

Remembering Ed Poling



Ed Poling is pictured kneeling on the far right.

Once in a great while, we encounter someone whose life and spirit embody the teachings of Jesus. For me, and many others, that person was Ed Poling. Ed's compassion reached far beyond any small circle of friends and family. It bridged the gap between generations, ethnic identity, and religious traditions. He found ways to use his passion for teaching, spiritual leadership, music, and hiking to promote social justice, equity, and peace in his community.

Many people know about Ed's service to the church as a pastor, worship leader, and camp leader; however, he served his community in many other ways. Shortly after the 9/11 terrorist attacks, Ed helped to create interfaith dialog between Muslims, Jews, Christians, and other faith traditions. This movement eventually merged with the Washington County Council of Churches to form the Hagerstown Area Religious Council (HARC), an interfaith coalition of volunteers that provides food for school children, assistance for refugees settling in Washington County, MD, afterschool programs, and dedicated volunteers to help numerous other local nonprofits and service organizations.

In 2012, when HARC hired its Executive Director, the organization struggled to find funds for her salary. Ed decided to hike the Maryland portion of the Appalachian Trail (more than 40 miles) to raise the needed funds. HARC has continued to hold an annual fundraising hike, now named the "Ed Poling Memorial HARC Hike for Hunger and Hope," to fund its various ministries. He was also a founder and leader of Hagerstown's Unity Walk, a project he began as a Good Friday procession to support social justice.

These are just a few of the many ways that Ed will be remembered by those who had the pleasure to serve with him and the many whose lives were touched by his.

Adam Lane, Communications Ministry Team

Worshipping Around the District



As I have been sharing with many around the District, one of my goals as I came into this position was to visit each congregation in our District on a Sunday morning within the first two years. I've been making good progress on that goal – I've been to more than twenty of our fifty-three congregations so far, and will be working at getting around to those whom I have not yet visited through the next year plus.

In the midst of visiting our congregations, it has been a great joy to be able to join in the worship services of our congregations. Depending on what brought me to a particular congregation, this has included times of simply worshipping in the congregation as well as a number of opportunities to preach in those congregations. In my time as a pastor prior to coming to this role, I had very few opportunities to experience worship in other congregations. I got used to how I would set up a worship service, in conjunction with the congregation I was serving.

In the role as DEM, though, I have been able to experience worship differently – indeed, even when I do preach, I usually am not the one who is planning the rest of the service! This has given me a wider breadth of experiences of the different ways our congregations structure their services. I have been in very traditional worship services as well as very contemporary services, from large crowds to ones where there have been less than ten people in the room. Each church I've visited has shown the commitment and dedication to worship God together and serve their local communities.

Even in the midst of different ways of worshipping together, one element that is present at almost every service I have been to is a time to share in the joys and concerns of the community. Sometimes it's called something different, but it is a mark of our shared commitment as Brethren to pray for one another. We are committed to sharing together in worship and prayer for one another.

While I know that others are not able to visit and worship with other Brethren congregations as regularly as I do, it is something that I would love to encourage you to do every once in a while. Sharing in worship with other Brethren folks, even and especially when it looks different than what you do at your own church, helps to form bonds and to share in our life together. If you have the chance, take the opportunity once in a while to visit another Brethren congregation to worship with them and experience the joy of something perhaps a little different!

In Christ,

Doug Veal, District Executive Minister

Installation of MAD District Executive Minister

The pace our new DEM has been keeping has been hectic from the day he was hired! The District has only now been able to schedule Doug Veal's installation service, and you are all invited to attend. The service will be at the Union Bridge Church of the Brethren at 124 S. Main Street, Union Bridge, MD on Saturday, March 15 at 2:00 pm. Dava Hensley, Annual Conference Moderator, and Nancy Heishman, Director of Office of Ministry, will attend the service.

Congratulations to New SVMC Director!



The Susquehanna Valley Ministry Center (SVMC) has hired Audrey Hollenberg-Duffey as its new Director. She will begin her time in that position on May 1st. Prior to May, she will be working with the retiring Executive Director, Donna M. Rhodes, to provide a smooth transition for SVMC. Audrey has served two years as Coordinator of English-Language Ministry Training Programs for the Brethren Academy of Ministerial Leadership. She has previously taught for SVMC's ACTS program.

In 2023, she completed a Doctor of Ministry degree through Wesley Theological Seminary that focused on congregational leadership and adaptive change. In 2014, she completed a Master of Divinity at Bethany Theological Seminary, with Distinction in Biblical Studies and Ministry Studies. She has spent 11 years in pastoral ministry in the Mid-Atlantic District and has served as a member of the Board of Trustees of Bethany Theological Seminary and on the

Mid-Atlantic District Church Outreach, Renewal, and Evangelism Ministry Team.

Audrey receives joy from supporting the ministry of local congregations where the work of forming disciples and continuing the work of Jesus is most effective and meaningful. Her greatest passion is congregational ministry and equipping those who provide leadership in the local church through training and continued education. Audrey and her family live in Vienna, VA. She and her husband, Tim Hollenberg-Duffey, have been co-pastors in the Mid-Atlantic District for nearly 11 years and have been serving their current church, Oakton Church of the Brethren, for 5.5 years. When Audrey starts her new position, the church will adjust Tim's hours to full-time.

