

## The Broadfording Church of the Brethren Fellowship

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## Forgive and Forget?

by Pastor Len Smith

Perhaps you have heard someone say something like this: "I can forgive, but I will never forget."

For several months this year my adult Sunday school class elective has been studying about the benefits of forgiveness. When we began our class I reminded us that there are at least 143 references in the Bible to the concept of forgiveness. We have been also using a book written by Dr. David Augsburger entitled The Freedom of Forgiveness. However, I decided to call our elective study, "The Benefits of Forgiveness."

We have discussed the health benefits of forgiveness. For example there are specific physiologic consequences that have been linked to individuals who experience the stress of living in a state of not being able to forgive like: increased blood pressure, hormonal changes that have been linked to cardiovascular disease, suppression of the immune system, and possibly impaired neurological function and memory loss.

We have explored the possibilities for forgiveness as well as definitions of forgiveness. We learned that how to forgive involves the process of discovery, understanding, valuing, loving, assertion, and affirmation. We learned that a lack of forgiveness can lead to anger. We discussed the role that confession plays in forgiveness in addition to the importance of forgiveness in the marriage relationship. Some areas that we are continuing to discuss include the role of prejudice in forgiveness, and additional specific action steps in the forgiveness process. We will be discussing how to forgive individuals we perceive are our enemies. In addition we will be discussing the role that mutual love plays in forgiveness.

Do we recognize that forgiveness is difficult and long after you've forgiven, the wound can live on in your memory? Forgiveness is an unnatural act. It is natural to hold grudges and want revenge. Some people wonder how many times they need to forgive. Philip Yancey once wrote that "We can stop forgiving others when Christ stops forgiving us."

You may ask the question: "What can I do when others won't forgive?" We do not have the power to force any one to forgive us. Hate hurts the hater more than the hated, no matter how justified it may seem. We can choose to follow the example of how Christ forgave people, even as He was hanging on the cross. Dr. David Augsburger has written, "Forgiveness is acceptance with no exception. It accepts not only the hurt you've received, it accepts the one who did the hurting, and it accepts the loss caused by the hurtful actions or words."

Forgiveness does not necessarily mean that the offense has been excused, but when we choose to forgive we can demonstrate the power of Christ and the Holy Spirit to the world. One particular passage that my class has examined in detail in regards to forgiveness comes from Colossians 3:12-13 (NIV).

*Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you.*

Certainly we need the Lord's help every morning to put on the virtues mentioned in these verses. The Lord wants us to be unique and set apart from those who choose not to forgive. When we truly learn how to forgive, we do not only enjoy the benefits of forgiveness, but we can also experience the freedom of forgiveness.

Frank Stagg has written about authentic forgiveness. "Forgiving and forgetting are related, but forgiving precedes forgetting. Forgetting is negative, passive; forgiving is positive and creative."

Dr. Augsburger also shared the following: "To say, I can forgive, but I can't forget, is really saying, I know how to overlook a wrong but not to forgive it." May we all experience the challenge of authentic forgiveness.



# Mission and Ministry

News from the Church of the Brethren

1451 Dundee Ave., Elgin, IL 60120; 800-323-8039; www.brethren.org

June 2015

## Mission 21, Church of the Brethren sign memo of understanding for crisis response work with EYN

Mission 21, a longstanding partner of the Church of the Brethren mission in Nigeria and of Ekklesiyar Yan'uwa a Nigeria (EYN, the Church of the Brethren in Nigeria), has signed a Memorandum of Understanding for cooperation in Nigeria crisis response.

Mission 21 director Claudia Bandixen visited the General Offices in Elgin, Ill., to sign the MOU and to hold meetings with general secretary Stan Noffsinger, Global Mission and Service executive director Jay Wittmeyer, and Nigeria Crisis Response co-directors Carl and Roxane Hill.

Formerly known as Basel Mission, Mission 21 is based in Switzerland. Begun in 1815, it served as an independent Christian mission society. It is active in 21 nations, and several European churches are taking part.

The organization started work in Nigeria several decades ago, and in 1950 became a partner with the Church of the Brethren Mission in Nigeria and with EYN.

Mission 21's focus is faith-based development work, with four "legs" working on health, poverty, education,

and peace. The understanding of Mission 21, Bandixen said, is that evangelism and church planting are the responsibility of church partners such as EYN, and the responsibility of the mission is development. The mission welcomes the way Christian communities grow up in areas where it is active, but its goal is not to plant new churches.

Mission 21's work in Nigeria began in the community of Gava, and its traditional area of work in northeastern Nigeria also has included Gwoza—the first town claimed by the Boko Haram Islamist insurgency.

