

“A Pathway to Healing” – MAD Pastor’s Retreat



MAD Pastors:

If your spirit has been whispering that it needs rest, renewal, or simply a place to listen again, this may be the pause you long for to restore your soul. This time and space will weave together Prayer, Body Awareness, Healing Presence, and Grace.

Gestalt Pastoral Care (GPC) is rooted in the healing ministry of Jesus. Believing that God desires healing and wholeness for us, we companion those who desire wholeness of Body, Mind, and Spirit.

Led by Darlene Meyers, a GPC Minister/Trainer and Retreat Leader, the Pastor’s Retreat will take place October 23—24 at Shepherd’s Spring. The Retreat begins on Friday with dinner at 5:00 p.m. and concludes on Saturday at 4:00 p.m.

The registration cost of \$225 includes one night’s lodging (single occupancy) and all meals. CEU credit is available for an additional \$10.

Registration forms are available online at <https://forms.office.com/r/st1e8aP2Yd>) and payment must be received in the Mid-Atlantic District Office (19 Bond Street, Westminster, MD 21157) no later than September 30. Please make your checks payable to Mid-Atlantic District.

More Than a Service: The Story Behind the Dunker Service



Imagine sitting inside a 19th-century church, singing a cappella with the sounds of rifles and cannons echoing outside. Around you are Civil War reenactors and encampments, while inside, worshipers gather for a traditional Dunker Service. What many people experience as a single Sunday service actually represents months of planning, collaboration, and preparation.

Now in its 56th year, the Dunker Service has continued through changing times—even during COVID-19. When gathering inside the church was not possible, the service was recorded and shared with the community. The following year, the service moved outdoors. Through it all, the commitment to preserving this unique tradition continued.

Planning for the next service begins before the current one has even taken place. After the September service, the planning committee meets in early November to review the previous service and begin preparing for the next. This includes working with Antietam National Battlefield to secure permits and coordinate the date with the annual reenactment.

One of the most important—and time-consuming—parts of planning is working with the speaker. Together, the committee and speaker develop the scripture and theme, select hymns, and shape the service's emphasis. Each year, Debbie Bittle Wilson writes a Battlefield Lament connected to the speaker’s theme and scripture. The committee also selects hymns that would have been sung during the Civil War era.

Much of what makes the Dunker Service special happens through the efforts of many people working together. The planning committee, District leadership, music leaders, speakers, and National Park Service all contribute to making the service possible.

Yet perhaps the most remarkable part is simply being there. The church's beautiful acoustics, a cappella singing, and the sounds of a battlefield reenactment happening outside create an experience unlike any ordinary worship service.

For those unable to attend, the service will also be livestreamed, allowing others to experience this meaningful connection between faith and history. (www.tiny.cc/DunkerChurchWorship)

This year's service will be on September 20 at 3:00 pm. Keep an eye on the Dunker Service's Facebook page for details (www.facebook.com/groups/dunkerchurchservice/).

Adam Lane, Communications Ministry Team

District Conference at Camp Mardela in October



Be sure to attend District Conference on October 9 and 10 at Camp Mardela. Highlights are provided below and more information can be found on the Mid-Atlantic District website at <https://www.madcob.com/districtconference/>. Note that the theme is based on Romans 14:10-13.

From Moderator Frank Lezotte –

I must admit that writing is not my forte. I'm much more comfortable behind the scenes making things work and fixing what's broken. Even so, I wish to extend a warm greeting to all. October is just around the corner and our District Conference quickly approaches. This year, we will be meeting at Camp Mardela in Denton, MD. Our theme for the conference is "Accountable to God, Committed to One Another" and is based upon Romans 14:10-13. I invite you to meditate on this passage as we prepare for our business. However, it's not all business. Being at camp allows us some pleasant experiences. Join us Friday night for a good old campfire with s'mores and singing. You can also enjoy a tour of the camp and, possibly, a hayride. At the very least, it could rekindle fond memories of your experiences at camp.

October 9 and 10, 2026

CAMP MARDELA

301 Deep Shore Rd., Denton, MD 21629-3408

Moderator – Frank Lezotte

Moderator-Elect – Sandi Evans Rogers

Clerk – Suzanne Bowdle

FRIDAY PASTOR'S DINNER 5:30pm

Denton Church of the Brethren

FRIDAY CAMPFIRE WORSHIP 7pm

Campfire Songs ☐ Inspirational Stories ☐ S'mores!

SATURDAY BREAKFAST 8:00am

SATURDAY BUSINESS 9:00am

Saturday Speaker - Dennis Beckner

Church of the Brethren Moderator

Britnee Linton Called as Regional Ministry Associate



The MAD Leadership Team called Britnee Linton as one of our three Regional Ministry Associates (RMAs), joining Charlotte Bear and Rusty Curling on the team. Britnee began her work in this role on Sunday, February 15. Prior to being called to this position, she most recently served as co-pastor of the Union Bridge congregation from 2019 through 2025. Before that, she also served as Program Director at Shepherd's Spring Outdoor Ministry Center from 2016 to 2017. As part of calling Britnee to this new role, the Leadership Team has finalized and updated congregational assignments for all three of our RMAs.

