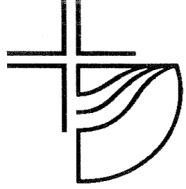


# The Growing Edge



**HARRISBURG FIRST  
CHURCH OF THE BRETHREN**  
219 HUMMEL STREET  
HARRISBURG, PENNSYLVANIA 17104-3399  
[WWW.HBGFIRSTCOB.ORG](http://WWW.HBGFIRSTCOB.ORG)



## A Prayer for June

Oh, gracious and loving God, we adore You for all that You do. We come before You, giving endless praise for Your love and faithfulness. We ask that You continue to carry us out the wilderness and lead us to the Promised Land like the Israelites. Carry us through uncertain times. Help us to remain steadfast through the many trials and tribulations. Father God, please be the lamp unto our feet and guide us back on the path of righteousness. Abba Father, we thank You for the strength You've given us on this journey. We ask that You continue to be with us every step of the way. We pray all these things, in Jesus' name. Amen.

- Eric Joloka

## Inside this Issue

Associate Pastor's Page	2
BV Ser Page	3
Community Ministry Page	4
Faith And Justice Corner	5
Youth Corner	6
Congregational News	7
Announcements	8-9
Celebrations and Prayer Calendar	10
Calendar	11

**PHONE: 717.234.0415**

**E-MAIL: [OFFICE@HBGFIRSTCOB.ORG](mailto:OFFICE@HBGFIRSTCOB.ORG)**

**ZOOM BIBLE STUDY 10:00AM**

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

# Associate Pastor's Page

## Watching Them Grow

The month of May was truly an emotional one for me as we celebrated the accomplishments of around 8 college graduates, a couple which have been in my life for quite some time.

Sierra Dixon came into my life when she was in about third grade. I saw her grow into an incredible young woman and leader in our youth group. I distinctly remember wondering if she even liked being around when she was in 9th or 10th grade, and one day she came into the office to meet with Pastor Belita. I was wondering what it was all about that she wouldn't have come to me. Turned out she had planned a big surprise for me where all the youth showed up for church and did a big "Thank You". From that moment on, Sierra was always someone I could rely on and I like to think she could rely on me too. She later graduated from High School and eventually enrolled at Penn State-Harrisburg. I was integrally involved in different facets of her time in university, but then we left for Africa. I wasn't able to literally "be there." But this didn't stop her from succeeding. In fact, I'd venture to say that this brief separation helped her realize how great she is on her own. The end result is graduating with a degree and even acceptance into grad school. I couldn't be prouder.

Briel Slocum came through our doors a few days after her 8th grade graduation. She immediately made an impact on our faith community and became a mainstay in our Community Ministry Programs. It was an era where we had committed attendees to youth group and other programs, but I couldn't get the youth to come to church regularly. I vividly remember the day that all changed. I think it was Youth Sunday or a week we were reporting about a trip or experience the youth had just gone through. Briel was sharing about the experience and ended her comments by saying something like, "I know some of you guys are worried about what will happen to your church. Some of you are aging and wondering what will happen. I just want you to know that now this is our church too, and we got y'all." That was probably 7 or 8 years ago now, and we have had regular attendees in youth/young adult age ranges ever since. Briel grew into a leader who others would rely on and look to for advice. She embodies the Agape Satyagraha lessons in conflict escalation and has resolved some circumstances in which even I didn't know what to do on more than one occasion.

People have told me what a good job I've done with that group of young people, and every time I tell them the real credit goes to these two young ladies. They have each been the leaders who have helped others to succeed as well. In some respect, each of them have also benefitted greatly from our Scholarship Fund, as paying for university was made much less of a hurdle. (So, don't forget to support this fund now and in the future!!!). Each has overcome much and come out on the other side shining like the stars they each are. They are each wonderful success stories in their own right, and two that we all can be very proud of.



