

EASTON CHURCH OF THE BRETHREN

MAY, 2026 PEACHBLOSSOM PRESS NEWSLETTER

Mission Statement

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

**Worship Hours — 10:45 a.m.
Sunday school — 9:30 a.m.**



**412 S. Harrison Street
Easton, MD 21601
410-822-0475**

**Email: eastonchurchofthebrethren@gmail.com
Website: www.eastonbrethren.org
Rev. Jody E. Gunn, Pastor**

On Sunday, April 19, I spoke on “welcoming the stranger,” using Hebrews 13:1-3. The scripture reminds us: “Let mutual affection continue. Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by doing that some have entertained angels without knowing it. Remember those who are in prison, as though you were in prison with them, those who are being tortured, as though you yourselves were being tortured.” Eugene Peterson’s *The Message* paraphrases “Do not neglect to show hospitality” as “Be ready with a meal or a bed”—a specific call to be ready and open to strangers.

Some of us grew up ready to provide hospitality at the drop of a hat. Others prefer to plan these opportunities. I have been reading a book my daughter Amelia gave me a while back. It is called *“Foreign to Familiar: A Guide to Understanding Hot- and Cold-Climate Cultures”* by Sarah Lanier. Her book gave me pause. I have read, thought, and talked about culture before, but not in terms of “hot- or cold-climates.” I realize how often we make judgments about people based on misunderstanding their culture. Lanier has a whole chapter called “Different Concepts of Hospitality.”

We might wonder, “Why do they expect food or a drink when they come into a home?” In their home, it would be rude not to offer a guest food and drink. We might be considered the rude ones. We could speculate that someone is not prepared when they travel. But they might come from a country with a different understanding of hospitality. In their country, they might literally provide the stranger with a meal or shelter if needed.

Where we grew up or spent our childhood shapes how we understand hospitality. Lanier explains that hot-climate cultures are more inclusive, group-oriented, and spontaneous, while cold-climate cultures value privacy and planning. Recognizing these differences helps us understand our own and others’ approaches to hospitality—personally, nationally, and within our church.

The Church of the Brethren has historically been a group-oriented people. I always describe our church history and values with the round table. We are about community, relationship, and hospitality. Our denomination is not perfect and has sometimes struggled to grasp the reality of living, learning, and sharing together. But regardless of the struggle, I always try to return to Matthew 25:35-36, Hebrews 13:1-3, and many other scriptures for guidance. We have been called to provide for the stranger and to remember that we never know who we are entertaining. Early believers shared all their possessions because they believed they were of one heart and soul (Acts 4:32).

Paul’s letters to the Ephesians and Corinthians offer guidance about community. Looking through the lens of hot- and cold-climate cultures, we can reflect on how our upbringing shapes our hospitality practices. My experience blends both: my Church of the Brethren family acted more spontaneously, while the Lutheran side preferred to plan ahead. Regardless of background and experience, we can always learn new ways to be hospitable. As one patient recently said, “We are never too old to learn.” I had to agree. In that spirit, let’s open ourselves to understanding different cultures, so hospitality toward strangers becomes a true practice everywhere.

Pastor Jody

Please note: I will be interacting with many strangers from May 4-13 as I travel to Portugal with two of my pastor friends. I would appreciate your prayers. Please make sure to reach out to Lee Ann Fox or Sharon Miller if you need deacon support while I am away.

Our Prayer List

Please pray especially for the following individuals and their families: for health care workers, and for government and civic leaders who are seeking the best way forward, for our District, for all those who have been affected economically, for Camp Mardela and administrator Jennifer Summy, the family of Jimmy Lohr, Cathy Heinsohn, Jay Lewis, Amy Saulsbury Hutchison, Terri Tarr, Geoff Fox, Ron Miller, Pete Fox, Joyce Battle, Gavin Miller, Les Groves, Howard Miller, Carol Segar, Debbie Maloney, Alycia Walbridge, Paul Shortall, Lynn Butler, Vicky Johnson, Norma Trax, Jay Lister, Tim Fluharty, Connie Griep, Cecilia Stephenson, Morgan Harvey, Nadia Schlotzhauer, Dean Clutts, Nora Quidas, John Evans, Holly Hill Jones (Larry Fike's stepdaughter), Cheryl Dayton, Chris Lyons, Ruth Gunn, Larry & Barbara McCann, Jeanette & Bob Miller, Bruce Butler, Loretta Lohr, Adele Pogue, Caitlyn Bussey, Theresa Durnbaugh, Billy Harding, Larry Fike, GraceWay CoB, Dee Candel, continuous prayers for our church family in Nigeria, continued prayers for Comfort Amos. Pray for leaders & people that are working towards peace.

Please phone or email the church office to add or remove persons on our prayer list.



