



1 W. Wyomissing Ave., Mohnton, PA 19540

Nov. 3rd, 2024 – Nov. 09, 2024

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

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

**Come to the Table, Week #4  
Laughter at The Table**

10/27/24 Pastor Nova; Scripture: Genesis 18:1-15

Questions on Joy and Sorrow: When Reactions Defy Expectations:

1. *Was there ever a time when, out of an abundance of joy, you found yourself crying instead of laughing?*

2. *How about a time when, out of the depth of sorrow, you found yourself laughing instead of crying?*

Laughter is something we all share, yet it often comes to us in surprising ways. Sometimes we laugh from pure joy; other times, we laugh to cover up sadness or disbelief. Laughter can be a reaction to an overwhelming feeling—when words fall short. Today, we reflect on laughter as a response to God's work in our lives, even in times when it seems impossible or unexpected.

In the Hebrew language, there are several words for laughter:

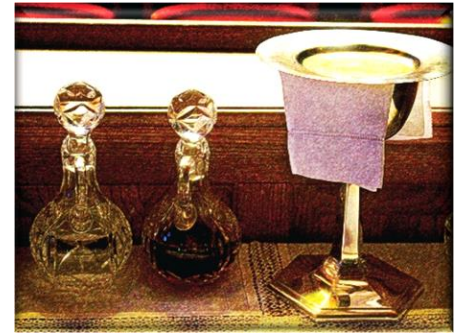
- **Itzchok** means "to laugh" or "to giggle."
- **Letzachek** means "to joke" or "to make fun."
- **Lehatzchik** means "to amuse" or "to cause to laugh."
- **Lehitztachek** means "to chuckle" or "to laugh to oneself."

Each type of laughter reveals something about the moment and our hearts in it. Through the story of Sarah in Genesis, we explore three kinds of laughter that reveal God's faithfulness even when our hope seems weak.

**Laughter Out of Pain**

In Genesis 18:12, we find Sarah laughing to herself when she overhears God's promise that she will have a son. Sarah's laughter is not from joy but disbelief. She has carried the pain of childlessness for so long that the promise feels impossible, almost absurd.

~Sermon cont'd on pg. 3



**November 3rd, 2024  
Holy Communion**

**8:00AM Praise Service**

**9:15AM ~ Sunday school**

**10:30AM ~ Traditional Service**

**Sermon Series:**

*Tossing and Turning Wk. #1  
FEAR*

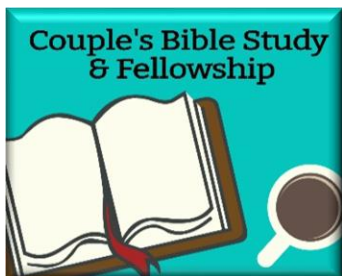
**SUNDAY LIVESTREAM  
CTRL + CLICK HERE**



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



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



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



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.  
Location TBD

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



## 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](mailto: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.



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. 4<sup>th</sup>, 2024.**  
(email [administrator.calvmohn@comcast.net](mailto: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 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.

## THE GARDENER

*by Chaplain Kenneth E. Dearstyne, Sr.*

By the time I arrived at the VA Medical Center in 1962, the large productive dairy farm was history. Fields of corn, hay, and produce were gone, as were the cows, barns and pastures. In their place were fine new schools and athletic fields. But older veteran residents at the Medical Center still had fond memories of the days when they took pride in caring for the livestock and harvesting crops. The hospital was the beneficiary of all this, until some bureaucrats in the nation's capital decided that it was wrong for veteran patients to volunteer their time to work on a farm. Even raking leaves on crisp fall days was no longer permitted.

When I began my work as chaplain, I found hospital dayrooms filled with men and women, many sleeping in front of a television set that was hardly visible because of dense cigarette smoke. Most would have preferred fresh air and exercise working on the farm or the hospital grounds. Ben was one of them.

Ben grew up on a Pennsylvania farm during the years prior to World War II. He had enlisted in the Marines early in the war, before graduating from high school. At age seventeen, he found himself in the middle of a violent struggle that he would never be able to forget. Guadalcanal was finally taken, but at a heavy cost. Ben survived the battle with no physical wounds, but he would never recover from the terrible memories. He would still dream of the friend with whom he shared a foxhole one dark night. He would always blame himself for not seeing the enemy soldier who came out of the darkness to kill his friend before Ben could fire his rifle.

