



DILLSBURG BIC CHURCH

GROWING DEEP



REACHING FAR

18 East Harrisburg St. | Dillsburg, PA | 717.432.3847

www.DillsburgBIC.org

December 2025

What's Your Story"

By Carolyn Kimmel

Editor's Note: I'm delighted to share this Doulos article, originally published in the December 2016 edition, written by our beloved Carolyn Kimmel. Carolyn's thoughtful insights and heartfelt words continue to inspire and resonate with our community, making this piece just as meaningful today as it was when first shared.

~ AM Brandt

Home is where your story begins.

That's written on the frame of a mirror that hangs near our doorway. Maybe it's because I love writing stories, but that sentence strikes a chord with me. It's my hope that when anyone in our house glances in that mirror before they leave for the day, they remember that love and grace undergird the home from which they set out.

Because what we experience in our childhood home certainly does impact at least the lead of the story that starts the day we are born. We – and the events that shape our lives – add in much of the narrative along the way, but the start of the story remains.

I am indescribably grateful that my three daughters have reached young adulthood with no tragedy that might color the best that they expect from life – and from God – when they put forth their best effort.

I was thinking about this recently when, in our Pre-K Sunday school class, we were talking about flowers. The children were telling us all the reasons they love flowers . . . they are pretty to look at; they smell good; it makes us happy when someone sends us flowers.

And, although I kept my thoughts silent, it suddenly hit me how much I don't like flowers. And I absolutely don't like how they smell. And the sight of them makes me feel . . . melancholy and momentarily lost.

Because that's where my story started . . . at least the earliest part I can remember. When my mother was sick, people sent her flowers to cheer her up. When she was in the hospital, more flowers were delivered. She

passed away when I was in elementary school – and oh the flowers we received! At the house, at the funeral home. The smell assailed my senses when I entered that alcove where she lay in her casket. It was foreign and scary and sad. I felt lost. And all I could smell were the flowers. Three years later, when my beloved grandma – my mother substitute – died suddenly, bringing more loss – and more flowers.

So now, many years later, the smell of flowers takes me back . . . back to where my story began.

This month we celebrate the One whose story began in a stable, where he was born as a baby destined to take on the sins of mankind. Growing up with a dad who was a carpenter, no doubt the smell of sawdust and the sight of wood chips were familiar to Jesus. I imagine him sitting in a shop with his dad, bonding over a piece of wood he was fashioning with his carpenter's plane.

And I wonder, did he think of that wood when he carried another piece of wood – the cross – on his back as he trod the streets of Jerusalem toward his death? Did the feel of it in his hands this time bring any comfort from the memory of home – or only pain and keen awareness of betrayal? He knew his story would end in triumph, but it far from an easy road.

There was a time, I must admit, when I wasn't sure I trusted the Author who was writing my story. If the beginning were any indication, I thought I might certainly have to take over the pen. While we all know where our stories started, we often wonder what the middle part will look like – what dangling participles will

Continued on Page 2

Continued from page 1

leave us hanging and uncertain; what exclamation points will fill our days with excitement; what periods will end sentences when we had much more to say? And the temptation is there to write our own stories, foolishly thinking we can write the happy ending that at times seems so elusive.

The good news of the Christmas story is we know the ending – and it's for us! It's a story that's become so familiar that sometimes we fail to appreciate its awe. But if we take time to really think about the story – the unlikely excuse that Mary gave when she turned up pregnant as a virgin – “It's God's son” – the crude surroundings where Jesus was born; the lowly shepherds that the angels entrusted to proclaim the news of his birth; the coming of the One who would die so we might live . . . wow; that's some story! And it's true!

For Christians, home – our eternal home - is where our story also ends. Thank you, Lord, for that precious gift!

Sometimes I can get bitter, if I let myself, about all the things in my life that were tainted for me because they became stained by early loss. Maybe there are those things for you as well.

But the beauty of the Christmas story for me is this: Jesus overcomes any twist in our earthly stories of home that seem too hard to smooth over. Because He lives, I can smell flowers anew and know that my story is safe in his hands – and I can trust his edits will bring me back home forever.

