



Have you noticed while reading our newsletter or participating in worship, a small group, or other activity that it feels less like a program with a start and stop feeling? Our ministries seem to many of us to have grown beyond those finite boundaries to a more dynamic community, one that is inviting, comfortable, safe, and generating opportunities and hope. How'd we get here? We've spent a decade integrating healthy relationship practices that reinforce the best of community. In a few words, we are committed to intentional relationships.

We see it at every level in our ministries. A few of the shifts can be seen in the way we have designed our small group ministries. There is a fallacy that long-term groups build deeper relationships. Relationships are built to the depth and degree to which we are committed. It's actually that simple. I know of many who are in their seventies and eighties and even nineties

that have gone to the same church their whole lives but actually know little more than a few others by name. I also know people who share conversations on weekend retreats, that they haven't shared with their spouse of fifty years. Of course some long-tenured groups can be healthy. That's not typical, however, and does not help us grow our network of healthy relationships.

What are the 'emotional components' of a person committed to healthy intentional relationships? What does that take? Tolerance, patience, openness, safety, and low levels of judgment arrived at through self-awareness. I've found Matthew 7:3 to be a helpful reminder of what God desires, "Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother's eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye?"

I invite you to read this edition of our newsletter twice. Once for the programming information, and again to get a feel for who we are as humans loved by God serving with each other in community. Do you see the difference? Better yet, do you feel the difference?

While in many congregations you will find deep relationships between its members, it's important to remember the Great Commission, where Jesus instructs his disciples to spread the gospel to all the world. You've got to escape the holy huddle and build relationships with those outside the faith. A special priority for disciple-making congregations is the role of the pastor, staff, and its core leaders growing the church by connecting to the church's community.

Many Christians are stuck socializing exclusively with others who look and sound the same. Making disciples of all the nations starts with meeting people outside the pews. We are committed to worshipping together, praying together, reading and studying scripture together, and engaging in lively holy conversation. Then, we go into the world and join others.

We meet people where they are - relationships start where people gather. Social media posts will never replace the power of a heartfelt conversation. Social media posts are easy - easy to create, easy to share, but hard to use to establish and engage in holy conversation that deepens relationships.

Today, it's easier than ever to connect with those outside the faith, yet we still struggle. Why? Because intentional relationships take effort, and that effort starts with off-line and offsite relationship building. This is the way we at St. John's are tending to God's garden. Many of us still comment on Rachael Geary's documentary "We are a Garden", which beautifully illuminates how we have been tending to each other.

Be blessed!  
Pastor Bob

## WHAT'S INSIDE?

Ringgold Band Concert

PAGE 2

Valentines for Homebound

PAGE 3

Upcoming Worship

PAGE 3

Preschool News

PAGE 4

Beginning January 26 and continuing through February 9, you'll find a heart-filled tree at the back of the sanctuary. These hearts contain the names and addresses of our homebound members. Please help us share our love for them by choosing one or two hearts and sending them a valentine. This small act reminds our homebound that they are remembered and cherished by their St. John's family!



## CELEBRATE WITH US

To honor Black History Month, the Ringgold Band will present a concert at St. John's on February 22 at 7:00 pm. The band will feature music by black composers and performers dating from the 19th century to the present. Of special interest will be the swing music of Duke Ellington and Louis Armstrong, marches by WWI band leader, James Reese Europe, and the amazing classical music of Florence Price, who was the first African American woman to write a symphony performed by a major orchestra. Among the vocal numbers featured, will be "Lift Every Voice and Sing". Also, a moving tribute to Civil Rights Activist, Rosa Parks, is planned. We hope to see you there!

**RINGGOLD  
BAND  
CONCERT**

SAT, FEB 22  
7:00 PM

ST. JOHN'S  
LUTHERAN  
CHURCH

CELEBRATING  
**BLACK  
HISTORY  
MONTH**

THROUGH THE MUSIC OF  
BLACK COMPOSERS AND PERFORMERS  
FROM THE 19TH CENTURY TO NOW

ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH  
45 N. READING AVENUE  
BOYERTOWN

FREE  
ADMISSION

STJOHNSBOYERTOWN.ORG RINGGOLDBAND.COM

## KEEPING MEMBERSHIP SIMPLE AT ST. JOHN'S

**GUESTS** are always welcome to the Table!

**MEMBERS** (*two types*)  
Voting & Non-voting

The only way you can ever be removed  
from the membership roll  
at St. John's, or any ELCA congregation:

- You request a transfer
- You ask to be removed
- You depart this life

Voting members must make a record of having:

- Filled out a communion card  
and received the Lord's Supper  
**ONE** time per year
- Contributed **ONE** time per year,  
making sure your name is included

# DEFINITIONS TO CONSIDER

By: Cathy Krause

There are two words that show up in my Bible, New American Standard, and in the King James translation that are not used in later translations. They are 'lovingkindness' and the name 'Beulah'.

I really like the word lovingkindness. It expresses, to me, how Jesus and God relate to us. We certainly don't deserve it; and, yet it is given freely.

*Checedh* is the Hebrew word that is often translated as lovingkindness. It has no exact match in English. In Hebrew it means covenant loyalty. It is used to describe God's character – his heart toward those who are his own; divine love condescending to his creatures (to sinners) in unmerited kindness. The kindness and love for his children that saves us from enemies, that comforts us, redeems us from sin, assures of his promises. It is frequently associated with forgiveness and mercy. It does not occur in the New Testament; but, mercy, goodness, kindness, brotherly love can be equivalents.

Psalm 118:1, 29 Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good; For His lovingkindness is everlasting. (New American Standard Bible)

*Resources consulted:*

"Lovingkindness." [biblehub.com/topical/l/lovingkindness.htm](http://biblehub.com/topical/l/lovingkindness.htm)

"Lovingkindness." [biblestudytools.com/dictionary/lovingkindness](http://biblestudytools.com/dictionary/lovingkindness)

"Lovingkindness." <https://www.gotquestions.org/lovingkindness.html>

Beulah is a name we used to hear – mostly among the elderly. We encounter it only once in the Bible. It is in Isaiah 62:4: 'It will no longer be said to you [Zion] "Azubah" (forsaken) nor to your land "Shemamah" (desolate); but you will be called "Hephzibah" (my delight is in her) and your land "Beulah" (married); for the Lord delights in you. And to Him your land will be married.'

Beulah is a name typically applied to Israel. It comes from the Hebrew verb *ba'al*, meaning to own or to rule, to marry or to dwell. It connotes themes of hope, restoration, and divine promise. It symbolizes deep covenantal relationship between God and his people, the promise of God's presence and joy of a restored relationship with him, a transformation from desolate to abundance.

Perhaps Beulah will become the next trend in baby names. Who knows?

*Resources consulted:*

"Beulah." [Abarim-publications.com/meaning/beulah.html](http://Abarim-publications.com/meaning/beulah.html)

"Beulah." [bibledictionarytoday.com/biblical-names/beulah](http://bibledictionarytoday.com/biblical-names/beulah)

"Beulah." [biblestudytools.com/dictionary/Beulah](http://biblestudytools.com/dictionary/Beulah)

## Eagle Messenger Article Deadlines

**Monday, February 10** for March issue

**Monday, March 10** for April issue

**Monday, April 14** for May issue



## UPCOMING WORSHIP

**Sunday, March 2 @ 9:30 am**

Transfiguration of Our Lord

Over the past Sundays, we have seen Jesus show himself to be Christ, the one anointed by God to be our Savior. This

Sunday, the Transfiguration, when Jesus appears on a mountain in divine glory, concludes the time after Epiphany. Three days after, on Ash Wednesday, we begin the climb to the mountain of Jesus' crucifixion. The church holds side-by-side the brilliance of God and the cross of Jesus.

**Wednesday, March 5 @ 7:00 pm**

Ash Wednesday

The beginning of Lent gives us the occasion to admit that we will die and that we are sinners. On Ash Wednesday we are marked with ashes—a sign of our death and of our sorrow for sin—but the ashes trace a cross on our forehead, where the baptismal water first marked us with God's grace.

**Sunday, March 9 @ 9:30 am**

First Sunday in Lent

Each year on the first Sunday in Lent we hear about Jesus being tested in the wilderness. In this way Jesus joined with us, who are also, one way or another, tested in some wilderness. We say Sundays "in" Lent, since when counting the forty days of Lent, we omit the six Sundays, because Sunday is always a celebration of Christ's resurrection. So this Sunday we are both in Lent and beyond Lent.





