

2026

MUSINGS...

by Pastor John Bethard



CHARLES TOWN PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

CT Press

Dear Friends,

At the start of this Lenten season, I want to visit an issue that is important to me: the Scriptures.

Christianity has its beginnings and foundations in the scriptures. During Jesus' ministry the only Bible was the Old Testament. And because the printing press had not yet been invented, there were relatively few copies. Still, the scriptures were learned at home, taught in the temple, and then later in the synagogue.

When Jesus comes on the scene around 30 AD, the part of the Old Testament most looked to were the promises of the coming Messiah. This was due in large part to centuries of living under the control of other governments: the Babylonians, the Seleucids, the Greeks, the Persians, and the Romans. They wanted release from this long captivity and looked to the promises of God for comfort. Those promises were realized in the person and work of Jesus Christ. He is the living Word of God in the flesh (John 1:1ff), the Messiah long-promised and long-looked for. He fulfilled the Old Covenant and created a new one. He taught a better way to love God and love neighbor. His ministry is recorded for us in the gospels in the beginning of the New Testament. The majority of what remains in the New Testament is letters to individuals and church communities, and they shed light on what it means to live for Christ personally and corporately.

I am genuinely concerned about how well we know the Bible. When I started teaching the Middle School/High School Sunday School class, it was obvious that our young people do not know much about the Bible, and many of them have been in Sunday School their whole lives! I responded to this by making a contest out of scripture memorization. It was going to be students verses adults. Write down a verse on a card, memorize it, present the card to Pastor John and recite the verse. Since announcing this in the fall, two adults and one student have recited verses for me.

The best way to learn the scriptures is through habit, and the best habits begin when we are young. Parents need to model and teach what they know about the Bible to their children. Sunday School and youth group supplement that faith journey. It lays the groundwork for one's adult faith journey. Of course, anyone can pick up a Bible any time and begin to read and learn. But we can be certain that if we never do this, we will pass that on to our children. There are too many apps and resources at our fingertips to submit any reasonable excuse for not engaging the scriptures. So, as we make our way through Lent, we can make scripture study more of a priority.

Remember that old saying "You are what you eat?" The same is true spiritually. If we never include scripture study in our faith journey we are going to end up very hungry.

Blessings,

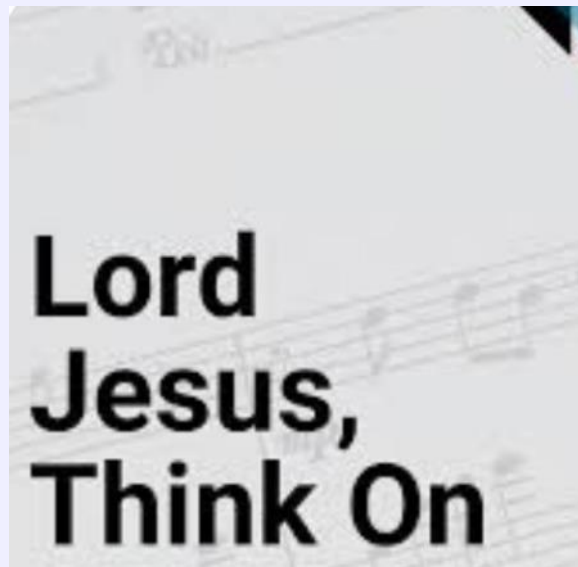
Pastor John



🎵 MUSIC NOTES 🎵 from Miss Penny

Attitude of Gratitude

A wonderful old hymn for our journey to the cross.



1. Lord Jesus, think on me,
And purge away my sin,
From worldly passions set me free,
And make me pure within.
Lord Jesus, think on me,
With care and woe oppressed;
Let me your loving servant be,
And taste your promised rest.
2. Lord Jesus, think on me,
Amid the battle's strife;
In all my pain and misery,
Please be my health and life.
Lord Jesus, think on me,
Nor let me go astray;
Thru' darkness and perplexity,
Point to the heav'nly way.
3. Lord Jesus, think on me,
And grant me this desire,
That I, with mind and limbs set free
May join the heav'nly choir.
Lord Jesus, think on me,
That when the flood is past,
I may th'eternal brightness see
And share your joy at last.

(Author: Synesius of Cyrene, Bishop of Ptolemais; Translator: Allen William Chatfield; Tune: Southwell (daman))

Blessings,
Penny

**GO
FOURTH!**

WORSHIP AND MUSIC

SUNDAY

MARCH 22ND

FOLLOWING WORSHIP

IN THE

HOSPITALITY CENTER

PLEASE JOIN US!

