

Come to life

As the national emblem of Scotland for over 700 years, the thistle epitomizes strength, pride, and resilience. In a popular legend, the Scots recall that, during a 13th century Norse invasion under the cover of darkness, a barefoot Norseman stepped on a thistle and cried out in pain which alerted the Scottish army who then repelled the invaders. Ever since, thistles inspire the Scottish sentiment, "You'll not want to meddle with me!" With their deep roots and bright purple flowers, thistles seem to taunt, "Dare to knock us down? We will rise again!"

The prophet Ezekiel envisions a collection of bones rising up from a dusty graveyard full of life and breath. Into the most discouraging days, the Spirit can breathe resurrection life. In fact, signs of the Spirit's life are all around us. Do we perceive and welcome them?

Call to worship

One: Holy Spirit, come with power, breathe into our aching night.

Many: Give us strength like a persistent thistle to resist all that prevents your liberating Spirit from making us come to life.

One: Holy Spirit, come with fire, burn us with your presence new.

Many: Give us open hearts to rejoice in welcoming the gifts and desires of those present outside our church doors. Together, may we come to life in you.

One: Holy Spirit, bring your message, burn and breathe each word anew.

Many: Fill us with love and trusting kindness and, your word within us, make us truly come to life!

—Nancy Sollenberger Heishman
Richmond, Virginia

"I will attach tendons to you and make flesh come upon you and cover you with skin; I will put breath in you, and you will *come to life*. Then you will know that I am the Lord." (Ezekiel 37:6, NIV). **Today's Bible readings from the lectionary:** Ezekiel 37:1-14; Psalm 130; Romans 8:6-11; John 11:1-45.

March 22, 2026, Fifth Sunday of Lent. Photo © Wendy McFadden. Used by permission.
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COME TO *life*

CHURCH OF THE BRETHREN
Hagerstown, Maryland

MORNING WORSHIP

10:45 AM

March 22, 2026
Fifth Sunday in Lent

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

WHERE HAVE YOU SEEN GOD?

PRELUDE "Awake, Thou Wintry Earth" (Smith)

***CALL TO WORSHIP** Brenda Shane, Worship Leader

One: God calls us from the valley of dry bones. Come, listen for a word from our God.

All: We hear God calling us in a far distant voice. We had nearly forgotten God's care for us.

One: The Spirit breathes life into our dry bones. God offers hope when we have lost our way.

All: Our souls wait for the refreshment God offers. Our spirits are filled with great expectation.

One: Christ came as a light to all the world. Christ comes among us today to light our way.

All: We hear the teacher calling for us. Christ unbinds us that we may see and believe.

***HYMN #28** "Breathe upon us, Holy Spirit"

[Verse 1]

*Breathe upon us, Holy Spirit, as adoringly we bow at these altars,
pure and sacred, paying thee our solemn vow.*

*All our feeble graces quicken with the streams of thy sweet grace,
and make glorious with thy presence this thy holy dwelling place.*

[Verse 2]

Thou art pure and thou art holy; Jesus, make us more like thee.

Thou art meek and thou art lowly; so may we thy children be.

Shed abroad thy love within us, fill our souls with light divine.

Holy Spirit, seal, anoint us, and our earthliness refine.

[Verse 3]

Now receive us, as repentant to thy heart of love we fly.

*Pardon all our sin and folly, lead us to they-self on high.
Oh, these hearts need thy refining, and the cleansing of thy blood!
Consecrate and make us holy, through redemption's crimson flood.*

[Verse 4]

*Here shall love, like a sacred incense, upward mount to thy great throne,
from cleansed heart and conscience of a people all thine own.
Humble are the gifts we bring thee, and upon thine altar lay,
yet be gracious to thy children as they worship thee today.*

***OPENING PRAYER**

God of steadfast love, bring new life to this community of your people. We are eager to hear your voice and be filled with your Spirit. Come from the four winds, O Breath, and bring vitality and purpose to our gathering that we might be energized and encouraged. Hear our voices, lifted in praise and crying out from our need. Be attentive to our supplications, lest we die apart from you. Only you can unbind us and set us free. Amen.

