



**CONNECT  
GROW  
LIVE  
RADIATE**





# ephrata

CHURCH OF THE BRETHREN

At Ephrata Church of the Brethren, we believe in things that matter – faith, family, friendships. We are a family of disciples who connect to, grow in, live out, and radiate the transformative power of Jesus in the world. At our core, it is our desire to make innovative, adaptable, and fearless disciples, ready for an ever changing community in which we serve. In order to do that, we understand that as a faith community, we need to also adapt our way of communicating how your participation at ECOB will develop your faith walk.

To that end, this brochure will give you a glimpse into this coming year. Specifically, it will help you see the tremendous amount of prayer and thought put forth into your faith formation. Making disciples is about finding opportunities to connect you with other believers in ways that are meaningful. Making disciples encourages growth in your personal and familial journeys, seeking ways to be more like Jesus. Making disciples means celebrating our call to live like Jesus, following his example to be light bringers into this world. Making disciples means that we take that light and radiate it into the world, sharing the love of God with all people, everywhere.

I look forward to this journey with you, as together, we deepen our faith in the one who is the way, the truth, and the life!

Serving Christ Together,  
**BRIAN MESSLER**





# MISSION STATEMENT

We are a family of disciples who connect to, grow in, live out, and radiate the transformative power of Jesus in the world.

## **CHRIST-CENTERED LIVING:**

Fixing our eyes on Jesus, we will daily worship God through our actions and attitudes – seeking God’s best, not our own.

**Romans 12:2**

## **COMPASSIONATE ENGAGEMENT:**

So that others may know the hope and new life in Jesus, we will be vulnerable disciples who desire to build relationships that resemble those Jesus had.

**Mark 12:30-31; Matthew 5:43; 1 Cor 13:13; Isaiah 43; Romans 5:8; John 13:34-35; Luke 6:36**

## **BIBLICAL HOSPITALITY:**

Understanding that we are at the banquet of God, we will demonstrate the characteristics of a servant by radically welcoming all who desire a seat at the table.

**Luke 10:35-37**

## **SPIRIT-DRIVEN MINISTRY:**

Everything that we do as a body of faith will be anchored in the character and nature of Jesus.

**Colossians 1:18; John 14:6; Matthew 25:45**

## **OUTWARD FOCUSED:**

Out of our desire to support our neighbors, near and far, we will proactively engage in partnerships that will care for the mental, emotional, physical, and spiritual well-being of others.

**John 13:14-17; Phil. 2:6-11; Romans 12:4-8; Luke 14:15-24**

## **FAMILY-ORIENTED:**

Viewing all people as children of God, we believe our missions, ministries, and resources are to be focused on how we can encourage, support, and equip each person’s discipleship.

**Deuteronomy 6:5-7**

# CORE COMPETENCIES

Relationship Development    **CONNECT**  
Spiritual Growth    **GROW**  
Christian Living    **LIVE**  
Community Outreach    **RADIATE**

## SERMON SERIES

At ECOB, we value the importance of faith formation for the entire family. Life groups of all ages will be engaging in our sermon-based curricula, using age-appropriate content and tools. This also ensures that family members can communicate with each other about the big ideas they're exploring throughout the week. Here's how we'll learn together this year:



### **Esther – God Remembers You** Starts 9/11/22 • 7 Messages

God's sovereignty, love, and protection – even though we don't always see it.

*Kids* - God is always with me

*Youth* - God protects us and is with us

*Adults* - God is sovereign in all things – even if we do not always see it



### **Chosen** Starts 10/30/22 • 4 Messages

Jesus goes out of his way to reach those who are left out – these are not “outcasts”, they are chosen. His love is extravagant and relentless.

*Kids* - God chose me

*Youth* - We are to be kind to all people

*Adults* - We are to advocate for the “outcasts” so that they may feel God's love



### **The Best Christmas Ever** Starts 11/27/22 • 4 Messages

What do we need in order to have the best Christmas ever? May we always remember that Jesus is to be at the center of our lives.

