

Twice-Blest Gifts

Mercy. A beautiful word. A priceless gift when given and received, as the psalmist attests in Psalm 116. Found in many languages, *mercy* in Hebrew is *hesed* (loving-kindness), and in Etruscan *merc* means exchange, value given and received between people.

In Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice*, Portia describes mercy: "The quality of mercy is not strained; / It droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven / Upon the place beneath. It is twice blest; / It blesseth him that gives and him that takes."

Mercy is God's language of abiding relationship with creation and humanity. Day and night, season after season, creation offers us unstrained gifts of mercy. They flow as water around boulders, drop as healing rain on parched ground, draw fresh growth from winter slumber, produce nourishing harvest that sustains our lives, even in fire and storm, through the exchange of life-giving breath of the universe.

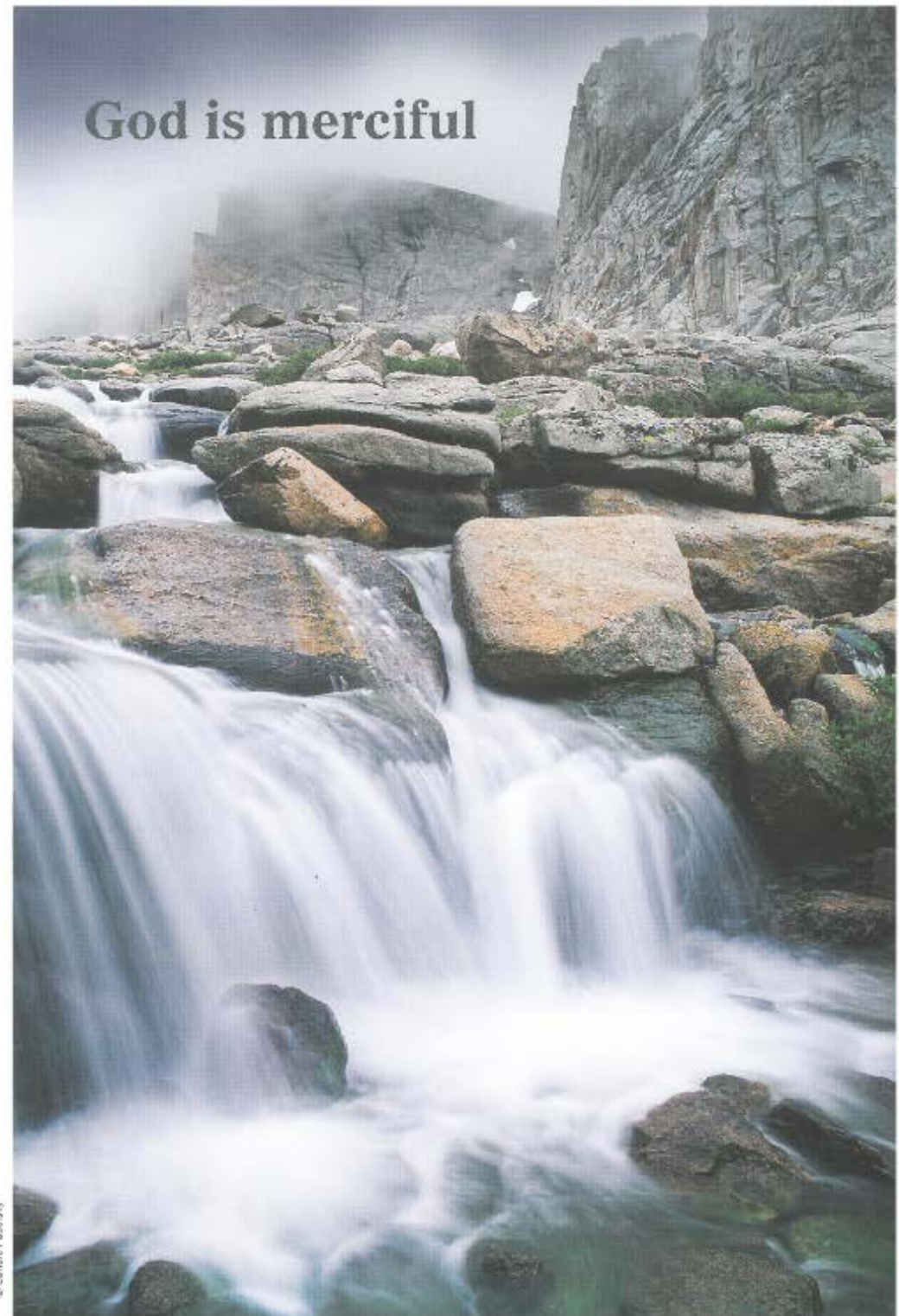
God's most profound gift of mercy is love embodied in Jesus Christ. In relinquishing power and control for love, God grants us freedom and simultaneously invites us into intimate relationship. Through his relationships, Jesus conveys the reciprocal quality of mercy: "Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy." In his life and in his death, Jesus reveals the character of mercy.

