



1 W. Wyomissing Ave., Mohnton, PA 19540

March 3rd, 2024 – Mar. 9th, 2024

[www.calvaryumcmohnton.org](http://www.calvaryumcmohnton.org)

*Connect with God.  
Connect with each other.  
Connect with the community.*

### Scripture As a Spiritual Discipline

2/25/24 Sermon by Pastor Nova; Scripture: Psalm 1:1-3 (NIV)

Reading and meditating on Scripture is the foundation for Christian life. In the New Testament, when the apostles and Jesus talk about the scripture, (sacred writing), they are talking about the Jewish bible, the Old Testament. When Christians talk about scripture, we mean the Old and New Testament.

### Fun Facts about the Bible:

According to the *Guinness Book of Records*, the Bible is the best-selling book in the world! Interestingly, in the 17<sup>th</sup> century the *Wicked Bible* (a/k/a the *Sinner's or Adulterous Bible*) was published by the Royal printers in London. It was meant to be a reprint of the King James Bible. One thousand copies were sold before they noticed that there was a single typo - the 7th Commandment stated: "Thou shalt commit adultery".

*What is your favorite verse in the Bible? Can you recite it?*

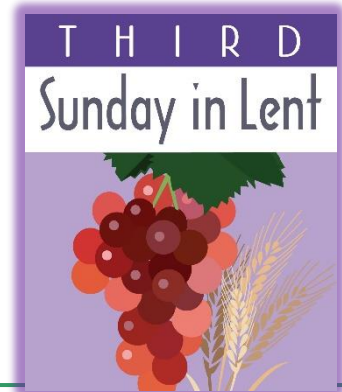
*Who is your favorite Bible Character or Hero of Faith? Can you tell their story?*

The Bible is not one book; it's a library, a collection of books written by more than 40 traditional writers who were inspired by God at different times. It was written over a span of at least 500 years, originally in 3 languages: Hebrew (OT), Greek (NT), and Aramaic.

Every book within the Bible has a purpose, with each one originally written to specific recipients: a group of people, a church, or a person in a **certain context**.

**CONTEXT** - The circumstances that form the setting for an event, statement, or idea and in terms of which it can be fully understood and assessed.

~Sermon *cont'd* on pg. 2



**March 3rd, 2024**

*Holy Communion*

8:00AM – Praise

9:00AM – Sunday school for all ages

10:30AM – Traditional

Purple Theory Series: Scripture  
Pastor Nova Preaching

The traditional worship is available via  
livestream through Calvary's  
website homepage.

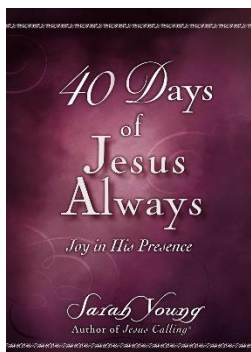
Go to: [calvaryumcmohnton.org](http://calvaryumcmohnton.org) or  
click on the link below.

**CTRL + CLICK HERE  
SUNDAY LIVESTREAM**

### Prepare Your Heart & Mind for Easter

A free Lenten devotional, *40 Days of Jesus Always*, is available for pick in the Gathering area. [One per household, please.]

The devotional booklet includes daily words of love, encouragement, and guidance, written to us, as if from Jesus.



**DAYLIGHT SAVINGS  
BEGINS SUNDAY,  
MARCH 10<sup>TH</sup>.**

Mark your calendar now (or put an alarm on your phone) to set your clock(s) **FORWARD** 1 hour before you go to sleep Saturday night (3/09). You don't want to be late for Sunday school and church!

#### 40-Day Lenten Prayer Challenge (Ctrl+Click)

You may join the daily 6PM Zoom meeting, where we will pray daily, and using a designated reader, listen to a chapter of the book, *Draw the Circle*, by Mark Batterson. If you would like to be a designated reader, we ask for you to click on the link **ABOVE** to sign up for the day(s) when you would be willing to volunteer. If you don't have a copy of the book, we will email you a copy of the reading for your designated day.

#### **ZOOM Prayer Challenge by Phone**

1-646-558-8656

Meeting ID: 647 829 181#; **Password: 082013**

#### **ZOOM Prayer Challenge by PC**

<https://zoom.us/j/647829181?pwd=dHlMM09HSmFQcUZ3bEorMUNwRUNkZz09>

Meeting ID: 647 829 181

**Password: 082013**

On March 19<sup>th</sup>, Bishop John Schol will join Calvary's 6PM Lenten Prayer Challenge. He will be the reader, lead the devotional prayer time, and participate in the discussion.

#### 40-Day Lenten Walk Prayer Challenge (Ctrl + Click)

- Join the 40-Day Lent Prayer Walk Challenge. This will happen daily at the church at 8:30AM, with Pastor Nova joining you if she has no other commitments that day. First, there will be prayer and a reading from the *Upper Room*. You may walk around the church, around the streets of Mohnton, or you may just sit in the church for the devotional reading and to pray. We ask that you click the link **ABOVE** to sign up for the days when you would like to be the designated reader for the Lent Prayer Walk Challenge.
- The last option is for people who can't make the other two options. In that case, we ask that you commit to finding a daily time for prayer on your own.



