

# THE BROTHER'S KEEPER

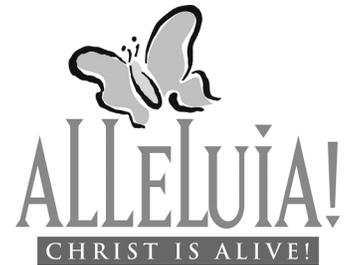
FIRST CHURCH OF THE BRETHREN—LIGONIER

APRIL—MAY 2021



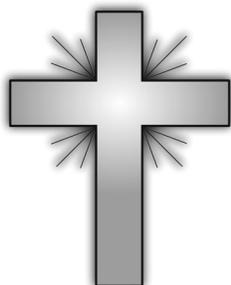
## A NOTE FROM PASTOR JOHN

Whether you get and read this newsletter before or after Easter matters not. As far as I am concerned, the Easter celebration is an important reminder of the blessings we enjoy daily and cherish for an eternity because of what Christ has done for us. And we surely need that reminder.



In the Gospel of John, Jesus tells His disciples **that “I am the way , the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.” (John 14:6)** In that same Gospel, Jesus tells Martha (after her brother Lazarus dies and before Jesus restores his life), **“I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies, and whoever lives and believes in Me will never die.”** And then Jesus says, **“Do you believe this?” (John 11:25)**

Do **YOU** believe this? The “this” is a lot to absorb. Christ left heaven to be among His people. He suffered and was tempted by virtually all the things that we suffer and are tempted by—and then some. This perfect God/man left His perfect home and came into this imperfect world because He loves His imperfect people! But it doesn’t end there. He sacrificed His life on a cross by accepting His Heavenly Father’s will to save us from our sins. A perfect sacrifice for His way less than perfect people, once for all. While all of the Scriptures references above were before His crucifixion, His glorious resurrection on Easter morning was **PROOF POSITIVE** that Jesus is who He said He is and did what He and the Scriptures said He would do!



I certainly believe “this” and I hope you do too! May this Easter and every Easter be a reminder of the great God we worship and serve. May it be a challenge for us to share the blessings we not only enjoy now while we walk this earth, but also when we join Him in Heaven. Easter candy is sweet, but the sweetness of our faith is off the charts!

**HAPPY EASTER ... EVERY DAY!**

**Dear Church Family:** We want to thank each and every one of you from the bottom of our hearts for all of your love, support, kind words, prayers, cards, visits, food, and gifts during John's recent illness and his passing.



Thank you to the Deacons for the food gift card, love, visits and support during John's illness and for the lovely service at the funeral home.

Thank you to Pam Zimmerman for playing the piano at John's funeral – beautiful as always. Thank you, Pastor John and Susan for your visits. John enjoyed them. Thank you for the beautiful service for John. I know he was smiling down on us.

Thank you to the Women's Fellowship for their kindness and all they did. And to Sherry and Lyle and the Luncheon Committee for all of their work preparing and serving John's funeral meal. Again, we thank everyone named or unnamed. You all have touched our hearts by your generous acts of kindness and support.

We miss John dearly. He touched the lives of so many people. He is now in God's arms free of pain and suffering.

God Bless you all in Christian love. The McInchok Family

Debbie, Dana, Dave, Quinn, Brock, Michael and Celeste.

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**JUST A REMINDER ... FOOD COLLECTION PROJECT DURING LENT SPONSORED BY THE WITNESS COMMISSION ...**

This outreach project for our church, sponsored by the Witness Commission will be ending on Easter Sunday, April 4. As a reminder, we're asking you to finish filling the tote bags that were provided for this collection. The list of suggested food items were provided with the tote bags. The Witness Commission will distribute the food items once it is all brought to the Church. Remember what the article in the February – March Newsletter said --- “Lent is often considered a time to **give up** something (usually a bad habit!!). This year we are asking that you **give** to those in need in our community. Thank you for your generous heart.” Please see Debbie McInchok or any member of the Witness Commission if you have any questions.

