

STONE CHURCH NEWS

February 2022

Membership Class – See inside for details on our upcoming membership class, starting February 20th – all are welcome!

Valentine's Day Cookies– Hospitality Team is handing out cookies for Valentine's Day – see info inside to learn how you can help with the event!

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From the Pastor's Desk

A Ritual to Read to Each Other

by William Stafford

*If you don't know the kind of person I am
and I don't know the kind of person you are
a pattern that others made may prevail in the world
and following the wrong god home we may miss our star.*

*For there is many a small betrayal in the mind,
a shrug that lets the fragile sequence break
sending with shouts the horrible errors of childhood
storming out to play through the broken dike.*

*And as elephants parade holding each elephant's tail,
but if one wanders the circus won't find the park,
I call it cruel and maybe the root of all cruelty
to know what occurs but not recognize the fact.*

*And so I appeal to a voice, to something shadowy,
a remote important region in all who talk:
though we could fool each other, we should consider—
lest the parade of our mutual life get lost in the dark.*

*For it is important that awake people be awake,
or a breaking line may discourage them back to sleep;
the signals we give — yes or no, or maybe —
should be clear: the darkness around us is deep.*

Stafford's image of our mutual life as a parade that can get lost in the dark if we do not nurture our knowing of one another - if we do not talk and learn together - if we do not remind each other that we belong to each other is powerful to me.

What does it mean to belong to something or someone? To be a part? To become a member? We've had several folks in the last few months ask about membership in the Stone Church of the Brethren. It's very exciting! We are happy to expand who we are to welcome others in. You can read about our upcoming membership class later in this newsletter - maybe you will want to be a part of it!

At the same time our worship series will reflect on who we are - within our Stone Church community and beyond. Beginning January 30, we will have a series of services focused on the Church of the Brethren tagline: *Continuing the Work of Jesus: Peacefully, Simply, Together*. It's important for all of us to take some time to remember who we are as a community of faith, to remember that we have promised to love and care and show up for one another, to remember that we are part of something bigger than just our individual viewpoint and contribution.

Belonging always exists on a continuum between identity and inclusivity. We all must navigate holding on to who we are while staying in relationship with others. We hope this series helps to kick off our membership class in a positive way - but we also hope that you all feel invited to think about your place within the Stone Church of the Brethren community. What are the places where you fit? How might the community need to change in order to grow? How might you need to change in order to grow? Can we get to know the kind of person you are - and the kind of person I am? And then talk about how we might continue...peacefully, simply, together?

Stone Church Leadership Team
“Continuing the Work of Jesus. Peacefully. Simply. Together.”



Please welcome our new Leadership Team Vice Chair – Jessica Buterbaugh! She will be authoring the Leadership Team updates in upcoming newsletters (including this one!).

There is something about the unknown of a new year that excites me. Maybe it's a childish naivety that makes me think I'm invincible and can handle any change that comes along. It's strange because any other type of unknown gives me insurmountable levels of anxiety, but not a new year. A new year gives me hope and confidence and optimism. And as I attended my first Leadership Team meeting, I felt those very things.

During the meeting, the chair of each team shared their biggest challenges, but also what they are excited about. As you can imagine, many of the challenges were pandemic related. We continue to strive to find ways to overcome the social side effects the pandemic has created, yet we do not give up hope and excitement for when we can return to some of our pre-pandemic activities.

Another challenge we continue to navigate is the lack of volunteers to serve on various church committees. It is understandable that there is a high concern for health and safety amidst the pandemic. We also are empathetic to the fact that many have had to adapt to new models of working, schooling, and parenting, in addition to so many other changes. As you find yourselves coming to terms with your new roles in the New Year, we encourage you to consider how you may be able to help serve Stone Church. This may mean serving on a team or simply volunteering to greet congregants (either in-person or virtually) during a Sunday worship service. We all have unique gifts, and we welcome you to share your gifts with us. If you're unsure how you can use your gifts to help serve Stone Church's mission, please contact the Gifts Discernment team or our pastors.

Although the pandemic has presented many obstacles, we have learned that not all side effects are negative. While the majority of faith communities across the country have seen a decrease in membership and service attendees, Stone Church has seen an increase. What a great "problem" to start the New Year! Because the pandemic has forced us to embrace technology, we have been able to welcome new attendees from locations near and far. We are thrilled that we have been able to reach more people and look forward to continuing to welcome new people to our church family.