May 24, 2026

We will have bread and cup communion

Worship Leader's Are Needed!!

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 and it's only every 5-6 weeks that you will serve. If you would like to join this team of volunteers or want more information, please contact the church office or Marlena Groves (Nurture Chair).

Neighborhood Service Center 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.

Neighborhood Service Center

Please contact Andy Hollis, Executive Director, if you are interested in volunteering at the center. Their phone number is 410-822-5015.

VOLUNTEER



Talbot Interfaith Shelter

The 2026 Talbot Interfaith Shelter (TIS) 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 month. Any questions, please contact Norma Trax. **Our next date will be May 19. Volunteers and the meal are needed.**

AA Group

Mid Shore Intergroup is a local AA group that meets at our church every Wednesday evening at 7p. For more information please go to www.midshoreintergroup.org.



- 4 Charlene Cabrera
- 5 Matthew Ball
- 6 Elisa Miller, Cheryl Hughes, Lucy Carrion
- 7 Susan Lohr, Ken Russ, Les Groves
- 8 Dan Ulrich
- 10 Susan Walbridge
- 12 Matthew Mullikin
- 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
- 20 Linda Mattox
- 21 Beth Fluharty
- 22 Dan Schwaninger
- 23 Terri Lednum
- 24 Robin Valliant, Ken Cober, Gregory North,
Tristan Walbridge
- 25 Sam Fike, J.D. Correa, Cathy Nalley
- 27 John Evans
- 28 CJ Grubbs
- 29 Joy Marshall, Linda Mattox
- 30 Mike Jacobs
- 31 Grant Hagenberger



- 1 Greg & Tammy Haddaway
- 6 Kevin & Kellee Kinsey
- 7 Steve & Makaran Mullikin
- 21 Brent & Melissa Johnson
- Christopher & Katie Fox
- 22 Bill & Sharon Schuyler



Leadership Team meeting



The Leadership Team will meet on Monday, May 18 at 2:00 p.m.

Special Dates for May 2026

- National Day of Prayer, *May 7, 2026*
- Mother's Day, *May 10, 2026*
- Ascension of the Lord, *May 14, 2026*
- Armed Forces Day, *May 16, 2026*
- Victoria Day [Canada], *May 18, 2026*
- Day of Pentecost, *May 24, 2026*
- Memorial Day, *May 25, 2026*
- Trinity Sunday, *May 31, 2026*



National Day of Prayer **MAY 7, 2026**

This year's theme:

"Glorify God Among the Nations, Seeking Him in All Generations."

"Tell of His glory among the nations, His wonderful deeds among all the peoples." 1 Chronicles 16:24 NASB

The National Day of Prayer exists to mobilize unified public prayer for America.



News about Camp Mardela, from Jennifer Summy, Camp Administrator

There are several copies of Camp Mardela's newsletter "The Lane" in the narthex.

- ♦ **Yard Sale:** May 16, 8:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.
- ♦ **Camp Appreciation Day:** June 7, 5-7:00 p.m.
- ♦ **Family Camp:** September 4-6
- ♦ **Camp Supper:** September 19, 4-7:00 p.m.
- ♦ **Sights and Sounds of Christmas,** December 11, 6-8:00 p.m.
- ♦ **Shop with RaiseRight/Script Fundraiser:** Support camp by shopping at your favorite stores! Order gift cards through the script program and a percentage will go back to camp without you spending any more money than you normally would for your shopping needs. Go to www.raiserright.com or use the RaiseRight app and enter the code (contact Camp for the code) to purchase gift cards and give back to Camp Mardela.



Thank you for your continued prayers and support for camp and its ministry. It is greatly appreciated and we continue to see the fruit of Camp ministering in the lives of people.

SERVING THE MONTH OF MAY

	5/3/2026	5/10/2026	5/17/2026	5/24/2026	5/31/2026
Message	Pastor Jody Gunn	Rusty Curling	Wanda Baynard	Pastor Jody Gunn	Music Sunday
Worship Leader	Sharon Lister	Jane Marshall	Mat Baynard	Kevin Wile	
Head Usher/Sound	Mat Baynard	Mat Baynard	Lee Ann Fox	Mat Baynard	Mat Baynard
Deacons on Call	John & Norma Trax	Geoff & Lee Ann Fox	Mat & Wanda Baynard	Les & Marlena Groves	Jane Marshall & Anne Harvey
Special Music	Peachblossom Bells	Jennifer Summy	Choir	Joy Miller	Music Sunday
Flowers	Anne Harvey				

PEACING-IT TOGETHER

NONVIOLENT SELF-DEFENSE

We suffer mainly from a paralysis of will. Most people do not think we are capable of creating a relatively nonviolent world.

