



The Practice of Love Feast

Every year, as Easter approaches, my thoughts turn to our Brethren practice of the Love Feast. This has been an important part of our tradition running back to the very beginnings of the Church of the Brethren, and is distinctive of our way of following Jesus. I look forward every year to gathering with fellow believers on Maundy Thursday to remember Jesus' Last Supper, participate in washing one another's feet, and partaking in communion.

Growing up as a pastor's child, and specifically in the Church of the Brethren, I remember first learning about and experiencing Love Feast when I was in elementary school. At the time, my father was the pastor at the Valley Pike congregation in the Shenandoah district. At that particular congregation, full participation in Love Feast was limited to those who were members of the congregation. As I was going through membership classes, all of us who were doing so were invited to come and see what Love Feast was like, while also being told ahead of time that we could come and observe but were not to participate in the footwashing or taking communion. When the time for footwashing arrived, I simply watched what was going on, and was looking forward to the next time it was held when I would get to participate. It was a moving experience for me, and one that helped me to understand the importance of Love Feast for the Church of the Brethren.

As I entered into the set-apart ministry, I remember the first time that I led a Love Feast, which was at the Lafayette congregation in the South-Central Indiana District, where I was serving as their interim pastor. In preparation for that, I met with the deacons as well as the worship team to review their past practices and to plan for the service. After all of that, I was still a bit nervous as the service approached. It all went well, though, as God moved through the service to inspire those who came.

I know for many of our congregations, the Love Feast is a service that tends to be less well attended these days. But it is still an important one for us, as we seek to be disciples of Jesus. It reminds us of the importance of confessing our sins, serving one another and being served in the footwashing, of the importance of sharing a meal together, and of the ultimate reason for our faith: the death and resurrection of Jesus embodied in the sharing of the bread and the cup at communion.

Celebrating Love Feast is an embodiment of our faith in Jesus Christ. But if it stops at the end of the service, then we've missed the mark. It is a service that should remind us of the call to go out and live out our lives in faithful obedience to Christ. I want to conclude by sharing the benediction that I often used as I led Love Feast, drawn from For All Who Minister: "The service isn't over; it is only beginning. What we have been about here is not a series of holy acts, separate from life. Rather these acts have been a reminder that we belong to Christ always and everywhere. We carry the Christ spirit into our homes, our daily activity, all our relationships. We are Christ's people. By God's grace let it be so."

Doug Veal,
District Executive Minister

Spotlight on Jo Ann Landon

Church home: Westminster Church of the Brethren, Westminster, MD

Title: Administrative Assistant, Mid-Atlantic District, Church of the Brethren



Jo Ann and husband John at High Rock in South Mountain State Park

Personal background: Jo Ann and her husband, John, are co-owners of Landon Graphics, a business they've had since 1983 that specializes in commercial fleet graphics, such as lettering on trucks and government vehicles. Jo Ann has been attending the Brethren Church since she was 5 years old and attends Westminster COB now with her mother, Lois Weaver. Jo Ann and John's son Will and his wife Kathryn live in Baltimore. Will is Senior UX Content Strategist for Humana's pharmacy website. Kathryn is tasting room manager for the Wine Collective.

Job highlights: Jo Ann has worked as the administrative assistant for the Mid-Atlantic District since 2017. Her job is highly varied, and she supports many tasks associated with both the District office and the MAD churches. One of her main responsibilities involves working with the District Program and Arrangements Team to plan for the annual District Conference—a task that begins not long after the end of the last District Conference. Jo Ann works with several other District Ministry Teams. "Every day is a little different," she says.

During her tenure with MAD, Jo Ann has supported a former District Executive Minister (DEM), Gene Hagenberger; the Interim DEM Team; and our newest DEM, Doug Veal. Her knowledge of and experience with the District churches has been invaluable to not only these DEMs, but to the entire MAD Leadership Team. Those who have come to know her over her 9 years in the position appreciate her dedication to the District and her outstanding work ethic. She works hard and often exceeds her part-time scheduled hours. The District is blessed to have Jo Ann as the MAD Administrative Assistant! She recently shared, "I am constantly amazed at the different people I meet within the District, it's such a wonderful opportunity."

Coming up on Jo Ann's calendar:

- Meat canning project in April, with case distribution in June
- Disaster Response Auction on Saturday, May 2, at the Carroll County (MD) Agricultural Center
- 2026 District Conference, Camp Mardela, Denton, MD, October 9-10

John Fleming, Communications Ministry Team

Annual Conference Volunteers Needed for Ushers

It is now time to register for Annual Conference 2026 in Fort Wayne, IN, with the conference beginning not long after that! As usual many volunteers will be needed, and this year I am responsible for coordinating those who would like to volunteer with ushering during our worship services.

