be solved by others besides myself and by institutions other than the church."

Instead, the words in Jeremiah point us to a new kind of faithfulness detached from the expectation that the government and wider culture will sustain us. We go about embodying our commitment to Christ, being what Hunter has called a faithful presence. Rather than working on the terms and assumptions of the dominant culture, the people of God in exile continue their faithful discipleship in worship and prayer.

As an example, Hunter offers 1 Peter 2:13-17: "For the Lord's sake accept the authority of every human institution, whether of the emperor as supreme, or of governors, as sent by him to punish those who do wrong and to praise those who do right. For it is God's will that by doing right you should silence the ignorance of the foolish. As servants of God, live as free people, yet do not use your freedom

---

## THE REMINDER HERE IS DIFFICULT. WE MIGHT BE LONGING FOR DAYS GONE BY, BUT THE WAYS OF LIFE IN THE PRESENCE OF GOD CONTINUE REGARDLESS OF LOCATION OR DOMINANT CULTURE.

our congregations. We simply do not feel at home in the emerging culture. Now the words of the Psalmist are very close to our own. "How could we sing the Lord's song in a foreign land?" (Ps. 137:4).

The prophet Jeremiah records important words for the Hebrews in exile: "Thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, to all the exiles whom I have sent into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon: Build houses and live in them; plant gardens and eat what they produce. Take wives and have sons and daughters; take wives for your sons, and give your daughters in marriage, that they may bear sons and daughters; multiply there, and do not decrease. But seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the Lord on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare" (Jer. 29:4-7).

The reminder here is difficult. We might be longing for

as a pretext for evil. Honor everyone. Love the family of believers. Fear God. Honor the emperor." Restating the text in his own words, Hunter points to the faithful requirement to accommodate "existing social realities and calling them into question by being different."

There are those who would lead us on a triumphal march back to days when there was no doubt that all of our neighbors were Christian. Still others would have us adopt the imagination of the culture in an attempt to shift its goals. Both assume a place of power and privilege, of domination rather than exile. Yet our calling as exiles is to be a faithful presence in whatever culture we find ourselves. In other words, not a people of nostalgia, but of exiles in a strange land. **W**

Joshua Brockway is director of spiritual life and discipleship for the Church of the Brethren.

## Brethren drought response will aid farm families, encourage congregational garden projects

Denominational staff and district representatives have launched a response to the needs of farmers and communities following a summer of extreme drought in a majority of states in the central US.

The project teams the energies and resources of several Church of the Brethren programs with the districts most affected by drought. These include Brethren Disaster Ministries, the Advocacy and Peace Witness Ministries, and the Global Food Crisis Fund, along with district executives and district disaster response coordinators.

The Church of the Brethren drought response will be carried out in two parts, reports Roy Winter of Brethren Disaster Ministries:

- A Farm Relief Initiative will support congregations and districts in providing relief and direct support to the most at-risk farmers in their communities. A grant of \$30,000 from the Emergency Disaster Fund (EDF) has been given to start the Farm Relief Initiative.

- A Community Food Security and Nutrition Initiative supported by congregation-based community gardens and similar efforts will address food insecurity, environmental degradation, and poverty. A grant of \$30,000 from the Global Food Crisis Fund has been given to begin this effort.

On the national level, Brethren Disaster Ministries also is connecting with the National Voluntary

Organizations Active in Disaster (NVOAD) drought response. Brethren Disaster Ministries associate director Zach Wolgemuth is one of those serving on an NVOAD task force to bring attention to the drought and help coordinate response among cooperating organizations and members of Church World Service.

"The United States continues to experience the worst drought in decades," said the grant request from Brethren Disaster Ministries. "During the hot, dry summer, the US Department of Agriculture declared natural disaster areas in 1,584 counties in 32 drought-stricken states. . . . The declaration—which covers roughly half of the country—is the most widespread natural disaster in America. The past 12 months have been the warmest the United States has experienced since the dawn of record-keeping in 1895, according to the National Climatic Data Center."

Church staff fear that results for rural America will be devastating, including loss of livelihood for many families and businesses that are based on agriculture, food production, food processing, farming, and ranching.

The drought and resulting crop shortages are expected to raise food prices. Many of those with marginal incomes may join the millions of Americans already struggling to put food on the table. The drought likely will increase in the number of children who go hungry, which at present represents one in four children across the nation.



Photo: J. B. Bunnell/Chapman



## 'My 2¢ Worth' has a new look, and a new collection label

A new look and a new label are now available for "My 2¢ Worth," formerly Two Cents a Meal. My 2¢ Worth is a program of the Global Food Crisis Fund (GFCF). The new look and label were showcased at Annual Conference this past summer and the labels, as well as envelopes, are now available from the Global Mission and Service office.

The GFCF is the primary way that the Church of the Brethren assists in developing food sovereignty around the world. Since 1983, the fund has provided grants upwards of \$400,000 annually to community development

programs in 32 countries. My 2¢ Worth donations help make it possible for the church, through the GFCF, to promote food sovereignty and mitigate hunger through sustainable agriculture development.

Write in to receive one or more free My 2¢ Worth labels for personal or congregational use. The labels are designed to wrap around tin cans or glass jars, turning them into attractive collection containers for change. Request labels and envelopes from GFCF manager Jeff Boshart at [jboshart@brethren.org](mailto:jboshart@brethren.org) or call 800-323-8039 ext. 332.



Carolyn Fitchner



Carolyn Fitchner

*Members of Chiques Church of the Brethren in Manheim, Pa., helped provide one of the Church of the Brethren medical clinics in Haiti earlier this year.*

## Haiti Medical Project supports Brethren-based clinics, reports growth of its endowment fund

The Haiti Medical Project has issued an update on efforts to raise an endowment fund to support Church of the Brethren medical clinics in Haiti, at the project's one-year mark. The effort is supported by the Global Mission and Service program. Leaders include Brethren physicians, notably Paul Ullom-Minnich of central Kansas, and other church members and congregations who are concerned to provide basic healthcare to Haitian Brethren communities, such as former Mission and Ministry Board chair Dale Minnich.

Ullom-Minnich, who was part of a Brethren medical delegation to Haiti shortly after the devastating 2010 earthquake, traveled to the Caribbean nation again Sept. 18 to meet with Haitian church leaders and physicians who are helping to provide mobile clinics.

Clinics are being held in neighborhoods around congregations of L'Eglise des Freres Haitiens (the Church of the Brethren in Haiti).

In a report to friends of the project, Ullom-Minnich said a total of \$20,591 has been raised

for endowment. The short-term goal for the endowment is to raise \$300,000 in five years.

Separately, \$32,250 has been received in 2012 for the current year's need. The project aims to raise an additional \$30,000 per year to meet current operating expenses for the mobile clinics.

So far, about \$12,000 has been spent to provide 10 clinics. Several more clinics are planned for coming months, with an overall goal to hold about 16 clinics a year in Haiti.

"All of this is fantastic, considering we are just nine months into this project," Ullom-Minnich commented. "I am thrilled with the participation of so many individuals and groups. Thank you all for the work and prayer you have contributed."

For more information about how to contribute or make a five-year commitment to the Haiti Medical Project, contact Anna Emrick, coordinator of the Global Mission and Service Office, at [aemrick@brethren.org](mailto:aemrick@brethren.org) or call 800-323-8039.

