



THE BROTHER'S KEEPER
FIRST CHURCH OF THE BRETHREN – LIGONIER, PA.
FEBRUARY – MARCH 2022

It is time for a confession! In previous newsletters I have written about how the pandemic appears to be on its way out, only to see a resurgence of this nasty virus. It has happened at least two or three times already. The confession: Your Pastor is as dumb as a door post! No, the pandemic does not appear to be phasing out, but since “misery loves company”, I haven’t been the only one who was wrong. Even the so-called “smart people” have missed the mark!



What’s the point of all this gibberish? I believe there is a truth that must be embraced by all who confess Christ as Lord and Savior. And that is: There is only our Lord and God who is all knowing, knowing the past, present and future without error. And when I think about it, I am glad that it is that way. From the very beginning of time man (Adam and Eve) desired the knowledge of good and evil like God. And look where that got us! **1 Samuel 2:3 says in part that “the Lord is a God who knows.” Isaiah 46:9-10 reads in part “... I am God and there is no other; I am God and there is none like me. I make known the end from the beginning, from ancient times, what is still to come. I say: My purpose will stand, and I will do all that I please.”**

If we believe that God loves us unconditionally and He has the power to do what He wants done, we can be comforted in knowing at least one thing for certain: I am sure glad it is God who has the perfect knowledge of everything. Can you imagine if life would take us down paths that we “thought” were the right paths, only to find out God had a different plan? What a mess that would create!

One final confession: I need to remember the oft quoted human truth: “The more you know, the more you know you don’t know.” God’s knowledge, way and plan for our lives are perfect. No need to second guess. Let’s just bask in the love and grace of our Savior.

Thank You

THANK YOU! THANK YOU! THANK YOU! These words don't seem like much, but they come from our hearts to all of you for the thoughtful and generous Christmas Gift you gave to us. You are all so special and we love all of you. You work hard for God's Church - you're faithful to the Worship Services, Sunday School and Church activities; you work in and around the Church, and, we thank you for your commitment. You may not look at the time you spend working at and for the Church as "gifts" but we sure do. You all take your responsibilities so seriously – not for your glory but for God's. It's a true honor and privilege to serve you and Worship with you. Thank You, and God Bless each and all in the New Year and beyond.

Pastor John & Susan



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THE COVID HAS AFFECTED MANY FOLKS in our families and several in our congregation. As we look at the news it can seem pretty dismal. Let's continue to keep in prayer our family and friends, our Church, our community, our country, our leadership, and the world as we deal with this pandemic. We've been blessed to be able to gather for Worship, and we thank God for that. Please take good care of yourselves – stay safe and healthy. Here is an excerpt from articles written by Deborah Nayrocker, who is a Christian author, columnist and educator. This emphasis on prayer will keep us keeping on!

FOUR HOPEFUL PRAYERS

1. **Pray for Godly Wisdom and Understanding**
Hebrews 4:16 * Proverbs 1:7 * Proverbs 4:5-6
2. **Pray for the Salvation of Family and Friends**
II Peter 3:9 * Ephesians 3:20
3. **Pray for Boldness to Share the Gospel**
Acts 1:8 * Galatians 1:1-6
4. **Pray for God's Mercy and Righteousness**
II Samuel 23:3 * I Timothy 2:12



I think Deborah is right on the mark. If every Christian would focus their prayer in these four areas, I can't help but imagine how God would move in our midst. Come on Prayer Warriors - Pray!

"This is the confidence we have in approaching God: That if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us." John 5:14



WE HAVE AN ACTIVE PRAYER CHAIN. If you have a prayer joy and/or concern, call Pastor John (cell: 610-413-2997 * home: 814-255-7838) and he will put it on our church prayer chain. There will be loads of people lifting prayers to God ...and, prayer does work!

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION NEWS ... Sunday School classes begin at 9:30am

A highlight of the Christmas Celebration was the play the Sunday School children performed during the Worship Service. Written and Directed by Darlene Rummel, the children recreated the Bible Lesson on the Birth of Jesus, and they did a great job. All who were in Church that Sunday were blessed by their performance. It took a lot of work and preparation, so a special thank you to Darlene, Billy, Darlene's helpers and the entire cast.

THERE ARE TWO SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASSES FOR CHILDREN – The pre-school class (led by Sheri Wedge and Susan Shaffer) meets in the Nursery. The elementary class (led by Stacey Knupp, Darlene Rummel, Lori Crawford, Breanna Deemer, and special helper Billy Crawford) meet in the room outside the Fellowship Hall.



THE ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASS led by Ed Wedge, meets in the Fellowship Room. Now through February, they're studying the Church of the Brethren curriculum entitled "Justice, Law and History." Make attending Sunday School and Worship a New Year's Resolution. You'll be blessed.

