

WEST MARVA DISTRICT MEMO NOVEMBER 2016

384 Dennett Road
Oakland, MD 21550
301-334-9270
Kendal Elmore, Executive Minister
J. Rogers Fike, Executive Minister Emeritus
Brenda Harvey, Administrative Assistant
www.westmarvachurches.org

DON'T LIKE HOW THEY DO THINGS IN DENOMINATIONAL LEADERSHIP? READ ON...

Our District Standing Committee representative, John Moyers, is on the nominating committee of Standing Committee; they will be meeting the first week in January to set the ballot for the 2017 Annual Conference. That means that you have from now to December 1 to make nominations for the following leadership positions: Moderator, AC secretary, Program and Arrangements committee, Mission and Ministry Board, Bethany, On Earth Peace and Brethren Benefit Trust Boards, World Council of Churches and Pastoral Compensation Advisory Committee. Submissions may be submitted online at <http://www.brethren.org/ac/nominations/>. You may also contact John at 304.749.7547 or [j emoe@frontiernet.net](mailto:emoe@frontiernet.net) if you have any questions.

CHAOS OR CALM?

Uncertainty and ambiguity seem to be everywhere. Is there no voice that speaks clearly? In times of turmoil, we long for a clear word from God. The Church of the Brethren has been struggling for about 40 years as we've gone back and forth in discussions of Biblical interpretation, often around issues related to human sexuality. I'm reminded of the words of Elijah in 1 Kings 18:21b (...*"How long will you waver between two opinions?"* NIV) Or Amos 3:3, (*Do two walk together unless they have agreed to do so?* NIV). We long for clarity as we hope to continue walking together in times a very rapid social and cultural changes in our society. Recently, and sadly, the Bethel congregation has voted to withdraw from the denomination. We are working very calmly and deliberately together as we work out the various details in implementing the separation. Please be in prayer for all who are involved. There is NO ANIMOSITY at all, and we are blessed with good leaders in the Bethel congregation as well as our District Board leadership.

PRAYERS FOR KENDAL AND CAROLYN WILL BE APPRECIATED

Our Executive Minister is scheduled for a few weeks of Medical Leave starting in mid-November, as he will be having surgery. He and Carolyn will be spending some of this time in their cottage in Falling Waters, WV, as his medical care is based in Winchester, VA. Carolyn continues to experience great pain in her knee following replacement surgery last June. Pain medications are not helpful, as her body has built a resistance to them due to her having used them for cough suppression over the last several years. Kendal is very grateful for the action of the District Mission and Ministry Board in approving a plan authorizing the District's Moderator (Russell Webster), Moderator Elect (Craig Howard), Board Chair (Grover Duling), and an appointee by Kendal (Carl Fike) to carry on some of the functions of his office during his recovery, while he has limitations in certain areas of his responsibility.

Kendal's Korner A Guest Editorial from Max Lucado

MARK YOUR CALENDAR...

We are really ready for this presidential election to be over. We're ready for an end to the rancor and tackiness. Voters on both sides feel frustrated, even embarrassed by it all. There is a visceral fear, an angst about the result. What if *so and so* wins? When we wake up to November 9, post-election, when the confetti is swept away and the election is finally over, what will we see?

I have a prediction. I know exactly what November 9 will bring. Another day of God's perfect sovereignty. He will still be in charge. His throne will still be occupied. He will still manage the affairs of the world. Never before has His providence depended on a king, president, or ruler. And it won't on November 9, 2016. "The LORD can control a king's mind as he controls a river; he can direct it as he pleases" (*Proverbs 21:1 NCV*).

On one occasion the Lord turned the heart of the King of Assyria so that he aided them in the construction of the Temple. (*Ezra 6:22*) On another occasion, he stirred the heart of Cyrus to release the Jews to return to Jerusalem. (*Ezra 1:1*) Nebuchadnezzar was considered to be the mightiest king of his generation. But God humbled and put him in "detention" for seven years. (*Daniel 4:28-34*) "The kingdom is the Lord's, and He rules over the nations" (*Psalms 22:28*).

Understanding God's sovereignty over the nations opens the door to peace. When we realize that God influences the hearts of all rulers, we can then choose to pray for them rather than fret about them. Rather than wring our hands we bend our knees, we select prayer over despair.

Jeremiah did this. He was the prophet to Israel during one of her darkest periods of rebellion. He was called "the weeping prophet" because he *was* one. He wept at the condition of the people and the depravity of their faith. He was so distraught that one of his books was entitled Lamentations. But then he considered the work of God. Note the intentionality of his words:

This I recall to my mind, therefore I have hope. The LORD's loving kindness indeed never cease, for His compassions never fail. They are new every morning; Great is Your faithfulness. (*Lam. 3:21-23*)

Imitate Jeremiah. Lift up your eyes. Dare to believe that good things will happen. Dare to believe that God was speaking to us when he said: "In everything God works for the good of those who love him" (*Romans 8:28*).

