



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



Happy New Year! Mifflin Community Food Ministry is sending you the history of Souper Bowl of Caring and asking if you/your youth would participate on February 8, 2026, Super Bowl Sunday (or another day in February) by asking the members of your congregation or organization or school to bring in a canned food item that Sunday with a \$1 bill rubber-banded around it and donate the food and money to the Mifflin Community Food Ministry, 57 N. Church Street, Mohnton, PA. You may respond to us by email. Thank you for your help. See below. Janet Reese janet.reese484@gmail.com

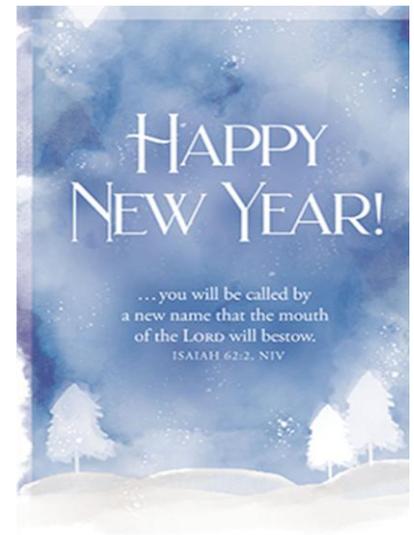
A simple prayer: "Lord, even as we enjoy the Super Bowl football game, help us be mindful of those who are without a bowl of soup to eat" is inspiring a youth-led movement to help hungry and hurting people around the world.

This prayer, delivered by Brad Smith, then a seminary intern serving at Spring Valley Presbyterian Church in Columbia, SC, gave birth to an idea. Why not use Super Bowl weekend, a time when people come together for football and fun, to also unify the nation for a higher good: collecting dollars and canned food for the needy? Youth could collect donations at their schools and churches in soup pots, and then send every dollar and food item directly to a local charity of their choice.

That was 1990. Since then, SouperBowl of Caring as part of Tackle Hunger, has generated an extraordinary \$220 million for soup kitchens, food banks and other charities in communities across the country. In addition, hundreds of thousands of youth have experienced for themselves the joy and satisfaction of giving and serving, inspiring people of all ages to follow their generous example. (See [souperbowl.org](http://souperbowl.org)). Please be a part of helping the millions of households in America without enough food by starting with the Mifflin area.

Members may place your canned soup donations in the pots on the counters above the MCFM collection cupboards at the end of the main hallway into the sanctuary anytime between now and Sunday, February 8.

**Let's FILL UP THE COUNTER to overflowing!**



## BLESSED BONDS

Next Lunch Dates  
Wednesday, January  
14<sup>th</sup> 11:30 AM at Sam's  
Wyomissing Bistro

Reach out to Linda Chandler  
with any questions.

**ALL ARE INVITED!**

## TWO MINUTES MORE...

Tune in to a weekly word of challenge and encouragement as Christ Servant Minister, Craig Caltagirone, offers sound and inspiring spiritual reflections on contemporary matters.

Consider using these solid two minutes for your own personal reflections or small group discussions. Either way, you'll be surprised at just how meaningful 2 minutes of your day will be if you visit our website and look for Craig's Podcasts

The 2026 Altar Flower chart is available for sponsors to sign up. Check your calendar to see which special occasion/person you'd like to honor or remember by sponsoring flowers to adorn the altar for Sunday worship.

# JANUARY Birthdays

03 – Joanne Schmidt  
03 – Jeanette Magerman  
05 – Becky Godfrey  
09 – Nathan Chandler  
09 – Lillyanne DeLoretta  
10 – Stacey Shannon  
11 – Bill Ruth

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.\*\*



## YOUTH GROUP NEWS

Sunday, January 11  
Kids Club 4:00PM

Sunday, January 18  
Youth Independent trip on your own to Greta Glen for Winter Blast. No regular Youth Group

Sunday, January 25  
Kids Club 4:00PM

### Looking Ahead into February 2026...

Pocono Winter Retreat  
February 20-22 for older youth.

