



Banner

We are a sharing, loving fellowship of Christian believers, rooted in biblical faith, that actively seeks and celebrates God. We desire to praise, love and serve with all our hearts in our faith community and to reach out to our neighbors, continuing the work of Jesus peacefully, simply, together. In God we find the source of all our joy.
Hallelujah!

December 2025

Pomona Fellowship Church of the Brethren

Vol. 52 No. 12

From the Pastor

This is the last Banner article I will write this year. Shouldn't it be something of substance?

Advent is upon us, and *that* is really something of substance! Many of us don't even know what the word "Advent" means, but if I say, "the holiday season", folks know the busy hustle and bustle.

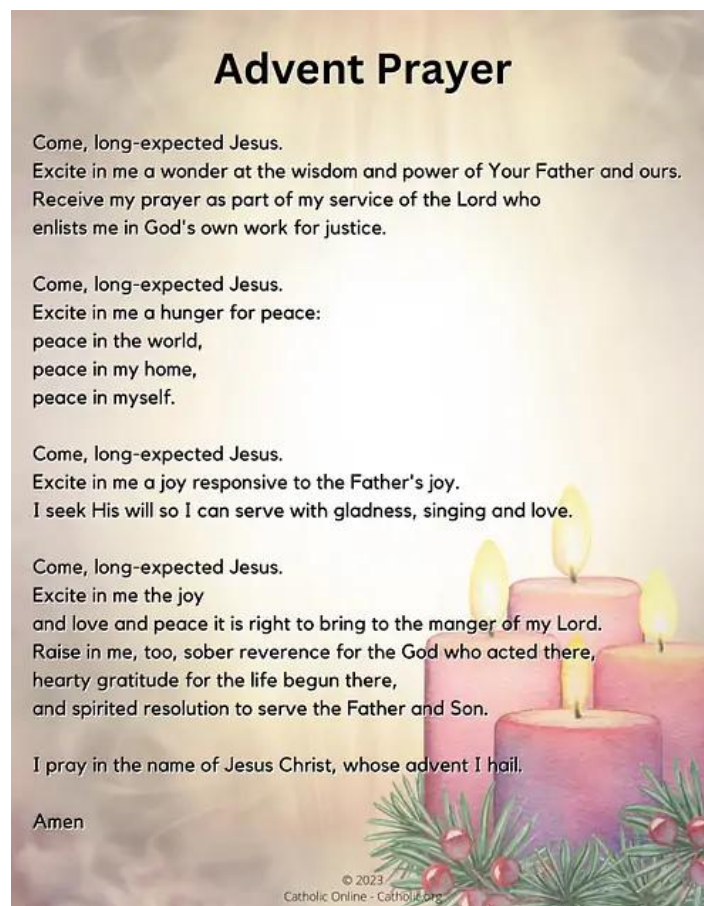
Too often, the Christmas holidays don't bring respite. Shopping, travel, and plain overcommitment can whip our lives into a breakneck pace. Advent gets lost.

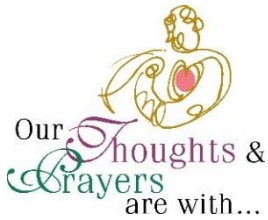
What if you spent time practicing Sabbath over these holidays?

I must say, after an entire lifetime of being an over-producer, over-functioner, efficiency-addict, Sabbath has changed my life. The tone and pace of my life have shifted. During my Sabbath rest, I try to do something to delight in God. It's delightful!

Can you carve out a day? Or 4 hours? Or an afternoon each week to give thanks and remember whose you are? (Don't forget to do something delightful!) May God bless your rest!

