

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!

January 2026

Pomona Fellowship Church of the Brethren

Vol. 53 No. 01

Welcome to the new year!

Have you been feeling that newness—change—is afoot in church?

There are a few more children, a few more new faces attending. These are all new signs of growth!

With the new year will come some changes in our musical presentation. We are actively seeking a Worship Music Leader. This person will be working diligently to honor the folks in the room and yet make the music relate-able to those who walk in off the street. This is a tall order, and I ask for your patience and tolerance. Change might feel disorienting when we have experienced church in a certain way.

Here's my request: I ask that you orient yourself to notice areas of growth.

It is easy to be oriented to see what is different, but the orientation I want us to try on, is what is happening in the church?

I know you have a commitment to grow the church. You expressed this nearly two years ago when you hired me.

You wanted to remain in Pomona to serve our neighbors.

You wanted me to look beyond our church for areas of connection.

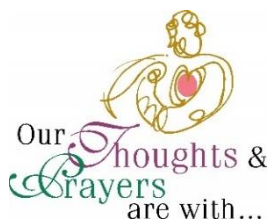
You have a commitment to greening, to new growth on the branches of Pomona Fellowship. When growth means change, it may be harder to see it for what it is: a sign of life, of flourishing.

Tim Harvey wrote in the Messenger July/August 25: "...how vital 'permission givers' are in a congregation: long-time, senior members of the congregation who both encourage and allow others to use their gifts and pursue their dreams, even if it's not their own personal preference. I suppose we might see 'permission giving' as a form of spiritual encouragement."

I pray that this new year brings growth and vitality to our little church!

Please join me in this prayer!

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 & Messiah Brim.**

PFCOB STEWARDSHIP INFORMATION Through November 2025

2025 Annual Budget \$232,522.00

Total Budget Income thru Sept. \$148,739.34

Giving 2025 \$72,425.50

Interest & Other Income \$76,313.84

Total Budget Expense thru Sept. -\$205,529.88

Budget Balance thru Sept. \$(56,790.54)

Sept. Special Non-Budget Offerings

Inland Valley Hope Partners Beta \$30.00

Capital Fund \$500.00

Christmas Card Tree \$35.00

Messenger \$68.50

Women's Fellowship- FINCA \$15.00

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.

Prayers 4 Pomona

Join us for a public vigil held in Pomona. **Prayers 4 Pomona** meets every Friday on the corner of Garey & Mission at 4:30 pm. For more information, please contact Pastor Julie, 909-720-9832.

Upcoming Meetings

Church Board:

Thursday, January 22, 6:30 pm

Executive Committee:

To be Determined

Music & Worship:

Tuesday, January 13, 2026

Service & Outreach:

Tuesday, January 13, 9:30 am

Stewards:

Tuesday, January 6, 3:00 pm





Birthdays

Phyllis Eller on the 2nd.

Carl Cook on the 6th.

Jennette Lovelace on the 7th.

Kathy Flores on the 11th.

Sandy Landrum on the 13th.

Pandra Cook on the 15th.

Robert Herndon on the 18th.

Graham Lovelace on the 24th.

Nacomi Hemsworth on the 27th.

Linda Lovelace on the 29th.

Randy Cook on the 30th.

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 Emphasis for January

Thank you for your continued response in our effort to support the local food bank. Our food emphasis for January is **Soup for the Souper Bowl**. Soup warms you from the inside out and stretches ingredients to feed more people. Soup is a fundamental part of most cultures serving as a medicine, a symbol of care, and a way to honor tradition. 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.



Revered Former Faculty
Member Peggy Redman
Receives Community Honor



Peggy Redman is honored during her induction into the La Verne Walk of Honor on December 12 in Old Town La Verne. (Courtesy: Kalista Redman)

Former University of La Verne faculty member recognized for decades of leadership in teacher education.

Congratulations to esteemed former University of La Verne faculty member Peggy Redman on her induction into the La Verne Walk of Honor.

Redman earned her bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degrees from the University of La Verne and later served as the Anthony LaFetra Endowed Chair. As director of the Teacher Education program, she led a remarkable expansion, growing the program from 30 graduates per year to more than 400 annually. Her leadership and dedication have had a lasting and profound impact on local education.