### UPCOMINGEVENTS

**Nov. 9-11 Pacific Southwest District Conference**, Hillcrest Retirement Community, La Verne, Calif.

**Nov. 9-10 Virginia District Conference**, Roanoke, Va.

**Nov. 10 Deacon Training**, the Village of Morrisons Cove, Martinsburg, Pa.

**Nov. 11 Stewardship Sunday**

**Nov. 16-18 Mission Alive 2012**, Lititz (Pa.) Church of the Brethren

**Nov. 22 Thanksgiving Day**,

**Dec. 1 World AIDS Day**

**Dec. 2 First Sunday of Advent**

**Dec. 9 Second Sunday of Advent, Advent Offering**

**Dec. 10 Human Rights Day**

**Dec. 16 Third Sunday of Advent**

**Dec. 23 Fourth Sunday of Advent**

**Dec. 25 Christmas Day**,

**Jan. 1, 2013 New Year's Day**,

## Survey gives clues to Brethren attitudes on faith formation

The Church of the Brethren took part in a survey by the Protestant Church-owned Publishers Association (PCPA) last spring when Brethren Press joined with 14 other publishing houses to compare how congregations are encouraging discipleship and spiritual formation.

The survey was conducted by the Southern Baptist-owned LifeWay Research. Their report to Brethren Press compared Brethren with the broader group of all denominations surveyed, and gave general findings for the whole group of congregations. Respondents were asked to report about attitudes toward discipling ministries such as Christian education, Bible studies, and small groups.

The survey received 191 responses from Church of the Brethren congregations, out of a pool of over 1,000. Brethren Press publisher Wendy McFadden noted that this is a good response rate for surveys in general. She commented that the results were interesting, although there were limitations because the survey instrument was developed by representatives of several large publishing houses and was based on their interests and wording.

McFadden also noted that it is difficult to reach conclusions about Brethren materials because the questions are somewhat general. For example, they do not compare congregations that use denominational materials with congregations that don't. Some of the findings seem contradictory as well. For example, more congregations report writing their own curriculum, yet more congregations also report use of published curriculum.

Some results of the survey:

- For all age levels of children, youth, and adults, Sunday morning Sunday school is by far the most important discipling ministry.
- The most commonly selected area for desired improvement is "more leaders."
- When asked about discipling ministries for children, 59 percent do not prefer a chronological approach to the Bible, 61 percent prefer a thematic approach, 90 percent prefer an approach that cycles through developmentally



*A group participating in a parent/caregiver study session of the Gather 'Round curriculum, a curriculum developed by both Brethren Press and MennoMedia.*

appropriate biblical concepts, and about 70 percent prefer a topical approach.

- For discipling ministries with youth, 90 percent prefer a topical approach.
- When asked how discipleship has changed in the past two years, Brethren are less likely to emphasize moving participants to act on biblical knowledge and forming small groups outside of other church activities, and somewhat more likely to emphasize people serving in the local community and building relationships with those outside the church.
- When asked about desired outcomes of discipling efforts with children, Brethren are more likely to select "demonstrate more love in relationships" and acceptance as a desired characteristic, and less likely to select "better understand Scripture and its meaning."
- Asked to select desired outcomes or characteristics of discipling ministries for adults, Brethren are more likely to select "better understand Scripture and its meaning" and "learn how to better handle problems," and less likely to select "witnessing changed lives" and "new leaders being developed."

## PERSONNEL CHANGES

**Rosella (Rosie) Reese** has retired as a packer for Material Resources at the Brethren Service Center in New Windsor, Md. She began employment at the center in 1986, when she was hired to work in the kitchen at the conference center. In 1989 she began as a medical packer, and has packed medicine, hospital supplies, and other relief materials for IMA World Health, the American Baptist

Church, the Evangelical Covenant Church, the Presbyterian Church, and Lutheran World Relief. Material Resources director Loretta Wolf noted that Reese has been photographed and interviewed by nearly every local newspaper and television news station, who have shown her packing supplies in response to disasters around the world.

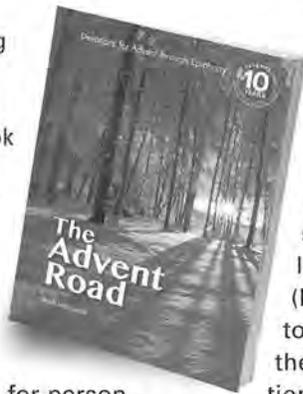
**Kayla Alphonse** has served her

last summer as program director at Camp Ithiel in Gotha, Fla., before leaving for a term of service in Haiti working for the Church of the Brethren on a contract basis. She has joined her husband, Ilexene Alphonse, who is serving at the headquarters of L'Eglise des Freres Haitiens (the Church of the Brethren in Haiti). She will be working in Haiti with a special focus on theological education.

## Former Messenger editor authors 10th anniversary Advent devotional

Brethren Press is celebrating the 10th anniversary of its Advent and Lent devotional series with a devotional book written by Manchester University campus minister and former MESSENGER editor Walt Wiltschek. *The Advent Road* includes daily scripture texts, meditations, and prayers for the Advent season. It is suitable for personal devotions and for churches to provide to their members. Some special features this year are publication in three formats including e-book as well as the regular size and large-print versions, and a fresh page design.

Also recently published is a new volume in the Dunker Guide series, *A*



*Dunker Guide to Brethren Beliefs*, a collection of 20 essays that focuses on core Brethren beliefs. The essays are written by 20 members—some former clergy, some lay members—of Lancaster (Pa.) Church of the Brethren to help the reader engage the topic, whether it's salvation or baptism or simplicity.

The book also provides discussion questions to take the themes even further. A foreword is written by Jeffrey A. Bach of the Young Center at Elizabethtown (Pa.) College, the preface by Guy E. Wampler, editor, and Charles Denlinger, assistant editor. Brethren Press hopes the book will be

used for new member classes and small group studies.

"It's a great introduction on core Brethren values and beliefs," says James Deaton, Brethren Press managing editor for books and study resources. "As the preface states, not everyone will agree with everything in the book. But we do hope the book will spark your thinking and stir you to articulate, like these writers have done, what you do believe." Previous books in the series are *A Dunker Guide to Brethren History* and *A Dunker Guide to the Bible*. \$12.95, paperback.

Order from Brethren Press by calling 800-441-3712 or ordering online at [www.brethrenpress.com](http://www.brethrenpress.com). A shipping and handling charge will be added to the listed price.

# MSS Ministry Summer Service

*Ministry Summer Service (MSS) is a leadership development program for college students in the Church of the Brethren who spend 10 weeks of the summer working in the church (local congregation, district office, camp, or national program).*



**I wanted a summer of significance - where I could make an impact and still be able to pay for school in the fall. I never would have guessed that I would have summer that would change my life.**

—Laura Whitman, MSS 2012 intern at the Palmyra Church of the Brethren



Church of the Brethren

**Ministry Summer Service is an amazing experience! It's an opportunity to try on "different hats" that allow one to listen for a call to serve the church and God.**

—Sarah Neher, MSS 2012 intern in the Church of the Brethren Youth/Young Adult Office



**Leading is a journey of discovery in which together persons live into the challenges of the present moment allowing the energy of God's love to be released in creative word or action.**

—Larry Fourman, pastor of the Union Center church of the Brethren and MSS 2012 mentor

[www.brethren.org/mss](http://www.brethren.org/mss) for mentor and intern applications and information.

Applications are due January 11, 2013.

# When research meets conventional wisdom

**N**onviolent resistance is more than twice as successful as armed struggle, even in the face of brutal regime repression. That's what two social scientists found when they examined 323 violent and nonviolent uprisings from around the world between the years 1900 and 2006.

This is detailed in *Why Civil Resistance Works: the Strategic Logic of Nonviolent Conflict*. Its authors are Erica Chenoweth, assistant professor of international studies at the University of Denver, and Maria J. Stephan, a strategic planner in the US State Department.

The authors also found that nations experiencing nonviolent uprisings were much more likely to emerge as democratic societies and with a lower risk of civil war relapse than nations undergoing violent insurgencies.

