



1 W. Wyomissing Ave., Mohnton, PA 19540

Dec. 8th, 2024 – Dec. 14th, 2024

www.calvaryumcmohnton.org

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

Deck the Halls with HOPE

12/01/24 Pastor Nova

Unlike many traditional Christmas carols, Deck the Halls is secular. It focuses on decorating, feasting, and general merriment rather than explicitly religious themes. But as we consider decking the halls of our homes, what about decking the halls of our hearts—with hope? HOPE is the first candle of Advent.

What is Hope?

Hope is a feeling of expectation and desire for a certain outcome or something good to happen in the future. It's often tied to optimism, resilience, and the belief that circumstances can improve.

Biblically, hope is more than wishful thinking—it is the confident expectation of what God has promised, rooted in His faithfulness.

- Romans 15:13: "May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in Him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit."
- Hope is a forward-looking perspective that sustains us in difficult times, giving us strength and motivation.

Is Hope the Same as Faith?

While hope and faith are closely related, they are not the same.

1. Faith is about trust and belief in something or someone. It is a present reality and often more action oriented. Biblically, faith is described as "confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see" (Hebrews 11:1). Faith rests on the promises of God and His character, enabling us to act on them now.
2. Hope, on the other hand, is more future-oriented. It is the expectation that those promises will come to fruition, often sustaining faith when circumstances seem bleak.

Analogy:

- Faith is like planting a seed, trusting it will grow because you believe in the process of nature (or God's promise).
- Hope is looking forward to the day when the tree bears fruit, even while waiting through the seasons.

~Sermon cont'd on pg. 3



Remember to stop by the church narthex to check for any Christmas cards that may have been dropped off for you/your family!



December 8th, 2024

9:15AM ~ Sunday school

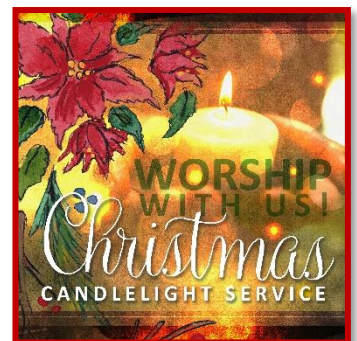
10:30AM ~ Traditional Service

Sermon Series:

Deck the Halls Wk. #2

Peace

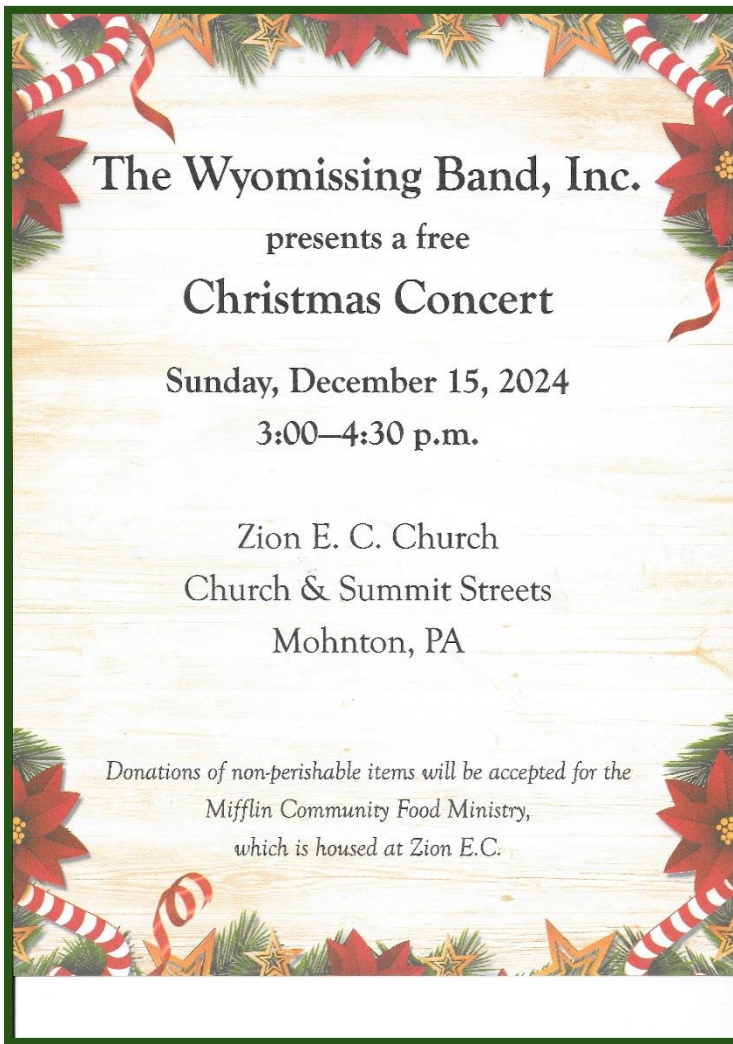
**SUNDAY LIVESTREAM
CTRL + CLICK HERE**



7:00PM –

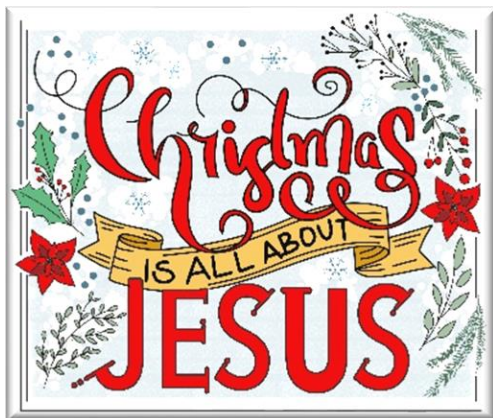
*Traditional
Candlelight
Communion
Service*

w/ the Brass Ensemble
before & after the
service.



Calvary Christmas Card EXCHANGE

- Calvary will continue our tradition of exchanging Christmas cards among our LOCAL church members and friends. (In the past, many cards have NOT been picked up; therefore, we ask that cards NOT be left at church for out-of-town members.)
- Bruce Morton will set up a drop-off/pick-up table in the narthex after Thanksgiving.
- Please alphabetize your cards.
- Cards addressed to local shut-ins will be delivered by a member of Calvary, but if you have time to hand deliver shut-in cards, you are encouraged and welcomed to do so.



SEASONAL HIGHLIGHTS

December Mifflin Food Ministry Needs:

Canned chicken breast, instant potatoes, canned yams, 100% Fruit Juice, Kleenex, canned pineapple, pasta sauce, canned peaches, stuffing, and cookie mix. Items needed by Fri., Dec. 20th. Place donations in the lower cabinets in the narthex.

Christmas Caroling at Berks Heim: ALL

Calvary members and friends are invited to participate in Christmas caroling for the residents of Berks Heim (1011 Berks Rd., Leesport, PA) on Friday, Dec. 20th. Carpooling from the church; please be present by 1PM. If you have any questions, please call or text Pastor Nova at 201-699-6704.

09 - Craig Caltagirone
38 Hilgert Ave.
Shillington, PA 19607

14 - Lesley Hartman
375 Oregon Road
Mohnton, PA 19540



THE BRAILLE WRITER

by Chaplain Kenneth E. Dearstyne, Sr.

Ray arrived in our little village of Pittstown, NY in the late 1930's. He had married Mary Baker, a young woman who had grown up in the home of her grandparents in the village.

Ray and Mary immediately became involved in the church, he as a Sunday school teacher and both of them as counselors of our Youth Fellowship. I well remember many winter evenings when a dozen or more of us would gather in the large living room of their home in front of a blazing fire. Several of us, including one or two of the girls, would soon find ourselves in uniform. Ray and Mary were sensitive, wise counselors not far beyond us in years. They never restricted our discussions, even when they involved subjects that our parents were careful to avoid.

I had not thought of this fine young couple in many years. Several weeks ago, a discussion with my daughter-in-law, Donna, rekindled the memories. Donna has devoted her life to teaching children with special needs. She told me about a girl who is both blind and autistic. In order to help this girl, Donna has had to learn Braille. When she mentioned using a Braille writer, memories came flooding back.

Ray Lavender had been working on the development of a compact, affordable Braille writer since the age of twelve, when he produced his first working model. That model is now on display in the Library of Congress.

Ray had graduated from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute (RPI) in Troy, NY only a short time before moving to our village. He was hard at work on a Braille writer that could be mass-produced at a reasonable price. His work was being financed by The American Printing House for the Blind in New York City. Ray's eyesight was not good. He wore very thick glasses. Reading gauges and dials in his shop was difficult. One day, he asked me and another young man, George Borter, if we would be interested in helping in the shop.

George and I would spend evenings both learning and doing. Ray taught us how to produce parts for the Braille writer on a metal lathe and milling machine. In a sense, we became his eyes. He taught us to read blueprints and use them to make parts and assemble models of the Braille writer.

I remember the thrill of visiting the offices of The American Printing House for the Blind in New York. Ray took us there on several occasions when he demonstrated each new model.