**THANK YOU TO ALL WHO PARTICIPATED IN THIS LOVING PROJECT AND THANK YOU TO THE WITNESS COMMISSION FOR ORGANIZING IT.**



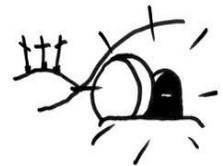
**THE SEASON OF LENT**, began with Ash Wednesday on February 17<sup>th</sup>. Each Sunday during Lent, we have been on the “**Journey of Life**”, our sermon theme for our Sunday Morning Worship. Our Lenten journey has taken us on the path Jesus took and Easter Sunday morning we will be celebrating Jesus’ victory over death, after dying for our sins, and conquering death on the cross.

**LOVE FEAST AND COMMUNION** will be celebrated on Maundy Thursday, April 1 at 7:00pm, in the Fellowship Room. All are welcome to attend. We thank the Deacon Board for their efforts in preparing for this most meaningful service.

**GOOD FRIDAY**, April 2. Schedule some quiet time on Good Friday to reflect on the life of Jesus, how He lived, and how He died for our sins. Take some time in your day for silent prayer and confession.

**“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**

**EASTER MORNING SONRISE SERVICE** – Set your alarm and get up early to attend the **Easter Sunrise Service at 6:30am**. The service will be followed by a continental breakfast. Please plan to join us. Then ....



**JOIN US FOR SUNDAY SCHOOL AT 9:30am** – Classes for all ages from the little ones through adults .



**COME TO THE EASTER SUNDAY CELEBRATION SERVICE AT 10:30 am** as we lift our praises to the Lord and celebrate the resurrection of our Savior Jesus Christ. **AND ...**

**SHARE THE CELEBRATION OF EASTER:** Invite a friend who doesn’t have a church home to join you for the Easter Sunday Celebration Worship Service. The resurrection of Jesus is too special to keep it to yourself!

**NAME THIS HYMN ...**

Verse 1: Years I spent in vanity and pride, caring not my Lord was crucified,  
Knowing not it was for me He died on Calvary.

Verse 2: By God’s Word at last my sin I learned – then I trembled at the law I’d spurned, Till  
my guilty soul imploring turned to Calvary.”

**Chorus:** Mercy there was great and grace was free, pardon there was multiplied to me.  
There my burdened soul found liberty.”

**“When they came to the place called the Skull, there they crucified Him.” Luke 23:33**



**WHO “DUN” IT?** With the employ of Pinkerton, Scotland Yard, the FBI, the Pennsylvania State Police, as well as local law enforcement, we are proud to announce that the mystery that occurred the beginning of Lent, was recently solved..

People have been asking: “Who changed the sign out in front of our church?” Now before the guilty are overwhelmed with a sense of guilt, behold! It is good news! Folks love the message as concerns Lent on our Church sign. So please ... Michele and Tracy Black, please step forward and make yourselves known. We will not gush all over you with praise, but instead we send forth a hearty “THANK YOU”. And by the way, you will win a great prize: For the rest of your natural lives, you will be given the front pew for all Worship services! Just kidding! If you like to hide behind the sound board, you can still do so. In any event, thanks for what you thought was a “behind the scenes” ministry!

**ATTENTION: MEN OF ALL AGES!** Join us the second Saturday of the month at 9:00am for a time of food, fellowship, and prayer. At each gathering we have a **GREAT** breakfast prepared under the leadership of Frank Kwak, Jeremy Peiffer, Lee Rummel, and Lyle Boyd We then hear a testimony from someone different at each get-together as to how their faith has made a difference in their lives. We close our time together with prayer — and ... we accomplish this in less than 90 minutes! Invite your neighbors and friends and join us in the Fellowship Hall. Just ask someone who has been attending—you will not be disappointed. **MARK YOUR CALANDAR ... Breakfast Date in April is Saturday, April 10th at 9:00am. Breakfast Date in May is Saturday, May 8th at 9:00am. Invite a friend to attend with you!**



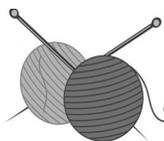
**... And, WOMEN’S FELLOWSHIP NEWS ...** The Women’s Fellowship met on March 14 with 11 ladies attending. We updated our “We Care Program” and “Funeral Dinner” guidelines. We distributed some of our money to different organizations. We are having a Mother’s Day Lunch on May 2nd and a Christmas Party on July 25. We are still undecided about the Bazaar/Basket Party. Maybe do Apple Butter again. As COVID is still lingering, things are questionable. As time moves on, pray for each day to be better so we can move on with our lives. Thank You.