~Elise Boulding

One comes to appreciate the reality that there can be no "we's" and "they's" in our lives, but only brothers and sisters: all children of God, all sacred and dignified. Destruction of any one of these God-gifts means a certain destruction of oneself and a mystery that is gone forever from this small fragile world. I believe that unarmed truth and unconditional love will have the final say.

~Martin Luther King, Jr.

Jim Lohr - In Memoriam



This winter has been a hard season for Camp Mardela - losing 2 beloved "Thursday guys" within months of each other. We shared this picture just a few months ago in memory of Jerry Garey (bottom left). And now, we are sharing it in memory of Jim Lohr (top center - in the driver's seat).

Jim Lohr had an incredible spirit - always wanting to share stories, teachable moments, and especially songs. We got to visit him in the hospital and had a wonderful time reminiscing as we sang songs from the Camp Mardela song books. He even taught us

a few we had never heard before!

On the Thursday crew, Jerry's specialty was with a paint brush, and Jim's was with a chainsaw. He was the lumberjack extraordinaire, and was the first one we called for our tree problems. Even in the hospital, Jim was concerned about the trees that had fallen from the last big snow we had. That is an incredible testament to how much camp meant to him - that even in his weak moments, he was always thinking about how he could help Camp Mardela.



During that visit, he also recounted getting to make applesauce and ice cream at Family Camp this fall, and fondly remembered teaching some of the young boys there how to make it for the first time, as he oversaw their operation. One of the great joys of his life truly was teaching people - especially young people.

Jim Lohr was also a singer. He sang in the Easton church choir, and always attended the Tidewater Singers concerts. He sang many camp songs, and was quite the song leader. He

is remembered fondly for his Family Camp talent show performances of song and drama. As I think about Jim Lohr, a song continues to echo in my head. He sang it a few times on Thursdays, and again the last time we visited him.

Intertwined with the laughter of Jerry Garey, will be the melodious singing of Jim Lohr ringing through the woods of Camp Mardela. He will forever be remembered here for the music he brought to all of us - whether through the hum of his chainsaw, the things he taught us, or the songs he sang.



Copied with permission from Jennifer Summy, Camp Mardela, Administrator

There will be a visitation on Tuesday, May 19, 2026, 5:00-7:00 p.m. at Fellows, Helfenbien, and Newnam Funeral Home in Easton.

A celebration of life will be held at the Easton Church of the Brethren on May 20, 2026 at 11:00 a.m.

April 14, 2026

Dear Church Family and Friends,

After 30 years of discernment, Easton Church of the Brethren has recognized the need to improve accessibility and safety for our congregation and visitors. What began as a vision has now become a call from our Congregation, Leadership Team, Building Committee—John Trax, Geoff Fox, Ron Miller, and Gene Walbridge—to take the health and safety of the Easton community seriously, with support from Torchio Architects and Willow Construction. The work before us is clear—we seek to align our building with the values we already profess while seeking broad-based support so that we might succeed on the points below.

Goals:

- Address critical health and safety needs, including asbestos removal and updated fire code compliance.
- Provide ADA-compliant restrooms and provide appropriate building accessibility to enable full participation in community life.

Outcomes:

- Sustain our role as a safe community space and continue serving groups who depend on this building.
- Preserve and share our sanctuary's acoustics so that music, worship, community discussions, and fellowship can be fully experienced.

The project's total cost, due to rising expenses, is \$1.2 million. We have already achieved 76% of our fundraising goal. By March 31, 2026 we received \$60,000 in commitments, leaving \$228,183.20 of the \$288,183.20 still to be raised. We kindly ask you to prayerfully consider making a gift by May 3. Whether it's a one-time donation or a pledge spread out over time, each contribution helps us move closer to our goal. Our Financial Secretary, Judy Musch will collect pledge cards and track progress in coordination with our Treasurer Dale Fike and assistant Jim Foreman. We will keep you informed through newsletters, announcements, our website, and Facebook.

Thank you for your prayers, generosity, and commitment as we create a space where all are truly welcome as Jesus fully intended.

With gratitude,

The Easton Church of the Brethren Leadership Team
Sharon Miller (Chair), Wanda Baynard, Geoff Fox, Marlena Groves, Anne Harvey
Dale Fike (Treasurer), Jim Foreman (Asst. Treasurer), Judy Musch (Financial Secretary), John Trax (Recorder), Pastor Jody Gunn

The Moment Before Us: A 30-Year Journey Toward Accessibility

For 30 years, Easton Church of the Brethren has prayerfully discerned how to make our church fully accessible—so that *all* may enter, worship, and belong.

1990s–2000s

A vision begins with recognizing the need to better serve all members of our community.

2007

Purchased land on Dutchman's Lane with hopes of building a fully accessible, single-level facility.

