

# The 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!

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November 2021

Pomona Fellowship Church of the Brethren

Vol. 47, No. 11

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## From Our Pastor...

It's good to be back, Pomona Fellowship! After 13 weeks of maternity leave, I have been transitioning back to pastoral ministry since my first day back in the office on Monday, October 18. What a rollercoaster it has been. On the one hand, while I am at the office, I really miss my little buddy Leo and all the snuggles, stroller rides, and smiles we shared each day.

On the other hand, I know that God has called Pomona Fellowship to continue our work as the Church and I am excited to resume our shared ministry and discernment. It will be an adjustment as I learn how to be both your pastor and Leo's mama, balancing my time and my energy of both of these callings, and I am grateful for your patience and grace as we learn together. Because after all, you'll be learning too... I am the first pastor to come back from maternity leave that you have ever had!

I also want to express my deep thanks for your generosity: both in terms of the many delicious meals that were prepared and delivered to our home, and in terms of respecting the intention and boundaries of my maternity leave. While I missed each of you during my leave, I felt very supported and respected as I was able to set aside the emotional and mental energy of pastoral ministry for a few months. Thank you!

I will leave you with the patron verse of parenthood that Jason and I have been living into these last few months (from the King James Version and admittedly taken out of context but worth a chuckle nonetheless)...

"We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed." -1 Corinthians 15:51

Grace & Peace,  
Pastor Lauren





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

We also uphold these members, friends and family members of our

congregation who have prayer concerns:

**Judy Brooks**  
**Bill Lemon**  
**Rochelle Lovelace**

### District Prayer Calendar – November

- Nov. 7 District Conference which meets November 12-13
- Nov. 14 For those called into leadership for PSWD for 2022
- Nov. 21 Enter with the password: “Thank you!”  
Make yourselves at home, talking praise.  
Thank God. Worship God. - Psalm 100:4  
(*The Message*)
- Nov. 28 As Advent begins, may we prepare to welcome the Christ child

### **PFCOB STEWARDSHIP INFORMATION Through September 2021**

<b>2021 Annual Budget</b>	<b>\$220,891.00</b>
Giving '21	\$69,986.71
Interest & Other Income '21	\$23,603.07
Total Budget Income thru Sept.	<b>\$93,589.78</b>
Total Budget Expense thru Sept.	\$ (123,610.00)
Plus Budget overage from 2020	\$4,224.32
Budget Balance thru September	<b>\$ (25,795.90)</b>
September Special Non-Budget Offerings	
Capital Fund	\$25.00
Inland Valley Hope Partners Beta	\$125.00



### BIRTHDAYS

- 3) Yvonne Belcher  
6) Lauren Cohen  
9) Crystal Cook  
17) Richard Hart  
20) John Short  
21) Bruce Hemsworth  
28) Heather Brasil  
Judy Lotton

### ANNIVERSARIES

- 2) George & Jan Spicer 1968  
5) Bruce & Bobbi Hemsworth 1981  
13) Don & Sharon Overholser 2004  
22) John & Karen Stewart 1990  
25) Frank & Shirley Ness 1985

### November Worship Schedule

As a reminder that we are rotating between in-person and Zoom worship, here is the schedule for upcoming worships: (1st & 3rd in person, 2nd, 4th, & 5th over Zoom)

### **DON'T FORGET TO CHANGE YOUR CLOCKS ON SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 6**

November 7, in-person at St. Paul's

November 14, ZOOM worship, followed by  
Congregational Business Meeting

November 21, in-person at St. Paul's

November 28, ZOOM worship

If you have any questions, please call Acia in the office.

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

### Upcoming Meetings over Zoom

**Deacons**, Sunday, November 7, after  
in-person worship

**Stewards**, Tuesday, November 2, 6:30 p.m.

**Service & Outreach**, Wednesday, November 10,  
10:00 a.m.

**Congregational Business Meeting**, Sunday,  
November 14, following Zoom worship

**Music & Worship**, Thursday, November 18,  
11:00 a.m.

**Executive Committee**, Thursday, December 2,  
6:30 p.m.

**Church Board**, Thursday, December 9, 6:30 p.m.

*Banner* articles are due on November 20

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#### Services & Activities

Sunday Worship Sunday, 10:00 a.m.

