

WD News & Notes

The Newsletter of the
Moravian Church,
Western District
August 2020

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Bruce's

*Brothers and Sisters in
Christ:*

Babblings

I write to you today as we continue in the midst of the Covid pandemic. There is a big part of me that would love to wake up some day and find out that the challenges of Covid 19 have been solved and that we can return to “normal” life. But, I realize that that scenario is highly unlikely. I also believe that we will be experiencing a “new normal” in the future and that may not be such a bad thing.

I've seen the illustration that says if anyone predicted 5 years ago what they would be doing in 2020 none of us would have believed them. I certainly was not expecting to be doing what I am doing!

I am aware of people who are continuing to work very hard to keep us safe and healthy. I am aware of people who are having trouble fully comprehending what is going on. I am aware of people who are just tired of this whole thing and want to be done with and beyond the Covid 19 crisis. I am aware of some folks who were close to retirement who have chosen to retire early because they just don't have the energy or stamina to keep going. I am aware of some folks who have been considered essential workers and have been putting in long days for several weeks now.

Yet in spite of all of this I am reminded of the words of Jeremiah 29: 11-12 which states, “‘For I know the plans I have for you,’ declares the Lord, ‘plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and future. Then you will call on me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you.’”

We must remember no matter where we are and what we are feeling in the midst of this challenging time that God has plans for us. Are you aware of God's plans for you or for your church? Have you called on God and prayed to God?

Serving Christ with you,
Pastor Bruce J. Nelson,
President, Western District Executive Board

District Synod

The Western District Executive Board recently took the advice of the Western District Synod Planning Committee to postpone once again our Western District Synod. Synod had originally been scheduled for April, 2020 at Mt. Morris Camp and Retreat Center. We postponed that meeting and rescheduled it for November 19-22 also at Mt. Morris. It has become clear that we cannot safely gather in November of this year as well. We have decided to postpone Western District Synod once again. We have rescheduled Western District Synod for **April 22-25, 2021**. We have Mt. Morris reserved for these dates but we are also exploring some sort of online synod if there is still not a Covid vaccine in place or if it is deemed that having an in-person synod would put people at risk of infection. We will share more information as it becomes available. In the meantime we would encourage your prayers for the Western District Synod Planning Committee as well as the Western District Executive Board.

Ordination Anniversaries

7 th	Jennifer Moran	(9 years)
20 th	Katie Van Der Linden	(14 years)
26 th	Kay Ward	(41 years)
28 th	Nancy Von Boeckmann	(27 years)
29 th	Reid Lauderman	(10 years)

CROSSROADS
UPCOMING
CLASSES



Unpacking the Scriptures – Teaching

Thursdays, 6:00 – 9:00 pm Sep 10th – Oct 29th

Instructor: Rev. Roberta Kearney

Realtime Distance Learning via Zoom

Price: \$240

[Learn More and Register](#)

The Story of Christianity (History)

Mondays, 6:00 – 9:00 pm Sep 14th – Nov 2nd

Instructor: Rev. Dr. Bill Falla

Realtime Distance Learning via Zoom

Price: \$240

[Learn More and Register](#)



BOARD OF
WORLD MISSION
of the Moravian Church • North America



Did you know that the 2020 Moravian Day of Service is set for **September 20th, 2020**? We realize that so very much is up in the air this year, but even during

these times, service to others is worth doing and celebrating. So with flexibility in mind, we invite your congregation to have a worship service that celebrates the many ways your congregation serves both locally and globally, set up service events (appropriate for present-day restrictions), and share what you have done with us so that we can spread the news and inspire more service to all of God's children. Worship resources, service ideas, and everything else that you will need can be found at www.moravian.org/dayofservice. If you have any questions or additional ideas, please contact the Rt. Rev. Chris Giesler at chris@moravianmission.org.

Planning anything in 2020 is a challenging thing to do because of the Covid-19 pandemic, so keeping things simple might be the best approach. We would encourage you to consider having individuals or family units do things at home or in the community that would help others. These might include:

- Collect food for your local food bank. They all need help and contributions, especially those in communities hardest hit by COVID-19.
- Give blood. According to the American Red Cross, there is an urgent need for blood due to the coronavirus outbreak.
- Check on seniors, disabled, or other at-risk neighbors in your area. Call ahead and set up a front porch visit where you bring a lawn chair and have them come out on their front porch for a brief visit and prayer time.
- Check-in on anyone you know who might have depression or anxiety, both of which can be exacerbated during a crisis like this.
- Have children draw pictures and write letters to local seniors in nursing homes who can't have visitors at this time.
- Shop or do errands for quarantined (even self-quarantined) families who need to stay home or don't want to take their kids out in public areas.
- Send thank-you notes and cards of appreciation to front-line workers at hospitals, public safety workers (police, fire-fighters, rescue squad workers), those working in the service industries (grocery store workers, restaurant staff, etc.). Simply be kind to them when they are assisting/serving you!

