

The banner features a dark, atmospheric background of a campfire at night. The fire is bright and central, with sparks rising. In the background, a calm lake reflects the dark sky, and distant hills are visible under a starry night sky. The entire graphic is framed with rounded corners and a dark blue border.

# *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!

July 2025

*Pomona Fellowship Church of the Brethren*

Vol. 52 No. 07

## *From the Pastor*

The world is cruel, life can be hard, but the church can be an oasis!

Below is a wonderful article forwarded by Russ Matteson, our district executive. It reminds us that we are to move beyond friendly, to be the salve to the world; to move beyond friendly, to create Christian family. There are ways of being that I need to take on more fully, to create the deep and wide Chrisitan community we are called to be. Frankly, I see where I fall down. Can you see where you do, too?

We have two new folks in our congregation who have enlivened us. It's a wonderful thing! Where have we been Christian community to them and where have we not?

I hope we grow and grow! It takes all of us to walk alongside newcomers and take time with those in our congregation with whom we are not yet "family."

Pastor Julie

### *The witness of hospitality*

Many churchgoers would describe their congregation as "friendly," but we should make a clear distinction between "friendliness" and "hospitality." Friendliness is a fine starting point, but its embrace may not be as wide or as deep as Christian hospitality. Through the lens of Christian faith, hospitality becomes a countercultural expression of love that elevates us above fear of the "other" and compels us to welcome the stranger.

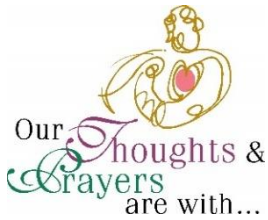
One of the post-resurrection stories in John offers a glimpse of how Christian hospitality bears witness to Jesus Christ. In John 21, a stranger found Jesus' disciples fishing without success, and he encouraged them to try again. When they did, the disciples hauled in a miraculous catch (21:6).

Not long after this, the stranger asked the disciples to eat breakfast with him; he had already prepared a fire of burning coals to cook the fish. Through the hospitality of a shared meal, the disciples recognized that the stranger was Jesus.

When we offer compassion and generosity to people in our congregations and our communities — especially in a socially and politically polarized climate — we bear witness to the presence of Christ among us.

As we strive to be hospitable, the goal should be to make everyone feel more seen, included and valued. One challenge for leaders is to think about what this means in worship and congregational life.

Who is in our community? Who is missing from our community? What are the barriers in our congregational structures that keep people from experiencing the love of God? A faithful reading of Scripture tells us that hospitality is not a destination. Hospitality is a spiritual practice that invites us to reflect and then act.



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 May 2025**

|                                         |                       |
|-----------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| <b>2025 Annual Budget</b>               | <b>\$232,522.00</b>   |
| <b>Total Budget Income thru May</b>     | <b>\$68,049.02</b>    |
| Giving 2025                             | \$32,990.00           |
| Interest & Other Income                 | \$35,059.02           |
| <b>Total Budget Expense thru May</b>    | <b>\$-91,396.91</b>   |
| <b>Budget Balance thru May</b>          | <b>\$ (23,347.89)</b> |
| <b>May Special Non-Budget Offerings</b> |                       |
| Inland Valley Hope Partners Beta        | \$55.00               |
| Bethany Seminary                        | \$50                  |
| Women's Fellowship Pennies              | 40.00                 |

#### **Upcoming Meetings**

##### **Church Board:**

None Scheduled in July

##### **Executive Committee:**

Scheduled as needed

##### **Music & Worship:**

Tuesday, July 8<sup>th</sup>, at 6:30 pm

##### **Service & Outreach:**

Tuesday, July 8<sup>th</sup>, at 9:30 am

##### **Stewards:**

None Scheduled in July

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.

#### ***Pastor Julie at Annual Conference***

July 1<sup>st</sup> – July 7<sup>th</sup>

#### **Preaching Schedule**

**July 06<sup>th</sup>:** Musical Sunday

**July 13<sup>th</sup>:** 12 Steps to Transformation

**July 13<sup>th</sup>:** 12 Steps to Transformation

**July 20<sup>th</sup>:** 12 Steps to Transformation

**July 27<sup>th</sup>:** 12 Steps to Transformation



#### ***Birthdays***

Guila Ladwig on the 2<sup>nd</sup>.

Jamie Herndon on the 2<sup>nd</sup>.

Candace Cook on the 4<sup>th</sup>.

Ryan Deal on the 7<sup>th</sup>.

