



# Manassas Church of the Brethren

## January 2026 Newsletter

### Happy New Year 2026!

We are excited to begin the new year with many meaningful opportunities to connect at Manassas Church of the Brethren. Our new church board is listed on pages 3 and 4.

On Sunday, January 4, we will kick off the year with a youth-sponsored doughnut breakfast in the fellowship hall (see page 5). Immediately following worship, everyone is invited to a cake social as we celebrate and give thanks for Gilmer Akers and his 11 years of faithful service (see page 6). After the cake social, our Young Adults will gather for a fellowship lunch at Noodles & Co. on Liberia Avenue (see page 5). In addition, our reading group will meet on Monday January 5, either via Zoom or in person (see page 7).

Other January activities include the House of Mercy workday, Retirees' Luncheon, and adult fellowship, all listed on page 5. Please note there will be no Cards & Games Club in January. The Lovina Conner Circle Luncheon will take place on January 22 (see page 6), and we invite you to save the date for the Youth Fundraiser Valentine's Dinner on February 14 (see page 6).

Youth opportunities also include registration for FaithX (see page 8) and the National Youth Conference (see page 7), as well as a district-wide youth retreat from January 9–11 (see page 8).

Additional events this month include a special Congregational Council meeting on January 11 following worship (see page 10) and a membership/baptism class offered by Pastors Mandy and Mark beginning January 25th (see page 10).

Finally, if you have not yet signed up for our directory app, instructions are available on pages 11 and 12.

Blessings to you all in this new year!

### Stewardship by the Numbers

#### Worship Attendance & Giving

2025 Average Worship Attendance: **88.6**  
2025 Average Weekly Offering: **\$11,141.67**

December Average Worship Attendance: **99.4**  
December Average Offering: **\$15,505.00**

**CHRISTMAS EVE OFFERING TO HOPE & SERENITY FARM: \$1,883.00**

## Pastor's Page

When 2025 began, we drew Star Words during our worship service for Epiphany to help guide us through the year. As 2025 comes to an end, I've been reflecting on my Star Word—"Devotion" ... Devotion can be love or loyalty, dedication to something. Devotion can be religious fervor, an act of worship and prayer. When I first drew this word, I thought about the devotions we have before Deacon and Church Board meetings. I thought about the Devotion booklets that we use through Advent and Lent to guide us through the season to center our hearts. And, then as I considered "devotion" as love, loyalty, and dedication, I thought at my own devotion to faith, to Christ, and to this congregation. I thought about my devotion to my family and friends. In a world that tries to isolate us, tries to divide us and tear us apart, I think we can use a bit more devotion, a bit more love, a bit more dedication and loyalty to the ones we love and the things that we hold dear. What in your life could use more devotion?

What was your Star Word from 2025? How did God guide you with this word? What new word might you get this year? How is God guiding you into 2026?



~Pastor Mandy

## Worship Themes

**January 4—Epiphany:** Star Words

*Fear Doesn't Stop Us*

Scripture: Matthew 1:12, 16-18

Preacher: Pastor Mandy

Worship Leader: Jennifer Summy, Camp Mardela

**January 11—Baptism of our Lord**

Scripture: Matthew 3:13-17; John 1:29-34

Preacher: Pastor Mandy

Worship Leader: TBD

**January 18—Come and See**

Scripture: John 1:35-42; 1 Corinthians 1:1-9

Preacher: Pastor Mandy

Worship Leader: TBD

**January 25—Perfectly United**

Scripture: 1 Corinthians 1:10-17

Preacher: Pastor Mandy

Worship Leader: TBD

If you'd like to serve as a Worship Leader in 2026, sign up here: [Manassas Church of the Brethren: Worship Leaders](#) or talk with Pastor Mandy

# Church Board

## MCOB 2026 Church Board

During our Fall Congregational Council Meeting, the slate was approved for this year. The 2026 Church Board is shown below. Please be in prayer for our new leadership in this new year! Please see the rest of our committees on page 4.

