

The Brethren Baptist Bi-Monthly Newsletter

Representing a Church of the Brethren and an American Baptist Church, May / June Issue, 2023

SPEAK LIFE

“Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen.” Ephesians 4:29

My father died in 1998. At his viewing hours, a man who had been a good friend of his, Don, came through the line, shook my hand, and said cheerfully, “I don't know the last time I saw your dad.” I felt furious. Dad didn't have many friends. He was in a nursing home at the end of his life because Mom could not handle his increasingly eccentric behavior. I understood that. But to acknowledge glibly that you hadn't bothered to check on your friend, to *be* a friend? I didn't say anything, but as you can tell, it stuck with me. And I think about it when I have the opportunity to visit a friend for the last time. I want to be a real friend, no matter how uncomfortable I feel, no matter how difficult the situation.

We talk about "last words" and wanting to have a meaningful time with people we love. This is crucially important. The visit with Darlene Uhrich was beautiful because her three friends who loved her-- Darlene, Colleen, and Estelle--made the effort to see her, overcame any discomfort (it's difficult to visit a person who is dying) and reasserted their love for her. I will never forget her smile at seeing her friends, and at their remembrances of their mischief together.

Last times together and final words feel so important to us. Make no mistake, they are, when we have the opportunity. But Jesus reminded me, in the midst of that beautiful visit, that often we don't know when our final time together will be. “Live every day like it's your last” is one of those great-sounding inspirational sayings that isn't very practical in everyday life. Yet I encourage us to consider the grain of truth in this adage, especially in regard to how we speak to one another.

Every *single* time we interact, we have the opportunity to speak life to one another, to build one another up, to encourage and bless. I don't expect my words to be last words to a friend...but what if they are? I'm not suggesting we get maudlin and over sentimental. That would be weird. But every single time I have a parting with my wife, I try to make a point of telling her I love her. That's what I want her to remember and, Lord have mercy, if that is the last time I get to speak to her, I want those to be my words to her.

It costs us so little to speak words of life to one another. Look for the positives. See the good in others. It's easy with our friends and loved ones. It's harder with those who bug us. But I'm firmly convinced this is how we live as people of God's Kingdom: we speak to everyone what is helpful for building them up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen. And we speak life to them, so that we will be content if these are the last words they hear from us. Someday, they will be.

Pastor Mike

CLOUD OF WITNESSES

Every year our church gives thousands of dollars for local missions. This money comes from interest earned from the Planned Gifts Fund. This fund is from estate gifts and bequests. People who love God and want to continue after their earthly life to share this love, make provisions in their wills for the Planned Gifts Fund. These people are part of the *cloud of witnesses* in heaven who continue to bless us.

This money is separate from our tithing to the church for the budget, i.e.: salaries, supplies, Sunday school, worship, and regular projects. The interest from the Planned Gifts Fund goes to non-budgeted missions. This year we have \$16,000 to share. The requested missions/projects so far are the YMCA Partners with Youth, YMCA Capital Campaign, Camp Koinonia, The Comfort Closet (Outreach), Immigrant Justice, Garden Terrace, Serve Wenatchee Valley, Church of the Brethren, American Baptist Church, and Young Life. The deadline for submitting a request in writing to Linda Vickery is May 7.

If you would like to join this *cloud of witnesses* in donating to the Planned Gifts Fund, please contact Merry Kay Shaw, or stop by the office and pick up a Planned Gifts Brochure.



REMEMBER IN PRAYER

Our Shut-ins:

- Mary Kintner
- Carolyn Storme
- Darlene Uhrich

MAY BIRTHDAYS

- 2nd Mabel Hoffman
- 9th Paxton Fletcher
- 15th Kim Rumley-Wells
- 21st Robin Shockey
- 22nd Corin Rumley-Wells
- 23rd Jan White
- 26th Don Miller



JUNE BIRTHDAYS

- 29th Steve Shell

MAY ANNIVERSARIES

- 3rd Chuck & Jo Anne Cox



JUNE ANNIVERSARIES

- 20th Steve & Jane Shell
- 24th Gary & Merry Kay Shaw





*The earth is the Lord's and all that is in it,
the world, and those who live in it.*

-Psalm 24:1

April 22 was Earth Day. This year at Pybus many groups provided ideas and resources for Earth care. The Interfaith Climate Group in connection with Climate Conversations shared several activities with hundreds of visitors. One of those activities was about planting flowers that attract pollinators.

