

The Moravian Monthly

Official Newsletter of the Canadian, Eastern, and Western Districts
of the Moravian Church Northern Province.

January 2025

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or concerns about
this newsletter.

Reflection on the 2024 “New Way of Being” Advent Series *Rev. Sue Koenig, MCNP Director of Racial Justice and Healing*

The MCNP Racial Justice Team sought answers to two questions with its 2024 “New Way of Being” Advent series: What is the Doctrine of Discovery and why does it matter? These questions are a starting point to understanding the legislation passed at the 2023 MCNP Synod entitled, “Repudiation of the Doctrine of Discovery and Terra Nullius and Initial Steps toward Reconciliation and Healing of the MCNP’s Relationship with Indigenous Peoples.” The most critical “initial step” is to become good listeners.

The series was offered as three, one-hour sessions on December 4, 11, and 18. Presenters for the series were The Rev. Canon Debbie Royals, The Rev. Dr. Winelle Kirton Roberts, and Fernando and Erica Rios.

The Rev. Canon Royals, Pascua Yaqui, Canon for Native American Ministry, Episcopal Diocese of Arizona, described ways in which the Doctrine of Discovery, originating in the Christian Church and supported by a distorted interpretation of scripture, is imbedded in the laws of the US (and Canada), and is cited in court cases today to take access to lands from Indigenous people. Rev. Canon Royals lamented that the Church “has been very good at words and not very good at actions.” She offered some initial actions as a way forward.

The Rev. Dr. Kirton Roberts, an ordained Moravian minister in the East West Indies Province, and a Caribbean missiologist and Church historian, explained that the Caribbean was “ground zero” for the Doctrine of Discovery. Rev. Dr. Kirton Roberts dispelled long-held historical myths and replaced them with truths about Moravian missions, enslavement of persons, and colonialism in the Caribbean.

Erica Rios is of Mexican American Indigenous descent of the Raramuri tribe, a member of the Morongo Moravian Church and of the Racial Justice Team. **Fernando** is a Native American of The La Jolla Band of Lusieño Indians in San Diego. They presented family and personal stories and described relationships with other Indigenous peoples. Fernando provided insights on the lasting harms and social symptoms of the legacy of the Doctrine of Discovery; and shared the generational changes that occurred from his parent’s to his own time as a student at the Sherman Indian High School.

Recordings of the sessions, the Synod legislation, an accompanying Bible study and devotional, and other resources are available at MCNP.org (click on Racial Justice & Healing under the Ministries tab). Contact suekoenig@mcnp.org for additional information, resources or assistance from the Racial Justice Team.

Provincewide Updates

January 18-25, 2025 – Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity is sponsored by the World Council of Churches. This year it is held January 18-25, 2025. We are invited to pray for unity in the worldwide church as a witness to Christ's prayer 'that all may be one.' Many congregations share ministries with a congregation of a different denomination, located in the neighborhood. During worship, highlight a shared ministry, for example: VBS, Food Pantry, Homeless Shelter, After School Program, or Youth Group. Remind the congregation of the many ways we naturally serve God and bless the world with our ecumenical partners. Consider establishing a goal of getting to know members of another congregation. Pray for the leadership and witness of another congregation. For a host of resources, scan the QR code.



SAVE THE DATE: 5 Years of Impactful Giving with the Moravian Day of Giving



Join us on **March 4, 2025**, for the 5th annual Moravian Day of Giving, a day dedicated to celebrating faith, hope, and generosity. Since 2021, this tradition has united Moravians across North America to support ministries and missions that make a lasting impact.

This milestone year's theme, "Who Inspires You to Give?" invites us to honor the people and values that fuel our generosity. Every gift to the Field of Interest Funds will unlock up to \$2,500 in matching contributions per fund, amplifying your impact on vital areas such as hunger, housing, health, and more.

Plus, the five ministries with the highest number of individual donors will each receive \$2,500, showcasing the unity and collective spirit of the Moravian community.

We'd love to hear who inspires you! Share your story by contacting Hanna Jackson at hjackson@mmfa.com before March 1st. Your story could help build excitement and inspire others as we approach this milestone event.

Together, we give—not just as individuals, but as a united community rooted in faith, love, and hope.

Mark your calendar, share your story, and stay tuned for more details at mmfa.com.