### Church Board:

Rhonda C., Chair (2026)  
David S., Clerk  
Melvin C., Moderator (2027)  
Rob D., Treasurer, ex officio  
Joan K., Financial Secretary, ex officio  
Mandy North, Pastor, ex officio  
Ben W., Trustee Chair, ex officio  
Bonnie C., Deacon Chair, ex officio

### Christian Education

Donna H. (2028), Chair  
Kim S. (2027)  
Nancy S. (2026)

### Communications

Devon H. (2027)  
Paul K. (2026)  
Travis W. (2028)

### Fellowship & Hospitality

Carla B. (2026), Chair  
Kelly K. (2027)  
Joan K. (2028)

### Mission & Service

Kim K. (2026)  
Jeanette S. (2028)  
Mary G. (2027), Chair

### Property

Scott C. (2028), Co-Chair  
Marc B. (2026), Co-Chair  
Sonny C. (2027)

### Stewardship

Luke C. (2028),  
Christian S. (2026), Chair  
Melissa B. (2027)

### Worship & Music

Anna W. (2028)  
Alicia S. (2026), Chair  
Amanda R. (2027)

We will host a Church Board Retreat on Monday, January 12 from 6—9 pm. The retreat includes dinner, and all board members are encouraged to attend!



**Deacons Meeting, January 18th  
12:00pm—Fellowship Hall**



# Church Committees

**Audit Committee** - Rick A., Christian S., Chris E.

**Cemetery Committee** - Rhonda C. Linda T., Mike H., Sherrie W. and John and Patricia G.

**Chancel Choir Officers** - Terrie C. (Librarian),

**Delegates to Annual Conference** (June 28, 2026 – July 2, 2026) - David S. & Mike B.

**Delegates to Mid-Atlantic District Conference**—Pastor Mandy, Pastor Mark, Terrie C., & Vacancy

**Education & Enrichment Fund Committee** – Lavonne H. (2027), Melissa B. (2028), Donna H. (2026)

**Elva Ramey Kline Memorial Fund Committee** - Martha A. and Patricia G.

**Financial Secretary** – Joan K

**Goals and Purpose Committee** - Illana N. (2026), Carla B. (2026), Paul K. (2028), Judy F. (2028), Pat F. (2027), Melvin C. (Ex Officio, Moderator)

**Ushers** – Don K. Christian S., Judy F., Jim F., Mike H., Luke C., Louis H., Christa H., Rob D.

**Hospitality Committee** - Rhonda C., Linda T., and Mary G.

**Kitchen Supplies Coordinators** - Terrie and Sonny C.

**Leadership Calling Team** - Linda T.(2026), Terrie C. (2028), Judy F. (2027)

**Librarian** – Jeanette S.

**Memorial Fund Committee** - Rick & Martha A. (2026), Jeanette S. (2028), Linda T. (2027)

**Nursery Committee** - Luke C., Carla B., and Meg A.

**On Earth Peace Representative** - Illana N.

**Organist** - Ben W.

**Pianists** - Susan D., Linda H., Krista K., Ben W. and Travis W.

**Shepherd's Spring Advocate** – Mary Jane P.

**Staff Advisory Committee** – Margaret B.(2026), Lisa N. (2027), Mike B.(2028), Alicia S. (2026), & Luke C. (2027)

**Trustee Board** – Ben W.(Chair), Bonnie C., Steve H., Don K., & Rhonda C.

**Vacation Bible School Directors** – TBD

# EVENTS



## Youth Sponsored Donut Breakfast!

January 4th

9:00am—Fellowship Center  
(Jr. High should arrive at 8:30am)



## Young Adult Lunch

January 4th  
12:30pm

Noodles & Co. - Liberia Ave.



