



My New Year's Resolution...

Bellevue Methodist Church

VOLUME 7, ISSUE 1

JANUARY / FEBRUARY

Have you ever considered how much of your life is spent on a screen? I recently did math, and in a given week, I will spend 10 hours typing, 2 hours using email and my electronic calendar, 2 hours in video calls, 4 hours reading for work or catching up on the news, and at least 6 hours watching TV or playing video games. In other words, I spend one day of my life, every week, that's fifty-two days a year working, communicating, and relaxing in front of a screen. If you were to conduct a similar audit, what would you find?

I am not an opponent of technology; without screens, Joel would only see his grandparents a few times a year, my weekly prayer and accountability group would not have a place to meet, and poor Jessica would have to decipher my handwriting for every church bulletin. But as St. Augustine explains in his famous treatise "On Christian Teaching", all created things exist to be employed for the knowledge and glory of God, not to become ends unto themselves.

But technology, especially our phones and televisions, has a way of becoming all-consuming, in part because they were designed to dominate our attention. And lately, I keep running into folks who are trying to implement some form of intentional "disconnecting", whether it is parents trying to protect their children, professionals trying to become more productive, or retired folks who just want to be more active and less anxious.

I think what these people are observing is the same principle that the Psalmist observed when he warned Israel about orienting their lives around idols made by humans. He writes, "Their Idols are silver and gold, made by human hands. They have mouths but cannot speak, eyes but cannot see. They have ears but cannot hear, nose but cannot smell. They have hands but cannot feel, feet but cannot walk, nor can they utter a sound with their throats. Those who make them will be like them, and so will all who trust in them." In other words, we become like the things we give our attention and our devotion to.

So, this year, I hope to do a little more writing and a little less typing, to send a few more cards and a few less emails, and to focus on making my connections in person rather than online whenever I can. Why? Not because these tools are bad, but because I find that too much of them makes me a little bit more like a robot and less like the person God has created me to be.

Yours In Christ, Pastor Ben

Operation Christmas Child



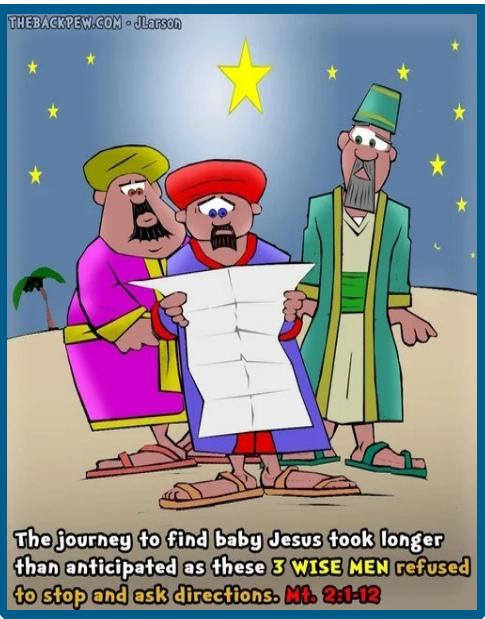
What an incredible year!!

Thank you to everyone who gave to Operation Christmas Child this year. Thanks to your generosity and joyful hearts, we exceeded our goal once again—packing **59** shoeboxes and raising **\$455** to support shipping, processing, and the Greatest Journey Discipleship Program for children receiving these gifts.

Each box brings hope, joy, and the love of Jesus to kids around the world. Thank you for being the hands and feet of Christ and helping us share His light far and wide.

Let's start getting ready for next year...contact Jessica Baker at the church office for more information about Operation Christmas Child and for a guide to year-round Operation Christmas Child shoebox shopping.

It's all about Jesus!



Movie Night at the Church!

All are welcome to join us on the following Saturdays:

31 January 2026 and 28 February 2026



Supper will be provided at 5 pm & the movie will begin at 6 pm. Bring a friend or two or more!

Contact Steve Hill at 269-719-0850 for details.



Youth Group Calendar of Events

Winter / Spring 2026

11 January 2026 — **Youth Group Resumes** (12:30 pm—2 pm)



8 February 2026—
“Soup’er Bowl” Party
 @ the Parsonage
 (5 pm—Halftime)
 Bring a Soup to Share

13—15 February 2026—

Winter Camp with Bellevue First Baptist Church
 @ Bair Lake Bible Camp

(4 spots left for male campers, female campers can join the waitlist!)



