

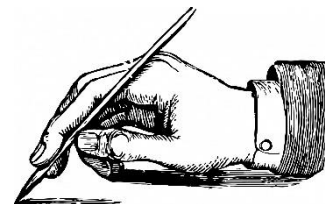
**THE BROTHER'S KEEPER – AUGUST – SEPTEMBER 2023**  
**FIRST CHURCH OF THE BRETHREN – 405 Rt. 271, LIGONIER, PA.**

**Phone: 724-238-6292 \* Email: [LCOB 1888@gmail.com](mailto:LCOB1888@gmail.com)**

**Sunday School – 9:30am \* Worship 10:30am**

### **THE PASTOR'S NOTE ...**

#### **“... THE LONG AND SHORT OF IT”**



Have you ever given thought to the many paradoxes of the Christian faith? Jesus came to earth fully human (like us) but fully divine (nothing like us)? God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit have always existed. How does that work? God is everywhere, all powerful and all knowing—difficult if not impossible for us to understand. God is love, but why all the sickness, poverty and violence in the world? (And while sin is the answer, we still don't quite get it!)

As for the “long and short of it”, why did it take the Israelites 40 years to reach the Promised Land when scholars suggest that it could have been done in less than two weeks? Or better yet: Why were the Israelites held as slaves in Egypt for 350-400 years? Why was David considered “a man after God's heart”, but God wouldn't allow him to build the Temple? (Scripture tells us it was because he was a man of violence and war, but even God destroyed many of the Israelites' enemies?) Why did it take so and so that long to recover from a hip replacement or pneumonia, when the average person takes half that time? One person gets a new job the day he or she was fired while it takes others months! Why does the Bible tell us that Christ will return shortly, but we are still waiting after almost 2,000 years? Why do we pray for patience, but want it now?

While there are many answers given in Scripture, I go back to our faith. If we truly believe that our Lord and our God is all knowing and all powerful, who are we to judge his timeframes? After many years, I have come to accept (or at least more readily accept) the fact that the Lord's timeframe is the best and that He definitely wants to teach me something during those times of drought, those times of waiting. And if you view it from a faith perspective, what's 40 years when we have an eternity with Jesus! Afterall, the **BLESSINGS** of our faith are limitless!

**“For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.” Isaiah 55:8**



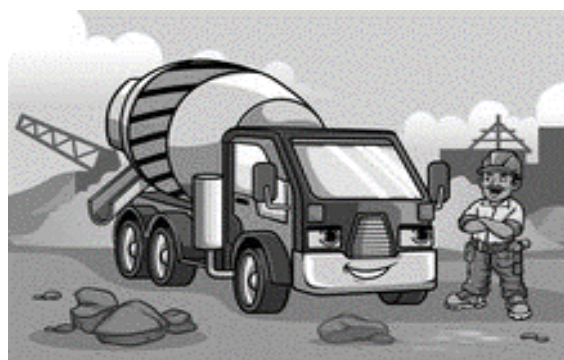
## **A NEW CHAPTER BEGINS IN THE LIFE OF THE CHURCH – NOVEMBER 1, 2023.**

On July 23, 2023, the church called **Irvin Ernst** to follow Pastor John (me) upon retirement. **Pastor Irv** is currently serving as Pastor of the Hostetler Church of the Brethren in Meyersdale, PA. He also served as Youth Pastor at the Abundant Life Christian Church in Berlin, PA from 1999-2011. **Irv** is single and resides in Stoystown, PA. He enjoys hunting, fishing and working with wood. I am sure you will bless **Pastor Irv** as you have blessed Susan and me and I know, with the Good Lord's leading, you too, will be blessed. And by the way, hats off for the fine work of the Search Committee—Paul Knupp, Tracy Black, Dick Jones, Becky Kwak and Debbie McInchok!



