

First Church of the Brethren, 2115 Yale Boulevard, Springfield, IL 62703

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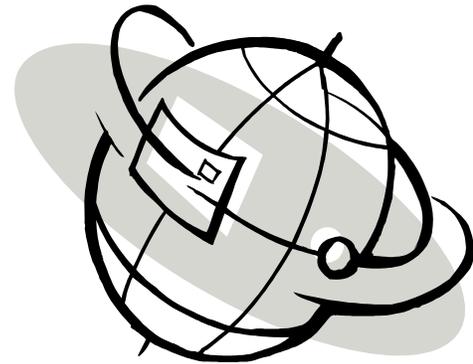
## Love Feast, Holy Thursday, April 5th

**“I felt like I was part of this great act of giving. It was humbling and yet elevating all at the same time.”**

**-from Susan Frain reflecting on her participation in the Church of the Brethren Love Feast last year at First Church of the Brethren.**

Our annual Love Feast service, remembering Jesus' last supper with his disciples, will be the evening of April 5<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 pm. Participants will gather for worship in the basement of the church meetinghouse.

The Love Feast worship begins with a time of personal and corporate prayer. Following this time of preparation, there is a time of feet washing (hand washing for those who have difficulty kneeling), a shared meal,



and the sharing of bread and cup communion. There are moments of singing throughout the service.

Frank Ramirez (Brethren pastor and author), in his book *The Love Feast*, writes: “As they studied their Bibles and church history, the Brethren found biblical and historical warrant for the four-fold communion

(preparation, feet washing, Lord’s Supper, bread and cup) they practice today...They read that Jesus told the disciples to follow his example and wash each other’s feet. Then the apostles sat down with Jesus to a real meal. And they shared the bread and cup. Brethren figured they had better do the same.” Let us do the same.

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## Easter Breakfast and Worship – April 8th

**“Why are you weeping?”** That simple question from the 20<sup>th</sup> chapter of John gets asked twice. We are here on Easter Sunday to proclaim the tomb empty! But even more, we are to

share the news of the Risen Lord with others. **Join us for worship at 10:30 am.**

The fellowship begins early on Easter Sunday. We will begin our morning together with our

annual Easter potluck at 9:30 am. Please bring a dish to share with the others who are gathered. Table service and drinks will be provided.

## “Providing More Than a Shelter”

*“God doesn’t look at how much we do, but with how much love we do it.”*

*-Mother Teresa*

“Julie, when you go pick her up be cautious and keep reminding her that she is coming to a safe place.” These were the words of my supervisor, said to me as I picked up my first client from the hospital my first week on the job. Little did I know the domestic violence victim I was about to pick up would forever write her life-changing story upon my heart. I’ll call her Tina.

Tina had many mental health issues, was pregnant and fleeing a very violent situation at home. However, this background is not unique to Tina, but true of a majority of the women seeking shelter at our domestic violence center. One in four women (25%) has experienced domestic violence in her lifetime and estimates range up to 3 million women who are

physically abused by their husband or boyfriend per year.

Tina was feisty, paranoid, and religiously charismatic and I didn’t think she was going to last long at our shelter due to her erratic behavior. However, as more time passed, I was drawn to Tina and her high energy, generous smiles and tenacity to fight through her past mistakes.

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## Camp Emmanuel Announces Schedule

Camp Emmanuel has released their 2012 camping schedule. The Women’s Retreat is June 1-3. Youth Camp (grades 9-12) is June 3-9. Jr. High Camp (grades 6-8) is June 10-16. Junior Camp (grades 3-5) is June 17-23. Pre-Junior Camp (k-2) is July 13-15. Young Adult Camp (18-26 yrs.) is August 3-5. Men’s Camp is August 10-12. Family Camp is August 31-

September 3.

The camp will also host several special activities in the spring. These include a Spring Work Day on April 14<sup>th</sup> beginning at 9:00 am. The Spring Work Week will be April 14-21. Volunteers are needed. On May 4 & 5 a Counselor-In-Training (CIT) will be held for those wishing to serve as counselors for the children

and youth camps.

Registration for the camps, along with information about what and what not to bring can be done online at [www.cob-net.org/camp/emmanuel/](http://www.cob-net.org/camp/emmanuel/).

Registration forms and a copy of the camp’s new brochure are available at the church.

## Illinois Central Song & Story Fest: All Aboard!

The 16<sup>th</sup> Song & Story Fest will make its first appearance in Illinois, July 1-7. Song & Story Fest is a family camp featuring Brethren musicians and storytellers. This year’s Fest is going to celebrate railroads and trains and take some themes and

titles from songs and stories about trains. We are invited to join with others in Riding the Rails of Comfort, Playing for Peanuts in the Club Car, praying for Cannonballs No More, celebrating When We Reach Our Destination, where Ain’t

No One Keeping Score, no one is left Waiting at the Station, and There’s No Cryin’ There.