**Pastor Josiah Ludwick**

*Pastor*

## An Interesting Month with New Changes and Strong Growth

This past month has been very interesting for me as I continue to work with the church and the community. For instance, I've been getting more comfortable with my role and leadership with the Agape Satyagraha Graduates. I was recently given the opportunity to talk about the Agape Kid's curriculum including the different sessions that's involved and what the program would look like. Within the community, I have continued volunteering with the Community Classroom at the Journey church which has been interesting. There have been some schedule changes and less kids due to many schools going back to in-person learning. For instance, my normal schedule was the afternoon from 12pm to 4pm, but recently I've been going in the morning from 8am to 12 pm. That part of my schedule change was very different but I was able to adjust to it. Furthermore, there have been some different faces in the Community Classroom, including some students and volunteers. I feel like I've learned a lot of lessons from this experience, including the need to adjust to new things and the importance of time management. Even though last month had its ups and downs, I started to gain more insight into my spiritual growth here in Harrisburg. Through working with the church, I started to understand some of my spiritual gifts and work on utilizing and improving them. For instance, self-control is something I'm improving in my walk with God and I am looking forward to improving on.

—Eric Joloka



## Saying Goodbye

My last month as a BVS volunteer has been a busy one. I was asked to join the property committee and have participated in several meetings. I was involved with the process of getting a new roof put on the church where I helped get different estimates for contractors. It is a good feeling to know the repairs are complete. The Community Classroom is winding down for the school year and we now average around five students a day. A summer program with field trips and mentorship will be starting shortly. Although I will not be participating, it has been a pleasure to see the kids grow. I attended the setup for the Heeding God's Call to End Gun Violence memorial in Steelton at the Islamic Society Center. Our help was not needed, but it was cool to see young students helping install the memorial. My time as a BVS volunteer is coming to an end.

I am headed to Medford, New Jersey which is close to Philadelphia. I got a job at a camp and conference center called Y.M.C.A of the Pines. I will be assisting in running a challenge course. I will also be starting graduate school soon. I want to get a Master's degree in Nonprofit Leadership. The last nine months have been a blur of outdoor church services, community meals, school classrooms and church maintenance. This is the most urban area I have ever lived in. I take with me the experiences of trying new foods, interacting with cultures that are different from my own, and living in a community house that I help equip. I plan to stay in touch and still attend the online services when I can.

- Daniel Wright





# Our Community Ministries



## Program Accomplishments this past month!



- Agape Graduates are currently designing a recipe book cover for the Allison Hill Farmer's Market
- Agape Graduates are interviewing Deacon Bill for the Allison Hill Newsletter with Tri-County Community Action!
- bcmPEACE has interviewed a potential Property Manager for the Safe and Affordable Housing Program!

## Highmark Walk for a Healthy Community

Monies raised: \$1,830  
Participants in virtual events: 13

### Things to know

- A \$10 donation gets you entered into our raffle
- We have fun prompts and challenges on our social media
- We have brochures and information you can use to share with friends and family
- This Father's Day donate in honor of your father and we will recognize them! Just donate as usual and then email us a picture and a brief statement of honor!

## COOKING UP A HEALTHY COMMUNITY: UBUNTU

June 7, 2021 | 5 PM | ZOOM



**Christine and Josiah Ludwick**  
Owners of The Ubuntu House  
Josiah is Pastor of Harrisburg First Church of the Brethren  
Christine is a Physicians Assistant at Hamilton Health

**Ubuntu** /ʊo'bʊon(t)ʊo/ n. - a quality that includes the essential human virtues; compassion and humanity. Meaning "I am because we are"  
Origin: South Africa, Zulu language

We are excited to have The Ludwicks discuss their journey opening up a community house for young people wanting to work/volunteer in the community. We will hear about the process, the impact, and the hopes and dreams for this community house!



This event is free, but we welcome donations for our Highmark Walk for a Healthy Community Fundraiser.

