

THE BRETHREN VISITOR

Sebring Church of the Brethren

February 2021

Volume 36



PASTOR'S KEYBOARD

It's February and that means it's Valentines month it also means that I am having a birthday! I'm looking at those special events this month and realize I have not really communicated to everyone what's happened since Covid settled in here in this country, this state, and our church.

I'll begin with March 2020, when we began receiving instructions on how to respond to the Covid virus. We had decided as a church to close the church and only do online services on Sunday. At the end of March I had an accident with my motor scooter breaking four ribs in seven places. The leadership team did a great job covering the time period of my recovery doing several online videos for worship. I want to thank the persons that participated in that effort including Tricia Bozeman, Larry Weise, Dawn Ziegler and others I apologize for not naming. After recovery I got back into doing the online service while we still did not have Sunday morning participation at the church.

At the beginning of April we talked about allowing people to come back to the church. It had started happening several places around the state and in the Church of the Brethren in Florida. We decided that we could open by providing hand sanitizer, masks, social distancing, and a video showing everyone how to proceed into the sanctuary. Other things we did was pick up hymnals and put the offering plate at the back of the church so that we were not passing things along hand to hand. We also began sanitizing the sanctuary every Friday so that it would be fresh and clean on Sunday.

At the end of April, we began talking about the people that were put out of work and the people who were struggling because of the COVID-19. Fellowship was just about nonexistent so we were looking at our food hand out and ways in which we can reach the community. The fellowship coordinators Terry Smalley and Jane Weiss, have food service experience and decided they could do a hot meal once a week to anyone who wanted it or needed it because of the virus. This was not necessarily a fellowship event except those who could cook and serve, but also felt with the gifts this would come under outreach at the same time.

We received a grant from the Church of the Brethren of \$5000 and that outreach grew to over an average of 200 each week. Terry Smalley again applied to the state through the county for a cares act grant of \$25,000. Terry received both of those grants and we established a grant committee that became the liaison and oversight from the leadership team.

This continued into the fall and still we had limited church fellowship and divided worship between those online and those who felt safe enough to come to the church under the present conditions.

In September I caught the COVID-19 virus. I was in the hospital for 10 days and we had two guest ministers. One came by zoom the other came forward and preached. I came through the virus just fine and returned to preaching.

Although we have talked about a movie night, or even a meal fellowship night it's been difficult to come together in that large of a group in Blough hall.

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Instead we have done some small group activity. We have open to the community a seniors day out on Tuesday mornings this goes with the care grant of \$25,000. We have also started in late December a Bible study on Thursday evening at 4:30 PM that can be attended in person or by phone or video phone. In January we began with the entire city of Sebring to hold an Abide 21 Bible study and prayer group. This meant there were three small groups in Blough Hall That you could attend in person or connect by online presence. The Tuesday morning senior citizens day out and Thursday evening 4:30 PM Bible study continues.

There is a disagreement over mask wearing at church worship. This issue is equally divisive so we shall continue as we are following these courtesies:

1. If someone approaches you wearing a mask please have one handy that you can put on while you talk to them.
2. The church itself has a choir side and an extension side. We request those who would not wear a mask in the service sit to the extension side or right side as you come into the sanctuary. Those who would wear a mask during the service please sit to the left side or the choir side of the sanctuary.
3. We are also requesting that family groups or very social together groups sit together while other groups distance themselves the 6 to 8 feet the CDC says will help to stop the spread of Covid.

As we've talked about these courtesies to one another, please remember if you feel you are especially susceptible to catching COVID-19 and having ill affects then please attend service online. We continue to look for better ways of connecting and being with one another in this social crisis.

Do not forget that we are having our annual business meeting on March 21. We will be working to have online attendance at this meeting and your vote will count.

Watch for more news as we can come across and give it out with God's love and his blessing to us all.

I continue to serve in Christ name,

David Smalley



**Pastor Dave will be on vacation from
February 15 to February 20.**
If you have any issues while he is out,
please contact Pat
during office hours 9am - 1pm Monday - Friday
or the Deacon on Call,
Barbara Kesselring 863-382-1472.

