

SEPTEMBER 2022

# *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 Pastor's Desk

WRITTEN BY CINDY LATTIMER

*"Our mission. We explore. We seek out new life and new civilizations. We boldly go where no one has gone before." ~ Captain Christopher Pike, Strange New Worlds*

Ben and I are one episode away from finishing the first season of Star Trek: Strange New Worlds. To say we have loved it is an understatement - the first seven episodes have been some of the best Star Trek we have ever seen. If you aren't watching it, drop everything and start - right now. 😊

Long time Star Trek fans will recognize the above speech as the voice-over at the beginning of every episode. One of the beautiful pieces of the Star Trek concept is the way it invites us to view others through a different lens. When the crew encounters an alien race and is forced to learn to communicate effectively with them in order to survive the encounter, we are invited to reflect on the ways in which we communicate with those who are different than we are. When the crew must understand the backstory of an alien race in order to work with them from where they are now, we are invited to reflect on how we take the time to see and understand the underlying stories that get the people we meet to the places they are today. If we let it, the show can push us to understand *ourselves* better as we face issues of division today, divisions over age and generation, race, gender and gender identity, sexuality, theology, culture - even differences born out of growing up in different parts of a small town like Huntingdon. From the safety of our couches we can wrestle with ourselves, and maybe learn to love our neighbors better.

But I don't want any of us to stay on our couches! I want to invite us all boldly out into places we may not have been before. Into the exploration of the lives of those around us - with compassion and openness and hope. As our Fall season gears up, we have plenty of opportunities to do just that - keep reading:

From September 20-25, Stone Church in collaboration with the Baker Institute and Bethany Theological Seminary will be hosting Dr. Dauda Gava, who is the provost of Kulp Theological Seminary in Nigeria. Dr. Gava is a member of EYN (the Church of the Brethren in Nigeria). He will give a lecture in Ellis Ballroom at Juniata College on Thursday, September 22 at 7:30 pm entitled, *Boko Haram, Peace Work, and the Brethren Faith*. He will also offer the sermon during our Sunday morning worship on September 25. There are other opportunities to join or provide a meal for him while he is in Huntingdon, please contact Pastor Ben for more information.

The "It's a Small World Book Project" continues to host the Check-Out Challenge - inviting you to read all or a portion of the 52 Books we have purchased to help expand the diversity of books available in our libraries. In order to recommend the books to teachers, friends, other libraries - we need to be familiar with them. Many of the books are children's books yet those are some with the most power - and we do not want you to miss out on them. To help you out with that, we are going to read some of them during worship. Each month we will feature a different book, read it aloud together in worship, and see what it draws out in us as individuals and as a community.

Finally, we want you to start priming your calendars for October. For seven weeks, during the Sunday School hour, we are going to have an intergenerational class that focuses on curriculum developed by our own Joanne Thurston-Griswold. It features original music by Andy and Terry Murray - who are able to provide that music LIVE and give us a glimpse into the writing process. It is a chance to invest in one another across differences in age and learn new things in the process. The class will engage all ages, but will lean toward the child-like faith that often gets uncovered in the "Time with our Children" during worship. It is a seven-week opportunity to lean into what we practiced when we had "Elder Time" in worship several weeks ago. The class is better for all of us if *everyone* comes. So make plans now to commit to these seven weeks together.

Our mission is to seek each other out - across differences - to find places of real connection - to nurture faith and compassion - to go together and within ourselves, where we have not gone before. And, as Captain Pike also says, "Wherever our mission takes us, we'll try to have some fun along the way, too!"



## Upcoming Events

### **Peacefully, Simply, Together with Shane Claiborne** **Sunday, September 11th, 1:00-3:00 pm**

#### **This event will be held in-person at Hollidaysburg COB**

Hollidaysburg Church of the Brethren will host Shane Claiborne (prominent speaker, activist, and best-selling author from the *Simple Way* in Philadelphia) for a day of celebrating peace on Sunday, September 11th. Feel free to join us for worship, lunch, and an outdoor event featuring music, readings, prayers, children's activities, and a demonstration by Shane using his forge. The outdoor event will be from 1:00 - 3:00 pm. Please register in advance by calling the church office at 814-695-0072.

