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WHY STUDY THE BOOK OF EXODUS?

As we enter into 2025, I would like to invite you to join us as we begin our new sermon series in which we will focus on the Old Testament Book of Exodus. Inevitably, whenever I suggest doing a sermon or study involving the Old Testament, someone raises the common question, “Why do we need to study the Old Testament? As Christians, shouldn’t we just focus on the New Testament, which contains all we need to know about Jesus?” If I may, permit me to share with you a brief response to this question put forward by Bible Scholar, Matthew Newkirk:

“When we meet someone for the first time, we often ask a series of questions in order to get to know them better: “What’s your name?” “What do you do for a living?” “Do you have any hobbies?” These questions give us basic information about this new person—what we should call them, how they support

themselves, and what their interests are. However, while these questions are certainly helpful for becoming acquainted with a new person, there is another question we often ask that is arguably most important for truly getting to know someone: “Where are you from?”

This last question is particularly important because knowing where a person is from is the tip of a much larger iceberg: knowing their story. Everybody’s life story begins somewhere, and once a person begins telling their story, we are immediately transported to the past and introduced to the people, places, and events that have shaped them into the person they are today. Without this knowledge of significant defining moments from a person’s past, we cannot truly know who they are in the present.

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The same logic applies to knowing who we are as God's people today. We don't truly understand who we are as the church of Jesus Christ unless we know our own story, and this "life story" of God's people extends all the way back beyond the time of Jesus and into the Old Testament period.

Just as each of us has various defining moments in our lives that have shaped who we are today, so there are various defining moments in the life of Israel that have shaped the identity of God's people throughout the ages. Two of these major defining moments in Israel's story are the exodus from Egypt and the giving of the law at Sinai, both of which are recorded for us in the book of Exodus.

The centrality of the exodus for Israel's identity was maintained through several of their annual feasts (e.g., the Passover, the Feast of Unleavened Bread, the Feast of Booths) as well as by the common description of God as the one who "brought you out of the land of Egypt" (e.g., Ex. 20:2; Lev. 11:45; Num. 15:41; Deut. 5:6; Judg. 2:1; 6:8; 2 Kgs. 17:36; Ps. 81:10; Amos 2:10; Mic. 6:4). The importance of the law for Israel's identity is evident in that their actions throughout their history were judged according to this standard, and their failure to keep it resulted in their exile from the promised land (2 Kgs. 17:7–20).

Both of these shaping events in Israel's story give us important insight into who we are as God's people today. The Gospels present Jesus as bringing about a new "exodus" for God's people (Mark 1:1–13; Luke 9:31), and the New Testament is replete with instructions for God's people to keep his commands (John 14:15; 15:10, 14; 1 John 5:3). Collectively, this shows us that Israel's experience with God in the book of Exodus is a foretaste of the church's experience with this same God through the work of Jesus.

So as we think about who we are as the church today, we cannot have an accurate grasp of our identity without having a firm understanding of the events that the book of Exodus records for us. This applies both to our understanding of the saving work of Jesus as well as the responsibilities that he has given to us as his people. However, by carefully attending to this very important book we are able to see "where we are from" as God's people, and in so doing we will understand more fully not only who we are, but also who our God is."

Our series in Exodus begins **Sunday, January 5**. I look forward to exploring this important book with you in the coming weeks. As a reminder, on January 5th we will be following our regular Sunday morning schedule; 8:30 – Traditional Worship, 9:35 – Sunday School, and 10:30 Contemporary Worship.

Happy New Year,

Pastor Paul



Contact U?

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Pastor Paul McCullough

pastor@bellpointchurch.com

Connect with us on
Facebook!

facebook.com/bellpoint

Church Office Hours:

Monday - Friday

8:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

Upcoming Event?

January 15

Children's Council Meeting

7:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.

January 17

Worship & Prayer Night

7:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.

January 25

The Reality of Healing

Workshop

9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Sunday Morning Worship Services

Traditional Service - 8:30 a.m.

Sunday School - 9:35 a.m. - 10:30 a.m.

Contemporary Service - 10:30 a.m.

K-4th graders, come join us in Bible Adventures during second service, 10:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.

Bellpoint Community Church Groups

(all groups meet at church unless otherwise stated)

- **Adult and Youth Sunday School:** Sunday Mornings, 9:35 a.m. - 10:30 a.m.
- **Men's Bible Study:** Every other Monday, 7:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m. Contact Pastor Paul for additional information.
- **Sunday Women's Bible Study:** Every other Sunday, 5:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m. at the McCullough home. Contact Lori McCullough for additional information.
- **Monday Women's Bible Study:** Mondays, 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
- **Bible Study Book Group:** The second and fourth Thursdays of the month, 6:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.
- **Teen Disciples** (6th - 12th grades): Sundays from 5:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.
- **Emerging Adults** (high school seniors through 30s): Contact Kelly Solli for additional information.

January Birthdays

Jan 3	Shayla Ellerbrock
Jan 6	Hayden Tiller
Jan 7	Ron Spessard
Jan 8	Vicki Kidd
Jan 9	Holly Jaudzems
Jan 19	Jodeen Miller
Jan 20	Elliott Kidd
Jan 24	Angie Ellerbrock Ryan West
Jan 25	Emily Carpenter Coleman Kraick
Jan 27	Mia Maxim Jordan Kelleher
Jan 30	Gracie Willis
Jan 31	Jody Kelleher

Children's Council

- ♦ **Bible Adventures** - Kiddos in K-4, after the opening worship music during second service we head down to our room. Anyone interested in helping in any capacity can see Susan Ritchie for more details. It is not your average Children's Church, it's an Adventure!
- ♦ **Nursery Volunteers** - Thanks to all who have stepped up to play with and minister to our littlest ones! If you are not yet on the list and would like to be, please see Susan Ritchie to sign up.



