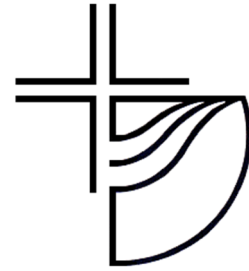


Montezuma Today

December 2019 – January 2020



Preparing for the Incarnation – Celebrate with Joy

As Christmas approaches, we experience many emotions. That fact of human life doesn't diminish the desire to find joy in this season. You are invited to share in the congregation's Advent worship. We hope that you – and your friends and neighbors – will join in these worship services. This year grandparents and grandchildren will lead our lighting of Advent wreath candles.

- December 1: 1st Sunday of Advent; Pastor Gabe Dodd preaching and the adult choir sings. You are invited to share in God's life. 9:30 a.m. service.
- December 8: 2nd Sunday of Advent; Children's Christmas program, *The Friendly Beasts*. Bridgewater Food Pantry offering of non-perishable foods. It is a time of preparation. 9:30 a.m. service.
- December 15: 3rd Sunday of Advent; adult choir sings. We anticipate God doing new things; we open our eyes to what is already happening in our midst. 9:30 a.m. service.
- December 22: 4th Sunday of Advent; handbell choir. The message is proclaimed. God is with us to save us from our sins. 9:30 a.m. service.
- December 24: Christmas Eve service, 8:00 p.m. Lessons and carols. The Adult choir sings and Pastor Gabe has the homily. Candle lighting affirms the Incarnation of the Word – the Word become flesh. Join with us for this entire season of preparation and celebration in the Gospel of our Lord Jesus!

5th Sunday

Sunday, December 29th is a 5th Sunday. A hot chocolate reception will take place between worship and Sunday School. We hope everyone enjoys this time of fellowship together.

What's Inside:

- | | |
|----------|-------------------------|
| 2 | Worship Topics |
| 3 | News Articles |
| 4 | Newsline |
| 5 | News Articles |
| 6 | Birthdays/Anniversaries |
| 7 | Financial Report |
| 8 | News Articles |

Church Events

December 2019

- 2: Bell Choir Practice – 7pm
- 3: Golden Lunch Bunch – 11:30am
- 4: Choir Practice – 7pm
- 5: Children's Dress Rehearsal – 5:30pm
- 8: Jr. High Christmas Party
- 9: Montezuma Support Group – 11:30am
- 9: Bell Choir Practice – 7pm
- 10: Church Board Meeting – 7pm
- 11: Choir Practice – 7pm
- 12: Salvation Army Meal
- 15: Sr. High Christmas Party
- 16: Bell Choir Practice – 7pm
- 18: Choir Practice – 7pm
- 22: Youth at BRCC
- 23: Bell Choir Practice – 7pm
- 24: Christmas Eve Service – 8pm
- 29: 5th Sunday Hot Chocolate Bar
- 30: Bell Choir Practice – 7pm

January 2020

- 1: New Year's Day
- 6: Bell Choir Practice – 7pm
- 7: Golden Lunch Bunch – 11:30am
- 7: Commission Meetings – 7pm
- 8: Choir Practice – 7pm
- 9: Salvation Army Meal
- 12: Sunday Night Live
- 13: Montezuma Support Group – 11:30am
- 14: Executive Committee Meeting – 7pm
- 17: Choir Practice – 7pm
- 20: Bell Choir Practice – 7pm
- 22: Choir Practice – 7pm
- 24: Christmas Eve Service – 8pm
- 25: Christmas
- 27: Bell Choir Practice – 7pm
- 29: Choir Practice – 7pm

WORSHIP – December 2019

Sunday mornings – 9:10 a.m. Gathering Time,
9:30 a.m. Worship Hour, 10:40 a.m. Classes

1: 1st Sunday of Advent Pastor Gabe

The Invitation: Walking in the Light

Isaiah 2:1-5; Matthew 24:36-44

Advent proposes impossibilities, and instead of casting our wishes away in a letter to the North Pole this year, we will consider our invitation to walk in the light.

Music by the adult choir

International S.S. Lesson: David Worships God in Jerusalem

8: 2nd Sunday of Advent Pastor David

Preparation: Signal & Noise

Isaiah 11:1-10; Matthew 3:1-12

Isaiah writes: “the shoot of Jesse shall stand as a signal to the peoples.” The people may see many events, happening together or one after another. How do we interpret the information? God communicates in small ways. Tuning in on the signal will lead us toward God.

