

Grants, and more grants

Grants have been given recently from three Church of the Brethren funds: Emergency Disaster Fund (EDF), Global Food Initiative (GFI), and Brethren Faith in Action (BFIA).

EDF

- \$5,000 for Eglise des Freres au Congo to respond to the eruption of Mount Nyiragongo.
- \$5,000 for a pandemic-related feeding program of Bittersweet Ministries in Tijuana, Mexico, that aids at-risk and migrant families.
- \$5,000 for Church World Service (CWS) to provide hygiene kits for families affected by Tropical Cyclone Seroja in Indonesia and Timor-Leste.
- \$7,500 for the Church of the Brethren in Venezuela (ASIGLEH) to aid people affected by COVID-19, particularly church members.
- \$15,000 for Eglise des Freres au Congo to support families displaced by violence.
- \$15,000 for the continuing COVID-19 response by Ekklesiyar Yan'uwa a Nigeria (EYN, the Church of the Brethren in Nigeria).
- \$25,000 for the worldwide coronavirus response by CWS in 2021.
- \$27,000 for the Children's Disaster

Services response with migrant families and children at the southern US border.

GFI

- \$1,500 for a community garden associated with Springfield (Ill.) First Church of the Brethren.
- \$3,000 for the garden advocate/casual labor fund of Capstone 118, a community garden in New Orleans, La.
- \$5,000 for a maize mill project of the Church of the Brethren in Uganda that will support widows, orphan-led households, and the elderly.
- \$11,000 for a food crops project of La Fundación Brethren y Unida in Ecuador following losses caused by flooding.
- \$17,000 for EYN's Soybean Value Chain Project in Nigeria.

BFIA

- \$1,250 for Antelope Park Church of the Brethren in Lincoln, Neb., to expand its outreach ministry to the neighborhood.
- \$5,000 for Pleasant Hill (Ohio) Church of the Brethren to purchase video equipment to enhance virtual ministries.
- \$5,000 for Dupont (Ohio) Church of the Brethren to turn a creek on the congregation's wilderness camp into a 1.5-acre pond to enhance outreach ministry.



Zakariah Akasa



Bill and Ann Gammeter / JMA

Mount Nyiragongo erupts near Goma, Democratic Republic of Congo.

Volcano response in Congo takes shape

Brethren Disaster Ministries has begun a disaster relief response to the May 22 volcanic eruption of Mount Nyiragongo affecting the areas of Goma, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), and Gisenyi, Rwanda.

Members and congregations of the Brethren in the DRC and Rwanda have been affected, with damage to homes and church buildings reported from the eruption and ensuing earthquakes.

Roy Winter, executive director of Service Ministries, is working in collaboration with Congolese Brethren leader Ron Lubungo, Goma pastor Faraja Dieudonné, and Rwandan Brethren leader Etienne Nsanziimana.

A COVID-19 handwashing station outside the EYN Ministers Conference earlier this year.



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Personnel notes

David Shetler retires Dec. 31 as executive of Southern Ohio and Kentucky District. During his 11-year tenure, the district sold Camp Woodland Altars, established several endowment funds, and created new commissions and task teams. He represented the Council of District Executives on the denomination's Mission and Ministry Board 2014-2018 and Leadership Team 2016-2018. He was a member of the Ministry Advisory Council that assisted with the 2014 Ministerial Leadership polity paper of Annual Conference, and he contributed to the 2017 report "Authority of Annual Conference Regarding Accountability of Ministers, Congregations, and Districts." An ordained minister of more than 40 years, he also directed Admissions and Student Development for Bethany Seminary from October 1996 to June 2003.

Norman and Carol Spicher

Waggy concluded an interim assignment as directors of Global Mission on May 14. They served part-time starting March 2, 2020. Their accomplishments included developing country advisory teams, facilitating Zoom gatherings of the Global Church of the Brethren Communion, and speaking for a Moderator's Town Hall.