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Carolyn Kimmel

Dear Friends,

Thank you for your patience as we bring you this December edition of The Doulos. Life brought a few unexpected pauses these past months, but your grace and support have meant so much.

As we move forward, may this season bring renewed energy, faith, and joy. We're grateful for you and for all that makes our Doulos family so special.

The new year will bring a slightly different Doulos. We look forward to sharing it with you.

With gratitude,
The Doulos Team

Celebrating Life Together!

Join Dillsburg BIC Church for FREE events:

Adults' Night Out: Wed. Dec. 10, 5:30-8:00 p.m.

meal for everyone (5:30-6:00); special activities for students K-12th

Caroling on the Square: Sat. Dec. 13, 3:00 p.m. at Dillsburg Square

hot drinks, cookies, carols & the Martin Brass

Christmas Choir & Culinary Treats: Sun. Dec. 21, 10:00 a.m

*celebration with hymns, choir & children's presentation,
followed by culinary treats*

Christmas Eve Candlelight Service: Wed. Dec. 24, 6:30 p.m.

18 E. Harrisburg St., Dillsburg - Questions? office@dillsburgbic.org





Dear Kathy & DBIC Church—I hope you are doing well! I was the recipient of the 2022 high school graduate scholarship in the amount of \$13,000 which helped cover my tuition at Northampton Community College. I wanted to share an exciting update—I have officially graduated from Northampton with an associate in Applied Science degree in Dental Hygiene, passed all national board exams, and am now a registered Dental Hygienist! I plan to practice in the Dillsburg/Mechanicsburg area... if you have any recommendations on any dentists hiring, please let me know. Thank you for all the kindness and generosity that you and the church has given me. The support throughout school, and the scholarship truly made a difference. I wouldn't be where I am today without all your help! Thank you again for helping me make this dream possible. ~ *Sincerely, Allyson Maylock*

Dear friends at Dillsburg BIC, Thank you so very much for your thoughts and prayers during our recent trip to Denver, CO where I (Tracy) had a medical scare and 10-day stay in the hospital! It was a very scary time, but knowing that so many of you were praying for us was extremely calming and reassuring! The beautiful fall flower arrangement that we received upon our return did indeed "brighten our day!" ~ *Sincerely, Tracy & Al Emig*

Thank you for this gracious gift. God is using your faithfulness together with SIM cross-cultural workers and partner churches to demonstrate the goodness of Jesus in many places where people otherwise live and die without having a single Christian who will be their friend. We are compelled to keep going so that all may experience the goodness of Jesus in human form! May His saving grace take root in the lives of individuals, families, communities, and nations! Please join us in praying fervently for God to raise up more U.S. believers who will answer His call to go. Pray for wisdom and guidance for us here in the U.S. office as we strive to be the instrument by which God calls another generation of workers to go and make disciples of all nations. Please ask God to give us creativity, wisdom, opportunities, and resources to help people discover that God is calling them to go to least-reached communities. We are grateful to be in ministry with you. Thank you for magnifying the Lord with SIM as we exalt His name together. ~ *Matt & Julie Walsh, SIM USA*

Dear DBIC—We wanted to take the opportunity to thank you for working with our program. Your partnership has allowed many students to be blessed by quality music education, and in turn, bless others. Cadence Music & Arts Programs would not exist without you and we extend our deepest gratitude! Thank you! ~ *Sincerely, Cadence Music + Arts Programs*

9-6-2025—The great package of BIC church information arrived yesterday. How wonderful of you to send it, even though we have been gone from there for almost 30 years. We anticipate Mel/Jan coming next weekend for Jinny's birthday. They have faithfully made that trek across the Turnpike for all these years. Jinny has been on Hospice since late January, but still with us. God is good to us. I visit her everyday about 2 hours. Again thank you so much. God's blessings. ~ *Marty*

Thank you for your confidence in the New Horizons Foundation, Inc. Your generous support has enabled the beneficiaries of your gift to continue the work they have been called to do. We appreciate the opportunity to co-labor with you on this important project. ~ *Dr. Steven Prensner, President/CEO, New Horizons Foundation*

Thank you for your recent gift. Your investment in these precious lives is making a real difference. We hope we can count on you to be a monthly Hope Giver through your generous donations. It takes consistent and tireless work on behalf of our Peace Promise team to forge relationships of trust, hope, and safety with these individuals. We're making a difference, and we couldn't do it without you. Thank you for helping to release these precious souls into freedom and restoration so they might live lives of endless opportunities, meaningful relationships, and enduring peace.

