

Blessings of Bearing Fruit

Growing up in a family of faith certainly has its advantages, and the urging of family and friends is often the catalyst we need to live into God's dream for us and bear fruit. I had nudges from early childhood to pursue a life of dedicated service to God, but that yearning didn't come to fruition until I was much older.

I had been part owner of a travel agency for nearly thirty years, and had shared my faith while escorting people around this beautiful world and making their dreams come true. But then, in my early fifties, I decided to follow the promptings of my church family, and that of my own heart. As a result, I now share with my husband in pastoring a beautiful fruit-bearing congregation that is nourished continually by the care of the Master Gardener. Let me share some thoughts that I jotted down just prior to making my commitment to the Lord:

As one reaches back into the recesses of life's past and gathers meaning from the joys of days gone by, a pleasant reassurance fills the heart. From the shadows of the past emerges the memory of a gentle hand silently but surely guiding unsure footsteps.

As the walk continues and uncertainty creeps in, that same perfect hand is there to give a gentle tug into the future.

When dreams appearing on the horizon are shaded by clouds of doubt, the hand exerts a tender but deliberate shove that turns an "Oh, I don't know" into a "Maybe I can."

And then one day, the maturity of adulthood opens the eyes and the same all-powerful hand appears to guide and reassure once more. For there is no place into which the hand cannot lead.

Finally, in gratitude, the one who has received so much reaches out a hand in return, places it in the precious nail-scarred one, and humbly steps into the Savior's service.

—Linda K. Stoner, co-pastor
Geiger Church of the Brethren
Friedens, Pennsylvania

Text for today: "I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinegrower. He removes every branch in me that bears no fruit. Every branch that bears fruit he prunes to make it bear more fruit. You have already been cleansed by the word that I have spoken to you. *Abide in me* as I abide in you. Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me. I am the vine, you are the branches." (John 15:1-5a, NRSV). **Bible readings for today:** Acts 8: 26-40; Psalm 22:25-31; 1 John 4:7-21; John 15:1-8 (4).

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Abide in me



BRIDGEWATER CHURCH OF THE BRETHREN
at Worship April 29, 2018 8:30 & 11:00 a.m.

RESPONDING

GATHERING

PRELUDE Organ Chorale: *J. S. Bach*
“Soul, adorn thyself with gladness”

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.

***CALL TO WORSHIP**

***HYMN # 1** *What is this place* KOMT NU MET ZANG

INVOCATION

PROCLAIMING

HAND BELL ANTHEM (11:00) *Abiding Nearer to Thee* arr. *Dan Edwards*

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 READING 1 John 4:7-21 *NRSV*

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE Jeff Carr

ANTHEM (11:00) *You Are Holy* arr. *John Helgen*
Brent Holl & Michael Overman, *percussion*

SERMON Jeff Carr

***HYMN # 71** *Joyful, joyful, we adore thee* HYMN TO JOY

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

OFFERING

Invitation

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

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

There’s Something about that Name *Gloria & Bill Gaither*
arr. *Gloria Axelson*

Prayer of Thanksgiving

SERVICE OF EUCHARIST COMMUNION

Invitation

Breaking the Bread and Pouring the Cup

Passing the Cup and the Bread

Bread of the angel host

César Franck

Partaking of the Bread and Cup

Prayer after Communion *concluding with The Lord’s Prayer:*

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be your name.

Your kingdom come; your will be done in earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread.

And forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors.

And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever.

Amen.

*** HYMN # 322** *For we are strangers no more* STRANGERS NO MORE

***BENEDICTION**

POSTLUDE *Toccata in C Major* *Jan Pieterszoon Sweelinck*

* Rise as able in body and spirit.

