

The Lamplighter

Buffalo Valley
Church of the Brethren

February 2025
Volume 41 No. 1



Operation Christmas Child

Welcome to 2025! It's that time of year again when we will begin our collection of items for shoeboxes. Last year we were able to reach our goal of sending 400 boxes (404 to be exact)! Through the shipping labels that were applied to the shoeboxes, we were able to track where our boxes went. In 2024, the boxes that Buffalo Valley Church of the Brethren packed went to **Tanzania, Liberia, and South Africa!**

Once again, we would love to be able to send another 400 shoeboxes this year! Take a look at this year's list to see how you can help to reach the goal. If you did not receive the list in an email or your church mailbox, pick one up at the Mission Table in the Main Entry.

Kelsey Zimmerman



Sermon Topics

We are back to the Matthew series starting January 19th. Did you know that all four gospels spend at least 25% of their text covering the final week of Jesus' earthly life? I guess that is the Holy Spirit's way of telling us to pay attention to this last week of the earthly life of Jesus. I hope we can do just that. Here is the schedule:

January 26th: Matthew 21:12-22
February 2nd: Matthew 21:23-32
February 9th: Matthew 21:33-46
February 16th: Matthew 22:1-14
February 23rd: Matthew 22:15-22

God Bless,
Pastor Eric



Get Ready for True North Trusting Jesus in a Wild World

The topic for this year at Westernport helps children learn to know and trust Jesus through difficult times.

Do you want to be part of a team that helps children find the right path to Jesus? Become a part of the team from **Saturday, July 12 to Friday, July 18** as we share the Good News through Bible lessons, Imagination Station, Crafts, Games, Singing, Good Food and more.

This is a week filled with many blessings as we work together to witness to these children and their families.

If interested, please see me for an application that needs returned by **Sunday, March 30th**. The **cost is decreased** to \$100 this year. Step out in faith and serve the Lord!

Vicki Bastian, Team Leader



Hope it Makes You Think!

A little boy was invited out to dinner for the first time in his life. He was just going next door, but to him it was a big event. So when the time came to go, he made a beeline for the house next door.

When they sat down to eat, the boy automatically bowed his head to offer thanks for the food because he came from a Christian home. Suddenly he realized he was the only one with a bowed head. He opened his eyes and not having any inhibitions, said, "Don't you thank God for your food?" There was an embarrassing silence for a moment and the lady of the house said, "No, we don't." The little guy thought for a moment and then said, "You're just like my dogs, they just start right in."

David Jeremiah



Sunday school & Junior worship fun every week ...join us! Available for Infants through 5th grade.

~Shepherding is available after Sunday school. We will gladly bring your child out to the sanctuary to meet with you at your seats in the sanctuary.

Friday Fun Nights 6 - 8:30 pm

K - 5th grade

January 24th

January 31st

February 7th

February 14th

February 21st

February 28th

A children's prayer: Thank you God, for this new day. Thank you for rest and for shelter, for health, and for food. Thank you for my friends and family. Thank you for the challenges and for opportunities to learn. May this day be filled with love. And may I know that you are always near. ~Amen

(from: outuponthewaters.com)

Angela Zimmerman for Children's Ministry



Annual Church Auction 2025

Last year with your generous support we were able to pay off the remaining debt on our church building. This year's **auction** is **March 1st** and will **support disaster relief** in the United States through Eight Days of Hope. Please let Steve Richard know ASAP any item you have for the sale so we can begin to advertise the hundreds of items or services. Items must be at the church by 8 am March 1st. Please feel free to send pictures as people enjoy seeing all the items being collected. Because of the large volume of items and space constraints we do ask that you not provide any furniture or junk items that are difficult to sell. Otherwise, we will accept most anything of value (new or used) to be sold at our silent auction tables or at the live auction.

We do reserve the right to combine, recycle, donate or trash items that are not appropriate for the sale. We encourage families or groups to donate a theme bag/baskets, food items etc. as they are always great sellers and a lot of fun. We are even happy to provide you a bag or basket if you wish.

