

The Lamplighter

Buffalo Valley
Church of the Brethren

February 2026
Volume 42 No. 1

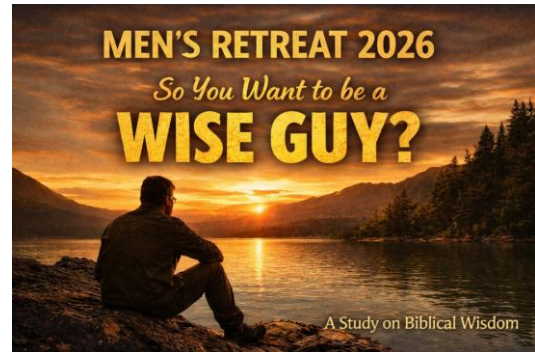
Time For Prayer & Discernment

The Ministry Coordinating Team (MCT) has been working to prepare for the **possibility of leaving the Church of the Brethren denomination**. As a reminder we have a Church Council meeting scheduled for **March 15th at 11:15 pm** where an **official vote administered by representatives from the Southern District** will be taken. If three-quarters or more of the members of Buffalo Valley present at the meeting vote to leave the denomination, then it will be approved. In that case MCT will also be bringing two other items for consideration. We will be presenting a motion for a name change for our faith community. And changes to our polity removing the Church of the Brethren and incorporating our new name. We continue to covet your prayers as we work through this process.

At our January meeting, we approved working with Beau Hoffman Esq. for counsel to address the legal issues that arise when leaving the Church of the Brethren (COB). We also approved 4 possible names for our congregation that were generated from our church naming process. You have been given an opportunity to rank these 4 names. MCT will review those results at our February 6 & 7 retreat and bring one name to Church Council on March 15th for approval pending our vote to leave the COB. At the retreat we will also be working to outline a scope of work for the Family Pastor search team and a job description for the position.

Thank you for your input so far. Keep our faith community in your prayers. If you have any questions, concerns, or comments my door is always open.

Brian Keister, MCT Chairperson



Join us for a relaxing weekend of
Faith, Fellowship, and Food!

March 20 - 22

Arrive: 5:00 - 6:00 pm Friday
~ Leave: 11:30 am Sunday

Mountain Dale Farm – McClure

Cost - \$85

Covers Lodging for both nights & food for
Meals: Friday Dinner – Sunday Breakfast

Contact Zach Showers with any questions.
570-765-2011 or zshowers@yahoo.com

Sign-Up by March 8

❤️ *Couples Banquet* ❤️

February 14

From 6 -8 pm in the Son Room

Menu: appetizers, rolls, salad, roast beef,
mashed potatoes w/gravy, baked corn green
beans and dessert

Sign up by Feb. 8
\$30 per couple

Childcare Provided



It Is Coming Quickly

2026 BVCOB Annual Church Auction is scheduled for **Saturday, March 7th**. The silent Auction starts at 3 pm and live bidding at 4 pm. Please start saving your items and sharing the date with your friends. Please email Steve Richard at sbrichard1960@gmail.com with items being donated ASAP. We prefer that you deliver items closer to the auction date, but if you have something that you prefer to deliver now or need assistance with, please let me know. Please feel free to send pictures if you would like as people enjoy seeing all the items being collected. Because of the large volume of items and space constraints we are asking that you not provide any furniture, exercise equipment or items that are more appropriate for a yard sale (estimated value less than \$5). Otherwise, we accept most anything else of value (new or used) to be sold at our popular 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 or basket, meals/food or services as they are always great sellers and a lot of fun.

Also note that our special children's auction returns, so feel free to get you kids involved in the fun.

In addition to donating, and/or bidding if you would like to help with the sale in some way, please let me know. Help is especially needed Friday March 6th and the day of sale March 7th.

This year's Auction proceeds will be divided equally three ways. One third toward support of personal needs within our congregation through the **Family in Need Fund**, one third to the **Mustard Seed School** in Pakistan. This is a school that Kurt Ilgen is familiar with and is overseen by people in our area. The last third will go toward the parking lot pavement project, **Pave the Way**.

Thanks for your support and stay tuned for more news.

Steve Richard, Sbrichard1960@gmail.com
570-452-4854



New Year...New Habits?

If you are looking to begin some new spiritual habits for 2026 I would like to suggest three.

First, plan to attend our monthly prayer meeting on the third Wednesday of each month from 7 - 8 pm in the Sonroom. We pray for our world, our church community and for individuals. You don't have to pray out loud. You can come for all or a portion of the time.

Second, join a John Bible study via email that will walk you through the gospel of John in small chunks, asking you about three questions to consider to help you to understand and hold onto what you are reading.

