

THE BROTHER'S KEEPER – APRIL - MAY 2023
FIRST CHURCH OF THE BRETHREN – 405 Rt. 271, LIGONIER, PA.
Phone: 724-238-6292 * Email: LCOB1888@gmail.com
Sunday School – 9:30am * Worship 10:30am



AN EASTER NOTE FROM PASTOR JOHN – Our Sermon theme this year for Lent has been “**How Do You View Easter?**” or more bluntly put, “**What Do You Do With Easter?**” Why is it “still” such an important part of our faith? Well, for starters, if it wasn’t for Easter, there is a good chance that you wouldn’t gather Sunday after Sunday to worship and praise our Lord and Savior.

But I like Paul’s statement in 2 Corinthians 9:15: “**Thanks be to God for His Indescribable Gift.**” It is the “**Indescribable Gift**” that is the reason Easter is so important. We have talked at length about God’s Gift to us in the form of a baby - Baby Jesus. Sunday after Sunday, we emphasize Jesus’ teachings and the blessings He bestows upon us: guidance, comfort, security, love, and grace, just to mention a few of His precious gifts. That’s just some of the reasons we celebrate Christmas.

But how do we describe the “Indescribable Gift”? Allow me to let you in on a little secret—the Indescribable Gift is describable!

Paul uses the term “indescribable” because we humans cannot comprehend the extent of God’s love for us. Why on earth did He send His only Son—perfect God and perfect human—to die for a sinful people? Weren’t the animal sacrifices good enough? NO! Wasn’t God’s test of Abraham’s faith by offering (almost) his son Isaac as a sacrifice good enough? NO! What **WAS** and eternally **IS** good enough, is God’s love demonstrated by the sacrifice of His Son for our sins — once and for all who believe. And to make it unfathomable, God resurrected His Son on that glorious morning, now referred to as Easter.

Why is Easter important? It proves God’s plan of salvation as revealed in His Holy Word. It demonstrates the extent of His love for us and His desire to have a relationship with us. It gives us hope for all eternity. I’d say that is an “Indescribable” Gift that can be described but never matched! Accept it!

HAPPY EASTER! GOD BLESS YOU & YOUR FAMILY.

LENT --- “STOP, LOOK AND LISTEN”

... These three words aren't only important for our safety in travel, they're also helpful for our journey throughout the remaining days of Lent – leading us to Resurrection Sunday ... Easter. This season of the Church year that's associated with repentance, began Ash Wednesday, February 22. During this time, some prepare for Easter through denying themselves (giving up a favorite food for example), others prepare through special Bible studies or devotions. Pastor John's Lenten Theme has been **“How Do You View Easter?”** It causes us to **STOP!** Lent says,

- It tells us to **LOOK**. Look inward for an honest self-examination. Look upward to see the cross of Christ offering healing and love. Look forward to the hope of the Resurrection.
- It tells us to **LISTEN**. Listen to the words of Christ. Listen to the voice of God. Listen to the winds of the Spirit of God. **STOP, LOOK & LISTEN.**



IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO PLACE FLOWERS ON THE ALTAR for a birthday, anniversary or for the Glory of God, please see Michelle. Let her know how much you would like to spend, and she'll order them for you.

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DOMINICK BOYD, Grandson of Barry & Mary, and a Senior this year, was inducted into the National Technical Honor Society on January 31st. He is studying computer engineering at EWTC. Congratulations to Dominick & the family.

CHILDREN'S SPECIAL MUSIC ... The



children have been practicing songs to share during the Worship Service. We've heard them practicing with Pam, Kara, Stacey, and Darlene (did I miss anyone?) and they sound wonderful. We'll be blessed! Be watching and listening! A special thanks to the adults for their leadership, and a special thank you to Pam for playing the piano for the "Children's Choir".



AND SPEAKING OF CHILDREN ... THE NURSERY IS GOING TO START UP AGAIN DURING WORSHIP...

and your help is needed!

Nurture is currently looking for attendants in the nursery during the Worship Service. Five people are needed, each of whom will have a designated Sunday each month. Please see Dana Shannon if you would be willing to help. Clearances are required ... The website for getting your clearance (if you don't have yours is:

<https://222.dhs.pa.gov/KeepKidsSafe/>

Clearances. Need help? See Michelle Black, Dana Shannon or Michelle "Micki" Clark. **AND, JUST A NOTE:** Do you know what it means when we're looking for Nursery Attendants during Worship??? It means we have more children attending Church – and that's a joy and a real blessing! And one more note: When the weather gets warmer, we have a lovely backyard, with a swing set and pavilion. If you have Nursery Duty, you can take the children outside!



