

WD News & Notes

The Newsletter of the
Moravian Church,
Western District
January 2020

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Bruce's Babblings

Brothers and Sisters in Christ: Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

Welcome to this new month, this New Year, this new decade. It is often at this time of year that we as individuals look back on the year past. We often look back at some things that were perhaps difficult to understand or accept. We maybe look back at some things that we wish we could have handled differently. We may remember with sadness some folks who are no longer with us or a particular medical diagnosis that rocked our world.

However, with a new month and year and decade we can also look ahead. We can look ahead to new opportunities, new situations, perhaps new relationships or an opportunity to mend a broken relationship. It is often at this time of year that people look at New Year's resolutions or new goals.

In my travels and my discussions around the district and beyond I get to see some of the challenges that a few of our local churches face. I am aware of some things that are significantly challenging our local congregations.

I also am aware of some very exciting and wonderful things that are happening in our local congregations. One of the things that I heard of recently is too exciting not to share. There is a church that is allowing another Hispanic speaking church to use their building for times when the Moravian Church is not using it. The Moravian worship service is on Sunday morning and the Hispanic service is later in the day on Sunday. The non Moravian Church did not have a place to have meetings or do any other programming during the week so they would often do those things in homes. The Moravian Church made the church available one night a week for meetings and programming needs of the Hispanic church. The Hispanic church also did not have a place for their pastor to do counseling with parishioners. The Moravian Church had space available for this pastor to have an office in the Moravian Church where these things can now take place.

There are stories of Moravian churches that allow other groups to use their building and receive rent as a result of it. It is like they are landlords but not really much else. In the case that I am referring to the local Moravian Church is receiving some rent as well but the churches are doing things together. They are supporting one another. In addition to the things I have listed so far, these two churches – the Moravian and the Hispanic church – shared the Christmas Eve service together. The Moravian pastor preached in English but the sermon was translated into Spanish for those who were from the Hispanic church. Silent Night was sung in English and in Spanish. Next year the Hispanic Pastor will preach on Christmas Eve and it will be translated into English. In addition to all of this the two congregations will come together a few times a year (I think it is quarterly) to do pot luck or covered dish meals to just engage in mutual support and fellowship.

So, as you think about the new things that will take place in this new month, New Year, new decade for you as an individual what new things could we be introducing in our churches? Where is the Lord leading us in 2020?

Serving Christ with you, Pastor Bruce J. Nelson

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) or via snail mail at: Rev. Bruce J. Nelson, 221 East Mills Drive, Lake Mills WI, 53551.

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.

Church Anniversaries

1st - Chaska (161 years) 1st - Waconia (104 years)
 20th - Wisconsin Rapids (130 years)
 30th - Sturgeon Bay (155 years)

Ordination Anniversaries

18th Terry Weavil (43 years)

Czech Republic 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

Mission Trip

www.moravianmission.org/young-adult-mission-trip-to-czech-republic-august-3-14-2020/

Youth and Young Adult Retreats

Register for both these events by going to www.wdcamping.com and scrolling down to the event.

The **Mid - Winter Youth Retreat** for youth in grade 9 – age 21 will be held on **January 31st – February 2nd** at Christian Faith Moravian Church in DeForest, WI. The program is entitled “In All Things Love.” This year we welcome Courtney Bauder as our program leader. Courtney is a professor at University of Wisconsin Oshkosh and has become a profound voice for Moravians desiring to serve Christ through a call to justice ministry. Come and join us as we learn what it means to love in all that we do as we enter into the year 2020!

The **Young Adult Retreat** for those age 18 – 30(ish) will be held on **February 7th – 9th** at Mt. Morris Camp and Retreat Center. Kathy Liebenow will be leading a program called “Faith: While Walking in the Wilderness.” Exploring the book of James, we will learn how to become mature followers of Jesus during life’s journey.

District Synod Plans are under-way for our 2020 Western District Synod, which will take place on **April 23rd - April 26th** 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 9th grade – age 21. Limit of two youth delegates per congregation. The delegates will have voice but not vote. First come, first served.

2nd Greg Behrend

4th Karen Krauss

6th Holley Weavil

7th Bob Volpe

10th Larry Christianson

12th Bob Smith

22nd Jackie Bell

23rd Matthew Knapp

24th Terry Weavil

Clergy & Spouse

Birthdays



27th Betsy Miller

30th Faith Fliegel

30th Art Hanson

Clergy Retreat The 2020 Western District Clergy Retreat will be held at Mt. Morris Camp and Conference Center from **January 20th – 24th**. 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.