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**RAMP IT UP!!** Thanks to the hard work of many, the ramp project in the rear of the Church and going into the Fellowship Hall has been completed. The project involved excavation of the site, rerouting drains and sewer lines, adding new drains on the ramp, and landscaping. (Just reading that makes me sweat!!) It has been estimated that to job the project out to contractors would have



cost anywhere between \$30,000 - \$60,000! We saved a few shekels thanks to the many helpful hands, including Paul Knupp (Trustee Chair), Joe Ometz, Aaron Ometz, Mike and Chris (co-workers of Joe and Aaron), Dick Jones, Tracy Black, Ed Wedge, Shane Smith, Scott Boyd and several I probably forgot! Equipment and supplies were donated by Joe Ometz, Paul Knupp, and Andy Knupp. The women provided a luncheon for the workers involved in the “final concrete pour” as well as snacks throughout the project. **NOW IT IS POSSIBLE TO GET TO ALL LEVELS OF THE CHURCH BY CHAIR LIFT OR RAMP!!**

“And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance; for you serve the Lord Christ.”

Colossians 3:23-24 (Life Application Bible)

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**PLEASE KEEP THESE FAMILIES IN YOUR PRAYERS ...**

**THE SYMPATHIES OF THE CHURCH ARE WITH THE ZIMMERMAN FAMILY**

as Mim was called home to be with the Lord. She will be dearly missed. God blessed her with a good, long life.

**THE SYMPATHIES OF THE CHURCH ARE WITH JOE & HOLLY PENROD** and the entire family as they mourn the passing of Gay McGuire, who was called home to be with the Lord. Gay's funeral was held at the Church on Saturday, August 5<sup>th</sup>. She will be dearly missed by her family and friends.

**OUR PRAYERS OF SYMPATHY ARE WITH JERRY AND JANICE HOOPER** and the family on the passing of their son Jack.

**PRAYERS OF SYMPATHY ARE WITH THE FAMILY OF MARY EICHORN**, as she was called home to be with the Lord.

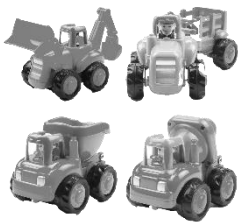
**"I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith."**

**II Timothy 4:7**

**ARE YOU IN NEED OF PRAYER OR KNOW SOMEONE WHO IS?** ... We have an active Prayer Chain and our prayer warriors are always ready to lift prayer when needed (or not needed!). Give Pastor John a call (cell phone or home phone – or call one of our Deacons) and your prayer request will be added to our prayer chain right away.

**"Prayer is the soul's sincere desire, uttered or unexpressed. The motion of a hidden fire that trembles in the breast. O Thou, by whom we come to God, the Life, the Truth, the Way. The path of prayer Thyself has trod; Lord, teach us how to pray."**

**The Brethren Hymnal – Hymn #285**



**CONGRATULATIONS and God's Blessings to Paul & Stacey**

**Knupp** as they're Grandparents again! Son Ryan and Grace celebrated the birth of their son Walker James on June 10<sup>th</sup>, making Paul & Stacey Grandparents again! The family lives in Atlanta, Georgia, but we have a feeling Grandma and Grandpa will be making many trips to see this little miracle. And do you know what? Sherry Boyd is the Great

Grandmother – Again!!



**THE REGULAR BASEBALL SEASON IS OVER AND WE HAD SOME GREAT PLAYERS FROM OUR CHURCH**

playing their hearts out! Congratulations to Brock who played for the Ligonier Expos / Parker played for the Ligonier Diamondbacks, and Roman played for the Ligonier Bandits

**THIS ATHLETE DIDN'T GO AROUND TELLING US ABOUT HER SKILLS!!**

... So many might not know about this sports newsflash! Becky Kwak was inducted into the Volleyball Hall of Fame for the Ligonier School District. She's the first inductee to receive this honor! Way to go Becky! We're proud of you!