(1st & 3rd in-person  
2nd, 4th & 5th over Zoom)

Bible Study over Google Meet Tuesday, 7:30 p.m.

Rev. Lauren Seganos Cohen	Pastor
Janet Short	Moderator
Acia Jernigan	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.

### **Help shape the future of the Church!**

Each member of the Church of the Brethren is invited to recommend possible nominees for Moderator-Elect and several other open positions for the 2022 Annual Conference ballot.

For more information and to nominate someone you know go to:

<https://www.brethren.org/ac/nominations/>

Submit all nominations by December 1, 2021. The earlier, the better!

### FROM SERVICE AND OUTREACH

Thank you for your continued response in our effort to support the local food bank. Our food emphasis for **November is Food for the Feast**. As always, staple items are always needed and welcome.



Our giving emphasis for **November is Walk for the Hungry**.

### **Food Bank Support**

This time of the year we have usually supported the Walk for the Hungry and Homeless sponsored by Inland Valley Hope Partners. Because of the pandemic, this year the walk will be “virtual”. Each walker will walk at the place and time of their own choosing. Since we only meet in person 2 times per month, getting pledges and collecting the money is difficult. Therefore our Service and Outreach Commission is asking that you send the equivalent of your usual Walk for the Hungry pledge to the church. Either put it in the offering plate or mail it to the church office marked for Walk for the Hungry support.

In November we suggest food donations be foods that could be part of a Thanksgiving dinner, but any non-perishable foods are always appreciated at the food bank. We will continue to bring the small wagon to our in-person worship services and deliver the food donations to the Beta Food Bank.

