

THE HIGHLIGHTS

Western PA District Church of the Brethren

November 2026

DISTRICT MINISTER TEAM NOTES

Living with Technology

In conversations with my parents, grandparents, in-laws, and others from those generations, I have heard numerous stories about when indoor plumbing, telephones, and electricity were installed in their homes. I have heard them speak of the first automobiles their parents owned, the first tractor on the farm, the first wringer washer, and the list goes on. When I speak to people in their 80's, 90's, or 100-plus years old, I'm amazed at the change they have witnessed in their lifetimes. From the installation of a telephone, with a party line, in their homes to today's smart cell phones. I have witnessed dramatic changes in my lifetime as well. Manual typewriters, electric typewriters, word processors, computers, the internet, email, and texting, to name a few. Today, hot topics revolve around the construction of data centers, the use of artificial intelligence – AI, and the demand on water resources and the demand on the electrical grid. So how do these advances in technology affect us in our daily lives? Each of our situations are different, and how AI impacts our lives varies.

Like with most things, there are positives and negatives, and the same is true for technology. If we use AI as a resource, a tool to expand our understanding, checking and verifying its content and context, it can have a positive impact. However, if we simply rely on AI to do our work for us, it becomes a negative. In the June 2026 issue of the Church of the Brethren Messenger magazine, Wendy McFadden wrote an article titled "Humans and Intelligence". In her article, she states, *"Cognitive surrender" is a term used to describe what happens to our brains when we willingly hand over our thinking ability to AI. What will life be like a generation after we have surrendered our ability to think critically?* End quote. AI is embedded in our daily lives, whether we realize it or not.

In ministry, AI can reduce hours of research to minutes or even seconds. Again, if used as a reference tool, this is quite beneficial. However, if instruction is given to AI to write a Sunday school lesson or sermon based upon a scripture text and little or no time is invested in researching the content and context of the AI-generated document, then we have committed "Cognitive surrender." Surrendering our integrity as Christians to do the work and to be accountable for the content of the work. Research is a vital tool that provides us with opportunities for growth and understanding of the Scriptures. Accessing commentaries, concordances, topical articles, multiple versions of the scripture text, and reviewing the text in its larger context is critical for comprehension.

As pastors, we need to give credit where it is due when quoting another author or source on a Sunday morning. The same applies when using AI. Those of us called to ministry need to remember we were called for our gifts and talents, and we were placed in leadership positions to serve God; the congregation didn't call and equip AI to prepare and deliver a sermon on Sunday morning.

May we all continue to exercise our ability to use our critical thinking skills throughout our daily lives. May we not be fooled by AI fakes or misrepresentations of information placed before us. Now more than ever, a focus on the bible and the lessons the Scriptures offer should be our focus for truth and direction in a world filled with uncertainty. Regardless of the inevitable changes we will witness in society, the wisdom we can glean from our mentors/elders and study of the Scriptures is invaluable in our faith journey and cannot be replaced by technology.

Blessings,
Chris Forry, District Ministry Team

Messenger Article: Humans & Intelligence
by Wendy McFadden
<https://www.brethren.org/messenger/from-the-publisher/humans-and-intelligence/>

FROM THE DISTRICT OFFICE

The Highlights deadline for the **December 2026/January 2027** double issue is

November 10, 2026

Please send your information to tlehman@brethren.org.

DISTRICT STAFF:

District Minister Team

Pete Kaltenbaugh
mdalepastorpete@comcast.net

Ruby Mader
redhatvicar@yahoo.com

Chris Forry
exit10dunkard@hotmail.com

Financial Clerk: Amy Bowman
wpacob@atlanticbb.net

District Secretary: Tina Lehman
tlehman@brethren.org

DISTRICT OFFICE HOURS:

Monday - Thursday**

8:30 am - 3:00 pm

**Closed Fridays

Financial Clerk is in

Tuesday & Thursday

9:00 am to 3:00 pm

CONTACT US:

115 Spring Road
Hollsopple, PA 15935

814-479-2181

Website: www.westernpacob.org

2027 DISTRICT DIRECTORY

I will be starting to work on the 2027 District Directory. Please send me any updates you may have starting in September. The 2027 Directory will be completed by December 15, 2026.