During worship we need volunteer ushers to help receive offerings and record attendance. While an important role in our worship services, ushering requires very little time and does not take away from participating in the rest of the worship service. You will be able to sign up when registering for Annual Conference and/or at the usher table when you arrive and check in for the conference.

The Fort Wayne location means that many more congregations than usual are within easy driving distance providing the unique opportunity to have the Sunday evening service ushered exclusively by local congregations, and the Tuesday service by graduates and current students of Manchester University. Therefore, early confirmation of your participation is greatly appreciated.

Once you have registered for conference, please follow the links to sign up to volunteer as an usher. You can also reach out to me at angelaFinet50@gmail.com and let me know your willingness to serve, your Congregation name, and your affiliation (if any) with Manchester University. Please use "AC usher" in the subject line. Feel free to contact me via text or phone call (717-916-4694). I look forward to seeing you there and facilitating our worship services together!

Peace be with you,
Angela Finet, Pastor, Mountville Church of the Brethren

Disaster Relief News

Disaster Response Auction

The Mid-Atlantic District Disaster Response Auction will be held May 2, 2026 at the Carroll County Agricultural Center in Westminster, MD. The auction starts with breakfast from 7:00 am to 9:30 am, and the auction starts at 9:00 am. Food booths will open at 10:00 am and child care is available from 10:00 am to 2:00 pm. More information can be found on the MAD website at [Disaster Response Auction | Mid-Atlantic District Church of the Brethren](#).

Meat Canning Project

Call the office to sign up a group of volunteers from your congregation to take part in canning chicken that will be available to District churches for use in area food pantries. Chicken canning will take place Monday, April 6 through Thursday, April 9, 2026. The MAD office phone number is 443-960-3052.

MAD's Mandy Park Joins OEP

The following article is from the recent On Earth Peace (OEP) newsletter and highlights Mandy Park's new position as OEP's Director of Development.



Mandy Park, Director of Development

In this issue, we welcome Mandy Park as the newest addition to On Earth Peace's permanent staff. We wish her the very best in her new role as Director of Development. We are very happy to have her on board!

Mandy lives in Western Maryland with her husband, two children, and two cats, and is a member of Brownsville Church of the Brethren, where her husband is pastor. She holds two Master's degrees in Old Testament and Biblical Languages and has an ongoing passion for theology, Biblical studies, peacemaking, and Jesus-centered discipleship. In addition to her professional experience ranging from teaching middle school Latin to local economic development, Mandy had a key volunteer role in launching and organizing the OEP Church of the Brethren Gun Violence Prevention Action Team and is a Certified Level 1 Kingian Nonviolence Reconciliation trainer. Mandy loves to dabble, learn, and experiment; she's also an author and fantasy fan, and has a keen interest in the role of spiritual and emotional health in building Beloved Community.

1. Please briefly tell us about your new role and what you are most looking forward to in this permanent position.

I am delighted to join On Earth Peace as Director of Development, a new staff position. I'll be collaboratively working to design and implement a comprehensive, strategic fundraising plan that builds on the fantastic work OEP is already doing but allows us to expand our capacity to meet the critical needs of the present moment and be prepared to meet whatever challenges the future may hold. I'm especially looking forward to meeting with our donors and partner congregations (past, present, and future!) to learn more about you, your passions and needs, and how we can work together to ensure the work of OEP is sustainable and scalable.

2. Are there any specific goals you would like to achieve in this new role?

My overall goal is for OEP to be ready and able to develop and walk with as many leaders and communities who are working for justice and peace as need and want our support. Practically speaking, this means expanding capacity in terms of both staffing and program, which means increasing our budget—which isn't funded by magic! And as we all know, the need for this capacity is now. I'll be evaluating streams of revenue that we haven't previously had the capacity to explore, building on fundraising efforts that have gone well, and also trying some new things. I want OEP program staff to feel free to pour into you—leaders and communities working for justice and peace—when the need arises.

I think sometimes we can feel as though fundraising is a necessary evil—as if it isn't spiritual enough for the work we're doing. Yet Jesus doesn't shy away from talking about money! Our relationship to our money and our generosity in comparison to what we have ourselves been given is a deeply spiritual matter. My goal isn't to wring whatever I can get out of anyone who passes by; it's to connect with donors, past, present, and future, who believe in On Earth Peace's mission and whom the Spirit is calling to partner with us in expanding that work by giving in proportion to what they have received.

