

## Celebrate Baptism



On Sunday afternoon, August 6<sup>th</sup> we received 5 new members through baptism at the Keister pond.

Baptized were **Isaac Buttorff, Cailynn Everitt, Natalie Stahl, Camden Ulrich** and **Lena Zimmerman**.

Please show your support with a warm welcome to these new members of our congregation.



## You Are Making a Difference

Everyone has been doing a wonderful job supporting our mission to reach **Outside Our Walls!**

The **Expectations Baby Bottle** drive was quite a success bringing in \$1,436.55. That is a wonderful amount and the staff there is very grateful.

The **Community Aid** bin has been used so well by our church and the community. The last check we received was \$676.47! That is fantastic. Please continue to place no longer needed, but gently used clothing and shoes in the bin.

The **Metal Recycling** also continues to be a wonderful way to get rid of your unwanted metal of all types and allows us to recycle them and earn a reward. From April through June, we earned \$1,262.66!

We are so grateful for all the ways that you help us support others as we serve Him. These funds help us to send the Operation Christmas Child Shoeboxes all over the world!

Vicki Bastian, Mission Ministry Team Leader



## What is Coming This Fall?

It's hard to believe that the summer is almost over! Fall Adult Sunday School classes will begin on **Sunday, September 8<sup>th</sup>** and run through **November 24<sup>th</sup>**.

Pastor Eric will be offering a second opportunity to participate in **The After Party** study from the summer. This course will help you navigate political discussions and shift your focus from the "what" of politics to the "how" in a small group setting.

Mark Hofmann will lead a class on **Ecclesiastes**. Mark warns that you might find this study to be somewhat depressing, but you will also come out of it with a clearer perspective on your earthly strivings.

We will continue our New Testament book studies with a look at **Hebrews**. Dani Sommers will lead a study about how Jesus fulfills all of the Old Testament promises and prophecies as our Prophet, Priest, and King.

Karen Arneson will offer **Your Divine Design**, a class that will help you focus in on your unique role in the body of Christ. This class was offered several years ago and is highly recommended by past participants.

Finally, Michelle Herman will facilitate a class around the book **Uncommon Ground**. This book study will provide practical suggestions for how Christians can interact with those around us in ways that show respect to those whose beliefs are different while remaining faithful to the gospel.

Watch for the Sunday school handout in your mailbox or the email I will send out next week for more details about these classes!

Stacy Reitenbach,  
Adult Sunday School Coordinator



Nothing lies beyond the reach of prayer  
except that which lies outside the will of  
God.

R.G. Lee



## IT IS NOW TIME!

It is now time to turn in your calendar dates for the **2025 Church Calendar**. If you or your group or team has **events, activities, meetings, meals, etc.** that you wish to hold **either here at the church or offsite**, please provide the information to the appropriate ministry team leader. The calendar helps prevent events from competing for our time. Use of the church also needs to be scheduled to prevent conflicts for space and for the best use of our facility. We also need to make sure that heating/cooling is set for the area(s) you want to use. (Ministry team leaders please turn in your dates to the church office for the proposed calendar. Please continue to do so as new dates arise or as changes are made throughout the year.)

You will need to complete a **Church Calendar ADDITION Form** for a **single church activity** or a **MULTI-EVENT Form** for **multiple activities** so that none are missed. Be sure to include the start & end times, preparation start & end times for each activity, and rooms to be used. You can also use a **calendar Google form** to submit dates. If you are interested in submitting your dates in this way, **contact the church office for the link**. Just because your event or meeting was on the calendar in the past, please do not assume anything. Again, don't forget to submit offsite activities.

A **Facility Use Agreement** needs to be completed for private use of the church facility. This and other forms can be found in the church office or by going to **www.bvcob.com**. The forms can be located by going to "Resources" then "Forms".

Thank you for keeping your church family informed of the where and when of church life. Please call the church office if you have any questions.

Note: In order to give priority to church functions and ministries, calendar dates for 2025 must be submitted from the ministry teams by October 1, 2024. No outside groups will be permitted to schedule any events for 2025 (with the exceptions of weddings) until after November 1, 2024.

