

WEST MARVA DISTRICT MEMO MARCH 2017

**384 Dennett Road
Oakland, MD 21550
301-334-9270**

**Kendal Elmore, Executive Minister
J. Rogers Fike, Executive Minister Emeritus
Brenda Harvey, Administrative Assistant
www.westmarvachurches.org**



APPLICATIONS BEING ACCEPTED FOR THE POSITION OF CAMP MANAGER AT CAMP GALILEE:

The trustees of Camp Galilee are looking for an individual to serve as Camp Manager. Applicants should have a solid Christian foundation and live a life that reflects these values and have a love for children of all ages and the outdoors. A minimum of a high school education and basic computers skills are required.

Some of the responsibilities of the manager are inspecting and coordinating with the caretaker to maintain the buildings and grounds; working with cooks to prepare menus and food orders; keeping records for camps, finances, insurance, regulatory agencies, etc.; and overseeing all other operations of the camp with the help of the trustees. Most responsibilities are during the months of April through October and the manager must be willing to stay at the camp when campers are present. An apartment and all meals are provided as well as a limited mileage allowance for travel. Salary is negotiable.

Interested person may request an application from the West Marva District Office.

Any questions may be directed to one of the following trustees: Mark Seese - 304-698-3500; Bob Spaid - 304-290-3459; or Cathy McGoldrick 301-616-1147.



2017 DISTRICT DIRECTORY COMPLETED

The 2017 District Directory has been completed and is now available. If you would wish to receive an electronic copy please contact the District Office.

Please note that the 1-800 number that is listed in the Directory is no longer available.

Also please note the following address correction for Ron Gnegy who serves of the District Disaster & Relief Committee: 23 Ash Spring Run Road, New Creek, WV 26743.



DEADLINE APPROACHING—The 2016 Congregational Statistical Information is due March 15, 2017. Please send all forms to the Yearbook Office, 1451 Dundee Avenue, Elgin, IL 60120

Kendal's Korner **Family Behavior (Misbehavior?)**

Mom and Dad, and the growing children were finishing dinner one Friday night. Dad was feeling so good because since the parents had given the children strong instruction about not arguing and fussing with each other, dinner time had been so peaceful and enjoyable for everyone. The biggest change was when the parents had explained that arguing with one another at the table was forbidden, as it even complicates digestion.

Then the day came when Billy and Sally began to argue. What was it about?

Which one Grandma loved the best. Billy was sure that he was best loved because Grandma always gave him extra hot rolls at dinner. Sally, on the other hand, defended her claim because Grandma always complimented the beautiful curls and waves in her hair.



Doesn't sound very important from our perspective, just now, but from their outlook, it must have been VERY important!



I've been thinking a good bit about our beloved denomination, the Church of the Brethren of late. We're continuing to deal with differing views on many subjects, nearly all of which are based on interpretation of scripture. I remember back in the 1960's conversations in the back yard of Carolyn's family home on Sunday afternoons. We younger folks would be complaining (at times ranting) about this or that issue and how the church was or wasn't responding to it in the way we thought it should. Carolyn's dad, Wilbert Stone, would sit quietly until we ran out of steam and simply say, "But, She's a good old church."

His view was very appropriate as he had come to Christ as the first member of his very large family to do so, and shared with them, and prayed for and with them, until one by one his family members had come to Christ.

Fast Forward to Today:

The family dinner above can be a metaphor for the current experience we are having in the church regarding Same Sex Weddings, and similar issues. The family (Annual Conference) has said in 1983 and again in 2011, that the church does not find same sex "covenantal relationships" (or marriages) to be acceptable, based on our understanding of scripture.

With the US Supreme Court recognition of same sex marriages nationwide in July 2015, some con-

gregations and ministers began to not only advocate for same sex weddings, but actually began to conduct them, and in some cases codified their blessing, with such language as "our minister(s) are authorized to perform any legal marriage."

This behavior led us in the West Marva District to question Annual Conference in Greensboro in 2016, "How shall districts respond when credentialed ministers and/or congregations conduct or participate in same sex weddings."

The children, Billy and Sally, find themselves in an argument. We in the COB are also in an argument over whose interpretation of scripture is correct. In this communion in the Body of Christ, we seek the wisdom of the gathered Body (Annual Conference). Some may remember Mammy Yokum, the character in the comic strip, Lil Abner. Her line was "I HAS SPOKEN!" To many of us, Annual Conference, like the parents of Billy and Sally, have spoken, and given us "strong instruction." We continue to expect dialog, but clearly have been told that this conduct that is contrary to Annual Conference stated wisdom is not acceptable.