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"You are the light of the world ... Let your light shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven." Matthew 5:14a&16  
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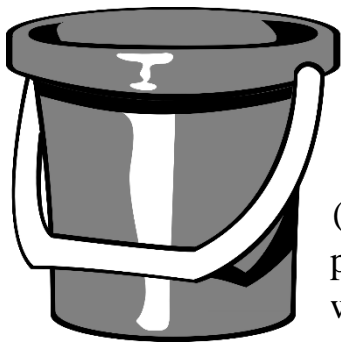
**BILLY CRAWFORD** participated in the Special Olympics in May and earned two Gold Medals and one Silver. He came to Church after the award ceremony and showed us the medals he earned. We're proud of you Billy. Congratulations!

**IT'S SCHOOL KIT – HYGIENE KIT – AND CLEAN-UP BUCKET TIME**

**AGAIN!** Once again the Church of the Brethren is collecting school kits, hygiene kits, and clean-up buckets for those in need and they'll be distributed through Church World Service. The list of supplies needed for each kit follows and should be brought to the Church by August 31. If you want to "pass the bucks", we have a very shrewd shopper in Becky Kwak and she expressed a willingness to do the shopping for those unable or who don't have the time to do so. The estimated cost of the school and hygiene kits are \$15.00 each and the Clean-up buckets come in at around \$75.00. (That should include the desired shipping fees requested. Any excess funds from donors will be put towards an additional kits.  
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**HYGIENE KITS:** One gallon Ziploc bag\* One hand towel measuring 15" x 28" x 16" x 32" (no fingertip, bath, dish, or micro-fiber towels \* One washcloth \* One wide-tooth comb removed from the package. (found at discount dealers like **sallybeauty.com**. Must be sturdy with at least 6" of teeth, no pocket combs or picks, rattail and combs without handles are acceptable / One fingernail or toenail clipper (either one is acceptable; remove from packaging); one bath-size bar of soap in the original package / one toothbrush in the original package / 10 standard size band-aids. Search for wide-tooth pastel comb to see an example.) Must be sturdy with at least 6" of teeth. All items must fit inside the Ziploc bag. Remove excess air from bag and seal before boxing. **(DO NOT ADD ANY EXTRA ITEMS OR TOOTHPASTE)**

**SCHOOL KITS:** One pair blunt scissors (rounded tip only. Remove from packaging) \* 3 70-count bound notebooks or notebooks totaling 200-210 pages (no lose-leaf or filler paper) \* One 30-centimeter, 12” ruler \* One hand-held pencil sharpener (remove from packaging) \* One large eraser (no pencil cap erasers) \* 6 new, unsharpened pencils with erasers (remove from packaging and use a rubber band to hold the pencils together) \* Crayons, 24 pack \* One 12” x 14” to 14” x 17” finished size cotton or lightweight canvas bag with handles (solid color or kid-friendly fabric. No logos, reusable shopping bags or backpacks. Download sew pattern at **cwskits.org**. All items must be packed inside of the bag. (The **MyShopAngel** website has an affordable CWS Kit bag option for bulk purchase. Visit [cwskits.org/bag](http://cwskits.org/bag) to order.) All items must be packed inside the bag.



**CLEAN-UP BUCKET LIST:** One 5-gallon bucket with resealable lid (if reused, please scrub clean. Do not use a bucket that has held chemicals of any kind. No screw lid / advertisement on the outside is acceptable. \* One 4-8 oz. pump spray air freshener \* 5 scouring pads (no stainless steel or pads with soap in them. Remove from packaging.) 7 sponges, including one large \* One scrub brush (with or without handle) \* 18 reusable, lightweight multipurpose dry cleaning towels (no terry cloth, microfiber or paper towels. Remove from packaging) \* One 32-64 oz. or two 25 oz. bottle(s) or liquid laundry detergent, one 16-34 oz. bottle of liquid disinfectant dish soap \* One 12-40 oz bottle of liquid concentrate household cleaner that can be mixed with water (NO spray bottles) \* One package of 36-50 clothespins \* One 50-100 ft. clothesline (cotton or plastic line) \* 5 dust masks (N95 particulate respirator dust masks preferred; no surgical masks.) \* 2 pair of heavy-duty, waterproof dishwashing gloves (latex-free, non-surgical, durable for multiple-use. (Remove from packaging) \* One pair of work gloves (cotton with leather palm or all leather) \* 20-28 heavy duty or contractor-type 30-45 gallon trash bags on a roll (remove from packaging) \* One 6-9 oz bottle of non-aerosol insect repellent (Pump spray bottles must have protective covers. Packs of 10-20 insect repellent wipes also acceptable.) **ALL CLEANING ITEMS MUST BE NEW** and all liquid items must be capped and securely tightened. Place all items into the bucket, making sure they are packed securely to avoid damage during shipment. Snap the lid on tight and seal with packing tape. Please DO NOT include cash or checks inside of the kits or the boxes. Send all monetary donations to: **CWS, PO Box 968, Elkhart, IN 46515** or pay your shipping online at **CWSkits.org/shipping**.