*Kids* - Focus on Jesus

*Youth* - Let go of the worldly so that we may see Jesus

*Adults* - Putting Christ first, in the midst of the constant worldly pressure to fill our hearts with things other than Christ



### **Church Crush** Starts 1/1/23 • 3 Messages

Dispelling the myth of the perfect church and helping us to find joy.

*Kids* - I have a family

*Youth* - The grass is not always greener on the other side

*Adults* - We are part of the church, thus, we are to work hard at making it the best place it can be



## Airplane Mode

**Starts 1/22/23 • 5 Messages**

Spiritual disciplines help us focus on God's presence that can heal us of our pasts and prepare us for our futures.

*Kids* - Listening to God

*Youth* - How do we focus in a distracting world?

*Adults* - Using disciplines in our lives helps us to see and hear God more clearly



## Follow Me:

### Returning to the Straight and Narrow

**Starts 2/23/23 • 7 Messages**

Examining ways that we have fallen out of step with Christ and inviting us to return to him in sacrifice, self-denial, and the hope of glory.

*Kids* - Be like Jesus

*Youth* - Knowing right from wrong

*Adults* - Less of me and more of Jesus



## Easter

**Starts 4/9/23 • 1 Message**

Celebrating the resurrection of Jesus.

*Kids* - Jesus is alive

*Youth* - Jesus's resurrection gives me hope

*Adults* - Jesus conquered death to give us life



## To The Streets:

### The Gospel on the Move

**Starts 4/16/23 • 1 Message**

Taking the message of Jesus' resurrection into our communities.

*Kids* - I can share Jesus with others

*Youth* - Knowing and Sharing the Gospel of Jesus

*Adults* - Knowing and Sharing the Gospel of Jesus



## Seasons:

### The Gospel Through Life Stages

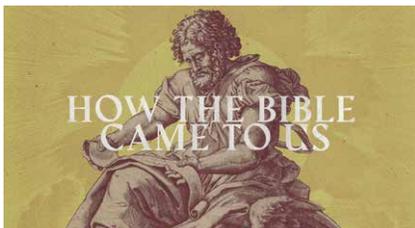
**Starts 4/23/23 • 6 Messages**

How does the gospel inform the different stages of our lives – leading us to fruitfulness and faithfulness.

*Kids* - God is with me all my life

*Youth* - Growing up in Christ means we need to leave childhood behind

*Adults* - Being a mature believer means we are to equip others for the journey



## How the Bible Came to Us

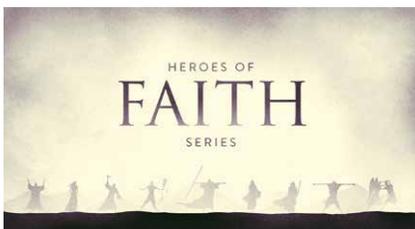
**Starts 6/4/23 • 4 Messages**

How did past Christians view and employ scriptures as divinely inspired writings.

*Kids* - The Bible is true

*Youth* - How did the Bible come to be

*Adults* - How do we meditate, honor, and interpret God's word?



## Heroes of the Faith

**Starts 7/2/23 • 9 Messages**

Learning from Women and Men of faith and how their lives stood as testimonies of the love and faithfulness of God.

*Kids* - God uses me

*Youth* - Men and women of the Bible encourage my walk with Jesus

*Adults* - We can draw faith from those who have shared testimonies of the greatness of God

Families and individuals can listen or watch the sermons live or during the week on our [website www.ecob.church](http://www.ecob.church)

### Sunday Faith Formation Opportunities

**8:30 am** Classic Service • **9:45 am** Life Group hour for all ages • **10:45 am** Contemporary Service  
**10:45 am** age appropriate offerings from infant – grade 4 • **6:00 pm** SNL (Sunday Night Live)

# Events with impact on faith formation



## MISSIONS

Being a disciple means that we are to use our gifts to serve those both near and far. We are to seek ways in which the love of Jesus can radiate through our words and actions. Through local opportunities, we serve the homeless and working poor through City Gate and Mountaineers Table. Nationally, we make school, hygiene, and clean up kits that support those in areas of disasters. Globally, we build houses, share Jesus, and proclaim love to all people. Participating in missions, near and far, you will have the opportunity to be the hands and feet of Jesus.