Thank you!

~~~Jerry Davis

Service & Outreach Commission



Newcomers Access Center set up apartments for refugees on the campus of the School of Theology in Claremont.

### **Volunteers Set Up Apartments**

Refugees from Afghanistan moved into housing in Claremont set up by Newcomers Access Center (NAC) in October. The apartments are located on the campus of the Claremont School of Theology (CST) and will temporarily house refugee families until they can arrange permanent housing. “We are thrilled to work with the Claremont School of Theology on housing refugees,” said Anne Thorward, NAC vice president of the board. NAC also moved its office to the CST campus. “We now have more space to provide services,” Thorward added.

Finding temporary housing is one of the biggest challenges in resettling refugees. The fall of the Afghan government to the Taliban happened swiftly, and after finding space, we quickly recruited volunteers and solicited donations of furniture and supplies for the apartment units. Thanks to an article in the Los Angeles Times that mentioned us, people from all over the Southland offered to donate and volunteer. After a few weeks, the apartments were ready, and the first refugees arrived soon after. More families members are expected to arrive in the weeks to come. We are working with our partners and volunteers to help family members with everything from buying groceries, to enrolling kids in school, to learning English and myriad other tasks associated with starting a new life in a new country after a traumatic experience. If you want to help, you can donate on our website: [Financial Contribution – Newcomers Access Center](#).

We also have opportunities to volunteer with transportation, tutoring, English conversation practice, administrative help, and community outreach. To volunteer, visit the NAC website and fill out a volunteer application. All volunteers must pass a background check and, if working in person, must be fully vaccinated.





*If you have driven by our old location on Orange Grove lately, and been saddened at the loss of the old building, you might take joy in the following list. Many pieces of our property will live on in loving homes. Thank you, Diane Deal for the following list...*

At the July 14, 2021, potluck gathering, we told of the blessings that have come to us and to others as we moved out of our sanctuary. Phyllis noted that much of the church and its furnishings were repurposed.

1. Mary Hines took the kitchen cupboard under the serving window, and it is now her son-in-law's workbench.

2. Jerry Davis said that the bushes in the rose garden went to many homes.

3. Unbeknownst to us, a photographer had been taking quinceanera pictures by our rose garden for years.

4. The scrap metal man took the swing and slide from the play yard for his own kids. He and his wife came the day after our deconsecration to dig up all the remaining rose bushes. Other than the two they took to the Shorts, they planted the bushes in their yard for their daughter's quinceanera next year. This same family re-homed various toys, art supplies, and a cabinet.

5. The rose garden fountain went to Jim Brown's son, a great-nephew of the Erismans.

6. John Short salvaged the wood from the pews to make custom furniture pieces.

7. Harvey Good also took pew wood to the Hillcrest wood shop.

8. Mary Hines had a place for the refrigerated water fountain from the hall.

9. Randy and Jan Leonard, who run a preschool in Blue Jay, took a reading table, a smaller table, little chairs, some stained glass, a roll of butcher paper, and blocks.

10. Karen Lotton Howell found Joellen's choir robe, and also took the small green table from the choir loft.

11. Linda Hart took our water glasses and our largest kettle to the La Verne Church, along with a number of hymnals.

12. Eighty hymnals went to Enten Eller and the Ambler Church, outside Philadelphia.

13. Todd Russi's friend, John Solana, a restaurateur, networked to find receivers for our stove and large refrigerator.

14. Todd found homes for an old pulpit, for a door from Fellowship Hall, for several of the etched doors from the parsonage, and for the chandelier from the parsonage, which went to Jerry Redman's home.

15. George Spicer salvaged the stained glass panes from the sanctuary and gave them to a number of congregants.

16. Janet and John Short took the stained glass sections from the Fellowship Hall doors, and they will flank their fireplace.

17. John removed parts of the Fellowship Hall stained glass windows, namely Jesus and the crosses, and he is storing them.

18. Janet put many odds and ends out for the neighborhood each day.

19. A church took the glass doors to the playground by the nursery.

20. Many people were given Cradle Roll pictures.

21. The Miller Doors plaque was sent to Stephanie (Miller) Smythe via Kathy Gilbert.

22. At our Open House, many couples who were married in the sanctuary returned and took their picture in front of the cross.

23. Diane Deal contacted David Allen at the Inland Valley Bulletin regarding the church closing. He came to the Open House and subsequently wrote a column, which in turn was picked up by a Ch. 4

newscast. This let more people know of our closing, furthering contacts with those who could use items.

24. The Urangas took office supplies for their home school, as well as some of the small Christmas play costumes.

25. An El Monte pre-school took chairs and tables.

26. Mary Hines and Sandi Brooks took carloads of odds and ends to Christian thrift stores.

27. Both of the turtles in the play yard have new homes: one with Todd and Laura Deal Russi, and the other with John Solana.

