

# Montezuma Today

March 2020



## Fifth Sunday Focus & Meal, March 29

Montezuma's Fifth Sunday forum and meal are March 29th. We have a special focus this 5th Sunday. The Church of the Brethren's Compelling Vision statement and an interpretative report were released earlier this year. This will be the main item of business for the 2020 Annual Conference in Grand Rapids, MI. Pastors David Miller and Gabe Dodd will lead a brief overview and discussion on the vision statement during the Sunday School hour from 10:45 to 11:30. We may have a special guest join us for that part. You may review the full statement online at: [www.brethren.org/ac/compelling-vision.html](http://www.brethren.org/ac/compelling-vision.html).

Youth and adult Sunday School classes are suspended on Fifth Sundays. Following the program, Church youth welcome everyone to stay for a meal in the fellowship room. Donations are accepted for the meal and will support Junior High Youth Workcamp costs this June in Michigan. We have eleven Junior High Youth attending the workcamp plus two advisors.

## Handbell Choir at VMRC March 1

The Montezuma Handbell Choir, directed Ramona Evans, is leading the Sunday, March 1, chapel service at VMRC's Strite Auditorium on the second floor of Crestwood. The program begins at 3:30 in the afternoon and will focus on the themes of hope and grace. In addition to eight pieces of sacred music by the handbell choir, Pastor David Miller will offer a brief devotional. The program is open to the public.

## Annual Church Birthday Celebration & Carry-In Lunch

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

Sign-up sheets will be available in the entryway 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 or anyone on the Nurture Commission.

### Church Events: March

- 1: Bell Choir Playing at VMRC – 3:30pm
- 2: Bell Choir Practice – 7pm
- 3: Golden Lunch Bunch – 11:30am
- 3: Nurture & Stewards Commission Meetings – 7pm
- 4: Witness Commission Mtg – 7pm
- 4: Choir Practice – 7pm
- 8: Sunday Night Live at Beaver Creek COB
- 9: Montezuma Support Group – 11:30am
- 9: Bell Choir Practice – 7pm
- 10: Executive Committee Meeting – 7pm
- 11: Choir Practice -7pm
- 12: Salvation Army Meal
- 15: Deacon Meeting – 11:40am
- 16: Bell Choir Practice – 7pm
- 18: Choir Practice – 7pm
- 22: Church Birthday Celebration
- 23: Bell Choir Practice – 7pm
- 25: VBS Meeting at Dayton COB – 6:30pm
- 25: Choir Practice – 7pm
- 29: 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday Program & Meal
- 30: Bell Choir – 7pm

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# WORSHIP – March 2020

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

## **1: First Sunday of Lent:**

*Pastor David*

### **Christ is Much More!**

Gen. 2:15-17; 3:1-7; Romans 5:12-19; Matthew 4:1-11

Is the story of Jesus Christ only the reversal of Adam and Eve's sin in the Garden? Or do we see in Jesus something more than that? Paul says yes – it's more. On this first Sunday of Lent, we turn toward the cross with Jesus and the true worship of God.

Music by the Children's Choir

*International S.S. Lesson: Called to Accountability*

## **8: Second Sunday of Lent**

*Pastor David*

### **In God's Hands**

Psalm 121; John 3:1-17

It is said, "Our lives are in God's hands." These words are true, but how do we experience them? Understand them? In Psalm 121 there is a confidence in God's care for us that is neither the cockiness of being in charge nor the defeat of despair. God keeps us "in our going out and our coming in."

Music by the Adult Choir

*International S.S. Lesson: A Prayer for Justice*

## **15: Third Sunday of Lent**

*Pastor Gabe*

### **Living Water**

John 4:5-42

Are you worthy enough to encounter the son of God? Are you worthy enough to share Jesus with others? The living God is calling the unlikeliest people to "preach the gospel." Jesus moves the woman at the well from an encounter to a brave first step.

*International S.S. Lesson: Consequences for Injustice*

## **22: Fourth Sunday of Lent:**

*Pastor David*

### **Are you "Woke"?**

Psalm 23; Ephesians 5:8-14; John 9:1-12

In popular culture we hear the call to be "woke" – awake, alert to what's happening around us. Jesus wants his disciples to see God's glory manifest in a man's blindness. Paul calls Christians out of darkness into light. He writes: Be awake – "Rise from the dead!" Whatever we think about current calls to be "woke," being awake is crucial to our spirituality.

Music by the Adult Choir

*International S.S. Lesson: Corrupt Leaders*

## **29: Fifth Sunday of Lent:**

*Pastor David*

### **The Spirit is Life and Peace**

Psalm 130; Romans 8:6-11; John 11:1-3, 17-45

Life and peace. Paul issues a contrast: it's between idolatry, worshiping what we want, or what we fear, and worshiping God, opening ourselves to the way of God. Idolatry leads to death; true worship to life and peace.

