

EASTON CHURCH OF THE BRETHREN

MAY, 2020

PEACHBLOSSOM PRESS NEWSLETTER

Mission Statement

“Sharing the love and blessing of God with all.”



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“As the deer panteth for the water, so my soul longeth after Thee. You alone are my heart's desire, and I long to worship Thee.”



These words begin one of my favorite songs that we sing at camp. It has a beautiful, meditative flow, and when a group is singing it together, it feels transcendent.

But more than that, I appreciate the message in the lyrics. They're inspired by Psalm 42, which begins, “As a deer longs for flowing streams, so my soul longs for you, O God. My soul thirsts for God, for the living God” (NRSV).

That verb, “longs,” expresses a deep, almost desperate, pull toward something that fulfills a great need. A dictionary definition of “longing” calls it “prolonged, unceasing, or earnest desire.”

Author Melissa Bane Sevier, reflecting on Psalm 42, says it is “A sense that something is missing. Or that something has been lost and you don't remember where you put it or what happened to it. Maybe it just drifted away from you on a raft, on that sea of everything. It's a common human experience. Who doesn't yearn for something more?”

Over the past month-plus, as the COVID-19 shutdown has kept us almost completely confined to our homes, I've intensely noticed some things for which I long: visits with friends and family, eating a good home-cooked or professionally cooked meal, being able to travel, watching baseball and other sports, and, of course, being gathered with you all for worship.

We know that the church is much more than a building. As Audrey Zunkel-deCoursey writes in *Messenger*, “This strange moment is teaching us some lessons about what being church is all about.” But I do miss being together. It's not the defining element of faith, but it's an important piece—perhaps more so for a tradition like the Brethren that has always lifted up the essential nature of community in being followers of Christ.

So I long for the Sunday when we are all worshipping in our sanctuary again. But in the meantime, I invite you to think about the things for which you yearn—even as we continue to be the church in our scattered places. Those tugs and pulls of longing show us what is close to our hearts, and what it is we really miss.

Going back to Sevier, she says: “Beauty and peace, love and happiness, joy and hope. It's the *noticing*, the paying attention to all the life-affirming moments that increase our humanity and the humanity of those around us. Longing with a thirsty soul means, in part, that we allow the soul to focus on the good things.”

Look for the good in these weeks ahead, and may the love of God flow into all the thirstiest parts of your souls.

—Pastor Walt

OFFICE SCHEDULE

Lee Ann and Pastor Walt are keeping limited hours at the church during the shut-down, and they will check messages and mail when possible. If you have an emergency or other immediate need, please contact your deacon or Pastor Walt.

RESOURCES DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

While we normally urge you to reach out to each other and the community, we encourage you to do that at a safe distance for the coming weeks! Until guidelines change, please stay home as much as possible, go out only for important needs or appointments that can't be missed, and take care of yourself physically and mentally. If you have a need that you can't meet yourself, please let your deacons or Pastor Walt know.

The director of the World Health Organization offered this advice recently on CNN: "If your local or national guidelines allow it, go outside for a walk, a run, or a ride and keep a safe distance from others. If you can't leave the house, find an exercise video online, do some yoga, or walk up and down the stairs. Get your information from reliable sources once or twice a day."

We have asked deacons to be in touch periodically with those in their care groups, and you are all urged to call, text, email, write, or otherwise connect from a distance with your friends from church and elsewhere. Be especially attentive to those who live alone and/or are homebound.

At this time, all worship services and activities at the church are cancelled until state and district guidance permits us to resume. We will update you on dates as more information becomes available.

Following are some resources you might find helpful during this time:

— Living Stream Church of the Brethren is an all-online congregation that normally helps scattered Brethren have a place to connect. If you want to connect to worship during this time, you can view their service live-streamed at 8 p.m. each Sunday evening at www.LivingStreamCOB.org. They usually have some past services available for viewing, too.

— Brethren Press has some free resources, including the Guide for Biblical Studies and this year's Lenten devotional, available during this period at www.BrethrenPress.com.

— If you have connections with younger children, the materials from Children's Disaster Services might be helpful: <http://www.brethren.org/news/2020/childrens-disaster-services-shares-resources.html>.

— As usual, Newline and other resources are available at www.brethren.org. Additional pieces are being posted related to the pandemic.