Cathy McMaster, President of Women’s Fellowship

**“THE PURPLE SHAWL”** ... We copied this devotional written by Xochitl Dixon, in **Our Daily Bread** Devotional from Friday, March 19th. The Scripture reading was from Romans 15:30. Maybe you read it during your devotion time—“While serving as my mom’s live-in caregiver at a cancer center hundreds of miles away from home, I asked people to pray for us. As the months passed, isolation and loneliness sapped my strength. How could I care for my Mom if I gave in to my physical, mental, and emotional exhaustion? One day a friend sent me an unexpected care package. Jodi had crocheted a purple prayer shawl, a warm reminder that we had people praying for us daily. Whenever I wrapped the soft yarn around my shoulders, I felt God hugging me with the prayers of His people. Years later, He still uses that purple shawl to comfort me and strengthen my resolve. The Apostle Paul affirmed the importance and spirit-refreshing power of praying for others. Through his passionate request for prayerful support and encouragement during his travels, Paul demonstrated how those who pray for others become partners in ministry. Offering specific requests, the Apostle not only showed his dependence on the support of fellow believers but his trust that God powerfully answers prayer (Romans 15:31-33). We all experience days when we feel alone, but Paul shows us how to ask for prayer as we pray for others. When we’re wrapped in the intercessory prayers of God’s people—along with the prayer shawls our ladies make—we can experience God’s strength and comfort no matter where life takes us.”



**(Copied from Our Daily Bread Devotional From Friday, March 19, 2021)**



Need we say more about the impact of prayer and the prayer shawls? The prayer shawls the ladies and friends of the church make provide much comfort, warmth and peace, surrounded by prayer. We are so thankful for the church’s support of the Prayer Shawl ministry, and for the ladies who faithfully work with their hands to create beautiful shawls and caps. Several prayer shawls were given to members of the McInchok Family as they mourned the loss of John. Individuals who come to Rita’s Closet were given prayer shawls when they asked Darlene to prayer with and for them as they were going through a difficult time. We mailed a prayer shawl and cap to a friend in Quakertown undergoing cancer treatments. She was so thankful for it. We sent one to a 14 year old boy going through numerous health issues. Recently fourteen infant and adult caps were donated to the Stahlstown Ministry and the Laurel Area Faith in Action. You’ll notice on Sunday mornings, the blankets, caps and even dishcloths are placed in the sanctuary, so they can be a part of our Worship Service and prayer time. The devotional from **Our Daily Bread** explains just how important the prayer shawls and the prayers that are lifted are to the people who receive them. **REMEMBER:** Let us know if you have a relative, neighbor, a co-worker, or friend who could use a comforting shawl or cap and the prayers that go with it. Stop by the Fellowship Room and visit with us on Thursday mornings and see the work being done ... and did we mention that we have coffee, tea, and snacks!!

**DID YOU KNOW ??? WE'RE STUDYING THE BOOK OF ISAIAH**

**WEDNESDAY EVENING FROM 6:30PM—7:30PM**

**#1 DO YOU KNOW WHO WROTE THE BOOK OF ISAIAH?**

**#2 DO YOU KNOW HOW MANY CHAPTERS THERE ARE IN THE  
BOOK OF ISAIAH?**



Isaiah was a 8th—7th Century BC Prophet. (A prophet is a person who speaks on God’s behalf.) Question #2: There are 66 Chapters in the Book of Isaiah. This is an invitation to join us on Wednesday evening at 6:30pm for weekly Bible Study. We meet in the Fellowship Room, and we spread out around the table. Pastor John leads our study and discussion—and we have a lot of discussion. As of the typing of this Newsletter, we are finishing up Isaiah Chapter 52, leaving 14 chapters to go., then we hope to move onto the Study of Revelation. (Did we mention we have refreshments??!!) We’re **all** students of the Word. Reading the Scripture, looking over the study sheets that are handed out, prayer, and discussion really help to bring understanding. The fellowship and snacks also help!! We’re a very informal group of “students”.