Rob McKellip on the 9<sup>th</sup>.

Ezekiel Uranga on the 15<sup>th</sup>.

Kelley Ladwig on the 22<sup>nd</sup>.

Linda Hart on the 23<sup>rd</sup>.

#### ***Anniversaries***

Richard & Natashua Uranga on the 11<sup>th</sup>.

Jessica & Andy Decker on the 27<sup>th</sup>.

## *Service & Outreach*

### **Camp La Verne**

#### *Giving Emphases for July*

Thank you for your continued response in our effort to support the local food bank. Our food emphases for June are **basic nutritional foods**. Rice, noodles, and beans make a great base for simple inexpensive dishes that can feed a lot of people. 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 July is **Camp La Verne**

Camp La Verne has inspired, taught, challenged and helped form many of us into who we are today. As campers, C.I.T.s, counselors in training, counselors, kitchen staff, cooks, directors, and all the other rolls we've all had throughout the years we've always managed to walk away with a new perspective on something or a deeper relationship with God.

Camp La Verne has and will continue to inspire, teach, and help all those who chose to walk her paths and spend a day or two surrounded by her beauty. This month our giving emphasis is Camp La Vene so we can continue the traditions of backwards day, campfires, and Jenks Lake through

others as they grow into the  
wonderful humans they are  
becoming.

To give you can write a check to  
Pomona Fellowship with Camp La  
Verne on the memo line, you can go  
to our website and write Camp La  
Verne in the note area, or you can  
give through Zelle,  
[office@mypomonachurch.org](mailto:office@mypomonachurch.org) and  
write camp La Verne in the notes.

Thank you for all you do and  
continue to do.

By Laura Lovelace

## **“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**

July 5<sup>th</sup>, 9:00 am – 12:00 pm

August 2<sup>nd</sup>, 9:00 am – 12:00 pm

September 6<sup>th</sup>, 9:00 am – 12:00 pm

October 4<sup>th</sup>, 9:00 am – 12:00 pm

November 1<sup>st</sup>, 9:00 am – 12:00 pm

***Banner* articles are due by July 20<sup>th</sup>**

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 20<sup>th</sup> of each month



## Team requests help with legal funding, expertise

**T**he **Deportation Defense Response Team**, an initiative of church districts, has received many requests for legal expertise and funding to support immigrants in local communities. Recognizing this as a great need for vulnerable church members and neighbors, the team is making two requests:

- For congregations to take up special offerings and do fundraising to support church members and others who face immigration challenges and are in need of legal support. Donations can be sent through the Atlantic Southeast District office. Contact atlanticsoutheast-cob@gmail.com.

- For connections with Church of the Brethren lawyers willing to help people navigate immigration forms and situations, and also people who are not lawyers but who are familiar with immigration law and forms. This involvement may range from consultation to representation, pro bono or at reduced cost. The team wants to organize a legal orientation session for lawyers who want to help. Contact migrantjustice@onearthpeace.org.



## Bethany celebrates 2025 commencement

**B**ethany Seminary held **commencement** for its class of 2025 on May 10. The keynote address was given by Dr. Kathy Melhorn, a retired board-certified child abuse pediatrician in Kansas and a former member of the Bethany board.

The seminary this year awarded 11 master's degrees. Masters of divinity were awarded to Liesl Eliana Higgins of Bellevue, Ohio; Connor Ladd of Columbia City, Ind.; Phillip Matarese of Fort Wayne, Ind.; and Joey Moss of Sterling, Va. Masters of arts in Theopoetics and Writing were awarded to Deborah Beddoe of Poulsbo, Wash.; Betty Ann Miskowicz of Charleston, W. Va.; Courtney O'Banion Smith of Houston, Texas; and Lauri Sorenson of Logan, Utah. Masters of arts in Spiritual and Social Transformation were awarded to Julie Avila of Indianapolis, Ind.;

Matthew Adam Fulk of Broadway, Va.; and Hayden Hobby of Richmond, Va.

Bethany awarded five graduate certificates. Certificates in Theopoetics and Theological Imagination were awarded to Deborah Elena Baumgartner of Cincinnati, Ohio; Kristine Grace of Austin, Texas; and Nathan Thomas Wheeler of South Lake Tahoe, Calif. A certificate in Peacebuilding and Neighborhood Engagement, and a certificate in Peacemaking, Violence, and Power, were awarded to Connor Ladd of Columbia City, Ind.

