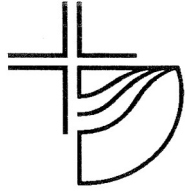


# The Growing Edge



HARRISBURG FIRST  
CHURCH OF THE BRETHREN  
219 HUMMEL STREET  
HARRISBURG, PENNSYLVANIA 17104-3399



*"...time to heal our women, be real to our women  
and if we don't we'll have a race of babies  
that will hate the ladies, that make the babies..."  
- Tupac Shakur*

Lord, as we celebrate Women's History month  
and begin the celebration of Holy Week, we  
ask that You guide all of us in the liberation  
that comes with our faith and Your  
resurrection. You have freed us and like Tasha  
Cobbs Leonard says, "we hear the chains  
falling". May we use this time as one of  
reflection and growth in You and Your love for  
ALL people. We ask this in Your Holy name,  
Amen.  
-Alyssa Parker

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**PHONE: 717.234.0415**

**E-MAIL: OFFICE@HBGFIRSTCOB.ORG**  
**TRADITIONAL WORSHIP SUNDAY 9AM**

**ZOOM BIBLE STUDY 10:00AM**

**VIRTUAL WORSHIP ON HARRISBURG FIRST  
CHURCH YouTube CHANNEL 11:00AM**

# Associate Pastor's Page

## Remain Together, Remain Committed

This past month we welcomed some great guests into our midst and had some wonderful conversations around racial justice, white supremacy, and the importance of remaining together during this season and remaining committed to this work regardless of outside forces. I was very happy to welcome back Josh Brockway from our denominational offices the beginning of the month and truly excited to welcome Daniel Hill from River City Community Church in Chicago on the 21st. Our Zoom calls with each guest were filled with fruitful conversation and can be accessed from our church's YouTube Channel. I'm hoping that we can continue to invite and hear from a variety of challenging voices during this season of virtual worship.

The Church's Discernment Team has also met and tabulated the results of our church-wide survey. The next steps in our search process will be to submit our congregational profile largely made up of the answers to these surveys. I want to ask the church to continue to pray for this process. Pray that the right person is revealed and that, even now, the Lord would be preparing their heart and mind for the work He has in store for them.

Easter is coming up the beginning of April, and we are hoping to be together around that date at least in an outdoor capacity. We are making plans to hopefully do some things around Holy Week, including some elements of Love Feast, Palm Sunday and Resurrection Sunday.

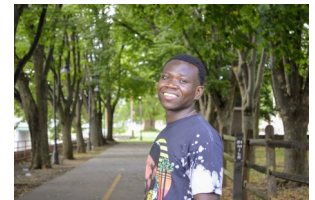
Also, please be in prayer as we will be submitting several grants that should help us continue to press in to this justice work the Lord has called us to be about. Please continue to pray for Alyssa, the BVSers and I as we continue to strive toward what God has in store for us. This journey we are on is truly exciting. Let's continue to walk courageously into the future He has laid out for us! Let us remain together, let us remain committed!



Pastor Josiah Ludwick  
Associate Pastor/Program Director bcmPEACE

## A Reflection

As I reflect on the month of January and February, I think about the contribution I made within the Harrisburg community and First Church of the Brethren. I think about the time I get to spend helping out at food distribution Friday mornings, and my time helping the kids at Community Classroom (at the Journey Church). I enjoy helping out at the Journey Church because it brings back memory when I worked at a day-care back in high school. Matthew 20:28 reads, "just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many". Another thing in the months of January and February I grew more liking to is Agape. Every Wednesday night at 5 we meet in the Agape room (in the basement of the church). During this time, we watch movies and have deep and meaningful conversation pertaining to social and racial injustice. This has helped me more to understand that uncomfortable conversation is much needed to bring awareness to the social and racial injustice in our society, and the proactive measures we can take moving forward. Furthermore, I've been meeting with Dr. Hart every month, and he's been mentoring me on leadership and faith. These meetings with Dr. Hart have been meaningful and impactful in my life so far because he's someone who has a lot of experience in areas I need to improve and work on. Lastly, ever since I moved to Harrisburg, we have our community dinner every Thursday. We've had a lot of people over our (Ubuntu house) and we've cooked a lot of meals. It's been awesome interacting and eating with people who come over to our house and just being in fellowship with one another. -Eric Joloka



