

JANUARY 2023



The Mustard Seed

The Newsletter of Christian Faith Moravian Church

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Elders Vice Chair
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Trustees Chair
to be determined

From the Pastor's Desk

There's an old joke about church that goes something like this:

Q: "How many church members does it take to change a light bulb?"

A: "Change?! Who said anything about change?!"

Admittedly we humans can sometimes be creatures of habit. We like familiarity, pattern, expectation, and comfort. Put simply, we like things the way we like them. There's nothing inherently wrong with wanting a sense of ordered arrangement to our lives. But things that remain the same without ever changing have a tendency to grow stagnant, stale, and lifeless. Change is the animating force that can bring growth, excitement, possibility, and joy to our lives. Both individually and corporately, we must be willing to change. A quote that has been attributed to one of our founders, Nicholas Ludwig von Zinzendorf, puts it this way: "I have observed that the preservation of the community is best assured through a process of continual change."

As we stand at the beginning of a new year and think about the ministries that God has entrusted to our hands here at Christian Faith Moravian Church, I want to offer a couple encouragements about change to both our older members (whose job it is to begin the process of handing down the ministries to our younger members) and our younger members (whose job it is to take up the mantle of ministry handed down to you through the generations).

First to our older members:

First, it can be a difficult process of discernment knowing when it's time to let go. Oftentimes, that time can come before we are ready to acknowledge it. Be prayerfully open to when God may be telling you that it's time to pass the baton of ministry on to someone new. If you are still drawing vitality and enjoyment from your participation in your current ministry, by all means keep doing it. But if you are starting to resent the tasks given to you or if the ministry you perform is starting to feel like a burdensome obligation (regardless of your age or how long you've been doing it), then perhaps it's time to stop.

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Second, when you are ready to step down from your participation in a ministry, keep reminding yourself that the person who will take that ministry up after you is NOT going to do it the way you did it. And it would be unfair for you to expect them to do it the same way you did it. It will be different, and some people who liked it the way you did it aren't going to like it the way the new person does it. That's life. But if you look long enough, you'll come to see that there will be new people blessed by the way the new person does it. Humbly offer a prayer of thanks for them.

Third, it's okay if a ministry ends after you set it down. Nothing in this life lasts forever. There is a time for birth and a time for death. Keeping a ministry going just because you're afraid it will stop if you don't keep doing it is not the best reason to keep it going. Trust in the providence of God to make space for those needs to be met in a different way. And just because it comes to a close doesn't mean it wasn't successful. Give thanks to God for the gifts that were given through the time the ministry existed. And finally, just because you choose to stop doing this ministry, doesn't mean that you become useless or worthless. It only means that the manner in which God chooses to use you is now transitioning into a different form. Take a rest if you need it, it's well earned. But then be creative in your prayerful consideration of what God may be calling you to do next. What abilities and gifts are at your disposal? Be ready to take part in the next chapter of ministry in your life.

And to our younger members:

First, it's your turn. Step up to the plate and take part in the wonderful legacy of ministry that is being passed down to you. To be certain, your schedules look ENTIRELY different than the schedule of someone your age from 25 or more years ago. Ministries and events that worked for the 20th century calendars simply will not work for the 21st century calendars. That's okay. As you move into positions of ministry involvement, let's have a conversation about what this will look like for YOU and for the people that God will reach through YOU.

Second, take the time to draw on the wisdom of your elders. Learn from their experience. Listen to their tips and techniques. Some of it will be applicable for you; some of it will not.

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Worship Schedule

January 1st

1st Sunday after Christmas
Pastor Jason on vacation
Drawing of watchwords
Kari and Joel Caulum leading worship

January 8th

1st Sunday after Epiphany
Holy Communion
Installation of Officers
Text: Matthew 2:1-12
Message: "By No Means Least"

January 15th

2nd Sunday after Epiphany
Text: John 1:29-39
Message: "Look! The Lamb of God!"

