



Banner

We are a sharing, loving fellowship of Christian believers, rooted in biblical faith, that actively seeks and celebrates God. We desire to praise, love and serve with all our hearts in our faith community and to reach out to our neighbors, continuing the work of Jesus peacefully, simply, together. In God we find the source of all our joy.

Hallelujah!

December 2024

Pomona Fellowship Church of the Brethren

Vol. 51 No. 12

A word from our Pastor

Happy New Year!

No, we're not too early. We're right on time! The beginning of Advent starts the new church year. It is a time for moving on and looking to the future. The future we are called to look toward is the second coming of Christ. We are called to look inward, on a personal as well as a cosmic level, to see if we are prepared.

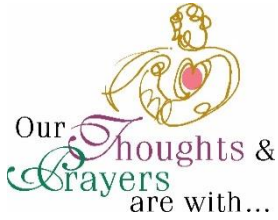
As we begin this new year, the days are getting shorter, and darkness comes earlier. The winter solstice is just a few days away. In fact, the day now contains more darkness than light.

Advent is a season of endings and beginnings. As the new church year begins, Christ's birth ushers us into new ways of living and loving, and yet the world as we know it spins madly on. In many ways, pregnant Mary was surrounded by endings - large and small, personal and political. But Mary proclaimed a hope and a God who was and is making all things new. Christ's birth offered a beautiful new beginning for shepherds and Magi alike - all the while, King Herod tried to bring Christ's story to an end.

When we ourselves navigate seasons filled with endings and beginnings, we need reminders. We need words that can feel like steady ground, like a path for our feet to find as we step forward into the unknown.

Come to the four Sundays in Advent where we are beginning and ending, loving and living, in Christ's name, Come!

Pastor Julie



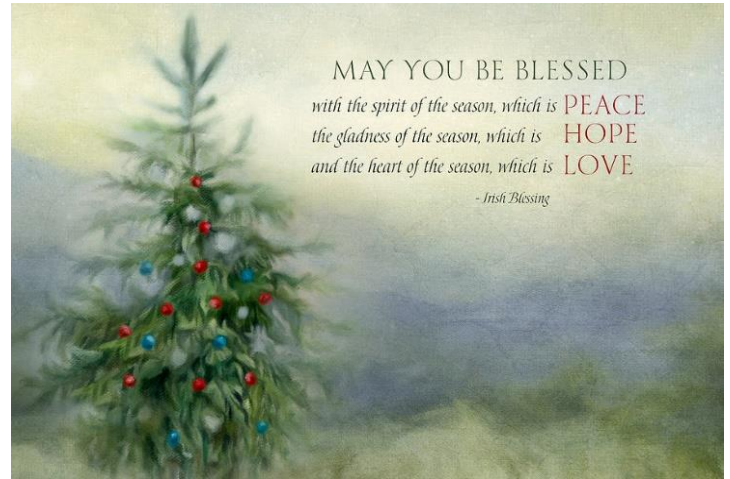
those limited or confined for health reasons:
Marcheta Pletcher.

We also uphold these members, friends and family members of our congregation who have prayer concerns: **Bill Lemon, Norma Lovelace**

Preaching Schedule

- December 1st:** Paul Lovelace Preaching
- December 8th:** We Can't Go Alone
- December 15th:** Do the Good that is Yours to Do
- December 22nd:** Hope is Worth the Risk
- December 29th:** Linda Hart, Peggy Redman, & Cody Smith

PFCOB STEWARDSHIP INFORMATION Through October 2024	
2024 Annual Budget	\$186,267.00
Total Budget Income thru October	\$163,058.18
Giving '24	\$72,497.00
Interest & Other Income '24	\$90,651.18
Total Budget Expense thru October	\$(165,824.74)
Budget Balance thru October	(\$2,766.56)
October Special Non-Budget Offerings	
Inland Valley Hope Partners Beta	\$55.00
Messenger	\$14.50
CoB Hurricane Relief	\$119.00
After School/Special Program	&1,000.00



Upcoming Meetings

Stewards:

Tuesday, December 3rd at 3:00 pm

Music & Worship:

Tuesday, December 10th at 6:15 pm

Service & Outreach:

Wednesday, December 11th, at 9:30 am

Church Board:

Thursday, December 12th at 6:30pm

Every Tuesday at 7:30 p.m. **Bible Study**, over Google Meet. Contact Sander Eller, sandereller@gmail.com, for details.

Every Wednesday at 8:00am, **Breakfast Fellowship Group**, in the Hillcrest Dining Room. Contact Mary Hines, 909-418-4654 for details.