**“God is not unjust, He will not forget your work and the love you have shown Him as you have helped His people and continue to help them” Hebrews 6:10**



**MUSEUM OF THE BIBLE BUS TRIP** – How often have you said, “I always wanted to go to the Museum of the Bible in Washington, D.C.” Well, guess what – some of the folks at the Church are planning to go on a bus trip, along with others from the District on August 19. The bus will leave the District Office at 6:00am. (across from the Maple Springs CofB).

The cost per person is \$57. **RSVPs are due August 4<sup>th</sup> – see Pastor John or Roseanne Ometz.** It will be educational and so much fun!!

**SOMETHING NEW ON THE CALENDAR! JOIN US FOR A CUP OF COFFEE AT “FRANK’S PAVILION”** on Wednesday



mornings (weather permitting) at 9:30am. Organized by Elaine Boyd, come and enjoy a cup of coffee (or tea) and conversation. See you there at 9:30am.

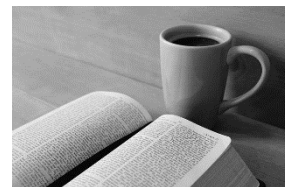
**RITA’S CLOSET** will be celebrating its 3<sup>rd</sup> year. Customers say: “We like Rita’s Closet -God’s Free Boutique” ... and it’s prettier than ever with the newly painted walls (thank you Brother Paul) and the new floor (thank you to the Trustees). Rita’s Closet is touching many lives and hearts every Monday. “It’s a joy helping” the volunteers tell me every week. And when we come to payday – I always tell them, they got a raise for doing such a good job! They know that when they get to Heaven on that Glorious Day ... they will be rewarded for what they’ve done here on earth. I’m so thankful for the opportunity to serve the Lord, helping the poor, hurting and widows in our community and as far as Ohio. Yes, one family comes 3 hours to cloth their 3 children and enjoy some fellowship while nibbling on a cookie or two! Tell your neighbors about “God’s Free Boutique!”

-Thank you Darlene for your article.

**SUMMER ISN’T OVER YET! CHECK THE CALENDAR AND SEE IF A WEEK OF SUMMER CAMP AT CAMP HARMONY IS STILL IN THE**

**OFFING.** Michelle Black is the contact person for this ministry and there are donated monies to help with the cost! See the flyers in the Church and then catch-up with Michelle Black!

**BIBLE STUDY** – Join us **Wednesday evenings at 6:30pm** for an hour of Bible Study. We’re continuing our study in the Book of Peter. Peter had a heart for serving Jesus and played a key role in helping establish and build the Church.



