

Seasons of HOPE

Melissa's Desk

A Season of Giving and Grace

As we step into December, the pace of life always seems to quicken. There are gatherings to attend, gifts to prepare, and family schedules that rarely slow down. It can be easy to get swept up in the hustle and forget the quiet beauty of this season. Yet Christmas gently calls us back to the heart of it all: the generous love of Christ, given freely for us.

This time of year reminds us that the most meaningful gifts aren't the ones we place under the tree. They're found in shared conversations, a warm meal enjoyed together, a child's laughter, or a simple moment of kindness when someone needs it most. Family, friends, and our church community become reflections of God's grace, showing us His presence in the everyday moments we might otherwise overlook.

As we look toward a new year, with all of its responsibilities and unknowns, my hope is that we carry this spirit with us. Not the busyness, but the blessing. Christ walks with us into every season, offering peace when life feels full and strength when we feel stretched thin. His love remains steady, guiding our hearts and shaping our days.

May this Christmas fill your home with joy, your gatherings with warmth, and your new year with the lasting peace only Christ can give.

**4725 Old William Penn
Hwy
Murrysville, PA 15668**

724-327-2898



Worship Hours:

**Sunday - 8:30 am
Sunday - 11:00 am
Monday - 6:30 pm**

**Pastor Joshua
Obermann**

In His love,

Melissa Boreman

Words from Pastor

What more can be said about Christmas? It is a joyous holiday that is centered in the great gift of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ! What more needs to be said?

Sometimes I fear that the message is so mundane and obvious that it seems stale and old fashioned. I find myself asking this time of year, "Is there a new way to preach this?" "Is there a new presentation of the Christmas Gospel message?"

Perhaps that is just the American consumer in me. Perhaps I have grown so accustomed to expecting the next big thing, a new model, or even the newest retelling of the same old story. It is probably the same part of me that every year feels a burning desire to peruse the ads just to see what is different about the new iPhone even though my version is working just fine the way it is. But I guess that is the crux of the situation though, isn't it? We have an innate desire to pursue the new, the bold, and the beautiful. But at the end of the day, mother's old fashioned meatloaf recipe is far more comforting and filling than the five star chef's new exquisite dish. Even though the chef's cooking is flawless and gourmet, mom's meatloaf is full of love and nostalgia. It may even remind us of a loving mother's warm embrace. While the chef's dish truly inspires the imagination and brings its own sense of joy and elation, the old recipe takes us back to being a child nestled in our mother's love.

That may be the secret of the Christmas Gospel message. Yes, a new presentation maybe entertaining and joyful, but the original message itself is full of love and offers true peace. The timeless Word takes us to the baby born in Bethlehem, to His mother gentle and mild, and even to the angels singing "Peace to His people on earth!" The Word wraps us in the warm embrace of the Heavenly Father and pours over us His eternal peace. Isaiah 9:6 says, "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given [...] and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace." It is a timeless classic for this time of year, but it is also a wonderful promise nonetheless.

God has sent His own Son in the world to save it. This Son is a wonderful counselor. He knows our needs and listens to us when we bring them to Him. He never gets distracted or judgmental. He is quick to forgive and inspire hope. His words become for us a healing salve massaged upon the wounds of our hurt and same. His advice never fails and He is never harsh when we fail to heed it. He is love and the source of all comfort and peace.

There may not be a new way to preach this. After all, King Solomon in all of his wisdom wrote that "there is nothing new under the sun." But there does not need to be a new way to preach the Christian message. We only need to open our ears so that we can hear it. God will do the rest. He brings the promise of our Savior, born in Bethlehem and lying in a manger, into our hearts and He will fill us with His peace.

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I pray you all have a very merry Christmas! And may the old traditions of our holiday inspire a renewed hope in Jesus’s love.

Love,

Pastor Josh

The Light of Life: Preparing Our Hearts This Advent

Advent is a season of light—a time to prepare our hearts for the coming of Christ. My theme verse for December is John 8:12: “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.” This season, we are reminded that the light of Christ shines from His birth in the manger all the way to the cross. From the very beginning, Jesus came to bring hope, peace, joy and love. That same light continues to guide us today. No matter what darkness you may be facing this holiday season, I encourage you to fix your eyes on Jesus. Not just as the humble baby in a manger, but as the one who came to bring salvation to all through his death on the cross. During Advent, we are reminded that the light of Christ begins in a humble manger but shines all the way to the cross. Whether you are celebrating with family, enjoying youth events, or participating in worship, may this season be filled with the light of Christ guiding your heart and home.

