

# Maple Spring

# Water Cup

November 2022



Vol. 56, No. 2

MAPLE SPRING CHURCH OF THE BRETHREN, HOLLISOPPLE, PA 15935  
814-479-7062

*I will praise  
the name  
of God  
with a song,  
and will  
magnify him with*

**THANKSGIVING**

*Psalms 69:30*



Our monthly newsletter, *Water Cup*, is distributed gratis to members and friends of the congregation to encourage vital Christian living and to promote participation in the life and work of the Church.

We hope you find this issue of the *Water Cup* informative and helpful. We welcome your contributions and comments.

Published by:

**MAPLE SPRING  
CHURCH OF THE BRETHREN**  
106 Spring Rd  
Hollsopple, PA 15935  
814- 479-7062

Web Page: [maplespringcob.org](http://maplespringcob.org)

Sunday School.....9:30 am  
Worship Service.....10:35 am

In emergencies, in the pastor's absence, call  
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**Please submit all bulletin items  
and *Dew Drops* announcements  
to the office by 11 a.m. on Thursdays.**

**WATER CUP DEADLINE  
for the December 2022 issue  
is November 15, 2022.**



**MISSION STATEMENT**

The living water of Christ wells up within us and overflows! It is our mission to be obedient to Christ by living in unity with one another, by discipling one another through the Holy Spirit, and by reaching out to our neighbors.

**PRAYER PARTNERS THIS MONTH**

Bill Watkins and  
Sandy Watkins and Nancy Gindlesperger  
Jordan Shroyer and Pat Koba  
Elsie Michael and Marlin Ott  
Connie Martin and Deanna Fisher  
Arbutus Blough and Sally Kaufman



...Pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much. ~ James 5:16b



The **Rummel Church of the Brethren**, Windber, PA is our prayer partner church for the year 2022.



**ONE CALL/PRAYER CHAIN**

To make a prayer request through our One Call system, please make all prayer requests to Arbutus Blough.



***Please remember the following,  
who are actively serving our country...***



SGT Adam Veres, Army Specialist (Whitney Weimer)

Jonathan Zanoni, US Coast Guard (Cayla Roberts)

MAJOR Mark Bedrin, Army (Katie McDonald)

SPECIALIST Sierra Alwine, Army

Ssgt Nathan Pahel, Air Force (Annie Bridge)

Police Officer Matthew Bridge, Richland PD

AB Jenna A. Hauser, US Air Force



**PRAYER FLAG**

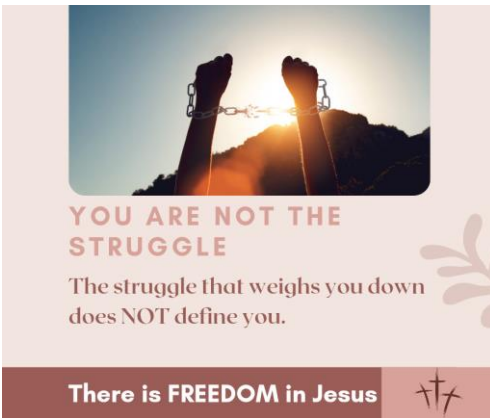
We are thankful for those who do God's work to protect us. Please pray for our peacekeepers. The Missions and Service Commission has a prayer flag displayed in support of active duty military personnel, 1<sup>st</sup> responders, EMS, firefighters, police officers, and conscientious objectors, presently serving from our congregation. If you have a loved one you would like to add, please give the name, office, or type of duty, along with a picture to the church office. If you prefer not to submit a picture, we can simply post the name.

