

Its leaves shall stay green

Barbara Brown Taylor wrote, "The gospel is terrible news before it is good news." Our scripture from Jeremiah is a microcosm of that observation, as is the book of Jeremiah as a whole.

This is especially true for the unrighteous, as Jeremiah points out that such people are cursed, that they "shall not see when relief comes" and that they "shall live in the parched places of the wilderness." The good news is that "Blessed are those who trust in the Lord, whose trust is the Lord." Then we read, "They shall be like a tree planted by water, sending out its roots by the stream. It shall not fear when heat comes; and *its leaves shall stay green*. In the year of drought, it is not anxious, and it does not cease to bear fruit."

The Old Testament is full of terrible news followed by good news!

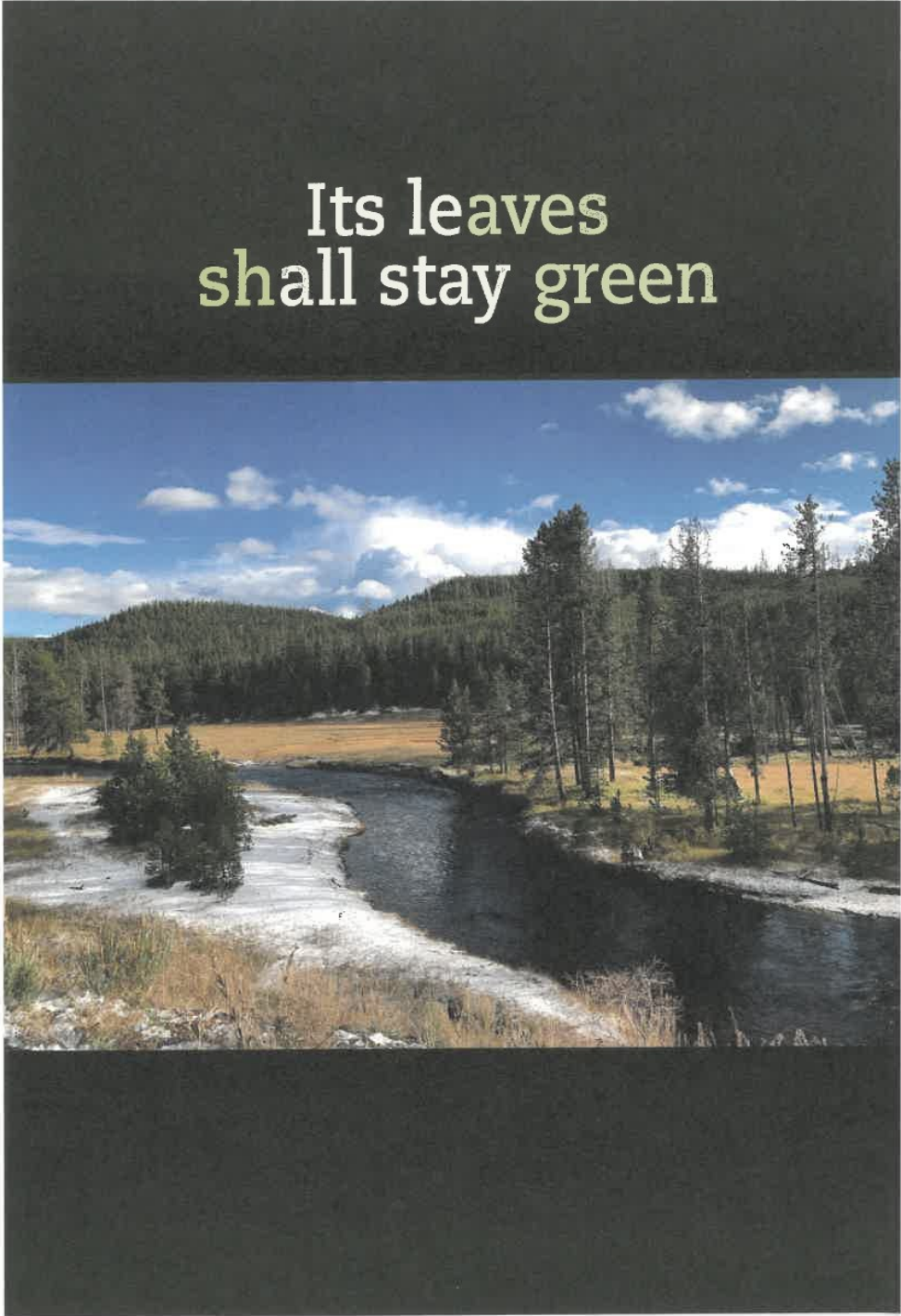
And then came the angel who proclaimed the "good news of great joy that will be for all the people." The good news was Jesus. Jesus himself brought good news to all people. He also said, "I am the vine, you are the branches. If you remain in me, and I in you, you will bear much fruit."

