

VIRLINA DISTRICT

Church
Of the
Brethren



MEMO FOR MINISTERS

DISTRICT EXECUTIVE MINISTER SCHEDULE FOR JANUARY 2021

- 1 NEW YEAR'S DAY - District Resource Center Closed
- 2 District Board Meeting
- 3 Preach at Roanoke - Hollins Road
- 4 Office/Northern Area Ministers Meeting (Z)
- 5 Office/CGI Consultation
- 6 Staff Meeting/Office
- 7 OFF
- 8 Office
- 9 OPEN
- 10 Worship Undetermined
- 11 Office/Moneta - Lake Side Steering Committee
- 12 Office/Smaller Membership Congregational Committee(Z)
- 13 Staff Meeting/Office
- 14 OFF
- 15 Office
- 16 Nominating and Personnel Committee (Z)
- 17 Worship at Hopewell/Licensing Service for Bill Fisher
- 18 Office/Consultation/BFIA Grant Committee (Z)
- 19 Office
- 20 Staff Meeting/Office
- 21 OFF
- 22 Office
- 23 OPEN
- 24 Worship Undetermined
- 25 Council of District Executives (Z)
- 26 Council of District Executives (Z)
- 27 Council of District Executives (Z)
- 28 Council of District Executives (Z)
- 29 Office
- 30 OPEN
- 31 Preach at Bethel

DISTRICT EXECUTIVE MINISTER SCHEDULE FOR FEBRUARY 2021

- 1 Northern Area Ministers Meeting (Z)/New Church Development (Z)
- 2 Office
- 3 Staff Meeting/Office
- 4 OFF
- 5 Office/Commission on Ministry(Z)
- 6 Speak to Shenandoah District CGI Leadership and Admin Class (Z)
- 7 Worship Undetermined
- 8 Office/Iglesia del Buen Pastor Steering Committee at Blacksburg
- 9 Council of District Executives - East (Z)
- 10 Staff Meeting/Office
- 11 OFF
- 12 Office
- 13 OPEN
- 14 Worship Undetermined/Bible Study (Z)
- 15 Office
- 16 Office/Christian Growth Institute Administrative Committee (Z)
- 17 Staff Meeting/Office
- 18 OFF
- 19 Office
- 20 Nominating and Personnel (Z)
- 21 Worship Undetermined

ORDINATION CARDS ARE COMING SOON

Several of you have inquired as to when you will be receiving your new ordination cards for 2020-2025. These cards are produced by the Office of Ministry at the General Offices in Elgin, Illinois. To date we have received fifteen cards for last names beginning with A, B, C, D and E. We expect to receive more cards during January. As these are received, we will be sending them to you along with a cover letter. If you have questions concerning the ordination renewal process or the distribution of the cards please contact us.

STAFF MEETINGS

We have staff meeting at the District Resource Center on Wednesdays from 10 a.m. until noon. In order to have uninterrupted time for our devotions, prayer concerns, the calendar review and general work conversation, we do not answer the telephone nor take callers during this time. Please be patient with our need to have uninterrupted time with one another.

DISTRICT EXECUTIVE MINISTER SCHEDULE FOR FEBRUARY 2021

22 Office
 23 Office
 24 Staff Meeting/Office
 25 OFF
 26 Office
 27 OPEN
 28 Worship Undetermined

MARY SINK ST. JOHN SCHEDULE FOR JANUARY 2021

2 District Board Meeting
 5 Office
 6 Office
 7 Staff Meeting/Office
 8 Office
 12 Office/Smaller Membership Congregational Committee (Z)
 13 Staff Meeting/Office
 14 Office
 15 Office
 16 Program and Arrangements Committee/Nominating and Personnel (Z)
 19 Office/Race Education Team
 20 Staff Meeting/Office
 21 Office
 22 Office
 26 Office
 27 Staff Meeting/Office
 28 Office/Spiritual Development Retreat Committee (Z)
 29 Office