Pastor Julie Wheeler





those limited or confined for health reasons: **Cathy Banks.**

We also uphold these members, friends and family members of our congregation who have prayer concerns: **Bill Lemon, Norma Lovelace, & Messiah Brim.**

PFCOB STEWARDSHIP INFORMATION Through October 2025

2025 Annual Budget	\$232,522.00
Total Budget Income thru Sept.	\$135,803.34
Giving 2025	\$66,089.50
Interest & Other Income	\$69,713.84
Total Budget Expense thru Sept.	-\$184,382.90
Budget Balance thru Sept.	\$ (48,579.56)
Sept. Special Non-Budget Offerings	
Inland Valley Hope Partners Beta	\$30.00
Capital Fund	\$500.00

Upcoming Meetings

Church Board:

Dark in December

Executive Committee:

Thursday, December 11, at 6:30 pm

Music & Worship:

Tuesday, December 9, at 6:30 pm

Service & Outreach:

Tuesday, December 9, at 9:30 am

Stewards:

Dark in December

Every Tuesday at 7:30 p.m. **Bible Study** over Google Meet. Contact Sander Eller, sandereller@gmail.com, for details.

Every Wednesday at 8:00 am. **Breakfast Fellowship Group** in the Hillcrest Dining Room. Contact Mary Hines, 909-418-4654 for details.

Healed and Whole

On the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays of each month **Healed & Whole** meets for Dinner & Bible Study at Julie and Dennis' house, 845 Hillcrest Dr. Pomona, at 7:00 pm.

Preaching Schedule

December 7th: What do you fear?

When we are running out of hope, God is at work.

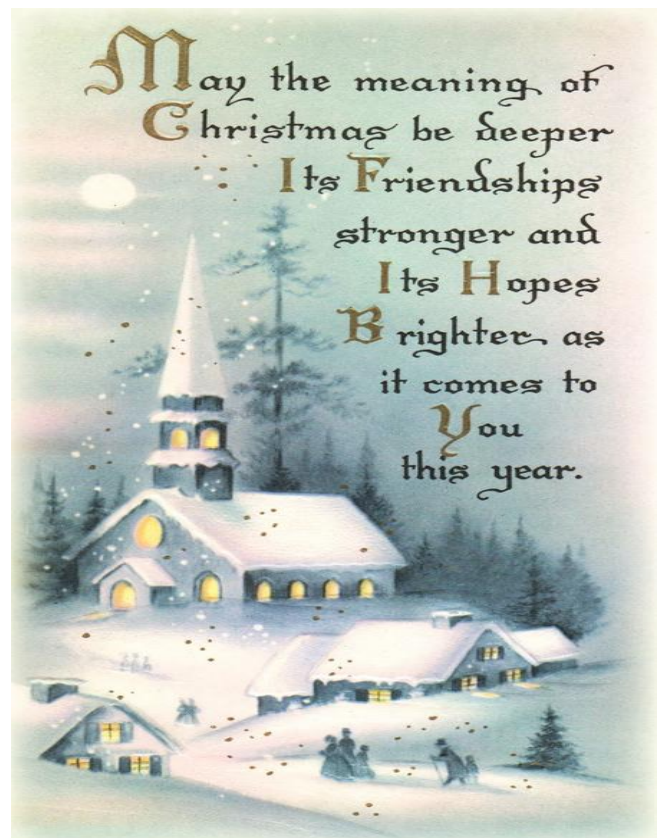
December 14th: What do you fear?

Even in our fear, we are called forward.

December 21st: What do you fear?

When you're afraid, give me your hand.

December 28th: Paul Lovelace Preaching



Service & Outreach

DECEMBER

Birthdays

Dennis Wallstrom on the 15th.

Jerry Davis on the 17th.

Sarah Mundy on the 18th.

Virgil Pletcher on the 19th.

JoAnn Mills on the 24th.

Dana Smith on the 24th.

Anniversaries

Cody & Dana Smith on the 12th.

If you would like to be included in the Birthdays & Anniversaries, please send an email to office@mypomonachurch.org with the information you wish to include.

Giving Emphases for November

Thank you for your continued response in our effort to support the local food bank. Our food emphases for December are **Holiday Foods**. Family time and holidays can be very difficult for those who don't have enough. Providing stuffing, dry potatoes, canned cranberry sauce, canned green beans and any other holiday food will help those struggling in our community have a holiday meal with their family. Flour and other basic baking ingredients can help stock a pantry and create many food options. For all canned food please provide pop-top cans if possible. As always, staple items, including spices, baking items like flour baking soda, yeast, socks and feminine products are always needed and welcome. Thank you for your continued support.



