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# The Moravian Monthly

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

## March 2026

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### NOTE ABOUT THE MORAVIAN MONTHLY

The Moravian Monthly is compiled each month. Please send contributions and questions about this newsletter to Shana at [shana@mcnp.org](mailto:shana@mcnp.org) by the 20<sup>th</sup> of the month preceding distribution.

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### Meet Manna!

*Rev. Byrnesse Craig*



Meet Manna, a new faith community taking root in the Leigh Valley!

Manna is a dinner church whose mission is to encounter God around the table through worship, fellowship, and service. Guided by the core values of worship, fellowship, discipleship and justice, Manna dreams of building a better community, where strangers become family through the power of the Holy Spirit. (cont'd on next page)

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Jesus' earthly ministry often took place around the table, the early church gathered and shared agape meals, we have carried the tradition of the Lovefeast from our ancestors all around the world, and now through Manna, a new generation of people will be invited to join in gathering around the table. A dinner church service involves prayer, singing together, the study of scripture, and celebration of communion. We gather to share a family style meal, connect with one another and worship together. Our meal is punctuated by our worship as we encounter God around the table in our neighbors and at the table through communion.

In Pastor Byrnese's own words, "It is a tremendous honor to serve our Moravian community as Manna's pastor, as my own journey has revolved around gathering with folks around the table and addressing the hunger many people feel for spiritual nourishment and relationship, this call is deeply in keeping with the Spirit's work in my life. I am eager to gather and share our heritage of faith with our neighbors in the Lehigh Valley through this new expression of church!"

This year Manna is seeking to identify a long term location for gathering and building community in the Lehigh Valley and needs your support. As the Spirit draws folks closer to community, we can help to set the table for them to come and encounter God, and so invite you to prayerfully consider how you might be able to get involved. One of the best ways you can help spread the news is to invite Byrnese to join you for worship! Whether you'd like to host a dinner church style service in your community, or are open to Byrnese sharing the mission of Manna during Sunday morning worship, please visit the website for contact information and scheduling. For those who are able to offer a one time or recurring gift of financial support, your generosity helps us to create a foundation that will enable Manna's ministry for years to come. The best way to stay informed about volunteer and connection opportunities is to visit our website by scanning the QR Code below and sign up for the newsletter.



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## Provincewide Updates

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### Board of World Mission Updates

#### *2026 Door County Century Ride*

*Sunday, September 13, 2026*

You are invited to join the BWM in ministry in an extra-fun way! Spend a day in beautiful Door County, Wisconsin, at the Door County Century Ride on September 13th! Train for a 30, 50, 70, or 100-mile bike ride and raise funds for the BWM along the way... Together we'll pedal toward a future of lasting, global ministry! In addition to the ride on Sunday, we will have a spaghetti dinner on Saturday evening and other opportunities for fellowship throughout the weekend.

Space is limited and registration is filling up quickly this year – the ride is already half full! If you are interested in joining us, please register ASAP and contact [sylvie@moravianmission.org](mailto:sylvie@moravianmission.org) with any questions. We hope you'll join us!

**Learn about last year's ride and register by scanning the QR code.**



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## 2026 Board of World Mission Service Camps

*For adults of all ages and abilities!*

The Board of World Mission, together with our Moravian camping ministries in Wisconsin and New Jersey, invites volunteers to join together in preparation for 2026 summer programming at our BWM service camps. There is no cost to attend either camp; meals and lodging (and lots of fun!) will be provided for the volunteers. Project details are not yet available, but in the past, groups have done everything from staining cabins, replacing roofing on pavilions, clearing brush, weeding, and more. Free time is casual and can be spent as you choose – you are sure to find others who will join you on a hike or sitting around the campfire.

### **Mt. Morris Service Camp**

Wautoma, Wisconsin | May 13-17, 2026

Register by May 1st

### **Camp Hope Service Camp**

Blairstown, New Jersey | June 16-20, 2026

Register by June 1st

Register at [MoravianMission.org/ServiceCamp/](https://MoravianMission.org/ServiceCamp/) and direct any questions to Director of Mission Service Dan Miller ([dan@moravianmission.org](mailto:dan@moravianmission.org)).