Children's Christmas Program: “The Friendly Beasts”

International S.S. Lesson: A Heart Filled with Gratitude

15: 3rd Sunday of Advent Pastor David

Anticipation: Looking Ahead

Isaiah 35:1-10; Matthew 11:2-11

The experience of anticipation is dicey. High swings of emotion can result when we don't get what we expect. And yet without anticipation, how can we be ready for what comes?

Music by the adult choir

International S.S. Lesson: Building God's House

22: 4th Sunday of Advent Pastor David

The Message: Immanuel

Isaiah 7:10-16; Matthew 1:18-25

The promise behind the name Immanuel is that God is with us. The implication of that promise for the church is that God “will save his people from their sins.” At Christmas we remember how God's love reclaims us.

Music by the handbell choir

International S.S. Lesson: The Lord is With You

24: Arrival Pastor David

Isaiah 9:2-9; Luke 2:1-14

Lessons, carols, message and candle lighting. Join with others in welcoming the Christ-child.

29: His presence saved them Pastor David

Isaiah 63:7-9; Matthew 2:13-23

The words of Isaiah are words of life. Life is full of hard stories like the slaying of the innocents in Matthew 2, but rather than surrender hope and become bitter, the prophet leads us forward. That is the message of the gospel.

International S.S. Lesson: David's Prayer

WORSHIP – January 2020

Sunday mornings – 9:10 a.m. Gathering Time,
9:30 a.m. Worship Hour, 10:40 a.m. Classes

5: The Word Become Flesh Pastor David

John 1:1-5, 10-18

Church-goers are all too familiar with the words of the Incarnation – “the Word became flesh and lived among us.” For hundreds of years Christians argued and fought over what it means. The argument is ultimately about solidarity: does God really know us? Does God understand?

International S.S. Lesson: A Place for the Ark

12: Of Baptism and Holy Spirit Pastor David

Acts 10:34-43; Matthew 3:13-17

In the biblical story, corners are turned. New directions are taken. Jesus is a new direction. His resurrection and the Holy Spirit are corners turned. People are released from bondage and find new hope with God for their lives.

Music by the adult choir

International S.S. Lesson: Solomon's Speech

19: Four o'clock in the afternoon Pastor Gabe

1 Corinthians 1:3-9; John 1:29-42

All of us have turning-point experiences. We may remember the exact time and place they occurred. John tells a story like that about two men meeting Jesus.

International S.S. Lesson: Solomon's Dedication Prayer

26: Follow me Pastor David

1 Corinthians 1:10-18; Matthew 4:12-23

More stories of people meeting Jesus. How does it matter for us? It can pull your kid out of the family business as in Matthew 4. It will change the meaning of tragic events as in 1 Corinthians 1. Jesus is an encounter. It is real living.

Music by the adult choir

International S.S. Lesson: Solomon's Blessing

Staff Notes

Church Offices Closed:

December 25th – 26th

December 30th – January 1st

December Special Offering: Bridgewater Food Pantry

The special offering for the month of December is the Bridgewater Food Pantry.

The mission of the Bridgewater Food Pantry is to distribute food to local needy families. The Food Pantry is housed at the Bridgewater Church of the Brethren, and is open the 1st and 3rd Tuesdays of every month.

Monetary contributions will be given to People Helping People, which works with the Bridgewater Food Pantry to assist clients with rent, heat, etc.

Montezuma will be collecting non-perishable food items on Sunday, December 8th, for the Bridgewater Food Pantry. Please be sure the food does not expire for at least 6 months (July 2020). They have plenty of canned vegetables right now, and are most in need of canned meat, canned fruit, cereal, canned soup and peanut butter. They also accept donations of paper products such as toilet paper and tissues.

Share your blessings with folks in our community!

2020 Offering Envelopes

The 2020 offering envelopes are now available for pick up in the entrance area. If you are not already signed up for offering envelopes, extras are available. Pick a set that has no name and put your name and envelope number on the form provided. This allows the financial secretary to have your number so he can mail the confidential statement to you.

Youth Auction Success

Montezuma's youth raised over \$3,200 at the November 15th auction at Montezuma Hall. We are thankful to the many helpers that made this event a success, including the youth and all of their parents. We are grateful to all who contributed items, goods, and food to the auction.

Scholarship

Peter Barlow was the recipient of the Church of the Brethren Nursing Scholarship in 2019.