~ *Christie Gustafson, President of the Board, Patty Seaman, Executive Director of Client Services, Peace Promise*

Thank you for giving help and HOPE to the people we serve at New Hope Ministries! We are grateful for your kind and incredibly generous gift received on September 22, 2025. Because of you, over 29,000 people each year have access to basic needs they depend on daily. Your generosity is absolutely critical - it ensures that every guest at New Hope has their urgent needs met today and the support to build a brighter future in the months ahead. Your gift is truly a lifeline - what a powerful blessing! You bring our mission to life! Thank you for partnering with us in this meaningful work as we share help and the hope of Jesus with our neighbors in need! ~ *Molly Helmstetter, CFRE, Director of Development, New Hope Ministries*



We are deeply grateful for your recent support of Paxton Ministries. Thank you for helping us provide a safe, comfortable home for adults in need. Your donation makes a big difference! At Paxton Street Home, it's not just our residents who find a place to belong—it's our staff and volunteers too. For many, Paxton has been more than a workplace; it's been a home.

Dawn Pope, a member of our resident services team, spent the last decade living and serving here while raising her twin daughters, Glory and Liberty. Their story is a powerful example of how Paxton's mission extends beyond our programs—it shapes lives. From navigating early challenges to responding calmly during emergencies, Dawn and her daughters became part of the fabric of our community. This summer marked a major transition for their family: Glory began her career as a cosmetologist, Liberty headed off to college, and Dawn moved out of Paxton Street Home to begin a new chapter in her life. Though she no longer lives on-site, Dawn continues her vital work with our residents, saying: "No place has ever made me feel as appreciated as Paxton Ministries. I know I've been created to come alongside people and help them become the best versions of themselves, and Paxton lets me do that."

Your support makes stories like Dawn's possible—and helps us continue creating a place where everyone is valued, supported, and loved. We sincerely appreciate your donation, and we deeply appreciate your help as we fulfill our mission to provide affordable housing and support services to adults in need with Christ-like love.

~ Amy Starr, Director of Development, Paxton Ministries

I am thankful for your partnership in this ministry. Your support and hospitality are encouraging. Together, we are serving God's kids and making an eternal impact. May God bless you abundantly!

~ Kim Sanger, Assistant Director of Bible Adventure/CIA

Dear DBIC Family—Thank you for lending us your tablecloths for our women's breakfast today. Having beautiful tables helped our event feel extra special and we're thankful that you enabled that for us.

~ Sincerely, the TMH Women's Ministry Team

We are truly touched by the outpouring of love and support you've shown us during our Mom's brief battle with cancer. Your cards, calls, texts, and prayers lifted our spirits and carried us through this difficult time. From the bottom of our hearts, we are deeply grateful for each of you.

~ Dan & Anne-Marie Brandt

"So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live your lives in him, rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness." (Col. 2:6-7). Together, rooted and grounded in Christ, we know there's much to be thankful for, and we also know there continues to be much pain and suffering. Your donations assist in sharing God's love and compassion for all in the name of Christ. THANK YOU so much for contributing to the work of Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) through the sharing of material resources. According to our records, you have donated the following between July 1 and September 30, 2025. Thank you!

140 School Kits

Your gift helps change lives around the world. Through this gift of hope, you are meeting urgent needs, helping to build peace, and investing in long-term change in communities. The supplies that MCC sends around the world offer comfort to families facing disaster or crisis.

