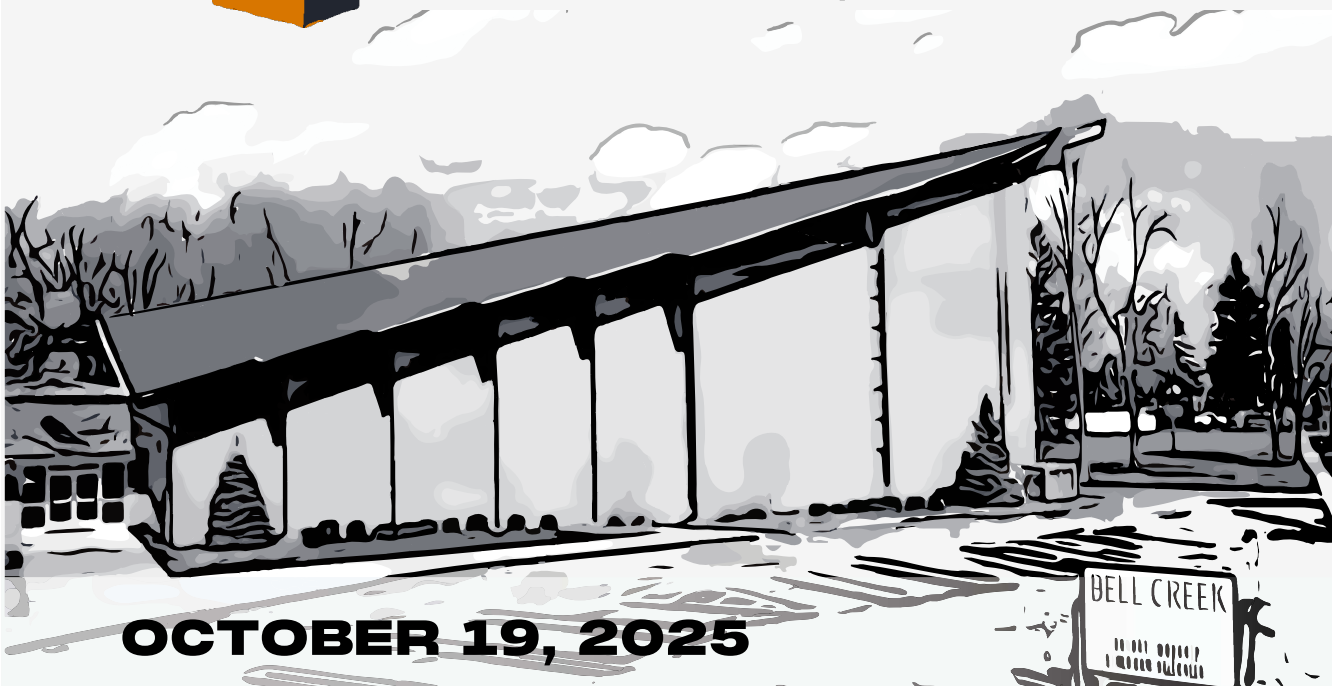


WELCOME TO



BELL CREEK

Community Church



OCTOBER 19, 2025

**TRUTH, HOSPITALITY, AND THE VOICES WE
WELCOME**

2 JOHN 10-13

SERMON BY: PASTOR FRED WRIGHT

CURRENT SERMON SERIES: THE SHORT LETTERS

TRUTH, HOSPITALITY, AND THE VOICES WE WELCOME

2 JOHN 10–13

The Power of a Message

The Flood of Voices

The Beauty of Presence

FOR NEXT WEEK

For Next Week, read 3 John as many times as you can!

DAILY CHRONOLOGICAL BIBLE READING

OCTOBER 19: MATTHEW 15; MARK 7
OCTOBER 20: MATTHEW 16; MARK 9; LUKE 9:18-27
OCTOBER 21: MATTHEW 17; MARK 9; LUKE 9:28-62
OCTOBER 22: MATTHEW 18
OCTOBER 23: JOHN 7-8
OCTOBER 24: JOHN 9:1-10:21
OCTOBER 25: LUKE 10-11; JOHN 10:22-42

UPCOMING AT THE CREEK

FALL FEST DATE CHANGE

Due to weather conditions for this afternoon we had to change the date of our annual Fall Fest to next Sunday, October 26 from 2:00-4:30 PM. We will have our chili cook off, games, face painters, bounce houses, and trunks with treats. If you are interesting in serving please visit www.bellcreek.org to sign up. If you have any questions, please contact Pastor Adam (adam@bellcreek.org) or Gretchen Schick (gretchenschick@hotmail.com).

OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD

Operation Christmas Child shoe boxes are available for taking. If you are interested in filling a shoebox to donate to Samaritan's Purse, you can pick one up in the lobby outside of the Sanctuary, or in the Kids' Creek registration area. Boxes are due back to Bell Creek by Sunday, November 9.

ETHICS SEMINAR

Have you ever wondered what the Bible has to say about tough issues like war, abortion, sexuality, politics, and more? Are you interested in learning how to apply Scripture to our daily lives and think biblically about tough issues? Ethics touches on every aspect of our lives, and it is essential that we as Christians learn how to apply Scripture to today's world. Join Pastor Dylan for our Ethics seminar during the 11:00 AM service Sunday mornings!

BETWEEN TWO TREES BOOK STUDY

Pastor Dylan's Between Two Trees Book Study will meet on Sunday, November 9 at 9:15 AM in the Prayer Room. We will discuss *Liberated: How the Bible Exalts and Dignifies Women* by Karen Soole. If you have any questions, please contact Pastor Dylan (dylan@bellcreek.org).

MINISTRY OPPORTUNITIES

PRAYER MEETINGS

WEDNESDAYS 6:30 - 7:30 PM

FRIDAYS 12 NOON

PRE-TEEN & MIDDLE SCHOOL BIBLE STUDY

WEDNESDAYS 6:30 - 7:45 PM

2ND, 3RD & 4TH SUNDAYS

AFTER WORSHIP

AWANA

WEDNESDAYS 6:30 - 7:45 PM

SEPTEMBER-MAY

HIGH SCHOOL BIBLE STUDY

SUNDAYS 11:00 AM

FIND OUT MORE ABOUT MINISTRY OPPORTUNITIES
AND EVENTS AT BELLCREEK.ORG

OUR MISSION

MATTHEW 22:37–40

He said to him, “Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the greatest commandment. The second is like it: Love your neighbor as yourself. All the law and prophets depend on these two commandments.”

MATTHEW 28:19–20

Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe everything I have commanded you. And remember that I am with you always to the end of the age.

STAY CONNECTED

WE HOPE TO SEE YOU HERE!

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FOLLOW US!



BELL CREEK
Community Church

30000 FIVE MILE RD.
LIVONIA, MI 48154

Sermon 10.19.2025

Sermon Text: 2 John 10-13

Sermon Title: Truth, Hospitality, and the Voices We Welcome

Scripture Reading

“For the LORD spoke thus to me with his strong hand upon me, and warned me not to walk in the way of this people, saying: “Do not call conspiracy all that this people calls conspiracy, and do not fear what they fear, nor be in dread. But the LORD of hosts, him you shall honor as holy. Let him be your fear, and let him be your dread.” (Isaiah 8:11–13, ESV)

The Power of a Message

“If anyone comes to you and does not bring this teaching, do not receive him into your house or give him any greeting,” (2 John 10, ESV)

Context: Hospitality was (and in many places, still is) sacred in the ancient world.

John says, if someone does not “bring this teaching, do not receive him into your house or give him any greeting.” What “teaching” is he talking about? John is talking about those who deny that Jesus was fully God and fully man. Those who deny these truths reject the Gospel.

“for whoever greets him takes part in his wicked works.” (2 John 11, ESV)

So, we are neither to accept or endorse false teachings regarding Jesus because the Good News, the Gospel of our salvation is at stake!

Application For Those Who Do Not Yet Know Jesus

The messages we allow into our minds and hearts shape what we believe about God, about ourselves, and about the world. In John’s day and ours, many voices sound convincing but lead away from the truth. Jesus calls us to listen to His voice above all others. He is not one opinion among many, He is Truth itself.

Question: Which voices are shaping you right now? Will you open your heart to hear the voice of Jesus, the One who loves you, and said, ‘I am the way, and the truth, and the life’ (John 14:6)? Ask Him today to speak to you, and He will show you that His voice is better than the noise of every other message.

