



*Beyond These Walls:  
For Peace, Service & Openness to All*

**The Capital Campaign for the Elizabethtown Church of the Brethren**





“ I love this congregation for its genuine friendship, acceptance, and overflowing love! ”

Sarah Uhl



Living the Love of God

Following the way of Jesus, the Elizabethtown Church of the Brethren is a thriving congregation that practices peace, service, and openness to all. Compelled by Jesus and empowered by a rich history, we envision a future where these practices will grow in depth and breadth.

God's Spirit and creative pastoral leaders empower us. Our vibrant worship promotes spiritual growth. Unapologetically Christian, we explore new ideas and different perspectives that enrich our understanding. This exploration draws new members into our fellowship and nourishes our growing congregation.

Our Brethren heritage accents our faith practice. We describe our mission as "Living the Love of God," and "continuing the work of Jesus, peacefully, simply, together." Our preaching and teaching ministries unabashedly call us to faithfully follow the way of Jesus and joyfully share God's gracious love.

Our forerunners gifted us a stalwart building in 1956 that has served over two generations. Many ministries were launched inside our walls and beyond. Now the age lines in our beloved 60-year-old building are showing and we need more space for our burgeoning family.

Pivoting toward the future, we are pursuing an ambitious campaign to raise the funds necessary to renovate, upgrade, and expand our building. The project adds new and flexible spaces to bolster our current ministries and launch new ones beyond our walls.





“Gail and I have found this church a most caring and dynamic congregation. If grace and service incorporate the gospel, this congregation encapsulates that marriage in beautiful form.”

**Carl Strikwerda**



# Within Our Walls

Whether you grew up in our congregation or recently joined us, this is our spiritual home. Important things happen inside our walls. Here we gather to worship, pray, and rekindle friendships. Robust worship, engaging discussions, excellent music, and powerful preaching nurture our souls and unite our beautifully diverse congregation. From four-part a cappella singing to a full-throated organ recital and from the sounds of a bell choir to the tones of an electric guitar, wondrous strains of music often evoke tears of joy.

Sunday school classes and youth activities plant seeds of conviction and commitment. Here many of our youth were baptized. Here rich fellowship—around coffee klatches, potluck meals, and generous fundraisers—reminds us of who we are and in whose name we serve.

Lenten services and other special moments renew our faith. Prayer, music, support groups, pastoral care, and the genuine compassion of kindred believers heal our sorrows and lift our burdens.

Our aging walls have silently witnessed child dedications, baptisms, anointings, communions, and love feasts—plus memorial, remembrance, and candle lighting services to name but a few. Our memories of these sacred moments will linger with us throughout our days.

Many service ministries originate from within our walls. Led by our deacons, a multitude of volunteers engage in visitation, prepare meals, provide transportation, manage the CROP table, sell fair trade items, and handle recycling. Whether our building serves as a hub for collecting relief funds to empower Nigerians, a spot to assemble buckets and hygiene kits to be sent afar, a literal sanctuary for refugees or a home for the affordable Elizabethtown Child Care Center and the first-rate Community Nursery School that was birthed within it—service starts here. And from here we go to witness to the way of Jesus and serve in the larger world.





“ I’m excited about our congregation’s commitment to serving the marginalized and powerless on the fringe of society. ”

**Sam Epps**



**“Peace, Service, and Openness to All.”**

These words greet us at the beginning of every worship service.

**Peace.** Over the centuries the Church of the Brethren has held high the banner of peacemaking. Likewise, our congregation has persistently witnessed to the Prince of Peace. We seek to practice peace in how we treat each other, in our corporate decision-making, and in our witness to the larger world.

**Service.** This word is surely the earmark of Brethren identity. From reconstruction work by Brethren Service volunteers in Europe after World War II, to Brethren Disaster Ministries and Brethren Volunteer Service workers today, service throbs in our DNA. Consider the endless labors of love given by our own members to Brethren Housing Association, Brethren Disaster Ministries, refugee resettlement, Camp Swatara, COBYS Family Services, Etown Community Housing and Outreach Services, and several food banks. Add to that list Samara, a parental education initiative in Harrisburg, recently started by some of our members. Empowered by God’s grace and the words of Jesus (Matt. 25:35-39), we seek to feed the hungry, offer water to the thirsty, welcome the stranger, clothe the needy, care for the sick, and visit the prisoner.

**Openness to All.** We also heed the biblical injunction to “welcome the stranger.” We believe Jesus emphatically calls us to embrace those scarred by stigma, poverty, and oppression. We believe that Scripture is unequivocal: God’s reign has no little people, no second-class citizens. Nor does God have favorites based on skin color, language, sexual orientation or country of origin. The Good News of the Gospel is abundantly clear: all are welcome at God’s table.





“ This is the most welcoming church that we have ever attended and everyone genuinely appreciates us here. We also love the openness to ask questions. ”

**Carissa Bonner**



# How We Got Here

The story began about ten years ago with informal conversations. How to address the needs of a growing congregation? Demolish or sell the present building? Construct a new facility or renovate an aging one for the rising generation?

So, how did we get here? We planned and prayed, and studied and sketched, and talked and prayed some more. Recently our Church Council affirmed a building design and authorized a Capital Campaign. So now it's time to step up and embrace our future. It's time to start giving.





“ We don’t need an ornate Gothic cathedral or an ancient one-room meetinghouse, but we do need an expanded and renovated building to serve the next generation. ”

**John David Bowman**





“ The project will increase our opportunities to serve our neighbors both near and far. ”

Peg Over





“ We are a warm, welcoming, spiritual family engaged in many avenues of strong service and courageous public witness. ”

Joe Detrick



Beyond These Walls



We are grateful for the visionaries who came before us. Grateful for all their sacrifices and enduring commitments. Grateful for the walls they built for us—walls that have spawned a multitude of service ministries beyond their imagination. Now we focus on the future and on those who are yet to come. Now is the time to lift our lamp higher and burn it brighter in our region and beyond. Now is the time to pay forward, the time to provide ample facilities for the next generation for “The Glory of God and Our Neighbors’ Good!”