Many years ago, I spent a week visiting the interior of Brazil with a long-time missionary pilot. He flew a circuit of remote towns in a small plane that threatened to come undone at the slightest gust of wind. Wilbur and Orville had a sturdier aircraft.

I could not get comfortable. I kept thinking that the plane was going to crash in some Brazilian jungle and I'd be gobbled up by piranhas or swallowed by an anaconda.

I kept shifting around, looking down, and gripping my seat. (As if that would help!) Finally, the pilot had had enough of my squirming. He looked at me and shouted over the airplane noise. "We won't face anything I can't handle. You might as well trust me to fly the plane." Is God saying the same to you? If so, make this your prayer:

Dear Lord,

You are perfect. *You could not be better than you are.*

You are ever-existing. *You exist because you choose to exist.*

You are self-sustaining. *No one helps you. No one gives you strength.*

You are self-governing. *Who can question your deeds? Who dares advise you?*

You are correct. *In every way. In every choice. You regret no decision.*

You have never failed. *Never! You cannot fail! You are God! You will accomplish your plan.*

You are happy. *Eternally joyful. Endlessly content.*

You are the king, *supreme ruler, absolute monarch, overlord, and rajah of all history.*

An arch of your eyebrow and a million angels will pivot and salute. Every throne is a footstool to yours. Every crown is papier-mâché to yours. No limitations, hesitations, questions, second thoughts, or backward glances. You consult no clock. You keep no calendar. You report to no one.

You are in charge, And I trust you.
Circle November 9 on your calendar and write upon it the words: Our good God rules the world.

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I hope you find as much encouragement as I have...

Blessings, 

Allocation Report—January 1, 2016—October 20, 2016

Church	Allocation	YTD Giving	Church	Allocation	YTD Giving
Asher Glade	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 3,318.19	Pine Grove	\$ 1,600.00	\$ 1,600.00
Bean Settlement		\$ 670.00	Peasant Hill		\$ 800.00
Bear Creek	\$ 4,500.00	\$4,500.00	Pleasant Valley		
Beaver Run	\$ 2,592.00	\$1,944.00	Red Creek/Bethel	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 800.00
Bethel	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 5,000.00	Romney	\$ 600.00	\$ 600.00
Bethesda	\$ 400.00	\$ 300.00	Salem	\$ 3,300.00	\$ 3,300.00
Bowden		\$ 2,000.00	Shady Grove		\$ 500.00
Brake	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 5,000.00	Shiloh	\$ 3,235.00	\$ 2,600.00
Brick	\$ 250.00	\$ 250.00	South Mill Creek	\$ 1,300.00	\$ 1,300.00
Brookside	\$ 3,000.00	\$ 3,000.00	Sugarland		
Capon Chapel			Sunnyside	\$ 1,500.00	\$ 750.00
Cherry Grove		\$ 2,500.00	Tearcoat	\$ 250.00	\$ 250.00
Clifton Mills		\$ 500.00	Terra Alta/Whitedale		\$ 125.00
Danville	\$ 1,200.00	\$ 1,200.00	Valley River		
Elkins	\$ 600.00	\$ 600.00	Walnut Grove		
Fairview	\$ 1,500.00	\$1,500.00	Westernport		
Frostburg			White Pine		
Georges Creek	\$ 75.00	\$ 100.00	Wiley Ford	\$ 1,750.00	\$ 1,750.00
Glady		\$ 400.00			
Gortner Union		\$ 600.00	Totals	\$75,402.00	\$ 84,854.19
Hanging Rock					
Harman	\$ 4,000.00	\$ 4,000.00			
Harmony					
Harness Run		\$ 122.00			
Harpers Chapel	\$ 100.00	\$ 400.00			
Hazelton		\$ 225.00	Brenda Harvey,		
Jordan Run	\$ 250.00	\$ 250.00	Financial Secretary		
Kelley Chapel	\$ 2,400.00	\$ 2,400.00			
Keyser	\$ 1,500.00	\$ 1,500.00			
Knobley		\$ 600.00			
Laughlin	\$ 400.00	\$ 400.00			
Laurel Glen	\$ 500.00	\$ 500.00			
Livingstone					
Locust Grove	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 2,000.00			
Maple Spring	\$ 7,000.00	\$ 7,000.00			
Moorefield	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00			
Morgantown		\$ 500.00			
Mount Zion		\$ 100.00			
Mountain Dale		\$ 500.00			
Oak Dale	\$ 1,500.00	\$ 1,500.00			
Oak Grove, MD	\$ 3,000.00	\$ 3,000.00			
Oak Park	\$ 10,000.00	\$ 7,500.00			
Old Furnace	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 2,000.00			
Onego	\$ 400.00	\$ 400.00			
Petersburg	\$ 1,200.00	\$ 1,200.00			

Mission and Ministry Board Reorganization Completed:

The District Board met Saturday, September 17, 2016 at the Moorefield Church for their re-organizational meeting. The following is a listing of all Teams and their members, meeting dates, etc.

