

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!

March 2025

Pomona Fellowship Church of the Brethren

Vol. 52 No. 03

"Do not mistreat foreigners who are living in your land. Treat them as you would an Israelite, and love them as you love yourselves". Leviticus 19:33-34

I'm writing this banner article on February 19th. This day is an ordinary day for me, but for a friend of mine, it is a heart-heavy day. This is the "Day of Remembrance," a day to remember when Franklin D. Roosevelt invoked the Alien Enemy Act to handle the "Japanese" issue during WWII. He issued Executive Order 9066, which arrested and imprisoned all Japanese Americans while we were at war.

My friend remembers it viscerally through family stories. When Auntie and Uncle were taken to Oregon, Grandma and Grandpa were at a local camp. It was a time of great disruption for his family.

"You shall not oppress an alien, for you know the heart of an alien, seeing you were aliens in the land of Egypt". Exodus 23:9

We live in difficult times. Have they ever been simple? You and I try to walk the Christian Walk, but it is tough to balance “real life” with what the Bible teaches us.

I struggle with that. Do you?

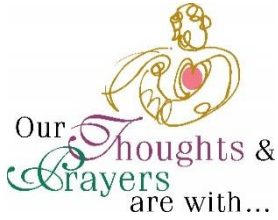
Let's walk this path together.

It has been a year since I started writing these monthly Banner articles, and sometimes, I wonder if anyone is out there – are you there?

If you are – when you pass me at church, give me a little wink and say, “Rosebud,” and I'll know you've read it.

Thanks for the feedback!

-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

March 2nd: Spiritual Practices, Sabbath

March 9th: Spiritual Practices, Fasting

March 16th: Spiritual Practices, Service

March 23rd: Spiritual Practices, Scripture

March 30th: Phyllis Eller Preaching

PFCOB STEWARDSHIP INFORMATION Through January 2025	
2025 Annual Budget	\$232,522.00
Total Budget Income thru January	\$15,777.63
Giving 2025	\$7,740.00
Interest & Other Income '25	\$8,037.63
Total Budget Expense thru January	\$(17,172.89)
Budget Balance thru January	\$(1,395.26)
January Special Non-Budget Offerings	
Inland Valley Hope Partners Beta	\$55.00
PSWD Wildfire Relief Fund	\$450.00
Choir Appreciation Fund	\$116.00

Upcoming Meetings

Church Board:

Thursday, March 20th, at 6:30pm

Executive Committee:

Thursday, March 13th, at 6:30pm

Music & Worship:

Tuesday, March 11th, at 6:30pm

Service & Outreach:

Tuesday, March 11th, at 9:30am

Stewards:

Tuesday, March 4th, at 3:00pm



Birthdays

Paul Lovelace on the 7th

Diane Deal on the 11th

Norma Lovelace on the 13th

Sandi Brooks on the 20th

Mary Hines on the 23rd

Andy Decker on the 24th

Laura Lovelace on the 28th

Dan Overholser on the 31st

Anniversaries

Chuck & Norma Lovelace on the 8th

Linda & Richard Hart on the 20th

Service & Outreach

Giving Emphases for March

Thank you for your continued response in our effort to support the local food bank. Our food emphases for March are **Meat and Pasta**. Pasta is a wonderful base for so many simple meals. Butter and cheese on pasta is a filling simple meal anyone can make. Pasta is also wonderful cold with tomatoes, meat, cheese, spinach and a vinaigrette, you have a pasta salad. While canned meat can be fried, made into salad for sandwiches, added to a rice or pasta dish, or spread over crackers with some seasoning. 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 Monetary Emphasis for March is the Church of
the Brethren Core Ministries.



***Continuing the work of Jesus
Peacefully, Simply, Together***

Our giving emphasis for March is the Church of the Brethren ministries. We used to call this “One Great Hour of Sharing.” John wrote in chapter 13: 34-35 that Jesus said, “As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples.”

The Church of the Brethren continues the work of Jesus. The church states that our love for the

Lord guides us to show love for one another in our neighborhoods. As we live in community, we care for the spiritual and physical needs of others.

The national Church of the Brethren invites us to partner with them. Every gift is essential to the work of the Church of the Brethren.

It is through the dedication of faithful people of passion, that the church works within neighborhoods across the US and around the world, growing in love for Jesus Christ and one another. The church has expressed its appreciation for our previous giving and our prayers for those who serve and are serving.