Third, join our church directory prayer group. You will receive an email every morning at 6 am which lists people in our church community for whom you can pray.

If you'd like to sign up for the last two ideas, please let me know.

God Bless, Pastor Eric



Keep the Welcome Mat Out

Friends, the Welcome Center could use your help! Whether you are a greeter, bringing a visitor, or just sipping some coffee and spot someone you don't know...could you invite them to stop by the Welcome Center?

Every week we have faithful, friendly volunteers stationed to welcome everyone, but some new folks have slipped by unnoticed. There is a welcome bag with goodies and church info, and it is a wonderful way to let them know that we are happy they stopped in. If you are a greeter, please usher folks right over. We would be so grateful! Thank you.

Sheri Reimer

Hospitality & Communications Ministry Team



ChMeetings

ChMeetings is the new church management software we started using in the fall to replace Servant Keeper.

Most of you should have received an **invitation to have a ChMeetings account**. If you do not remember receiving an invitation, look back in your emails from January 5 - 9. It will say Login Credentials.

This invitation asks you to set up a login using a temporary password (a series of numbers) and then establish your own password. Once your login is set up, you are able to access your account at chmeetings.com, or by downloading it on your computer, tablet or smartphone.

Most people have a member account which allows you to see events for the next 60 days, view and edit your profile (please add your picture) and see the church directory. There are some group leaders and admins who are able to do more things with ChMeetings.

If you look at the directory, you will see you can call, email or text individuals. Texting is only available through the mobile app and it utilizes the texting application you use within your phone.

If you are sending an email, make sure the "sender" at the bottom is you and not Buffalo Valley Church of the Brethren. You can change it to you by using the drop-down menu and selecting your name. If you do not change the sender to you, the email replies will come to the church office.

I plan to continue to include articles about ChMeetings in future Lamplighters. These articles will include more information about ChMeetings and tips for how to use it.

If you have any questions about ChMeetings, please feel free to contact me at churchoffice@bvcob.com or at 570-966-1183. The church's ChMeeting account in the directory is Buffalo Valley.

Cheryl Ilgen, Ministry Assistant



Camp Eder Corner

First call for summer camps. Do not delay! Some camps fill up fast! Camps are for those finishing Kindergarten through those graduating high school.

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 14 - 19

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

Week 2 June 21 - June 26

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

Week 3 July 5 - 10

Kids Camp 1 (Grades 1 - 3)
Farm Camp (Grades 1 - 3)
Barefoot (July 8 - 10 for Kindergarten and First)
Junior Camp 2 (Grades 4 - 6)

Week 4 July 12 - 17

Dream It, Build It (Grades 4 - 6)
Horse 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); 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



Buffalo Gals

I am stepping into something new and that is into leadership of the Women's Ministry.

I bring a sincere heart for God, a passion for connecting women in faith, and a desire to see every woman grow spiritually and personally. I value authentic relationships, prayer, and am committed to creating a welcoming space where women can feel supported and just be empowered.

Please come and join me as I transition into a new role and begin a new chapter with Women's Ministry.

Amanda Stahl, Women's Ministry Coordinator



Have You Ever Been to a Rain Forest? Exploring the Nature of God

This year in Westernport beneath a canopy of chattering birds and howling monkeys the children will plunge into an adventure of discovering the nature of God. They will explore what it means to be rooted in relationship with God, their Creator, a safe place in all of life's storms.

Do you want to be part of a team that helps children find the right path to Jesus? Join the team as we share the Good News through Bible lessons, Imagination Station, Crafts, Games, Singing, Good Food and more from **Saturday, July 11 to Friday, July 17.**

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 29th. The cost is \$100 per person.

Step out in faith and serve the Lord!

Vicki Bastian, Team Leader for Westernport



Outside Our Walls

The Mission Ministry Team (MMT) reviewed their 2026 budgeted organizations at their recent January team meeting. Can you guess how many there are? If you guessed 23, you're right! An ambassador was assigned to each ministry to keep the lines of communication open. Since space is limited here, I won't be able to identify all 23 outreaches, but suffice to say it's diverse and exciting to be a part of helping so many wonderful organizations. Thank you for enabling the MMT to be the hands and feet of Jesus. Your help is greatly appreciated as we do the best we can to meet needs around the world and around the corner.



One of the first needs is the upcoming mission trip to the Dominican Republic (February 21 -28). This annual trip has been happening since 2015 with a couple years off during the pandemic. For over a decade we have been loving on this unique culture in the Caribbean. Please keep the team in your prayers as they anticipate traveling to and serving on the island of Hispaniola. The 2026 team is Pastor Eric Reamer, Aaron Reitenbach, Rose Summers, Jeff Bastian, Chris Graham, Cheryl Noll from Chambersburg COB and one of Cheryl's friends, Aleshia Hoch. The relationships built with Jewel and David and their flock in Los Toros is something special. May God be glorified.