Covid-19 Resources

Both the Moravian Church, Northern Province and the Moravian Church, Southern Province have prepared an extensive list of resources for congregations during the Covid-19 pandemic.

These are resources for laity, pastors, Trustees, Elders, and church staff. There is also a listing of Moravian churches that are doing online worship.

Make sure to check them out at:

www.moravian.org/covid19resources
and www.moravian.org/bcm

Please hold the **Chaska, Berea,** and **Veedum** congregations in your prayers as they work in the Call Process to seek pastoral leadership.

The Call Process

The District Board continues to be grateful for the leadership of the Joint Boards of **Grace and Main Street** as they lead their congregations.

Grant for Lay Ministry

The Western District recently received a generous bequest from the family of Rt. Rev. Wil and Ruth Behrend.

With some of this gift, your Western District Board has developed the **Behrend Memorial Grant for Lay Ministry**. We are encouraging churches to write requesting a grant for \$1,000 per congregation for use with an ongoing or a new **lay-led** ministry.

This grant is open to any congregation or emerging ministry in the Western District and the grant money will be distributed after the local congregation or emerging ministry has filled out the grant application and any other requested materials. Grant application forms have been sent to all congregations and emerging ministries in the Western District. Completed application forms should be sent directly to District President Bruce Nelson either via email (bruce@mcnp.org) or via snail mail at: Rev. Bruce J. Nelson, 221 East Mills Drive, Lake Mills WI, 53551.

Clergy & Spouse Birthdays

4 th	Barry Lehman	19 th	Val Lehman
5 th	Susan Weinlick	21 st	Karen Kilps
11 th	Mary Bielke	24 th	Aden Ward
14 th	Joy Hicks	25 th	Sharon Lauderman
14 th	Tom Von Boeckmann	26 th	Sam Propsom
17 th	Marcia Eder	30 th	Amy Straughan

Covid-19 Equipping Series

Does COVID-19 Change Everything?

*How to turn challenge
into opportunity*

Join us for an ongoing series of conversations to explore how to take 'full

advantage' of the COVID-19 pandemic as Brother Ben Ingebretson, Director of Church Planting and Emerging Ministries, shares some of his ideas and expertise about how to engage our congregations in new ways. Join as your interest and schedule permit. Each session is designed as presentation/conversation and will last no more than one hour.



Tuesday, August 4th at 1:00 pm CT

Socially Distant Community Impact:

Tested methods to help you connect with people who are remarkably open to good news.

Tuesday, September 1st at 1:00 pm CT

Engaging Online Worship:

Move beyond putting up a camera and streaming your existing worship and consider maximizing the virtual world.

Tuesday, October 6th at 1:00 pm CT

Real Time Discipleship:

How can COVID help us move people beyond "church attendance faith" into a deeper experience with Jesus?

No registration required. Just join via Zoom.

(Same link for all 4 sessions)

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83169527221?pwd=RDFRZjlreFRWSm9UeHRjUm93cWhlOT09>

Meeting ID: 831 6952 7221 Password: 343466

Plans are moving forward for next year's Interprovincial Moravian Ministers Convocation on **June 1st–4th, 2021**. You will be receiving more

information as the event approaches, but until then, here is what we'd like you to do ...

- What workshops might you like to lead? What do you do well that you can share with colleagues? (yoga, hymn-writing, creative worship planning, beading, crocheting, hiking, meditating, etc)
- What workshops might you like to attend?
- Please contact Nola at nknouse@mcsp.org with your ideas.

Minister's Convocation



Liturgies and Hymns

The Interprovincial Board of Communication continues to update its offerings of liturgies and hymns from the Moravian Book

of Worship and other worship resources. In our latest update, we are offering a variety of **Moravian-themed slide backgrounds** for use in PowerPoint or Keynote presentations used in online worship. You can find them at www.moravian.org. We have also updated the **Liturgy for Pentecost and August 13** (from Singing from the Heart) including musical accompaniment for this liturgy. Find this and more than 20 other liturgies from the 1995 Moravian Book of Worship, Singing from the Heart and Sing to the Lord a New Song. Please note: due to copyright restrictions, we are unable to post liturgies that contain copyrighted hymns or hymn texts. However, Moravian congregations with appropriate licenses to use these materials in online services may request electronic versions of liturgies by contacting Sue Kiefner, IBOC, at sue@mcnp.org.

