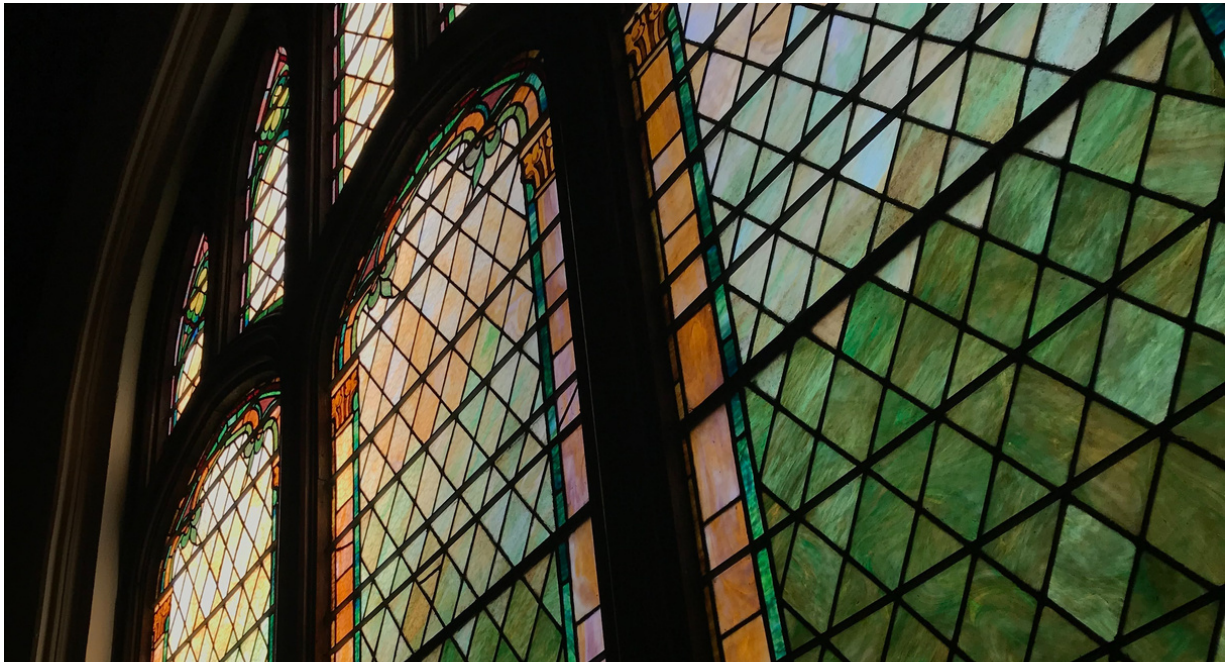


MARCH 2024

The Stone Church Newsletter

The monthly publication of the Stone Church of the Brethren



Our Welcome Statement

ADOPTED BY OUR CONGREGATION JANUARY 2012

Stone Church of the Brethren is a Christ-centered community, which celebrates every individual as a unique and beloved child of God.

We welcome all regardless of age, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, race, ethnicity, physical or mental ability, economic circumstance, or current relationship with God.

We invite your active participation in the life of this congregation, as together we continue to grow in grace and seek justice for God's creation.

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From the Pastors' Desk



George Ella Lyon wrote a poem, "Where I'm From," that has become a template for poets - and wannabe poets alike, to practice *showing* who they are as opposed to telling who they are. She makes great use of details such as favorite foods, brand names, and familiar phrases to paint a picture of herself that invites us into her life in a unique way.

As we move through our Lenten worship series, *Wandering Heart: Figuring Out Faith With Peter*, I have been wondering what Peter's "Where I'm From" poem might look like. Below is my guess - what would you add? Or leave out? I've also included the template developed from Lyon's original - maybe you'll try to write one that shows us who *you* are... If you would like a printed template - [click here](#)! And be sure to share with me any poems you come up with - I'd love to read them!

Where I'm From

By Peter, an Apostle of Jesus Christ

I am from the rolling waves on the sea of Galilee.

From wooden boats and flax nets used for fishing.

The smell of the sea permanently embedded within me.

I am from an occupied homeland, a religious tradition in crisis,
But I am surrounded by friends and family.

I am the rock. A title that inspires me and weighs me down.

I am from Passover meals and impulsivity;
from a long line of those who go fishing when all seems lost,
And ones who are too stubborn to ever give up,
Especially on each other.

I come from "Don't be afraid," and "Not only my feet, but my head also!"
And am haunted by, "Get behind me!" and "Before the rooster crows today..."
"Feed my sheep" keeps driving me on.