Then, abruptly, World War II intervened. George and I enlisted. Ray's eyes prevented military service, but he became part of the war effort in other ways. My son, Peter, found a record stating that, in 1943, Ray Lavender installed the first radar system aboard a U.S. Navy vessel, the carrier, Enterprise.

After the war, in 1950, Ray continued where he left off and, in 1962, a plastic version of the Lavender Braille Writer went into production. It was manufactured until 1982. Peter also found photos of the writer on the American Printing House for the Blind Museum website and, sure enough, it looks very much like the demonstration models I made parts for so many years ago.

I have no information on Ray Lavender's later life, but I am certain that his brilliant, creative mind did not remain idle for even a moment.

Ray's father was an ordained minister in Troy Conference of the Methodist Church. Lavender's bookstore was well known in the city of Troy for many years. Ray's life was strongly influenced by his religious background. Development of the Braille writer was his way of using his talent and training to make life better for those less fortunate.



Sermon *cont'd* from pg. 1

Faith is believing in the promise now. Hope is looking forward to its fulfillment. Both are essential to a vibrant Christian life (1 Corinthians 13:13). Faith and hope work together, grounded in love, to sustain our journey with God.

Connecting Deck the Halls and Hope

Isaiah 9:2-7 speaks to a hope greater than any holiday tradition. This hope is firmly established in the promises of God, upheld by His unwavering faithfulness.

3 Ways to Deck the Halls with Hope

1. Deck the Halls with Hope in the Promise of God

- Isaiah 9:2: *"The people walking in darkness have seen a great light."*
- During Isaiah's time, the Israelites faced darkness and oppression. God promised a light—a Savior to bring deliverance and peace.

Our Hope:

- Just as God promised a Messiah to Israel, His promises remain true for us today.

- In moments of uncertainty, God's faithfulness gives us assurance and liberation.

Challenge:

What promises of God are you holding onto during this season?

- Personal struggles, health issues, relationships, financial concerns, spiritual challenges, or societal pressures.

Deck your heart with hope by standing on His Word.

2. Deck the Halls with Hope in the Person of Jesus

- Isaiah 9:6: *"For unto us a child is born, to us a son is given."*
- Messianic Fulfillment: This prophecy points to Jesus as the "Wonderful Counselor," "Mighty God," "Everlasting Father," and "Prince of Peace."

Jesus' Impact:

- He brought light to a world in darkness, healing, peace, and redemption.
- His presence inspires hope amid life's chaos.

Reflection:

Who is Jesus in your life? How does He inspire hope, even in difficult times?

3. Deck the Halls with Hope in Promoting the Gift

- Isaiah 9:7: *"Of the greatness of his government and peace, there will be no end."*

Our Call:

- Like Judah, our world needs hope. We are called to share Christ's light in the darkness.
- Your story of hope can inspire others to find assurance in God's promises.

Challenge:

How can you be a beacon of hope this season? Through:

- Acts of kindness
- Words of encouragement
- Sharing Jesus' story

Deck someone else's life with hope by pointing them to the Prince of Peace.

As we prepare for Christmas, let's focus on hope:

1. **Hope in the Promise:** Trusting God's plan even when we can't see the outcome.

2. **Hope in the Person:** Celebrating Jesus as the light in our darkness.

3. **Hope in Promoting the Gift:** Sharing Christ's hope with the world.

This Advent season, may we live confidently in God's faithfulness, sharing His hope with others. Let us declare with joy:

"Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given!" Our Living Hope.

In the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen.



SAFE BERKS WISH LIST HOLIDAY 2024

The following items are needed for the families at the SAFE BERKS shelter.

(Please only new items! Drop Off at the Church by 12/15)

Toys, dolls, games, puzzles

Adult coloring books/ Books, Books/Puzzle Books for Teens

New clothing, all sizes for babies, children, teens and adults

Pajamas, Robes, Slippers, Socks (All sizes)

Coats, Gloves, Hats, Scarves for Women, Men and Teens

Gift Cards: Walmart, Game Stop, iTunes,

It is also possible to shop online by going to the SAFE BERKS website, choose Donate, scroll to the bottom and follow links to either Boscov's or Amazon wish lists. Any questions, call Diane Anderson at 484-269-7599. Thank you for your support!





Dec. 2nd, 2024 Church Council Meeting ~ Pastor's Devotional

Scripture Reading: Isaiah 43:18-21

Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past. See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland. The wild animals honor me, the jackals and the owls, because I provide water in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland, to give drink to my people, my chosen, the people I formed for myself that they may proclaim my praise.

