

# Board of World Mission 2022 Advent Calendar



Counting our blessings so that we  
can be a blessing to others...

In support of Moravian  
education efforts near and far.

To receive daily prompts for this Advent calendar via text, text  
(920)495-8995 and include "Advent calendar" in the text.

To receive daily updates for this Advent calendar via email,  
email [sylvie@moravianmission.org](mailto:sylvie@moravianmission.org) and include "Advent  
calendar" in the subject line.

Follow us on Facebook and Instagram for daily updates there!

# How can counting our blessings help others?

We are blessed more than we realize because rarely do we pause to count the blessings. Day by day, as you follow this Advent calendar, you will be given an opportunity to count many of your blessings. But rather than leave it there, this Advent, we seek to allow our blessings to bless others. Either by yourself or with others, decide how much you would like to donate for each of your blessings to help the Board of World Mission build our Education Fund to support Moravian education ministries for years to come. You may not have some of the blessings listed for one day but be aware that you may count many blessings for other days. Find a jar to collect a penny or a nickel for each of these blessings? Perhaps you can afford to give more. If coins are in short supply around your home, you can use the tally card sheet found at the end of this file to help you with this process. Cut the tally cards off the sheet each day, make note of your blessing, and place it in the jar. At the end of Advent, December 24, we will invite you to total up your blessing count and make that a donation to the Board of World Mission's work. We would count it a blessing to share your blessings with Moravian education efforts throughout the Unity.

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## Sunday, November 27th -- First Sunday of Advent

Education has long been a foundational part of the Moravian Church and Moravian mission efforts. In our mission areas, the school is often the first building constructed after the worship space is complete. In many parts of the world, schools are not easily accessible to families, keeping them trapped in a cycle of poverty. Count your blessings if the children in your neighborhood have access to schools.

## Monday, November 28th

In Luke chapter 21, Jesus says, "Truly, I tell you, this poor widow has put in more than all of them; for all of them have contributed out of their abundance, but she out of her poverty has put in all she had to live on." Here in North America, public schooling is free for elementary-aged children. In many of our mission areas, families struggle to afford school fees and are forced to choose between educating their children while depriving themselves of basic necessities like food and clothing, or keeping the family locked in poverty while children stay home to help with the household chores and businesses. Count your blessings for each year of schooling you attended without incurring extreme financial hardship.

## Tuesday, November 29th

Early Moravians like Zinzendorf focused on three educational pursuits: religious topics, secular subjects, and vocational training. Vocational training is necessary so that people can fill the needs of their communities while also providing for themselves and their families. Job training and continuing education opportunities are growing in many Moravian mission areas through church-led vocational training centers, which teach skills like sewing, auto repair, construction, and more, but access to this training is still limited by geographic immobility and financial instability. Count your blessings if you have had access to job training or continuing education opportunities this year.

## Wednesday, November 30th

In Matthew chapter 25, Jesus says, "I was naked and you gave me clothing." Many children in developing countries walk to school each day without shoes. Consider how this simple article of clothing makes our daily tasks more bearable. Count your blessings for each pair of shoes in your home.

## Thursday, December 1st

In Luke chapter 10, Jesus tells the parable of the Good Samaritan who found a man who was recently attacked while traveling on a dangerous road. The Samaritan bound up the man's wounds, placed him on his donkey, and took him to an inn where he could find care. Being able to get where we need to go for school, work, and other daily activities is a blessing that we often take for granted. Count your blessings for each mode of transportation available to you for safe travel to school or work (i.e. cars, public transit, school buses, bicycles).

## Friday, December 2nd

In John chapter 8, Jesus says, "I am the light of the world." Our Moravian Advent stars remind us of this when they glow from our porches or front windows on a dark winter night. In many areas around the world, electricity is not accessible to the average family, making it difficult for children to complete their schoolwork in the evenings. Count your blessings for every lightbulb in use in your home today.

## Saturday, December 3rd

Matthew chapter 15 recounts "great crowds [coming to Jesus], bringing with them the lame, the maimed, the blind, the mute, and many others. They put them at his feet, and he cured them." Because of the many people Jesus cured, he is often referred to as the great physician. Doctors are vital to our communities, providing much of the healing that we experience in our lives today. Many of our siblings in Christ do not have easy access to medical care. Can you help the Board of World Mission provide educational opportunities for future doctors, nurses, and medical support staff throughout all corners of our Moravian world? Count your blessings for the number of medical professionals you have seen in the last year.

