

WD News & Notes

The Newsletter of the
Moravian Church,
Western District
August 2023

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Bruce's Babblings

Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

I greet you today on this warm August day as I am writing this. It must be August. Our summer church camps are history. I am beginning to hear talk of events that will take place this fall. The days are getting shorter (that makes me sad as I appreciate the sunlight).

In the past few weeks I had been at Mt. Morris for Chetek Senior High/Post High Camp. Unfortunately, we had to end camp early because of a Covid 19 outbreak. Both campers and staff were disappointed that we had to end camp early but there was a silver lining in all of this. First of all, the staff and the campers handled this "hiccup" extremely well. We were disappointed and some were not at all happy about having to leave camp early while others were afraid that they would also test positive and would spread it to their elderly grandparents or others. But, in spite of the many emotions, the staff and campers seemed to go with the flow and to adapt very quickly to new plans and a new way of doing things.

All of this got me to thinking that the Moravian Church is in good hands. Please note that I did not say "the future of the Moravian Church," rather I said "the Moravian Church." I was unquestionably one of the oldest people on staff at Chetek camp. There were staff members the age of my children and there were campers not much older than my oldest grandchild. What I saw at Chetek was a great deal of leadership. I saw this leadership in the staff members as well as in the campers.

At the most recent Provincial Synod one of the resolutions was to create a provincial regional youth council with representatives from each of the districts (Eastern District, Western District, and Canadian

District). Our youth delegates wrote this piece of legislation. Our youth delegates presented it on the synod floor and as they presented it, there was emotion

in their voices as they obviously very passionate about this. Our youth are excited to be a part of the Moravian Church.

I am excited to see where the next generation will take the Moravian Church as they follow the Holy Spirit's leading.

How are you encouraging and supporting the younger generation in your local church? If you are not, I would suggest that you please do that.

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

On behalf of the Western District Executive Board

Moravian Western District Women's Retreat

The Western District Women's Retreat will be held at Mt. Morris September 15-17, 2023. Rev. Katie Van Der Linden will be the guest speaker as we enjoy a weekend of fellowship.



Katie will reflect on the Greatest Commandment: Love God, Love thy neighbor, LOVE THY SELF. The focus of the retreat will be self-care.

We hope you can join us at tranquil Mt. Morris to take time to relax and enjoy the Lord's creation. In addition to a great program there will also be time for fellowship, laughter, sharing and delicious meals. The cost will be \$160.00 for housing in Black Oak or \$130.00 for housing in one of the cabins. Friday dinner through Sunday breakfast meals are included. If you are only able to come for part of the weekend, that could be accommodated as well. Registration materials are available at the back of the sanctuary. The retreat is being hosted by the Lake Mills Moravian Women.

Registration forms are available at your local congregation. Registration and payment are due by August 15,

DEBT JUBILEE PROJECT

FOR THE HEALING OF THE WORLD

The Debt Jubilee Project: For the Healing of the World is a collaborative effort of the Board of World Mission, the Commission on Congregational Development, the Moravian Ministries Foundation in America, and the Interprovincial Board of Communication. Based on our biblical call to care for the sick and our belief that healthcare is a fundamental human right, this project will work to offer grace and hope through the forgiveness of medical debt. Because our call is to our siblings in Christ here in North America and throughout the world, this project will forgive medical debt in the United States as well as at the Moravian medical ministry of the Clínica Evangélica Morava in Ahuas, Honduras.

Through this effort, we hope to build on the energy and witness of the recent work of Moravian congregations such as Trinity in Winston-Salem, which raised about \$15,000 earlier this year to forgive over \$3,000,000 in medical debt. The Debt Jubilee Project; For the Healing of the World aims to provide an opportunity for more Moravians to join in this freeing and life-changing initiative. Our goal is to raise \$50,000 in 50 days with the project concluding on August 13th.

75% of your gift will support the elimination of medical debt in the U.S. through a partnership with RIP Medical Debt, an organization that purchases medical debt for pennies on the dollar and erases that debt, which would otherwise have been sold to for-profit debt collectors. RIP Medical Debt only abolishes debt for those earning less than 4x the federal poverty level and/or hold debts of 5% or more of their annual income. The Debt Jubilee Project: For the Healing of the World will specifically forgive debts for those living in U.S. counties with a Moravian presence (through a congregation or ministry). The individuals and families who owe the medical debt purchased will receive a letter informing them that their debt is forgiven. Jubilee!