Their book has been named a 2012 Woodrow Wilson Foundation Award winner. This is a scholarly work and other scholars are, without question, its first intended audience. The message is clearly accessible to any reader, however, and for people with an interest in the power of nonviolence to effect change, it is an important message indeed.



DICK JONES

The authors evidence no concern over whether peaceful protest is morally or spiritually superior to armed revolt. Their question is practical. Does peaceful protest work better than violence? Their answer, bolstered by careful statistical analysis, is yes.

A main reason why nonviolent protest is superior, they found, is because nonviolent campaigns have a decided "participation advantage" over military struggle. They tend to be about four times larger. Because of the mixture of resistance tactics available to nonviolent movements—ranging from protests, sit-ins, and occupations to stay-at-home and go-slow demonstrations, boycotts, and strikes—they attract a broader following than armed rebellion. Success tends to stem from using a variety of tactics to weaken a regime's "pillars of support" and finally make the status quo untenable.

The authors looked at the success rates of the toughest types of insurrections: anti-dictator, self-determination, and

anti-occupation movements. Their cases range from the famed Indian Independence movement of the 1930s and '40s to the Serbian movement to overthrow Slobodan Milosevic in 2000, among many others.

Of course, not all nonviolent campaigns succeed. Tiananmen Square in China is an example. There, insurgents relied too heavily on protests and demonstrations rather than a diversity of methods. The authors look in depth at another failure: the Burmese Uprising of 1988-90. Poorly managed campaigns can fall short.

They note that armed revolt does occasionally work, but has a much lower success rate than nonviolent campaigns. And the cost is high. The Russian, Chinese, Algerian, Cuban, and Vietnamese revolutions—the best-known examples of successful armed revolt in the 20<sup>th</sup> century—each produced harsh results. None of those countries emerged democratic.

In addition to its statistical analysis of 323 uprisings, the book features four case studies: the Iranian Revolution of 1977-79, the First Palestinian Intifada of 1987-92 (nonviolent at the start and partially successful until succumbing to factionalism and violence), the Philippine People Power Movement of 1983-86, and the Burmese Uprising.

The overall results of their work were an admitted surprise to Chenoweth, a scholar of political violence. And they clearly fly in the face of much conventional wisdom. Perhaps that's why the authors spend considerable time anticipating arguments from those who would dispute their findings, and then refuting them.

Like all scholarly efforts, *Why Civil Resistance Works* is full of citations of previous research. For those who understand the workings of regression analysis, all of the statistical investigation is there. Fear not, however. You don't need to be a social scientist to read this book. The charts and graphs are clear and helpful. The text is, for the most part, quite accessible, if sometimes a bit repetitive.

This book is useful to anyone who values nonviolence in public policy. It's good news for those who feel lonely in a world that seems to accept without question the notion that violence, or the threat of it, is always the practical way to solve problems. **W**

Dick Jones is a member of University Baptist and Brethren Church (UBBC) in State College, Pa.

## ABOUT THE BOOK

**Title:** *Why Civil Resistance Works: the Strategic Logic of Nonviolent Conflict*. **Authors:** Erica Chenoweth and Maria J. Stephan. **List price:** \$29.50. **Pages:** 320. **Publisher:** Columbia University Press, 2011, New York.

**What others say:** "This is social science at its best. Years of critical study culminate in a book on one dominating issue: How does nonviolent opposition compare with violence in removing a regime or achieving secession?" — Thomas C. Schelling, recipient of the Nobel Prize in economics.



# Cyclists honor Brethren student who 'rode with God'

The times Paul Ziegler felt closest to his God was often riding atop a bicycle.

"I'm going on a bike ride to be with God' was one of his last texts," said Debra Ziegler, mother of Paul Ziegler, a Brethren student at McPherson (Kan.) College, who then set out on what would be his last ride.

The sophomore, whose home church was Elizabethtown (Pa.) Church of the Brethren, died in an accident in McPherson on Sept. 23 when an oncoming vehicle crossed the center line and struck him riding his bicycle.

On Oct. 20, about 200 people honored Ziegler during the college's homecoming weekend by putting their feet to the pedals themselves to surpass Ziegler's goal of cycling 2,000 miles this year. The event in his honor was called "Pedals for Paul" and involved people from the campus, the McPherson community, and many others who care about the young student.



**Paul Ziegler**

Ziegler had logged 800 miles at the time of the accident. During the event, 74 riders participated in a bicycle ride in and around McPherson, logging 1,692 miles. Even more rode on stationary bicycles in the college's small gym, pedaling to 1,783 miles. Others who were not able to attend went on rides of their own and sent in what they rode, bringing the grand total for the day to 3,475 miles. When that was added to the 800 miles Paul had already ridden, his 2,000-mile goal was more than doubled, totalling 4,275 miles.

Before the Oct. 20 event, McPherson senior Kyle Smith said the ride was a way to give back and honor Paul. "It seems like something he would have really wanted to do. I would have wanted someone to do this for me."

Senior Emily James said Pedals for Paul showed there's a community who supports him and supports what he loved. "What's a better way to spend this day than doing something that he loved in his memory?"

Paul's personality and spirit drew many to honor him by riding in the event. Respected, ready and willing, talented, passionate, ready with a smile, extraordinary, and loving are just a few of the words used to describe him. "He was the best of us," said Dusty Kitchen, director of student activities. "Everything that was a good human being, he was."

Ziegler was active in McPherson Church of the Brethren, was involved in campus life as a member of the tennis team, and worked with Kitchen in the sports information office.

Before the bikers started on the road ride during Homecoming, Debra Ziegler told the riders that Paul wanted to ride his bicycle in support of world peace. She commented on her son's trademark grin and said, "Maybe world peace begins with a smile."

—Adam Pracht

Adam Pracht is coordinator of Development Communications at McPherson College in McPherson, Kan.



# Humor, Tragedy, *and* Inspiration

from Herald Press

## Laughter Is Sacred Space

The Not-So-Typical Journey  
of a Mennonite Actor

Ted Swartz

Follow Ted Swartz of Ted & Company  
TheaterWorks through his  
life journey of humor and tragedy.

**\$24.99 hardcover**



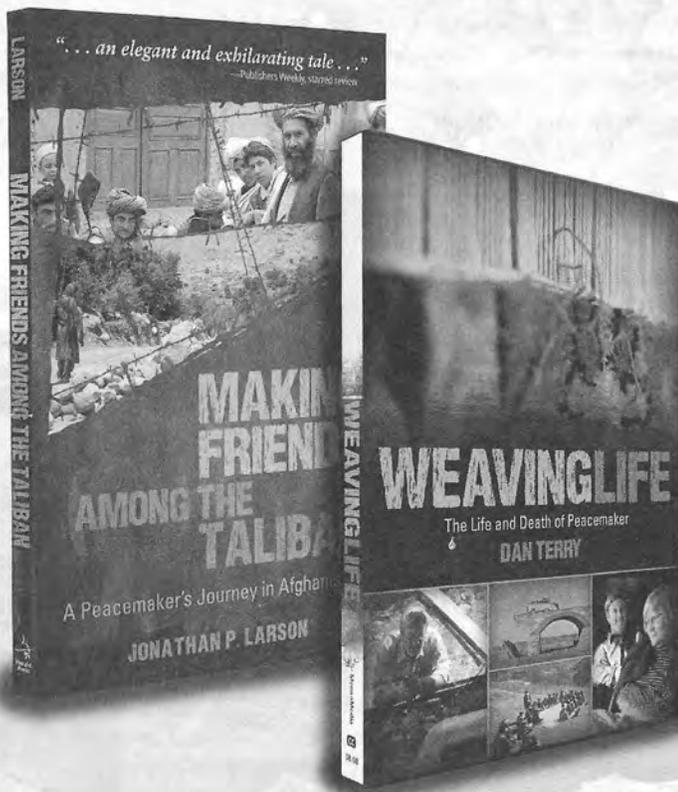
## Relentless Goodbye

Grief and Love in the Shadow of Dementia

Ginnie Horst Burkholder

Burkholder shares from the heart  
about caring for a spouse who is  
slowly slipping away to early dementia.