22 February 2026 — **Spring Break Mission Trip Training Begins**
 (Sundays 12:30—2 pm). All participants must attend these weekly trainings. Please contact Pastor Ben if you are unable to attend for any reason.

28 March—3 April 2026—**Spring Break Mission Trip to Chicago**

We will spend a week serving with Jesus People USA, an intentional community of believers working together to alleviate poverty, serve the unhoused, and share the love of Jesus on the Northside of Chicago. Contact Pastor Ben if you are interested in attending or in financially supporting a youth missionary.

5 April 2026 and 10 May 2026—No Youth Group in observance of Easter & Mother’s Day

31 May 2026—Last Youth Group of the Year (See you in the Fall!)

Covenant Sunday

4 January 2026

Join us as we welcome our new members, celebrate baptisms, and renew our commitment to follow Jesus together.

As members of the Bellevue Methodist Church, we will be making a commitment to God in Faith which will give you an opportunity to make a plan for how you are going to partner with God in his calling for you. See previous newsletter for more details, pick up a Covenant Commitment Sheet available in the Fellowship Hall or contact Pastor Ben.



Good Samaritan Food Pantry

January / February Collection



Ramon Noodles / Jams & Jellies

Donations accepted all month long and can be dropped off at the church (Shopping Cart in Fellowship Hall) or the Bellevue Good Samaritan Building on Wednesdays between 3 pm—6 pm.

The Good Samaritan Food Pantry would like to give a hearty “THANK YOU” for all the donations this year.

The outpouring of love and generosity within our congregation has truly blessed this community and beyond.



4U Free Store

Volunteers will be needed for set-up, during the event and for tear-down. Lunch will be provided for the volunteers. Please contact Steve Hill at 269-719-0850 to volunteer and for more details.

SAVE
THE
DATE



4U Free Store Silent Auction

At the Bellevue Methodist Church

7-8 March 2026

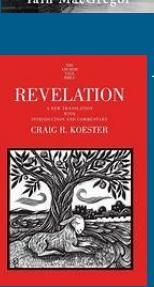
10 am—5 pm

Pastor's Library

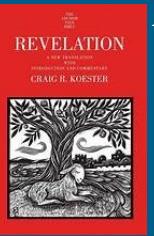
What I am Reading...



My Utmost for His Highest, Oswald Chambers: This is my 2nd time through this all-time classic devotional. Chambers challenges me to follow Jesus more closely each day.



Checkpoint Charlie, Iain MacGregor: Since the Berlin Wall came down before I was born, I have some catching up to do on this important place in modern history.



Anchor Bible Revelation, Craig Koester: Everything I am looking for in a detailed commentary: historically rooted, pastorally sensitive, and theologically astute. A key source for Tuesday Bible Study.

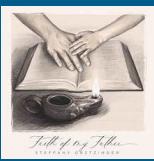
What I am Listening to...



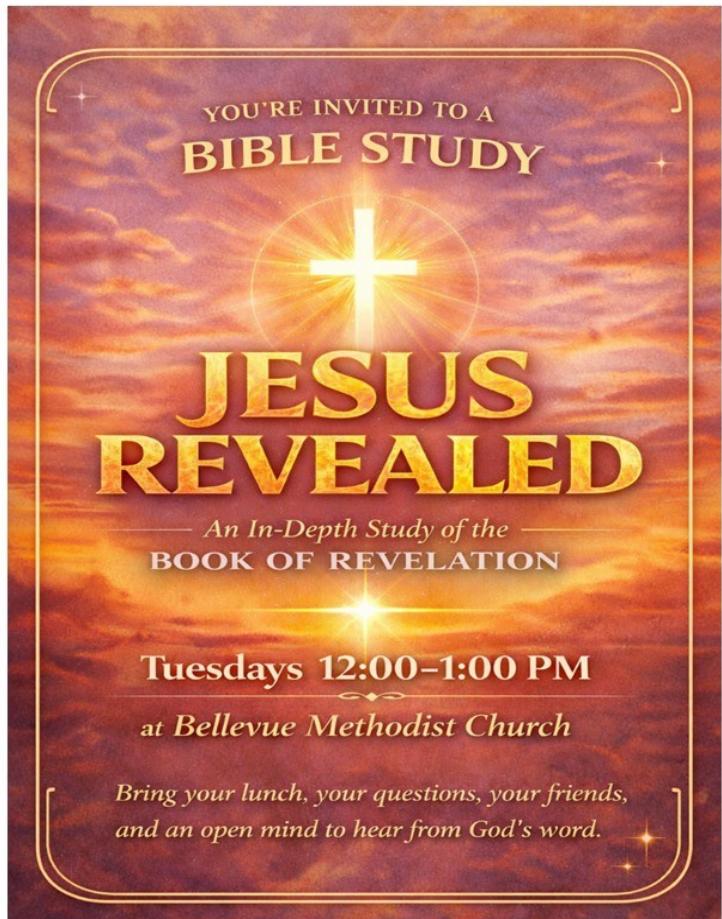
Theology Project: A few months ago I recommended Dr. O'Reilly's sermons. This is a combination of his research and interviews with leading Methodist scholars.



