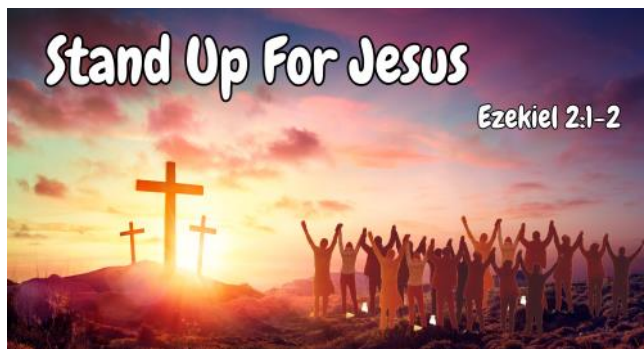


**WEST MARVA DISTRICT  
MEMO  
AUGUST 2024**

384 Dennett Road  
Oakland, MD 21550  
301-334-9270

Brenda Harvey, Administrative Assistant (301-616-1367)  
[www.westmarvachurches.org](http://www.westmarvachurches.org)



**MEMO FROM YOUR DISTRICT CONFERENCE MODERATOR**

And he said unto me, Son of man, stand upon thy feet, and I will speak unto thee. And the spirit entered me when he spake unto me, and set me upon my feet, that I heard him that spake unto me. Ezekiel 2:1-2

**Submitted by: Pastor Robert Combs, Moderator**

We would like to welcome you to the West Marva District Conference at the Moorefield Church of the Brethren, 115 Clay Street, Moorefield, WV, on Saturday, September 21, 2024. Refreshments will be served in the Fellowship Hall at 8:00 a.m. Registration for Delegates will also be held in the Fellowship Hall at this time.

Our theme is: "Stand Up for Jesus" with scripture of Ezekiel 2: 1-2. Our work here today consists of "Standing Up for Jesus" at all times. We believe it is very important to "Stand Up for Jesus" because of the way the world is today as proof of the time is near for Jesus to return. We as Brethren need to follow our scriptures as Jesus requests as our work is to benefit Him by showing love and affection for one another. We are all Disciples sent out by God with the authority to spread the word of His return. Our job at our District Conference is to make the work easier for those who preach and teach the word. Our work here is very important to support one another as we work and pray for our well-being and He will lead us to eternity with our Lord and Savior. We must stay strong and stand together and work as one unit for our Lord Jesus Christ. I ask you through Conference to pray as you vote and make recommendations that it will be within Christ's approval. The second greatest commandment is to love one another as we love Christ and may Jesus be with you throughout the Conference.

We thank all those who have diligently worked getting the Conference together and up and running.

**MAY GOD BLESS YOU ALL AS WE WORK TOGETHER SERVING CHRIST!**

## **A MESSAGE FROM THE LEADERSHIP TEAM**

This world is not my home, I'm just passing through.

But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ, Philippians 3:20 (NIV)

We need to live in this world, but our true citizenship is not of this world. We need to pray for our leaders, in this world, no matter how we feel about the job they are doing.

"I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world." John 16:33 (NIV)

Jesus never said that our lives would be trouble free, but he did assure us that we could have peace amidst the trouble.

You, dear children, are from God and have overcome them, because the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world. 1 John 4:4 (NIV)

We can overcome whatever comes our way because God who is in us is greater than the one who is in the world!

14 "You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. 15 Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. 16 In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.

Matthew 5:14-16 (NIV)

The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. John 1:5 (NIV)

We, as Christians, are the light of the world. We need to boldly let our lights shine. God has promised that whatever comes our way because we let our light shine; He is there to walk with us and He will give us the courage and strength to overcome it. Let your light shine – No Matter What

7 I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. 8 Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day—and not only to me, but also to all who have longed for his appearing. 2 Timothy 4:7-8 (NIV)

Go and fight the fight for Jesus and finish strong!

Be a blessing today.

Anna Skeweris  
West Marva District Leadership Team Member  
240-321-1561      annasauder@gmail.com

## Westernport Church News

### JUNE

The weather was beautiful for our community block party. Different yard games with prizes were available for all ages. A dry and wet bounce house and slide offered fun entertainment and a chance to cool down for those who attended. Pastor Allie was in a dunk tank, which the children enjoyed (perhaps too much ☹), as well as some members of the district who came to participate.

The youth held a pancake breakfast fundraiser after a church service to earn money for a trip to Kennywood. Seven youths put on their pancake breakfast with the help of one of the youth leaders.

### JULY

Our annual day camp was a huge success, led by Diane May with Buffalo Valley COB from Pennsylvania. On average, we had 64 kids and middle schoolers. With the help of Westernport and Buffalo Valley volunteers (30), the camp led the kids into a friendship with Jesus through the Scuba theme from Group VBS. The kids and youth were fed two meals (breakfast and Lunch) and three snacks during the day. Monday-Thursday, they were transported from the church to the Piedmont pool, a much-welcomed cool down from the heat advisories of the first two days. The closing program happened after lunch instead of the pool on Friday, with a sanctuary filled with family and friends. Our annual church picnic took place on the Sunday following Day Camp. There was outdoor worship in the parking lot. It was a well-attended service with amazing food and fellowship.