### **Combined Heritage Fair and District Conference**

#### **Heritage Fair: Sept. 17, starting at 6:30 am**

#### **District Conference: Sept. 16-18**

#### **This event will be held in-person at Camp Blue Diamond.**

Program & Arrangements Committee and The Heritage Fair Committee have planned a combined Heritage Fair/District Conference. Stone Church will be sending delegates, as usual to the District Conference portion. However, *all* are welcome to attend the Heritage Fair! The Annual Heritage Fair will be held on Saturday, September 17, 2022 beginning at 6:30 am with breakfast and booths open around 8:30 am. There will be food, drinks, crafts and activities for all ages. All proceeds support the ministries of Camp and the Middle PA District. Please plan to attend this unique conference in the middle of God's creation at Camp Blue Diamond.

### **Men's Breakfast**

#### **Saturday, September 17th, 8:00 am**

Join us for some great fellowship, a few corny jokes and a light reflection. If you are interested in attending, send your email address to Rick Laabs and he will send you an invitation. We are excited to be gathering again in person at Donna's Restaurant. Watch the Friday Flash for updates! If you have questions, call Rick..

## Announcements

### **Guest Preacher: Dr. Dauda Gava**

Dr. Dauda Gava from the Church of the Brethren in Nigeria will be coming to Huntingdon in September to commemorate the International Day of Peace! Stone Church, the Baker Institute, and Juniata College are partnering together to host him while he is visiting Huntingdon. On Thursday, September 22nd at 7:30 pm he will be giving a lecture in Ellis Hall titled: *Boko Haram, Peace Work, and the Brethren Faith*. And on Sunday, September 25th, he will be preaching at Stone Church. We hope to see you at these events! If you are curious about how else you can help host Dr. Gava, please reach out to Pastor Ben.

### **Stewardship Series: The Opportunity of Blessing**

Starting the end of October and running through mid-November we will be sharing in our yearly Stewardship Series. This worship series invites us to think about our stewardship and giving together. As we look ahead to this series, we encourage you to think about what you may be able to pledge to the church.

# Sojourners Book Study

WRITTEN BY VIRGINIA BIBER

Back to school greetings! The Sojourners' classes will resume on September 11 at 9:15 am, allowing 15 minutes for folks to link in (trouble shooting if necessary) and socialize before discussion begins at 9:30. Classes this year will be in hybrid format, that is both in-person at Stone Church and via Zoom. A new Zoom link will be established and communicated to you all soon.

