



“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overtake it.” - John 1: 1-5



Wishing you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

From the District Office Staff:

*Laura*

*Sarah*

Look for updates from Laura and other folks in the S/C IN District on our District blog at:

<https://southcentralindianacob.com/blog/>

To subscribe to the blog and get new articles by email, click the brown gear icon at the top of the website.

Also, follow South/Central Indiana District on Facebook to see current information and upcoming events.

### **MESSAGE FROM THE MODERATOR**

Christmas is coming, ready or not. This reminds me of the children's game Hide and Seek. One person is chosen to have the job of hiding their eyes and counting to 20, 50, or even 100. Then calling out, "Ready or not here I come". I play that game with our Grands and they squeal as I get close to them. If I didn't already know where they were, I could guess by the squeals and giggles. The term, "Ready or not, here I come" brings great pleasure to the children. Now about Christmas, "Ready or not, here I come" looms large in the minds of many people, sometimes without the pleasure. Christmas time can be a time of stress as the advertised perfection, wants everything just thus and so.

The decorations are festive, the foods are delicious, the music is wonderful. Shopping lists and presents are completed. Even the Hallmark movies and the bright colorful lights call for our attention at Christmas time. Ready or not, here it comes!

For we Brethren, Christmas is all about the gift of the Son of God born into this world. It's God in action sending His Son to live with us, interact with us, to be one of us. To show how God loves us and how we are to love others.

What part can we play in bringing alive the true Christmas story? In our church home we have the gifts of kinship in community and warmth of other Christians. Home is where the heart is, home is where there is warmth, home is where we can experience the love of Christian community. We can invite all people into that.

As we ponder the story of the baby in a manger, I would encourage each of us to remember the song "I'll be home for Christmas". Where is our home? Home is at the manger of the newborn Son of God! How do we call each other and those in the world to come home to Jesus for Christmas? With warmth and community!

Enjoy your holiday. Share your faith and traditions with each other. And share with the world your understanding of the King born and placed in a manger. Merry Christmas! Ready or not, here it comes.

Agape from your Moderator

Bruce Dunk  
Lower Deer Creek COB

# DISTRICT NEWS ITEMS

<b>DISTRICT FINANCIAL REPORT</b> <i>as of October 31, 2023</i>		
	<u>October</u>	<u>YTD</u>
<b><u>Income</u></b>		
Congregations' Self-Allocation	\$7,147.73	\$72,993.22
Restricted Income	\$100.00	\$7,050.00
Other Income	-\$27,240.65	\$52,605.16
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>-\$19,992.92</b>	<b>\$132,648.38</b>
<b><u>Expenses</u></b>		
District Expenses	\$10,890.45	\$121,323.74
Restricted Expenses	\$10,045.75	\$22,618.62
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$20,936.20</b>	<b>\$143,942.36</b>
<b>Net</b>	<b>-\$40,929.12</b>	<b>-\$11,293.98</b>
<b>District Fund Balance</b>		<b>\$976,732.13</b>

<b>DECEMBER 2023 - DISTRICT CALENDAR DATES</b>	
December 6 - N IN, S/C IN, and Camp Mack Staff Christmas Gathering - 6:00 pm	
December 7 - Shalom Team - 7:00 pm	
December 8-9 - Indiana Camp Board Meetings - Camp Mack	
December 10 - Mark Cripe licensing service - 1:00 pm - Lafayette CoB	
December 12 - Ministry Excellence Project Board Meeting - 6:00 pm	
December 13 - BLI Task Team Meeting - 11:00 AM - District Office	
December 25 & January 1 - District Office closed for Christmas and New Years Holidays	

**DISTRICT BOARD REORGANIZATION**

The District Board met on November 3-4, for their annual Board Retreat.

*During the retreat, board members were elected to the following positions for 2024:*

**Paul Schrock, Northview CoB - chair**  
**Kristen Roop, Lafayette CoB - vice-chair**

**DECEMBER DISTRICT PRAYER CALENDAR**

**December 3** - Join us as we lift up Akron CoB and the Middle Pennsylvania District.

**December 10** - Join us as we lift up Anderson CoB and the Southern Pennsylvania District.

**December 17** - Join us as we lift up Andrews CoB and the Western Pennsylvania District.

**December 24**- Join us as we pray for peace around the world.

**December 31** - Join us as we pray for the Church in 2024

- DISTRICT CHURCH UPDATES**
- **Anderson** - Is currently in the search process to fill a new part-time ministry position, Leader for Growth and Community Engagement. For more information about this position, go to: [https://docs.google.com/document/d/1a7uN41DD7o8pDfI0J\\_cp-3b6B-cfDeIsJr6gRs4bj5s/edit?usp=sharing](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1a7uN41DD7o8pDfI0J_cp-3b6B-cfDeIsJr6gRs4bj5s/edit?usp=sharing)
  - **Eel River Community**—Is seeking to fill a part-time position on their ministry team.
  - **Guernsey** - Is beginning the search process; Pastor Jeff Tomson will be resigning the beginning of 2024.
  - **Manchester** - is currently putting together a search committee and will soon begin looking for a settled pastor.
  - **Peru** - Matt Myers was installed as their new pastor on Nov. 19.
  - **TurnPointe Community** - The congregation is in search for an interim while Pastor Mike Shroyer is on a leave of absence.