Blessing *Kendal* 😊





When the Church of the Brethren gathers in Grand Rapids, Michigan for Annual Conference (AC) this summer, there is to be further consideration given to the two queries submitted by West Marva to Annual Conference last summer in Greensboro. The two queries are, “*How shall districts respond when*

“Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful.”

credentialed ministers and/or congregations conduct or participate in same sex weddings?” and “...to consider if it is the will of Annual Conference for On Earth Peace to remain an agency of the Church of the Brethren with reportability and accountability to Annual Conference.”

The **Same Sex Wedding** query was referred to the Annual Conference Leadership Team in consultation with the Council of District Executives and the conference charged these two groups to report back regarding Authority and Accountability of Annual Conference, Districts, Congregations and Ministers.

The **On Earth Peace** query was referred to the Annual Conference Review and Evaluation Committee to be added to the overall work they’re charged with.

Both of these are to be reported back to the 2017 Annual Conference this summer in Grand Rapids.

Since both of these issues were brought to AC from our district, I am announcing three different “meetings” in different locations in the district to have conversations with all interested Brethren as we prayerfully prepare for the big meeting in Grand Rapids. The plan is for me to convene and facilitate the conversations. For these times of focus to be effective and helpful, persons need to prayerfully study the information in the responses that are being brought. Accompanying this document, are the additional materials to be considered prior to our meetings.

The meetings are to be held, as follows:

1. **Elkins** Church of the Brethren, Saturday, March 25, 9:30 AM. Light refreshments upon arrival.
2. **Keyser** Church of the Brethren, Saturday, March 25, 3:00 PM. Light refreshments to follow.
3. **Oak Grove** Church of the Brethren, Sunday, March 26, 3:00 PM. Light refreshments to follow.

For directions or additional information, contact the District Office, 301.334.9270.

Please call the office no later than Wednesday, March 22nd to “register” which will assist those preparing the food.

WORKSHOP: “TEACHING TO TRANSFORM NOT INFORM”

WHO SHOULD ATTEND: Pastors, Bible Study Leaders, Sunday School Teachers.

All too often, teachers teach to impact listeners lives but listeners forget what teachers teach. (*quote from Bradley Simon*) It’s a common problem. We teach Bible Study Lessons, Sunday School Lessons, and even informational sermons, but people just can’t seem to remember the points we covered.

In a series of books called “Teaching to Transform, not Inform” Dr. Bradley Simon shares how we can teach more by teaching less. It sounds strange but he makes some very valid points.

The introduction in Dr. Simon’s book begins with: In Matthew 28:18-20, Jesus gives teachers a clear and concise teaching goal: ¹⁸ Then Jesus came to them. He said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹ So you must go and make disciples of all nations. Baptize them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. ²⁰ Teach them to **obey** everything I have commanded you. And you can be sure that I am always with you, to the very end.” (NIV) As a result, Jesus makes life-altering transformation (not simply information or explanation) our primary teaching goal.

The “Teaching to Transform not Inform” books focus on informational and transformational teaching techniques that effectively teach the head and heart using a step-by-step, biblically grounded, tested, and proven approach. You will learn how to improve the listeners comprehension and understanding, but more importantly, how to help them accept and obey the truth from the heart. As you learn to replace informational or educational lessons with life-altering transformational ones, your impact will ripple from person to person to person.

During this one day workshop, we will cover Dr. Bradley’s key points and you will have the opportunity to discuss some of his ideas with others in attendance.

PLACE: Westernport Church of the Brethren, 200 Oak View Drive, Westernport

DATE/TIME: Saturday, April 29th from 9am-4pm.

INSTRUCTOR: Diane May, pastor of the Westernport Church

COST: \$10 for the book (You will only be purchasing one of the books in the series, but information will be shared from both books)

Lunch will be provided (freewill offering)

PRE-REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED so that we may order the appropriate number of books and prepare the necessary handouts. Please Pre-register prior to April 1st to guarantee the \$10 price. After April 1st the price could increase to \$15 to guarantee delivery in time for the class. Pre-register by contacting the District Office at 301-334-9270 or wmarva@verizon.net. Books need to be paid for prior to the class.