I am from wandering up to the top of Mount Tabor...

And all the way back down again.

From miraculous meals,

Healing that can't be explained,

And the best teaching and preaching the world has ever known.

And I come from prayers that put me to sleep, courtyards full of betrayal,
And a cross - his...
And mine.

I come from loaves and fish, breakfast on the beach,
Hide and seek in an upper room, and foot races to a tomb.

I am from pages in a book, stored in nightstands around the world,
My words and actions waiting to spring to life,

Patiently standing against judgment, interpretation, parsing, misreading,

So that hopefully, eventually, humbly,

I am able to testify for you

To the faithfulness of my Lord, and my God, Jesus.

Holy Week Activities



Wander along with us this week - from the parade, to the upper room, the garden, to the cross, and beyond...

Here are opportunities to gather and worship:



Palm Sunday Worship, Sunday, March 24 at 10:45AM - with Palms!
Wandering Heart: "Songs of loudest praise"
Palm Sunday Pancake Brunch, after worship

Visio Divina, Wednesday, March 27 at 7PM on Zoom
Our weekly "sacred seeing" using original art based on the scriptures used in worship.



Maundy Thursday Love Feast, Thursday, March 28 at 6PM
Wandering Heart: "Streams of mercy"

Prayer Stations of Peter

Wandering Heart: "Prone to leave the God I Love"
Stations will be set in the downstairs of the church for you to engage on your own. Those attending Love Feast will be encouraged to walk through the stations as they leave that service. We will also have the church doors open from 12-3 and 6-7 on Friday for others wishing to participate.



Good Friday Community Service, Friday, March 29 at 12-3PM
Follow the cross through the streets of Huntingdon. This service is a series of reflective moments at multiple downtown churches, beginning at The Abbey.



Easter Sunday, March 31
Easter Sunrise Service, 6:30AM at the Peace Chapel
Easter Worship, 10:45AM in the sanctuary and on Zoom
Including the Hallelujah Chorus!
Wandering Heart: "And I hope..."

What Happens at a Stone Church Retreat?

WRITTEN BY SHARON YOHN

Lots of small group sharing - memories, thoughts, ideas for the future

In our most recent retreat (February 10th), the pastors asked us questions related to upcoming worship themes, and we shared in large and small groups our thoughts on questions such as:

- What is the most interesting thing we ever gave up for Lent?
- How have we felt our faith ebb and flow? How has Stone Church supported that?
- How can we as a church create ways to embrace the ebbs and flows in our faith?
- How have you found service meaningful in the past? What are things that restrain our ability to serve? What helps us feel called?
- How can we better support children in our congregation?

Learning

This retreat we learned how to better read the **budget statements** that are available to everyone in the congregation through an exciting game of Budget Bingo! We also learned Pastor Ben's favorite color...

Sharing information and ideas

Retreats are a great way for the Leadership Team to solicit ideas and opinions from the Stone Church family. This retreat, we discussed:

- Thoughts on the new organizational structure, especially the effectiveness of communication
- Advantages and disadvantages of switching the time of Sunday School and church to promote more social time
- How to cover critical work if there is a gap between when Rowan leaves and their replacement starts
- Thoughts on a financial campaign to grow our endowment to support the financial stability of our church

Rest assured that any major decisions will include chances for input from all members of our church family.

Building community

I confess, this is my favorite part. As we share ideas, dreams, and memories, we learn about each other and grow closer. During lunch we deliberately shared about recent events that were good and things that were challenging. There is something special about feeling safe, supported, and even loved while participating in these significant conversations - special enough to make it worth making time for.

In case you were wondering...

Yes! We want you to come! Whether you are a team member or not involved in the organization of the church in any way, you are welcome. As part of the church family, we value your thoughts and insights, and the chance to grow closer in community. Our next retreat is scheduled for May 18th!

What about the Shared Ministry Priorities?

WRITTEN BY SHARON YOHN

Last year in January we shared and voted on a set of Shared Ministry Priorities for 2023. This helped us identify the priorities of the church and determine who is responsible for those priorities - including both the pastors and the congregation. These priorities are submitted to the District as part of our pastors' contract, and are a useful tool to discern where to put our time and energy. Early in the year I would often encourage ministry teams to review the priorities that fell under their team. My hope was to review our planned priorities at the end of the year, celebrate what we achieved and plan for the following year. After a major leadership reorganization and a budget almost-crisis, the Leadership Team discerned that perhaps January is not the time for this kind of planning...