- Our Safe and Affordable Housing just got new and secure mailboxes installed!
- Wellness Hub has been giving out food to an average of 120 households each week
- Pathway to Prosperity Program has gained 3 new participants!
- We are excited to welcome Maryanne Fitzkee to the bcmPEACE team this Summer!
- Our Computer Program should be starting back up in June!
- We were available to assist in the installation of the Heeding God's Call Memorial to the Lost in Steelton

"Be the Peace"

bcmPEACE.org and bcmPEACE on social media



**Alyssa Parker,**  
bcmPEACE  
Operations  
Manager

# Faith and Justice Corner

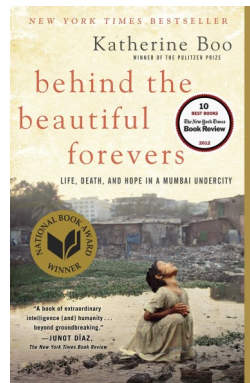
## A Good Book...

### ***Behind the Beautiful Forevers: Life, Death, and Hope in a Mumbai Undercity***

by Katherine Boo

This is not an easy book to read but from personal experience I can tell you that it is an honest and accurate one. I spent time in Calcutta India many years ago. The author spent time in a slum area in which 3000 people lived in 300 small huts. The author interviewed the residents and humanized them as individuals with their own stories to tell. Boo Overcomes the obstacles to effective reporting posed by her class, gender, ethnicity and language. She follows their lives and experiences to understand the problems of poverty from the bottom up. Reading this brought back many memories of my time there, both happy and sad. 5/5

-Daniel Wright



## A Good Show...

### ***THEM***

Available on Amazon Prime

This psychological horror drama visualizes the trauma of Black lives. The story centers around a family comprised of Mother, Father, High Schooler and Pre-Schooler in 1950s Compton, CA. Each of them, from the youngest to the oldest, have their own story and experience with trauma. There are elements of religious complicity and downright violence if you make it to the last few episodes. This show is one of the most heart wrenching shows I have ever watched. I even had to skip at times because it was too much. But it offers a look into the trauma black people face through the system that was not set up for them and allows the viewer to sit with the fact that this is real.

5/5

-Alyssa Parker



## Thriving Together Acceptance, Update, and Information!



This month the First Church cohort had our first meeting as part of the Thriving Together program. Thriving Together: Congregations for Racial Justice is a multi-faceted, multi-year initiative designed to strengthen Christian congregations so they can help people deepen their relationships with God, build strong relationships with each other, and contribute to the flourishing of local communities and the world. Out of a number of congregations, we were chosen to participate in this endeavor. Pastor Josiah, Donna Benson, and Alyssa Parker sit on the cohort representing the congregation.

“It was so interesting to see the other congregations that were apart of this program and share our interests with one another. I am excited to be on this journey.” - Alyssa Parker

Please keep this group in your prayers as they venture and discern the future of our congregation.

# Youth and Young Adult Corner

## Happy Juneteenth!

**What is Juneteenth?** Juneteenth is a holiday commemorating the freedom of the slaves in the United States. On June 19th 1865, the country's last enslaved people in Galveston, TX, were informed of their freedom! The name Juneteenth is a combination of the words June and nineteenth. The day is also called Emancipation Day and Freedom Day.

**When is Juneteenth celebrated?** June 19th

**Who celebrates this day?** The day is celebrated in the United States mostly by African-Americans. It is most celebrated in the state of Texas where it has been an official state holiday since 1980. Many other states recognize the day as either an official holiday or observance.

**What do people do to celebrate?** There are a number of different ways that people celebrate the day including parades, marches, and barbecues. Many people get together for ceremonies that include public service awards, prayer, and the raising of the Juneteenth Flag. Government and educational facilities will often have programs or information regarding the history of the holiday and the Emancipation Proclamation. It's also a time for African-Americans to celebrate their heritage.

### Fun Facts About Juneteenth

- It is the oldest known holiday that commemorates the end of slavery in the US. Juneteenth is the title of a book by author Ralph Ellison. Other books by Carolyn Meyer and Ann Rinaldi also center around the day.
- Some cities and groups have Miss Juneteenth contests.
- Strawberry soda pop was once a popular drink associated with celebrating the day.
- There is a Juneteenth Flag of Freedom. It is half red and half blue with a star in the middle. Each year a Juneteenth Flag raising ceremony is held in Galveston.

