

# Wabash Church of the Brethren

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Kay Gaier, pastor



## *Here's what I'm thinking...*

This year's Advent Scriptures and Worship Resources from the *The Leader* draw us to Mary's prayer in Luke 1:38, "*Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word.*" Mary is often characterized here as a meek and passive, obedient servant, but a close look at the language Luke uses suggests a more active engagement with and commitment to God's plan. Mary is expressing a strong desire to be part of what God is doing in the world. Scholar Sarah Klitenic Wear offers this analysis;

*"Mary's response in the Annunciation highlights her supreme, humble obedience to God's plan. But in this humility, lies something earth-shattering. Mary's response to God's plan is nothing short of radical. For, she does not merely accept this plan—a plan so terrifying its messenger finds need to warn her 'be not afraid'—but she prays for it. Mary does not merely accept God's path for her—she wishes for it."*

So this Advent season we are invited, along with Mary, to make this our prayer to God: "Yes! Let it be!" The theme statement each Sunday will express a variant of this sense of prayerful desire to participate in God's activity. It is an invitation to make our prayer for this season that we will all be drawn into a deeper commitment to be co-participants in God's loving work in our world; to "let it be" with us as well.

***So here's what I'm thinking...*** Let us listen for God's word to each of us this Advent. Then during our evening service on Christmas Eve, our listening will be embodied with a symbolic action. We will prepare to go into the Christmas Eve night, bearing gifts of cookies to share with someone who will not expect it. Following the light of Christ's love, each of us will take to someone who is alone or sick or sad or kind or generous or working on Christmas Eve, a gift of Christmas Love, a plate of homemade cookies. It will likely take us out of our way to make this extra stop on our journey home to family celebrations. It will be an intrusion on "*Christmas Eve as usual.*" May it be a reminder of the way that God's plan often is an intrusion on our lives, and lead us to not only accept it, but to pray for it with Mary, saying; "Here am I, the servant of the Lord ; let it be with me according to your word." Amen.

December  
2017

*Blessings,*

*Kay*



# *Worship Schedule*

Our theme for Advent 2017 is built around Mary's pray in Luke 1:38, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord: let it be with me according to your word." Mary is giving voice to an active commitment. Mary is expressing a strong desire to be part of God's plan. So we are invited this Advent season, along with Mary, to make our prayer to God: "Yes! Let it be!"

December 3    Advent 1: Let it be    Hope  
Scripture    Isaiah 64:1-9, Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19  
Message    Pastor Kay Gaier

We awaken to God's purpose, which begins in darkness—whether seed in the ground, child in the womb, or new self in the soul, we use this time to wait, watch, and prepare for dramatic signs of God's presence in our midst. God is working to form us in God's image. It is time to get ready.

December 10    Advent 2: Let it be so    Peace  
Scripture    Isaiah 40:1-11, Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13  
Message    Pastor Kay Gaier

We long to be comforted. Moving from uncertainty and fear, we call upon God to make things ready—the mountains leveled, the paths made straight, our hearts prepared. These scriptures invite us to slow down. We yearn for the day when faithful love and truth shall meet, when righteous and peace shall kiss

December 17    Advent 3: Let it be whole    Joy  
Scripture    Isaiah 61: 1-4, Luke 1:26-38  
Message    Pastor Kay Gaier

Rejoicing in God's comfort, we catch God's vision of Shalom. If we are willing to both embrace the vision and to work passionately toward its fulfillment, we can be participants in the joy God seeks to bring into the world.

December 24    Advent 4: Yes! Let it be now    Love  
Scripture    Luke 1:39-55  
Message    Pastor Kay Gaier

Mary's Magnificat echoes Hannah's song of praise and predicts God's reign as if it has already happened. Grand mysteries, visions and hopes are today's theme: ancient promise, royal lineage, power brought down, the poor lifted up, secrets revealed.

December 21    The Longest Night Service

December 24    Christmas Eve    Yes! Let it be with you and me.  
Scripture    Luke 2:1-20  
Message    Pastor Kay Gaier

This is a night for rejoicing—a night to embrace the light that shines in the darkness. Love took flesh in the watches of the night. It happens again and again every time we carry Christ's love and light into the dark places and moments around us. Let us be Christ-light bearers as we carry Christmas into the night.

December 31    Happy New Year!  
Scripture  
Message    Laurie Kieffaber—Cornett

### December Special Offering— Advent Offering

The Church of the Brethren Advent Offering supports ongoing international partnerships with brothers and sisters in Nigeria, Haiti, South Sudan, and many other places around the world. It also helps fund the Office of Public Witness, the Youth Peace Travel Team, Youth and Young Adult Ministry events like Christian Citizenship Seminar, and many other ministries that provide opportunities for people of all ages to give voice to the fulfilled promises of God through action.



### Hanging of the Greens

On Sunday December 3 everyone is invited to stay for a meal (not a carry-in) and help with the decorating of the Church for the Advent Season. We will start the decorating around 1:00pm.



