



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 2020

Pomona Fellowship Church of the Brethren

Vol. 45, No. 3

From our Pastor...

On March 7, our congregation will gather for our annual All-Church Retreat at UrbanMission (810 South White Avenue, Pomona). I love that this congregation has a retreat designed for all members, rather than a retreat just for its board or leadership like some other congregations. That fact says a lot about the commitment and dedication of our congregation overall.

We will spend the morning naming the theological and spiritual roots of our congregation, including our Brethren heritage, our congregation's history, and our shared values as a faith community in this time and place. We as a congregation have already done the majority of this work in the years prior to my arrival as your pastor, so we will aim to remember and synthesize the good work that has already taken place.

In the afternoon, we will transition from reflecting on ourselves to learning about others. Many of you expressed gratitude for the worship series we experienced in summer 2019: "Out of the Building & Out of the Box: Stories of Congregations Taking Faithful Risks." A number of you have also expressed interest in hearing even more examples of congregations doing church in new and different ways. And so our afternoon will be spent asking the question: "Did you know that church could look like this?" I will share even more stories and examples of congregations doing exciting and innovative ministries (with and without buildings).

I don't want to give too much away but my goal for our retreat is for us to feel like we are experiencing forward momentum in our process of transition and discernment. When the retreat is over we will indeed have concrete next steps to take as a result of our time together on March 7. I hope you can join us!

Yours in grace and 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
Rochelle Lovelace

Please be in prayer for the crisis in **Nigeria**, which saw the destruction of several churches and homes recently.



Graham Lovelace's email should be: **grlovelace@gmail.com**



Fun Facts from the Pages of Our History

In 1980, the Fellowship congregation merged with the Pomona congregation to officially become the Pomona Fellowship Church of the Brethren. Pastor Dick Landrum started a month later!

March Hosts, Ushers, etc.



Hosts: Jerry & Berkley Davis
Ushers: George & Jan Spicer
Offering: Bill Lemon
Hymn Leader: Phyllis Eller

District Prayer Calendar – March

- Mar. 1 Circle of Peace Church of the Brethren (Peoria, AZ)
- Mar. 8 Papago Buttes Church of the Brethren (Scottsdale, AZ)
- Mar. 15 Nurturing and Credentialing Committee which meets March 19-21 and the candidates preparing for licensing and ordination interviews
- Mar. 22 The work of the COB Ministry & Mission Board and Staff (which includes Pastor Lauren.)
- Mar. 29 For youth and children who are growing in faith



MARCH BIRTHDAYS

- 6) Paul Lovelace
- 11) Diane Deal
- 23) Mary Hines
- 28) Laura Lovelace
- 31) Don Overholser

MARCH ANNIVERSARIES

- 20) Richard & Linda Hart 1959

FROM SERVICE AND OUTREACH

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



Our giving emphasis for March is
One Great Hour of Sharing.

One Great Hour of Sharing - We are invited to join the wider church in celebrating the One Great Hour of Sharing during the month of March. Funds donated to this outreach program will go for such projects as providing clean water, teaching more holistic aid to farmers, or providing aid to areas of devastation, whether caused by nature or humans. The designated Sunday for this celebration is March 15, so offering envelopes will be available on March 8 and 15. Thank you for caring and sharing. We may never know how our offerings are being used, or what effect they may have, but we have faith that “God can do so much more that we can even imagine.”

Service and Outreach Corner

You may have noticed the yellow flyers in a clear plastic case by the Miller doors and several other places outside the church.. These are Assistance Flyers which have information to help our neighbors who may need help with food, housing, or other matters. Being outside means that they are available 24 hours, even when no one is at the church.

Thank you for your donations to the Christmas Card Tree fund. Pastor Lauren was able to put together several emergency packets for those who come by the church during regular hours seeking help, as well as providing the information in the Assistance Folders to help them find the services they need to move forward in their life.

Announcements from the Inland Valley Hope Partners include:

- 24th annual golf classic on Thursday, May 14, at the Sierra Lakes Golf Club in Fontana. Other activities include a meal and an auction.
- A Luncheon for volunteers on Friday, April 24, from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. at the First Christian Church, 1751 North Park Avenue, Pomona.
- A call for hygiene products to be given to the homeless.
- A new program that gives extra food assistance to seniors once a month.
- If you use Amazon Prime, how to donate to IVHP.

More information on these activities, including registration dates, are in the newsletter in the hall.

This is also a year for anniversaries!

- Heifer International has been recognized by the United Nations for 70 years of family farming to reduce poverty and improve global food security.
- Bethany Theological Seminary just finished celebrating 25 years on their “new” campus in Richmond, IN. They were recently recognized as one of the seminaries that are making a difference in the lives of others.
- Our sister Mennonite denomination is celebrating 100 years of activities of the Mennonite Central Committee’s (MCC) work in “relief, development, and peace in the name of Christ.” Their yearly Festival and Sale will be May 1 & 2 at the Pacific Christian Center Gymnasium, 800 W. Arrow Highway, Upland. (And they still auction homemade quilts!)

