Montezuma Today

February 2020



Ash Wednesday

The congregation's Ash Wednesday service February 26 begins with supper at 5:30 and is followed by a short worship at 6:30. Choir practice follows at 7 p.m. The meal consists of soup, sandwiches, and raw veggies. If you would like to contribute a pot of soup, a plate of sandwiches or veggies contact one of the pastors. Ash Wednesday allows us to intentionally begin our preparations for Holy Week. This year, Montezuma is preparing a daily devotional booklet that includes scripture and reflections from members and friends of the congregation (see page 4 for Pastor Gabe's article). All are welcome so please join us for this service!

15th Annual Tenderloin Feast

The 15th annual Montezuma Tenderloin Feast will be on Saturday, February 22nd at the Montezuma Hall. As always, there will be an outstanding menu of pork tenderloin and gravy, sweet potatoes, macaroni and cheese, beans, fresh spinach salad, cranberry salad, pickled eggs, pickles, assorted homemade breads and desserts, coffee and tea.

There will be five seating times for the meal: 12:00pm, 1:30pm, 3:30pm, 5:00pm and 6:30pm. Tickets are \$15 for adults and \$7.50 for children age 3-12. You can purchase tickets on Sunday mornings at church or you may call Stephanie Diehl at 540-879-3567. Tickets for takeout boxes are available, as well.

We will need many volunteers to cook, serve, clean up, etc. and volunteers to provide homemade breads, desserts and pickles. Sign-up sheets are in the entry way at the church.

Proceeds for this event will go towards the Montezuma Church of the Brethren Building Improvement Fund.

Deacon Bible Studies Just Getting Started

Parables of Matthew are the focus of this year's Deacon Bible study. Books from Brethren Press are available on the small table next to the church office. The Sunday morning group meets during Sunday School in the Board room at the bottom of the steps; a special focus of that class is parenting and parables; Pastor Gabe Dodd is leading that study. A Wednesday morning group meets at Helen Shickel's home, 119 Dry River Road, Bridgewater; that group starts at 10 and Pastor David Miller is the facilitator. The Thursday evening group meets at Janet Whetzel's home, 2748 W. Dry River Rd, Dayton; that group begins at 6:30 and Linda Waggy is facilitating. Each of these groups is just getting started. Join one!

Church Events: February

- 3: Bell Choir Practice 7pm
- 4: Golden Lunch Bunch at the church 11:30am
- 5: Choir Practice 7pm
- 7-9: Jr. High Youth Winter Camp at Brethren Woods
- 10: Montezuma Support Group 11:30am
- 10: Bell Choir Practice 7pm
- 11: Church Board Meeting 7pm
- 12: Choir Practice 7pm
- 13: Salvation Army Meal
- 15: Sr. High Youth Caving Trip
- 17: Bell Choir Practice 7pm
- 19: Choir Practice 7pm
- 22: Tenderloin Feast
- 24: Bell Choir Practice 7pm
- 25: BRC Shrove Tuesday Pancake Luncheon 11am-1pm
- 26: Ash Wednesday Service 5:30pm
- 26: Choir Practice 7pm
- 28-1: Youth Roundtable Conference at Bridgewater College

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WORSHIP - February 2020

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

2: Threats of Foolishness Pastor David

1 Corinthians 1:18-31; Matthew 5:1-12
Both Paul and Jesus confront charges of foolishness head on. Jesus's blessings don't seem like blessings to everyone. People often ridiculed Christians about the cross. How do we live with the foolishness of the Gospel?

Music by the Children's Choir International S.S. Lesson: Single-Minded Obedience

9: Fasting Pastor David

Isaiah 58:1-9a; 1 Corinthians 2:1-5

Lent is just around the corner; we think, rightly, of fasting as part of our preparation for Jesus's journey to the cross. Isaiah has a few words about fasting and the true worship of God. We will read through his words together.