If we, the branches, stay attached to the vine that is Jesus, our leaves will stay green, too!

— Ken George
Ridgely, Maryland

"They shall be like a tree planted by water, sending out its roots by the stream. It shall not fear when heat comes, and *its leaves shall stay green*; in the year of drought it is not anxious, and it does not cease to bear fruit" (Jeremiah 17:8, *NRSVue*). **Today's Bible readings from the lectionary:** Jeremiah 17:5-10; Psalm 1; 1 Corinthians 15:12-20; Luke 6:17-26.

February 16, 2025. Photo © Karen Hodges. Used by permission.
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Its leaves
shall stay green

CHURCH OF THE BRETHREN
Hagerstown, Maryland

MORNING WORSHIP

10:45 AM

February 16, 2025
Matthew 5:1-11

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

WHERE DID YOU SEE GOD?

PRELUDE “Celebration Fanfare” (Mallory)
Brethren Bells

***CALL TO WORSHIP** Amy Clipp, Worship Leader

One: Jesus taught: Blessed are the poor in spirit. He said that the realm of God is theirs.

All: We read that those who mourn are blessed. Jesus said they will be comforted.

One: The meek will inherit the earth. The merciful will obtain mercy.

All: All who hunger and thirst for rich treasures are blessed; Jesus said they will be filled.

One: Blessed are the pure in heart and the peacemakers; they are God’s children and will see God

All: Those who are persecuted and falsely accused are blessed. Even in the face of evil, we will rejoice.

***GATHERING HYMN #43** “Christ is our cornerstone”

[Verse 1]

Christ is our cornerstone, on him alone we build. With his true saints alone the courts of heav’n are filled. On his great love our hopes we place of present grace and joys above.

[Verse 2]

Oh, then with hymns of praise these hallow’d courts shall ring. Our voices we will raise, the Three in One to sing, and thus proclaim in joyful song both loud and long that glorious name.

[Verse 3]

Here, gracious God, do thou for evermore draw nigh. Accept each faithful prayer, and mark each suppliant sigh. In copious shower on all who pray each holy day thy blessings pour!

[Verse 4]

Here may we gain from heav’n the grace which we implore, and may that grace, once giv’n, be with us evermore, until that day when all the bless’d to endless rest are called away!

***OPENING PRAYER**

Let the mountains hear our voices raised in prayer and praise, wise and holy God. We gather in this sacred place to honor and adore you. We come humbly, claiming the cross of Jesus Christ as our sign. We give thanks that you lift up the weak and lowly, defy the world’s foolishness, and invite us to share in life at its fullest and best as disciples of Jesus. We want to accept your invitation. Amen.

A MOMENT TO BECOME LIKE CHILDREN

SERVICE OF GIVING

Call to Giving

God is neither pleased with burnt offerings nor impressed by the size of our gifts. God wants our full commitment and devotion, of which our giving in these moments is only a symbol. God calls us to lives of mercy and peacemaking, for which our offering can make a beginning.

As we pass the offering plate here in the sanctuary, we also pass a virtual offering plate to those worshiping with us on Facebook Live. We invite you to give by mailing your offering to the church or dropping it off at the church during the week, or by going to the Hagerstowncob webpage and using Paypal.

Offertory “In His Love” (Ressman)

***Doxology #119** “Praise God from whom”

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

We devote ourselves and these tokens of our thankfulness toward the realization of your reign among us, holy God. We pray for purity of heart as we hunger and thirst for righteousness and as we seek to be peacemakers. We rejoice in this opportunity to share in the extension of your realm. Bless us and our offering, we pray, in Jesus’ name. Amen.