**\$16.99 paper**



## Making Friends among the Taliban

A Peacemaker's Journey in Afghanistan

Jonathan P. Larson

Why would Dan Terry follow faith and  
calling into the turmoil of Afghanistan  
and believe he could make a difference?

**\$15.99 paper**

## Weaving Life **DVD**

The Life and Death of Peacemaker Dan Terry

Dan Terry's friends and family tell how he  
confronted assumptions and pursued authentic  
relationships over 40 years in Afghanistan.

**\$24.99 DVD**

Available from:



BrethrenPress.com

This day. 24 hours a day.

**Thanks for the memories**

I just wanted to tell you that I enjoyed your October editorial because I related to it. "Papa" and "Mama" Schultz were the main people at Camp Mack in northern Indiana for many years. I attended camp there when I was a sophomore in high school. Today is my 88th birthday, so you can figure out how long ago that was. But we had a lot of Indian lore at Camp Mack. Thanks for the memories.

**Ellen Boos**  
Plymouth, Ind.

**OEP statement not ecclesiastical disobedience**

We at On Earth Peace appreciate the generous spirit and historical insights shown in Pastor Bowser's "Ecclesiastical Disobedience" article (October MESSENGER).

This being said, we think it is

important to point out that we do not see our "Statement of Inclusion" as an act of ecclesiastical disobedience in this case. By this statement we were simply bearing a spiritual witness which was experienced by more than two dozen people during an open process of consensus decision-making. We view sharing this witness as being squarely within the scope of the "1983 Statement on Human Sexuality from a Christian Perspective" which calls the church to continued exploration, conversation, and discovery with open hearts and minds.

On Earth Peace remains deeply committed to "providing a ministry that is clearly within the scope of Annual Conference directives." Sharing what we believe we hear God calling us to—even when this differs from current decisions of our governing body—is one part of this ministry, along with all the work we do with our Ministry of Reconciliation and



**An inspiring process empowering Church of the Brethren congregations of every size, context and location to pursue their God-given mission.**

*Involves:*

- *Storytelling and holy listening*
- *Bible study and prayer*
- *Spiritual gifts and formation*
- *Strategic spiritual ministry and mission*
- *Coaching and resourcing congregational leaders*

*Leadership*

- *District collaboration*

**Developed by  
Congregational Life Ministries**

**Contact**

Jonathan Shively  
jshively@brethren.org  
800-323-8039 x 302

Stan Dueck  
sdueck@brethren.org  
800-323-8039 x 343



**Church of the Brethren**



**Let's grow together**

Financial services rooted in faith and values to help you grow and thrive.

Talk to your local representative or visit [Everence.com](http://Everence.com) to learn about the benefits of becoming a member.

2111135

youth and peace witness programs.

It also is very important to us that our brothers and sisters in the church not lose sight of the broader scope of our statement which embraces all forms of exclusion—including “on the basis of gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, or any other

aspect of human identify”—and goes far beyond the current anxieties surrounding sexuality. In fact, we are so committed to these principles that we are making a substantial investment in comprehensive, long term, anti-oppression training for our entire board and staff beginning next spring.

Our statement happened to come out around the same time as other church agency actions that also were disturbing to some with anxieties and concerns about sexual identity. These three actions were taken by three separate bodies—independently of each other, and without coordination between them—each acting within the scope of their respective callings in response to separate sets of circumstances. As the other two actions faded into the past and we gain some distance from the impact of their close timing, we hope our statement will continue to stand out as a beacon for continuing conversation and respectful listening among all members of the church as we all share our distinct visions, concerns, and beliefs with each other.

**Bill Scheurer, executive director**  
On Earth Peace

 Pontius' Puddle



**Faith-based travel at its best with TourMagination!**

Experience God's world with other believers on our range of tours.

**CRUISES**

- PANAMA CANAL CRUISE (February 26-March 8/2013)
- ALASKA CRUISE TOUR (July 23-August 3/2013)
- CHINA & YANGTZE RIVER CRUISE (Nov 1-15/2013)

**ECO-ADVENTURE TOURS**

- AUSTRALIA & NEW ZEALAND (Feb 1-21/2013) **SOLD OUT!**
- ICELAND ECO TOUR (June 10-19/2013)
- EUROPEAN CHRISTMAS MARKETS (Dec 9-15/2013)
- AMAZON RAINFOREST & GALAPAGOS ISLANDS (Jan 16-26/2014)
- SPECTACULAR SCANDINAVIA & ITS FJORDS (June 13-26/2014)

**EDUCATIONAL TOURS**

- CHURCHES & SAFARIS IN KENYA & TANZANIA (Feb 8-20/2013) **SOLD OUT!**
- BRITISH ISLES (ENGLAND, SCOTLAND & WALES) WITH DAVID & JOYCE ESHLEMAN (Sept 13-25/2013)
- JAMAICA: ITS PEOPLE, NATURAL BEAUTY & FRUITS (Jan 18-27/2014)

**CUSTOM TOURS**

- MEDA IN MOROCCO (April 2-12/2013)
- HESSTON COLLEGE TOUR TO EUROPE (May 24-June 6/2013)
- COLUMBIA BIBLE COLLEGE ANABAPTIST HERITAGE TOUR (July 2-15/2013)

**HOLY LAND TOURS**

- HOLY LAND TOUR WITH TRACY SPROAT (Mar 13-21/2013)

- ISRAEL/PALESTINE WITH PASTOR PHIL WAGLER (April 16-25/2013)
- LANDS OF THE BIBLE WITH PASTORS SEBASTIAN & CAREY MEADOWS-HELMER (April 28-May 7/2013)
- EXPLORE THE WORLD OF PAUL WITH TOM YODER NEUFELD (May 1-17/2013)
- FOLLOWING THE STEPS OF MOSES WITH PASTOR NELSON KRABILL (July 22-31/2013)
- BEHIND THE VEIL: EXPERIENCING EGYPT (Oct 17-28/2013)
- ISRAEL/PALESTINE WITH PASTOR RICH BUCHER (Nov 5-14/2013)
- ISRAEL/PALESTINE WITH PASTOR DAVID BOSHAUT (April 24-May 3/2014)
- FROM NAZARETH TO ROME WITH PASTOR JIM BROWN (Nov 3-15/2014)

**HERITAGE TOURS**

- EUROPEAN HERITAGE WITH PAUL ZEHR (May 2-15/2013)
- GREAT TREK TOUR WITH JOHN SHARP (May 7-18/2013)
- EUROPEAN HERITAGE WITH JOHN RUTH (June 6-19/2013)
- RUSSIA & UKRAINE: THE MENNONITE STORY (Sept 4-16/2013)
- EXPLORE SOUTH AMERICA (March 15-27/2014)
- EUROPEAN HERITAGE WITH JOHN RUTH (June 24-July 7/2014)

**MYSTERY TOUR**

- MYSTERY TOUR (April 17-26, 2013)



**BOOK YOUR LIFE-CHANGING JOURNEY TODAY! (800) 565-0451**

E-MAIL: [office@tourmagination.com](mailto:office@tourmagination.com)

WEB: [www.tourmagination.com](http://www.tourmagination.com)

Reg. # 50014322

**Not anti-Jewish**

I believe in a secure and prosperous Jewish Israel in Zion. A good half of my school mates and friends as I grew up were Jews of many perspectives. Hanukkah celebrations and Passover Seders and Bar Mitzvahs are large and happy parts of my youthful experience. Jews and practiced Judaism are a part of me.