The giving emphasis for December is Inland Valley Hope Partners

Adopt-a-Family



Every year for as long as I can remember we have been adopting two or three families for Christmas. We take their wish list or Christmas list and make their wishes come true. We also provide money and food for necessities or other things they might need.

This year we are adopting the Brim Family and the Orosco Family. The Brim family includes 5 people: Freddie (32) and Galisa (31) and their 3 kids, Londyn (8), Messiah (7), and Angel (6). Freddie is a teacher and is our sound tech during worship. Galisa works in the medical field. The Orosco family includes Sam (21) and her daughter

Jaylene (1½). Sam works in customer service.

Please pick up a tag from Jerry Davis or donate to the church and write adopt a family on the memo line or in the notes to contribute to our Adopt-a-Families this year

Written by Laura Lovelace

Christmas Card Tree



Giving Christmas cards is a wonderful way to brighten someone's day and share the spirit of the season. Instead of mailing individual cards to all our church friends, we invite you to bring a card to church and hang it on our Christmas Card Tree. Gathering

around the tree to read the thoughtful messages before and after services is always a delightful experience.

By participating in this tradition, we save on the cost of stamps and cards, and we use those savings to support a meaningful cause. This year, the funds collected from our

Christmas Card Tree will be donated to Fundación Quintanilla Amaya (FQA) to support their impactful work in El Salvador.

About the Organization

FQA is a nonprofit organization whose work started in 2006 with a mission to enhance the quality of life for communities, families, and individuals experiencing vulnerability.

FQA nurtures, develops, and implements projects that support

the holistic growth of individuals, guided by biblical values and principles. The organization is dedicated to fostering a culture of peace and inclusion. Their vision is to provide comprehensive support to everyone they serve, creating lasting and transformative change in each community they reach.

FQA focuses on five key areas: Health & Wellbeing, Education, Development & Social Welfare, Environment & Sustainability, and Economic Autonomy.

For more information about FQA, please visit their website at fundacionqa.org, or speak with Rudy Amaya as he volunteers as the Education Programs Manager for the foundation.

Written by Rudy Amaya

"Dress A Girl"



"Dress-a-Girl," is a program where folks come together to cut & sew dresses for orphaned girls in other countries. The dress may be the only new item of clothing they have ever owned. This would be a good time to invite people who would like to learn to sew as well. All levels of skill are encouraged to attend. This is a wonderful opportunity to create community and friendship with the folks from St. Paul's.

Upcoming Sewing Dates

December 6th, 9:00 am – 12:00 pm

January 3rd, 9:00 am – 12:00 pm

February 7th, 9:00am – 12:00 pm

***Banner* articles are due by December 20th**

The *Banner* is published by the
Pomona Fellowship Church of the Brethren
Address: 242 E. Alvarado St.
Pomona, CA 91767
Office: 909-629-2548
Pastor Julie: 909-720-9832
Office email: office@mypomonachurch.org
Pastor Julie email;
pastorjulie@mypomonachurch.org
Rudy Amaya email:
cymc@mypomonachurch.org
Website: mypomonachurch.org

Services & Activities

Sunday Worship
10:00 a.m. in the St. Paul's Parish Hall

Sunday School
Elementary Children 9:15 am

Bible Study on Google Meet
Tuesdays, 7:30 p.m.

Fellowship Breakfast Group
Wednesdays, 8:00 a.m.

Healed & Whole Bible Study
2nd & 4th Wednesdays 7:00 p.m.