Additional information is available on the bulletin board at church.

And right at home, thank you for continuing to fill up the little yellow wagon. This is a very visible and tangible way we continue to help our neighbors.

Nigerian Brethren leader executed by Boko Haram

Lawan Andimi, a leader in **Ekklesiyar Yan'uwa a Nigeria** (EYN, the Church of the Brethren in Nigeria) was executed by Boko Haram on Jan. 20 after having been captured during an attack on the town of Michika on Jan. 2. He was EYN district secretary for Michika area and chair of the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) for Michika. Also killed alongside Andimi was a Nigerian soldier.

General secretary David Steele sent condolences to EYN president Joel S. Billi on behalf of the Church of the Brethren. "Please know that we are holding all of you in our prayers, praying through our Lord Jesus Christ to bring you mercy and

peace," he wrote. "May God continue to grant you strength to sustain you in your leadership of EYN during this most difficult time."

Said Nathan Hosler of the Office of Peacebuilding and Policy, "Though the world has paid less attention to Boko Haram, the situation in the region still is dire."



CAN said its leadership and the Nigerian churches "are deeply saddened," and urged Christians to set aside three days to fast and pray. It also called for effective action by the Nigerian government.

Andimi was from Kwada village in the Chibok area. His abduction gained international attention when on Jan. 5 his captors released a video in which he professed his Christian faith, saying, "I have never been discouraged, because all conditions that one finds himself . . . is in the hand of God."

Amnesty International Nigeria reported that "Boko Haram followed up the killing of Rev. Lawan Andimi with an attack on his village in Chibok."

Annual Conference ballot is announced

Topping the ballot for the 2020 Annual Conference are candidates for moderator-elect Paul Liepelt and Tim McElwee.

Paul Liepelt is a pastor at Annville (Pa.) Church of the Brethren and serves on the executive committee of the denomination's Mission and Ministry Board. His term ends during Conference this July. His work for the church has included teaching at Kulp Bible College in Nigeria, 2004-2007. He holds a master of divinity degree from Bethany Seminary.

Tim McElwee, now retired, has filled numerous leadership roles at Manchester University over more than 30 years including vice president for advancement, vice president for academic resources, associate professor of peace studies, and campus pastor. He has been a chaplain at Timbercrest retirement community, denominational staff in Washington, D.C., and senior director of development for Heifer



International. He holds a master of divinity from Bethany and a master's degree and doctorate from Purdue University.

Additional nominations:

Annual Conference Program and Arrangements

Committee: Beth Jarrett, Harrisonburg, Va.; Walt Wiltschek, Easton, Md.

Pastoral Compensation and Benefits Advisory

Committee, representing laity: Richard E. Allison, Claysburg, Pa.; Arthur Fourman, Dayton, Ohio.

Mission and Ministry Board, Area 1: Josiah Ludwick, Harrisburg, Pa.; Mandy North, Manassas, Va. **Area 4:** Daniel L. Butler, Grundy Center, Iowa; Kathy A. Mack, Rochester, Minn.

Bethany Seminary trustees representing clergy: Chris Bowman, Manassas, Va.; Frances R. Townsend, Onokama, Mich. **Representing laity:** Irene Beltran, Pomona, Calif.; Jacki Hartley, Elgin, Ill.

Brethren Benefit Trust board: Janis Fahs, North Manchester, Ind.; David L. Shissler, Hummelstown, Pa.

On Earth Peace board: Erick Flores, Hermitage, Tenn.; Drew G. I. Hart, Harrisburg, Pa.

GFI evaluates Haiti projects

Global Food Initiative (GFI) director **Jeff Boshart** traveled to Haiti in January for a year-end evaluation of an agriculture project carried out with Eglise des Freres Haitiens (the Church of the Brethren in Haiti) and Growing Hope Globally.

As well as participating in the evaluation, Boshart visited 7 of the 14 communities that are participating in a Soil Conservation and Income Generation project.

“We learned of the disastrous impacts of last year’s civil unrest or ‘lock down,’ as it was called,” reported Boshart. “Roads were closed from September through November. Schools were closed and life became even more of a struggle than it normally is in Haiti. During the ‘lock down’ it became difficult for people to get medical care and lives were disrupted.

“The animal raising projects of Eglise des Freres saw significant deaths of animals as veterinary services were not able to get to remote villages,” he continued. “Many rabbits died. The goat projects fared a bit better, and the fish projects looked excellent. ... The evaluation is giving us a clear direction of interventions in the third and final year of this project, which will begin in April.”



Aquaponics project in Haiti.



Cheryl Evansworth-Caplan

Clergywomen gather from across denomination

Church of the Brethren clergywomen gathered in retreat at the Franciscan Renewal Center in Scottsdale, Ariz., Jan. 6-9. The 57 women were led by presenter Mandy Smith on the theme, “Treasure in Clay Pots” (2 Corinthians 4:7).