Wayne Bishop's accusing CPT of "anti-Jewish activities" can only be rooted in ignorance of Jews and CPT (October MESSENGER). I, some Jews, CPT, and many others are critical of Israel's settlement policies, the Wall, checkpoints, house demolitions, destruction of Palestinian orchards,

*The opinions expressed in "Letters" are not necessarily those of MESSENGER. Readers should receive them in the same way as when differing views are expressed in face-to-face conversation.*

*Letters should be brief, clear, and respectful of the opinions of others, with strong differences handled in the spirit of Matthew 18. Preference is given to letters that respond directly to items in MESSENGER. Anonymous letters will not be considered.*

*Send letters to MESSENGER, Attn: Letters, 1451 Dundee Avenue, Elgin, IL 60120 or email [messenger@brethren.org](mailto:messenger@brethren.org). Please include home-town and phone number.*

brutal detention policies and other tactics apparently intended not only for security but also to interfere with and suppress the economic development and civic growth of the Palestinian people; but we are definitively not anti-Jewish. Indeed, most all of us are very pro-Jewish.

**Donald Hooker Monroe, Jr.**  
Hyattsville, Md.

### Neff's article timely

Thank you for Robert Neff's analysis of the Philip/Ethiopian eunuch story in Acts 8 (October MESSENGER). His article was most timely for our Sunnyslope Congregation (Church of the Brethren and United Church of Christ, Wenatchee, Wash.). We have just completed a very thorough, two-year study concerning the meaning and possibility of becoming officially an Open and Affirming congregation. On Sept. 23, at a specially

called congregational meeting, we did just that.

Two statements Neff makes in his closing section especially speak to us: "(T)his radical dimension of the early church is most challenging for many of us. And, paradoxically, it makes clear that the conservative choice is to be a welcoming church. Those who use questions of gender or sexual identity to exclude are, in fact, the ones who have strayed from the original teaching of Scripture. . . ." "(T)he earliest church was a welcoming church. Gender inclusiveness is not a new idea but rather is at the center of the earliest church, according to Luke. To be true to our heritage, we should simply hang our a sign which says: 'Welcome all, no exceptions.'"

Those who would like to see the statements that will appear in our Sunday bulletins and monthly newsletters may find them on our website:

[www.sunnysloprchurchwa.org](http://www.sunnysloprchurchwa.org).

**David J. Brown**  
Wenatchee, Wash.



**NOAC 2013**  
National Older Adult Conference

**September 2-6, 2013**  
Lake Junaluska, NC

[www.brethren.org/NOAC](http://www.brethren.org/NOAC)  
(800)323-8039 ext. 305

*Master of divinity and master of arts, one-year certificate program,  
local and distance tracks  
Grounded in distinctive Anabaptist and Radical Pietist perspectives*

**Peace**  
*Living peace, liberating gospel*

**Deeply Rooted**

**Jesus**  
**Scripture**  
**Community**  
**Discernment**

**Diversity**



**Spring 2013 Application  
Deadline: December 1, 2012**

 **BETHANY**  
*Theological Seminary*

Richmond, Indiana  
800-287-8822  
[www.bethanyseminary.edu/zvmp](http://www.bethanyseminary.edu/zvmp)

**Weary and worn**

I received the October MESSENGER only to discover another issue devoted to the homosexuality debate, as found in the cover article by Brother Robert Neff. After a 30-year war of words over this issue, our denomination endured a painful two-year Special Response process followed by a contentious discussion and decision at Annual Conference. Then came the BMC/BVS (Brethren Mennonite Council for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Interests, and Brethren Volunteer Service) debacle and the OEP (On Earth Peace) statement. For now, the body has spoken and we need some time to heal. If we continue to force this issue and apply pressure, it will certainly result in further schism, deeper pain, and wasted efforts. Please give us all some time to heal by calling a ceasefire on this. We are weary and worn.

**George Bowers**  
Woodstock, Va.

**Thanks for the reminder**

Wow! I loved the editorial by Randy Miller in the October issue of the MESSENGER. Thank you for a wonderful weaving of observations, stories, and insights. We often dig in our heels, stick to that with which we are comfortable and forget that "with each passing year, with each passing minute, really, new truths are being revealed.. All we have to do is listen."

Thanks for a wonderful reminder to continue to respect what we know and yet be open to the opportunity that new truths, new experiences, and a new day can bring.

**Beth van Haaren**  
Tipp City, Ohio

**Astounding statements in Letters**

I want to address two letters to the editor in the September MESSENGER. The first is titled: "A disservice to the message of Christ," and was submitted by Denzel Short. The second, titled: "Wasted time and energy," was sent in by Jim Power.

Short reveals his ignorance of New Testament Scriptures in that he states, "Others, including myself, believe Scripture should be read in light of the present culture." The Apostle Paul never advocated any such thought in all his recorded writings in the New Testament, and even those writings attributed to Jesus would never substantiate such thought.

Furthermore, the writer's criticism of the writings of Carl Myers and myself relating to the issue of homosexuality is another sign of scriptural ignorance. Those two writings have been based on New Testament scriptural substantiation. Therefore, it is never a disservice to the message of Christ to engage the work of the Holy Spirit; it enhances the work and brings honor and glory. The writer needs to understand that factor.

It is astounding to me that Short, a former science educator and a Brethren, would make this statement: "I doubt if the Apostle Paul and Jesus Christ knew of terms like genetics, chromosomes, or hormonal imbalance." This is the beginning sign of a heretic. It is Brethren like him who are taking the denomination to hell in a handbasket, and their souls to eternal damnation, if they do not change their thought process. Denzel Short needs to be born again and get his nose into the Scriptures. Answers can be found in the New Testament for every situation, but one must be willing to study, research, and be in tune with the Holy Spirit.

The second writing, by Jim Power, is an excellent evaluation of New Testament theology. But the issue of homosexuality needs not to be thought of as a waste of time and energy, but be brought into context with the other factors of absolute condemnation as mentioned in Scripture.

**Robert Clapper**  
Holidaysburg, Pa.

When Elaine Frey turned 65 ...



She got quotes from several health insurers, but she said,

*"The only person I talked to was Steve Fath, my Everence representative. I knew I'd get an honest answer from him."*

If you're looking for a relationship with your insurer that's based on trust, call (800) 348-7468 ext. 2463 or visit [www.Everence.com/medsupp](http://www.Everence.com/medsupp).



**STATEMENT OF OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT AND CIRCULATION**

This is a periodical publication.

<b>Publication Title:</b>	MESSENGER
<b>Publication No.:</b>	0026-0355
<b>Filing Date:</b>	October 1, 2012
<b>Owner:</b>	Church of the Brethren, 1451 Dundee Ave, Elgin IL 60120-1674
<b>Publisher:</b>	Wendy McFadden, 1451 Dundee Ave, Elgin IL 60120-1674
<b>Editor:</b>	Randy Miller, 1451 Dundee Ave, Elgin IL 60120-1674
<b>Total Circulation:</b>	9,280
<b>Cost:</b>	\$17.50

**CLASSIFIED ADS**

**Travel with a Christian group.** Visit Beijing, China (Great Wall, Forbidden City, etc.) before boarding Diamond Princess for cruise of South China Sea. Shore visits will be made with opportunity to visit interesting sites in Korea; Japan; Shanghai (China); Hong Kong; Ho Chi Minh City (Saigon), Vietnam; Bangkok, Thailand; and Singapore. November 3-25, 2013. For information please write to J. Kenneth Kreider, 1300 Bear Creek Road, Elizabethtown, PA 17022 or email [kreiderk@etown.edu](mailto:kreiderk@etown.edu)

**Serve in Japan:** Brethren Volunteer Service and the World Friendship Center are seeking a married couple to serve as volunteer directors of the WFC in Hiroshima, Japan. The co-directors will serve a two-year term through BVS starting in May 2013. The directors manage and operate guest services for the Center and also teach English classes. Contact BVS at [bvs@brethren.org](mailto:bvs@brethren.org) or 847-429-4834.

