

THE HIGHLIGHTS



Western PA District Church of the Brethren

DISTRICT MINISTER NOTES

Celebrity Status

Society often envies celebrities. People pay various amounts of money to meet celebrities from sports, Hollywood, politics, and other professions. We place these people on a pedestal, as if they were better than others.

We make judgments and form opinions based upon what we see or witness these persons doing. What we fail to realize is that in some respects, our opinions or judgments are skewed. What we witness of Hollywood celebrities is often the result of many outtakes. We only see what the producer/director of the TV show or movie wants us to see; we don't see all of the outtakes and mistakes of real life. In reality, without the outtakes, we elevate these people to a "better than" status.

A few years ago, my son Seth, my granddaughter Sara, and I attended an NHRA drag-racing event with my younger son, Ethan. During the event, Seth and Sara had the opportunity to meet and spend time with Tony Stewart and Leah Pruett, celebrities in motorsports. They spent time with Tony and Leah in their race haulers' lounge. As they visited, Seth realized Tony and Leah were no different than any of us. They have concerns, worries, doubts, and feel pressure to perform for race fans and sponsors. As we discussed their visit, I said Tony and Leah are people just like us, only they are often in the national spotlight, in the world of auto racing. I just finished reading an autobiography of Lou Holtz's life titled "Wins, Loses, and Lessons."

The book covered Lou's life as a college and NFL football coach. Lou tells the story of dinner at the white house, and I quote, "Beth and I were fortunate enough to go to the White House for the first time for dinner with President Reagan when we were at the University of Arkansas

. I splurged and hired a limousine, and the evening was everything I had hoped it would be. At our dinner table were Chief Justice Warren Burger, Olivia Newton-John, and others. Beth and I aren't much for dancing, so we left the White House around midnight. I asked the chauffeur to drive us around the Capitol, the Lincoln Memorial, the Supreme Court, and other historical buildings. I had seen them previously, but I was feeling very patriotic and, as always, proud to be an American. However, I had a headache, so our first stop was at a drugstore five blocks from the White House. I had no sooner gotten out of the car than the driver locked the limo for safety. Once inside the drugstore, I saw a man with a gun sticking out of his pocket. Then I noticed a huddle of drug addicts and homeless people standing near the corner. And these were the impressive ones! Just one hour earlier, I was socializing with the president of the United States, members of the Supreme Court, senators, movie stars, and entertainers. Five blocks away from the White House, it was hard to believe I was still in America.

It was a sobering moment, one I have never forgotten and one that taught me that the people I met at the White House, despite all their accomplishments, are no more important than the ones I met in the drugstore. I was sorry I didn't exhibit the same respect and friendliness to the armed homeless man that I did to those I met at dinner.

DISTRICT MINISTER NOTES cont'd

I made a promise to myself that night, one I've tried to keep for the past quarter century: I do everything I can to treat all strangers as celebrities. The truth of the matter is, they are." End quote. Lou made the effort to treat everyone he met with equal importance. The same is true for the church.

At times, pastors or evangelists have been elevated to celebrity status as their ministries grow, perhaps by hosting weekly televised services or becoming the focus of national media. At the local level, a church member who is a successful businessperson or community leader is placed in church leadership and rewarded with power and authority within the church structure. We are instructed in James 2:1-20 that elevating some people above others is sinful. In other words, there is no celebrity in God's eyes. And placing judgment upon one person or another is also sinful. We are all sinners, we are God's children, and we are instructed to love our neighbor as ourselves. When we practice that, judgment and status fade away. In God's eyes, how many degrees, titles, offices we hold, professional credentials, or celebrity status mean nothing. God views us on an equal basis, as one of his children. In a world that seems more divided. May we treat the people we encounter with respect, reflecting God's love and compassion for his children.

Blessings

Pastor Chris Forry
W.PA District DM Team

James 2: 1-20

NRSV Updated Edition

Warning against Partiality

2 My brothers and sisters, do not claim the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ of glory while showing partiality. 2 For if a person with gold rings and in fine clothes comes into your assembly, and if a poor person in dirty clothes also comes in, 3 and if you take notice of the one wearing the fine clothes and say, "Have a seat here in a good place, please," while to the one who is poor you say, "Stand there," or, "Sit by my footstool," 4 have you not made distinctions among yourselves and become judges with evil thoughts? 5 Listen, my beloved brothers and sisters. Has not God chosen the poor in the world to be rich in faith and to be heirs of the kingdom that he has promised to those who love him?

