

District Developments

Congregational Spotlight

Edgeboro Moravian Church Bethlehem, PA



Pass the Potatoes: A Thanksgiving Food Drive Story

For decades, Edgeboro Moravian Church has faithfully hosted a Thanksgiving food drive. It was a pretty traditional food drive, which collected non-perishable Thanksgiving mainstays over a period of a few weeks. It became a pretty standard precursor to Christmas gift drives during the season of Advent, almost so standard, in fact, that it started to lack intention, which threatened to make it no longer a prominent fall ministry for Edgeboro.

Something simple about this food drive changed three years ago, something which gave this food drive life again. Since Thanksgiving is now behind us and the results of another Thanksgiving food drive are in, I wanted to tell you about the thing that changed Edgeboro's food drive in the hopes that it might be helpful to any similar food drives your church hosts.

Prior to three years ago, Edgeboro's Thanksgiving food drive collected a wide variety of non-perishable

Thanksgiving foods which would yield results that amounted to two or three dozen incomplete family meals. The drive barely made the announcements and only a handful of church members participated, none of them kids.

Three years ago, the change happened. Northeast Community Center in Bethlehem, a local ministry partner and food pantry provider, had 200 families request full Thanksgiving meals from them, and with that clear goal in mind, they contacted a number of churches and organizations who had donated Thanksgiving food to them in the past, including Edgeboro, and requested that we go about our food drive differently. Instead of collecting small amounts of *all* types of Thanksgiving food, they requested we collect large amounts of one or two types of food that they assigned to each of us.

The results were amazing! In that first year, Edgeboro was tasked with collecting 200 boxes of mashed potatoes and 200 boxes of brownie mix in four weeks. With that goal in mind, people began scouring the shelves of their local stores for these items. Some were clearing entire shelves of boxes into their carts. People were calling the church while standing in the store asking about brands, sizes, price comparisons between stores, and other specifications, and on a number of occasions, they'd come right to the church from the store to drop off their recent purchases.

They wouldn't even wait for a Sunday to drop it off!

We met our goal that year, and have met similar goals each year since. Participation has grown. Sunday school kids are involved, not only bringing in their own donations (or their family's), but some even counting all the food before church each Sunday to give me weekly updates to give at the pulpit. The overall impact of this drive is greater than it's ever been. Not only are we collecting more food, but this has also positively impacted our relationship with Northeast Community Center and impacted our understanding of the need in our own neighborhood (because saying 200 Thanksgiving meals are needed is one thing, but to see how much space is taken up by 200 boxes of mashed potatoes makes the need real).

I can't promise that making the same kind of change will work for your church next Thanksgiving, but I offer it in case it might. I'm grateful to have a chance to share this story, and even more grateful for your generosity, which has been and will be shown in tangible ways during this season of holiday and year-end giving. Now that Thanksgiving is done, Advent blessings to all!

Thanks to Tammy Lavoy (LV North region rep. of the EDEB) for providing this article. A special thank you to Brother Dan Miller, Pastor of Edgeboro Moravian Church, Bethlehem, PA for writing

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this article and sharing information on this ministry!

Board Member Spotlight

Melissa Johnson
President of the EDEB



I suspect a lot of people already know much of my ministry biographical information. I graduated from Moravian College ('95) and Moravian Theological Seminary ('01). I have served congregations in Staten Island, NY, Easton, PA, and Bethlehem, PA. I also worked on the staff of Moravian Theological Seminary as well. I was elected as president of the Eastern District Executive Board by the Eastern District Synod of 2021 and have been both blessed and challenged by this ministry.

I reside in Nazareth, PA, on a piece of land that was once part of my grandparents' dairy farm. My family includes my spouse, Frank, and our children, Morgen (18) and Quincy (14). And I can't leave out our two beloved dogs, Leah and Elliott. Morgen is a student at Moravian University, and Quincy is in his first year of high school. We enjoy attending Yankees games and the theater together. Morgen and Quincy are members of the Palmer Township Moravian Church. Along

with Frank, they enjoy playing with the handbell choir. Frank and I are members of the Advent Moravian congregation, where I served before becoming EDEB president. Now it is a privilege to visit our many Eastern District congregations and experience how God is at work within them and through them!

I wish you all a blessed Advent and Christmas season. Thank you for your ministry and the many ways you share the love of God in your context. Your partnership is truly a blessing!

Eastern District Synod
Save the Dates!!!
JUNE 26 - 29, 2024

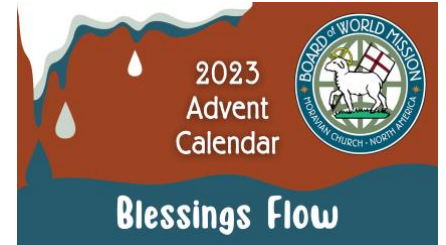


BOARD OF
WORLD MISSION
of the Moravian Church • North America

Join the BWM this Advent Season!