Hope to see you! **AND THERE'S MORE** - Join our adult mid-week Bible Study led by Pastor John. This adult group meets in the Fellowship Room from **6:30pm – 7:30pm**. So far, we've studied the Book of Revelation, James, Isaiah and we just started our study on the Book of Acts. It's a very informal group of adults who enjoy getting together to study and learn more about God's Word. (PS: Following our study, we have refreshments!) Please join us! Remember – we're all students!

HAPPY VALENTINE'S DAY

FEBRUARY 14



“A prayer for you on Valentine's Day that God will grant to you the happiness you so deserve today and always too. And may He keep you in His care through every future day, and fill your heart with blessings in His tender loving way.”

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*“A smile may help lift your load
When filled with anxious care,
But trusting God brings inner peace
And joy beyond compare.”*

Shared by: Delores (Sis) Ray

LENT BEGINS SUNDAY WITH ASH

WEDNESDAY - MARCH 2 * FIRST

SUNDAY OF LENT – MARCH 6

“**IN THIS IS LOVE**, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. And we have known and believed the love that God has for us. God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God, and God in him. We love Him because He first loved us.”

I John 4:10, 16, 19

“**For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whosoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.**” **John 3:16**



***** CHURCH FAMILY NEWS *****

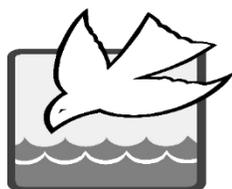
Have you taken notice of the Church sign at the front of the Church at the parking lot? Say a big thank you to Tracy & Michelle. The comments on the sign are so creative. Our Nursery Sunday School Class saw Michelle changing the sign a few weeks ago. The children loved knocking on the window in our classroom and waving hello!

CHECK OUT THE CHURCH SIGN:

“Good or Bad, your past will live on as long as you choose to recall it.”

“Feel puzzled? Is God your missing peace?”

IT WAS A JOY to have Matthew Rummel home from College for Christmas. Please keep Matthew in prayer ... Did you read the note from Bobbie Lambert Grimes on the bulletin board in the Narthex? It was good to hear from her over the Holidays. Check it out!



ROMAN SIMMONS WAS BAPTIZED DURING THE WORSHIP SERVICE ON SUNDAY, JANUARY 9.

Those who attended the worship service were blessed to be able to witness Roman's Baptism. The Baptismal pool was filled and what a joy it was to watch Roman affirm his vows, walk down the steps and be baptized – accepting Christ as his Lord and Savior. Many of his family members were there to support him as was his Church family. What a beautiful service for all to witness. Please keep Roman, his faith walk, his family and the Church in prayer. PS: When asked by Pastor John why he wanted to be baptized, he answered: **“He wanted to draw nearer to Jesus and to be an example to others.” Praise God!**

“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has passed away, behold the new has come.” II Corinthians 5:17

LOOK WHO HAS A NEW ADDRESS. Lori Derk recently moved in with her son Jim and his family. Please keep her and the family in prayer as they all adjust to this change. We miss seeing Lori in Church and at stitchers, but hope she'll be joining us for Worship and stitching soon. Her new address is 701 Holly Street, Derry, Pa. 15627.

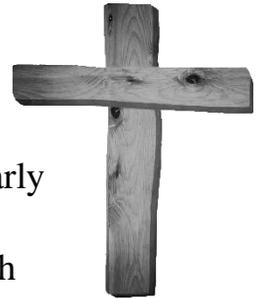
KEEP CASEY ZELENAK AND DOUG KWAK in prayer as they will become Mr. & Mrs. on Saturday, March 19, at the Ligonier First Church of the Brethren. What a joy that day will be for them, their families and the Church family. Until then ... and after ... please keep this young, dear couple in your prayers – and keep the families in your prayers as well. What an exciting day for Doug and Casey.



“And the Lord God said, ‘It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper comparable to him. Therefore, a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.’ Genesis 2:18 & 24

WITH
SYMPATHY

PRAYERS OF SYMPATHY FOR THE HARR FAMILY ... As virtually all are aware, on January 3, Fay Harr went home to be with the Lord, joining her husband Charles. Charles and Fay were an important part of our church family for many years. A Memorial Service in celebration of their wonderful lives will be held on Saturday, June 11. For now mark that date on your calendar - more details will follow. We recently received this note from the family, together with a generous donation in memory of Charles and Fay: **“This donation is from Charles and Fay Harr’s estate to honor their love of the Lord. They cherished the First Church of the Brethren family so much and asked that this be donated to further God’s Word on their behalf.”** Their love of the Lord lives on! Please continue to keep the Harr family in your prayers.