Bees, butterflies, and other insects as well as hummingbirds and some bats help pollinate food crops for humans and for animals. Without these pollinators, we would all go hungry. And we know pollinators are in trouble.

We can do something about this problem. Some people take out their lawn and plant native flowers. Others plant a little section of their lawn or garden with native plants. But what if you live in an apartment as many of us do? Can you still make a difference?

The answer is, of course you can! If you have a patio or a balcony you can plant native flowers in a variety of pots and create a beautiful garden for you and our pollinator friends to enjoy. Grocery stores and nurseries sell mixes of native plant seeds as well as potted plants. Pick plants that are appropriate for our area. Some of these are Blue Flax, Purple Coneflower, Indian Blanket, Black-eyed Susan, Columbine, Coreopsis, California Poppy, Blue Sage, and Lupine.

God created a world of color and beauty in perfect balance, and we can help keep Earth that way. After all, we are God's hands and feet.

Creation Care Team

2 CENTS WORTH OFFERING

Sunday, May 28

The 2 Cents Worth Offering is where every person sets aside 2 Cents for every meal every person eats in their home to go toward world hunger and the Heifer Project.



VENTURES IN CHRISTIAN DISCIPLESHIP

**“Blank Panther films as Metaphor: Lessons
about Race, Colonialism,
Violence, and Identity in Wakanda”**

Monday, June 5, 2023

5:00pm – 7pm via ZOOM

Presenter: Dr. Steven Schweitzer, Academic Dean,
Bethany Theological Seminary

The MCU film *Black Panther* (2018) engages in complex topics such as race, colonialism, violence/nonviolence, and issues of identity in explicit and surprising ways. The sequel, *Black Panther: Wakanda Forever* (2022) continues to explore these themes. These two films provide helpful metaphor and entry point for such theological questions being raised both in the wider culture and within the church.

Joe Roy will be facilitating our engagement in this Course offering through McPherson College, Ventures in Christian Discipleship, using our new Technology Center. Please consider joining us in our office meeting room on Monday June 5 from 5:00pm – 7:00pm. Bring finger food to share.

For additional information please contact: Joe Roy (509.881.1082) or Colleen Michael (509.669.5643). We need to know how many will be participating.

I strongly encourage every participant in our church family to consider joining in this exciting opportunity for viewing and conversation. From personal experience during my studies at Bethany Seminary I strongly encourage us to take advantage of this course offering Science Fiction and Theology.

Continuing in ministry with you all
Colleen Michael, Co-Moderator

LOCAL DISASTER RESPONSE

During the week of April 2-8, 2023, five people from the Pacific Northwest Church of the Brethren (Frosty Wilkinson, Peggy Liley, Lani Wright, Mary Carter Pringer, and Kevin Bowman) joined the Mennonite Disaster Services while they were on a two-week rebuilding of houses from wildfires and mudslides.

Working in collaboration with the Okanogan Long Term Recovery, many people and families have been able to be put into new houses after their homes were destroyed in wildfires: 2014 Carlton Complex, 2015 multiple fires, 2020 Okanogan and Douglas Counties fires.

We worked towards completing the interiors of two homes (electrical outlets and water hookups yet to be completed along with exterior painting). Those houses are on track to be dedicated and keys given to owners by the end of April.



We were a crew of around 20, working together, eating together, starting each day in devotions with each other in the spirit of Christ Jesus. If given the opportunity later this summer/fall, I would join that collaboration again. A great opportunity to serve those in need.



Submitted by, Mary Carter Pringer