6 But you have dishonored the poor person. Is it not the rich who oppress you? Is it not they who drag you into the courts? 7 Is it not they who blaspheme the excellent name that was invoked over you?

8 If you really fulfill the royal law according to the scripture, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself," you do well. 9 But if you show partiality, you commit sin and are convicted by the law as transgressors. 10 For whoever keeps the whole law but fails in one point has become accountable for all of it. 11 For the one who said, "You shall not commit adultery," also said, "You shall not murder." Now if you do not commit adultery but you murder, you have become a transgressor of[a] the law. 12 So speak and so act as those who are to be judged by the law of liberty. 13 For judgment will be without mercy to anyone who has shown no mercy; mercy triumphs over judgment.

FROM THE DISTRICT OFFICE

The Highlights deadline for the
July 2026 issue is

June 10, 2026

Please send your information
to tlehman@brethren.org.

DISTRICT STAFF:

District Minister Team

Pete Kaltenbaugh

mdalepastorpete@comcast.net

Ruby Mader

redhatvicar@yahoo.com

Chris Forry

exit10dunkard@hotmail.com

Financial Clerk: Amy Bowman

wpacob@atlanticbb.net

District Secretary: Tina Lehman

tlehman@brethren.org

DISTRICT OFFICE HOURS:

Monday - Thursday**

8:30 am - 3:00 pm

**Closed every Friday

Financial Clerk is in

Tuesday & Thursday

9:00 am to 3:00 pm

CONTACT US:

115 Spring Road

Hollsopple, PA 15935

814-479-2181

Website:

www.westernpacob.org

2026 DISTRICT DIRECTORY

The 2026 District Directory
is now available. If you have
any updates or changes,
please send them to me asap
so that I can publish them
here in the Highlights.

Any questions, please
contact me at

tlehman@brethren.org

or 814-479-2181.

Thank you!

Tina

REQUEST FOR DIRECTORIES

It is very helpful to the
District Office staff to have
updated information from
all the churches we serve.

If your congregation will be
making a new directory for
2026 please send one to:

Western PA District Office
115 Spring Road,
Hollsopple, 15935

Thank you!

HAPPY FATHERS DAY

The Lord is like a
father to his children,
tender and
compassionate to those
who fear him.

PSALMS 103:13



LivingChristian.org

ACROSS THE DISTRICT

FOR ALL WHO MINISTER MANUALS

We are no longer able to order the handbook **For All Who Minister**. This helpful minister's manual is given to persons when they are licensed to ministry. If you have an extra copy or one that is not being used, please consider donating it to the District. It will then be given to someone called to future ministry



VIRTUAL SERVICES

Arbutus COB - <https://arbutuscob.org/>

Freedom Church (Indiana COB) - Freedom Church on Facebook and @FreedomChurch-cd9xj on YouTube

Geiger COB - <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1709517105945633>

Hostetler COB - <https://www.facebook.com/HostetlerCOBMeyersdalePa>

Meyersdale COB - https://www.facebook.com/people/Meyersdale-Church-Of-The-Brethren/100064412810727/?eav=AfZ_hZTDR0BT2145UoR6btO6zS69_LKf8aq-ZM8IDloOJ_v6FfXuzfhRJn8YR1Nqs9g&ref=py_c&paipv=0

Rummel COB - <https://rummelchurch.com/sermons/>

Salisbury COB -

<https://www.facebook.com/Salisbury-Church-of-the-Brethren-211422968870314>

Walnut Grove COB - <https://www.facebook.com/Walnutgrovecob>

ACROSS THE DISTRICT

CALL FOR CHOIRS OR ENSEMBLES

Calling all church choirs, ensembles, quartets, etc. The Program and Arrangements Committee is looking for a group to share the song "Go Ye into All the World" at this year's District Conference.

The Committee would like to open the conference with the singing of this song as our 2026 District Conference theme is Preach the Gospel! The whole conference would then sing the song again before adjournment that day. Music will be provided.

If your group would be interested in singing, please contact District Moderator Abby Shaffer at abramash10408@gmail.com or call Tina at the District Office at 814-479-2181.



REMEMBER IN PRAYER

Please pray for Annual Conference, all the delegates, non-delegates, and leadership to listen to what God is calling the denomination to do over the next year.

