



# The Chimes

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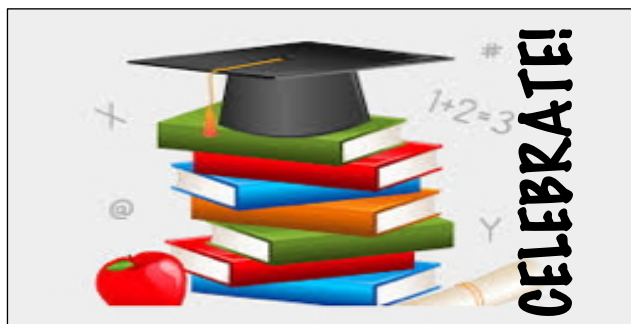
## Modesto Church of the Brethren

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Pastor: Andrew Sampson Ministers: Every Member of the Congregation

*Continuing the work of Jesus. Peacefully. Simply. Together.*



Dear friends,

We are rapidly ending another school year and what a year it has been! Our teachers, administrators, staff, and schools completely changed how they teach students in a short amount of time. While I'm sure that there were growing pains, the flexibility, creativity, and resourcefulness in this new way of educating has been spectacular to see. Our schools and their staffs deserve our gratitude for doing what they did. It seems that at least some of the changes that were rapidly made and modified over the past few weeks will be permanent as they move into the future. How different and amazing education will look when school resumes in the fall.

However, we also need to recognize that losses have been suffered as a result of the pandemic. School trips were canceled, there were no junior or senior proms, graduations are being highly modified or diplomas being mailed out, sports seasons have been scratched, orientations moved from in-person

to virtual, retirement parties delayed, and many other happenings called off or postponed. For those of us who are not students nor involved in their education; these events may seem trivial in the grand scheme of what is happening. Yet, these are milestones, recognitions, and achievements that help to mark the passage of time and most of which are cause for celebration.

So, the question that keeps coming to my mind is how can we, as individuals and the church, recognize and celebrate the achievements of many within our congregation and community for whom there has not been the opportunity to do so? What can we do to honor our teachers, administrators, and school staff for the job that they have done this year - especially the last half? How can we congratulate and mark the feats of those who are graduating? Is there something that can be done to thank those who are retiring? And how can we remember the seasons that are gone and never to be repeated? Let us ponder these questions and call or email me with your suggestions on what we can do to help mark these significant events in the lives of many. Keep safe and wash your hands!

~Andrew

P.S. One idea is if you know someone who is experiencing a milestone or significant moment then please email us their name, the achievement, and a few pictures so that we can do a special edition of the Chimes.

## Invitations to Worship

(On Modesto Church of the Brethren Facebook page)

May 24 - Scripture: Matthew 19:16-22  
*Chasing the Wild Goose: Caged or Flying Free in Quarantine?* Jeff Glass will be preaching.

May 31 - Pentecost  
Scripture: Acts 2:1-4 ; 1 Corinthians 12:1-12 -  
"The Church's Birth-day"



### Create a Sacred Space in Your Home

In response to last week's article on creating a sacred space in your home, I was asked to share my sacred space. I was first introduced to this idea by Sue Monk Kidd, I think, in her book *Dance of the Dissident Daughter* and again in a book written by Marianne Williamson. Having grown up in the Catholic Church this was not a foreign thought to me but I was surprised that two Protestant women were making the suggestion.

Above is a picture of my sacred space which is in my bedroom. Right underneath, is a rocker for me to sit. The Chinese symbol is for happiness, under that a card with LOVE

on the front, a couple of art pieces my son created for me, the crucifix is from my dad's funeral and the dragonfly is my "spirit" animal if you will. Some think the dragonfly symbolizes harmony, intuition, and mysticism. "The dragonfly flutters along the breeze, skimming the surface of the water, attuned to both worlds. Dragonflies symbolize transition and the power of the subconscious."

The art rendering of the dragonfly on my altar is from an indigenous people's drawing from Tofino on Vancouver Island. These people saw the dragonfly as the end of spring.

The empty bowl symbolizes me waiting for the blessings of God, an open vessel so to speak--An idea I got from a spiritual retreat. Also my journal and my day planner allow me to write in paragraphs for each day.

So have fun creating your own personal, sacred space. ~AnneMarie Washington



Keep Jolinda Reddy in your prayers as she is recuperating at home.

Remember persons in Michigan and the Carolinas evacuating due to flooding and torrential rain.