Music by the Adult Choir International S.S. Lesson: Piety That Honors God

16: God gives the Growth Pastor David Psalm 119:1-8; 1 Corinthians 3:4-9

Paul is dealing with a quarrelsome congregation in Corinth. Strong personalities have divided the assembly: who gets the credit? Who's the best? Paul's pastoral response reorients the debate.

International S.S. Lesson: The Prayer of Jesus

23: Transfiguration Sunday Pastor Gabe Matthew 17:1-9

Witnessing a radical moment in Jesus' life, the few disciples who were present search for an appropriate response. Might an appropriate response to Jesus' transfiguration require the honor that we show to Elijah and Moses? Perhaps our response to the majesty of Jesus requires change and obedience.

Music by the Adult Choir International S.S. Lesson: Perseverance in Prayer

26: Ash Wednesday Meal & Service

2 Corinthians 5:20b-6:10

Peace of my Mind

When I was a kid, we'd load up in the Ford Galaxy station wagon every Sunday for church. There were seven of us: four children, two parents, and my father's mother – Mamaw. We kids looked sporty in our "church" clothes; mom and dad had – if I do say so myself – a Kennedy-esque look: pillbox hat with netting for my mom; skinny tie and suit for my dad. Mamaw was a blast from the past: full-length black dress, black shawl and bonnet over top her white prayer covering. We were all in there together going to church.

Mamaw knew she was the dinosaur. It had been a long surrender. My parents moved into the farmhouse near Edom with Mamaw and Papaw in the late 40s. Not just them – my uncle and aunt, and a kid or two, did as well. It was a big house, but not that big. Those were different times.

Mom and Aunt Peggy were modern women. Aunt Peggy was a college graduate. Mom had worked in Washington during the war. In the summer, mom wore shorts to do yard work – a style of dress none of Mamaw's four daughters ever accomplished.

One summer day, as mom worked in the yard, the Greenmount pastor pulled into the driveway for a visit with my grandparents. Mom asked Mamaw: "Should I change my shorts?" "No," Mamaw said. "You're young."

"You're young?!?" What kind of Brethren plain style was this? Even in her own family, Mamaw was a conservative – two of her brothers, Earnest and Dr. Fred Wampler, were missionaries in China who accepted modern dress and pursued education.

They all grew up together there on a farm near Greenmount, all confessed faith in Jesus Christ, and all ended up taking very different paths. Some remained plain; others took the modern path.

I have no idea if they fought about it, or not. Many Brethren did fight over the transition, families like the Wamplers and the Millers. It tells me that if saintly people like my Mamaw and her brothers could not follow the same path, then maybe we can reframe our differences.

We may think that the differences are too great to overcome. That they reflect "a bridge too far." But Mamaw made space for the differences in her family. She respected her daughters-in-law. That respect, I believe, was about more than their age.

Peace to you, and to our world – David

February 2020 Special Offering: Bridge of Hope

Bridge of Hope is a non-profit organization in Harrisonburg and Rockingham County that helps homeless and at risk mothers and children. They train and support mentors to serve these clients.

Bridge of Hope offers supportive friendship for a lasting impact. Individuals and church groups provide mentors to single mothers and children to help bridge the gaps. There are working classes, classes on money management, housing choices, etc. Then there is a graduation for the client, and the mentor continues to walk alongside the client.

Annual Church Birthday Celebration & Carry-In Lunch

Our Annual Church Birthday & Carry-In Lunch will be held on March 22nd, following Sunday School, in the Fellowship Hall. Drinks, paper products and silverware will be provided.

Sign-up sheets will soon be available in the narthex for persons to provide decorations for each month's birthday table. Decorations may be placed on the tables Wednesday, March 18, through Saturday, March 21.

We will celebrate with lots of good food and fellowship! For more information contact Stephanie Diehl (879-3567) or anyone on the Nurture Commission.

BRC Pancake Luncheon

Bridgewater Retirement Community's Shrove Tuesday pancake luncheon is scheduled for Tuesday, February 25, 2020, from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Bridgewater Church of the Brethren. The menu includes pancakes, sausage gravy, chipped beef gravy and applesauce. All proceeds benefit the Bridgewater Home Auxiliary.

