

# WD News & Notes

The Newsletter of the  
Moravian Church,  
Western District  
December 2019

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## Bruce's Babblings

*Brothers and Sisters in Christ:*  
Welcome to December. Here in Wisconsin we've had December type weather for quite a while already. It felt let December much before the calendar turned to December. I find it hard to believe that we are almost to the end of the year.

As we walk through these days of Advent toward the Christmas celebration, I am aware that it is a very busy time for many people. Our college students are finishing up end of semester exams. Our public school students are doing winter or Christmas concerts and programs. Children are anxiously waiting to see what they will get on Christmas morning. Many places of business have Christmas or end of year parties. In our churches we often have extra programming. Family members are making plans to travel to be together with loved ones. It is a busy time of year for many people. It is often a time of year when we could easily forget to care for ourselves or to remember the important things in life. I would encourage you this month to be mindful of those who may be struggling and to spend some time with them. I would also encourage you to take time to be kind to yourself and those whom you love. Have a wonderful Advent and Christmas Season!

Serving Christ with you,  
*Pastor Bruce J. Nelson*

President of the Western District Executive Board  
Moravian Church, Northern Province

The Unity Prayer Watch is designed to have at least one Moravian somewhere in the world constantly in prayer! The Western District churches have been given **December 5<sup>th</sup> – 10<sup>th</sup>**. More information is available in your local church office.

## Prayer Watch

Dec 5<sup>th</sup> Hope and West Salem  
Dec 6<sup>th</sup> Berea, Bethel, Canaan, Goshen, Grace, Main Street, Shepherd of the Prairie, and Unionville  
Dec 7<sup>th</sup> Christian Faith, Ebenezer, Glenwood, Lakeview, London, Tricklebee, and Watertown  
Dec 8<sup>th</sup> Lake Mills, Veedum, West Side, and Wisconsin Rapids  
Dec 9<sup>th</sup> Daggett, Ephraim, Freedom, Sister Bay, and Sturgeon Bay  
Dec 10<sup>th</sup> Chaska, Christ's Community, Lake Auburn, Morongo, and Waconia

## Church Anniversaries

4 <sup>th</sup>	Berea	145 years
21 <sup>st</sup>	Lake Mills	163 years
22 <sup>nd</sup>	Freedom	153 years

## Grant for Lay Ministry

The Western District recently received a generous bequest from the family of Rt. Rev. Wil and Ruth Behrend. Some of that bequest has gone to Mt. Morris to help with future expansion or building maintenance. With the other part of the bequest, your Western District Executive Board decided to develop the **Behrend Memorial Grant for Lay Ministry**. We are encouraging our local 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](mailto:Bruce@mcnp.org)) or via snail mail at: Rev. Bruce J. Nelson, 221 East Mills Drive, Lake Mills WI, 53551.



In September, the Provincial Elders' Conference approved the purchase of the building in which **Tricklebee Café** is located at 4424 W. North Ave. in Milwaukee, WI.

Negotiations are underway to buy the whole building, which will allow Tricklebee Café, under the leadership of Sister **Christie Melby-Gibbons**, to determine how the other area of the building are used. The rear apartment unit is already being renovated for office, storage, and meeting space. Stay tuned for developments in this exciting ministry.

## Ordination Anniversaries

1 <sup>st</sup>	Amy Gohdes-Luhman	23 years
27 <sup>th</sup>	Aden Ward	49 years
27 <sup>th</sup>	Staci Marrese-Wheeler	27 years

## Clergy & Spouse Birthdays

6 <sup>th</sup>	Nan Nelson	19 <sup>th</sup>	James Heroux
13 <sup>th</sup>	Bruce Nelson	28 <sup>th</sup>	John McCarthy
19 <sup>th</sup>	John Gehler	28 <sup>th</sup>	Rose Ullrich

Please hold the **Chaska** congregation 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.

## Prayer Concerns

It is with a heavy heart that we report that Brother **Darryl Bell**, retired pastor from Grand Rapids, Michigan, died from a diving accident on Wednesday, November 27. He and his wife Jackie were visiting their son David and his family in Antigua when this occurred. Please hold Darryl's family in your prayers at this time of grief: his wife Jackie, their sons David and Bryce and families, Darryl's father Cliff, and the extended family in Unionville, Michigan and beyond.

You are invited to pray for the people of **Albania** in the wake of a 6.4 magnitude earthquake. The epicenter was near the capital Tirana, where the Moravian Church in Albania is headquartered.

