

PREPARE THE WAY...

Advent and Christmas Preparations, Celebrations and Events

HELP PREPARE FOR ADVENT

Friday, November 30, 9:30 am - noon

Sanctuary decorating, wreaths, garlands and Crèche - both manual and artistic help is appreciated!

Saturday, December 1, 9 am - noon

Finish preparations for the First Sunday of Advent, sanctuary, doors, and tables.

BRIDGEWATER CHRISTMAS PARADE

Saturday, December 1, at 10:00 a.m.

Calling all Christmas carolers!! We need singers, hand wavers and smiling faces to ride on the BWCOB float in the parade. Those interested should come to the parade spot by 9:30 a.m. on Saturday, December 1.

Location TBA in this week's bulletin and weekly information email next week. Dress for the weather and bring a blanket.



ADVENT CELEBRATION

Saturday, December 4

Crafts—4:30-5:30 p.m.

Carry-in Meal—5:30 p.m. (Bring a dish or two to share)

Worship Service and singing following the meal

Come join us and bring a friend!

CHRISTMAS TENEBRAE

Saturday, December 15, at 7:00 p.m.

A time of worship and contemplation for those who find it difficult to relate to the joyful and festive mood of the Christmas season.

CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS MUSICAL

The Unfriendly Beasts

Sunday, December 16, during worship at 11:00 a.m.

CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES

Monday, December 24

7 p.m. and 11 p.m.

Candle lighting will take place at both services and Eucharist communion will be served at 11 p.m.



SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICES

8:30 & 11:00 a.m. on Sundays

- December 2 1st Sunday of Advent: *Preparing the Way... of Hope*
Scripture Reading: Psalm 25:1-10
Preaching: *Pastor Jeff Carr*
- December 9 2nd Sunday of Advent: *Preparing the Way... of Peace*
Scripture Reading: Luke 1:68-79
Preaching: *Pastor Chris Zepp*
- December 16 3rd Sunday of Advent: *Preparing the Way... of Joy (Worship at 11 only)*
Scripture Reading: Isaiah 12:2-6
Children's Musical: *The Unfriendly Beasts*
- December 23 4th Sunday of Advent: *Preparing the Way... of Love*
Scripture Reading: Luke 1:46b-55
Preaching: *Pastor Jeff Carr*
- December 30 1st Sunday after Christmas: *Preparing the Way... for a New Year*
Scripture Reading: Luke 2:41-52
Preaching: *Pastor Jeff Carr*



THANK YOU NOTES

For your prayers, good wishes and cards, I thank you. Keep praying for me...

~ Grace Fleishman

David, Jonathan and I would like everyone to know how VERY much we appreciate all the kindness, support, and love that has been shown and given to us these past few weeks since Emma's death. All the hugs, cards, food, visits and company have been so comforting. The generosity shown by our congregation by preparing food for Emma's Life Celebration and supporting the youth in their Sunday meal in honor of Emma was incredible. Pastors Jeff and Chris' sermon and prayer on Sunday 10/28/18 honoring Emma's wish of not invalidating her choice and opening the conversation of mental illness is invaluable. Thank you, Pastor Chris, for leading Emma's Life Celebration. We are so grateful to be part of such a caring community.

~ Kajsa Svarfvar

Thank you for the cards, phone calls, prayers and gifts of food given during my hip replacement surgery and recuperation. The support of Pastor Jeff and other staff members were invaluable not only to me, but also our family.

~ Sylvia Bowman

Many thanks to everyone who came out to Jalapeños last month to support the fundraiser for our campus ministry, Brethren Student Movement (BSM). With your help and the generosity of Jalapeños, we were able to raise over \$100 for BSM!

Thank you to everyone who has supported the recent benevolent fundraising efforts of our youth. With your help, \$1200 was raised at one meal for the Brain and Behavior Research Foundation in honor of Emma Nicholas and an additional \$1200 was raised in two days of house and yard work for Lybrook Community Ministries in New Mexico! Because of your generosity, our youth have been able to pay that generosity forward to benefit these causes that are near to our hearts. Your support speaks volumes and is very much appreciated!