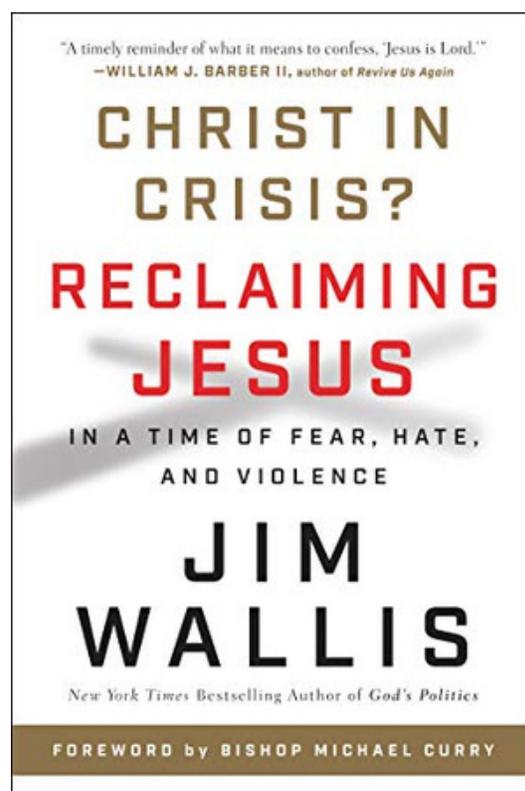
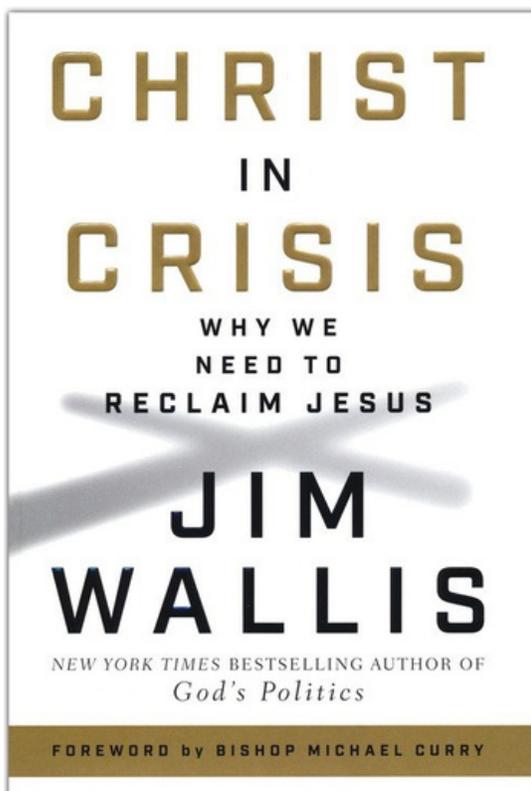
We will be discussing the book, *Christ in Crisis: Why We Need to Reclaim Jesus* (note: paperback version of same book has a different subtitle, *Reclaiming Jesus in a Time of Fear, Hate and Violence*). Wallis's book has been highly praised by a variety of spiritual, political and activist leaders. One writes:

*"For years Jesus has been hidden by shallow religion and dishonest commentary. Jim Wallis reclaims and reintroduces us to a radical spiritual figure even non-believers will find inspiring."*

Another states that this book is:

*"A spiritual health-check for the ailing, wheezing American body-politic. As Jim writes, 'Don't go right, don't go left, go deeper.'"*

So come and join us (contact: Virginia Biber) in what promises to be a spirited and timely discussion!



# News from Camp

WRITTEN BY DAVID MEADOWS

## Heritage Fair – September 17

The Middle PA District Heritage Fair is right around the corner! Spend the day at Camp Blue Diamond for this annual festival featuring tons of food, crafts, activities, and more! It's a family reunion for all of our camp and church friends as we eat, visit, and have fun.

The day starts with breakfast at 6:30 am in the Lodge. Booths open at 8:30. Enjoy all of the traditional Heritage Fair features including the auction, dunk tank, crafts, children's activities, demonstrations, an escape room, and entertainment! Traditional foods include beef and noodles, apple dumplings and apple butter pies, fresh cider, pies and cakes, clay oven pizza, ice cream, soups, hot sausage, fudge, whoopie pies, chili, and so much more! The money raised at Heritage Fair helps the District maintain its support of ministries throughout the region and helps Camp Blue Diamond maintain an amazing summer camp program.

Overnight lodging in the summer camp cabins and Lodge is available, but going fast! Contact the Camp office at 814-667-2355 for more info.

*Volunteer parkers are needed. If you're willing to help, contact David Meadows.*



For more information about Heritage Fair, and a photographic look back at the fair over the last 20+ years, visit [www.campbluediamond.org/heritage-fair-1](http://www.campbluediamond.org/heritage-fair-1).

## Middle PA District Conference – September 16-17

District Conference will be at Camp this year during Heritage Fair! Join Brethren from across the District for a worship service at 7:00 pm on Friday evening, led by District Moderator Mike Benner. Meetings and reporting will take place on Saturday beginning at 2:00 pm.