In Christ's name,

Hannah Obermann

Youth & Family

Joyfest

Sunday, December 14th at 10:00AM

This year's Joyfest theme is "Holy Week...in Bethlehem?" Our youth will lead a special worship service that draws the connection from the baby in the manger to the Savior on the cross. A potluck will follow, hosted by the Evangelism Team. Bring a dish to share and enjoy a time of fellowship with your church family.

Drop-Off Movie Night

Friday, December 19th at 5:30 PM

Parents, drop off your kids for a fun evening watching The Grinch, enjoying dinner, and making a holiday craft—giving you a little time to tackle your own holiday preparations.

All Youth Christmas Party

Saturday, December 21st at 6:30 PM

A festive evening for our youth to celebrate the season together, filled with games, fellowship, and holiday cheer.

Middle School Bible Study Sunday, December 7th 6:30PM-8PM Designed for 6th grade and up, with games, snacks, and conversations on how faith connects to real life.

✨ Young Adult Bible Study ✨

When: December 3rd & December 17th

Place: Our church

Time: 5:30 PM

We'd love to see you there!

As we move from the warmth of Thanksgiving into the holy anticipation of Christmas, we enter a unique stretch of the year—a time that invites both gratitude and reflection. For many, these months are filled with celebration, family, and joy. For others, they serve only to underscore the sad reality of loss or hardship. And yet, Scripture reminds us that in every circumstance God is faithfully at work.

A new contemporary Christian worship song (performed by Brandon Lake and Jelly Roll), speaks of a “hard-fought hallelujah”. Its raw, hard, edgy and passionate tone conveys a faith forged out of the fires of licentious living; the kind of praise rising up, not from a life of peace and tranquility, but rather out of the tears and fears of a hopeless and meaningless existence. It is the hallelujah offered after the battle, the one born from scars, hope, grace, forgiveness and the undeniable presence of God carrying them through. **Blessed in Christ — Even in the Struggle** In Ephesians Chapter 1, Apostle Paul sought to encourage the believers at Ephesus. His words now remind us that:

- We have been blessed with every spiritual blessing in Christ (Ephesians 1:3).
- We have been chosen before the foundation of the world (1:4).
- We are redeemed through His blood and forgiven by His grace (1:7).
- We have been given the seal of the Holy Spirit, a guarantee of our inheritance (1:13–14).

These are not just words for peaceful seasons—they are anchors for the battles we face. Paul doesn't say we are blessed because life is easy; he says we are blessed in Christ, which remains true even when we walk through life's valleys of uncertainty or pain. A “hard-fought hallelujah” is exactly what Ephesians describes: praise rooted not in circumstance, but in the hope of God's eternal work of salvation. **Christmas: The Hallelujah That Changed Everything**

As we approach again the Christmas season, we turn our eyes to the ultimate expression of God's love: “that He chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world” (Ephesians 1:4) and sent His Son to redeem us (1:7). Christmas is God stepping into our world—into our struggles, questions, and brokenness. Jesus came not for a world that had it all together, but for a world desperately in need of hope. The birth of Christ is the reason we can sing hallelujah at all—whether it be soft and tranquil or hard and edgy born from hard fought battles. The manger shows us a Savior who understands our humanity and offers us grace upon grace.

Carrying Our Hallelujah into the New Year

As we move beyond Christmas and toward a new year, we do well to remember:

- Gratitude is not seasonal—it is spiritual armor.
- Identity in Christ is not fragile—it is sealed by the Spirit.
- Hope is not wishful thinking—it is anchored in the work of Jesus.
- Worship is not always easy—but it is always possible.

May your hallelujah this season—whether a quiet whisper or vociferous singing, be a testimony to the grace of the One from whom Salvation comes. He who has blessed you, chosen you, redeemed you, and holds your future in His hands.

Grace and peace to you this Christmas season.

Randy Glasser

Head Elder

For anyone interested in watching/listening to Hard Fought Hallelujah, type into web browser search: hard fought hallelujah video CMA.

Also: Consider reading and contemplating Ephesians Chapter 1

One Additional “Word”

I continue to be encouraged by the continual outpouring of care Calvary extends one to another, and by the generosity in giving to the many small missions Calvary supports. Thank you for the good example you set for me and for the many who see the good work of your love!

- *“Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God.”- Hebrews 13:16*
- *“Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.” - Ephesians 4:32*

Evangelism/Hospitality & Fellowship Committees

"For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given..." -Isaiah 9:6

May you all have a blessed Christmas and a very Happy New Year!!!