Music by the Handbell Choir

*International S.S. Lesson: Leading Justly*

Don't forget the Lenten Devotional! Please call or email the church office to add your email address to the daily devotional email, or to pick up a paper copy of the devotionals.

**See page 4 for Peace of My Mind**

## Special Offering for March

*For we are co-workers in God's service; you are God's field, God's Building. 1 Corinthians 3:9*

The One Great Hour of Sharing offering ministers to people in every kind of situation. Our gifts during Sunday morning offerings may seem impersonal, until we allow ourselves to trust that these gifts are making a difference in the world: to feed the hungry, minister to victims of violence, provide clean water to the thirsty, help small farmers bring a crop to harvest, meet the needs of natural disaster survivors, and much more. It's more than we can imagine.

Gifts given through this special offering empower ministries like the Church of the Brethren's Global Mission and Service, Discipleship Ministries, Brethren Disaster Ministries, Brethren Volunteer Service, workcamps, the Global Food Initiative, and many others.

## Vacation Bible School – June 22-25

Summer isn't far away and with summer comes Vacation Bible School! This year's theme is **Rocky Railway**. Climb aboard for mountains of fun at Rocky Railway! On this faith-filled adventure, kids discover that trusting Jesus pulls them through life's ups and downs.

Like last year, Montezuma will cooperate with the Beaver Creek and Dayton congregations. This summer the Beaver Creek congregation will host VBS. The dates are Monday through Thursday, June 22-25. Supper is served beginning at 5:15 p.m. and activities conclude at 8 p.m. We plan programs for ages 4 years through rising 5<sup>th</sup> graders. We also plan Junior High Youth service projects for each evening; these involve traveling off campus to minister in the community. Look for more information in the coming months. Questions? See Linnette Coaker, Becky Daubert, or Wendy Rhodes. Registration will begin in May.

## Easter Flowers

Spring flowers will be used to decorate for Easter Sunday. They may be purchased for \$8 each in memory of or in honor of a loved one. You may take your plant home after morning worship on Easter Sunday. Order envelopes are available on the table in the entryway. The deadline to order flowers is Sunday, March 15th. Thank you for your support.

- Worship Center Committee

## Thank you

Thanks so much for the beautiful arrangement of flowers sent following Dad's death. Dad loved being a part of the Montezuma Church and all of the friendships he developed by being included in such a wonderful church family.

- The John Coffman Family

## Thank You from David Miller and Family

Dear Montezuma Family:

We are very grateful for the support and love we have experienced following the death of David's brother, Tommy Miller. The church family has been caring and kind during a difficult time for us. So many kind words, cards, and acts of kindness. Thank you. Tommy died suddenly, but he had not been in good health for a long time. As you are able and gifted by the Spirit, remember his wife Barbara and immediate family in your prayers.

- David and family.

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.

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## Youth Events: March 2020

- March 8:** Sunday Night Live at Beaver Creek COB  
3:00 – 5:00pm
- March 13-14:** Jr. High District Lock-In at Luray COB
- March 25:** 5th Sunday meal. Funds will send youth to work camps.

## Brethren Woods Camp Sign-Up

It is camp sign-up time again! To get the best selection of camp times and the best discount, register by March 31<sup>st</sup>. Brethren Woods has online registration at [www.brethrenwoods.org](http://www.brethrenwoods.org). Just click "Summer Camp" and "Register Online" and follow the instructions. Printable forms are also available online and must be signed by Pastor David, Pastor Gabe, or Jenifer Hiner, Camp Representative, to get the discount.

## Peace of my Mind

Super Tuesday! Just let that sink in for a moment. *Super ... Tuesday.*

It's a presidential election year and that means primaries. This year Super Tuesday is March 3. Fourteen states, including our beloved Virginia, go to the polls to vote, mostly for democratic candidates; over 1,600 delegates are at stake. When it's over, we'll either have clarity about who will run against President Trump – or it will be chaos.

Clarity or chaos. Sounds like regular life.

As I write this, it's another kind of Tuesday – "Fat Tuesday," *Mardi Gras*. A day of indulgence – deserts, parties, carnival – before the day of ashes, before the season of repentance, restraint, and reflection. Clarity and chaos.

The season of Lent takes suffering seriously. Jesus journeys to the cross. There is no Easter without the cross. What is the cross if not chaos? Utter, complete desolation and confusion. And yet every year in this season Christians mark the day, we begin the journey of remembering Jesus's willingness to stand out as the harbinger of the Kingdom of God. He was, in the words of the Revelation to John, "the faithful witness" (Rev. 1:5). John writes, too, that Jesus is "the first born of the dead ... the ruler of the kings of the earth," but here, at the beginning of Lent, let's remember Jesus as the *faithful witness*.