MORNING ANTHEM “The Gift of Love” (Hopson)
Temple Choir



Hagerstown
Church of the Brethren
15 S. Mulberry Street,
Hagerstown, Maryland
21740
301-733-3565

Office: Tuesday—Friday
Flexible hours
(appointments welcome/
call ahead)

Morning Praise Worship
at 8:30 AM
Sunday School at 9:30 AM
Worship and Facebook Live at
10:45 AM

www.hagerstowncob.org

[www.facebook.com/
hagerstowncob](http://www.facebook.com/hagerstowncob)

Twyla Rowe
Pastor

Allyson McPeak
Administrative Assistant

Burton Young
Director of
Music Ministries

Don Rowe
Interior Esthetics
Technician

*We welcome you to our church and
Rejoice in your participation with us in
worship. It is our prayer that you will
experience the presence of God's Spirit and
that it will equip you for service and ministry
in the week ahead. Our Pastor, Deacons, and
Cluster Leaders are available after worship
and during the week to listen and assist you in
your Christian pilgrimage.*

THE ANNOUNCER February 16, 2025

If you placed someone on the prayer list and they are now celebrating a recovery and would like their name taken off the list, please contact the church office.

If you or a loved one has surgery scheduled, is hospitalized, or would like a visit from the pastor, please notify the church.

"Take a Moment" Let this be our daily "Take a Moment" prayer beginning on Sunday, February 16 - Loving God, You hold in your loving arms all who are weary, poor, and hungry; as well as those who are healthy, rich and happy. You weep with the down-trodden and call your church to reach out to them with help to meet their needs and offer hope. You know that even there are those with the best of circumstances who have afflictions of the spirit that need your help...and you hold them too. You are a God for all people. Your church, likewise, needs to be the church for all people. I pray for the church...your body...that she will be alert and sensitive to the physical and spiritual needs of people, both in the community and within the church family; and respond with love and care to provide opportunities for help and healing. I offer myself as an instrument of your presence in service to all whom you bring into my days that need me to do something to help them. Thank you, Compassionate God, for your love, healing and guidance, which you offer to all people...including me. Amen.

Our thanks to Amy Clipp for being our worship leader today and to the Temple Choir and Brethren Bells for our morning music. A special thanks to Pastor Doug Veal for being with us while Pastor Twyla is away.

Pastor Twyla will be away on vacation February 9th through February 21st. If you are in need of regular pastoral care, please contact your Deacon. Pastor Eddie Edmonds will be on call for emergencies. His information can be found in the church directory.

Attendance. Please sign the attendance rosters found at the end of your pew, or possibly in the hymnal rack, and pass it down the row so everyone can sign.

The flowers on the altar this morning are given to the Glory of God and in memory of Bertha Lindsay by Sharon and Ralph Stottlemeyer.

Today our Bread & Soup luncheon will be held in the Fellowship Hall after the late service worship, to celebrate Valentines Day and the love for our congregation.

The Lenten devotional, "Take Up Your Cross" by Tim Harvey is available this morning. Copies can be found on the credenza in the west entrance of the sanctuary and in the fellowship hall. The devotional is provided by the Worship Ministry Team. If you're a Cluster Leader, please make sure everyone in your cluster gets a devotional.

It's time to order Easter flowers! Everyone is invited to purchase a flower for Easter morning and may be purchased as a memorial, tribute or as a thank you. All orders must be received by March 16th. Please see the order form in the bulletin.

Wowzers!! FIFTY-TWO of you families at HCOB bought patron ads through Arn in this year's Disaster Response Auction booklet!! That means that your names will be IN the booklet when it comes out late next month, to promote our CoB district's biggest fundraiser -- our auction sale day Saturday, May 3. And, what's even more wonderful is that altogether, you donated \$1,405 for this cause of buying tools, and trailers to haul equipment and provide showers for Brethren volunteers, like our own Daryl Long, to help other Americans rebuild their homes after tornados, wildfires and other disasters!!! ...And, THANK YOU, too, for continuing to donate to the cause by buying Daryl's homemade chocolate pretzel creations!! Yep, so far, you all have given \$290 for Daryl's sweet little side hustle for disaster response!!! -Submitted by Arn Platou

Our service week at the REACH Cold Weather Shelter is March 9-15, 2025. We need to cover all roles Sunday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday that week. All meals are covered! Hallelujah! We still need volunteers for other roles (Servers, Search, Laundry, Hospitality). Any help would be appreciated! Starting February 16, and through March 9, we will be collecting donations of items for REACH. The REACH needs list can be found in the February Tidings, on the credenza in the sanctuary wing, and in the Fellowship Hall. Donations will be taken to REACH during our week at the shelter. Any donations will be greatly appreciated! Please contact Sandy Clipp at 240-291-8753 if interested in serving at REACH or if you have any questions.