Christmas Card Project

Christmas card greetings were received from the following people:

Sara Atkins, Dustins Atkins & Tessa Hickman; Pansy Auville; Bob & Patty Black; Melvin & Edith Burger; Betty & Rebecca Click; Carolyn Cline; Mike & Stephanie Diehl; Phil & Ramona Evans; John & Karen Fleishman; Wanda Flora; Randy & Mary Lou Glick; Bob & Bonnie Guyer; Louise Howdyshell; Bill & Gloria Heishman; Mary Frances Heishman; Roma Holloway; Gloria Horne; Carole Hoover; Donnie & Mary Jackson; John, Amy, Heather & Ashley Knott; Rick & Tina Knott; Sharon Layman; Brad, Yvonne & Carrie Miller; David, Carol Lena, Jonas & Zeb Miller; Kenny & Sue Miller; Roger & Barbara Moyer; Gary & Eleanor Payne; Joyce Rhodes; Tom & Barbara Ross; Dick & Bonnie Ryan; Bobby & Elaine Shank; Fred & Helen Shank; Nelson & Frances Shenk; Helen Shickel; Wade & Catherine Showalter; Brad, Julie, Jared, Nathan & Noah Smith; Gary, Missy & Amy Vandevander; Janet Whetzel; Sandy Whitmer & Zayda; Tom Womble

Heifer Project International has been sent a check for \$750 from this project, which was sponsored by the Upward Way Sunday School class.

Salvation Army

Montezuma will be preparing and serving the meal for the Salvation Army on February 13th. Please see Brenda Wine if you have any questions.

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 ormail to: 4937 Ottobine Road, Dayton, VA 22821

What is Lent, Anyway?

- Pastor Gabe Dodd

"...pick up their cross and follow me." - Matthew 16:24

No, I am not talking about lint that is found in your jean pockets. When the church talks about the season of Lent, we mean the weeks that lead up to Easter. Every year, Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, which happens to be on February 26th this year. This is a special time where Christians take intentional steps to bring attention to their mission: to know God by following Jesus.

Lent is practiced by Christians all around the world, Protestant, Catholic, and Orthodox people observe this season by dedicating themselves in three ways: prayer, fasting, and almsgiving. In these ways, disciples follow Jesus, thus bringing a richer meaning to our life in Jesus, and our connection to the almighty.

What ways do you pray? Some pray quick prayers throughout the day, while others sit in silence, listening to God. I am not sure if there is an absolute correct way to pray, but I do believe that prayer is the pathway to know God and to grow in our faith. When I mention fasting, I do not necessarily mean that we all need to go without food as Jesus did long ago (although, I do think it's a good discipline for us to practice). By fasting, I am really talking about taking inventory of our lives today; consider what might be taking up too much room. If we want God to be a big part of our lives, we must first be invited to make room for God in our daily living and in our mind. Fasting is less about getting rid of our junk, and more about using that vacant space to be with God. Finally, almsgiving is a way that we respond to Jesus in our living. How do we serve God? How do we serve Jesus? We serve by caring for our family, our neighbors, and our enemies. Building relationships and practicing reconciliation bring us closer to one another and closer to God.

This year there are several opportunities to observe Lent. We hope you will join us!