## Our Mighty Fortress

Recently, I ventured into a part of the church that most of the people who attend there have never gone...The Attic. I took the roofer up so he could see an area of damage from underneath. The first thing that I noticed is just how stout our Sanctuary is. The oldest part of our church was built in 1905, back then unskilled labor was paid the princely sum of .15 cents an hour. Most people did not have electricity or running water. The church was lit with gas lamps, we still have the long pole they used to light them in the archive room. The beams that hold up the roof in the sanctuary are three inches thick and built of wood that has no knotholes. Wood such as that can no longer be purchased for any price it has simply been used up. Wood like that is very strong. Harrisburg had a planning mill where wood was cut and milled, it is a possibility that the beams that make up our church were given form just down the road from it. The nails that hold the building together are hand forged and square. Instead of a machine, someone had to heat up the metal red hot and make each and every one by hammering it out. The nails in our church are likely not much different than those that held Jesus to the cross and made exactly the same way. The handiwork of those craftsman has stood for nearly 120 years and with care will stand for many more. The craftsmen who built the nails and cut the wood did so knowing that no one would see their work directly but that it was a part of a greater whole. Both are vital. Without either the building would not exist. I am reminded of a Hymn written by Martin Luther called "A Mighty Fortress Is Our God". Our church is a mighty building but without the people that fill it, it is simply an empty shell. Our church has been empty too long. I hope before I depart in August that I can see the sanctuary completely full of people again. - Daniel Wright



# Our Community Ministries



## Program Accomplishments this past month!

- Daniel Wright has been working to get our Computer Class back up and running at a limited capacity and with social distancing and through concentrated cleanings.
- Agape Graduates met with On Earth Peace to have their first webinar on Kingian Nonviolence and Organizing. We have also had great discussion around #BlackLivesMatter, policing, and more! We are hoping to begin our second mural project this month!
- We have continued to serve an average of 160 households thanks to our weekly Wellness Hub and even gained some new volunteers!



## ZOOM Trivia Night

March 26 at 5:00pm

Join us as we kick off the 2021 virtual Highmark Walk for A Healthy Community with a fun game of trivia! We will be testing your knowledge on all things random and fellowshiping with one another.

sign up on our website [www.bcmpeace.org](http://www.bcmpeace.org) under the "2021 Virtual Highmark" tab!

this is a free event, but it is a part of our Highmark Walk for a Healthy Community fundraiser, so please consider donating.

Thank you to all who have supported us financially and prayerfully as we adapt and navigate continuing our mission in this time. We are abundantly blessed!

## The Virtual Highmark Walk For A Healthy Community



Again this spring (yes, spring really is coming), **bcmPEACE** will be participating in the Highmark Walk For a Healthy Community, and even though the walk may seem like it's a long way off we are beginning the festivities now! So get it on your calendar now and plan to be involved in these activities coming up! **Better yet, plan to donate, ask friends and family to donate, and engage with our community.** **bcmPEACE** is one of many organizations hit hard by the pandemic. We are continuing to grow and adapt and progress. With that said, we have done well. Saying such, we have created a way for us to fellowship with one another, learn, and raise money for our community ministry.

Check out our website [www.bcmpeace.org](http://www.bcmpeace.org) for more information!

### What we are asking of you:

- Register as a virtual walker and donate if you can!
- Start a team and fill it with friends and family!
- Follow us on social media to engage with our weekly activities

"Be the Peace"

[bcmPEACE.org](http://bcmPEACE.org) and [bcmPEACE](#) on social media





# Youth Corner

## Youth/Young Adult Group Updates: Back Up And Semi-Running

In the last few months the youth and young adults at Harrisburg First have gathered in person every other week.

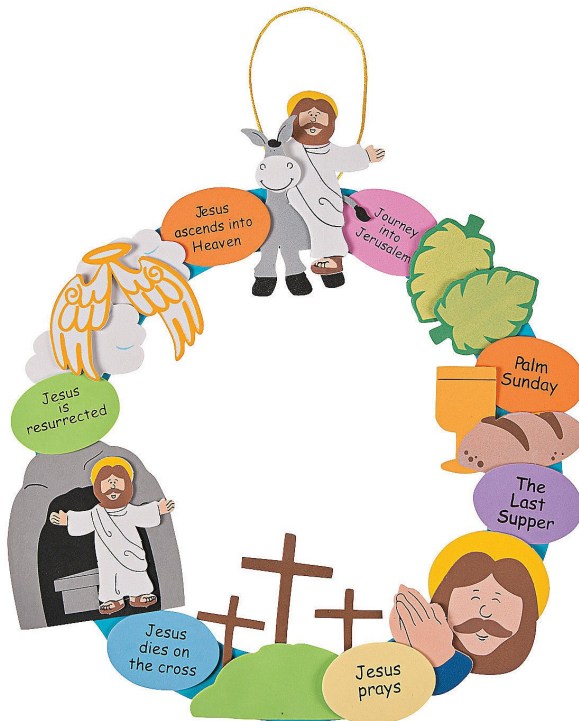
The young adults are the same crew that used to be the youth group, but have now outgrown that moniker. Most young adult gatherings center around consuming media and discussion. We have also continued some of our former traditions of cooking together, round table and other activities.