As a result, the Leadership Team submitted Shared Ministry Priorities to the District that are nearly identical to last year. We will also try to figure out the best time of year to do the valuable work of discerning our congregational priorities that allows everyone in the church family to be involved. We appreciate your patience and grace as we move through this time of transition.

Christian Ed Spotlight!

- **YOUNG Children's Sunday School Class (age 2 - 1st Grade):** Pastor Ben teaches this new class, engaging the YOUNGER younger among us in the stories of Jesus through crafts and games. Join this group of kids, growing up together as a family of faith!
- **OLDER Children's Sunday School Class (2nd Grade and up):** This month, Joanne Thurston-Griswold begins a 6-week series on Equality. It's an incredible chance to learn how we can live out the good news of our faith!
- **Biblical Leftovers Bible Study:** Rick Laabs leads this Bible Study for teens and adults - taking us on a deeper dive into the Bible Stories we read each Sunday morning in worship. You don't need to be a Biblical Scholar in order to notice and explore connections you hadn't seen before. Join in person or over Zoom!
- **Sojourners Book Study:** Be a part of this group of thoughtful people reflecting together on the intersections between faith and society. This month we are continuing to reflect on Donna Hick's book, *Dignity*.

Announcements

March Food Pantry Collection

Our monthly collection for the Food Pantry will take place on Sunday, **March 24th**. We will be collecting **HAND SOAP** this month. Continuing until next month, any monetary donations will benefit the food pantry.

Upcoming Events

Dinner and a Movie - Dune 2 with Conversation

Held in-person on Saturday, March 2nd at 3 pm.

(With a Friday, March 1st Screening of Dune - Part 1)

For anyone interested in seeing the new blockbuster film Dune: Part Two, based on the Frank Herbert novel considered by many critics to be the greatest science fiction novel of all time, you are invited to join a viewing party at the AMC Classic Altoona 12 theatre on Saturday, March 2nd, at the 3:00pm matinee. Following the film, the group will have dinner together and a discussion of the film at the nearby Plaza Azteca Mexican restaurant.

The film, which opens on March 1st, currently has a 98% Fresh rating on Rotten Tomatoes, based on 131 film critic reviews. The critical consensus states: "Visually thrilling and narratively epic, Dune: Part Two continues Denis Villeneuve's adaptation of the beloved sci-fi series in spectacular form."

Please contact Henry Thurston-Griswold by Monday, February 26th, if you would like him to pre-purchase you a ticket. You are also invited to his home on Friday evening to view Part One of the film in preparation for our Saturday viewing of part two. Contact Henry for additional details.

Older Adult Luncheon

Held in-person on Tuesday, March 12th at 12 pm.

This event will be held at Donna's Restaurant.

The Older Adults met on February 14 for a Valentine's brunch in the Fellowship Hall at 11 am. There were twenty-six of us there to enjoy the delicious food, generously prepared by Rick Laabs and Eddie Crader. Our next meeting will be at Donna's on **Tuesday, March 12, at noon.**

Movie Night: American Symphony

Held in-person on Friday, March 22 at 6:30pm

This event will be held in the Llamacats Room - unless we don't fit! :-)

Join us for a showing of this Netflix Documentary as we prepare for the ups and downs of Holy Week. Lisle Gwynn Garrity: "This moving documentary follows the life and career of the prolific musician, Jon Batiste. While his career swells with awards and creative projects, his wife pursues treatment for leukemia. The film explores the triumphs and turmoil of a year filled with extreme highs and lows. Throughout, viewers witness Batiste's enduring faith and inspiring creative spirit. There are several ways this film resonates with this series, as Batiste shows us a steadfast, heart-forward faith in the midst of a wandering journey." We will have popcorn and a bit of discussion after the movie. [Click here to watch the trailer!](#)

Upcoming Events

Palm Sunday Pancake Brunch

Held in-person on Sunday, March 24th after Service

This event will be held in the Fellowship Hall.

After a successful event last year, Stone Church men and boys will be preparing and serving a pancake brunch after worship on Palm Sunday March 24th. Please mark your calendars and plan to join us for a brunch of pancakes, maple syrup, sausage and fruit.

Calling all Stone men and boys to assist in preparing and serving the meal. We will also need assistance in setting up and cleaning-up afterwards. This will be a great opportunity for new members to work with and get to know other Stone Church men. If you are willing to assist please contact Rick Laabs.