If any pastor needs financial assistance to cover the cost of their book, please contact the District Office.

0.6 CEU's available

WORKSHOP: “Recognize, Respond, REACT Training—Suicide Prevention”

WHO SHOULD ATTEND: Pastors, Bible Study Leaders, Youth Leaders, Sunday School Teachers and all others who would benefit from this training.

0.35 CEU's available.

PLACE: Tearcoat Church of the Brethren, 48 Dunkard Church Road, Augusta, WV

DATE/TIME: Saturday, May 13 from 9:00 a.m. until 12:30 p.m.

INSTRUCTOR: John Lyon, BA is experienced with both suicide prevention programming and active crisis intervention. John has worked with Prevent Suicide WV as a regional youth intervention specialist since 2015 and with the Potomac Highlands Mental Health Guild as a crisis worker since 2013. John has a bachelor degree in Political Science and Religious Studies and is a graduate student in the Integrated Mental and Behavioral Health Program at the West Virginia University School of Social Work.

Purpose of Recognize, Respond, REACT: This is a locally developed gatekeeper training. Participants will be introduced to the prevalence and significance of suicide. Participants will also learn to recognize the risk factors and warning signs for suicide, as well as a model for intervention. By the end of the workshop participants will understand the best practice in interacting with youth and adults at risk for suicide.

THERE IS NOT A CHARGE FOR THIS WORKSHOP.

Pre-registration is required — contact the Tearcoat Church of the Brethren at 304-496-7841 or e-mail the church at tcbchurch@frontiernet.net

Registration deadline will be May 7, 2017.

The following is the text of a letter we recently received from Church of the Brethren General Secretary, David Steele. If felt it would be good for us to read it and learn more about the thinking of our brother in Christ, who provides executive leadership as God empowers him for the benefit of all of us... “For the Glory of God and our neighbors good.” I encourage us all to keep him and all of the leadership in the Church of the Brethren in our prayers during these challenging days.....

.....Kendal

Being the church

By David Steele, General Secretary

“May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope.”

(Romans 15:13)

My first 100 days as general secretary have come and gone. These first weeks have been exhilarating, challenging, and joy-filled. Assessment, questions, review of past board and committee minutes, and many meetings have filled my days. What has been and will continue to be central in my work and ministry has been listening—listening to staff and you, the church. From the hallways and meeting rooms of the General Offices and Brethren Service Center to the listening sessions being held across the denomination, I am learning much. I count it a privilege to meet with you to hear your hopes, passions, and concerns, and I look forward to many more listening opportunities as I continue to schedule listening sessions in other districts.



What am I learning from your sharing? We are passionate about the Church of the Brethren and our common ministries of service, mission, discipleship, and evangelism. Yet, we are also distracted by dwindling numbers and whether we will split over our diverging or opposite views related to human sexuality and same-gender marriage. Many of your hopes have been centered in a desire for unity, reconciliation, and focusing on what unites us. Much of your sharing can be taken at face value; however, for some our desire for unity and staying together are tied to certain outcomes.

The issues we face as a church will not go away. Let’s not kid ourselves. Given our diversity, there is no decision that we can make about a social issue that will satisfy all of us. And when we do make a decision about a social issue, it will likely be replaced by another, and another, and another.

(Being the church, continued)

Being the church is messy. It always has been. I have always appreciated the diversity of the church and the opportunities and challenges such diversity offers. In 1 Corinthians 12:12 we read, “The body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body.” Each part of the body is essential and cannot be denied its place in the body. “God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as he chose” (12:18).

I believe we must work together as one body—the body of Christ—to attend to the issues before us and those that we will face in the future. Our rich diversity provides us the ability to speak to a very complex and diverse world and model another way of living—the way of Jesus. Our working together, despite our differences, is not a denial of our convictions, but an acknowledgment of our conviction that Jesus is central in our lives and that we are part of one body in Christ. Sure, it is easier to seek out and gather with those who think and believe like us, but where would be our sense of smell, sight, ability to walk, to touch? As one dear brother said in one of the listening sessions, “I need those of you calling me to purity equally as much as I need those calling me to grace and compassion.”

