



1 W. Wyomissing Ave., Mohnton, PA 19540

Oct. 27th, 2024 – Nov. 02, 2024

www.calvaryumcmohnton.org

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

Come to the Table, Week #3
What Are You Wearing?

10/013/24/24 Craig Caltagirone, CSM; Scripture: Ephesians 6:10-18

For the past 2 weeks, Pastor has invited us to “Come to the Table”. She spoke of emotions, hospitality and generosity ... invitations to dinner parties and lunches, from casual to formal. When receiving such an invitation, some will ask, “How should I dress”, or “what will I wear?” Today, I modify the question to ask, “What are you wearing?” Though it may sound like a question from a wife to her husband – “WHAT are you wearing?” ... I approach the question from a different angle today.

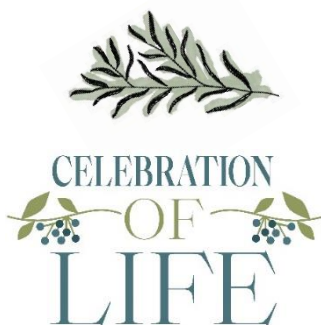
A few weeks ago, you may have heard two minutes of my thoughts with the same title as today’s message. Those thoughts were prompted when Pastor Nova asked me the question, “what do you think of spiritual warfare?” My initial response was simply five words. “I believe it is real.”

So, I start by asking you - do you believe spiritual warfare is real? If so What are you wearing as you step on the field every day to engage the world? Do you need protective gear? A few minutes ago, we heard the words from the 6th chapter of Ephesians ... “putting on the armor of God”, in verses 10 through 18.

Perhaps I should continue with verse 19. Hear these words from verse 19: “¹⁹ Pray also for me, that whenever I speak, words may be given me so that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel,”

The mystery of the gospel. Do you find the Gospel to be a mystery? I confess there are many times when I say “WHY?” while reading the Bible – especially with the Old Testament. But with the New Testament, while the teachings, commands and examples presented by Jesus may sometimes seem opposite of what my nature wants to immediately respond with, when I pause and look at what Jesus offers, when I hear the words, “my ways are not your ways”, it becomes a bit easier to accept, even if a mystery.

~Sermon cont'd on pg. 3



BRO. HENRY BHASKER
Sunday, October 27th @ 1:00 PM
Calvary's Sanctuary
Livestreamed



October 27th, 2024

9:15AM ~ Sunday school

10:30AM ~ Traditional Service

Sermon Series:
Come to the Table
Laughter at the Table

SUNDAY LIVESTREAM
CTRL + CLICK HERE



The altar flowers for
this coming Sunday
are sponsored by
Zach and Kendall
Martin in joyful
celebration of their
12th wedding
anniversary on
Oct. 27th.



TITHES & OFFERINGS, WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?

Years ago, when I was young (and I do mean YEARS ago), at Sunday service we would always collect our "tithes and offerings." I always knew what an offering was but as for tithes, I wasn't so sure. We, as church members, know that a tithe is 10% of your income to be given back to God; an offering is a gift above and beyond that 10%.

For many, tithing is an Old Testament concept and has gone by the wayside. Many now consider whatever percentage of their income that they contribute as their tithe. For those in our congregation who would like to continue the act of tithing AND offering, the Sunny Day Fund (SDF) is custom made for you. A SDF contribution is a special gift to God's work, over and above your regular tithe, representing 10% of monies spent on yourself for your own enjoyment.

The PRISM team has made it easy for you to now add an offering to your tithe. You're welcome! Our personal SDF balance stands at \$314! We sure must be having a good time! Thank you, Jesus!

Bob Werner, PRISM Chp.



Calvary will be participating in the Mohnton YMCA

Trunk or Treat

October 28th ~ 6 – 8PM

(140 Chestnut St, Mohnton)

Meet at the church at 4:30PM if you'd like to help decorate Calvary's car!



Monthly
POTLUCK

Starting **November 24**, we will hold a **potluck lunch** on the **last Sunday of every month.**

Bring a dish to share and enjoy a time of fellowship following the 10:30AM service.

Start time approx. 11:45AM
Location TBD

The mess of mercy

The reformer Martin Luther once dreamed that he saw Jesus approaching his door. Luther panicked, seeing that his home was an absolute disaster inside. "How am I going to let the Lord of Life, Jesus Christ, come into a mess like this?" he wondered.