Many have had to leave their homes and have few options. The material resources we send are a tangible way of sharing God's love and compassion, reminding people their needs are not forgotten. MCC plans shipments carefully to meet local needs by sending high-quality items that can withstand the harsh conditions faced by people receiving the supplies. Whether you participate by making a comforter, donating kits or volunteering, we appreciate your generosity. You enable MCC to respond to a variety of needs around the world and show God's love to our neighbors both far and near.

~Carol Zook, MCC Material Resources Center, Mennonite Central Committee

The “Whys” of Thrift on Purpose: A Mennonite Central Committee Thrift Shop

Courtesy of “Common Place” (an MCC magazine) & submitted by Kimberly Tucker

At Thrift on Purpose, every purchase is a gift to the world!

Here is how your purchase allows MCC to work with partners in development:

A Novel Approach to Peacebuilding: MCC-supported peace libraries help Rwandan youth foster a harmonious new chapter.

It is morning in Rwanda’s Gicumbi District, Northern Province. Rays of sun stream through the windows of the Gicumbi Children’s Peace Library, softly illuminating shelves stocked with colorful Bible stories, crossword anthologies and books on the environment. A plethora of works by African authors shares shelf space with titles like Clifford the Big Red Dog.

Children from G.S. Byumba Inyange, a local school, walk to the library with their teacher and sit in a row. Francine Muhawenimana, a coordinator at the library, hands them each a slip of paper with a single word written on it, in English, which the children study alongside the national language of Kinyarwanda.



MCC/Fairpicture Photo/Denyse Kamugwiza

As Muhawenimana asks the students to take turns using their words in sentences, Bruno Ineza Kabera is the first to raise his hand, crafting a sentence with the word “sister.” His peers share sentences using words like “brother,” “pot” and “friends.” When a child is unsure of what their word means, the others assist.

Muhawenimana next projects the pages of a picture book — Beloved Daughter by Uganda-based teacher and author Ritah Katetemera — onto a screen at the front of the room. The book is part of African Storybook, an initiative that publishes children’s books by African authors in a range of languages spoken on the continent. She reads each page in both English and Kinyarwanda. The story, about a young girl who is comforted by a friend after her brothers break her favorite clay pot, features all the words used in the first activity. When the book ends, Muhawenimana leads the children in a short discussion about ways they can help their friends. “It helped me to refresh my mind,” says Ineza Kabera, and to learn the meaning of new words. But this and other activities also help children learn the value of peace — and how to foster it in their communities.

In the years after the 1994 genocide against the Tutsi — which turned neighbors against neighbors, friends against friends, and in which moderate Hutus were also killed — Rwandan and international organizations started various peacebuilding initiatives. They worked to repair the rift between ethnic groups that decades of colonial rule had deepened. These programs generally focused on reaching Rwandan adults.

But, as Muhawenimana explains, “Even the children, they have conflict between them,” which can lead to arguments, theft and even physical altercations in schools. The organization she works for, MCC partner Transformational Leadership Center (TLC), saw



Thrift On Purpose
AN MCC THRIFT SHOP

5218 E. Trindle Road | Mechanicsburg
Shop Hours: 10:00 AM-6:00 PM
Monday-Saturday

an opportunity to rewrite this narrative. Seeking to instill a culture of peace and a lifelong love of reading in children, TLC opened its first peace library in 2005. Today, the organization runs six libraries across Rwanda. In addition to activities like these, children partake in peace debates. They are presented with a topic, and with a stance to take on it. They research the topic using library resources, and then practice public speaking skills when they state their case to their peers. About 250 children and teens have also completed peer mediation training at the libraries.

"In peer mediation, we study how children can help another child or her friend or her family," explains Ineza Kabera's classmate Sonia Hakizimana Iraboneye. During the trainings, youth aged 8 to 15 learn about the root causes of conflict and practice mediation techniques by acting out scenarios, such as intervening when one classmate steals another's pen. When a similar situation played out in real life at school, Bienvenue Mugisha knew exactly what to do. He compelled a classmate to return items they'd stolen from a friend — and convinced the student they'd stolen from to forgive the theft.



'Awe came upon everyone." Acts 2:43 (NRSV)

"There is none like You. Your mercy flows like a river so wide. And healing comes from Your hand."