MARY SINK ST. JOHN SCHEDULE FOR FEBRUARY 2021

2 Office
 3 Staff Meeting/Office
 4 Office
 5 Office
 8 Disaster Response Committee (Z)
 9 Office/Commission on Witness
 10 Staff Meeting/Office
 11 Office
 12 Office
 16 Office/Race Education Team
 17 Staff Meeting/Office
 18 Office
 19 Office
 20 Nominating and Personnel (Z)
 23 Office
 24 Staff Meeting/Office
 25 Office
 26 Office

A WORD FROM THE RACE EDUCATION TEAM OF THE VIRLINA DISTRICT

A Race Education Team has been formed by the Commission on Witness in this time of tension. The team's purpose is to increase our understanding about racism's affect on our congregations and communities. Members of the team include Eric Anspaugh, Dava Hensley, Anne Mitchell, Ellen Phillips and Jennie Waering.

They have developed a video presentation on race titled "Necessary Conversations" with special guests Barbara Pendergrass Richmond of Bethel AME Church and Ron Robinson, a Roanoke City Police Officer, of the Roanoke-Oak Grove Church. This can be found on the team's Facebook page.

The team is committed to providing individuals, groups and congregations throughout the district with a variety of resources to help them better understand this difficult and continuing problem. They would appreciate the opportunity to meet with your group or congregation. All virtually for now, but hopefully in person in the not so distant future. For further information, please email the team at <virlinaret@gmail.com>.

COMPELLING VISION BIBLE STUDY SERIES

The Compelling Vision Team is developing a 13-session Bible study series around the Compelling Vision. Designed for use by youth and adults, the series will be available at no cost on the Compelling Vision webpage in February 2021. (Sample sessions will be posted in mid-January.) Recognizing the importance of discerning the mind of Christ through communal study of scripture, it is our hope that this Bible study series will serve a two-fold purpose: to help congregations engage more deeply with the Jesus in the Neighborhood vision and to help congregations and their delegates prepare for the conversations to take place at Annual Conference as we move toward affirmation of the vision.

Each of the thirteen sessions has as its focus a question that invites participants to explore a different word or phrase in the vision and has been written by a different person, creating a series that is rich in both breadth and depth. The project is being edited by Joan Daggett. Plans are also underway to translate this resource into both Spanish and Haitian Kreyol. For an outline of the lessons and writer's names please contact us at <nuchurch@aol.com>.

PASTORAL PLACEMENT REPORT

- **BETHANY** - Part time position, no profile available - Emma Jean Woodard serving as interim pastor.
- **BETHEL** - Part time position, no profile available - Pulpit supply.
- **BETHLEHEM** - Full time position, profile pending - Horace D. Light, Jr. serving as interim pastor.
- **EDEN, FIRST** - Full time position, profile circulating - Edward C. Woodard serving as interim pastor.
- **FRATERNITY** - Full time position, profile circulating - Harold E. "Hal" Sonafrank and Robert L. Williard serving as interim pastoral team.
- **GREEN HILL** - Part time position, profile circulating - J. Michael Varner serving as interim pastor effective September 1, 2020.
- **JETERS CHAPEL** - Part time position, profile circulating - Pulpit supply.
- **LIGHTHOUSE** - Part time position, no profile available - Don D. Street, layspeaker from Mount Hermon, serving as pulpit supply.
- **MAPLE GROVE** - Part time position, no profile available - Chad Beamer serving as pulpit supply.
- **MONETA, LAKE SIDE** - Part time position, profile circulating - Christian Becker (FGBC) continues as pulpit supply.
- **MONTE VISTA** - Part time position, no profile available - Pulpit supply by Tony Emmons in January and Bruce Huffman in February and March.
- **NEW BETHEL** - Part time position, no profile available - Pulpit supply.
- **NEWPORT NEWS, IVY FARMS** - Part time position, profile circulating - Pulpit supply.
- **OAK GROVE, SOUTH** - *Part time position, no profile available - Chris C. Foster resigned effective December 31, 2020.*
- **ROANOKE, IGLESIA CRISTIANA RENACER** - Part time position, profile pending - Pulpit supply.
- **SAINT PAUL** - Part time position, no profile available - Not meeting due to COVID-19.
- **SELMA** - Part time position, no profile available - Alvis Jackson serving as pulpit supply.
- **SHELTON** - Part time position, no profile available - Joseph D. Smith is serving as interim pastor.
- **TRINITY** - Part time position, profile circulating - E. Anne Mitchell serving as interim pastor.