Luther raced to clean up, but the mess only increased. As Jesus knocked, Luther was resigned. "Come on in, if you think you can come into a place like this," he told Jesus ... only to turn around and see that everything was now in order. All Luther had to do was let Jesus enter.

"Mercy is always a messy business," writes pastor Daniel Emery Price at 1517.org. That's true of the Reformation, just as it was when Jesus cleared moneychangers out of the temple. "There will always be those who condemn the mercy because of the mess," notes Price. "Reformation is always about clearing the path to God's radical grace."

[by permission: churchart.com]



The Mohnton Community Thanksgiving Eve worship service will be hosted by Calvary UMC on SUNDAY, November 24th, at 4:00PM.

New Small groups

"Let's Talk About It" Bible Study/Life Group

Join us every Thursday at 9:30AM for an engaging and open discussion led by Pastor Nova. Whether you're new to the Bible or have years of experience, this group offers a welcoming space to explore Scripture and share life experiences with honesty and without fear of judgment. Together, we'll grow in faith and understanding. We'll meet in the chapel, so come as you are, ready for meaningful, open-hearted conversations and spiritual growth.

Prayer Warrior's Night

Join us on the 1st Thursday of every month at 7PM for an evening of powerful, faith-filled prayer. Led by Pastor Nova, this gathering is a time to come together as a community to lift up our needs, stand against spiritual battles, and seek God's guidance and strength. Whether you're seasoned in prayer or just beginning, all are welcome to unite in intercession and experience the power of prayer together. We meet in the chapel—come ready to pray boldly!

Sermon *cont'd* from pg. 1

It is where understanding yields to what we call "Faith"! as I confess those familiar words, "you are God, and I am not."

But what about these words, "putting on the armor of God"?

I suspect many of us have heard this passage of Scripture many times, but how much attention do we give these words? Even after just hearing the words a few minutes ago, are we all able to recite the list Paul presents? His description has a bit of an ancient connotation that we may have trouble relating to.

Now of course Paul was not suggesting his listeners run out and purchase actual armor. But whether two thousand years ago or now, the question may be the same, where do I acquire a helmet of salvation, a shield of faith, a belt of truth? I cannot go to a store to try these items on for a proper fit. I cannot simply order online for next day delivery.

But these were the words of Paul, this suit of armor. Do we need the same items? Are upgrades necessary as threats have changed?

Many sports have protective equipment. Baseball players do not think of stepping into the batter's box without a helmet. Football players add shoulder pads to go with the helmet. And most athletes require proper footwear to battle in competition.

Over the years, updates are introduced. Let us look at how the football helmet has changed to protect players from injury.

From the 1920s until today, the armor of the football player has changed. From a basic leather head covering – to a single bar facemask – to a full shield. The helmet has changed. And yet concussions continue to be too frequent an occurrence.

So, what would it look like if Paul was writing today? Even with the updates, Paul's words may not be easy to understand.

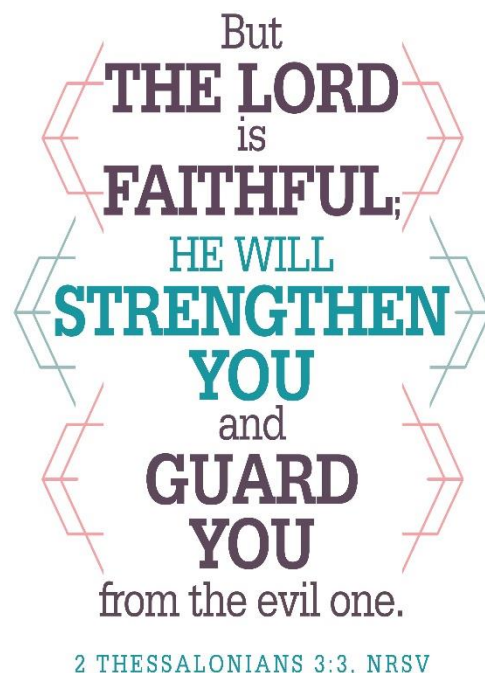
Most of us are not professional athletes or professional soldiers.