2016-2017 Mission and Ministry Board

Board Chair: Grover Duling, 3232 Laurel Dale Road, Scherr, WV 26726 304-749-8014
groverduling@gmail.com
Vice-Chair: Mark Teets, 4147 Aurora Pike, Aurora, WV 26705 304-735-3481
mteets@frontiernet.net
Recording Sec.: Beverly Vetter, P. O. Box 352, Moorefield, WV 26836 304-434-2578
bsvfw@hotmail.com
Treasurer: Beverly Vetter, P. O. Box 352, Moorefield, WV 26836 304-434-2578
bsvfw@hotmail.com
Assistant Treasurer: Diane May, 197 Marsh Avenue, Westernport, MD 21562 301-707-9935
dianemay197@gmail.com
Assistant Treasurer: Carl Fike, P. O. Box 126, Oakland, MD 21550 301-334-2243
crfike56@gmail.com
Financial Sec.: Brenda Harvey, 5558 Oakland Sang Run Rd., Oakland, MD 21550 301-387-6138

Ministerial Leadership Team

Chair: Mark Teets, 4147 Aurora Pike, Aurora, WV 26705 304-735-3481
mteets@frontiernet.net
Vice Chair: Mark Jones, P. O. Box 91, Slanesville, WV 25444 304-559-1166
markjones@frontiernet.net
Sec.: Betty Dzubba, P. O. Box 1442, Keyser, WV 26726 304-788-0379
diebanes@yahoo.com
Randy Shoemaker, Rt.6, Box 6008, Keyser, WV 26726 304-788-1259
rkshoemaker@frontier.com
Carroll Junkins, 11222 Lunice Creek Hwy., Maysville, WV 26833 304-749-7107
cgjunkins@outlook.com

Spiritual Growth Team

Chair: Lucy Webster, 5077 Needmore Road, Baker, WV 26801 304-897-6213
lweb@hardynet.com
Vice-Chair: David Fouts, 8008 Jordan Run Rd., Maysville, WV 26833 304-749-8172
foutsberg@citlink.net
Sec. Donna Kempfher, 1896 Hutton Road, Oakland, MD 21550 304-288-1004
donnaempfher@yahoo.com
Richard Funk, 141 Lower Arkansas Road, Baker, WV 26801 304-897-5319
debfunk@frontiernet.net
Betty Wolford, 504 Pocahontas St., Mt. Lake Park, MD 21550 301-334-9521
bjwolford57@hotmail.com

Mission & Evangelism Team

Chair: Clarence Arbogast, P. O. Box 27, Bowden, WV 26254 304-636-5617
csarbogast@aol.com
Vice Chair: Denzil Davis, P. O. Box 7, Augusta, WV 26704 304-496-8329
dasdavis51@yahoo.com
Sec.: Rose Bennett, 14076 Dryfork Road, Davis, WV 26260 304-866-4381
rmbennett@frontiernet.net
Nova Stonesifer, 121 C Street, Mt. Lake Park, MD 21550 301-387-5542
novaann@verizon.net
Dan Spaid, 346 Shoemaker/Cole Road, Eglon, WV 26716 304-290-2500
drspaid79@gmail.com

Financial Resources Team

Chair: Mike Saturday, 1651 Hoyes Sang Run Road, Friendsville, MD 21531 301-616-7353
mike@mikesaturday.com
Sec.: Anna Sauder, 809 Heritage Drive, Oakland, MD 21440 240-321-1561
annasauder@gmail.com
Philip Rodeheaver, 402 N. 3rd St., Oakland, MD 21550 301-616-0002
4rodeheavers@gmail.com
John Hetrick, 105 Manor Drive, Oakland, MD 21550 301-334-4694
fhetrick@cebridge.net
Phyllis Marsh, 4824 Dry Run Road, Swanton, MD 21561 301-245-4119

TREASURER CAMP GALILEE (Send all checks to:)

Camp Galilee, Attention: Jay Anderson, P. O. Box 146, Terra Alta, WV 26764

(Phone number for Jay Anderson – 304-789-62640)

TREASURER CAMP HOPE (Send all checks to:)

Merinda “Rindy” Clayton, 3514 Mountaineer Road, Philippi, WV 26416 304-457-5332

DISTRICT DISASTER PROGRAM (Send all checks to:)

District Disaster Program, c/o West Marva District Office, 384 Dennett Road, Oakland, MD 21550

DISTRICT BOARD - EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING DATES:

The Executive Committee consists of the Board chair; vice-chair; board secretary; treasurer; financial secretary; District Moderator and Chair of each Team.