**IN THE LAST ISSUE OF THE BROTHER’S KEEPER** we shared an article from the Church of the Brethren News Services about the Eyn Churches in Nigeria (Ekklesiyar Yan’uwa A Nigeria). Pastor Bulus Yakuru of the Church of the Brethren in Nigeria has been released by his abductors Church of the Brethren after being held since December 24, 2020. Praise the Lord for answered prayer. Yakuru was held by the Boko Haram, which is a militant group that has declared allegiance with ISIS. Yakuru was abducted when Boko Haram attacked his village of Pemi, just before Christmas. Seven were killed in the attack. Boko Haram also burned down a church and several houses during the attack. There are six other people who were abducted. As of now, it is not known for sure what happened to them. Boko Haram also took credit for kidnapping 300 school boys in Northwest Nigeria in December. The militant group has also been attacking Chibok, an area in Nigeria, every two weeks and the chairman of the Chibk community, Nkeki Mutah told CNN that “They want to wipe Chibk out from the surface of the earth.” Prayer does work so please continue to keep the people of Nigeria, the Churches, Pastors and the people in prayer. Pray that peace will come to Nigeria—and the world that God created.





**COMING SOON AT AN INTERNET  
CONNECTION NEAR YOU!**

You may recall over a year ago the Church Board approved the development of a website for the church. A website developer was hired to help in this effort. Despite developmental efforts being slowed because of the pandemic, work did continue and in the next month or two, the work done will be ready for “prime time”.

**QUESTION: “What is so great about a website?” ANSWER: “A lot”**

The website will contain the latest and greatest information about the church, including a current calendar, pictures of recent activities, copies of “The Brother’s Keeper, inspirational writings, directions to our church, service times, contact information and a lot more. So, not only will the website be helpful for those looking for a church home, but also to keep we “old-timers” informed and up-to-date. So, get your internet connection ready and be prepared to “surf the web” for a look at YOUR church! Details at 11!

**SERVING THE CHURCH OF THE BRETHREN DISTRICT AND BEYOND...**

The Shoe Project Fundraiser—Have you noticed a box or tote of shoes, that have been put together as a pair with rubber bands? Maybe you’ve noticed a church member adding shoes to the box or tote. Ever wonder what it’s all about? Our congregation collects used—but in good shape—shoes as we support the **Shoe Project Fundraiser for EL HOGAR DE NINOS EMMANUEL**. As of February 1, the shoe project has received 2,400 pairs of shoes packed and ready for shipment at the ICA Building in Jerome. That’s just 100 pairs short of the 2,500 pairs needed to have free shipping provided by **funds2orgs**. Every extra pair of shoes adds to shipment and to the amount of profit for the orphanage. So, please continue to bring your shoes to the church, put a rubber band around them and place them in the box (or tote) with the others that have been donated. The next packing date is Monday, April 12. We are encouraged to collect and save shoes during the winter months as well and store them at the church. The funds received help people and families in need.



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**CELEBRATE MOTHER’S DAY—SUNDAY, MAY 9**

**“Of all the earthly things God gives, there’s one above all others; it is the precious, priceless gift of loving Christian Mothers.”**

**“The virtues of Mothers are visited on their children.”**

**\*\*\* CHURCH FAMILY \*\*\***

**ANOTHER NEW MINISTRY HAS “SPRUNG UP”**

**“Bear one another’s burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.” Galatians 6:2** We all



know that when someone has cancer it not only effects that person, but it puts stress on the whole family. Well two families are going through the stress of chemotherapy treatments right now and we can help relieve some of that stress. I have started a “Meal Train” in our Church. “How can help?” you ask. Below is a list of the things you can do ...