Reflection & Discernment questions:

1. Where do we see God already at work in our church and community?
2. How can we align our resources and efforts to support His mission?
3. What "new thing" might God be calling us to embrace?

Reflection:

God is always at work bringing renewal and growth, even in the most challenging circumstances. As we step into the task of planning for next year (vitality and sustainability), **we are called to embrace God's creative power to transform and revitalize.** Just as God made streams in the wilderness for His people, He can provide new ways for our church to thrive and meet the needs of the community.

This is a time to focus not on past struggles or limitations but on the fresh opportunities God is revealing. We are partners in God's mission, tasked with discerning how to steward our resources and energy for the flourishing of our church and its impact on the world. We cannot be doing the same things and expect growth, we need to step up to be the Church God intended us to be. It is God's Spirit that gives life, and it is our role to follow His leading with faith, humility, and boldness.

Prayer:

Heavenly Father, thank You for the promise that You are always doing something new for and among us. Open our eyes to perceive the opportunities You are laying before us. Grant us wisdom, creativity, and unity as we seek to build a team that will help sustain the mission and vitality of our church. May we trust in Your provision and walk forward in faith, knowing You will make a way. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Vision - What do you see God will do to Calvary three years from now?

Currently, our vision is to have 206 in attendance for weekly worship by 12/31/2026

Mission - How are we going to participate to what God will do?

Announcements

Sunday Potluck Lunches:

Following the 10:30AM service, on the 4th Sunday of every month to celebrate birthdays & share in fellowship!

Next potluck: Sun., 12/22
Church Christmas party
Bring a gift to exchange (\$20)

ADVENT DEVOTIONALS

Submitted by Calvary members & available on our website at calvaryumcmohnton.org (homepage slider)
From Sunday, Dec. 1st through Christmas Eve.

ENJOY!

Couples' Fellowship

Next dates
Fridays: Jan. 7th, 14th,
and Feb. 7th @ 7PM

Couples' Party
Friday, Feb. 14th

FUN!

Special Christmas Gifts

A variety of gifts may be given in honor of or in memory of loved ones. Please indicate your choice(s) below. **All gifts must be received by Wednesday, December 18th.** Checks may be made payable to "Calvary UMC" with the *gift designation in the memo section*.

The dedications will be printed in the *Calvary Connection* edition just prior to Christmas Eve.

_____ A Poinsettia to adorn the sanctuary (\$12 each)

_____ GSM Medical Camps (\$10)

_____ Safe Berks (formerly Berks Women in Crisis) (\$10)

_____ Mifflin Community Food Ministry (\$10) To help defray extra expenses at Christmas.

NAME: _____ Env. # _____
(if applicable)

IN HONOR OF _____

~ 4~

IN MEMORY OF: _____

Please mail your donation and dedication(s) to:
Calvary UMC, Attn: J. Dearstyne, 1 West Wyomissing Ave., Mohnton, PA 19540



Remember to Send Holiday Cheer & Love to:

Please send these 1st class or hand deliver; do not place these in the Christmas card exchange.

Shirley Ayrton
Health Center, Rm. 114
PO Box 125
Cornwall, PA 17016-0125

Michelle Daniels
4106 Lynn Ave.
Reading, PA 19606

Bonnie Ehst
Berks Heim, Room A206
1011 Berks Rd.
Leesport, PA 19533

Ginny Epps
Berks Heim, Room A317
1011 Berks Rd.
Leesport, PA 19533

Ron & Dawn Fox
2139 Reading, Blvd.
West Lawn, PA 19609

Pegge Harshaw
Mifflin Court, Rm. 216
450 E. Philadelphia Ave.
Shillington, PA 19607

Suzie & John Maniaci
9 Bancroft Terrace
Shillington, PA 19607

Doris McCleary
230 Hawthorne Ct., N.
Wyomissing, PA 19610

Doris Metz
% Darryl Metz
407 Valor Dr.
Lititz, PA 17543

Janet Reppert
308 Maplewood Ave.
Mohnton, PA 19540

John & Dorismarie Rowe
Fairmount Health Center
333 Wheat Ridge Rd.
Ephrata, PA 17522

Doug & Alice Schonour
35 Sage Dr.
Sinking Spring, PA 19608

Lola Troutman
1 Summer Hill Drive
Sinking Spring, PA 19608

Karen Wade
616 Mull Ave.
Leesport, PA 19533

Sue Werner
Phoebe Berks Village Gardens
9 Heidelberg, Dr., Room 106
Wernersville, PA 19565



