

Life in Christ

Part of my morning routine is to rise early enough to watch the sunrise. My goal is to be in my chair sipping a hot cup of tea before first light so I can soak in the beauty of the gradually brightening sky and reflect on the promise of a new day.

The chasing away of darkness with glorious light is a word-picture often used in scripture to describe what happens when the light of Christ, through the transforming gospel of salvation, shines into our lives. "For once you were darkness, but now in the Lord you are light. Walk as children of light" (Ephesians 5:8). Much like the sunrise, the light grows brighter as we realize even more what belief in Christ and yielding to his transformation means in our day-to-day life.

Paul continues his letter by explaining how we will grow and what we need to avoid that would stunt our growth: "for the fruit of the light is found in all that is good and right and true. Try to find out what is pleasing to the Lord" (Ephesians 5:9-10). What a blessing to know that Christ's light brings the gifts we need in order to be transformed, just as the light of the sun brings the gifts needed for a small plant to emerge from the dark richness of the soil. What a joy to see this happen in a life, once enveloped in the darkness of the world, now emerging into the light and warmth of life in Christ!

Yes, the darkness of the world is still our reality. We are called to take this light of Christ into that darkness to help reveal the destruction which deeds of darkness bring — and, most important, to share the truth of restoration and life that comes through the light of Christ. May each sunrise bring new opportunities to share the joy of Christ's light!

—Donita Keister
Mifflinburg, Pennsylvania

"[F]or once you were darkness, *but now in the Lord you are light*. Walk as children of light" (Ephesians 5:8, NRSVue). **Today's Bible readings from the lectionary:** 1 Samuel 16:1-13; Psalm 23; Ephesians 5:8-14; John 9:1-41.

March 15, 2026, Fourth Sunday of Lent. Photo © Wendy McFadden. Used by permission.
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BUT NOW IN THE LORD
YOU ARE *light*

CHURCH OF THE BRETHREN
Hagerstown, Maryland

MORNING WORSHIP

10:45 AM

March 15, 2026

Fourth Sunday in Lent

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

WHERE HAVE YOU SEEN GOD?

PRELUDE "The Light of the World Is Jesus" (Miles)

***CALL TO WORSHIP** Robin Davies, Worship Leader

One: When the world is dark and full of hate and fear, when we cannot see God

All: we will turn on the light.

One: When we cannot find our way back to love and peace

All: we will turn on the light.

One: When our vision dims due to the darkness within

All: we will turn on the light.

One: Christ opens our eyes with the gift of sight.

All: The light of the world is Jesus Christ.

One: Come and worship the one who brings sight to the blind.

All: Hallelujah! Praise God, the light of the world!

***HYMN #37** "Praise to the Lord, the almighty"

[Verse 1]

Praise to the Lord, the Almighty, the King of creation!

O my soul, praise him, for he is thy health and salvation!

All ye who hear, now to God's temple draw near. Join me in glad adoration.

[Verse 2]

Praise to the Lord, who o'er all things so wondrously reigneth, shelters thee under his wings, yea, so gently sustaineth. Hast thou not seen how thy heart's wishes have been granted in what he ordaineth?

[Verse 3]

Praise to the Lord, who doth prosper thy work and defend thee.

Surely his goodness and mercy shall daily attend thee.

Ponder anew what the Almighty can do, as with his love he befriends thee.

[Verse 4]

Praise to the Lord, oh, let all that is in me adore him!

All that hath life and breath, come now with praises before him!

Let the "amen" sound from God's people again; gladly forever adore him.

***OPENING PRAYER**

Gracious God, who created us in God's own image, we are grateful for all that you have done for us, for all that you are doing in us, and for all that you will do through us. Open our eyes to see your presence among us, moving in powerful ways at all times and in all places. Open our ears to hear familiar words in new ways—ways that will change us and challenge us to become the people you created us to be. Grant us the power and the courage to come out of the darkness and into the light of Jesus Christ, that we may serve you by serving others. We love you with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength. Amen.

A MOMENT TO BECOME LIKE CHILDREN

SERVICE OF GIVING

Call to Giving

God has given us all that is good and right and true. What a joy to share these gifts with one another in the life of this community and far beyond our own reach. In this offering, we return to God with eager response to all we have received.

As we pass the offering plate here in the sanctuary, we also pass a virtual offering plate to those worshiping with us on YouTube 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 website.

Offertory "A Closer Walk" (Jordan)

***Doxology #119** "Praise God from whom"

***PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING**

Loving God, as you illuminate our lives with fascinating insights and possibilities, we reach out to share your love through our tithes and offerings and our investment of time and energy in tasks to which you call us. All this we offer now for your blessing, for apart from you, the light goes out of our lives and we slip into meaningless existence. Let us, rather, dwell with you and serve you wherever we go. Amen.