~ Chris Zepp

SHENANDOAH VALLEY CHORAL SOCIETY CHRISTMAS CONCERT

The Shenandoah Valley Choral Society, under the direction of Curtis Nolley, will present its 49th annual Christmas concert on Friday, December 14, at 7:30 p.m., and Sunday, December 16, at 3:00 p.m. in our sanctuary. The concert entitled "Welcome All Wonders" will feature a variety of new and traditional carol settings accompanied by brass, percussion, organ, and piano. Tickets are available at the door, locally from Red Front Supermarket (Harrisonburg), Bridgewater Foods (Bridgewater), and on-line at www.singshenandoah.org. Admission is \$15 for adults/\$12 for seniors and students.

SPECIAL HOLIDAY ENVELOPES INCLUDED IN MAILING

TWO envelopes are included in this newsletter mailing:

The white envelope is for our Tree Lights of Love—gifts benefitting the decorating fund in honor or memory of a loved one. Tree Lights of Love gifts need to be returned by Wednesday, December 19, to be included in the bulletin on December 23. Cost of each Light of Love gift is \$5.00.

The green envelope is for our Christmas offering:

A traditional part of our congregation's Christmas celebration is receiving this special offering to support selected needs. This year the Christmas offering will be received on Sunday, December 16. The Executive Committee approved that the 2018 Christmas offering be divided equally among the work and service of the following two organizations:

Brethren Disaster Ministries

Inspired by Jesus, Brethren Disaster Ministries focuses on rebuilding homes, caring for children, and providing international relief by engaging volunteers, supporters, and partners to serve communities recovering from disaster.

Harrisonburg Rockingham Free Clinic

This program provides medical services to local persons who cannot otherwise afford health care from other providers.

CHURCH OF THE BRETHREN ADVENT OFFERING

The Church of the Brethren Advent Offering this year is focusing on Joy and giving thanks to God. "Give thanks to the Lord, call on his name; make known his deeds among the nations; proclaim that his name is exalted" (Isaiah 12.4). Envelopes for this special offering, as well as bookmarks, are available from the literature rack in the greeting hall. To learn more about the ministries of the CoB, visit www.brethren.org.

CALLED USHERS MEETING

The ushers will meet in the Seekers classroom immediately following worship on December 2 to discuss the usher organization for 2019. We also need more persons to consider serving our congregation as ushers. If you would feel called to serve in this capacity, please join the meeting to learn more about the usher duties and contribution to services and duties.

UPDATED DIRECTORY INFORMATION

Please make the following corrections and additions in your 2018 Congregational Contacts Directory:

* Megan Button & Anthony Carano
Married November 11
17128 Mistflower Lane
Urbandale IA 50323

* Sharon Flaten
37756 Drawbridge Way
Purcellville, VA 20132

* Genita Metzler and Tatum Nolan
Married July 28

BWCOB DECEMBER 2018 **EVENTS PROGRAM CALENDAR**

This is a church-related program calendar and does not include all building use. Please be sure to schedule ALL EVENTS and building use through the church office. All events are at BWCOB unless otherwise indicated.

1 Christmas Decorating – 9 a.m.
Salvation Army Bell Ringing – 9 a.m.-7 p.m. – BFS
Bridgewater Christmas Parade – 10 a.m.
Advent Celebration – 4:30 p.m.

2 Bell Choir Rehearsal – 9 a.m.
Children's Worship during Worship at 11
Youth Fundraiser Lunch – Noon
Ushers Meeting – Noon
Sr. Hi. Movie Night & Discussion – Zepp's Home
Children's Choirs Perform at BRC Lovelight – 7 p.m.
– Lantz Chapel
BSM Leadership Team – 8:30 p.m.

5 Pastor's Book Study – 2 p.m.
Cherub Choir Rehearsal – 5:15 p.m.
Wednesday Night Meal – 5:30 p.m.
Carol Choir Rehearsal – 5:45 p.m.
YOrffs Rehearsal – 6:45 p.m.

6 Brethren Student Movement – 6 p.m. – Carter Center
Puppets Rehearsal – 6:30 p.m.
Sanctus Choir Rehearsal – 7:30 p.m.

8 Children's Choirs perform at VMRC – 3 p.m.

9 Bell Choir Rehearsal – 9 a.m.
Jr. High Youth Fellowship – 5 p.m.

12 Children's Choirs Rehearse
Christmas Musical – 5 p.m.
Wednesday Night Meal – 5:30 p.m.
YOrffs Rehearsal – 6:30 p.m.
Friendship Circle – 7 p.m.
– Home of Judy Henneberger
JOY Circle – 7 p.m. – Home of Joyce Grove

13 Puppets Rehearsal – 6:30 p.m.
Sanctus Choir Rehearsal – 7:30 p.m.

15 Christmas Tenebrae – 7 p.m.

16 Bell Choir Rehearsal – 9 a.m.
Blood Pressure Clinic – 9:30 & 10:30 a.m.
Children's Choirs Rehearse
Christmas Musical – 9:45 a.m.
Properties Commission Reorganization – Noon
All Youth Christmas Party – 6:30 p.m.