DECEMBER

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 8:00am Praise Service 9:15am Sunday school for all ages 10:30am Traditional Worship w/Livestreaming 4:00pm Children's Club Christmas Party 6:00pm Mohnnton Tree Lighting	2 PRESCHOOL CHRISTMAS SHOPPE 12:00pm Adv. ESL Class 12:00pm Beginner ESL 12:45pm Chapel & Sanctuary QUIET TIME 7:00pm Church Council Mtg	3 PRESCHOOL CHRISTMAS SHOPPE 9:00am Weekly Prayer Gp. 12:45pm Chapel & Sanctuary QUIET TIME 6:20pm Recreational Bowling (Calvary & West Lawn)	4 PASTOR NOVA ON VACATION PRESCHOOL CHRISTMAS SHOPPE 9:00am Local Pastor's Gathering 12:45pm Chapel & Sanctuary QUIET TIME	5 PASTOR NOVA ON VACATION PRESCHOOL CHRISTMAS SHOPPE 9:30am "Let's Talk About It" Bible Study/LIFE Gp 12:45pm Chapel & Sanctuary QUIET TIME 7:00pm Prayer Warrior's Night	6 PASTOR NOVA ON VACATION PRESCHOOL CHRISTMAS SHOPPE 12:45pm Chapel & Sanctuary QUIET TIME	7 PASTOR NOVA ON VACATION
8 PASTOR NOVA ON VACATION/BOB WAGNER PREACHING 9:15am Sunday school for all ages 10:30am Traditional Worship w/Livestreaming 5:00pm Youth Group (6th-12th gr.) Christmas Party @ Parsonage	9 PASTOR NOVA ON VACATION 9:00am Preschool Christmas Program Practice 12:45pm Chapel & Sanctuary QUIET TIME 2:30pm Piano Tuning	10 9:00am Preschool Christmas Program Practice 9:00am Weekly Prayer Gp. 12:45pm Chapel & Sanctuary QUIET TIME 6:20pm Recreational Bowling (Calvary & West Lawn)	11 9:00am Preschool Christmas Program Practice 12:00pm Adv. ESL Class 12:00pm Beginner ESL 12:45pm Chapel & Sanctuary QUIET TIME	12 9:00am Preschool Christmas Program Practice 9:30am "Let's Talk About It" Bible Study/LIFE Gp 12:45pm Chapel & Sanctuary QUIET TIME 6:30pm WVP Christmas Program	13 12:45pm Chapel & Sanctuary QUIET TIME	14 8:00am Praise Team Rehearsal
15 8:00am Praise Service 9:15am Sunday school for all ages 10:30am Traditional Worship w/Livestreaming 4:00pm Children's Club	16 12:00pm Adv. ESL Class 12:00pm Beginner ESL 12:45pm Chapel & Sanctuary QUIET TIME	17 9:00am Weekly Prayer Gp. 11:00am Calvary Early Learning Ctr Chapel Time 12:45pm Chapel & Sanctuary QUIET TIME 6:20pm Recreational Bowling (Calvary & West Lawn)	18 11:00am Calvary Early Learning Ctr Chapel Time 12:45pm Chapel & Sanctuary QUIET TIME	19 9:30am "Let's Talk About It" Bible Study/LIFE Gp 12:45pm Chapel & Sanctuary QUIET TIME 5:30pm Wadsworth Christmas Piano Recital	20 Food Donations Due 12:45pm Chapel & Sanctuary QUIET TIME 2:00pm Caroling at Berks Heim	21 9:00am Mifflin Food Ministry Distribution @ Zion ECC
22 9:15am Sunday school for all ages 10:30am Traditional Worship w/Livestreaming 11:40am Potluck Luncheon 4:00pm Youth Group (6th-12th gr.)	23 12:45pm Chapel & Sanctuary QUIET TIME	24 6:40pm Brass Ensemble 7:00pm Candlelight Communion Traditional Service	25	26 GSM MISSION TRIP	27 GSM MISSION TRIP	28 GSM MISSION TRIP
29 GSM MISSION TRIP 10:30am Traditional Worship w/Livestreaming	30 GSM MISSION TRIP	31 GSM MISSION TRIP 9:00am Weekly Prayer Gp.	1 GSM MISSION TRIP	2 GSM MISSION TRIP	3 GSM MISSION TRIP	4 GSM MISSION TRIP 8:00am Praise Team Rehearsal