A MOMENT TO BECOME LIKE CHILDREN

SERVICE OF GIVING

Call to Giving

God invites us to view the valleys of dry bones that fill our world. Prophecy to these dry bones and say to them: O dry bones, hear the word of God. We here offer ourselves and our resources that the winds of God might blow through our world with life-giving energy.

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 "Nobody Knows the Trouble I've Seen" (Thygeron)

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

***PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING**

Lift us up, O God, from the graves of our self-interest as we invest ourselves in sharing the good news with the world. Increase our gifts of time and treasure, that all who are drained of hope might have their minds set on the Spirit. May the Spirit raise them to new life as we celebrate the resurrection Jesus promised to Lazarus and to all who trust and follow where God leads. 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.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Out of the depths we cry to you, O God. Hear our prayers, the confession of our neglect, the admission of our desire to rule in your place. Like the house of Israel in Ezekiel's time, we are cut off from communion with you. We are like dead people, going through the motions of living. We cry out for forgiveness and a new start. We long to know you and to live in reverence before you. By your steadfast love, redeem us from our iniquities and raise us up to serve you, In Jesus' name. Amen.

MOMENTS FOR QUIET REFLECTION

CALL TO PRAYER #349 *"Spirit of the Living God"*

Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me.

Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me.

Melt me, mold me, fill me, use me.

Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

MORNING ANTHEM "Just A Closer Walk/In the Garden" (Martin)
Temple Choir

SCRIPTURE READING Ezekiel 37:1-14 OT 806

The hand of the LORD came upon me, and he brought me out by the spirit of the LORD and set me down in the middle of a valley; it was full of bones. He led me all around them; there were very many lying in the valley, and they were very dry. He said to me, "Mortal, can these bones live?" I answered, "O Lord GOD, you know." Then he said to me, "Prophecy to these bones and say to them: O dry bones, hear the word of the LORD. Thus says the Lord GOD to these bones: I will cause breath to enter you, and you shall live. I will lay sinews on you and will cause flesh to come upon you and cover you with skin and put breath in you, and you shall live, and you shall know that I am the LORD."

So I prophesied as I had been commanded, and as I prophesied, suddenly there was a noise, a rattling, and the bones came together, bone to its bone. I

looked, and there were sinews on them, and flesh had come upon them, and skin had covered them, but there was no breath in them. Then he said to me, "Prophecy to the breath, prophesy, mortal, and say to the breath: Thus says the Lord GOD: Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live." I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived and stood on their feet, a vast multitude.

Then he said to me, "Mortal, these bones are the whole house of Israel. They say, 'Our bones are dried up, and our hope is lost; we are cut off completely.' Therefore prophesy and say to them: Thus says the Lord GOD: I am going to open your graves and bring you up from your graves, O my people, and I will bring you back to the land of Israel. And you shall know that I am the LORD when I open your graves and bring you up from your graves, O my people. I will put my spirit within you, and you shall live, and I will place you on your own soil; then you shall know that I, the LORD, have spoken and will act, says the LORD."

MESSAGE "God Can Put Us Together" Pastor Twyla Rowe

***HYMN #502** "Spirit of God! Descend"

[Verse 1]

Spirit of God! descend upon my heart. Wean it from earth, through all its pulses move. Stoop to my weakness, mighty as thou art, and make me love thee as I ought to love.

[Verse 2]

I ask no dream, no prophet ecstasies, no sudden rending of the veil of clay, no angel visitant, no op'ning skies, but take the dimness of my soul away.

[Verse 3]

Hast thou not bid us love thee, God and King? All, all thine own, soul, heart and strength and mind; I see thy cross, there teach my heart to cling. O let me seek thee, and, O let me find!

[Verse 4]

Teach me to feel that thou art always nigh. Teach me the struggles of the soul to bear, to check the rising doubt, the rebel sigh; teach me the patience of unanswered prayer.