"There Is None Like You," Steffany Gretzinger

Elevator doors slid open. The courthouse hallway was empty with the exception of residual emotions - anxiety, anger, sadness, grief - remained. Tension was palpable. The elevator doors emitted pairs and small groups of people. Each person emerged from the elevator wearing their best court clothes - dress pants, suit jackets rumpled from riding in the car, flowing pantsuits, shoes that shined and pinched. Then the doors parted and she stepped across the threshold attired in a sapphire blue pantsuit with coordinating white blouse and heeled sandals. Her slender hands, punctuated by sparkling fingernails, gripped a file-organizer : Filled with proof of her goodness - letters of recommendation, certificates of completion, clean urine tests, and handwritten letters to her son. She walked confidently down the hallway and entered the courtroom surrounded by her support team.

The purpose of the hearing was to assess parental change and competence. No one expected the judge, familiar with this case from its inception, to call his own witness to the stand. He invited her forward. She raised her trembling right hand, repeated the oath, and took her seat nervously beside the judge; the same man who previously sentenced her to incarceration. Today, compassionate strength flooded his eyes. He opened with a statement, followed by a question. "All of us are just one decision away from losing it all. What will prevent you from making that kind of decision - decisions like the ones you made in the past?" Her , reply was quick and forthright, "My faith. My family. Those people sitting back there help me when I'm having a rough day." After more conversation and public affirmation of her remarkable accomplishments and transformation, the judge awarded visitation.

Astonishment. Gratitude. Awe. Two weeks later a son sprinted across a room into the open arms of his mother. Thank you, donors, for your gifts of prayer and financial support. Your presence and purchases at Good Ground Coffee Company and Soaps By Survivors events creates resources for restoration - healed relationships with self, family, and community. We are honored to collaborate with you. Thank you!



General Announcements:

December Sunday School Classes for Adults: On December 7 and 14, Naomi Smith will lead the adults in an exploration of the themes of Advent.

All Sunday School Classes will be on break December 21 and 28.

REMINDERS

Do you drive to church? Deacons are looking for a few volunteers to take a monthly shift providing Sunday morning transportation. Contact Rachel Miller for more information if you think you might be able pick up some local friends on your way to church! miller.rachelkathryn@gmail.com or 717-526-9589.

The DBIC church library is being graciously tended by Ariela Vader. If you have suggestions for books to be added to the library, contact Ariela at ariela.vader@gmail.com, but we kindly ask that you find a different place to drop off unwanted books. One place that would be happy to accept your book donations is Thrift on Purpose, our local MCC Thrift store, which uses donations to raise money for MCC.

Prayer Chain emails: To have a request sent out to our email prayer chain, please use the form on the church website (<https://www.dillsburgbic.org/prayer-request/>) If you aren't able to submit it that way, you can email your request to the office (office@dillsburgbic.org) or ask someone (a friend or your deacon) to submit it for you. Our general guidelines have been that we will monitor the email from 9-5 Monday through Saturday. For urgent situations, you are encouraged to contact your deacon and NOT to rely on the email prayer chain because there is no guarantee the email will go out immediately. If you receive email prayer chain requests, please send any replies to the contact person in the body of the email. DO NOT reply to the email. If you reply to the email, it goes to the team who monitors the requests, not to the person who requested prayer.

We are no longer scheduling regular office hours. Staff members will still be available by appointment or by chance. Please email or call if you want to plan a time to meet with any member of the staff. If you need a key fob to access the building throughout the week, please contact Kathy (office@dillsburgbic.org) to request one.

We join in prayer every Thursday night at 7:30 pm. We model it after 2 Chronicles 7:14. This is a time for corporate prayer and seeking God's face. We meet via the zoom meeting link <https://zoom.us/j/6801432491>

SUPPORT GROUPS OFFERED

DBIC offers two support groups, which are open to the public.