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 Unity Offering has been designated for the Moravian Church in Rwanda to erect a church building as a national headquarter in the capital city of Kigali, as required by government regulations.

Unity Offering

March 1st is observed as the founding of the Unitas Fratrum and the first Sunday in March (**March 1st, 2020**) is the Prayer Day for Unity Work and the Sunday when the Unity Offering is often received.

Detailed information received from the Unity that you can share has been sent to all congregations. The information will also be posted on the Unity website www.unitasfratrum.org.

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!

Minister's Convocation

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"!)

Crossroads Lay Leadership at Moravian Seminary starting in January:



My Journey Spiritual Formation
with the Rev. Maggie Wellert

Faith Journeys of the Old Testament
with Kim Denyes

Deepen your spiritual life. Explore the Bible. More info at www.moravianseminary.edu/academics/crossroads/upcoming-courses



BOARD OF
WORLD MISSION
of the Moravian Church • North America

DID YOU Know... ... that this past November, pastors and leaders from five congregations in Sierra Leone got together for a time of reflection and planning? Just as we are looking back on another year gone by and looking ahead to what this year will bring, the Moravians in Sierra Leone spent some time looking back (to see how they fit into an amazing story that has been unfolding for more than 560 years); looking around (to see how they fit into a wonderful worldwide Moravian family) and looking ahead (to see what God has planned for them in the coming year and beyond!). Plans were made for a National Conference to be held in February 2020. This will be a time to explore ways in which the Sierra Leone Moravians, the Board of World Mission, the Southern Province, the Worldwide Unity, and the Sierra Leone Mission Committee at Little Church on the Lane can work together to be faithful stewards of the exciting ministry that is taking place in Sierra Leone. If you would like to support the work in Sierra Leone, please visit our website at www.moravianmission.org/give. Donations can also be mailed to our office at 1021 Center Street, Bethlehem, PA 18018. Checks should be made payable to "Board of World Mission". Thank you!

Tour of the Holy Land Bishop Hopeton and Shelia Clennon will lead a 10-day pilgrimage to the Holy Land **June 30th - July 9th, 2020**.

The itinerary includes travel through Israel and Palestine visiting major Biblical. The all-inclusive cost from New York Kennedy airport starts at \$3,698 per person based on double occupancy. For more information visit www.moraviantour.com.

Three New Year's Resolutions You Can't Break

By Vince Holbrook



A graphic where the word "RESOLUTIONS" is spelled out using individual white letters with black outlines, each letter placed on a dark rectangular background. The letters are slightly staggered and have a 3D effect.

toward resolutions, fresh starts, and new commitments. Many of us vow year-after-year to lose weight, stop smoking, or change other behaviors. But discipline is hard.

Sadly, studies show most New Year's resolutions are broken in about 21 days – only about one third of the time (66 days) it takes to establish a new pattern. And Lent is just around the corner too. So why not make a resolution you can actually keep! We can help.

1) Become a “First Fruits” Giver.

Find your church or ministry on the [Moravian Giving Portal](#) and schedule a MONTHLY gift the day after your payday. This way your gift is automatic. It's the first thing you do with your money. You won't have to remember it. It will happen if you are traveling, sick, or playing hooky from church. If your circumstances change, you can always go in and change the amount of your monthly gift, or the date.

2) Invest in the church.

If you have investments, you're probably paying investment fees. But what happens to those fees? When you invest in the [Moravian Common Fund](#), managed by the Moravian Ministries Foundation in America, the fees remain in the Moravian Church and continue to do God's work. Those fees enable us to provide Stewardship Services at no charge to congregations, distribute money globally to support mission work, issue grants and more. Your investment fees continue to do God's work when they remain in the church. By spending a few minutes to move your investments from secular managers to MMFA, your investment fees will keep your resolution to support God's work all year.

3) Name your church or Moravian Ministry in your estate plan.

The beginning of a new year is a great time to create or reassess your will. If you don't have one, let 2020 be the year you create one. We can help you organize your thoughts, clarify your passions, and use the tools of philanthropy to make your perfect planned gift. If you already have a will, the beginning of a new decade is a great time to reassess whether it reflects your current priorities and wishes.

[Click here to schedule your monthly gift on the Moravian Giving Portal](#)

[Click here to see and print our Estate Planning Guide & Organizer.](#)

[Click here to find your perfect gift.](#)

[Click here to see bequest language.](#)

So, say “yes” to a resolution that will last longer than 21 days, take only a few minutes to complete, and you won't forget. Fun Fact: the word “discipline” and “disciple” have the same Latin root word, “discipulus.”