Winter Jam at Santander February 26<sup>th</sup> at  
6:00PM

## a Big Thanks



In usual fashion, our Calvary family responded with overwhelming generosity to those in need. There was an abundant offering of clothing, blankets and handmade scarves for the families at SAFE BERKS. Thank you to everyone who helped to warm the holidays for others. It is greatly appreciated by all.

Church Liaison,  
Diane Anderson



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



**Poinsettias to adorn the altar were sponsored by:**

Tomczak Family in honor of our Parents  
Jim & Carol Adams in memory of Jeanne Adams

**Gifts for the Pastor's Discretionary Fund were sponsored by:**

Diane & Ron Anderson in memory of Shea Anderson  
Marlene Burkard  
Toni & Eli Calata in memory of Pedro & Antonia Serrano and Froilan & Dolores Calata  
Vickie Dautrich  
Joan Fisher in memory of Craig Fisher and our parents Betty & LeRoy Hoffert and Wes & Jayne Fisher  
Danny & Gloria Hutzell in memory of our parents: Ivan & Nancy Ross and Joan & Ellwood Hutzell  
Scott Piergrossi  
Bill & Lisa Ruth in memory of Bill & Pauline Ruth  
Allen Stalnecker in memory of Jason Stalnecker  
Chuck Wills in memory of Loved Ones

**Gifts for the Mifflin Food Bank were sponsored by:**

Pa State Education Association  
Kelly & Joyce Baumgartle in memory of our dads and sister-in-law  
Linda Chandler in memory of her sister Teresa  
Lyle & Cheryl Neal in memory of Frank & Irnigan Neal  
Bill & Lisa Ruth in memory of Bill & Pauline Ruth  
Marianna Wolfe

**Gifts for the Youth Fellowship were sponsored by:**

Ron & Diane Anderson in memory of Debbie & Anton Fernsler & Christopher Starke  
Joan Fisher in memory of Craig Fisher and our parents Betty & LeRoy Hoffert and Wes & Jayne Fisher  
Bill & Lisa Ruth in memory of Bill & Pauline Ruth  
Tomczak Family in honor of our Parents

**Gifts for the Good Shepherd Mission were sponsored by:**

Kelly & Joyce Baumgartle in memory of our dads and sister-in-law  
Joan Fisher in memory of Craig Fisher and our parents Betty & LeRoy Hoffert and Wes & Jayne Fisher  
Lyle & Cheryl Neal in memory Louanna Wagner & Raymond & Gloria Renninger

**Gifts for the Community Dinner Church were sponsored by:**

Ken & Janet Dearstyne in memory of Rev. Ken & Ruth Dearstyne and Nick Jacobs  
Joan Fisher in memory of Craig Fisher and our parents Betty & LeRoy Hoffert and Wes & Jayne Fisher  
Bill & Lisa Ruth in memory of Bill & Pauline Ruth



### **INTRODUCTION:**

As we step into a new year, we are surrounded by voices telling us what we should fix, improve, or change. January has a way of making us feel like projects—like we need to be upgraded, reorganized, or reimagined. But Epiphany invites us to pause and hear a different word—not a word of pressure, **but a word of revelation**. Before we are told what to do, Scripture tells us **who we are**. Listen again to the opening words from Ephesians:

*“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, **who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing...**”*

Before resolutions. Before expectations. Before the year unfolds- God blesses.

WE ARE BLESSED.

### **1. Chosen Before We Begin**

Paul tells us something astonishing: *“He chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world.”*

Before we got it right. Before we got it wrong. Before we even knew what we were looking for.

WE WERE CHOSEN- **God’s intentional decision**

**Chosen** answers a different question:

*Why are we included at all?*

- It emphasizes **God’s initiative**
- It speaks to **belonging**, not merit
- It addresses **identity**, not outcome

*Choosing is the origin.*

Epiphany is not about us discovering God for the first time.

Epiphany is about realizing that God has already chosen us, already claimed us, already poured grace upon grace into our lives. This is not earned love. This is revealed love.