Items can be dropped off in the main entry way, but please let Steve know they are being dropped off so we can appropriately store them out of the way.

The day of the sale March 1st, starting at **3 pm** food will be available, silent auction tables will open and you can look through the order of sale and review the hundreds of items that are donated. The **live bidding starts at 4 pm** with Auctioneer, Jeremy Waite. We will again have a silent auction table geared toward children and there will be a period of kids only bidding during the live auction (with Parents on hand to pay). Children are also invited to put together their own theme baskets.

In addition to donating, and bidding if you would like to help with the sale, please let me know.

We encourage you to share the date with your friends and encourage them to come and enjoy the fun. We will have a Facebook post making the rounds that we encourage you to share with all your friends.

Please email me, Sbrichard1960@gmail.com with your donations. Thanks for your support and watch for more news.

Steve Richard, 570-452-4854



What Is It?

EIGHT DAYS OF HOPE

(EDOH) is a Christian, nonprofit organization that exists to love and serve those in need and will be the recipient of this year's auction proceeds. EDOH responds to US Natural disasters with a Rapid Response Ministry, Mass Feeding Ministry and a Rebuilding Ministry. Many of us are aware of their response in Tioga County PA following Hurricane Debbie last August. EDOH also has a safe house ministry for victims of human trafficking. To learn more you can go to [Our Impact - Eight Days of Hope](#)

Note that there are also opportunities for you to get personally involved as a volunteer with this organization. We hope that you will support the church auction and help us provide hope for those going through rough times.

We also value your input as to where auction funds might be utilized in the future so we encourage you to pray about it and be prepared to see how God leads.

Steve Richard

February Young Adult Activities

Young Adults (18-30 yrs)

We continue to check in on individual basis, to listen and share our journeys. I look forward to more in 2025!

We have a couple groups of young adults meeting. Megan Wetzel invites young adults to join her on **Sunday evenings, 6 pm**, at Cornerstone Fellowship with a larger group of young adults in the area for **Bible Study**.

Pastor K meets on the **first Wednesday of the month, 6 pm**, with a group at Matty's Bar & Grill in Lewisburg for food, laughs, sharing and challenging growth questions.

Pastor K



Outside Our Walls 2025

The Mission Ministry Team has a busy year ahead.

In February 11 – 20 there is a mission trip to the **Dominican Republic** with 10 team members. The team consists of Eric Reamer, Jeff Bastian, Darryl Fetterolf, Diane Reigle, Rose Summers, Ben Reimer, Larry Showver, Ethan Hoover, Tom Styers, and a lady from Carlisle. Please pray for the team as they serve and witness for Jesus.

Our **Community Aid Bin** has been so well used and we thank those in the church who have helped “Feed the Bin”! We receive money each quarter and through September or the third quarter we have received \$1,922.00. This money helps us with our OCC shoeboxes.

Our **Recycling Program** has also been well used and we thank you for bringing your metal and placing it on the trailer. Through December 9 we have received \$2,924! This is amazing and again we thank everyone who contributes. Thank you also to Kurt Ilgen for sorting and to Doug Rishel who delivers the recycling.

Stay tuned for collections for **Dwell** and **Expectations**.

Meat Canning dates are **April 21 – 24**. More info to come.

Vicki Bastian, Mission Ministry Team Leader



March 14 - 16

Arrive: 5 - 6 pm Friday

Leave: 11:30 am Sunday

Mountain Dale Farm - McClure

Cost - \$75

Sign Up By March 2



Women's Ministry Yearly Overlook

We have almost an entire year ahead of us! That means there are lots of opportunities for getting together and building connections. All of the regular and yearly women's events are already planned out and on the church calendar, but I'd love to hear from you about what other kinds of events or new focus groups you'd like to try. It doesn't matter whether it's something that has been done before, or something we've never done before. If it's something that you'd enjoy or think would be helpful, chances are someone else would agree. Please let me know!