HOSPITALITY CENTER

OLD MOTHER HUBBARD
WENT TO THE CUPBOARD
TO RESTOCK THE HOSPITALITY CENTER



BUT WHEN SHE GOT THERE
THE CUPBOARD WAS PRETTY BARE
AND SO, ALL THE GUESTS HAD NONE

**JUICE BOXES, SMALL BOTTLED WATER
BREAKFAST BARS, FRUIT SNACKS
HOT CHOCOLATE MIX, COFFEE CREAMER
POPCORN, VEGGIE STRAWS**

The CTPC Hospitality Center has created this wish list to assist in maintenance and growth. All donations greatly appreciated!



Know. Grow. Serve.

CTPC Upcoming Events

March 11th—April 1st
March 23rd
March 28th
March 29th

Lent Bible Study 12:00pm
Life-Line Screening 8-5:00pm
CTP Women's Group 10:00am
Palm Sunday—Easter Egg Hunt following worship

April 3rd
April 5th

Good Friday service 7:00pm
Easter Sunday Community Sunrise service 6:30am,
at Jefferson Memorial Park

April 6th
April 24th
April 25th

OFFICE CLOSED
Donadio/Springstead rehearsal
Donadio/Springstead wedding

Session News

The session of Charles Town Presbyterian Church met for their February 2026 stated meeting. Here are the highlights:

After the initial perfunctory agenda items, the session moved on to committee reports. The Discipleship and Family Ministry Committee moved a new job description for what was the Director of Children, Youth, and Family Ministries. Last summer, the session deliberately stepped back and looked at what our needs were as a congregation and to spend time in prayer about staffing specifically. The consensus was that the emphasis of the next staff position should be Christian Education and helping the ministries of the church move solidly into the digital age with technology, social media, etc. After some minor amendments and change to the title of the position, the job description was approved and the DFM was released to begin searching for (drum roll) a Minister to Emerging and Discipleship Ministries! Please keep this process in prayer.

The property committee gave thorough update on current and future projects. The day care center is still moving forward. We must do some lead paint abatement, all of which is on the exterior of the building. Nothing on the interior showed up positive. The big issue is still if we need a sprinkler system. We are still working on that. As always we will have AC/heat pump units to replace each year, and some lighting around the building needs to be replaced as well. The manse is also in need of attention, mostly maintenance and upgrades around painting (interior and exterior), bathroom upgrades, and consideration of some HVAC issues. The session was also made aware that we need to contract lawn services because our current arrangement is no longer tenable.

The session approved hosting the May 19 in-person meeting of Shenandoah Presbytery. It has been over fifteen years since CTPC hosted. This will require help from many folks in the congregation.

The meeting was adjourned after a brief discussion of scheduling matters.

At the session meeting on Tuesday, February 17th, the elders agreed to hosting the May 19 meeting of Shenandoah presbytery. Presbytery meetings are very involved and require a good deal of people to help pull it off. If you are interested in helping here are the opportunities:

Presbytery Meeting Task Force – this group will organize the logistics for the day. Likely no more than three meetings and lots of planning.

Additional jobs include greeters 3-4 people especially 8-9:30am; parking team 4-5 people; kitchen help 6-8; set up and clean up (all hands).

We will need to provide a meal of some kind, and some continental breakfast style food and drink as commissioners arrive.

Please contact pastor John if you are able to help.



Easter Memorial or Honorarium Lilies.

Just like last year, in lieu of lilies, we will encourage people to make donations to the Pastor's help fund. We will list these the same way that we list Easter lilies, in memory of or in honor of loved ones. It's understandable that some people will not be pleased with this. Friends, there will be lilies and other flowers decorating the sanctuary. At the moment, the worship committee feels called that the human need is greater. Please contact the church office (304-725-5316 or ctpres.org) for more information. The recommended minimum donation is the same as what we would charge for lilies, \$15.

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Easter Memorial or Honorarium Lilies.



This year in lieu of lilies we donated to the pastor help fund due to increased local need.

In Memory of: _____

In Honor of: _____



Good Friday service.

Please join us Friday, April 3rd, at 7:00pm, for our Good Friday service. The offering will go to the One Great Hour of Sharing.



Resurrection Sunday

Community Sunrise Service at Jefferson Memorial Park at 6:30am, Sunday, April 5th.



One Great Hour of Sharing Offering will be collected on Resurrection Sunday, April 5th. The OGHS offering is used to assist people in suffering and in need through Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, the Presbyterian Hunger Program and the Self Development of People program.