Other occupations require special gear. Law enforcement has protective vests to protect officers. Fire fighters wear helmets, turnout coats, gloves, boots, pants, hoods. The factory worker may have safety glasses and steel tip boots. All of these protecting against injury.

But as you enter your everyday world, "What Are You Wearing?"

Do we have the need as Paul described for armor? Do you believe spiritual warfare is real?

~Sermon *cont'd* on pg. 5



KIDNAPPED

by Chaplain Kenneth E. Dearstyne, Sr.

This year, with the approach of Advent Season, my memory takes me back nearly fifty years to the dedication of our beautiful new chapel at the VA Medical Center where I served as chaplain. Clergy and people from the surrounding community were invited to attend the event. A combined ecumenical choir from local congregations provided music and our guest speaker was Rabbi Sandhaus, Director of Chaplain Service for the Veterans Administration in Washington D.C.

Many volunteer organizations supported chapel activities and projects. They provided funds for stained glass windows, a Torah scroll, altar equipment and so much more. For an outdoor display on our first Hanukkah-Christmas in the chapel, several volunteer groups donated a large lighted menorah and a life-size manger scene, complete with magi, shepherds, animals and, of course, the Christ Child in the manger. This story centers on the persistent disappearance of the baby in the manger.

The tree lighting and musical program in early December was a long-standing tradition at the medical center. Our new chapel with its outdoor displays attracted much attention when lit for the first time.

On the morning following all these festivities, I reported for duty, as usual. I had hardly removed my coat and hat when I heard a loud commotion in the narthex. When I went out, I found a very excited group of veterans telling my secretary that the baby Jesus was missing. A visit to the lawn display confirmed the "kidnapping".

So began a mystery that was not solved until the following year. I think I must have replaced the missing baby in the manger at least three or four times before Christmas Eve. Security checked frequently but was never able to detect the culprit.

I had nearly forgotten all of this when it became time to decorate the chapel for another Advent Season. I remember hoping, as I placed the figure of the baby Jesus in the manger, that history would not repeat itself. But it did. Just as the year before, the morning after the lighting of the display found the manger empty.

I replaced the figure of the Christ Child twice before Father Mack had a sudden revelation. One morning, he came into my office with a knowing smile on his face. He told me that he should have solved the mystery a year earlier because it had been so obvious. He said that Catholics, along with many other Christian denominations, never put the figure

of the Christ Child in the manger until Christmas Eve. The culprit, Mack believed, was most likely a veteran who was trying to be faithful to his tradition. And Mack had a suspect.

John was an older veteran of World War I and a devout Catholic. He had assisted at daily Mass for years. The new chapel was his second home. The next day, Fr. Mack had a long talk with John who, finally, confessed that he had removed the baby from the manger because he should never have been placed there before Christmas Eve.

That afternoon, John took us to a spot in the woods bordering the campus. There, he showed us more than half a dozen of the missing figures. They had not been simply discarded. He had tenderly placed them on a bed of hay and covered them with a colorful blanket. There they lay, as though asleep.

On our second Christmas Eve in the new chapel, Midnight Mass established a tradition that continued, at least until my retirement in 1985. After the Benediction, the congregation followed the priest outside to the lawn display where John (the kidnapper) placed the figure representing the Christ Child in the empty manger. It remained undisturbed until the display was put in storage for another year.



Creating an Advent Devotional of Calvary Member Living Faith Stories

Write your own devotional to share with others, similar to the style of *The Upper Room*.

Pray about what God may be calling you to share about as an encouragement/message to others. We are looking for submissions in the following format:

- 1) Choose a scripture that speaks to your personal story.
- 2) Write a brief personal story (300 - 350 words, max.)
- 3) Conclude with a short, written prayer.
- 4) Include your name.

Please submit your devotional via email to the church office (administrator.calvmohn@comcast.net). Include in the email subject line "Shared Devotional".

Submission deadline: November 15th, 2024. Our Calvary's 5th Gospel of Living Stories will be published in time for Advent.

Sermon *cont'd from pg. 3*

The belt of truth. Where do we find God's truth? The best source I know is in His Word, the Holy Bible. If we do not know God's truth, how do we recognize opposing lies?

A breastplate of righteousness – living a holy life as defined by God, to help us and others resist destructive temptations.