There are a lot of things to be praying for right now. We will be switching prayer partners soon, but that leaves us with the opportunity to continue to check in on and pray for our previous prayer partners, or anyone else that crosses our minds.

We would love to see you at one of our women's Connections gatherings! They have been very meaningful and refreshing times for those that have attended. I know first-hand that some days we don't feel like going out or being social, but I've heard from others and experienced myself numerous times how it was so worth it to push through that and attend anyway. There's no pressure to speak or participate in anything we might be doing. It's a time for you to get what you need – whether that's social interaction, asking for prayer, or simply being present with other people. We'd love to have you!

Don't hesitate to contact me with any comments or questions!

- Elaina Richard

(elaina.miller008@gmail.com, 717-979-6732)



The Holy Spirit has given to each believer a special gift. Give back to Him an improved gift by managing it with all your heart.

From Your Lead Pastor,



Reflections of an Old(er) Man

As I write this article I am five days shy of my 60th birthday. There was a day a few decades ago when I thought that 60 was old. I no longer think of 60 as old. Rather, I choose to think of it as “older”. I like the sound of “older man” better than “old man”. “Old man” seems to have some sort of finality to it. “Older man” seems to be more in transition. I’d like to think of myself as a man in transition.

The truth is that we are always in transition. There is really nothing static about the human life. Though we stay a certain age for an entire year, the truth is that we are getting older day by day. The idea of “status quo” is an illusion in human life. Our bodies and the world around us are in a constant state of change.

A metaphor that I like to use is the idea of a sunrise and sunset. Those who are approaching the sunset portion of life have much to look forward to. Sunrises are nice but sunsets are just as beautiful. In fact, at any given moment in a sunrise or sunset the sun is at the same place on the horizon. Your life is like the sun, travelling on a path. The truth is that we don’t know exactly how long we have.

Psalm 90:12 reads: *“So teach us to number our days, that we may gain a heart of wisdom.”* That’s an exciting verse. As our days grow in number, we have an opportunity to grow in wisdom. The wisdom I have at 60 is far greater than the wisdom I had at 20...in fact I’m not sure I had any wisdom at 20...

For the follower of Jesus, advancing age is intended to lead to an advancing identification with Jesus. Here are two ways that the apostle Paul puts it: In Romans 8:29 we read: *“For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son.”* Then in 1 Corinthians 15:49 we read this: *“Just as we have borne the image of the man of dust [Adam], we shall also bear the image of the man of heaven [Jesus].”* The conforming process and the process of bearing the image of Jesus takes time. Once a person is born again into God’s family, the process of conforming takes place.

If you are young and reading this, I exhort you to participate in this conforming process now. You won’t regret it. I suggest it is analogous to saving

money while young. The “spiritual interest” that will be accrued through following Jesus at a young age will be substantial in your latter years. If you are older and reading this, please see that the conforming process never stops until we stop breathing. There are things you can know and experience in your 60s, 70s and 80s (and beyond) that you couldn’t have known in your 30s. That’s a good thing.

I intend to continue to see what God has in store for me. There is no such thing as spiritual retirement. I expect that my greatest years with Jesus lie ahead of me, not behind me. I hope you feel the same way as well. If not, let’s talk. Until we die, we are going to grow older...so let’s grow wiser and more clearly bear the image of Jesus.

God Bless,
Pastor Eric

BVCOB Youth & Young Adults:

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



Youth News

Upcoming Youth Events

February 2 - No Youth

February 9 – Youth

(possibly ice skating with young adults
but more details will be coming via email)

February 16 - Planning

February 21 - 23 - **Youth Retreat Weekend!**

Youth Retreat Info - The youth will be having a retreat at the FD Brown Conference Center (384 Dieffenderfer Road, Mifflinburg). Youth can be dropped off after school on Friday, February 21 and picked up on Sunday, February 23 between 11:30 am and 12:30 pm.