The Christian Education Ministry Team is looking for a Director or Co-Directors for this year's Vacation Bible School, tentatively scheduled for the week of June 23rd. The candidate need not have prior experience, just a love for children and a desire to help them learn about and experience God's love. As Director (or Co-Directors), you will be surrounded by a "village" of volunteers who will work alongside you to support you and help make VBS a fun and memorable experience. If you are interested, please reach out to any CE member: Deb Long, Tina Mills, Tracie Poteet, Kay Ogilvie, or Brenda Shane. Thank you for your prayerful consideration.

HCOB T-shirts, sweatshirts, hoodies, tote bags and hats are now on sale. The Service & Outreach Team are taking orders through February 26th. The colors offered for shirts, sweatshirts, & hoodies are gray, royal blue and orange. Pricing starts at \$20.00. The tote bags (14x13x6.5) come in all black, black & gray, and black & blue. The cost for the tote bags is \$25.00. Two types of adjustable hats are also for sale. The cost for the hats is \$18.00. A sign-up sheet has been placed in the west entrance and fellowship hall. Please contact Suzie Wolfe if you have any questions.



The Property & Finance Ministry Team has been researching a new database software for the church. With approval from the Leadership Team, they have chosen Breeze and will be implementing this new software in the coming weeks. Breeze includes a more efficient payment processor for giving your offering online and the fees are cheaper than PayPal. We will discontinue use of PayPal once Breeze is available. The manner in which you give through our website will stay the same, the processor will be Breeze instead of PayPal. We will keep you updated as we get closer to the roll-out of Breeze. If you have any questions, contact Chris Stockslager.

A young family is in need of a full size mattress and box spring, full size bed frame and a crib. If you are able to help or know someone who can, please see Arn Platou or Suzie Wolfe for more information.

GriefShare Just a reminder that our spring session of GriefShare begins on Monday, Feb. 17, and will continue through May 12, from 6:30 – 8:30 in the Mullendore Room. You may join at any time during the 13 weeks, but we ask that you commit to attending at least 3 consecutive weeks. Cost is free, but we gladly will accept a \$10 donation toward materials.

The grief journey after losing a loved one is very painful, difficult, and lonely. Since everyone grieves differently, there is no magic endpoint to the grieving process. Fortunately, HCOB offers GriefShare, an international, faith-based 13-week seminar offering support after the death of a loved one, no matter how recent. The GriefShare ministry provides a safe, welcoming space where people understand the heavy emotions of grief. As a participant, you will receive valuable tools to help you navigate your personal path, as well as gain support from others also on their grief journeys. If you or someone you know has lost a loved one, please share this information with them and consider attending. We encourage you to bring a family member or friend so they can better understand your loss and become a greater support for you.

Register at www.griefshare.org. If you have any questions about the program, see Pastor Twyla or Debbie Nycum.

CALENDAR

Sunday, February 16

Pastor Vacation/Doug Veal Guest Preacher
 8:30 am Morning Praise Worship/Fellowship Hall
 9:30 am Sunday School, individual classrooms
 10:45 am Worship, Sanctuary & Facebook Live
 12:00 pm Bread & Soup Sunday/Fellowship Hall

Monday, February 17

Pastor Vacation/Church office closed/Presidents' Day
 6:30 pm GriefShare/Mullendore Room

Tuesday, February 18

Pastor Vacation
 12:00 pm Mary Martha Group/Mullendore Room
 5:30 pm Service & Outreach Meeting/Mullendore Room
 7:00 pm Hag. Choral Arts/Fellowship Hall & Sanctuary

Wednesday, February 19

Pastor Vacation/Administrative Assistant/Work from home
 12:00 pm Deadline for bulletin announcement submissions
 12:30 pm Hag. Choral Arts Women's Ensemble/Fellowship Hall

Thursday, February 20

Pastor Vacation
 5:30 pm Praise Band Rehearsal/Fellowship Hall
 6:30 pm Brethren Bells/Choir Room
 7:30 pm Temple Choir/Fellowship Hall

Friday, February 21

Pastor Vacation
 8:00 am Bulletin preparation time/Church office
 1:00 pm Islamic Center/Use of Parking Lot (1-3pm)

Saturday, February 22

Pastor Twyla's day off

Sunday, February 23

Junior Church
 8:30 am Morning Praise Worship/Fellowship Hall
 9:30 am Sunday School, individual classrooms
 10:45 am Worship, Sanctuary & Facebook Live
 12:00 pm Nominating Committee Meeting/Mullendore Room

Remember our weekday schedule is subject to rapid change.

