

PASTOR'S ARTICLE (CONTINUED)

Merciful Love. Good moms and dads discipline their children by teaching right and wrong and by having consequences for wrongdoing and rewards for well-doing. But they must also show mercy! Good parents must also excel at showing grace! Otherwise, you will overwhelm and totally wear out your children; it will not end well. The merciful mom often withholds punishment. In love, she overlooks her little boy's offense and guilt and, therefore, she removes the penalty he deserves. She shows merciful love. Mercy holds back the judgment deserved; God's love through Jesus does just this, holding back divine judgment and setting our souls free forever from the guilt of our sin.

Gracious Love. A gracious father often blesses his daughter with a special gift even in the aftermath of her wrongdoing. Not only does he forgive, but he showers her with undeserved favor and kindness. He shows gracious love. Grace gives a gift that is clearly not deserved. God's love is not like a paycheck! It is a gift. Your paycheck is worked for and earned. When you receive a gift, you incur none of the cost while reaping all the reward. To win our salvation, Jesus incurred all the cost by dying on the cross to turn away the judgment of God, and we reap all the reward of receiving eternal life in Him. "In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him." ¹⁰ In this is love, not that we have loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins" (1 John 4:9-10, "propitiation" is a blood sacrifice that turns away wrath by satisfying divine justice; see Exodus 34:6-7).

Everlasting Love. When you receive God's love through faith in Jesus, you learn that His love is eternal and will never be taken from you. Those resting in the light of God's love learn what it means when God says, "I have loved you with an everlasting love; therefore I have continued my faithfulness to you" (Jer. 31:3b). God will not abandon you, betray you, turn you away, cheat on you, cast you out, curse you, beat you, berate you, and so on. His love is true and right. You cannot find this kind of love in the world. God's love is perfect; it is just what you need to heal and console you, to strengthen you for what lies ahead.

Unbreakable Love. Being latched to God's love, therefore, fills the heart with true and lasting hope in this life and assurance for the life to come.



Scan the QR code to read the rest of this article or visit timeintheword.weebly.com.

ONLINE GIVING

If you would prefer to give online, please scan the QR code for a secure online giving option.



NEED HELP?

Need help with a practical need? Your deacon is here to help make the resources of the church available to you. Email our secretary Jenn if you do not know who your deacon is (secretary@NorthHarford.org)

Brian Akers (Chairman) hcsbball@gmail.com

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Need a pastoral visit for prayer, comfort, or encouragement? Do you need Christian counselling or guidance? Do you have a theological question? Your pastors are here to help. Don't be afraid to text, call, or email us. We are here for you. Either contact us directly or schedule something through Jenn.

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CONTACT INFORMATION

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Scan the QR code or email Jenn at info@NorthHarford.org to sign up for weekly Bible Devotions from Pastor Matt.



Nursery Workers – October 5th

I AM (Crib) – Janie Steplowski and Bill Fornoff

II AM (Toddlers) – Alex Lewis and Phoebe Evans

PM– Combined I/II – Linda Mack and Marie Reid

Prayer Intercessor – October 5th– Tina Holmes

Greeters – October 5th — Suzanne Heiss and Deb Eiche

Ushers – October 5th — Gil Brown, Josiah Brown, Mark Evans*, Wesley Evans*, Mark Huna, John Steplowski

Today's Ushers — Malik Baker-Gore, Bob Burman, Frank Cicone*, Jim Feldbush, Gary McAllister, Tom Neunaber*

* ushers who greet in the lobby



**NORTH HARFORD
BAPTIST CHURCH**

To live for Jesus and not ourselves.

September 28, 2025

Prayer Meeting

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 5TH

6:30-7:15 PM

FELLOWSHIP HALL

READING THE BIBLE IN 2025

This week's readings are:

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| ☐ Matthew 25-28 | Job 39 (God) |
| ☐ Daniel 1-4 | Job 40 (God & Job) |
| ☐ Daniel 5-8 | Job 41 (God) |
| ☐ Daniel 9-12 | Job 42 |
| ☐ Catch-up day | |

WEEKLY SCHEDULE

Sunday	9:30 AM	Sunday School
	10:45 AM	Worship Service* (Church/Facebook)
	After Church	Christmas Choir Practice (downstairs)
	5:00PM	Deacon's meeting
	6:30 PM	Evening Worship* (Church/Facebook)
Tuesday	9:15 AM	Precept Ladies' Bible Study
Wednesday	9:30 AM	Men's Prayer Group
	7:00 PM	Adult Bible Study (Rm. 1)
		Boys Bible Club (1 st -6 th grade boys)
		Girls in Action (1 st -6 th grade girls)
		Youth on Mission (7 th —12 th graders)
Friday	6:00 PM	1st Friday Prayer Vigil for America
	6:00 PM	Youth Group leaves for Black Rock