Love Feast

Held hybrid on Thursday, March 28 at 6PM

This event will be held in the Fellowship Hall and on Zoom

Jesus taught us this practice, sharing with his disciples a last, loving meal the night before he died. He washed the disciples' feet, ate supper with them, sought to draw them closer into the fold of his love, and offered them the symbolic bread and cup. We will re-live this event together as a community. Please join us - and bring a friend!

Prayer Stations of Peter

Immediately following Love Feast or on your own Good Friday, March 29th 12-3 or 5-7

This unique reflective set-up invites you to walk "the way of sorrows" to the cross, but through the eyes and experiences of one of Jesus' closest disciples. Each station provides multisensory ways to engage, confess, and lament. You could choose to only do one or a few stations - or all of them. As a nod to the Stations of the Cross, this service highlights Peter's role in the crucifixion narrative. In this way, we follow Jesus to his death with Peter as our companion. By focusing on Peter, we imagine how we might have acted and behaved had we been there as one of Jesus' followers and friends.

Those attending Love Feast will be invited to leave by walking out through the Stations. The church will then be open at times on Friday for those who wish to experience the Stations on their own. We believe this will be a meaningful way to engage the season and encourage you to participate. If you have questions, please contact one of the pastors.

News From CAMP

WRITTEN BY DAVID MEADOWS

Annual Dinners – March 15 & 16

You're invited to Camp Blue Diamond's Annual Dinner! This event is a fundraiser that features amazing food, fellowship, and wonderful entertainment. Your \$50 donation goes a long way in supporting the mission of Camp Blue Diamond. Entertainment will be Bill Lepp, an award-winning storyteller, author, and recording artist along with being the host of the History Channel's Man Vs History series. For a full menu, tickets, and more info, [see the enclosed flyer](#), contact Stone Church's servers, or [click here to sign up](#), David Meadows and Jeannie Lashlee.

Quilt and Craft Camp – April 19-21

This annual event is a spiritual retreat centered on our God-gifted creativity. Together we worship God and create beauty through the work of our hands and the love in our hearts. The weekend is for crafts of all types. Bring your quilt work, cross stitch, knitting, scrap booking, etc... and join the fun! Workshops will be available during the weekend offering opportunities to learn a new skill! For more info and online registration, visit www.campbluediamond.org/retreats-%26-events.

Breakfast With the Birds – May 10 & 11

Join us for our Spring Migration "Breakfast with the Birds" morning at Camp Blue Diamond. Gabe Imler will lead us around Camp looking for bird species that are passing through Rothrock State Forest. The bird walk will begin on Saturday, May 11 at 7 a.m. with a bird-themed breakfast to follow. Or, if you would like to come the night before and participate in a guided night hike, overnight lodging and a snack will be provided. Cost for Saturday only is \$20; cost for both Friday and Saturday is \$40. All ages and experience levels welcome! Feel free to bring your own binoculars and field guides. For more info and online registration, visit www.campbluediamond.org/retreats-%26-events.

Summer Camp 2024

Online registration is open at www.campbluediamond.org! Summer Camp brochures have been mailed to past campers. If you would like one, contact Camp or David Meadows. There are also copies in the back of the sanctuary. Take advantage of the Early-Bird Discount before March 1, and don't forget the Sibling Discount!

Facilities Update

The new bathhouse in Camp Blue Diamond's Family Campground is now open. This bathhouse replaces the two aging campground bathhouses. This beautiful new facility will make life easier for those folks in the family campground. As part of this project, a new well was drilled and is now connected to the campground water system, taking the campground off the lodge water system.

Upcoming Events

- Junior Retreat - March 1-3
- Annual Dinners - March 15 & 16
- Spring Outdoor School - March 27 – May 5
- Quilt & Craft Camp - April 19-21
- Breakfast with the Birds - May 10 & 11
- Hoss' Fundraiser - June 16
- Brethren Open Golf Tournament - August 13
- Heritage Fair - September 21

Have questions?
Contact your Camp
Representative, David
Meadows

A Note from Property Team

The property team is looking to add more members to the committee! The property team is in charge of maintaining the church and coming up with solutions when issues arise. The church is old and there is never a shortage of problems to fix! Please contact the church office if you are interested in joining.

Gene's Jottings - Lenten Laments

WRITTEN BY GENE GOSHORN

Some 2000 years ago, some Roman soldiers nailed our Savior, Jesus, to a cross. We Christians mark the occasion as Good Friday and Easter. African-American slaves sang the spiritual "Were you there when they crucified my lord? Were you there when they nailed Him to the tree?"