Originally from Australia, Smith is lead pastor of University Christian Church in Cincinnati, Ohio, and author of *The Vulnerable Pastor: How Human Limitations Empower Our Ministry*. She told about powerful experiences of God working through her own weakness and frailties, and related those experiences to the dynamics of a church leader’s life. She encouraged clergywomen to “lean into” and accept their own vulnerabilities and weaknesses to allow God to work through them.

The retreat included daily worship, workshops, recreation, relationship-building, and fellowship. Childcare was provided, encouraging the participation of younger clergywomen.

Support to Puerto Rico after earthquakes

Puerto Rico District asked for prayer after many earthquakes and aftershocks hit Puerto Rico in late December and early January. The quakes hit especially hard in the south of the island.

The district and Brethren Disaster Ministries were in close communication to identify critical needs. Pastors and district leaders met to discuss future response plans and determine what funding would be required. An initial grant of \$5,000 was given from the Emergency Disaster Fund to enable the district to start addressing emergency essentials.

Some of this support went to Río Prieto Church of the Brethren to help its ministry with a tent city where at one point 23 adults, 2 babies, and 6 children were living. District executive José Calleja Otero and district disaster coordinator José Acevedo visited the site.

Contribute to the Puerto Rico relief effort at www.brethren.org/edf.

Personnel notes

LaDonna Sanders Nkosi began Jan. 16 as director of Intercultural Ministries, a staff position in Discipleship Ministries. Nkosi is the planting pastor of the Gathering Chicago and former pastor of Chicago First Church of the Brethren. She has served in diversity and multicultural program administration for DePaul University, Loyola

University Chicago, and Syracuse University. She is a graduate of McCormick Theological Seminary specializing in cross-cultural community development and international relations, and is completing a doctorate as a Wright Scholar at McCormick.

Sara Cook is contracted with Brethren Volunteer Service to coordi-

nate BVS Europe as of Jan. 1, working in Ireland and in Northern Ireland where she was a BVSer 2001-2003. Originally from Corona, Calif., she has been living in Belfast for the last decade and has been involved in peacebuilding in the period following the Good Friday agreement.



Newcomers Access Center (NAC)
SERVING REFUGEES AND IMMIGRANTS IN THE COMMUNITY
www.newcomersaccesscenter.org

GALA

Benefit Dinner & Silent Auction Help Immigrant Families Thrive!

Sunday, April 5, 2020 at 5pm

Pilgrim Place, 665 Avery Road, Claremont 91711

Enjoy good company, new friends, delicious food, live music and silent auction to benefit **Newcomers Access Center (NAC)**.

All proceeds benefit local refugee families.

Keynote Speaker:



Dustin Craun, Executive Director of CAIR (Council on American-Islamic Relations).

Dustin is a creative media strategist, filmmaker, writer and ethnic studies scholar (both BA & MA degrees) and a community organizer. He is widely published globally. Dustin has traveled to 25 countries and worked in Malaysia, Ghana, Morocco, and Mexico. He will share ideas about immigration issues and interfaith activism.

Tickets now on sale!

\$ 60 per person

\$360 Table for 6

~~Tables for 7 & 8 (sold out)~~



Purchase tickets online or via check payable to Newcomers Access Center and mail to address below. If for some reason you are unable to attend, a donation will be most appreciated. Thank you for your support.*

www.newcomersaccesscenter.org

401 North Gibbs Street, Pomona, CA 91767

909-455-3248

*Your donation is tax-deductible to the fullest extent of the law. The *Newcomers Access Center* is a 501(c)(3) Nonprofit Public Benefit Corporation organized for charitable purposes.

MARCH 2020

| SUN | MON | TUE | WED | THU | FRI | SAT |
|---|---|---|---|-------------------------|---|---|
| 01 | 02 | 03 | 04 | 05 | 06 | 07 |
| | | 7:30 pm Bible Study | 8:00 am Breakfast @ Roberta's 9:00 am Knit Wits 7:30 pm Choir | | |  Time to Spring Ahead 9:00 am All-Church Retreat |
| 08 | 09 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 |
| | | 6:30 pm Stewards 7:30 pm Bible Study | 8:00 am Breakfast @ Roberta's 4:30 pm S&O 7:30 pm Choir | 11:00 am M&W | Pastor Lauren away at Missions & Ministry Board | Pastor Lauren away at Missions & Ministry Board |
| 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 |
| Pastor Lauren away at Missions & Ministry Board | Pastor Lauren away at Missions & Ministry Board | 7:30 pm Bible Study | 8:00 am Breakfast @ Roberta's 7:30 pm Choir | 6:45 pm Church Board | BANNER ARTICLES DUE | |
| 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 |
| 11:00 am Deacons | | 7:30 pm Bible Study | 8:00 am Breakfast @ Roberta's 7:30 pm Choir | 6:00 pm Birthday Dinner | | |
| 29 | 30 | 31 | | | | |
| Worship Field Trip No Worship Here | | 7:30 pm Bible Study | | | | |

Sunday Schedule: Worship 9:15 a.m., Sunday School 10:45 a.m.



POMONA FELLOWSHIP
CHURCH OF THE BRETHREN
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