LENT FOOD OFFERING 2023, SPONSORED BY THE WITNESS

COMMISSION ... Did you pick-up your green and purple tote bags with the **LENTEN FOOD OFFERING 2023** listing attached? The bags are in the Church Narthex or see Debbie McInchok or any member of the Witness Commission. Collect the food items on the list attached to the bags. Keep all

of the items until Easter Sunday. (Back-up Sunday will be the Sunday after Easter.) Food bags will be distributed through our local School District or the local Food Bank. A special thank you to all who organized and supported this project.

JUST A REMINDER OF ACTIVITIES AND PROGRAMS **THROUGHOUT THE WEEK:**

Rita's Closet continues to help our community on Monday from 10AM – 5PM. Community organizations are becoming aware of Rita's Closet ministry and are making use of it. The donations of clothing (for ALL ages), children's items, and some household goods continue to be donated. The volunteers who help are hardworking, caring, and dedicated to this special ministry. Have you volunteered yet? ... **AND JOIN THE LADIES ON THURSDAY MORNING** for "Sunshine Stitches". Our hands are always busy making prayer shawls (yes, we're still making them!), wall hangings for in the sanctuary (have you noticed?) and some are working on personal projects. We attended a luncheon with Faith in Action Ministries and will be starting to work on some new projects for their ministry that supports the Seniors in our community. Don't forget: Idle hands are the devil's workshop!

AND, WHILE THE LADIES ARE STITCHING, PASTOR JOHN is in the Pastor's Office working on Bible Studies, his Sermon - but he's never too busy to visit with anyone from the Church or community who might stop in for a cup of coffee and some conversation. You don't need to call ahead – just stop by. He'll be thrilled for your visit!



BIBLE STUDY ... We meet on Wednesday evening in the Fellowship Room at 6:30pm for an informal time of fellowship, study and (of course) refreshments! We just completed the study on the Book of Proverbs and we're just beginning the study of 1st, 2nd, and 3rd John. The first sentence in

the Introduction to this study, Pastor John wrote "Unlike Paul's letters, I John has no opening address or closing greeting, but it is indeed written as a personal letter. Some call it a "loving and anxious sermon ...". Study sheets are distributed as we work our way through each book.

**"May Easter say to thy heart, 'Christ died and rose for thee.'
May Easter night on thy heart write, 'O Christ, I live for Thee.'"**

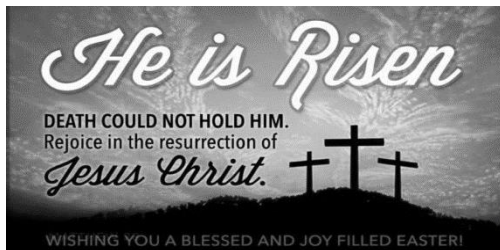
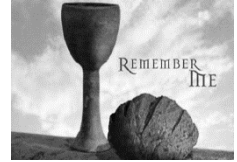


THE MEN'S & BOY'S BREAKFAST SATURDAY, APRIL 15 – Mmmmm! Can you smell the bacon sizzling??? The Sausage and Gravy simmering on the stove??? (My favorite!!) The coffee brewing??? The chefs will be preparing breakfast for the Men's Breakfast held on the third Saturday of the month: April 15 (a date change for this month only!). The speaker will be Ken Barackman. Ken was scheduled to speak in March, but wasn't able to make it. We're glad he can come in April to speak at our Breakfast. Ken was past President of the Pittsburgh Christian Business Men's Association. We're looking forward to hearing what he has to share with us. In May we will be back to the second Saturday of the month – May 13 (no speaker planned yet!). Mark your calendar now!!