Any questions, please contact me at tlehman@brethren.org or 814-479-2181.

Thank you!

REQUEST FOR DIRECTORIES

It is very helpful to the District Office staff to have updated information from all the churches we serve. If your congregation will be making a new directory for **2027** please send one to:

Western PA District Office
115 Spring Road,
Hollsopple, 15935

Thank you!



ACROSS THE DISTRICT

NEW MEMBERS

Geiger—Chelsey Berkey, Damyn Berkey, Aubrey Tipton, Maci Burgos, Kyler Burgos, Matthew Rody, Brandon Richter, Waylan Mosgrave, Watson Mosgrave, Walker Mosgrave

Greensburg—George Clawson, Bill Farnham, Aubrey Fordyce

Meyersdale—William Valentine, Sandy Baer

Salisbury—David Hilt, Shaylee Felker, Dawn Hampe, Ron Hampe, Nevaeh Custer, Thomas Custer, Willow Knopsnyder, Brittian Deal, Hallie Deal, Randy Beal, Deanna Beal

DISTRICT LEADERSHIP TEAM

The next
District Leadership Team
meeting will be held on
November 14, 2026
at the
District Office

FOOD PANTRIES

Walnut Grove Food Pantry
<https://www.facebook.com/Walnutgrovecob/>

Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank
<https://www.pittsburghfoodbank.org/>

Please consider donating food to these or any other groups in our area.

VIRTUAL SERVICES

Arbutus COB Sunday Services are streamed at 9:00 am <https://arbutuscob.org/>

Freedom Church (Indiana COB) services are on Facebook (Freedom Church Facebook page) and on YouTube (@FreedomChurch-cd9xj)

Geiger COB Sunday Services are on Facebook at 10:30 am <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1709517105945633>

Hostetler COB Sunday Services are on Facebook at 10:30 am <https://www.facebook.com/HostetlerCOBMeyersdalePa>

Meyersdale COB Sunday Services are on Facebook at 10:30 am https://www.facebook.com/people/Meyersdale-Church-Of-The-Brethren/100064412810727/?eav=AfZ_hZTDR0BT2145UoR6btO6zS69_LKf8aq-ZM8IDloOJ_v6FfXuzfhRJn8YR1Nqs9g&ref=py_c&paipv=0

Rummel COB You can listen to podcasts of services on their church website at <https://rummelchurch.com/sermons/>

Salisbury COB Sunday Services are on Facebook at 10:30 am <https://www.facebook.com/Salisbury-Church-of-the-Brethren-211422968870314>

Walnut Grove COB Sunday Services are on Facebook at 10:00 am <https://www.facebook.com/Walnutgrovecob>



We invite you to attend:

Thanksgiving Eve Service

Wednesday November 25th
7pm



Hostetler Church of the Brethren
2344 Sand Spring Rd
Meyersdale PA

ACROSS THE DISTRICT

YOUTH LEADER NEEDED

The **Beachdale COB** is looking for someone to serve as a youth leader. This position is for a church with a wonderful children's department, but it needs a spiritual leader for junior high and high school students. This role is for someone called to youth ministry, whether you're just stepping out and starting or looking to serve part-time.

If you or someone you know has been praying for and looking for a church to serve in youth ministry, please let Pastor Tammy Horner at Beachdale COB know.

Email: pastorthorner@gmail.com

Cell: 814-244-0958

THANKS FOR YOUR GIVING

The Western PA District would like to thank everyone for their continued support through 2026. If you are making a donation in the month of December, I would suggest that you would have it in the mail by Friday, December 11, 2026 to insure that your contribution gets to the office by the end of the month, crazy things have been going on with the mail this year. Also, should you need any type of a statement for tax purposes, call the office and I will be glad to get that information to you.

