

A banner graphic featuring a background of orange tulips and green leaves. The word "Banner" is written in a white, cursive font at the top. Below it, a paragraph of text is centered. At the bottom, there are three pieces of text: "April 2025", "Pomona Fellowship Church of the Brethren", and "Vol. 52 No. 04".

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!

April 2025

Pomona Fellowship Church of the Brethren

Vol. 52 No. 04

"Rev. Dr. Elaine Heath writes a letter to the church today:"

Dear church, God's one holy, catholic, and apostolic church: ...

Let's get on with our work. You know the parable of the wineskins [see Luke 5:37-38]. For goodness' sake, you taught that parable to me! We are in a time of wineskin change. Let's celebrate that instead of wringing our hands. Let's thank God for the old wineskin and the grace it carried to us. And let's celebrate the new wineskin with its expansive fermentation. Let's do both. We don't have to choose.

So what if we are losing our privileged place in society? We never did our best work there anyway. We're always our best on the bottom or the edge. This is a great time to remember the saints and mystics who founded our traditions, the ones who did their work from the margins.

Because—and I say this with more love than I can name—we can't afford to keep squabbling about things like buildings, budgets, pews, stoles, handbells, praise bands, and carpet.... We must stop that at once. God needs all hands on deck. We cannot continue operating as if we are a private club with members, dues, and privileges. Why? Because Jesus never acts like that. Our neighbors need us. God needs us. We need us too.

I know it's hard to play and be creative when we feel fearful. Anxiety takes the spring out of our step.... We don't have to be afraid. That is the wonderful news. God's love casts out fear. God is with us. With us! God orchestrates systems change. Change happens all the time so that every generation, every community, every person can experience God in their world, their context, their time.

Heath imagines the possibilities on the other side of our anxiety:

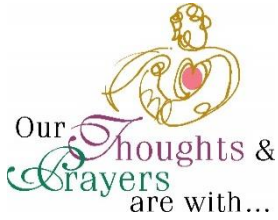
Beloved church, can we agree to let God have our anxiety? Church, do you realize we are on the cusp of a new Great Awakening? God's new thing is networked, exponential, Spirit-breathed, decentralized, a vast planting of small communities of faith.... It is very much the work of laypeople, and it is emerging as a natural progression out of the church that used to be....

I know if we will say yes to God, we can rely on God's already having said yes to us. So let's go together, all of us, in the direction that God leads. When that happens, the world will know that Jesus spoke the truth, that God's love is for everyone. People will encounter the real tradition, the tradition behind the tradition, because they will experience it in us.

Reference:

Elaine A. Heath, *God Unbound: Wisdom from Galatians for the Anxious Church* (Upper Room Books, 2016), 97–100.

-Pastor Julie Wheeler



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

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

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

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

Preaching Schedule

- April 6th:** Spiritual Practices; Generosity
- April 13th:** Spiritual Practices; Community, Palm Sunday
- April 17th:** Maundy Thursday Service
- April 20th:** Spiritual Practices; Witness, Easter
- April 27th:** Joe Vecchio Preaching

PFCOB STEWARDSHIP INFORMATION Through February 2025	
2025 Annual Budget	\$232,522.00
Total Budget Income thru February	\$29,273.63
Giving 2025	\$13,293.00
Interest & Other Income '25	\$15,980.63
Total Budget Expense thru January	\$(36,220.03)
Budget Balance thru January	\$(6,946.40)
January Special Non-Budget Offerings	
Inland Valley Hope Partners Beta	\$55.00
PSWD Wildfire Relief Fund offering	\$325.00
PSWD Wildfire Relief Fund IMPAX	\$1,000
Wildfire Relief Fund Hillcrest	70.00

Upcoming Meetings

Church Board:
Thursday, April 24th, at 6:30 pm

Executive Committee:
Scheduled as needed

Music & Worship:
Tuesday, April 1st, at 6:30 pm

Service & Outreach:
Tuesday, April 8th, at 9:30 am

Stewards:
Tuesday, April 15th, at 12:30 pm



Birthdays

- Ethan Decker on the 10th
- Janet Short on the 11th
- Bethany Uranga on the 11th
- Gabriel Uranga on the 26th
- Jonathan Lovelace on the 30th

Anniversaries

- James & Karin Herndon on the 16th
- Jonathan & Ceres Lovelace on the 17th

Service & Outreach

Giving Emphases for April

Thank you for your continued response in our effort to support the local food bank. Our food emphases for April are **potatoes (not fresh) and canned fruit**. Instant potatoes with cheese, bacon and chives mixed in, was one of my go to meals when I lived in Indiana. Potatoes are filling and can be used to create so many different meals. Fruit is a wonderful snack or dessert. It's great for bringing up your energy and giving you something sweet to eat that has health benefits. 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.