## What the flag represents:

**The star**—For one, it represents Texas, the Lone Star State. It was in Galveston in 1865 where Union soldiers informed the country's last remaining enslaved people that, under the Emancipation Proclamation issued two years earlier, they were free. But the star also goes beyond Texas, representing the freedom of African Americans in all 50 states.

**The burst**—The bursting outline around the star is inspired by a nova, a term that astronomers use to mean a new star. On the Juneteenth flag, this represents a new beginning for the African Americans of Galveston and throughout the land.

**The arc**—The curve that extends across the width of the flag represents a new horizon: the opportunities and promise that lay ahead for black Americans.

**The colors**—The red, white and blue represents the American flag, a reminder that slaves and their descendants were and are Americans.





# Congregational News



Happy Father's Day to all the Fathers who have made us who we are today! This includes biological fathers, step-fathers, and role models who molded us into who we are now. We thank you and we love you.



Join us!

We will be having fun with one another through crafts, games, and a Bible lesson!

Make sure to wear your mask!

## KID'S DAY!

AT FIRST CHURCH



JUNE 19  
10:00-  
11:30AM

### HARRISBURG FIRST CHURCH

We will meet in the back parking lot for fun in the sun! Parents and guardians please accompany your children for the duration of the event!



DUE TO COVID, WE CANNOT HOLD A LARGE GATHERING SO TO SECURE YOUR SPOT AT THE EVENT, CONTACT US AT [HBMFIRSTCOB@YAHOO.COM](mailto:HBMFIRSTCOB@YAHOO.COM)!

## Did you know there are books for Adults in our Social Justice Library?!

Our Social Justice Library is not only for children and Young Adults. It is for all ages to check out a book and read about social justice topics that interest them! To get you started, here are some titles we have for adults in the library available for check out:

- ***White Fragility*** by Robin Diangelo
- ***Stride Towards Freedom*** by Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.
- ***The Cross and the Lynching Tree*** by James Cone
- ***Who Will be a Witness*** by Dr. Drew G.I Hart
- ***The Half Has Never Been Told*** by Edward Baptist

These are only a few of the titles we have and more are coming! Check it out now!



If you would like to purchase a title from our wishlist, you can do so at [bcmPEACE.org](http://bcmPEACE.org)!

# Announcements



## Faith and Finances Saturday, June 12, 2021 9:00am - 12:30pm Online

Psalm 24 reminds us that God created everything, the heavens, the earth and all that live on it. As followers of Jesus, we are called to be servants of Christ and stewards of God's creation (I Cor. 4:1). This practical workshop will introduce (or re-introduce) you to the significant Biblical concept of Stewardship and specifically the way we manage our money – aligning our spending priorities with our faith values. We help you answer the question, “How do I put my money where my faith is?”

This virtual event will include opportunities to ask questions and share feedback with the presenters. Musicians and worship teams from our ANE District Urban churches will also lead us in times of worship throughout this event.

**Register now at [www.ane-cob.org](http://www.ane-cob.org)!**

*ANE Urban Ministries Initiative is empowered to propose new vision and practices for ministry in the urban context and committed to building a broader network of relationships among those who have a passion for mission in the city.*

## Kid's Day was a success!

We had fun discussing Pentecost and had 11 young disciples present! We even had 7 of the kids check out books from the Social Justice Library!



## Have A Green Thumb?

We are still offering our community garden plots to those who wish to start growing their own fruits, vegetables, and flowers!

Please see Waneta Benson if you are interested in securing a spot.

Also please reach out if you are interested in helping general maintenance of the space!



## Upcoming Speakers!

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



**June 6 // Rev. Jon Brenneman**—Another brother of Harrisburg First Church whom we love to hear from! We are excited to have him bring the word once again!

**June 20 // Dr. Katelin Hansen**—the Director of Operations for the nonprofit organization Community Development For All People in Columbus, OH. She will also be leading an afternoon workshop on the strengths-asset model. We are excited to welcome her!