MAY WORSHIP SCHEDULE

We are currently assuming that we will not be able to resume in-person worship in May, but that could change, so please stay tuned. For now, we will continue to send out worship resources by email each week (and regular mail, for those who need it) so that we have common themes and materials around which we can come together even while we're separated.

We will also, through May, have a "Check-in and Cheer" call-in time each Tuesday evening at 7 p.m. This will consist of sharing and updates, prayer, a scripture and brief reflections, and a special music piece. For those calls, please dial in to 480-660-5320 and enter the conference code, which is included in the announcements each week. If you need the code, please contact Lee Ann or Pastor Walt.

Sunday worship themes for May will be as follows:

May 3

The Common Good

Acts 2:42-47, 1 Peter 2:19-25

May 10 (Mother's Day)

Rocks of Refuge

Psalms 31:1-5, 15-16; John 14:1-4; 1 Peter 2:6-10

May 17

The Defense (Never) Rests

Acts 17:22-31, 1 Peter 3:13-17

May 24

Trial by Fire

Psalms 68:1-10, 1 Peter 4:12-14, 5:6-11; Acts 1:6-12

May 31

Great Balls of Fire

Acts 2:1-21, Psalm 104:24-35, 1 Cor. 12:3b-13

Our Prayer List

Please pray especially for the following individuals and their families: for those who have contracted COVID-19, for health care workers, and for government and civic leaders who are seeking the best way forward, our District Executive, Gene Hagenberger, Barbara Saulsbury's and Wanda Baynard's Aunt Recie; Lee Willis, Kathy Spurry, for Camp Mardela and camp manager "Chief" Gieta Gresh, Lillian Sefcik, Ginger Brady, Beth Lockwood, Jean & Don Saballus, Richard Scott, Billy Harding, Chuck Davis, Annabel Young, Larry Fike, Childlene Brooks, Alan Segar, Bruce Butler, Virginia Watson, Brent Spurry, Pat Saathoff, Pat Lewis, Ellen Walbridge, Pete Haynes, Lee Roesti, Norman Harding, Gene & Betty Lednum, GraceWay CoB, Nancy Scheffler, Roger Plagge, JK Rider, John Nalley, Bobby Hopkins, Kurt Kline, Dee Candel, Mary Ann Kiser, Doug Edsall, Lois Schall, Natalee Jones, Jeff Wright, continuous prayers for our church family in Nigeria, continued prayers for Comfort Amos, Barbara Taylor, Audrey Geib, Leo Truban, Emerson Fike, Katelyn Howard, Christine & Kenny Fike. Pray for leaders & people that are working towards peace. Please phone the church to add or remove persons on our prayer list.



Congratulations and best wishes to Darin Jones & Rebekah Murphy, who were married on April 18 in a private ceremony. They are residing on Calvert Street in Easton.

May God bless you with abundant joy and love always.



MAY Birthdays

- 4 Charlene Cabrera
- 5 Matthew Ball
- 6 Elisa Miller, Cheryl Hughes, Lucy Carrion
- 7 Susan Lohr, Ken Russ, Les Groves
- 8 Meredith Kelly, Dan Ulrich
- 10 Susan Walbridge
- 12 Matthew Mullikin, Gary North
- 13 Mischelle Nalley
- 14 Becca Walbridge
- 15 Doug Rathell
- 16 Dana Walbridge
- 17 Eric Plagge, Adrienne Eve Schwaninger
- 19 Christopher Fox, Brian Walbridge, Ellen Wile
- 21 Cora Elizabeth Fluharty
- 22 Dan Schwaninger
- 23 Terri Lednum, Virginia Turkington
- 24 Robin Valliant, Ken Cober, Gregory North, Tristan Walbridge
- 25 Sam Fike, J.D. Correa, Cathy Nalley
- 28 CJ Grubbs
- 29 Joy Marshall, Linda Mattox
- 30 Mike Jacobs
- 31 Grant Hagenberger



MAY Anniversaries

- 1 Greg & Tammy Haddaway
- 6 Kevin & Kellee Kinsey
- 7 Steve & Makaran Mullikin
- 15 Paul & Virginia Turkington
- 21 Brent & Melissa Johnson
- 22 Bill & Sharon Schuyler



2020 Graduates

Graduation Sunday is scheduled for June 7. If you have or know of a graduate; high school, college or master's, please let Lee Ann or Wanda Baynard know as soon as possible. Thank you!



NEW MEMBER SUNDAY RESCHEDULED!!

