



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.



Over the past few weeks my sermons have been based upon the book of Acts [of the Apostles] which is a look at the early days of the Church. There have been and will be some stories from our earliest days that are familiar and others not so much - there may even be some that make you wonder why they were included! So, why was this chosen as a sermon series? In my opinion, the time when any type of organization starts up is filled with excitement and energy. Yes, there are times of anxiety for numerous reasons, but there is also the thrill of the "firsts" - first African believer (Ethiopian eunuch), first European disciple (Lydia), first worshipping community (Jerusalem), first-time kicked out of a city (Peter and Paul in Antioch), and first baptism (Cornelius). According to Luke, who wrote the Acts of the Apostles, "Day after day God added to their number everyone who was experiencing liberation." (Acts 2:47) This was certainly an exciting time as the Church began to grow, expand, and evolve in ways that must have amazed those who were living through it.

I think that we are in the midst of a similar time in the life of the Church. The global pandemic has required the Church to rapidly change the way it goes about its business: to create new programs from scratch; create, adapt, evaluate, and re-evaluate how it engages its membership, neighborhood, and world; and to do it with a speed and uncertainty that have not been felt by the Church for generations. Has there been anxiety, stress, and doubt? Speaking personally, yes! As I saw on Facebook, "If 2020 were a math problem: If you're going down river at 2MPH and your canoe loses a wheel, how much pancake mix would you need to re-shingle your roof?" It has been a confusing and upsetting time for everyone and that includes the Church.

However, out of isolation comes community, out of indifference comes appreciation, and out of chaos comes creativity. Now is the opportunity to recreate Church in ways that model what the early apostles and disciples believed was needed and where God was leading. I believe that we were already doing many of these before the pandemic, but will continue to work as a community that seeks to follow the teachings and example of Jesus; affirms the value of each person; and welcomes others regardless of gender, sexual orientation, economic status, intellectual or physical disability,

ethnic and religious background or age and experience.

We will seek justice for the oppressed, promote peace, treat one another with respect, cry with those mourn, laugh with those who laugh, pray together, work together, and be together. How will we do these things? I don't know. Let's work together and figure it out, evaluate, and try to be better the next time! ~*Pastor Andrew*



The Church Begins to Grow (Continued)

August 16 – Scripture: Acts 19:13-21

August 23 – Scripture: Acts 19:22-41

Join us for worship on the Modesto Church of the Brethren Facebook account at 11 AM every Sunday. **To join, if you don't have a Facebook account, type this into the address bar of your browser:**

[Facebook.com/modcob](https://www.facebook.com/modcob)



Continue to keep the Fletcher family in your prayers. You may send cards to

Michael & Becky Fletcher

43100 Palm Royale Drive Apt. 1024

La Quinta, CA 92253

Kelly Gepley asks for prayers for her colleague, Gina, whose 23 year old stepson died recently from an aggressive form of cancer that was diagnosed in June.

Elaine and Al Forcier have a joy that Al's granddaughter has recovered from COVID-19 and is going back to work.

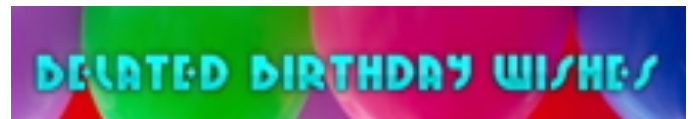
Sandy Whitby asks for prayer for her cousin's 12 year old grandson, Adam, who had serious symptoms and may have Type 1 diabetes.

Cal and Mary are asking for prayers for an old friend, Chris, who is dealing with a hospital stay, not from COVID-19.

Sandy Whitby asks for prayers for her cousin Anne who is in Lebanon, helping her colleagues who have lost everything in the Beirut explosion.

Larry Cole asks for prayers for his youngest son, Brandon, who is in a hospital in Atlanta with COVID-19.

Keep in your prayers all those whose concerns are too deep for words.



So sorry that Tom Deal's August 9th birthday was omitted from the birthday list last week! Happy Birthday, Tom!



Put yourself in the Labyrinth picture this Saturday!

It's going to be warm this Saturday morning! Come at 8am and leave on or before 10 am and bring your good wheelbarrow and or shovel. We have about 5 yards of decomposed granite (special dirt) to wheelbarrow in and spread. If we have a good number of folks this can be done in a couple of hours or less. Come early and leave early. A few folks may remain for some special treatment of the decomposed granite.

Building and Grounds Minutes for 8-

3-2020 Present on zoom call: Jim Boardman, Russ Davis, Jason Davis, Bill Johnson, Derek Castle

1. Current conditions at the church: Cut back of janitorial staff seems to be working ok. The cut back of the dumpster service does not appear to be working well. The dumpster is currently overflowing and we will probably restart service the first of September. Our janitor apparently has been putting our trash in the large dumpster instead of the smaller black barrels. It appears that some of our neighbors may be using the large dumpster also. Our monthly charge is about \$140.00 per month.

2. 2021 budget: With the arrival of the July financial statements that we get with tonight's board meeting we will start work on the 2021 budget. This will involve input from all the commissions and some real good crystal ball work by leadership looking into our future.

3. Earlier this summer Andrew had entertained the idea of a sun shade area for the courtyard. After getting some bids, going to locations to see previous work the Building and Grounds crew decided that this was probably not a high priority project at the present.

5. Bill still needs to finalize the purchase of stands and signage to address coronavirus safety steps when coming to church when we eventually reopen. Will do this month.