***Please remember those  
on our Visitation List...***

- |                           |  |
|---------------------------|--|
| Rita Alwine               | 767 Soap Hollow Rd.<br>Hollsopple, PA 15935  |
| Frank & Mona Blough       | 1003 Wildflower Ct.<br>Davidsville, PA 15928                                       |
| Howard & Helen Hildebrand | Laurel View Village<br>2000 Cambridge Dr.<br>Davidsville, PA 15928                 |
| Robert Lape               | 1000 Vista Dr., Apt. 813<br>Davidsville, PA 15928                                  |
| Jim Moran                 | 1056 Soap Hollow Rd<br>Hollsopple, PA 15935  |
| Marlin Ott                | 131 Apache Ln.<br>Stoystown, PA 15563  |
| Betty Shaffer             | Richland Woods<br>3324 Elton Rd<br>Johnstown, PA 15904                             |
| Doris Shaffer             | c/o Rest Assured Living Center<br>1137 Shirleys Hollow Rd.<br>Meyersdale, PA 15552 |
| Gale Shipley              | 51 Akers Street, Apt. 306<br>Johnstown, PA 15905                                   |
| Owen Stevens              | 1000 Vista Dr., Apt. 825<br>Davidsville, PA 15928                                  |
| Ruth Stevens              | 125 W. Main Street<br>Stoystown, PA 15563  |
| Cliff & Sally Stutzman    | Meadow View Nursing Center<br>1404 Hay St., Rm 328<br>Berlin, PA 15530             |
| Emma Thomas               | 822 Fisher Rd.<br>Boswell, PA 15531  |
| Phyllis Thomas            | Laurel View Village<br>2000 Cambridge Rd., Rm 522<br>Davidsville, PA 15928         |
| Marilyn Ullery            | 588 Woodstown Hwy.<br>Hollsopple, PA 15935   |

# DEACON MINISTRY

...Serving the Maple Spring Congregation



## Grace in the Struggle

Throughout scripture we see affirmations, promises from God that we are loved, special, equipped, and forgiven. The author of chaos (Satan) would have you believe that you are not enough, you are a failure, a disappointment, that you are your struggle.

Do you think you are special? Now hear me out. When you walk into a room full of smiling, laughing people behind that smile, behind that laugh there are struggles and trials. You are not the ONLY one.

In 1 Peter 5 we are told we will have trials. We struggle and we will suffer for our faith just as Christ suffered. But as Believers we are to hold each other up and support each other.

You may be struggling with fear, self-doubt, shame, addictions, separation. . . the list is endless. There is Hope. There is Freedom. Your struggle does NOT define you. Those burdens that are weighing you down, those chains that bind you CAN be broken! It is through the power and blood of the cross. It is through the anointing of the cross, like Samuel anointed David.

Time and time again we see through King David's life that he failed. He was a murderer, an adulterer, he tried things his way, But he came back to God. God did not turn his back on King David. He didn't change His plan for his life. Our Lord and savior comes from the line David. He had a purpose and though he struggled God used his struggle to further the kingdom of heaven. That Almighty Father that loved King David, loves YOU to.

It's time to break free of the chains that are weighing you down. It is time to move forward and live in the freedom knowing that our struggles Do NOT define us.

How do we break these chains of struggle? How do we live in the FREEDOM of the Truth, that we are Loved by the Almighty King?

One way is through the Grace found in His Word. Studying scripture and being together in the Word.

"For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—" Ephesians 2:8 NIV

Spend time reflecting today. What scripture speaks to you? Where do you turn, in your Bible, for that Grace that speaks freedom into your heart?

Submitted by Megan Hostetler

# *Maple Spring Church of the Brethren*

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October 24, 2022

Tim McDonald, Board Chair

Maple Spring Church of the Brethren

Greetings from the Maple Spring Church!

This letter is long overdue. I apologize for not having written sooner.

Much has happened in the life of our congregation during 2022. I write to inform you of those events that have taken place and to discuss our church's future. With many difficulties behind us and certainly more before us, I pray confidently that if we seek God's leading and if we remain faithful to scripture and to the values that lie therein, the Maple Spring Church will prosper in its mission. I thought it might be helpful to revisit our mission statement and to keep it in mind as a backdrop for all that you read in this letter.

The living water of Christ wells up within us and overflows! It is our mission to be obedient to Christ, by living in unity with one another, by disciplining one another through the Holy Spirit, and by reaching out to neighbors.

To say the least, 2022 has been a tumultuous year for Maple Spring for lots of reasons. In April's council meeting a motion was made to ask Pastor David to resign as the leader of our flock. This required a special council meeting which was held in mid-May when votes were cast. Because the vote was tied, the motion failed, and pastor David remained with us.