For anyone who is not a member of our congregation but would have interest in officially joining, we will be re-scheduling this sometime late spring or early summer. Membership is a way to connect at a deeper level with the faith community, sharing in its service and ministry. If you would like to become a member, please contact Pastor Walt asap.



From our Music Director Ellen Wilz

Choir and Hand Bell practices will resume as soon as possible, based on the rescheduling of meetings at the church. We would like to continue working on presenting at least one song from each musical group the next time we can meet for worship. Stay tuned! Ellen



Sunday, May 10, 2020

INFORMATION FROM CAMP MARDELA REGARDING COVID-19

Despite the uncertainties surrounding COVID-19, we want our camp families (and new families!) to be able to register for summer camp with confidence. Here's what we're doing to help that to happen:

1. We are closely monitoring public and verifiable information about the current health crisis and what that might mean for our summer camp season. The recent "stay at home" orders issued by the governor of Maryland currently extends to the end of April. Depending on what happens following this, it could impact our first few summer camp weeks. Of course, any future order could be revoked, reduced, or extended at any time as our leaders navigate this public health crisis.

2. We are exploring and creating various modifications to our staff training and summer camp schedules to allow for a later start date, if needed, and expanded program options in July to accommodate all interested campers. We are also looking at ways that we can structure our program (smaller area family groups, for example) in order to keep campers and staff safe and comply with all health and legal regulations. We are also reviewing our initial health screening procedures for campers and staff, as well as our cleaning/disinfecting procedures. For now, as we continue to plan and prepare, we just need to wait and see how things progress on the local, state, and federal levels, and then be ready to put whatever is needed into place for the summer.

3. We are modifying our deposit and registration payment policies for 2020 in the following ways:

If a child's summer camp program needs to be canceled because of the COVID-19 virus based on Department of Health recommendations; by local, state, or federal government regulations; and/or by the decision of camp leadership (including the Director and Camp Doctor), any registration payments, including the full non-refundable/non-transferable deposit, will be refunded to the camper family or credited toward a future camp program, based on the preference of the family/church.

If a child is unable to attend summer camp because of the COVID-19 virus based on a written physician's note, Department of Health recommendations, and/or local, state, or federal regulations, any registration payments, including the full non-refundable/non-transferable deposit, will be credited toward a future camp program OR the registration payments minus the non-refundable/non-transferable deposit will be refunded to the family and the non-refundable/non-transferable deposit will be credited toward a future camp program, based on the preference of the family/church.

4. We are recommending that families register their campers for the camp programs you would prefer so that we have accurate information related to camper/program interests in order to make adjustments to the schedule as needed. Registration trends will indicate which programs are drawing camper interest. Later weeks of the summer, particularly in July, are more likely to still be held as planned but **nothing has been cancelled yet**. Should camp programs need to be cancelled due to COVID-19, camp staff will contact affected campers to reschedule for later in the summer or issue a refund or credit based on the family/church preference.

5. Registration is available online or via snail mail. If you are in need of registration materials for snail mail registration, please contact the camp at campmardela@gmail.com. In order to register you will need to pay the \$55 registration fee. Once again, if your program is canceled due to COVID-19 or if you camper acquires COVID-19 your registration fee will be refunded. If you would like to register, but are currently unable to afford the registration fee, please, contact the camp at campmardela@gmail.com to make arrangements to hold your spot.



Due to the ongoing uncertainty surrounding the COVID-19 outbreak, the Camp Mardela board at its

Monday, April 6 meeting, decided to postpone the camp auction that had been scheduled for May 9. The auction is annually the biggest fundraiser for the camp. The camp is looking at rescheduling the event for early fall, with the date to be determined in the next few weeks. Please stay tuned for further details. Thank you for your support of the camp and its ministries, and blessings to all during this challenging time.

Walt Wiltschek
Camp Mardela board chair

NOT EVERYTHING IS CANCELLED

sunshine is not cancelled
spring is not cancelled
love is not cancelled
relationships are not cancelled
reading is not cancelled
naps are not cancelled
devotion is not cancelled
music is not cancelled
dancing is not cancelled
imagination is not cancelled
kindness is not cancelled
conversations are not cancelled
hope is not cancelled



#keeplookingup
SimpleStencils.com

PETAL POWER

It is said that “April showers bring May flowers” (and not the Pilgrim variety!). Can you unscramble the names of these flowers? If you can’t get them all, don’t feel like a blooming idiot! Answers below.