6. **All Church Work Day.** Saturday October 3rd. Building and Grounds has planned a slimmed down All Church Work Day for Saturday October 3rd. We will be cleaning the solar panels, cleaning church gutters, winterizing the swamp cooler for the kitchen, cleaning some windows and maybe a few other things that we think of. We will put out a sign up sheet on line. Masks and social distancing will be required. We will not have a lunch for the work crew that day. When the specific job is completed that crew will then go home. We will not have those creme filled, bacon covered maple bars. We will also not have spots for the youth this time (maybe when it is safe in 2021).

Next zoom commission meeting is scheduled for Tuesday (because of Labor Day) Sept 8th at 7pm. Respectfully submitted: Bill Johnson, Commission chair

Outreach Opportunities

Please donate and help us to support these organizations in our community and around the world which work to meet direct human need, locally and globally, and challenge injustice that works against the reign of God.

Bethany Theological Seminary was founded in 1905, the seminary remains committed to educating the mind, heart, body, and spirit of students from a variety of theological perspectives. Sharing the conviction that each person is a minister grounded in Christ's transformative love, we live and teach in the questions that challenge religions and cultures today. Our Church of the Brethren heritage blends the centrality of Christ, the importance of community, peacemaking, and resistance to violence.



Bethany Theological Seminary has a history of adapting its program to meet the changing needs of the church and society. Now, in a religious and spiritual landscape characterized by uncertainty, Bethany will uphold its mission by embracing and articulating its Anabaptist-Pietist identity and reaching both within and beyond the church to serve a broader, more diverse constituency. Hallmarks of Bethany's education will be (1) an interdisciplinary approach to learning, (2) integration of theory and practice, and (3) increasingly diverse programs of study.

- Anchored in its commitment to academic freedom, Bethany expresses a prophetic witness rooted in a deep theological understanding of scripture and the Anabaptist-Pietist traditions of disciple making, peace building, and advocacy for justice.
- Bethany claims a position as a center for the study and practice of emerging areas of religious interest across faith traditions.
- Blending academics with application and spiritual formation, Bethany exemplifies impactful learning, developing servant leaders with theological understanding, sensitivity, and skill to forge genuine change in church and community.
- Engaging people of diverse religious, geographic, and social backgrounds, the Bethany community nurtures respect for differences and sustains spiritual empowerment for students and alumni.

Borrowed from their website, <https://bethanyseminary.edu/>





The Church of the Brethren in the United States and Puerto Rico is divided into districts, and we belong to the **Pacific Southwest District (PSWD)**. Our district is comprised of faith communities throughout California, Arizona, and one congregation in Las Vegas. The District Executive Minister is Russ Matteson and the office is located in Pomona, CA.

Board of Administration Core Objective of PSWD is:

- Supporting congregations in being vital and healthy communities of faith that embody and share distinctive Brethren ways of Christian belief and action
- Support/Encourage congregations in their mission
- Support/Encourage the work of congregations in birthing new faith communities
- Call/Train/Support ministry and ministers
- Guide congregations through times of leadership transition
- Provide Stewardship support of local congregations
- Provide Youth leadership and faith development
- Share opportunities for mission across the district
- Build Intercultural ministry and relationships
- Produce District Conference to promote ministry, connection, and unity in Christ

The PSWD also adopted the following unity statement.

On this 300th anniversary of the founding of the Church of the Brethren, we remember the words of Jesus:

“Let me give you a new command: Love one another. In the same way I loved you, you love one another. This is how everyone will recognize that you are my disciples – when they see the love you have for each other.” (John 13: 34, 35; The Message)

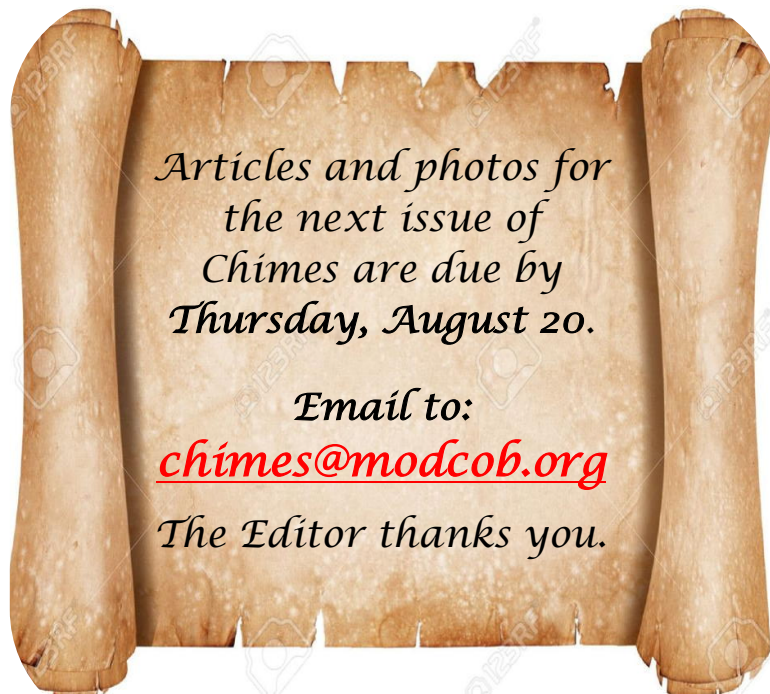
Recognizing we are a living peace church, and that God is constantly revealing, we commit to humble ourselves, and to engage in the tension of community necessary for new birth.

Not focusing on our differences, but in the spirit of love and acceptance, we choose to focus on Christ.

We purpose to remain open, as we listen to one another and to the Holy Spirit, working in love to mutually support and encourage our various ministries.



Borrowed from their website,
<https://www.pswdcob.org/>



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.