The Board of World Mission's Blessings Flow Project has provided clean water to over 400 families in the La Moskitia region of Honduras this year through the distribution of household water filters. Through a partnership with local leaders and an organization called One Atta Time, we have blessed every family in the villages of Tumtum Tara and Warunta, with plans to serve three

additional communities in the first stage of the project.



We are offering a special way to engage with this ministry during the Advent season. Our annual Advent calendar offers an opportunity for each of us to count the blessings we often take for granted. Each day, you will have the opportunity to learn more about the Blessings Flow project and turn your own blessings into clean water for a family in need.

Sign up for daily text prompts by texting +1(920)495-8995 or daily email prompts by emailing sylvie@moravianmission.org. Include "Advent calendar" in the text or subject line.

If you would like to support the Blessings Flow project, those in the US can send checks to: Board of World Mission, 1021 Center Street, Bethlehem, PA 18018. Canadians can send checks to: Moravian Church in Canada, 600 Acadia Drive SE, Calgary, AB T2J 0B8. Interac e-Transfer donations may be sent to treasurer@moravian.ca. Please indicate that your donation is for "Blessings Flow."

Learn more and find the Advent calendar at
www.MoravianMission.org/BlessingsFlow.

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MMFA



Save the Date for Moravian Day of Giving 2024!

Join us on February 13, 2024, for a day of impact and generosity during the 4th Annual Moravian Day of Giving! It's more than a date—it's an opportunity to embrace the spirit of our community, driven by shared values and a commitment to making a difference.

Mark your calendar and be part of the collective generosity that defines the Moravian Day of Giving. Together, let's make a lasting impact on individuals and communities! Stay tuned for more information.

#IGiveMoravian



Prayer Concerns

You are invited to offer prayers for Sister Rebecca Sisley, pastor of First Moravian Church of Riverside, NJ, and her family in this difficult time as they suffer the loss of her mother, Margaret Schoeneberger, who entered the more immediate presence of Jesus Christ on November 12, 2023.

You are invited to offer prayers for Brother David Sobek's wife Dina,

who is recovering from hip surgery to repair to the injury from a fall. Please hold Dave and Dina in prayer as they navigate this complicated and painful circumstance and the healing that will be needed in the days to come.

Please Pray for the following churches who are without pastors:

Canadian District:

The following congregation is not in the call process but is currently without a pastor: Heimtal Church in Edmonton, Alberta.

Eastern District:

Battle Hill, Union, New Jersey
Covenant, York, PA
Egg Harbor City, Egg Harbor City, NJ
First, York, PA
First New York, NY
Schoeneck, Nazareth, PA
Tremont Terrace, Bronx, NY
Trinity, New Carrollton, MD

Western District:

Freedom Moravian Church in Appleton, Wisconsin

Veedum Moravian in Pittsville, Wisconsin and Daggett Moravian in Daggett, Michigan are not in the call process but are currently without pastors.

December Birthdays & Anniversaries

December Birthdays

1 Mrs. Rose Nehring
4 The Rev. Cynthia Rader Geyer

7 Mrs. Marie Morman
The Rev. Wanda Weidman
9 The Rev. David Geyer
11 The Rev. Jeffrey Gehris
The Rev. Duane Ullrich
13 Mr. Keith Dague
14 Mrs. Carole Johnson
18 The Rev. Nasel Ephraim
21 The Rev. Timothy Naisby
25 The Rev. Frank Barker
The Rev. Charles Harewood
27 Ms. Bonnie Robertson
28 The Rev. Darrell Johnson
30 The Rt. Rev. M. Blair Couch

December Anniversaries

6 The Rev. Dr. Michael & Mrs. Carole Johnson
8 The Rev. Timothy Naisby & Mrs. Usha Naisby
17 The Rev. Bevon White & Mrs. Cecile White
21 The Rev. Aden Ward & the Rt. Rev. Kay Ward
27 The Rev. Jodie Harney & Mr. Scott Harney
28 The Rev. Dr. Reed & Mrs. Carol Acheson
The Rev. Tracy Robinson & the Rev. Rhonda Robinson
29 The Rev. Mark & Mrs. Dianne Newman

Churches celebrating December anniversaries:

11 - 1887 College Hill, Bethlehem, PA
19 - 1747 Lebanon, PA
25 - 1863 First, now Advent, Bethlehem, PA
27 - 1748 First, New York, NY
1842 First, Dover, OH
31 - 1865 First, Riverside, NJ
1947 Schoenbrunn, New Phila., OH

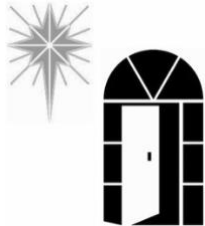
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We celebrate with Sister Marie Morman (spouse of the late Rev. John Morman), as she celebrates her 100th birthday on December 7th!