SIIR

AREST

SORE

USCRASINS

TRYMANCHHMUSE

SYDIA

WONLFUSER

PLUTI

DRAMIOLOG

UNITAPE

CHOIRD

GRANDHAYE

DOGSLULIA

GAINOBE

GRAPDONNAS

ANSWERS: Iris, Aster, Rose, Narcissus, Chrysanthemum, Daisy, Sunflower, Tulip, Marigold, Petunia, Orchid, Hydrangea, Gladiolus, Begonia, Snapdragon.



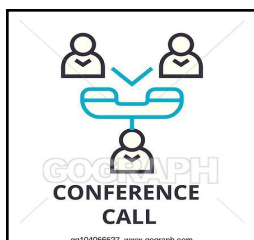
Attendance & Offering for April

Attendance					0
	4/5/20	4/12/20	4/19/20	4/26/20	Totals
Distributions					
<i>General (06)</i>					
Envelopes	1,785.00	830.00		1,960.00	4,575.00
Loose Change/Cash	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Tithes	1,785.00	830.00	0.00	1,960.00	4,575.00
<i>06 Income</i>					
Building Use					
Safe Harbor	30.00				30.00
Dutchmans Lane Rent			1,155.00		1,155.00
Harrison St. Rent				1,155.00	1,155.00
Subtotal of Income	30.00	0.00	1,155.00	1,155.00	2,340.00
Totals	1,815.00	830.00	1,155.00	3,115.00	6,915.00
<i>Special Offerings (07)</i>					
Deacon Fund					0.00
In Kind					
Miscellaneous					
Totals	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Totals	1,815.00	830.00	1,155.00	3,115.00	6,915.00

While we are not able to meet for worship in person, many of the expenses of our church continue during this time of shutdown due to the pandemic. We realize that some of you might not be in a position to give as income has become restricted, but if you are able to do so, please prayerfully continue to send your offerings in to the church or directly to our financial secretary, Judy Musch. Other organizations are also in need at this time, so please continue to be generous when you can. Hopefully we will all be able to gather again soon!

Leadership Team Meeting

The next Leadership Team meeting will be by teleconference on May 4 at 1:00 p.m.



HAPPIER DAYS ARE COMING

Don't think that all pleasure is gone from your life
Though now your heart is filled with sorrow and strife -
Remember your Father has heard every sigh,
He knows all your fears and is standing close by.

Much joy lies ahead that our dear Lord has planned,
Happy hours and days from His own loving hand...
So be of good courage, take heart, and press on
For after the darkness there's always a dawn. MZM

Thank you to Barbara Saulsbury for submitted this poem.

Volunteer Opportunities

Talbot Interfaith Shelter

The 2020 volunteer list is available for sign-up. Please take the time and look to see where you can spare a few hours of your time every other month. Any questions, please contact Norma Trax. **Our next date is May 19, 2020. *For those who have signed up, please call the shelter before arriving. Thank you!***

Ridgeway House Lunches

The 1st & 3rd Fridays of each month. For months that have five Fridays, lunches will be provided on the 1st, 3rd, and 5th Friday. Contact Loretta Lohr (410-822-3094). Monetary and food donations (drink boxes, individual fruit cups, small bags of chips and cookies) are always welcome.

NSC Food Pantry

Let's not forget that food prices keep going up! When we pay attention to our local, national and international food needs, we are reminded that people suffer from food insecurity all around. If we do not share of our bounty, others go hungry. Let us give, so others may live. Any non-perishable food items with good "best if used by" dates are accepted. ***Consider bringing in your non-perishable items when church re-opens.***

Interested in Serving as Worship Leader or doing the Children's Time?

We're always looking for new people to share their gifts! It doesn't take a lot of time--just a bit of preparation and a willingness to serve. If you would like to join this team of volunteers or want more information, please contact the church office or Pastor Walt.

The volunteer opportunities listed below are currently closed due to COVID-19. Please keep these opportunities in mind when things re-open.

Neighborhood Service Center

Please contact Marilyn Neal, if you are interested in volunteering at the center. Their phone number is 410-822-5015.

Dixon House Senior Living Center

The Dixon House located at 108 N. Higgins in Easton is seeking volunteers interested in helping out occasionally with crafts projects for the residents. All supplies are provided. If you would like to help, please contact Pastor Walt or the church office, or you can contact activities director Shelly Laroque directly at 410-822-6661.





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