SHARING OUR JOYS, CONCERNS, AND HOPES

Please remember our worship is also on YouTube and our website.

Please do not share any personal information you do not want to be made public.

An usher will hold the microphone for you while you share.

MORNING ANTHEM “My Shepherd Will Supply My Need” (Rasley)
Temple Choir

RESPONSIVE PRAYER OF CONFESSION

One: The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want.

All: *But, O Lord, we are consumed with wanting more.*

One: He makes me lie down in green pastures;
he leads me beside still waters; he restores my soul.

All: *But, O Lord, other pastures seem greener. The waters aren't always still. Our souls still thirst.*

One: He leads me in right paths for his name's sake.

All: *O Lord, we long to be led by you, though we may complain along the path.*

One: Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I fear no evil; for you are with me; your rod and your staff—they comfort me.

All: *And yet, O God, we do sometimes fear. May we feel your presence, your comfort and your forgiveness anew.*

One: You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies;
you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.

All: *O God, sometimes we refuse to sit down at your table. Forgive us and help us to see your overflowing mercy.*

One: Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life,
and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord my whole life long.

All: *Forgive us, God, and lead us into your house.*

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

SPECIAL MUSIC “The Lord's My Shepherd” (Lamb)
Brethren Bells

SCRIPTURE READING Ephesians 5:8-14 NT 194

for once you were darkness, but now in the Lord you are light. Walk as children of light, for the fruit of the light is found in all that is good and right and true. Try to find out what is pleasing to the Lord. Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness; rather, expose them. For it is shameful even to mention what such people do secretly, but everything exposed by the light be-

comes visible, for everything that becomes visible is light. Therefore it says, “Sleeper, awake! Rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you.”

MESSAGE “Don't Waste Your Life on the Darkness”
Pastor Twyla Rowe

***HYMN #599** “He Leadeth Me”
[Verse 1]

*He leadeth me, oh blessed thought! Oh, words with heav'nly comfort fraught!
What e'er I do, where'er I be, still 'tis God's hand that leadeth me.*

[Refrain]

*He leadeth me, he leadeth me, by his own hand he leadeth me. His faithful
foll'wer I would be, for by his hand he leadeth me.*

[Verse 2]

*Sometimes 'mid scenes of deepest gloom, sometimes where Eden's bowers bloom,
by waters calm, o'er troubled sea, still 'tis his hand that leadeth me.*

[Refrain]

*He leadeth me, he leadeth me, by his own hand he leadeth me. His faithful
foll'wer I would be, for by his hand he leadeth me.*

[Verse 3]

*Lord, I would clasp thy hand in mine, nor ever murmur nor repine; content,
whatever lot I see, since 'tis my God that leadeth me.*

[Refrain]

*He leadeth me, he leadeth me, by his own hand he leadeth me. His faithful
foll'wer I would be, for by his hand he leadeth me.*

[Verse 4]

*And when my task on earth is done, when by thy grace, the vict'ry's won, e'en
death's cold wave I will not flee, since God through Jordan leadeth me.*

[Refrain]

*He leadeth me, he leadeth me, by his own hand he leadeth me. His faithful
foll'wer I would be, for by his hand he leadeth me.*

*BENEDICTION

After the Benediction, you may be seated.

Please continue in a spirit of worship as we listen to the Postlude music.

POSTLUDE “An Irish Melody” (Chmura)

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\*Please rise — in body or spirit — as an act of worship  
Thank you for joining us in worship today.

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Fourth Sunday in Lent

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 YouTube Live at
10:45 AM

www.hagerstowncob.org

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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 March 15, 2026

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 "Take a Moment" prayer this week beginning with Sunday, March 15 - Wonderful God...so many days I find myself just moving from one thing to the next without any thought about what I am doing and why I am doing it. I also realize that many times I give little thought to what I say to others I meet throughout the course of a day. That is at least, until something difficult comes along and stops me in my tracks. Then sometimes...depending on what it is...I get stuck in the mire and muck of negativity or pain. It can be like walking through the deepest, darkest valley. I don't want to be in...nor am I planning to be in that kind of a space today, but should I find myself there...stretch out your hand to me so that I may grasp it, and walk with you through it and out of that dark valley...and into the light of your presence where I know I will find peace and joy. With the faith you've given me, I'm ready now, to face the day...knowing you are by my side. Amen.

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.

Our thanks to Robin Davies for being our worship leader today and to the Temple Choir & Brethren Bells for our morning music.

