

# WD News & Notes

The Newsletter of the  
Moravian Church,  
Western District  
September 2021

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## *Bruce's Babblings*

Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

For those of you who don't know, I am the youngest of 7 children. I would often get advice from my older siblings. Some of it was welcomed and some was given anyway. One of the pieces of advice that I heard not only from my older siblings but by others as well was, "enjoy your children while they are home because those years will go quickly." When I initially heard this, I didn't totally appreciate what I was being told. Now that my children are all adults and some of them have children of their own, I completely get the sentiment. Time does have a way of moving quickly at times.

I guess another to put that sentiment is to live in and appreciate the moment. I remember being at a post season Milwaukee Brewers game in 2011 with my son. I remember that the Brewers won in the 10<sup>th</sup> inning in 2011 to win the National League division series. I remember saying to my son, "You have to appreciate this because this does not happen too often for baseball teams in Wisconsin."

I have had the privilege of being with couples as they recite marriage vows and I also have been with families while a loved one has breathed their last breath. I have watched parents bring their children for baptism and watch young people profess their faith or talk about an uplifting camp or mission trip experience. All of those instances are very holy and tender moments. Sometimes I need to look back on those moments to appreciate them.

We have been living in some "interesting" times in the last 15-18 months. I have learned new ways to do things. I have learned to do things that I never knew I could do.

I wonder what moments you have lived in and appreciated in the past year and more importantly what moments you will get to experience in the future. A friend of mine would refer to those as "God moments."

I encourage you live in and appreciate the moments and/or to be mindful of the God moments that will become available to you.

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

## *Western District Women's Retreat*

The Lake Mills Moravian Women are planning their Western District Women's Retreat at Mt. Morris to be held September 17-19. Rev. Christie Melby-Gibbons will be the guest speaker as we enjoy a weekend of fellowship.

Christie will focus on what it means to be restricted and what it means to be free/restful, and if there is such a thing as a good restriction.

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 \$140 for housing in Black Oak or \$110 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 through your church office.

## *November Leadership Retreat - Doing Justice: Widening the Circle*

You are invited to join the Western District Justice Team for a Fall, 2021 retreat -- **Doing Justice: Widening the Circle**. This event will take place on November 19<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>st</sup> at beautiful Mt. Morris Camp and Retreat Center near Wautoma, WI.

Whether this is your first step or 100th in doing justice, this is your time to get a clearer understanding on what you can do in your congregation and larger community.

During our weekend retreat we will welcome the Reverend Dennis Jacobsen, retired ELCA clergy and author of the book “**Doing Justice: Congregations and Community Organizing.**” In the book Rev. Jacobsen brings together the Biblical calling to do justice with strategies for congregations in their work with local communities. In addition, Rev. Jacobsen will bring the teaching of the book to life by sharing a case study of his congregation’s current work in the Milwaukee area on lead poisoning.

In order that we can host meaningful discussions we ask all participants to read the book; *Doing Justice: Congregations and Community Organizing*, prior to the retreat. This work prior to the gathering is important as we discuss strategies to be about God’s justice in our congregations and larger communities.

You won’t want to miss out this time for fellowship, networking, organizing, and fun! By the end of the weekend our hopes are that you will leave with new connections and concrete steps to begin or strengthen justice ministry in your church and community.

The book can be purchased for \$14.40 at [Fortress Press](http://Fortress Press) or ordered from your local bookstore. Register at [wdjusticeteam@gmail.com](mailto:wdjusticeteam@gmail.com) by Tuesday, October 19th. The cost per participant is \$100.

*With excitement and gratitude,  
The Western District Justice Team*

## *Grant for Lay Ministry*

The Western District has received a generous bequest from the family of Rt. Rev. Wil and Ruth Behrend. With some of this gift, your Western District Board has developed the **Behrend Memorial Grant for Lay Ministry**. We are encouraging 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.

## *Church Anniversaries*

Sept. 10	Daggett	110 years
Sept. 11	Watertown	167 years

## *Clergy & Spouse Birthdays*

Sept. 13	Marian Boyle-Rohloff
Sept. 21	Rita Andersen
Sept. 22	Jason Andersen
Sept. 27	Sharon Benson
Sept. 27	Peg Chamberlin

## *Ordination Anniversaries*

Sept. 5	Peg Chamberlin (39 years)
Sept. 6	Christie Melby-Gibbons (12 years)
Sept. 7	Vicki Jens-Page (13 years)
Sept. 10	Olaf Andersen (54 years)
Sept. 12	David Glasser (39 years)
Sept. 13	Christopher Samsen (7 years)
Sept. 15	Barry Lehman (46 years)
Sept. 24	Jane Gehler (15 years)
Sept. 29	Sharon Benson (24 years)

## *The Call Process*

Please hold the **West Salem Moravian, Our Savior’s Moravian and the Unionville Moravian** congregations in your prayers as they continue in the call process.

The District Board continues to be grateful for the leadership of the Joint Board at **Grace Moravian** as they continue to lead their congregation.

## *Prayer Concerns*

Br. Joel Russell, pastor of the Bethel and Goshen Moravian Churches in rural North Dakota, continues his recovery from a jeep accident. He is making slow, but steady progress on a long road toward healing. Please pray for Joel, his wife Jan, and their family as they walk on this journey.