Subsequent to that vote and after many hours of "coaching" the pastor, the cooperation we sought was not forthcoming. Difficulties arose that eventually led to the board calling for another vote at July's council meeting, this time to retain Pastor David. In keeping with the terms of our Start Up Agreement, a vote to retain a pastor requires a 2/3 majority. Because that vote failed, Pastor David was relieved of his duties. The result was made known to him within hours of the conclusion of the meeting on August 14th.

In the year past, many people have left the congregation, some having transferred their letters of membership to other congregations, and some just "disappearing", not to be seen among us for months at a time and some not at all. There are the usual reasons that people leave the church; people die, relocate, etc. Beyond that, we have seen



folks leave for various other reasons as well. Some because of Covid and the concerns the pandemic brought to the fore, some left because of infighting and unrest, some because a pastor left. Some left because a pastor stayed, and some left for other reasons. And some left because our congregation failed to address the elephant in the room, that being our denomination's behavior that is inconsistent with its stated position on human sexuality, to say nothing of its departure from scriptural teaching related to the same topic. And this is happening amidst a culture war, where popular culture tells us what is acceptable and what is not and is frequently in conflict with biblical teachings.

As I prayerfully consider our path forward, I have come to realize that moving ahead will not be an easy task, but I am reminded that nothing worthwhile is often easy. The Ministry Commission is convinced that no forward progress will take place until the Maple Spring congregation decides what it believes. Please do not confuse what we believe with our mission statement which is what we do. What we believe goes far deeper and has lasting impact on what we do. What we believe is our moral compass. It is what steers us and keeps us from losing our way. This is increasingly important as we live in a culture that often looks down upon Christianity and its core teachings.

As our first step on that journey, the congregation needs to gather to discuss this very topic of what we believe as a group of Christians; fundamental questions like whether or not the Bible the inerrant word of God, where we stand as a congregation (not a denomination) on human sexuality. How do we define marriage? We must consider all of this based on what the Bible teaches us. Questions like this must be addressed if we're to get beyond step one. Simply stated, we need to decide what unites us. To that end, we will gather and discuss this topic, but we have a problem. There are few of us. And so, with this letter I invite you to come and be part of these discussions if you wish to be part of the congregation going forward. We won't love you less if you decide not to come. We won't love you less if you decide you don't like the decisions we make in such meetings and at subsequent meetings. We seek God's will for our church in unity and in faithfulness to scripture as we are called to "contend for the faith" as stated in the Book of Jude, verse 3. It is my fervent hope that you will consider coming back to be part of these discussions as we seek to move forward as a church.

Our meeting will be on Sunday, November 6, at 12:30 p.m. It will follow a covered dish meal that will be served immediately after our morning worship service. I hope you will make the most of this opportunity to come and be a voice for the future direction of the Maple Spring Church.

I am available to discuss as you see fit. I can be reached after 5:00 p.m. at 814-244-4136.

Wishing you God's peace and His blessings,

Tim McDonald, Board Chair.

## EXPERIENCING ANEW THE MANIFEST PRESENCE OF GOD

**Now to Him who is able to protect you from stumbling, and to make you stand in the presence of His glory, blameless with great joy, to the only God our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion, and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen (Jude 24-25 NASB).**