28. Crestwood has found a taker for the steeple.

29. Crestwood is responsible for incorporating our cornerstones into a commemorative piece on the property.

30. The Historical Society has said they would like the tongue and groove ceiling from Fellowship Hall.

31. Kristie Graham took a pew.

32. A Crestwood person is determined to save the sanctuary stained glass window.

33. A piano from Fellowship Hall went to a Ness family member.

34. The Erisman Remembrance Plaque from the rose garden was given to Sandi Brooks and Mary Hines to send to their cousin, Joann (Erisman) in Alaska.

35. Equipment from our wonderful soccer field was taken by Valley Vista Services for recreation for their workers.

36. Todd Russi salvaged three light fixtures, a linen closet, and the front door security opening frame and glass from the parsonage.

37. Todd took the case that the Guest Book used to rest in. A taxidermist friend is using it for a display case.

38. The storage container on the parsonage lot went to Lopez Urban Farm.

39. Yvonne Belcher culled the library, keeping what we might use, and with Karen Stewart sent the rejects to the book salvage to be used somewhere else. Leftover hymnals were included.

40. A window from the room in front of the sanctuary and a few pieces of the blue glass from the front of the Fellowship Hall went to an artist named Lizz Redd, a friend of Katie Hart's.

41. Janet Short took the construction paper and other art supplies and gave them to her students who were learning from home.

42. Some new soccer backpacks and hats became a part of Janet Short's classroom prize box.

43. Harvey Good shortened the sanctuary cross and refinished it for our continued use.

44. Randy Good was the recipient of a white board for his science office on the campus of Azusa High School.

45. The Hillcrest Woodshop is using the outdated computer from the carillon system to play instructional DVD's .

46. 20 hymnals went to the Church of the Living Savior, McFarland

47. Many items from the parsonage and cottage went to refugees/new families through NAC (see story on p. 4)

In its earliest days, the Church of the Brethren referred to churches as meetinghouses. The spaces were kept simple and plain, inside and out, to keep the focus on the *people*, not the building. Certainly, part of focusing on the people was understanding community as the place where Christ resided. To focus on the people and not the building was a commitment both to simplicity and to deepening the relationship of the people to Christ and to one another as potential lovely dwelling places of Christ's love.

—Erin Matteson

*A Guide for Biblical Studies, Fall quarter, p. 60.*



Hello Knitters and Crocheters,

It is time to celebrate and view our accomplishments for the year. The event will be held in the lobby of the Meeting House at Hillcrest. Sorry, but due to Covid regulations, we will not be having tea and goodies.

November 11, 2021

Hillcrest Meeting House Lobby

Afghans will be on display from 11:00 to 3:00

Knitters and crocheters will meet and work at 1:00-3:00PM

Invite your friends and neighbors to come by to view the beautiful afghans – the work of many hands!      See you there!







## Disaster work in Nebraska

**B**rethren Disaster Ministries and volunteers from midwestern districts carried out a short-term flood response in King's Lake, Neb. A grant of \$7,500 from the Emergency Disaster Fund supported the two-week response on Oct. 3-16.

Jill Borgelt of the Douglas County Long Term Recovery Group remarked, "It's a great team and they're accomplishing a lot, more than we would have hoped for!"

In early 2019, Nebraska suffered record-breaking damage from severe winter weather, straight-line winds, and devastating flooding.

## Grants help congregations help their communities

The most recent Brethren Faith in Action Fund ([www.brethren.org/faith-in-action](http://www.brethren.org/faith-in-action)) grants have gone to three congregations:

**Manchester Church of the Brethren** in North Manchester, Ind., received \$5,000 for its support of a family from Guatemala that has been granted asylum in the US.

**Myerstown (Pa.) Church of the Brethren** received \$5,000 to upgrade audio and video equipment, recognizing that worship attendance patterns are changing because of the pandemic.

**Potsdam (Ohio) Church of the Brethren** received \$2,350 to restart its Kids Club, a weekly program for children in grades 1-12 providing a meal and Bible-based activities.

## Collaboration aids Afghan evacuees

A new joint effort with Church World Service (CWS) for resettlement of Afghan evacuees has received support from the denomination's Mission and Ministry Board and a grant of \$52,000 from the Emergency Disaster Fund.

"The Humanitarian Parolee status allows people fleeing a compelling emergency . . . admission to the US, but they don't qualify for many of the resettlement services the US government provides to immigrants with regular refugee status," explained the grant request. "These government services are mostly provided through nine refugee resettlement agencies, including CWS, meaning that many of the 75,000 Afghan evacuees won't have access to health insurance, food programs, housing assistance, or cash assistance."

The initiative appeals to con-

gregations to help. Resources are at [www.brethren.org/bdm/afghanistan-2021](http://www.brethren.org/bdm/afghanistan-2021).

## CDS aids Afghan children

As part of the airlift of Afghan evacuees, Children's Disaster Services (CDS) helped children and families arriving at Dulles International Airport in Virginia and at a nearby expo center for eight days in September. Through a partnership with Save the Children, the Dulles CDS volunteer team worked with 100 to 200 children at a time while they awaited transportation to their next stop.