Thank you to those whose terms on district committees are finished at the end of this year:

- **Diana Bucher and Brooke Guerrier** - District Board
- **Doug Veal** - Program and Arrangements Committee
- **Christy Huiras** - Past-Moderator, Nominations & Personnel Committee Chair
- **Cindy Ritter and Jim Shively** - Indiana Camp Board

Many thanks to all of the above for your faithful service! Also a big thank you to **Mark Stahl for his work as Moderator**. Mark will serve this coming year as chair of the Nominating and Personnel Committee.

### CLERGY TAX SEMINAR 2024 January 27, 2024 11:00 am - 4:00 pm

Students, clergy, and anyone who deals with clergy finances are invited to participate in this online Zoom seminar.

- Learn how to prepare clergy taxes correctly and legally.
- Comply with regulations while maximizing tax deductions.
- Earn 0.3 CEUs - for the first 2 sessions only.

#### **Schedule:**

#### **11:00am - 12:30pm: Everything You Ever Wanted to Know About Clergy Taxation, part 1**

*Topics covered: IRS's definitions of ministers (ministerial "status") and of ministerial work (ministerial "services"), as well as the three kinds of income ministers receive, the two kinds of taxes ministers pay, and the various ways ministers can pay those taxes during the tax year.*

#### **1:00pm - 2:30pm: Everything You Ever Wanted to Know About Clergy Taxation, part 2.**

*Topics covered: Housing exclusion, parsonages and parsonage adjustments, and self-employment taxes, as well as ways to reduce total taxes.*

#### **3:00pm - 4:00pm: Completing the Clergy Tax Return.**

*Rev. Zeke Zacharias, pastor at Litlold Church, has a typical clergy tax return to complete. We will walk through it with him. Deb will be using H&R Block's Premium (for self-employed people) version of their downloadable software.*

**Registration and Cost:** \$40 per person (generally nonrefundable to keep fees and overhead low). Current Brethren Academy, Bethany Theological Seminary, and Earlham School of Religion students may attend the seminar at no cost, although registration is still required to allow us to provide you with web access to the seminar. Registrations are not complete until payment is received. For quality reasons, registrations may be capped at eighty-five persons.

**Registration deadline is January 19, 2024.**

For more information or to register, go to: <https://bethanyseminary.edu/brethren-academy/clergy-tax-seminar/>

## UPCOMING BLI COURSE

### OLD TESTAMENT SURVEY

**Instructor:** Jonathan Crandall  
Senior Pastor, Pleasant Dale CoB

**Dates:** January 13 & 27, February 10, 2024

**Location:** Marion Church of the Brethren



### **When you finish this class, you will be able to:**

- *Locate each of the books of the Old Testament as arranged in both the Hebrew Scriptures and the Christian canon*
- *Identify these books in terms of their literary type, origin in Israel's story, and basic issues raised in each book*
- *Place at least two dozen key figures and events on a timeline of the history of Israel*
- *Articulate the significance of the Old Testament as a resource for the Christian community*
- *Take a selected text of the Old Testament and demonstrate its use as a resource for a particular area of ministry.*

You may be exploring ministry, answering a call to ministry, and/or seeking further education. We will prayerfully support you on this journey. There are no prerequisites to these courses. Anyone may enroll, one course at a time.

For more information, contact: [brethrenleadershipinstitute@gmail.com](mailto:brethrenleadershipinstitute@gmail.com), 260-274-0396.

## UPCOMING BRETHREN ACADEMY COURSES

### ***Introduction to Pastoral Care***

January 16-19, 2024

Instructor: Debbie Eisenbise

*This overview will emphasize the importance of formation as a pastoral caregiver, self-differentiation, scope of care, family and congregational systems, confession and forgiveness, death and grief, active listening, and prayer.*

This course fulfills a required Ministry Skill unit (Preaching, Worship, Pastoral Care) and fulfills the Bethany Theological Seminary Experience. The deadline to register for this course is **December 12, 2023**. Questions may be directed to the Coordinator for English-Language Training Programs, Audrey Hollenberg-Duffey at [holleau@bethanyseminary.edu](mailto:holleau@bethanyseminary.edu) or 765-983-1810.