- Lenten Devotional: This year, Montezuma is assembling a Lenten devotional, and we want you to contribute! Your contribution may be a devotion, a poem, a drawing, a song, etc. Let your imagination run wild! If it is meaningful for you, it may be helpful for someone else. There are assigned scriptures for the days of Lent, and that list is available at church in the vestibule. (Please contribute by Feb. 15 and limit your writing to 300 words.) If you would like to know more, talk to pastor Gabe.
- **Deacon Bible Study** Already happening! The deacon bible study is already underway, but it is never too late to join a group! Bible studies are held at the church on Sunday mornings during Sunday School, at the home of Helen Shickel on Wednesday Mornings, and at the home of Janet Wetzel on Thursday evenings. This year we are studying the parables of Matthew. Bible Study books are available at church.
- <u>Ash Wednesday Service</u> For the last few years, Montezuma has celebrated a service on the first day
 of Lent. This service and soup/sandwich meal will be enjoyed together in the fellowship hall on
 Wednesday, February 26th from 5:30-7PM.
- <u>Lovefeast</u> The Deacons are hosting Lovefeast in the fellowship hall on Thursday, April 9. This is a way to enter the story of Jesus' last supper, and the words he shared with the disciples. We celebrate with a simple meal, footwashing/handwashing, and communion.
- <u>Cross Walk</u> Good Friday, April 10, beginning at noon at Bridgewater Presbyterian Church.
- Easter Morning Worship

Youth Events: February 2020

Feb 7-9: Jr. High Winter Camp at Brethren Woods

Feb 15: Sr. High Caving Trip

Feb 22: Jr. & Sr. High are helping to serve the Tenderloin Feast; clean-up is at 8pm

Feb 28 – Mar 1: Roundtable Conference at Bridgewater College

Brethren gather to discern a global alliance

eeting in Kwarhi, Nigeria, representatives from Church of the Brethren bodies around the world gathered Dec. 2-5, 2019, to discuss the vision of becoming a global church body. Representatives came from Haiti, the Dominican Republic, the United States, Rwanda, Democratic Republic of Congo, Spain, and Nigeria, with Ekklesiyar Yan'uwa a Nigeria (the Church of the Brethren in Nigeria) as host.

The 23 people—18 men and 5 women—included the EYN president, vice president, and general secretary. Jay



Wittmeyer, Global Mission and Service executive, and Jeff Boshart, director of the Global Food Initiative, attended from the US. Representatives from Brazil, India, and Venezuela were unable to attend either due to difficulties in procuring visas or for other political reasons. Carol Waggy from the US also was unable to get a visa.

The conference tested the US proposal that autonomous Brethren groups should develop a global structure for the Church of the Brethren. Unanimously, representatives affirmed their hopes for establishment of a global body and shared how such a structure might positively affect their communities and the broader church witness. Many expressed the need to magnify the Brethren voice for peace and hoped such a structure might reaffirm Brethren beliefs and practices, give a deep sense of Brethren identity, and be a vehicle to develop shared mission programming.

Participants also discussed concerns about a lack of resources, difficulty in procuring visas to travel, fears of discrimination and prejudice, and concerns that the body could identify and agree to adhere to shared biblical principles.

The group recommended that a temporary board be established to work toward a constitution, develop guiding principles, and define points for sharing resources and programing. The Nigerian Brethren suggested Global Brethren Communion be used as a temporary name.

Brethren Service Europe office closes

he Brethren Service Europe office has been closed. It was hosted at the World Council of Churches' Ecumenical Center in Geneva, Switzerland, and had served as the center of Church of the Brethren presence in Europe for some 72 years.

Most recently the office centered on placement and supervision of Brethren Volunteer Service (BVS) workers in Europe. For more than three decades it was staffed by Kristin Flory, who has retired. Factors in the decision to close the office included cutbacks in the denominational budget, fewer BVSers serving in Europe, and difficulty in acquiring visas for BVSers to work in European countries. BVS project sites in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland are expected to continue.

The office was first established in February 1947 by the Brethren Service Commission (BSC), the group responsible for Church of the Brethren relief and rehabilitation work after World War II. In 1968-69 the work of the BSC was merged with the mission work of the denomination, including BVS. Over several decades, those who staffed the office continued a tradition of engaging with places suffering from war and violence including Northern Ireland and the Balkans. The staff served as Church of the Brethren representatives participating in historic peace church consultations, engaging with ecumenical leadership at the WCC, and at times with world leaders at the United Nations in Geneva.