PRAYERS OF SYMPATHY FOR THE KWAK FAMILY as Frank went home suddenly to be with the Lord on Monday, January 17. Frank will be dearly missed. He loved his Church, his wife Becky and his children Douglas and fiancée Casey and Samantha and husband Jeremy. Frank served on the Church Board and was the chief cook for the Men’s Breakfast. He enjoyed making the delicious meals for the men. He enjoyed Apple Butter Making Day and was very involved and helpful with that project. He set up a canopy in the back yard and watched the fire under the apple butter kettle. He was looking forward to making ham loaf at the Church with the men. His sudden death has affected so many – his family, Church family, and community. Please keep them all in prayer.

“And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying; and there shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away.” Revelation 21:4

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JUST A REMINDER: Rita’s Closet ministry continues to be open on Monday from 10am – 6pm to help those in need of clothing (adult and children) as well as some household items, books, and toys for children. Please keep this ministry in your prayers. The Stitchers continue to meet on Thursday at 9:00am in the Fellowship Room. Pastor John has office hours on Thursday as well from 9:00am – noon. Stop in to visit with the Pastor, then come to the Fellowship Room to visit with the stitchers! Make a morning of it! Both “visiting areas” have coffee, but the Stitchers have refreshments! Yummy!

WE’RE SURE YOU KNOW BY NOW ... Anniversaries and Birthdays are listed in the Church Directory. Take a look at the listing and send someone a birthday card and/or anniversary card or a “thinking of you” card. We know the person receiving the card, with your thoughts written inside, will be blessed when they receive it – and you will be also!

LOOK WHAT'S COOKING! HAM LOAF The Men's Breakfast Group and Women's Fellowship are teaming up to make Ham Loaf. It is my understanding that a number of years ago, this very popular practice was discontinued ... but live in the past no more! Through very questionable means (Shh!), the recipe has been obtained (thanks to Paul Shumaker). On **Saturday, March 12**, immediately following the Men's Breakfast, sleeves will be rolled up and this favorite main course will be prepared for your enjoyment when and where you choose. An order form will be available so we can gain an estimate of our supply needs. Men and Women: Meet at the church at about 10:00am (Men: If you're coming to the breakfast meet at the Church at 9:00am) and join in the fun (and work) and fellowship. Many hands make light work. The price? -- Very affordable!



SOME EXCITING NEWS IN THE KNUPP FAMILY – Paul and Stacey just became Grandparents to little Chloe James Rhodes born to Ken and Amanda (Knupp) Rhodes on January 12. They've all been anxiously awaiting the arrival of this little one. Please keep Ken, Amanda, Chloe, Great Grandma Sherry, Grandma Stacey and Grandpa Paul, and the entire family in prayer. ... **AND BLESSED NEWS IN THE BLACK FAMILY**

– Tracy and Michelle were blessed with a new Granddaughter, Eleanor Jean born on January 18 to Zach and Kami McVicker. Little Eleanor joins big sister Caroline and big brother Allister. And congratulations to Great Grandpa Tom Clark as well. May God Bless these lovely families.

DID YOU EAT ALL OF YOUR DELICIOUS APPLE BUTTER AND WISH YOU HAD MORE? Well, you're in luck! There are still jars of apple butter left in the Church kitchen ready to be purchased and taken home and enjoyed. (Half pints \$3.00 and Pints \$6,00!) See Becky Kwak if you have any questions. There is an envelope with the apple butter. Just drop your money in – or see Becky. Thank you.

WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP NEWS FROM CATHY MCMASTER ... We started the New Year with the virus following behind us. Please keep praying for it to stop so our world will become a some-what normal and healthy place to live. Our December Christmas Party was attended by 34 women, men and children. Games, a gift exchange, and wonderful food were enjoyed by all. "Thank You" to Stacey and Sherry for setting up for the gathering. The newly elected officers for 2022 are as follows: Vice President: Jo McWherter * Secretary: Mary Boyd; Treasurer: Roseanne Ometz * We Care: Mary Boyd & Colleen Zimmerman Be watching for a new platform and new ideas for the year. Pray for COVID to stay away and for God to guide these ladies to an inspiring year. - Cathy McMaster

COLLEGE CORRESPONDENCE: Dear Dad: School i\$ great. I'm making lot\$ of friend\$ and Studying very hard. With all my \$tuff I \$imply can't think of anything I need. \$o if you'd like, you can ju\$t \$end me a card, a\$ I'd love to hear from you. Love, Your \$on **Reply:** I kNOW that astrotNOmy, ecoNOMics, and oceaNOraphy are eNOugh to keep even an hoNOr student busy. Do NOt forget that the pursuit of kNOWledge is a NOble task, and you can never study eNOugh. Dad. (Did Lee get a note like this from Matt???)

AS YOU KNOW, WE COLLECT FOOD ITEMS FOR A LOCAL FOOD PANTRY.

Colleen Zimmerman forwarded information to us that she thought would be helpful to those who make donations to the food collection at the church. These suggestions were put together by Linda Pattison of the Moxham Community Food Pantry. By volunteering at the food pantry, she's been able to put together a list of suggestions that could help those who receive the food donations and those who make donations of food for local food pantries.