HOUSE OF MERCY

*making God's love visible to those in need*

8170 Flannery Court | Manassas, VA 20109 | (703) 659-1636

[www.houseofmercyva.org](http://www.houseofmercyva.org)

## House of Mercy Workday

January 8th

1:00pm—4:00pm



## Retirees' Luncheon

Great American Buffet - January 15th

1:00pm



ADULT FELLOWSHIP GROUP

## Adult Fellowship Group

January 18th

12:30pm

Location TBD

## Upcoming Events



*Lovina Conner Circle Ladies Lunch*

*Thursday January 22nd*

*11:30am*

*Cracker Barrel*

*10801 Battleview Pkwy, Manassas, VA 20109*

MCOB  
**VALENTINE'S DINNER**

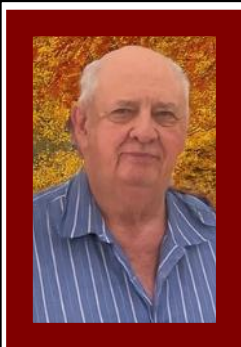
**SAVE THE DATE**

**Avoid the Waitlist!**

**Join us for our Annual Youth Fundraiser  
Valentine's Dinner!**

**Saturday February 14th**

## Cake Social in honor of Gilmer Akers



Gilmer Akers, born into Manassas COB, has been our Maintenance Engineer for our church and property for 11 years and 1 month. While serving on the Property team, Gilmer built our large wooden cross on the altar. He also created a platform for the Advent candle wreath, Gilmer has done projects such as recreating a base for the Cannon Branch Lectern (with Cannon Branch pew wood), painting all throughout the church, chose and purchased gym paint and coordinated painting of the gym. Worked with VAWFSC for Guest house needs, worked on a new fire alarm system; Made a detailed map for contractors, Regularly changed out all light bulbs and A/C filters, ensured keys were made and distributed, and handled all van maintenance. Gilmer also ensured all supplies were ordered, and did the frame for the screen in the sanctuary. Gilmer has also worked with out boy scouts making picnic tables.

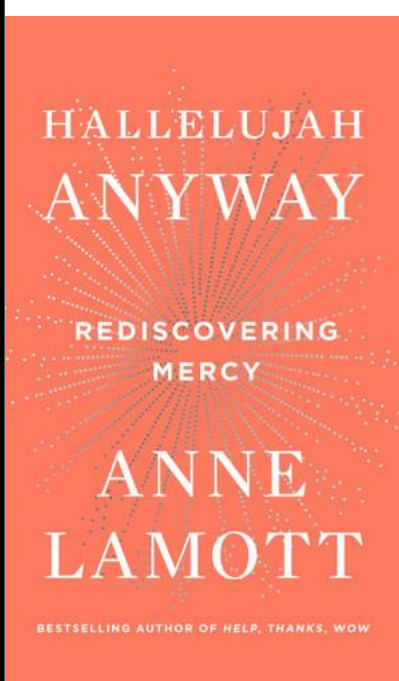
As Gilmer retires we will hold a cake social on January 4th following worship. Many Thanks to Gilmer for all of his hard work!

### **Joe 15 Blood Drive—SAVE THE DATE**

Join us for our annual Joe 15 Blood Drive on **January 14th 9:30am—2:30pm**

Click here to make an appt: [RedCrossBlood.org/rapidpass](https://www.RedCrossBlood.org/rapidpass)

## Reading Group



The MCoB Reading Group will be meeting on 1/5 at 7 p.m. to discuss Anne Lamott's *Hallelujah Anyway: Rediscovering Mercy*. If you haven't read Lamott before, you are in for a treat because she has a conversational, relatable, honest, and self-deprecating style. This short book explores mercy and where to find meaning in life, and how mercy to ourselves and others is the ultimate kindness, saying "kindness towards others, beginning with myself, buys us a shot at a warm and generous heart, the greatest prize of all." For those unfamiliar with the MCoB Reading Group, we read one book chosen by members every few months and then meet one evening to discuss it. That gives us each the flexibility to read at our leisure before the meeting and doesn't require a large commitment of time for discussion (the meeting is generally an hour). Lamott's book is pretty short, so it gives you a perfect opportunity to try us out! We'd love to have you with us and there is an online option. *Hallelujah Anyway* is available from your favorite online bookseller in several options, including an audio book. The book is also available for free via the PWC Library in the Libby app.