SVMC delivers training and continuing education for Church of the Brethren ministry and lay leadership. They offer classes in the ACTS and TRIM certificate programs and organize continuing education events. SVMC works in close partnership with five Church of the Brethren districts: Atlantic Northeast, Mid-Atlantic, Middle Pennsylvania, Southern Pennsylvania, and Western Pennsylvania. They also work with Brethren Academy for Ministerial Leadership and Bethany Theological Seminary.

Do You Know About the Global Women's Project?



As expressed on their website, the Global Women's Project (GWP) has been rooted in the Church of the Brethren since 1978. Their Mission is as follows: *GWP seeks to educate about wealth, power, and oppression, encouraging one another to live more simply, being mindful of our luxuries, and join in empowerment with women around the world, sharing resources with women's initiatives.*

GWP seeks to educate (as variously privileged people) about the global poverty, oppression and injustice that women suffer, and how our own overconsumption and misuse of resources directly contributes to their suffering. GWP invites all women to live in solidarity with women around the world seeking to empower women and girls in their own communities in living a life of dignity and respect. Follow these links to read more [about GWP](#) and [their founding in 1978](#).

One resource they publish is a Lenten calendar that offers daily short emails that educate, inspire, and stretch those who receive them. As one of the Steering Committee members, Kim McDowell of the Mid-Atlantic District, recently wrote, "Last year, opening it faithfully (most of the time!) helped me to stay aware and grounded. Whether you've used

a version in the past or not, we invite you to sign up for the daily messages at this link: <https://globalwomensproject.org/worship-and-education-resources/lenten-calendar/>.”

The calendar is available in a print version if you prefer, which you can request by contacting cobgwp@gmail.com. Ask for one or several copies and join together on a meaningful Lenten journey!

Now Hiring Regional Ministry Associates for the District

The Mid-Atlantic District is seeking individuals to serve the District as a Regional Ministry Associate (RMA). This is a part-time stipend position with an expected work commitment of 5 to 10 hours per week. Each RMA will be assigned to engage with approximately one-third of the congregations in the District with the geographical division efforts of the District Executive Minister (DEM), regularly checking in with the DEM to share information and receive feedback. This position reports to the DEM with an annual review and is accountable to the District Leadership Team.

Qualifications

- Membership in a Church of the Brethren congregation
- Reside within or adjacent to the Mid-Atlantic District
- Ordained or licensed through the Church of the Brethren
- Prior pastoral ministry experience
- Willingness to participate in the denomination’s ethics training
- Working knowledge of MS Office, Zoom, and email communications
- Possesses reliable transportation

Responsibilities

- Maintain regular communication with assigned congregations, developing authentic relationships with pastoral staff and laity
- Make congregations aware of resources available to them
- Support congregations in creating and sustaining healthy ministry programs
- Connect congregations with neighboring Church of the Brethren congregations, the Mid-Atlantic District, and the broader denomination
- Monitor the overall spiritual, financial, and organizational health of congregations to ensure optimal vibrance and vitality
- Attend – physically or virtually – the quarterly District Leadership Team meetings
- Be accessible to other District staff – DEM, Administrative Assistant, and other RMAs – for timely and reliable communication

Compensation

- \$8,000 annual stipend
- Travel mileage reimbursed at standard IRS rate – maximum of 250 miles/month without prior approval

Inquiries and applications are being received by the District Office at aamad@brethren.org; 443.960.3052.

News Around our District

Congregational Openings, Placements, Updates	Upcoming District Events
<p>Bethany – Profile circulating, Jerry Fike interim</p> <p>Dranesville – Joey Moss called as pastor to start January 1</p> <p>Fellowship – No profile available; Brad Wibbing interim</p> <p>Frederick – Profile circulating, searching for Family & Youth Pastor</p> <p>Grossnickle – Called Kinley Simmers as pastor to start April 1</p> <p>Harmony – Profile circulating, pulpit supply</p> <p>Manor – Profile circulating, pulpit supply</p> <p>Welty – Profile circulating, pulpit supply</p> <p>Woodbridge – No profile available; Charlotte Bear interim</p>	<p>Mar. 5, 7:00 pm, Lenten Worship Service, Bush Creek COB (combined service with Locust Grove COB)</p> <p>Mar. 8, 7:00 pm, Elizabethtown College Concert Choir, Easton COB</p> <p>Mar. 15, 2:00 pm, District Executive Minister Installation Service, Union Bridge COB</p> <p>Mar. 22, 12:00 pm-5:00 pm; Turkey, Fried Oysters, and Country Ham Dinner; Bush Creek COB</p> <p>Mar. 22, 4:00 pm, National Christian Choir Concert, Glade Valley COB</p> <p>Mar. 22, Camp Mardela Service Day. Check camp website for projects scheduled; all welcome to join; service hours for students. See Service Days Camp Mardela, Denton, MD.</p> <p>Mar. 23, 2:00 pm, District Executive Minister Meet and Greet, Easton COB. Members of Area 1 churches are invited for light refreshments, fellowship, and an opportunity to meet and talk with Doug Veal, DEM.</p> <p><i>The District office sends out flyers to all churches that describe many of these upcoming events. Check with your church office or contact the District if you would like additional information (aamad@brethren.org).</i></p>

<p>Mid-Atlantic District Church of the Brethren 19 Bond Street Westminster, MD 21157 443-960-3052 Douglas Veal, District Executive Minister dveal@brethren.org Jo Ann Landon, Administrative Assistant aamad@brethren.org</p>	<p>Please submit items for <i>The JOURNEY</i> newsletter to Jo Ann Landon in the District Office.</p> <p>Permission is granted by the Mid-Atlantic District to reproduce and distribute information from this newsletter.</p>
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