CHICKEN BBQ

Shade Creek Ridge COB
1623 Ridge Road Hooversville

July 11, 2026
11:00 am to 2:00 pm

Chicken Barbecue Meal
\$13.00 meal includes :1/2 chicken,
baked potato, roll, and dessert.

Eat in or take out

Call 814 754-5593 to order tickets by
July 5th

We invite you to our:
*The Annual
Hot Dog Roast*

Saturday July 18
5pm

Hostetler Church of the Brethren
2344 Sand Spring Rd Meyersdale PA



Please bring a covered dish to share.
Hot Dogs, Drinks and Music will be provided.

SOME GOOD NEWS

NEW MINISTER TEAM

Hostetler COB welcomes their new pastor team! Pastor Travis Shaulis and Pastor Kaitlyn Coughenour were installed as the new co-pastor team on Sunday, April 12, 2026.



The Hostetler COB is very happy to welcome Pastor Travis with his wife Christina and Pastor Kaitie to be part of their congregation and invite the District to pray for them as they begin this new ministry.

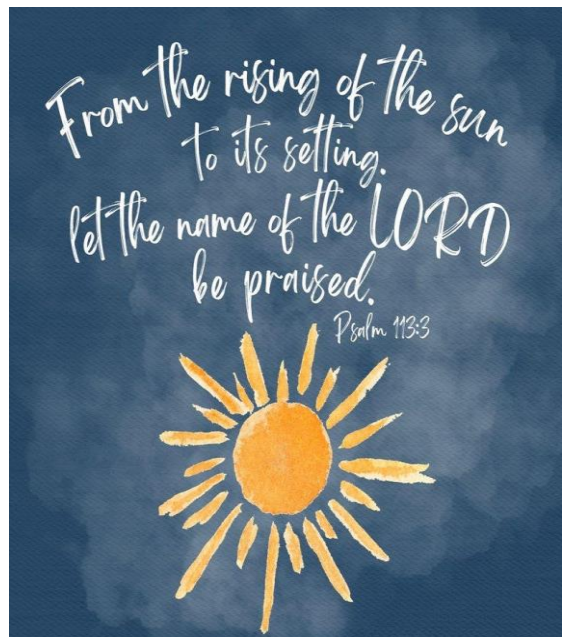
CALL FOR GOOD NEWS

We can all use some good news now and again right?

Stories of serving in the community, milestone birthdays and anniversaries, academic achievements, etc.

I look forward to sharing more good news from the District!

tlehman@brethren.org



DISTRICT CONFERENCE

Hello!

I pray the church is healthy and growing where you are!

I'm writing today because every year in our district, we have a wonderful opportunity to gather together and spend some time in worship, fellowship, and sharing in the business of the wider church community. This year, that's going to happen on

Saturday, September 19

at our 160th annual District Conference!



**Preach the
Gospel!**

We'll gather at the County Line meetinghouse in Champion, PA, and we'll begin the day's program at 9:00 am. Our hosts will serve us a tasty brunch, and we'll hope to adjourn by 12:30 pm.

We'll talk about what it means to Preach the Gospel, and we'll hear from our sisters and brothers in faith.

You are invited to share in this special morning - talk with your pastor or board chair today, and find out how you can take part! Registration will be open soon, so check your calendar and talk with your people. I hope to see you there!

grace & peace, Abby & friends

DISTRICT CONFERENCE

Western Pennsylvania District Church of the Brethren

115 Spring Road, Hollsopple, Pennsylvania 15935-7412

814 479-7058 814 479-2181



Church of the Brethren

MEMO

TO: Western PA District Churches
FROM: Program and Arrangements Committee
DATE: June 2026
RE: 2026 District Conference Information

Greetings in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ!

The Western PA District Annual District Conference will be held at **County Line Church of the Brethren, 1411 County Line Road, Champion, PA 15622 on Saturday, September 19, 2026**. The Program and Arrangements Committee is working hard to insure a productive and uplifting experience for all those in attendance. We are also pleased to announce that we will again be serving brunch during the business meeting. We appreciate your prayers and patience as we go forward during this time. Thank you!

There will be NO on-site registrations. Please register by completing the included form and send to the District Office by SEPTEMBER 1, 2026.

The registration fee for the conference is \$30.00 per person, which includes brunch, conference booklet materials, and facility fee.

Enclosed you will find the **District Conference Registration Form**.
Please send **ONE** check and **ONE** registration form for your church

Please share this information with your delegates and non-delegates of your congregations. REMEMBER, ALL registrations must be done BEFORE District Conference.