Charles Town Presbyterian Church 2026 Elder Committee Assignments

- | | |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Communicating with Technology | -Roger Snook |
| Discipleship and Family Ministry | -Brooks Kursey |
| Finance and Budget | -Diane Mayhew |
| Mission and Outreach | -Doyle Criswell / Patsy White |
| Personnel | -Kathy Shue |
| Property | -Christian Pechuekonis |
| Stewardship and Vision | -Chris Clark |
| Worship and Music | -Beth Pugh |



VBS Rainforest Falls *Exploring the Nature of God*
July 13-16, 2026
9:00 AM-12:00PM
SAVE THE DATE!

To set up this jungle scene we will need many hands. Here's how you can help.

Save these items and bring them to the church--we need to start now on decorations:

brown packing paper found in Amazon shipments--any length (when twisted, they will make great jungle vines)

brown cardboard boxes--the bigger the better (any size except very small- refrigerator boxes welcome)

cylindrical containers used for shipping or at the center of carpet rolls--any length the longer the better)

This is just the start...so let's get started!



Palm Sunday Easter Egg Hunt: Get ready for this year's Easter Egg hunt, happening after worship of March 29th, rain or shine. Bring your family and try to find the most eggs, all of which will be filled with candy! Donations of candy—individually wrapped and **not chocolate**. Can be dropped off at church office. We hope to see you there. This year we are adding a time of refreshments and fellowship for the entire congregation out on the lawn on the Mildred Street entrance. We will be able to snack, talk, and watch the Easter Egg Hunt. This year all ages of kids will be hunting from the same area so that we can all be together.



Pathfinders Youth

Pathfinders will continue meeting on the 2nd and 4th Sundays of the month from 4-6 PM for regular youth group. Special activities to be announced.



Celebrations this month

Birthdays

Brooks Kursey
Russell Low
Jeremiah Clark
Sherry Clark
Jenna Hardy
Joseph Farmer
Michael Thompson
David Van Vuuren
Vincent Pugh
Emily Rogers
Julia McDonough



Bethany Hollida
Peyton LaVallee
Diane Mayhew
Chloe Ruffner
Laura Van Vuuren
Donna Burns
Jane Ishman
Spencer Howard
Kenneth Reim



Anniversaries

Jim & Stella Bovard

Sunday @ CTPC

10:30am-Worship Celebration Facebook

For a complete listing of all of the church activities, please click [here](#).



Yokefellows Sunday School class is in need to two Sunday school teachers. Teachers are furnished with teaching materials from the Adult Bible Studies series. Teachers will only be asked to teach one Sunday per month. Please contact the church office if you are interested (304-725-5316 or ctpres@ctpres.org).

It is urgent that we create a list of people who would volunteer to keep the nursery with Jordan for the immediate future. There will be sign-up sheet on the piano and in the narthex. If you have not had a background check with CTPC this will need to be done. DFM is taking resumes for this position right away. If you know someone who might be interested please call the church office: 304 725 5316.



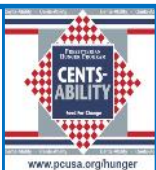
URGENT NEED- Meals-on-Wheels needs drivers. Please call (304-725-1601) or stop by the kitchen of the Charles Town Presbyterian Church. We are open 8am-1pm.



Online giving helps you to bring your offering before God in a simple, and secure way. You can choose from The Presbyterian Foundation, Facebook, or PayPal, each of which have a nominal fee that you can include as part of your gift. The Presbyterian Foundation fee does help the organization's mission, and you can easily use a mobile app (Vanco Mobile Faith Engagement on Google Play/AppStore) to set up for repeating or one time giving. If you have any questions, please contact the church office. Donation options and tax information at www.ctpres.org (<http://www.ctpres.org>).



JCCM Food Pantry needs. Any assistance would be greatly appreciated: spaghetti sauce, canned fruit, canned meat (vienna sausage, spam, chicken, tuna), canned beans, canned vegetables (not green beans/corn), soups (hearty & condensed), canned chili, rice (small bags), instant mashed potatoes, jelly and peanut butter, syrup, instant oatmeal, crackers, boxed pancake mix, cooking oil, deodorant, shampoo/conditioner, paper towels, toilet paper, dish soap, laundry detergent. Thank you, Kari Dean, Food Pantry Coordinator, JCCM



The Six-cents-a-meal offering, is collected on the 4th Sunday each month, and goes to the Presbyterian Hunger Program. To contribute to this offering please note on memo line: hunger offering. Thank you.

Be part of the blessing! Join the Stewardship committee and help our church grow in faith, generosity and purpose. Help us inspire a spirit of giving in our church family. Stewardship and vision begin with you! Contact Patsy White 304 725 8058.



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