## Mid-Atlantic District Church of the Brethren

MAY 2015

*Together on the Journey with your District Executive Minister . . .*

### News and notes this month:

The district has begun an initiative to raise \$65,000 to sponsor a **Habitat for Humanity** house build. The district outreach and service ministry team is forming a steering committee and the project is moving toward a Spring, 2016 ground breaking in Hagerstown, Md. A letter with information about the project and some initial opportunities to become involved was sent to all district congregations last week. More information will be forthcoming as time goes by. Please begin thinking about the possibilities of making the Habitat project a VBS focus, or making it a youth or men's or women's group or Sunday school class activity, or doing a special project or emphasis to raise funds. Contributions may be sent to Mid-Atlantic District Church of the Brethren, noted "Habitat House."

The May 1-2 Annual Mid-Atlantic District **Disaster Response Auction** raised \$58,289.36 for the Church of the Brethren's disaster relief efforts.

Thanks to the committee and all the congregations and individuals who supported this year's auction with your gifts and presence.

Mid-Atlantic District congregations and members contributed \$22,401 and labor (86 district volunteers over 5 days) toward the annual cooperative **meat canning project** with So. Pa. District, which helped to send three skids of chicken (3,600 cans) to Mexico for distribution, with six skids (7,200 cans) to each district for distribution through congregations to area food pantries, soup kitchens, etc. It's all gone! The fund is now empty so any congregations or individuals who would like to contribute toward next year's project may send gifts to Mid-Atlantic District Church of the Brethren, attention "Meat Canning Fund."

Thank you for all the ways you are together on the journey!

Gene Hagenberger

## Good news you may not have heard . . .

**A string of court decisions** paved a way for greater accommodation of religion in public life, dealing a blow to atheist groups that warned that the separation of church and state was under attack.

In *Greece v. Galloway*, the US Supreme Court upheld sectarian prayers at public meetings, and the justices also ruled 5-4 in favor of the Hobby Lobby art-and-crafts chain in its bid to refuse a full range of contraceptive services to employees. That ruling also established religious rights for private businesses, a precedent that could have a range of ramifications.

In addition, atheists lost bids to require religious groups to have greater transparency on donors; to remove "In God We Trust" from US currency; and to end a tax break for clergy housing.

A federal appeals court ruled that a cross-shaped relic can remain at the National September 11 Memorial and Museum at Ground Zero.

*MESSENGER*, March 2015

## Christian Education Sponsored Activities

The Christian Education Commission supports various outreach programs in our budget. One of these is Creation Festival. Creation takes place at Agape Farm in Mt. Union, Pa. This year it is scheduled for June 24-27, 2015. It takes 2,500 volunteers to make Creation happen. Creation is focused on Contemporary Christian music (rock). There are 7 stages offering different music genres from pop-rock to heavy metal. Leadership teachings, Bible study, seminars, and communion are also offered. There are over 100,000 people in attendance so be prepared for a lot of walking and long lines. Anyone interested in attending should see Sharon Reese for more information. Children must be accompanied by an adult.



Another outreach opportunity is youth work camps. In 2015, the Senior High Sunday School class is sending 4 students to Crossnore, N.C. Destiny Betts, Shane High, Austin Spessard, and Lisa Weller will spend a week in July helping at the Crossnore School. This school supplies a safe learning and living environment for children from crisis families. The work camp volunteers will spend the week interacting with the children and helping with maintenance of the property. Sharon and Greg Reese are attending as chaperones. The proceeds of the Cabin Fever Indoor Yard Sale helped support this mission trip. Anyone interested in attending or chaperoning a future work camp should speak with Sharon Reese.

A third outreach opportunity is a mission team going to the Dominican Republic. Bob and Judy Kay are church supported missionaries serving in the Dominican Republic and they invite groups from sponsoring churches to send mission teams. The members of the team spend time spreading the

word of God to impoverished children through Bible lessons, face painting, balloon animals, games, and snack time. The team also helps with maintenance of church properties. Because of a lack of sleeping space, the mission team is limited to a small group of 6-8 people. Broadfording COB usually sends a team every 2 years. The next mission team will go to the Dominican Republic in February or March 2016. This group has been fundraising for the past 2 years to raise approximately \$1,000 per person to cover expenses. The food stand at the Rock & Mineral Show, the peanut butter eggs, and the Dinner Theater all supported this effort. If there is enough interest, the church may be able to send a second mission team again in 2017. If you are interested in a future trip, see Sharon Reese. Fundraising must start immediately if there is enough interest. Only adults 18 years or older are allowed to attend.

Finally, we have an outreach opportunity very close to home. Each year Broadfording tries to send a group to SERRV in New Windsor, Md. Students over the age of 14 and adults are invited to come and spend a day in the warehouse preparing wares and crafts from other countries for sale. This connection with low-income artisans and farmers allows these people to market their crafts and foods and therefore help eradicate poverty in these countries. This is a nonprofit organization which uses all proceeds to promote values of sustainable development and peace in the 32 countries where they work. If anyone is interested in spending a day volunteering at SERRV, please contact Pastor Len.