*“Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade.” I Peter 1:3-4*



## **DON'T FORGET SUNDAY SCHOOL ON SUNDAY**

**MORNING.** There is a class for adults ... they meet in the Fellowship Room. And, there are two classes for the children – pre-school and grade school children. Before Sunday School begins the children gather in the sanctuary and practice songs with Miss Pam and Miss Stacey. Miss Darlene helps too! They are so enthused and the congregation LOVES seeing and hearing the children share during the Worship Service. They are so precious and so enthused to learn new songs. And, they sound great! God's little angels! They warm our hearts and they bring to God all of the glory! Sunday School begins at 9:30am. And just a note: The Nurture Commission is looking for substitute Sunday School teachers (clearances are required) to fill in when a current teacher is unavailable. And, they'll be looking for a teacher for the Nursery Class. Pray about it, then see Michelle if you think you can help. Thank you. **JUST A NOTE:** Stacey and Kara took their Sunday School class outside a few weeks ago and made pancakes!! Did you get invited???? Could you smell the pancakes cooking? Maybe next time! A special thank you to Stacey and Kara for their love and care of the children. **YOU HAVE TO STAY FOR WORSHIP AT 10:30AM!!**

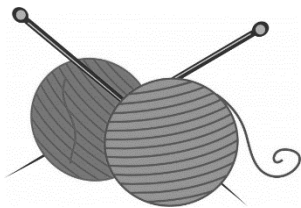
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## **REMINDERS OF UPCOMING PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES**

**THE MEN'S AND BOY'S BREAKFAST** continues to be held on the second Saturday of the month in the Fellowship Room at 9:00am. As we write this newsletter, we can smell the bacon cooking, the coffee brewing, maybe some sausage gravy and biscuits ... Men, are you getting hungry?? Well, mark your calendar and "come on down" to the Fellowship Room at the Church and feed the hunger you're feeling!! And, it's AYCE (All You Can Eat) until the food runs out!!! The breakfast opens with a devotional and prayer. On some Saturdays there is a Guest Speaker. But every breakfast includes delicious food and friendly fellowship. So ... "Come On Down" to the Church Fellowship Room for a good breakfast and a great time in fellowship with the men. (NO Ladies Allowed!!!)



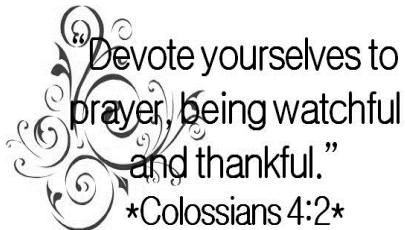
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**BUT THAT'S ALRIGHT ... WE HAVE STITCHING!** On Thursday morning at 9:30am the ladies meet for a time of fellowship, breakfast "snacks", a devotional and time of prayer, AND "uninterrupted stitching" / crafts/ and talking – so there! ALL

women are invited. If one of the men stop in, that's OK – but they can't stay!! (Just kidding!!) NOTE: Take notice of the old – made new – wall hanging on the hall in the education wing. It needed some repairs and adjustments and it looks great. It's a wall hanging about the history of our Church. Thank you Joni for repairing this relic.

**HAVE YOU BEEN TO YOUR CHURCH MAILBOX LATELY?** If not you should be checking it regularly, because your church mail is there waiting for you – and it’s very important!! But, when you check out the mailbox and you look for your name on your box, notice the new name tags – the permanent kind! (hopefully) put on by Becky. Guess we should thank Ed and Jeanne also, since they gave us their daughters Joni and Becky!!



**SOME NEWS ON THE HAPPENINGS OF WOMEN’S FELLOWSHIP ...**

We have been meeting after Church on the third Sunday of each month since the beginning of 2023. A light lunch is provided at each meeting. At our meetings we discussed many different things and ideas to do throughout the year. Listed here are a few of the activities we’ve talked about: Outings \* Cooking Classes \* Art Classes. A painting class is being held on Sunday, August 20 after Church. The cost is \$25 per person. Upcoming events are a Game Night, Apple Butter making in the fall, and a Fall Festival on October 7. **ALL WOMEN:** Please know you’re welcome to join us! **AND PLEASE NOTE:** the Women’s Fellowship agreed that all Church activities can use products (plates, plasticware, cups) that are in the supply closet in the Social Hall, and it will be replenished by the Women’s Fellowship. It was also agreed to pay out all of our outreach donations for the 2023 year.