May you have Joy and Peace this Christmas and be guided by the Love and Hope of the Lord in the coming year.

Amy Bowman – District Financial Clerk

Enter into his gates with
THANKSGIVING
and into his
PRAISE
courts with
be thankful to him and bless his name
For the **GOOD** *his mercy is*
LORD is **EVERLASTING**
and his TRUTH endureth to all generations. *Psalms 100:4-5*

SERVING IN THE DISTRICT AND BEYOND

COLLECTING AND DELIVERING CWS KITS

If your group is already packing relief kits or thinking about it, we thank you! You are and will be participating in a much needed service in the life of the church. We also have great news for you, these kits can now be delivered to the District Office. The District Disaster Team will deliver the kits in the district van to Mission Central in Mechanicsburg, PA.

When you have your kits ready to ship, please contact the District Office at 814-479-2181 to set up a time to drop them off. Once you have a date and time set, please contact Herb Ewald at 814-691-5718 and let him know when your kits will arrive at the District Office. After enough kits are collected, the Disaster Team will deliver them to Mechanicsburg.

If you would like to volunteer to deliver the kits to Mission Central as part of the District Disaster Team, please contact Herb Ewald. These 1/2 day trips will replace the one-day trips that the team used to take to the New Windsor MD facility.

Herb will be working on a Brethren Disaster Ministries work schedule for 2027 that will cover six, one-week work trips and the 1/2 day trips to Mechanicsburg, PA (number of trips to be determined). If you have never participated in disaster ministries, please consider serving, thank you!

CWS—MISSION CENTRAL

MISSION CENTRAL

5 Pleasant View Drive
Mechanicsburg, PA 17050

HOURS: Monday–Friday, 9 a.m.–3 p.m.

(Closed on weekends and holidays)

Arrive by **2:30 pm** so their team has time to assist you before closing. If your delivery fills more than an SUV, please call **717-766-1533** in advance. If you have a specific question, please call prior to delivering kits.

KIT ASSEMBLY INSTRUCTIONS

Kits should contain 10 items only, it may contain 11 with a pencil pouch. Pack only the specified amounts, do not add or subtract items.

CWS School Kits

- 1—70 page single subject spiral notebook
- 1—2 pocket folder
- 1—glue stick
- 6—new, unsharpened pencils (rubber band together)
- 1—box of crayons (no more than 24 count)
- 1—box of 12 colored pencils (no more than 12 pencils)

Please remove the packaging from the following:

- 1—blunt, round-tip scissors
- 1—12" ruler
- 1—hand held pencil sharper
- 1—large eraser

- 1—pencil pouch (optional)

Kids kits should be packed in clear, resealable plastic bag or a lightweight canvas bag not to exceed 14" x 17".

Collected kits should be packed in cardboard boxes with flaps or lids sealed with one piece of packing tape. Boxes will be discarded and recycled after kits are inspected and packed into the shipping container. Please do not pack kits into plastic shopping bags or garbage bags as they are hard to handle and do not stack well.

Please remember to follow the above guidelines to help speed up the processing time once the kits are delivered to Mission Central. This will also help the volunteers as they do not have to take the time to add or remove items in kits before they can be processed. Thank you!