* Nursery Provided (birth-3 years old), Downstairs in Rooms 8 and 9

MORNING WORSHIP

Call to Worship and Announcements (Pastor Matt)

To God be the Glory

Reading: 1 John 4:13-16 (Jeremiah)

O for a Thousand Tongues to Sing | Our Great Savior

Offering

SERMON: Religion Isn't Good
John 3:1-17 (Pew Bible Page 1399)

Jesus, Name Above All Names | Closing Prayer

EVENING WORSHIP

Welcome

Reading & Prayer: Proverbs 1:1-7, The Call to Wisdom

How Firm a Foundation

Reading & Prayer: Proverbs 9:1-6, The Feast of Wisdom

Trust and Obey

SERMON: Some Proverbs of Solomon
Proverbs 10 (Pew Bible Page 818)

Closing Prayer

***If you are able, please help set up tables and chairs for the Tuesday morning Ladies' Bible Study after the Evening Service. Thank You! ***

THE WAY OF SALVATION

The salvation of your soul is extremely important to us. We want you to experience the love and forgiveness of God through faith in Jesus. We don't ever want to give you the impression that all you need is religion and doing good deeds. "Jesus said to him, 'I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me'" (John 14:6).

1. **God** - Do you acknowledge God's authority, that He made the world, made you, and will bring everyone to judgment? (see Ecclesiastes 12:14)
2. **Sin** - Are you convicted of your sin and guilt before the eyes of God, grieved at your wrongdoing, and humbled by God? (see Psalm 51:1-4)
3. **Salvation in Christ** - Do you believe in the gospel of salvation in Christ? That is, do you grasp that He alone is Mediator? That He alone is righteous? That He alone died as a substitute for sinners? That He rose and is the only source of eternal life? (see 1 Corinthians 15:1-4)
4. **Saving Faith** - Do you trust Jesus to forgive your sins and save your soul by the grace of God, not because of your good deeds or religion? (see Ephesians 2:1-10)

VISITING WITH US?

We are glad to have you with us this morning, and we hope God speaks to your heart through the great and wonderful truths of the Bible. Please visit the **Guest Resources** desk in the lobby, where you will find a variety of free gifts for you, including a study Bible for adults and a study Bible for teens. Email us at info@NorthHarford.org if you have any questions or special prayer requests.

WHAT TO KNOW THIS WEEK

CHRISTMAS CHOIR - CALL FOR SINGERS

We need singers for our Christmas Concert on Sunday, December 7th, at 6:30 PM. Dave and Ruth Good will lead a time of congregational singing accompanied by a choir of youth, from 7th grade and up, and adults. The choir will also perform a few pieces. They practice in the Fellowship Hall for 30 minutes immediately following the worship service.

MEN'S PRAYER GROUP

Our men's prayer group meets in the Fellowship Hall from 9:30AM-10:00AM every FIRST and THIRD Wednesday. The next meeting is this Wednesday. Come when you can for encouragement and prayer. *This is a great opportunity for fellowship for retired men who don't work during the day.*

YOUTH RETREAT

The youth will be leaving for Black Rock Retreat Center in Quarryville, PA, on Friday, October 3rd at 6 PM and returning Sunday, October 5th at 3 PM. If you have registered, your money is due TODAY! Please pray for the youth and leaders to have a safe and effective weekend.

NEW MINISTRY: FIRST FRIDAY PRAYER VIGIL FOR AMERICA

Join us outside in front of the youth building (or inside if raining) from **6-7 PM every FIRST FRIDAY** of the month for a time of focused prayer for America. **October 3rd** is the first one. We will also sing praise songs and hear from God's Word. We will have light refreshments and practical tools to help us pray for our nation in our own time. Please block out these 12 hours for the whole year and join us in calling upon God for revival, reform, and spiritual awakening in Harford County and the whole nation. Prayer is a powerful spiritual weapon that I want to see our church and especially our leaders, embrace and trust more and more.

ON THE HORIZON

PRAYER MEETING

Next Sunday from 6:30-7:15 PM, we will have our monthly Prayer Meeting. We meet downstairs in the Fellowship Hall around tables. No one will be forced to pray. Nursery will be provided.