A special paver bearing Redman's name was unveiled in front of Café Wang on D Street in Old Town La Verne on Saturday during a first-of-its-kind dedication ceremony.

The Walk of Honor was created to recognize individuals who have selflessly contributed to the betterment of the local community and was unveiled during this year's Holiday Stroll event.

Written by: University Of La Verne

"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

January 3rd, 9:00 am – 12:00 pm

February 7th, 9:00 am – 12:00 pm

March 7th, 9:00 am – 12:00 pm

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

The *Banner* is published by the
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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

Mission and Ministry Board extends general secretary's term

The Mission and Ministry Board held its fall meeting Oct. 17-19 at the General Offices in Elgin, Ill., led by chair Kathy Mack with chair-elect Josiah Ludwick and general secretary David Steele.

Out of several hours of closed sessions, the chair announced that the term of David Steele as general secretary of the Church of the Brethren is extended two additional years. As of August 2026, he will have served two five-year terms for a total of 10 years as general secretary. With the extension, he will serve through August 2028.

The open sessions, among other business, included approval of a 2026 budget parameter for the denomination's Core Ministries, a statement renewing the call to prevent gun violence, a query on immigration from Atlantic Southeast District, and recognition of the Material Resources program that is being phased out at year's end.

Material Resources

The seven remaining employees in the Material Resources program were present on screen and recognized for their years of service. The program is closing at the end of this year, a decision that was made by the board in October 2023.

See p. 6 for a description of the long-standing program and a list of the employees, whose years of service totaled 233 years.

Budget parameter

The board approved a 2026 budget parameter for Core Ministries of \$5,453,000 of income and \$5,555,000 of expense, representing a \$102,000 deficit. The decision on a budget parameter had been postponed from July because of lack of financial information for 2024 following a data breach. A final decision on the 2026 budget is expected in a Zoom meeting in late November.

Statement on gun violence

The board adopted a brief statement



Cheryl Brumbaugh-Cayford

renewing the call to prevent gun violence and reaffirming the 2018 board statement "Lukewarm No More: A Call for Repentance and Action on Gun Violence." This followed discussion in March, when there were calls for gun violence to be addressed as the board adopted a "Resolution on Weapons Transfer."

After one board member urged that much stronger action be taken, citing the frequent incidents of shootings in neighborhoods across the country, others voiced support. Concern was expressed for those affected by gun violence in rural and urban settings.

"We need to be much more forceful in our statement," said board member Robert Jackson. "I would like to see us doing something in our neighborhoods. ... Peace doesn't just mean the absence of war but the absence of violence."

Query

The board accepted referral of "Query: Our Response to Current Immigration Laws that Do Not Uphold Holy Scriptures" from Atlantic Southeast District and appointed a committee to draft a statement for consideration by the board in March 2026, to be passed on to the 2026 Annual Conference.

The committee includes board member Edward Cesar-Fincher and staff

Nathan Hosler, director of the Office of Peacebuilding and Policy; Founa A. Badet, director of Intercultural Ministries; and Cheryl Brumbaugh-Cayford, director of News Services.

The query came to the board at the suggestion of the Annual Conference officers, who felt the board rather than the Conference query process would enable a timelier response.

Citing numerous scripture texts and current national immigration practices, the query asks, "How should our Christian Church of the Brethren respond as individuals, fellowships, projects, congregations, districts, and denominational staff, when the United States Government imposes laws/policies that are unjust and contrary to Holy Scripture, the Ten Commandments, the ministry and teaching of Jesus Christ, and our historic peace witness? What statements should we make? What actions should we take?"

In other business

A committee will be appointed to recommend board action on a referral from the 2025 Annual Conference. The board is to consider two options for Annual Conference: a biennial Conference with a different staffing arrangement in order to decrease cost; or, to decrease the length of the event,

alternate years of in-person and online Conferences with the online year for business only and the in-person year for fellowship, worship, and other events.

Brethren Disaster Ministries received feedback from the board as it prepares for a major review and assessment of its work.

The board was led in a session on “A Place for Everybody” by Jeanne Davies of the Anabaptist Disabilities Network.