# Announcements Cont.

## Have You Registered for the 2021 Virtual Annual Conference!

**June 30 – July 4**

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

A detailed schedule of events is now available on the website where you can find more information about my favorite part—the “equipping sessions” which include workshops on Kingian Nonviolence, Climate Change, Economic Peacemaking, and so much more!

**Register NOW at [www.brethren.org/ac](http://www.brethren.org/ac)**



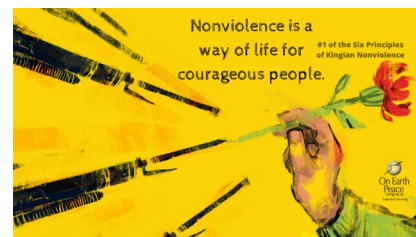
## Compelling Vision Bible Study

*“Together, as the Church of the Brethren, we will passionately live and share the radical transformation and holistic peace of Jesus Christ through relationship-based neighborhood engagement. To move us forward, we will develop a culture of calling and equipping disciples who are innovative, adaptable, and fearless.”*

There are still a few Bible Studies left if you have not yet attended and would like to!

The class meets via Zoom on Monday evenings at 6:30 p.m.

Lesson materials can be found on <https://www.brethren.org/ac/compelling-vision/bible-studies/>



## 2020 Kingian Nonviolence Training June 5–26 at 12pm-4:00pm EST Weekly Online via Zoom

Kingian Nonviolence workshops are transformational experiences that have helped thousands of people around the world understand the depth of the philosophy of nonviolence and learn to begin to bring the practices into their lives and their work. Whether you are an organizer working for social change, a teacher trying to change the culture of your school or simply an individual trying to deal with the conflicts in your personal life, each person will walk away from our workshops with new skills and a new perspective.

Leaders include: Sara Haldeman-Scarr, Xeo Sterling, Katie Shaw Thompson, and Dr. Esther Mangzha

**Register now at [https://www.onearthpeace.org/sd\\_knv\\_2021!](https://www.onearthpeace.org/sd_knv_2021!)**

# Celebrations and Prayer Calendar

## Its Time for Spring Council!

Our Spring Council will take place on **June 6, 2021 at 2:30pm via Zoom!**

You should have already received your Council Packet, but if you have not, please email the office and let us know! Also if you need the Zoom info or need help getting on, please reach out to us or your deacon so we can assist!



## Reminder:

Submissions for the June Growing Edge are due by

**June 20!**

Make sure to submit them to [office@hbgfirstcob.org](mailto: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.



4	Jazzmine Ortiz	20	Alan Benson
8	Rosie Fisher	23	Larry Stillions
11	Malcolm Wertz Jr.	25	Ewatomi Ajirotutu
	Adesewa Ajirotutu	26	Kathy Leitzell
12	Ian Roberts	27	Paul Albin
14	Steve Dodge		
16	Jackie Leiter		
19	Mark Wolfe		

## 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
June	6	Paxton (Harrisburg, PA)	Akron (Akron, PA)
	13	Mt. Wilson (Lebanon, PA)	Providence (Royersford, PA)
	20	Ambler (Ambler, PA)	Midway (Midway, PA)
	27	Philadelphia First (Wyndmoor, PA)	Lirio De Los Valles Fellowship (Lebanon, PA)

# June 2021

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 MCT Meeting	2	3	4	5
6	7 bcmPEACE Zoom Event	8 Stewardship Team	9	10	11	12
13	14 bcmPEACE Board Meeting	15 Spiritual Life Meeting	16	17	18	19 Juneteenth Kid's Day
20	21 BRT Meeting	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

## Weekly Activities

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



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HELLO  
June

2021 *The Growing Edge*

### **OUR CHURCH STAFF**

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

**Waneta Benson,**  
*Organist*

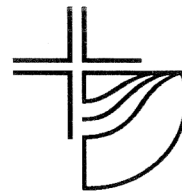
**Alyssa Parker,**  
*Operations Manager, bcmPEACE*

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

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

**Don-Valiant Mitchell**  
*Custodian*

**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, .