Our Giving Emphasis for April is **The Church of the Brethren Ministries**.



This year we are not doing an Easter Egg Hunt. We are creating Easter Baskets for the Children in the Options Pre School that shares St. Paul's building and for children in a transitional housing shelter in Pomona. We are working with St. Paul's Episcopal to create 60 Easter Baskets for the children and bring them some joy and happiness. We are including stuffed eggs, toys and necessities like, toothbrushes, toothpaste, shampoo, conditioner, etc. The baskets will be presented to the Options children during their Easter Program.

Written by. Laura Lovelace

Congregational News

“Dress A Girl” Sewing Party

"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

April 5th, 9:00am – 12:00pm

May 3rd, 9:00am – 12:00pm

June 7th, 9:00am – 12:00pm

July 5th, 9:00am – 12:00pm

To the family and friends of Diane Deal,

As I will not be able to attend the Memorial Service, I felt it was important for me to let you know what Diane meant to me. She has been a key person in a couple of areas of my life.

When Linda and I married, stayed in the Pomona area and joined the Pomona Church we, especially I, needed to do a lot more growing up. Since my parents were in Bakersfield and Linda's parents were not active in a church it fell to several people at the Pomona Church to give guidance and

support for us to become mature members of God's children. Diane was one of those patient and stalwart people who were our support. Sometimes I realize I still look to them, as well as my father, for that guidance and support as I still try to become a mature Christian.

Since high school, I have been preaching and teaching within the Church of the Brethren and so, I have often substituted as the preacher when our pastor was not available. I would be considered a fairly liberal interpreter of the Bible.

Diane's faith was much more conservative, much more literal in Biblical understanding. Over time, as I began to recognize the depth and vibrancy of her faith, I found

myself challenged to make sure that what I had to say, especially from the pulpit, did not demean her faith in any way. I would imagine she didn't always feel I was successful in meeting that challenge. But, Diane always continued to give me loving support and respect for my faith. Her gift of love, not just to me but to the whole church, as a prayer warrior, as a contributor of insight in meetings and as a Martha like servant to the church as an organization as well as to anyone in need will remain a beacon of love to me.

Diane helped me to understand that the Lord's table is a very large table. It is designed to be a spiritual home for a wide variety of people. Indeed, the

Kingdom of God needs a wide
variety of people with a wide
spectrum of beliefs to reflect the
multitude of facets of God.

I pray that I will always hold
Diane's faith, her heart for God and
for others as a beacon that guides
how I speak to and about those
whose faith looks different than
mine.

I will miss her greatly. She was
one of God's gifts in my life.

With love and sympathy,
Paul Lovelace

*I Said a Prayer
of Healing for You*

—body, mind and soul—

That God would bring you comfort
to restore and make you whole.

I prayed you'd be surrounded
by His awesome love and healing,
Dispelling all anxiety

or pain you might be feeling.

Finally, I prayed you'd be
uplifted by His grace,

And feel yourself enfolded
in the peace of His embrace.

—Lisa O. Engelhardt

*Our church member Harvey Good was honored with an article in
the March Hillcrest Happenings*

Harvey Good

By Karen Vance for the Hillcrest Hush Puppies

Dr. Harvey Good's 42 years of service on the Board of the Inland Valley Humane Society and SPCA were honored in a special way with the creation of the Harvey Good Mobile Veterinary Clinic. This clinic, dedicated and launched at the Hillcrest Retirement Community where Dr. Good lives, offers low-cost veterinary services to La Verne and surrounding areas. To celebrate his retirement from the SPCA Board, the Hillcrest Hush Puppies—his retirement community dog group—gifted him with an engraved desk clock that reads, "Dr. Harvey Good. The Hillcrest Hush Puppies thank you for enriching countless lives."

Dr. Good's impact continues to reach many. He spent 30 years as a volunteer firefighter and fire chief for the Mt. Baldy Fire Department, where he led the Mt. Baldy Search and Rescue Team in partnership with the Forest Service. He coordinated countless rescues, many by helicopter, including some in a canyon with a cliff drop off of 400–500-feet. In recognition of his years of service, the canyon was named Harvey Good Canyon in 2004.

Dr. Good's love for animals became evident when he was almost 9 years old. He swapped his baseball glove for a stranded burrowing owl that he nurtured back to health. Over the years, he cared for hundreds of animals and even turned his passion for parakeets into a business. Later, he became a professor at the University of La Verne, where he taught for over 40 years, including classes in mountain and field biology. His favorite class to teach was The Environmental History of California. After retiring, he continues to teach and work at field stations in Alaska and Wyoming.