Please pray for Brother **Daniel Johnson**, son of former Western District pastors Revs. **Christine and Darrell Johnson**, as he recovers from a cardiac procedure that took place November 18.

## District Synod

Plans are under-way for our 2020 Western District Synod, which will take place on **April 23<sup>rd</sup> - April 26<sup>th</sup>** at Mt. Morris.

The theme for our next synod is *"Being the Church: Holy Spirit Empowered."* Our theme hymn for this synod is "We Have Received Christ Jesus" which was written by Jack Hicks. A "Call To Synod" letter was recently sent to all District churches.

More information will be coming but we would encourage you to put this on your church calendars now and to be in prayer for our **Synod Planning Committee** (Amy Andersen, Karen Buchholz, Rev. Judy Ganz, Sylvie Hauser, Rev. Jim Hicks, Rev. Bruce Nelson, Megan Smock, Rev. Aden Ward, and Taylor Wickert) as they continue with their preparations.

A **Nominating Committee** is being formed chaired by Rev. Jason Andersen. You will be receiving information in a few months about the positions open for election at Synod as well as accompanying position descriptions, terms lengths, and requirements

The Western District Board has approved inviting up to 10 **Youth Delegates** to our 2020 Synod. The District Board will pay 50% of the cost for these delegates to attend. The age range is completed 9<sup>th</sup> grade – age 21. Limit of two youth delegates per congregation. The delegates will have voice but not vote. First come, first served.

## Czech Republic Mission Trip

We are looking for 6 youth adults (ages 18-25) to worship, learn, and serve with our Moravian brothers and sisters in the Czech Republic. The trip is **August 3-14, 2020**. The application deadline is **January 15, 2020**. For more information or to fill out an application form, go to

[www.moravianmission.org/young-adult-mission-trip-to-czech-republic-august-3-14-2020/](http://www.moravianmission.org/young-adult-mission-trip-to-czech-republic-august-3-14-2020/)

## Clergy Retreat

The 2020 Western District Clergy Retreat will be held at Mt. Morris Camp and Conference Center from **January 20<sup>th</sup> – 24<sup>th</sup>**. Our speaker this year is Rachel Westenberg.

Our theme is "Journey to Justice." Registration forms have been emailed out. Pastor Joel Russell from Bethel and Goshen Moravian Churches is this year's coordinator. He can be contacted at [joelchap@aol.com](mailto:joelchap@aol.com).

Following the 2018 Provincial Synod, the Provincial Elders' Conference called together a group of clergy to work toward fulfilling synod legislation to provide anti-racism training for all clergy, and to develop a culture in our province to dismantle racism. Plans are under way for a pilgrimage for active clergy **September 21-25, 2020**. To prepare for this significant event, members of the Racial Justice Team, the Provincial Elders' Conference, and our Bishops will travel to Montgomery, Alabama in January 2020 to experience the Equal Justice Museum and Memorial and learn from Dr. Catherine Meeks, Founding Director of the Absalom Jones Center for Racial healing, and tour other significant sites in Selma and Montgomery.

## Racial Justice

The 2020 Mid-Winter Youth Retreat for youth in 9<sup>th</sup> grade – age 21 will be held **Friday, January 31<sup>st</sup> – Sunday, February 2<sup>nd</sup>** at Christian Faith Moravian Church in DeForest, WI. If you have any questions, please contact Regional Youth Council advisors Greg Behrend, Megan Weihert, or Carmen Gesinger.

## Mid-Winter Youth Retreat

The 2020 Young Adult Retreat for those age 21 – 30 (ish) will be held **February 7<sup>th</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup>** at Mt. Morris Camp and Retreat Center. If you have any questions, please contact coordinators Taylor Wickert or Sylvie Hauser.

## Young Adult Retreat

The Northern and Southern Provinces are sponsoring an Interprovincial Ministers Convocation in **May of 2021**, and we want all our active ministers to be present! The planning committee is meeting monthly and will send periodic progress reports. Major expenses of the event are supported by the Thriving in Ministry grant: Moravian Clergy Connections, awarded by the Lilly Endowment Inc. last year. Still to be determined are such important items as the specific dates and location, speakers and convocation theme, and worship plans. (As far as location, don't think of a college dorm with bathroom down the hall; the intent of the grant writers is to give us all a more peaceful experience, so that we might even feel a bit "pampered"!)