DISTRICT BOARD MEETINGS: January 14, 2017 – Knobley Church, March 18, 2017 – Walnut Grove Church, June 3, 2017 – Oak Park Church

West Marva District Women’s Fall Rally Update:

The Fall Rally was hosted by the ladies at the Locust Grove Church which is located near Mt. Storm, WV. Not only was the drive to the church a beautiful experience due to the fall foliage but the church was beautifully decorated for the season. We would like to thank the Pine Grove Church for being responsible for the morning registration, the Brookside Church for the morning refreshments, the Tearcoat Church for the morning devotion and the Walnut Grove Church for the closing devotion. We are always delighted when Nellie Bradshaw is able to be with us to play the piano and a special thank you to Lois Reed for being the chorister. The ladies from Locust Grove provided the group a wonderful luncheon consisting of a potato and salad bar along with many delightful desserts.

The theme for our program this year was “Women’s Roles In The Church of the Brethren – Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow”. Diane May and Phyllis Marsh presented a delightful skit in which a present day pastor was transported from a modern day cruise ship to a ship carrying some of our forefathers from Krefeld, Germany. We then heard about Sarah Righter Major one of the first women preacher in the Church of the Brethren, but not without opposition. We also heard about Wilma Waybright, who is from our own district and was from the Eglon area. Wilma was licensed to the ministry in 1930 but was not ordained until 1966. She too faced much opposition. We were delighted to find out during the day that Brenda Jones, from the Sugarland congregation, announced that she and her husband were the first couple who were married by Sister Waybright. Louise Nealis and Deborah Strawser, two ordained ministers from West Marva, shared with us some of their experiences in the ministry. Gina Frazee, is a member of the West Marva District Ministry Training Program and she shared with us about her call to begin the ministry process. The program concluded with another skit presented by Diane May and Phyllis Marsh. This time our ancestor was transported to a modern day setting in which she learned about all of the things that were now possible with women in ministry. Needless to say, she was very shocked!

There were 63 ladies present with 19 churches being represented.

Our morning love offering of \$1,345.00 will be going to the Union Rescue Mission, in Cumberland, MD, to purchase metal bunkbeds for Hope House. We also collected baby items for the Union Rescue Mission. We hope to have an article in the next MEMO sharing with you more extensive information about items collected, ongoing projects and possibly have some pictures.

Our afternoon offering of \$1,709.00 will be given to the Kitzmiller Lion's Club to assist in the purchase of food items for the flood victims in Clendenin, WV. This area was devastated by flooding earlier this summer and at this time many of these families are living in tents.

Mary Berg, our Witness Chair reported that we had received 110 Hygiene Kits and 179 School Kits. We also received \$578.00 to assist with postage for the kits, \$122.00 for Clean-up Buckets and \$50.00 which was undesignated. We would like to thank Nova Stonesifer for seeing that all of these kits are delivered to New Windsor.

Our Women's Fellowship has been seeking historical information regarding the Women's Fellowships of our District churches. Nina Mason, who is very involved in historical issues, volunteered to work at putting together a booklet of all of this information. Tammy Timbrook from the Tearcoat church is assisting Nina. Nina shared that she and Tammy hoped to have this booklet completed for distribution at our Spring Rally at the Oak Park Church. The cost of the booklet is \$5.00 and we are asking that if you or your church would wish to order one of these booklets to contact Tammy Timbrook at tcbchurch@frontiernet.net with a number of copies you would like to purchase. If your church has not had opportunity to share your historical information and would wish to be included you can contact Nina Mason at 304-897-6471.

John Walker, pastor of the Locust Grove Church, shared with the group earlier in the day that he knew that what we did as a Women's Fellowship was a 'labor of love'. He encouraged us to never stop reaching out to the darkness of the world. Let's continue to do our work as we 'seek to do the will of God'.

Mark your calendar because the District Women's Spring Rally, May 10, 2017 will be held at the Oak Park Church and our Fall Rally, October 11, 2017 will be held at the Westernport Church. We hope that you will make plans to attend.

DISTRICT CONFERENCE UPDATE:

Our Conference was held at the Moorefield Church, September 16-17 with Carl Fike serving as our Moderator. Our Friday evening service opened with a special music time with Adam & Katie Breneman, from the Oak Park Church. The guest speaker for the evening was Don Fitzkee, chairman of the Church of the Brethren Mission and Ministry Board. There were 120 in attendance and our offering, which will support the District General Fund, amounted to \$829.66.

