

God's Call to Live Peacefully

These words from the prophet Isaiah reveal truth—and hope—about an extended kingdom of peace on earth. Wonderful, miraculous things will happen in the realm of nature when Jesus returns and reigns over all the earth.

The end of the present age will be marked by increasing tribulation (see Mark 13:14-23), but Isaiah's prophecies indicate that this age will be followed by a period of peace. Deserts will become beautiful with vegetation and flowers—in short, they will “blossom as the rose” (v. 1, *KJV*). Weak hands will be strong to work; tottering knees will be firm; fear will be banished (vv. 3-4).

On the other hand, this text depicts what happens when God lays hold of human lives in need of redemption. Penitent believers experience a transformation of life that is similar to what happens when a desert becomes a lush garden! A spiritual change occurs when God opens blinded eyes and unstops deaf ears to receive a new incentive for living peacefully with others (v. 5). Joy and gladness replace sorrow and sighing (v. 10).

Isaiah speaks in symbolic poetic language about the kingdom of peace—a redeemed creation with a redeemed people—that will come in the future. The change will be like streams flowing out of the desert, renewing life and transforming character.

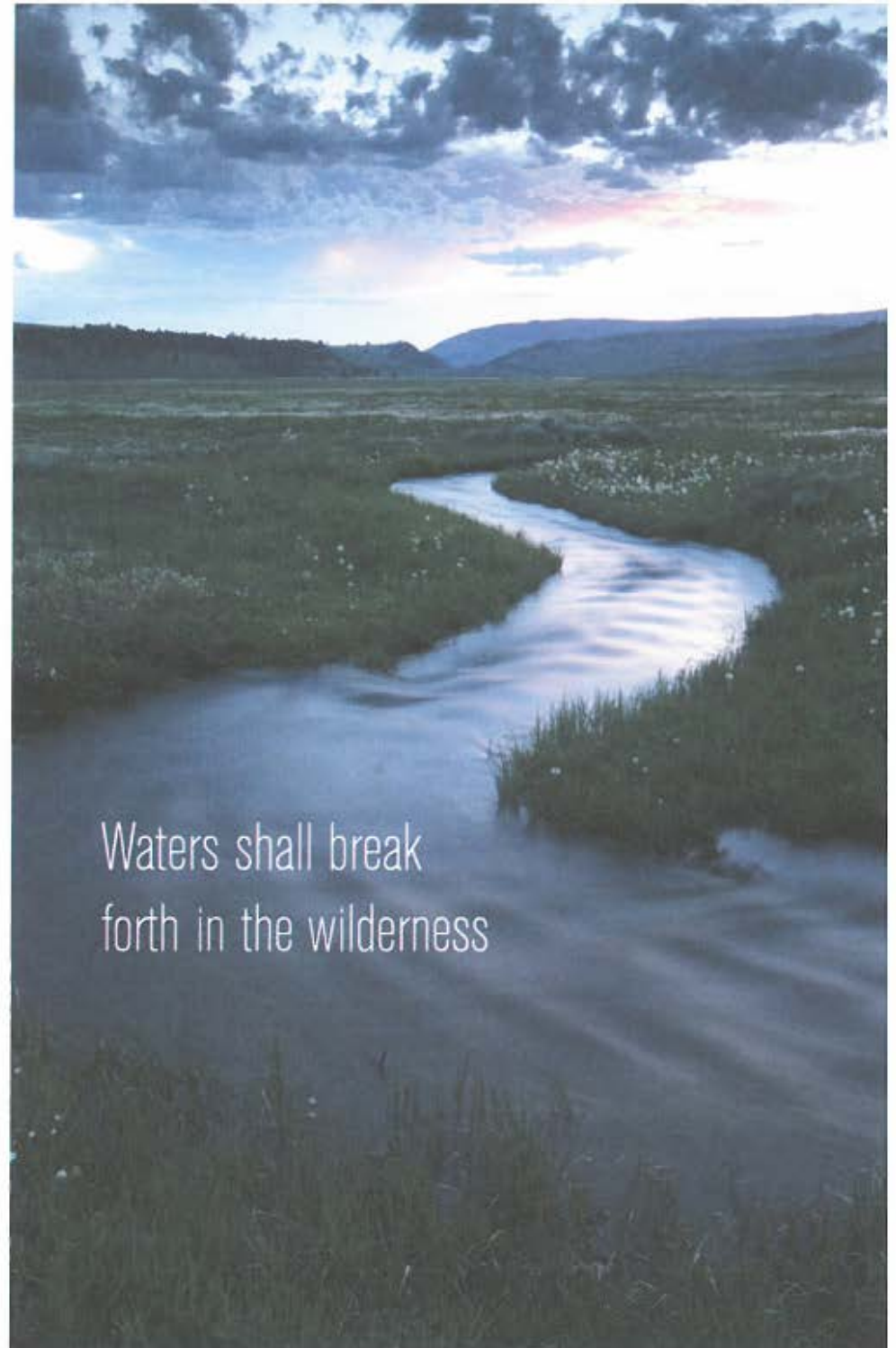
The lesson here is this—that the living God is a compassionate Being who looks upon frail human beings with pity, and takes the initiative to move us to new levels of spiritual maturity. God punishes sin, but he is also a loving God who forgives, extending mercy to penitent people. If we let God move in our hearts, our lives will become more like the life of Jesus, and indeed, “waters shall break forth in the wilderness” (v. 6).