Sometimes, the Lent and Easter season makes me think of death in my own family starting with my grandfather, Charles Edgar Jones, in 1952. My mother and I lived with my grandfather in Mount Union until I was twelve years old. My grandfather, like a lot of men in Mount Union, contracted silicosis (a lung disease) from working in brick yards. He and I were close. He whittled toy animals for me, especially elephants and horses. We walked in the woods where he taught me to identify bird calls, plants, and trees. Unfortunately, as he got sicker and sicker, he had to go to an old tuberculosis sanatorium called Mont Alto, near Chambersburg. When we visited, I had the job of looking after my little brother, Randy. I remember that Grandfather popped his head out an upstairs window, and Randy called out "Pap-pap home Cimmes [Christmas]." Of course, he wasn't; he died there at Mont Alto soon thereafter.

My father, Austin Eugene Goshorn, also died young, aged just 65. He had had a fever (maybe rheumatic fever?) as a child that left him with an enlarged heart. But he was still able to serve in North Africa, France, and Germany during the Second World War. Eventually, he suffered from congestive heart failure and was treated at the Orbisonia Medical Center and ate a banana a day to manage his potassium. In July of 1981, Dad was admitted to JC Blair Hospital in Huntingdon for a week. I was living in New Jersey when Mom, Randy, and I scheduled to meet and go together to the hospital to see Dad. As we entered his ward, the attending doctor, not known for his bedside manner, came out and announced "Mr. Goshorn is dead." He had died about an hour before our arrival. We just missed being there for his final moments.

I often learned a little late when relatives died. I missed saying goodbye to a couple favorite Aunts, Violet and Mararet. I wasn't told in time when my dear cousin Mary Margaret Reck passed, and my Aunt Virginia of Newton-Hamilton died in a nursing home in Lewistown without my knowing. I'm pained to have lost these dear ones without the chance *to be there* when they died - to say farewell.

Please remember with me the last line in the Spiritual, Were You There: "Were you there when he rose up from the grave?" It was a heavy loss for the early christians when Jesus died. It was heavy for me and for my family when we lost all these dear ones. But I find comfort in that spiritual and some words of the the 25th Psalm, verses 1-10, and I hope that you can find comfort for your laments as well.

Psalm 25 1-10:

To you, O Lord, I lift up my soul.
O my God, in you I trust;
do not let me be put to shame;
do not let my enemies exult over me.
Do not let those who wait for you be put to shame;
let them be ashamed who are wantonly treacherous.
Make me to know your ways, O Lord;
teach me your paths.
Lead me in your truth and teach me,
for you are the God of my salvation;
for you I wait all day long.
Be mindful of your mercy, O Lord, and of your steadfast love,

for they have been from of old.
Do not remember the sins of my youth or my transgressions;
according to your steadfast love remember me,
for the sake of your goodness, O Lord!
Good and upright is the Lord;
therefore he instructs sinners in the way.
He leads the humble in what is right and teaches the humble his way.
All the paths of the Lord are steadfast love and faithfulness,
for those who keep his covenant and his decrees.

Staying in Community

FIND WAYS TO CELEBRATE YOUR COMMUNITY MEMBERS BELOW!

March Birthdays

1st - Daniel Laprade	25th - Brandon Conaway
2nd - Chuck Yohn	26th - Taylor Boyer
6th - Paul Elder	26th - Knox Boyer
9th - Rowan Roth	26th - Carol Oldring
12th - Oscar Tuten	26th - Sandino Phillippe-
14th - Beau Buterbaugh	Crugan
15th - Seppi Grugan	26th - Kate Thurston-
16th - Sarah Worley	Griswold
17th - Tim Launtz	26th - Kim Witkovsky
23rd - Dan Cook-	27th - Chris Gibboney
Huffman	27th - Charlie Paterson
23rd - Lori Fagan	29th - Paul Lattimer
24th - Shelby Anders	30th - Anita Soliday

March Anniversaries

24th - Phillip & Patricia Paterson

Homebound Members

USE THE ADDRESSES BELOW TO REACH OUT TO THOSE IN OUR COMMUNITY THAT ARE UNABLE TO JOIN US IN-PERSON

DeLois Fluke
11325 Raystown Rd.
Huntingdon, PA 16652

Gene Coshorn
18889 Croghan Pike
Orbisonia, PA 17243

Louise Smith
11642 Station Road
Huntingdon, PA 16652

Westminster Woods
Sue Martin