Church Servants

Deacons on Call - Bev Hann, Chair



January 17 - February 20
February 21 – March 6
March 7 – 20
March 21 – April 3
April 4 – 17

Barbara Kesselring	C	863-382-1472
Tom & Jane Weiss	C	863-260-2655
Bev & Bill Hann	C	301-739-9445
Bev & Bill Hann	C	301-739-9445
Barbara Kesselring	C	863-381-8613



**Happy Birthday
Pastor Dave!!!!**

February 20



SENIOR DAY OUT MINISTRY

This program is every Tuesday beginning at 9:00 AM and running till 2:00 PM. Each week we will do a different activity such as indoor shuffle board, dominoes, crafts, bingo, travel logs, short day trips, and movies. A hot lunch will be provided with the program. Encourage others to join in.

Due to limited seating on our church bus and to keep everyone safe and healthy, our Senior Day Out program will be limited to 14 people. The program will be held in Blough Hall so there is plenty of room to social distance as you feel is necessary. Hand sanitizer and masks will be available and temperature checks will be done each Tuesday. If transportation is needed to the church we can provide that.

Each person must be able to ambulate on their own and be able to climb the steps onto the church bus for trips. If you use a walker or wheel chair, as long as you can get on the bus on your own, you are welcome to join us.

If you have any questions, please feel free to talk with Pastor Dave or Terry.

MESSAGES FROM MEMBERS AND FRIENDS

John & Mary Slotter say they are now living permanently in Delaware but miss the warm weather. If they ever get down to Florida again, they will stop in to see us. We would enjoy continuing to get the newsletter so we can keep up with the people down here. Thank you.

Dick & Marilyn Groves say hello from N. Manchester, IN.

Baldy & Marcel wish to express their sincerest thanks to the Sebring COB and Lorida COB for the many, many prayers, cards, and texts on our behalf with the loss of our son, Ruben Miranda from COVID. Also to Pastor Dave for his visit. Your thoughts have been greatly appreciated.

Jim Kidwell would like to thank everyone for their prayers and concerns during his recent illness.

Greetings from (Ruth Ann Bever and...) the cold and snowy state of Indiana. We're up here for about a week. Just got our second vaccine today, Daddy got his yesterday, and in a week we fly down with him. We have some friends, Paul and Sally Schrock, that Tom knows from Northview COB in Indianapolis. Sally's mom lives in Sebring but is moving to her daughter's in Orlando. She has a Wurlitzer spinet piano that they would like to give away if there is someone who would like it. I'd take it in a minute, but we don't have space for it. Sally's number is 317-908-2666 if you know someone. They are cleaning out her mom's house this week, so it needs to be soon if someone wants it. Thanks! Ruth Ann Bever

On February 16th, Grace Lighty turns "90" !!! Her son, Larry, wants to have a card shower with hopes of her receiving at least 90 cards for her birthday. If you wish to help celebrate with her please send the cards to:



Grace Lighty
2740 Desoto Rd
Sebring, FL 33870



The 2020/2021 Church Directories are now available in the church office.

If you want to receive a digital copy please send us your email address and we will send you the pdf version. The address is: sebring.church.brethren@gmail.com

If you would like us to mail you a printed copy please let us know that as well (either by phone call, email or regular postal mail). Thank you! Pat

If you want an end of the year statement of your financial giving,
please let Sharon Kesselring know. Thank You!



Special Prayer List - 1-29-21

To All of our Church Family,

Please continue to update our prayer list by sending us those changes. You can email or phone changes to the office. Thank you. Please make sure you put your name on it so we know who made the changes.

Recent Church Family:

Anne Balint (Knitting group - gall bladder surgery 2/12)

Rudy Bawel (at The Palms) (asking for prayer)

Sharon Burner (Assisted Living & fell again)

John Cooke (Stephanie's husband, shoulder/neck pain)

Corona Virus - especially nursing homes where it is rising
Nation's Unity

Jerel Eller (Prostate cancer)(Barb K's son-in-law)

Tucker Frail (covid)

Ken Frantz (health problems)

G. Berdine Frey (doing better)

Marsha Gahrett, friend of Mary Lou's has breast cancer

Bev Hann, 2nd Coolief surgery to reduce hip pain. Home.
- NO PAIN

Bill Hann (dementia) (petscan/chemo went well)

Jonathan Hollenberg (prayers for positive life changes)

Miriam Kauffman (Home, feels stronger, thankful for
prayers & appreciates continued prayers)