Our business sessions began Saturday morning. The conference delegates voted to close the Maple Grove Church, located near Grantsville, MD as recommended by the District Mission and Ministry Board.. They approved the 2017 West Marva District Budget and approved a Resolution of Condolence for Elmer Cosner.

There was a presentation of the ballot and the following are the results of that election: Moderator, Craig Howard; District Conference Planning and Arrangements, Ann Friend; Spiritual Gifts Discernment Team, Steve Sauder; Camp Galilee Trustee, Mark Seese; Camp Hope Trustee, Dwayne Poling; Standing Committee Delegate, Grover Duling; Alternate Standing Committee Delegate, Steve Sauder; Ministerial Leadership Team, Mark Jones; Financial Resources Team, Anna Sauder; Spiritual Growth Team, Betty Wolford, Lucy Webster and David Fouts; Mission and Evangelism Team, Nova Stonesifer and Dan Spaid.

In 2012 the Ministerial Leadership Team began recognizing ordained ministers who had reached a 5 year anniversary. The following is a list of ministers who were recognized: Dan Ludwick, 35 years; Ed Weaver and Greg Bland, 30 years; Mark Durst, 15 years; Deborah Strawser, Tom Rowan and Robert Combs, 10 years and Mark Teets, LaDeana Teets, Russell Webster and Lucy Webster, 5 years.

On Saturday there were 51 churches represented, and 142 delegates and 42 non-delegates in attendance. The offering for the day which again will support the District General Fund amounted to \$1,400.00.

We would like to thank the Oak Park Church for preparing and serving the Friday evening refreshments and Fred and Marge Roy for the Saturday morning refreshments. Music is always a very special part of our District Conference. We would like to thank Ezra Yoder and the choir for their special selections; Kevin Staggs for serving as our chorister; Marian Sutton for serving as our organist and Nellie Bradshaw for serving as the pianist.

The following articles were taken from Newsline:

Church of the Brethren Disaster ministries, mission staff assess hurricane damage, begin planning for response.

Staff of Global Mission and Service and Brethren Disaster Ministries have been assessing storm damage and needs in areas affected by Hurricane Matthew. A Church of the Brethren response is being planned, with funding through donations to the Emergency Disaster Fund; go to www.brethren.org/edf to support this effort.

The Haitian Church of the Brethren (l'Eglise des Freres d'Haiti) "continues a comprehensive evaluation of the impact on Brethren families and communities," reported Roy Winter, associate executive director of Global Mission and Service and Brethren Disaster Ministries. "Early reports indicate flooding and mudslides damaged homes in a number of communities with Brethren families. The heavy rains destroyed crops and killed livestock, causing great concern about longer term hunger and food insecurity in this already food insecure country."

Brethren Disaster Ministries plans to work closely with the Haitian Brethren, the Global Food Initiative (GFI), and the Haiti Medical Project in carrying out a response effort. Winter noted that a supply of canned chicken provided by the Southern Pennsylvania and Mid-Atlantic Districts arrived in Haiti recently and will be the first point of distribution to the most vulnerable families.

Although Children's Disaster Services (CDS) was put on alert and had volunteers ready to provide childcare on the east coast, the American Red Cross has asked them to "stand down" for the moment. CDS expected to be asked to respond in Florida, but the hurricane actually caused more flooding and damage in North Carolina. Associate director Kathleen Fry-Miller today reported that another CDS team is being identified and will be ready to go if and when CDS receives the call for North Carolina.

Group of Chibok schoolgirls are released from captivity

The Nigerian government says 21 of the Chibok schoolgirls abducted by Boko Haram in April 2014 have been freed in negotiations with the insurgents, according to reports from media outlets today including the Associated Press and ABC News. The negotiations were carried out with help from the International Committee of the Red Cross and the Swiss government.

Church of the Brethren staff have received confirmation of this news from Ekklesiyar Yan'uwa a Nigeria (EYN, the Church of the Brethren in Nigeria). EYN president Joel S. Billi sent confirmation after he talked with Chibok parents and the Bring Back Our Girls organization in Nigeria. The majority of the girls abducted from the school in Chibok are from Nigerian Brethren families.

"We receive this news with great joy," said Jay Wittmeyer, executive director of Global Mission and Service. "As a church we have been in active prayer for these individuals since their abduction. Congregations continue to pray specifically for each girl. Jesus said that we should pray always and not lose heart and we have steadfastly been doing so and we will continue to do so.

"We also express gratitude to all parties involved in this negotiated release. We know that both the IRC and the Swiss government have been actively involved in working toward peace and relief in Nigeria in many ways, and we are not surprised that they have been involved in this settlement.

"We do continue to call for the release of all individuals held against their will," Wittmeyer said, "not just those from Chibok."