Thank you,

Cheryl Ilgen, BVCOB Ministry Assistant



## Buffalo Gals Updates

I'd first like to thank everyone for your donations to Rolling Hills. We ended up with about 2 large tubs full of various craft supplies and nail polish for the residents! They were very appreciative of the generosity. These donations may seem like a small thing, but doing crafts benefits the residents in many ways such as improved cognitive abilities, motor skills, feeling accomplishment, social interactions, dexterity, and creativity.

The Beach Retreat is September 8 – 11. Please be in prayer for those who are going that it would be a time of connecting with God and others. Please also be in prayer for those who will be facilitating the study discussions based on Lisa TerKeurst's book, *Finding I Am*.

If you ever want to host an event for other women from our church - even if it's as simple as gathering for a few hours during an afternoon - don't hesitate to reach out, or just post a flyer on the Women's Ministry board and make sure it gets announced. It takes all of us to build a close-knit community!

Contact Elaina Richard with any questions or comments - ([elaina.miller008@gmail.com](mailto:elaina.miller008@gmail.com), 717-979-6732)

Elaina Richard for Women's Ministry



## Sermon Topics

We continue with our series on Matthew. Remember to join the sermon group on Facebook if you have not already done so. Below is the schedule through the end of September:

August 25 <sup>th</sup> :	Matthew 17:1-13
September 1 <sup>st</sup> :	Matthew 17:14-20
September 8 <sup>th</sup> :	Matthew 17:24-27
September 15 <sup>th</sup> :	Matthew 18:1-14
September 22 <sup>nd</sup> :	Matthew 18:15-20
September 29 <sup>th</sup> :	Matthew 18:21-25 Pastor K

God Bless,  
Pastor Eric

## Working on the Future

The Ministry Coordinating Team (MCT) continues to work on the issues identified at the Spring Council meeting. At our August meeting we approved job descriptions for a Volunteer Coordinator and a Youth and Young Adult Leader. We also approved \$3,000 to Lehman's construction for the development of plans that would alter the main gathering space allowing for more seating and an improved sound room. We hope to bring recommendations for all these things to our Fall Church Council meeting for your consideration. We also approved guidelines for Cultivo Ministries establishing them as an international ministry point.

This is also the time of the year when all our teams are developing their 2025 budgets. Please take a moment to express your appreciation to anyone who serves on a team. Their dedication to our faith community is what keeps this ship afloat. MCT always covets your prayer as we work to fulfill what we feel God is calling us to do.

During our prayer time it struck me that we seem to have a fair number of people in our faith community who are dealing with health-related issues. Let's keep all these folks in our prayers and let them know we are praying for their recovery.

Brian Keister, MCT Chairperson



## CHURCH CALENDAR

Please remember that the calendar in The Lamplighter is only a copy from the church events calendar. For the complete view of the current official calendar including facility in use items visit the church website, [www.bvcob.com](http://www.bvcob.com).

## Expanded Ministry Work Ongoing

You have heard a few times about work being done to expand our ministry here at Buffalo Valley with the financial resources that no longer are necessary for the building debt and resources available with the reduction in staff salaries. At the May Church Council meeting a document was presented which outlined four areas where we think we can expand our ministry and take care of some important needs. The four areas were building upgrades, mission support, community support and staffing. A document was also sent via email.

Our ministry teams are putting preliminary plans in place to present at our November Church Council meeting. There is still time to provide input/ideas on how we can expand the ministry in our community and around the world.

Recommendations can be turned in written form via mail or the black offering boxes. Emails can be sent to the church office or to any of the Ministries Coordinating Team members. Personal visits are also an option if you'd like to discuss some of your ideas in more detail. You can submit things anonymously or with your name. We would prefer to have your name so we can follow up with you.

