

An Invitation to Grace

In this passage, the prophet Jonah reveals an inviting theological statement about the Lord: “You are a gracious and compassionate God, slow to anger and abounding in love, a God who relents from sending calamity” (4:2b, NIV). As inviting as this truth is, it is declared by Jonah in an ironic twist. The Ninevites had responded to Jonah’s call to repentance, turning from their evil ways and causing God to forgo the promised destruction. Jonah is not happy with this, however, and becomes frustrated. What we read throughout the remainder of chapter 4 is God’s invitation to Jonah to understand and experience the Lord’s grace and compassion for himself.

We love the idea of God’s grace, yet we resist our best opportunities to experience it. As a pastor, I often ask my members: “Have you ever had someone ask you for forgiveness in a way that was incredibly heartfelt and sincere?” I personally recall a staff meeting a few years ago, when my boss ripped into me right in front of my colleagues. I left the meeting boiling hot and fumed in my office, when I heard a knock on my door. It was my boss. For the next fifteen minutes, he began to apologize sincerely and to share some of the deep things that were going on in his life. I forgave him, and will never forget that moment. Within minutes, I went from seeing this man as an object to a human in need of a Savior just like me.

It is only by extending grace and forgiveness to others that we can experience and understand this nature of God for ourselves. We get many opportunities that lead us in a closer walk with Christ, that move us from knowing about him to actually knowing him. Saying yes to forgiveness and grace is one of them. Will you accept this invitation to offer forgiveness and extend grace to someone today, and experience the power of Christ in your life?

—Brody Rike, pastor
West Alexandria Church of the Brethren
West Alexandria, Ohio

Text for today: “But this was very displeasing to Jonah, and he became angry. He prayed to the Lord and said, ‘O Lord! Is not this what I said while I was still in my own country? That is why I fled to Tarshish at the beginning; for I knew that *you are a gracious God* and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love, and ready to relent from punishing’” (Jonah 4:1-2, NRSV). **Bible readings for today:** Jonah 3:10–4:11 (2); Psalm 145:1-8; Philippians 1:21-30; Matthew 20:1-16.

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You are a
gracious God

BRIDGEWATER CHURCH OF THE BRETHREN
at Worship September 24, 2017 8:30 & 11:00 a.m.

GATHERING

PRELUDE (11:00) Two Trumpet Rondeaus *David Lasky*
1 in D Major # 2 in G Major
Trumpet Tune (from Voluntary # 5) *John Stanley*
Prelude on CWM RHONDDA *Paul Manz*

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.

CHORAL INTROIT (11:00)
A Shaker Call to Worship *arr. Burton Bumgarner*

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.

SCRIPTURE READINGS Deuteronomy 1:6-8
Acts 2:14-21

***HYMN # 582** *Guide me, O thou great Jehovah* CWM RHONDDA

SERMON "Are we there yet" Jeff Carter
President, Bethany Theological Seminary

RESPONDING

SINGING WITH BRENT (8:30) Brent Holl

REFLECTIONS (8:30) Contemplation and conversation.

***HYMN # 328** *O God, our help in ages past* ST. ANNE

OFFERING

Invitation

Offertory

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

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

Meditation on PINE GLEN *John Barr*
("Move in our midst")

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE Jeff Carr

***HYMN # 418** *Move in our midst* PINE GLEN

***SENDING**

***CHORAL BENEDICTION** (11:00)
A Shaker Benediction *arr. Burton Bumgarner*

POSTLUDE (11:00) Postludium *Flor Peeters*

* Rise as able in body and spirit.

MEETINGS & OPPORTUNITIES FOR SERVICE & NURTURE

September 24-30, 2017 (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.

Tues.	6:30	Child Care Center Board	Lounge
Wed.	5:15	Cherub Choir Rehearsal	Agape Room
	5:45	Carol Choir Rehearsal	Agape Room
	6:30	YORFFs Rehearsal	Room # 35
	6:30	Witness & Renewal Commission	Open Door Room
Thurs.	7:30	Sanctus Choir Rehearsal	Choir Room
Fri.	6:00	Brethren Student Movement – Youth Room; Social Hall	

NEXT SUNDAY – October 1, 2017 – 18th Sunday after Pentecost

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

Preaching: Jeff Carr

Sermon: “Kneading Faith”

Scripture: Philippians 2:1-13 and Matthew 21:23-32

Children’s Worship during Worship at 11

Bell Choir Rehearsal – 9 a.m. – Choir Room

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

Youth Fundraiser Lunch – Noon – Social Hall

(Menu: Spaghetti & Salad)

TODAY’S DECORATIONS

Today’s altar and entry tables are decorated to recognize the Children’s Disaster Response Training Workshop that was held here this weekend. The Children’s Disaster Services (CDS) response suitcase, also known as our “Kit of Comfort” is being updated by the family of Esther Bittinger, in honor of her 90th birthday and of the years that she served as a CDS Volunteer. This kit will be available for use by those trained from our congregation who serve on location as CDS volunteers.

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.

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) – Betty Caricofe

Head Usher – Kevin Keplinger

Decorator – Lisa Flory

Sound & Light Technician – Michael Overman

Deacon Caregiver – Andrea Miracle

Van Driver – Wayne Angleberger

ATTENDANCE / STEWARDSHIP FOR SUNDAY: 09/17/17

Worship Attendance: 8:30 – 21 11:00 – 217 Sunday School: 147

Pledges & Envelope Giving	\$10,497.45
Loose Offering	240.50
<i>Messenger</i> Subscriptions	29.00
Books	80.00
One Great Hour	50.00
Disaster Relief	50.00
Brethren Student Movement	172.46
Habitat House	150.00
Backpack Program	100.00
JOY Circle	91.35
Altruistic Sunday School Class	121.00
McIntyre Assistance Fund	2,990.00

SITTING IN THE GAP – Now Offering Online Scripture Study Guides

Our new intergenerational Sunday School class, "Sitting in the Gap," is now up and running! Each week is a self-contained discussion for anyone interested in deeper exploration of and reflection on the scriptures and topics guiding our worship each Sunday. We follow a rabbinical model of spiritual formation – using the questions we bring to a scripture text to guide discussion, as we sit together and discuss how to interpret the scriptures and how to apply them to our lives. The class meets in the Gap Room (down the hall near the fish pond) and begins promptly at 9:45ish, with Pastor Chris providing facilitation and guidance. For those wishing to study or reflect on the scriptures ahead of time (or after the fact!), a weekly online study guide is now being offered on our website. Just go to our congregational website (www.bwco.org) and follow the menus links from Faith Formation -> Sunday School -> Adult Classes -> Sitting in the Gap. Each study guide will link directly to the week's text(s), highlight a selected commentary or two, link to additional resources, and offer a few questions for reflection. Even if you aren't able to join the class for live discussion, it might be something worth checking out ...

TODAY'S CHORAL INTROIT TEXT: Traditional Shaker Text

Come to Zion, sin-sick souls in sorrow bound.

Lay your cares upon the altar where true healing may be found.

Shout Halleluiah! Praise resounds o'er land and sea.

All who will may come and share the glories of this Jubilee!

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TODAY'S CHORAL BENEDICTION TEXT:

The Canterbury Shakers, 1908

On the work of our hands and the praise of our hearts,

May the light of Thy countenance shine,

In the least ever faithful, abiding and true,

Our service of joy shall be Thine.

May the halo of pray'r mantle of peace

As heav'n's benediction descend,

Ordaining our lives for the mission of Christ,

And love with our sacrifice blend.

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