Please send information to be included in *Turning Points* to Jean Clements, 1451 Dundee Ave, Elgin, IL 60120; 800-323-8039, ext. 320; jclements@brethren.org. Information must be complete in order to be published. Information older than one year cannot be published.

## New Members

**Bethany**, Farmington, Del.: Kaitlyn Slater  
**Cabool**, Mo.: Robert Scoby, Diane Schroeder, Craig Fowler, Jo Martin, Archuleta, Brian Linehan, Doris Linehan  
**Chambersburg**, Pa.: Travis Rhodes, Jamie SanFilippo-Rhodes  
**Chiques**, Manheim, Pa.: Lauren Peters, June Antkowiak  
**Ephrata**, Pa.: Kevin Antol, Jr., Ryan Groff, Taylor Hoeffner, Bobbijo Pfautz, Cory Pfautz, Beckah Shenk  
**Frederick**, Md.: Shawn Carey, Stacie Carey, Carrie Drum, Ginger Fogle, Tyler Fogle, Jordan Haugh, Chris Hiden, Devyn Hiden, Gary Hiden, Kathy Long, Joey Moss, David Muns, Debby Muns, Joe Ryan, Tracy Ryan, Andrew Young, Blaine Young, J. R. Young, Karen Young  
**Geiger**, Friedens, Pa.: Bonnie Baer  
**Henry Fork**, Rocky Mount, Va.: Richard Isner, Katie Mitchell, Ricky Collins, Trevor Hodges, Casey Hodges, Dyl Hodges, Missy Brown, Benjamin Hodges, Lois Hall, Michael Rice, Kim Boitnott, Beth Boitnott, Josh Arrington, Britanni Yopp  
**Lancaster**, Pa.: Andrew Lefever  
**Maple Grove**, Lexington, N.C.: Christine Bean  
**Montezuma**, Dayton, Va.: Avery Andrews, Dustin Atkins, Lydia Erbaugh, Amy Good, Weston Mandeville, Chris Payne, Austin Shifflett, Tanner Shifflett  
**Mountain View**, McGaheysville, Va.: Guy

Lam, Tammy Lam, India Miller, Sharon Monger  
**New Enterprise**, Pa.: John Dively, Joann Dively, Dan Albright, Thelma Albright, Brandon Defibaugh, Jim Sell, Michele Sell, Derrick Imler, Darrell Imler, Alicia Smith, Cody Grimes, Kaitlin Grimes  
**North Liberty**, Ind.: Mike Martin, Annette Martin, Dennis Prout, Ann Prout, Debbie Knabe  
**Penn Run**, Pa.: Catherine Fackler  
**Quakertown, First**, Quakertown, Pa.: Larry Schwartz, Joseph Czop, Shawn Swavely, Logan Evans, Carroll Donnelly, Moriah Wilt, Jennifer Steich, James Peiffer, Blanche Peiffer, William Mapes, Ellie Mapes  
**South Waterloo**, Waterloo, Iowa: Roger Lear, Lucinda Lear  
**Trinity**, Sabetha, Kan.: Mary Stucky, Devin Stucky, Doug Doty, Paul Shaver, Ruth Shaver, Jeffrey Walter, Jayne Walter, Kendall Walter, Brandon Walter  
**University Baptist & Brethren**, State College, Pa.: Casey Cook, Emily Kiver, Chad Schimmel, Danica Schimmel, Henry Ziegler  
**White Cottage**, Ohio: Clarissa Bagley, Kim Fell, Joe Fey, Ryan Boone, Sarah Irvin, Skyler Irvin, Jocelyn Wigel, Cletieth Birchfield, Mary Palmer, Sherry Foley, Allen Foley, Hannah Hartman, Kevin Morrison,  
**Woodbury**, Pa.: Alexander Barkman, Mary Stenning  
**Wyomissing**, Pa.: Kim Cataldi, Joyce Fidler, Nathan Grayek, Robert Keim

## Wedding Anniversaries

**Bohince**, Darcey and Judy, Nokesville, Va., 50  
**Darding**, Don and Marjorie, Greenville, Ohio, 60  
**Dull**, Don and Jean, Gettysburg, Ohio, 55  
**Force**, Sam and Linda, Bradford, Ohio, 55  
**Gardner**, Rick and Carol,

Huntley, Ill., 50  
**Gruber**, Ross and Marilyn, Greenville, Ohio, 50  
**Harman**, Ronald and Harriet, York Springs, Pa., 50  
**Miller**, Terry and Sharon, Bradford, Ohio, 50  
**Mumma**, Luke and Emily, Lorida, Fla., 60  
**Myers**, Carl and Jean, Sinking Spring, Pa., 50  
**Nusbaum**, Bill and Mary, Frederick, Md., 55  
**Shenk**, Laysar and Elizabeth, Manheim, Pa., 72  
**Walbridge**, Gilbert C. and Marjorie S., Easton, Md., 70  
**Witwer**, Leo and Jeanne, Greenville, Ohio, 65

## Deaths

**Adams**, Vernon F., 81, Lititz, Pa., June 5  
**Arnold**, P. Arthur, 94, Bluffton, Ohio, June 12  
**Arnold**, Warren L., 85, Greenville, Ohio, May 31  
**Barber**, Pearl Hansford, 102, Batavia, Ill., Oct. 2, 2011  
**Bingham**, William L., 82, Lititz, Pa., May 8  
**Bohn**, Cynthia A., 63, Boyertown, Pa., June 15  
**Boward**, Thelma Nadine, 100, Hagerstown, Md., Aug. 27  
**Brant**, Frances E., 77, Garrett, Pa., May 12  
**Cave**, Helen M., 95, Palmyra, Pa., Sept. 6  
**Cordier**, Marilyn L., 66, Fort Wayne, Ind., Aug. 16  
**Delauter**, Golda Odessa, 90, Ijamsville, Md., March 4  
**Derrickson**, Gladys Hostedler, 92, Millsboro, Del., Aug. 24  
**Eichelberger**, Dean Rutledge, 50, Newport News, Va., Feb. 2  
**Fassnacht**, Kenneth C., 92, Lititz, Pa., Jan. 5  
**Fassnacht**, Verna G., 92, Lancaster, Pa., May 24  
**Ford**, Edith Good, 93, Frederick, Md., March 5  
**Forster**, Dorothy L., 82, Wyomissing, Pa., Sept. 3  
**Gibbs**, Herschel F., 90, Frederick, Md., Feb. 22  
**Gordon**, Mary Magdalene, 107, Waynesboro, Va., Sept. 3  
**Goughnour**, Alice Evelyn, 88, Martinsburg, Pa., Aug. 27  
**Griffith**, Jane D. Keller, 82,

