



1 W. Wyomissing Ave., Mohnton, PA 19540

Dec. 22nd, 2024 – Dec. 28th, 2024

www.calvaryumcmohnton.org

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

Deck the Halls with JOY

12/15/24 sermon by Pastor Nova; Scripture: Luke 1:39-55

What are the things that bring you joy? Perhaps it was a last-minute invite to a gathering or a gift from someone unexpected. These moments can bring joy into our lives in surprising ways.

Reflect:

- How many times have you done something you didn't want to do but ended up enjoying it?
- I remember a time when I received a surprise gift. It was simple, but it filled my heart with joy and reminded me of the unexpected ways God works and provides through others.
- What about you? Have you ever experienced joy in an unexpected way?

God provides joy in unexpected ways through unexpected means, people, and places.

Joy and happiness are often confused, but they're not the same. Happiness depends on happenings—what's going on around us. Joy, however, is deeper. It's rooted in God's presence and promises.

I remember a time when I didn't expect much joy—life felt heavy. But in the middle of it, God sent someone who encouraged me, shared kindness, and reminded me of His goodness. That encounter lifted my heart, not because my circumstances changed, but because I was reminded of God's faithfulness.

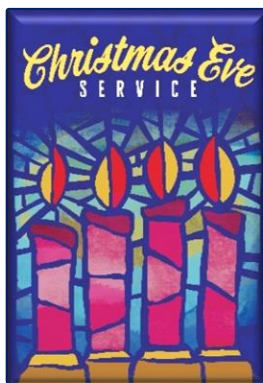
What about you? Have you experienced joy in unexpected ways?

What is Joy?

The Bible tells us that joy is a gift from God, something far greater than momentary happiness. Here's what the Bible reveals about joy:

- **Hebrew (*Simcha*, *Sason*):** A celebration of great events like weddings or births. God uses these milestones to show His faithfulness and bring joy to His people.

~Sermon cont'd on pg. 3



Traditional
Candlelight
Communion

7:00PM

w/ the Brass Ensemble before &
after the service.



*Fourth Sunday
of Advent*

December 22nd, 2024

9:15AM ~ Sunday school

10:30AM ~ Traditional Service

Sermon Series:

Deck the Halls Wk. #4

Love

SUNDAY LIVESTREAM
CTRL + CLICK HERE



**This Sunday,
Dec. 22nd
Church Christmas
Party**

**Bring a gift to
exchange (\$20)
and a potluck dish
to share after the
10:30AM service.**

DECEMBER

23 – Bonnie Comeau
24 Gillen Terrace
Gloversville, NY 12078

24 - Matthew Chandler
5 Kenny Drive
Mohnton, PA 19540

25 – Mike Wahl, Jr.
1050 Palisades Dr.
Leeport, PA 19533

26 – Paige DeLoretta
453 Kenny Dr.
Sinking Spg, PA 19608

27 - Marilyn Williams
21 Overlook Rd.
Morgantown, PA 19543

In case of inclement weather, please tune into Channel 69 News and watch the lower scroll, and/or check our website for any worship service or meeting cancellations/delays.

They will be posted on the **ORANGE** banner at the top of the home page.

The church office will follow the Governor Mifflin schedule for delays, early dismissals and cancellations.



THE CHURCH OFFICE WILL BE CLOSED

from Christmas Day through
New Year's Day.

While Pastor Nova is in India (Dec. 26 – Jan. 7), Bob Wagner will be covering for any pastoral emergencies. You may contact him at home (610-796-0111) or his cell (610-406-7038).

NEXT WEEK

There will be no edition of the
Connection.



COUPLES' FELLOWSHIP

Next dates

Fridays: Jan. 17th, 24th,
and
Feb. 7th @ 7PM

COUPLES' PARTY

Friday, Feb. 14th



Calvary Christmas Card Exchange

Calvary is continuing our tradition of exchanging Christmas cards among our LOCAL church members and friends.

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



CHURCH STAFF OPENING: Janet Dearstyne will be retiring the end of March 2025. We are looking to hire someone for the role of Administrative Assistant to begin on March 1st. This will allow a period of transition.

If you or someone you know is interested in learning more about this opportunity, please contact Michelle Tomczak, SPRC Chair, at 484-650-0223. The job description is posted on the bulletin board near the end of the main hallway, by the restrooms.

- **Greek (*Chara*):** The first time it is mentioned in the New Testament is coupled with the birth of Jesus: “When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceedingly great joy” (Matthew 2:10). The joy Elizabeth and Mary experienced was a leaping, ecstatic delight—a wild joy (Luke 1:44-47).

Joy is also one of the fruits of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23). It's not something we muster up but something God plants in us through His Spirit. As Christians, being joyful should be one of our defining traits.

Luke, the 3rd gospel in the New Testament, was written by Luke, a historian, physician, and Gentile, around 70-85 CE. His purpose was to present an orderly account of Jesus' birth, life, ministry, death, and resurrection and to show Jesus as the one who offers salvation to all humanity. If Matthew's Gospel was written for the Jews, Luke's Gospel was written for the Gentiles.

The Story of Joy in Mary and Elizabeth's Lives: Three Joys

There is Joy in Encouragement (Fellowship/Community)

Mary's visit to Elizabeth is a beautiful example of unexpected joy. Mary visited Elizabeth in a time of uncertainty. Despite her miraculous pregnancy at an old age, Elizabeth is filled with joy when Mary arrives. Her baby leaps in her womb, responding to being in the presence of Jesus. Elizabeth's blessing transformed Mary's fear into celebration. God's presence through Elizabeth encouraged and gave Mary joy.

