

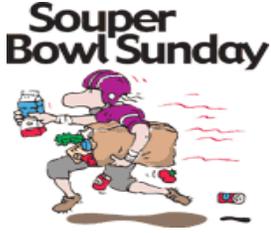


1 W. Wyomissing Ave., Mohnton, PA 19540

Jan. 19th – January 25th, 2026

www.calvaryumcmohnton.org
Office Hours- Mon.-Thur. 9-2
610-777-8441
Administrator.calvmohn@comcast.net

*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). 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!

January 25th, 2026

9:15AM ~ Sunday school

10:30AM ~ Traditional Service

Craig Caltagirone, preaching

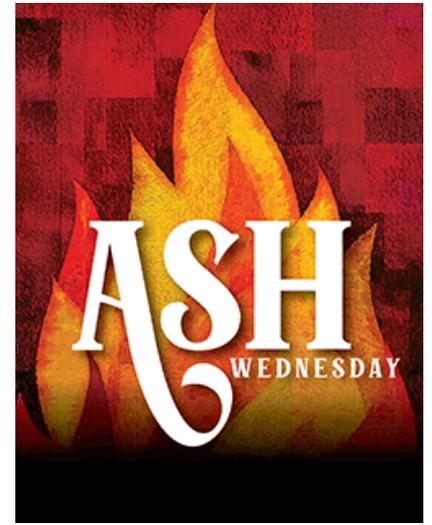
Pastor Nova will be on
Vacation - January 17-
February 3, 2026.

For Pastoral needs please call
Assistant Pastor Bob Wagner,
610-406-7038

Scott Piergrossi will be on
vacation February 8-15, 2026

**ASH WEDNESDAY
SERVICE
February 18, 2026**

Calvary UMC will be hosting
the community Ash
Wednesday Service
February 18, 2026 at
7:00PM. There will be a
community choir. Rehearsal
for this service will be held
February 11, 2026 at
7:00PM in the choir room.



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

21 – Suzy Maniaci
21 – Alex Raszkwicz
22 – Jenna Smith
23 – Ray Dautrich
23 – Courtney Fichthorn
24 – Sean Steffey
25 – John Kline

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 **BLUE** banner at the top of the home page.

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

BLESSED BONDS

Next Lunch Dates
Wednesday, February 11th ,
11:30 AM at the Crooked Hen
on Lancaster Ave, in Shillington.

Reach out to Linda Chandler with
any questions.

ALL ARE INVITED!

YOUTH GROUP NEWS

Sunday, January 25, 2026- Kids Club 4:00pm

Sunday, February 1, 2026- Youth Group 4:00pm

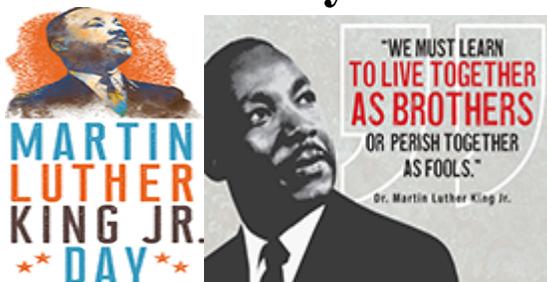
Sunday February 8, 2026- Kids Club 4:00pm

Sunday, February 13 -15 2026 - "New Date" Pocono Winter Retreat for older Youth. Cost is TBA. Please let me know by February 1st if you plan on coming. We would like to leave around 3:30pm.

Sunday, February 22, 2026- Kids Club 4:00pm

Thursday, February 26, 2026 – Winter Jam at Santander for older youth. More details soon.

January 19



Family Promise of Berks County
Celebration & Fundraiser
20th Anniversary Breakfast
Save the Date!
Saturday, April 25, 2026
Join us as we celebrate 20 years of serving Berks County families in need!
Breakfast Event & Program
Saturday, April 25, 2026
8:30 AM
Venue Atonement Lutheran
We look forward to celebrating with you!