MEETINGS & OPPORTUNITIES FOR SERVICE & NURTURE

April 29-May 5, 2018 (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
Tues.	6:30	Living Peace Banquet – Linville Creek CoB	
	6:30	Properties Commission	Open Door Room
	7:00	Executive Committee	Lounge
	7:00	Food Pantry	Social Hall
Wed.	11-1	Bridgewater Home Auxiliary Lunch	Social Hall
	2:00	Book Study	Lounge
	5:15	Cherub Choir Rehearsal	Agape Room
	5:30	Wednesday Night Meal	Social Hall
		<i>Menu: Francesco's Meat and Cheese Ravioli, Lasagna (limited), Salad, & Bread</i>	
		<i>Suggested Donation: \$10 Adults / \$5 Kids</i>	
	5:45	Carol Choir Rehearsal	Agape Room
	6:30	YOrffs Rehearsal	Room # 35
	7:00	Christian Education Commission	Library
	7:00	Fellowship & Recreation Commission	Youth Room
	7:00	Mission & Service Commission	Lounge
	7:45	Ministerial Services Commission	Altruistic Room
Thurs.	Noon	Interfaith Association	EMU
	6:30	Puppets Rehearsal	Agape Room
	6:30	Refugee Committee	Lounge
	7:30	Sanctus Choir Rehearsal	Choir Room
Fri.	6:00	Bridgewater College Baccalaureate	Campus Mall
Sat.	10 a.m.	Bridgewater College Commencement	Campus Mall

NEXT SUNDAY– May 6, 2018 – *Sixth Sunday of Easter*
Worship: 8:30 & 11:00 a.m. – Sanctuary
Preaching: Pastor Jeff Carr
Sermon: “Friends”; Scripture Reading: John 15:9-17
Children’s Worship during Worship at 11 – Agape Room
Bell Choir Rehearsal – 9 a.m. – Choir Room
Sunday School – 9:45 a.m. – Classrooms
Youth Fundraiser Lunch – Noon – Social Hall
Council – 1 p.m. – Social Hall

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

Karissa Hunt – Interim Financial Secretary

Shannon Puffenbarger – Administrative Assistant

Leon Rhodes – Head Teller

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.bwco.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.

Fellowship Host – Tim Kreps

Head Usher – John Hipps

Music Leader (11:00) – Curtis Nolley

Decorators – Rebekah & Mikah Overman; Lori Lineweaver

Deacon Caregiver – Lori Lineweaver

Van Driver – John Flora

Worship Leader – John Barr

TODAY'S ANTHEM TEXT: Per Harling

You are holy, you are whole.

You are always, ever more than we ever understand.

You are always at hand. Blessed are you coming near.

Blessed are you coming here to your church in wine and bread,

Raised from soil, raised from dead.

You are holy, you are wholeness, you are present.

Let the cosmos praise you, Lord! Sing hosanna in the highest!

Sing hosanna! Sing hosanna to our God!

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GRADUATE INFORMATION REQUESTED

If you are aware of someone who has, is, or will be completing their course(s) of study during this school year (high school, college, or graduate school), please contact Pastor Chris or the church office with their name(s) and information about their completed program and future plans so that they we can recognize them! We will be recognizing our high school graduates during Sr. High Youth Sunday on May 20 and will publish a spotlight compilation of all of our graduates a future edition of *Connections*.

SHENANDOAH DISTRICT DISASTER MINISTRIES AUCTION

This annual auction to benefit the Disaster Relief Ministries of our District will be held May 18-19 at the Rockingham County Fairgrounds. There are countless ways you can help – from donating items, baked goods, or money to volunteering your time and energy, from making theme baskets or school kits to participating in the golf tournament, and of course by attending and participating in the event itself! More information is available on the bulletin board in the greeting hall or by contacting Doris Harsh.

BWCOB BLOOD DRIVE

Sunday, May 20, 10 am-2 pm in our Social Hall.

Save the date and if possible, plan to donate. Appointments are preferred, but walk-ins are welcome. Contact the office for more info.

UPCOMING COUNCIL AGENDA

The May 6, 2018 council agenda can be obtained from the literature rack.

ATTENDANCE / STEWARDSHIP FOR SUNDAY: 4/22/18

Worship Attendance: 8:30 – 21 11:00 – 234 Sunday School: 134

Pledges & Envelope Giving	\$5,430.00
Loose Offering	433.00
Church User Fees	725.00
<i>Messenger</i> Subscription	14.50
Books	20.00
Special Projects	1,500.00
One Great Hour	655.00
Wednesday Night Meals	270.00
Brethren Student Movement	20.00
Women's Fellowship	255.00
Youth Programs	1,120.00
Miscellaneous	7.00

Our Guiding Values – Part IV

We value sharing the love of God and the God that is love.

To that end we:

- Seek to embody God's love in our life together
- Proclaim all persons as beloved children of God
- Extend love to others and to ourselves as Christ loves us
- Challenge ourselves to live as examples of the abundant life and extravagant love we experience through Jesus the Christ
- Live as children of our loving and sustaining God, sharing in the vision of God for all, and desiring to see Christ in one another

~Adopted by BWCOB Council August 25, 2013