There will be some organized, faith-growing activities intermixed with free time. More detailed information is available from the youth in paper format but will also be emailed out to parents. If your child isn't able to attend the entire event they are always welcome for a portion of the time. There will be a sign up genius coming via email so youth can sign up for the weekend.

Looking ahead to March we are planning for our annual GoKart adventure on Saturday, March 22!

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

Stacy Mast, Youth & Young Adult Ministry Leader

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

Factors in Maintaining Mental Health

(This Winter Sunday School Quarter, I am facilitating a class called, "Streetlights: Equipping Church to support those facing Mental Illness and/or Addiction." I appreciate having this group as a support - especially as I shared in my December sermon on Joy that I struggle with mental health at times. But mental health is a factor in everyone's life, especially in darker, colder months. Maintaining mental health is parallel to our spiritual health, as it includes things like meditation and prayer, and affects the energy and ambition we have to put into reading the Bible and being kind to others. Here are 10 Factors of mental health. How are you doing with these? Are there 1 or 2 that could use some improvement? What specific steps can you take toward growth in mental and spiritual health?

- 1) Get enough Sleep: 7-8 hours/night
- 2) Eat regular healthy meals and drink plenty of water:
- 3) Exercise Daily: even smaller amounts of walking or moving help...
- 4) Spend positive time regularly with family & friends
- 5) Reduce everyday stress
- 6) Talk about stress and trauma when it happens with safe, caring people
- 7) Spend time in nature and/or with animals
- 8) Nurture Spiritual Life
- 9) Take care of your physical health (Doctor visits, hygiene, etc)
- 10) Find Purpose

We hope that Buffalo Valley Church of the Brethren supports and provides time for each of these elements in our community life. We have exercise classes, Volleyball nights, Basketball mornings, other small groups that meet; we try to encourage and develop safe, encouraging relationships. If you would like help with any of the above, please feel free to reach out to someone, including myself, another pastor or leader. We wish you a growing and healthy year!

Peace, Pastor K



Camp Eder Corner

“Camp Eder seeks to offer a place where people can learn to know Jesus Christ through Bible based ministry in an outdoor environment”.

First call for summer camps! Remember our church pays a large portion of tuition for our campers! Camp Eder camps are for Elementary children through and including High School youth.

Register online at campeder.org. If you are a regular attender here at Buffalo Valley COB, \$280 of your tuition will be paid by the church (\$280 is for full week camps; \$150 for barefoot camps). There are also scholarships for this church camp, near Gettysburg. Please let me know if you are going!

Week 1 June 15 - 20

- Senior High (Grades 9 - 12)
- Junior High (Grades 7 - 8)
- Rock Climbing (Grades 7 - 12)
- Shining Stars (Ages 15+special needs)

Week 2 June 22 - June 27

- Wet and Wild (Grades 7 - 12)
- Junior Camp 1 (Grades 4 - 6)
- Outback Camp (Grades 4 - 6)
- Horse Camp (Grades 4 - 6)

Week 3 July 6-11

- Kids Camp 1 (Grades 1 - 3)
- Camp All Out (Grades 1 - 3)
- Barefoot (July 9 - 11 for Kindergarten & 1st)
- Junior Camp 2 (Grades 4 - 6)

Week 4 July 13-18

- Dream It, Build It (Grades 4 - 6)
- Culinary Camp (Grades 4 - 6)
- Puddle Jumpers (Grades 4 - 6)
- Kids Camp 2 (Grades 1 - 3)

Week 5 July 20-25

- AT Trekkers (Grades 7 - 12)
 - C&O Biking Trip* (Grades 7 - 12)
- (*note this camp is physically challenging)

Hope you check out the summer adventures being planned for your child's Christian camping experience at campeder.org!

