



## EYN team repairs houses, distributes food

**M**any homes of members of Ekklesiyar Yan'uwa a Nigeria (EYN, the Church of the Brethren in Nigeria) were destroyed by fire during the Boko Haram insurgency. The EYN Disaster Ministry Response team has been working to re-roof the houses of the most vulnerable.

Once dry season arrived in north-eastern Nigeria last fall, housing

repairs went into full gear. A total of 57 homes were re-roofed in remote areas in the latter part of 2017.

Food distributions continued during the “lean period” from July through late October, a time in north-east Nigeria when food from the previous year’s harvest is almost gone and the new crop is not yet ready. The Boko Haram insurgency compounded this problem with a decreased ability

to even plant crops.

In the last few months of 2017, the EYN team carried out eight food distributions to around 300 families at a time. Food was bought in the local market, loaded on trucks, and taken to the distribution point, often a church. Leaders of the church districts created lists of needy families in their area, and contacted them to convene for the distributions.

## Brethren staff part of meeting with Palestinian president

### **A Churches for Middle East Peace (CMEP) delegation met with Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas**

on Nov. 2, 2017, the 100th anniversary of the Balfour Declaration. The group included Church of the Brethren staff Nathan Hosler, director of the Office of Public Witness, who is serving as board chair for CMEP, and Roy Winter, associate executive director of Global Mission and Service and Brethren Disaster Ministries.

The historic declaration by Lord Balfour of Great Britain “[viewed] with favor the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people” and stated “that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine.”

CMEP executive director Mae Elise Cannon was part of the delegation. During the meeting, President Abbas expressed appreciation to Cannon for CMEP’s work.



*CMEP delegation at Saint Georges Cathedral in Jerusalem.*

## Workcamps repair buildings in PR

**I**n November, Church of the Brethren volunteers made repairs to church buildings and homes in Puerto Rico that were damaged in the hurricanes of 2017. Two groups of volunteers, totaling seven people, assisted with the project, which received support from Brethren Disaster Ministries.

The workcamps at Caimito Church and Community Center were organized by Shirley Baker, with Jeff Bruens, disaster project leader, providing construction leadership, and other volunteers coming from churches in the continental US. These teams repaired the roof and ceiling at Segunda Iglesia Cristo Misionera, provided partial repairs to the Caimito

Community Center affiliated with the church, repaired the Brethren House, and worked on two homes in the area.

Additional work projects were being organized and planned for 2018.

Puerto Rico District, led by district executive José Otero, has been organizing a response to Hurricane Maria, with support from Brethren Disaster Ministries. As of November, more than \$28,000 in grant funds had been sent to the district, some coming from special donations received by several districts of the Church of the Brethren, and some through the Emergency Disaster Fund. The money has helped meet emergency needs in the communities around the seven Churches of the Brethren in Puerto Rico.



## Personnel notes

**Joe Detrick** completed an interim assignment as director of the Office of Ministry for the Church of the Brethren Nov. 10. He worked in the position for more than a year, starting June 22, 2016. He is retired from serving the denomination as a pastor and a district executive. He also is former staff for Brethren Volunteer Service.

**Debbie Eisenbise** concluded work with the Church of the Brethren's Congregational Life Ministries Nov. 8. She worked as director of Intergenerational Ministries for almost three years, starting Jan. 15, 2015. Her work included coordinating Inspiration 2017, last year's National Older Adult Conference, as well as

serving as staff for the Disabilities Ministry and connecting with the church's spiritual directors, among other responsibilities.

**Mark Hartwig** has retired as director of Information Technology for the Church of the Brethren, following more than 12 years of service. He began in March 2005 as a computer and applications specialist. In March 2007, he was promoted to the position of director of Information Services.

**Patrice Nightingale** has retired as manager of production for Brethren Benefit Trust. She joined the BBT staff May 5, 2008, becoming director of communications that October. In late 2011, she became manager of production. She provided lead-

ership in marketing, promotions, publications, electronic media, and copy editing.

**Margie Paris** is retiring Feb. 8 as program assistant in the Church of the Brethren's Office of Ministry. She has worked at the denomination's General Offices for more than 28 years, beginning in August 1989 as assistant *Yearbook* coordinator. In 1996 she became the *Yearbook* coordinator. In August 1999 she began in her current role. A key focus of her work has been facilitating daily operation of the pastoral placement system, working with district staff. She provided administrative support for the director of Ministry and facilitated support for the director's work with the Brethren

Academy for Ministerial Leadership.

**Brenda Reish** concluded employment as treasurer and executive director of business services at Bethany Theological Seminary Dec. 31, after 19 years of service to the school. When she began in August 1998, she served as business manager for both Earlham School of Religion and Bethany, as well as treasurer for Bethany, until 2002, when a separate business office was established for each school. As treasurer under three Bethany presidents, Reish was responsible for institutional finances as an internal auditor. During her tenure, Bethany received clean audits each year and the endowment grew from \$10 million to \$39 million.



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