2007–2022

Years of faithful discernment as plans evolved and circumstances changed.

2022

Sold the Dutchman's Lane property and renewed our commitment to accessibility at our current location.

2023–2024

With renewed purpose at Harrison & Stewart:

- Removed the willow oak to
- Completed drainage improvements to protect the basement in preparation for the accessibility project.

2025

- Sold the parsonage to reduce building management and ultimately support the project
- Building Committee partnered with architects and builders
- Plans refined to focus on essential accessibility needs

2025–2026

- Following the drainage project, sidewalks in that area were replaced to improve safe access
- Finalized project plans, including: ADA-compliant restrooms, asbestos removal, and fire code updates
- Updated project cost: \$1.2 million

Spring 2026

- 76% of funding secured through property sales, estate gifts, and existing resources
- \$60,000 commitments toward the remaining goal of \$288,183.20
- \$228,183.20 still needed

May 1, 2026

Pledge deadline as we take the next faithful step forward.



Yes! I/We want to donate today!

- ☐ My/Our gift now is: \$ _____
- ☐ I/We pledge a One-Time gift of \$ _____ to be given within ____ days.
- ☐ I/We pledge the gift amount below for () 1 Year () 2 Years () Other _____
- Monthly \$ _____ Quarterly \$ _____ Annually \$ _____



Ways to Give:

- ☐ PayPal using the link <https://www.paypal.com/ncp/payment/6MKB7T2LDJDMW> or QR code
- ☐ Check with "Accessible" written on the memo line
- ☐ Cash with "Accessible" written on the envelope

Name(s) Making Pledge: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Thank you very much for your support!

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- ☐ Cash with "Accessible" written on the envelope

Name(s) Making Pledge: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Thank you very much for your support!



CAMP MARDELA

KING RETREAT CENTER IMPROVEMENT FUNDRAISER

GOAL - \$10,000

We are raising money this year to make needed improvements to the King Retreat Center - mainly the dorm rooms. Here is what we hope to improve.

Remove mold from eaves & bathrooms

Replace carpet with laminate flooring

Build new, custom wooden bunk beds

Repaint rooms

New heat & AC units in dorms

Replace lighting in dorm rooms



Current dorm room



Sample custom, wooden bunk
Built by John Trax

**Make donations at www.campmardela.org/donations
or mail to P.O. Box 460, Denton, MD 21629**

**45th Annual
Mid-Atlantic Disaster Response**

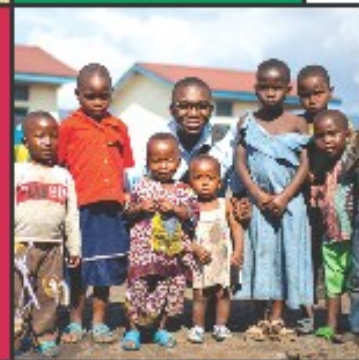
Auction

www.madcob.com/disaster-response-auction

**Handmade
Quilts &
Comforters**



**Baked
Goods
Food & Gifts**



**Handcrafts,
Artwork &
Antiques**



**Plants, Tools,
Furniture
& more**

May 2, 2026

**Carroll County Agricultural Center - Shipley Arena
Westminster, Maryland**

Sponsored by the Church of the Brethren Mid-Atlantic District



CAMP MARDELA

CAMP MARDELA YARD SALE!

MAY 16, 8AM-12PM

RENT A 10'X10' SPACE FOR \$15
OR DONATE ITEMS TO CAMP'S STAND!

PROCEEDS GO TOWARDS CAMP MINISTRY!!

MORE INFO AT
WWW.CAMPMARDELA.ORG/YARD-SALE

301 DEEP SHORE ROAD, DENTON, MD 21629

CAMPMARDELA@GMAIL.COM

410-479-2861

Tidewater Singers

Ellen Wile, Artistic Director

Born of Our Singing



Celebrating our 25th Season!

Friday, May 29

7:30 pm at Trinity Episcopal Cathedral, Easton

Saturday, May 30

4 pm Matinee at St. Paul's Church, Oxford

Admission \$20 at the door, or in advance. Students free.



Scan for tickets



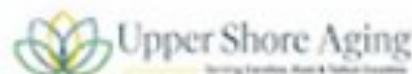
GRAB N' GO LUNCH

PROVIDED BY EAT SPROUT

STARTS:
NOVEMBER 12



BROOKLETTS PLACE WILL BE HANDING OUT FREE
GRAB N' GO LUNCHES TO SENIORS (60+) EVERY
TUESDAY FROM 10AM-11AM OR UNTIL WE RUN OUT!
GLUTEN FREE OPTIONS ARE AVAILABLE.



FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT BROOKLETTS PLACE: 410-822-2869



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