



Patricia Challenger

Disaster work in Nebraska

Brethren Disaster Ministries and volunteers from midwestern districts carried out a short-term flood response in King's Lake, Neb. A grant of \$7,500 from the Emergency Disaster Fund supported the two-week response on Oct. 3-16.

Jill Borgelt of the Douglas County Long Term Recovery Group remarked, "It's a great team and they're accomplishing a lot, more than we would have hoped for!"

In early 2019, Nebraska suffered record-breaking damage from severe winter weather, straight-line winds, and devastating flooding.

Grants help congregations help their communities

The most recent Brethren Faith in Action Fund (www.brethren.org/faith-in-action) grants have gone to three congregations:

Manchester Church of the Brethren in North Manchester, Ind., received \$5,000 for its support of a family from Guatemala that has been granted asylum in the US.

Myerstown (Pa.) Church of the Brethren received \$5,000 to upgrade audio and video equipment, recognizing that worship attendance patterns are changing because of the pandemic.

Potsdam (Ohio) Church of the Brethren received \$2,350 to restart its Kids Club, a weekly program for children in grades 1-12 providing a meal and Bible-based activities.

Collaboration aids Afghan evacuees

A new joint effort with Church World Service

(CWS) for resettlement of Afghan evacuees has received support from the denomination's Mission and Ministry Board and a grant of \$52,000 from the Emergency Disaster Fund.

"The Humanitarian Parolee status allows people fleeing a compelling emergency . . . admission to the US, but they don't qualify for many of the resettlement services the US government provides to immigrants with regular refugee status," explained the grant request. "These government services are mostly provided through nine refugee resettlement agencies, including CWS, meaning that many of the 75,000 Afghan evacuees won't have access to health insurance, food programs, housing assistance, or cash assistance."

The initiative appeals to con-

gregations to help. Resources are at www.brethren.org/bdm/afghanistan-2021.

CDS aids Afghan children

As part of the airlift of Afghan evacuees, Children's Disaster Services (CDS) helped children and families arriving at Dulles International Airport in Virginia and at a nearby expo center for eight days in September. Through a partnership with Save the Children, the Dulles CDS volunteer team worked with 100 to 200 children at a time while they awaited transportation to their next stop.

CDS teams also deployed to Fort Bliss, Texas, where nearly 10,000 Afghan evacuees, including more than 3,000 children, were being housed while awaiting resettlement. CDS teams saw between 100 to 300 child contacts per day. CDS planned to continue providing support at Fort Bliss through October.



Nancy Miner

Material Resources in early October announced that "donations from the Midwest area have filled the trailer located at the General Offices in Elgin, Ill." Drivers Ed Palsgrove and Miller Davis picked up the full trailer, leaving an empty trailer to be filled with more donations. Also in early October, 1,080 Church World Service cleanup buckets were shipped to New Orleans following Hurricane Ida. In September, the program received a boxcar from Lutheran World Relief "filled with about 50,000 pounds of quilts, school kits, personal care kits, and fabric kits," said director Loretta Wolf. Material Resources warehouses and ships relief goods out of the Brethren Service Center in New Windsor, Md.



Doris Abdullah with Rodney Leon, architect of the African Burial Ground in lower Manhattan, at a discussion of the memorial for people of African descent.

Brethren attend UN General Assembly

Doris Abdullah, Church of the Brethren representative to the United Nations and a minister at First Church of the Brethren in Brooklyn, N.Y., attended a number of events during the UN General Assembly in late September.

The assembly, in its 76th year, commemorated achievements and programs aimed at healing racism, Abdullah reported. Among them was the Durban Declaration and Program of Action first adopted in 2001 at the world conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia, and Related Intolerance in Durban, South Africa.

“The trans-Atlantic slave trade, apartheid, and colonialism were recognized as sources of much modern-day racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia, and related intolerance,” Abdullah reported. She noted, however, that “little attention was given to the continuous exploitation of the African continent for its natural resources and to the people of African descent in the diaspora for their cheap labor. Just as sugar, cotton, and tobacco drove the slave trade and provided racism ideology for 400 years—while creating the wealth of Europe and the United States—today the mining of minerals such as tantalum (coltan) with cheap labor fuels racist ideologies while creating wealth for multinational corporations and western nations.”

Personnel

Linetta Ballew has been hired as acting director of Brethren Woods and Retreat Center in Shenandoah District, through Aug. 31, 2022. Ballew most recently has been assistant director at Brethren Woods. From 2013-2018 she was co-executive director of Camp Swatara.

Nicholas (Nick) Beam began Oct. 1 as interim associate district executive minister for Southern Ohio and Kentucky District, serving beside retiring district executive David Shetler until Jan. 1, 2022, when he will become interim district executive. Beam has been a pastor in the district for 23 years.

Scott Douglas retires Jan. 31, 2022, after 13 years at Brethren Benefit Trust (BBT). He first began working with the Church of the Brethren when employed by the former General Board in September 1997. From November 1998 to May 2005 he worked for the former Association of Brethren Caregivers. In January 2009, he began at BBT as director of the Brethren Pension Plan and Employee Financial Services. In January 2014 he was called to

head Client Relations, now named Relationships and Growth.

Joshua Sati began Sept. 15 as academic/operations manager for Bethany Seminary's Certificate in Biblical Peacemaking in Jos, Nigeria. He is ordained by ECWA (Evangelical Church Winning All), holds a degree from the ECWA seminary and a master's in ethics and philosophy from the University of Jos, and is enrolled in a doctoral program in theology through the University of South Africa.

Paul Shaver began Sept. 1 as coordinator of Seminary Computer Services for Bethany Seminary and Earlham School of Religion in Richmond, Ind. He holds a bachelor's in computer science from Bridgewater (Va.) College, has more than 10 years of experience in technology support, and more than 5 years in ministry contexts.

Beth Sollenberger retires Dec. 31 as district executive minister of South Central Indiana District, after nearly 11 years in the position since February 2011. Concurrently, she was interim district executive for

Michigan District in 2018. She has served on the Council of District Executives, Ministry Advisory Council, and Ministry Issues Committee, and has been a district executive representative to the boards of On Earth Peace, BBT, and Bethany Seminary. Previously, she was employed on the denominational staff as director of Stewardship Education and Congregational Life Team coordinator for Area 2. She has pastored in Atlantic Southeast, Southern Ohio and Kentucky, Mid-Atlantic, and Northern Indiana Districts.

David Vasquez of Nuevo Amanecer Church of the Brethren has been hired by Atlantic Northeast District as church video streaming specialist.

Lee-Lani Wright of Springfield (Ore.) Church of the Brethren, began Sept. 19 as a member of the Pacific Northwest District executive team.

Debbie Roberts is retiring from the team after serving since 2019. Wright will be the district contact for the Office of Ministry and will maintain district files and records.