God calls us to spread His word. The Christian Education Commission thanks all of the people who are part of a mission team or work camp. We also thank all of you who supported the many fundraising efforts to make these trips possible.

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### Haiti: Shalom Gardens

University of Maryland landscape architecture student Harris Trobman recently traveled to St. Louis du Nord, Haiti. Trobman designed and supervised the installation of a prayer garden, rooftop vegetable gardens, a mini-soccer field, a sand/gravel bio-filter, a large cistern, and an amphitheater made of old tires, collectively known as Shalom Gardens. The work was carried out on property shared by the New Covenant School and the St. Louis du Nord congregation of Eglise des Freres (Church of the Brethren in Haiti). Staff and students from the school, Global Mission and Service field staff Michaela and Ilexene Alphonse, agronomists from Eglise des Freres, several volunteers from Southern Pennsylvania District, and Global Food Crisis Fund manager Jeff Boshart all joined forces to bring the project to fruition. Funds for this project were provided by a special grant from the Haiti Medical Project. The Global Food Crisis Fund covered travel costs for Trobman.

### Brazil: Prison Garden Ministry

A recent grant of \$10,000 from the Global Food Crisis Fund will help strengthen the work of the Rio Verde congregation of Igreja da Irmandade-Brasil (Church of the Brethren in Brazil) in its ministry with prison inmates. The congregation, under the direction of pastor Jose Tavares Junior, has developed a multi-faceted program working with inmates in the local prison and their families. This program includes a gardening project involving 32 prisoners, which provides food for meals for 400 inmates at the prison. The gardening project has been in existence for five years, and recently rented new land for expansion. Funds will be used to cover costs associated with drilling a well, setting up irrigation, purchasing vegetable seeds and transplants, and bank transfer fees.

—E-news of the Global Food Crisis Fund  
of the Church of the Brethren, Spring 2015

**A portion of Broadfording's outreach giving each week helps to support the Global Food Crisis Fund.**

## Why send your child to summer camp?

Sending your child to summer camp is a very good idea! Child development professionals believe that attending camp helps kids to mature socially, emotionally, intellectually, morally and physically. This belief is supported by a study on youth development done by the American Camp Association.

Additionally, Christian camps add a focus for the spiritual aspect of a child's life. Attending a Christian camp encourages spiritual growth—a dynamic many families are seeking. Shepherd's Spring's Summer Camp seeks to help children strengthen and grow their character. Biblical values are the foundation of this program.



Here are some basic benefits your child will experience from spending a week of summer camp at Shepherd's Spring:

**Total involvement**—The spiritual, physical, social and sensory are activated uniquely and simultaneously in our wholesome, Bible-centered camping environment.

**Outdoor learning**—Through interactive experiences with the natural world a sense of wonder and a desire for environmental stewardship of God's world are developed.

**Growth experiences**—A healthy self-confidence, independence, and desire for learning is fostered through new and challenging activities.

**Relationship building**—Opportunities to form new relationships with peers and camping staff abound, while gaining understanding of the give-and-take of community living.

**Memory making**—Great memories are created from out-of-the-ordinary experiences of weather, scenery, campfires, physical exertion, success and failure, conversations and Bible studies.

Each one bring one. That is our desire—we are praying that God will greatly increase the number of children and volunteers who are participating in our summer camps. Our scholarship program, supported by the annual golf tournament and donations, makes it possible to break down the cost barrier for any camper.

Consider making Shepherd's Spring a part of your summer plans.

—*Reflections from the Spring*, Spring 2015

**NOTE:** The church will pay 75% of the tuition for a child to attend one session of a Christian camp per year.

### Lines from Lois Ann Glessner

*Thank You! Your gifts are a blessing. Thanks for your prayer support. Currently, I am writing lessons for next year. I enjoy studying Scripture and making it understandable for our students. I am impressed by the eagerness I see to learn the Bible.*

Lois Ann

#### Lois Ann ...

- ... serves with Joy El Ministries, 3741 Joy El Drive, Greencastle, PA 17225. A portion of our outreach giving each week helps to support her work.
- ... met with our junior church children on Sunday, June 7, to promote Joy El's summer camping program.
- ... will be serving in the capacity of Moderator-Elect for the Mid-Atlantic District Conference, October 9–10, 2015.

### Upcoming fundraising events:



#### Pig Roast

Saturday, August 8, 2015  
Time and other details  
to be announced.



#### 13th Annual Benefit Auction

Saturday, August 22, 2015  
Doors open at 9:00 a.m.  
Bidding begins at 10:00 a.m.

Auction proceeds will benefit security system update.



## Vacation Bible School

July 6-10, 2015

6:30 - 8:30 p.m.

Pre-K through 8th Grade and Adult

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301-791-5432



**COME JOIN US  
FOR A WEEK OF FUN!!**



*It was you who set all the boundaries of the earth;  
you made both summer and winter. —Psalm 74:17*

*Don't take a vacation from church!*

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FIRST CLASS MAIL