Rejoice with Al Forcier that he can see bright colors again, after his successful cataract surgery.

Keep On Earth Peace and the Church of the Brethren Leadership Team in your thoughts. (See Andrew's article, next page)

## Disunity in the Denomination

On May 6, Bill Scheurer, Executive Director of On Earth Peace (OEP), announced via email that OEP had formally become a part of the Supportive Communities Network (SCN) a program of the Brethren Mennonite Council for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Interests (BMC). A couple of items: 1) We, Modesto Church of the Brethren, along with 40+ other Churches of the Brethren, are also part of the Supportive Communities Network! 2) A list of websites is included below for more information on each of the organizations in this article.

This week, May 18, in a special issue of Newsline, the denominational email newsletter, the Leadership Team of the Church of the Brethren issued a rebuke of On Earth Peace and its decision to formally become a member of SCN. The Leadership Team is comprised of David Steele, the General Secretary (the head of the denomination), a representative from the Council of District Executives, and three Annual Conference officers.

A summary of their statement:

1) OEP's decision violated polity or the guiding principles voted upon by the delegate body of Annual Conference, 2) OEP has a responsibility to uphold the decisions of Annual Conference, as it is one of the agencies of Annual Conference, and 3) Ultimately, the next steps of what to do will be determined by Standing Committee, who oversees Annual Conference, and the delegate body of Annual Conference, representatives of the congregations of the denomination.

It is my opinion that we should continue our support of BMC, SCN and OEP, their work and ministry, and the witness that they provide to the denomination and the wider world. As a congregation we continue to affirm the personhood of each individual as being a beloved child of God, and work for the causes of peace and justice within our community and beyond.

The Leadership Team's rebuke of OEP has no impact upon our decision to support either of these organizations or the vision and ministry of the Modesto Church of the Brethren. We will continue to be the community that we believe we are called by God to be and strive to faithfully follow Jesus in word and deed.

~Pastor Andrew

On Earth Peace

<https://www.onearthpeace.org>

Brethren Mennonite Council for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Interests

<https://www.bmclgbt.org>

Leadership Team's statement

<http://www.brethren.org/news/2020/leadership-team-statement-re-on-earth-peace.html>



**When Normalcy Returns**  
**By Bill McKibben,**  
**Sojourner Magazine, May 2020**

For Christians, and really for all humans, the particular horror of the coronavirus is that the best way to help is to separate from others. Unlike almost every other natural disaster where our species' instinct and our theological directive is to love our neighbors, our job in the pandemic is to separate ourselves. Don't lay on hands; wash them. Don't give a lingering, loving hug: stand at least six feet away making awkward gestures. The college where I work quickly sent its students home, so there's not even the satisfaction of seeing them: Instead, we're now engaged in something called "remote learning."

If there is a grace here amid the very real suffering, it's that we're also being asked to go a little quiet—to reduce our busyness, to sequester ourselves in our homes. And for a society that's been lately marked by an almost obsessive overachievement, a society whose wealthiest members boast not of their leisure but of their workaholicism, that's full of interesting possibilities. Here are some of the things I've been reflecting on.

One, the physical world is very real. We spend our days staring into screens, so it's easy to forget that we live on a planet where biology—in the form of a tiny microbe—can upend every facet of life. I know this to be true because I spend my life working on climate change, the much larger crisis that grips our planet. But day to day even I tend to forget just how real physics and chemistry—the driving forces of global warming—really are. In a created world, physical reality is the bottom line.

Two, "social distancing" doesn't feel quite as odd as perhaps it should. We're already in much less contact with our fellow humans than most of our ancestors—surveys show steep declines in recent decades in the number of close friends for the average American. The hyper-individualism that undergirds our economy undercuts our faith: It's hard to love your neighbors if you don't know them. Maybe, just maybe, this stretch of isolation will make us think longer and harder about our daily lives in ordinary time: When we're released from this strange interlude, maybe we won't simply return to our ingrained habits, but make a conscious effort to reach out to those around us.

The day will come when we can easily return to church, to the store, to the hairdresser—for that we will be able to thank the scientists, and the brave doctors and nurses, who did what they had to do during this emergency.

**But their courage will have been wasted if nothing deeper changes in how we treat one another and the planet.**

(Thanks to Pat Royer for sending this article!)