## National Youth Conference



National Youth Conference, or "NYC," is a Church of the Brethren tradition that dates back to 1954! Every 4 years, youth from across the United States (and beyond) travel to the YMCA of the Rockies in Estes Park, Colorado for an incredible weeklong youth conference. Youth who have completed 9<sup>th</sup> grade through one year of college (or age equivalent) are eligible to attend.

The week includes worship twice a day, small groups, workshops, service projects, recreation, hiking in the Rocky Mountains, and more! It is a full week with lots of exciting activities, but there is also plenty of time for recreation and reflection. Our Sr. High will be attending. Let us know if your youth plans to attend! We are also working to secure advisors for this trip. If you are interested in attending as an advisor, let us know!

Registration begins on January 5th! Learn more here: <https://www.brethren.org/nyc/>

# FaithX



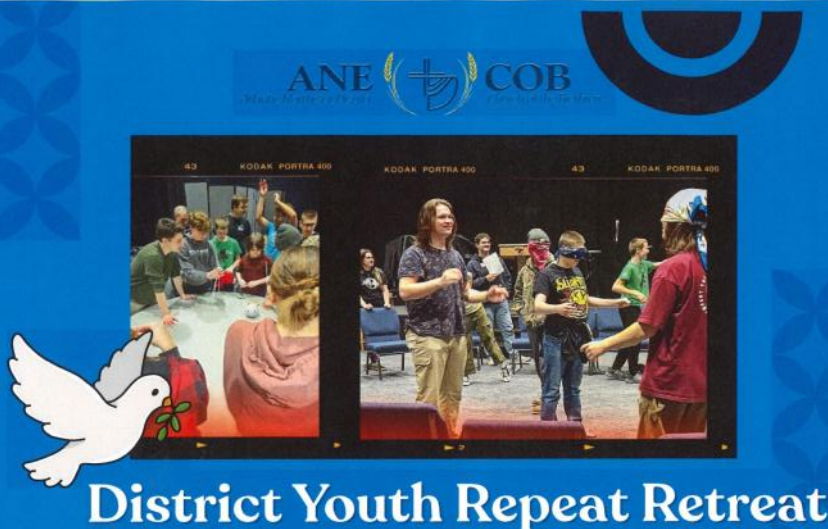
**Our Junior High Youth will be attending FaithX Workcamp this summer!**

**Registration\* opens January 14th at 7:00pm. Click here to learn more: <https://www.brethren.org/faithx/>. Parents, check**

**your email for more information about the schedule! Let us know if your JR High Youth plans to attend, and which location works best for you and your family!**

\*There is a deposit due for each registrant (assistance is available to families in need.)

## District Youth Retreat



### District Youth Repeat Retreat

Led by Peacefully, Simply, Together group from Elizabethtown College

Held at York First Church of the Brethren



#### Retreat Highlights

- Exploration of Brethren Values & Lifestyle
- Inspiring Worship & Sessions
- Service Project
- Fun Games & Activities
- Meet Other COB Youth!