Thank you to all who graciously gifted many items for the 2025 Operation Christmas Child event. Kelsey Zimmerman informs us that she was notified that all 400 of the boxes that you helped to fill were sent to South Africa. Thank you to Kelsey for organizing all of the particulars to get a task such as this accomplished. Keep an eye at the Missions bulletin board for assisting with things for this year. We are again shooting for 400 boxes.



THANK YOU also for feeding the bins. The metal recycling was robust as 25 loads were collected in 2025 and generated roughly \$4,800.



The Community Aid bin also made considerable revenue and also keeps us supplied with community care cards.

Kurt Ilgen, Mission Ministry Team Leader



Youth News Upcoming Youth Events

January 25 - Youth 3 - 5 PM

February 8 - Youth

February 15 - Planning

February 20 - 22 Youth

Winter Retreat Weekend at Bucknell Center

Please keep an eye (or ears) out for race day in March!

We ended 2025 with our annual youth lock in with 20 youth and 7 leaders. Fun was had by all between games, skits, mario kart tournament, lack of sleep, and PLENTY of food.

Ending 2025 also means outgoing/incoming leaders. We are grateful for the time Stacy Mast (YaYa Leader) & Doug Frank served. You will be missed! We are also excited that Clayton Frank & Jennifer (Jenny) DeLong are joining the YaYa Team as well as Brent Ulrich accepting the call to be the YaYa Leader.

Winter Retreat

February 20 - 22 at F.D. Brown Conference Center. Parents are in charge of dropping off and picking up kids. There is a sign-up to attend on TeamSnap and on the sheets in their mailboxes.

Activities involve lots of food, free time, sessions examining who we are as the "PIT" and a new game combo of manhunt and werewolf.

Please let Brent Ulrich, Megan Wetzel, or Pastor K know if you have any questions!

How does Moses make his coffee?...Hebrews it. - Ethan Hoover

Brent Ulrich, Youth & Young Adult Team Leader



BVCOB Youth & Young Adults:

BVCOB Youth: "New Meanings"



PIT - Purposeful Influential Team

P: *Jeremiah 29:11, "For I know the plans I have for you declares the Lord, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope."*

I: *Proverbs 27:17, "As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another."*

T: *Psalms 133:1, "How very good and pleasant it is when kindred live together in unity!"*

Our church building has a pit - not sure if you knew this. Yes, we have a basement - beneath the church offices. "The Youth" have made their home there, and are very grateful for this space. It is not a dark, smelly pit - at least not like you might think. It is a warm and comfortable space with couches for lounging, a "half-kitchen" area for snacks and monthly pancakes, a ping-pong table and chess board for friendly competition, and of course shelves, tables and chairs for study.

This PIT is not just a space or location - this PIT has given shape and direction to who the youth are. When I came 10 years ago, the youth were already in the PIT and held that name. It stood for *Passionate, Intimate, and Transformed*. It directed the Youth and Young Adults (YaYA) to be *Passionate, Intimate and Transformed in Christ*.

A unique characteristic of Youth Programs is that they are continuously changing - individuals move through constantly, bringing new energy and personalities. Each group is different. This school year (September), we began asking again, "*Who is God calling us to be?*" Megan and I (Pastor K) guided youth in doing this search themselves; we avoided just us telling them what *we think* God is saying, and made space for youth to hear God personally and corporately.

This can be a frightening experience - what if they don't hear God? But this came out of personal experiences, which inspired confidence (you might even call it faith) that God would speak to these youth. The difficulty was learning to listen. Over the last couple years we began the tradition of hosting breakfast on the first Sunday of each month. Eating together helped digital devices disappear, opened conversation, and created space to listen. This time evolved into purposeful and creative prayer times, and then full-fledged listening for God's guidance in the question - "*Who is God calling us to be?*"

To give some structure, we kept the beloved acronym, PIT. We surrounded each step with prayer - asking God to be with us and bring words to mind and direct our thoughts. Youth brainstormed words that started with each letter, and Megan came up with 30+ verses that word searches brought to the surface. Then we just gave the mixed up words to the youth, prayed, and had them assign verses to words from THEIR perspective. We prayed, had youth narrow down words, argued, prayed, voted, discussed, prayed, and came to consensus, and prayed again.

Since then we have dug further into each word. We have 3 groups studying each word, verses about the word, and Bible stories / characters that demonstrate the word. They are forming presentations, complete with skits, verses, and applications for our lives today. They will present them at our Youth Retreat at the end of February, and maybe for a church service in the future? If you noticed at the beginning, our new words are

Purposeful Influential Team

I am excited for who and what God is calling this PIT to!