## **Sunday, December 4th – Second Sunday of Advent**

Many times throughout the New Testament, Jesus provides women with equal consideration, respect, and honor. In Mark chapter 5, Jesus is touched by an "unclean" woman and, instead of rejecting her, he calls her "daughter" and says, "Your faith has made you well; go in peace..." In many areas of the world, girls are denied equal access to education due to discrimination, household expectations like caring for younger siblings, child marriages, pregnancy, lack of feminine hygiene products, and more. Count your blessings if the girls in your neighborhood have access to a quality education.

## **Monday, December 5th**

In Mark chapter 9, Jesus encourages us to share a cup of cold water whenever we can as an act of compassion. Clean water is essential for health and hygiene and a blessing that we can easily forget to count. Students at risk for waterborne illnesses like cholera, dysentery, and typhoid are likely to miss class and have trouble focusing on schoolwork. Count your blessings for every place in your home from which you can get clean water (i.e. faucets, showerheads, refrigerator doors).

## **Tuesday, December 6th**

In Colossians chapter 3, we are reminded to do everything in the name of Jesus, giving thanks to God for all that we have been given, including times of relaxation, entertainment, and fun. Education does not only allow us to pursue financial stability and religious study; it also provides us with hobbies like reading, journaling, learning a new language, and more. We often take literacy for granted here in North America, but many Moravian brothers and sisters around the world lack access to quality education in their early youth. Count your blessings for every book you read this year.

## **Wednesday, December 7th**

In Matthew chapter 23, Jesus tells us, "All who exalt themselves will be humbled, and all who humble themselves will be exalted." Higher education programs and formal wage jobs are often concentrated in urban areas, so access to those opportunities is dependent on a person's geographic mobility. For many people, it is difficult to move to a new city from their village, due to family responsibilities, poverty, lack of access to housing, and more. Moving even an hour away can feel like moving a mountain when these barriers are in place. Count your blessings for each time in your life that you have had the opportunity to move to a new city.

## **Thursday, December 8th**

In Matthew chapter 6, Jesus reminds us to "strive first for the kingdom of God and his righteousness." We are blessed to have many tools which can be used for self improvement but can also be used to our detriment. While many of us waste hours of our day watching low-value television, TVs also give us access to important news, documentaries, and other educational programming. While TVs have become more and more present in developing countries, many have limited access to them. Count your blessings for every TV in your household.

## **Friday, December 9th**

In Luke chapter 19, Jesus reminds the Pharisees that they cannot stop creation from praising God saying, "I tell you, if [my disciples] were silent, the stones would shout out." Moravians throughout the Unity use music to praise God, express emotion, and interact with each other. Music and arts are an important part of our education systems here in North America. In many of our mission areas, music is enjoyed informally and natural talent is undeniably present, but access to formal lessons is limited. Count your blessings for each type of music training you have had access to (i.e. piano, voice, guitar, dance).

## **Saturday, December 10th**

In John chapter 6, Jesus feeds over 5,000 hungry people by multiplying what little could be found. In many of our mission areas, school meal programs incentivize food-insecure families to send their children to school, increasing children's likelihood of accessing an education while also avoiding malnourishment. Count your blessings if the children in your neighborhood have access to free and reduced-price meals at school.

## **Sunday, December 11th -- Third Sunday of Advent**

Since our earliest days, Moravians have believed that everyone should have access to the Bible as well as the education needed to read and study scripture themselves. In many places, people do not have easy access to the Bible and other religious documents in their native languages. Can you help the Board of World Mission provide Bibles and other Moravian resources in all of the languages spoken by Moravians worldwide? Count your blessings for each written resource that you use in your faith journey (i.e. Bibles, Bible apps, Daily Texts, devotional guides, this Advent calendar).

## Monday, December 12th

In Matthew chapter 28, Jesus says, "And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age." Just 25 years ago, cell phones seemed like a dream for most of us... no longer. Nearly every adult (and even many children) in North America has one for safety as well as convenience and entertainment. Because of wireless technology, cell phones are helping to improve communication and connect people to educational opportunities all over the world. Count your blessings for every cell phone in your home.

## Tuesday, December 13th

In Matthew chapter 25, Jesus says, "I was hungry and you gave me food." It is well documented that children from food-insecure families are more likely to struggle in school. Here in North America, we have grocery stores where we can purchase food from all over the world without a second thought. In many of our mission areas, access to nutritious food can change quickly due to floods, droughts, and other crises. Can you help the Board of World Mission work with our partners to provide much-needed nutrition and to improve agricultural systems long term? Count your blessings for each grocery store that is easily accessible to you.