### News from the Church Board

To fill in a likely gap during the pastoral search process, Kay will continue her current  $\frac{3}{4}$  time package into 2018 on a month-by-month basis (for a maximum of 5 months). If necessary, hiring an Interim Pastor to fill in gaps at any time during the search process is also an option.

After Kay's decision to back off from her current  $\frac{3}{4}$  time position and a congregational meeting on November 5th with our District Minister, the pastoral "search" process is underway. The process is outlined below:

Step 8 = Once all parties agree and the final contract details are complete, we will be ready to welcome our new pastor and/or a pastoral team

Step 7= The recommendations from the Search Committee and the Church Board would then come to a Congregational Council Meeting where a decision would be made to "call" a pastor and/or a pastoral team

Step 6 = After discussions, the Church Board decides on the final recommendations

Step 5 = The Search Committee reviews the profiles of prospective pastors while also evaluating the possibility of a pastoral "team" and eventually brings recommendations to the Board



Step 4 = The Search Committee develops a "profile" of our congregation that is then circulated to potential pastors within the denomination

Step 3 = Committee members are approved by the Council Meeting

Step 2 = A time is announced for a specially called Council Meeting

Step 1 = The Church Board selects 10 to 12 nominees to serve on a Search Committee

## CAMP MACK

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At the end of the year, we ask all of our supporters if they can contribute to our annual fund. Gifts to this yearly appeal make a big difference in the lives of many who find sanctuary in this holy place. We thank you for your kind support of Camp Mack!

Christmas Get-A-Way Days – December 2nd

Williamsburg Wreathes and Swags, 9 a.m.–3 p.m. \$30

Christmas Ornaments, 9 a.m.–3 p.m. \$20

Christmas Cookies, choose December 2nd 12 p.m.–4 p.m. or

December 3rd 12 p.m.–4 p.m. \$45 (Saturday 9 a.m.–1 p.m. is FULL)

**Junior and Senior High Youth: Register now for the New Year's Eve Party at Camp Mack! Fee increases after Dec. 5. The party is from 2:00 p.m. on Dec. 31, 2017 until 12:30 p.m. on New Year's Day, Jan. 1, 2018. The theme is "Beyond Belief." Check out details and register at [www.campmack.org](http://www.campmack.org).**

Camp Mack Alternative Gift Options: Consider a life-changing gift—a gift of summer camp or a Good as Gold certificate for the program of the recipient's choice. Call camp to order a certificate. Also, give a monetary gift in honor or memory of a loved one.

Camp Mack Festival 2017 Report: After all income and expenses have been accounted for, the 2017 CMF raised over \$14,000.00 for camp. Many thanks to all who helped make the festival a success. Please join us again next year! Camp Reps, mark your calendars! Plan to attend the Camp Rep Meeting on Saturday, January 13, from 9:00 to 11:30 a.m. Enjoy a brunch and receive 2018 program information and materials. Please send a substitute if you are unable to attend.

**PRAYER REQUESTS:** God's Love to be evident in our lives; funds needed annually for Camp Mack.

### Phone system upgrade

The Stewards Commission is considering the usability of the current phone system (20—25 years old) and how well it does, or does not, fit our needs. They are soliciting the congregation for thoughts, concerns, and questions regarding what next steps should be. Please see Larry and let him know what you think.



### Timbercrest Festival of Trees

Saturday, Dec 2 10am-2pm

Be sure to swing by to check out the Christmas Bazaar, visit with Santa, and top the day off with cocoa and cookies!



If you would like to participate in The Salvation Army's Ringing of the Bells, Wabash Kroger and Walmart, North Manchester New Market you can call Deb at 260-563-8970 or sign up online at [registertoring.com](http://registertoring.com). Proceeds go toward: utility, rent, prescription, and gasoline assistance.



December 1st 7:00pm—Service of Lessons and Carols. Location: Manchester Church of the Brethren

December 3rd 3:00 pm—Manchester Symphony Orchestra Holiday Pops! and Amahl and the Night Visitors. Location: Cordier Auditorium

December 8th 7:30pm—Touchstone, A University Bands Concert. Location: Cordier Auditorium

December 12 4:00pm—Help with the Community Dinner. Location: Zion Lutheran North Manchester

December 14 5:00pm—Help pack items for Blessings in a Backpack. Location: Manchester Elementary



RELIEVE EDITORIAL STRESS:

**TURN IN  
YOUR ARTICLES  
EARLY!**

R E M I N D E R :

**DEADLINE FOR  
NEWSLETTER  
ARTICLES IS  
15th of every month**

### *Snow and ice*

If we ever have to cancel Sunday morning worship this winter because of snow and/or cold, please check WANE-TV (Channel 15), Ft. Wayne, for such an announcement. An attempt will also be made to post this info on the local radio station(s).

DID YOU KNOW...