#### Scan QR Code for more information!

Register by January 5

Questions? Contact [witkovskyd@gmail.com](mailto:witkovskyd@gmail.com) or [lindab@lancob.org](mailto:lindab@lancob.org)

**January 9-11, 2026**

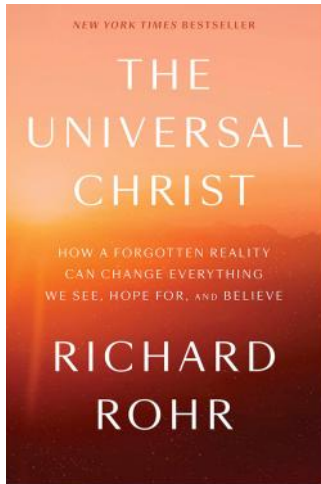
Youth Grades 6-12

Limited to 50 Participants

#### Weekend Youth Retreat January 9-11, 2026

For the past few years, we have been invited to attend a Winter Retreat with Lancaster Church of the Brethren. The retreat has expanded to include the entire Atlantic Northeast District and their Manassas Church of the Brethren friends! It will be led by Peacefully, Simply, Together student group from Etown College and held at York First COB, 2710 Kingston Rd, York, PA 17402. Our weekend focus is to bring together youth from around the area for fun and service at an inexpensive retreat for both Jr and Sr High youth. We will spend time in conversation around Brethren values and lifestyle. The cost is \$15 per person (youth and advisors). This cost includes a Friday evening snack and Saturday breakfast and lunch. There will be an additional cost for groups staying for dinner on Saturday night. Here's a link with all the details: <https://files.constantcontact.com/0524495d501/8cf08b16-9708-421e-abf7-bdd6e4689dfa.pdf> Tom Schaeffer is willing to attend as an advisor along with Pastor Mark and Elisa Pickens. Registration is due January 5, so let us know ASAP if your youth plans to attend.

## Adult Youth Sunday School



### Adult Sunday School Class Begins January 4th

The Universal Christ, by Richard Rohr, will be read and discussed. Drawing on scripture, history, and spiritual practice, Rohr articulates a transformative view of Jesus Christ as a portrait of God's constant unfolding work in the world. "God loves things by becoming them." Melvin C., Pat F., and Steve H. will facilitate the lively class discussion, drawing on over 100 years of life experiences. In addition to Richard Rohr's book, class time will incorporate video presentations by Rohr. Please join us!

## Shine Curriculum for Kids & Jr. High Youth

Jan. 4	Jesus' Ministry Begins	Matthew 4:17-25	We can bring our cares to Jesus.
Jan. 11	Sermon on the Mount	Matthew 5:1-16	We can follow in the way of Jesus.
Jan. 18	Two Builders	Matthew 7:24-29	We can build faith on a strong foundation.
Jan. 25	Mustard Seed and Yeast	Matthew 13:31-35	God's kingdom grows.

## Sr. High Sunday School

Our Sr. High Youth will continue their discussion on LGBTQ+ and the Bible with Pastor Mandy.

## Other Sunday School Options

We also offer the Handbell Choir and our Cards and Caring Hands Class during the Sunday School hour beginning at 9:45am.



## Membership Class

### Become a Member

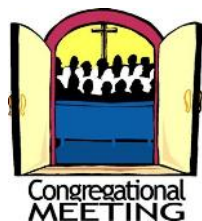


*Certificate of Membership*

Are you interested in learning more about the Church of the Brethren denomination? Do you want to become a member of the Manassas Church of the Brethren?

Pastor Mandy and Pastor Mark will be teaching a membership course beginning January 25th, immediately following worship. The course will continue on February 1st, February 8th, and February 15th. The class is open to anyone 9 - 99!

## Special Congregational Council Meeting



On Sunday January 11th, following worship, we will hold a special Congregational Council Meeting. Following a 6-month discernment period, we will discuss the property proposal. We will begin this meeting by taking an affirmation vote to approve Terrie Cox for licensing in the ministry. We invite all to join.

## Church of the Brethren Job Opening

### Position Opening: Church of the Brethren

December 15, 2025

DIRECTOR OF BRETHREN DISASTER MINISTRIES (BDM)

The Church of the Brethren is seeking to fill a full-time salaried position of Director of Brethren Disaster Ministries (BDM). The Director of Brethren Disaster Ministries is part of the Brethren Disaster Ministries team and reports directly to the Executive Director of Service Ministries.