- 1** Let's begin this month by praising God for the sacrificial and redemptive work of Jesus that makes it possible for us to "stand in the presence of His glory, blameless with great joy" (Jude 24).
- 2** In seeking to please God, Moses longed to know His ways (Exodus 33:13). Pray that the members of your church family will experience a renewed desire to know and better understand the ways of God.
- 3** Pray that the members of your church will have the same heart as Moses when he said to God, "If Your presence does not go with us, do not lead us up from here" (Exodus 33:15).
- 4** Pray that churches in your community will experience the kind of revival that sets them apart from the ways of the world. Pray that these congregations will be distinguished within your community by the ongoing, manifest presence of God (Exodus 33:16).
- 5** Pray that your pastor and church leaders will be desperate to experience the glory of God (Exodus 33:18).
- 6** Pray that your entire congregation will understand how God holds Christians accountable individually and corporately when they depart from His presence, purposes, and ways (Ezekiel 36:19).
- 7** Pray that Christians across the country will long for the manifest presence of God more than just His blessings of favor. Pray that we will all see Christ's powerful presence as the only hope for lasting, spiritual victory within our churches and nation (Psalm 44:3).
- 8** In Matthew 21:12-16, we see Jesus cleansing the temple in Jerusalem. Pray that God will move in a similar way today, bringing purification, prayer, power, perfected praise, and His anointed presence back into the lives of church members.
- 9** Pray that Christians will purpose to demonstrate their love for Christ by obeying Him completely. Pray for the grace to lay down whatever displeases Christ and do that which brings Him the greatest pleasure (John 14:21).
- 10** Before every spiritual awakening in America, the church has acknowledged through prayer her need for God's manifest presence. Cry out to Him today that this same burden will once more arise and be evidenced by the church's pursuit of God through fervent prayer (James 5:16).
- 11** When the manifest presence of God is felt among church members, they often sense an increased burden for the lost to be saved. Just as Jesus came to seek and save the lost, pray that today's church members will do the same (Luke 19:10).
- 12** Ask God to so manifest His power within His people that boldness and clarity of witness become the norm (Acts 1:8).
- 13** As we sense Christ's holy presence personally, pray that believers everywhere will be moved to courageously obey the two Great Commandments: loving God with all their hearts and loving their neighbors as they love themselves (Matthew 22:37-40).
- 14** Pray that God will break the church's love of self, money, and pleasure (2 Timothy 3:2-4). Pray that we will instead choose to love Christ, seeking His manifest presence more than the passing pleasures of this world.



- 15** Since no evil dwells in God's presence (Psalm 5:4), pray that God will powerfully move across our nation, breaking this country's addiction to sexual immorality and violence (Psalm 11:4-5).
- 16** When we lose our commitment to value God's presence, it is easy for us to also lose our commitment to other things He values, such as the life of a child (Luke 18:16). Pray that Christians will seek God's Word to understand what things are important to Him.
- 17** In Deuteronomy 4:29, the Hebrews who had been scattered to other nations because of their sins were told that they would find God if they searched for Him with all their heart and soul. Pray that the believers in your community who have lost the sense of God's presence will diligently seek Him today.
- 18** Psalm 24:6 mentions a generation of Hebrews who sought the face of God. Pray that today's generation will experience the kind of revival that marks them as a generation seeking the face of God.
- 19** When God asked the Psalmist in Psalm 27:8 to seek His face, he responded, "I shall seek Your face, LORD." Just as David responded with a quick commitment, pray that our churches will eagerly commit to seek God's face.
- 20** First Chronicles 16:11 reads, "Seek the LORD and His strength; seek His face continually." Pray that the members of your church family will continually seek God and the strength He alone provides.
- 21** Men tend to love the darkness of wickedness more than the light of God's holy presence (John 3:19). Pray that Christians in your community will so love God that the light of His holiness within them will push back the darkness of sin around them.
- 22** When God's people have profaned His name because of their sinful deeds, He often steps in to restore the glory of His reputation among the nations (Ezekiel 36:22). Pray that God will do everything necessary in order to see the reputation of His holy name restored in today's church.
- 23** There are many influences in today's world that can lead us to spend much time thinking about ungodly things. Pray that the members of your church will learn to set their minds on things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God (Colossians 3:1-2).
- 24** Pray that your Christian friends will lay aside the falsehood of their old selves and, in Christ Jesus, put on the new self, which has been created in righteousness and holiness and truth (Ephesians 4:22-24).
- 25** Living in a world system designed to entangle us in sin, pray that God's people will fix their eyes on Jesus and follow His example of selfless obedience to the Father's will (Hebrews 12:1-2).
- 26** Pray that God's mercy and grace will abundantly touch the ignorant and unbelieving in your community, manifesting in their lives the faith and love found only in Christ Jesus (1 Timothy 1:13-14).
- 27** Pray that the "spiritual house" God is building with the "living stones" of your church family will reflect His glory and the strength of His mighty presence (1 Peter 2:5).
- 28** In longing for the manifest presence of Christ, pray that your church family will be neither useless nor unproductive in her knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. Also pray that diligence, faith, moral excellence, knowledge, self-control, perseverance, godliness, brotherly kindness, and love will characterize their walk with Him (2 Peter 1:5-8).
- 29** The Bible tells us that an evidence of a person knowing Jesus is their commitment to keep His commandments (1 John 2:3-4). Pray that Christians across the world will grow in their commitment to love Jesus by knowing Him and by keeping His commands.
- 30** Pray that churches will recognize and avoid those who are holding on to a form of godliness but denying its power, seeking to simply establish an organization without the manifest presence of God (2 Timothy 3:5).