## Wednesday, December 14th

In John chapter 4, Jesus tells a Samaritan woman that "Everyone who drinks of this water [from the well] will be thirsty again, but those who drink of the water that I will give them will never be thirsty." When children don't have access to water at home, they are often responsible for collecting it for their families. This can take hours each day and takes time away from school and other activities that are important for children's development. Count your blessings for each time that you accessed water today without having to interrupt your school, work, chores, and other activities (i.e. showering, washing dishes, cooking).

## Thursday, December 15th

In Matthew chapter 19, Jesus says, "Let the little children come to me, and do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of heaven belongs." A good education requires more than just a teacher and a classroom. Each year, families need to purchase school supplies like paper and pencils and schools are expected to provide textbooks and other printed materials. These supplies are often expensive or difficult to find, so students in many areas go without some of these tools or share one textbook with many other children, making it difficult to complete their schoolwork. Count your blessings for each type of office / school supply in your home (i.e. post-it notes, paper, pens, staples).

## Friday, December 16th

In John chapter 9, Jesus' disciples ask him about a blind man, wondering whether the man was born blind because of his own sin or the sin of his parents. Jesus answered, "Neither this man nor his parents sinned; he was born blind so that God's works might be revealed in him." In the US and Canada, children with disabilities are legally guaranteed an education. In many other places, children living with disabilities are denied an education due to discrimination, lack of training in inclusive teaching methods, and lack of accessible schools. Count your blessings if children in your neighborhood have access to schooling, regardless of disability.

## Saturday, December 17th

John Amos Comenius, the most well-known Moravian educator, was an advocate for universal access to education in all topics. Here in North America, libraries offer us an array of books and other resources that help us in our studies and in our daily lives. In many places around the world, these stores of knowledge are not publicly accessible, with people instead having to rely only on the few books that are privately owned by themselves and any friends who are willing to lend them out. Count your blessings for all public library branches that are easily accessible to you.

## Sunday, December 18th -- Fourth Sunday of Advent

In Matthew chapter 4, Jesus says, "One does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God." Since the pandemic began, many North Americans have begun working from home (including the BWM staff) and learning from home. Computers are a helpful tool in our education and careers, but we are reminded again and again throughout the Bible not to rely on worldly things. It is important to be grateful for the amenities that make life easier for us, knowing that many people have no hope of being able to afford these luxuries. Count your blessings for the number of computers in your home (i.e. notebook, iPad, laptop, desktop).

## Monday, December 19th

In Matk chapter 6, Jesus sends disciples out in pairs to teach in nearby villages. Both here in North America and in many other places worldwide, athletics and physical education programs provide important opportunities to practice teamwork and to interact with children in other communities. These programs are accessible in some areas, but many young people around the world are left without the opportunity to participate in sports. Count your blessings for every sport that the children in your community can play.

## **Tuesday, December 20th**

In Matthew chapter 9, Jesus says, "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick." In many areas, dental pain is the leading cause of missed school days for children. Healthy teeth and gums are a blessing that we often take for granted, but those without access to dental care often suffer from toothaches which can cause medical emergencies as well as difficulty focusing on school, work, and other activities. Count your blessings if you can see a dentist regularly.

## **Wednesday, December 21st**

In Mark chapter 15, Jesus quotes Psalm 22 crying, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" For those who are poor and living on the margins, natural disasters can have a devastating effect. Hurricanes, earthquakes, tornadoes, floods, fires, and droughts leave families vulnerable to sickness or death and often rob communities of their schools, church buildings, and other shared resources. Count your blessings if you have not been adversely impacted by a natural disaster this year.

## **Thursday, December 22nd**

In Matthew chapter 15, Jesus says, "But what comes out of the mouth proceeds from the heart, and this is what defiles. For out of the heart come evil intentions, murder, adultery, fornication, theft, false witness, slander. These are what defile a person, but to eat with unwashed hands does not defile." We are clean in the eyes of God regardless of our access to sanitation, but indoor plumbing provides for better public health. Poor sanitation leads to illness and keeps children, especially girls, from being able to go to school. Count your blessings for every bathroom in your home.