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### ***From Reformation to Today***

January 24 - March 19, 2024

Instructor: Josh Brockway, PhD

*In order to understand Christian faith and practice also means we must attend to time and place. Simply stated, the study of the past helps us comprehend what God has done and continues to do among us. This course will focus on the history of Christianity from the 1500s up to the present day*

TRIM students will receive one credit in Biblical/Historical/Theological Studies upon completion. EFSM students may create a Learning Unit for the course. **The deadline to register for this course is December 19, 2023.** Questions may be directed to Academy Director, Janet Ober Lambert at [oberlja@bethanyseminary.edu](mailto:oberlja@bethanyseminary.edu) or 765-983-1820.

Persons interested in taking an Academy course for CEUs or Personal Enrichment may register in one of two ways:

1) Mail the registration form, available for the district office, with payment to:

Brethren Academy, 615 National Rd. W., Richmond, IN 47374.

2) Register and pay online at <https://bethanyseminary.edu/brethren-academy/brethren-academy-course-listings/brethren-academy-course-registration-annual-trim-payment/> There is a 3% service charge when registering online.

## CAMP MACK

# WINTER BREAK Day Camp

**Jan 2-5** | **8:30AM** | **\$120**  
**Grades K-5** | **3:30PM** | **Per Child**

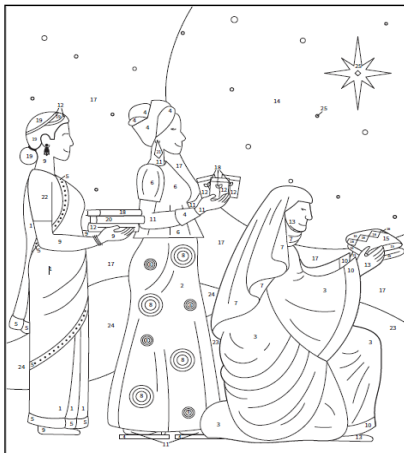
Before & after care additional fee

Activities include: indoor & outdoor, STEM/STEAM science, crafts, games, cookie/cupcake decorating, and so much more!

**Financial Assistance Available!**

To register, go to:

<https://www.ultracamp.com/info/sessiondetail.aspx?idCamp=1321&campCode=132&idSession=438103>



Happy Advent!

At this time of Thanksgiving and Advent, we at Global Women's Project are so, so grateful for your support. We met as a Steering Committee earlier this month, and shared together our gratitude for all of you and for our amazing partner projects!

Advent is now upon us and beginning on December 1, we invite you to take time for reflection as you spend time with our Advent Calendar, a new design of the Wise Women by Jessie Long which is available at:

<https://globalwomensproject.files.wordpress.com/2023/11/2023-advent-calendar-web-print.pdf>

. While meditating on the day's theme, color in the shapes labeled with the day's number and the color listed in the reflection, or you can choose your own colors. With gratitude for the luxuries in your life send your taxes to the address below.

Also, as you are considering charitable contributions for #givingtuesday or as an end of the year gift, we hope that you'll support Global Women's Project. You can make your donation online by clicking [here](#), or send your checks written to GWP c/o Church of the Brethren, 1451 Dundee Avenue, Elgin, IL 60120.

We are truly grateful for all that you are doing for women around the world!

With gratitude,  
Barb Sayler for GWP

## Nominations for the 2024 AC Ballot Requested

The deadline for nominations for the Annual Conference ballot is **December 4**. The denomination and its agencies depend on leaders elected at Conference from nominees proposed by the wider church. There are deliberate, purposeful steps to the process of discernment which leads to the Nominating Committee engaging in prayerful discussion of the nominees when it meets in January. The list is narrowed to four names per office which is then sent to the full Standing Committee which votes to further narrow the list to two names per office in order to create the ballot. The delegates of Annual Conference elect those who will finally serve.

We are grateful for the excellent nominations already submitted, but additional names are needed! The offices that are open for 2024 are the following: **Moderator Elect, Program & Arrangements Committee, Mission & Ministry Board from Area 4, Mission & Ministry Board from Area 5, Bethany Seminary Board – Colleges, and On Earth Peace Board**. Detailed information regarding these positions is available at <https://www.brethren.org/ac/nominations>.

**We ask that you prayerfully consider the gifted people you know** throughout the denomination and in your local churches and districts. Then fill out the simple online form to nominate someone. Be sure to contact the person you have nominated and let them know why you think their gifts qualify them for the role and encourage them to agree to take the next step in filling out the nominee information form on the Annual Conference website.

**If you have been nominated and have not yet accepted**, we encourage you to prayerfully discern your possible call and willingness to serve the church in this way. Then fill out the nominee information form and return it so you will be included in the pool of candidates who will be considered for the ballot in 2024. That form indicates your acceptance to be considered.

