

# VIRLINA DISTRICT

Church  
Of the  
Brethren



## MEMO FOR MINISTERS

### DISTRICT EXECUTIVE MINISTER SCHEDULE FOR APRIL 2021

- 1-5 VACATION
- 4 Preach at New Bethel
- 6 Office/Council of District Executives - East (Z)
- 7 Staff Meeting/Office/Ministry Advisory Council
- 8 OFF
- 9 Office/Commission on Ministry (TBD)
- 10 OPEN
- 11 Worship at Mount Joy/Study Group (Z)
- 12 Northern Area Ministers (Z)/Office
- 13 Christian Growth Institute Consult/Office/CODE Executive Committee (Z)
- 14 Staff Meeting/Office
- 15 OFF
- 16 Office/Wellness Seminar Consult (Z)
- 17 Placement Interviews (Z)
- 18 Worship Undetermined/Study Group (Z)
- 19 Office/Executive Committee (TBA)
- 20 Virginia Council of Churches Steering Committee (Z)/Office/Consult
- 21 Staff Meeting/Office
- 22 OFF
- 23 Office
- 24 Nominating and Personnel (Z)
- 25 Preach at Jones Chapel/Study Group (Z)
- 26-30 VACATION

### DISTRICT EXECUTIVE MINISTER SCHEDULE FOR MAY 2021

- 1 Ministry and Mission Day in Virlina District (Z/V)
- 2 Worship at Jeters Chapel/Study Group (Z)
- 3 Northern Area Ministers (Z)/Office/New Church Development Committee
- 4 Office/Out of Office in Afternoon
- 5 Staff Meeting/Office
- 6 Virginia Council of Churches Coordinating Cabinet (Z)
- 7 Office
- 8 OPEN/Travel
- 9 Preach at Mill Creek/Study Group (Z)
- 10 Office/Iglesia el Buen Pastor Steering Committee at Parkway
- 11 Office/CGI Administrative Committee (Z)
- 12 Staff Meeting/Office
- 13 OFF
- 14 Office
- 15 OPEN
- 16 Preach at Peters Creek/Study Group (Z)
- 17-18 Office
- 19 Staff Meeting/Office
- 20 OFF
- 21 Office
- 22 OPEN
- 23 Worship at Eden, First (T)/Study Group (Z)
- 24 Office/Moneta, Lake Side Steering Committee
- 25 Office/CODE Executive Committee (Z)

### BRETHREN FAITH IN ACTION FUND GRANTS

Formed by funds generated from the sale of the upper campus of the Brethren Service Center in New Windsor, the Brethren Faith in Action Fund provides grants to fund outreach ministry projects that serve their communities, strengthen the congregation, and expand the reign of God. Such ministries will honor and continue the legacy of service that the Center has epitomized while also addressing the dynamics of the present age. Grants of up to \$5,000 per congregation or ministry project per year are awarded, with a maximum of \$15,000 allocated to any one ministry project over multiple years.

Any United States Church of the Brethren congregation, fellowship or project may apply. Grants will be awarded as determined by the Grant Oversight Committee each month. A grant application will require basic information such as amount requested, description of the project, budget, affirmation that congregation will provide match as recorded in the minutes of the congregation's decision-making body, and a statement of support from the district executive minister. For more details go to <https://www.brethren.org/faith-in-action/>

**DISTRICT EXECUTIVE MINISTER SCHEDULE FOR MAY 2021**

26	Staff Meeting/Office
27	OFF
28	Office
29	OPEN
30	Worship Undetermined (AM)/Williamson Road Licensing Service (PM)
31	MEMORIAL DAY - DRC Closed

**MARY SINK ST.JOHN SCHEDULE FOR APRIL 2021**

1	Office
2	CLOSED
6	Office/Commission on Witness (Z)
7	Staff Meeting/Office
8	Office
9	Office
13	Office/Peace Affairs Committee (Z)
14	Staff Meeting/Office
15	Office
16	Office
20	Office/Race Education Team (Z)
21	Staff Meeting/Office
22	Office
23	Office
24	Program and Arrangements (Z)/Nominating and Personnel (Z)
27	Office
28	Staff Meeting/Office
29	Office/Good News Team (Z)
30	Office

**MARY SINK ST.JOHN SCHEDULE FOR MAY 2021**

1	Ministry and Mission Day in Virlina District
4	Office/Smaller Membership Congregational Committee (Z)
5	Staff Meeting/Office
6-7	Office
10	Disaster Response Committee (Z)
11	Office/Disabilities Ministries (Z)
12	Staff Meeting/Office
13-14	Office
18	Office/Race Education Team (Z)/Commission on Nurture (TBA)
19	Staff Meeting/Office
20	Spiritual Development Retreat Committee (Z)/Office
21	Office
25	Office
26	Staff Meeting/Office
27-28	Office
31	CLOSED