Experiencing God's boundless mercy, we understand that human mercy dare never be contrived. Offered unconditionally, absent of judgment, seeing beyond illusions and beneath the surfaces of fear, mercy forgives and frees from all faults through courtesy, compassion, and grace. Mercy provides the humus of peace and justice. Emptying ourselves of self-importance and relinquishing self-sufficiency, we prepare our souls for the exchange of the priceless, twice-blest gifts of mercy.

—Ruthann Kuechel Johansen, president emerita
Bethany Theological Seminary
Richmond, Indiana

Text for today: "Gracious is the LORD, and righteous; our *God is merciful*. The LORD protects the simple; when I was brought low, he saved me. Return, O my soul, to your rest, for the LORD has dealt bountifully with you. For you have delivered my soul from death, my eyes from tears, my feet from stumbling. I walk before the LORD in the land of the living" (Psalm 116:5-9, NRSV). **Bible readings for today:** Isaiah 50: 4-9a; Psalm 116:1-9 (5); James 3:1-12; Mark 8:27-38.

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BRIDGEWATER CHURCH OF THE BRETHREN

at Worship September 16, 2018 8:30 & 11:00 a.m.

GATHERING

PRELUDE (11:00) *Jan Pieterszoon Sweelinck*
Psalm 116 “I love the Lord” (four variations)

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 worshiping near us. After all have signed, the pad can be passed back to the inside aisle.

THE WHITTINGTON CHIME (11:00)
Church of St. Mary le Bow, Cheapside, London

CALL TO WORSHIP ~Hymnal # 683

***HYMN INSERT** *I love the Lord, for he has heard my voice* GENEVAN 116

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.

OFFERING Invitation Offertory

(8:30) We bring our tithes and offerings to the worship center.
(11:00) Ushers receive our tithes and offerings.

Psalm 116 (variation 3) *J. P. Sweelinck*

SCRIPTURE READING Psalm 116:1-9 *NRSV*

SERMON “*The One About Mercy*” Jeff Carr

RESPONDING

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

ANTHEM (11:00) Hymn of Creation *Dan Forrest*

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Silence

Invitation

Hymn # 631 *Anoint us, Lord* ANOINT US, LORD

Anointing, Meditation, and Personal Prayers

Prayers Spoken ~Hymnal # 722, adapted

Unison Response: Come, Redeeming God – take all these sufferings upon yourself and transform them. Be merciful also to us, who offer these prayers, so that we might enter the sufferings of others and become agents of your healing love, through Jesus Christ, who taught us and with whom we now pray ...
Our Father, which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come; thy 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 # 417** *All who love and serve your city* CHARLESTOWN

***RESPONSIVE BLESSING** Hymnal # 711

POSTLUDE (11:00) Trumpet Rondeau in G Major *David Lasky*

* Rise as able in body and spirit.

MEETINGS & OPPORTUNITIES FOR SERVICE & NURTURE

September 16-22, 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	9:30/10:30 a.m.	Blood Pressure Clinic	Reception Area
	2:00	Jr. Hi. Putt-Putt	Meet here
Tues.	8:30 a.m.	Financial Leaders	Open Door Room
	7:00	Food Pantry	Social Hall
Wed.	5:15	Cherub Choir Rehearsal	Agape Room
	5:30	Wednesday Night Meal	Social Hall
		<i>Catered by Nikki Watson. Menu: Mandarin Orange Chicken, Rice Pilaf, Sesame Green Beans, Side Salad, Dessert and Drink</i>	
		<i>Children: Chicken Tenders Vegetarian: Mandarin Couscous</i>	
		<i>Suggested Donation — \$10 for adults, \$5 for kids</i>	
	5:45	Carol Choir Rehearsal	Agape Room
	6:30	Yorffs Rehearsal	Room # 35
	7:00	Board of Administration	Seekers Room
Thurs.	6:00	Brethren Student Movement	Carter Center
	6:30	Puppet Practice / Orientation	Agape Room
	7:30	Sanctus Choir Rehearsal	Choir Room
Sat.	1:00	Mills/Kravets Wedding & Reception	Sanctuary/Social Hall

