

Claimed by God

Today's passage from Isaiah was written for the Jewish exiles in Babylon. Context shows that the Israelites had lost their close bond with God due to disobedience. Leading up to exile, the Israelites were still going through the motions of worship in the temple. As the Bible points out: "This people honors [worships] me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me" (Matt. 15:8; cf. Isaiah 29:13).

After reading Isaiah 43, you will quickly realize that it is not a negative one. God's grace and mercy are held out as the solution for any trouble we experience, whether it be deep waters or consuming flames or separation from our loved ones (vv. 2, 5-7). Our commitment is to God, and God claims us as his own: "I have created you and redeemed you. I call you by name, you are mine. Don't fear, for I will be with you" (vv. 1-2, paraphrase).

We are precious and honored in God's sight, and he calls each of us by name. And it is through the cross of Christ that God ultimately proved his love for us. Jesus died so that we might be reconciled to God (2 Cor. 5:18). Our part is to be living advertisements of how good God is to all people, no matter the circumstance. God's primary purpose in saving us is so that we might display the joy of salvation in our lives and through this glorify him.

As the Church of the Brethren, we have been praying and giving generously of our resources for our suffering sisters and brothers in Nigeria. We do this for God's glory, declaring that we serve a gracious, merciful, and loving God. When we acknowledge God and give due credit for all things, we affirm that he is "the LORD [our] God, the Holy One of Israel, [our] Savior" (v. 3). So no matter what the future holds for any of us, God boldly proclaims, "Do not fear, for I am with you" (v. 5). Let us continue, as a body of believers, to praise the Lord and keep our eyes on him. And let us go forward, asking God to restore us and revive us as we seek to continue the work of Jesus, peacefully, simply, and together.

—Carl Hill, co-director
Nigeria Crisis Response
Church of the Brethren

Text for today: "Because *you are precious in my sight*, and honored, and I love you, I give people in return for you, nations in exchange for your life. Do not fear, for I am with you; I will bring your offspring from the east, and from the west I will gather you" (Isaiah 43:4-5, NRSV). **Bible readings for today:** Isaiah 43:1-7; Psalm 29; Acts 8:14-17; Luke 3:15-17, 21-22.

Photo of displaced Nigerians near Abuja © 2016 David Sollenberger. Used by permission 01-10-16, Baptism of the Lord
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You are precious in my sight



THE BRIDGEWATER CHURCH OF THE BRETHREN
at Worship January 10, 2016 8:30 & 11:00 a.m.

GATHERING

PRELUDE (11:00) "The Old Year Has Passed Away" *J. S. Bach*
Prelude to the Introit for Epiphany *Maurice Duruflé*

CALL TO WORSHIP Jeff Carr

CONNECTING WITH EACH OTHER

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.

UNISON PRAYER ~Revised Common Lectionary Prayers, 2002, adapted

God of grace and glory, you call us with your voice of flame to be your people, faithful and courageous. As your Jesus embraced his mission and calling in the waters of baptism, inspire us with the fire of your Spirit to join in this transforming work. We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns for ever and ever. Amen.

***HYMN # 407** *We are people of God's peace* AVE VIRGO VIRGINUM

PROCLAIMING

SCRIPTURE READING Isaiah 43:1-7 *NRSV*

ANTHEM (11:00)
Climb to the Top of the Highest Mountain *Carolyn Jennings*

CHILDREN'S TIME (11:00) Jeff Carr
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. Following the Children's Story, all children preschool through 5th grade are invited to attend Children's Worship in the Agape Room.

SCRIPTURE READING Luke 3:15-17, 21-22 *NRSV*

***HYMN INSERT** *I Was There to Hear Your Borne Cry* WATERLIFE

SERMON "Plastic Pitchers, Raging Rivers, & Baby Baths" Jeff Carr

RESPONDING

REFLECTIONS (8:30) Music for contemplation, followed by conversation.

OFFERING

Invitation

Offertory

(8:30) We bring our tithes and offerings to the worship center.

(11:00) Ushers receive our tithes and offerings.

"Star of the East" *Amanda Kennedy*

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

***HYMN # 433** *Go, my children* AR HYD Y NOS

***SENDING WORDS**

POSTLUDE (11:00) "In Thee is Gladness" *Marcel Dupré*

* Rise as able in body and spirit.