### **Illustration: The Reserved Seat**

Imagine walking into a sanctuary or a large gathering and seeing a small sign on a chair that says, *“Reserved.”* You might assume it’s for someone important—someone expected.

Now imagine being told, *“That seat is for you.”* You didn’t earn it.

You didn’t request it. It was set aside before you arrived.

That’s what Paul means when he says we were *chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world*. Before the year began. Before we knew what we were stepping into.

Epiphany reveals that we don’t come to God hoping there’s room

**room was already made for us. Isn’t that wonderful?**

### **2. The Light That Was Already There**

Some of you may have noticed this light up here today. It’s been on the whole time.

I didn’t turn it on during worship. No one announced it. It was already shining before we began.

Think about walking into a room late at night. You reach for the switch—and realize the lights are already on. You didn’t cause the light. You didn’t power it. **You simply entered what was already illuminated.** That’s the message of Epiphany.

Christ is not the light we turn on when life gets dark. **Christ is the Light who was already shining—before Bethlehem, before the manger, before the star.**

John takes us back Bethlehem, before the manger, Before the star-back to the beginning itself. Christ is not a backup plan, Christ is not an afterthought, **Christ is the light that was already shining. John is saying: "Jesus is not just part of the story. He is the source of the story."** Some of us come into worship thinking we need to fix ourselves first.

Turn something on. Get something right.

**But Epiphany says: The Light is already on.**

You don't create it. You don't earn it. You step into it.

And if the Light was already shining before we arrived—then Epiphany is not about what we do for Christ...but about who Christ already is for us. Epiphany reminds us that the Light did not wait for perfect conditions. The Light entered the world as it is: confused, divided, fragile, beautiful. And once we realize that—that the Light does not flicker on and off depending on us— we begin to see something else John wants us to notice. The Light doesn't just reveal. **The Light gives.** John tells us that from Christ's fullness, we don't receive a little help, or a single moment of mercy we receive again and again.

John says: John 1:16 *"From his fullness we have all received, **grace upon grace.**"*

Not grace once. Not grace only when we deserve it.

### **3. Grace Upon Grace**

Grace stacked upon grace—enough for yesterday, today, and whatever this year brings. *He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him.* John 1:11 Epiphany is also about this truth: the Light is offered, but not always received.

Some look and turn away. Some are too distracted. Some are afraid of what the Light might reveal. But then comes the promise:

**"To all who received him... he gave power to become children of God."**

Not by achievement. Not by effort. Not by human striving. But by grace. **Marked, Claimed, and Sent** Paul tells us in Ephesians 1:13 that we have been *"marked with the seal of the promised Holy Spirit."* That means we do not walk into this year unmarked, unclaimed, or alone. **We belong to God. Our lives are held within God's larger story of redemption.**

**Epiphany reveals not only who Christ is, but who we are in Christ—beloved, chosen, redeemed, and sent to reflect the Light.** We do not create the Light. We bear it. We live it. We point to it *"From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace."*

#### **Illustration: Overflowing Cup**

Picture a cup placed under a flowing faucet. The water fills it, then overflows, yet the water keeps coming. That's grace upon grace. Not grace once. Not grace only when the cup is empty. But grace that continues even after we think we've had enough. John tells us that from Christ's fullness, we receive again and again. Enough grace for yesterday's mistakes, today's struggles, and tomorrow's unknowns. And some step away from that flow. But those who stay those who receive are named children of God, marked, claimed and sent to the dark world to carry God's light.....

#### **A Table of Revealed Grace**

And today, as we come to the table, we come not to summon Christ, but to acknowledge Christ, present and radiant among us. We have seen the Light—and are still learning how to walk in it. Here, the Word becomes tangible, and the Light meets us in bread and cup.

This table is not set for the perfect, but for the beloved; not for those who have everything figured out, but for those who come open to receive grace upon grace. So come—not because you are ready, but because Christ is present and invites you....AMEN