Throughout his incredible life, Dr. Good has touched so many lives—from rescuing animals, to saving lives on Mt. Baldy, to educating students. And now, with the Mobile Clinic, his work will continue to help pets for many years to come. Hillcrest is proud to have him as part of our community, and we join the Hush Puppies in thanking him for everything he's done to enrich our lives.



(L to R) Sharon Wulfensmith,
Harvey Good and Karen Vance



“When I am tempted to complain about God’s lack of presence, I remind myself that God has much more reason to complain about my lack of presence.”

Philip Yancey

Banner articles are due by April 20th

The *Banner* is published by the
Pomona Fellowship Church of the Brethren

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Services & Activities

Sunday Worship at 10:00 a.m. in the Parish Hall

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

Breakfast Group Wednesdays, 8:00 a.m.

Julie Wheeler

Pastor

Janet Short

Moderator

Laura Lovelace

Admin. Assistant

The *Banner* is published once a month. Articles and announcements to appear in the next issue of the *Banner* are due in the church office by the 20th of each month

Mission and Ministry Board concerned for immigrants

Among a series of recent actions, the Mission and Ministry Board expressed concern for those of migrant, immigrant, or refugee status who may be affected by presidential executive orders. The board cited Matthew 25:35, “I was a stranger and you welcomed me,” among other scripture texts.

“These renewed threats of deportation are already affecting the lives of many in our denomination’s congregations,” said the board’s statement, in part. “Our concern is for all people—undocumented and documented—who are under threat. Our congregations and districts are urged to extend support to people in their communities who are living in fear for their own safety and that of family members and loved ones, as well as fear of possible losses that may include homes, jobs, livelihoods, and more.”

The board designated Jan. 16 as a day of prayer and fasting for immigrants, at the request of Atlantic Southeast District, inviting all Church of the Brethren congregations, projects, fellowships, and the denominational staff to participate.

2025 budget

On Dec. 5, 2024, the board approved a 2025 budget for denominational ministries in a special Zoom meeting led by chair Colin Scott assisted by chair-elect Kathy Mack. The board approved a 2025 budget proposal brought by general secretary David Steele and treasurer Ed

Woolf and recommended by the Executive Committee.

A Core Ministries budget of \$5,291,000 of income and \$5,311,720 of expense represented budget reductions across various departments amounting to \$395,280 in total. Other measures to offset expenses included a \$125,000 transfer from designated funds and an additional \$33,000 transfer from the Brethren Service Center quasi-endowment intended to help staff provide language interpretation and translation, among others.

The grand total 2025 budget for all denominational ministries—Core Ministries and the four self-funded units of Brethren Disaster Ministries, the Conference Office (Annual Conference), the Global Food Initiative, and Material Resources—is \$8,019,400 of income and \$8,163,470 of expense, representing a total net expense of \$144,070.

Steele told the board that the 2025 budget is a framework and more is to be done in 2026. Adoption of the 2025 budget in early December followed closed sessions during the board’s October meeting. Find a link to the 2025 budget at www.brethren.org/mmb/meeting-info.

Fall meeting

In its regularly scheduled meeting in October 2024, the board approved a new Global Mission Development Fund and a revision of the Health Education and Research Fund; named new board leadership; named Ben Barlow and Thomas



Board chair Colin Scott (at center) leads the Mission and Ministry Board’s Fall 2024 meeting. At right is chair-elect Kathy Mack. At left is general secretary David Steele.

R. Lauer to the Germantown Trust; held a board growth session on the Strategic Plan’s goal of “Seeking God’s Racial Justice”; and engaged in a discussion of “The Church of Tomorrow.”

Josiah Ludwick, a pastor at Harrisburg (Pa.) First Church of the Brethren, was named chair-elect as of July 2025, when current chair-elect Kathy Mack will begin as chair.

Daniel Butler of Ivester Church of the Brethren in Northern Plains District, who is filling an unexpired term on the board, was named an at-large member pending affirmation by Annual Conference.

Denomination supports Hillcrest investigation

The Church of the Brethren is supporting an independent investigation and assessment of allegations of multiple forms of abuse that may have occurred

at Hillcrest School in Jos, Nigeria. The investigation is being carried out by the Zero Abuse Project. Contact Zero Abuse at Hillcrest@zeroabuseproject.org.

Hillcrest was founded by

the Church of the Brethren in 1942 but for many decades has been an ecumenical endeavor. The Church of the Brethren is one of the churches and mission agencies cooperating with the

investigation and is contributing some \$63,000 toward the total cost sharing for both the investigation and victim advocacy services carried out separately by an organization called Accord.