—Harold S. Martin
*Pleasant Hill Church of the Brethren
Spring Grove, Pennsylvania*

Text for today: “Say to those who are of a fearful heart, ‘Be strong, do not fear! Here is your God. . . . He will come and save you.’ Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; then the lame shall leap like a deer, and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy. For *waters shall break forth in the wilderness*, and streams in the desert; the burning sand shall become a pool, and the thirsty ground springs of water” (Isaiah 35:4-7a, *NRSV*). **Bible readings for today:** Isaiah 35:4-7a; Psalm 146; James 2:1-10, (11-13), 14-17; Mark 7:24-37.

09-06-15

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THE BRIDGEWATER CHURCH OF THE BRETHREN
at Worship September 6, 2015 8:30 & 11:00 a.m.

RESPONDING

GATHERING

PRELUDE (11:00) Elegy *Douglas E. Wagner*

CONNECTING WITH EACH OTHER Jeff Carr
Please sign and pass the *Friendship Register* pad located at the inside aisle of the pew. Signing helps us learn the names of those worshipping near us. After all have signed, the pad can be passed back to the inside aisle.

SCRIPTURE READING Proverbs 22: 1-2, 8-9, 22-23 *NRSV*

***HYMN # 517** *Open my eyes, that I may see* OPEN MY EYES

PROCLAIMING

CHILDREN'S TIME (11:00) Janean Fawley
Children of ALL ages are invited to the front of the sanctuary for a time of building upon and connecting to faith through stories and interactions.

ANTHEM (11:00) Clap Your Hands *Alfred V. Fedak*

SCRIPTURE READING Mark 7:24-37 *NRSV*

OFFERING
Invitation
Offertory
(8:30) We bring our tithes and offerings to the worship center.
(11:00) Ushers receive our tithes and offerings.
Air (from Water Music Suite) *G.F. Handel*

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

SCRIPTURE READING James 2:1-17 *NRSV*

***HYMN # 142** *Brothers and sister of mine* MINE ARE THE HUNGRY

SERMON "Labor of Love" Jeff Carr

***HYMN # 540** *Strong, righteous man of Galilee* MELITA

REFLECTIONS (8:30) a time for conversation.

***SENDING WORDS**

POSTLUDE (11:00) With Trumpets and Horns *G.F. Handel*
(from *Water Music Suite*)

* Rise as able in body and spirit.

TODAY'S ANTHEM TEXT: Psalm 47; para. Michael Morgan
Clap your hands, O faithful people! Shout to God a song of praise!
From the dust of conquered nations, God a realm of grace shall raise.
In appointed court of glory faithful to God's name always.
May we prosper all our days.
With a shout, and blast of trumpet, God shall mount a throne on high;
Let our praise, as finest incense, rise to meet God in the sky.
Fill the world with glad rejoicing, Heav'n shall sing, and earth reply,
All God's work to glorify.
Let your hearts be filled with gladness, as the Lord your life shall bless;
Live as heirs of God's great justice, wear the cloak of righteousness.
God will grant us earth's dominion, all things good, and nothing less.
All things good, for our gift of faithfulness.

BRIDGEWATER CHURCH OF THE BRETHREN

*An inclusive family of faith seeking to follow Jesus
and live the love of God.*

Our Mission...

As an inclusive community of faith, we commit ourselves to embody the love of God and to share our diverse lives and gifts with each other and the world. Through faith formation, worship, mission, and fellowship we boldly proclaim the peace and love of Christ. Together we work for justice, extend grace, and partner with God to offer abundant life, healing, and hope to our community and the world.