# WHAT IS GRACE?

A LESSON FROM A PRESCHOOL PERSPECTIVE

By: Bethany Calderwood

We have a letter of the week in preschool, and we have a set of verse cards that contains one Bible verse for each letter. One day this month, we were looking for the “G” verse: A, B, C, D (yes you should be singing), E, F, G! G is for grace. “By grace you have been saved. . .” I gave a brief explanation of grace and watched that explanation fly right past the ears of the four-and-five-year-old students in front of me. We moved on.

Later in the day, I picked up a book I’d selected as part of our transportation unit, “Little Blue Truck.” In the story, a dump truck is rude to several animals it passes on the road. Then, the dump truck gets stuck in the mud and cannot budge. Who helps the dump truck get unstuck? At first the animals ignore the dump truck because of how it treated them. Then their friend the little blue truck gets stuck, too. The animals help their friend, then they help the dump truck, too. And that, friends, is grace. An offering of good, a show of love, that is undeserved by the recipient. Grace. We all need it, and we all need to show it to others.

In other preschool news, a chilly January was warmed by a hot cocoa party where families brought donations of “white gifts” (paper goods, etc.) for our neighbors at Preston’s Pantry. We continued to work on literacy, numbers, and the art of being a good neighbor—in school and out of it. We also got plenty of practice managing our winter gear and enjoyed the occasional glance out the classroom window to watch the wind!

In conclusion, a prayer I often pray for my neighbors: Today may you experience grace and show grace, all day long.



## TEACHING TIME

Are you new to Lutheranism?  
You may or may not be familiar with some of the 'Lutheran Buzzwords' we use here.  
Let's get familiar!

### LECTIONARY

A schedule of readings from Holy Scripture for use in the weekly liturgy. At St. John’s we follow a 3-year lectionary. Use of a lectionary provides the congregation with the opportunity to hear carefully chosen sections from the entire Bible.

## WEATHER RELATED CLOSINGS

Our ‘Inclement Weather’ policy at St. John’s states that when the Boyertown Area School District is closed, we follow their lead and cancel all meetings and events. For weather related closings, check Channel 69 News or [www.wfmz.com](http://www.wfmz.com).



YOUR GENEROSITY  
IS APPRECIATED!  
WAYS TO GIVE:

- **Mail in your contribution envelopes**
- **Give online**  
Available on St. John’s website.  
Sign up in 4 easy steps by clicking ‘Give’ on our homepage.