# Words to Remember

WRITTEN BY GENE GOSHORN

When you go to the funeral home when a friend or family member passes, there's often a poem or a reading. I found one that begins:

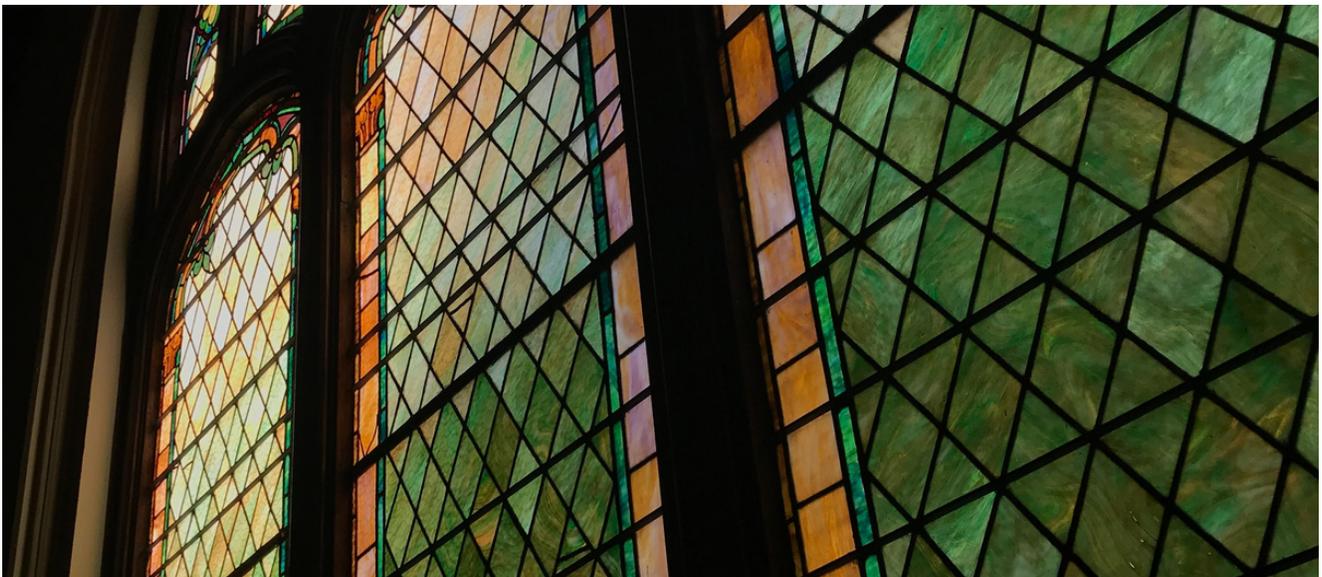
*"I'd like the memory of me to be a happy one. I'd like to leave an afterglow of smiles when life is done."*

I have a lot of memories from years gone by. I remember growing up in the 50s on Vandevender Street on the hill in Mount Union. I remember going to the Weis store with Dad for groceries on a Friday night after he got home from his job at Letterkenny. He got paid every two weeks, so we ate better the first week and we ate a lot of butter beans the second.

I remember being vexed by our friend, Larry. He refused to fall down even when you were sure you got him four or five times with your Roy Rogers six-shooter. "You missed me, you missed me!" he'd cry.

Last month, I wrote about a poem named Desiderata, copywritten in 1927, by a poet named Max Ehrmann. In part, Max said "avoid loud and aggressive persons. They are vexations to the spirit. If you compare yourself with others you may become vain or bitter, for always there will be greater and lesser persons than yourself." In our society today, there seem to be a lot of loud and aggressive people, especially in politics, who want to vex the Spirit.

Maybe we could all stand to step back and think about how we want to be remembered. We are leaving an impression after all. Maybe the way we treat each other matters as much in the end, as the things we fight about. When the time comes, *"may your memory be a happy one. Leave an afterglow of smiles when life is done..."*



# Guatemala Delegations Report

WRITTEN BY HENRY THURSTON-GRISWOLD

There were a total of 18 participants ranging in age from 13 to 83 in the educational delegation from July 11th-22nd, and 22 participants in the medical delegation from July 23rd-31st. The two groups combined included seven MDs, two nurses, six Juniata students and alumni, and nine Stone Church members: Tinka and Henrik Berger, Darlene Chivers, Dennis and Austin Plane, Henry, Joanne, and Kate Thurston-Griswold, and Laura White. A special shout out goes to the Plane family, which contributed seven educational delegation members: Dennis's mom Rosemary, his brother Brian's family of four, and Dennis and Austin.