Our Values...

*Sharing life together and including all persons in our common life.
Growing in faith, compassion, and understanding.
Serving one another and our neighbor's good.
Sharing the love of God and the God that is love.*

PASTORAL MINISTRY STAFF

Jeff Carr – Senior Pastor

Chris Zepp – Associate Pastor

ADMINISTRATIVE AND FACILITIES MINISTRY STAFF

Fortunato Correa – Custodian

Phil Flory – Treasurer

Shannon Puffenbarger – Administrative Assistant

Leon Rhodes – Head Teller

Glenna Wampler – Business Manager

PROGRAM & MUSIC MINISTRY STAFF

Kathleen Arndt – Child Care Center Administrator

John Barr – Organist

Jim Benedict – Bell Choir Director

Jeanie Eye – Christian Education Director

Mary Beth Flory – Pianist

Marianne Houff – Children's Choir Director

Ellsworth Neff – Sound, Light, Video Coordinator

Curtis Nolley – Sanctus Choir Director & Music Coordinator

Clarke & Hope Staton – Youth Ministry Coordinators

CONTACT INFORMATION

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www.bwcob.org / (540) 828-3711

Normal office hours are Monday-Friday from 8 a.m.-Noon, and 1-5 p.m.

SUNDAY MORNING INFORMATION & TODAY'S VOLUNTEERS

HOSPITALITY CENTER in the Greeting Hall

Nametags; large-print Bibles, hymnals, & bulletins; listening receivers; and information are available here.

SUNDAY SCHOOL: 9:45 a.m.

Rep. – Sarah Rees

All Are Welcome brochures, available in the pews and literature rack, list specific Christian Education opportunities and locations.

PARKING ASSISTANCE: 10:30-10:55 a.m. every Sunday.

CHILDREN ARE WELCOME!

Children are always welcome among us and in our corporate worship gatherings. Activity bags are available in the greeting hall for their use and enjoyment. Additionally, childcare for children ages birth to kindergarten is available as well as a “cry room” for those who wish to listen and see the worship service in a separate room from the sanctuary. Ushers are more than willing to help you locate these resources.

Hymn Leader (8:30) – Curtis Nolley

Greeters (11:00) – Eric & Heather Barkey

Michael & Rebekah Overman

Head Usher (11:00) – Kevin Keplinger

Sound/Light Operators (11:00) – Adeline Hipps

Dave Lineweaver

Decorators – Lori Lineweaver & Dwyann Stovall

Van Drivers – Fred Zimmerman & Jim Beckman

Worship Leader (11:00) – Linda Clague

ANNOUNCEMENTS

JUBILEE CIRCLE NEWS

Since many of our Jubilee Circle members will be attending NOAC, we will not be having a September 9 meeting. Our luncheon at Thomas House will be October 14. Our November 11 meeting will be held in the BRC Smith Room with a board member of Global Women’s project as our speaker. Our Jubilee Circle has been supporting these projects with our offerings.

MEETINGS & OPPORTUNITIES FOR SERVICE & NURTURE

September 6-12, 2015 (All events are p.m. unless noted)

This is a church events calendar and does not include all building events use. Please be sure to schedule ALL EVENTS through the church office.

Today 2:00 Jr. Hi. Youth to Putt-Putt – Meet here to carpool

Mon. Church Offices Closed – Labor Day Holiday

Wed. 8 a.m. Bridgewater Ministers Maple Terrace
11 a.m. Office Staff Meeting Pastor’s Office
Friendship Circle Carry-In – CANCELLED

Thurs. 10:30 a.m. Leaveners N. River Library
7:30 Sanctus Choir Rehearsal Choir Room

Fri. 6:30 Brethren Student Movement – Youth Room / Social Hall

NEXT SUNDAY– September 13, 2015 – 16th Sunday after Pentecost

Worship: 8:30 & 11:00 a.m. – Sanctuary

Pastor Chris Zepp, preaching

Sermon: “Fun with Flags (But who do you say that I am?)”

Scripture Reading: Mark 8:27-38

Sunday School – 9:45 a.m. – Classrooms

ATTENDANCE /STEWARDSHIP FOR LAST SUNDAY: 8/30/15

Worship Attendance: 8:30 – 16 11:00 – 303 Sunday School: 164

Pledges & Envelope Giving \$7,401.75

Loose Offering 406.00

Back Pack Program 200.00

~ Leon Rhodes, Head Teller