Want to experience another Moravian camp facility for the first time? We ask that in-area volunteers cover their own transportation to and from service camp, but if you are traveling from a long distance, exchange camping funds are available for travel assistance. Inquire with Dan!



## **New Educational Opportunities for Lay Leaders**

If you have been considering an online course, there are two beginning in April that will be especially relevant for congregational ministry! These 6-week courses are being taught by our own Moravian pastors. We invite you to check the website and consider whether you or someone you know would benefit from this learning. Please remember that each district will provide \$300 toward the course, leaving only a small fee to be covered by the student. Before registering, email your district executive board president (listed below) to let them know you will be taking the class(es).

*Individual and Congregational Care, taught by the Rev. Tammie Rinker*  
Wednesdays, April 15<sup>th</sup> through May 20<sup>th</sup>

*Faith Formation and Education, taught by the Rev. Desna Henry Goulbourne*  
Thursdays, April 16<sup>th</sup> through May 21<sup>st</sup>

Canadian District – Dave Jones [davejones@mcnp.org](mailto:davejones@mcnp.org)  
Eastern District – Melissa Johnson [melissa@mcnp.org](mailto:melissa@mcnp.org)  
Western District – Jason Andersen [jason@mcnp.org](mailto:jason@mcnp.org)

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## A Bishop's Musings – March 2026

The Rt. Rev. Chris Giesler

rtrevchris@gmail.com

As I write these words, the Lenten season has just begun, but I am guessing that you will be reading them after we are several weeks into this holy journey. I hope and pray what follows will help you along the way and open your heart to God's creative Spirit.

As Moravians, we believe in the essential truth that God creates, redeems, and blesses us, and that we respond with faith, love, and hope. At the heart of these essentials is our belief that Jesus Christ is the Word of God made flesh. His life and ministry showed us just how God loved the world. More precisely, Jesus' ministry was all about showing us no matter who we are and where we find ourselves, God loves us. God gave us his Son to call us back to God's heart. Jesus also teaches those who follow him must take up this mission and let those around us feel God's love in tangible, authentic ways. We do this through the words we use and the acts of compassion seeking to comfort those who suffer and change the systems of injustice keeping others from realizing their full potential.

As we use this Lenten season to follow Jesus more closely, allow me to remind you of some of his most essential teachings.

- As Jesus begins his sermon on the mount, as recorded in Matthew chapters 5-7, he reminds us that God's blessing will rest upon those who are poor in spirit, mourn, are meek, hunger and thirst for righteousness, are merciful, pure in heart, make peace, and are persecuted. How can we share God's blessing with those who fit these categories?
- In Mark 10:17-30, Jesus is asked by a rich young man what he must do to inherit eternal life, and Jesus tells him to give his wealth to the poor and to follow him. In Matthew 25:31-43, Jesus doubles down on this by telling us we will be judged by how we have fed the hungry, given drink to the thirsty, welcomed strangers, clothed the naked, and visited the sick and imprisoned. These were priorities for Jesus. How can we follow him more closely?
- In Mark 12:28-34, a lawyer asks Jesus to name the greatest commandment. And the answer is we must love God with all of who we are, and then we love our neighbor just as much as we love and care for ourselves. How can we love others as much as we say we love God?
- And finally, as Jesus is suffering on the cross, he looks upon those who have put him there and, rather than speaking words of retribution and insult, he prays to God, "Father, forgive them for they know not what they do." (Luke 23:24) We believe Jesus prays these words when he considers our sin, and those who follow Jesus must also forgive.

If we could make Jesus' priorities our own, just how different would our world be? I pray that as you continue your Lenten journey, the Spirit of God will bring you ever closer to the heart of God as shown to us in Jesus. It is my honor to be serving as one of the bishops of our Northern Province. I can be reached at [rtrevchris@gmail.com](mailto:rtrevchris@gmail.com).