Together we expand Christ's mission near and far by training disciples, developing and calling

leaders, and transforming communities. Additional gifts to the Church of the Brethren are encouraged and are used for its faith-building and life changing missions and ministries. If you want to give to these ministries make your gift to Pomona Fellowship Church and mark that it is for the Church of the Brethren.

Our food emphasis for March is for canned meat and pasta. However, donation of any staple food product is appreciated and used to help feed the hungry at the Beta Food Center in Pomona. Bring your donations to any church service and it will be transported to the Beta Center.

Written by Jerry Davis

“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

March 1st, 9:00am – 12:00pm

April 5th, 9:00am – 12:00pm

May 3rd, 9:00am – 12:00pm

June 7th, 9:00am – 12:00pm

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

The *Banner* is published by the
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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

EDF grants respond to Israel-Hamas war

Brethren Disaster Ministries has directed grants from the Emergency Disaster Fund (EDF) to organizations responding to the war between Israel and Hamas. A strategy has been developed to work with four partners: International Orthodox Christian Charities, Bethlehem Bible College Shepherd Society, Wi'am: The Palestinian Conflict Transformation Center, and the Lebanese Society for Education and Social Development.

- **\$25,000** supports projects of Bethlehem Bible College Shepherd Society including emergency food, water, fuel, and supplies for families and elderly residents in Gaza and the West Bank; construction, supply, and staffing of a medical clinic at St. Porphyrios Orthodox Church in Gaza; tutoring and support to some 100 young students living in and around church shelters in Gaza City; winterization supplies for 1,000 to 2,000 people in Gaza; and trauma counseling training.

- **\$25,000** supports programing developed by Wi'am to address needs of children impacted by the war: creating safe spaces to allow children to air their stress; distribution of Christmas gifts and food packages; professional counseling and emotional support; trauma-informed care; educational programs; and community engagement.

- **\$35,000** supports the Lebanese Society for Education and Social Development aiding families displaced by the war in southern Lebanon. Identified priorities include food assistance and non-food items such as blankets, mattresses, pillows, diapers, feminine hygiene products, personal care items, and emergency lights.

Additional EDF grants:

- **\$45,500** continues the Brethren Disaster Ministries response to the July 2022 flooding in Kentucky. The current phase of the response, in partnership with HOMES Inc., is working in Letcher County.

- **\$26,000** assists the Goma congregation of l'Eglise des Frères au Congo (Church of the Brethren in the Democratic Republic of Congo) to give school kits to 800 vulnerable children.

- **\$20,000** helps build and equip a Women's Empowerment Center in the city of Ngovi on the property of a Congolese Church of the Brethren.

- **\$10,000** is given for l'Eglise des Freres au Congo to implement an mpox prevention program.

- **\$5,000** supports construction of a new home for a retired pastor in Iglesia de los Hermanos (the Church of the Brethren in the Dominican Republic) whose home was badly dam-

aged in multiple storms.

- **\$3,000** partially funds a solar power system for Global 8235/RecycloCraftz in Zambia, a faith-based fair-trade organization providing vocational training, literacy programs, and learning centers.

Global Food Initiative grants:

- **\$15,000** helps purchase farmland in Uganda to be used by the country's emerging Church of the Brethren to meet critical food needs for vulnerable children and other ministry goals.

- **\$15,000** aids the Wings of Blessing and Hope Farm Poultry Project of ASIGLEH (the Church of the Brethren in Venezuela), an income and livelihood generation project.

- **\$6,470** helps a well project provide drinking water for the Ngovi congregation of l'Eglise des Frères au Congo and the surrounding community.

- **\$5,000** goes to the Soybean Value Chain project of Ekklesiyar Yan'uwa a Nigeria (EYN) and the agricultural program that is part of EYN's Integrated Community Based Development Program.

- **\$825** supports a farming project of the emerging Tanzania Church of the Brethren, assisting church members to improve their farming skills.

Personnel

Jeff Lennard will retire on March 28 as director of marketing and sales for Brethren Press. He has served in the position for 18 years, since November 2006. He has overseen the e-commerce site and bookstores at Church of the Brethren conferences; super-

vised customer service, shipping, and inventory management; marketed products on multiple platforms; played a key role in the development of new resources; and served as marketing coordinator for the Shine curriculum of Brethren Press and MennoMedia.

Hannah Nelson has begun as a Brethren Volunteer Service worker at the Office of Peacebuilding and Policy in Washington, D.C. From southern California, she recently graduated from the University of San Francisco with a bache-

lor's in politics.