The youth provided a spaghetti supper/fundraiser. This was well advertised, and many folks from the community came to support it. The youth wanted to ensure their first goal was providing a meal. If someone could not make a free-will donation, they were more concerned about serving the community. In having a servant's heart, the donations for their trip were above what they expected. They served 75+ meals over 2 hours.

Pastor Allie has been working on her doctorate. On July 6th, she defended her portfolio regarding rural mountain communities' lack of mental health services. Allie now has a Doctor of Ministry: Pastoral Counseling.

### August

The Thursday Night Bible Study started again on August 1. This is both in-person and offered via zoom. If you want to join, please see the information below

#### **Meeting:**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87489672960?pwd=uOuWfhsInQhAzbT9cUYBZKb2QiUTgo.1>

**Meeting ID: 874 8967 2960**

**Passcode: 529910**

The Youth will be taking their trip to Kennywood on August 15. Prayers for good weather and safe travel as we approach this fun day!

The church's website has been revamped. Check us out at [www.westernportcob.com](http://www.westernportcob.com)

### **WEST MARVA MINISTRY TRAINING PROGRAM**

The upcoming class will take place on August 24. Allie Crowe and Jennifer Kreighbaum will teach this course on the history of the universal church. If you need CEUs for licensure or ordination, you are welcome to sit through a class. All that is asked is participation in discussion.

Class begins at 9 AM at the Westernport Church of the Brethren.

**Text- Church History: The Basics** On Amazon: <https://a.co/d/in1mgca>

The final course for 2024 will be the Old Testament Survey. John Ellifritz will teach this course.  
**Text- Old Testament Survey, 3rd Edition. 2023 (On Amazon)**

*THE CHURCH OF THE BRETHREN*

# LEAD

**LISTEN • EQUIP • ADAPT • DISCIPLE**

## CONFERENCE

**Nov. 15-17, 2024**  
Ephrata Church of the Brethren  
Ephrata, Pennsylvania

**Leadership matters!** Learning more about leading well can only help pastors and congregations. The Church of the Brethren LEAD Conference will encourage, inspire, and equip you and your congregation's leaders to further develop your ministry's effectiveness and earn CEU credit. Join us for powerful times of worship, in-depth keynote messages from Dr. Dennis Edwards, and practical breakout sessions taught by practitioners who are eager to share lessons they've learned that you can adapt and implement in your own ministry context.

**Register NOW!**  
[www.brethren.org/dlf/lead-conference](http://www.brethren.org/dlf/lead-conference)  
\$99 per person until Sept. 1, then \$125  
For churches sending 5 or more people, \$79 per person

**Keynote Speaker:**  
**Rev. Dennis Robert Edwards**



Rev. Dr. Dennis R. Edwards, PhD, serves as Dean and Vice President of Church Relations at North Park Theological Seminary, after having previously been Associate Professor of New Testament. He's the author of several articles and books including the recent *Humility Illuminated: The Biblical Path Back to Christian Character (IVP)*. Dennis has been married to Susan Steele Edwards since 1982. They are the parents of four children, and grandparents of five.

Dennis has three decades of urban pastoral ministry experience. He most recently served as senior pastor of The Sanctuary Covenant Church in Minneapolis, MN. Prior to that, Dennis served in Washington, DC and Brooklyn, NY.

Dennis holds a Bachelor of Science degree in chemical engineering (Cornell University), a Master of Divinity degree in Urban Ministry (Trinity Evangelical Divinity School), Master of Arts and PhD degrees in Biblical Studies (Catholic University of America). Dennis enjoys baking, playing his flute and saxophone, as well as weightlifting and cycling—as much as his body will let him.

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Sponsored by Discipleship & Leadership Formation  
For information email: [DLF@brethren.org](mailto:DLF@brethren.org)

**Church of the Brethren**

We are very pleased to announce that Jennifer Kreighbaum, our Mission and Ministry Board chair and co-pastor of the Bear Creek COB, is on the planning team for the above conference.

## **BRETHREN BITS BY BETTY DZUBBA OAK PARK CHURCH OF THE BRETHREN**

How many churches can count the Charter Members as regular worshippers in their congregation today? Oak Park has six charter members still involved in their church.

Years before any church building appeared on Oakland soil, the need for a Church of the Brethren was acknowledged. As long ago as the 1890's the Western Maryland District considered and debated this issue. This was long before the West Marva District was established. It is known the leaders of the Pine Grove Church near Swallow Falls were aware those Brethren living in or near the town of Oakland would be better served with a church in the town.

