

The Promise of Peace

"Let me hear what God the LORD will speak,
for he will speak peace to his people,
to his faithful, to those who turn to him in their hearts."

—Psalm 85:8

It is a tumultuous time in U.S. and world affairs. I don't remember an election season as divisive or an administrative transition as chaotic as what we've just come through. Not for several decades has the possibility of nuclear war seemed as real as it does right now. Though not by act of God, with the touch of a few buttons a good bit of the earth could "be dissolved with fire" (2 Peter 3:10), taking a large portion of humanity with it.

Especially the young adults I know, thoughtful Christ-followers and lovers of peace, are distraught. They live knowing that lone-wolf extremists or terror cells could attack on the most idyllic of days, but are also aware of the world's long-standing injustices that drive certain people to such heinous acts. Good parents and good Christians, they want to protect their children and love their enemies. What hard times!

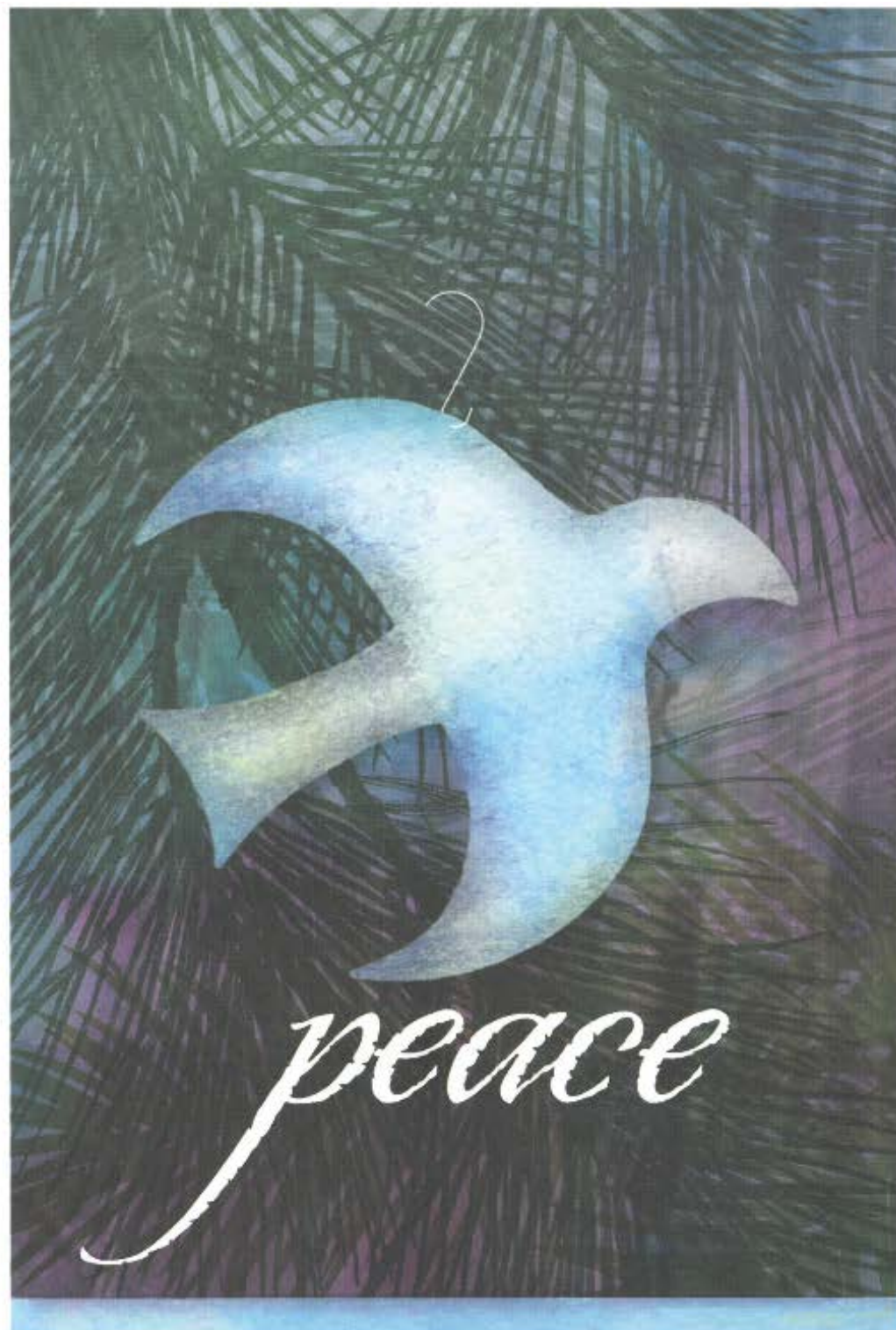
The church of Peter's day was also under fire. Persecutions were frequent. Some were dying for Christ. Scoffers sowed doubts about God's existence, a moral universe, the eventual triumph of the good. The delay of Christ's return was marshaled as proof that the faith was hokum. But Peter's take was this: God is not slow to act, but patient, giving us all time to repent. What looks like chaos is grace in action. The world is not without its Savior. Our task is to learn to be at peace, without spot or blemish, and to remain confident in the Lord, waiting for new heavens and a new earth where righteousness is finally at home.