**MINISTRY AND MISSION DAY IN THE VIRLINA DISTRICT - MAY 1, 2021**

Ministry and Mission Day in the Virlina District will be online on Saturday, May 1, 2021. This will be a live online event and preregistration is required. Paul Munday, Annual Conference Moderator for 2021, will be hosting a delegate briefing via zoom. Once registered, delegates will be emailed a zoom link. All pastors and Annual Conference delegates are encouraged to attend. Paul is offering a question-and-answer period after the delegate briefing. Ministry and Mission Day is sponsored annually by the Commission on Witness of the Virlina District Board. 0.1 CEU will be offered to those who qualify. Contact Mary St.John at <virlina2@aol.com> or (540) 362-1816 to register.

In addition, Greg Fleshman, 2021 District Conference moderator, will offer a short devotion video which will be available to watch at your convenience. Learn more about the Virlina District Conference theme, "Wait on the Lord", Isaiah 40:31, as we begin to approach District Conference on November 12-13, 2021. The worship video will be posted on the <virlina.org> website.

**COVID-19 FUNERAL EXPENSE FUNDING AVAILABLE**

The COVID-19 pandemic has brought overwhelming grief to many families. At FEMA, our mission is to help people before, during and after disasters. We are dedicated to helping ease some of the financial stress and burden caused by the virus.

Under the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act of 2021 and the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021, FEMA is providing financial assistance for COVID-19 related funeral expenses incurred after January 20, 2020.

More information can be found at <<https://www.fema.gov/disasters/coronavirus/economic/funeral-assistance>>.

**FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FROM THE MODERATOR'S Q&A SESSIONS**

Paul Munday, 2021 Annual Conference Moderator, along with the Leadership Team of the Church of the Brethren, held 24 Moderator's Q&A Sessions in fourteen districts during the past months of 2020-21. As a result, in the course of holding those sessions, a collection of questions and answers about the current state of the church was developed. What follows is a link to those FAQ's at <https://www.brethren.org/ac2021/wp-content/uploads/sites/20/2021/03/State-of-the-Church-FAQs.pdf>

- **PASTORAL PLACEMENT REPORT** (P indicates reviewing profiles/I indicates interviewing)
- **BETHANY** - Part time position, no profile available - Emma Jean Woodard serving as interim pastor.
- **BETHEL** - Part time position, no profile available - John P. Reed, Sr. serving as interim pastor from March 1 - May 31, 2021.
- **BETHLEHEM** - Full time position, profile circulating (P/I) - Horace D. Light, Jr. serving as interim pastor.
- **COPPER HILL** - Full time position, profile pending - ***Daniel L. Johnson has resigned effective June 30, 2021.***
- **EDEN, FIRST** - Douglas M. Diamond of the Mid-Atlantic District began on a full time basis effective April 1, 2021.
- **FRATERNITY** - Full time position, profile circulating (P/4-I)- Harold E. Sonafrank and Robert L. Williard serving as interim pastoral team.
- **GREEN HILL** - Part time position, profile pending (P) - J. Michael Varner serving as interim pastor.
- **JETERS CHAPEL** - Part time position, profile circulating (P/2-I)- ***In negotiation, no trial sermon or vote date.***
- **LIGHTHOUSE** - Part time position, no profile available - Don D. Street, lay speaker from Mount Hermon, serving as pulpit supply.
- **MAPLE GROVE** - Part time position, no profile available - Chad Beamer serving a pulpit supply.
- **MONETA, LAKE SIDE** - Part time position, profile circulating (P) - Christian J. Becker (FGBC) continues as pulpit supply
- **MONTE VISTA** - Part time position, no profile available - Charles DeHart providing pulpit supply in April.
- **NEW BETHEL** - Part time position, no profile available - Pulpit supply.
- **NEWPORT NEWS, IVY FARMS** - Part time position, profile circulating (P) - Pulpit supply.
- **OAK GROVE, SOUTH** - Part time position, no profile available - Pulpit supply.
- **ROANOKE, IGLESIA CRISTIANA RENACER** - Part time position, profile pending - Pulpit supply.
- **SAINT PAUL** - Part time position, no profile available - Congregation is not currently meeting.
- **SELMA** - Part time position, no profile available - Alvis Jackson serving as pulpit supply.
- **SHELTON** - Part time position, no profile available - ***Joseph D. Smith has resigned as interim pastor effective April 30.***
- **TRINITY** - Part time position, profile available by request (P) - Anne Mitchell serving as interim pastor.