The youth group is now made up of younger members of our former youth group who have become the older members of the current group. In addition, we have added several sixth graders.

Youth meetings generally consist of playing games, discussing the teaching from the morning service and eating together.

If you or someone close to you would like to hang out with either group, contact Pastor Josiah at [josiahludwick@gmail.com](mailto:josiahludwick@gmail.com) for the schedule.

\*Social distancing, hand sanitizing and mask wearing are, of course, being observed to keep everyone safe\*



This month and into April, we will be celebrating Holy Week! This is a cool idea to remember what Holy Week means and all of the important events that took place such as Jesus riding in on a donkey, the last supper, Jesus' death, and Jesus' resurrection!

Use this idea as a guide to make something that is **your own representation of those events**. When you finish it, remind yourself of the miracles, the importance, and the love God has for us.

Also you can send in pictures of your crafts to the church by emailing them to [hbgfirstcob@yahoo.com](mailto:hbgfirstcob@yahoo.com) and we will put them in the next edition of the Growing Edge!

# Congregational News

## Discernment Team/Search Committee update

Thank you to everyone who filled out the survey asking about our congregation and our hopes and dreams moving forward. We received over 70 responses! We are now able to put together the congregational profile and send it to the district. We hope to complete this next step by the end of the month. Thank you to all who are praying and patient as we discern what is to come next in our journey. And thank you to the members of the discernment team who put in a lot of time and faithful work into this. We continue to keep them in our prayers.

## Upcoming Speakers!

We are blessed to have these special Sundays where we all come together as one body in Christ



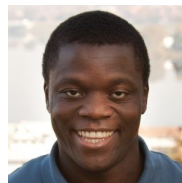
**March 7—Michaela Alphonse**, Pastor at Miami First Church of the Brethren, has spoke at National Youth Conference and been a leader in the Church of the Brethren

**March 14—Andy Hamilton**, Pastor at Steven's Hill Church of the Brethren, a very good friend to us here at First Church, and a bcmPEACE Board Member!



**March 21—Daniel Wright**, current BVS volunteer will be bringing the word! We are excited to welcome him into the pulpit!

**April 11—Hank Johnson**, Pastor at Harrisburg Brethren in Christ Church close by and a friend of our congregation!



**April 18—LaDonna Nkosi Sanders**, we have been blessed by her presence before and are excited to welcome her back for another powerful word.

## A Reflection Based on Our Time With Daniel Hill



"I was very moved by our time with Pastor Daniel Hill. He offered a genuine look into a constant pursuance of racial justice. It was powerful for me to see a white man so openly say that he does not know all things, it even took pressure from his peers to publish his books. When he spoke of a constant reflection of himself, I knew this one was different. He is someone who genuinely cares about growing in knowledge knowing he will not fully arrive. It reminded me of my sermon discussing transformation vs. transfiguration. We must transform constantly with the understanding that we will not be fully transfigured until we enter heaven"

- Alyssa Parker

You can watch his sermon as well as our discussion on our YouTube channel!

## Upcoming Easter Plans!

- ♦ Palm Sunday—Virtual Service
- ♦ Spring Love Feast—stay tuned for more information
- ♦ **Easter Service—we are hoping to have a live service outdoors, but more information to come as the time draws near.**