NEXT SUNDAY— September 23, 2018 – 18th Sunday after Epiphany

Worship: 8:30 & 11:00 a.m. – Sanctuary **Preaching:** Pastor Jeff Carr
Sermon: “Bob Ross, Art Class and other places to pay attention”
Scriptures: James 3:13 - 4:3, 7-8a

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

Sr. Hi. Youth – Pizza & Duck Pin Bowling at Ruby’s

ATTENDANCE / STEWARDSHIP FOR SUNDAY: 9/9/18

Worship Attendance: 8:30 – 22 11:00 – 219	Sunday School: 127
Pledges & Envelope Giving	\$21,712.00
Loose Offering	734.00
Food Pantry	100.00
EYN Compassion Fund	100.00
CoB Mission Offering	100.00
Seekers Class	100.00
Janet Sohn Memorial Fund	4,900.00

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

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

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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.

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.

Decorators – Rebekah & Mikah Overman; Lori Lineweaver

Deacon Caregiver – Bea Miller

Fellowship Host – Beth Day-Miller

Head Usher – Palmer Lee Berry

Pianist (8:30) – Cindy Fike

Van Driver – Rick Wampler

Worship Leaders – John Leigh Miller and Fred Swartz

TODAY'S ANTHEM TEXT: *Isaac Watts*

I sing the mighty pow'r of God that made the mountains rise,
That spread the flowing seas abroad and built the lofty skies.
I sing the wisdom that ordained the sun to rule the day,
The moon shines full at His command, and all the stars obey.
I sing the goodness of the Lord that filled the earth with food.
He formed the creatures with His word, and then pronounced them good.
Lord, how Thy wonders are displayed where-e'er I turn my eye!
If I survey the ground I tread, or gaze upon the sky.
There's not a flow'r, below but makes Thy glories known,
And clouds arise and tempests blow by order from Thy throne.
While all that borrows life from Thee is ever in Thy care,
And ev'rywhere that man can be, Thou, God art present there.

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I love the Lord, for he has heard my voice

GENEVAN 116

1 I love the LORD, for he has heard my voice.
2 Our God is gra - cious, mer - ci - ful, and just.
3 For you, O LORD, have saved my soul from death.
4 How can I pay the LORD for all his gifts?
5 Pre - cious to God the dy - ing of his saints.

He turned to me and heard my cry for mer - cy.
He watch - es o - ver all the sim - ple - heart - ed.
You kept my eyes from tears, my feet from stum - bling.
I will lift up the cup of full sal - va - tion.
I am your faith - ful ser - vant, freed from bond - age.

An - gushed by death and o - ver - come by sor - row,
Rest, O my soul, and trust him for sal - va - tion.
I kept my faith, though I was much af - flict - ed.
I will ful - fill my vows to God my Sav - ior.
I'll pay my vows and, with your peo - ple, thank you.

I turned in my dis - tress to God in prayer.
Re - mem - ber all his good - ness shown to you.
Dis - mayed, I said, "All peo - ple are un - true."
With all his saints I'll call up - on his name.
Come to his house, O peo - ple, praise the LORD!

Text: Psalm 116; vers. Hele Ottie, 1980, ©1987 CRC Publications

Tune: Genevan Psalter, 1562 Tony E. Alonso
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Psalm 116:1-9

- ¹ I love the LORD, because he has heard
my voice and my supplications.
- ² Because he inclined his ear to me,
therefore I will call on him as long as I live.
- ³ The snares of death encompassed me;
the pangs of Sheol laid hold on me;
I suffered distress and anguish.
- ⁴ Then I called on the name of the LORD:
“O LORD, I pray, save my life!”
- ⁵ Gracious is the LORD, and righteous;
our God is merciful.
- ⁶ The LORD protects the simple;
when I was brought low, he saved me.
- ⁷ Return, O my soul, to your rest,
for the LORD has dealt bountifully with you.
- ⁸ For you have delivered my soul from death,
my eyes from tears,
my feet from stumbling.
- ⁹ I walk before the LORD
in the land of the living.