A NOTE FROM DEBBIE & SHANE -- "GRACIE" has become a part of our Church family, thanks to Shane and Debbie Smith. They shared this article with us ... Shane and I met Gracie a few months ago at the "Wash-Um Laundromat", where we do our laundry. We were talking to one of the girls who work there when Gracie came over and said, 'I have cancer.' We all looked at each other in a surprised kind of shock. Then, we told her we would pray for her. She said, "Thank you" I have Jesus and that's all I need." Wow! What faith and courage she showed us! So, I got to talking with the girls and the owner of the laundromat and found out that Gracie is Autistic, and was Stage II of a rare form of brain cancer, called Pleomorphic Xanthoastocytoma. She had already had one surgery to remove half of the tumor, and was scheduled to have another in December to remove the other half. After healing from the last surgery, she had to undergo 7 weeks of radiation therapy in Pittsburgh near Children's Hospital. She, her mom and sister were staying in a small apartment there for the duration of the treatments. Lynette Patterson, Gracie's Mom, had to take off work for all of this time to be with her daughter. I knew they did not have much, and was worried about how they could sustain their bills at home and be able to pay for costs while in Pittsburgh. I talked to Shane and told him that I felt strongly that God had put it in my heart to try to help them. So, I asked Pastor John if it would be appropriate to ask our Church family to consider donating to help them out with costs. He agreed, then I told everyone the following Sunday that I would like to take up a collection for Gracie. So, over two Sundays I had a collection box in the Narthex. The next Sunday I took it home and tallied it all up. Our AWESOME church family had donated \$2,112 for Gracie! We then took it and deposited it into Lynette's bank account, so it would be there for her to use right away. I called her to let her know what our Church had done and gave her the amount ... she was speechless for a moment, then said, "Thank you so much, that will really help us out." My heart swelled with joy to know that we helped them, and whether you donated or prayed for her, I want to say a huge "Thank You" to all of you ... we are so blessed to be a part of this Church family! God Bless you all, and we love you! Through all of this, Gracie has been so upbeat and happy, and FAITHFUL! She is still undergoing radiation as I wrote this, until March 8th. She is losing some hair, sick at times, dizzy has had seizures and is very tired. She still has her faith and Tries to be happy. She told her Mom that if she makes it through this, she wants to go to Lancaster this summer. This has been a wonderful experience for me, and I pray that Gracie get to go to Lancaster this summer with her Mom and sister Emily. Please continue to keep Gracie and her family in prayer. Thank you to our Church family for their support and prayers. (See a copy of a photo of Gracie on the bulletin board in the Narthex. (Submitted by: Debbie Smith)

JUST A FEW MORE REMINDERS OF SERVICES AND PROGRAMS DURING HOLY WEEK & RESURRECTION SUNDAY

- **On Palm Sunday, April 2** at the 10:30am Service, we will ponder the meaning of “The Victory Parade” led by Jesus into Jerusalem. (Luke 22:14-23, 61)
- **On Maundy Thursday, April 6 at 6:00pm**, we will observe the service of Feetwashing, Love Feast and Communion. All baptized Christians are encouraged to attend. If you have any questions about this service, please get in touch with Pastor John. (Remember, we wrote earlier – he’s in the Pastor’s Office on Thursday mornings. This would be a good time to bring your questions. Stop in or give him a call.) We thank the Deacon Board for planning and organizing this most meaningful and moving service for all of us, as we reenact Jesus’ feetwashing with His Disciples.
- **Good Friday is April 7.** Take some time in quiet prayer and meditation with the Lord.
- **Easter Sunday Sunrise Service, April 9**, beginning at 6:30am. We will explore the cross as a “Gift of Life”. (Isaiah 52:13-53;12; and Hebrews 4:14-16; 5:7-9). A Continental Breakfast will follow in the Fellowship Room.
- **Easter Sunday Morning**– Alleluia! Christ IS Risen. Join us for Sunday School at 9:30am. There are classes for ALL ages.



- **Easter Sunday Resurrection Worship**, April 9 at 10:30am, we will celebrate “The Triumphant Jesus” (Revelation 1:4-8.) Alleluia! Christ is Risen!

Happy Easter To ALL

“He lives, He lives. Christ Jesus lives today! He walks with me and talks with me along life’s narrow way. He lives, He lives, salvation to impart! You ask me how I know He lives? He lives within my heart.”

From Hymn: “He Lives”

SHANE AND DEBBIE SMITH sent us a praise to share in the Brother's Keeper ... Their Granddaughter Jaedyn was just inducted into the National Honor Society in March. "We're so happy for her and of course, as her Grandparents (and she is our only granddaughter, we're also very proud of her! She plays two sports simultaneously – Softball and Volleyball – both for her school – Shade. She plays on two tournament teams. She also works part-time at a restaurant in Ligonier and has still managed to do well in school! Debbie said: "Please forgive me for bragging – I'm just so happy for her. She blesses our lives with her responsible actions, her fun side, and her love." She also sent us some group pictures of all the girls on Jaedyn's High School Team who were inducted. When you see Shane and Debbie, express your congratulations to them for the achievements of their Granddaughter Jaedyn. Grandparents have bragging rights! Thank you for the article. Congratulations to the Shane and Debbie Smith family and to Jaedyn. God Bless Jaedyn and the Smith family.