Individuals attending the conference should report to the Check-In Table by 8:30 am on September 19th in order for the conference to begin on time. If you have any questions regarding District Conference, please feel free to contact the District Office at 814 479-2181 or toll free at 1-866 279-2181.

DISTRICT CONFERENCE

2026 WESTERN PA DISTRICT CONFERENCE

Saturday, September 19, 2026 – 9:00 am

County Line Church of the Brethren, 1411 County Line Road, Champion, PA 15622

**Participants recommended arrival time is 8:30*

CONFERENCE REGISTRATION FORM

CHURCH _____

Number of **DELEGATES** _____ **NON-DELEGATES** _____ @ 30.00 each

TOTAL REGISTRATION FEE _____

[\$30.00 registration covers registration materials, meal and beverages, facility fee]

There will be NO on site registrations. Please complete this form

and send to the District Office by SEPTEMBER 1, 2026.

Make ONE check for ALL participants payable to:

Western PA District COB, 115 Spring Road, Hollsopple PA 15935-7412

Before mailing to the District Office, please copy this form for your records.

The Program and Arrangements Committee is working hard to make sure this year's conference is a success and they thank you in advance for your support.

- Each Church may have **NO MORE THAN 6 individuals** represented.

◆ **DELEGATE REPRESENTATION—Choose 4 from the list below**

- Elected Delegates for 2026
- Pastor
- Board or Church Leadership Team Chair
- Commission or Team Chairs
(Ministry, Nurture, Stewards, and Witness **OR** an authorized/appointed representative of those commissions)
- Youth Representative

◆ **NON-DELEGATE REPRESENTATION—Each congregation is allowed 2**

Registration Form on Reverse Side →→→→→

DISTRICT CONFERENCE

DELEGATE

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Brunch will be served at 10:30 am.

Food Allergies: _____

DELEGATE

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Brunch will be served at 10:30 am.

Food Allergies: _____

DELEGATE

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Brunch will be served at 10:30 am.

Food Allergies: _____

DELEGATE

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Brunch will be served at 10:30 am.

Food Allergies: _____

NON- DELEGATE

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Brunch will be served at 10:30 am.

Food Allergies: _____

NON- DELEGATE

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Brunch will be served at 10:30 am.

Food Allergies: _____

SERVING IN THE DISTRICT AND BEYOND

CHURCH WORLD SERVICE KITS

We would like to take this time to thank the congregations in the Western PA District for their generous donations of school, hygiene, and clean up bucket kits over many years. Church World Service continues to serve communities here and abroad by delivering these kits where they are needed. There is a new Mission Central location in Mechanicsburg PA (near Harrisburg) that will be the location where kits can be delivered. Please see the info in the below.

CWS Mission Central
5 Pleasant View Drive
Mechanicsburg, PA 17050

HOURS:—Friday, 9 a.m.—3 p.m.
(Closed on weekends and holidays)

Please plan to arrive by **2:30 pm** so their team has time to assist you before closing. If your delivery fills more than an SUV, please call **717-766-1533** advance. Mission Central is closed on holidays. If you have a specific question, please call prior to delivering kits.

Our District is going to ask that for this year and for the 2026 District Conference, please try to have your individual congregations deliver their own kits or work with other COB churches to collect and deliver kits to this new location in Mechanicsburg, PA. If that does not work for you, contact the District Office and we will other make arrangements.

Thank you!



FOOD PANTRIES

Walnut Grove Food Pantry
<https://www.facebook.com/Walnutgrovecob/>

Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank
<https://www.pittsburghfoodbank.org/>

Please consider donating food to these or any other groups in our area.

