

MEMO ANNOUNCEMENT

Welcome to our new bi-monthly newsletter, Issue 4.

Moving forward, please send all MEMO submissions to me directly by or before the following dates:

Issue 5: October 28 deadline (for November 1 release)

Send electronic submissions to westmarvade@gmail.com, call or text 540-742-2457, or send mail correspondence to the District Office at 384 Dennett Rd, Oakland MD 21550



Include anything you'd like the district churches to know about, learn about, pray about, support, copy, or otherwise enjoy!

- ✓ **service times, special occasions/events, fundraisers,**
- ✓ **prayers/poems/devotionals/liturgies/responsive readings,**
- ✓ **book/study recommendations,**
- ✓ **church or pastor anniversaries/homecomings/milestones,**
- ✓ **favorite potluck recipes,**
- ✓ **updated website, social media, or contact information**
- ✓ **obituary links or other remembrances of recently departed friends, and**
- ✓ **anything else that would be wonderful to share with your district brothers and sisters.**

LETTER FROM THE DE'S DESK

What do you think of when you hear the term "otherworldly?" Aliens? Close Encounters of the Third Kind? Angels or Demons? Jesus had a definition for "otherworldly" – US. He essentially called us "otherworldly" in the theme passage for this year's district conference. Near the beginning of His prayer for the unity of the faithful, He says in John 17:3, *Now this is eternal life – that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom You sent. I glorified You on earth by completing the work You gave me to do. And now, Father, glorify Me at Your side...*

Jesus knows that His work on earth for *us* is about to be complete, and that soon He will ascend to God's domain and return to His original dwelling place, roaming the halls of heaven and sitting at the right hand of God the Father.

Further into the prayer, He is praying for us to remain in the Father's care after His departure: *I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to You. Holy Father, keep them safe in Your name that You have given me (v. 11)...* You've heard, maybe even used the saying, "In this world, but not of it." This is the passage from where that sentiment comes. He finishes the thought in verses 15-16: *My prayer is not that You take them out of the world but that You protect them from the evil one. They are not of the world, even as I am not of it.*

This world is not our home. On the days when we are consumed with consuming, distracted by distractions, tempted by temptations, living and behaving like the worldly world around us, we forget that. Doesn't even cross our minds. We can go hours, days even, of not thinking eternally significant thoughts, not praying eternally significant prayers, not sharing the eternally significant Gospel, not actively pointing people toward the Way of Christ that leads to God.

When we are operating in the Holy Spirit, however, when we are on Mission, when we are clear-minded in our purpose and being guided by the Lord, taking comfort in the knowledge of His presence, depending utterly on His power, and experiencing and modeling His supernatural peace, we are already living as if we are *home*. Now we are walking by faith and not sight. Now we are moved to godly living, Christlike compassion and service, actively testing and developing strong faith and spiritual muscle. Now we are embodying Jesus' bold prayer on our behalf that we would be *sanctified* by the Word of Truth (verse 17).

Waking up to news cycles about assassinations and school shootings and train stabbing and interest rates and mental health crises and church decline and, and, and ... I am convicted now more than ever that the Church is in desperate need of a baptism in the Holy Spirit to reignite our passion for the people who know the Lord and the people who need to know the Lord, and that the Church has allowed itself to become worldly, distracted, and far too comfortable in the place that was never meant to be *home* for us.

We were called to be aliens, foreigners, strangers here in this world. This world is not our home. We are not of this world.

But we are in it. While we are here, we were never meant to blend it, we were to stand out. We weren't meant to adopt worldly beliefs, we were meant to be sanctified by the true Word of God. We were never meant to be the highly distractable, easily tempted, consumerist, comfortable people we often are: We were meant to bear the Message of God's Good News to the world. In verse 20, Jesus prays this: *I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message...* If Jesus thought it important enough to pray for those who will hear our message, then we need to make sure it is a message that we are sharing. How will they hear it if we keep it to ourselves?