- Everyone donates Kraft Mac and Cheese in the box. They can rarely use it because
- it needs milk and butter, which is not usually provided at the pantry.
- Although canned soups, veggies and fruits are awesome, if you don't have a can opener, or the container can't be opened without an opener, they sit on the shelf
- Everyone donates pasta and spaghetti noodles
- Boxed milk is a treat. Kids need it for cereal, which we get a lot of at the pantry
- Salt and pepper is always appreciated
- Tea bags and coffee makes us feel warm inside and shows you care
- Canned tuna and a box of crackers make a good lunch
- They get a lot of peanut butter and jelly but no ketchup or mustard
- Eggs and a loaf of bread are a treat
- Pancakes need syrup to be really good
- Hamburger helper isn't much good without the ground beef
- Everyone loves Stove Top Stuffing
- Cake mix and canned frosting is all you need for a child's birthday cake
- Sugar and flour are very rare but oh so appreciated
- Kids could use a snack sometimes



**Feeding the
Community**

Thank You Colleen

OUTREACH FOR JANUARY ... In January we celebrate Souper-bowl Sunday to benefit the local Food Pantry. Please bring your soup and Jack will see that it gets delivered to the distribution center in Ligonier. Thank you for your donations.



JUST A REMINDER: YOU MAY SEE A BOX OF USED (BUT STILL HAVE LIFE IN THEM) SHOES, BOOTS, SLIPPERS AND SANDALS. The **EL HOGAR DE NINOS SHOE PROJECT** is through **funds2Orgs.com**.

Cleaning out your closets? Bring those gently used items to the church (put a rubber band around them) and place them in the box provided. If you have any questions about this special and important ministry, please see Elaine Boyd.

LENT BEGINS WITH ASH WEDNESDAY, MARCH 2 AND THE LENTEN FOOD OFFERING BEGINS. A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO THE WITNESS COMMISSION FOR SPONSORING THIS FOOD DRIVE AGAIN THIS YEAR.

ANY QUESTIONS, PLEASE SEE DEBBIE MCINCHOK.



THE FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT IS MARCH 6. Our Lenten Theme will be **“LOVE ON THE CROSS”**. As we travel through the Season of Lent, our messages will focus on various Gospel Lessons. Please go on this journey with us.

JUST A REMINDER: DON'T FORGET! DAYLIGHT SAVINGS TIME BEGINS ON MARCH 13. You don't want to be late for Sunday School and Church do you? Don't forget to change your clocks one hour ahead on Saturday evening, March 12 before you go to bed so you get up in time for Sunday Services. Remember: **SPRING FORWARD!!**



LOVE FEAST & COMMUNION – MAUNDY THURSDAY, APRIL 14:

“The evening meal was being served when Jesus got up from the meal, took off His outer garment, and wrapped a towel around His waist. After that, He poured water into a basin and began to wash His disciples’ feet, drying them with the towel that was wrapped around

Him.” John 13:17 The Deacons are extending the invitation for all to come to the Lord’s Table. Won’t you join us?

GOOD FRIDAY – APRIL 15

EASTER SUNDAY APRIL 17 – HALLALUIAH! CHRIST IS RISEN!

CROP WALK ... This program originated through Church World Service. The local Ligonier Association of Churches had included CROP Walk as part of their outreach in the Ligonier Valley. Rita Horrell has coordinated CROP Walk for the association for the last 21 years. Each year she contacts the local churches and provides them with the materials needed to advertise CROP Walk in their churches and to provide opportunity for people to participate in the walk and to turn in the money collected. St. James Lutheran Church in Ligonier has hosted the walk each year and provided refreshments following the walk for those who participated. The walk through Ligonier has varied through the years, but has always allowed walkers to shorten or lengthen the walk as desired.

The walk is always scheduled for the 3rd Sunday in October and most years the walk has fallen during the period of time when Ligonier displays Halloween decorations around the diamond and on some of the side streets. Often walkers include checking out these displays as part of their walk. Over the 21 years of reporting by Rita Horrewll, \$104,730.39 has been collected with the average being \$4,987.16. In 2021, ten churches provided 30 walkers and collected \$5,546.00. One fourth of each year’s collection stays in the local community to support the local Food Pantry and the Salvation Army Program.

I believe our Church has provided walkers and supported this outreach program since its beginning in the Ligonier Valley, and we have also supported Church World Service in its programming. A special thank you to all who have participated in any way through these many years of outreach.

- From: Elaine Boyd

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CHURCH WEB SITE: Ligonierfirstcob.org



FIRST DAY OF SPRING – MARCH 20



**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 CLASSES
WORSHIP - 10:30AM

EVERYONE IS WELCOME!