Resources for MLK, Jr. Day and Black History Month

The Northern Province Racial Justice Team (RJT) is pleased to offer several liturgies and other resources for congregational use in observance of MLK Jr. Day and Black History Month.

The RJT has also created a calendar for 2025 that includes significant dates in history and special opportunities during the year to make ourselves aware of racial justice issues.

Go to MCNP.org and click on Racial Justice & Healing under the “Ministries” tab to view all resources from the RJT.

JANUARY

20 Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
27 Int'l. Holocaust Remembrance Day



January Mission Minute: BWM 2025 Watchword

In early December, the Board of World Mission staff gathered for a working retreat in Black Oak Lodge at Mt. Morris Camp in Wisconsin. The snowflakes were falling, the fire was crackling in the fireplace and the staff were gathered in comfy chairs under quilts on day two of our meetings. Our opening task for the day was to choose the BWM watchword for the coming year. To our surprise, the day that was randomly chosen was August 13th, a Moravian High Holy Day. The text for that day is **John 3:21** and it comes to us from Jesus' midnight conversation with the inquisitive and troubled Pharisee, Nicodemus, who was desperately trying to understand the truth about Jesus' identity.

Truth, *aletheia* (in the Greek), is debated and explored in the Gospel of John. Most famously Jesus claims to be the truth, as well as the way and the life (John 14:6). In his face to face meeting with Pilate, the Roman Governor of Judea, Jesus states that his reason for being born is to testify to the truth. Pilate sputters out a frustrated response: What is truth??? (John 18:37-38)

We join in line with Pilate and Nicodemus, wanting to know the truth. In John 3:21 we get a hint: **“Those who do what is true (*aletheia*) come to the light so that it may be clearly seen that their deeds have been done in God.”**

In the BWM Advent Calendar this past December, we were asked daily: When have we seen you a stranger, or sick, or hungry or thirsty? And fed you, cared for you, and welcomed you? Enacting compassion and love for humanity is the truth that Jesus lived and taught. When the BWM, the church and y'all come to the light this Epiphany season, doing deeds of care and compassion in God, then we have found the TRUTH (and the way and the life).

Advent 2024 Global Bishops and Christian Leaders Letter Churches for Middle East Peace

The Moravian Church Northern Province PEC joins 200+ Global Leaders to Sign Churches for Middle East Peace (CMEP) Advent Letter calling for Ceasefire and Half to Weapons Shipments to Israel. Scan the QR code to read the letter and view recent press releases.



Prayer Concerns

The Rev. Franklin C. Jones passed into the more immediate presence of our Chief Elder, Jesus Christ, during the morning of November 23, 2024. Brother Jones was born on March 18, 1940, in Allentown, PA. He was the son of the late Franklin C. Jones and Anna Susan (Seip) Jones. Brother Jones graduated from Moravian College in 1962 with a B.A. and from Moravian Theological Seminary in 1965 with an B.D. In 1973 he graduated from Gettysburg Theological Seminary with an S.T.M. He was ordained on May 9, 1965, and consecrated a Presbyterian on June 14, 1970. He was united in marriage to Carole Anne Altemose on August 18, 1962, at the Old Moravian Chapel. He was a loving father to his daughter, Louellen Sue and to his son David Allen and loving grandfather and great-grandfather to numerous grandchildren and great grandchildren. Brother Jones served the Newfoundland Moravian Church, Newfoundland, PA, Graceham Moravian Church, MD, Berea-Our Savior's Moravian Church in MN, Lake Auburn Moravian Church in MN. Brother Jones returned to Berea Moravian Church and served several years after his retirement.

Brother Jones earthly body has been lovingly donated to the Mayo Clinic. A celebration of life service will be held on April 26th.

Those wishing to make a contribution to honor the work and life of Br. Franklin, can do so to the Board of World Mission. To give online visit WWW.Moravianmission.org/give indicating the gift is in memory of Rev. Franklin C. Jones.