Major responsibilities include providing oversight and administration of Brethren Disaster Ministries with a focus on the home rebuilding program. This includes identifying and opening new home rebuilding sites as necessary, managing long-term and weekly rebuilding volunteers and leading the training of volunteer leaders.

Required skills and knowledge include strong interpersonal skills; ability to articulate, support and operate out of the vision, mission, and core values of the Church of the Brethren as defined by the Mission and Ministry Board, ability to uphold and support the basic beliefs and practices of the Church of the Brethren as determined by Annual conference, and ability to act within a multicultural and multigenerational team environment. Training or experience with making effective presentations and providing adult education, especially in conducting skill training workshops; managing staff and volunteers and in house construction and repair is required.

Knowledge of International Building Codes is preferred. A Bachelor's degree is required, advanced degree in related field preferred. This position is remote and based at the Brethren Disaster Ministries Office, New Windsor,

Applications will be received beginning immediately and will be reviewed on an ongoing basis until the position is filled.

Qualified candidates are invited to send a cover letter and resume to [COBApply@brethren.org](mailto:COBApply@brethren.org). Human Resources Office Church of the Brethren 1451 Dundee Avenue Elgin, IL 60120

# Church Directory

Instant  
Church Directory™  
Online



## ONLINE MEMBER DIRECTORY LOGIN INSTRUCTIONS.

### First time signing into the Online Directory or Mobile App?

1. Go to [members.InstantChurchDirectory.com](https://members.InstantChurchDirectory.com)
2. Click on the **Create Login** button under: First time signing in?
3. Enter the email address as it is listed in the family portion of the directory.
4. Create a password. The password must be 8 characters long and contain at least two of the following special characters: capital letters, numbers or symbols.
5. Retype the password to confirm it and click **Request Login**.
6. Check your inbox for an email from [service@instantchurchdirectory.com](mailto:service@instantchurchdirectory.com).
7. To complete the sign-up process, you will need to verify your email address by clicking on the link sent to you in that email.
8. Once you confirm your email, you may sign at [members.InstantChurchDirectory.com](https://members.InstantChurchDirectory.com).

Instant Church Directory™  
Church Member Sign In

Email address in your church's directory

Password

Sign In

Forgot password?

or

First time signing in?  
Create Login

Are you a church admin? Sign in here.

Your email with the password you created will work on all the Instant Church Directory apps on any device

### Already logged into the Mobile App?

1. Go to [members.InstantChurchDirectory.com](https://members.InstantChurchDirectory.com)
2. Enter your email address listed in the directory and your unique member password.
3. Click **Sign In**.

Need help signing in? Please see your directory Administrator.

# Mobile Church Directory Instructions

Instant  
Church Directory™  
Online

## Mobile App Login Instructions for Android™ Devices

### First Time Signing into Directory (Version 2.0 or newer)

1. Download the App from the App Store.

Search for "Instant Church Directory" and look for this icon:



2. Open the app and click on the **Create Login** button.
3. Enter your email address that is used in your church's directory.
4. Create a password. The password must be 8 characters long and must contain at least two of the following special characters: capital letters, numbers or symbols.
5. Retype the password to confirm it and click **Create Login**.
6. Check your inbox for an email from service@instantchurchdirectory.com.
7. To complete the sign-up process, you will need to verify your email address by clicking on the link sent to you in that email.
8. Once you confirm your email, you may open the app and click **Sign In** to log into your church's directory.

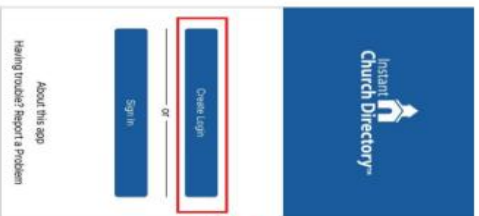
Your email with the password you created will work on all the Instant Church Directory apps on any device, as well as the member website at [members.InstantChurchDirectory.com](http://members.InstantChurchDirectory.com).