The Flood of Voices

How do we apply this principle today? This is a crucial question because we’re not just dealing with people showing up at our door asking for permission to speak; we face countless voices vying for our attention through our digital devices. With minimal effort, if we choose to open the door, we can let numerous teachers into our lives, delivering messages that are Godly, ungodly, and everything in between.

First, let's start by understanding what the "flow of information" was like in 90 A.D.

Imagine a day in the life of an ordinary citizen, say, a man named Marcus, who is a craftsman living in Ephesus around A.D. 90, the same era when 2 John was written.

Next, let's take what we've learned from Marcus' life and contrast information flow in the 1st Century vs the 21st Century...

Speed of Information

In the Ancient World: It was by couriers and ships. It took weeks or months for messages to travel. News of an imperial decree could take 30–60 days to reach distant provinces. Communication was mainly one-way (government to people).

In the Modern World: Info passes through digital networks. It takes milliseconds via the internet. Global news cycles refresh every second; livestreaming is instantaneous. Communication is two-way and multi-directional (anyone and everyone).

So, what took weeks in AD 90 now takes less than a second. The barrier of distance and human travel has been replaced by continuous digital connectivity.

Literacy, Access, and Availability

In the Ancient World: Only 10–15% of the population was literate. Information was scarce and communal. Most people heard news in the marketplace; few read it.

In the Modern World: Over 85% global literacy (!). Information designed for mass access. Unlimited duplication and distribution through the internet. The internet is mainly one language – English (kind of like a modern-day Tower of Babel).

The ancient world's information was scarce and communal; ours is abundant and individual.

Reliability and Control

In the Ancient World: Official news was strictly controlled by the Emperor and provincial elites. Scarcity made imperial propaganda highly effective.

In the Modern World: Power is decentralized; misinformation spreads easily through social media and algorithms. Verification is possible, but credibility is contested.

Both systems wrestle with truth and manipulation - the Romans through central control, modern society through decentralization and noise.

Cost and Barriers

In the Ancient World: Writing materials and scribes were expensive; copying was slow and prone to error. Only the wealthy could afford private libraries.

In the Modern World: Digital replication is free and instant; every phone is a personal library larger than Alexandria!

Information has moved from being a luxury good to a basic human expectation!

Social and Cultural Impact

In the Ancient World: Public life revolved around shared physical spaces like the agora, baths, and temples. Information flow created tight local communities but limited global awareness.

In the Modern World: Public life unfolds in virtual spaces — social media and online platforms. We have global awareness but a fragmented local identity.

The ancient system was built strong local cohesion but weak global connection; the modern one achieves the opposite.

Now, let's talk about the mental and spiritual effects of Information flow, both ancient and modern.

The sources of our information and how we receive it influence our thinking, emotions, reactions, and spiritual life.

Thinking: How We Process Truth

In the ancient world, thinking was slower, communal, and memorized. Information was scarce, so people pondered deeply, memorized large portions of text, and, over time, formed arguments through conversation or letters. Thought was narrative, not fragmented. This produced deep reflection but limited exposure to other perspectives.

In the modern world, thinking is fast and fragmented. The constant influx of data encourages surface-level scanning and short attention spans. Easy access to information can replace understanding with accumulation. We know more facts but possess less wisdom.

Emotions: How We Feel and Respond

In the 1st century, emotional life was local. People reacted to events they witnessed directly. News was rare, and community gatherings provided a space for shared emotional processing. Emotions were intense but periodic.

Today, we are constantly exposed to global tragedy, outrage, and fear. The result is compassion fatigue, anxiety, and emotional overload. Social media comparison also drives envy and dissatisfaction. We feel more, but often process less.

Reactions: How We Respond to Events

Ancient reactions were slower and more reflective. Decisions and conflicts took time to resolve, often through face-to-face dialogue. Social norms reinforced patience and endurance.

Modern reactions are instantaneous. Social media encourages emotional, impulsive responses: likes, shares, outrage, and “cancels” in seconds. This can fuel positive mobilization and destructive division.

Community and Identity

Ancient identity was rooted in family, city, culture, and religion. These reinforced belonging and continuity. Memory and tradition were anchors of stability.

Modern identity is fluid. People invent online personas and form communities by interest rather than geography. While this allows global connection, it often weakens rootedness and deep belonging.

Let's ask, "What's positive about modern information flow?"

Knowledge: Access to vast learning; everyone has access to education and Scripture.

Compassion: Global awareness of suffering; ability to mobilize help quickly.