In the program based in Nigeria, post-graduate diplomas in Biblical Peacemaking were awarded to Chuckle Raymond Chifwang, Samuel Nggada Daniel, Jonathan Many Dogo, Patricia Ezekiel Gwom, Yahaya Lazarus, Victoria Yemisi Olaniyan, Fubure Sati, Dominic Isaac Sauri, and Bambiko Markus Wagereng.

## Letter supports multicultural welcome at Conference

**T**he **Inter-Agency Forum** (Annual Conference officers and director, general secretary, representatives of the district executives, and leadership of the Conference agencies) in May issued a letter announcing measures to ensure multicultural welcome at the Conference

in Greensboro, N.C.

Citing Romans 15:5-7, the letter said, in part: "Our desire, as church leaders, is for all people to feel safe and welcome at the Annual Conference." The letter celebrated cultural and racial diversity in the church but also acknowledged that international guests and certain racial

and ethnic groups within the Church of the Brethren in the US may find traveling to this year's Conference particularly challenging. It announced creation of an action plan for Annual Conference to support multicultural commitments and ensure the widest welcome to those traveling to Greensboro.





**Mary Abraham of the Office of Peacebuilding and Policy represented the denomination at an ecumenical prayer vigil in Phoenix, Ariz.,** expressing solidarity with the San Carlos Apache Tribe's effort to protect the sacred site *Chí'chil Bildagoteel*—known in English as Oak Flat, part of the Tonto National Forest land. The event affiliated with Creation Justice Ministries coincided with a federal court hearing on the Trump administration's effort to transfer the land to Resolution Copper, a foreign-owned mining corporation. Lawsuits on behalf of the Apache people argued the destruction of Oak Flat will violate federal protections for religious freedom. However, on May 27 the Supreme Court made a decision allowing transfer of the land to the copper mining company.

## Disabilities network renews partnership

**The Anabaptist Disabilities Network (ADN)** and the Church of the Brethren through its Discipleship and Leadership Formation unit have renewed the partnership that supports congregations in becoming more inclusive of people with disabilities and mental illness.

A memo of understanding outlines a collaborative partnership focused on disability inclusion and accessibility throughout the denomination. ADN continues as the primary provider of disability ministry support for the Church of the Brethren, offering education, consultation, and resources for congregations and districts, as well as accessibility services and continuing education at denominational gatherings.

In return, the Church of the Brethren contributes annual financial support to ADN and supports its mission by contributing articles to ADN publications and inviting churches to become ADN partner congregations. The Church of the Brethren continues to hold an ex officio seat on the ADN board.

## District disaster coordinators trained

**Brethren Disaster Ministries** recently oriented new district disaster coordinators, welcoming seven into the role: Troy Barnhart as a co-district disaster coordinator in Middle Pennsylvania District; Gary Benesh in Southeastern District; Wendy Russell in Michigan District; and the South Central Indiana District team of Bill Baxter, Bill Gay, Seth Hendricks, and Kay Theel.

Several district disaster coordinators have "retired" from the volunteer position: Cliff Kindy in South Central Indiana District, Bob Schnepf in Michigan District, and Pam and Rick Brady in Southeastern District.

## Personnel

**Keith Call** began June 2 as director of the Brethren Historical Library and Archives (BHLA) at the General Offices in Elgin, Ill. He most recently was an archivist for the College Church of Wheaton, Ill., but spent the bulk of his career as assistant archivist at the Wheaton College Archives and Special Collections, Buswell Library.

**Darlene Johnson** has retired from On Earth Peace after serving nearly 25 years in positions including co-executive director and administration director. During her tenure at the On Earth Peace office at the Brethren Service Center in New Windsor, Md., the agency shifted from a fully staffed in-person office to a remote, decentralized workplace, and also made programmatic shifts.

**Andrew Duffy** has begun as interim transition director for On Earth Peace to help update and develop processes for its decentralized workplace and plan for future staffing. His career spanning 15-plus countries has focused on people and organizations navigating conflict and change.

**Kevin Daggett** and **Rebecca House** begin Sept. 15 as co-district executive ministers for Shenandoah District. **Daggett** has served in pastoral ministry for more than 30 years in Shenandoah, Southeastern, and Virilina districts, and is currently pastor of Dayton (Va.) Church of the Brethren and chair of Shenandoah's leadership team. He will also direct ministerial services, an eighth-time district position. **House** has served in pastoral ministry for 17 years in Shenandoah, Mid-

Atlantic, and Southern Ohio and Kentucky districts and currently is associate pastor of Staunton (Va.) Church of the Brethren. She will continue quarter-time as director of district conference and youth services.