COVID-19 AND OUR CONGREGATIONS

• With the rising number of persons being infected with COVID-19, including a number of our pastors and ministers, as well as numerous congregational members and friends, it is important to once again review the guidelines on sanitization, social distancing, the wearing of masks and other helpful information. Our congregations have learned to continue worship during this time by using the tools of technology such as FM transmitters, Facebook Live and other virtual methodologies. For some congregations, these techniques have actually increased involvement.

• It is helpful to remember that our ancestors endured pandemics and plagues. They endured even without the medical science and treatment protocols that we benefit from. Moreover, we believe that God's sovereign purpose is being worked out and that we are strengthened by the Holy Spirit as we meet this challenge.

• Each of us and our congregations have taken diverse approaches to continuity during this time. As ministers we must be careful not to single out others whose approach has been different than ours. Some are comfortable in person, some are not comfortable with exposure to others. Hesitancy to expose oneself to exposure is not evidence of spiritual laziness or unfaithfulness. It is our role to be patient, listen and understand until we can all be together again.

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.

Who May Apply and What is the Process?

• Any United States Church of the Brethren congregation, fellowship or project. 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/>>

FAITH, SCIENCE, AND COVID-19 - MODERATOR'S TOWN HALL - JANUARY 21, 2021

We are excited to announce the next Moderator's Town Hall on January 21, 2021, at 7:00 p.m. EST. The topic will be "Faith, Science, and COVID-19, Part Three." Dr. Kathryn Jacobsen will once again be the featured resource person.

The Town Hall will center on current trend lines related to the COVID-19 crisis along with relevant topics such as the rollout of vaccines to alleviate the pandemic. A special focus will be the role of churches in response to the crisis, as the faith community is called to grapple with the realities of both faith and science.

Dr. Kathryn Jacobsen is Professor in the Department of Global and Community Health at George Mason University, Fairfax, Virginia. Dr. Jacobsen is a specialist in infectious disease epidemiology and global health who has consulted with several organizations during this pandemic. She is also a member of the Oakton Church of the Brethren, Oakton, Virginia, valuing her connection to faith and the Church of the Brethren.

To register for the Town Hall, please access the blue button below or use the following link: <tinyurl.com/ModTownHallJan2021>

You are encouraged to sign up early, as the event is limited to the first 500 registrants.

The Town Hall will once again feature a Question & Answer format. You are invited to submit your questions for Dr. Jacobsen during the Town Hall, or you can send them in advance. To send your questions prior to the Town Hall, please email: <cobmoderatorstownhall@gmail.com>. Though we cannot commit to answering every question, we'll do our best to use what is submitted.

QUEST FOR FAITH: A SELF-LED EXPLORATION OF FAITH FOR YOUTH - MARCH 11-12, 2021

This year, in lieu of the traditional FaithQuest that we typically offer for youth in Grades 9-12, we are offering, "Quest For Faith: A Self-Led Exploration Of Faith For Youth."

Due to the continuing pandemic, we believe that FaithQuest cannot be held in the normal manner in order to keep people safe. As we pondered what to do we realized that the continuing true purpose of FaithQuest is to help youth connect with God and with one another. God can connect with us wherever we are.

Therefore, we developed "FaithQuest in a Box." This "Quest for Faith" in 2021 will come packed with devotionals, fun activities, as well as spiritually reflective information for youth to complete on their own or with their small youth groups.