Guadalcanal was only the beginning. Ben survived another year and several invasions before the early explosion of a grenade nearly killed him. Ben's war was over, but the mental scars would never heal.

In 1967, the grounds around the chapel were nicely landscaped with perennials and evergreens. Volunteers helped to maintain them, but they were never quite able to keep up with the weeds and trimming. One spring morning, as I sat in my office, I heard some activity outside the open window. When I looked out, I saw Ben clearing leaves and raking mulch away from the crocuses trying to make their annual appearance. It was obvious that Ben knew what he was doing and that he was enjoying the work.

Through the window we talked for a few minutes. I told him how nice the landscaping looked and how much his work was appreciated.

For several days, Ben would appear outside the chapel with gardening tools "borrowed" from a storage building on the grounds. Finally, the inevitable happened. Someone discovered that a veteran was "working" on the chapel landscaping. Ben was told that he was to cease and desist. The tools were locked away and, for several days, our gardener did not appear. But Ben was not deterred.

One morning, when I arrived at the chapel, Ben was busy with the landscape garden with shiny new tools that, I was to learn, he had purchased with his own money.

Ben and his "work" became a management issue. Some firmly believed that a veteran patient should not be doing any kind of physical labor on the station, even as a volunteer. Most of us disagreed. We saw Ben's gardening as therapeutic, giving him a sense of accomplishment and the feeling that he was making a contribution.

For a week or two some staff members tried to urge Ben to stop his work. He persisted. His tools were locked away. He objected and went straight to the front office. The tools were returned.

Finally, a frustrated ward treatment team met to discuss this pressing issue. The social worker contributed that Ben seemed more contented and peaceful. The dietician said that Ben had been underweight for a long time, but, in the past few weeks, had gained several pounds and his appetite had improved. The head nurse commented that Ben's nightmares were less frequent, and he seemed to be sleeping better. There were no negative comments. It appeared that Ben had chosen his own therapy. It was decided that he should be left alone to continue his "work".

Summer turned into fall. Ben put the perennials to sleep by mulching them for winter. I was tempted to make a sign, naming the chapel landscaping, "Ben's Garden". I have always been sorry that I didn't do it.





## RECREATIONAL BOWLING BEGINS NOV. 5TH

### Join Us for Fun and Fellowship!

Continuing our tradition for the past 15 years, **Calvary UMC** and **West Lawn UMC** invite you to join our informal bowling group at **Berks Lanes** from November through April.

**When:** Every Tuesday

**Time:** 6:20 M (practice); 6:30 M (games begin)

**Cost:** \$15 for 3 games

This is not a structured, experienced-only league; it's simply a group of adults who enjoy camaraderie & fun for 2 hours Tuesdays.

**Come When You Can!**

Questions? Call **Bruce Morton** 📞 484-794-0744

## A HUGE

THANK YOU to everyone who donated items to SAFE BERKS! I

delivered a trunk full

of diapers, pillows, and bed sheets to the shelter last week. Your generosity is greatly appreciated by everyone involved. We will continue to collect throughout the coming months. A reminder that gift cards for food are also welcomed. As we approach the holidays, I will update you on any additional needs. Thank you again for your support of this important service. ~ Diane Anderson

Thank You!

*Sermon cont'd from pg. 1*

In her culture, children were a sign of blessing and validation, so her laughter masks years of hurt and disappointment. This laughter shows her inner conflict, a mix of faith and doubt, defense against yet another heartbreak.

Reflection: How often do we laugh because something seems too good to be true? Sometimes, our laughter comes out of a place of guarded hope, a way of protecting ourselves from more pain. Yet, even in those moments of doubt, God is present, understanding our struggle, and inviting us to trust in His timing.

### Laughter Born of God's Surprising Grace

Later in Genesis 21:6, after Isaac (whose name means "he laughs") is born, Sarah laughs again, but this time out of pure joy. She exclaims, "God has brought me laughter, and everyone who hears about this will laugh with me." The

laughter of disbelief transforms into a laughter of overwhelming grace and joy as God's promise is fulfilled. This shift from doubt to joy shows that God's promises can overcome even our deepest disappointments and fears.

As I often remind you during the Benediction: Ephesians 3:20-21, "Now to Him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to His power at work within us, to Him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever! Amen." Like Sarah, we too have seen God's grace turn despair into joy. Think about Ms. Michelle Daniels: not long ago, she was so weak and sick that it was hard to imagine her recovery. But today, by God's grace, she can walk, talk, and shout "Hallelujah!" Her story, along with those of Mr. Jim Adams and others among us, testifies to God's power to turn sorrow into joy.