AVAILABLE SPEAKERS

ORDAINED MINISTERS

FARREL ABRAHAM

4315 Seton Drive
Pittsburgh, 15227-1245
412-979-0067
sharingpearls@comcast.net

LINDA BEACHLEY

PO Box 723
Davidsville, 15928-0723
814-479-4802
lrbeac@atlanticbb.net

RONALD BEACHLEY

PO Box 723
Davidsville, 15928-0723
814-479-4802
rondbeachley@gmail.com

KEVIN BROADWATER

475 Keystone Street
Meyersdale, 15552-6943
814-442-5684
pastorbroadwater@verizon.net

OYANGO BURNEY

137 N. 9th Street
Indiana, PA 15701
724-541-6850
livingyourbestlifeinthepresent@gmail.com

KAITLYN COUGHENOUR

785 Red Dog Roa
Salisbury, 15558
814-521-4649
shellywithattitude@gmail.com

ERIC KABLER

126 Clermont Street
Johnstown 15904-2132
814-242-0920
eric.Kabler@christcenteredinvesting.com

ERIC LONGWELL

240 Plumcreek Road
Shelocta, 15774-3144
724-599-8690
kb3ttx@gmail.com

GARY MOSORJAK

1337 Roxbury Avenue
Johnstown, 15905-1224
814-659-5853
wendel05@aol.com

TRAVIS SHAULIS

608 Second Street
Meyersdale, 15552
814-442-8626
tanbadaner@gmail.com

ROBERT SIMONSICK

111 Apple Jack Lane
Greensburg, 15601
419-934-1794
bprabsimon@aol.com

MICHAEL SWICK

4127 Greenville Road
Meyersdale 15552-8518
814-634-8158
preachmike101@comcast.net

JAMES WHITED

14 Pennsylvania Avenue
Brookville 15825
814-592-5714
jrwhitedsr@gmail.com

TRANSITION OF EDER FINANCIAL PRODUCTS AND SERVICES TO EVERENCE® FINANCIAL IS UNDERWAY



On April 14, 2026, Eder Financial announced it would transfer most of its products to Everence. As the transition moves forward, individuals who steward the business of a church or organization that does business with Eder Financial must complete several steps in the coming months to help ensure a smooth and successful transfer of services.

Organizational Investing Clients

Individuals who steward Eder Financial Organizational Investing services on behalf of a church or organization and are decision makers or authorized signers must meet with a financial consultant from Everence. Decision makers or authorized signers who are unaware of the Everence financial consultant designated to their account should call the Everence Customer Engagement Center at 877-284-2349 or email them at customerengagementcenter@everence.com. Eder Financial will continue to process transactions prior to the transfer of accounts but will not be able to support organizational investing services after November 2026, with the last transactions being processed on October 31, 2026.

Deferred Gifts Clients

Eder and Everence are finalizing the steps needed to transfer management of all Eder Deferred Gifts products and services to Everence.

Retirement Plan Clients

Contributions to Eder Retirement Plan will transfer through a two-phased process with active contributions being redirected to the Everence platform by the Fall. To start this process, Church of the Brethren affiliated churches and organizations must designate Mennonite Retirement Trust, the church plan offered by Everence, as the future retirement plan provider by following the instructions at everence.com/mrt-for-cob. Acting immediately will help prevent contribution interruptions and keep retirement savings on track. Existing contributions into Eder Financial retirement plan are currently scheduled to be transferred on April 5, 2027.

Ancillary Insurance Clients

Eder Financial will continue offering ancillary insurance to the Church of the Brethren Ministers' group next year. "It is not our style or practice to walk away from our members if there is an alternative possibility, said Nevin Dulabaum, Eder president. "And so, we're going to be the plan sponsor of life, short- and long-term disability, vision, and dental insurance in 2027. As an agency dedicated to serving Brethren pastors and staff members, this is the right thing to do."

Eder Foundation

Work continues to transition Eder Financial into Eder Foundation, which will focus on administering the Church of the Brethren's Church Workers' Assistance Plan as well as a new benevolent fund designed to promote vitality and revitalization within the denomination. Eder is in dialog with an Annual Conference Standing Committee sub-committee to produce a new covenant of understanding between Annual Conference and Eder Foundation so the newly formed Eder can serve as an Annual Conference agency.

Eder will continue to provide updates at ederfinancial.org/news and ederfinancial.org/together as details are finalized.

A Final Reminder - Protect Yourself from Scammers

As bad actors continue to exploit weaknesses to do harm to individuals and organizations, Eder Financial encourages all to stay alert and protect sensitive information. Fraudsters never take a break, so exercising caution with all interactions is extremely important. Eder Financial will never call to ask for sensitive information such as passwords, birth dates, or social security numbers. Members and clients who receive questionable printed, electronic, or telephone communication should reach out to Eder Financial through the contact information listed at ederfinancial.org/contact-us.