Ephrata, Pa., May 19  
**Hall**, George Elwood, 90, Charlottesville, Va., April 5  
**Harpest**, Mary L., 97, Greenville, Ohio, March 8  
**Haworth**, Virginia M., 94, Fostoria, Ohio, Feb. 9  
**Hollinger**, Dottie Lou, 69, Lancaster, Pa., July 12  
**Horner**, Lloyd, 92, Shawnee, Kan., Aug. 16  
**Jenkins**, Cletis Lowe, II, 66, Harrisonburg, Va., Sept. 11  
**Kreiner**, Dale H., 87, Manheim, Pa., Aug. 9  
**Marsau**, Robert William, 88, Waterloo, Iowa, Sept. 4  
**Miller**, Arthur Dale, 66, McPherson, Kan., Aug. 27  
**Nicholson**, Bertha Elizabeth Hager, 98, Frederick, Md., June 19  
**North**, Susan J., 56, Greenville, Ohio, June 28  
**Painter**, Eleanor F., 86, Pemberville, Ohio, Sept. 5  
**Pere**, Peggy Lou, 78, Frederick, Md., March 31  
**Plum**, Audrey Gayman, 98, Dixon, Ill., Aug. 19  
**Prak**, Sampach, 42, Frederick, Md., May 18  
**Progecene**, Constance D., 76, Frederick, Md., June 3  
**Reece**, Sally Ann, 71, Clermont, Fla., Dec. 28, 2011  
**Reid**, Lena M., 87, Frederick, Md., April 30  
**Rettinger**, Donald Keith, 88, Plymouth, Ind., Dec. 5, 2011  
**Rhodes**, Calvert W., 91, Berlin, Pa., Aug. 1  
**Rissler**, Melvin N., 85, Stevens, Pa., Dec. 12, 2011  
**Rissler**, Patti L. Heisey, 54, Stevens, Pa., Dec. 12, 2011  
**Rissler**, Rachel L., 24, Stevens, Pa., Dec. 12, 2011  
**Royer**, Eunice E., 91, Greenville, Ohio, July 25  
**Runkles**, Gracey Beachley, 96, Frederick, Md., April 30  
**Schmidt**, Nancy J., 75, Polo, Ill., March 24  
**Seltzer**, Philip H., Jr., 81, Lebanon, Pa., Sept. 18  
**Smith**, John M., 48, Ephrata, Pa., Dec. 7, 2011  
**Smith**, Pauline Naomi, 100, Titusville, Fla., Aug. 6  
**Thompson**, Treva M. Hardin, 92, Zanesville, Ohio, Aug. 15

**Tyler**, Doris Irene, 86, McPherson, Kan., Aug. 31  
**Walter**, Robert C., 80, Salix, Pa., Sept. 11  
**Wampler**, Robert Franklin, 89, New Market, Va., June 5  
**Weeks**, Kurt E., Sr., 49, Laura, Ohio, June 17  
**Wenrich**, William R., 79, Pine Grove, Pa., March 18  
**Williams**, Judy D., 62, Frederick, Md., May 18  
**Williams**, Patty Louise, 84, Troy, Ohio, Sept. 16  
**Willoughby**, William G., 94, La Verne, Calif., Aug. 29  
**Wishon**, Raymond J., 81, Garden City, Kan., Aug. 22  
**Yenser**, Helen D., 69, Oakwood, Ohio, Aug. 20  
**Yingst**, Ruth Naomi Bennetch, 91, Stevens, Pa., Feb. 11  
**Zechman**, Lillian M., 81, Richland, Pa., Sept. 5

## Licensings

**Berger**, Brian M., Atl. N.E. Dist. (Mount Zion Road, Lebanon, Pa.), Sept. 23  
**Bryant**, Millard Lee, Virilina Dist. (Smith River, Woolwine, Va.), Sept. 23  
**Funkhouser**, Beverly A., Shen. Dist. (Columbia Furnace, Edinburg, Va.), Sept. 23  
**Gibbel**, Joel, Atl. N.E. Dist. (Lititz, Pa.), Sept. 9  
**Reed**, Todd A., Virilina Dist. (Poages Mill, Roanoke, Va.), Sept. 16  
**Whitaere**, Kathryn, W. Plains Dist. (McPherson, Kan.), Aug. 19

## Ordinations

**Barnett**, David, III. & Wis. Dist. (Virden, Ill.), July 22  
**Harding**, Rebecca, N. Ind. Dist. (Beacon Heights, Fort Wayne, Ind.), Aug. 12  
**Muthler**, Mark H., Mid. Pa. Dist. (Woodbury, Pa.), Sept. 23

## Placements

**Harding**, Rebecca, pastor, Luray, Va., Sept. 1  
**Reamer**, Eric S., pastor, Buffalo Valley, Mifflinburg, Pa., Sept. 1  
**Stutzman**, Paul F., associate pastor, Clover Creek, Martinsburg, Pa., Sept. 1

# A simple gift

**“Oh, man! Do I have to sit there?”**

Everyone else was already at the table, diving into their Thanksgiving turkey and mashed potatoes. The only spot left was next to Great Aunt Dottie, who was reedy and wrinkled and always smelled of too much Jean Naté. That’s what I get for not coming down from my room when Mom called, Jeremy thought to himself.

His 10-year-old sister—two years younger than Jeremy—and a handful of cousins were at the kids’ table, set up nearby. His sister smirked at him, knowing where he had to sit.

With a heavy sigh, Jeremy trudged to the spot on the piano bench next to his great aunt and set his plate on the table.



RANDY MILLER  
MESSENGER Editor

“Why, hello there, young man!”

Dottie said, beaming at him. He smiled weakly and replied, “Hi, Aunt Dottie,” and noticed the dab of yams clinging to the corner of her mouth as she chewed. “My, isn’t this a wonderful Thanksgiving? And aren’t I a lucky girl to get to sit with such a handsome boy?”

He suddenly wished he hadn’t loaded his plate with so much food.

His parents insisted he finish what he took, and when he’d walked along the

buffet table it all looked so good. Now he could barely smell it over stiff wafts of perfume. It was going to be a long meal. And it seemed as though Dottie never stopped talking.

He tried thinking of something else as he forked in his food.

“Where?” Jeremy asked.

“Dance halls, USO events, things like that. Oh, he was so graceful for such a big man. That’s how we met, actually. He was about to go overseas—this was in 1942—and the USO had held a dance for the soldiers. I was serving punch. He saw me from across the room and came straight over, just like in the movies! He asked me to dance. We spent the rest of the evening together.”

Jeremy slowly began seeing his aunt in a different light.

“How old were you?” he asked. “Did he ask you to marry him?”

She told him how they wrote every day, how she worried about him constantly, how she hoped the war would end soon so he would return to her.

“Did he come back?” Jeremy asked, and then felt foolish for asking such an obvious question. But Dottie only smiled and told him about their first house, and when Aunt Ruth was born, and how cold the winters in Boston were, but that they didn’t really mind because they had each other.

Jeremy sat listening to this woman who had been shriveled and old when he’d sat down, but was now young and vibrant and even interesting.

The minutes ticked by without Jeremy noticing that his plate had grown cold and that his sister and cousins had drifted away.

“Well, look at the time! How I’ve gone on so. I’d better let you get some pie, young man!”

Later, as Dottie was putting on her coat, Aunt Ruth came

**JEREMY SAT LISTENING TO THIS WOMAN WHO HAD BEEN SHRIVELED AND OLD WHEN HE’D SAT DOWN, BUT WAS NOW YOUNG AND VIBRANT AND EVEN INTERESTING.**

His mom had tuned the radio to an all-Christmas station playing carols, but his dad usually managed to slyly put on a big band LP when they had company. Jeremy saw his dad pull a black vinyl disk out of its jacket and slip it onto the turntable. Soon Benny Goodman’s clarinet was noodling in the background.

Jeremy noticed that something besides the music had changed. Dottie was not talking anymore. He looked up and saw her, fork in mid-air, staring off at nothing in particular. Her eyes were misty and she had a faint smile.