Thanks,  
Pastor Eric



## LOOKING AHEAD IN 2024

October 2 – Family Connections begin

October 6 – Love Feast

October 12 – Women's Brunch

November 3 – Church Council Meeting

November 23 – Kettle Cook



Have you lost someone who was very close to you? Are you feeling stuck after the death of a loved one? Perhaps you feel overwhelmed with grief that seems to never end.

**Griefshare** may be able to help you move forward with your life. **Griefshare** is a **support group** that helps us understand grief and how it impacts us and how to begin to move forward in life. It is a **safe place** where someone can share very personal and deep feelings in the confidence and support of others and find that you are **not alone in grief**. No one is ever forced to talk or embarrassed for what you may share.

The format for the evening consists of sharing a light meal together, a time of open sharing and watching a video about some aspect of grief with the goal of finding healing for our life. Our next Griefshare **begins September 3 at 6:30 pm** in the Sonroom and runs for thirteen weeks finishing on November 26.

If you know someone that would benefit from Griefshare please invite them to attend or perhaps volunteer to come with that person. This is an opportunity to bless someone who may be grieving silently and has never come to terms with their situation.

Jim Brubaker



## September Young Adult Activities

Young Adults (18-30 yrs)

Megan Wetzel will be restarting the **Sunday night Bible Study** in October.

Pastor K meets with a Young Adult group at various area Restaurants, testing food and discussing faith - a "Pub Theology" type of gathering. We meet one evening a month (now Wednesday). September Date and location: **September 4<sup>th</sup>, @ Marzonis, 6 pm.**

Peace, Pastor K

*From Your Lead Pastor,*



## The Highs and Lows of Lament

The men's Tuesday morning Bible study just began a study of the book of Lamentations. Lamentations was written by the prophet Jeremiah during a difficult time in the history of God's people. The lament opens with the following verse:

*How lonely sits the city that was full of people!  
How like a widow is she, who was great among the nations!  
The princess among the provinces  
Has become a slave!*

What struck me as I read this first verse was the contrast between the highs and the lows. "lonely" vs "full of people", "widow" vs "great among the nations", "slave" vs "princess". The depth of the lament is often dependent on the height from which one falls. The depth of the lament is often dependent on the depth of the relationship. We are going to lament more deeply the life of one to whom we were deeply connected, compared to someone we don't know. One who was used to being the center of attention is likely to lament the loss of his/her influence more than one who never was the center of attention. The person with great status is likely to lament more the loss of that status than someone who never had the status of prince or princess.

The nation of Israel had it all at one time. Under the reign of king Solomon, Israel sat at the high-water mark of kingdoms. Israel was the envy of all the other nations. But now, as Jeremiah writes these words, the mighty have fallen. God has punished His people because of their disobedience and has brought the Babylonians in as agents of His judgment.

No one lives life on the mountaintop and no one lives only in the valley. It is good and necessary for us to lament our losses. I think that an important part of lament is to acknowledge the goodness of God in giving us relationships and other things that we mourn the loss of. God does give and He takes away. Blessed be the name of the Lord. I hope that as you and I lament, we see the process as a genuine part of worshipping a great God, even when we don't know all of the reasons why God does what He does.

God Bless,  
Pastor Eric

## Church Email Lists

**news@bvcob.com**  
BVCOB church news & events

**prayer@bvcob.com**  
prayer requests

**share-ads@bvcob.com**  
requests for help (moves, yardwork, rides, childcare, etc.), yard sales, items for sale, etc.



## **BVCOB Youth & Young Adults:**

**PIT** "Together passionately pursue  
& demonstrate the transforming life of Christ."



### "Meeting Bears"

"You who have such little faith! Why are you arguing among yourselves about having no bread? Don't you remember the 5 loaves for 5,000, and how many baskets you took up?..." – Matt. 16:8-12

The other day, I met a bear.

I know, that would usually be exciting and maybe even spiritual - a rare meeting of one of God's creatures.

But I was  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the way through a difficult mountain run, on a narrow trail, with Zelda, my highly skittish Border Collie. It was not convenient.