Connection: Relationships maintained across distance; online Christian fellowship and teaching.

Creativity: Countless tools for art, storytelling, and evangelism.

Accountability: Corruption and injustice are more easily exposed through citizen reporting.

What's Negative about Modern Information Flow?

Attention Spans: Fragmented thinking; constant distraction; decline in sustained reading and prayer.

Emotions: Anxiety, outrage culture, comparison-driven depression.

Lies: Spread of misinformation; difficulty discerning credible voices.

Fragmented Community: Shallow 'connection' without actual presence; loneliness epidemic.

Decreased Spiritual Health: Overexposure to noise; Social media competes with the Word of God and prayer.

For early Christians like John's readers, truth was preserved in faithful memory and handwritten letters. Their danger was the loss of truth through absence or distortion. For modern believers, truth is drowned out by abundance and distraction. Our danger is dilution—losing focus amid too much noise.

The ancient world asked: 'Who will tell me the truth?' Our world asks: 'Why should I believe you among the millions of voices?' The challenge for today's church is to cultivate discernment, depth, and peace amid information saturation.

The ancient information system formed patient, reflective, relational thinkers but limited their exposure. The modern system forms fast, informed, but fragmented minds. The task of faith today is not to retreat from knowledge but to recover wisdom - to slow down, reduce, discern, and live faithfully in a world of endless messages.

A Biblical example of the power of believing false information: Spies in the Land of Israel (Numbers 13 and 14).

Application For Those Who Know Jesus

We are called to guard what enters our homes, our minds, and our hearts. John's words remind us that hospitality must be joined with discernment. In an age of constant digital access, faithfulness means filtering what we see and listen to. This week, evaluate which messages, shows, influencers, and conversations strengthen your faith and which subtly erode it, or waste precious, precious time you could be spending with Jesus, your family, and God's people.

Question: What have you let into your house that shapes your faith more than the Word of God? Will you practice spiritual discernment by limiting voices that weaken trust in Christ, or rob you of time with Him? Will you intentionally seek out voices that help you abide in Christ?

The Beauty of Presence

"Though I have much to write to you, I would rather not use paper and ink. Instead I hope to come to you and talk face to face, so that our joy may be complete." (2 John 12, ESV)

"The children of your elect sister greet you." (2 John 13, ESV)

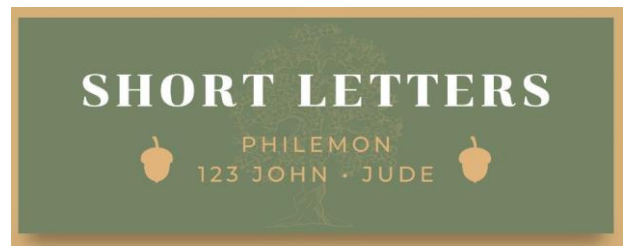
For Those Who Are Hurting

In an age of isolation and endless messages, John's longing for face-to-face fellowship is a healing truth. The Gospel doesn't come only through words; it comes through people who carry Christ's love. God invites you not only to hear His Word but to experience His care through the presence of His people.

Question: Whose presence might God be sending to strengthen your heart today? Will you allow the family of God to draw near and speak truth to you, pray with you, and remind you of His promises and that you are beloved of God? Are you willing to be the person who brings strength to others? Amen!

Benediction

"Now to him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you blameless before the presence of his glory with great joy, to the only God, our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion, and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen." (Jude 24–25, ESV)



Truth, Hospitality, and the Voices We Welcome

1. What did you think of the sermon "Truth, Hospitality, and the Voices We Welcome"?

2. John warns not to "receive" those who do not bring the true teaching of Christ. What might "receiving someone into your house" look like in our modern world? How can we show kindness to others without supporting what is false?

3. Since John says that greeting or endorsing false teachers makes one "take part in their wicked works." How might we unintentionally share in someone's harmful influence today? What helps us discern when something seems "Christian" but isn't faithful to Scripture?

4. John pivots in v.12 stating that he longs for a face-to-face conversation. What does this tell us about the importance of genuine, personal fellowship among believers? How does truth deepen our joy in Christian relationships?

5. John ends with "The children of your elect sister greet you," showing the unity of believers walking in truth. Why is it important for churches and believers to stay connected in sound teaching and shared faith? How can we encourage one another to remain faithful in a world full of spiritual confusion?