18 Financial Leaders – 8:30 a.m.

19 Pastor's Book Study – 2 p.m.

20 Sanctus Choir Rehearsal – 7:30 p.m.

23 Bell Choir Rehearsal – 9 a.m.

24 Christmas Eve Services – 7 p.m. & 11 p.m.

24-Jan.1 Church Offices Closed

25 Church Building Closed
Merry Christmas!



OTHER COMMUNITY EVENTS

2 InMotion Christmas Dance Recital – 3 p.m.
BRC Lovelight Service – 7 p.m. – Lantz Chapel

4 Bridgewater Interchurch Food Pantry – 7 p.m.

5 B. H. Auxiliary Luncheon – 11 a.m.-1 p.m.

6 Interfaith Association – Noon

10 Ret. Ministers & Spouses – 5 p.m. – Maple Terrace

12 Bridgewater Ministers – 8 a.m. – Maple Terrace
North River Library: "A Christmas Carol" – 4 p.m.

14 Shenandoah Valley Choral Society Concert – 7:30 p.m.

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

17 Blue Ridge Christian Middle & High School
Christmas Concert – 6:30 p.m.

18 Blue Ridge Christian K-5 School
Christmas Concert – 6:30 p.m.
Bridgewater Interchurch Food Pantry – 7 p.m.

JOSH EYE CALLED TO BE INTERIM CHRISTIAN EDUCATION DIRECTOR

With the retirement of Jeanie Eye last month, we have called Josh Eye to be our Interim Christian Education Director through June 2019. Josh is no stranger to our CE program, moving into this position after completing a term as the chair of our CE Commission. His immersion and long-term investment in the life of our Christian Education ministry will bring much continuity to our CE program and relationships during this interim period.

Since Josh works full time as a fourth grade teacher at John Wayland Elementary, he will not generally be in the office during school hours. His regular office hours will be on Wednesday afternoons and evenings 3:30 pm through the Wednesday Night Meal, with additional appointments and meetings as needed. You can continue to reach Josh at his contact info as listed in our directory, in addition to his office e-mail and phone, which remain the same as Jeanie's (jeye@bwcob.org / ext. 105).

BITS AND PEACES

[brought to you by Peace Committee and
Mission & Service Commission]

We know that Christ came into this world as the Prince of Peace. Christ himself is our peace. ~ Thomas Merton

A child has been born for us, a son given to us;
authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father,
Prince of Peace. ~ Isaiah 9:6, NRSV



PASTOR'S BOOK STUDIES

This month's book study with Pastor Chris will meet on Wednesday afternoons, 2-3 p.m., Dec. 5 & 19, and will focus on *Against Empathy: The Case for Rational Compassion* by Paul Bloom (2016).

We often think of our capacity to experience the suffering of others as the ultimate source of goodness. Many of our wisest policy-makers, activists, scientists, and philosophers agree that the only problem with empathy is that we don't have enough of it. Nothing could be farther from the truth, argues Yale researcher Paul Bloom. In AGAINST EMPATHY, Bloom reveals empathy to be one of the leading motivators of inequality and immorality in society. Far from helping us to improve the lives of others, empathy is a capricious and irrational emotion that appeals to our narrow prejudices. It muddles our judgment and, ironically, often leads to cruelty. .. With precision and wit, he demonstrates how empathy distorts our judgment in every aspect of our lives, from philanthropy and charity to the justice system; from medical care and education to parenting and marriage. Without empathy, Bloom insists, our decisions would be clearer, fairer, and—yes—ultimately more moral.

If you have not already ordered a book through the church office, you should obtain your own copy. We will discuss the first three chapters plus interlude (thru page 127) on December 5.