- God uses people to bring us joy and encouragement. Like Elizabeth encouraged Mary, we can encourage others to see God's hand in their lives.
- There is joy in meeting and fellowship.
- There is joy in God's presence: “The joy of the Lord is our strength” (Nehemiah 8:10). Spend time with Him in prayer and Scripture.

There is Joy in Praising

Inspired by Elizabeth's affirmation, Mary sings a song of joy and praise. She celebrates God's faithfulness to His promises and His care for the humble and hungry. Mary's joy is grounded in her deep faith and understanding of God's goodness. From Luke 1:46-55:

- God's faithfulness to His promises: “He has been mindful of the humble state of His servant.”
- God's greatness and mercy: “The Mighty One has done great things for me—holy is His name.”
- God's justice and provision: “He has filled the hungry with good things.”

Mary rejoiced not because her situation was easy but because she trusted God's promises. There is joy in worship and praising God, singing of His greatness and goodness.

There is Joy in Sharing

Mary couldn't keep her joy to herself; she sang of God's greatness for all to hear. Even in a time of personal uncertainty and societal unrest, Mary's joy overflowed.

- Our joy isn't just for us—it's meant to bless others and reflect God's mercy and grace.
- Joy doesn't come from perfect circumstances; it comes from knowing God is with us.
- Mary and Elizabeth rejoiced because they focused on God's goodness, faithfulness, and power.

As a church, we are called to “Deck the Halls with Joy.” Let's reflect on how we can spread God's joy to our community:

- How can we welcome and bless unexpected guests?
- Can we support those who feel weary or discouraged with acts of kindness and hope?
- How can we proclaim the Good News of Jesus in ways that uplift and inspire others?

Let's follow Mary's example and make our lives a song of praise, sharing God's joy with the world.

In times of uncertainty and challenges, Elizabeth and Mary found joy in God's faithfulness and saving grace. They focused their eyes on God and saw the things that could bring them joy.

Reflect on these questions

- What is your calling to help others have joy?
- What do you see in people around you that can help them find joy?

As a church, we are called to be like Elizabeth—welcoming and affirming, helping others find joy in their circumstances. We are called to follow Mary's example and make our lives a song of praise, sharing God's joy with the world.

This Advent, even in moments of uncertainty or difficulty, let's remember Mary and Elizabeth's story. Their joy wasn't tied to easy lives but to their deep trust in God's faithfulness and love.

Final Thought: Sometimes it is hard to have joy in the midst of uncertainty and despair, but as long as we have hope in God, we can find joy in His promises and the greatness of His grace. God is the source of true joy. Whatever your situation is, deck the halls with joy! Rejoice in the Lord always, and again I say, rejoice!

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



*Thank you to all those
who shared so generously
to help bring the joy of
Christmas to others.
Your gifts make a
difference.*

A poinsettia to adorn the altar was sponsored by

Chuck & Joyce Wills in memory of loved ones.
Jim & Carol Adams in memory of Jeanne Adams.
Matthew Chandler in honor of Pastor Nova and Justin for helping with surgery transportation.
Marianna Wolfe in honor of the Thursday morning discussion group, Pastor Nova & family, and Jay & Jan Wonder, and in memory of her parents and Charlie Wolfe.

Gifts for Safe Berks were sponsored by

Bill & Lisa Ruth in memory of John Rowe.
Don & Kay Wadsworth in memory of Don's parents, Walter & Marylou Wadsworth and Kay's parents, Fred & Jeanne Hoffman.
Ron & Diane Anderson in memory of Shea Anderson.
Anthony & Michelle Tomczak in memory of Rev. Bill Garrett.
Danny & Gloria Hutzell in honor of their grandchildren: Paige & Lillyanne DeLoretta and Zayn elSamaky, and in memory of Charlie Morgart, Sr.
Joy Ruth in memory of George, Shirley, Tim, and Todd Miller, and Justin Ruth.
Kelly & Joyce Baumgartle in honor of their Moms and in memory of their Dads.
Lyle & Cheryl Neal in memory of Lyle's parents, Frank & Irmgard Neal.

Gifts for the Food Ministry were sponsored by

Bill & Lisa Ruth in memory of John Rowe.
Chuck & Joyce Wills in memory of loved ones.
Danny & Gloria Hutzell in honor of their grandchildren: Paige & Lillyanne DeLoretta and Zayn elSamaky, and in memory of Charlie Morgart, Sr.
Jim & Carol Adams in memory of Jeanne Adams.
Joy Ruth in memory of George, Shirley, Tim, and Todd Miller, and Justin Ruth.

Gifts for the Food Ministry were sponsored by

Matthew Chandler in honor of Pastor Nova and Justin for helping with surgery transportation.
Lyle & Cheryl Neal in memory of Cheryl's parents, Raymond & Gloria Renninger.
Marianna Wolfe.

A gift for the GSM India Team Medical Camps was sponsored by

Bill & Lisa Ruth in memory of John Rowe.
Don & Kay Wadsworth in memory of Don's parents, Walter & Marylou Wadsworth and Kay's parents, Fred & Jeanne Hoffman.
Ron & Diane Anderson in memory of Debbie Fernsler.
Anthony & Michelle Tomczak in memory of Rev. Bill Garrett.
Danny & Gloria Hutzell in honor of their grandchildren: Paige & Lillyanne DeLoretta and Zayn elSamaky, and in memory of Charlie Morgart, Sr.
Joy Ruth in memory of George, Shirley, Tim, and Todd Miller, and Justin Ruth.
Kelly & Joyce Baumgartle in honor of their Moms and in memory of their Dads.
Lyle & Cheryl Neal in memory of Louanna Wagner.
Marianna Wolfe.

A gift for the Good Shepherd Mission was sponsored by

Marianna Wolfe in memory of Charlie.