Julie Wheeler	Pastor
Rudy Amaya	Children/Youth Ministry Cor.
Janet Short	Moderator
Laura Lovelace	Admin. Assistant



The Annual Conference officers met with the Program and Arrangements Committee, the Conference staff, and a worship team to begin planning the 2026 Annual Conference. The meeting in late August was at the General Offices in Elgin, Ill. From left: **Debbie Noffsinger**, Conference assistant; **Amber Harris**, Program and Arrangements Committee; **Andy Duffey**, worship team; **Gail Heisel**, Program and Arrangements; **Jim Chinworth**, worship team; **Laura Sellers**, Program and Arrangements; **Dennis Beckner**, Annual Conference moderator-elect; **Don Fitzkee**, Annual Conference moderator; **David Shumate**, Annual Conference secretary; **Cristal Herrera**, worship team; **Marty Keeney**, music coordinator; and **Rhonda Pittman Gingrich**, director of Annual Conference.

Gifts to immigrant legal and mutual aid fund top \$44,000

A Legal and Mutual Aid Fund supporting immigrant Church of the Brethren members and families affected by detention and deportation has received \$44,830 in donations as of Sept. 23. The fund aids the Deportation Defense Response initiative created by four Church of the Brethren districts with the Intercultural Ministries office and On Earth Peace.

The donations have been put to work immediately and grants have been made to 18 individuals and families. The grants of between \$1,500 to \$2,500 help cover legal expenses, application and form fees (such as asylum, work permits, religious work permits), and mutual aid (such as rent, food, and supplies). All grants are applied for and distributed through local congregations.

To give financially to help reach the initial goal of \$100,000, mail contributions to Atlantic Southeast District, Church of the Brethren, 64954 Orchard Dr., Goshen, IN 46526. Checks should be payable to Atlantic Southeast District with "DDR" in the memo line. Congregations may apply for assistance for their members: email ddrcobcoordinator@gmail.com for a link to the application form.

Other Church of the Brethren funds give grants

Emergency Disaster Fund grants:

- \$25,000 supports the Deportation Defense Response Team and the Legal and Mutual Aid Fund.
- \$33,000 supports the Brethren Disaster Ministries response to Hurricane Helene, helping to fund a new partnership in eastern Tennessee with International Orthodox Christian Charities. Brethren Disaster Ministries volunteers are working with the Johnson County Long Term Recovery Group from Sept. 21 to Nov. 15, based in Mountain City, Tenn.

Global Food Initiative grants:

- \$2,500 supports Ellisforde (Wash.)

Church of the Brethren's work with the Tonasket Emergency Food Bank.

- \$2,500 supports Akron (Ohio) First Church of the Brethren's Community Blessing Box.

Brethren Faith in Action grants:

- \$5,000 supports the Gun Buy Back Program of Spirit of Peace Church of the Brethren in Lansing, Mich. The grant helped purchase handguns and rifles for destruction by the Lansing Police and Ingham County Sheriff's Office on Oct. 18.
- \$5,000 supports Sunnyslope Church, a joint Church of the Brethren and United Church of Christ congregation,

increase hospitality through a technology update and purchase of equipment for Packing Friendship, kitchen essentials, and resources for children's programs.

- \$5,000 supports the WildWood Gathering Church of the Brethren to develop a retreat to deepen relationships and strengthen community culture.
- \$3,639.75 supports Prince of Peace Church of the Brethren's marketing and community outreach through Facebook ads, yard signs, an espresso ministry, and interaction with the local elementary school.



Leaders at the Peace Conference in Tanzania included (from left) Expert Bukene, Bwambale Sedrack, Rhobinson Baiye, Nathan Hosler, and Jennifer Hosler.

Tanzania hosts peace conference

A Church of the Brethren peace conference held Aug. 15-17 in Mwanza, Tanzania, brought together church leaders as potters of hope, molding visions of *amani* (peace) and *tumaini* (hope) into forms that can serve their communities.

The emerging Church of the Brethren in Tanzania hosted the conference and its bishop, Rhobinson Baiye, asked two Church of the Brethren denominational staff—Jennifer Hosler, manager of the Global Food Initiative, and Nathan Hosler, director of the Office of Peacebuilding and Policy—to lead the teaching.

Other church leaders provided support and added teachings related

to their African contexts including Bwambale Sedrack, national director of the Church of Brethren in Uganda; Expert Bukene, bishop of the Church of the Brethren in Burundi; and Esther and Amos Muhagachi from the Mennonite Church in Tanzania.