**THE VIRTUAL NEW AND RENEW CONFERENCE - MAY 13-15, 2021**

● Ministry in a rapidly changing world requires courage and imagination. Do you want to unlock your congregation's imagination and potential for creative and Spirit-inspired ministry? Learning events by innovative practitioners who have planted churches and led congregational revitalization can stimulate ideas and new ways to passionately live and share the radical transformation and holistic peace of Jesus Christ.

● Stimulate your leadership and the congregation's ministry by attending the virtual New and Renew Conference. The conference offers the opportunity to network with other ministers and congregational leaders on topics related to church renewal and church planting. This virtual event features resourceful and practical ideas, ministry practitioners, and integrated practices and solutions you can use.

**Register now and choose from more than 20 sessions including:**

- Trusting God, Trusting Neighbors: Mobilizing Power and Assets in the Neighborhood
- The Shalom-Making Church: Imaginative Practices for Public Witness
- Restoring Congregational Vitality
- Racial Justice, Discipleship and Evangelism in These Times
- How Leadership Must Change for the Incarnational Church Plant
- The Promise of Church in Hard Places
- Cultural Humility and the Art of Becoming All Things
- Recapturing a Pioneering Heart
- Spirit-Filled: Embodying God's Imagination for God's Mission

**Cost:**

- \$79 for live event attendance and access to session recordings. Does not included CEUs.
- \$89 includes event attendance and/or access to recordings. Includes CEUs for live event and recordings.

**Need to Know:**

- More than 2.0 CEUs if you register. CEUs include both live sessions and recordings.
- Register to access recordings of sermons, plenary sessions, and workshops.
- New and Renew Schedule: May 13-15, 2021 from 12:00 – 5:30 pm EDT each day.
- Registration and Information: <<https://www.brethren.org/discipleshipmin/newandrenew/>>
- Questions: contact Randi Rowan at <[churchplanting@brethren.org](mailto:churchplanting@brethren.org)> or by phone (847) 429-4303

**CHRISTIAN GROWTH INSTITUTE NEW STUDENT ORIENTATION - JUNE 12, 2021**

We need your help! Are there persons in your congregation feeling a call to ministry? Experiencing spiritual rebirth? Desiring to deepen personal faith? Learn about Christian Growth Institute, the district program that promotes spiritual growth for persons from all educational backgrounds. Classes and workshops are offered throughout the year, and students who enter the program are expected to complete all the offerings in four years. The next new student orientation will be held virtually on June 12 from 9 a.m. until 12 noon. Please have persons you know contact Cathy Huffman at <cashuffman@gmail.com> for more information and schedule an in-person meeting at the Virlina District Resource Center prior to June 12.

**THE CHALLENGE OF AN ONLINE ANNUAL CONFERENCE - IDEAS NEEDED!**

The territory of the Virlina District is inclusive of an area of about 100,000 square miles from the Atlantic Ocean to the Ohio River across portions of three states. Having an online Annual Conference is necessary given the restrictions and uncertainties amidst a pandemic. Nevertheless, internet accessibility is limited in many areas of the district. As we ponder how to include the greatest number of our congregations in the Annual Conference it is clear that we need creative approaches. One idea has been to have congregations with strong internet connection and considerable space serve as "cluster points" for delegates. If you have thoughts on this matter, please send your ideas to us at nuchurch@aol.com.

**ANCIENT AND MEDIEVAL CHURCH HISTORY COURSE - AUGUST 25 - OCTOBER 19, 2021**

The Brethren Academy for Ministerial Leadership is offering **Ancient & Medieval Church History** from August 25-October 19, 2021. TRIM students will receive one credit in Bible/Theology upon completion, along with a Bethany Experience. The instructor for this online course will be Ken Rogers, Professor of Historical Studies at Bethany Seminary.

This online course provides a brief overview of the history of Christianity from the close of the New Testament era to the eve of the Reformation (approximately 150 CE to 1450 CE). Topics include early Christianity, the beginning of Christian theology, and issues in the study of church history. The course focuses on the development of Christian thought...Ken Rogers

Please give consideration to participating in this class. The deadline to register is July 21, 2021. A brochure for the class is attached to the MEMO FOR MINISTERS e-mailing or enclosed in the U.S. Mail version.

Online TRIM classes are particularly accessible for busy pastors. These online classes "meet" for eight weeks in Moodle, a virtual classroom platform. The Brethren Academy students have their own Moodle access from orientation. A Moodle tutorial will be provided if one is needed.

New lessons are posted once a week, once the course begins, and students are given a week to complete their assignments. Students can log on at any time, day or night, to read lectures, watch videos, work on group projects and/or engage in forums (email-style conversations) with their classmates. In this way, online courses are fairly flexible.

**This course is also available for continuing education and personal enrichment.** Persons interested in taking an Academy course for continuing education credit (CEU) or personal enrichment (PE) may enroll as a student and select their category (CEU or PE) upon registration. Successful completion of the course requires:

- 1) Meeting the attendance requirement set by the instructor,
- 2) Completion of the assigned reading,
- 3) Engagement in the course through participation.