The school's students have not had in-person classes for over two years, and we prepared and taught five days of enrichment activities for a group of about 50 students in the areas of English, music, art & creative writing, civics, and science. The activities were very well received, the students were excited to be back in school, some of the younger ones for the first time, and our group enjoyed renewing and making new friendships with our Guatemalan partners. Henrik and Tinka also completed an important maintenance project that involved the renovation of bathrooms on the two lower floors—removing sinks, fixing toilets and stall doors, and painting—and they generously purchased and installed a new water pump to provide water for the bathrooms and the workshop on the upper floor.

The medical delegation held four days of health clinics, the first three at the school and the final one at a school in the rural community of Chiquilajá, located about twenty minutes from our partner school. Our medical team saw a total of 511 patients, including 115 the final day at the rural health clinic, and in addition to wellness checkups and the treatment of a variety of illnesses and ailments, we offered vision screenings and dental extractions. The success of the health clinics owed a great deal to the contributions of the school's staff and the entire Chojolán family, and especially to oldest daughters Laura and Paty. As a physician, Laura was an invaluable resource for our health professionals from the United States, and Paty was the only dentist in this summer's delegation and did a fantastic job of meeting patients' dental needs.

The greatest challenge for both groups was COVID-19 and keeping participants and our Guatemalan partners healthy. Guatemala was experiencing a surge in COVID cases during our time there, what they termed their fifth wave; Laura and Paty Chojolán tested positive before our arrival, and mother Verónica tested positive our third day in Xela. All of our delegation members tested negative before arriving in Guatemala, but we ended up having three educational delegation members test positive during our time in Xela, and the medical delegation had three members test positive as well, with a fourth person testing positive immediately following her return home. Fortunately, only two cases were somewhat severe and no one had to be hospitalized. The retreat center staff where we stayed while in Xela was extremely supportive and accommodated our need to isolate COVID-positive individuals.

Many thanks to everyone who provided support for the two delegations, both financially and also by making and donating glasses cases and other medical and school supplies. Thanks to the payments made by delegation members and donations by several individuals, in addition to all the service provided, we were able to contribute nearly \$11,000 for the school's operating budget at a moment when the funds are sorely needed.

We're planning the next delegations for the summer of 2024, and we welcome both returnees as well as new members, so mark your calendars! If you want to participate and you have any scheduling preferences, please contact Henry.



# Staying in Community

FIND WAYS TO CELEBRATE YOUR COMMUNITY MEMBERS BELOW!

## September Birthdays

3rd - Holden McBrayer  
5th - Cheryl McClain  
7th- Harriet Kaylor **\*92**  
8th - Kristy Launtz  
8th- Bill Musser  
9th - Jessica Buterbaugh  
10th - Barb Purdy  
11th - Rachael Beck **\*12**  
13th - Pam Hileman  
14th - Brandon Beck  
14th - Barbara Detwiler  
14th - Cyrus Lattimer **\*7**  
14th- Ezra Lattimer **\*7**  
15th - Randy Yoder  
16th - Rowan Dickey **\*12**  
18th - Elsie Weld **\*9**  
19th - Henry Thurston-Griswold  
20th - Aiden Borgardt  
22nd - Valarie Lester  
22nd - Bill Peters  
24th - Grace Cook-Huffman  
25th - Joan Engle  
25th - Greta Hall  
25th - Austin Plane **\*16**  
25th - Doug Soliday  
30th - Tom Ness

## September Anniversaries

1st - Bert & Melissa McBrayer  
6th- Ben & Cindy Lattimer  
15th - Chuck & Sharon Yohn  
20th - Anne & John Shetron Swigart  
21st - Jeremy Santos & Mary Garvey  
25th - Cindy & Geoff Clarke  
25th - Charlie & Robin Paterson  
29th - Jeff & Pam Adams