### Previously Signed into the Directory (Version 2.0 or newer)

1. Open the app and click on the **Sign In** button.
2. Enter your email address that is used in your church's directory and your personal member password.
3. Click on the **Sign In** button.

If you do not remember your personal member password, click on the **Forgot Password?** link to receive a link to your email to reset your password.

Need help signing in? Please see your directory Administrator.



Instant  
Church Directory™  
Online

## Mobile App Login Instructions for iPhone®, iPad and any iOS Device

### First Time Signing into Directory (Version 2.0 or newer)

1. Download the App from the App Store.

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2. Open the app and click on the **Create Login** button.
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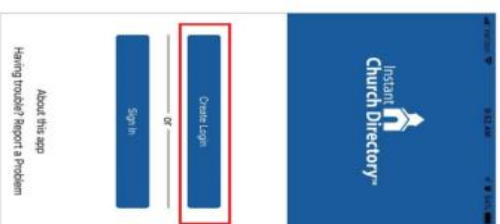
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Need help signing in? Please see your directory Administrator.



# January 2025



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				<b>1</b> Office Closed	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>4</b> 9:00am—D'nut B'fst 9:45am—S.S. 11:00am—Worship 12:00 pm—Cake Social 12:30pm—YA Lunch	<b>5</b> NYC Registration Opens	<b>6</b> 12:00pm—Lunch Bunch @ Arby's 3:30pm— Forgetful Friends	<b>7</b> 6:45pm—Bible Study 7:30pm—Choir Practice	<b>8</b> 1:00pm—House of Mercy Workday	<b>9</b> Youth Winter Retreat Begins	<b>10</b>
<b>11</b> 9:45am—Sunday School 11:00am—Worship 12:00pm Congrega- tional Council Mtg	<b>12</b> 6:00pm— Church Board Retreat	<b>13</b> 12:00pm—Lunch Bunch @ Arby's	<b>14</b> 6:45pm—Bible Study 7:30pm—Choir Practice	<b>15</b> 1:00pm— Retirees' Lunch @ Great American Buffet	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>18</b> 9:45am— Sunday School 11:00am—Worship 12:00pm—Deacons meeting 12:30pm—Adult fellowship Luncheon	<b>19</b> <b>OFFICE CLOSED</b>	<b>20</b> 12:00pm—Lunch Bunch @ Arby's 3:30pm— Forgetful Friends	<b>21</b> 6:45pm—Bible Study 7:30pm—Choir Practice	<b>22</b> 11:30 am— Lovina Conner Circle Lunch @ Cracker Barrel	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>25</b> 9:45am—Sunday School 11:00am—Worship 12:00 pm— Membership Class	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b> 12:00pm—Lunch Bunch @ Arby's	<b>28</b> 6:45pm—Bible Study 7:30pm—Choir Practice	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b>

MANASSAS CHURCH OF THE BRETHREN  
10047 NOKESVILLE ROAD  
MANASSAS VIRGINIA 20110

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

*Happy  
Birth day*

6-Ava C.	18-Clark C.
6-Jenn F.	18-Jan H.
7-Brad H.	18-Katelyn Wampler-L.
8-Nancy B.	21-James F.
9-Lance K.	23-David S.
9-Donna L.	25-Megan A.
9-Shirley M.	26-Josephine K.
9-Heather B.	27-Brian H.
11-Debbie E.	27-Margaret B.
11-Wayne K.	28-James S.
11-Tyler B.	29-Grace C.
12-Patrick W.	30-Gina M.
13-Kate W.	30-John F.
13-Kim S.	30-Leys R.
16-Henry P.	31-Ben H.
16-Matthew W.	
17-Alexander P.	



16-Carroll & Susan W.

*Do you have a birthday or anniversary in  
January? Let us know! We'd love to celebrate  
with you*