Congregational assignments are as follows:

Charlotte is supporting Arlington, Dranesville, Hollywood, Manassas, Midland, Nokesville, Oakton, Woodbridge, Allensville, Fellowship, Johnstown, Moler Avenue, Mountain View, Brownsville, Union Bridge, Bush Creek, and Locust Grove.

Rusty is supporting Bethany, Community of Joy, Denton, Easton, Fairview, Greenhill, Ridgely, 1st Baltimore, Friendship, Long Green Valley, Reisterstown, Woodberry, Flower Hill, University Park, Washington City, Meadow Branch, and Westminster.

Britnee is supporting Frederick, Grossnickle, Harmony, Monocacy, Pleasant View, Thurmont, Beaver Creek, Broadfording, Downsview, Hagerstown, Longmeadow, Manor, Sharpsburg, Welty, GraceWay, Sam's Creek, Edgewood, Glade Valley, and Piney Creek.

Please welcome Britnee into this role as she works with our other RMAs and Doug Veal to better connect with congregations across the District. Your ongoing prayers for the work of our RMAs are greatly appreciated.

Help Children Heal After a Disaster

Training in Child-Led, Trauma-Informed Care

When disaster strikes, children need calm. Children's Disaster Services (CDS) understands how to create safe spaces for play, comfort, and healing. This two-day, hands-on training prepares adults to provide child-led, trauma-informed care for children and families after disasters.

October 9–10, 2026
Chalice Christian Church
5612 Haden Road
Virginia Beach, VA 23455

October 16–17, 2026
Manassas Church of the Brethren
10047 Nokesville Road
Manassas, VA 20116

Early Bird Registration Pricing (\$55.00) is available up to 3 weeks prior to training. Register online at www.brethren.org/cds/training/ or contact Adam Lane at 410-635-8735 or alane@brethren.org for a registration form.

**Join us and learn practical skills. Support children's resilience.
Be ready to help when disaster happens.**

Share The Journey!



Mid-Atlantic District CoB

Scan this QR code and join!

The MAD Communications Ministry Team wants to increase opportunities for connections between congregations. Please let us know if your congregation would be interested in the following:

Resource Exchange: Does your church have a Bible Study curriculum they've used and want to pass along? Looking for a few more hymnals for the pews? Share it here in *The Journey*! Let us know what items you'd like to give or get by emailing shalomblacklane@gmail.com and we will include it in the next issue.

Band App: It can be challenging to wade through so many emails and Facebook posts, and that makes it easy to miss important information from the District. We are piloting an MAD communication channel on BAND, a free all-in-one app for sharing messages, calendars, files, photos, videos, and more. You can check out the test site at <https://band.us/@madcob> (or scan the QR code). It's a private network and does not share or sell your data. In addition to the District's email list and this newsletter, it's another way to widely share and connect. More information to follow in the next newsletter

For now, we are gauging interest in use of this platform across MAD pastors and congregation members for sharing events, resources, and other information. If it is useful, we can add subgroups for youth leaders, pastors, older adults, etc. Please check it out and share your thoughts!

And finally...

Share This Newsletter: This good news is meant to be shared! **Please send this newsletter out with your congregation's email newsletter and print some copies to share at church.** We hope to help each member feel connected with their brothers and sisters in the District. More ideas for how to connect? Let us know!

Shalom Lane, Communications Ministry Team

Pre-Conference Minister's Workshop

Preaching and Living the Gospel of Peace

Friday, October 9, 10:30 am, Denton Church of the Brethren



Conflicts at home and abroad are impacting the lives of people we serve in ministry. During this continuing education workshop, we will explore biblical texts that speak to our experiences of conflict and our hopes for peace. Participants will leave the workshop with biblical preparations for preaching or teaching about peace in the coming year. We will also seek inspiration and guidance for living out the gospel we preach.

Dr. Dan Ulrich is Wieand Professor of New Testament Studies at Bethany Theological Seminary, where he has taught since 1996. He is the author of a book and several articles related to peacemaking, and for many years he has taught a seminar titled "Gospel of Peace." More recently, that seminar has become central to Bethany's biblical peacemaking program designed for students in Nigeria. Before completing a Ph.D. in biblical studies at Union Presbyterian Seminary in Richmond, VA, Dan served as a pastor in the Mid-Atlantic District at the Easton Church of the Brethren (1985-91). He and his spouse, Paula Ziegler Ulrich, have two children in their thirties, including one who was born at Easton.

REGISTRATION for [Ministers' Continuing Education Workshop](#)

Profile of Miller Davis, Part 2



Editor's note: This interview by Louise Scalzi is being published in two parts; the first half was included in the May Journey newsletter.

[Also please note that there are two errors in the previously published first half of the interview. We identified Miller's mentor as "Mr. Ziegler," but that should have been "M.R. Ziegler." Second, we wrote that Miller's flood work was in the town of "Johnsville," but that should have been "Johnstown."]