Are You the Light? Pastor Neal Sermon from 1/18/26

Almighty God, unto whom all hearts be open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of thy Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love thee, and worthily magnify thy holy name: through Christ our Lord. Amen.

We are in the season of Epiphany. A time of revelation; of coming into the light. emphasize Jesus as the revelation of God's glory. Both of our scriptures for the day speak to light and revelation.

Isaiah 49 offers words of comfort to the Israelites in a time of crisis for God's chosen people. Written around 600 BC to a people exiled in Babylon, their Temple destroyed, uprooted from Jerusalem, Isaiah offers hope. And I believe they offer us hope, comfort and challenge during this time of crisis. One of the Servant Songs, Isaiah's words invite us to consider how God reveals glory through us, God's servants. They open space for us to focus on how to live the substance of our faith in the day-to-day moments and happenings of our lives. (For I believe we are in crisis as well).

John identifies Jesus as the Lamb of God, God's Chosen One. His first followers appear with questions. Today, we still ask those questions today.

The questions I ask you today are the same: Are you the light, and what do you reveal? How and what is revealed by your daily lives?

Let's look at our scriptures to see if we can find answers and direction.

In my big print NIV Bible, Isaiah 49: 1-7 is titled The Servant of the Lord. Who is this servant? Is it an individual, Jacob who is renamed Israel, perhaps, or Isaiah himself? Is it Jesus? Is it the nation of Israel, God's people, called to live as the sign of God's glory at work in the world? What makes you think that?

Wrestling with the text is always a fruitful exercise. When we do so, we are training our minds to think like God. We can begin to hear the message that God had and still has for God's people. In the end, our musing ought to bring us around to the idea that God is speaking about us. We are the ones called into service. We are the ones who need to be the proclaimers, the ones who carry the light out into the world. We are the servant Isaiah 49 is talking about.

I know it is hard to put ourselves in that place. We don't feel named before we were even born. We don't feel equipped, like we speak with a mouth like a sword, or like a polished arrow from the quiver of God. Surely the text is pointing toward someone else. Well, yes, but actually, no. One of the great things about the Bible is that it functions on multiple levels at once. There is a historical reference here that helps us understand how this text was used and seen by readers and hearers of these words from the beginning. There is also a faith reference here. We are being referenced in these words. We are being called to be the servant, the instrument of God's glory at work in the world. So, listen again and listen deeper. Insert your own name as you read.

Inserting yourself into the text, you will find both a high calling and a profound blessing. The high calling is found in the certainty that this light is a light to the world and not to a single people; it's not a national promise, but a universal one. Verse one declares in a loud voice to the coastlands – our own borders – and to the people far away. We do not have exclusive rights to the proclamation, to the call to service, to the blessing light. Later, we read in the voice of God, who says:

It is too small a thing that you should be my servant to restore the tribes of Jacob and bring back those of Israel I have kept. I will give you as a light for the Gentiles, that my salvation may reach to the ends of the earth (Isa. 49:6 NIV.)

“To the ends of the earth.” From the beginning, God’s people were blessed to be a blessing. They were chosen; we were chosen before we came into being as individuals or the community we call the church. We were given a name and a task to bring light into the world and glory to God.

Are we up to the task? Well, no. Let’s be honest, we fail more often than we succeed. We focus on self more than the other. We keep quiet when we should speak out, and we run our mouths when we should be quiet. We aren’t worthy of the call. At least, that is how we feel most of the time or the times when we take an honest look at ourselves. In that, we are not alone. The servant of Isaiah 49 was not up to the task either. “But I said, ‘I have labored in vain; I have spent my strength for nothing at all.’” (Isa. 49:4 NIV). “I can’t do it,” the servant says. “I tried and it wasn’t working, or it didn’t work. I didn’t see the results I hoped to see. I got in the way of my own efforts. Whatever it was, I am not worthy of the call,” the servant says, sounding frighteningly like us in our inadequacy.

But that isn’t the end of verse 4. Our doubts and hesitations are not the end of the story. Neither were they the end of the story for the servant of Isaiah 49.