A recurring motif the past two years has been change. As we start 2022, the Leadership Team is looking at the church's bylaws and making considerations for revisions. One approved change is to update the outdated pronouns. It is now grammatically correct, and more inclusive, to use the term "they" when "referring to a generic person whose gender is unknown or irrelevant to the context" (American Psychological Association). As such, all references in the bylaws to "he/she" will be changed to "they." This is a small change that we are excited about because it demonstrates the church's commitment to inclusivity.

We also are looking at the membership categories and discussing ways to welcome new and veteran attendees in different ways. While we have only had preliminary discussions regarding membership, we are excited to further examine this category and find ways to grow our community of faith.

I am excited to start the New Year serving on the Leadership Team and working with others to support our church family - blessings to you all as we climb together the mountain that is 2022.



Hiring Summer Staff--Apply Now!

If you (or someone you know) love Camp and enjoy working with kids, nothing is better than working at Camp and getting paid too. Camp is hiring staff for Summer 2022: counselors, lifeguard, ropes/tower director, naturalist, crafts director, kitchen, and maintenance. Program Staff must be at least 18 yrs. old. Support Staff - kitchen and maintenance workers - must be at least 16. All staff members must be committed Christians, enjoy children and youth, and have to be able to live in harmony with others.

Aside from being fun, working at camp is a great learning experience too. Staff members grow in faith as well as leadership and communication skills. For those interested in education, ministry, social work, or just being a parent, it's terrific on the job training! The Camp season for 2022 will be from June 9 - July 30. Program Staff pay ranges from \$200-\$250 per week, depending on experience. Support Staff ranges from \$180-\$250. Applications are available at www.campbluediamond.org/summer-staff.

Summer Camp 2022 – What's In A Name?

Don't miss out on summer camp opportunities for children and youth ranging from 5 years-old to high school seniors, and families too! Regular registration is open through June 1, with *early bird savings* available before March 1. Families should check out the *Multiple Sibling* discount. Don't forget that Stone Church pays half of the registration fee for our children and youth. If finances stand in the way of a child going to camp, look for scholarship information in the brochure and consider applying.

Online registration is now open at www.campbluediamond.org! Brochures were sent to all past campers in January. If you or someone you know need one, contact David Meadows using the info below or view the information online.

Welcome Gabe Imler as New Program Director

Camp is excited to welcome Gabe Imler as our new Program Director! Gabe grew up in the Hollidaysburg Church of the Brethren and has a long history with CBD. He went to summer camp as a child and continued through high school, during which time he also served as a CIT. Gabe has worked on staff for eight different summers as a counselor, naturalist, and song leader. More recently, he has been an assistant director and instructor at an outdoor environmental education program in Lake Geneva, WI. In addition to his new role at Camp, he is also exploring his call to ministry and working toward being licensed.

Junior High Retreat – Teamwork makes the Dream Work!

February 11, 7:00 p.m. – February 13, 1:30 p.m.

Come join Gabe Imler and your favorite summer camp counselors as we explore how our talents help strengthen us as a body of believers. Enjoy singing, games, a campfire, outside fun, arts and crafts, and some new and exciting team activities. Camp will communicate exact Covid plans, but precautions will be in place. Cost is \$70 and all 6th, 7th, and 8th graders are welcome. For more info and online registration, visit www.campbluediamond.org/retreats-%26-events.

Upcoming Events

Junior High Retreat	February 11-13
Junior Retreat	March 4-5
Outdoor School	March 28-May 6
Heritage Fair	September 17

Have questions?

Contact your Camp Representative, David Meadows.

February Birthdays

3—Doris Comerford *92	14—Meta Meckstroth	18—Phil Paterson
7—Anne Rice	15—Karen Morgan	19—Donna Evans
7—Cheryl Ritchey	15—Monte Furry	26—Darlene Chivers
7—Greg Stein	15—Laura White	27—Gene Goshorn
7—Joanne Thurston-Griswold	16—Sylvia McDowell	28—William Meloy
8—Bob Oldring	17—Sophie Fisher-Sneath *11	28—Norm Siems
14—Zachary Cloz *4	17—John Wright	

February Anniversaries

3—Bill & Lori Fagan	19—Barbara & Ron Detwiler
4—Bob & Virginia Biber *55	

Grocery Gift Cards— Every card helps our church! (We get 5% to use in our ministries!)

Buy your groceries at Weis or Giant using a grocery gift card purchased through Stone Church and Stone Church gets a donation of 5% back from the grocery store! To get your grocery gift cards, simply contact Cheryl Ritchey or contact the church office! Cards are available in denominations of \$25, \$50, and \$100.