"FaithQuest in a Box" will be available for pick-up, for those who register for the activity, at the District Resource Center on March 11 and March 12, 2021 from 9 a.m. until 4 p.m. We are also able to ship boxes upon prior request. A flyer is attached for posting on your congregational bulletin board and inclusion in newsletters or other communications. For more information, contact Joy Murray, Coordinator of Children, Youth and Young Adult Ministries at <virlinayouthministries@gmail.com> or by private message on the Virlina Young Facebook page.

CHURCH OF THE BRETHERN POLITY COURSE - MARCH 10 - MAY 2, 2021

The Brethren Academy for Ministerial Leadership is offering a course on Church of the Brethren Polity from March 10 - May 4, 2021. Academy students will receive one credit in Bible/Theology upon completion and pastors will earn 2 CEU credits. The instructor for this online course will be Torin Eikler, District Executive Minister for the Northern District of Indiana.

In the Church of the Brethren, polity is intertwined with our history, practices, and ecclesiology (who we are as a church). Talking about polity as ministers and members of the Church of the Brethren naturally uncovers who we are, what we do, and how we shape our lives together. In this course, we will engage the current and past polity of the Church of the Brethren in order to understand how it has, and continues to shape "another way of living." ...Torin Eikler

A brochure is available by contacting us at nuchurch@aol.com. Please give consideration to participating in this class. The deadline to register is February 3.

Successful completion of the course requires

Meeting the attendance requirement set
by the instructor,
Completion of the assigned reading,
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. Please contact Janet if you have any particular questions about the course.

THE REWARD OF RISK - A VIRTUAL NEW AND RENEW EVENT - MAY 13-15, 2021

"The Reward of Risk" is a virtual NEW AND RENEW EVENT sponsored by Discipleship Ministries of the Church of the Brethren. This online event will provide a space to explore new forms of mission, church planting, church renewal and shaping community. This year, the keynote speakers will be Christiana Rice and José Humphreys. Offered in at least three languages, we will be providing opportunities to network with others as we learn and grow. An interpretive document is available - in Spanish, Haitian Creole and English. If you want a copy, please contact us at nuchurch@aol.com

Registration opens February 1, 2021. Further information will be sent in the new year. The website link for all things related to the 2021 NEW AND RENEW EVENT including registration for the conference and updates is <<https://www.brethren.org/discipleshipmin/newandrenew/>>.

DEFINING SET-APART MINISTRY WITHIN THE MULTIVOCATIONAL REALITY - APRIL 7 - JUNE 1, 2021

The Brethren Academy for Ministerial Leadership is offering Defining Set-Apart Ministry Within the Multivocational Reality online from April 7 - June 1, 2021. Participants will receive one credit in Ministry Skills upon completion. The instructor for this online course will be Sandra Jenkins.

Multivocational ministry is a reality in many denominations. It is not only a calling, but a necessity; part-time ministry placements often outnumber full-time placements. This class will explore the set-apart ministry within the multivocational context, including the rewards and challenges for both pastor and congregation.

A brochure is available with more information by contacting the Brethren Academy for Ministerial Leadership or by e-mailing us at <nuchurch@aol.com>. Please give consideration to participating in this class. The deadline to register is March 3, 2021.

INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE ANNOUNCES MILEAGE RATE FOR 2021

Beginning on January 1, 2021, the standard mileage rates for the use of a car (also vans, pickups or panel trucks) will be 56 cents per mile driven for business use, down 1.5 cents from the rate for 2020.

PULPIT SUPPLY LIST FOR JANUARY 2021

The current pulpit supply is attached to the Memo for Ministers. The current recommended rate for pulpit supply is \$100 per sermon plus mileage.

SELF-ALLOCATION/FINANCIAL SECRETARY REPORT

The penultimate Virgina District Financial Secretary Report for December 30, 2020 is attached. Please review your congregation's self-allocation giving for 2020 in consultation with your treasurer and draw any discrepancies to our attention. Please remember that your offering plate is the offering plate of the district and denomination.