Deportation Defense Response provides update

The Deportation Defense Response Team in mid-August provided an update on the number of Church of the Brethren immigrant members and attenders affected by detention or deportation. The team is a project of five districts in partnership with On Earth Peace and Intercultural Ministries.

Some 37 Church of the Brethren congregations are affected by various concerns around immigration in 5 districts, representing the churches with the most immigrants in their congregations. In those 5 districts combined, 6 churches are dealing with 11 deportations, with 10 people detained as of Aug. 12. Some of the families of detained or deported people are homeless and in need of legal and financial support.

The team hopes to raise $100,000 for legal support for church members facing immigration enforcement. To donate, contact atlanticsoutheastcob@gmail.com. Lawyers willing to help are asked to contact migrantjustice@onearthpeace.org.

Remembering Katrina

On Aug. 29, 2005, Hurricane Katrina made landfall on the Gulf Coast. Twenty years later, Brethren Disaster Ministries marked

the anniversary by remembering the response that included Children's Disaster Services (CDS) and Brethren Disaster Ministries rebuilding.

CDS had a total of 4,846 child contacts related to Hurricane Katrina. From Sept. 7 through Oct. 27, 2005, under the leadership of coordinator Helen Stonesifer, 113 CDS volunteers served more than 1,122 workdays at 14 different sites. The volunteers cared for 2,749 children in that period of time. A year and a half later, CDS served in the "Welcome Home" center in New Orleans. From Jan. 3 to Sept. 11, 2007, 61 volunteers cared for 2,097 children, putting in 933 working days.

The rebuilding response covered nearly six years, from September 2005 through June 2011. Some 5,737 volunteers repaired and rebuilt homes for 531 families, working on homes in six communities affected by Katrina: Citronelle, Ala.; Lucedale and McComb, Miss.; and Pearl River, East New Orleans, and Chalmette (St. Bernard Parish), La. Project leaders John and Mary Mueller oversaw this project for more than four years. The program also contributed to a New Orleans Ecumenical Build in cooperation with Church World Service and several other Christian organizations.

A photo album of the Katrina response is at www.yogile.com/bdmkatrina20.

Personnel

Stan Dueck began Oct. 1 as director of Discipleship Ministries for Atlantic Northeast District. He had retired as director of Formation Leadership for the Church of the Brethren denomination in July.

Marianne Fitzkee of Lancaster (Pa.) Church of the Brethren began Aug. 18 as Communications and Event specialist for Atlantic Northeast District. After graduating from Messiah University in 2023 she completed a year and a half of Brethren Volunteer Service including placements at an organic farm near Quito, Ecuador, and a nonprofit in Austin, Texas, that provides immigration legal services.

Donita Janney of Nineveh Church of the Brethren in Hardy, Va., began Aug. 18 as office manager for Virlina District.

Patrick Miller on Aug. 15 concluded his work as Buildings and Grounds assistant at the Church of the Brethren General Offices after a month in the position.

Latest grants from denominational funds

Emergency Disaster Fund

■ $258,600 and an additional $50,000 supports l'Eglise des Freres au Congo (Church of the Brethren in the Democratic Republic of Congo) to aid people affected by war in the eastern part of the country. More than 71,000 Congolese refugees have crossed into Burundi, including dozens of church families. Brethren are living in the Musenyi Refugee Camp near the border with Tanzania. The World Food Program ran out of funding for the camp at the end of June because the Trump administration canceled USAID funding. The church designed a plan to support 4,990 households living as refugees in Burundi and 1,000 households with vulnerable family members.

■ $125,000 and an additional $35,000 supports development of a program by the Church of the Brethren Mission in South Sudan. The country's escalating violence and natural disasters have been exacerbated by climate change and the Trump administration ending most US humanitarian aid to the country. Nearly 80 percent of the population is in need of humanitarian assistance with nearly 70 percent (7.7 million people) facing acute food insecurity, 2.2 million internally displaced, and another 2.3 million in surrounding countries as refugees. The program will focus on communities with a Church of the Brethren congregation, internally displaced families, and refugees who have fled to Uganda. Additional South Sudanese staff have been recruited.

■ $20,000 supports Shepherd Society of Bethlehem Bible College to purchase medicines and equipment for Al Ahli Baptist Hospital and the medical clinic in St. Porphyrios Orthodox Church in Gaza City.

■ $14,400 supports Brethren Disaster Ministries' continuing response to Hurricane Helene. The town of Spruce Pine was selected for a short-term rebuilding project in May.

■ $10,000 supports a relief program of ASIGLEH (the Church of the Brethren in Venezuela) for families affected by severe flooding. Ten congregations were directly affected.

■ $10,000 supports training initiatives of Child Life Disaster Relief.

Global Food Initiative

■ $15,000 supports the Beyond Abundance Program of Phahama Grain Phakama in South Africa. A project in Driefontein is introducing equipment to optimize threshing, milling, storage, and trading of maize.

■ $9,200 supports food ministries at Champaign (Ill.) Church of the Brethren including the Randolph Street Community Garden, food distribution, and job training.

■ $7,000 supports the church garden and food pantry of East Dayton (Ohio) Fellowship.

■ $6,600 supports the purchase of electric mills for indigenous Amazon communities to grind cassava, via ASIGLEH.

■ $2,968 supports food programs of Happy Corner Church of the Brethren, Clayton, Ohio, including the free Monday Night Meal and two Blessing Boxes.

■ $2,500 supports the free community meal and food pantry at Freeport (Ill.) Church of the Brethren.

Brethren Faith in Action Fund

■ $5,000 supports Roanoke (Va.) Central Church of the Brethren to sponsor training on racial justice and reparations. Author and professor Drew Hart of First Harrisburg (Pa.) Church of the Brethren presented at a community forum at Roanoke College and a workshop for church representatives.

■ $5,000 supports the Blessing Bag Ministry of Williamson Road Church of the Brethren, Roanoke, Va.

■ $4,825.13 supports a community meal ministry and outreach events of Amaranth Church of the Brethren, Warfordsburg, Pa.

■ $3,291.67 supports Lynchburg (Va.) Church of the Brethren's Gun Lock Ministry focused on safe storage to prevent suicide, homicide, and accidents.

Brethren Volunteer Service Unit 337 completed orientation at Camp Colorado on Aug. 4. *From left:* **Wesley Nance** of Monte Vista, Colo., is assigned to Project PLASE in Baltimore, Md.; **Benjamin Ajeti** of Düsseldorf, Germany, to SnowCap Food Pantry, Portland, Ore.; **Jackson Barbour** of Decatur, Ga., to Camp Stevens, Julian, Calif.; **Mia Dauser** of Baden-Württemberg, Germany, to Camp Stevens; **Jonathan Schwarte** of Münster, Germany, to the Center on Conscience and War, Washington, D.C.; **Vera Logose** of Crowley, Texas, to the Women's Alliance for Theology, Ethics, and Ritual, Silver Spring, Md.; **Ella Hedges** of Dayton, Ohio, to Ferncliff Camp and Conference Center, Little Rock, Ark.; **Marilyn Megala** of Neuwied, Germany, to Lydia's House, Cincinnati Ohio; and **Jessika Kreuzer** of Witten, Germany, to Abode Shelter, Fremont, Calif.

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