Weather/Service Announcements

As winter comes, congregations prepare for the effects of inclement weather on worship and other events. Congregational leadership strives to make announcements concerning Sunday worship services by 7 a.m. Sometimes that's not possible. We announce information about closings or delays via TV at WHSV-TV3 and NBC29, and via WSVA radio (AM 550). We also plan to make announcements via the church Facebook page, website, and church email when possible. Weekday events at church are generally cancelled when schools in Rockingham County are closed due to weather. Evening meetings can vary if the weather has cleared and warmed up later in the day. Pay attention to your event leader or email and Facebook in those cases. At times, worship services may proceed if conditions are winter-like but not unsafe. Remember, you are always the final arbiter of what is safe for you when you consider attending worship or church events during uncertain weather conditions.

Winter/Spring Deacon Bible Studies

This winter's Deacon Bible study series is Parables of Matthew. Each winter Deacons sponsor a church-wide Bible study series leading up to Easter. In 2020 we will begin the week of January 26 and continue through the week of March 29. We hope to have a mixture of settings for the studies. We hope to have a Sunday School opportunity, plus several home studies and a weekday study at the meeting house. Pastors Miller and Dodd will lead studies, but the Deacons need some help finding leaders for all groups. If you have interest, talk to one of the pastors; leading doesn't mean being an expert on the Bible. It's leading a discussion about what is read together. We need volunteers to host studies in their homes as well. Bible study is a good way to grow in faith as you talk to others about the Bible and life. If you have not tried it, give it a shot! Information about times and dates will be announced early in January.

Salvation Army Meal

Montezuma will be serving the Salvation Army meal on Thursday, December 12th and Thursday, January 9th. Those helping in December are: Marsha Shank, Libby Kiser, and Karen Derby

Mission and Ministry Board approves 2020 budget

The 2020 budget for denominational ministries was the main item at fall meetings of the Mission and Ministry Board on Oct. 17-21 at the General Offices in Elgin, Ill. Meetings were led by chair Patrick Starkey with chair-elect Carl Fike and general secretary David Steele.

The board approved a total 2020 budget for all denominational ministries of \$8,527,880 income and \$8,584,200 expense, resulting in an anticipated net expense of \$56,320. The decision included budgets for the six major ministry areas of the Church of the Brethren: Core Ministries, Brethren Disaster Ministries, Brethren Press, Conference Office, Global Food Initiative, and Material Resources.

The Core Ministries budget of \$4,969,000 income and expense represents a cut of almost \$180,000 compared to 2019 budgeted expenses. Core Ministries include the General Secretary's office, Global Mission and Service, Ministry Office, Discipleship Ministries, Brethren Volunteer Service, workcamps, Office of Peacebuilding and Policy, communications, Brethren Historical Library and Archives, and finance, among others. Sources of income include giving from congregations and individuals.

A years-long downward trend in giving from congregations is expected to continue. Mission Advancement staff shared about their work to engage more closely and frequently with donors.

There was good news about the denomination's investments and asset balance in financial reporting for 2019. Net assets as of Sept. 30 were at their highest level in five years, at more than \$38 million, having grown by about \$5 million since 2015. These assets include invested funds with and without donor restrictions, real property, and cash.

In other business

The board approved a revision of the funding formula for grants from the Brethren Faith in Action Fund, routine updates to financial policies, and 2024 meeting dates. Also affirmed was a staff decision to remake the National Youth Conference Fund into a Youth and Young Adult Conference Fund in order to help finance a wider variety of events.

John Hoffman was named an at-large board member beginning in 2020. Currently he is filling a one-year uncompleted term on the board.

The board received a presentation from "Plains to the Pacific," a small think tank-style group that was initiated by former General Board staff. Plains to the Pacific is closing out its work.

Time was spent on a question raised during compelling vision conversations: what is the next "big idea" for the Church of the Brethren? Table groups brainstormed responses, contributing to the work of formulating a new strategic plan for the board. Leadership will assess the relationship of a strategic plan with the compelling vision statement expected to come to Annual Conference for approval in 2020.



Cheryl Brumbaugh-Cayford

Annual Conference 2020 logo is released

The logo for the 2020

Conference has been released, illustrating the theme "God's Adventurous Future." The logo is by calligrapher Timothy Botts, who more than 20 years ago created a design for the Church of the Brethren tagline "Continuing the work of Jesus. Peacefully. Simply. Together."