The Last Invention: A long-form investigation of the history and future of Artificial Intelligence and what it may mean for us.



Faith of My Father: Stephanie Gretzinger soulfully revives the classic praise choruses I grew up singing at summer camp.



**ABIG
THANK YOU
to these volunteers**

Thank You Trustees

Steve Hill

Fred Viers

Paul Haist

Garry Cousins

Norm Leonard

Harry Augustine

Thank you to these members of the Trustees and the Monday Morning Work Crew for all the work they have done throughout the 2025 year for the church and parsonage.

Your time and talents are greatly appreciated. Please take the time to give a hearty thanks to these selfless volunteers.

Jessica Baker, Trustee Chair

Contact Information

Church Office Hours:

Tuesday/Wednesday/Thursday: 9am—1pm

Pastor's Office Hours:

Thursdays: 9am—3pm

Additional hours available by appointment

Phone Numbers:

Church Office—Jessica Baker

Phone—269-763-9421

Email—office@bellevuemethodist.org

Pastor Ben Palmer

Church Office—269-763-9421

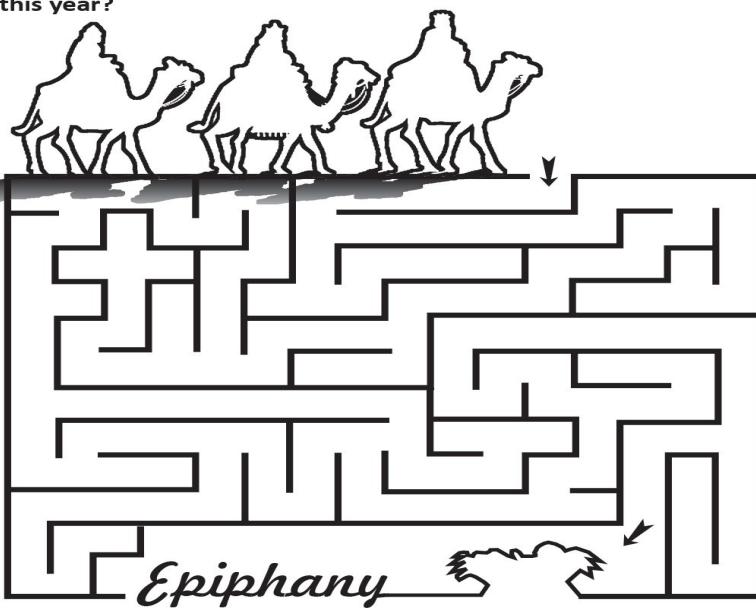
Cell—269-303-4457

Email—pastorbenpalmer@gmail.com



Epiphany, Mt 2:1-12

Three wise men were searching for Jesus. They traveled from very far away to meet him. They followed a star and finally found him in Bethlehem. They adored him and gave him special gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. **What gift would you like to give to Jesus this year?**



Bellevue Methodist Church Mission Statement:

**“Ignite God’s Love In Our Lives
As We Reach Out To The World.”**

Website:

www.bellevuemethodist.org

Check out our website:

- Listen to our Sunday Messages
- See our Current Events and Happenings at the Church
- See what our Ministry Groups are up to
- Read our latest Newsletter and Calendars
- And find out any other information



Facebook:

www.facebook.com/BellevueMethodistChurch

Instagram:

www.instagram.com/bellevuemethodist

Good Housekeeping is Everyone's Job...

- * Pick up tissues, wrappers, & bulletins in the pews
- * Turn off lights
- * Shutting off sink facets
- * Turning off AC Units & ceiling fans
 - * DO NOT OVERRIDE the thermostats...they are preset
- * Clean up after use of the church (meetings, committees, groups, fellowship, activities, etc.)
 - see checklist in Kitchen
- * Lock all doors

Just a reminder...

...and it promotes safety!