January 22nd

3rd Sunday after Epiphany
Text: 1st Corinthians 1:10-28
Message: "No Divisions, Perfectly United"

January 29th

4th Sunday after Epiphany
Church Council after Worship
Text: Micah 6:1-8
Message: "God's Action and Our Response"

Installation of Officers

We will be installing our newly elected officers during worship on January 8th -- Elders Kari Caulum, Betty Timm, and Paul Vanderbloemen, Trustees Doug Block and Scott True, Synod delegate Megan Vanderbloemen, and Synod alternate Peggy Landgraf.

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Take what works for you and let the rest go. Be patient with them as they tell you how they did it. You don't have to do it that way, but you might find some helpful advice.

Third, you don't have to do things just because the previous generation did them. What new ministries might God be seeking to bring into existence through you? Perhaps your ministry isn't going to be a refashioned version of a prior generation's ministry; perhaps your ministry is something brand new and completely different. If I can mix my metaphors, don't be afraid to pray outside the box.

And finally, don't be afraid. Don't be afraid of failure or of criticism. One of my frequent prayers comes from Thomas Merton, who prayed, "Lord, I believe that the desire to please you does indeed please you." The God who loves you and called you to share your gifts with others is not going to reject you or forsake you just because you didn't do things perfectly. God knew you weren't perfect when God called you. You are loved no matter how you do at this new ministry you are trying.

So whether we've been at this for decades and are starting to ponder when it might be time to let something go, or whether we're new to this whole "church" thing and are still trying to find our place, let us rest in the confident faith that we serve a loving God who names us, claims us, gifts us, and calls us for the ministry of God's kingdom come on earth.

Pastor Jason

CHRISTIAN FAITH MORAVIAN CHURCH

CHILI SUPPER

It's Back!!

We will have our Chili Supper for the first time in three years on Thursday, January 26 from 4:30–7:00 pm.

Stay tuned for further announcements and a sign up sheet that will be shared at church and online on how you can help out.



Mark your calendars and invite your friends!

Church Council MEETING

PLAN TO ATTEND

Our next Church Council meeting will be held Sunday, January 29 following worship.

We will receive reports from our various church boards and ministries. Please submit all reports to the church office by Friday, January 20.



Confirmation Assistants

Carter Mayr and Mackenzie Mayr will have their confirmation classes with Pastor Jason two Wednesdays a month from 4:00-6:00 pm.

We are looking for individuals willing to be confirmation assistants.

The confirmation assistant would simply be another adult presence in the room who would also be available to provide input on the material as you'd like. If you're interested in signing up for one or more days, you can sign up at church or on our website.

Notes of Appreciation

- Thank you to all those who donated to the Mitten Tree Christmas Gift program and to Marlene Sobek for coordinating the event.
- Thank you to all those who helped out with our Winterfest Craft and Baked Goods Sale on December 3.
- Thank you to Jill Stephens and the Worship Choir for providing special music at our Christmas Eve Services.
- Thank you to Elly True and Megan Vanderbloemen for being our Morning Star soloists at our Christmas Eve services.
- Thank you to Bob Hudecek, Rich Vanderbloemen, Lindsay Freye, Ken Glienke, Pastor Jason, Seth Andersen, and the True family for setting out the luminaries for our Christmas Eve services.
- Thank you to Toni Reigstad, Marty Karow, Joyce Simon, John Scepanski, Shirley Block, Pastor Jason, Lindsay Freye, Sandi Newell, and Dorothy Hatfield for taking shifts during our church's turn at the Unity Prayer Watch on December 21.
- Thank you to Shirley Block, Ken Glienke, and Chad, Anna, Dakota, and Mackenzie Mayr for serving as candle servers at our Christmas Eve services.



Thursday Morning Bible Study

Join us each Thursday morning at 9:00 am for our adult bible study. You can join us each Thursday or as it fits your schedule.

January Celebrations

Birthdays

3rd – Christy Mayr
 4th – Gary Mayr, Jerry Mayr
 15th – Randy Anhalt
 20th – Shirley Block
 21st – Cassidy Byrd
 25th – Briana Mitchell
 27th – Mackenzie Mayr
 31st – Beth Sobek



Church Family Nights

We had lots of fun at our church family nights throughout last fall – each gathering had more people than the last. The Elders have scheduled

four more family nights on the third Wednesdays of January (the 18th), February (the 15th), April (the 19th), and May (the 17th) from 6:00 – 7:30 pm. (We won't have one in March due to our Lenten activities.) Join us for a free meal, a time of games and crafts for the kids, and a time of fellowship and guided conversation for the adults. If you'd like to provide a game or craft for the kids or a meal for one of the family nights, please contact the church office. If you have a friend or family member who's interested in Christian Faith, these are great events to invite them to!