Keke (Lieketseng) Phooko has begun as a BVS volunteer with the Brethren Disaster Ministries rebuilding project in Letcher County, Ky. She comes from the country of Lesotho in southern Africa.



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L.E.A.D. Conference gathers in Ephrata

Keynote speaker **Dennis R. Edwards**

of North Park Theological Seminary, along with preachers Etienne Nsanzimana of the Church of the Brethren in Rwanda and Jeff Carter of Bethany Seminary, led the main sessions at the first-ever L.E.A.D. Conference Nov. 15-17.

Some 150 people gathered at Ephrata (Pa.) Church of the

Brethren including participants from around the country and members of the Ephrata congregation who helped host the event.

Twenty break-out sessions were presented by a wide variety of Church of the Brethren speakers on topics related to the four focus areas: listen, equip, adapt, and disciple. Break-out sessions were in English, Spanish, and



Cheryl Burnham/Cyford

Dennis R. Edwards, a New Testament scholar and dean and vice president of Church Relations at North Park Theological Seminary, took on the topic of humility. He presented humility as a biblical value and a key characteristic of Christian leadership.

Haitian Creole, and language translation was available.

Nate Polzin, executive director of Discipleship and Leadership Formation, which

sponsored the conference, announced that plans are already in the works for another L.E.A.D. Conference in 2026.

Brethren Disaster Ministries director visits area hit by Helene

The director of Brethren Disaster Ministries, **Jenn Dorsch-Messler**,

traveled through Virginia and North Carolina last October to visit with district and congregational leaders in areas affected by Hurricane Helene. The bulk of the deaths and catastrophic damage from the storm occurred in areas that are part of Southeastern District.

The trip included two visits to Taylors Valley, Va., to meet with Southeastern District leaders and members of Walnut Grove Church of the Brethren. The church had several rooms full of supplies to distribute to those in need, many donated by Virgina District and Shenandoah District, and delivered there by Virgina members a few weeks earlier. The church parking lot was hosting shower trailers and other trailers from FEMA, the Red Cross, and other responding organizations.

Two Walnut Grove members and long-time Taylors Valley residents, Carl and Linda McMurray, were also recipients of relief supplies and help. Their house, the home in which Linda McMurray was born, had washed away in the flooding. Debris had backed up on a nearby bridge, causing the raging water to be diverted directly toward it. A tour of the area showed where the McMurray

house used to be, with only the front steps remaining, and where parts of the structure had been deposited by the flood waters in a nearby field.

The McMurrays were in the house when it was being washed away. Carl McMurray was thrown from the house during the night and was rescued by a helicopter after clinging to a tree for three hours. Linda McMurray spent 16 hours trapped by trees, debris, and water in the middle room of the house. She survived with help from her faith, spending the time repeating scripture and singing hymns.

During the tour, the group met the man who found Linda the next morning. When she introduced him as the person who saved her, his response was, "I may have rescued you, but I was not the one that saved you." Despite their traumatic experience, the McMurrays were busy helping others affected by the flooding.

Dorsch-Messler also visited Southeastern District's Camp Carmel. Led by director Erica Leeds, the camp was busy supporting the community with relief supplies and other services. The kitchen and dining area were filled with a range of items, from blankets to mold remediation spray to baby supplies, that they were working to get out to those in



Jenn Dorsch-Messler

Leaders of Southeastern District and members of Walnut Grove Church of the Brethren in hard-hit Taylors Valley, Va., gather on the church steps for a picture during the visit by Brethren Disaster Ministries director Jenn Dorsch-Messler.

need. The camp had hosted a community meal for around 175 people the week before, the first hot meal since the hurricane for some of those who attended.

A final stop in North Carolina was a visit with the Children's Disaster Services team that was serving at a Family Assistance Center in Asheville, N.C. Dorsch-Messler also met with Virgina District staff and leaders who had been coordinating collections of in-kind and financial donations.



SUN MON TUES WED THUR FRI SAT

						1 Dress-a-Girl 9:00am
2 Spiritual Practices: Sabbath	3 On Earth Peace Presentation 6:00pm	4 Stewards 3:00pm Google Meets Bible Study 7:30pm	5 Breakfast Fellowship 8:00am	6	7 Girl Scouts 6:00pm	8
9 Spiritual Practices: Fasting	10	11 Service & Outreach 9:30am Music & Worship 6:30pm Google Meets Bible Study 7:30pm	12 Breakfast Fellowship 8:00am	13	14	15 Church Workday 9:00am
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