Brethren Disaster Ministries, 2 districts respond to fires

Give now to support California wildfire response through Brethren Disaster Ministries,” said an appeal. “Children’s Disaster Services is already responding to the needs of children and families. Working with the Pacific Southwest District and partner organizations, Brethren Disaster Ministries is planning to address short- and long-term needs of vulnerable people impacted by the fires.” (See www.brethren.org/giveEDF-Wildfires.)

Pacific Southwest District, which includes the Los Angeles area, and Virlina District, on the East Coast, both announced special collections to aid people affected by the fires.

The Pacific Southwest District board created an emergency fund to support Brethren who have been affected and gave an initial \$2,500 of districts funds.

At least three Church of the Brethren families lost their homes in the Eaton Fire, and several others had to evacuate or suffered other losses, including loss of employment.

The district asked for prayer for the Conexiõn Pasadena congregation and pastors Juan Pablo Plaza and Adriana Rios and their children. Their church parsonage was destroyed, but the Pasadena church building and the second parsonage were not damaged.

Two volunteer teams from Children’s Disaster Services (CDS) began work in the L.A. area in mid-January, caring for children and families, at the request of the Red Cross. At least two teams of

seven volunteers each served in shelters and other sites, with one team continuing its work through early February.

In another recent CDS response, the Critical Response Childcare team served in New Orleans, La., following the truck attack of Jan. 1 that killed 14 people and injured 35 others in a crowd on Bourbon Street. The Critical Response Childcare program offers specially trained volunteers following mass casualty events.



The CDS Critical Response Childcare team at work in New Orleans.

Personnel

National Youth Conference coordinators **Rachel Johnson** and **Anna Schweitzer** will work with the National Youth Cabinet to plan the event to be held at the YMCA of the Rockies, Estes Park, Colo., July 18-23, 2026. Johnson is in Brethren Volunteer Service as assistant coordinator for FaithX. She is a 2024 graduate of Messiah University with a bachelor’s in youth ministry and grew up in Mechanic Grove Church of the Brethren in Atlantic Northeast District. Schweitzer is a freshman at Indiana University and will serve part time as assistant coordinator while continuing

college coursework. She grew up in Cedar Grove Church of the Brethren in Southern Ohio and Kentucky District.

Virginia Rendler has been promoted to volunteer coordinator with BVS after serving as interim since July 17, 2023.

Marcia Sowles has joined the Office of Peacebuilding and Policy as a volunteer Policy and Governmental Affairs associate with a focus on immigration. She holds a bachelor’s from Manchester University in North Manchester, Ind.; a Juris Doctor from Valparaiso University School of Law; and a Master of Laws (L.L.M)

from Yale Law School. From September 1987 she was a trial attorney with the Civil Division of the US Department of Justice. Previously she was a trial attorney with the US Department of Energy and an attorney with the Legal Services Program of Northern Indiana.

Leah J. Hileman began Dec. 10 as half-time West Marva District executive minister, continuing as part-time pastor of Robinson Church of the Brethren in Seward, Pa. She has been a pastor in several districts; is a musician and composer who has been a member of the Bittersweet Gospel Band; has served on

Standing Committee and on a previous Review and Evaluation Committee of Annual Conference. She holds a bachelor’s in music from Harding University, has studied at Ashland Theological Seminary, and holds a Training in Ministry Certificate from the Brethren Academy for Ministerial Leadership.

Peggy Moylan began Dec. 9 as administrative assistant for Illinois and Wisconsin District. Outgoing administrative assistant **Andrea Garnett** ended her work for the district on Dec. 13, with plans to complete a graduate program in social work.



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SUN MON TUES WED THUR FRI SAT

		1 Music & Worship 6:30pm Google Meets Bible Study 7:30pm	2 Breakfast Fellowship 8:00am	3	4	5 Dress-a-Girl 9:00am
6 Generosity	7	8 Service & Outreach 9:30am Google Meets Bible Study 7:30pm	9 Breakfast Fellowship 8:00am	10	11	12
13 Palm Sunday Community	14	15 Stewards 12:30pm Google Meets Bible Study 7:30pm	16 Breakfast Fellowship 8:00am	17 Love Feast 6:00pm	18	19
20 Easter Witness	21	22 Google Meets Bible Study 7:30pm	23 Breakfast Fellowship 8:00am	24 Church Board 6:30pm	25 Pastor Julie on Vacation	26 Pastor Julie on Vacation
27 Joe Vecchio Preaching Pastor Julie on Vacation	28 Pastor Julie on Vacation	29 Google Meets Bible Study 7:30pm	30 Breakfast Fellowship 8:00am Laura on Vacation			