Birthdays

- Dennis Wallstrom on the 15th.
- Jerry Davis on the 17th.
- Sarah Mundy on the 18th.
- Virgil Pletcher on the 19th.
- JoAnn Mills on the 24th.
- Dana Smith on the 24th.

Anniversaries

Cody and Dana Smith on the 12th.

Service & Outreach News & Updates

Giving Emphases for December

Thank you for your continued response to our effort to support the local food bank. Our food emphases for **December are Christmas Foods and Staple items**. This time of year, is a great time for reflection and connecting with those you love. It is also a time of great stress and sadness for many families. Having a meal with your family is a privilege we often take for granted. Providing ingredients is a wonderful way of allowing others to enjoy a meal and celebrate together. For all canned food please provide pop-top cans if possible. As always, staple items, including spices, baking items like flour baking soda, yeast, socks and feminine products are always needed and welcome.



**The Giving Emphasis for December is
Inland Valley Hope Partners**

The Christmas Carrd Tree Fund is FINCA.

Commission News

The holiday season is the time of year for reflection, endings and new beginnings.

One of the many things we focus on during this season is giving. Whether it's presents under the tree for loved ones, the gift of food, a joke gift for a white elephant with friends, the gift of time, or the gift of money, all are given with love.

This year we have 4 opportunities to spread the love and heart of the season.

Our Monthly emphasis to IVHP, Inland Valley Hope Partners, is an opportunity to help many who are struggling as they help hundreds of families put food on the table.

One of my favorite things to do is read Christmas Cards. The Christmas Card Tree is a fun way to share a card with everyone and give the money you saved to the fund that will go to FINCA,

Foundation for International Community
Assistance.

Giving gifts is one of my favorite things to do now, but when I was a kid, seeing the gifts under the tree and the anticipation of what they might be was the best part of Christmas. Our Adopt – a – Family is a simple way of spreading the joy of giving and receiving gifts to a family that can't provide the luxury of gifts to their children and each other.

As you decorate for Christmas and make family plans take a moment to spread that joy and love of the season to any of these amazing organizations.

Written by. Laura Lovelace

The Christmas Card Tree

This year the funds from our Christmas Card Tree are going to FINCA, Foundation for International Community Assistance. FINCA's mission is to end poverty through

sustainable and scalable solutions inspired by the insights and needs of people in the communities where they live and work. They do this by providing financing for farmers and business owners of small and micro businesses.

They are celebrating their 40th anniversary this year by quadrupling all the donations that come in. Women's Fellowship and our church have been supporting FINCA since 2005 with our pennies and have given over \$4,500 to FINCA. We are excited to support FINCA as the needs of the world grow and change.

Written by, Yvonne Belcher & Laura
Lovelace

"Dress A Girl" Sewing Party

"Dress a Girl," a program where folks come together to cut & sew dresses for orphaned girls in other countries. The dress may be the only new item of clothing they have ever owned. This

would be a good time to invite people who would like to learn to sew as well. All levels of skill are encouraged to attend. This is a wonderful opportunity to create community and friendship with the folks from St. Paul's.

Upcoming Sewing Dates

December 7, 9:00am – 12:00pm

January 4, 9:00am – 12:00pm

February 1, 9:00am – 12:00pm

Please RSVP to the church office.

***Banner* articles are due by December 20th**

The *Banner* is published by the
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Services & Activities

Sunday Worship at 10:00 a.m. in the Parish Hall

Bible Study on Google Meet Tuesdays, 7:30 p.m.

Breakfast Group Wednesdays, 8:00 a.m.

Julie Wheeler	Pastor
Janet Short	Moderator
Laura Lovelace	Admin. Assistant

The *Banner* is published once a month. Articles and announcements to appear in the next issue of the *Banner* are due in the church office by the 20th of each month.



Advent

December 1: Hanging the Greens
After Worship

Join us in decorating the tree & fellowship

December 8: Cookie Exchange with St. Paul's
After Worship

Bring 2 dozen cookies:
1 to share & enjoy, & 1 packaged to exchange

December 13: Christmas Caroling at Woods
10:00 a.m.

Meet Peggy at South Woods, we'll go in together.

December 15: Christmas Party
After Worship

Please bring your favorite holiday
treat savory or sweet
to share.

NEW YEAR'S DAY OPEN HOUSE

COME FOR
FOOD, FELLOWSHIP,
& FRIENDS

WHERE

Julie & Dennis' House
845 Hillcrest Dr.
Pomona, CA 91768
909-720-9832

The
House
has Stairs

WHEN

January 1, 2025
2:00pm - 5:00pm



Brethren Disaster Ministries, CDS respond to Hurricane Helene

Soon after Hurricane Helene hit the southeastern United States in late September, Brethren Disaster Ministries and Children's Disaster Services (CDS) began active responses to aid survivors.