"Our future is not uneventful; it is marked by rigorous peaks, rushing

currents, and deep valleys," said Annual Conference moderator Paul Munday. "But it's wise to be expectant, even hope-full, for God moves among us, calling us beyond our bewilderment and discord."

Munday is writing a quarterly pastoral letter on the theme titled "Trail Thoughts: Trekking Toward God's Adventurous Future," available at www.brethren.org/ac/2020/moderator.



Tenderloin Feast

Montezuma's annual Tenderloin Feast, coordinated by Tom Miller, will be held on Saturday, February 22, 2020. Seating times are: 12:00pm, 1:30pm, 3:30pm, 5:00pm and 6:30pm. Tickets are \$15 for adults, and \$7.50 for children ages 3-12. Meals are also available to purchase for take-out. You can purchase tickets after church in the entry way or by contacting Stephanie Diehl.

The meal includes pork tenderloin & gravy, sweet potatoes, macaroni & cheese, beans, fresh spinach salad, cranberry salad, pickled eggs, pickles, assorted homemade breads and desserts, coffee and tea.

The proceeds from the meal will go to the Montezuma Building Improvement Fund.

Fall Business Meeting

Montezuma's Fall congregational business meeting met Sunday, November 3, following morning services. Congregational leaders provided reports and answered questions. The following were called to leadership roles: Trustee: Helen Shickel; Church Board: Bob Black, Bob Michael, Rhonda Mandeville, Karen Fleishman, and Leslie Mohler; Annual Conference Delegates: Sara Atkins and Dustin Atkins; District Conference delegates: Mary Frances Heishman and Ramona Evans; Nominating Committee: Brenda Wine and Jim Rusmisel. The 2020 church budget of \$310,012.00 was approved.

Church Directory & Prayer Chain

It is time to update the church directory. Please look over the current directory carefully. If you have any changes, additions, etc. please let Linnette know. We would appreciate receiving all of this information by January 7th.

Also, if you would like to join the phone prayer chain or the email prayer list, please call the church office (540-879-2246).

Montezuma Handbell Choir at CrossRoads on December 14th

Join the festivities at CrossRoads on December 9th from 2pm-6pm, and experience Advent preparations as they might have taken place 100 years ago.

In addition to the traditional candlelight tour, this year's celebration includes hands-on family crafts, live music and singing, and holiday refreshments. Montezuma's handbell choir will be performing a Christmas program at 3:00pm.

Admission fees support the ongoing work of the Valley Brethren-Mennonite Heritage Center: adults-\$10, students-\$5, children 5 and under-free).

CrossRoads is located on Garber's Church Road in Harrisonburg. More information may be found at www.vbmhc.org.

Jr. High & Sr. High Youth Events: December 2019 & January 2020

See the church's website for more details about these events: www.montezumacob.org

Jr. High Christmas Party

Sunday, Dec. 8th at the Dakin's

Sr. High Christmas Party

Sunday, Dec. 15th at the Kiser's

Service Project at BRCC

Sunday, Dec. 22nd at 3pm,
followed by going to the movies

Sunday Night Live

Sunday, Jan. 12th, 1-3pm

Montezuma Today is a monthly publication of Montezuma Church of the Brethren. Articles and information for publication are appreciated by the 20th of each month.

Email: montezuma.cob@gmail.com or mail to: 4937 Ottobine Road, Dayton, VA 22821

December & January Birthdays/Anniversaries

December Birthdays:

1	Debbie Albers Elvert Black Daniel Lambert Danny Tumer Wayne Waggy	14	Jeff Berry Carolyn Mohler	28	Buck Brown Sherry Shull Roy Waggy Jeremy Daubert
3	Rick Knott Joseph Miller	16	Dennis Huffman	29	Andrea Black Dorita Webster Augusta Reel
4	Walker Shull Jessica Strawderman	17	Gene Sheffer Oliver Wood	30	Jennifer Payne
5	Mary Lou Glick Autumn Pequignot	18	Norman Harper Louise Howdysshell	31	Diana Havener Kyle Symons Chelsea Tumer Jackson Will
7	David Skelton	19	Joel Fulwider Carole Hoover Brooke Pennybacker Charlie Rhodes Bonnie Ryan		
8	Jim Mason Andi Riley	20	Bob Black George Watts		
9	Bob Michael	21	Toviah Shipe		
10	Sheila Skelton	22	Guy Lee Clark		
11	Stephanie Diehl	23	Holly Coaker		
12	Lauren Harper Brad Miller	25	Don Paston		
13	John Coffman Gordon Driver Dinah Puffenbarger	26	Sharon Embres Cora Kiser		