WORSHIP MINISTRY

Date	Day	Time	Liturgical Day (Special Service)	Acolyte	Altar Assistant	Altar Guild	Assisting Minister	Lector	Media	Prayers	Sound	Ushers	Video
2/2/2025	Sunday	9:30 AM	Fourth Sunday after Epiphany	Camryn Friz	George Hill, Bonnie Moatz	Shirley Hartman, Sue Hill	Jen Schlegel	Karen Pollock	Sarah Eidle	Michele Eidle	Melissa Eidle	Bev & Joe Blake, Mike Gilbert, Ed Schaeffer	Justin Jones
2/9/2025	Sunday	9:30 AM	Fifth Sunday after Epiphany	Abby Torres	Melissa Eidle, Lauren Jones	Bonnie Moatz, Amy Moyer	Lauren Jones	Randy Rupert	Shannon Omlor	Karen Pollock	Myles Omlor	Martha Bentley, Jodi Dykie, Barbara Houpp, Josee Ruckenbrod	Camryn Friz
2/16/2025	Sunday	9:30 AM	Sixth Sunday after Epiphany	Grant Hersperger	Ashley Gheer, John Gheer	Dorothy Breitreutz	Mel Roth	Becky Scheiry	Sarah Eidle	Friz Family	Ashley Gheer	Lauren Jones, Bill Rohrbach, Carol Sematis, Terry Wadsworth	Abbe Grofe
2/23/2025	Sunday	9:30 AM	Seventh Sunday after Epiphany	Delaney Hersperger	Michele & Dave Eidle	Jodi Dykie, Mary Kay Heimbach	Melissa Geary	Andy Varzally	Shannon Omlor	Ros Moatz	Brianna Rohrbach	Sue & George Hill, Ros & Brian Moatz	Abbe Grofe
3/2/2025	Sunday	9:30 AM	Transfiguration of Our Lord	Philip Derr	Amanda Ehst, Tom Engle	Mary Dierolf, Nancy Edwards	Amanda Ehst	Jen Schlegel	Jason Friz	Lauren Jones	Melissa Eidle	Ashley Gheer, John Gheer, Susan & Andy Varzally	Scott Scheiry
3/5/2025	Wednesday	7:00 PM	Ash Wednesday	Camryn Friz	<b>NA (packets)</b>	Sue Hill	Amy Moyer	Michele Eidle	Justin Jones	Tom Engle	Myles Omlor	Sandy & Terry Wade	Shannon Omlor
3/9/2025	Sunday	9:30 AM	Lent 1 <i>Girl Scout Sunday</i>	Delaney Hersperger	Jen Friz, Jen Schlegel	Bonnie Moatz, Heather Murray	Bev Blake	Terry Wade	Jason Friz	Ros Moatz	Ashley Gheer	Becky & Barry Erb, Bunny & Ron Riffle	Justin Jones
3/12/2025	Wednesday	7:00 PM	Unfailing Light	Tatum Friz	<b>NA</b>	<b>NA</b>	<b>NA</b>	<b>TBD</b>	Justin Jones	<b>NA</b>	Brianna Rohrbach	Mary Kay & Donnie Heimbach	Jason Eidle
3/16/2025	Sunday	9:30 AM	Lent 2	Grant Hersperger	Mel Roth, TBD	Mary Kay Heimbach, Amy Moyer	Mel Roth	Dave Babb	Sarah Eidle	Martha Bentley	Melissa Eidle	Lauren Jones, Darrin Moyer, Kevin Moyer, Bill Rohrbach	Camryn Friz
3/19/2025	Wednesday	7:00 PM	Unfailing Light	Camryn Friz	<b>NA</b>	<b>NA</b>	<b>NA</b>	<b>TBD</b>	Jason Friz	<b>NA</b>	Myles Omlor	Bev & Joe Blake	Abbe Grofe
3/23/2025	Sunday	9:30 AM	Lent 3	Philip Derr	Bev & Joe Blake	Dorothy Breitreutz	Jason Friz	Bev Blake	Shannon Omlor	Susan & Andy Varzally	Ashley Gheer	Josee Ruckenbrod, Jen Schlegel, Carol Sematis, Terry Wadsworth	Scott Scheiry
3/26/2025	Wednesday	7:00 PM	Unfailing Light	Tatum Friz	<b>NA</b>	<b>NA</b>	<b>NA</b>	<b>TBD</b>	Justin Jones	<b>NA</b>	Brianna Rohrbach	Martha Bentley, Jodi Dykie	Shannon Omlor
3/30/2025	Sunday	9:30 AM	Lent 4	Abby Torres	Melissa Eidle, Lauren Jones	Shirley Hartman, Sue Hill	Lauren Jones	Lori Carnes	Jason Friz	Sarah Eidle	Myles Omlor	Mike Gilbert, Phil Haddad, Gerry Krause, Ed Schaeffer	Justin Jones