Kelly Rumpf Hired As Director of Camps and Global Village



The District received the following announcement from David Rogers, Interim Director of Shepherd's Spring:

As Interim Director at Shepherd's Spring (SS), I wanted to share with congregations that last week we hired Kelly Rumpf as the Director of Camps and Global Village, and we are most thankful for her willingness to join our staff. Kelly grew up at

Grossnickle COB, where she and her husband, Danny, and their three children worship, and where she and Danny serve as Ministry Fellows and in other leadership roles. Danny also serves on the District Leadership Team and is the Principal at Heather Ridge Alternative School in Frederick.

Kelly's experience in education, youth work, real estate, and more will provide enthusiasm, creativity, a positive attitude, and teamwork to the critically important programs at SS. She will be hiring full/part-time and volunteer assistants for different seasons at SS in summer camps, in the Global Village program, assisting other staff members where most needed, and partnering with a parent/educator volunteer team in the development of new features and models for SS ministries.

Thank you for your prayers and suggestions for Kelly and support for SS as we seek to be good stewards of this ministry now and in the years ahead.

Family & Grandparent Camp at Shepherd's Spring

Would you like a truly fun and meaningful few days away with your family this summer? The Family & Grandparent Camp retreat, one of Shepherd's newest weekend adventures, may be your answer!

The camp will be filled with faith-based fun for all ages, and is scheduled for Friday, Jul. 31 to Sunday, Aug. 2. The camp offers family-building activities, from making your family's own t-shirts, to swimming and hiking together, gathering at campfires and much more, while staying amid 220 acres of God's forested beauty bordering the C&O Canal and the Potomac River!

All this, while staying in Shepherd's Spring's lodge or its Poplar Village cabins, or setting up your own tent nearby. You can enjoy breakfast, lunch, and dinner in the lodge's beautiful dining room, overlooking the camp's Prayer Garden and woods beyond. It's all here for your family—intergenerational, even! Yes, bring Grandma and Grandpa and build the meaning of having Christian FAMILY!

Your total price per person for the entire weekend’s lodging, meals, and programming, led by Church of the Brethren volunteers from throughout the region, depends on where you reserve to stay:

- \$120 per person in a hotel-style room (up to triple-occupancy) in the beautiful Shepherd’s Spring lodge.
- \$100 per person in a cabin in the camp’s Poplar Village. Each cabin sleeps up to 10 people. (We’d like at least six campers staying in each cabin, so your family might want to consider inviting another family along, too.)
- \$50 per person for the whole weekend if you’re bringing your own tent.

This camp is for folks of all ages. And, if you’ve got little ones you want to bring along to make this experience complete, there’s no charge for including your children ages 5 and under. Just let us know who all’s coming. Questions? Call Shepherd’s Spring Camp Director Kelly Rumpf at 301-223-8193.

News Around our District

Congregational Openings, Placements, Updates	Upcoming District Events
<p>Bethany—Profile circulating; Jerry Fike interim</p> <p>Denton—Profile circulating; pulpit supply</p> <p>Fellowship—No profile available; Brad Webbing interim</p> <p>Hagerstown—No profile available; Twyla Rowe announced retirement as of May 31, 2026</p> <p>Harmony—Profile circulating; Leon Yoder interim</p> <p>Manor—Profile circulating, pulpit supply</p> <p>Moler Avenue—No profile available; Pastor Robert Miller resigned Jan. 2026</p> <p>Washington City—Profile available; searching for part-time Pastor</p> <p>Welty—Profile circulating; Gideon Elliott interim</p> <p>Westminster—No profile available; Sandi Evans Rogers interim</p> <p>Woodbridge—No profile available; Charlotte Bear interim</p>	<p>Apr. 5—Easter Sunday</p> <p>Apr. 11—Auction Benefit Dinner, Bush Creek COB, 6:00 p.m.</p> <p>May 2—Disaster Response Auction, Carroll County Agricultural Center, Westminster, MD</p> <p>Oct. 9-10—MAD District Conference, Camp Mardela, Denton, MD</p> <p>Oct. 23—2026 Pastors’ Retreat, sponsored by MAD Spirituality and Congregational Life Ministry Team</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</p> <p>Douglas Veal, District Executive Minister dveal@brethren.org</p> <p>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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