## What the Spiritual Life Team and Ministries are all about here at 1st Church

Here at Harrisburg First COB our leadership is affirmed at Church Councils and the Spiritual Life Team is just one part of the church's working teams. We assist the pastoral staff in caring for the physical, spiritual and emotional needs of our church family. God blessed us in 2020 with more than 28 new attendees to our outside services and they keep interacting virtually. About 20 plus others have reconnected and are attending again as well. This is an answered prayer, let the Church say "Praise God!" The Spiritual Life Team coordinates First Church's Deacon Ministry and we currently have 21 deacons who serve eleven deacon zones of members and regular church attenders. Most deacons have been in touch with those new to their zones. God is moving our church and it takes dedication, prayer and God's love to be in community. Please take time to know who your deacon is and get to know him/her. Let us know your needs, your gifts of how you too can serve or "be" for each other. If you are feeling the tug of the Holy Spirit to be called to this ministry, to be disciples or deacons, we encourage you to discuss this calling with our pastoral staff or your deacon. Deacons respond to the needs of the church through "Deacons of the month," visits, delivering the altar flowers to hospitalized or home bound persons and post Covid-19 connecting by email, text, card or call. Deacons of the month get to know others beyond their zone and purposefully serve the church body's needs that month with the pastoral team & staff. The Spiritual Life Team including many volunteers assist with planning Love Feast, communion (in worship and in home), anointing, funeral luncheons & baptism. Spiritual growth opportunities including devotionals, scriptures / uplifting encouragement, Zoom bible study on Sundays & midweek are communicated by email or monthly "Growing Edge." College student care packages & Holiday Widow / Widower cookie tubs are organized by the Spiritual Life Team. Our Anabaptist Disabilities Network and Healing Communities Network Representative, Mark Pickens, reports to the Spiritual Life Team. HFCOB is recognized by the Church of the Brethren as an Open Roof Fellowship. The Healing Communities Network representative reports to the Spiritual Life Team. HFCOB is a Station of Hope, welcoming our brothers / sisters returning from prison, creating a culture of healing and restoration for people affected by crime and incarceration. We have an active prayer ministry through our email prayer chain. Please continue to be in prayer, to share your concerns / testimonies and contribute ways we can continually the work of Jesus peacefully, simply, together!

Currently our Spiritual Life Team are: Deacon William Holland, Pastor Josiah Ludwick, Deacon Gene Mascioli, Deacon Ricky Mehaffie, Deacon Julie Newsome, Licensed Minister Mark Pickens, Deacon Joy Reardon, Chair of SLT and Deacon Doris Zeigler

The following scriptures are resources to study or learn more:

Exodus 18:13-26	Matthew 4:18-22; 10:1-4; 18:15-20	Acts 13:1-3
Romans 12:1-16	Mark 1:16-20; 2:14-17; 3:14-19	John 17:1-26
1 Timothy 3:8-13; 5:1-10 1	Peter 3:4; 8-12 1	Corinthians 14:12



# Announcements

ANE Women's Fellowship  
**Virtual Spring Fellowship**  
**March 20, 2021**  
**10a-11:30a**

## CONSIDER THE GARDENS Gardens & Spirituality

Speaker: Audrey Finkbiner  
 Ordained Minister & Chaplain

Traducción al español disponible.  
 See your Women's Fellowship  
 Representative or details on the ANE  
 website: [www.ane-cob.org](http://www.ane-cob.org) and Facebook.

**CeaseFirePA is hosting a Virtual Advocacy Day for Gun Safety on Tuesday, March 23rd.**

CeaseFirePA will be hosting several free training sessions. RSVP at the link to get details about lobbying training, an event schedule, and more:

<https://bit.ly/3sRnrot>

*Note: The RSVP link says the event is 9am to 4pm, but we will email you the details about what time your specific meetings are — you will not be expected to be on Zoom 9am-4pm*

## March 5

World Day of Prayer is a global ecumenical movement led by Christian women who welcome you to join in prayer and action for peace and justice.



**March 8 is International Women's Day and this month of March is Woman's History month.** I would encourage everyone to take a moment to appreciate the women in our lives, our society, history and everything in between who made it possible for us to be here now, especially our woman of color.

Join us at ON Earth Peace for four book club meetings to discuss *Healing Resistance* by Kazu Haga. The meetings will be 2:30pm - 3:30pm PST on Mondays and will take place on March 1, March 15, March 29, and April 5.

You can purchase the book wherever books are sold, including the audiobook and a digital copy. If you need assistance buying the book, please contact us for support.

Contact Clara McGilley at [kingian-intern@onearthpeace.org](mailto:kingian-intern@onearthpeace.org) for more information.