PIE AUCTION

Our annual Pie Auction to benefit the Church Building Fund will be held on Sunday, February 12 after worship. Plan on join us and baking and/or bidding on some delicious pies. It's lots of fun and it all goes to a great cause of helping pay off our building expansion loan.

Financial Report as December 1, 2022

If you have questions about this information, please feel free to speak with a Trustee. Thank you to Joel Caulum for compiling this report.

General Fund	Month of November	Year-to-Date
Budgeted Expenses	\$11,770.31	\$129,473.41
Assessments for Pastor's Health, Prov. and Dist. Admin. – <i>not pd.</i>	(\$2,467.67)	(\$26,144.37)
Actual Expenses Paid	\$12,290.07	\$99,251.91
Plate Collections	\$8,062.08	\$79,776.37
Building Fund	Month of November	Year-to-Date
Monthly Debit Service	\$1,331.28	\$14,644.08
Plate Collections	\$935.00	\$9,890.00

Trustees Meeting Highlights

The Board of Trustees met on December 13.

- We read the Behavioral Covenant.
- We approved the November Treasurer's Report and the Pastor's Report.
- Approved transferring money from the Memorial Fund to cover our year-end shortfall.
- Initiated conversation about estate planning opportunities to bless future ministries.
- Reviewed completed projects of cemetery tree removal and updated fire inspection compliance.
- Discussed cemetery administrator position.

Our next meeting will be Tuesday, January 10 at 6:30 pm.

Upcoming Youth and Young Adult Retreats

- Mid-Winter Youth Retreat for youth in grade 9 – age 21 will be February 3rd – 5th in Wisconsin.
- Young Adult Retreat for young adults age 18 – 30ish will be February 17th – 19th at Mt. Morris.



Elders Meeting Highlights

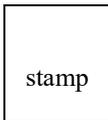
The Board of Elders did not have a December meeting.

Our next meeting will be Monday, January 9 at 6:30 pm.

VOLUNTEER SCHEDULE

	Church Cleaning	Ushers	Call to Worship Leader	Scripture Reader	Fellowship Host
Jan 1 st	Toni Reigstad	Marlene Sobek and Sandi Newell	Kari and Joel Caulum	Kari and Joel Caulum	Peggy Landgraf
Jan 8 th	Ken Glienke	Daryl Stephens and Joel Caulum	Amy Andersen	Dorothy Hatfield	Marlene Sobek
Jan 15 th	Ken Glienke	Rich & Laurie Vanderbloemen	Peggy Landgraf	Elizabeth Hockett	<i>Host(s) needed</i>
Jan 22 nd	Peggy Landgraf	Peggy Landgraf and Seth Andersen	Marie True	Amy Andersen	<i>Host(s) needed</i>
Jan 29 th	Peggy Landgraf	Doug & Shirley Block	Bob Hudecek	Marty Karow	Church Council

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



Socialize with Us!

Clergy Retreat

Pastor Jason will be out of the office from Monday, January 16 - Thursday, January 19 at the District Clergy Retreat at Mt. Morris Camp and Retreat Center. Please hold our District's pastors in your prayers as they take this time of retreat, fellowship, education, and renewal.

Confirmation Retreat

Mackenzie Mayr and Carter Mayr will be attending the Southern Wisconsin Confirmation Retreat at Mt. Morris on January 20 and 21. They will join confirmands from Moravian Churches in southern Wisconsin for a time of fun, fellowship, and learning. The cost of their attendance is being covered by congregational funds -- thank you for your support of them in this way!

Digital Communication

Each Monday morning, we send out a brief email highlighting some upcoming dates and events, as well as some other fun things. If you would like to our weekly e-newsletter, as well as receiving this monthly newsletter in digital format, please contact the church office (cfmcoffice@gmail.com) to be added to the list