Sedrack said the conference offered “vital lessons to Uganda, which continues to wrestle with legacies of past conflicts while facing new pressures of political polarization, migration, climate change, economic inequality, youth unemployment, and violent extremism.” What became clear to him is that “peace cannot be imposed from above; instead, it is cultivated within church communities.”

Brethren Volunteer Service Unit 338, the Fall 2025 unit of BVS, completed orientation in September. The 10 new volunteers include 6 from EIRENE, a longterm partner organization based in Germany. Front row, from left:

Mika Hennecken of Neunkirchen-Seelscheid, Germany, is serving at Abode Shelter, Fremont, Calif.; **Julian Ernst** of Stuttgart, Germany, is serving at Ferncliff Camp and Conference Center, Little Rock, Ark.; **Lydia Neuhauser** of Hummelstown, Pa., is serving at the Asian Rural Institute, Tochigi, Japan; **Cäcilia Dohmes** of Düsseldorf, Germany, is serving at La Puente Home, Alamosa, Colo.; **Josiah Esch** of Lancaster, Pa., is serving at SnowCap Community Charities, Portland, Ore.; and **Sonja Hasenbrink** of Singen, Germany, also is serving at La Puente Home. Back row, from left: **Sam Reichenbach** of Manchester Church of the Brethren in North Manchester, Ind., is serving at CIP Center for China Asia Pacific, Beijing, China; **River Norton** of Goshen, Ind., is serving at East Belfast Mission/The Larder, Belfast, Northern Ireland; **Biko De Sausa Vilela Neumann** of Berlin, Germany, also is serving at Abode Shelter; and **Matthias Roos** of Frankfurt, Germany, is serving at the Bernardo Kohler Center, Austin, Texas.



Personnel

Angella F. Haranzo began Sept. 21 as half-time associate district executive minister for Virlina District. She has been the district's interim director of district conference, nurture, and witness. Following service as children's director at the Daleville and Troutville congregations, she pastored Vinton Church of the Brethren for the last 13 years. She holds an associate's degree in

paralegal studies from Dominion College of Virginia and is a 2013 graduate of the district's Christian Growth Institute.

Candice Rolf began Oct. 1 as part-time administrative assistant for the Brethren Academy for Ministerial Leadership, a partnership of Bethany Seminary and the Church of the Brethren Ministry Office. She holds a

bachelor's degree from Stephens College with an emphasis in business.

Due to budget cuts, **Diane Stroyeck**, subscription specialist for MESSENGER, working in the Brethren Press and Communications department of the Church of the Brethren, had her work hours reduced from full-time to half-time as of Oct. 20.



Post this page

You are welcome to photocopy these news pages. For more Newsline stories, go to www.brethren.org/news

December

SUN MON TUES WED THUR FRI SAT

	1	2 Google Meets Bible Study 7:30pm	3 Fellowship Breakfast 8:00am	4	5	6 Dress-a-Girl 9:00am
7 What do you fear? When we are running out of hope, God is at work.	8	9 Service & Outreach 9:30am Music & Worship 6:30pm Google Meets Bible Study 7:30pm	10 Fellowship Breakfast 8:00am Healed & Whole 7:00pm	11	12	13
14 What do you fear? Even in our fear, we are called forward. Christmas Party 11:15am	15	16 Google Meets Bible Study 7:30pm	17 Fellowship Breakfast 8:00am	18	19	20 Church Workday 9:00am
21 What do you fear? When you're afraid, give me your hand.	22	23 Google Meets Bible Study 7:30pm	24 Christmas Eve Office Closed	25 Merry Christmas Office Closed	26 Office Closed	27 Office Closed
28 Paul Lovelace Preaching Office Closed	29 Office Closed	30 Office Closed Google Meets Bible Study 7:30pm	31 New Year's Eve Office Closed	January 1 New Year's Day party at Julie & Dennis' house 2:00pm- 5:00pm		