When I heard the grunt and saw a black ball of fur shoot up a tree 30 yards ahead of me, I uttered my own grunt of disapproval and stopped in my tracks. Fortunately, so did Zelda. My first thought was - great, where is the mother?! It didn't take long for the mother's head to pop up near the tree, grunting louder, urging her cub further up the tree, and staring the intruder down. Now I was faced with a decision - do I try to sneak by the bear and continue my path... OR do I turn around, take another path that will lead through swampy woodlands, and add 2 more miles as well as a long uphill slog to my run? Drat the bear family who decided to go for a stroll on my path!

Gratefully I was reflecting on the above Matthew passage about the disciples getting disgruntled after forgetting bread. I quickly realized that like them, I had more than just two choices; I could also choose my attitude and response. I could focus on my tiredness and interrupted schedule, and begrudgingly stomp my way around the longer route; or I could pause and enjoy the moment of being in the presence of a black bear cub and its mother in the wild... at a safe distance. I could choose to focus on the inconvenience or the possibility the inconvenience brought.

In Matthew 16, Jesus' response to the disciples arguing over forgetting bread was pretty strong, and kind of surprising to me. Forgetting bread seems like a trivial thing... and Jesus jumps to evaluate their faith! Either the disciples were pretty ugly when hangry, or maybe what we consider

trivial isn't that trivial. Maybe our response in little things like hunger is an opportunity to practice faith. Jesus challenged the disciples to use hunger to focus them on how they might experience God in new ways, or reflect on God's presence in the past.

Meeting a bear on top of a mountain was a small inconvenience (and in reality an exciting distraction); but it gave me a choice: be grumpy or celebrate the adventurous world God created and reflect on it for the extended run. With a focus on my interruption, I could have ruined my whole day. Focused on myself I would have carried my frustration back home and vented it on family who didn't meet another expectation. They would have vented on each other and endured a grumpy day together. Instead, I could share my joy of meeting a bear on a mountain trail. We look forward to future encounters!

Peace in your adventures!

Choose faith,  
Pastor K



## Youth News

### Upcoming Youth Events in September!

September 1 - LABOR DAY NO YOUTH

September 8 - No Youth

September 15 - Youth - Roller Skating

(Sunset Skating Rink from 1 - 4 pm,  
admission \$7 & regular skate rental is \$2)

September 22 - Youth 3 - 5 pm

September 29 - Planning 11 am

Please let Stacy Mast or Pastor K know if you have any questions!

**Calling All College Students** - please send your updated college address to Stacy Mast at [kyesmommy04@yahoo.com](mailto:kyesmommy04@yahoo.com) so that the Youth & Young Adult Ministry Team can bless you during this school year! (Parents of college students are welcome to provide their child's address to us as well!)

Stacy Mast, Youth & Young Adult Ministry Leader

## My Annual Conference Experience

Well I survived the Annual Conference with Eric. Oops, that came out wrong. I had an engaging time in Grand Rapids, Michigan and also survived the 564 mile one way, 9.5 hour drive in a Mini Cooper with our Pastor Eric. We left at 6 am on Wednesday the 3<sup>rd</sup> of July. Our conversations were diverse and he stopped for a break whenever my back side lost all feelings. We ended up with a beautiful glass walled corner room on the 18<sup>th</sup> floor. The two nights of viewing fireworks from this vantage point were outstanding. This was the second time I have attended the Annual Conference. The first being in Louisville, Kentucky in 2002, some 22 years ago. Back then there were 900 delegates. In 2024 we had 410 delegates. My first impression is that this conference seems to be an awfully expensive big affair for such a small denomination. Maybe we should consider only doing this every other year.