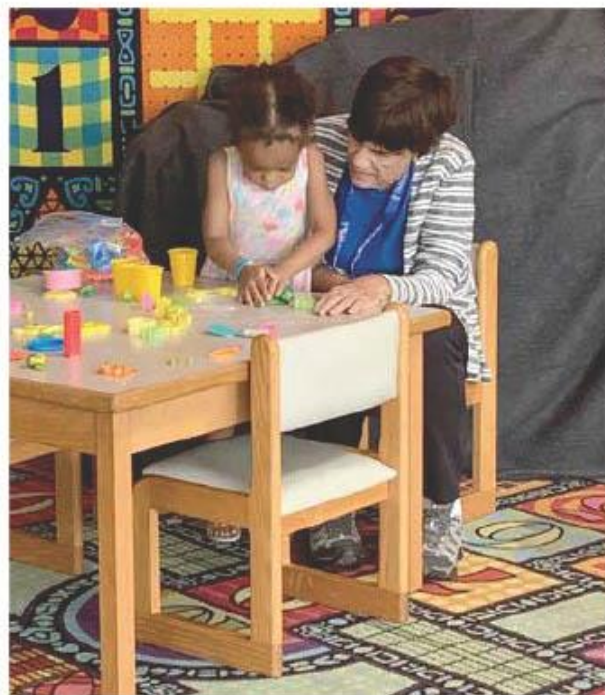
A call for prayer was made by general secretary David Steele. "All those who have suffered from this devastating storm are in need of our prayers and our help," he said. "I invite your prayers for everyone who has lost loved ones, those who have lost homes or businesses, the communities that have been destroyed, and those who are displaced and those lacking basic necessities like food, water, and power."

In early October, CDS deployed two teams of volunteers to care for affected children and families in North Carolina. One team of four people responded in Fletcher, N.C., serving at a Red Cross shelter beginning Oct. 3. The second team of four began work Oct. 7 at a shelter in Asheville, N.C., also in partnership with the Red Cross. The teams were expected to work for two weeks at those locations, while CDS staff prepared to deploy more teams as needed.

Brethren Disaster Ministries staff, in communication with leaders in the most affected church districts of Southeastern and Virilina, requested grants from the Emergency Disaster Fund (EDF) for the initial response. A grant of \$10,000 helped pay for and transport relief supplies to affected areas of Southeastern District and a grant of \$20,000 gave emergency funding to local relief efforts of the district and its congregations. Other church districts also began collections of relief materials and monetary donations.

With congregations in the mountainous region of western North Carolina and southwestern Virginia, where massive flooding occurred, Southeastern District reported catastrophic damage. The congregation most affected was Walnut Grove Church of the Brethren in Taylors Valley near Damascus, Va. Carl and Linda McMurray, who are leaders in the district, were among church members who lost homes in that area. They gave a moving television interview about their harrowing experiences when they were swept away as their home was carried off its foundation in Taylors Valley. The couple have been married for 57 years, noted WCYB Channel 5 News.

An Oct. 2 coordinating call between Brethren Disaster Ministries staff and the leadership of Southeastern and Virilina Districts developed a plan for providing relief supplies and financial resources. The districts began work to



CDS volunteer Lydia Dorje plays with a child in Fletcher, N.C.

coordinate clean-up and relief supplies and identify staging points for getting supplies into the area of most need.

The \$10,000 grant paid for a shipment of clean-up and relief supplies including Church World Service (CWS) Clean-up Buckets, Hygiene Kits, Period Packs, gloves and masks, and gallon containers of Concrobiom mold treatment along with related equipment.

The \$20,000 grant provided emergency funds to Southeastern District to help district leaders and congregations meet financial needs and provide humanitarian assistance for people affected by the flooding. Proposed uses for the funds included aid such as bedding and supplies for people in shelters, food and water, generators and fuel, temporary housing needs, medical needs, and more. Brethren Disaster Ministries staff worked with the district to monitor and document the use of the funds.

Give to the work of CDS and Brethren Disaster Ministries at www.brethren.org/givehurricaneresponse.



Post this page

You are welcome to photocopy these news pages. For more Newsline stories, go to www.brethren.org/news

Proposed NDAA includes automated draft registration for men and women

The Office of Peacebuilding and Policy issued an alert in September that a proposed version of the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) would put into law automated Selective Service—or military draft registration—for both men and women. The NDAA is the major defense policy bill put forward by the Senate Committee on Armed Services.

If passed by Congress, the provision would take effect in the next federal fiscal year. The alert urged church members to contact their representatives in Congress to oppose the measure. Go to www.brethren.org/peacebuilding/legislator-lookup.