## Minister's Convocation



## BOARD OF WORLD MISSION

of the Moravian Church • North America



The season of Advent is often thought of as a journey...a four-week journey toward the stable where we will greet the newborn Christ child. We can imagine the Magi traveling across borders, following a mysterious star, to find something most unexpected: a poor, homeless child born to peasants, who is about to change the world. The presence of those Wise Men from afar hint that this newborn child is the beginning of something bigger than we can imagine; a reaching out of God's love to ALL people on this good earth. Of all the gifts that God gives, Jesus the Christ, is the most precious of them. Christmas is indeed the celebration of God's abundant and amazing grace and generosity.

The season of Advent invites us to make this journey to the manger and to ponder how we can be generous to others in Jesus' name. We live in a world that is in desperate need of God's love and at the Board of World Mission we celebrate that we are all journeying together in God's mission.

We take this sacred moment to thank you for your support of the Board of World Mission through your prayers, your service, and your giving, and look forward to continuing our partnership into the new year ahead. We wish each of you a very blessed celebration of the Advent and Christmas season.



Has God been nudging you to consider ministry – either ordained or in a lay capacity?

Moravian Theological Seminary in Bethlehem, PA offers an opportunity to “put your toe in the water” through the Crossroads Program, designed specifically for people exploring service in the church. Classes are available online. Learn more at [www.moravianseminary.edu/academics/crossroads](http://www.moravianseminary.edu/academics/crossroads).

If you are sensing a call to ordained ministry and think you can't uproot your life and move to Bethlehem for 3 years, consider taking some classes online. In order to remove as many financial barriers as possible, the Provincial Elders' Conference has extended the amount of time the church will loan tuition support to approved candidates from 3 years to 5 years. This allows candidates to study part-time and still work part-time. The church also provides health care to approved candidates during seminary studies, up to five years. Talk with your pastor, a bishop, or your District or PEC president to learn how you might respond to God's call!

For the first time in our existence, your Moravian Ministries Foundation in America we will be making grants early next year to Moravian congregations, fellowships, ministries, or agencies. On August 1 of 2019, we launched the first Field of Interest Fund on the [Moravian Giving Portal](#). The idea was to simplify giving for Moravians of all means, according to their passions and calling. The [Hunger & Thirst Field of Interest Fund](#) was the first to allow donors to give generally to a cause. In this case, to make a gift that will address hunger and thirst in communities where Moravians have a presence. A Grant Advisory Team [from left to right, The Rev. Beth Rohn-Hebhegger (Wisconsin Rapids WI); Sue Dreydoppel (Nazareth PA); Sandy Baldwin (Winston-Salem NC); The Rev. Jenny Moran (Chaska, MN); Vince Holbrook (Greensboro NC); Tres Fordham (Laurel Springs NC). Not pictured: Zachary Routh (Mt. Airy NC)] will make the funds available to ministries based on the merits of their grant applications. Your Moravian Ministries Foundation in America will be responsible for due diligence and monitoring to make sure the funds were used effectively as planned.



#### How to apply for a grant

Since August, our Hunger & Thirst Field of Interest Fund has accumulated enough to make small grants (\$500 to \$1000). The deadline to apply for a grant is January 15, 2020. Grants will be awarded and funds dispersed on or around Valentine's Day (February 14, 2020). It's easy to apply. Just complete [this form](#) and send it to Vince Holbrook at the Moravian Ministries Foundation, 119 Brookstown Ave., Suite 305, Winston-Salem, NC 27101. Or email it to [vholbrook@mmfa.info](mailto:vholbrook@mmfa.info).

#### Who should apply for a grant

Organizations that are affiliated with the Moravian Church in North America are the preferred grant recipients. This includes Moravian congregations, fellowships, emerging ministries, agencies and institutions. The Grant Advisory Team will review applications received by the deadline and make grants to the best projects with the funds available. Organizations may receive a grant from any given Field of Interest Fund once every three years. The Moravian Ministries Foundation in America will manage due diligence on granted funds. Recipients should plan to provide at least an annual report, including photos suitable for publication. Organizations that apply, but do not receive a grant, are encouraged to reapply for the next cycle.

- Vince Holbrook, MMFA

## From the **Moravian Seal Lapel Pin**

**I.B.O.C.** The IBOC is pleased to introduce our new Moravian Seal Lapel Pin. This 1" metal enamel pin features a black rim with silver lettering and a color Moravian seal, perfect for lapels, collars, ties, lanyards, even backpacks. Pins are \$5.25 each. For a limited time, we're offering free U.S. shipping on these pins; use coupon code PINSHIPFREE at checkout or mention it to Jill when ordering. (Regular shipping charges apply to additional items on your order.)