We offer sympathy and prayers to Br. Kerry Krauss on the death of his mother, Linda Krauss on August 22.



**BOARD OF  
WORLD MISSION**  
of the Moravian Church • North America

Moravian Mission Coffee makes it possible for you to support Moravians around the world... just by drinking your morning cup of joe! 12 oz. bags of Moravian Mission Coffee are now **available for preorder**, with shipping beginning in mid-September. Our first roast is a medium roast sourced out of Uganda.

**Order now at: [MoravianMissionCoffee.org](http://MoravianMissionCoffee.org)**

**About the mission:** Each bag purchased will enable the Board of World Mission to provide more Mission Grant funding to address specific needs and ministries as they are identified by our partners.

**About the coffee:** To make this project possible, we are partnering with Lutheran World Relief's Farmers Market Coffee. They are committed to paying their farmers a



living wage so that they can lift themselves out of poverty and become self-sufficient and better able to support their families.



Crossroads is pleased to offer the following courses this Fall. All courses are offered in person at Moravian Theological Seminary and online, real time through Zoom. Registration and more information is available at [www.moravianseminary.edu/crossroads](http://www.moravianseminary.edu/crossroads). Contact Dr. Jill Peters at [petersj2@moravian.edu](mailto:petersj2@moravian.edu) with any questions.

*Traditions*, a look at world religions and other Protestant denominations, with the Rev. Dr. Bill Falla on Mondays from 6-9 pm, Sept 13-Nov 1, 2021.

*Creative Worship* with Rev. Maggie Wellert explores what is worship and how we can bring new life to our worship experiences. Thursday 6-9 pm, Sept 9 - Oct 28, 2021.

*Unpacking the Scriptures - Discipleship* with Pam Weiss who leads the discipleship program at First Pres Allentown gives us practical and creative ways to bring people together to explore their faith. This is our Late Fall Course which meets twice a week (Mon and Thur) from 11/4 until 12/2/2021.

Looking ahead:

*Missional Leadership*, Mondays 1/3 - 2/21/2022 Dr. Jill Peters

*Road Hazards* (Congregational Ethics), Thurs 1/6 - 2/24/2022 Rev. Derek French & Dr. Jill Peters

*Story of Christianity*, Mondays 3/7 - 5/2/2022 (Except Holy Week 4/11) Rev. Dr. Bill Falla

*My Journey* (Formative Spirituality) Thursdays 3/10 - 5/5/2022 (Except Holy Week 4/14) Rev. Maggie Wellert



INTERPROVINCIAL BOARD  
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**Resources for Moravian Churches**

Don't forget the IBOC offers free resources to help churches in worship. Log onto our website and click on COVID-19 Resources

(<https://www.moravian.org/covid19resources/>). Here you will find Liturgies and hymns in Word format as well as slide backgrounds. Can't find a hymn or liturgy you are looking for? Contact Sue Kiefner by email and she will send you what you need. [sue@mcnp.org](mailto:sue@mcnp.org).

Churches will need a CCLI or One License for copyrighted hymns.

**Free 2021 Daily Texts available**

As we prepare for the arrival of the 2022 Moravian Daily Texts in late October/early November, we would like to offer our remaining 2021 editions to congregations and agencies for us in their ministries free of charge. Daily Texts are perfect for outreach, new member introductions, study classes and community events. All we ask is that you pay for shipping to your location. To obtain these free editions, please contact Jill Bruckart at [jill@mcnp.org](mailto:jill@mcnp.org) or call 1.800.732.0591, ext. 38.



Your Moravian Ministries Foundation invites you to this year's *Celebrate Stewardship* conference to be held virtually from October 4-8.

Join us to explore how our identity as God's stewards impacts every aspect of our lives, from our relationship with money to how we spend our time, use our gifts, and care for others.

Celebrate Stewardship 2021 will offer:

- two guest speakers and keynote sessions:
  - Tim Schuster, creator of *Six Weeks on Money*
  - Grace Pomroy, director of the *Stewardship Leaders* program at Luther Seminary
- two bible studies
- a variety of useful workshops

[Click here for a full printable schedule.](#)

Together, we'll look at how to both be and form faithful and generous stewards in a time of continued challenge and change.

Through engaging conversations and sharing practical tools, best practices, and resources, Celebrate Stewardship 2021 is sure to energize you as a steward and enrich the stewardship ministry in your community of faith.

[Click here to continue reading and register.](#)

## *A Message from Betsy Miller*

Grace and peace to you in the name of Jesus. This morning, the Racial Justice Team met and made the difficult, but clear, decision to postpone the pilgrimage because of the rising risk of COVID. We made this decision based on a number of factors. As leaders who are called to model behavior that demonstrates care and concern for all, we believe postponing the pilgrimage was the only responsible decision to make at this time. We are unwilling to take the chance that you might be exposed and or contract COVID and then expose your families and congregations. The COVID positivity rate in Montgomery, Alabama is 24%, a 48% increase in the past 2 weeks. Atlanta, Georgia shows a 13.3% positivity rate. Both places report less than 55% vaccination rate.

The pilgrimage will be rescheduled at a yet to be determined time.