- Kara Boyd – Women’s Fellowship President

**STITCHERS’ NEWS** ... Jeanne Boyd asked recently how many prayer shawls we might have given away and caps. A journal is kept, or we “try” keep a journey when we give prayer shawls, winter caps, chemo caps to organizations or individuals. We donated to Rita’s Closet, a Nursing Home through Darlene, the Infusion Center at Reading Hospital, the Palmer Cancer Center, Stahlstown Helping Hands, Laurel Area Faith In Action, the cancer treatment center in Johnstown, our Church family, and numerous individuals who asked for a shawl or cap to give to a neighbor, friend, or family member. We tried to keep records of what we are making, and where they were going, and we try to be as accurate as possible, but we’re sure some were given and not marked down (and that’s OK). Our records in our journal indicated donating 100+ prayers shawls, 282+ Chemo Caps, 94, baby blankets, and baby shawls. One of the thank you notes we received was from Ron and Linda:

**“Thank you ladies for gifting me with a beautiful prayer shawl. We are especially grateful for Edith’s(Hay) prayers over Ron as she stitched each row. Ken has been wrapping himself on chilly days, enjoying the warmth. May God Bless You and keep you in His awesome care. Thank you: Ron and Linda**

**“Thank you all for the prayer shawl for me (on the loss of her Dad). I was comforted by it. You all do amazing work and everything you make always looks beautiful. Keep on stitching ... You are all bringing so much comfort and joy to others during difficult times.”**

Our dear Sue Kinsey, before she passed, asked for several prayer shawls. She wanted to give them to the women who came to help her and comfort her as she so bravely battled cancer.

And, when Pastor John and Susan dropped off prayer shawls and chemo caps at Reading Hospital, a gentleman was leaving the Infusion Center, after having his dose of chemo. It was cold outside, and as we were giving the caps to the receptionist at the Infusion Center, she asked him if he would like one of the caps we just brought. He of course said “Yes” and he put it on right away. It made him so happy ... and warm. Another time when we were dropping these items off at the hospital, the guard who was at the doorway asked if we needed help (since we were carrying a large plastic bag filled with caps). We told him we were dropping caps off at the Cancer Center and with a big, friendly smile he welcomed us right away saying, “Boy, are they going to be glad to see you!!”

The work is being put to good use! Thank you dear stitchers!

**IF YOU NEED A PRAYER SHAWL OR A KNIT/CROCHETED CAP, please see one of the dear, giving stitchers.**

**A SPECIAL WORD OF THANKS TO OUR CHURCH** who supports this Ministry, and to the ladies who faithfully come to stitching on Thursday mornings. When you see a shawl and/or cap on the altar, know that it’s going to someone who needs it and appreciates it. And if you have a need, please see one of the ladies. We’re in the praying and sharing business!

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**AND FROM DICK JONES:** We have seen many changes in our Country - good and bad. Let your voice be heard. Contact your Representatives, and let them know what you think.

PA Representative Leslie Rossi	724-238-3255
PA Senator Joe Pittman	717-787-8724
U. S. Senator Bob Casey, Jr.	866-802-2833
U. S. Senator John Fetterman	202-224-4254
U. S. Congressman John Joyce	202-225-2431





**FIRST CHURCH OF THE BRETHREN**  
**405 ROUTE 271**  
**LIGONIER, PA. 15658-9245**

**LIGONIER FIRST CHURCH OF  
THE BRETHREN** is a community  
of believers who seek to walk  
passionately with Christ - reaching  
out in His name – preaching and  
sharing His Gospel and teaching all  
to love Him.



**PLEASE JOIN US FOR ...**

**SUNDAY SCHOOL – 9:30AM**  
**CLASSES FOR ALL AGES –**  
**PRE-SCHOOL THROUGH**  
**ADULT STUDY**

**WORSHIP - 10:30AM**

**BIBLE STUDY – WED. 6:30PM**

**EVERYONE IS WELCOME!**