To give by mail: Send a check to the address below, indicating the gift in memory of Rev. Franklin C. Jones on the memo line, or in an accompanying note: Moravian BWM 1021 Center Street Bethlehem, PA 18018

Please pray for the following churches who are in the call process or without pastors:

- Advent, Bethlehem, Pennsylvania
- Battle Hill, Union, New Jersey
- Castleton Hill, Staten Island, New York
- Christ, Calgary, Alberta
- Christian Faith, Deforest, Wisconsin
- Daggett, Michigan
- Faith of the Nation's Capital, Washington, DC
- First, Dover, Ohio
- First, New York, New York
- Heimtal, Edmonton, Alberta
- St. Paul's, Upper Marlboro, Maryland
- Tremont Terrace, Bronx, New York
- Veedum, Pittsville, Wisconsin
- Waconia, Minnesota

January Birthdays and Anniversaries

Birthdays

- 1 Belfield Castello
- 2 Gregory Behrend
- 4 Karen Krauss
- 4 Michael Poole
- 5 Andrew Meckstroth
- 6 Holley Weavil
- 7 Robert Volpe, Jr.
- 8 Carol Acheson
- 10 Lawrence Christianson
- 11 Sherwin Alleyne
- 11 Jodi Heim
- 11 Diane Joseph
- 12 David Jones
- 12 Robert Smith
- 12 Margaret Wellert
- 14 Dave Bennett
- 15 Dean Easton
- 16 Nigel Powell
- 18 Gordon Sommers
- 19 Benjamin Lippert
- 20 Joan Engelbrecht
- 20 Ruth Ricketts
- 22 Jacquelyn Bell
- 22 William Andrews
- 23 Richard Thierolf
- 23 Matthew Knapp
- 24 Terry Weavil
- 24 Betty Castello
- 27 Elizabeth Miller
- 27 Renae Weaknecht
- 28 Gail Andrews
- 30 Robert Grey
- 30 Faith Fliegel

Ordination Anniversaries

- 1 Wellesley Ferguson (35 years)
- 2 Gary Marsh (42 years)
- 6 Eileen Edwards (18 years)
- 6 Carol Dague (34 years)
- 14 Mikayla Sauerbrey (1 year)
- 18 Terry Weavil (49 years)
- 21 Jesmina Hebbert Meade (1 year)
- 22 R. Burke Johnson (58 years)
- 29 Desna Henry Goulbourne (30 years)
- 29 Richard Thierolf (47 years)

Churches Celebrating Anniversaries

- 1 Chaska, Minnesota (167 years)
- 1 Sharon, Tuscarawas, Ohio (210 years)
- 1 United, New York, New York (57 years)
- 1 Waconia, Minnesota (110 years)
- 19 Rio Terrace, Edmonton, Alberta (61 years)
- 20 Wisconsin Rapids, Wisconsin (136 years)
- 30 Sturgeon Bay, Wisconsin (161 years)
- 31 St. Paul's, Upper Marlboro, Maryland (54 years)

The Eastern District
Moravian Church in America
Northern Province



Save the Date: 2025 Eastern District Clergy Retreat

Monday, March 31, 2025 - Wednesday, April 2, 2025
Bon Secours Retreat Center, Marriottsville, MD



Western District Crossroads Lay Ministry Course Grants

Thanks to a generous donation from the estate of the late Rt. Rev. Wil Behrend, the Western District Executive Board is pleased to offer \$300 grants to members of Western District congregations to take an online lay ministry course through the Crossroads Program of Moravian Theological Seminary.

Grants will be distributed upon completion of requested course.

To apply, please fill out the application form (found by scanning the QR code here) and submit to Western District President Rev. Jason Andersen either by email to jason@mcnp.org or by mail to 6708 Wolf Hollow Road, Windsor WI, 53598. This grant cycle will run through the end of 2026.



Youth and Young Adult Retreats

Scan the QR code to find registration and more information
(available at sites.google.com/view/wdcamping/home/)



The **Mid-Winter Retreat** for youth grade 9 - age 21 will be held January 31 - February 2 at Lake Mills Moravian Church in Lake Mills, Wisconsin.

The **District Young Adult Retreat** for those age 18-30(ish) will be held March 15-16 at Mt. Morris Camp and Retreat Center. The theme is "Keeping Your Head, Directing Your Heart."

District Clergy Retreat

The annual retreat for our Western District pastors, both lay and ordained, will be held at Mt. Morris Camp and Retreat Center on January 13-16. Our program leader this year will be retired Moravian pastor and certified spiritual director Rev. Rick Beck. All pastors are encouraged to utilize this time for fellowship and retreat, and all congregations are encouraged to help their pastors attend. Registration information has been emailed out to clergy. If you have questions, please reach out to retreat coordinator, Rev. Joel Russell, pastor of the Bethel and Goshen Moravian Churches in North Dakota.
