

## Brethren Disaster Ministries in Kentucky

**A** new rebuilding project by Brethren Disaster Ministries has opened in Dawson Springs, Ky., which was devastated by a

tornado on Dec. 10, 2021. This project primarily will build new homes, helping to replace the hundreds of housing units that were lost. Partners are the Hopkins County Long Term Recovery Group and Habitat for Humanity Pennyrile Region.



Brethren Disaster Ministries

## EYN president to preside over TEKAN

**T**he 67th TEKAN General Assembly in January elected Joel S. Billi, president of Ekklesiyar Yan'uwa a Nigeria (EYN, the Church of the Brethren in Nigeria) as the TEKAN president. Billi had served previously as vice president. TEKAN stands for the Fellowship of Christian Churches in Nigeria.

In more news from EYN, the Minister's Council approved the ordination of 74 pastors at their annual meeting in January. The list included 33 candidates to be ordained as full ministers and 41 as probationary ministers. The council also welcomed 58 pastors who were ordained in 2022.

## Personnel

**Emily Bowdle** and **Michael Brewer-Berres** concluded their work with the Brethren Volunteer Service (BVS) office on Dec. 16. Bowdle, of Denton (Md.) Church of the Brethren, had been volunteering as orientation assistant. Brewer-Berres resigned as interim program assistant.

**Chidinma (Chidi) Chidoka**, a Nigeria-trained lawyer and 2022 graduate of the School of International Service at the American University, has begun as a fellow at the Church of the Brethren's Office of Peacebuilding and Policy.

**Russ Chrusciel** began Dec. 12 as Eder Financial's operations manager for Organizational Investing and Deferred Gifts. He holds degrees in business administration from Washington University in Saint Louis and the University of Illinois-Chicago and has worked at financial technology provider FIS.

**Heidi Gross** began Feb. 6 as managing editor of Brethren Press. Most recently

she has been assistant director of the Center for Civic Engagement at Northwestern University and a special projects manager and editor at the Together Group. She holds a master's degree from Northwestern and a bachelor's from Manchester University. She is a member of Chicago First Church of the Brethren.

**Laura Kelley** began Jan. 9 as director of Annual and Leadership Giving at Bethany Theological Seminary. She previously worked as admissions and marketing coordinator for the Graduate Programs in Education at Earlham College.

**Devorah Lieberman** will retire as president of the University of La Verne, Calif., on July 1 after serving a 12-year tenure as the first female president. She came to the university in 2011 from Wagner College in New York, where she had been provost. During her tenure, the university has reimagined academic and co-curricular programs, created a Center for Teaching and Learning and the Office of Civic and Community Engagement, completed its largest fund-

raising campaign, worked on a campus master plan including construction of two residence halls, a dining hall, a parking structure, the Randall Lewis Center for Well-Being and Research, the Campus West athletic facilities, and the Ludwick Center for Spirituality, Cultural Understanding, and Community Engagement. Most recently, she guided the establishment of a new College of Health and Community Well-Being.

**Pauline Liu** resigned Feb. 2 as volunteer coordinator for BVS. Working on the staff for almost three years, she contributed to shifting BVS orientations and placements to accommodate pandemic conditions. She began with the BVS office as orientation assistant on May 18, 2020.

**Steve Mason** resigned from Eder Financial on Dec. 31. During his many years of service to the organization, Mason specifically worked for Brethren Foundation Funds, Inc. and Brethren Funds, Inc., and in these roles was the caretaker for Brethren Values Investing.

**Dave McFadden** will retire as president of Manchester University in North



## Global Church of the Brethren Communion meets

**F**or the first time since 2019, leaders of the Global Church of the Brethren Communion met in person, hosted by the Church of the Brethren in the Dominican Republic in fall 2022.

Leaders representing the DR, Brazil, Haiti, Honduras, India, Nigeria, Rwanda, South Sudan, Spain, and the United States met for five days, including a visit to farms and a demonstration thresher project. Leaders from the Democratic Republic of Congo, Uganda, and Venezuela were unable to attend for visa reasons.

The main purpose was to review bylaws for the organization.

Marcos Inhauser of Brazil represented the committee presenting the bylaws, the culmination of several years of hard work. According to the draft bylaws, the purpose of the group is to “share the Gospel and plant new churches around the world,” “promote strong leadership ethics, accountability and financial responsibility,” “promote fundamental elements of the Church of the Brethren, such as: non-confessionalism, non-creedalism, pacifism, love feast and feet washing, [and] ministry of service for people in need.” The group will also work to address “structures and systems which impoverish and marginalize people” and “promote care for nature.”

Manchester, Ind., on June 30. He has spent nine years as president but has worked at the university for close to 30 years. After graduating from Manchester in 1982, he earned a doctorate in political science at Claremont (Calif.) Graduate University, served there as an administrator for six years, then returned to Manchester to lead enrollment efforts. Over the next two decades, he worked in strategic planning, marketing, institutional research, institutional accreditation, and as assistant professor of political science. In 2004, he was appointed executive vice president. He became dean of the College of Pharmacy in 2012. He was inaugurated as president on July 1, 2014. He is active in Manchester Church of the Brethren and has served on the board of Bethany Seminary.

**LaDonna Sanders Nkosi** resigned on Dec. 31, after three years as director of Intercultural Ministries for the Church of the Brethren. Her innovative work included a Healing Racism Mini-grant program, webinars on “Healing Racism Congregations and Communities,” and other online opportunities for conversation, education, and prayer. She served on

the Standing with People of Color Committee of Annual Conference.

**Nathan Polzin** begins April 10 as executive director of Discipleship and Leadership Formation for the Church of the Brethren, overseeing a merged department including the Office of Ministry and Discipleship Ministries. From 2009-2017, he was Michigan District executive. He pastors the Church in Drive in Saginaw, Mich., and Midland (Mich.) Church of the Brethren. He holds a bachelor’s in political science from Central Michigan University and a master of divinity from Bethany Seminary.

**Daniel L. Rudy** began as Virginia District executive on Feb. 6. He pastored Ninth Street Church of the Brethren in Roanoke, Va., since 2011. His district leadership roles have included service on the district board and the new church development committee. On the denominational level, he has served on the Pastoral Compensation and Benefits Advisory Committee. He holds a master of divinity from Bethany Seminary and a bachelor’s in philosophy and religion, with a minor in peace studies, from Bridgewater (Va.) College.

**Laura Stone** began Feb. 1 as South Central Indiana District executive. Most recently she was chaplain at Timbercrest Senior Living Community in North Manchester, Ind. She is a trustee of Bethany Seminary, has served on the Annual Conference worship planning team, has spoken at National Youth Conference, and has been on the board of *Brethren Life and Thought*. She holds a master of divinity from Andover Newton Theological School and has done work toward a doctorate from Boston University School of Theology.

**Randall Westfall** will begin as manager of Camp Emmaus in Mount Morris, Ill., in late August. Currently he is director of Camp Brethren Heights near Rodney, Mich., where he has served for 12 years, helping the camp to grow and add a variety of programs during his tenure. He is a licensed minister and previously pastored West Manchester Church of the Brethren in Indiana. He holds a degree from Manchester University, has studied in the denomination’s Training in Ministry program, and has wilderness/naturalist certification from the Wilderness Awareness School in Duvall, Wash.