The flowers on the altar this morning are given to the Glory of God and in loving memory of my husband, Charles Gehr, in remembrance of our 79th wedding anniversary, given by Nancy.

The flowers on the pedestal are celebrating the 100th birthday of Mary Ellen Beachley from her family.

- Lenten Services will be held on March 18 & 25
Our guest speakers are as follows:
- March 18—Brenda Shane & Becky Jackson
Special Music—Ed Plank
- March 25—Dennis Browne—Special Music—Wendy Browne

Cookies are also needed for our Lenten services. Sign-up sheets can be found in the west entrance or fellowship hall.

Thank you to everyone who volunteered at or gave donations for our week of service at the REACH Cold Weather Shelter. Each night, we served approximately 50 guests and they expressed their gratitude to us regularly. We collected 2 full carts of needed supplies! Your efforts were greatly appreciated!

Easter Egg Hunt! Sunday, March 29th at 2:00 PM at the Linden Hall Farm. If your child or grandchild will be attending, please let one of the team members from Christian Ed know. CE Team: Tina Mills (chair), Debbie Long, Brenda Shane, Kay Ogilvie & Tracie Potteet.

Vacation Bible School will be held June 15th through the 19th. The theme this year will be Tropical Trek. Sign-up sheets can be found on the credenza in the wing of the sanctuary and in the fellowship hall. Please fill out and give to any CE Team member, place in the offering, or put in Tina Mills mailbox. The first meeting is Tuesday, April 7th in the fellowship hall. CE Team: Tina Mills (chair), Debbie Long, Brenda Shane, Kay Ogilvie, & Tracie Potteet

NOTICE—Starting in 2026 Contribution Statements will now be emailed. If you do not have an email on file with the church office, your statement will be mailed or placed in your church mailbox. By doing this, it will help us save money in postage and will be a more convenient way for you to have access to your statements. If you do not have an email on file with the church office and wish to receive your statement via email, please contact Allyson (secretaryhcob@gmail.com or 301-733-3565) and she will add your email to the list.

Birthday Celebration! Mary Ellen Beachley is turning 100 on March 18th. To celebrate, the family is having an informal open house for people to stop by and say hello. It will be Sunday, March 15th, 2-4 PM at her house. The address is 1345 The Terrace.

The Service & Outreach Team will be collecting the large tissue boxes (9"x4 1/2"x3") for the residents of Fahrney Keedy. We ask that you wrap the tissue boxes in spring colors (no bows or ribbons needed). We ask that the boxes be placed in the designated box in the west entrance by March 22nd.

Love Feast and Good Friday—You are invited to attend the following worship events as a time for personal reflection:

- ◆ April 2nd (Maundy Thursday) at 7:00 PM – Love feast and Communion in the Fellowship Hall.
- ◆ April 3rd at 7:00 PM in the sanctuary- Good Friday service.
- ◆ Both Love Feast and Good Friday Services will be on YouTube.

The Mid-Atlantic District Disaster Response Auction will be held this year on Saturday, May 2, 2026 at the Carroll County Ag. Center in Westminster, MD and will start at 9:00 am. The Response Dinner will be held Saturday, April 11, 2026 at 6:00 pm at Bush Creek Church of the Brethren.

Volunteers Needed—The Flower and Altar committee is looking for a volunteer for the month of **January and October**. If you're interested, please contact Cinnamon Shay.

Cash for Causes/Martin's Gift Card Program. Purchase Martin's gift cards to take to the store to pay for your groceries or gas, and 5% of the face value of the gift card is a donation to the church and goes toward your yearly charitable contribution. To purchase a card, please contact Donnie Maas (240-866-1077). We can make arrangements to leave cards in your church mailbox or mail them to you.

Church mailboxes. Everyone is welcome to use the mailboxes. If you would like to be added or taken off the list, please contact Mary Means. If you have a mailbox, we ask that you be willing to monitor it. Any mail that is left in the mailboxes after a three-month period will be disposed of. The mailboxes are located in the hallway of the church office.

Offering envelopes are located in the pew racks and at other convenient locations around the church. To assist our financial secretary, we ask that you use an envelope and please put your name and envelope number on the outside. Here's a tip - take a few envelopes home and stick one of those return address labels we all get on the outside. Then all you need to add is your number. Having your name and number on the outside of the envelope is a huge help to our offering counters. Thank you!

Deadline for bulletins and newsletters. Announcements for the weekly bulletin need to be given to the administrative assistant before noon on Wednesday. Announcements for the monthly newsletters need to be given to the administrative assistant before the 15th of each month. Let's help her out by meeting deadlines, and also by not asking for special exceptions. Announcements should continue to be emailed to secretaryhcob@gmail.com. Thank you!