Camp Emmanuel is the site. Register at [www.onearthpeace.org/programs/special/song-story-fest/registration](http://www.onearthpeace.org/programs/special/song-story-fest/registration).

## Providing Shelter, continued from page 2

She would come into my office at times rubbing her very pregnant belly and saying, "oh, whatta day, whatta day, Miss Julie." Tina would then proceed to tell me about her day and I felt honored to hear the details of her present and past struggles. She and I cried in her room when she got devastating news from her doctor, we hollered and twirled in the hallways when she was

approved for our housing program and broke it down dancing to Lady Gaga while sweeping up after dinner.

What has working at the Family Abuse Center done for me? It's taught me to look outside myself. Sometimes we need to walk in the shoes of another to be encouraged and to find so much to be thankful for. There are many different stories

being told every day and we just need to stop and listen because soon we're going to want to share our story. In the mean time I plan to live fearlessly in the palm of God's hand, in hopes of writing a great story that will inspire when shared, like Tina's story has done for me.

-Julie Henninger, Unit #292 (BVS)

(Reprinted from BVS, The Volunteer, Winter 2012)



## Up-Coming Worship At-a-Glance

**March 25:** Readings for the morning include: Jeremiah 31: 31-34 and John 12:20-33.

**April 1:** This is the Sunday of the Passion/Palm Sunday. The primary reading is from Mark 11:1-11.

**April 5: Holy Thursday.** Please note the article on page one.

**April 8: Easter Sunday.** Our Easter worship is at

10:30 am. Come and join in the worship and fellowship.

**April 15:** We begin a Sunday series on the book of Daniel. Fletcher Farrar will begin this series by talking about Daniel 6. His title is: "Would the king throw you in the lion's den too?"

**April 22:** A Sunday worship series on the book of Daniel continues.

Read chapters 1 and 2 of Daniel for preparation.

**April 29:** Series on Daniel will cover with a focus on the story of three persons thrown into the fiery furnace.

**May 6:** Chapter 5 of the Book of Daniel. Message will center on the story of the handwriting on the wall.

## Seeking the Relevance of Daniel for Our Time

The adult Sunday school class will begin a study of the Book of Daniel on April 15. A Bible study guide written by Brethren pastor Frank Ramirez will be utilized.

In Eugene Peterson's preface to the Book of

Daniel, he writes, "*Obedience to God in the pressures and stresses of day to day living and trust in God's ways in the large sweep of history are always at risk, but especially in times of suffering and persecution.*" The 10 week

study will explore what it means to live faithfully in days of uncertainty.

The study guide has been purchased and can be picked up in advance of April 15. Additional readings will be taken from the *Apocrypha*.

*"God comes to a suffering people at the right time, God's time."*  
-author Frank Ramirez

**First Church of the Brethren**

**Worship on Sunday at 10:30 am**

**Phone 217-523-5212**

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Peacefully, Simply, Together

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### *Who are these Brethren?*

In the New Testament, the word Brethren describes the kinship of men and women who chose another way of living: the Way of Jesus. The Church of the Brethren, begun over 300 years ago, still draws people who want to continue Jesus' work of loving service. For guidance, Brethren look to the scriptures rather than doctrine. Our faith emphasizes compassion, peacemaking, and simplicity. We baptize those who seek to follow Jesus; we anoint for healing; and in our Love Feast, we reenact the Last Supper at which Jesus washed his disciples' feet and offered the bread and cup communion.

Locally, First Church of the Brethren, collects donations of food on the second Sunday of each month, provides hot meals to homebound seniors on Thanksgiving and Christmas, participates in the annual Springfield Area CROP Walk which raises money for local food pantries and international relief efforts, provides ways for children of the community to be involved in local service projects, and much more.

## **“Walk in the Newness of Life” by Kim Ebersole**

Director of Family Life and Older Adult Ministries for the Church of the Brethren

*“See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the desert and streams in the wasteland.” (Is. 43:19)*

Many people view old age as a “desert time”—arid and desolate, barren and lonely, monotonous and unwelcoming. Those words paint a pretty bleak picture of the last years of life. With images like these, it is no wonder this worldly idea of aging is greeted with dread.

With apprehension, people cling to the false hope of a fountain of youth, for who would

want to age into a vast wasteland of meaningless years?

But this is not what God has in mind for our later years. God's image of aging and old age is bountiful and beautiful: doing new things, bearing fruit, and striving toward what lies ahead...

The Biblical vision of aging is a time of finding new meaning and purpose in life: God doing new things in the lives of elders. The Bible is full of stories of older adults answering God's call to be actively involved in God's work in the world:

Moses and Aaron, Abraham and Sarah, Zacharias and Elizabeth, Daniel, Anna, and many others...

The last part of life is not like the beginning it is not a repeat of the first half. The second half is a different adventure—deeper, richer, fuller—as new things continue to unfold in our lives. Just like the people of the Bible, God calls us to new experiences and ways to serve in our “old age.” We can walk in the newness of life if we are open to hearing the call.