Barbara Kesselring (Ablation - feeling much better)

Tony Kesselring (Better)

Jim Kidwell (Recent Illness & recovery)

Ed Knox - bad health & wife just passed (see Amanda O)

Faye Livengood (Heart problems - stress test needed)

Walt Livengood (Home, trying to get off oxygen)

Baldy Miranda (memory getting worse)

Marcel Miranda

Amanda Osborn (tired)

Dick Osborn (lesion on aorta)

Jim Osborn (sleepy, Oncologist visit - given iron)

Phil Petry (Brain Tumor) (Pet scan, ambulatory, no pain)

Evelyn Petry

Kelsey Schoendorf, (Seth's friend from the district, breast
cancer age 27)

Dan Schwartz (aunt & uncle have covid, much stress)

Andrew Strickland (Gayle Strome's nephew)(Leukemia)
(hospitalized)

Charles & Sheila Wallace (Health Issues)

Lucy Wilson (heart too weak for surgery)

Weiss' daughter - home from hospital with referrals

Archie Wolfe (chemo)(cat scan shows improvement)

Esther Sue Wolfe

Chris Ziegler—(foot problems)(will see a surgeon)

Employee's son at Village Inn - overdosed
Ryan, Jarred, (Prayers) See Yvonne for details
Gary (Yvonne's cousin) (Admitted self for alcohol
treatment)

Prayer for Leadership team, as they move beyond
confusion and mixed struggles from last year
Those not feeling comfortable coming to church

Ongoing Church Family:

Abide 21

Jim Baker,

Lizz Batts & daughter, Paisley (mouth not
coordinating)

Bob Benedict

Joan Bohrer

Louise Bohrer

Carolyn Colver

Carol Cooper's son (Health Issues)

Gail Diehl (Assisted Living in PA)

Colleen Drew (Gayle Strome's daughter)

Scott Lofton (Gayle Strome's son)

Glenn Mayer (Esther W's Nephew)

Terrell Morris

Beverly Noffsinger (Hospice) (Palms Health Care)

Harold Picking

Pastor David & Terry Smalley

Virginia Tharpe (Assisted Living LP)

Nick Vela (Prayer for positive life changes)

Randy Walker (Lorraine Walker's Son) (ALS)

Lucy Wilson,

Wednesday "Grab and Go" & Friday Food Pantry
handing out food, clothing, Bibles, blankets

JOYS: Howard and Sharon's granddaughter , Hannah
married Austin Liles

Jamie McBride started Seminary

Mary Lou Kepner saw her sister in Lakeland
- hadn't seen her in a year

Dawn's student with leukemia has been cleared
If you would like to donate to Children's
Dream Foundation see Dawn

Paul Kidwell and Morgan Andrews engaged (Jim
Kidwell's son & Dee Andrew's daughter
from Dee's)

*RECENTLY DECEASED:

Darlene Knox - keep Amanda Osborn in prayer

All prayer chain requests need to go thru Barbara
Kesselring. Requests will remain on our list for four
weeks. Please give updates to **Barbara Kesselring**
5 (863) 381-8316 or email: kessellb@embarqmail.com



Dear Church Family:

February 2021

Valentine's Day! Already? We are in trouble if the year is flying by this quickly, yet, I am sure, several would like to come out of their homes and begin socializing again. I am blessed that I have been able to avoid the Covid virus so far. I stay busy with my grandkids mostly so I definitely do not want to get the virus and have to avoid getting near them.

For me, lent starts Ash Wednesday, February 17th. I have started to read through Matthew, Mark, Luke and John as a challenge to myself. I feel I need to get closer to God with all this going on. Please pray for my family and I to have wisdom to continue making good choices about our health and to be street smart about social distancing, wearing masks, etc. Dean's Aunt Edna & Aunt Dorothy and Uncle Harry, from PA, are coming to dinner next week and sadly I can't have my kids over because of the virus and avoiding crowds. I will be glad when our lives can get back to normal. Here's hoping you have a WONDERFUL Valentine's Day and your "sweetie" brings you LOTS of "sweets".

In Christ's love,

Pat Hollenberg

Church Secretary



SEBRING CHURCH OF THE BRETHREN

700 S. PINE STREET
SEBRING, FL 33870