

STONE CHURCH NEWS

October 2021

From the Pastor's Desk



I was late to the party. As a fan of science fiction - I'd seen and read most of the staples. I'd watched my share of *Star Trek* and *Star Wars*. I'd read *Dune* and Asimov's *Foundation* series - but somehow I'd never gotten around to watching *Doctor Who*. Until recently that is... Over the past couple years, Cindy and I have finally caught up on many of the adventures of this eccentric alien who travels through time and space in his blue box.

At the end of one adventure, after saving the universe again, the Doctor whispers to his sleeping companion, "When you wake up... you won't even remember me. Well, you'll remember me a little. I'll be a story in your head. But that's OK: we're all stories, in the end. Just make it a good one, eh? Because it was, you know, it was the best..."

Our stories shape us. There are these narratives that we tell about ourselves and about others - these stories that we tell about God that help us find our place in the world. During the month of October we finish up our worship series, *"I've Been Meaning to Ask..."* and the Fellowship Small groups that have gone with it. It's been an opportunity for us to listen to one another and to hear each other's stories.

After that, we are returning to our worship series, *"The Big Story"*. In it, we are looking at the "big story" of the Old Testament - from the creation tales at the beginning of Genesis, through the Exodus from Egypt, to life in the Promised Land and beyond. By zooming out, we get a chance to see God's work in the world, in and through God's people on a trajectory that reaches all the way to us and connects to our own stories.

Our children's new Sunday School class continues this month as well. It's called, *"All Together Now"* - and explores stories from throughout the Bible. In our Mid-week Bible Study we're reading the same stories as our kids, so that - young and old - we can be shaped by these stories of God and us together.

Taking time to tell all these stories in community - reminds us who we are - and who God is calling us to become - as together we write the next chapter in our lives and in the life of this Stone Church family. Let's make it a good one, eh?

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

I love our mistakes.

That might sound a little odd – my personal mistakes are not something I usually celebrate.



But I love that our congregation is willing to embrace a new hybrid style of worship so that our community can include those near and far, those ready to interact with others in person, and those happy to worship snuggled up with a cat or two.

And more than that, I love that we prioritize our love for each other more than perfection.

You’ve probably noticed an occasional glitch in the Sunday morning service - perhaps no sound, or maybe too much sound, or some interesting echoes. Have you noticed how you feel when this happens? I haven’t sensed frustration or anger in those around me, but rather patience, support, and even amusement.

I am indeed grateful for the amazing talent we have in the church. The transition from in-person to on-line to hybrid has been remarkably smooth (thanks to the hard work of a lot of people). Our services are meaningful and rewarding to me. But I’m also grateful that they aren’t perfect, and that they don’t need to be perfect for us to learn, grow, and care for each other.

As I looked at the faces in the squares on the screen during Leadership Team, I saw a group of dedicated and caring people with common hopes and a common love for this community. Each team is thinking, working, and exploring how to strengthen our community of faith even as change seems to happen faster and faster.

And so, we will continue to try new things. We will find success in some places and mistakes in others. But what a joy it is to be a part of this church family that is quicker to laugh than get angry, and quicker to love than to judge.

~Sharon Yohn, Vice Chair of Leadership Team~

News From CAMP

Program Director Search – Camp Blue Diamond is seeking a gifted individual with a passion for outdoor ministry to serve as the next Program Director. The main role of the Program Director is to oversee all aspects of programming, working to ensure that each is Christ-centered, allowing campers and staff to experience growth and healing in their relationship

with God, others, themselves and the created world. The duties of the Program Director include but are not limited to managing and supervising summer staff, organizing retreats, helping to coordinate rental groups, assisting with kitchen and housekeeping duties during Outdoor School, and participation in Camp Board meetings, church visits and the American Camp Association. Outdoor ministry at Camp Blue Diamond requires flexibility and teamwork. In this spirit, the Program Director may be called upon to provide help in other areas of camp as needed. The Program Director is accountable to the Executive Director and Board of Directors.

Qualifications for this position include strong interpersonal skills, leadership, organization, communication, along with a basic knowledge of program development, computer skills, and marketing. A Bachelor's Degree is required, along with camp leadership experience. The applicant should be a Christian and a member of the Church of the Brethren or have an appreciation and understanding of Brethren beliefs and values.

Review of applicants will begin on October 1, 2021. It is expected that an appointment will be made in November with an anticipated start date in January 2022. For a full description, and information on how to apply, visit www.campbluediamond.org/openings%2Fapplications. You may also contact Jerri Heiser Wenger, Executive Co-Director, at campbluediamond@verizon.net or call 814-667-2355.

Summer Camp – To provide a safe, fun-filled summer in 2021, Camp adopted the following:

- Offered 17 camps, compared to 20 in 2019
- Limited the total number of campers to 300
- Limited each cabin to 4 or 5 girls or boys plus 1 or 2 staff
- Cabin Units (Family Units) stayed together for all activities
- Tested all unvaccinated campers and staff upon arrival
- Staggered arrival times
- Campers immediately moved in after completing testing
- Increased the number of hand washing stations
- Had all meals served by staff
- Ate meals, sang, did games, crafts & coffeehouses outside
- Rented a large tent for rainy days
- Wore masks when we had to be indoors

Everyone was cooperative about pre-camp testing, and there were no cases of Covid at Camp. Thanks to all the staff, volunteers and parents for a great, fun-filled, and meaningful summer camp experience for the campers. Your diligence and cooperation made it successful and safe.

Upcoming Events

| | |
|---------------------|----------------|
| Youth Retreat | January 28-30 |
| Junior High Retreat | February 11-13 |
| Junior Retreat | March 4-5 |

Have questions?

Contact your Camp Representative, David Meadows.