Looking Ahead – The next book study will meet on January 16 (just one meeting!), and will focus on *In the Shadow of Statues: A White Southerner Confronts History* by Mitch Landrieu (2018). *There is a difference between remembrance of history and reverence for it. 'When Mitch Landrieu addressed the people of New Orleans in May 2017 about his decision to take down four Confederate monuments, including the statue of Robert E. Lee, he struck a nerve nationally, and his speech has now been heard or seen by millions across the country. In his first book, Mayor Landrieu discusses his personal journey on race as well as the path he took to making the decision to remove the monuments, tackles the broader history of slavery, race and institutional inequities that still bedevil America, and traces his personal relationship to this history.... Equal parts unblinking memoir, history, and prescription for finally confronting America's most painful legacy, In the Shadow of Statues will contribute strongly to the national conversation...at a time when racism is resurgent with seemingly tacit approval from the highest levels of government and when too many Americans have a misplaced nostalgia for a time and place that never existed.'* Order your copy through our office at an estimated cost of \$16 (if ordered by Dec. 9) OR obtain your own copy.

For Our Prayers during the Month of December 2018

Each month a prayer list with opportunities for directed prayer is included with our newsletter. In addition to highlighting specific prayer requests, we are invited to pray with particular mindfulness of the persons connected with our congregation and community. Additionally, focusing thoughts and prayers around the following may be helpful as a guide:

Our Congregation and its Ministries, Vision and Mission

Those who are...

Struggling emotionally and spiritually during the holidays
Recovering, rebuilding and grieving from natural disasters
Undergoing significant life changes
Living with illnesses, both chronic and acute
Finding peace and contentment
In difficult relationships or experiencing the loss of relationship
Struggling with mental illness, anxiety, depression and or thoughts of suicide
Criticized, belittled and demeaned because of their beliefs and understandings
Survivors, Victims, Witnesses, and Perpetrators of violence, intolerance, racism and hatred
Advocating for justice and righteousness
Wrestling with their faith
Facing financial hardships
Seeking employment and who have lost work

We also lift up in prayer and mindfulness specifically...

...*Our Nation and World*

...*those in Nigeria...* facing violence, kidnappings, and deep unrest...and for those committing these atrocities

We continue to pray specifically for Hauwa Abdu, one of over 200 girls and young women kidnapped in April 2014.

...*our congregation, district, and denomination*

...*those who grieve, especially the families and friends of...*

Cliff Keplinger, father of Donna Miller, Karen Hess, Julie Huffman, & Kevin Keplinger, who died Nov. 18

John Sayre, who died Nov. 8

David Flora, father of Steve Flora and brother of Sam Flora who died Nov.5

Kay Rittenhouse, wife of Wilbur Rittenhouse and sister of Karen Wyrick, who died Oct. 25

Emma Nicholas, daughter of Kajsja Svarfvar & David Nicholas, sister of Jonathan Nicholas, who died Oct. 24

Ronald Mathias, father of Kathy Shrader, who died Oct. 21; **Robert Zimmerman**, brother of Fred Zimmerman, who died Oct. 14; **Kathryn Roller**, sister of Janet Coffman, who died Sept. 17; **David Will**, who died Sept. 15; **Dorothy Dellinger**, sister of Charlotte Harvey, who died Sept. 14; **Glendon Shank**, husband of Mildred, who died Sept. 12; **Lowell Miller**, husband of Peggy & father of Robbie Miller, who died Sept. 2

... *those under the care of Hospice, Palliative Care and Comfort Care*

...*those who have had surgery, been hospitalized, receiving treatments, recovering from illness or are in rehabilitation...* **Denny Eye, Wilbur Rittenhouse**

...*those requiring long-term healthcare, specifically...* in Avante, Bridgewater Home, Sunnyside, & White Birch Estates

...*those in Volunteer Service, specifically...* **Lauren Capasso** (Houston, TX), **Lauren Flora** (Elgin, IL) **Stephen Miller** (Japan)

...*those in Military Service, specifically...* **Tyler Hopkins, Kent Hutchinson**

...*those who are requesting prayer specifically or have been on the prayer chain recently...* **Libby Hartwell**, the sister of **Timbo Hartwell**

For these and all God's Children we pray...

2018 CHRISTMAS OFFERING

To be received Sunday, December 16

To be distributed equally among:

- Brethren Disaster Ministries
- Harrisonburg Rockingham Free Clinic

Name(s) _____

Amount \$ _____ Check # _____ Envelope # _____

TREE LIGHTS OF LOVE

Suggested Donation: \$5.00 per light



Name(s) _____

In Memory Of _____

In Honor Of _____

Amount \$ _____ Check # _____ Envelope # _____