As a reminder, I invite everyone to submit their Living Faith stories by November 15. These are stories of how God has moved in your lives, not for our own praise, but to glorify God and testify to His presence among us. Like the beautiful stained-glass windows in our sanctuary, these stories reveal how God can take broken, scattered pieces and make something beautiful when His light shines through.

### Laughter at the Table Together

In Genesis 18:1-2, Abraham welcomes three visitors—a manifestation of God. He offers them hospitality, showing both reverence and openness. This "table" they share becomes a place where God's promises are affirmed, even when Sarah laughs in doubt. God does not rebuke her harshly but gently reminds them that nothing is too hard for the Lord.

*~Sermon cont'd on pg. 5*

*Sermon ~cont'd from pg. 4*

The table in this story is more than a setting; it's a place of encounter, where God's promises come to life. Here in our church, we have our own "table" when we gather together in fellowship, prayer, and sharing. At this table, we create space to share our joys and struggles, allowing God's presence to work within us. As we listen to one another, God transforms both our laughter and tears into something holy, drawing us closer to Him and to each other.

As we conclude this series with "Laughter at the Table," may we remember that God is present in every moment of our lives—the joyful, the sorrowful, and the unexpected. Our role is to remain open, to welcome His presence even when it brings laughter mixed with doubt. In our journey together, we are called to support one another, to celebrate together, and to witness God's amazing grace in each other's lives.

### Prayer:

*God, we thank You for Your surprising ways and for the laughter and tears that draw us closer to You. Teach us to trust in Your promises, even when they seem far beyond our reach. Help us to build a community that embraces both the joys and the struggles of life together. May our shared moments become places of holy encounter, where Your light transforms everything we bring to the table. Amen.*



### Parable of the pufflings

As summer ends on a remote island off Iceland, parent puffins — black and white seabirds with rainbow beaks — stop bringing fish to their chicks. These “pufflings,” whose first few weeks were lived in burrows in cliffs, now must launch into a wind current to glide out over the sea and find their own food. Some babies, however, mistake a lit-up house or gas station for moonlight on the water and, as locals say, “fall out of the sky.” Because pufflings can’t yet take off from land and fly, if left alone they starve.

So, for generations, during “puffling season” people on this island have stayed up late to rescue baby birds. On his *Animal* podcast, reporter Sam Anderson tells how, with an islander’s help, he picks up a puffling one night, placing it in a box for morning release over the ocean. As the frightened, confused bird squeals and scratches to get free, Anderson supposes it thinks this is the worst night of its life. In fact, it is the best: It’s being saved.

We humans often get confused, pulled in wrong directions. We’re misled and land in trouble from which we cannot save ourselves. Scared and confused, we believe we’re irredeemably trapped in the worst of circumstances. We can’t perceive that, even now, we are being protected and rescued, that God is working to give back to us the fullness of life we cannot attain for ourselves.

Hang on, beloved one. Though you can’t sense it at this moment, you are held in God’s care, soon to be lifted on the wind of the Holy Spirit, who will carry you into better days.

~Heidi Hyland Mann

[With permission from churchart.com]



### Fundraiser to Support the India Mission Team Medical Camps

**When:** Sunday, November 10th

**Time:** 4 PM - 6 PM

**Where:** Social Hall

Join us for a delicious spaghetti dinner while supporting a great cause! Enjoy a night of good food, great company, and a silent auction with exciting items!

✦ **Meal Donations Accepted!**

Your generosity helps us make a difference.

**Bring your family, friends, and neighbors!**

Together, we can make an impact!



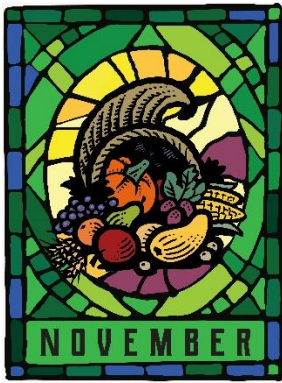
3 – Kelly Graffius  
1001 Hill Ave., Apt 2837  
Wyomissing, PA 19610