The bulletin board articles get changed out every couple of weeks. Be sure to check it out for all the latest news from:



- ⇒ Manchester University
- ⇒ District Offices
- ⇒ Brethren Disaster Ministries
- ⇒ Global Food Crisis
- ⇒ Church of the Brethren, Nigeria
- ⇒ General Offices
- ⇒ Bethany Seminary
- ⇒ BVS The Volunteer
- ⇒ And many more!

#### Brethren Leadership Institute

Evangelism/Outreach Nov 4—9:00-4:00 Marion CoB

Taught by Nate Polzin, District Executive of the Michigan District and pastor of The Church in Drive In Saginaw.

Contact Tina at [scincob@gmail.com](mailto:scincob@gmail.com) for registration information.

**BRETHREN LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE**

The next BLI class is Preaching, taught by Aaron Gross, pastor of the Logansport Church of the Brethren.

Class sessions are these dates:

Saturday, January 20, 2018

Saturday, February 3, 2018

Saturday, February 17, 2018

Back-up date in case of a weather cancellation of another day: February 24.

Register by January 3 to avoid a late fee.

The spring class will be History of the Church, taught by Mark Flory Steury.

More information about the Brethren Leadership Institute can be found at the district website.

## Rejoice on Giving Tuesday

By Matt DeBall, coordinator of Donor Communications  
*"The Lord has done great things for us, and we rejoice"*  
(Psalm 126:3).

*Blessed are you, Lord, our God, Ruler of the Universe. We praise you for your steadfast love and for your mighty works in the world. Thank you for redeeming and restoring us, your church. Ignite our hearts to serve you and others more fully. In the name of Jesus we pray, Amen.*



**Rejoice and be glad!** God has been faithful to us. Despite the challenges and hardships we face, God continues to express love to us in profound ways. Overwhelmed by the goodness of God, it seems natural that we would respond with praise and gratitude.

As we give thanks to God in this season, we continue a long tradition. The Israelites, after being rescued from difficulty and distress, were filled with gratitude and love for God. They rejoiced with heartfelt singing and joyful dancing. They gave of the best of themselves as an act of praise.

Like the Israelites, there is much for which we can be thankful. Through the provision and love of God, the Church of the Brethren continues to share the peace of Christ.

This year alone, **God has done many great things among us.**

- Approximately 302 youth, young adults, and advisors served in 19 workcamps.
- The Mission and Ministry Board has approved two new mission projects in Venezuela and in the Africa Great Lakes region (Democratic Republic of Congo, Rwanda, and Burundi).
- More than 800 individuals attended Inspiration 2017 (National Older Adult Conference).
- The Office of Public Witness helped lead a conversation with elected officials to raise concerns and propose ways to address the humanitarian and food crisis in northeast Nigeria.
- 45 Brethren Volunteer Service volunteers faithfully served around the world.

And from BDM:

- To support the Church of the Brethren congregations in the Puerto Rico district and their communities, a container is being shipped from the Brethren Service Center with canned chicken from the Mid-Atlantic & Southern PA districts, 14 generators, gas cans, power cords, chain saws, BDM carpentry tool kit & saws, 200 water filters and buckets, 200 large heavy-duty tarps and solar lanterns.
- Children's Disaster Services has already surpassed last year's record number of deployments with sent 153 dedicated volunteers to 13 responses that cared for 2,328 children, including a damaged dam and wildfires (California), tornados (Georgia, Missouri), flooding (New York, Missouri), a mass shooting (Las Vegas) and both Hurricanes Harvey (Texas) and Irma (Florida).
- Rebuild Program volunteers helped rebuild more than 55 homes damaged by disasters in Missouri, South Carolina, West Virginia, and several other locations.
- Disaster Ministry Response team of Ekklesiyar Yan'uwa a Nigeria (EYN, the Church of the Brethren) provided eight food distributions in the last few months which fed around 300 families at a time. Additional support has focused on rebuilding homes of the most vulnerable in the community, agriculture & livelihoods leading to self-sufficiency, education, peace building & trauma recovery, medical & home supplies and church recovery.

# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



## ***What will I be doing at NYC?***

Everyday at NYC there are 2 worship services, workshops, recreation time, service projects, hiking, small groups, late night activities and so much more! It will be a week jam packed of fun, fellowship and making new friends!

## ***Who will my roommate be?***

You will get to put down who you would like to room with and we do our best to match preferences.

## ***Who will be in my small group?***

You will be placed in a small group with youth from all over the country. Small groups can be the place where you make new friends and meet new people!

## ***Do we have to sign up for workshops before we get to NYC?***

You will get to choose what workshop you want to attend when you arrive to campus, and you don't sign up for workshops you just attend.

## ***Is there an extra cost to go hiking and do service projects?***

No, these memorable parts of NYC are free! When you register you will choose if you want to go hiking and participate in a service project.

## ***What should I pack for NYC?***

Bed linens, pillows, a blanket and shower towels will be provided in the dorms. You should pack sunscreen, a Bible, journal and pen, modest comfortable clothes and shoes, toiletries, camera, a reusable water bottle, money and items for offerings, a homemade pillow for worship, and a jacket or sweatshirt.