Your Otherworldly Sister,

Leah J. Hileman

NEWS AROUND THE DISTRICT

West Marva District Church of the
Brethren / Sleep in Heavenly Peace
Bed Build 09/27/25



**NO KID SLEEPS
ON THE FLOOR
IN OUR TOWN!**

Description: We will build bed headboards, footboards and siderails for kids that need beds. Participants can expect to sand, drill, assemble, stain and brand wood.

Purpose: This is a bed build event. When finished we will have the components for 50 new beds we can deliver to families with children in need! Our bed delivery teams need these beds to keep up our supply of beds. You make it happen and make new friends!

Role: No expertise is necessary. Come ready and dressed to sand, to drill, assemble wood into headboards, attach runners to siderails, stain and brand wood. No heavy lifting. There are other support roles if woodworking isn't you. Lunch will be provided.

USE THIS LINK TO REGISTER FOR FREE ONLINE, then use your social media and email and word-of-mouth to get even MORE people to use the link and sign up! <https://x.gldn.io/e/hfUJEjc61Ub>



West Marva District Church of the Brethren / Sleep in Heavenly Peace TWIN Bedding Drive

Do you enjoy a good night's sleep? Everyone does. We *need* sound sleep. Yet thousands of children and teens go to be on floors, couches, or shared spaces every night. We want to alleviate the problem of poor sleep quality and unsafe sleeping conditions for children and youth in our area.

West Marva Churches are encouraged to collect **NEW (unused!) TWIN-SIZED BEDDING** to bring as an offering to District Conference at Moorefield Church of the Brethren on Saturday, September 20. We want twin-sized sheets, pillowcases, and comforters with designs in mind for boys and girls, tweens and teens. **PLEASE NOTE: Bedding out of the packaging or pre-used cannot be accepted – BRING WHAT IS NEW AND BEST FOR THESE KIDS!**

We'll have an opportunity a week later at Oak Park Church of the Brethren in Oakland, MD to **BUILD** brand new beds (see above, no experience required!) to accompany our bedding donations. We will have a service of consecration at District Conference for the bedding, the bed build day, and the children who will **SLEEP IN HEAVENLY PEACE** because we are serving them in the love and name of Christ Jesus, who loves the little children.

Does your church have a directory? We'd love to have a copy at the district office! Email a digital version to westmarvade@gmail.com or send a paper copy to West Marva District, 384 Dennett Rd, Oakland MD 21550

HEIRBORN PROMISE Will be our featured District Conference musical guests. From Moderator Allie



Crowe: It is my privilege to announce our music ministry for this year's district. *Heirborn Promise* holds a special place in my heart. The trio have been doing music ministry since 1982! In fact, they sang at a district conference for West Marva several years ago. Darlene and Brett Scott, along with Kevin Shreve, have been proclaiming the Word of God through song, and they are bringing their ministry to us! I hope you all are ready to be inspired!



Old fashioned Gospel Sing

Whitedale Brethren Church
Terra Alta WV
Sept 27 2025 7 PM
Come out and enjoy some community singing

Bring your voices, guitars or instrument of your choice. Piano will be available for you to play.
Come alone or bring your group
Let's get together as a community and praise the Lord!

WHITEDALE GOSPEL SING Saturday, September 27 at 7pm. Open to all, whether you want to present music, sing along, or just sit back and enjoy and be blessed by these talents. 61 White Dale Church Rd (sometimes known as White Church Rd on some GPS apps), Terra Alta WV.

PASTOR LEAH AWAY DATES: Vacation September 30 – October 4, Council of District Executives Meeting in Elgin at Church of the Brethren Headquarters October 13-16. The District Office will be closed Tuesday, September 30 and Tuesday, October 14 for these travel trips.

CONGRATULATIONS TO ANNA ALT! Anna Lee was named **Grand Marshal of the 2025 Treasure Mountain Festival Parade**. Anna Lee is a member of South Mill Creek.