The Church of the Brethren since its beginning has repeatedly declared its position against war, based in the church's peace witness and discipleship to Jesus Christ, and has historically opposed draft registration and military conscription.

The Office of Peacebuilding and Policy signed a letter to the Senate committee, which was sent jointly by a range of faith-based partner organizations, opposing the version of the NDAA that includes those provisions. The letter urged the committee to "excise concerning provisions to automate Selective Service registration (Sec. 598A of S. 4638 and Sec 531 of H.R. 8070) and to expand registration to women (Sec. 598C of S. 4638)." It continued, in part: "Rather than look towards automation and expansion of Selective Service registration, the time has come to abolish it entirely. . . . [Expanding] draft registration to women, does not represent a move forward for gender equality. Instead, it represents a move backward, imposing on young women a burden that young men have had to bear unjustly for decades—a burden that no young person should be forced to bear." The letter urged the Senate committee to consider instead a measure to repeal the Military Selective Service Act.



The Fall 2024 unit of Brethren Volunteer Service, Unit 336, completed orientation in September:

(front row, from left) June Scheidemann from Bielefeld, Germany, will serve at La Puente Home, Alamosa, Colo.; Ace Anteby from Brooklyn, N.Y., will serve at SnowCap Food Pantry, Portland, Ore.; Lisa Abele from Hamburg, Germany, will serve at the San Diego (Calif.) Peace Campus, which is related to San Diego First Church of the Brethren; Pierre Schatz from Strasbourg, France, will serve at La Puente Home, Alamosa, Colo.; (middle row) Keke Phooko from Mohale's Hoek, Lesotho, will serve with Brethren Disaster Ministries in Kentucky; Lorena Nordmann from Nordenham, Niedersachsen, Germany, will serve at Abode Services, Fremont, Calif.; Hannah Nelson of La Verne (Calif.) Church of the Brethren, will serve with the Office of Peacebuilding and Policy in Washington, D.C.; Megan Roth from Wichita, Kan., will serve at Christ House in Washington, D.C.; Alyson Heckerth of Messiah Church of the Brethren in Kansas City, Mo., will serve at Highland Park Elementary School, Roanoke, Va.; (back row) Justine Eckert of Harrisburg (Pa.) First Church of the Brethren, will serve at Camp Mardela, Denton, Md.; Sue and Brad Cox of Lynchburg (Va.) Church of the Brethren, will serve at the World Friendship Center, Hiroshima, Japan; Elizabeth Long of Eel River Church of the Brethren in Silver Lake, Ind., placement pending; Magdalena Müller from Schleiz, Thuringia, Germany, will serve at WATER in Washington, D.C. Not pictured: Wed Naji from Bonn, Germany, who also will serve at WATER.

Personnel

Sharon Norton begins Dec. 2 as executive director of Global Mission for the Church of the Brethren, working remotely from Goshen, Ind. Her career in missions spans 27 years including, most recently, 4 years as co-administrator for

Europe and Africa with the Mennonite Mission Network. She previously spent 14 years as a mission worker in Germany with Eastern Mennonite Missions/ Mennonite Mission Network. Ordained in the Mennonite

Church, Norton has been transitional pastor at Fellowship of Hope Mennonite Church in Elkhart, Ind., and from 2014 to 2017 was a licensed minister with the Church of the Brethren in Goshen. She holds a master's

degree from Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary and has studied Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL). Her language skills include German, Spanish, and some French.



SUN MON TUES WED THUR FRI SAT

1 Paul Lovelace Preaching Hanging of the Greens	2	3 Stewards 3:00pm Google Meets Bible Study 7:30pm	4 Fellowship Breakfast 8:00am	5	6	7 Dress a Girl 9:00am
8 We Can't Go Alone Cookie Exchange	9	10 Google Meets Bible Study 7:30pm	11 Fellowship Breakfast 8:00am Service & Outreach 9:30am	12	13 Christmas Caroling as Woods 10:00am	14
15 Do the Good that is Yours to Do Christmas Party	16	17 Google Meets Bible Study 7:30pm	18 Fellowship Breakfast 8:00am	19	20	21 Church Workday 9:00am
22 Hope is Worth the Risk	23 Office Closed	24 Office Closed St. Paul's Christmas Eve Service 8:00pm	25 Merry Christmas	26 Office Closed	27 Office Closed	28 Office Closed
29 Service By: Peggy Redman, Linda Hart & Cody Smith	30 Office Closed	31 New Years Eve	(January 1) New Years Day Open House	(January 2) Office Open 9:00am - 2:45pm	(January 3) Office Open 9:00am - 1:00pm	