AVAILABLE SPEAKERS

ORDAINED MINISTERS

FARREL ABRAHAM

4315 Seton Drive
Pittsburgh, 15227-1245
412-979-0067
sharingpearls@comcast.net

LINDA BEACHLEY

PO Box 723
Davidsville, 15928-0723
814-479-4802
lrbeac@atlanticbb.net

RONALD BEACHLEY

PO Box 723
Davidsville, 15928-0723
814-479-4802
rondbeachley@gmail.com

KEVIN BROADWATER

475 Keystone Street
Meyersdale, 15552-6943
814-442-5684
pastorbroadwater@verizon.net

KAITLYN COUGHENOUR

785 Red Dog Roa
Salisbury, 15558
814-521-4649
shellywithattitude@gmail.com

AMELIA DERR

1202 Roberts Street
Nanty Glo, 15943-1325
814-749-0262
iamameliaderr@yahoo.com

ERIC KABLER

126 Clermont Street
Johnstown 15904-2132
814-242-0920
eric.kabler@kablerthomas.com

ERIC LONGWELL

240 Plumcreek Road
Shelocta, 15774-3144
724-599-8690
kb3ttx@gmail.com

GARY MOSORJAK

1337 Roxbury Avenue
Johnstown, 15905-1224
814-659-5853
wendel05@aol.com

TRAVIS SHAULIS

608 Second Street
Meyersdale, 15552
814-442-8626
tanbadaner@gmail.com

ROBERT SIMONSICK

111 Apple Jack Lane
Greensburg, 15601
419-934-1794
bprabsimon@aol.com

MICHAEL SWICK

4127 Greenville Road
Meyersdale 15552-8518
814-634-8158
preachmike101@comcast.net

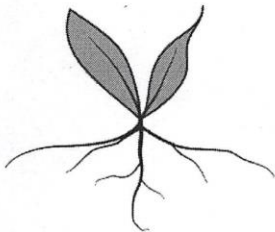
JAMES WHITED

14 Pennsylvania Avenue
Brookville 15825
814-592-5714
jrwhitedsr@gmail.com

CONTINUING EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES

Continuing Education Offerings from Susquehanna Valley Ministry Center

For more information and to register, please click on the title of the event, or contact SVMC.



- February 17, 2026: Spiritual Well-Being: Strengthening & Refining. A Zoom session with Julie Guistwite. **COMPLETED**
- March 13, 2026: Love Feast: Past, Present, and Future. An in-person session at Cross Keys Village with Denise Kattering-Lane. **COMPLETED**
- April 18, 2026: Better with Less Workshop. A Zoom session with G. Jeffery MacDonald (Sponsored by Atlantic Northeast District). **COMPLETED**
- June 3, 2026: Congregational Ministry to Members Navigating Divorce Experiences. A Zoom session with Julie Guistwite. (Registration not yet open). **COMPLETED**
- October 6, 2026: Caring for Congregational Members with Chronic Health Conditions: A Zoom session with Julie Guistwite. (Registration not yet open).
- October 29, 2026: Supporting Congregational Members with Chronic Health Conditions. A Zoom session with Julie Guistwite. (Registration not yet open).

www.etown.edu/svmc

SVMC@SvmcCob.org

717-361-1450

ANNUAL CONFERENCE

go to www.brethren.org for the most complete and up to date news from the Church of the Brethren



Annual Conference 2026 Sunday, June 28 – Thursday, July 2 Fort Wayne, Indiana Grand Wayne Convention Center

Registration now open at
<https://www.brethren.org/ac2026/registration/>

See links below for Annual Conference information:

Gathering and Worship:

<https://us4.campaign-archive.com/?u=fe053219fdb661c00183423ef&id=0ffe1e504f>

Exploring the Exhibit Hall:

<https://us4.campaign-archive.com/?u=fe053219fdb661c00183423ef&id=a6998fba7e>

Message from the Moderator:

<https://us4.campaign-archive.com/?u=fe053219fdb661c00183423ef&id=653a589572>

Discover Fort Wayne, Indiana:

<https://us4.campaign-archive.com/?u=fe053219fdb661c00183423ef&id=1b45073bbf>

General Annual Conference information:

<https://www.brethren.org/ac/>



July 18 – 23 at the [YMCA of the Rockies in Estes Park, Colorado](#) National Youth Conference (NYC) provides young people in high school and the first year of college (or are age equivalent) and their advisors the chance to gather for a week of fellowship, worship, workshops, recreation and more!

NYC 2026 forms and payments are due **as soon as possible!** You can find the forms and link to pay online in your confirmation email that you received after registering. For those paying by check, please put NYC on the memo line and mail to 1451 Dundee Ave, Elgin, IL 60120.

If you need the forms again or have questions, please email cobyouth@brethren.org.

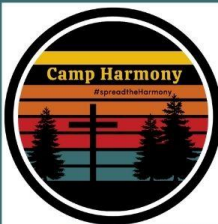
Grant of \$500,000 to the Church of the Brethren will support Brethren Disaster Ministries

The Church of the Brethren has been awarded a half-million dollar grant to support Brethren Disaster Ministries, reported Roy Winter, executive director of the Church of the Brethren's Service Ministries and Brethren Disaster Ministries. The grant will support "a three-year program expansion and improvements to US based programs," he said.

