

Wisconsin Rapids Moravian Church

310 First Avenue South 715-423-0180 www.wrmoravian.org

"Sharing Christ, Serving People"

Sunday, November 19, 2023

25th Sunday after Pentecost

PRELUDE: "How Could I Ask For More" -Cindy Morgan

SHARING OF JOYS AND CONCERNS

CALL TO WORSHIP – Psalm 123: 1-2c

L: To you I lift up my eyes, O you who are enthroned in the heavens!

C: **As the eyes of servants look to the hand of their master, as the eyes of a maid to the hand of her mistress, so our eyes look to the Lord our God.**

WELCOME & NEWS OF THE CHURCH ALIVE

(Please sign Welcome Pad)

*HYMN #614 "Jesus, Master, Whose I Am"

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE WITH PASTORAL PRAYER

With the Lord's Prayer: **Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen**

SCRIPTURES: 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11

Now concerning the times and the seasons, brothers and sisters, you do not need to have anything written to you. ²For you yourselves know very well that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. ³When they say, "There is peace and security," then sudden destruction will come upon them, as labor pains come upon a pregnant woman, and there will be no escape! ⁴But you, beloved, are not in darkness, for that day to surprise you like a thief; ⁵for you are all children of light and children of the day; we are not of the night or of darkness.

⁶So then let us not fall asleep as others do, but let us keep awake and be sober; ⁷for those who sleep sleep at night, and those who are drunk get drunk at night. ⁸But since we belong to the day, let us be sober, and put on the breastplate of faith and love, and for a helmet

the hope of salvation. ⁹For God has destined us not for wrath but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, ¹⁰who died for us, so that whether we are awake or asleep we may live with him.

¹¹Therefore encourage one another and build up each other, as indeed you are doing.

Matthew 25:14-30

¹⁴“For it is as if a man, going on a journey, summoned his slaves and entrusted his property to them; ¹⁵to one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away. ¹⁶The one who had received the five talents went off at once and traded with them, and made five more talents. ¹⁷In the same way, the one who had the two talents made two more talents. ¹⁸But the one who had received the one talent went off and dug a hole in the ground and hid his master’s money. ¹⁹After a long time the master of those slaves came and settled accounts with them. ²⁰Then the one who had received the five talents came forward, bringing five more talents, saying, ‘Master, you handed over to me five talents; see, I have made five more talents.’ ²¹His master said to him, ‘Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.’ ²²And the one with the two talents also came forward, saying, ‘Master, you handed over to me two talents; see, I have made two more talents.’ ²³His master said to him, ‘Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.’ ²⁴Then the one who had received the one talent also came forward, saying, ‘Master, I knew that you were a harsh man, reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you did not scatter seed; ²⁵so I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here you have what is yours.’ ²⁶But his master replied, ‘You wicked and lazy slave! You knew, did you, that I reap where I did not sow, and gather where I did not scatter? ²⁷Then you ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and on my return I would have received what was my own with interest. ²⁸So take the talent from him, and give it to the one with the ten talents. ²⁹For to all those who have, more will be given, and they will have an abundance; but from those who have nothing, even what they have will be taken away. ³⁰As for this worthless slave, throw him into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’

CHILDREN’S MESSAGE

HYMN #652 “God, Whose Giving Know No Ending”

MESSAGE

PRESENTATION OF TITHES AND OFFERINGS

OFFERTORY: “Give Thanks”

*RESPONSE

**Praise God, who blesses from above;
Praise Jesus Christ, God’s living love;
Praise God, whose Spirit in us lives;
We praise you God through what we give. Amen.**

*OFFERTORY PRAYER with PRAYER OF SERVANTHOOD

**O God, our help in ages past, our hope for years to come.
We give you thanks for your constant presence. Through seasons
of constancy and change, you are with us, calling us out of
ourselves into the world to serve others. Grant that we may be
united in love for each other and for those we haven’t yet met.
Grant us wisdom, patience, and perseverance as we work through
the details and challenges of the ministry you have placed before
us. Continue, O Lord, to bless the work of our hands. Bless the
work of our hands. Amen.**

*LITURGY of Stewardship – page 154 (with Benediction)

ELDERS UPDATE

POSTLUDE: “Let There Be Peace on Earth”