PASTOR'S ARTICLE

THE WONDER OF GOD'S LOVE

Longing for Love. Have you ever been in a relationship where nothing was ever good enough for the other person? Have you ever felt like you were always on trial, always having to prove yourself or earn someone's consideration? I am sorry for any such manipulations, mind-games, and power-play relationships you have had to encounter. But I want you to know that God's love is different. A relationship with God is based on His free and unending love that is always there for you and always has your best interest in mind. Doesn't that sound refreshing? Wouldn't that be liberation? To have someone who will love you no matter what? To enjoy the comfort and security of such love? It can be yours in God.

The Source of Love. Today I want to write about God's incredible love for us. God is the source of true love because "God is love" (1 John 4:16). With God, there is faithful companionship, care for our souls, and help in our daily struggles. Though we search high and low in this world for a sense of deep meaning, lasting purpose, and inner fulfillment, such things cannot be found in earthly things. They are found in God, and they come to us because of God's love. I invite you today to forsake the insane rat race for money, fame, pleasure, and entertainment, and drink from the soul-quenching fountain of God's love. God is "the fountain of life" (Ps. 36:9), and there is no admission charge to drink and be satisfied.

The Location of Love. Jesus is the way to God's love. To find God's love, therefore, you must seek Jesus. "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life" (John 3:16). Jesus is "His only Son." Based on Jesus' life, death, and resurrection (aka the good news of salvation), place your heart's trust in Jesus for the forgiveness of sins and the gift of eternal life. In doing so, you will enter a relationship with God that will never end, and all the resources of His incredible love will be yours to feast on. Please know that God's love is available to you as long as you have breath in your lungs; it is available in Jesus. Turn, therefore, and believe in Him.

The Nature of Love. God's love found in Jesus is merciful and gracious through and through. "For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly.⁷ For one will scarcely die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die—⁸ but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us" (Romans 5:6-8). The importance of mercy and grace cannot be overstated when it comes to God's love for us. But what exactly are mercy and grace?
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ON THE HORIZON (CONTINUED)

CHILDREN'S CHOIR FOR CHRISTMAS CONCERT

All children aged 3 through 6th grade are invited to participate in a children's choir! Practices will be on Sundays from 12:10-12:30 PM, in Room 1 immediately following worship, starting **October 5th** through December 1st. See Becky Fortunato or Kenzi Wilson with questions.

MEN'S MINISTRY'S WILD GAME FEAST

Bring what you caught, hooked, shot, or bought to be cooked on the grill or bring it already grilled to share—let's try it all! Saturday, October 11th at 4:30 PM at Brian Akers' home. The sign-up sheet is in the lobby.

GRIEF SHARE PROGRAM

We are hosting a 13-week GriefShare Program. This is a faith-based program designed to help those in the grieving process. The cost of the book is \$20. Scholarships are available. They will meet in the Youth Café on Wednesdays from 6:30 –8:30 PM beginning October 15th. Scan the QR code to register. If you have any questions, please contact Robyn Smith.



LADIES' BONFIRE

Ladies, save the date for our annual bonfire at Jeanne Akers' house! It will be on Friday, November 7th, at 7:15 PM, after the church's First Friday Prayer Vigil. Rain date is November 14th.

CHURCH NEWS

MUSIC LEADER POSITION

In the budget for 2026, there is a new position called music leader. The prayer is for a leader over this ministry with the proper spiritual gifts and leadership experience. Right now, the pastors schedule the rotation and choose the songs, but there is no further training, equipping, or practice. The desired music leader will not only do the scheduling but also will be able to (1) lead practices and work with the various teams and individuals for growth (2) implement other instruments and recruit other singers or accompanists, (3) work in conjunction with a choir to use during worship, and (4) have the time and ability to find new songs for the rotation and teach them to the teams and church. If you have any questions, contact Pastor Matt directly.

BCMD ANNUAL MEETING

We belong to the Baptist Convention of Maryland and Delaware, and the annual meeting is coming up on November 10-11 in Ocean City, MD. If you would like to be a messenger who represents our church at this meeting, please let us know at info@northharford.org.

CHRISTIAN LEADERSHIP IN THE DIFFERENT AREAS OF LIFE SEMINAR

Dr. Michael Erickson, a friend and colleague of Pastor Matt, is hosting a one-day seminar entitled *Christian Leadership in Ministry, Family, Workplace, & Life Settings: Fundamentals & Skills of Leadership in the Project Management of Life* on Saturday, October 11th, at Upper Cross Roads Baptist Church.

Visit <https://www.crossroadsbi.org/courses> for information and registration.