As we step into this new year, I am committed to our common struggle together as the body of Christ. In the midst of distractions, it has been most exhilarating in my first 100 days to experience firsthand the tireless efforts of staff and leaders to be the church. Mission work around the globe, disaster response ministries, workcamps for youth, discipleship ministries and working with congregations in efforts of vitality and evangelism, intercultural ministries, church planting coaching and support, and planning for Christian Citizenship Seminar, Young Adult Conference, and Inspiration 2017 (National Older Adult Conference)—and the list could go on.

ATTENTION YOUTH:



Roundtable 2017 – Southeast Regional Youth Conference is scheduled to be held at Bridgewater College, Bridgewater, VA – March 31 – April 2, 2017.

Featuring: Tyler & Chelsa Goss and Mutual Kumquat.

For more information:

<http://iycroundtable.wix.com/iycbc>

Additional Opportunity for Ministers to Participate in Ethics Education

We have received information that a Web-Cast is being offered, *Healthy Boundaries 101*, by the Brethren Academy for Ministerial Leadership, on May 8, 2017. Julie Hostetter, recently retired Director of the Academy, will be leading this event.

All credentialed ministers need ethics education once every 5 years. Those who are recently credentialed and those who are prayerfully considering credentials, may wish to take advantage of this opportunity. It is also an excellent opportunity for additional Continuing Education Units, which are also required for renewal of credentials.

The training session will take place via webcast from 10:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m. eastern standard time with a break for lunch. A website link will be e-mailed to all registered participants a few days prior to the webcast. This link will connect you to the webcast room. Dan Poole, Director of Educational Technology at Bethany Seminary, will provide technology support for this event.

If interested in attending this Health Boundaries 101 training and overview of the 2008 Ethics in Ministry Relations paper, please contact the West Marva District Office for a registration form or contact the Brethren Academy at academy@bethanyseminary.edu. There is a registration fee of \$30 for this continuing education event (book will be sent via USPS to your mailing address) and 0.5 CEU will be granted. The registration fee for current BTS, TRIM, EFSM or ACTS ministry training students is \$15. Registration and payment must be sent to the Brethren Academy by April 21, 2017. No phone or e-mail registrations will be accepted after this deadline date.



ARE YOU A DR, NURSE PRACTITIONER, RN, LPN, OR EMT?

The First Aid Office at Annual Conference in Grand Rapids is looking for DR.'s, RN's, LPN's and EMT's who would be willing to volunteer a few hours during Annual Conference this summer. Dr. Rosalie McBride of Northern Indiana District is coordinating the First Aid Office this summer in Grand Rapids and would be glad to hear from willing volunteers! Please contact her at: rosalie.l.mcbride@gmail.com



YOUNG ADULT CONFERENCE 2017

The theme for the Young Adult Conference this year will be "Loving Neighbor" with a scripture text of Matthew 22:36-39. The Conference is scheduled for May 26-28, 2017 and will be held at Camp Harmony near Hooversville, PA.

The Young Adult Conference (YAC) is a time to make new friends and spend time with old friends, too! Enjoy worship, music and singing, Bible study, small groups, workshops, and recreation (including an optional canoe trip!)

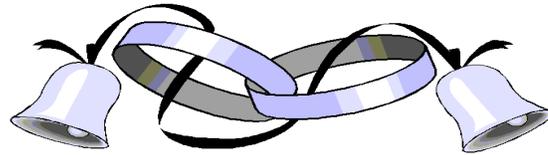
Registration fee (includes food, lodging, and programming): \$125. Non-refundable deposit of \$65 due within two weeks of registering. Register by April 30, 2017 to avoid a late fee of \$25.

Young Adult Conference is for those ages 18-35.

For registration information go to www.brethren.org/yac or call 1-847-429-4385

A SPECIAL INVITATION TO A 25TH WEDDING ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

You are cordially invited to attend the 25th Wedding Anniversary celebration for Kevin and Petula Staggs which has been scheduled for Sunday, March 5th from 2:00—4:00 p.m. at the Sunnyside Church, New Creek, WV. Kevin is the pastor of the Bear Creek Church of the Brethren. Please plan to join the family for this special celebration and please share this announcement with your congregation. Cards can be sent to Kevin and Petula at 13929 Knobley Road, Keyser, WV 26726.



SPECIAL PRAYER CONCERNS

Would you please share the following prayer concerns with your congregation:

Donnie Knotts, pastor of the Walnut Grove COB. Donnie is still a patient at Johns Hopkins Hospital. They had been trying to find a rehab facility but at this time it looks as if home care is their only option. He would be coming home with feeding tubes. Please keep Donnie, Teresa (who will be his caregiver) and their family in your prayers. Cards of encouragement can be sent to them at 413 Feaster Lane, New Creek, WV 26743.