Community News: Every Wednesday during Lent at 5:30pm there will be a Soup and Sandwich dinner at St. James Church, located at 300 W. Main Street in Ligonier. * **National Day of Prayer is Thursday, May 4.**

A buffet breakfast will be served beginning at 7:30am at The Barn in Ligonier. Elaine will have tickets if you're interested in attending. It's a lovely breakfast and service.

Our Church Congregational Business Meeting will be held on Sunday, May 7 following the worship service. Mark your calendar and watch and listen for more information. Plan to attend!

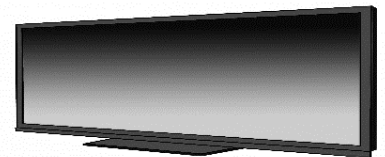
WOULD YOU BE INTERESTED IN SPONSORING A CHILD OR YOUTH to attend Camp Harmony this summer? Please see Michelle Black. Also, if you willing to drive, transportation might be needed to and from the Camp for our daily campers. Please see Michelle Black if you're interested in sponsoring a child to Camp and/or providing a ride.

(This article was in the Church Bulletin): WE'RE

STREAMING NOW!! The Sunday Morning Worship Services are being streamed every Sunday. If you would like to receive the Worship Services on Sunday mornings, please see Dana

Shannon or Tracy Black (or give them a call or email). You can send an email request to:

LCOBSundayWorship@gmail.com. Isn't technology GREAT! Just a note: Joe and Rosanne have been traveling the past several months. They've been able to watch the morning Worship Service and they are thrilled. They're heading back to Pennsylvania and we're looking forward to hearing about their trip – and how they enjoyed "Streaming" !! Technology is great ... Sometimes!!!



SUMMARY OF “EAT AND MEET” PLANNING SESSION

MEETING HELD FEBRUARY 12, 2023

We thought you would be interested in what the Church Board has been working on over the past several months. The Church Board began the session by previewing the Church's Mission Statement (provided weekly on the front of the bulletin), and the Vision Statements (printed on the back cover of the directory). Our emphasis for this meeting was to be consistent with the Mission/Vision Statements which are consistent with God's Word.

Also, the article entitled, “50 Ways To Increase Church Attendance” was used as a tool to begin the “brainstorming” sessions.

We encourage everyone to look over the ideas generated at that meeting and speak to any Board member if you would like to and are willing to help make any of them happen.

PROJECTS AND EVENTS

- Reach out to persons who stopped coming to Church.
- Continue to encourage children to bring a friend to Sunday School (currently children earn points for bringing someone to Sunday School).
- Find ways to ensure parents that the Church is not concerned when children are disruptive during the Worship Service.
- Nurture will work on staffing the nursery when needed during Church Services.
- Invite someone new to Church (we noted the importance of follow-up).
- Paul Knupp will ask Dave Kremmell if the Church can use parking lot at former Watkins Store on Sundays.
- Place signs in upper parking lot indicating “Church of the Brethren Parking Lot”. (Note: Jeremy has volunteered to provide the sign)
Note that current members may want to consider parking at Kinsey Museum. It was noted the Fire Company said the Church could use their parking lot when needed.
- Suggested having movies at Church (would require a license).
- Every month set a time and date for people to meet and visit with coffee and Danish.
- Special events such as a bonfire, dinners, picnic.
- Community Day at Church.
- Look within community to help someone in need and offer help (this may be associated with Men's Fellowship).
- New people moving into the area - have someone visit with cookies.

**AND AS ALWAYS – PLEASE KEEP
THE CHURCH AND THE
LEADERSHIP IN YOUR PRAYERS.**

MARKETING/INFORMATION

- Notify people Nursery Service/Nursery is available during Church Service
- Have bags with Church name to place literature inside, and give to visitors / newcomers / Rita's Closet patrons
- Lay Leaders will mention to visitors to include their address in attendance books
- Encourage congregation to greet visitors at Church
- Keep Web Page updated with upcoming events (Note: Stacey Knupp is the current Web Master and Sam and Jeremy Pfeiffer and Sharon Lanz can update the Facebook page. If you can help, please see one of them.)
- Noted Church Bulletin is currently on Church website
- Need to better inform people of Church website
- Carry extra bulletins and offer to family and friends
- Will increase number of bulletins printed weekly to 70
- Prepare signs to invite people to Worship and various activities, and place in various locations throughout the valley. (Suggested to have pull-off tabs with Church website.)
- Encourage people to promote Church on their personal Facebook page.
- Focus on people living close to the Church.
- Subscribe to "New Movers Mailing List".
- Placing ads in Newspaper on Church events. (Darlene Rummel will reach out to the Newspapers)
- Darlene shared various items they use at Rita's Closet.