Men's Breakfast

February 19th — 8:00 AM

Fix your favorite breakfast and brew up some coffee, then settle in for some great fellowship, a few corny jokes and a light reflection. Join the regular attendees, who look forward to seeing the gallery of faces and hearing the latest joke. If you are interested in attending, send your email address to Rick Laabs and he will send you an invitation. Due to the colder weather, this event will be held virtually over Zoom. If you have questions, call Rick.



Prayer Shawls

The prayer shawl ministry provides comfort and love from the Stone Church congregation to those who experience challenging times. The shawls are tangible reminders of God's ever-present hope and peace freely given to us. Challenges may cloud our awareness of God's continual presence, but a shawl is a wonderful reminder. Placed around shoulders or across a lap, a prayer shawl provides a comforting touch. We are journeying through a most unusual year filled with social unrest, political stress, COVID and maybe stress that is unique to you. The prayer shawl ministry offers shawls to those who may be feeling additional stress, sadness, or loneliness this season. If you would like a shawl, please reach out to Pastor Cindy, Pastor Ben, or Donna Rhodes. We will arrange for a safe delivery to you.



Gene's Jottings **"Found in Scripture"**

Adapted from *The Bible Promise Book*
Barbour Publishing

Whatever the need of the moment, the answer is to be found in Scripture. Whatever we are feeling, whatever we are suffering, whatever we are hoping—the Bible has something to say to us.

Concerning Anger...

The Lord is gracious, and full of compassion, slow to anger and of great mercy. *Psalm 145:8*

A God ready to pardon, gracious and merciful, slow to anger and of great kindness. *Nehemiah 9:17*

Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let everyone be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath; for the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God. *James 1: 19, 20*

Be not hasty in thy spirit to be angry; for anger resteth in the bosom of fools. *Ecclesiastes 7:9*

Be angry, and sin not; let not the sun go down upon your wrath. *Ephesians 4:26*

Concerning Belief...

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, thus whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. *John 3: 16*

And Jesus said unto them, I am the Bread of life; whoever cometh to me shall never hunger; whoever believeth on me shall never thirst. *John 6: 35*

Jesus said unto him, if thou canst believe, all things are possible to those who believeth. *Mark 9: 23*

Jesus said unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me thou hast believed; blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed. *John 20: 29*

Concerning God's Correction...

For whom the Lord loveth, he correcteth; even as a father and a child in whom he delighteth. *Proverbs 3: 12*

Concerning Courage...

Be of good courage and God shall strengthen your heart, all ye that hope in the Lord. *Psalm 31: 24*

I know both how to be abased and how to abound. Everywhere and in all things, I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth me. *Philippians 4: 12, 13*

Concerning Death...

O Death, where is thy sting? O Grave, where is thy victory? *I Corinthians 15: 35*

For this God is our God forever and ever; God will be our guide even unto death. *Psalm 48: 14*

That whosoever believeth in Him should have eternal life. *John 3: 16*

For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the life of God, which is in Christ Jesus, our Lord. *Romans 8: 38, 39*

Concerning Eternal Life...

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, thus whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. *John 3: 16*

Concerning Seeking God...

The Lord is with you, while ye be with Him, and if you seek God, God will be found of you; but if you forsake God, you will be forsaken. *II Corinthians 15: 2*

The Lord is good unto them that wait, and to the soul that seeketh God. *Lamentations 3: 25*

For thus saith the Lord unto the house of Israel, seek ye me, and ye shall live. *Amos 3: 4*

Sorry to have missed January... first time since 2004.

Membership Class

We will hold a **6-week** membership class beginning **February 20, 2022**. The class is open to members and non-members and does not obligate you to join the church. The Stone Church Community has always had an expansive sense of belonging. Membership is one part of that belonging and we want to welcome any of you into that. The class will be a chance to get to know other people within the church, learn a bit about Stone Church structure, practices and beliefs, expand your knowledge of broader church history, and take a look at the Bible and how one might understand and study it well. Classes will be on **Sunday afternoons at 2pm** for about an hour. All of the classes will be on zoom in order to accommodate those who do not live locally. If you are interested, please contact one of the pastors.

Valentine's Day Cookies

The Hospitality Team will be spreading love for Valentine's Day after church on Sunday, February 13th in the form of cookies and valentines! ***The team is looking for volunteers to share in cookie baking by providing 2 dozen cookies to the church by February 11th (cookies can be stored in the freezer if needed).***

In addition, Hospitality Team is looking for individuals interested in dropping off 1 or 2 packs of cookies to those among us who aren't able to attend church in person. If you would like to volunteer or have any questions, please contact Jeannie Lashlee..