Donald Savage, pastor of the Salem Church. Don is a patient at the Mon-General Hospital in Morgantown. He has been diagnosed with Lymphoma and is receiving chemotherapy treatments. Please keep Don, Hazel and their family in your prayers. Cards of encouragement can be sent to them at 97 W. Cranesville Road, Oakland, MD 21550.

Naomi Fisher, wife of Chester Fisher, one of our ordained ministers, recently suffered a stroke. She has been transferred to Hampshire Memorial for rehabilitation. Her condition is improving but she still has many challenges ahead. Cards of encouragement can be sent to 125 Tochnoma Lane, Augusta, WV 26704.

Steve Sauder, ordained minister and member of the Oak Park Church. Steve has been struggling with mysterious fevers. He will be going back to Johns Hopkins in April. Please be praying for Steve and Anna and also for the doctors as they continue to search for a diagnosis for these health concerns. Cards of encouragement can be sent to 809 Heritage Drive, Oakland, MD 21550

Donald Matthews has been hospitalized with a bad case of flu. Cards of encouragement can be sent to 929 Underwood Road, Oakland, MD 21550

Many people from across the district will remember Rick Riley. Rick was the pastor of the Frostburg Church. He is now the pastor of the Berean Independent Baptist Church. Rick served on the Mission and Ministry Board and was a member of the Ministerial Leadership Team while in West Marva. Rick has been diagnosed with cancer and will be having surgery on March 3rd. Cards of encouragement can be sent to him at 15918 Foundry Row, Mt. Savage, MD 21545.

BRETHREN BITS from Betty's Desk . . .

ELKINS CHURCH CELEBRATED 65th ANNIVERSARY June 18, 2016

Almost all of our churches who celebrate anniversaries share how Elder John Kline traveled on horseback from his Shenandoah Valley home over the mountains into our communities to encourage our early Brethren ancestors to establish churches. Elkins joins this list for it is known he was in the Elkins area in June and July 1853. He stayed in the Josiah Simon family home and also with Valentine Powers, an ancestor of the present Powers family of the current Elkins Church of the Brethren.

Dr. Emmert Bittinger's Allegheny Passage book gives us information about the beginnings of the Elkins church. Rev. J.J. Scrogum and family moved to Elkins in 1934. His daughter, Ada Scrogum, a Brethren pastor assisted her father with the services. They held Sunday School in their home on Center Street. I am very grateful to Lynda Cosner who provided me with excellent historical data in preparation of this article which I will be including.

Services in Glady, Wildell, Bemis, Wheeler, Bowden, Oseola, Huttonsville as well as Elkins got underway. Altogether Rev. Scrogum and Ada were conducting forty-two services monthly with all these preaching points in these communities. Rev. Scrogum enlisted the assistance of V.L. Bennett and Boyd Phares to help preach some of these services.

As the Elkins congregation continued to grow, the Scrogums moved to First Street and continued to hold services in their home. In 1935 a vacant store building was rented on Davis Avenue for \$10.00 per month to accommodate the worshippers after the First Street home became overcrowded. A Sunday School was established in 1935. At this time the Elkins Church was part of the Cheat River Congregation of the Second District of Virginia.



This is the original Elkins Church. The adult in the picture is Jerelean Mongold

In the **1939 Yearbook of the Church of the Brethren** the congregation showed there were sixty members. Much progress was made in the Elkins work, and the 1938 District Conference accepted a request to establish this church as an independent congregation. Services continued at the Davis Avenue location until 1948. Services returned to Rev. Scrogum's home on First Street in anticipation for building a church house. Rev. Scrogum served as pastor from 1934-1950.

In 1950, Rev. V.L. Bennett gave a plot of ground 100 feet by 50 feet on Central Street, the current location, and work began on the new church. The building project was a cooperative activity of the congregation with members doing most of the actual work. Many furnishings were donated by church members—some still in use today.

The first service was held in the new church on June 15, 1951 with Rev. V.L. Bennett as pastor. It should be noted Rev. Bennett, affectionately called "Preacher" faithfully served from 1950-1970. He was unselfish, hard worker (performed over 300 marriages during his life time and countless funerals) and well known throughout the area.