December Anniversaries:

4	Jeff & Brenda Wine
14	Ian & Kari Ostlund
17	Roger & Barbara Moyer
18	Keith & Sharon Weaver
19	Rick & Libby Kiser
21	Adrian & Orva Lambert
28	Matthew & Danelle Ross
30	Russell & Janice Shank

January Birthdays:

2	Wilamena Harback	17	Robert Albers Jonas Miller	30	Phil Evans Greg Losh Eli Moyer Kathryn Roche
3	Kathleen Michael	19	Morgan Dakin		
5	Cheryl Martin Tom Miller	20	John Miller		
6	Wendy Rhodes Tanner Showalter	22	Linda Harpine	31	Dawn Miller
7	Parker Fulton Paula Rhodes	23	Connie Stiles		
10	Betty Miller Elaine Sherwin	24	Nellie Black Derek Shickel Justin Hottinger		
11	Adam Brunk Craig Payne	25	Edith Allman Zandra Miller		
12	Braelyn Skelton Caroline Young Elias Dodd	26	Wayne Huffman		
14	Brian Weaver	27	Meredith Durham Finn Richard Wilhelmina Shank		
15	Sharon Northrop Russell Shank Edna Shickel	28	Addison Fulton Drake Mandeville		
		29	Daniel Shickel		

January Anniversaries:

6	Walter & Cathy Coccano
20	Wayne & Sandra Huffman
22	John & Ann Monger
23	Isaac & Amber Shank

Our Stewardship for November 2019

		Attendance		
		Worship	Sunday School	For Budget
November	3	147	92	\$5,969.00
	10	142	81	\$5,085.02
	17	131	82	\$6,423.00
	24	164	87	\$4,982.00
November average per Sunday		146	86	\$5,614.76
Last 12 mos. average per Sunday		152	74	\$5,477.49

Special Giving for November

Betty Jo Glick Memorial	\$787.50	NYC Account	\$3,212.25
Building Repairs	\$200	Open Doors	\$10
CWS Blankets	\$640	Poinsettias	\$360
Heritage Festival	\$90	Salvation Army Meals	\$200
Honoraria	\$100	Tenderloin Feast Tickets	\$3,212.25
Messenger Subscriptions	\$8	Youth Cookbooks	\$5

Serving in December

NURSERY

- 1 Stephanie Diehl & Sarah Craun
- 8 Becky & Hayley Daubert
- 15 Pam Dodd & Kenzy Hiner
- 22 Rhonda Mandeville & Roma Holloway
- 29 no schedule

WORSHIP CENTER

- 1
- 8 *Worship Center*
- 15 *Committee*
- 22
- 29 Kathy Veal

SOUND SYSTEM

- 1 Bobby Williams
- 8 Ron Shickel
- 15 John Layman
- 22 Randy Glick
- 29 Jim Rusmisl

VALET PARKING

- 1 John Monger
- 8 Jeff Wine
- 15 Ralph Rohrer
- 22 Donnie Jackson
- 29 Jeff Wine

USHERS: Roger Moyer, Bob Black, Ben Hall, Jim Rusmisl

Christmas Card Tree

If you could have any gift you wish, what would it be? Peace on Earth? An end to hunger? Preservation of the environment? Education for children? You say this is too big to even think about but a gift to Heifer International is an extraordinary opportunity to bring change to the world.

In 1944, Dan West a CoB minister had the idea that to help people you give them tools to work with and teach them how best to produce what is needed and then pass this along to other folks in the community. Heifer Project grew to become independent and is now called Heifer International. Since 1944, Heifer has provided food and income-producing animals and training to 125 million resource-poor families to more than 125 countries.

In order to give you an opportunity to help, the Christmas Card Tree is one way to contribute. Bring a card to place on the tree from you to the church family and contribute the money saved (box will be provided). Checks should be made payable to Upward Way SS Class. Then after Christmas a total check will be sent to Heifer International and a list of all cards sent will be published in the February newsletter.

Join with many others into an endless circle of giving that stretches around the world making lasting change possible. The Upward Way SS class appreciates your support of this project.

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