Some 197 of the Chibok students remain in Boko Haram hands, and "it is not known how many of them may have died," said the AP report, as published on AllAfrica.com. According to AP, the freed girls are in the custody of Nigeria's Department of State Services, which is the country's intelligence agency. Presidential spokesman Garba Shehu told the AP that talks will continue for the release of the rest of the Chibok girls.

The "Premium Times" of Nigeria has reported the 21 names given by the Nigerian government: Mary Usman Bulama, Jummai John, Blessing Abana, Lugwa Sanda, Comfort Habila, Maryam Basheer, Comfort Amos, Glory Mainta, Saratu Emmanuel, Deborah Ja'afaru, Rahab Ibrahim, Helen Musa, Maryamu Lawan, Rebecca Ibrahim, Asabe Goni, Deborah Andrawus, Agnes Gapani, Saratu Markus, Glory Dama, Pindah Nuhu and Rebecca Mallam.

Keith Lewis . . . Westernport Church of the Brethren Has A Celebrity!

The Cumberland Times News, August 18, 2016 issue had a photo of Maryland Governor Larry Hogan and Westernport native, KEITH LEWIS, “one of 17 chefs celebrated in July at the ninth annual Buy Local Cookout hosted by the Maryland Governor at the governor’s mansion in Annapolis.”

Headline of the newspaper article tells the story! **“Lewis wins accolades for ramped-up sushi.”**

Keith was among the statewide contest winners for his recipe **Wild Western Maryland Ramp Maki**, which definitely gave a Mountain Maryland twist to a Japanese sushi dish. He traveled to Annapolis July 21 to be part of the invitation-only cookout, even though he was unable to supply his winning dish. Ramp season was over by the time he learned that he had won, and he was unable to secure the “wild leek” the main ingredient of his dish. He plans to return next year, mentioning he would stock up enough spring ramps to feed the crowd at the 10th annual cookout.

Keith is the youngest son of the late Owen and Phyllis Lewis and a lifelong resident of Westernport. He grew up in the Westernport Church of the Brethren and became a member in 1972. Many in the West Marva District have known and worked with Phyllis over the years—especially our District Women’s group and also Phyllis was an advocate and supporter of Camp Galilee serving as camp counselor and director as she raised four sons. Phyllis “never missed Women’s Camp, Women’s Rally or New Windsor workdays.”

Keith was aware any recipe he submitted for the Buy Local Cookout would have to include home-grown ramps. Those of us in the Potomac Highlands are familiar (if not friends of) the pungent, garlic/onion taste of this springtime “delicacy” here in the mountains. During his years in Keyser, West Virginia as shopkeeper of Martie’s Hot Dogs, he spearheaded the downtown RampFest.

Today, Keith is owner of Big Lew’s Crusin’ Treats in downtown Westernport. If you are in Westernport (across from Roderick Furniture Store) you might want to stop by for one of his specialty hot dogs—he offers nearly 20 varieties, such as “Bruce Bulldog”, “Pigs in the Garden” and “Blue Lew Dog”—just to name a few, but also brisket sandwiches, pulled pork or some hand dipped Hershey ice cream. Old newspaper articles and pictures are posted on the shop’s walls and quickly get conversations going with customers. Stopping by means you’ll be drawn into conversation for Keith is a “people person.” He is the father of three children and five grandchildren.

Locally, Keith is well known and delighted the children attending 2015 Westernport Church of the Brethren Day Camp when they were treated to ice cream cones at his shop. Again, this year the 99 kids (and all those assisting) attending Westernport’s Day Camp were given ice cream cones courtesy of “Big Lew’s Crusin’ Treats.

At the Westernport church he serves as usher and scripture reader on Sundays. Over the years he has served as camp counselor at Camp Galilee also. He is a participant in the “Soup-er Sunday” fundraisers in his local church when members of the congregation bring soups. Winners are chosen by the contributions per soup in order to raise money for Union Rescue Mission outreach. Most likely, Keith is best known for his chili recipes, however, he often brings unusual dishes to the Westernport covered dish meals. Who knows if the good Brethren in Westernport are ready for “ramped up sushi”??

Owing to contest guidelines, Keith’s recipe features only a half dozen ingredients—including chicken livers, bacon, barbecue sauce, dipping sauce and ramps. This is by no means the first or only culinary competition he has won in our area. Stop by for one of his “Crusin Treats” and you’ll soon learn how much he enjoys “cooking.”

Being chosen one of the 17 chefs selected from among 45 entries for this state of Maryland contest was indeed an accomplishment and we add our congratulations to Keith for this honor and recognition brought to our area.



INFORMATION FROM OUR ANNUAL CONFERENCE OFFICE

Chris Douglas from the Annual Conference office has provided us with the following article which will assist our congregations in their understanding of sending a delegate to Annual Conference.