But I said, "I have labored in vain, I have spent my strength for nothing at all. Yet what is due me is in the Lord’s hand, and my reward is with my God." (Isa. 49:4 NIV).

“Yet what is due me is in the Lord’s hand, and my reward is with my God.” What does that mean? It sounds like the end of the sentence that begins “I am not worthy” is “but I am called anyway.” The task is beyond me, but I am called anyway. The vision is bigger than I am, but I am called anyway. The light is beyond me, but I am called to be a carrier of that light until rulers shall see and bow before the goodness and the glory of God. I may never see that day in this life, but I will carry that light anyway.

Am I the only one who has read scripture as being fantasy. Only to begin reading them as aspirational, to be read with faith and hope.

So, let me ask what do you want?

Those were the first words of Jesus in John 1:38. English translations obscure the meaning of the Greek, which is better translated, “What are you seeking?” Jesus’ ministry begins not with a mighty command to silence a demon, as in Mark; nor with a sermon to the crowds who have gathered on a mountain, as in Matthew; and not with a quotation from

Isaiah to proclaim his anointing for the year of God's favor, as in Luke, but it begins with a question: "What are you seeking?" What are you looking for? What do you need? It is a question worth wrestling with — as individuals, as congregations, as communities — since our answers will have a great deal to do with what we find as well as with the journey we take to get there. What are you seeking? What motivates you? What is that you really need, not just on the surface, but deep down into the core of your being? What are you looking for? Jesus poses his question to two of John's disciples, who, having just learned that Jesus is the Lamb of God, are determined to follow him. Before the story moves very far we will learn that others also are looking for Jesus, but for very different reasons. Crowds are seeking to have their bellies filled with a little more bread (John 6:26); while the religious authorities are seeking to kill him (John 5:18; 7:1; cf. 7:11, 19, 20, 25, etc.); one group seeks life, the other, death. These two disciples, for their part, want something different than either the crowds or the authorities. They want simply to be with Jesus. Like contestants in a television game show, they answer Jesus' question with one of their own: "Where are you staying?" (I read as "How can I find {or be}with you?")

When the disciples respond to Jesus' query with their own question, they are not asking Jesus for the location of his tent, or the address of the guest house at which he is visiting; they want to know about the enduring, permanent, eternal, undying dwelling place of this Lamb of God. Where are you staying? Where can we find you? Where shall we go to be with you, to receive what you have to offer? Where can we be in the very presence of God? What are you seeking? In our materialistic culture, dominated by the acquisition of things, a search for meaning can (supposedly) be satisfied by a search for "stuff." the exchange of questions between Jesus and his would-be followers shows that they are seeking something different. Jesus answers, "Come and See."

His answer captures a primary message of John's Gospel: If you want to know the word made flesh, come and see Jesus. If you want to know what love is like, come and see Jesus. If you want to experience God's glory, to be filled with bread that never perishes, to quench your thirst with living water, to be born again, to abide in love, to behold the light of the world, to experience the way, the truth, and the life, to enter into life everlasting, . . . if you want to know God, come and see Jesus. We are called to be a part of a project that is bigger than we can see. It is nothing less than the reconciliation of the whole world to God. It is the bringing of the kingdom on earth as it is in heaven. If we catch that vision, then we can carry a light that shines beyond us and from within us. We become a part of the light we proclaim. To follow Jesus is not simply to proclaim good news. It is to enter other people's worlds with humility, trusting that God has already gone ahead of us, and that the kingdom often emerges not from our programs, but from what we are willing to co-create together.

Matthew 6:22-23

New International Version

22 “The eye is the lamp of the body. If your eyes are healthy,[a] your whole body will be full of light. 23 But if your eyes are unhealthy,[b] your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light within you is darkness, how great is that darkness!

Matthew 5:14-16

New International Version

14 “You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. 15 Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. 16 In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.

The world needs The Light. Jesus calls us to be the light shining brightly through our words, our actions, individually and as a church. I pray that we will be the light. May others be inspired to Come and See, and may we see as Jesus sees. Amen.