CALENDAR

Sunday, March 15

8:30 am Morning Praise Worship/Fellowship Hall
9:30 am Sunday School, individual classrooms
10:45 am Worship, Sanctuary & YouTube (www.youtube.com/@hagerstowncob)
12:00 pm Newsletter Deadline

Monday, March 16

Church office closed
1:00 pm GriefShare/Mullendore Room
6:30 pm Deacon Meeting/Mullendore Room

Tuesday, March 17

St. Patrick's Day
12:00 pm Mary Martha Group/Room 208
5:30 pm Service&Outreach Meeting/Mullendore Room
6:30 pm CE Meeting/Room 302

Wednesday, March 18

Admin. Assistant/Work from home
12:00 pm Deadline for bulletin announcement submissions
7:00 pm Lenten Service/Fellowship Hall
Guest Speakers_Brenda Shane & Becky Jackson

Thursday, March 19

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

Friday, March 20

8:00 am Bulletin prep/Church office
1:00 pm Islamic Center/Use of Parking Lot (1-3PM)

Saturday, March 21

Pastor Twyla's day off

Sunday, March 22

Junior Church
8:30 am Morning Praise Worship/Fellowship Hall
9:30 am Sunday School, individual classrooms
10:45 am Worship, Sanctuary & YouTube (www.youtube.com/@hagerstowncob)

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 www.hagerstowncob.org

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

Remember our weekday schedule is subject to rapid change.



We grieve many things in life, but the loss of a loved one is probably the most devastating. As a result, the grief journey is a painful and lonely one. GriefShare is an international faith-based ministry that provides valuable tools to anyone who has lost a spouse, parent, child, sibling or other family member or friend, even if that loss is not recent. Our HCOB team offers a safe, welcoming space where people understand the heavy emotions of grief and where participants can find support in the company of others also on their grief journeys. If you or someone you know has lost a loved one, please share this information and consider attending. We encourage you to bring a family member or friend so they can better understand your loss and become an even greater support for you.

Our spring session of GriefShare began on Monday, Feb. 16, and will continue each Monday afternoon through May 11, from 1:00 – 3:00 p.m. in the Mullendore Room. Cost of the session is free, but we gladly will accept a \$10 donation toward materials. You may join the group at any time during the 13 weeks, but we ask that you commit to attending at least 3 consecutive weeks. GriefShare recommends repeating the 13-week course a second time to absorb even more of the content, so if you have participated in GriefShare before and wish to attend again, we welcome you.

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

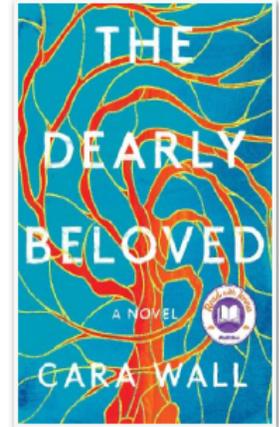
The Novel Bunch presents...

The Dearly Beloved

by Cara Wall

"This gentle, gorgeously written book may be one of my favorites ever."
—Jenna Bush Hager (A Today Show "Read with Jenna" Book Club Selection)

"The best book about faith in recent memory."
—Entertainment Weekly



This book is a character study about friendship, family, and faith. Charles and Lily & James and Nan meet in Greenwich Village in 1963 when Charles and James are jointly hired to manage the historic Third Presbyterian Church through turbulent times. However, their personal differences threaten to tear them apart. Charles is destined to follow his father as an esteemed history professor at Harvard until an unorthodox lecture about faith leads him to ministry. So, how can he fall in love with intellectual Lily after she tells him that she never will believe in God? And yet, how can he not believe?

James, the youngest son in a hardscrabble Chicago family, spent much of his youth angry at his alcoholic father and avoiding his nervous mother. James's escape from his desperate circumstances leads him to Nan, the devout and beloved daughter of a Mississippi minister and debutante. Despite James's guarded optimism, Nan's gentle, constant faith changes the course of his life. *The Dearly Beloved* follows these two couples through decades of love, friendship, jealousy, forgiveness, and commitment. Against the backdrop of conflict and change facing the city and the church's congregation, these four forge improbable paths through their evolving relationships as each struggles with uncertainty, heartbreak, and joy. This book is a moving reflection on faith and reason, and the ways we find meaning in our lives.

Date: Saturday, April 25

Time: 10 a.m. - 12 p.m.

Place: Fellowship Hall

*This is a book for men and women alike, so we encourage the men of the congregation to attend and offer their perspectives.

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, Judy Williams, Jan Young