Sending Your Congregation's Delegate to Annual Conference

In 2017, the 231st recorded Church of the Brethren Annual Conference will be held in Grand Rapids, Michigan. And once again congregations will be encouraged to send a delegate to come together for fellowship and to discern the business of the denomination. For those who may be unaware, here is some information on sending a delegate from your congregation.

Why is it important for my congregation to send a delegate to Annual Conference?

Sending a delegate to Annual Conference is the only way to ensure your congregation has a say in decisions that affect the whole church. The Annual Conference delegate body is one of the most important—if not the highest—level of decision making in the Church of the Brethren. Each congregation may play a vital part in Annual Conference by sending a delegate or delegates. The number of delegates a congregation may send is relative to the number of members in the congregation.

Who can be a delegate and how many delegates does our congregation get?

Each congregation may choose who their delegate(s) may be, and all delegates must be full members of the Church of the Brethren. The pastor of a congregation is not automatically a delegate.

The number of delegates allowed per congregation is based on its membership statistics as reported in the Church of the Brethren Yearbook for the previous year. The number allowed is as follows:

1 – 200 members	1 delegate
201 – 400 members	2 delegates
401 – 600 members	3 delegates
601 – 800 members	4 delegates
801+ members	5 delegates

What do delegates and their congregations get from Annual Conference?

Delegates benefit personally from the opportunities for spiritual renewal, continuing education, and faith formation. Their congregations benefit from the spiritual growth that their church leadership may bring back and share with the church. In addition to business sessions, each Conference features daily worship services, Bible studies, insight sessions on a wide variety of topics, support groups, meal events, an exhibit hall with booths and many free resources, a Brethren Press bookstore, and much more. All of these are open to every Conference attendee. Every congregation that sends a delegate will also receive a copy of that year's Annual Conference minutes.

To take full advantage of sending a delegate, a congregation should make time for that person to report back following the Conference, so that they can share the experience with the whole congregation.

Delegate registration for Grand Rapids will open online on Wednesday, March 1, 2017. The registration fee for each delegate is \$285. For more information about how to send a delegate to Annual Conference, contact the Conference Office by email at annualconference@brethren.org, or call 800-323-8039 ext. 365.

2016 BRETHREN BITS from Betty's desk HARMAN CHURCH

Elder John Kline Traveled to the Harman Area in the 1850's to establish churches

Most of us are familiar with Elder John Kline and have often heard how he came into the territory of West Marva and "planted" churches in an era when settlements in communities were being developed. It is known in **1856—one hundred sixty years ago** John Kline, from Virginia, was in the Harman and Dry Fork communities baptizing converts before moving on to do mission work in the Eglon area.

Many may not realize the Seneca Creek Valley and the mountain pass over the Allegheny between Onego and Harman was an important route of migration east and west. Locals are well aware of the Seneca Indian tribes who had lived here generations before the white settlers arrived. Many Pioneers used the Indian trails as they sought out a place to stake their claims and eventually established communities. Then came the missionaries to bring churches to these settlements!

In early times from "...1860 to 1897 Emmert Bittinger shares information with us indicating the Harman Church was included in what was then called the Seneca and Red Creek Congregation which included North Fork and Onego on the east side of the Allegheny; and Harman, Dry Fork and Red Creek (Bethel) on the west side of that mountain range. Asa Harman born in 1834 and elected to the ministry in 1859 is said to have been in charge of the congregation from 1865 until his death in 1902." ...

We learn as we read in ***Allegheny Passage*** that John Kline and others from Rockingham County, Virginia held services in the Harman area in the 1850's. Certainly there were no regular, weekly meetings during that era but if John Kline was on a journey to Annual Conference or making his "rounds" to encourage congregations or conducting baptisms there are entries in his Diary indicating he traveled to and around the Harman area. On page 548 of *A. Passage* we learn about ..." Elder Kline's plan for gaining entrance into a community. His pattern was to visit and stay with families which were already members of the church. With their consent, he would announce meeting for those homes, sometimes doing this in advance by mail. On his arrival, he then would speak to an often large and interested group." ...

Elder Kline was concerned as well about training and nurturing the churches he sought to establish. Winters on the mountains created challenges in those years before salt & chemicals could be used by the state road equipment. Thus, we can assume much of the "missionary work" was carried out in warmer months. Before macadamized highways these mountain roads were rough and muddy making horseback travel time consuming and demanding.

"The story about Widow Cooper of this area, as told by E. Bittinger, ... reveals she was especially willing to allow services in her home and actually sought to encourage the establishment of a church as early as 1859. She has been referred to as the "*mother* of the Harman church!" Actually her home was used for worship services until a church building could be constructed.

We learn she allowed at least three Love Feasts to be held in her home. These were the first known Love Feasts in the area of the Harman congregation. Sharon Harman shares information that the early Love Feasts took place after three o'clock in the afternoon in order to more fully symbolize the Last Supper of Christ and his disciples. She fed all who came, members or not, often large crowds, many who came for two days. She also fed their horses without charge." ...