A shield of faith – faith in God to shield from the arrows of doubt, guilt and fear - the arrows the enemy shoots at us. Do you doubt the arrows come?

The helmet of salvation – may I simplify this one to be a personal relationship with Jesus?

A sword of the spirit – again the Word of God, needing to be read and studied.

And let us not forget the boots – keeping a firm footing, a foundation in the Gospel, ready to share the Gospel with others.

But if you do not believe you are under attack, you may not find a need for this protection. So let us go to Holy Scripture to find warning. Consider 1 Peter 5:8: *Stay alert! Watch out for your great enemy, the devil. He prowls around like a roaring lion, looking for someone to devour.*

John 10 speaks of the thief coming to steal, kill and destroy.

Ephesians 6:16: *hold up the shield of faith to stop the fiery arrows.*

Where do those arrows come from? The spiritual enemy may go by different names. You may call it the devil. Take away the letter "D" and just call out "evil." Or Satan, the dark side, the prince of this world or simply ... the enemy.

Now these words of Paul may simply sound like "church language" to some – outdated, and not applicable to your life, so I would like to share some personal testimony to support my certainty of the existence of the enemy.

You may have previously heard some of my story, but I have recently gone deeper into what I see as an explanation for some of the darkness of my past. I have spoken of the toolbox to get me OUT OF the darkness –

the tools of faith, God, spiritual disciplines, counselors, medication, and relationships. Some of those may be ~~part~~ ~ of my armor, but I put on some of that armor a bit late, after already being wounded in battle.

I have made attempts to look at what led to my darkness – how I was consumed with fear of perfection in my career; how I feared what others thought of me; the missing confidence, how I was vulnerable to attack. And I now believe – it was not just MY weakness and MY mistakes. I believe there was another side working to get to me; an enemy getting its hooks in me, wanting to prevent me from having unity with my brothers and sisters in faith, preventing me from standing here before you to speak words of testimony, to speak words of encouragement, to speak words praising God, praising Jesus Christ, and giving thanks for the Holy Spirit working in my life.

You see, that recruiter on the dark side did not want me on the dark team for my benefit, not to bring me fulfillment, joy, success. That enemy just wanted me defeated.

And I came far too close to being a statistic, but God did not give up on me. Other people, some of you, did not give up on me. Some may have chosen to keep a distance – not knowing how to help, but enough stood by my side. Enough prayed for me. Enough held me up and carried me until I was able to figuratively walk again. If you were one of those praying for me, carrying me, again I thank you. Recognize the value in your prayers and more importantly, God's response.

Enough fought the battle with me to defeat the attack of the dark side, to resist the temptation to think I had no hope, no future, no value. And here I am today.

God saved me 3 times from darkness, not once, 3 times. The other side wanted me, not for my own good, not to help or reward me, but to keep me from worshipping Jesus and from sharing my Jesus with others.

So, go ahead and ask me, is spiritual warfare real?

And you would think with such a story to tell, that I would make it a point, every day to suit up, put on the full armor of God, and yet some days I start without getting fully dressed.

Did a full schedule keep me from being in God's Word today? Did I miss an opportunity to share Jesus? Did I reject a request for help from someone needing to know God's love today? Did I consume entertainment that fails to pass the test of God's judgment? Paraphrasing Pastor/Author Louie Giglio, did I give the enemy a seat at my table?

In his book titled, "Don't Give the Enemy a Seat at Your Table" Giglio devotes a chapter to what he calls a remix of Psalm 23, suggesting we too often declare, "I am my own shepherd, and I'm a mess".

Citing Romans 12:2 "Don't copy the behavior and customs of the world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think." Giglio warns us, "Once we let a harmful thought pitch a tent in our mind, eventually that temptation is acted on." His book contains so much more than I can include in our time today.

Commenting on Giglio's book, Pastors Levi and Jennie Lesko, write, "In the banquet of you heart there are two seats – one for you and the other for Jesus – and three is a crowd. Tell the enemy, 'Seats taken'".

We know how this war ends. We know the victor, but we also know there are everyday battles we fight and sometimes it may feel like we are losing the battle.