Delegation visits Kurdistan

uring fall 2019, Nathan Hosler, director of the Office of Peacebuilding and

Policy, traveled to Iraqi Kurdistan with Mae Elise Cannon, executive director of Churches for Middle East Peace (CMEP), and Erik Apelgårdh of the



World Council of Churches. Hosler is chair of the board of CMEP, where the Church of the Brethren is one of nearly 30 member communions.

The group met with church leaders, humanitarian organizations, and the US Agency for International Development (USAID). Church leaders spoke of the displacement and severe decrease of their members in recent years. Their numbers have dropped from 1.5 million Christians before the US invasion of Iraq in 2003, to some 200,000 at present.

Among other activities the delegation also visited with the Christian Peacemaker Team near the Turkish border and heard of CPT's accompaniment and human rights documentation of cross-border bombing by Turkey.

Brethren Disaster Ministries changes sites

Brethren Disaster Ministries made changes in its rebuilding project sites as 2019 closed out and the new year began.

In the Carolinas, ongoing work will focus on Robeson County, N.C. In Puerto Rico, a project rebuilding homes affected by hurricane damage has been extended to May 2020, with Carrie Miller continuing as site leader.

In Florida, Brethren Disaster Ministries is working on recovery from 2017's Hurricane Irma. A short-term site in Jacksonville that started in September 2019 closed around Christmas. Tampa is the new site for spring 2020.

Annual Conference preachers announced

The names of those preaching for daily worship services at Annual Conference in Grand Rapids, Mich., July 1-5 have been announced. The Conference will devote significant time to a compelling vision for the Church of the Brethren. Though other business will be entertained, no polity/structural changes will be considered in 2020.

Moderator **Paul Mundey** speaks on the opening evening, July 1. **Richard Zapata**, a pastor of Santa Ana (Calif.) Principe de Paz Church of the Brethren, preaches on July 2.

Sister-and-brother team **Chelsea Goss and Tyler Goss** of Virginia bring the message July 3.

Beth Sollenberger, executive minister for South Central Indiana District, preaches July 4.

Patrick Starkey, chair of the Mission and Ministry Board, leads the Sunday morning service on July 5.

Personnel notes

Jay Wittmeyer has resigned as executive director of Global Mission and Service, effective Jan. 13. He has spent 11 years in the position, since Jan. 5, 2009. He has supervised Brethren Disaster Ministries and Material Resources, Brethren Volunteer Service, the Global Food Initiative, and the Office of Peacebuilding and Policy, as well as holding primary responsibility for the mission work of the denomination. During his tenure, new and emerging church groups have been nurtured in Haiti, Spain, the Great Lakes region of central Africa, and Venezuela. South Sudan also has been a priority. He has strengthened relationships with Church of the Brethren denominations in Brazil, Dominican Republic, India, and Nigeria, where he worked with leaders of Ekklesiyar Yan'uwa a Nigeria during the most extreme violence of the Boko

Haram insurgency. A culminating accomplishment was "Vision for a Global Church," adopted by Annual Conference in 2018 and opening the possibility for an international conference on a global structure for the Church of the Brethren held in December. His career also included two years with Brethren Benefit Trust, where he was director of the Brethren Pension Plan and employee financial services.

Kristin Flory has retired as Brethren Volunteer Service (BVS) staff at the Brethren Service Europe office in Geneva, Switzerland. She served in the position for almost 33 years, since 1987. Her work included supervision of more than 300 BVS volunteers in many different countries, maintaining working relationships with each project site and organizing annual retreats for the volunteers. Under her leadership, BVSers served at projects

focused on peace and reconciliation—sometimes in war and conflict zones, worked with children and families, lived in community with people with disabilities, worked with refugees and homeless people, and more. She also continued relations with European ecumenical organizations. In addition to her work with BVSers, Flory was the denomination's Europe representative and served in that capacity at annual meetings of ecumenical and peace organizations and at European church events and conferences.