## **Friday, December 23rd**

In John chapter 16, Jesus says, "In the world you face persecution. But take courage; I have conquered the world!" In areas of the world facing conflict and war, it is difficult to keep stable routines like school schedules and extracurricular activities. However, access to education during conflict is particularly important since it provides a sense of normalcy and resilience, supporting long-term recovery. Our partners in Ukraine are working hard to provide education for their students even when it means moving to the basement during missile sirens or studying by flashlight when the power goes out. Count your blessings if your education was uninterrupted by war.

## **Saturday, December 24th – Christmas Eve**

In Matthew chapter 5, Jesus says, "In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven." Today, simply look back over the blessings you have noted this Advent season. Give thanks for the gift of the Christ Child who came into a world of darkness and filled it with light. How can you bless others with that light in the days, weeks, and months ahead?



# What Next?

As you have journeyed through this Advent season counting your blessings, you should now have a jar full of change or tally cards. Take a moment to count that up. Can you make this donation to the Board of World Mission so that we can share your blessings with Moravian education efforts near and far?

Please don't send us your change...

U.S. citizens can go to [MoravianMission.org/Give](http://MoravianMission.org/Give) to donate online or mail a donation to:

Board of World Mission  
1021 Center St.  
Bethlehem, PA 18018

Canadian citizens may send Interac e-Transfer donations to [treasurer@moravian.ca](mailto:treasurer@moravian.ca) or mail a donation to:

Moravian Church in Canada  
600 Acadia Drive SE  
Calgary, AB T2J 0B8.

Please note: Whether you make your donation online or by mail, please indicate that this donation is part of the Advent Blessing Calendar for the Education Fund. Thank you!

# Advent Blessing Calendar Tally Cards



<p><b>Sunday, Nov. 27</b></p> <p>Access to schools: _____</p>	<p><b>Monday, Nov. 28</b></p> <p>Affordable schooling: _____</p>	<p><b>Tuesday, Nov. 29</b></p> <p>Job training: _____</p>	<p><b>Wednesday, Nov. 30</b></p> <p>Number of pairs of shoes in your home: _____</p>	<p><b>Thursday, Dec. 1</b></p> <p>Number of safe modes of transportation: _____</p>
<p><b>Friday, Dec. 2</b></p> <p>Number of lightbulbs in use in your home: _____</p>	<p><b>Saturday, Dec. 3</b></p> <p>Number of doctors seen in the past year: _____</p>	<p><b>Sunday, Dec. 4</b></p> <p>Quality education for girls: _____</p>	<p><b>Monday, Dec. 5</b></p> <p>Number of faucets in your home: _____</p>	<p><b>Tuesday, Dec. 6</b></p> <p>Number of books read this year: _____</p>
<p><b>Wednesday, Dec. 7</b></p> <p>Number of moves to a new city: _____</p>	<p><b>Thursday, Dec. 8</b></p> <p>Number of TVs in your home: _____</p>	<p><b>Friday, Dec. 9</b></p> <p>Number of music training opportunities: _____</p>	<p><b>Saturday, Dec. 10</b></p> <p>Access to free and reduced-price meals: _____</p>	<p><b>Sunday, Dec. 11</b></p> <p>Number of written religious resources: _____</p>
<p><b>Monday, Dec. 12</b></p> <p>Number of cell phones in your home: _____</p>	<p><b>Tuesday, Dec. 13</b></p> <p>Number of accessible grocery stores: _____</p>	<p><b>Wednesday, Dec. 14</b></p> <p>Number of times accessing water: _____</p>	<p><b>Thursday, Dec. 15</b></p> <p>Number of school / office supplies: _____</p>	<p><b>Friday, Dec. 16</b></p> <p>Access to schooling, regardless of disability: _____</p>
<p><b>Saturday, Dec. 17</b></p> <p>Number of public library branches: _____</p>	<p><b>Sunday, Dec. 18</b></p> <p>Number of computers in your home: _____</p>	<p><b>Monday, Dec. 19</b></p> <p>Number of sports: _____</p>	<p><b>Tuesday, Dec. 20</b></p> <p>Regular access to a dentist: _____</p>	<p><b>Wednesday, Dec. 21</b></p> <p>Not impacted by natural disasters: _____</p>
<p><b>Thursday, Dec. 22</b></p> <p>Number of bathrooms in your home: _____</p>	<p><b>Friday, Dec. 23</b></p> <p>Education uninterrupted by war: _____</p>	<p><b>Saturday, Dec. 24</b></p> <p>Count up all of your blessings for the month: _____</p>		