### PROS

- During the morning opening, a brother from Michigan reminded us of the Native Americans that used to camp next to the Grand River (Oh-wah-ten-ong) on the site of this convention center. How the Ottawa, Chippewa and the Potawatomi lost their lands to white expansionism. Even though I did not meet any Native Americans, for me this presentation introduced to me the conference theme "Welcome and Worthy".
- Attended three evening worship messages that exposed me to different viewpoints of our faith community. Had an appearance of "Affirmation Man" Greg Broyles. Thursday night preacher Greg Boyles dressed in a red superhero costume including a cape with a big Red A on his chest.
- Even though my attempt to sing was futile, I was moved and uplifted by the worship team.
- It was good to see a bit of diversity in skin tone, sex and ages. My circular delegate table contained a Hispanic pastor from Southern California, a 17 year old young girl from a Hispanic church of color in Virginia, a youth leader from Bridgeport Church of the Brethren. And an emergency room nurse that sees children DOA from gun shots regularly. Most of them had church populations under 100.
- Noticed that most of the new fellowships were from the African continent, India or from the Hispanic culture.

- Learned about a new Bible study software called LOGOS. A powerful tool for biblical study.
- On Earth Peace presented the 7 discussion prompts to Stand with People of Color.

I found these four additional steps challenging

1. Be aware that racism happened where you live
2. Sit with that
3. Then be able to see it when it happens again
4. Respond and say that it is not acceptable

- I talked Eric into going to an Indian Buffet for lunch on Friday. We ate so much that it was almost 8 pm until we felt like eating again. Eric really..really...likes Indian food as long as it is not too hot.

### CONS

- There was not enough time to find a place for lunch, be served and get back to the Equipping Sessions by 12:30 pm.
- I only made one Equipping Session during the day because I was unable to find the meeting rooms. The hotel was like walking in a giant maze. Did attend one about the Brethren Church of India, which is the oldest Church of the Brethren outside of the United States. They are suffering increased persecution from the pro-Hindu government.
- It is a shame that the theologically liberal churches are the most socially active. They are working with people of color, the environment, gun violence, Christian nationalism and reaching out to new legal immigrants. While the theological conservative church shies away from such issues.
- Looking over the conference room the attendance was predominately white and gray haired.

The voting that I participated in was mostly to approve reports or allow some study to have another year to complete their task. We left at 10 am on Saturday so we did not stay for the discussions and voting during the Saturday afternoon session. On the return trip Eric and I solved all the problems of the denomination and the world in general. These solutions are under a non-disclosure agreement LOL.

Mark A. Hofmann



## Apple Pie Fundraiser

Apple Pie Season will be upon us very soon! Last year the Youth did a great job (along with the help of some adults in the congregation) with their first apple pie fundraiser. Because of the great success and many compliments we received we will be doing another sale this fall! Money raised through this fundraiser helps to pay for youth and advisors to participate in the Westernport Mission Trip or to go to Sight and Sound.

Here are some ways that you can help: - **donate money** to offset the cost of apple pie ingredients (mark your donation in the offering with a note that says "Apple Pie Fundraiser") - **help** on one of the following dates: Monday October 14 in the AM for pie dough making day, Friday, October 18 in the late afternoon for pie dough rolling, or Saturday, October 19 in the AM for final pie prep. More details on how to sign up to help on those dates will be coming soon. - And the obvious way to help is to **buy apple pies** from the youth (pies will be ready to pick up on October 19 between 12 and 2 pm. They are ready for you to bake or freeze for later enjoyment). More details on cost and how to sign up will be coming soon!

But to whet your appetite we have an apple pie review from Janice Shively! (If you do not know Janice she is an excellent cook and baker - just ask anyone who goes to Westernport and they will verify this!): "We purchased numerous apple pies from the youth sale last fall and every one of them was delicious! We really appreciated that they were ready to pop in the oven and bake or freeze and bake another time. I shared one of the pies at work and it got rave reviews. I am so glad to hear that the pies are coming back this year, and plan to offer my co-workers the opportunity to order as well." This is a great way to support the BVCOB youth group.

Stacy Mast, Youth & Young Adult Ministry Leader



**The Lamplighter**

Buffalo Valley Church of the Brethren  
46 Brethren Church Rd  
Mifflinburg PA 17844

Return Service Requested

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for Youth & Young Adults

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[churchoffice@bvcob.com](mailto:churchoffice@bvcob.com)

8:30 AM - Sunday school  
9:45 AM - Worship Service