—Dan Petry

*Florence Church of the Brethren/Mennonite
Constantine, Michigan*

Text for today: "But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a loud noise, and the elements will be dissolved with fire, and the earth and everything that is done on it will be disclosed. Since all these things are to be dissolved in this way, what sort of persons ought you to be in leading lives of holiness and godliness, waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be set ablaze and dissolved, and the elements will melt with fire? But, in accordance with his promise, we wait for new heavens and a new earth, where righteousness is at home. Therefore, beloved, while you are waiting for these things, strive to be found by him at *peace*, without spot or blemish; and regard the patience of our Lord as salvation" (2 Peter 3:10-15a, NRSV). **Bible readings for today:** Isaiah 40:1-11; Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13; 2 Peter 3:8-15a (14); Mark 1:1-8.

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THE BRIDGEWATER CHURCH OF THE BRETHREN

at Worship December 10, 2017 8:30 & 11:00 a.m.

GATHERING

PRELUDE (11:00) O Come, O Come, Emmanuel *Hal Hopson*

CONNECTING WITH ONE ANOTHER 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.

SINGING WITH BRENT (8:30)

YORFFS (11:00) I Saw Three Ships *arr. Shirley W. McRae*
Sing Noel *Liberian Chant, arr. Yorffs*
Carol of the Bells *Mykola Leontovich, arr. Yorffs*

***RESPONSIVE CALL TO WORSHIP** ~Cindy Weber-Han, adapted

One: It was the best of times, it was the worst of times,
it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness,
it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity,
it was the season of Light, it was the season of Darkness,
it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair,
we had everything before us, we had nothing before us,
we were all going direct to Heaven,
we were all going direct the other way
~Charles Dickens, *A Tale of Two Cities*, 1859

All: This sounds a lot like our world today, which is why we wait for the coming of the promised Child of God who will bring us justice and peace.

One: Then prepare the way and ready the Human Race!

All: God is calling to us to be midwives of the birth of a New Way for all of humankind.

One: And so we wait, calling on God's wisdom, guidance, and hope for this New World.

All: Whether the best of times or the worst of times, these are our times, O God. So we pray thee, come!

***HYMN # 172** *O come, O come, Immanuel* VENI EMMANUEL

PRAYING THE PSALM Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13, *TEV adapted*

PROCLAIMING

ADVENT LITURGY

Story of Peace Brent Holl (8:30); Heather and Timbo Hartwell (11:00)

Lighting of the Second Advent Candle

Advent Prayer (*Unison*) ~Sing the Story, #125, adapted

God of Advent, in the darkest days and nights of the year, our hearts turn toward your promised light. By the faint glimmer of candlelight, our peace is restored once more. In these Advent days, lead us into your light to a manger where the face of God shines bright and clear. Amen.

SCRIPTURE READING Isaiah 40:1-11 *NRSV*

***HYMN # 176** *Comfort, comfort, O my people* GENEVA 42

SCRIPTURE READINGS Mark 1:1-8; 2nd Peter 3:8-15a *NRSV*

CHILDREN'S TIME (11:00) Mark Dowdy & Puppets

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.

SERMON "In the Meantime..." Chris Zepp

RESPONDING

REFLECTIONS (8:30) ...a time for conversation.