### **Watchwords for 2020 Now Available**

Watchwords for 2020 are now available for your year-end services. This downloadable file contains watchwords pulled from the 2020 Moravian Daily Texts, formatted into cards for congregational use. Many Moravian congregations use these watchwords as part of their New Year's services to offer their members a watchword for the year. To use, simply print the watchwords onto the paper/card stock of your choice; each page is formatted to be cut in half lengthwise and then on the dotted lines to create individual watchword cards. For more details or to purchase, visit the "2020 Moravian Daily Texts" section of [www.store.moravian.org](http://www.store.moravian.org).

### **Christmas-Themed Bulletin Covers**

Looking for the perfect bulletin cover for your Christmas Eve services? The IBOC offers six different styles. Choose from candle themes, putzes, angels or stars! Bulletin covers are 10 cents each and are sold in packs of 50 for \$5.00. Visit [www.store.moravian.org](http://www.store.moravian.org) and click on the "Bulletins for Special Occasions" category for more information. Order by Dec. 13 to ensure delivery for use this Christmas.

### **Digital Editions of 2020 Daily Texts now available**

The digital editions of the 2020 Moravian Daily Texts are in final production and will be available for your Kindle or iPad. Visit [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com), the iTunes Store or [www.bn.com](http://www.bn.com) and search for "Moravian Daily Texts 2018." Digital editions are 7.99 each.

## I.P.O Letter to the Church

Dear Church – brothers and sisters in Christ,  
Grace, mercy, and peace to you all in the name of Jesus Christ, our Chief Elder. We, the elected leaders of the Provincial Elders' Conference and all three District Executive Boards, met to review the results of the Identity, Purpose, and Organization Survey and develop plans to follow through on the feedback you provided us. In the midst of our time together, we prayed for you and our congregations, and sought the leading of God's Holy Spirit for our next steps as congregations, districts, and province. We reaffirmed our Mission Statement: *The Moravian Church Northern Province exists to equip people and congregations to be agents of God's transforming love in the world.* This means that everything we do must help you do ministry more joyfully and more effectively.

1. Thank you for attending the IPO presentations this summer and fall in your congregational regions and for responding to the Survey Monkey. An outstanding 77 of 85 congregations filled out the survey! Here is the link to the actual survey results: [www.surveymonkey.com/results/SM-8PXBCFM27/](http://www.surveymonkey.com/results/SM-8PXBCFM27/)
2. Based on your feedback, we identified four main areas of focus:
  - a. **Communication** – you all wanted more communication about every facet of ministry, from money to congregational resources. This letter is the first step; we count on those who receive this letter to share it broadly in your congregation – through bulletin inserts, your local Facebook page, email lists to members, etc. We acknowledge that communication goes both ways. As we share more with you, we count on you to tell us how things are going in your congregation.
  - b. **Lay Leadership Development** – we are committed to equipping you to offer the gifts God has given you in a variety of ways and areas of ministry, whether it helps you become a better Sunday School teacher or equips you to provide lay pastoral leadership at your local congregation.
  - c. **Congregational Care** – we recognize that there are ministry challenges in every area of our province – no matter where you are located. We affirm that are one church expressed in many contexts and geographical areas. We are developing ideas and identifying existing resources to equip you to be agents of God's transforming love in the world.
  - d. **Nurture a culture of experimentation and possibility** – we believe that God is at work in all our congregations and that the exciting ministries that are happening in one place might inspire another congregation to try something similar. We encourage you to share stories of your neighborhood-blessing ministries.
3. This gathering took place as part of our ongoing effort to be faithful to the directive of the 2018 Provincial Synod resolution. This information will help us deliberate on how we will live fully into our Identity, Purpose, and Organization. Look for more information and recommendations that will be available to you as you prepare for 2020 District Synods.

We close with a hymn that has become our prayer:

*O Breath of Life, coming sweeping through us, revive your church with life and power.*

*O Breath of Life, come, cleanse, renew us, and fit your church to meet this hour.*

*O Breath of Love, come, breathe within us, renewing thought and will and heart.*

*Come, love of Christ, afresh to win us; revive your church in ev'ry part.* (MBW, p. 47)

With hopeful anticipation,

Members of the Canadian (BECD), Eastern (EDEB), and Western (WDEB) District Boards and The Provincial Elders' Conference (PEC)