**Charlotte Bear** and **Rusty Curling** began May 1 as regional ministry associates for Mid-Atlantic District, a new role at the district level. The need for better connections between the district and congregations was identified during the interim period between the retirement of Gene Hagenberger and the call of Doug Veal as district executive minister.

**Betty M. Wills** retired June 30 as Virilina District administrative assistant, after serving the district for 17 years and serving as a church administrative assistant for more than 30 years.



### Post this page

You are welcome to photocopy these news pages. For more Newsline stories, go to [www.brethren.org/news](http://www.brethren.org/news)



**Blood Drive**  
**St. Paul's Episcopal Church**  
 Parish Hall  
 242 E Alvarado St  
 Pomona, CA 91767  
 Saturday, July 12, 2025  
 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Please visit [RedCrossBlood.org](https://RedCrossBlood.org) and enter: SPECPC to schedule an appointment.  
 Streamline your donation experience and save up to 15 minutes by visiting  
[RedCrossBlood.org/RapidPass](https://RedCrossBlood.org/RapidPass) to complete your pre-donation reading and health  
 history questions on the day of your appointment.



Scan to be directed to  
 RapidPass®



Come give blood 7/1 to 7/14 for an exclusive pair of Red  
 Cross x goodr sunglasses, while they last!



Scan to schedule  
 an appointment.

**goodr**



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Offer applicable to presenting donors 07/1/2025-07/14/2025, while supplies last. One size fits most. Subject to availability of donation opportunities in presenting donor's area.  
 No substitutions and not transferable by presenting donor. Not redeemable for cash. © 2025 The American National Red Cross. Image and GOODR trademark used under license  
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POMONA FELLOWSHIP

# Potluck & Concert in the Park

Concert:  
The Great U.S.A.

**Bring**  
A dish to share  
A drink for yourself  
Table service  
and  
A chair for the  
concert

Ganesha Park's  
Concerts  
in the  
Park Series

Pomona  
Concert Band

Linda W. Taylor  
& Kerry Kline  
Conducting

Thursday, July 31

Ganesha Park

1575 N. White Ave, Pomona, CA

Meet at the picnic tables

6:00 pm Picnic

7:30 pm Concert





*SUN*

*MON*

*TUES*

WED

THUR

*FRI*

SAT

|                                                         |           |                                                                                                               |                                                                      |                                                           |                                   |                                                              |
|---------------------------------------------------------|-----------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                                         |           | <b>1</b><br><br>Google Meet Bible Study 7:30pm                                                                | <b>2</b><br><br>Annual Conference<br><br>Fellowship Breakfast 8:00am | <b>3</b><br><br>Annual Conference                         | <b>4</b><br><br>Annual Conference | <b>5</b><br><br>Dress-a-Girl 9:00am<br><br>Annual Conference |
| <b>6</b><br><br>Annual Conference<br><br>Musical Sunday | <b>7</b>  | <b>8</b><br><br>Service & Outreach 9:30pm<br><br>Music & Worship 6:30pm<br><br>Google Meet Bible Study 7:30pm | <b>9</b><br><br>Fellowship Breakfast 8:00am                          | <b>10</b>                                                 | <b>11</b>                         | <b>12</b><br><br>Red Cross Blood Drive 8:00am                |
| <b>13</b><br><br>12 Steps to Transformation             | <b>14</b> | <b>15</b><br><br>Google Meet Bible Study 7:30pm                                                               | <b>16</b><br><br>Fellowship Breakfast 8:00am                         | <b>17</b>                                                 | <b>18</b>                         | <b>19</b><br><br>Church Workday 9:00am                       |
| <b>20</b><br><br>12 Steps to Transformation             | <b>21</b> | <b>22</b><br><br>Google Meet Bible Study 7:30pm                                                               | <b>23</b><br><br>Fellowship Breakfast 8:00am                         | <b>24</b>                                                 | <b>25</b>                         | <b>26</b>                                                    |
| <b>27</b><br><br>12 Steps to Transformation             | <b>28</b> | <b>29</b><br><br>Google Meet Bible Study 7:30pm                                                               | <b>30</b><br><br>Fellowship Breakfast 8:00am                         | <b>31</b><br><br>Potluck & Concert at Ganesha Park 6:00pm |                                   |                                                              |