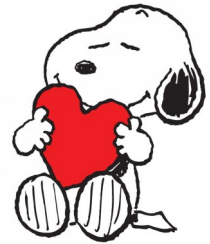
Fresh Hope for Mental Health: First and Third Thursdays, 6:30-8:00 pm, Orange Room. This is a peer-to-peer group, meaning that everyone attending is affected by a mental health challenge of their own or of a family member or close friend. It is not necessary that you be in treatment with a therapist or doctor to attend, but our meetings are not a replacement for treatment when needed. We incorporate faith practices with psychological information or science-based information about mental health and share information, support, and encouragement with one another. The privacy of individuals who attend is important, so we are asked to keep our conversations confidential.

Support Group for Christian parents of LGBTQ+ children. (Meeting time shared as needed to protect privacy) Do you want support in your efforts to love your child and have a good relationship with them? Do you have questions or fears about your child's future? Are you questioning your parenting? We are not trying to change your child, the church, or the world. We are here to support and honor each other in our efforts as parents who love their LGBTQ+ children. If you would like to join us in judgment free conversation, please contact Rob at freshhope@dillsburgbic.org or 717-432-3847.

Celebrating Life Together!

WEDDING ANNIVERSARIES



Al & Tracy Emig	December 2
Ray & Peggy Knepper	December 16
Matt & Julie Walsh	December 18
Joey & Erika Hecker	December 21
Jim & Faithe Spurrier	December 22
Stan & Sherry Eyster	December 23
Nathan & Rachel Pease	December 23
Tim & Arlene VanDyke	December 24
Paul & Kimberly Tucker	December 27
Jay & Judy Smith	December 30



HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

Andrew Miller	December 1	Randy Fish	December 13
Lincoln Horst	December 4	Jason Smith	December 14
Julie Walsh	December 5	<i>(this is Naomi's husband - not to be confused with Jay Smith's son)</i>	
Reuben Smith	December 5	Peggy Knepper	December 16
Romina Altez-Nunez	December 6	Jane Tucker	December 19
Avis Whitesel	December 7	John Spurrier	December 19
Zimra Waris	December 7	Jordyn Moyer	December 20
Susan Hatch	December 9	Wendell Hoover	December 20
Avery Carlson	December 12	Missy Zile	December 23
Julie Cook	December 12	Lauren Renard	December 28
Nicole Rank	December 12		
Jacob Brandt	December 12		

December 2025

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 		2	3 9:00 am Ladies' Bible Study 6:30 pm Shine 6:30 pm Thrive 6:30 pm Sharing/Prayer (Zoom)	4 6:30 pm Fresh Hope 6:30 pm Martin Brass Rehearsal 7:30 Prayer (Zoom)	5	6
Family Promise Hosting						
7 9:00 am Sunday School 10:00 am Worship 2:00 pm Choir Rehearsal	8	9 6:30 pm Ladies' Bible Study (Zoom)	10 9:00 am Ladies' Bible Study 5:30 pm Corner Life Meal 6:30 pm Shine/Parents' Night Out 6:30 pm Thrive 6:30 pm Sharing/Prayer (Zoom)	11 6:30 pm Human Trafficking mtg (Strayer home) 6:30 pm Martin Brass Rehearsal 7:30 Prayer (Zoom)	12	13 9:30 am Girls' Group (Carlson home) 3:00 pm Caroling On the Square
14 9:00 am Sunday School 10:00 am Worship 2:00 pm Choir Rehearsal	15	16 6:30 pm Leadership Council	17 9:00 am Ladies' Bible Study 6:30 pm Shine 6:30 pm Thrive 6:30 pm Sharing/Prayer (Zoom)	18 6:30 pm Fresh Hope 6:30 pm Martin Brass Rehearsal 7:30 Prayer (Zoom)	19	20
21 NO Sunday School 10:00 am Worship	22	23 6:30 pm Ladies' Bible Study (Zoom)	24 6:30 pm Christmas Eve Service	25	26	27
28 NO Sunday School 10:00 am Worship	29	30	31	 DILLSBURG BIC CHURCH GROWING DEEP REACHING FAR 18 East Harrisburg St. Dillsburg, PA 717.432.3847 www.DillsburgBIC.org		