BEAVER RUN FALL FESTIVAL AND CHILI SUPPER will be held **Saturday, October 11 from 2-6pm**. 1774 Beaver Run Rd in Burlington WV. See details to the right.

CAMP GALILEE CLOTHING AND SHOE DRIVE Saturday, **September 20, 9am – 3pm**. Clothing, shoes, coats, and other items in all sizes, completely free. Please share with your congregations and neighbors for people to “shop” and meet their needs. 409 Camp Galilee Rd, Terra Alta WV.

WMMTP (West Marva Ministry Training Program) has updated its fee structure to simplify the way current and prospective students pay their portion to participate. Moving forward, all students will pay an **annual fee of only \$75** beginning with the first class of the fiscal year, usually early February. This covers registration for quarterly classes, including a stipend for the teaching staff.

Classes are open to all pastors and laypersons, ministry inquirers, anyone who wants to develop more Bible knowledge or ministry skill. Continuing Education Units available.

As West Marva Ministry Training Program is self-funded but charges very low fees, any individual or congregation that would like to make a contribution to support the teaching staff and program costs may **make checks payable to West Marva District with "WMMTP" in the MEMO line**, and



BEAVER RUN CHURCH OF THE BRETHREN
JOIN US FOR OUR ANNUAL
FALL Festival
AND CHILI SUPPER

ALSO: VEGETABLE, CHICKEN NOODLE & NAVY BEAN WITH RICE SOUP

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 11th, 2025 2 - 6 P.M.

JOHN DAVY'S FAMOUS CHILI FOOD, CAKE WALK, MUSIC, HAYRIDES, GAMES & MORE

1774 BEAVER RUN ROAD
BURLINGTON, WV 26710

Free will offering to be used to help the community

FOR MORE INFO
CONTACT SINDA NESSELRODT
(304)813-2561

FOR ALL AGES!

send to the district office. Your financial support advances Christian Education for current and future pastors. Thank you!

FROM WMMTP COORDINATOR ALLIE CROWE: The training program has hosted quarterly classes to help participants discern their calling into ministry. The program currently has three students. The 2025 program has included Administering the Church's Life, New Testament Survey, Pastoral Care, with Teaching and Learning in the Church yet to come. With the West Marva District transitions, many former educators no longer participate in our program. However, we are reassured by the dedication of several new individuals who have stepped up to teach classes, which will be actual assets to the program as we continue.

Leah and I are working with the ACTS representative for training programs across the denomination. Our goal is to open our program up to districts who may not have a training program, to allow more students to get training from our outstanding pastoral educators. Students would join VIA zoom, while our students in our district would continue to be in person. This would offer a chance to grow our program and allow our students to get perspective from students in other areas of the denomination.

For licensed and ordained pastors needing Continuing Education Units, participating in and/or teaching a class will help them gain those CEUs. If you plan to attend a class, you are expected to participate in discussions and contribute beneficial perspectives that support our students' growth.

I want to thank Leah and Jennifer for helping me teach classes during the 2025 year.

October Class:

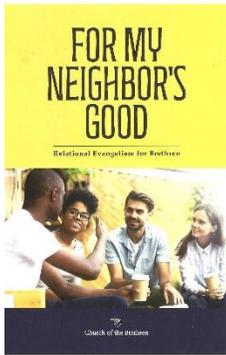
Teaching and Learning in the Church: Oct 11 at 9 AM located at the Westernport Church of the Brethren. This will be taught by Leah Hileman.