*In the Interprovincial Bishops' Conference in 2004, the idea of Bishops contributing monthly articles to the Moravian Magazine was suggested. That suggestion evolved to the current "A Bishop's Musings" for the Northern Province Moravian Monthly. The email address of the contributing bishop is included for any comments or responses which we welcome.*

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## Racial Justice Team Calendar: March 2026

### *Day of Remembrance March 8: The Gnadenhutzen Massacre*

The Equal Justice Initiative includes the Massacre at Gnadenhutzen on its 2025 History of Racial Injustice calendar, and in a related article notes that the Massacre “has been called the greatest atrocity of the Revolutionary War.” The article also records that the soldiers took a vote on whether to kill the Lenape people, with only a few voting, “no.” The people were informed of their coming execution and “the captured Indigenous people spent the night praying and singing.” Children made up the largest group of those killed.

MARCH WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH	
08	Day of Remembrance (Gnadenhutzen Massacre)
08	Int'l. Women's Day
13	STN Breonna Taylor
21	Int'l. Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination/Int'l. Day for Cultural Diversity
25	Int'l. Day of Remembrance of the Victims of Slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade

*Marion Perrin is a member of the Rio Terrace Moravian Church in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada, and the MCNP Racial Justice Team. Originally published in March 2025.*

*This year, the March 8 Day of Remembrance of the Gnadenhutzen Massacre is the Third Sunday in Lent. This month's reflection includes prayers of lament and remembrance that may be used as a worship resource. A bulletin insert is also available. The full calendar reflection can be found by scanning the QR code.*



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## 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 2026. Congregations may also apply for grant funds to join a pilgrimage sponsored by another entity such as the Calvin Institute for Christian Worship or an ecumenical partner.

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. A qualifying pilgrimage will occur before May 31, 2027. Please see the grant application for additional details.

The deadline to apply for a 2026 Pilgrimage Grant from the MCNP Racial Justice Team is June 1, 2026. Grant applications will be reviewed by the Racial Justice Team by June 30, 2026. Please visit the MCNP Racial Justice Team website for an application by scanning the QR code.



### Music on the Mountain – A Harmonious Retreat!

March 13-15, 2026 at Laurel Ridge

A Harmonious Retreat for band and choir, and children's music and activities. March 13-15, 2026. Higgins Lodge, Laurel Ridge Camp, Conference & Retreat Center, Laurel Springs, NC. An opportunity to make music together, to worship, to learn, and to enjoy fellowship in a casual mountain setting with cozy accommodations (2 nights) and delicious meals. Learn more and register at [MoravianMusic.org](http://MoravianMusic.org)

An opportunity to make music together, to worship, to learn, and to enjoy fellowship in a casual mountain setting with cozy accommodations (2 nights). View the daily schedule at [www.moravianmusic.org](http://www.moravianmusic.org)

### Comenius Music Academy - Moravian Music Foundation

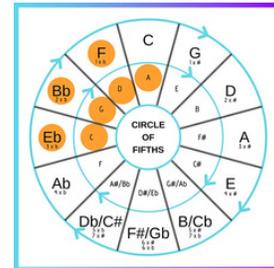
New Free Classes for Spring ! Simply sign up to receive the Zoom links and updates.

#### Music Theory 101

Five Class Series by Christopher Ogburn and the Lenten Journey by Darla Earnest

#### ONLINE

Tuesdays at noon (Chris Ogburn):  
Music Theory 101 (4 weeks)  
April 14 - May 5



#### Lenten Musical Journey

Join Darla Earnest on Zoom for a 7-week musical devotion and prayer journey throughout Lent. Let's set the tone together for the Easter season... musically and spiritually!

12:00pm - 12:30pm

Wednesdays at Noon - Dates: Feb. 4, 11, 18, 25, March 4, 11, 18

Scan the QR code for the link for more information and sign up.

