

STONE CHURCH NEWS

JUNE 2020



From the Pastor's Desk

Friday is cinnamon roll day. The whole family looks forward to it every week. On Friday mornings we run upstairs and everybody pitches in to make the cinnamon rolls. We wait expectantly while the aroma wafts from the oven. And when the timer goes off there is a race to add the frosting - which we of course sample when we're done spreading it out.

Everybody picks out the one that looks best to them and we dive in.

It's our new tradition. Cindy started picking up a container of those ready-to-bake cinnamon rolls each week from the grocery store for a little treat as we approach the weekend. It has ended up being part of the rhythm of our week, something that helps set one day apart from the next as we live in this strange era of "social-distancing". Some of our friends do "Waffles & LEGOs" on Saturdays. You probably have a few new traditions of your own.

These rhythms give structure to our lives, they help us make sense of it. We've developed new rhythms of life together as a church too. We still gather faithfully for **Worship** each week on **Sunday mornings**. We just gather together from our own homes now. Many of you join us before the service for a time of fellowship, catching up on one another's lives. We've added the mid-week rhythm of **Wednesday Night Bible Studies** too.

Over the next few weeks, we will continue our series on **Everyday Holiness**, drawing from themes raised in Tish Harrison Warren's book, *Liturgy of the Ordinary*. We'll look at ways that even the most ordinary rhythms of our lives: from *eating leftovers* to *drinking tea* are invested with the sacred and can point us toward life with God, and being the community of faith we are called to be. As Elizabeth Barret Browning put it:

*"All earth is crammed with heaven, and every bush aflame.
But only those who see take off their shoes..."*

The church isn't closed. The whole earth is crammed with the wondrous work of God all around us. God's work in and through this Stone Church family, never stopped. This has been a season filled with its own unique experiences - and with its own unique blessings. We are grateful for you - so grateful that we get to do life together with you in the midst of these strange times.

Stone Church Leadership Team Meeting

“Continuing the work of Jesus. Peacefully. Simply. Together.”



Every year for Memorial Day, we pack up the car and head out to Illinois for family camp at Camp Emmaus, that region’s version of Camp Blue Diamond. There we spend the weekend visiting Chuck’s mom, brothers and friends. We do the same things every year – cook hot dogs, fish in the “lake” (pond), sit around the fire and talk, and watch John Royer fly a toy plane or drone and get it stuck in a tree. As Memorial Day approaches, these unsolicited memories fill my mind. My mind, heart and body know it is the season for this trip. Only this year, we won’t be going.

You may feel the same way about the rhythms and seasons of your life. Part of this may have been the weekly pattern of getting ready and heading to church, greeting friends, hearing the choir, and exchanging handshakes and hugs with the pastors on the way out. Many of us are longing for a “return to normal”.

Jeff Decker, our Leadership team chair, has been forwarding us guidance and information from our District Executive. As I read through that guidance before our meeting it became painfully apparent that “normal” will look very different even when we can gather in the sanctuary together again. Masks will be normal, handshakes will not. Sermons and prayer are safe, but singing and passing the offering plate are now high risk activities. Worst of all, opening too soon or failing to take precautions may have fatal consequences for loved ones in our church family.

It was clear, as we went through the Leadership team meeting, that planning is going to be critical. Great things are happening right now under the stay at home order – Deacons are working hard to support and stay in touch with the church community, Witness team is actively supporting those in greatest need, and Worship team is already thinking ahead to how we can continue to use video technology when some of us are back in the sanctuary. But how will we open? When? What will it look like? What cleaning and safety protocols do we need?

To work on these questions, your Leadership team has appointed a COVID-19 response team including the pastors, Daisy Decker, Marty Keeney, Brooke Meadows, Luke Roth, and Sharon Yohn. Our task will be to outline the phased reopening of facilities and gathering, and determine what precautions will need to be taken. The good news is that there are excellent recommendations available from our District Executive, the CDC, and other resources.

So many of us long for life to return to normal. To embrace our weekly patterns, seasonal traditions and just to give a friend a hug. But now, more than ever, we need to continue to prioritize the health and safety of the most vulnerable. To embrace our new patterns and find joy in modified traditions. The response team will be working to envision how church activities may feel the same but look different while we all cope with our own personal changing traditions. So this year, while we can’t travel to Illinois for Memorial Day, we can make a campfire at home, roast hot dogs, Zoom with friends, and maybe, just for tradition, get a toy drone stuck in a tree.

Submitted by Sharon Yohn
Leadership Team vice-chair

Annual Conference Church of the Brethren



Because we could not meet this year, this year's Annual Conference theme, program, business, and featured leadership will take place June 30-July 4, 2021 in Greensboro, N.C.