“Your great uncle and I used to dance to that,” she said, turning to Jeremy. His Great Uncle Garrett had died 10 years earlier. Jeremy didn’t remember him.

up to Jeremy. “Thank you!” she said. “You’ve made this the best Thanksgiving ever for your great aunt—and for me!”

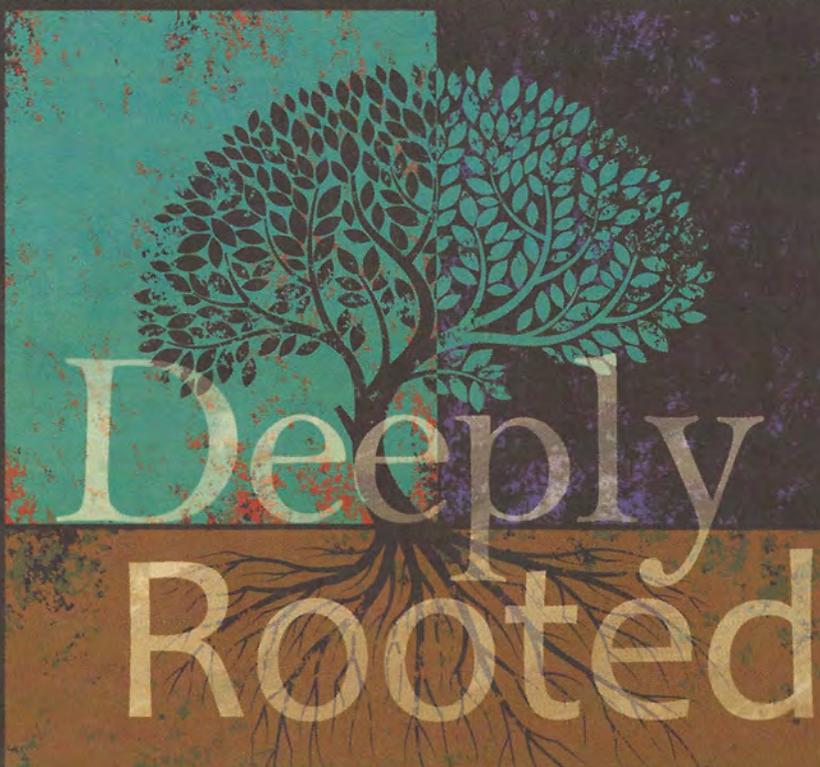
“I did? What did I do?”

“You listened. You made her feel young again. You made her feel special. Nobody’s ever asked her about those days. Thank you, Jeremy.”

It was a simple gift, one that he had not even realized he was giving at the time.

Later, in the quiet of his room after everyone had gone, Jeremy downloaded Benny Goodman to his iPod, put in his earbuds, and listened to Goodman’s lilting clarinet long into the night. **W**

**COMING IN DECEMBER:** Gary and Doug Studebaker describe their recent visit to their brother Ted’s home and BVS project in Vietnam.



# Deeply Rooted

[www.brethren.org/workcamps](http://www.brethren.org/workcamps)

Registration opens January 9th, 2013 @ 7pm CST.

Let your living spill  
over into thanksgiving

—Colossians 2:6-7 (The Message)

## 2013 Brethren Workcamps

### JUNIOR HIGH (Completed grades 6-8)

- |                     |  |
|---------------------|--|
| 1. June 16-20       | New Community Project – Harrisonburg, Virginia |
| 2. June 17-21       | New Windsor, Maryland                          |
| 3. July 3-7         | John Kline Homestead – Broadway, Virginia      |
| 4. July 10-14       | Harrisburg, Pennsylvania                       |
| 5. July 17-21       | Springfield, Illinois                          |
| 6. July 24-28       | Indianapolis, Indiana                          |
| 7. July 29-August 2 | Greenville, Ohio                               |

### SENIOR HIGH (Completed grade 9-age 19)

- |                      |   |
|----------------------|---|
| 8. June 8-14         | Innisfree – Crozet, Virginia                |
| 9. June 9-16         | Idaho Mountain Camp                         |
| 10. June 15-21       | Caimito, Puerto Rico                        |
| 11. June 16-23       | BRF Workcamp – Brooklyn, New York           |
| 12. June 22-28       | Bayamon, Puerto Rico                        |
| 13. June 23-29       | Concord/Charlotte, North Carolina           |
| 14. July 7-13        | Disaster Response                           |
| 15. July 15-21       | Koinonia Partners – Americus, Georgia       |
| 16. July 15-21       | Pine Ridge Reservation – Kyle, South Dakota |
| 17. July 22-28       | Peoria, Arizona                             |
| 18. July 22-28       | Washington, D.C.                            |
| 19. July 22-28       | Lombard, Illinois                           |
| 20. July 29-August 4 | ECHO – North Fort Myers, Florida            |
| 21. August 5-11      | Camp Eder – Fairfield, Pennsylvania         |
| 22. August 5-11      | Los Angeles, California                     |



Church of the Brethren

If you have any questions,  
please contact

Katie Cummings, Tricia Ziegler,  
or Emily Tyler in the  
workcamp office at 1-800-323-8039  
or [cobworkcamps@brethren.org](mailto:cobworkcamps@brethren.org).

### INTERGENERATIONAL (Completed 6th grade - 99+)

- |                      |                                   |
|----------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 23. July 29-August 4 | Camp Colorado – Sedalia, Colorado |
|----------------------|-----------------------------------|

### YOUNG ADULT (Ages 18-35)

- |                   |  |
|-------------------|--|
| 24. May 28-June 2 | Seattle, Washington                            |
| 25. June 10-13    | We Are Able Assistants – New Windsor, Maryland |

### WE ARE ABLE (Ages 16-23)

- |                |                       |
|----------------|-----------------------|
| 25. June 10-13 | New Windsor, Maryland |
|----------------|-----------------------|

Brethren Disaster Ministries Alternative Giving

# Give the love of Jesus this holiday season!



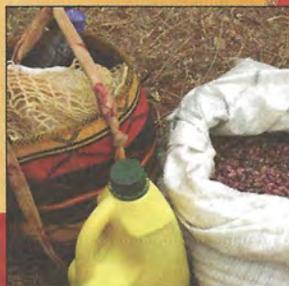
## For \$10 you can give:

- A CDS training Manual
- A dozen reusable water bottles
- A hygiene kit



## For \$50 you can give:

- A scholarship for a CDS volunteer workshop
- Three full nail pails
- Emergency food and water



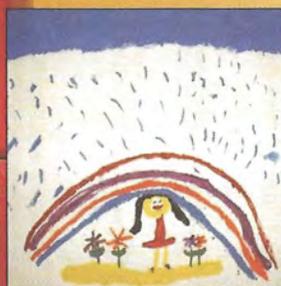
## For \$1000 you can give:

- A CDS volunteer workshop
- A carpentry kit
- Community water project



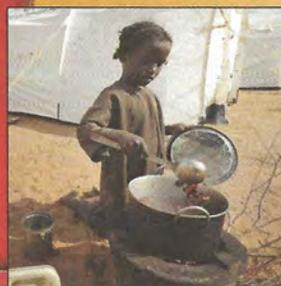
## For \$25 you can give:

- Art supplies to a CDS site
- Feed a volunteer for a week
- A school kit and a hygiene kit for a child



## For \$100 you can give:

- Four CDS re-certifications
- Safety equipment
- Household supplies



## For \$3,500 you can give:

- Disaster kit



**Give  
NOW!**

[www.brethren.org/bdm/gift](http://www.brethren.org/bdm/gift)

### For more information:

Brethren Disaster Ministries  
601 Main St. P.O. Box 188  
New Windsor, MD  
Phone: 800-451-4407  
E-mail: [BDM@brethren.org](mailto:BDM@brethren.org)