So, ... are you dressed for battle? Do you gear up, adhering to the words of verse 11 and put on the FULL armor of God? Or are we like the factory worker who gets disciplined for not using the safety harness or the homeowner using the chain saw without the safety glasses?

Would firefighters suit up and leave their gear in the truck? We need the full armor.

I can throw you a lifeline with a verse of scripture – James 4 verse 7: "resist the devil and he will flee from you". Sounds easy – and yet the resistance may sometimes be difficult. Not as simple as those old Dracula movies or Dark Shadows television episodes where the potential victim pulls out a cross and the vampire flees. Sometimes we may not even have the strength to pull the cross out of our pocket. That may be when we need others to support us and if you are fortunate to not need the help, maybe you

have the opportunity to provide that encouragement and support to others by offering the love and hope of Jesus.

And a word of caution to any who thinks you can stand up to the Devil on your own. Don't need any help? Remember this enemy is not one who can always be recognized, captured, defeated or eliminated – not the case with the spiritual enemy.

Satan has updated the arsenal of weapons used against us. The internet, electronic devices, social media – these tools are available to both sides in the battle.

So, do I need to update my wardrobe? Holy Scripture, prayer, fasting, truth - these items have not been discontinued, though some may think they are out of style; but they do require my attention. They need to be put on, not left hanging in the closet.

Today's armor remains based on the truth of God's Word and a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

So, suit up with the full armor of God every day to resist the Devil, and he will flee from you. AMEN!



On Sunday, November 10th, Calvary will observe All-Saints' Sunday. During the 10:30AM, livestreamed service, we will be remembering our church members & loved ones who passed away during the last year.

If there is a special person you would like to be remembered, please send us the name of that person, his/her relationship to you, and a photo, if desired, **on or before Monday, Nov. 4th, 2024.**

(email administrator.calvmohn@comcast.net or mail your information to the church at 1 W. Wyomissing Ave., Mohnton, PA 19540, Attn: Janet.)

Finally, we would be honored if you and your family members/friends could be present with us, either online or in-person, for this important time of remembrance. Kindly pass this information along to your other family members, as well as those who had a significant relationship with your loved one.



Couple's Bible Study

I am excited to announce a *Couple's Bible Study and Fellowship*, which will meet on six Fridays at 7PM: Nov. 8th & 22nd, Jan. 17th & 24th, and Feb. 7th, concluding with a special *Couple's Party* on **February 14, 2025** to celebrate our journey together!

Calvary couples are warmly invited to participate in this Study and Fellowship, and feel free to extend the invitation to your friends and relatives. This time together will help us strengthen our bonds, not only with our partners but also in our relationship with God.

The theme of each session will be determined by the couple who leads the discussion, making this a unique opportunity to learn from each other's experiences and perspectives. Our goal is to grow together in love, communication, and understanding. Each session is designed to deepen our relationships and help us experience love more fully.

We will hold six sessions in the Chapel on the main floor, though we are open to hosting in homes if anyone is interested. Zoom will also be available for those unable to attend in person. The gatherings will be fun, insightful, and interactive.

I hope you can join us for this enriching time of fellowship and growth in our relationships. Looking forward to seeing you there!

Shalom!
Pastor Nova
201-699-6704c



On Tuesday, Oct. 22nd, Pastor Nova met at the state capitol with an ecumenical group of pastors, along with state and federal representatives, to pray for the upcoming election, for our nation, and for the world.

OCTOBER Birthdays

- 27 – Joann Werner
18 E. Fairview Street
Mohnton, PA 19540
- 27 – Joyce Caltagirone
38 Hilgert Ave.
Shillington, PA 19607
- 29 – Shane MacMahon
702 Sycamore Rd.
Mohnton, PA 19540
- 31 - Jennifer Werner
205 Slichter Dr.
Mohnton, PA 19540
- 11/1 – Sheila Renninger
1 Pebble Brook Ln.
Mohnton, PA 19540
- 2 – Laura Conlin
40 Melcon Ln.
Mohnton, PA 19540
- 2 – Sawyer Martin
c/o Martin
20 E. Fairview St.
Mohnton, PA 19540



The November/December *Upper Room* devotionals are now available in the Gathering Area, on the table outside church office.



Set your clocks back one hour before you go to bed on Nov. 2nd. Daylight Savings Time ends on Sunday, Nov. 3rd.