Greetings can be sent in care of her daughter:

Ruth Shelley
26 Front Street
Lititz PA 17543

An Advent-Season Gift for Moravian Open Door



Each Advent season, we are reminded of the family long ago who was homeless, had no room at the inn, and not even a crib for their expected infant. Yet, they were provided for.

Moravian Open Door (MOD) is a Moravian ministry in New York City that provides a safe, clean, temporary home for up to 40 homeless men and women aged 50 years and older since 1987. While the facility (called Moravian House) provides accommodation in single and double rooms, the staff provides supportive services to rebuild lives and help residents move to affordable permanent housing.

As New York City struggles in dealing with the effects of repeated and extreme flooding, so also, MOD struggles to provide that safe and secure facility in an area of the city prone to flooding. The safety of our residents depends on us.

MOD receives no government funding at all.

MOD needs the financial support of Moravian congregations to continue its important service to the homeless.

Please respond generously with your “No Room at the Inn” gift.

www.moravianhouse.org

Essentials Café is OPEN!

The brand new, donation-based, deliciously wonderful Essentials Café is ready to welcome you! Offering breakfast and lunch menus, the restaurant is open 8 a.m. – 2 p.m. daily, Tuesday-Saturday. Essentials Café is sustainably balanced by customers who donate the suggested cost of each meal, or more, or less. Customers may also donate time and service in lieu of money. If you’re in the area, come dine with us at 418 Third Avenue in Bethlehem (next door to West Side Moravian Church).

As you might imagine, Essentials Café offers many volunteer opportunities—70 or so jobs/shifts each week, as a matter of fact! To learn how you might engage as a volunteer, visit <https://www.essentialscafe.org/> and click on the “Volunteer” tab. There you’ll find task descriptions and the chance to register and schedule yourself through the volunteer portal.

Food is essential. Relationships are essential. Help us provide both in Bethlehem!

Essentials Café is a recognized Emerging Ministry in the Moravian Church Northern Province.

MCNP Racial Justice Team Announces Pilgrimage Grants

The 2023 Synod of the MCNP encouraged pilgrimages toward racial justice and healing in light of the profound impact of the Provincial Pilgrimage toward Racial Justice and Healing to Montgomery, Alabama for clergy, appointed pastors, and candidates for ordination held in September 2022. The Racial Justice Team is offering Pilgrimage Grants of \$500 to \$1,000 to encourage MCNP congregations to plan and experience pilgrimages toward racial justice and healing in 2024. (Those clergy, appointed pastors, and candidates for ordination who were eligible but unable to attend the September 2022 Pilgrimage may also apply for a grant up to \$500 to participate in a pilgrimage sponsored by another entity.)

Any site(s) or location of significance to/for the work of racial justice and the healing of relationships with Black, Indigenous, People of Color will be considered. Pilgrimage sites may be local, regional, or longer distances. Please see the grant application for additional details.

The deadline to apply for a 2024 Pilgrimage Grant from the MCNP Racial Justice Team is March 29, 2024. Grant applications will be reviewed by the Racial Justice Team by April 15, 2024. Please visit the MCNP Racial Justice Team website for an application: <https://www.moravian.org/northern/category/racial-justice-and-healing/>.

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IBOC

Watchwords for 2024 now available

Watchwords for 2024 are now available for your year-end services. This downloadable file contains watchwords pulled from the 2024 *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 length-wise and then on the dotted lines to create individual watchword cards.

For more details or to purchase, visit the "2024 Moravian Daily Texts" section of 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!

These bulletin covers feature beautiful full-color images. They measure 11" x 8.5," and fold to 8.5" x 5.5." When folded, these covers have a blank inside and back page for printing information about your Christmas service.

Bulletin covers are 10 cents each and are sold in packs of 50 for \$5.00. Visit 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 2024 Daily Texts now available

The digital editions of the 2024 *Moravian Daily Texts* are now available for your Kindle or iPad. Visit www.amazon.com or the [iTunes Store](https://www.apple.com/itunes) and search for "Moravian Daily Texts 2024." Digital editions are 9.99 each.

And, of course, printed editions – paperback, large print, journal and hardcover, along with German, Spanish and French editions – are all in stock and ready for immediate shipment. Visit store.moravian.org for more.

Advent and Christmas resources available at MoravianChristmas.org



Music, images, liturgies and more for your Advent and Christmas services are still available at

www.moravianchristmas.org.

This site, initially developed to assist with pandemic-era challenges in 2020 and 2021, remains a resource for Moravian congregations. Please contact Mike Riess (mike@mcnp.org) with additional requests (or if see anything that needs updating!)