The grant was received from Lilly Endowment Inc. through its initiative, "Hope After the Storm: Capacity Building for Faith-Based Disaster Relief Organizations."

Winter emphasized that continued financial support of Brethren Disaster Ministries programs by individuals, congregations, and districts will be important during the three-year grant cycle, as the grant does not fund normal operations.

Read more at www.brethren.org/news/2026/grant-of-500000-to-church-supports-bdm



SUMMER CAMP 2026

PROVIDING ADVENTURE & FUN WITH AN ETERNAL PURPOSE.

DAY CAMPS \$110

GRADES K-6, 9AM-4:30PM

Day Camp 1: June 15-19

Day Camp 2: July 6-10

Day Camp 3: July 13-17

Day Camp 4: July 27-31



PRE-K CAMPS \$65

AGES 3-5, 9AM-12PM

Pre-K Camp 1: June 8-12

Pre-K Camp 2: July 13-17

OVERNIGHT CAMPS \$390

OVERNIGHT 1

GRADES 2-12

June 28 - July 3

OVERNIGHT 2

GRADES 2-12

July 19-24

YOUTH ADVENTURE

GRADES 7-12

July 26-31



WILDERNESS CAMPS \$390

Wilderness 1: June 21-26

Grades 2-8

Wilderness 2: July 5-10

Grades 7-12



SIBLING DISCOUNTS AND SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE!

REGISTRATION OPENS FEBRUARY 1ST!

www.CAMPHARMONY.ORG

CAMP HARMONY

WHY SUMMER CAMP?

- COMMITTED STAFF**
Staff go through an extensive background and interview process, and are committed to the wellbeing of you camper!
- DISCONNECTED**
Camp provides an opportunity to disconnect from technology.
- SOCIAL GROWTH**
Some campers find lifelong friendships and engage with others their age!
- PROMOTES INDEPENDENCE**
Campers get to make their own choices. what to eat, strategize for games, etc..
- PROMOTE PHYSICAL ACTIVITY**
Campers are always on the GO! Games, activities, swimming. the fun is endless
- BIBLICAL INTEGRATION**
Each day, campers have Bible/Chapel, Devotions and memory verses!



CAMP HARMONY

WE'RE LOOKING FOR OUR NEXT **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR!**

PROVIDING ADVENTURE AND FUN WITH AN ETERNAL PURPOSE!



CAMP HARMONY IS SEEKING A MISSION-DRIVEN LEADER TO PROVIDE SPIRITUAL AND OPERATIONAL LEADERSHIP, ENSURING A SAFE, FUN, CHRIST-CENTERED EXPERIENCE FOR ALL GUESTS.

Full details at www.campharmony.org/about

WPA DISTRICT CALENDAR June 2026

Sunday Monday Tuesday Wednesday Thursday Friday Saturday

| | | | | | | |
|--|----------------------------|----------------------------|----|----|-----------------------------------|----|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 District Office Closed | 6 |
| 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 |
| 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 |
| 21 Happy Father's Day! | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 |
| 28 Annual Conference Begins – Fort Wayne IN | 29 Annual Conference | 30 Annual Conference | | | | |



2026 DISTRICT EVENTS AND MEETINGS

If your congregation, committee, or group would like to have information listed on the District Calendar, please send it in to the District Office by the 10th of each month. Thanks!

JUNE 2026

28 - ANNUAL CONFERENCE begins,
Fort Wayne, IN

JULY 2026

2 - ANNUAL CONFERENCE ends,
Fort Wayne, IN
18—National Youth Conference begins
23— National Youth Conference ends

AUGUST 2026

8—SVMC Class
22— SVMC Class at the District Office

SEPTEMBER 2026

5—SVMC Class
10 - Core Leadership Team, 6:00 pm, Zoom
19 - District Conference, County Line COB
26—SVMC Class

OCTOBER 2026

10—SVMC Class at the District Office
24—SVMC Class

NOVEMBER 2026

5 - Core Leadership Team, 6:00 pm, Zoom
14 - District Leadership Team, 9:00 am, TBA

DECEMBER 2026

No meetings or events scheduled

Western PA District
Church of the Brethren
115 Spring Road
Hollsopple, PA 15935

THE HIGHLIGHTS

June 2026