ANTHEM (11:00) Before the Marvel of this Night *Carl Schalk*

OFFERING

Invitation ~Bill Scheurer, Executive Director of OEP, adapted

Offertory

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

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

Chorale Variations on GENEVA 42 *Johann Pachelbel*

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE ~Earle W. Fike, Jr.

***HYMN INSERT** *While we are waiting, come*

***BENEDICTION**

POSTLUDE (11:00) Toccata on VENI EMMANUEL *John Barr*

* Rise as able in body and spirit.

MEETINGS & OPPORTUNITIES FOR SERVICE & NURTURE

December 10-16, 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.

Today	9 a.m.	Bell Choir Rehearsal	Choir Room
	Noon	Properties Commission	Lounge
	6:00	Youth Christmas Party	Kreps' Home
Mon.	Noon	Retired Ministers & Spouses	Maple Terrace
Wed.	8 a.m.	Bridgewater Ministers	Maple Terrace
	10 a.m.	Office Staff Meeting	Lounge
	5:15	Cherub & Carol Choirs Rehearsal	Sanctuary
	6:30	YORFFs Rehearsal	Room # 35
	7:00	Friendship Circle	Maple Terrace
Thurs.	6:30	Puppets Rehearsal	Agape Room
	7:30	Sanctus Choir Rehearsal	Choir Room
Fri.	7:30	Shenandoah Valley Choral Society Concert	Sanctuary

NEXT SUNDAY– December 17, 2017 – *Third Sunday of Advent*

Worship: 11:00 a.m. – Sanctuary

Children's Choirs Musical: "Simple Gifts of Christmas"

by Steve Kupferschmid & Jean Anne Shafferman

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

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

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

Youth Play, Create, Unwind – Noon – Youth Room

Shenandoah Valley Choral Society Concert – 3 p.m. – Sanctuary

SHENANDOAH VALLEY CHORAL SOCIETY under the direction of Curtis Nolley, will present its 48th annual Christmas concert on Friday, December 15, at 7:30 p.m., and Sunday, December 17, at 3:00 p.m. in our sanctuary. The concert will feature G. F. Handel's "Messiah" accompanied by the SVCS Chamber orchestra and guest soloists. The second half of the concert includes a variety of new and traditional carol settings, and will feature the premier of a new carol by John G. Barr.

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) – Ann Daggett

Guitarist (8:30) – Brent Holl

Head Usher – Devin Bowman

Sound & Light Technician – Skip Eger

Decorator – Bea Miller, Dwyann & Tony Stovall

Deacon Caregiver – Jan Flora

Van Driver – Donnie Fulk

Worship Leaders (8:30) – Brent Holl

(11:00) – Heather and Timbo Hartwell

Puppeteers (11:00) – Lilly Day-Miller, Andie Neher,
and Eliana Teshome

WORSHIP TABLE FLOWERS are in memory of Charlotte McKay whose memorial service was held here yesterday.

TODAY'S ANTHEM TEXT: Jaroslav J. Vajda

Before the marvel of this night adoring, fold your wings and bow,
Then tear the sky apart with light and with your news the world endow.
Proclaim the birth of Christ and peace,
That fear and death and sorrow cease:
Sing peace, sing peace, sing gift of peace, sing peace, sing gift of peace!
Awake the sleeping world with song, this is the day the Lord has made.
Assemble here, celestial throng, in royal splendor come arrayed.
Give earth a glimpse of heav'nly bliss, a teasing taste of what they miss:
Sing bliss, sing bliss, sing endless bliss, sing bliss, sing endless bliss!
The love that we have known, our joy and endless light,
Now to the loveless world be shown, break upon its night.
Into one song compress the love, the love that rules above:
Sing love, sing love, sing love, sing God is love!

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ATTENDANCE / STEWARDSHIP FOR SUNDAY: 12/03/17

Worship Attendance: 8:30 – 18 11:00 – 251 Children's – 17
Sunday School: 143

Pledges & Envelope Giving	\$20,521.75
Loose Offering	1,350.00
Food Pantry	100.00
<i>Messenger</i> Subscription	14.50
Books	33.00
Christmas Offering	1,845.00
Tree Lights of Love	230.00
Disaster Relief	50.00
Habitat House	2,000.00
Youth Programs	953.00
Friendship Circle	120.00
Roof Replacement	10,000.00