You may mail your offering to
 15 S. Mulberry Street,
 Hagerstown MD 21740
 OR
 you can make a secure offering
 donation on our website using
 Breeze at www.hagerstowncob.org

The church calendar is online at
www.hagerstowncob.org
 Click the calendar tab.

The Novel Bunch presents...

Looking for Salvation at the Dairy Queen

by Susan Gregg Gilmore

Sometimes you have to return to the place where you began to arrive at the place where you belong.

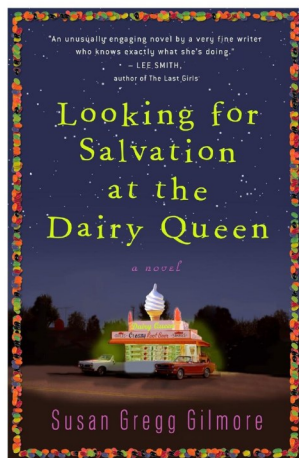
This novel focuses on a young girl's attempt to escape the confines of her hometown and find her place in the world. In the early 1970s, the town of Ringgold, Georgia, has a population of 1,923, one traffic light, one Dairy Queen, and one Catherine Grace Cline. The quick-witted, extremely stubborn daughter of Ringgold's third-generation Baptist preacher, Catherine Grace feels trapped in her small-town life and longs for more.

Every Saturday afternoon, she sits at the Dairy Queen, eating Dilly Bars and plotting her getaway to Atlanta, where she feels her life will be transformed and she will find happiness. When the dream becomes a reality with the help of a family friend, Catherine Grace immediately packs her bags and leaves behind her family and the boy she loves to claim the life she's always imagined. But before things even begin to get off the ground in Atlanta, tragedy brings Catherine Grace back home. As a series of extraordinary events unravel to alter her perspective and bring sweeping changes to Ringgold, Catherine Grace begins to wonder if her place in the world may actually be, against all odds, right where she began. The major theme of this novel is forgiveness, which causes the reader to ponder...how do we really forgive?

"Readers of Southern stories will enjoy the poignant self-discovery journey of this lovable heroine."—Tampa Tribune

Date: Saturday, May 17
Time: 10 a.m. - 12 p.m.
Place: Fellowship Hall

Light refreshments to follow.



NOTE: If you have any questions or need assistance acquiring the book, call Jenny Ferguson at 301-964-1779. Please return the section below if you plan to attend.

NAME _____ I plan to attend _____ YES

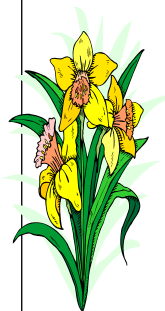
Preferred contact information: Phone _____ OR Email _____

Book Club Team: *Jenny Ferguson, Kristal Bricker, Debbie Nycum, Kay Ogilvie, Jan Young

Easter Flowers Order Form

Your name: _____

Amount enclosed _____



The Easter season is approaching and it is time to order Easter flowers. Everyone is invited to purchase a flower for Easter morning. Flowers are as priced below and may be purchased as a memorial, tribute, or as a thank you. Return this completed form and your check made out to Hagerstown Church of the Brethren. Form may be either placed in the offering or mailed to: Hagerstown Church of the Brethren, 15 S. Mulberry St., Hagerstown MD 21740.

All orders must be received by March 16. Payment must accompany this form. We need to order early so the greenhouse can place the order with its supplier and get our flowers here on time.

Lilies: White only [] Number of plants \$11.50/each

Mums: Yellow [] Number of plants \$10.00/each
Purple [] Number of plants \$10.00/each

Large Daffodils: [] Number of plants \$12.50/each

"Mini Gardens" [] Number of pots @ \$11.00/each
(Mini daffs and violas in the same planter)

(please print)

IN MEMORY OF: _____

IN TRIBUTE TO: _____

THANKS TO: _____