*“The DR Mission Trip was a great first experience with missions to prepare me for the more physical Peru Trip.”*

*– Montgomery Sensenig*

*“Looking around you could see families who were blessed by the time they could spend together.”*

*– A July 4th attendee*

## DEVELOPING RELATIONSHIPS

As part of our faith formation, there are many opportunities to develop relationships with others. Whether it is a life group, Sunday worship, or hosting a block party, we desire to provide space for you to create those life long healthy friendships. Specifically, we host many meals with other men, women, and older adults – focused around living life together. Participating in these events will have a deep impact on your faith formation as together, you grow closer to Jesus and one another.



## AGE APPROPRIATE MINISTRIES

Each person at ECOB can participate in a ministry that will impact their faith walk. Whether it is Kid's Church, VBS, or seasonal events for children – retreats, camps, or SNL (Sunday Night Live) for our youth – Spiritual Discipline Retreats, Men's Worship Nights, or Women's Breakfasts for adults – or – lunches, trips, and special growth events for our Prime Time older adults – all of these opportunities are building blocks to connect, grow, live, and radiate the power of Jesus in the world.

*“Oh, I get it! So just like the good Samaritan was kind to a stranger we should be kind to people we don't know!”*

*- ECOBKIDS during a VBS lesson*



*“They both had so much fun!! My 6-year-old lets everyone know nothing is impossible through Jesus!”*



# MILESTONES



## Children

### Parent/Child Dedication

We believe that babies born into our congregation belong to Jesus and are an important part of our congregation. Together with the congregation's support, parents dedicate themselves to raising their child to learn who Jesus is, proclaim Him as Lord, and engage in a relationship with Him.

### Move Up Sunday

Each year, we celebrate how God has encouraged all of our children and youth. We celebrate with them as they move from our children's ministry to our youth ministry, and our youth to our young adult ministry. As they move on to the next age appropriate ministry, these young disciples grow deeper and deeper in their faith, learning more about how to be like Jesus.



## Youth

### Driver's License

There are moments in our lives that are considered turning points. Getting a driver's license is a moment which reflects the independence of our youth. Celebrating with these young people is a way for a deepening of relationships with the congregation, as together we pray for safety and celebration.

### Graduation Sunday

Whether it is high school or college, graduation marks an end and a beginning of new journeys. This milestone celebrates with families and students as together, we enter new moments of opportunities and growth in Jesus



## For Any Age

### Baptism

We believe that baptism is vital to our faith walk. While at the time of baptism, we have already accepted Jesus, we hope and pray that the act of baptism is a reflection of what Jesus did – committing his life to the ministry and mission of God and proclaiming his desire to follow God's will.

### Membership

Multiple times each year, we receive those who desire to become a member of ECOB. This time is one that shares a level of commitment from those becoming members and from the congregation as we welcome them in the family of faith at ECOB.

### Memorial Sunday

Part of living together means that we often experience death together. On Memorial Day Sunday, we take some time to remember those who have passed, praying for grieving families, and to sit within the faithfulness of God's comfort together.

# Regular Program Offerings:



## WORSHIP

Each week, ECOB offers two worship services that praise God and engage in our discipleship. Our 8:30 Classic service offers strong liturgy, faith-filled hymns, and times of prayer that connect with the very nature of God. At our 10:45 Contemporary service, our time together is marked by energetic and meaningful music, prayers, and a message that connects the deep truths of the Bible with the need for real life application.

## LIFE GROUPS

At the core of our faith formation is our Life Group Ministry. These groups, meeting both on Sunday mornings and throughout the week, provide opportunities to connect with other disciples in deep and meaningful relationships as together, you explore faith and life. Our Welcome Desk has an ongoing list of Life Groups for men, women, all ages, and even special groups based off of our weekly messages.



## SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES

Each week, there are opportunities to be the hands and feet of Jesus. These opportunities are both within ECOB and our local community giving ways to use your unique gifts, talents, and passions.



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