CDS teams also deployed to Fort Bliss, Texas, where nearly 10,000 Afghan evacuees, including more than 3,000 children, were being housed while awaiting resettlement. CDS teams saw between 100 to 300 child contacts per day. CDS planned to continue providing support at Fort Bliss through October.



**Material Resources in early October** announced that "donations from the Midwest area have filled the trailer located at the General Offices in Elgin, Ill." Drivers Ed Palsgrove and Miller Davis picked up the full trailer, leaving an empty trailer to be filled with more donations. Also in early October, 1,080 Church World Service cleanup buckets were shipped to New Orleans following Hurricane Ida. In September, the program received a boxcar from Lutheran World Relief "filled with about 50,000 pounds of quilts, school kits, personal care kits, and fabric kits," said director Loretta Wolf. Material Resources warehouses and ships relief goods out of the Brethren Service Center in New Windsor, Md.





*Doris Abdullah with Rodney Leon, architect of the African Burial Ground in lower Manhattan, at a discussion of the memorial for people of African descent.*

## Brethren attend UN General Assembly

**D**oris Abdullah, Church of the Brethren representative to the United Nations and a minister at First Church of the Brethren in Brooklyn, N.Y., attended a number of events during the UN General Assembly in late September.

The assembly, in its 76th year, commemorated achievements and programs aimed at healing racism, Abdullah reported. Among them was the Durban Declaration and Program of Action first adopted in 2001 at the world conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia, and Related Intolerance in Durban, South Africa.

“The trans-Atlantic slave trade, apartheid, and colonialism were recognized as sources of much modern-day racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia, and related intolerance,” Abdullah reported. She noted, however, that “little attention was given to the continuous exploitation of the African continent for its natural resources and to the people of African descent in the diaspora for their cheap labor. Just as sugar, cotton, and tobacco drove the slave trade and provided racism ideology for 400 years—while creating the wealth of Europe and the United States—today the mining of minerals such as tantalum (coltan) with cheap labor fuels racist ideologies while creating wealth for multinational corporations and western nations.”

## Personnel

**Linetta Ballew** has been hired as acting director of Brethren Woods and Retreat Center in Shenandoah District, through Aug. 31, 2022. Ballew most recently has been assistant director at Brethren Woods. From 2013-2018 she was co-executive director of Camp Swatara.

**Nicholas (Nick) Beam** began Oct. 1 as interim associate district executive minister for Southern Ohio and Kentucky District, serving beside retiring district executive David Shetler until Jan. 1, 2022, when he will become interim district executive. Beam has been a pastor in the district for 23 years.

**Scott Douglas** retires Jan. 31, 2022, after 13 years at Brethren Benefit Trust (BBT). He first began working with the Church of the Brethren when employed by the former General Board in September 1997. From November 1998 to May 2005 he worked for the former Association of Brethren Caregivers. In January 2009, he began at BBT as director of the Brethren Pension Plan and Employee Financial Services. In January 2014 he was called to

head Client Relations, now named Relationships and Growth.

**Joshua Sati** began Sept. 15 as academic/operations manager for Bethany Seminary's Certificate in Biblical Peacemaking in Jos, Nigeria. He is ordained by ECWA (Evangelical Church Winning All), holds a degree from the ECWA seminary and a master's in ethics and philosophy from the University of Jos, and is enrolled in a doctoral program in theology through the University of South Africa.

**Paul Shaver** began Sept. 1 as coordinator of Seminary Computer Services for Bethany Seminary and Earlham School of Religion in Richmond, Ind. He holds a bachelor's in computer science from Bridgewater (Va.) College, has more than 10 years of experience in technology support, and more than 5 years in ministry contexts.

**Beth Sollenberger** retires Dec. 31 as district executive minister of South Central Indiana District, after nearly 11 years in the position since February 2011. Concurrently, she was interim district executive for

Michigan District in 2018. She has served on the Council of District Executives, Ministry Advisory Council, and Ministry Issues Committee, and has been a district executive representative to the boards of On Earth Peace, BBT, and Bethany Seminary. Previously, she was employed on the denominational staff as director of Stewardship Education and Congregational Life Team coordinator for Area 2. She has pastored in Atlantic Southeast, Southern Ohio and Kentucky, Mid-Atlantic, and Northern Indiana Districts.

**David Vasquez** of Nuevo Amanecer Church of the Brethren has been hired by Atlantic Northeast District as church video streaming specialist.

**Lee-Lani Wright** of Springfield (Ore.) Church of the Brethren, began Sept. 19 as a member of the Pacific Northwest District executive team.

**Debbie Roberts** is retiring from the team after serving since 2019. Wright will be the district contact for the Office of Ministry and will maintain district files and records.