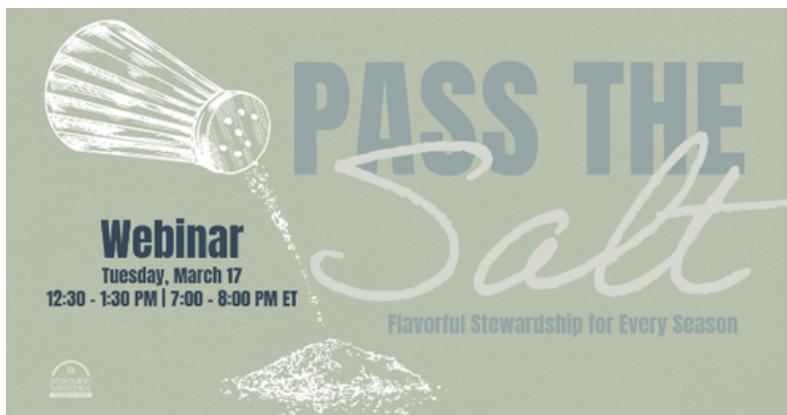


#### America 250

As we enter the 250th Anniversary Year (1776-2026) of America's declared independence, you may be interested in presenting the earliest string chamber music composed in America, written in Salem, NC, by Moravian pastor, administrator, and composer, Johann Friedrich Peter (1746-1813) in 1789. The quintets would have been composed for the Salem Collegium Musicum, but actually survive in the Philharmonic Society of Bethlehem (PA) Collection. Peter left no copy in Salem upon his departure in 1790. Six String Quintets | sheet music / score and parts | \$35 for each set of two quintets. MMF also publishes the first string chamber music composed by an American. The Three String Trios by John Antes, Moravian pastor, missionary, composer, and instrument maker, are available from MMF for \$35 per set at [MoravianMusic.org](http://MoravianMusic.org).

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## Pass the Salt: Flavorful Stewardship for Every Season Webinar Tuesday, March 17, 2026 | 12:30 PM OR 7:00 PM ET



Jesus said, “You are the salt of the earth.” What does this mean for how we approach stewardship in our communities of faith? Join us for this engaging webinar where we’ll explore creative, holistic strategies that go far beyond a pledge card. Whether your church’s stewardship efforts are a bit bland or you’re looking for new ingredients to add to the mix, you’ll leave with practical ideas for making faithful stewardship a way of life in 2026.

Register by scanning the QR code.



### Plan Faithfully for the Future

Looking ahead can feel overwhelming, but thoughtful preparation can bring peace of mind and lasting impact. The Moravian Ministries Foundation in America is here to help you plan in ways that reflect your faith and values. MMFA offers free resources and personal support to help you:

A graphic with a purple and white color scheme. At the top, it says "Want to support your church?". Below that, it says "Moravian Ministries Foundation can help!". There are four circular icons, each with a sunburst symbol, representing different ways to support the church: "Make a tax-free gift", "Make a gift that pays you back", "Avoid taxation on your IRA", and "Make a gift that costs nothing in your lifetime". At the bottom, there is contact information: "MMFA.com | 336.725.2589 | 119 Brookstown Avenue, Suite 305, Winston-Salem, NC 27101".

- Establish gifts that provide income now and benefit ministry later
- Maximize tax advantages for you and your loved ones
- Transfer stock or retirement assets as charitable gifts
- Create a plan that reflects your values and faith

To learn more, visit [MMFA.com](http://MMFA.com) and reach out to Chris Spaugh, MMFA President & CEO: [cspaugh@mmfa.com](mailto:cspaugh@mmfa.com).

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## IBOC updates



### Church Resources on Moravian.org

Did you know the IBOC has a number of resources on the Moravian.org website to help make worship a little easier? One surprising resource is a collection of slide backgrounds for worship. You can click this link and access more than 20 different images in both widescreen and standard versions.



Scan the QR code for the slide backgrounds!

### Check out the IBOC Store

#### *Readings for Holy Week*

Now available in CD and printed editions! The five-CD set includes the complete narration and hymns that make up the printed editions of Readings for Holy Week. Each narration section and hymn appear on separate tracks to allow listeners to access them in a variety of ways. A perfect gift for a shut-in or for a small church. Go to our website to hear samples of this beautiful collection. CD set \$24.95 Printed editions are Music Edition \$13.95 \$10.50 & Large Print \$11.95 \$7.50.

Bundle CDs with Music Edition Book: \$35.00

Bundle CDs with Large Edition Book: \$32.00



#### Conquering Lamb Plush

The Lamb is a favored symbol of the Moravian Church and now little Moravians can add a fuzzy representation of the Lamb who conquered to their stuffed animal collections. This plush Conquering Lamb from Gann Memorials is 8" tall and includes the halo, staff and banner. This is a great addition to an Easter Basket. \$22.50



See the entire selection of books in the IBOC store.  
Find it by scanning the QR code.