TODAY'S ANTHEM TEXT: Adapted from Isaiah 40

Climb to the top of the highest mountain,
Joyous tidings proclaim to the world,
Lift up your voice, shout the good news:
Behold, your Lord comes to you.
He will feed his flock like a shepherd,
He will carry the lambs in his arms,
He will ever keep them safe from harm.
Behold, your Lord comes to you.
He who made the stars in the heaven,
He who fashioned the earth and the sea,
From time eternal, He was Alpha and Omega, He. Behold, your Lord!
He will come in power and glory, He will rule with mercy and truth,
Hope of the nations, Light of the world, Light of all.
He will love the little children, He will hold them in his arms.
Love him and trust him as a child, Behold, your Lord!

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2016 OFFERING ENVELOPES are available to be picked-up in the greeting hall this morning. **2015 YEAR-END GIVING STATEMENTS** will be available for pick-up next Sunday January 17 and 24.

MEETINGS & OPPORTUNITIES FOR SERVICE & NURTURE

January 10-16, 2016 (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	Children's Worship during Worship at 11	
	Noon Youth Fundraiser Lunch	Social Hall
Mon.	Noon Retired Ministers & Spouses	Maple Terrace
	7:00 Executive Committee	Lounge
Tues.	7:00 Finance Commission	Lounge
	7:00 Women's Fellowship Cabinet	Open Door Room
Wed.	8 a.m. Bridgewater Ministers	Maple Terrace
	11 a.m. Office Staff Meeting	Pastor's Office
	2:00 Pastor's Book Study	Lounge
	6:00 Friendship Circle – Home of Kathy Simmons	
	7:00 JOY Circle	Lounge
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– January 17, 2016 – 2nd Sunday after the Epiphany

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

Pastor Chris Zepp, preaching

Sermon: "The time has come..."

Scripture Readings: Isaiah 62:1-5 & John 2:1-11

Puppets Rehearsal – 9 a.m. – Agape Room

Blood Pressure Clinic – 9:30 & 10:30 a.m. – Office Reception Area

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

ATTENDANCE /STEWARDSHIP FOR LAST SUNDAY: 1/3/16

Worship Attendance: 8:30 – 24 11:00 – 244 Sunday School: 128

Pledges & Envelope Giving	\$14,568.26
Loose Offering	515.57
Messenger Subscriptions	58.00
Christmas Offering	25.00
Children's Offering (Christmas Offering)	12.50
Rent – Refugee House	400.00
EYN Compassion Fund	100.00
Carson Kiracofe Memorial Fund	200.00
Jan Matteson Memorial Fund	75.00

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

420 College View Drive, Bridgewater, VA 22812

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

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

I Was There To Hear Your Boring Cry

I was there to hear your born-ing cry, I'll be there when you are
 When you heard the won-der of the Word, I was there to cheer you
 In the mid - dle a - ges of your life, not too old, no long - er

old. I re - joiced the day you were bap-tized to see your life un -
 on. You were raised to praise the liv - ing Lord to whom you now be -
 young, I'll be there to guide you through the night, com- plete what I've be -

fine
 fold. I was there when you were but a child with a
 long. If you find some-one to share your time and you
 gun. When the eve - ning gent - ly clos - es in and you

faith to suit you well; in a blaze of light you
 join your hearts as one, I'll be there to make your
 shut your wea - ry eyes, I'll be there as I have

D.C. (vs. 1) al fine
 wan - dered off to find where de - mons dwell. *rit.*
 vers - es rhyme from dusk till ris - ing sun.
 al - ways been with just one more sur - prise.

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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.

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.

Pianist (8:30) – Ann Daggett

Greeters (11:00) – Don & Jane Fulk; Dawn & Lauren Flora

Head Usher (11:00) – Kevin Keplinger

Sound/Light (11:00) – Ellsworth Neff & Dave Lineweaver

Decorators – Lori Lineweaver & Dwynn Stovall

Deacon Caregivers – David & Lori Lineweaver

Van Driver – Edgar Simmons

Worship Leader (8:30) – Chris Zepp (11:00) – Amanda Zepp

ATTENDANCE /STEWARDSHIP FOR SUNDAY: 12/27/15

Worship Attendance: 8:30 – 24 11:00 – 267 Sunday School: 117

Christmas Eve Attendance (7 p.m.): 315 (11:00): 49

Pledges & Envelope Giving	\$22,138.55
Loose Offering	1,153.00
Church User Fees	300.00
Messenger Subscriptions	43.50
Christmas Offering	1,730.00
Church World Service	1,000.00
Alternative Christmas Fair Donations	545.00
Tree Lights of Love	20.00
Special Gifts	174.98
Heifer International	400.00
Back Pack Program	200.00
EYN Compassion Fund	200.00
Jan Matteson Memorial Fund	500.00