25% of your gift will buy debt owed by patients of the Clínica Evangélica Morava, a Moravian medical ministry in Ahuas, Honduras, that has been serving the remote area of La Mosquitia for over 75 years. Medical debt held in this area is a burden on the indebted patients, the clinic, and the community as a whole. The individuals and families who owe the medical debt purchased will receive notice informing them that their debt is forgiven. Jubilee! Learn more and donate at www.moravian.org/debtjubilee.

Northern Province Churches in the Call Process or Without Pastors

Please pray for the following churches who are without pastors:

Canadian District: Two congregations that are not in the call process but are currently without pastors: Edmonton Moravian and Heimital Church, both in Edmonton, Alberta

Eastern District: Battle Hill, Union, New Jersey; Central (Associate Pastor), Bethlehem, PA; Egg Harbor City, Egg Harbor City, NJ; Schoeneck, Nazareth, PA; Tremont Terrace, Bronx, NY; Trinity, New Carrollton, MD.

Western District: Glenwood Moravian Community Church in Madison, Wisconsin.

Daggett Moravian Church in Daggett, Michigan is not in the call process but is currently without a pastor. Grace Moravian in Westland, Michigan voted recently to conclude their ministry in Westland. Their final worship celebration will be held on Sunday, September 10.

Fall Western District Justice Conference

Building the Beloved Community

September 1-3, 2023



Goals:

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Understanding of the Beloved Community that God desires for us
- 

Increased awareness of barriers to Beloved Community
- 

Tools for talking respectfully with those with whom we disagree, even as we express our own truth.
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A sense of connection with the broader work in the Province around justice and increased tools to nurture Beloved Community at home (e.g. starting or strengthening your congregation's justice team)
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Recognition of responsibility of people of faith to work collectively and intentionally to promote diversity in Beloved Community, address the violence directed at others, as well as our own complicity with unjust systems

REGISTRATION INFORMATION



Location: Mt. Morris Camp and Retreat Center
W6016 Bleckhewk Rd, Wautoma, WI 54982

Costs:

- Black Oak: \$150
- Cabins: \$120
- Saturday Day Guests: \$25
- Linens upon request at \$15 per person

Questions:

- Contact Rev. Merian Boyle-Rohloff by phone at 920-499-4433 or email pastor@wsmoreviangb.org



Scan to Complete Registration Form

REGISTRATION DEADLINE: AUGUST 15

Keynote Speaker:
Pardeep Singh Kaleka

• Author of "The Gift of Our Wounds" • Co-Director, Not In Our Town • De-radicalization Specialist with Parents4Peace • Columnist with Milwaukee Independent • Trauma Clinician • Adjunct Professor of Peace Studies UWWM

Clergy & Spouse Birthdays

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

Ordination Anniversaries

Aug. 7	Jennifer Moran (12 years)
Aug. 20	Katie Van Der Linden (17 years)
Aug. 26	Kay Ward (44 years)
Aug. 24	Judy Ganz (15 years)
Aug. 28	Nancy Von Boeckmann (30 years)
Aug. 29	Reid Lauderman (13 years)



Crossroads 2023 Fall Schedule:

We are offering "Unpacking the Scriptures." Teaching on Monday nights starting Sept 11th and Compass on Thursday nights starting Sept 7th. Compass is a great place to start - build your skills in writing, research, and presenting - and at the same time explore your sense of call. Special: If you want to take both of these courses but feel that it might be too much, we can get you started this summer with the readings and a jump on the assignments. If that sounds good to you, contact Jill Peters at petersj2@moravian.edu and after you have registered for both courses, she will forward syllabi and instructions to you. It is very manageable.

Mark Your Calendars
Western District Synod
April 25-28, 2024

Free stewardship help for the asking

"Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you."

These often-quoted words from Matthew 7:7 still ring true. Many Moravian congregations struggle with stewardship. But surprisingly few take advantage of the **free** Stewardship Services available from the Moravian Ministries Foundation in America.

If your church or ministry requires time, talent, and treasure to continue to do God's work, why not ask for help?
By Vince Holbrook

[Click here to ask how.](#)

(336) 725-2589



How we can help, free of charge:

Training

- In-person and online
- Topics include best practices, trends, and more

Tools

- Narrative budgeting
- Financial stewardship programs from ecumenical partners
 - Guide for year-round financial stewardship planning
 - Thematic campaigns
- Congregational gift planning support

Facilitation & coaching

- Guided board conversations
- Health assessment
- Action plan development

Relationship building

- Communication support
- Inspiration and sharing information
- Connecting ministries

Development services

- Feasibility studies
- Capital campaign consultation and resource-sharing
- Fundraising
- Board training

Scan QR Code or visit
mmfa.com/stewardship/
for more information