*Stand as able

IN OUR WORSHIP THIS MORNING

Ministers All who serve Jesus Christ
Pastor Beth Rohn-Habegger
Scripture Reader & Liturgist Rosemary Mooney
Keyboardist..... Jan Baker
POP Musicians Milo & Kathy Plante, John Gunn

IN THE LIFE OF OUR CONGREGATION THIS WEEK

TODAY at 6:00 pm..... Community Thanksgiving Service
Port Edwards United Methodist Church

MONDAY at 7:00 pm..... Board of Trustees

TUESDAY at 10:00 am..... Study on the Women in the Bible
4:30 pm..... TOPS (Take Off Pounds Sensibly)

NEXT SUNDAY at 9:00 am..... Sunday School
10:15 am..... Worship

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Our **Joyful Noise** offering this month will go to *The Blessings Flow* project of the Moravian Board of World Mission.
- Just a reminder that a sign-up sheet for **Coffee Hour hosts** is located in the Social Room. Call the church office (715) 423-0180 or Kathy Plante (715) 459-1110 if you have any questions.
- **POP (Prelude, Offertory and Postlude) musicians** are needed. To schedule a date or check availability, you can call Diane Renner (715-325-5300) or just talk to her at church.
- The Board of Elders wants to make sure that transportation is not an issue to participate in worship or other events. **If a ride is needed, please let a member of the Board of Elders know. Also, if you are willing to give a ride to someone in need, let a member of the Board of Elders know.** We will do our best to make connections.
- **Unity Prayer Watch – Saturday, December 2.** A sign-up sheet is on the back table if you wish to participate. The West Green Bay, You Belong, Lake Mills and Veedum Moravian churches are sharing this date with us. Prayer Helps are also located next to the sign-up sheet.
- **December 3rd** is the beginning of Advent! On that Sunday, you are invited to a **Christmas Workshop** following worship. The Blessings Committee will provide a light lunch followed by the opportunity to wrap beeswax candles for the Christmas Eve worship services and crafts for the kids. This year we plan to have a small Christmas tree in the Social Room that the children can decorate with the crafts they make.
- We plan to order the **new Christmas tree** this week. We currently have \$600 of \$750 - \$1,000 needed. Please let the church office/Pastor Beth know if you are willing to help.
- **2024 Calendars are here!** These are also on the back table.

Use It or Lose It

Today's parable challenges us with references to slavery, yet reveals a God of plenty who knows us and calls us to actions on God's behalf. We do well to remember that literal readings of slavery in such biblical texts had a long history of being used by many Christians, in the United States and elsewhere, to justify the existence of slavery. So, surface literalism does not serve us well.

Despite this, we know that the needs of the enslaved persons should have been provided for by the man going on the journey. All the money given to them belonged to the enslaver, and would not have been necessary for their own well-being. Also, the money given to them was based on the enslaver's knowledge of the abilities of the people he was enslaving. He knew what to expect. Soon after the man's departure, two of the enslaved men begin trading the money, doubling their enslaver's holdings. The third hides the money, takes no risks, and loses none of that which had been entrusted to him.

Are we like the third slave, so afraid of God that we are unwilling to risk and lose what God has entrusted to us? Do we keep what has been entrusted to us and hide it, not running the risk of losing it? We cannot do that, because Jesus tells us it will be taken from us if that is all we are willing to do.

Through this parable Jesus calls us to be brave with God's money (and the time and abilities God gives us, we might also interpret). Put it out there. Let it work. What would an investigation of our personal accounts, our congregation's budgets, and the interior of this bulletin say about our faithful risks related to our traditions and our talents?

*Riddick Weber, faculty, Moravian Theological Seminary,
Bethlehem, Pennsylvania*

The Moravian Church

Twenty-fifth Sunday after Pentecost
November 19, 2023





Gifts
for People in
Need

This year we have received the names of two families to supply gifts and food for this Christmas. When contacting Head Start, we requested that the families are among the working poor. They can know that the gifts come from the Moravian Church. And we will only know their first name, ages and sizes.

We've set up a list of items at the back of the sanctuary, along with a sign-up sheet. Usually they pick up and deliver the gifts around the 10-15th of December. We'd like to supply some groceries for each family, as well as at least one toy and item of clothing for the children. We requested that Head Start have the families include anything that they or the children especially needed such as socks or winter boots.