## Pastoral Updates

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### Retirement

**Rev. Kurt Liebenow** has been granted permission to retire from the active ministry of the Moravian Church, effective June 1, 2026. Brother Liebenow was ordained on February 26, 1995, at Christ's Community Moravian Church, Maple Grove, Minnesota and consecrated a Presbyterian on June 23, 2013, at Christian Faith Moravian Church, DeForest, Wisconsin. Brother Liebenow has served at Christ's Community Moravian Church in Maple Grove, Minnesota, Christian Faith Moravian Church in DeForest, Wisconsin and most recently at Watertown Moravian Church, Watertown, Wisconsin. Please hold Brother Liebenow and his family in your prayers through this transition.

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### Appointment

**Father Omar Reyes** has accepted an appointment to serve as the full-time pastor at Castleton Hill Moravian Church in Staten Island, NY. He began his appointment on February 9, 2026, but will be officially installed on February 15, 2026. Prior to this appointment Brother Reyes most recently had served as priest in charge at Saint Albans Episcopal Church in Saint Pete Beach, FL; also at Christ Episcopal Church, Albertville, AL; and at the Anglican Diocese of Western Newfoundland, Corner Brook, NL, Canada. He was ordained Deacon in the Episcopal Church on September 13, 2015, and a Presbyterian on December 1, 2015. Please be in prayer for the members of Castleton Hill Moravian Church and for Father Omar and his family as they transition together in this ministry.

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### Presbyterial Consecration

**Sister Linda Wisser**, presently serving as pastor of East Hills Moravian Church, Bethlehem, Pennsylvania will be consecrated a Presbyterian on Sunday, April 19, 2026, at 3:00 p.m. ET. The Rt. Rev. Christian Giesler will officiate at the service. Further information regarding the service will be shared as it becomes available with a provincial update by email.

### Ordination Announcement

Your prayers and presence are invited to celebrate a service of ordination.

By the Grace of God, the Right Reverend M. Blair Couch, Bishop of the Moravian Unity, will ordain Byrnese Craig to service as a Deacon in the Moravian Church, Northern Province

March 7, 2026 at 3:00pm  
Moravian Theological Seminary  
60 W. Locust Street, Bethlehem, Pennsylvania 18018

Clergy and their families are invited to gather in Genadendal before the service.  
Reception to follow

**RSVP or Questions to Byrnese Craig at [Byrnese.craig@gmail.com](mailto:Byrnese.craig@gmail.com)**

## February Birthdays and Anniversaries

### **Birthdays**

1 Norma Christianson	16 Brian Dixon
2 Mary Harke	16 Aaron Linville
2 Debbie Propsom	17 Brian Kent
3 Joel Russell	18 Kurt Lebenow
3 Bobbie O'Connor	19 E. Reeder Herrick
4 James Hicks	19 George Richmond
7 Sayward Lippincott	21 Michael Johnson
8 David Schwarz	21 Barbara Herrick
10 Kathy Liebenow	23 Susan Sommers
10 Lauren Grady	23 Cheryl Wallace
11 David Glasser	24 Pamela Alleyne
12 Peter Skelly	24 Andrew Kilps
13 Eric Renner	24 Maxine Powell
	31 John Wallace

### **Ordination Anniversaries**

- 7 Sue Koenig (22 years)
- 20 Andrew Meckstroth (38 years)

### **Churches Celebrating Anniversaries**

- |   |                                     |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| 5 Calvary, Allentown, PA (87 years)           | 25 First, York, PA (274 years)      |
| 5 Roots, St. Paul, MN(3 years)                | 27 John Hus, Brooklyn, NY(60 years) |
| 14 Great Kills, Staten Island, NY (140 years) |                                     |
| 14 Mountainview, Hellertown, PA (75 years)    |                                     |

## Prayer Concerns

### **Obituaries**

Sister Lucy Robinson entered the more immediate presence of our Savior on Friday night, February 13, 2026, at the age of 47 years. Sister Lucy is the daughter-in-law of retired pastors Tracy and Rhonda Robinson. Please continue praying for her husband, Steadman, their children and grandchild, as well as Sister Rhonda and Brother Tracy Robinson.