Numerous reports included the new-board committee called the “Revelation 7:9 Committee” that is addressing racial justice concerns. It is made up of board members Michaela Alphonse, Edward Cesar-Fincher, Colby Patton, Eric Ramirez, and Joanna Willoughby, with staff consultant Founa A. Badet, director of Intercultural Ministries.

A report on Lybrook Ministries in New Mexico shared that the group formerly overseeing that ministry for Western Plains District has disbanded. The property is now overseen by the denomination.

The next board meeting is in March 2026 at Modesto (Calif.) Church of the Brethren, continuing a practice of every five years holding the spring meeting at a location other than the General Offices. Board leaders will seek opportunities for worship and fellowship with churches in northern California.



Cheryl Burnham/Coyford

Annual Conference 2026 schedule announced

The 2026 Annual Conference will be held Sunday, June 28, through Thursday, July 2, at the Grand Wayne Convention Center in Fort Wayne, Ind., in a change from the usual Wednesday through Sunday schedule. Registration and housing reservations will open online March 4.

There are significant numbers of Church of the Brethren members living in and around Fort Wayne who may want to participate on the opening Sunday afternoon. The exhibit hall will open at noon and equipping sessions will be offered that afternoon.

In addition, a lighter business agenda makes possible a special morning of “sparking, stirring, and serving” on Tuesday, June 30, including a keynote presentation, equipping sessions, and opportunities to serve the host city.

For more information go to www.brethren.org/ac.



Pastors with ordinations terminated

Two pastors of Bridgewater (Va.) Church of the Brethren—David R. Miller and Jennifer K. Scarr—have had their ordinations terminated by Shenandoah District.

The district Leadership Team has instead credentialed them as commissioned ministers.

A letter from the Leadership Team to the congregation explained that “the district and the Bridgewater Church of the Brethren are not in harmony in understanding and practice related to theology of same sex marriage” and said that the re-classification as commissioned ministers “allows David and Jennifer full privileges and responsibilities for pastoral ministry solely in the Bridgewater Congregation rather than in the district or denomination.”

The district’s move followed a listening session with the Standing Committee of district delegates to Annual Conference, in which the two pastors along with pastor Erin Rinaca and congregational moderator Ted Flory presented information about the longstanding

conflict between the congregation and the district.

A clarification of commissioned minister status was issued by the Ministry Office and the executive committee of the Council of District Executives. “According to the 2014 Ministerial Leadership polity paper of Annual Conference, a commissioned minister ‘holds the legal credential of clergy and is commissioned to perform all ministerial services and to preside at the ordinances practiced by the denomination in the specific congregation for which they have been commissioned,’” said the clarification, in part.

“If a district terminates the ordination of a minister and then chooses to grant commissioned minister status as was the case in Shenandoah District, this does not imply a reduction of status or a diminishment of importance in any way. Commissioned ministers are not ‘second class ministers.’ They are fully credentialed ministers who are restricted to a specific setting and require the approval of the district to move to a new ministry setting.”



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JANUARY

SUN

MON

TUES

WED

THUR

FRI

SAT

				1 New Year's Day party at Julie & Dennis' house 2:00pm-5:00pm Office Closed	2 Prayer Vigil 4:30pm Office Closed	3 Dress-a- Girl 9:00am
4 Epiphany Sunday: Church Play	5 Office Closed	6 Stewards 3:00pm Google Meets Bible Study 7:30pm	7 Fellowship Breakfast 8:00am	8	9 Prayer Vigil 4:30pm	10
11	12	13 Service & Outreach 9:30am Music & Worship 6:30pm Google Meets Bible Study 7:30pm	14 Fellowship Breakfast 8:00am Healed & Whole 7:00pm	15	16 Prayer Vigil 4:30pm	17 Church Workday 9:00am
18	19	20 Google Meets Bible Study 7:30pm	21 Fellowship Breakfast 8:00am	22 Church Board 6:30pm	23 Prayer Vigil 4:30pm	24
25	26	27 Google Meets Bible Study 7:30pm	28 Fellowship Breakfast 8:00am Healed & Whole 7:00pm	29	30 Prayer Vigil 4:30pm	31