The Blessings Bags were truly a Blessing to the Dream Center. Amanda, from the center, was so appreciative of the bags you all filled. It could not have come at a better time. We were able to give 46 bags! Without your kindness, love and generosity, Calvary Family, this would not have been possible!!! Thank you all!

On Nov. 23rd we had a group adorn our Sanctuary and Narthex for Christmas. After decorating, we enjoyed pizza and cookies! THANKS TO ALL FOR YOUR HELP!

December 7th

Blue Christmas service will be held. You are encouraged to join others that are perhaps need some quiet time and words from Pastor to help you through the holiday season!

Dec. 13th- CHRISTMAS CAROLING AT CONCORDIA AT 2:00

This is such a wonderful time to share with the residents! They indeed love listening to and singing with us all the Christmas songs! Please give the gift of your presence, you also will be Blessed! We also provide cookies!

PLEASE, PLEASE COME!

Dec. 14th- JOYFEST

Come to the one service at 10:00 and enjoy a service conducted by our children! You will be uplifted as they present this program for us!

Potluck dinner will follow immediately after the program. Just bring your favorite dish to share and enjoy a birthday cake for Jesus! You don't want to miss this!

Joel & Jenn Shibata

November 28th, 2025

Hello, Happy belated Thanksgiving and an early Merry Christmas to you! We can't help but be thankful for the ways the Lord has provided for our family and for us to be able to continue to work to see college students lives changed with the good news of Jesus Christ. We just returned from our staff gathering conference this past weekend. This year, Joel was asked to speak and share a bit about what the Lord has taught me throughout the years of ministry. We always look forward to this particular conference: for the chance to connect with fellow staff friends from across the region and be poured into by the leaders above us.



The Lord continues to do great things in the Susquehanna Valley! This fall, Joel was able to help baptize 7 students at our church. We also have seen 3 students Dominic, Ben & Prince pray to receive Christ! The staff team continues to be a joy to serve alongside. We love Noah and Rachel and the addition this year of Ryan as a part-time staff member. Pretty much across the board, we've seen increased numbers in attendance: to our weekly meetings, Bible studies and retreats. We set a faith goal of wanting to see 30 students come to Winter Conference in January which is 3 times the amount from last year. As of right now, it looks like we will easily surpass that number! Family wise: TJ did football, Jenn & Abby were in a local production of Anastasia, Eli picked up the French horn and Hope is now in pre-school every weekday.

Ultimately, I'm writing to you due to our current financial needs. We've had several expenses that have either just come up or will very soon. In order to pass inspection, both our van needed new tires among other things which came to just under \$700 in expenses. The combined cost to attend our staff gathering and the Winter Conference coming up will be just over \$1225. Over the course of 2025, we experienced a financial support shortfall of around \$3000. **We are trusting God will provide for our combined financial need of \$4,925.** As 2025 comes to a close, would you consider giving a special gift to help us cover these expenses? If you are able to help, please make your check payable to 'Cru' or 'Campus Crusade for Christ' and mail it in using the enclosed envelope. If you would prefer to give a gift online go to www.give.cru.org/0573620 and follow the simple instructions.

Thank you so much for your faithful partnership in the gospel and also for considering how you can help with our financial needs. May you rest in the peace of God this season and experience His love for you!

Joel + Jenn

December 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3 YA Bible Study 5:30	4 Circle of Moms 6:30PM Voter's Meeting 7PM	5	6 Breakfast with Santa
7 Blue Christmas 5:30PM	8	9	10	11	12 CELC Program 10AM	13 Caroling at Concordia 2PM
14 Joyfest 10AM	15 No Service	16	17 YA Bible Study 5:30	18 Circle of Moms 6:30PM	19 Drop off movie night 5:30PM	20
21 All Youth Xmas Party 6:30PM	22 No Service	23	24 Christmas Eve Services 5PM + 7PM	25 Christmas Day Service 10AM	26	27
28	29	30	31			
No Youth Bible Studies					School resumes 1/5	

Donation Station

CELC (Calvary Early
Learning Center)
Dum-dum lollipops

Shoebox Project

No donations this month!

Loaves & Fishes

Always accepting donations!

MOS Food Bank

Always accepting donations!

Toys for Tots

Please consider buying new toys for the Toys for Tots program. These toys are for underprivileged children. Bring a smile to a face of a child with a new, unwrapped gift for a boy or girl, of any age. The donation box is located in the Narthex.