# FEBRUARY 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						<b>1</b> Men's Retreat 4:30p Come to the Table
<b>2</b> Men's Retreat 9:30a Worship Celebration 9:30a Sunday School	<b>3</b> 5:00p Building a Better Boyertown 6:30p Girl Scouts	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b> Oley Cluster 8:15a Preschool Staff Meeting 6:30p Worship Team	<b>6</b> 10:00a Chestnut Knoll Service 10:00a Operation 143 Delivery 8:00p Worship Broadcast	<b>7</b> 7:00a Men's Small Group Bible Study	<b>8</b> 4:30p Come to the Table
<b>9</b> 9:30a Worship Celebration 9:30a Sunday School 10:45a Coffee & Conversation 11:00a Wellspring Karitas	<b>10</b> 5:00p Newsletter Submission 6:30p Girl Scouts 6:30p Optimist Club of Boyertown	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b> 9:30a Preschool Sweetheart Breakfast	<b>13</b> Wellspring Karitas Trip 10:00a Chestnut Knoll Service 8:00p Worship Broadcast	<b>14</b> Preschool Closed Wellspring Karitas Trip 7:00a Men's Small Group Bible Study	<b>15</b> Wellspring Karitas Trip 4:30p Come to the Table
<b>16</b> Wellspring Karitas Trip 9:30a Worship Celebration 9:30a Sunday School	<b>17</b> President's Day Office Closed Preschool Closed Wellspring Karitas Trip 8:15a Preschool Professional Learning	<b>18</b> Wellspring Karitas Trip 6:30p Finance Team	<b>19</b> 9:30a Pottstown Soup Kitchen 10:00a Preschool Chapel Time	<b>20</b> 9:30a Community Leaders 10:00a Chestnut Knoll Service 10:00a Operation 143 Delivery 8:00p Worship Broadcast	<b>21</b> 7:00a Men's Small Group Bible Study 5:30p East Berks Mission District 6:00p Girl Scouts Overnight	<b>22</b> Girl Scouts Overnight 9:00a Caring & Correspondence 4:30p Come to the Table 7:00p Ringgold Band Concert
<b>23</b> 9:30a Worship Celebration 9:30a Sunday School	<b>24</b> 6:30p Girl Scouts 6:30p Optimist Club of Boyertown	<b>25</b> 1:00p Joyful Sisters of Service 6:30p Building a Better Boyertown	<b>26</b> 6:30p Congregation Council 7:00p State Theatre Board	<b>27</b> 10:00a Chestnut Knoll Service 8:00p Worship Broadcast	<b>28</b> 7:00a Men's Small Group Bible Study	

# FEBUARY BIRTHDAYS

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1
2 Bonnie Bosler	3 Marie Adamski Dave Babb	4	5 Cody Gheer Constance Gilbert Joanne Sheidy	6	7 Krista Fretz	8 Joe Matthews Ruth Weil
9 Dave Long	10	11 Ny Omlor	12	13	14 Val Gonzalez	15 Sandra Wade
16	17	18	19	20	21 Tom Engle Susan Laubach Brianna Rohrbach	22
23 Melissa Eidle	24 Bobbie Eddinger	25 Kiersten Kulhamer	26 Shirley Miller Sue Schaeffer Bertha Schott	27	28	



# EAGLE MESSENGER

ST. JOHN'S EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH | 45 North Reading Avenue | Boyertown, PA 19512  
610-369-1024 | 610-369-1463 Fax | [www.stjohnsboyertown.org](http://www.stjohnsboyertown.org)

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As children of God and disciples of Christ seeking peace and justice in the world, we welcome, affirm, and include all people into the fullness of God's love. We celebrate and lift up people of all races, cultures, ages, sexual orientations, gender identities, physical or mental abilities, economic statuses, political affiliation, appearances, family status, and citizenship as equally loved and valued in the eyes of God and in this place. All are invited to join this community as we worship God, grow in faith, and strive to love and serve one another.

All, without exception, are welcome in this place.

Return Service Request - Dated Material  
Mailed January 27, 2025

## WORSHIP

SUNDAY 9:30 AM

IN-PERSON & LIVESTREAM ON YOUTUBE

### Office Hours

*Monday-Thursday 8:30 am - 3:30 pm*

*Friday 8:30 am - 12:00 pm*

Pastor Bob Machamer

Kay Christman, Finance Team

Sue Grofe, Finance Team

Donnie Heimbach, Property

Bonnie Moatz, Finance Team

Shannon Omlor, Communications Coordinator

Linda Rohrbach, Treasurer

Becky Scheiry, Parish Administrator

[bmachamer@stjohnsboyertown.org](mailto:bmachamer@stjohnsboyertown.org)

[financialsecretary@stjohnsboyertown.org](mailto:financialsecretary@stjohnsboyertown.org)

[financialsecretary@stjohnsboyertown.org](mailto:financialsecretary@stjohnsboyertown.org)

[financialsecretary@stjohnsboyertown.org](mailto:financialsecretary@stjohnsboyertown.org)

[somlor@stjohnsboyertown.org](mailto:somlor@stjohnsboyertown.org)

[treasurer@stjohnsboyertown.org](mailto:treasurer@stjohnsboyertown.org)

[parishadmin@stjohnsboyertown.org](mailto:parishadmin@stjohnsboyertown.org)



**Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**

God's work. Our hands.