This is the first time in the 233 years of recorded Church of the Brethren annual meetings that the Brethren will not meet together in person. Even throughout the Civil War years, World Wars I and II, the Great Depression, and more, Brethren have gathered each summer to discern God's will, worship, and fellowship together. We mourn that this year the pandemic makes such a gathering impossible. **BUT...** The Program and Arrangements Committee is working on plans for one or two online gatherings during the week of July 1-5 when Annual Conference would have been held. More information will be available in the coming weeks.

AND... you're invited to **Participate in the Church of the Brethren Virtual Choir!**



Three hymns, "Blessed Assurance," "I See A New World Coming," and "Move In Our Midst," will be used in the Virtual Denominational Worship and Concert, July 1 and 2. More info at: www.brethren.org/news/2020/denominational-worship-service-to-be-virtual-event.html

In summary, a virtual choir is produced by each individual recording themselves singing along with the hymn and submitting it. Then, all those submissions are put together into one grand compilation. We've set ambitious goals for this project and welcome your submissions as soon as possible

- The Early-Bird Deadline is **June 7, 2020**;
- The Final Deadline is **June 14, 2020**.



To make your submission go to the following web link: www.brethren.org/VirtualChoir
For general questions about the project, contact cobvirtualchoir2020@gmail.com.
For technical assistance, please contact: assistance@LivingStreamCOB.org.

Please pray for the project overall, and the project core team consisting of Enten Eller, Paul Munday, and Dave Sollenberger.

Photo by Keith Hollenberg

Guatemala Circle Update – June 2020



Greetings from our Guatemala partners at the Asturias Academy! There's an old saying that "When the United States catches cold, Latin America gets pneumonia," and that adage is proving to be tragically accurate in many ways for the Guatemalan people. While the COVID-19 pandemic has revealed that our social safety

net here in the U.S. is much more frayed than we thought, at least our government and health care system have the resources to provide relief to most who find themselves unemployed and in need of medical treatment. That is sadly not the case in Guatemala.

At present (May 19th), Guatemala has only reported 2,001 cases and 38 deaths, although that number is surely low because only very limited testing has been done. The government has imposed strict measures such as a twelve-hour per day curfew from 4:00pm to 4:00am to attempt to limit the spread of the coronavirus. The problem, though, is that a large percentage of the population lives in poverty conditions and cannot afford to shelter in place. There has been a recent spike in cases and the Guatemalan president actually recommended to citizens already suffering from malnutrition that they fast in response to food shortages and limited access to food, a step down from Marie Antoinette's "let them eat cake" proposal for the poor masses.

Schools have been closed since late March and are not scheduled to reopen until July 1st, although it remains to be seen whether conditions will permit them to do so safely at that time. Their regular school year runs from January to October, so the pandemic will have even more disruptive consequences for students there than it has here. Our partners have been training teachers to offer instruction to some students using Google Classroom, but since many of the students do not have internet access, they are unable to participate and many parents who have lost their employment can no longer pay the partial tuition they contribute.

Jorge Chojolán is honoring the school's commitment to pay teachers during the shutdown, but they are running low on resources. If you are in a position to provide financial support for the school, any funds donated will be used to cover teachers' salaries and other operating expenses. Checks should be made out to Stone Church of the Brethren, with Guatemala Partner Relief included on the memo line, and can be mailed to the church, or contributions can also be made through online banking, being sure to designate the funds for Guatemala Partner Relief. *Mil gracias* in advance for any support you can offer our Guatemalan partners and friends!



CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR 2020 GRADUATES

As another school year comes to a close, we want to recognize the achievements and education milestones for those in our church community. Please congratulate these students...

High School Graduates

Jack Hosler
Maggie Lashlee
Grant Musser
Jordan Soliday
Nick Troha
Kieran Wright

College Graduates

Martin Berger
Harry Biddle
Molly Biddle
Will Conrad
Hunter Downs
Kiera Lindner
Hudson Speck
Kate Thurston-Griswold
Will Thurston-Griswold
Madison Troha
Evan Ulrich
Molly Ulrich
Joanna White
Allison Yearwood



June Birthdays

3—Deborah Barrette	15—Barb Parlett	22—Cheryl Washburn
4—Max Moyer	17—Taran Pelkey	24—Megan Boyer
4—Jack Hosler	19—William Dickey	24—Maddix Uhrich
7—Cecilia Elder	21—Mary Garvey	25—Andy Murray
8—Patti Paterson	21—Chad Miller	25—Dale Wampler
8—Dottie Steele	22—Becky Mitchell	28—Jeff Adams
8—Tara Yorke	22—Wesley Newman	