5 – Carly Tomczak  
323 Summit St.  
West Reading, PA 19611

07 - Mary Morton  
335 Scenic Drive  
Reading, PA 19607

09 – Sue Altenderfer  
101 Ridge St.  
Reading, PA 19607

09 - Doug Pearson  
53 Shea Drive  
Mohnton, PA 19540



# 2024

GIVE  
*thanks*  
 TO THE  
*Lord;*  
 FOR HE IS GOOD.  
PSALM 107:1, NIV

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					<b>1</b> 12:45am Chapel & Sanctuary QUIET TIME	<b>2</b> 9:00am Charge Conference @ Lincoln Park UMC
<b>3</b> 8:00am Praise Service 9:15am Sunday school for all ages 10:30am Traditional Worship w/Livestreaming 11:45am C.E. Committee Mtg. 4:00pm Children's Club	<b>4</b> 12:45am Chapel & Sanctuary QUIET TIME 12:00pm Adv. ESL Class 12:00pm Beginner ESL 6:30pm Council/Leadership Bible Study 7:00pm Church Council Mtg	<b>5</b> 12:45am Chapel & Sanctuary QUIET TIME 9:30am Weekly Prayer Gp. 6:20pm Recreational Bowling (Calvary & West Lawn)	<b>6</b> 12:45am Chapel & Sanctuary QUIET TIME 9:00am Local Pastor's Gathering 7:00pm Choir Rehearsal	<b>7</b> 12:45am Chapel & Sanctuary QUIET TIME 9:30am "Let's Talk About It" Bible Study/LIFE Gp 7:00pm Prayer Warrior's Night	<b>8</b> 12:45am Chapel & Sanctuary QUIET TIME 7:00pm Couple's Bible Study and Fellowship	<b>9</b>
<b>10</b> All Saints Day 9:15am Sunday school for all ages 10:30am Traditional Worship w/Livestreaming 4:00pm Spaghetti Dinner and Silent Auction Fundraiser 4:00pm Youth Group (6th-12th gr.)	<b>11</b> 12:45am Chapel & Sanctuary QUIET TIME 11:00am Calvary Early Learning Ctr Chapel Time	<b>12</b> 12:45am Chapel & Sanctuary QUIET TIME 9:30am Weekly Prayer Gp. 11:00am Calvary Early Learning Ctr Chapel Time 6:20pm Recreational Bowling (Calvary & West Lawn)	<b>13</b> 12:45am Chapel & Sanctuary QUIET TIME 12:00pm Adv. ESL Class 12:00pm Beginner ESL	<b>14</b> 12:45am Chapel & Sanctuary QUIET TIME 9:30am "Let's Talk About It" Bible Study/LIFE Gp	<b>15</b> 12:45am Chapel & Sanctuary QUIET TIME Food Donations Due	<b>16</b> 9:00am Mifflin Food Ministry Distribution @ Zion ECC 5:30pm PARKING FOR AMOS LEMON BURKHART FOUNDATION EVENT
<b>17</b> 8:00am Praise Service 9:15am Sunday school for all ages 10:30am Traditional Worship w/Livestreaming 4:00pm Children's Club	<b>18</b> 12:45am Chapel & Sanctuary QUIET TIME 12:00pm Adv. ESL Class 12:00pm Beginner ESL	<b>19</b> 12:45am Chapel & Sanctuary QUIET TIME 9:30am Weekly Prayer Gp. 9:30am WVP Pictures 6:20pm Recreational Bowling (Calvary & West Lawn)	<b>20</b> 12:45am Chapel & Sanctuary QUIET TIME 9:30am WVP Pictures 7:00pm Choir Rehearsal	<b>21</b> 12:45am Chapel & Sanctuary QUIET TIME 9:30am "Let's Talk About It" Bible Study/LIFE Gp	<b>22</b> 12:45am Chapel & Sanctuary QUIET TIME 7:00pm Couple's Bible Study and Fellowship	<b>23</b>
<b>24</b> 9:15am Sunday school for all ages 10:30am Traditional Worship w/Livestreaming 11:40am Potluck Luncheon 4:00pm Community Thanksgiving Service @ Calvary U.M. Church 4:00pm Youth Group (6th-12th gr.)	<b>25</b> 12:45am Chapel & Sanctuary QUIET TIME	<b>26</b> 12:45am Chapel & Sanctuary QUIET TIME 9:30am Weekly Prayer Gp. 6:20pm Recreational Bowling (Calvary & West Lawn)	<b>27</b> 12:45am Chapel & Sanctuary QUIET TIME	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>