Syllabus: https://docs.google.com/document/d/11-3rJpVrX7nePekAE_IWcTlnPmwiP6oh/edit?usp=drive_link&oid=104083604457629973698&rtpof=true&sd=true

2025 Classes

Mission and Witness (Feb/March 2026). Carl Fike
Preaching and Worship (April/May 2026) Allie Crowe and Jenn Kreighbaum
Practical Applications/Brethren Belief & Practices. (August/Sept 206). Diane May
Prayer and Spiritual Growth (Oct/Nov 2026)

Did you participate in last year's District-wide **PULPIT SWAP**? We would love to have even more congregations participate in this fun opportunity to meet members in the district and hear good preaching from fresh voices. Notify Richard Funk at [304-897-5319](tel:304-897-5319), debfunk@frontiernet.net if you are willing to be included. **We will arrange a fresh date in the Spring.** It would be fantastic for all 27 congregations to join in!



DISCIPLE-MAKING IS IN DECLINE. TIME FOR IT TO MAKE A COMEBACK!

For My Neighbor's Good is a curriculum created by Pastor Nate Polzin, the Executive Director of Discipleship and Leadership Formation for the Church of the Brethren, written with Brethren in mind. It is a 6-week/6-lesson guide to relational evangelism (faith sharing) that can be used by small groups, youth groups, Sunday School classes, pastors as a sermon series, and even once-monthly all-church potluck and discipleship training.

Free copies were donated to West Marva District! Call or email Leah at 540-742-2457, westmarvade@gmail.com, to arrange for pick-up or delivery of the

curriculum.

DISTRICT-WIDE BIBLE STUDY using this curriculum will be offered as an in-person/ZOOM hybrid class for SIX weeks, ***Tuesdays 6:45pm-7:30pm, beginning OCTOBER 21*** at the District Office, led by Leah Hileman. Meeting

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/85638143006?pwd=bpO1P9eBCSu08miKMo7an51DnEVYM9.1>

Meeting ID: 856 3814 3006, Passcode: 8bLEPr. If you would like to participate remotely, **give your email address to Leah at westmarvade@gmail.com** and she will include you in a same-day reminder email with the link. Anyone in or around Oakland, Maryland is welcome to attend in person at 384 Dennett Rd, 21550. It will be approximately 40 minutes each week for 6 weeks. Clergy who attend at least 5 sessions may receive .5 CEU.

Please keep Kenneth "Cappy" Caplinger in prayer, minister at Beaver Run, for a cancer diagnosis and treatment. If you see him masked at District Conference, or sitting apart, please respect his health needs, and love on him from a little distance.

2025 WOMEN'S RETREAT PHOTOS from the camp "HEALED WHOLLY."



FROM OUR MODERATOR ALLIE CROWE

The last year has flown by. It is hard to believe District Conference is right around the corner. This year's theme is "Not of this World." This has become one of the few life verses that have had a profound impact on my life. This is also something I believe

Christ-followers need to be reminded of, given the societal standards that have become the norm in today's modern age. Not of this world is found in the Gospel according to

John and the letter to the church in Rome. When reminded not to be of this world, there is a call to remember to be separate from worldly ways of thinking, acting, and being.

When we think about being not of this world, it has religious and philosophical avenues that help break down the need to be detached from worldly temptations and views.

Jesus describes his kingdom as being not of this world. When he is praying for himself, his disciples, and all believers, Jesus prays that we remember we are not of this world, just as He was not of this world. In the letter to the church in Rome, the phrase comes

with a call to not be conformed to the patterns of the world, but instead to allow our minds to be transformed. We are called to show our devotion to the Word of God, allowing it to speak to us, and through us, so we can be an example to others we come

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NEWS FROM AROUND THE DENOMINATION

ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2026 will be in Fort Wayne, IN from Sunday, June 28 to Thursday, July 2. In 2027 it will convene in Daytona Beach, FL. Note the special dates (for better rates) – Wednesday, July 28 to Sunday, August 1.

We had very poor representation from West Marva this year. ***Please plan, pray, budget, and prepare to send a delegate to Fort Wayne next summer.*** Let's get full participation from our district churches. Any member in good standing may serve as a delegate. Pastors benefit from several continuing education events as well (consider sending your pastor as a non-delegate!).