## HEALING RESISTANCE Book Club

By Kazu Haga



# Announcements Cont.

## 2021 Annual Conference gone virtual!

June 30 – July 4

**How will AC work virtually?** The platform is simply a website that you'll click on. It will ask you to enter the same email address that you registered with as well as a password emailed to you the week before Annual Conference begins. Once on that website, you can click to participate in Business Sessions, Insight Sessions, Networking Groups, Concerts and more! Delegates will have table conversations in online groups. There will be training sessions offered at various times in June so that you will be able to learn how to use this online platform. If you have questions feel free to contact us at [annualconference@brethren.org](mailto:annualconference@brethren.org) or 847-429-4366



**Why do we have to pay for Annual Conference if it's online?** Non-delegate and Delegate fees to "attend" Annual Conference online pay for the creation and management of the online platform, the salaries of Annual Conference staff, office and warehouse rental, etc. The Annual Conference budget does not receive money from the denominational budget or anywhere else, but is only funded by registration fees. Thus, the registration fees are critical to being able to offer an online Annual Conference this year. Registration allows you to participate in Business, Insight Sessions, Networking Groups, Concerts and more. Worship Services are free and will be available to everyone, registered or not. Non-Delegates fees: Full Conference: \$99, daily \$33 Delegate fees: Full Conference: \$305 **Registration opens March 2 at [www.brethren.org/ac](http://www.brethren.org/ac)**

## April 19-22, 2021

A Virtual Leadership Summit on Wellbeing for clergy and other church leaders is being planned by Church of the Brethren staff for April 19-22, 2021. The summit will open Monday evening with a keynote presentation by clinical psychologist and professor Dr. Jessica Young-Brown of Virginia Union University's Samuel DeWitt Proctor School of Theology.

Pre-recorded sessions by presenters on five aspects of wellbeing will be available for viewing in preparation for participating in Q&A sessions with the presenters during the week. Speakers will address themes including family/relational, physical, emotional, spiritual, and financial wellbeing.

CEUs will be available through the Brethren Academy upon registration for the event. Contact Stan Dueck at [sdueck@brethren.org](mailto:sdueck@brethren.org) or 847-429-4343 for more information.



*Keynote  
Speaker*

**Dr. Jessica  
Young Brown**

# Celebrations and Prayer Calendar

## Spring Forward!

Make sure to change your clocks on

### March 14



## Reminder:

Submissions for the April Growing Edge are due by

**March 20!**

Make sure to submit them to  
office@hbgfirstcob.org

Remember to continue to reach out to your friends, family and loved ones through this time. You never know how much a simple conversation or a letter can mean to someone missing their friends and family.

8	John R. Nantz	24	Eric Benson
11	Waneta Benson		Helen Fuge
13	William Hayes	28	Taviss Barchue
17	Waverly Chadwick	28	Belita Mitchell
21	Jim Boswell	31	Robert Brode



2	Don & Belita Mitchell
22	Bob & Beth Vroon

## 2021 ANE District Prayer Calendar

Encourage one another and build up each other, as indeed you are doing.

*1 Thessalonians 5:11*

		Pray for this church	Praying for First Church
March	7	Little Swatara (Bethel, PA)	Hatfield (Hatfield, PA)
	14	Jennersville (West Grove, PA)	Un Nuevo Renacer Fellowship (Mountville, PA)
	21	21Conewago (Hershey, PA)	Pottstown (Pottstown, PA)
	28	Schuylkill (Pine Grove, PA)	Grace Christian (Landsdale, PA)

# March 2020

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2 MCT Meeting	3	4	5 World Day of Prayer	6
7	8 bcmPEACE Board Meeting	9	10 Christian Ed Meeting	11	12	13
14 Spring forward!	15	16 Spiritual Life Meeting	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26 Trivia Night	27
28 Palm Sunday	29	30	31			

## Weekly Activities

10:00am Sunday Bible School for all ages	1:00pm Staff Meeting	5:00p Agape-Satyagraha	Pastor Josiah's Day Off 6:00pm Weekly Bible Study	11:00a Food Distribution	12:00pm Praise Band
11:00am Virtual Worship Service					
6:00p Youth/Young Adult Group					

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CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED



2021 *The Growing Edge*

### OUR CHURCH STAFF

**Josiah Ludwick,**  
*Associate Pastor, BCM Program Director*

**Waneta Benson,**  
*Organist*

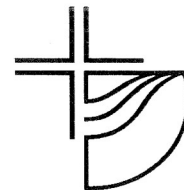
**Alyssa Parker,**  
*Operations Manager, bcmPEACE*

**Eric Joloka,**  
*Brethren Volunteer Service*

**Daniel Wright,**  
*Brethren Volunteer Service*

**Vacant,**  
*Administrative Assistant*

We are called to be a  
Christ-centered multi-cultural  
Community in the inner city,  
Sharing the love, healing, peace  
and justice of Christ.



**Anointed to share transformation  
in Christ Jesus.**

*The Growing Edge* is a publication of  
**Harrisburg First Church of The Brethren**  
for our members, friends, and neighbors, .