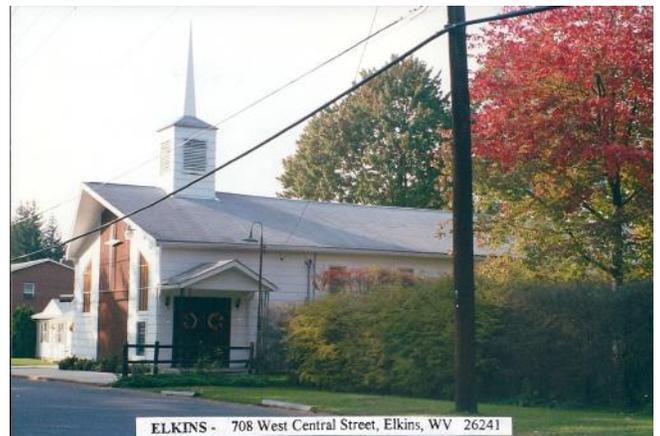
In 1965 Elkins became part of the West Marva District. From 1970-1989 Walter Blough came to serve the congregation.

In 1980 a 29 year celebration of the church was held with Rev. and Mrs. V.L Bennett as special guests. Following the dinner, the Bennett's presented the church with a gift—another plot of ground behind the present church to build an addition to the structure. This was given in honor of their daughter Evelyn Belle Woods.

April 25, 1982 a ground-breaking ceremony was held for the addition. Again, church members assisted with the building project. A need for more pews for seating of the 173 members was met in an interesting fashion. Local woodworker, Dan Mole made eight additional pews, using the same pattern and wood as the original pews made by Forrest Ware for the first church. They are identical—in fact the congregation cannot recognize if they are sitting on the pews made in 1950 or those made in 1982. The church over its years of existence has benefited from the gifts and assistance of many people giving of not only their tithes but their talents.

It is worthwhile to list the dedicated persons who have served at Elkins over the years. Rev. Sam Longenecker served as interim pastor May through August 1989. Rev. Arnold Naff was with Elkins from September 1989 until December 1991. Rev. Steve Abe came to be interim pastor from November 1992 to February 1993 when he was voted in as permanent pastor. He left Elkins in December of 1999 to accept the position of District Executive Minister for West Marva. Next Larry Poling came to the church in November 2000 and continued until March 2004. Harry Paterson served from June 2006 until October 2007. Chaz Stoner, Mark Teets and others provided pulpit supply before Mark and LaDeana Teets were voted as associate pastors in January 2010 and remained until the end of December 2015. John Knoll came in January 2016 as pulpit supply and has been serving as pastor since February 2016.

During the 65th celebration guests and those connected with early members were on hand to participate. Lynda Cosner prepared an excellent power point historical sketch for the observance giving interesting information about the many members who contributed so much of their time and efforts to make a difference in the growth of the congregation. Lynda used Allegheny Passage, personal interviews but also records from Rev. V.L. Bennett and Rev. Boyd Phares.



Kevin Staggs led the music for the afternoon observance and Brenda Harvey provided special music. The Steve Abe family came, Mark & LaDeana Teets and many others with ties to Elkins attended. Those gathered enjoyed fellowship and bountiful amounts of delicious foods. It was a "beautiful day" celebration at 708 West Central Street in Elkins on June 18th.

PLEASE NOTE THE FOLLOWING CHANGE OF LOCATION FOR
THE DISTRICT MISSION AND MINISTRY BOARD MEETING:
MARCH 18, 2017, AT THE KNOBLEY CHURCH OF
THE BRETHREN

**Church of the Brethren
West Marva District Office
384 Dennett Road
Oakland, MD 21550
MARCH 2017 Issue**

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IN GOD WE TRUST

UPCOMING EVENTS

March 18	District Mission and Ministry Board meeting—Knobley Church
25	Conversations regarding Annual Conference issues, Elkins COB 9:30 a.m.
25	Conversations regarding Annual Conference issues. Keyser COB 3:00 p.m.
26	Conversations regarding Annual Conference issues. Oak Grove, MD COB 3:00 p.m.
April 14	Office Closed—Good Friday
29	Workshop—“Teaching to Transform Not Inform”—Westernport Church
May 13	Workshop—“Recognize, Respond, REACT Training—Suicide Prevention”—Tearcoat Church
29	Office Closed—Memorial Day