Beyond a doubt, she was a generous, Christian woman! Imagine the amount of food necessary to feed such a crowd and the time involved in preparation. There are other similar stories of our early unselfish Brethren in many communities. Were the Brethren trying their hand at bed and breakfast—long before that idea caught on in our nation?

Further, we learn at a Council meeting on September 4, 1859 a resident minister and deacon were elected. This could indicate the organizational date of the Red Creek Congregation and the founding of the Harman Church according to the research of Dr. Emmert Bittinger. " Ministers from Beaver Run, Greenland, Eglon and perhaps even from the Beaver Creek (in Virginia), congregation near Bridgewater had been coming to preach and baptize here. The German Settlement Congregation had just been organized so they did not have a surplus of ministers to assist in the missionary work beyond that locality.

This picture was submitted by Sharon Harman. In the doorway of the church is Jonas Fike and the picture was taken in the early 1900's.



HARMAN CHURCH

Emmert Bittinger gives information about the beginnings of the HARMAN Church. "Under the leadership of its home ministers, Asa Harman and Washington Summerfield, the Dry Fork Congregation grew rapidly in membership.

Feeling the need for a church house, the Harman group built a church less than a mile eastward from the village of Harman on the south side of Route 33 which is believed to have been around 1885. The building, fifty-four by thirty feet, was made of lumber sawed on the mill of Asa Harman. He and other men of the congregation carried the beams and boards on their backs across Horse Camp Run to the building site."

The style of the building was similar to other churches built during that era with two entrances, one for the men and the second for the women, and with raised seats at each end of the sanctuary. In Allegheny Passage we learn "the raised seats at one end were removed in 1924 and those on the other end were removed around 1956.

A committee had been appointed in 1954 to make plans for expansion. First, more land was obtained for a parking area. One of the members, Carrie Roy, came up with a creative way to raise funds and to honor their pastor, her brother Ellsworth Harman. As Ellsworth's birthday approached she sent letters to all members and many friends across the country, in which she invited them to a party in Ellsworth's honor.

However, instead of bringing a gift to the guest of honor, they were asked to make a monetary donation to the church's newly formed building fund. Two hundred people attended the party, and donations totaled \$1,499.00. In addition, the third Sunday of each month was designed as Building Fund Sunday. On that day, the church offering was placed in a special account for building expenses.

Renovations were made, including new pews to replace the home made ones (which were said to be keeping people from coming to church), a fellowship hall, pastor's study, Sunday School rooms, kitchen, baptistery, restrooms and other improvements before a dedication service was held in July 10, 1977. It should be noted the first kitchen, added on to the original church, in 1897 was referred to as a "dry kitchen" since there was no running water inside the building until much later. Water was carried from the stream which flows through the property during those early years.

Unfortunately in October 1977 two boys who escaped from the Children's Home in Elkins gained entrance and set the fellowship hall on fire. As a result the fellowship hall and kitchen were destroyed. There was water damage to the sanctuary and records were lost but that portion of the structure was intact.

Disaster struck again, twice actually in 1985. First a flood in July caused the bridge across the stream at the church to be destroyed; then came the destructive November 1985 flood which wrecked havoc once more in Harman and surrounding communities in several counties in West Virginia.

Harman Church held a celebration in 2009 to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the first church service of their congregation. It has also been noted a bell tower was added to the church about twenty years ago.

It is interesting to learn in 1890, the Seneca and Red Creek Congregation was transferred from the Second Virginia District and reorganized as a congregation of the First District of West Virginia. In 1897, the congregation was divided three ways—Seneca which included Onego and North Fork, Red Creek became separate as did Harman.

Some of the earliest ministers serving here after Elder John Kline came to this region were Asa Harman, an earlier settler here who donated the land for the "town" of Harman, Jonas Fike, Ezra Fike and Simon Harman, another one of the Harman clan.

From 1949 to 1974 Ellsworth S. Harman served as pastor. He passed away in 1980 but he had devoted his entire life to serving the church at any time and in any role he was needed to fill—teacher, mentor, friend and counselor to nearly everyone of the community.

Later Galen Fike and Earl W. Fike represented the fourth generation of Fike ministers to serve the congregation. Robert Grandusky and John Moyers carried on the pastoral work. The current pastor is John Moyers who has served here and at Red Creek (Bethel) since 1985.

It is worth noting, Virgie Fike, wife of Ezra Fike, one of the first pastors had a dream of organizing a fellowship for the ladies of the church. She passed away "before it came to fruition, but in October 1964 the ladies of the church met in the home of Ellsworth & Twila Harman to establish a Women's Fellowship which has remained active over the years.

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