The Reality of Healing Workshop

Join us on **Saturday, January 25th** from 9:00 a.m. - Noon at Cornerstone Church for a Christian workshop led by Kelly Solli (licensed professional clinical counselor). Kelly will explore practical insights and tools to help you and your family become healthier in mind and soul. This **FREE** workshop is clinically informed and biblically grounded.

All ages and families are welcome! Bring a friend!

Registration: <https://ourcornerstone.churchcenter.com/registrations/events/2629296>

Friendship Table

Don't forget about our Friendship Table on the **second** and **fourth** Sundays each month! Enjoy some coffee, juice or milk, and a donut, etc. during Sunday School or before the worship services. Please keep all food and beverages in the Fellowship Hall or in your Sunday School room (if your teacher is okay with it). **There is a sign-up sheet available in Fellowship Hall** if you'd like to sign up to provide for the Friendship Table. It is intended to be just a light snack, not a full breakfast, so anyone could do it!



Upcoming Events - Save the Date!



Wednesday, January 15th - **Children's Council Meeting** - 7:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.

Friday, January 17th - **Worship & Prayer Night** - 7:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.

Saturday, January 25th - **The Reality of Healing Workshop** - 9:00 a.m. - Noon
(see page BLANK for details)

Wednesday, February 19th - **Children's Council Meeting** - 7:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.

Friday, February 21st - **Worship & Prayer Night** - 7:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.

Wednesday, March 19th - **Children's Council Meeting** - 7:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.

Friday, March 21st - **Worship & Prayer Night** - 7:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.

Caroling in the Community

On Thursday, December 19th, ten carolers from our congregation sang to the Bellpoint community. What a fun night! Many residents were happy to have us return and sang along with us. What a joyous time to spread the good news of Christ's birth and invite them to worship with us. A big thank you to all who participated in this wonderful outreach to our church neighbors!



Mya's Mission to Thailand



**HELP
SUPPORT
MYA'S
MISSION TO
THAILAND**

Help Mya serve the Lord and spread His good word to the Buddhist community.

Checks can be written to "The Ohio State University Chi Alpha" with Mya Ritchie in the memo or go to <https://osuxa.managedmissions.com/MyTrip/myaritchie22>

Mya Ritchie
@MyaR22

venmo

Monday Morning Women's Bible Study

On December 8th, the Monday Morning Women's Bible Study class went to visit Georgeanna Mills at Sarah Moore in Delaware. During their visit Sherri Finley led a devotional about one of our favorite carols, "Joy to the World." After presenting her with a box of Cheryl's Christmas cookies, we all enjoyed getting into the Christmas spirit by singing many of our favorite carols. A fun time was had by all!



The Monday Morning Bible Study had their Christmas party at the home of Vicki Kidd on December 16th. Due to winter travel, the group will meet once a month in January and February, and resume weekly studies in March. We meet Monday mornings from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Watch the Peal and weekly emails for more information!



Prayer Requests

- ♦ **Chuck** – will be having his colon removed on January 21st
- ♦ **Family of Juanita Hall** – Juanita passed away.
- ♦ **Ben Laycock** – has been in the hospital for two weeks with necrotic pancreatitis, it's life-threatening (Margie West's cousin)
- ♦ **Drew Matthews** – just diagnosed with terminal cancer of the lining of his stomach (West)
- ♦ **Monroe** – seven-year-old with brain cancer
- ♦ **Jamie** – recovering from falling from a tree
- ♦ **Barbara** – neurological issues and brain trauma (Spellman)
- ♦ **Linda** – diagnosed with cancer (Norm's sister)
- ♦ **Bill** – diagnosed with cancer (Spellman)
- ♦ **Cheryl** – diagnosed with Alzheimer's (Spellman)
- ♦ **Wendy** – stage 4 breast cancer (Spellman)
- ♦ **Penny** – undergoing chemo (Miller)



Prayer Chain

Are you looking for a way to serve Bellpoint Community Church and our community? Prayer is a powerful way to make an important difference in someone's life. The Prayer Chain is always looking for new members for this vital ministry, so please call the church office if you are interested.

If you hear of a concern or praise there are multiple ways to share the information with our Prayer Chain:

- ♦ Complete a paper prayer request located on the back of each chair and drop in an offering bag or one of the clear boxes in the entrances to the fellowship hall and sanctuary.
- ♦ Contact Brooke Williams, the church office manager, by phone at 740-369-5956 or by email at office@bellpointchurch.com.
- ♦ Post to the online prayer wall at bellpointchurch.com/prayer-wall.

Sisters in Faith

We had 19 ladies at the Christmas Ornament and Cookie Exchange. Everyone had a great time! Barbara Lehman said she really enjoyed it and was glad that her daughter-in-law Sherri invited her.



Farewell to the Kraicks

Thank you to the Kraick Family for your years at Bellpoint serving our church body in many capacities. We will greatly miss you and you will be a blessing in your new community!

The Peal

If you do not have access to the internet or email, or simply prefer to have a hard copy mailed to you each month, please contact Brooke Williams, the church office manager at 740-369-5956 or by email at office@bellpointchurch.com.

Just a Reminder...

Please email all articles, pictures, and content for the February Peal to Rachel Kapraly at peal@bellpointchurch.com by **Friday, January 24th**. Thank you in advance for your assistance!