October Birthdays

| | | |
|---------------------------|------------------|-----------------------|
| 5—Melissa Trout | 12—Donna Rhodes | 23—Henry Elder *9 |
| 6—Marty Keeney | 12—Jim Tuten | 23—Barb Moyer *90 |
| 6—Dale McClure *94 | 17—Tom Tuten | 26—Kathryn Beck |
| 8—Reagan Oser *2 | 17—Jamie White | 27—Sue Martin |
| 9—Myrna Landrum | 18—Janis Jones | 29—Thelma Wallace *94 |
| 9—Max Paterson *8 | 19—Gavin Musser | 30—Laurie McMinn |
| 9—Yvonne Stein | 19—Peggy Yoder | 30—Judy Pheasant |
| 12—Quinera Bumgardner *15 | 20—Heather Hicks | 31—Darlene Bumgardner |
| 12—Joanne Laabs | 20—Maylin Musser | 31—Maggie Lashlee |

October Anniversaries

| | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| 6—Rick & Joanne Laabs | 21—Brenda & Monte Furry |
| 13—Roxann & Jon Yon | 26—John Wright & Lori Schoupe-Wright *25 |
| 17—Ryan Wetzels & Sarah Worley | |

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

October 16th — 8:00 AM

Enjoy fellowship, jokes, stories 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. The plan is to still hold this month's breakfast on the patio at Standing Stone Coffee Company, but watch the Friday Flash just in case plans change! As always, there is also the option to join through 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.

Grateful: A Letter from Your Finance Team

Together, the Stone Church community has sustained our mission through a challenging and stressful time for us all. The gifts of our time and financial resources have allowed us to continue to serve our congregation and beyond in a wide variety of ways.

Beginning on Sunday October 10th and ending Sunday November 7th, we will be inviting Stone Church members and friends to consider pledging financial support for the upcoming year. Each year we try to build a budget based on realistic expectations of giving, with a sprinkle of faith added as well.

You will receive more information by email, and by mail for those who prefer that method. Our hope is to have pledges returned by November 7, 2021. As we share in praying about what Stone Church can accomplish next year, please consider pledging to the extent that you are able.

If you have questions, the members of the Finance Team are at your service;

Gratefully!

Jeff Closz
Daisy Decker
Bob McMinn
Jamie White

"With us in spirit..."

Below are members of our church family who, though they are not often 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

Thelma Wallace
5754 Wallace Dr.
Huntingdon, PA 16652

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

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

Westminster Woods

John Bowser
Sue Martin
Denny Rock
John Keiper



Remarks Regarding 2021 Church of the Brethren Annual Conference

In the more than 50 years I have been affiliated with the Church of the Brethren, this is the very first time I have been a delegate to its Annual Conference. Hard to believe, isn't it? This year, the 234th Recorded Annual Conference, ***God's Adventurous Future***, was held virtually due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, from Wednesday June 30 through Sunday July 4. It began with a worship service on Wednesday evening, titled ***A Future Grounded in Jesus***, based in text from Revelation 1:1-9 and ended with a worship service, ***A Future Filled with Promise***, with Revelation 21:1-6 as its scriptural text.

Each day featured morning and afternoon business sessions, equipping sessions or insight sessions (many and well done were the ones I attended or sampled), networking groups and an evening worship. For those of you who have attended Annual Conference in recent years, yes we had virtual table discussions. I thought mine was well organized with each person given ample voice in the discussion. There were concerts (an organ recital by Robin Risser Munday and a concert by Christian recording artist Fernando Ortega among them.).

Paul Munday has spoken at Stone Church in the past and was the Annual Conference Moderator. Central PA was well represented, with Pastor Cindy Lattimer on the Worship Planning Team, David Steele, General Sec., Moderator Elect David Sollenberger, Donna Rhodes representing Brethren Benefit Trust, Loren Rhodes, Standing Committee, and Bob McMinn on the slate for election to Pastoral Compensation & Benefits Advisory Committee. One of my favorite pieces was attending Bible Studies lead by Michael J. Gorman who holds the Raymond E. Brown Chair in Biblical Studies and Theology at St. Mary's Seminary & University in Baltimore, MD.

I would classify most business sessions as uneventful, with the highlight being Saturday's affirmation of a **Compelling Vision for the Church of the Brethren entitled, "Jesus in the Neighborhood."** Its introduction reads in part, as follows:

Three years ago, denominational leadership recognized that we had reached a critical moment in our life together. While individuals and congregations were engaged in faithful ministry, as a denomination, it could be said we were wandering without a sense of unified purpose. Further, we were mired in soul-sapping conflict. Something needed to change.

The following Vision Statement is the culmination of many discussions held in past years.

Together, as the Church of the Brethren, we will passionately live and share the radical transformation and holistic peace of Jesus Christ through relationship-based neighborhood engagement. To move us forward, we will develop a culture of calling and equipping disciples who are innovative, adaptable, and fearless.

It is my considered opinion that, despite being held virtually, the Conference was good, well organized, Spirit-filled and effective. May God richly bless the Church of the Brethren, and our Compelling Vision.

~Jeff Decker, your Stone Church 2021 Annual Conference Delegate~

Stone Church of the Brethren
1623 Moore Street
Huntingdon, PA 16652
www.huntingdonstonechurch.org
814-643-3390 • stonechurch@verizon.net

BULK RATE
NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION
U.S. POSTAGE
PERMIT NO. 116

Or Current Occupant

STONE CHURCH NEWS

October 2021



Finance Team Letter— We are so grateful for our community's continued generosity during difficult times and excited as we begin to think about next year!

Reflection on Annual Conference— Jeff Decker was our delegate at Annual Conference this year. Read all about his thoughts and reflections!