**Have you had interest and a sense of call to serve** in one of the roles that are open?

Talk to someone who knows you and test that sense. If affirmed, ask that person or another to nominate you!

As we seek a range of candidates who represent the whole church, we pay particular attention to the Call for Accountability in order to include our diversity in terms of age, race/ethnicity, gender, and theology.

Thank you so much for participating in this important process! The Annual Conference office is receiving nominations until December 4, 2023.

Becky Maurer  
Chair, Nominating Committee

## **2024 FAITHX OPPORTUNITIES**

Registration for summer workcamps opens Dec 1, 2023.

For more information or to register, go to: <https://www.brethren.org/faithx/>

- Jr. High - Roanoke, VA - June 19-23
- Palmyra, PA - July 17-21
- Jr. & Sr. High - Denton, MD - Camp Mardela—June 19-14
- South Bend, IN - June 18-23
- Knoxville, TN - July 21-26
- Winston-Salem, NC - July 28 - August 2
- Sr. High - Cle Elum, WA - Camp Koinonia - June 8-14
- North Ft. Myers, FL - July 14-20
- Adult International -Ecuador - June 1-10
- Adult Domestic - Eastern US - Brethren Disaster Ministries - July 28-August 3
- Older Adult - Gotha, FL - Camp Ithiel - February 25-March 1 (*registration open now*)
- Family - Petersburg, PA - Camp Blue Diamond - June 23-27
- We Are Able - Elgin, IL - June 24-27



**CHRISTIAN CITIZENSHIP SEMINAR  
APRIL 11-16, 2024  
WASHINGTON, D.C.**

***“And They Fled: Advocating for Just Immigration Policy,” Matthew 2:13-23”***

Online registration opens December 1 at 12:00 pm CST. Register and pay in full by Dec. 31 to receive a free t-shirt! Non-refundable \$250 deposit due within 2 weeks of registration to hold your spot.

**2024 THEME** - Not only did Jesus care for and welcome all, but as a child he and his family were forced to flee violence (Matthew 2:13-23). People fleeing violence, the impacts of

climate change, and economic catastrophe continue to seek a safe place to live and support their families. But what does leaving your home country actually mean? What are the reasons that demand such a huge sacrifice?

A posture of welcome and care is a clear Christian mandate and the right to seek asylum is a human right. While community and religious groups continue to provide critical support for families in need, the government has a duty to make just and life-giving policies. While the challenges are significant, our response should be one of love. During CCS 2024 come to Washington to learn about asylum and immigration from policy experts, faith-based advocates, and community organizers. You will gain tools to address Congress, hear examples of local communities’ ministries and Church of the Brethren churches around the world, and strengthen your biblical understanding of God’s love in this work.

**WHO IS ELIGIBLE TO ATTEND?** All high school youth, college freshman, and age equivalent young adults and their adult advisors are eligible to attend the seminar. Churches are strongly encouraged to send an advisor with their youth, even if only one or two youth attend. Churches are required to register one advisor for every four youth.

**WHAT IS THE COST?** The \$500 registration fee includes: all event programming, shared room lodging for five nights, and 2 dinner meals. Participants need to bring additional money for most meals, sightseeing, personal expenses, and public transportation fares.

**WHAT IF I HAVE QUESTIONS?** If you have any questions, contact Becky Ullom Naugle, Director of Youth and Young Adult Ministries, at [bullomnaugle@brethren.org](mailto:bullomnaugle@brethren.org) or 847-404-0163

**NATIONAL YOUNG ADULT CONFERENCE  
May 24-26, 2024  
Shepherd’s Spring Camp near Sharpsburg, MD**

For more details and information when it becomes available, go to:  
<https://www.brethren.org/yya/yac/>

**Does your congregation have a ministry or event you’d like to share about with the rest of the District?**

**Call or e-mail the District Office and we’ll get it in the next newsletter!**



# ***Peacefully, Simply, Together.***

**SOUTH/CENTRAL INDIANA DISTRICT OFFICE, CHURCH OF THE BRETHREN**  
260.274.0396

**LAURA STONE, DISTRICT EXECUTIVE MINISTER**

[scindlaura@gmail.com](mailto:scindlaura@gmail.com), 574.306.8768

Usual work days: Wednesday—Sunday

**SARAH O'HARA, ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT**

[scindcob@gmail.com](mailto:scindcob@gmail.com)

*Office Hours: Monday, Wednesday, Thursday: 8:30 AM - 12:00 PM*

District Website: [www.scindcob.org](http://www.scindcob.org)

Denominational website: [www.brethren.org](http://www.brethren.org)



<https://www.facebook.com/SouthCentral-Indiana-District-205091192857321/>

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Church of the Brethren

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