[Verse 5]

Teach me to love thee as thine angels love, one holy passion filling all my frame; the baptism of the heav'n-descended dove, my heart an altar, and thy love the flame.

***BENEDICTION**

After the Benediction, you may be seated.

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

POSTLUDE

“Rise and Yet Arise!”

(Martin)

(Worship resources used from, “Taught by Love”, Year A, by Lavon Bayler.)

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

*Please rise — in body or spirit — as an act of worship

Thank you for joining us in worship today.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

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

[www.youtube.com/
@hagerstowncob](http://www.youtube.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 March 22, 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 daily "Take a Moment" prayer beginning on Sunday, March 22 - Holy Savior, my Lenten walk is bringing me closer to the foot of the cross. The walk brings with it moments of remembering exhilarating highs and devastating lows that were a part of your journey to save God's children...which includes me. I would rather avoid remembering the dark moments and jump right to Easter. But I know I cannot do that; for it is the sin of the world...my sin, too...that created the dark valley you had to walk through. Forgive me, Loving Savior. As I remember your pain and suffering, remind me also of the hope I can hold onto when I am faced with desert journeys. I am reminded that with you in my life, the deserts are not the end -all of life; the promise of resurrection and eternal life in your kingdom is. I praise you, my glorious Savior of my soul. 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 Brenda Shane for being our worship leader today and to the Temple Choir for our morning anthem.

The flowers on the altar this morning are given to the Glory of God and in loving memory of our Dad, Harold Hood, given by Scott and Judy Hood.

Junior Church will be held today for children ages Kindergarten through the sixth grade. **We will gather in the Children's Church Room (Room #203).** (Parents may, of course, opt to keep their child in worship with them especially if the child is uncertain about going.) Parents/grandparents should pick up their children afterward at the stair/elevator area outside the sanctuary in the west entrance. If you'd like to volunteer, please contact Tina Mills. **Junior Church is held the second and fourth Sunday of each month.**

Our last Lenten Service will be held this Wednesday, March 25th. Dennis Browne will be our guest speaker and Wendy Browne will be presenting special music.

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 today, March 22nd.



The Service & Outreach Team would like to thank Sandy Clipp for organizing and working during our REACH week. We would also like to thank all of our members and friends who helped with the many different tasks involved. We cannot tell you how much you are appreciated. Also, we thank those of you who donated essential items and money. This outreach is so important, and you show our homeless community how much you care about them.

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 Poteet.

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.

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 Poteet

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.

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!

Our services are streamed through YouTube! If you have not done so already, subscribe to HCOB's YouTube Channel and share it with others. You can do so by going to: www.youtube.com/@hagerstowncob

CALENDAR

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)

Monday, March 23

Church office closed

1:00 pm GriefShare/Mullendore Room

Wednesday, March 25

Admin. Assistant/Work from home

12:00 pm Deadline for bulletin announcement submissions

7:00 pm Lenten Service/Fellowship Hall

Thursday, March 26

5:30 pm Praise Band Rehearsal/Fellowship Hall

6:30 pm Brethren Bells/Choir Room

7:30 pm Temple Choir/Fellowship Hall

Friday, March 27

8:00 am Bulletin prep/Church office

1:00 pm Islamic Center/Use of Parking Lot (1-3PM)

Saturday, March 28

Pastor Twyla's day off

Sunday, March 29

Palm Sunday

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)

2:00 pm Easter Egg Hunt/Linden Hall Farm

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 www.hagerstowncob.org

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



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...

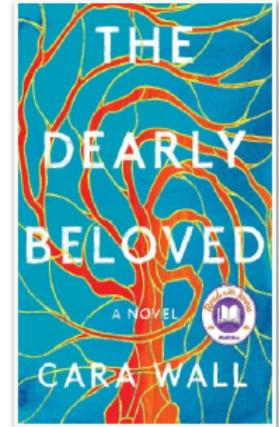
The Dearly Beloved

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