Walt Wiltschek begins Sept. 1 as Illinois and Wisconsin District executive, half-time. An ordained minister, he pastors Easton (Md.) Church of the Brethren, is an academic advisor at Chesapeake College, and is at-large editor for MESSENGER. He edited MESSENGER from January 2004 to Feb. 1, 2010. He worked on the denomination's communications staff for more than 10 years, beginning in August 1999. From 2010-2016 he was chaplain and director of church relations for Manchester University in North Manchester, Ind.



Bethany celebrates classes of 2020 and 2021

Bethany Theological Seminary celebrated the classes of 2020 and 2021 during a hybrid in-person and online commencement on May 8. The seminary honored 13 graduates from the class of 2020, who did not have a commencement ceremony because of the pandemic, and 21 graduates in the class of 2021. This year's class included the first students to earn certificates while attending classes at the Technology Center in Jos, Nigeria.

The seminary this fall launches a new Master of Arts in Spiritual and Social Transformation for students pursuing nonprofit leadership, social services, or spiritual direction. The school also has received a \$50,000 planning grant from the Lilly Endowment to provide students with intercultural and antiracist learning opportunities.

Bethany plans face-to-face teaching and learning during the 2021-2022 academic year, at its campus in Richmond, Ind.

Class of 2020

Certificate in Theopoetics and Theological Imagination: Eric William Bader (Columbia, Mo.), Amy Beth Lutes (Nashville, Tenn.), Joanna Davidson Smith (McPherson, Kan.), Rachel Elizabeth Ulrich (Richmond, Ind.)

Master of Arts, concentration in Peace Studies: Duane Edwin Crumrine (Martinsburg, Pa.), Paul Bala Samura (Freetown, Sierra Leone)

Master of Divinity: Raul Gregorio Rivera Arroyo (Vega Baja, P.R., and Kettering, Ohio), John Andrew Fillmore (Caldwell, Idaho), Susan K. Liller (New Carlisle, Ohio), Thomas Michael McMullin (Minburn, Iowa), Katherine Lynn Polzin (Defiance, Ohio), Jack Richard Roegner (Davenport, Neb.), Elizabeth Ullery Swenson (Olympia, Wash.)

Class of 2021

Certificate in Biblical Peacemaking: Sanamo Kpanah (Demsa, Nigeria), Maina Pindar (Jos, Nigeria), Aimu Sunday (Jos, Nigeria), Esther Zira (Kwarhi, Nigeria)

Certificate in Intercultural Biblical Interpretation: Vivek Ashokbhai Solanky (New Delhi, India, and Naperville, Ill.)

Certificate in Just Peace and Conflict Transformation: Charles D. Jackson (Champaign, Ill.), Nolan Ryan McBride (Elkhart, Ind.)

Certificate in Theopoetics and Theological Imagination: Timothy Paul Harvey (Roanoke, Va.), Steven Troy Headings (Bay City, Mich.), Charles D. Jackson, Meridith Anne Owensby (Cincinnati, Ohio), Alexandra Elizabeth Thorpe Toms (Chambersburg, Pa.)

Master of Arts, concentration in Peace Studies: Patricia Doka Amos (Jos, Nigeria), Rachel Elizabeth Ulrich

Master of Arts, concentration in Theological Studies: Jack Richard Roegner

Master of Arts: Theopoetics and Writing: Julia Baker-Swann (Fresno, Calif.), Gene George Bradbury (Sequim, Wash.), Carol Diane Davis (Canton, Ill.), Somer Brady O'Neill Eckert (Alexandria, La.)

Master of Divinity: Amanda Sheree Bennett (Rancho Cucamonga, Calif.), Mary A. Garvey (Huntingdon, Pa.), Steven Troy Headings, Charles D. Jackson, Katherine Ruth Peterson (Middletown, Ohio), Vivek Ashokbhai Solanky, Alexandra Elizabeth Thorpe Toms