There *is* scholarship money available directly from the Annual Conference office for congregations who need financial assistance. Don't let it be the money that stops you from participating – ***IF IT'S GOD'S WILL, IT'S GOD'S BILL!***

National Youth Conference 2026 will take place July 18-23, 2026, at the YMCA of the Rockies in Estes Park, Colorado. The theme for NYC 2026 is "Light Within Us," based on Matthew 5:14-16. Youth who have finished 9th grade through their first year of college (or age equivalent) are invited to attend with adult advisors. This will be a week full of fellowship, worship, service projects, recreation, and so much more! Registration opens January 5, 2026, visit www.brethren.org/nyc for more information. The cost of NYC is \$625 for early bird registration, \$650 for regular registration, and \$675 for late registration. If you have any questions, reach out to Rachel Johnson (rjohnson@brethren.org).

BRETHREN DISASTER MINISTRIES NEEDS VOLUNTEERS IN OUR OWN DISTRICT!

Project Workdays:

- Saturdays: 9/27, Oct 4, Oct 11, Oct 18. More dates will be added if needed.
- Weekdays: as volunteers (with leaders, tools and equipment) are available

Rally Location:

- Bruce Outreach Center, [388 Philos Ave, Westernport, MD](#)

- Parking is available for volunteers who want to carpool to worksites
- Restrooms may or may not be available on Saturdays. Other restrooms are available at McDonalds: 182 Church St, Westernport

Saturday Schedule:

- 8:30 - Arrive at Bruce Outreach Center for sign-in, briefing, assignments, load equipment.
- 9:00 - Depart to worksites. Later start times can be arranged for groups travelling a long distance to Westernport.
- End-of-day - Groups are not expected to work beyond 5 pm. Please check in with the project coordinator and return any borrowed tools/equipment before departing for home.

What to Bring:

- Volunteers should plan on bringing their own lunch and snacks. Bottled water will be provided.
- Groups are encouraged to bring equipment and tools for their project if possible. The Baptist equipment trailer will be onsite and can lend out equipment if needed.
- A briefing sheet with an attached liability waiver will be sent to each group leader upon signup. Please ask your volunteers to bring their signed waiver with them.

Contact Denny Skeweris for information or to lend a helping hand for Christ
denskew@gmail.com, 301-616-0013 (cell)

SIGN UP TO RECEIVE NEWS AND INFORMATION FROM CHURCH OF THE BRETHREN

Newsline, FaithX, Brethren Disaster Ministries, Global Food Initiative, NYC and other events. Stay informed about what God is doing in and through our denomination, both here and abroad.

Use this link <https://tinyurl.com/yjhppue5> or the QR Code →



Do you have a full-time career while also serving the church as a part-time pastor? If so, this webinar is for you. Over 90 minutes, we will explore what it is like to serve the church in pastoral ministry while also tending to the responsibilities of a full-time career and family.

Those who are called to pastoral ministry know ministry isn't something you can turn off when you get to work or arrive home in the evening; it is a calling that pervades the entirety of our lives. So, with all the responsibilities of ministry, work, and family, how are you taking care of your own well-being? It is vitally important that those who fill these roles tend to their spiritual, emotional, and physical health. No-one knows what it is like to be in pastoral ministry except others in pastoral ministry.

You are invited to join us as we discuss these experiences, discern ways that we can prioritize our own health, and create relationships with others that understand the demands of ministry while working in another field. Participants will be asked to fill out a short survey upon registration, and will receive a copy of the book *The Art and Practice of Bivocational Ministry: A Pastor's Guide* by Dennis Bickers.

Register at <https://forms.gle/rt6r3EhNp7m8buWH7>

Link to the survey at <https://forms.gle/aczCELHaAwgkPs766>

— Richard Wehrle is manager of *Thriving in Ministry*, which is a program under Part-Time Pastor; Full-Time Church in the Church of the Brethren's Ministry Office.

NYC2026 LOGO, Designed by Debbie Noffsinger