In 1899 during the Western Maryland District Conference this issue was brought before the Conference. A simple statement "This District Meeting decides to build a church in Oakland." was recorded. Interesting that during this era the Western Maryland District was known to be favoring missions and the establishment of new churches. Oakland seemed to be a good opportunity. Likely there were questions about the practicality of such a venture, as it was some years before more action was taken.

Various arguments were raised after two years of study. There were encouraging aspects and lengthy reports. By 1901, \$1,000.00 had been committed toward the project. It was pointed out there were already many churches serving the Oakland community and "the town environment was not appropriate for a church."

Interesting that the Conference delegates after hearing the report, adopted the committee's recommendation: "We deem it not good business judgment to invest at the present."

More than half a century later, decisive action was taken toward building a church in Oakland. There must have been those who were disappointed that the earlier attempts were not successful in getting a congregation started within the town. Today, one could ponder whether there was opposition to losing "faithful, generous supporters" from the surrounding congregations.

Some of the Brethren living in or near Oakland were not inclined to ignore the issue of establishing a new Congregation. June 7, 1953 several interested persons met at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Ernest Spoerlein. Soon regular bi-monthly meetings were held in various homes with 25 to 30 attending "Mid-week" services. Some attending were active in Eglon, Maple Spring, Gortner Union, Brookside, Glade View, Pine Grove, Sugarland and Mt. Grove congregations.

By May 1954 one hundred and four people in and around Oakland indicated they desired to become Charter Members. The next step was to search for appropriate property. During early January, two and one half acres of land was purchased between Oakland and Mt. Lake Park at the cost of \$7,500. Meetings were held from May 1955 until October 7, 1956 in the Mt. Lake Park Town Hall. Oak Park was first listed as a congregation on April 21, 1957. It registered thirty-two members in the Western Maryland District. A groundbreaking ceremony was held April 21, 1957. The plans called for the building of a social hall and a sanctuary with an educational wing to be added later.

The first services in the new fellowship hall were held December 29, 1957 with worship in the morning and a Christmas service in the evening. The First Love Feast in the building was on March 30, 1958. A total of one hundred eleven members were reported in the Brethren "Yearbook" for 1959. Over the years there were other additions to the church and most recently the Family Life Center addition was completed in 2005.

Carl Fike current pastor is the fifteenth pastor to serve Oak Park. When Carl was asked "Did Covid change your congregation" his immediate answer was "Yes, most certainly, we gained about twenty five people that continue to worship with us!" Having to cope with restrictions posed some adjustments for all our congregations. Oak Park acquired a 3-watt radio transmitter with "audio" only for the Pastor to "reach" those sitting in their vehicles in the parking lot. Later worshippers moved inside the Family Life Center widely spaced until it was safe to return to the sanctuary. Many of our churches began using Zoom, some continue to offer zoom as well as "in person services."

Oak Park has a continued flair for outreach with regular annual two week mission trips to Bolivia, (beginning in the 1990's) their Food Bank project established years ago that has grown over the years and reaches out with church volunteers serving 150 families.

**WOMEN'S RETREAT AT CAMP GALILEE  
AUGUST 15-16, 2024  
"THE BROKEN PIECES"**



"I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.

John 16:33

**Guest Speaker on Friday: Laura Biggs**

Thursday - 4:00 Registration, supper at 5:00, Bible study at 7:00 and don't forget our Campfire!  
Cost: \$12.00 per meal. If possible, please let Donna Kempfer (304-288-1004) or Brenda Harvey (301-616-1367) know which meals you will be having so that the camp knows how many to prepare.

Friday – Breakfast at 8:00 a.m. with camp finishing at 6:00 p.m. Come and enjoy some wonderful Christian fellowship!

Our service project is Garrett County Lighthouse.  
We will be collecting items for their "Treasure Chests"

Suggested items:

Personal care toiletries (women & men)	Mugs	Kitchen Gadgets
Audio books (tapes or CDs)	Music CD's	Word Search books
Cosmetics (nail polish, perfume, etc)	Movie DVD's	Coloring Books
Ceramics (vases, candle holders, etc)	Children's Toys	Decorative Knick-Knacks
Art Pencils/Markers	Jewelry	Paper Towels
Toilet Paper	Purses	Dishwash Liquid
Laundry Detergent	Pierced Earrings (not clips)	
Barrettes & Hair Clips	Fragrant Body Lotions	

\*\*\*\*If you can't come for the entire time, please feel free to come and go as you can.\*\*\*\*

**Church of the Brethren  
West Marva District Office  
384 Dennett Road  
Oakland, MD 21550  
August 2024**

**IN GOD WE TRUST**

## **CALENDAR OF EVENTS**

<b>August 15-16</b>	<b>Women's Camp at Camp Galilee</b>
<b>September 21</b>	<b>District Conference, Moorefield COB</b>
<b>October 26</b>	<b>Ethic's Training, Moorefield COB</b>