STAFFING

- Will need designated teams to follow-up
- Announce in Church of upcoming events, projects, etc., to invite congregation to participate.

CHURCH EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBERS

Executive Board Chair:

Dick Jones, Board Chair - (H) 724-238-5536

Witness Commission:

Debra McInchok, Chair – (H) 724-238-4537/Cell: 412-915-0194

Mary Boyd - (H) 724-441-4919 / Cell: 724-757-4247

Connie McCoy - (Cell) 724-420-1213

Stewardship Commission:

Becky Kwak (C) 724-972-9513

Doug Kwak – (C) 724-454-5771

Lee Rummel –(C) 724-238-2448

Nurture Commission:

Michelle Black, Chair - (Cell) 724-259-0100

Dana Shannon (Cell) 412-601-4231

Michelle Clark (Cell) 724-238-9830

WE ALWAYS ENJOY A “SNACK” at Bible Study, and at Ladies’ Stitching – and pretty much everywhere!! It was suggested that we share a few of our “snack” recipes in the Brother’s Keeper! If you have a favorite you would like to submit for the Newsletter, please place it in Pastor John’s and Susan’s mailbox.

NUTTY BUDDY CAKE

(This was Pastor John’s Mother’s recipe)

1 box Duncan Hines Yellow Cake Mix	1 box butterscotch instant pudding
1 box vanilla instant pudding	½ cup oil
1 cup water	4 eggs

FILLING:

1 cup brown sugar * 1 cup nuts (if desired) 1 tsp. cinnamon

Grease a 9” x 13” cake pan. Mix batter together and put half in cake pan. Sprinkle half the filling on the batter. Pour remaining batter on top. Sprinkle the rest of the filling on top. Bake in 350 degrees oven for 50 minutes.

CARAMEL POPCORN

(Shared by Paul & Shirley Shumaker)

6 quarts popped corn	½ cup boiling water
¾ cup salted peanuts (optional)	½ tsp. baking soda
2 cups sugar	¼ cup cream of tartar

Have corn fresh and crisp. Measure sugar and cream of tartar into 3 quart saucepan. Stir in boiling water. Place over moderate heat, cover pan and boil gently for 5 minutes, stirring occasionally. Uncover pan and continue cooking, without stirring, until syrup takes on a bright caramel color. Do not cook until dark in color or it will be bitter. Remove from heat and stir in butter and soda until thoroughly mixed. Pour immediately in a thin stream quickly all over top of corn. Use two forks to stir and lift until all corn and nuts are coated. As soon as corn can be handled, lift out portions loosely onto waxed paper to cool. When corn is cool, break apart to serve. Serves 10 – 12 people. Many of us have been given this delicious homemade popcorn by Paul and Shirley. It’s always a treat!

THIS RECIPE DOESN’T HAVE ANY CALORIES!!!

“A Happy Home Recipe”

(Shared by Dee Leonard)

4 cups love * 2 cups loyalty * 3 cups forgiveness * 1 cup friendship * 5 spoons of hope * 2 spoons of tenderness * 4 quarts of faith * 1 barrel of laughter.

Take love and loyalty. Mix it thoroughly with faith. Blend it with tenderness, kindness and understanding. Add friendship and hope. Sprinkle abundantly with laughter. Bake it with sunshine. Serve daily with generous helpings. Enjoy the happiness!



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

CHURCH WEB SITE: Ligonierfirstcob.org

**PLEASE JOIN US EACH AND
EVERY SUNDAY DURING
LENT AS WE STUDY “HOW DO
YOU VIEW EASTER?”**

SUNDAY SCHOOL

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

**EASTER SUNDAY SUNRISE –
6:30AM – Continental Breakfast
follows**

SUNDAY SCHOOL – 9:30AM

EASTER WORSHIP – 10:30AM

**BIBLE STUDY –
WEDNESDAY @ 6:30PM
EVERYONE WELCOME!**

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.**