Louise: Your confidence and vision as you approach a situation is always accompanied by a wonderful sense of humor. My own experience is that others feel very comfortable working with you because you bring a sense of fun and camaraderie to the job site. Together we learn, grow, and accomplish our part of the vision. That is not a question!

Louise: How did or do you decide which ways to serve and which roles to accept or decline? What is your decision-making process?

Miller: The assignment and expectations need to be clear. What am I expected to do and is it going to make a difference? Does it fit with my abilities? Is it something I am interested in? Does the slot really need to be filled, and do I have the ability to fill it well? All those thoughts go through my mind before saying yes to leading/participating in a project.

Louise: How are your faith and service connected in your daily life and what has inspired your work in the denomination in the past and what inspires you today?

Miller: The scripture writer, James, is probably my favorite. Succinctly, "Faith without works is dead" sums it up for me. That example was set by my mother. When there was a need, Margaret was there with the capabilities and means that she had. A second piece that is also very important to me is that I take the call of others very seriously. I have volunteered on the gifts and discernment committee because that is what we do as Brethren; we call people. If we know an individual who has the gifts that they need to be using, we challenge them to use them in the context of the church.

Louise: As a leader in the church, what significant changes have you seen in the past and do you foresee in the future?

Miller: In our local church what first comes to mind is our status of becoming an open and affirming congregation. I believe that I can take some responsibility for starting that conversation in 2021. Another significant change for our own congregation is the Love Feast with men and women together at the same table. The increased role of women in leadership within the denomination is significant. I also feel that we have a much better approach to studying the Bible; we are much more open to exploring, discussing, and understanding the Bible from many different perspectives.

As for the foreseeable future, I feel that the growth and strength of the seminary and its variety of programs and outreach are very important to our denomination. I think that it will eventually come to be that we will have an annual conference committee that will rewrite the 1983 document on homosexuality and it will be updated so that individual congregations will not have to worry if they follow God's leading and accept with no exceptions, all God's children. Thereby getting rid of this stigma that we have lived under since 1983.

Each morning, as part of my prayer time, the three words "innovative, adaptable and fearless" come to mind. We are all charged to follow those directives when we grow together as God's servants on earth. We all must be accountable for holding ourselves and others accountable for their actions.

We also may discover and find that a larger variety of groups needs to be formed to provide community to, and for, our varied membership. I am sorry for the split in our denomination. Certainly, an unfortunate situation has occurred; however, presently, we are very far apart in our understanding of where the Gospel is leading us.

Louise: What else do you want others to know about you and your involvement in the church community?

Miller: I haven't mentioned FABB—Fixing Assisting Building Brethren. This is a church group that, during the second Saturday of each month, assists a congregant or friend with a needed project. This group was started many years ago. It's important to me not just because I was one of the starters but because it is an opportunity for me to relate to people I don't always relate to on Sunday morning or during the week. I also want people to know that I am what you see and what I do; I want my actions to reflect my thoughts and beliefs.

Louise: What advice might you pass along to someone about living a "good life"?

Miller: To learn as much as possible about oneself. Share one's thoughts and feelings with others. Be honest and learn to say "no" when needed. And when saying "yes," search for the best acceptable alternatives. As my mother would say way back when I was leaving on a date, "Remember who you are; not whose you are, but who you are."

Louise Scalzi, Communications Ministry Team

News Around our District

Congregational Openings, Placements, Updates	Upcoming District Events
Bethany—Profile circulating; Jerry Fike interim	Sept. 20—Dunker Church Service, Antietam National Battlefield, Sharpsburg, MD, 3:00 pm
Denton—Profile circulating; pulpit supply	Sept. 24—Narcan Distribution and Training, Welty COB, 13465 Greenburg Rd., Smithsburg, MD, 6:00 pm
Fellowship—No profile available; Brad Webbing interim	Oct. 9-10—MAD District Conference, Camp Mardela, Denton, MD
Hagerstown—Profile circulating; Eddie Edmonds, interim	Oct. 23—Oct. 24—Pastor's Retreat, Shepherd's Spring, Sharpsburg, MD
Harmony—Leon Yoder interim	Oct. 24—Turkey, Fried Oysters, and Country Ham Dinner, Bush Creek COB, 4821A Green Valley Rd., Monrovia, 12:00 pm-5:00 pm
Moler Avenue—Profile circulating; Sarah Beth Lillard interim	Nov. 14—Holiday Craft Bazaar, Bush Creek COB, 4821A Green Valley Rd., Monrovia, 8:00 am-2:00 pm
Washington City—Profile available; searching for part-time pastor	<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>
Westminster—Profile available; Sandi Evans Rogers interim	
Woodbridge—No profile available; Charlotte Bear interim	

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	Please submit items for <i>The Journey</i> newsletter to Jo Ann Landon in the District Office. Permission is granted by the Mid-Atlantic District to reproduce and distribute information from this newsletter.
--	--