Peace, Pastor K



Wednesdays
January – April 29

Meal served: 5:30 - 6:15 pm
Buffet-Style Meal
\$5/person \$15/family



Temptation is the devil looking through the key hole. Yielding is opening the door and inviting him in.

Billy Sunday

From Your Lead Pastor,



Was Jesus Political?

We have a very small segment of the teaching of Jesus in the gospels. It only takes a few hours to read all the words of Jesus that are recorded in the Bible. In that teaching of Jesus, we have very little teaching that many people would classify as “political”, despite the fact that Jesus lived in a time when the Jewish people lived under an incredibly oppressive Roman government. Outside of “Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s and to God the things that are God’s”, we don’t have much.

Why didn’t Jesus campaign aggressively for the overthrow of the Roman government? Why did Jesus not overthrow the government Himself? I’m going to suggest that Jesus was very political in His teaching, though not in the way that we might often consider.


Here is a definition of the word “politics”: “the activities associated with the governance of a country or other area, especially the debate or conflict among individuals or parties having or hoping to achieve power”. Using this definition, I think we would all agree that Jesus was incredibly interested in politics. He was definitely interested in achieving power. He was very interested in governing a country or area. What many people miss is that Jesus wasn’t particularly interested in the kingdom of this world. Instead, Jesus taught regularly about life in His kingdom. Jesus said things like “The kingdom of heaven is like...” numerous times to illustrate His political principles. Standing before Pilate Jesus said, ³⁶“*My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, My servants would fight, so that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but now My kingdom is not from here.*” (John 18:36). Clearly, Jesus knew that He had a kingdom.

The reality for Jesus was and is that His kingdom is not of this world. The values and governance of His kingdom are vastly different than that of any government or kingdom on this earth. However, if we are followers of Jesus we are exhorted and equipped to live out the values of His kingdom now, while we live in a broken kingdom on earth. This is true whether one lives under a democracy or a dictatorship.

I hope you see that Jesus’ followers are called to be political. We are called to activities that are associated with a governance hoping to achieve power. Well, in reality Jesus already has all the power, but He doesn’t often use that power to thwart the political plans and purposes of man...yet. There will come a day when man’s political agenda will be canceled, and Jesus will rule and reign in His kingdom on earth.

Until then I encourage you to live out the values of the kingdom of Jesus. Participate in human political systems as you feel God is leading but never to the detriment of your engagement with the kingdom of God here on earth. Finally, I exhort you to join with the saints in praying these words of Jesus from the model prayer. “*Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done. On earth as it is in heaven.*”
Come Lord Jesus!

God Bless, Pastor Eric

 **February Young Adult Activities**
Young Adults (18 - 30 yrs)

Young Adults (ages 18 - 30) meet with Pastor K on the third Wednesday of the month, 6:30 pm, to test food, listen to each other's lives, and ask challenging faith questions. In January we moved it to the 4th Wednesday (January 28) at "The Bullrun Taphouse" in Lewisburg at 6:30 pm. Check out our BVCOB Young Adults Messenger chat group, or contact Pastor K for details.

Peace, Pastor K



Upcoming Sermon Series

We will continue in our series on Paul's letter to the Philippians titled, "Church Life". We are taking three to four weeks on each chapter. Here are the upcoming texts:

January 25th: Philippians 1:27-30
February 1st: Philippians 2:1-4
February 8th: Philippians 2:5-11
February 15: Philippians 2:12-17
February 22nd: Philippians 2:19-30

Don't forget to engage with the sermon group on Facebook to get more out of the time we are spending together in Philippians.

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

Annual AUCTION



Saturday-March 7th

**Mark your calendars
for this uplifting
event; questions?
talk to Steve Richard**



LOOKING AHEAD IN 2026

- March 7 – Church Auction
- March 15 – Special Church Council Meeting
- March 20 – 22 – Men's Retreat
- March 28 – Easter Egg Fair
- April 2 – Love Feast
- May 3 – Church Council Meeting
- June 6 – Strawberry Festival
- June 17 – Day Camp Beginnings
- July 11 – 17 – Westernport Mission Trip
- July 26 – Church Picnic
- September 6 – 9 – Women's Beach Retreat
- October 4 – Love Feast
- November 1 – Church Council Meeting
- November 28 – Kettle Cook



CHURCH CALENDAR

For the complete view of the current official calendar including facility in use items visit the church website, www.bvcob.com.

The Lamplighter

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

Return Service Requested

The Lamplighter

Buffalo Valley Church of the Brethren
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