1. Pick up a gift card for a local restaurant so the family going through this stressful time will be able to pick up a meal on the way home from their treatments.
2. If you like to cook, a homemade meal would be nice: Soups and comfort foods will work. Please contact me and I will let you know when each person is having treatments and we can set-up a delivery plan. My cell phone is 724-331-2228. Please feel free to contact me anytime. Thank You. Stacey Knupp

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**\* AND SPEAKING OF CARING**—Already this year our church family and community have suffered the loss of three individuals that made a difference in the lives of others: Bob Zimmerman, Charles Harr, and John McInchok. Please keep these families in your prayers, and if you have a moment, drop them a note or make a phone call, asking if there is anything you can do to help them in any way. These men spent a lot of years touching lives and are truly missed—not only by the community and church family, but especially by their immediate families. Sharing the love of Christ one person at a time.

**\* RITA’S CLOSET is also a fairly new ministry of the Church** ... As many of you know, this ministry is organized by Darlene Rummel to help folks in our community who have a need. She has received many donations of clothing for men and women, and children and there is also a “fun” table with items for the kids—including toys, puzzles, books and some children’s clothing. Darlene uses some of the funds donated to the Ministry for clothing items for children. RITA’S CLOSET is open Monday from 10am—6pm. If you want to make a donation of clothing and this time doesn’t work for you , please give Darlene a call to make special arrangements. Several folks from the congregation have volunteered their time to help with Rita’s Closet sorting and organizing. Feel free to stop by and visit .Darlene has put her time, energy and heart into this much-needed ministry in our community. If you would like to make a donation of clothing or if you would like to donate some of your time with Rita’s Closet, organizing donations, please give Darlene a call.

**“For God is not so unjust as to overlook your work and the love which you showed for His sake in serving the saints, as you still do.” Hebrews 6:10**

## **DON'T FORGET ... CELEBRATE MOTHERS DAY**

**SUNDAY, MAY 9th**

**A WEEK OF TRIBUTES TO MOM:** To celebrate the special woman in your life, use a quote a day the week before Mother's Day, or honor her with tributes the whole week after. Write one of these quotes (or one of your own) on a card, make a message into a placemat, tape one to the bathroom mirror—get creative! Every day of the week is a good day to celebrate her love and show her yours. Write a Bible Verse or a note on an index card the week before Mother's Day. Each day place one beside her cup of coffee or tea, on her night stand, tuck it in her bible—be creative! Here are a few suggestions—be creative / come up with some of your own!: “Being a mother is learning about strengths you didn't know you had.” “Mother love is the fuel that enables a normal human being to do the impossible.” “The Mother's heart is the child's schoolroom.”

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**ANOTHER NEWSLETTER IS FINISHED!** We'll be working on the June-July Brother's Keeper before you know it. Please help by submitting an article—or two for the Brother's Keeper. ... an update from your Commission / a poem / a project that's going on at the church / a joy in the family. We would appreciate it. Just put it in our mailbox by the middle of May . Thank you. Pastor John & Susan

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**FOR THE KIDS ... AND ADULTS TOO!** Color this picture and bring it back to Pastor John so he can display it for all to enjoy—put your name on it. I heard he has a sweet treat for all who color it and return it! The congregation will love your work.



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

**RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED**

**LIGONIER FIRST CHURCH  
OF THE BRETHREN ...**

**is a community of believers who  
seek to walk passionately with  
Christ by reaching out in His  
name, preaching and sharing  
His Gospel, and teaching all to  
love Him.**

**PLEASE JOIN US**

**SUNDAY SCHOOL—9:30am  
(CLASSES FOR ALL AGES)**

**WORSHIP—10:30am**

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**EASTER SUNDAY CELEBRATION**

**SUNRISE SERVICE—6:30am**

**SUNDAY SCHOOL—9:30am**

**WORSHIP SERVICE—10:30am**

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**BIBLE STUDY**

**WEDNESDAY—6:30pm**