Roxane Hill concluded her position as coordinator of the Nigeria Crisis Response at the end of 2019. Her work with Nigeria-related efforts of Global Mission and Service has totaled five years. The Nigeria Crisis Response is not ending, but programing is being reduced. The response is expected to continue through 2021.

Our Stewardship for December 2019							
	Attendance						
	V	Vorship	Sunday School	For Budget			
December 1	145		57	\$8,023.00			
8	223		86	\$7,699.00			
15	180		65	\$7,071.08			
22	207		86	\$7,906.00			
29	106		72	\$5,371.00			
December average per Sunday	149		76	\$7,214.02			
Last 12 mos. average per Sunday	151		74	\$5,405.46			
	Special Giv	ing for Decemb	er				
Betty Jo Glick Memorial	\$100	Open Doors		\$40			
Bridgewater Food Pantry	\$165	Poinsettias		\$8			
Building Repairs	\$300	Tenderloin Tickets		\$1,118.50			
Dorcas Circle Brooms	\$10	Youth Auction		\$9			
NCP "Give a Girl a Chance"	\$125	Youth Cookbooks		\$10			

Our Stewardship for January 2020						
	Attendance					
	Worship	Sunday School	For Budget			
January 5	158	83	\$6,765.51			
12	158	81	\$4,015.29			
19	128	68	\$3,496.00			
26	150	71	\$3,692.00			
January average per Sunday	149	76	\$4,492.20			
Last 12 mos. average per Sunday	151	74	\$5,300.63			
Special Giving for January						
Backpack Program	\$850 Proceeds from Stock Gift		\$4,386.91			
Building Repairs	\$700 Youth C	ookbooks	\$38			
Edith Allman Memorial	\$200					

Serving in February 2020

<u>Nursery</u>		Worsh	Worship Center	
2	Rhonda Mandeville & Roma Holloway	2	Wanda Hollen	
9	Pam Dodd & Kenzy Hiner	9	Kathy Veal	
16	Sara Atkins & Dawn Kiser	16	Jill Sease	
23	Sarah & Bobby Williams	23	Lisa Shickel	
Sound System		<u>Valet Parking</u>		
2	Bobby Williams	2	Brad Smith	
9	Jim Rusmisel	9	Ralph Rohrer	
16	Ron Shickel	16	Donnie Jackson	
23	John Layman	23	Jeff Wine	

<u>Ushers:</u> JO Good, John Monger, Roger Moyer, Jim Rusmisel

February Birthdays & Anniversaries

February Birthdays:

- 1 Nathan Smith Noah Smith Kathy Veal
- 3 Helen Shickel Patty Skelton
- 4 Trey Daubert Jacob Ross
- 5 Piper Brown Mac Rhodes
- 6 Louise Grady Barbara Ross Hunter Shipe
- 7 Kari Ostlund
- 8 Monica Burkholder Ben Hall
- 9 Kim Wyrick
- 10 Amy Vandevander
- 11 Peter Barlow Katy Roche Sam Shickel

- 12 Aaron Brunk Damian Hinkle
- 13 Kenny Miller Annie Wilhelm
- 14 Trevor Barnhart
- 15 Ron Black
 Dawn Guilloy
 Kenzy Hiner
 Nelson Shenk
 Penelope Smiley
- 16 Justin Berry
- 17 Kayla Kuster
- 18 Garold Shull Ricky Shull
- 19 Rebecca Click Joel Hottel Norlyn Miller
- 21 Mary Jane Cox Bonnie Guyer

- 22 Quinn Rhodes Wanda Wampler
- 23 Don Click
- 24 Ray Coffman Janelle Weaver
- 25 John Knott Lisa Tumer
- 26 Glenna Rhodes
- 27 Gordon Miller Juanita Swartz Elaine Fike
- 28 John Monger

February Anniversaries:

- 2 Robbie & Dena Symons
- 18 Garold & Sherry Shull
- 27 Dick & Bonnie Ryan

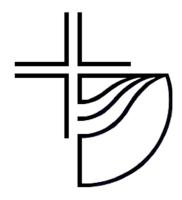
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