Orders for **2021 Moravian Daily**

Texts are now available at www.store.moravian.org! Order

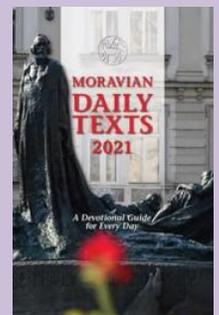
your 2021 Moravian Daily Texts by Aug. 13th and receive a 10% discount.

Versions available include: traditional paperback

"pocket" version, hardcover, spiral-bound journal, large-print

paperback, Spanish, German and

large-print German! (Moravian congregations – use the Purchase Order option.)



During the spring and summer of 2020, we've seen an astounding variety of creative, caring, spirit-filled efforts from Moravians across the U.S. and Canada. Online worship and outreach, feeding those in need, caring for and supporting those on the front lines, standing up against injustices and reimagining our church lives are just a few of the ways Moravians have responded to the COVID-19 pandemic and racial unrest in our country. **Now, it's time to tell your story.** In our upcoming issues of The Moravian Magazine, we want to share the story of how you, your congregations, your families and your communities have responded during the first half of 2020. We're looking for articles, images and reflections that celebrate and honor Moravian efforts both big and small, while sharing ideas and best practices with others. To learn more about how to share your story, visit www.moravian.org or e-mail moravianmagazine@mcnp.org.



“Now What?”

For many weeks, Sunnyside Ministry has been providing canned food to a group of residents who are vulnerable so that they don't have to leave their homes as often; volunteers pick up the food from Sunnyside and take it to the apartment building where the residents live. Last week I was able to be the “transporter”, and after I got done unloading the food, I thought to myself, “Now what?” It hit me how much I miss doing little things to be useful to others and how much my stewardship has changed since March; I haven't been able to use my time and talent in the ways in which I have grown accustomed. Have you had the same experience this year? Maybe it isn't such a bad thing; perhaps we all need to ask ourselves, “Now what?” and take advantage of this time to reflect on how God is calling us to joyful stewardship in new ways. Here are 5 “StewardTips” to help as you consider your own stewardship “Now what?”:

1) Know your gifts.

Have you ever taken a spiritual gifts inventory? If so, was it recently? The United Methodist Church has a great online inventory available at www.umcdiscipleship.org/spiritual-gifts-inventory.

2) Look for little ways to live generously.

Going to the grocery store? Pick a parking spot further away and leave the closer ones for others. Thank the staff. Buy a few cans of food each time you go in and take a monthly donation to your favorite agency that distributes food (Many of our churches have blessing boxes just outside their church buildings.)

3) Examine how you're stewarding relationships with others.

Picture yourself sitting wherever you would for worship and write down the names of 5 people you “see.” What were your last contacts with those people? What can you do to relate to them right now?

4) Consider how you live with money and what God would have you do with it.

Our financial lives impact our faith: as we grow in our generosity to God's work in the world, we grow closer to God. During this challenging time, if money management has become a heavy burden, don't be afraid to ask for help. Your pastor may know of a relief fund and MMFA has relationships with two financial management courses that could help.

5) Finally, we've said it before and it's worth repeating: form a “stewardship belief statement.”

If someone were to ask you, “As a Christian, what do you believe about stewardship?” how would you answer that question? I like this response from Grace Pomroy in the book *Embracing Stewardship*: “*Stewardship is recognizing the many tangible and intangible ways that God has shown God's love to us, and looking for the Spirit's guidance as to how we might share that love with the world. It is about what we do with all of our life, all the time.*”

So now what? Interested in hearing StewardTips for your community of faith? Join Chris Spaugh and me for a webinar on **Thursday, August 13th at 2:00 pm ET (1:00 pm CT)**. We'll be sharing ingredients for a successful stewardship ministry, with a focus on specific steps for a 2020 financial appeal and securing future funding for your community of faith. Register today at:

https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_9YSyWBBTSEuh78ZfHXMHkw!

Want to explore StewardTips on your own time? Visit the resources page of our website (<https://mmfa.info/resources/>) and scroll down to find helpful articles, links, and more for stewardship development.

Finally, would you like to look at your stewardship ministry with fresh eyes? MMFA is here to help. Whether it's through a conversation via Zoom, a stewardship health assessment, or an in person meeting or workshop when the time is right, we have tools that can help you answer “Now what?” when it comes to the next best steps for stewardship.

To learn more, contact Laura Watson, Director of Stewardship Services, at lwatson@mmfa.info or 336-725-2589.