So much of what passes for Christianity today is about feeling. How do we feel? Do we feel the Spirit? Do we feel joy? Do we have something to hold on to in our pain, our grief, our anger? At times we do have good and helpful feelings. Much of the time, if we are honest, we do not. Is that a sign of faithlessness? A sign of weak Christianity? Are we damned? Well, I hope not. The Gospels reflect the suffering of Jesus. He is frustrated; he weeps; his soul is troubled. Yet, he is a witness.

We observe Lent in order to be witnesses. Without our witness others cannot know or remember what Jesus was. Even more, we cannot know that we are Jesus's people.

The thing that makes Super Tuesday super is that a whole bunch of people vote. If they don't vote, then there's nothing super about it.

During Lent we are witnesses. We come to worship. We read scripture. We abstain from things – food, video, social media, too much work, too much distraction, apathy, lazy discipleship. This isn't about us! It's the kingdom Jesus announced ... it's our loyalty to that kingdom. That loyalty matters most.

Peace to you – and to our world. Pastor David

## Nigerian Brethren leader executed by Boko Haram

**L**awan 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

**T**opping 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, Onekama, 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

**G**lobal 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 Bumborough-Carroll

## 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](http://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.

## Our Stewardship for February 2020

<b>Attendance</b>			
	<b>Worship</b>	<b>Sunday School</b>	<b>For Budget</b>
February 2	167	75	\$6,022.00
9	164	77	\$5,269.28
16	139	68	\$8,996.00
23	150	73	\$4,621.00
February average per Sunday	155	73	\$6,227.07
Last 12 mos. average per Sunday	153	75	\$5,409.53

### **Special Giving for February**

Backpack Program	\$59.73	John Clayton Memorial	\$50
Bridge of Hope	\$425	John Coffman Memorial	\$100
Building Repairs	\$200	Tenderloin Feast	\$5,672
Family Assistance	\$2,530	Youth Cookbooks	\$10

## **Serving in March**

### **NURSERY**

- 1 Stephanie Diehl & Sarah Craun
- 8 Becky & Hayley Daubert
- 15 Pam Dodd & Kenzy Hiner
- 22 Rhonda Mandeville & Roma Holloway
- 29 Sara Atkins & Dawn Kiser

### **WORSHIP CENTER**

- 1 Karin Derby
- 8 Dawn Kiser
- 15 Wanda Hollen
- 22 Jill Sease
- 29 Kathy Veal

### **SOUND SYSTEM**

- 1 Randy Glick
- 8 Ben Hiner
- 15 Bobby Williams
- 22 Jim Rusmiser
- 29 Ron Shickel

### **VALET PARKING**

- 1 Melvin Burger
- 8 Weldon Good
- 15 Wade Showalter
- 22 John Monger
- 29 Brad Smith

### **USHERS**

Roger Moyer, Bob Black, Ben Hall, Jim Rusmiser

## **Salvation Army**

Our church is serving the Salvation Army meal on Thursday, March 12<sup>th</sup>. The following people have signed up to help: Tom & Ann Miller, Karin Derby, Libby Kiser, Sam Rohrer, and Barbara Ross.

# **March Birthdays & Anniversaries**

## **March Birthdays:**

- |    |                  |    |                   |    |                  |
|----|------------------|----|-------------------|----|------------------|
| 1  | Donna Brunk      | 14 | Susan Kinkead     | 27 | Brent Burkholder |
|    | Marian Layman    | 16 | Josh Kinkead      |    | Shirley Dameron  |
|    | Orva Showalter   |    | Carol Lena Miller |    | Chloe Eye        |
|    | Amanda Trent     | 17 | Adrian Lambert    |    | Fred Shank       |
| 2  | Andrew Skelton   | 18 | Carol Martin      | 28 | Alanah Brashears |
| 3  | Claire Williams  | 20 | Avery Andrews     |    | Paula Brown      |
| 4  | Alexander Shank  |    | Eleanor Payne     |    | Scott Yelverton  |
| 5  | Julia Rohrer     |    | Tanner Shifflett  | 29 | Anne Marie Depoy |
|    | Jared Smith      |    | Jeff Wine         |    |                  |
| 7  | Steve Glick      | 21 | Pansy Auville     |    |                  |
| 8  | Sue Miller       | 22 | Charles Airey     |    |                  |
|    | Owen Strawderman |    | John Coaker       |    |                  |
| 11 | Paige Eavers     |    | Judy Hill         |    |                  |
| 12 | Lori Good        | 23 | Vincent Cash      |    |                  |
| 13 | Shevonne Fulton  | 24 | Sadie Wilhelm     |    |                  |
|    | Lindsey Richard  | 26 | David Mason       |    |                  |
|    |                  |    | Vince Rhodes      |    |                  |

## **March Anniversaries:**

- |    |                          |
|----|--------------------------|
| 2  | Gordon & Wanda Driver    |
| 9  | Bobby & Elaine Shank     |
| 28 | David & Wilamena Harback |

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