## Lonely in the middle by Don Fitzkee

**I**t had been a few years since I attended an in-person Annual Conference.

I had missed a year or two before the two years of pandemic disruption, so I didn't know what to expect when our family arrived in Omaha.

One clear difference was that Conference was noticeably smaller. The main meeting room for business and worship was a far cry from the bigger halls we used to meet in. And traffic in the exhibit area seemed light.

I'm sure some of that was due to ongoing COVID concerns. And Conference attendance is always lower when we gather west of the Mississippi. But the hard truth is that there aren't as many of us as there used to be. Membership has been declining for decades and in recent years whole congregations have been pulling out, nearly all of them seeking to maintain traditional views of sex and marriage.

While my theological views are evolving, I grew up in a conservative evangelical context; I count some of the people absent from this year's

Conference as friends. It made me sad that they weren't there.

I believe that, with a significant segment of conservatives gone, the denomination eventually will move toward greater acceptance of LGBTQ people. You may celebrate or lament that, depending on your views. In his introduction of next year's Conference theme, incoming moderator Tim McElwee made it clear that he would advocate for a more inclusive church.

The curious thing is that efforts to make the church more inclusive almost inevitably will result in some people exiting. A more inclusive church might end up being an even smaller church.

I was heartened by one conversation I had with a conservative friend at Conference. When his congregation voted to leave the denomination, he was among the minority who voted to stay. He reasoned that they didn't need to leave over this disagreement. They could continue to believe just as they always had. To be sure, he maintains his conservative views—he handed me some literature defending traditional

biblical views of sexuality. But he continues to value his heritage and identity as a member of the Church of the Brethren.

I've reached a stage in life where I can tolerate some ambiguity. Some would view my unwillingness to denounce gay people as a sure sign of apostasy. Others would remind me that anything less than a full embrace of LGBTQ children of God is no embrace at all. And maybe there is no middle ground.

In some of my more hopeful moments, however, I imagine that a shared heritage and commitment to following Jesus can help us overcome even really big differences. Admittedly, it's getting more difficult to find evidence to support that view. But I guess I'll keep muddling along, trying to understand various viewpoints and lived experiences, and seeking to discern the Spirit's leading. I hope some will join me. It gets kind of lonely in the middle these days. ❧

Don Fitzkee is pastor of worship at Lancaster (Pa.) Church of the Brethren.

# November 2022

## Maple Spring Church Activities, Birthdays, & Anniversaries

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
30 Emalyne Rosenbaum 9:30 Sunday School 10:35 Morning Worship Speaker: Pete Kaltenbaugh	31	1	2 Kim Livingston	3	4	5
6 Nikita Kane 9:30 Sunday School 10:35 Morning Worship Covered Dish Meal 12:30 Congregation Meeting	7 Wally Ullery	8	9	10	11 <b>Veteran's Day</b>	12 Reta Alwine Blaine Leverknight
13 9:30 Sunday School 10:35 Morning Worship Speaker: Rodney Hatfield	14 Sally White Tom & Diane Bridge	15	16	17	18 Tom Korber	19 Linda Baraniak
20 9:30 Sunday School 10:35 Morning Worship Speaker: Rodney Hatfield	21	22	23	24 <b>Thanksgiving Day</b> Doug & Jeanne Cober	25	26 Mike & Tracey Seganos
27 <b>First Sunday of Advent</b> 9:30 Sunday School 10:35 Morning Worship Speaker: Rodney Hatfield	28 Ron & Rachel Weible	29 Jacob Rosenbaum Josh & Jen Hauser	30 Don & Linda Tresnicky	1	2	3