~Sermon cont'd from pg. 1

**The beauty of scripture is that we can see our context in it, and even though we are not the original recipient, God talks to us through it.** Adam Hamilton defines it as: "A Disturbing, Wonderful, Perplexing and Inspiring Book".

Christian denominations interpret certain stories differently, which is why we have a variety of denominations, such as: Baptist, Lutheran, Pentecostal, Evangelical, and Methodist. But, still, we are all Christians, and that is what's important. Peter Meiderlin, a Lutheran Theologian, said: *Regarding the Scripture. In Essentials - Unity, In Non-Essentials - Liberty, In All Things - Charity.*

According to today's text, there are 3 points to remember about the Scripture:

1. **Scripture brings joy.** V2 What does it mean to delight in the law of the Lord? As Christians, our ultimate source of joy is the gospel; it literally means good news. We can remain joyful even when life is difficult because we know that God is with us in all our journeys. He is more powerful than any circumstance that we experience. God is faithful. **Jesus said, John 16:33- in this life you will have tribulation, but take heart, I have overcome the world.**
2. **Scripture gives life and generates growth.** Like our physical body, our spiritual body needs food. Our daily bread is the Word of God. Verse 3 gives the image of trees planted by streams of water. When we study the Word of God, we can know God more and His plans for us; it strengthens our faith, speaks to our hearts, and makes us grow and bear fruit. **John 15** says, "No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me. I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me, you can do nothing."

~Sermon cont'd on pg. 3

~Sermon cont'd from pg. 2

**3. Scripture enlightens our path.** "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path" –Psalms 119:105. The Bible tells us the stories of people who were faithful to God, who obeyed God, and who followed Him. It redirects our lives away from sin and towards holiness. It reveals what is evil, sinful, and dishonoring to God and tells us what righteous living looks like. It gives us the wisdom to decide what is best for the glory of God and gives guidance and direction for every need and decision in our life.

#### **Other Verses about Scripture:**

**Hebrews 4:12:** *For the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.* This passage clearly tells us that God's word can be used in our daily life because it is alive and active, it is not predated or postdated it was used before and we can use it today and will be effective in the future.

**2 Timothy 3:16-17:** *All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting, and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.* This passage shows us how God uses the Scripture for His people to be equipped in the great mission of Christians in the entire world.

When we meditate on scripture, we can learn to find our story within it. All our triumphs and screw-ups are in the Bible - it is not just an ancient, geographical, historical, irrelevant text. Because God has chosen to be present to us through scripture, the disciplines of reading, studying, and meditating on scripture are life-sustaining. Last week, we talked about prayer, which is to connect with God. God is connecting with us through the Bible- it is also called the Special Revelation of God.

**Hebrews 1:1-2** says: *In the past, God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets at many times and in various ways, <sup>2</sup>but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom also he made the universe.*

**John 1:1-** *"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God". JESUS is the living Word.*

Scripture is life-giving, life-sustaining, and life-enlightening. We can read it, study it, and meditate on it. It is important to differentiate between reading, studying, and meditating on the Bible. **Reading** is primarily the assimilation of facts and gathering of information. **Studying** is more like digging into the context-author, time, and purpose. **Meditation** is an act of pondering. When we meditate, we seek to make personal application of the Scriptures to our own lives and circumstances. *"This results in more than the intake of information; it transforms by leading to the formation of the individual into Christlikeness".* (Billygraham.org)

When meditating, we can use the acronym SOAP, which means Scripture, Observation, Application, and Prayer. Practicing spiritual disciplines doesn't always lead to that "wow" experience we're hoping for. We must stick with it - it's not about achieving "results" right away. It's about building and shaping a life through consistency and discipline.

**There is no one "right" way to meditate;** the important thing is to do it regularly and remain committed. That said, reading, studying, and meditating on scripture, just as with any spiritual discipline, isn't about feeling guilty when you don't do it or don't keep up with it right away! It is impossible to do it. It is only by God's grace that we can do it. When we meditate on God's word, we need to have FAITH because, in God's word, there is HOPE and, Above all, God's LOVE.

Gipsy Smith, a known Methodist Evangelist, told of a man who said he had received no inspiration from the Bible, although he had "gone through it several times." **"Let it go through you once,"** replied Smith, "Then you will tell a different story!"

**"Let it go through you once," then you will have a different story.** In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen



~ SAVE THE DATE ~  
COMMUNITY EVENT  
SATURDAY, MARCH 23<sup>rd</sup> @  
9:30AM, RAIN OR SHINE  
at CALVARY U.M.C  
(Ages 2 yrs. – 4<sup>th</sup> Grade)



Individually wrapped donations of candy are needed for the Egg Hunt. A drop-off box is located on the Gathering Area. Thank you for your generosity!