June Anniversaries

1—Carol & Charles Swigart	22—Terry & Andy Murray
3—Kim & Dave Witkovsky	26—Emily & Paul Elder
5—Myrna & Dick Landrum	26—Donna & Loren Rhodes
11—Carolyn & Bruce Lidston	28—Daisy & Jeff Decker
11—Cheryl & Robert Washburn	29—Lisa & Jay Hosler
13—Joanne & Henry Thurston-Griswold	29—Becky & Donald Mitchell
16—Carol & Terry Fultz	30—Harriet & Earl Kaylor
18—Anne & Norman Siems	30—Julie & Joel Pheasant
20—Chris & Chip Gibboney	30—Zilla & Jack Wagner
20—Laura & Jamie White	



Dear Stone Church community,

I first came to the Stone Church as a freshman at Juniata who was alone and far away from her hometown and family in southwest Florida. I hadn't felt at home in a church for a long time. But from the very beginning the Stone Church community welcomed me. The first sign of this welcome was the little bookmark that is given out that states that the Stone Church celebrates everyone, regardless of their identity, background, or current relationship with God. I had yearned for a church like that for years and years.

Growing up, I was raised in extremely conservative evangelical churches, and was told things like "if you believe in the Big Bang you go to hell." I spent my entire childhood fighting against the anti-science leanings of my churches, and when my family began going to more science-accepting churches, and I began to grow aware of my identity as an LGBT+ person, I began to fight for LGBT+ recognition, acceptance, and celebration in the church. I came out at fifteen. I was blessed to have a family who loved me unconditionally, but I yearned to find a church community that did the same, to find a church that really seemed to love others – no matter who or what those others were – with the kind of love that I knew God had for everyone.

I couldn't find that church in southwest Florida; my family pretty much stopped going to church altogether when I was an older teenager. But I found that church in central Pennsylvania right next door to my college. I found that church in the welcome I received the moment I walked in the door of the Stone Church, in the bookmark they gave me that affirmed their celebration and love of others, in former pastor Anna Lisa's friendship and guidance, in current pastors Cindy and Ben's friendship and welcome into their home for Easter lunch and long conversations at Baker, in church services and Bible studies that challenged and grew my faith in directions I never imagined my faith could grow but that I am overjoyed it has, in the many free meals offered by the Stone Church that as a college student I appreciated immensely, in Zoom services and Bible studies that have allowed me to remain a part of the Stone Church community from at home in Florida, and in the presence of God and God's love for everyone, no matter what, that permeates the Stone Church community and everyone I have encountered in it.

I am extremely sad to be leaving the Stone Church community now that I have graduated, but more than that, I am unbelievably grateful. In big and small ways, all of you, even those I haven't had the pleasure of meeting or getting to know, have made an incredible difference in my life, more than I can say. You welcomed me and celebrated me and were truly the hand of God in my life. Thank you all for everything.

With love,

Kiera Lindner

Mothers' Day was May 10. Fathers' Day is June 21. Such holidays give us memories, and memories, as the play "Cats" tells us, are things songs are made of. Years ago a Stone Church officer asked Alberta to write a monthly column. She called it "Messenger Musings." Soon she had me writing it for her. In memory of Alberta's columns – whose writing skills are far superior to mine—what follows is Alberta's column of May 2017, titled "What More Can We Ask?"
Enjoy!



MESSENGER MUSINGS

"What More Can We Ask?"



"Under the certainty of heaven, all we can be sure of is tomorrow. When yesterday is ours, what more can we ask?" Brother Cadfael spoke these words in *Monk's Hood*. Ellis Peters (pseudonym of the late Edith Pargeter) created this much-beloved character and used him in a series of twelfth-century murder mysteries.

Cadfael, a Welsh Benedictine monk, lived and worked as an herbalist at the Shrewsbury Abbey of St. Peter and St. Paul, in Shropshire. His duties included ministering to the sick and spending many hours in spiritual contemplation. And through it all he found time to solve murder mysteries. A busy person indeed! One whom I've enjoyed reading about for a number of years.

As for myself, I'm certainly no Brother Cadfael. These days I'm certain of one thing: I've forgotten more than I remember. No joking, I'm in earnest here. Right now I'm looking at a newspaper clipping from last year. Its title: "Someday lost memories may be recoverable" by Anthony L. Komaroff, M.D. He believes that when we forget something one day, then remember it later, that suggests "a memory really is still there, but that we just have trouble retrieving it sometimes."