It's time to sing Happy Birthday to those born the month of May. We have a short list of some and would welcome knowing of others. Please send particulars to the Chimes, [chimes@modcob.org](mailto:chimes@modcob.org). Please don't send somebody else's birthdate! You need to have permission from individuals, especially parents of children, for us to publish their information. If you signed the posters at church on the board by the nursery or if it's been on Facebook then it's already public info. We will try to list birthdays in the first Chimes of the month from now on, so send them early!

La, la, la happy birthday to....

- 5. Ken Schroeder
- 24 Anita Petersen- Pennock
- 26 David F. Messamer
- 31 Jamie Farrar
- Jonathan Goodrich (Date)
- Bev Jefferies (Date?)
- and?????



**On-line Prayer / Worship Services in Stanislaus County**  
**Compiled by Rabbi Shalom Bochner of Congregation Beth Shalom, Stanislaus Interfaith Council**

**Baptist**

Escalon First Baptist Church, Sunday mornings at 10:30, live Zoom Service Zoom ID 85159343328

**Buddhist**

Insight Meditation Central Valley:  
Sunday Meetings from 8:45—10:15am, Meeting ID 821-059-222, password: 793137  
Tuesday Meetings from 6:30—8:30pm, Meeting ID 975-209-697, password: 062997  
Thursday (in Spanish) Meetings from 7:30—9:00pm, Meeting ID 849-233-749, password: 909845  
Saturday Buddhism & the 12 Steps Meetings from 4:30—6:00pm, Meeting ID 779-278-779, password: 844062

**Catholic**

Mass on Facebook at StFrances Romechurch Lady of Fatima Parish offers two live-streamed Masses each Sunday: English at 10 AM and Spanish at 12PM. They can be accessed through our parish website: [olfmodesto.weebly.com](http://olfmodesto.weebly.com)

**Covenant Grove Church:**

Sermons and Services posted at [www.CovenantGrove.org](http://www.CovenantGrove.org) .

**Hindu**

Hindu Temple of Modesto Shri Radha Krishna Mandir on Zoom: ID 320 025 486 7pm on every day but Wednesday.

### Jewish

Congregation Beth Shalom: Shabbat Services on Facebook: CBSModesto (Congregation Beth Shalom, Modesto - Center for Jewish Life) Fridays 6pm and also archived for later viewing; Shabbat Morning Services, Saturday 10:30am on Zoom (contact congregation for link and password)

### Lutheran

Emanuel: online service every Sunday at 9:30am at emanuellutheran.org , the link is there to Facebook/You Tube and the Services are archived for later viewing.

### Methodist

Community United Methodist Church <http://cumcoakdale.org> Sundays 9:30 AM, (Services are pre-recorded and can be viewed throughout the week)

Riverbank First United Methodist Church, <https://fumcriverbank.org> 9:30 AM, Sundays

### Seventh Day Adventists

Parkwood Seventh-day Adventist Church offers a live-stream church service on Saturdays at 11am, as well as a Saturday Bible study at 9:30am through Zoom, and a Zoom prayer meeting on Wednesdays at 7pm. All information can be found on our website: [parkwood.adventistfaith.org](http://parkwood.adventistfaith.org)

### United Church of Christ

Every Sunday at 10am, Livestream worship service: on the Facebook page for **College Avenue United Church of Christ**. After the livestream, the video is stored there for viewing.

Thursday evening, 7pm, "Shelter-in-Praise" a pre-recorded service that is uploaded on our Facebook page.

Join the worship leaders Shelly and Brian Bort-Zarka in a Watch Party on Thursdays. First Wednesday of every month at 7pm on Facebook page: Contemplative prayer service with chants from the Taize monastic community



**Stanislaus Interfaith Council** encourages all to become familiar with members of other faith communities and their

spiritual traditions. For a time, I was representative from Modesto Church of the Brethren to SCIC. Modesto Church of the Brethren now has no representation in SCIC, although some of our members were instrumental in helping to found it, and have been supportive in its activities. If you are interested in more information about SCIC, or might think about representing MCOB, contact me.~ Luella

### **Modesto Church of the Brethren Welcome Statement**



Believing that God's unbounded love and grace, as taught by Jesus, are offered to all and meant to be shared and celebrated by all, we embrace persons of every age, race, sexual orientation, ethnic and religious background, physical and mental ability, and economic means as vital and integral members of God's family. As an Open and Affirming congregation we welcome everyone to participate in the life and worship of our church.