A CEU or PE student is not required to complete assigned papers or exams. However, any student who completes papers or exams can expect feedback from the instructor. CEUs are awarded after the instructor has notified the Brethren Academy of successful completion of the course. Questions about taking an Academy course for CEU's or personal enrichment may be directed to Academy Director, Janet Ober Lambert at <oberlja@bethanyseminary.edu> or (765) 983-1820.

**CHURCH WORKERS ASSISTANCE PLAN**

Another block of COVID-19 grants is available from the Church Workers Assistance Plan through the Brethren Benefit Trust. The application deadline is July 31, 2021. Information and application are attached to the MEMO FOR MINISTERS e-mail or may be found at <<http://cobbt.org/sites/default/files/pdfs/Pension%20pdfs/COVID-19%20Application%20extended%204.pdf>>. **In 2020, more than \$290,000 in grants was given by the Church Workers' Assistance Plan, including 45 grant recipients.**

**GLOBAL CHURCH OF THE BRETHERN SURVEY - PLEASE RESPOND BY APRIL 30, 2021**

A committee of the Global Church of the Brethren Communion has developed a survey and asks that all interested Church of the Brethren members in the US respond. This will also be sent in Spanish, Portuguese, and Haitian Creole to Church of the Brethren related denominations of those language groups. The survey names 19 characteristics that some identify with the CoB. The intent is to receive feedback from across our 11 country denominations as to which of these are considered essential, important, or irrelevant to the individual respondent.

The committee believes that this survey can lay the foundations for intentional ongoing dialogue among the worldwide Church of the Brethren on our theological and denominational identity, and strengthen ties between the sister churches.

Results will inform discussions between these Church of the Brethren related denominations (in Brazil, DR Congo, Dominican Republic, Haiti, India, Nigeria, Rwanda, Spain, Uganda, the US, and Venezuela) in order to develop criteria for what bodies might be included in this global fellowship in the future, as there are many inquiries for affiliation.

The data may also provide information about areas for more emphasis in education. For example, if a high majority of the respondents say trine immersion is irrelevant, what might that tell us? To see the survey and enter your responses please follow the link below.

<<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScB4jJXhitap-4Ns21VriloXQIBF0rh4z9B6h7VPxErTjufIA/viewform?vc=0&c=0&w=1&flr=0>>

We strongly encourage you to answer the survey and enhance our understanding of the Global Church of the Brethren Communion. Please complete the survey by the end of April.

**DISTRICT RESOURCE CENTER CLOSED ON MEMORIAL DAY WEEKEND - MAY 29 -31, 2021**

The District Resource Center will be closed on Memorial Day Weekend beginning at 6 p.m. on Friday, May 28, until Tuesday, June 1, at 9 a.m. As always, we will monitor e-mail periodically.

**ANNUAL CONFERENCE NEWSLETTER**

Attached you will find the latest Annual Conference Newsletter. It is full of interesting and important information concerning schedule, speakers and methodology. You may also access it at <<https://www.brethren.org/ac2021/wp-content/uploads/sites/20/2021/02/AC-Newsletter-2021.pdf>>.

**NEW MEMBERS REPORT FORM**

A New Members Report Form is enclosed for you to copy and use throughout the year to report the names of persons who become members of your congregation. You can complete and send the form to the District Resource Center, or you can email the new member information to <[virlinasecretary@gmail.com](mailto:virlinasecretary@gmail.com)>.

**2021 ADDITIONAL OFFICERS FORM**

The Additional Officers Form for 2021 is enclosed in this memo. Please complete the form and return it to the Virlina District Resource Center, 3402 Plantation Road, Roanoke, VA 24012. This information helps the district staff in making contact and sending material to persons in certain positions of service. This form is due by May 15.

**DISTRICT BOARD REORGANIZATION FOR 2020-21**

The 2021 Virlina District Directory is in process. In the interim, please use the attached reorganizaiton chart in conjunction with your 2020 directory. As always, we appreciate your bringing corrections to our attention at <[nuchurch@aol.com](mailto:nuchurch@aol.com)>.

**SELF-ALLOCATION/FINANCIAL SECRETARY REPORT**

The Virlina District Financial Secretary Report for March 31, 2021 is attached. First quarter giving received after April 9 will be included in the next report. Please review your congregation's self-allocation giving for the year-to-date in consultation with your treasurer and draw any discrepancies to our attention. This ensures that we are posting giving correctly and allows for transparency in accounting. We appreciate your congregation's giving to the district and camp ministry. Always remember that your offering plate is the offering plate of district and denominational mission and ministry.