I find that very comforting. And just now I am recalling the last time I visited Mother at the Morrison's Cove Nursing Home. When I walked through the front door into a hallway, the light was shining in my eyes and I could not see the faces in the group seated in the room ahead of me. But I heard Mother's voice! "That's my daughter!" On previous visits she had not seemed to know me. What more can we ask than to be remembered by those we love?

And please do remember to keep your subscription to *Messenger* current. Debbie will be pleased to help you do that. Just check with her at the church office. What more can we ask than that?

---Alberta H. Goshorn---
(May 2017)

"With us in spirit..."

Below are members of our church family who, though they are not often physically able to join us in worship, remain with us in spirit. Remember them in your prayers, and with cards and visits! Please contact the church office (814-643-3390 or stonechurch@verizon.net) to add others you know.

DeLois Fluke
11325 Raystown Rd.
Huntingdon, PA 16652

Jean Prendergast
Arista Care, Room 173
1229 Warm Springs Ave
Huntingdon, PA 16652

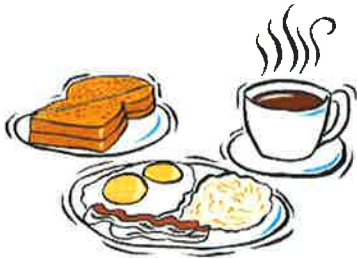
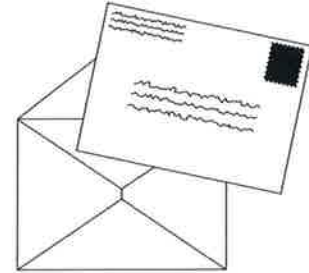
Thelma Wallace
5754 Wallace Dr.
Huntingdon, PA 16652

Gene & Alberta Goshorn
14155 Hill Valley Rd.
Mt. Union PA 17066

Lydia Price
c/o Charla and Greg Chiapelli
597 Sechler Rd.
Somerset, Pa 15501

John Keiper
PO Box 121
Bedford, PA 15522
jdkjak@gmail.com

Westminster Woods
John Bowser
Sue & Bill Martin (@the Oaks)
Yvonne McKenzie (@the Oaks)
Denny Rock



Men's Breakfast

June 6th - 8:05 AM

Zoom Men's Breakfast Gathering

Bring your own favorite breakfast dish and join other Stone Church men and boys for fellowship, jokes and a light reflection. Send your email address to Rick Laabs (laabsra55@gmail.com) if you are interested in attending and he will send you a Zoom invitation.

Watch for details in the Friday Flash.

Mid-Week Bible Study – WEDNESDAY nights @ 7pm*

(*except on the 2nd week of June, when we will meet on Tuesday, June 9th, instead!)



Join us as we take a deeper dive into the scriptures on *Everyday Holiness*.

See the **Friday Flash** for details on how to join us on Zoom via computer or phone. Unable to make it, but still want to listen in? Please contact the office for an audio recording.



Grocery Gift Cards— Every card helps our church!

Do you ever buy groceries at Weis or Giant? Purchase a grocery gift card through Stone Church and you can shop as normal and Stone Church gets a small donation!

Grocery gift cards are available in denominations of \$25, \$50, and \$100. You can purchase these by contacting the church office; we'll be happy to get them to you.



Food Pantry Sunday—June 21

As we live with the stay-at-home order, we find creative ways to continue our ministries. Since we aren't meeting to collect your food item donations, we are instead accepting donations to purchase grocery cards to mail to the Huntingdon Food Pantry. Simply mail your checks to the church office or go to the donation page on our website and indicate in the memo line or note that funds are to be used for this purpose!

In May, we donated grocery gift cards totaling **\$4375** to the Food Pantry!



Blair Building Fire Victims – Update

In May, we donated **\$3576** to the Salvation Army, who is organizing housing and support for the victims of May's fire. Our latest update is that Michele Rupert, Soup Kitchen Director, is coordinating providing food/meals to those still displaced. As of Friday, May 22nd, there are 10 people housed at Comfort Inn and 15 at the Motor Inn. A spokesperson for the Salvation Army told us that **NO** more clothing is needed at this time; noting that this is due to the quick action and generosity of local residents. She also noted that as these 25 people find more permanent living spaces, they will need linens and furniture. Thank you all for your donations and prayers during this time.

Stone Church of the Brethren

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www.huntingdonstonechurch.org

814-643-3390 • stonechurch@verizon.net

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STONE CHURCH NEWS

June 2020



SUMMER HOURS ??

***Virtual Services continue
with no time change!***

***10:45AM Sunday – WORSHIP
7:00PM Wednesday – Bible Study***