CAMP HARMONY



For more information about packing shoeboxes, visit Operation Christmas Child at samaritanspurse.org

Camp Harmony is once again partnering with Samaritan's Purse to collect Operation Christmas Child Shoeboxes. If you as an individual or as a church would like to drop off your filled shoeboxes at Camp Harmony, the available times are:

Monday, November 16: 10:00 AM - 3:00 PM

Tuesday, November 17: 10:00 AM - 3:00 PM

Wednesday, November 18: 10:00 AM - 3:00 PM

Thursday, November 19: 10:00 AM - 3:00 PM

Friday, November 20: 10:00 AM - 3:00 PM

Saturday, November 21: 5:00 - 7:00 AM
or By Appointment

Sunday, November 22: 1:30 PM - 3:30 PM

Monday, November 23: 8:00 AM - 10:00 AM





www.campharmony.org

FUNDRAISING FOR CHAIR-ITY

Our current chairs are 30+ years old and show signs of use from serving thousands of campers & guests per year.

As we continue to upgrade our facilities, we want to provide comfortable, long-lasting chairs to those who come to Camp Harmony seeking rest, relaxation and restoration.

Help provide a seat for guests to meet, eat, and get off their feet!



**The MityLite
FlexOne CS is
extremely durable
& stands up to
the rigors of
commercial use.**



STRONG & DURABLE STEEL FRAME

WIDER THAN STANDARD FOLDING CHAIRS

LIGHTWEIGHT, EASY TO CLEAN & STORE

VENTILATED, BREATHABLE SEAT & BACK

CAN HOLD UP TO 1,000 LBS



REVIEW THE NEXT PAGE TO SEE HOW YOUR
DONATIONS CAN HELP!

CHAIR-ITY GIVING TIERS:

Back Stage Pass - \$500
(6+ CHAIRS)

Front Row - \$250
(3+ CHAIRS)

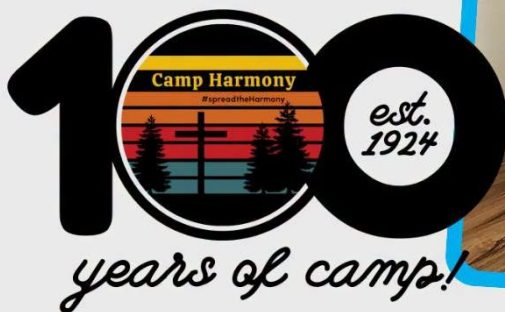
Lower Bowl - \$150
(TWO CHAIRS)

Balcony - \$75
(ONE CHAIR)

General Admission - Any

Our goal is \$20,000 to purchase 300 chairs

Donations can be given with a cash, check,
or online at www.campharmony.org



Donate online!





CAMP HARMONY CHRISTMAS COOKIE FUNDRAISER

Order by  December 7 4 doz. cookies/platter
1 = \$25 or 2 = \$45

Each platter will contain a mixture
of the following cookies:

Chocolate Chip	Snickers Doodle
M&M	Peanut Butter Meltaways
Sugar	Peanut Butter Blossom
Oatmeal	Thumbprint



Cookie pick up at Camp on
December 17 & 18, 9-3 each day.



To order:
814-798-5885
harmony@campharmony.org

1414 Plank Road Hooversville, PA 15936
www.campharmony.org



2026 DISTRICT EVENTS AND MEETINGS

If your congregation, committee, or group would like to have information listed on the District Calendar, please send it in to the District Office by the 10th of each month. Thanks!

NOVEMBER 2026

5 - Core Leadership Team, 6:00 pm, Zoom
14 - District Leadership Team, 9:00 am, TBA

DECEMBER 2026

No meetings or events scheduled

JANUARY 2027

No Meetings or events scheduled

FEBRUARY 2027

11 - Core Leadership Team, 6:00 pm, Zoom
20 - District Leadership Team, 9:00 am, TBA

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Church of the Brethren
115 Spring Road
Hollsopple, PA 15935

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