Any questions, contact Fay Richard,
BVCOB Camp Rep at 570-716-2442

Mission Ministry Spotlight

This month we want to highly Brent and Liz Hoffman who are **missionaries to the Czech Republic**. Brent is a cousin to Laura Daubert. Their primary focus is to help Czech believers plant churches in their homeland for the glory of God. In their most recent update they listed the following prayer requests:

Liz's mom Colleen is having major surgery on January 21

TEAM leader's retreat in Portugal in January

The Holy Spirit's leading in every area of our lives

Those we're investing in and those who'll come to the Chosen outreach

I would suggest that their use of the Chosen series suggests a real kindred spirit with us! Please pray for the Hoffman family and their ministry in the Czech Republic.

A new ministry that we are getting involved in closer to home is **SUN Area Work and Witness**. This group has four sponsoring churches and serves to help people with home repairs and other small projects (in a similar way to our MifflinServe effort a few years ago).

Dale Lehman and Jim Libby are serving as our coordinators for this effort. Pray for them as the planning continues and pray that you may be able to help with these projects in mid-July when the effort takes place.

We are also supporting SUN Area Work and Witness financially.

Pastor Eric



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.



Hospitality

As Laura Zimmerman finished up as Hospitality & Communications Ministry Team lead in December, I want to thank her for thorough notes and for meeting with me to answer my questions. I think she has done an excellent job! So thank you, Laura. Laura plans to continue to schedule meals using MealTrain, which is a special way we minister to each other here at Buffalo Valley COB.

A note of thanks to the rotating faithful Welcome Center folks: Holly Lehman, Brenda Rishel, Fay Richards, Lynda Jarrett and Jan Kline. They willingly serve a week per month and I remember feeling very welcome the first Sunday I visited in 2020. So thank you!

Thanks to all who greet folks each week! I enjoy seeing a smiling face at the door, I'm sure we all do. Thank you to Nancy Keefer and Cheryl Ilgen for scheduling this.

A big shout out to Karen Beiler. She joyfully makes the coffees, the hot chocolate, prepares the ice water and sets it up every single week. If anyone would like to be her backup, please reach out to Karen or myself. I value her ministry to the church very much. Thank you, Karen.

Pastor Donita is helping to gather ideas for decor in the lobbies, and Doug Diehl makes trips to gather supplies we need. Thanks to them as well!

If there is a way that you think the Hospitality team could serve the BVCOB family better, please reach out. My contact info is in the directory....thank you, Jeff Bastian, for working to put that together every year, and the Lamplighter, too!

Sheri Reimer

for Hospitality & Communications Ministry Team



Worshipping God in the storm doesn't mean we know the outcome, it means we trust the Captain.

Chris Tomlin

Volunteer Coordinator

By the grace of God. I have been placed at such a time as this to manage a new position at the church. If you do not know me, I hope you do soon. I have been volunteering my time mostly in children's ministry events for some years.

My goals are to help identify needs of service in the church and navigate members in the church to the best places for them to serve.

If you are interested in serving or have questions about serving, please contact me.

How can I serve?

Couples Banquet

February 15th 6 – 8 pm

Prepare the meal, and childcare.

Angela Zimmerman,

deadwings@dejazzd.com

LOOKING AHEAD IN 2025

March 1 – Church Auction

March 14 – 16 – Men's Retreat

April 12 – Easter Egg Fair

April 17 – Love Feast

May 4 – Church Council Meeting

June 7 – Strawberry Festival

June 18 – Day Camp Beginnings

July 12 – 18 – Westernport Mission Trip

October 5 – Love Feast

November 2 – Church Council Meeting

November 29 – Kettle Cook

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

Return Service Requested

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46 Brethren Church Road
Mifflinburg PA 17844
www.bvcob.com

Lead Pastor – Rev. Eric S. Reamer
(570) 837-9393

Donita J. Keister, Associate Pastor
for Children & Pastoral Care

Eric M. Kauffman, Associate Pastor
for Youth & Young Adults

Editors – Jeff & Vicki Bastian
Church Office/Kitchen (570) 966-1183
churchoffice@bvcob.com

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