**March 24th @ 10:30AM:** A joyful celebration of Christ's arrival into Jerusalem, with palms waving, joyful hymns and a special choir anthem. The service will be livestreamed & available through Calvary's website homepage & Facebook. All are welcome.

**March 28th @ 7PM:** An experiential service in Calvary's lower-level Social Hall (handicap accessible), including scripture, hymns, sharing Holy Communion, special music, and reflection. The service will be available via Zoom. All are welcome.



**March 29th @ 7PM:** An evening service in Calvary's sanctuary recalling & reflecting on the passion and death of Christ through readings and hymns. All are welcome.

**March 31st @ 10:30AM:** Join us for a joy-filled service rejoicing in Christ's triumph over the grave. The bell choir and senior choir will present special music, and we will share in the fellowship of Holy Communion. The service will also be livestreamed & available through Calvary's website & Facebook.



For centuries many faith traditions observed the Sunday after Easter as a "day of joy and laughter" to celebrate Jesus' resurrection. The custom was rooted in the musings of early church theologians (like Augustine) that God played a practical joke on the devil by raising Jesus from the dead. "*Risus paschalis* - the Easter laugh," the early theologians called it. Calvary will celebrate **Holy Humor Sunday** on April 7th during the 10:30AM service, with children & youth participating.



- 04 – Juliette Newton  
509 Sycamore Rd.  
Mohnton, PA 19540
- 07 - Helen Hartman  
375 Oregon Road  
Mohnton, PA 19540
- 07 - Rick Ehst  
333 Pennwyn Place  
Shillington, PA 19607
- 07 – Chris Raszkievicz  
1122 Lehigh Avenue  
Wyomissing, PA 19610

## Finding a New Ministry Model and Rebranding

Calvary's two largest children's outreach ministries, Calvary Before and After School Care and Wyomissing Valley Preschool, have been mainstays for the community for over 40 years. Registrations for both have, at times, even required a waiting list. However, three events have caused the Center Director, Stacey Hanley, and the WVP/CC Board to rethink how these ministries can best continue to serve the changing daycare and preschool demographic, especially in a post-COVID world.

It hasn't been an easy road trying to absorb ever-rising expenses, while also competing for student enrollment with Pre-K Counts, a PA legislative initiative which offers qualifying families free preschool for 3 & 4 yr. olds. Even with significant COVID- related grants, the overall finances for the two ministries have either experienced losses or barely hit a breakeven.

After spending considerable time researching, networking, and brainstorming, Stacey presented a possible new model of operation, which was wholeheartedly supported by the WVP/CC Board and recommended for approval by Calvary's Church Council.

~Remodel/Rebranding cont'd on pg. 5



~Remodel/Rebranding cont'd from pg. 4

This new model, which was unanimously approved at the February Council meeting, involves merging the preschool and before and after school programs under a new name, *Calvary Care Early Learning Center*, operating primarily as a daycare, but still offering either stand-alone preschool (toddler – pre-K. as of Sept. 2024), daycare alone (up to 10 hrs./day), or a hybrid of both. Legally, the changeover is relatively straight forward. WVP and CC have already been merged under the current CC corporate name, and Stacey has applied for and is awaiting approval of the new fictitious name of *Calvary Care Early Learning Center*. All other business operations remain the same.

The new organizational model offers several streamlining advantages: 1. One all-encompassing tuition rate sheet; 2. One payroll and employee handbook; 3. One set of financials; 4. One all-encompassing registration form; 5. One all-encompassing set of other required paperwork; 6) year-round operation, including preschool and school age summer camps; and 7) state subsidized preschool tuition and daycare costs remain available to all qualifying families.

In essence, the scope of daycare (fledgling in the 2023-24 school year) will expand, better meeting the needs of working parent households, while still offering a preschool component in a safe and nurturing Christian environment. Finally, since the cost of daycare is typically higher than preschool, there's a greater opportunity to increase program revenue and remain a strong, viable presence seeking to serve our community to the glory of God.



## “Surprise” Street Art on Wyomissing Ave.

One of the joys of our 40-Day Lenten Prayer Walk at 8:30AM is when we are blessed by an unexpected sighting...in this case, sidewalk chalk drawings.



The Eastern PA Conference offers four camping locations with a wonderful myriad of camping themes. **NOW** is the time to be looking over the various websites to check out their electronic brochures and registration areas. **NOW** is the time to start talking to your brothers, sisters, and friends about experiencing a camp adventure this summer!

Partial scholarship funds are available through Calvary Church (one scholarship per child per season). If you have any questions, please contact Pastor Matthew at 717-917-5342 or [christianed.calvmohn@gmail.com](mailto:christianed.calvmohn@gmail.com).

Below are the links to each of the camps: (Ctrl + Click)

[Gretna Glen Camp & Retreat Center](#)

[Innabah Camp & Retreat Center](#)

[Pocono Plateau Camp & Retreat Center](#)

[Carson Simpson Farm Christian Camp](#)