*God of all comfort, we offer our sympathy to the Robinson family and pray in the assurance of the resurrection. May your Spirit sustain them and comfort them as they move more fully into this time of transition and deep grief. As they find refuge in you, may they also be consoled by the love and prayers of their family in faith. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.*

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

- Battle Hill, Union, New Jersey
- Canaan, Davenport, North Dakota
- Central, Bethlehem, Pennsylvania
- Chaska, Minnesota
- Christ, Calgary, Alberta
- Christian Faith, Deforest, Wisconsin
- Daggett, Michigan
- Ephraim, Wisconsin
- Faith of the Nation's Capital, Washington, DC
- First, Dover, Ohio
- First, New York, New York
- Great Kills, Staten Island, New York
- Heimtal, Edmonton, Alberta
- Lebanon, Pennsylvania
- Lititz, Pennsylvania
- Sharon, New Philadelphia, Ohio
- Shepherd of the Prairie, Fargo, North Dakota
- Tremont Terrace, Bronx, New York
- Unionville, Michigan
- Veedum, Pittsville, Wisconsin



# Moravian Church in Canada

## Van Es Camp & Conference Centre Welcomes New Leadership and Opens Summer Registration

Van Es Camp & Conference Centre is excited to share that Aiden Lamb has stepped into the role of Executive Director as of June 2025. Under this new leadership, the camp has experienced tremendous growth, with strong bookings and exciting facility improvements underway. Our Retreat House renovations are expected to be completed by the spring and the Harmony Centre roof will be replaced when the snow melts.

Van Es Camp continues to serve as a vital retreat and conference facility, providing a beautiful space for spiritual renewal, community gathering, and connection with nature in the heart of Alberta.

Summer 2026 camp registration is now open! We invite families to secure spots soon for an unforgettable summer experience. Whether you're looking for a week of adventure for your children or seeking a peaceful retreat for your group, Van Es Camp offers something special for everyone.

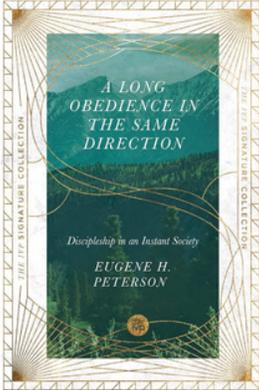
For more information about summer camps, retreat bookings, or facility rentals, or if you would like to make a donation to support camp and our mission, visit [vanes.ca](https://vanes.ca) or contact us at [bookings@vanes.ca](mailto:bookings@vanes.ca).

We look forward to welcoming you to Van Es Camp in 2026!

# The Western District Moravian Church in America, Northern Province



## Young Adult Retreat



There is still time to register for the Young Adult Retreat!! It will be held March 13-15 at Mt. Morris Camp and Retreat Center. Come enjoy the happy expectation of Joy's cookies, camp songs, and time with distant friends. Our District President Jason Andersen will be our program leader; the program will be based on Eugene Peterson's book, "A Long Obedience in the Same Direction." Rev. Mary Lou Plummer will be our chaplain. Register by scanning the QR code. Retreat coordinators are Taylor Ferrey and Kyra Tessman.



## Church Camps!

*For youth in WI, MN, and ND*

Junior (2nd - 5th grade) August 2-6  
Winmor (6th - 8th grade) July 26-August 1  
Chetek (9th grade - age 21) July 19-25  
Register at [www.wdcamping.com](http://www.wdcamping.com)

*For youth in IL, IN, and MI*

Spring Rally (6th grade - age 21) April 10-12  
Illiana (2nd - 6th grade) July 27-31  
Tar Hollow (7th grade - age 21) July 19-25  
Register at [www.msymc.weebly.com](http://www.msymc.weebly.com)

## Ministry Highlight: You Belong

Last month, You Belong experienced extensive damage in their facility due to a frozen pipe that ruptured. The water damage affected 3,000 square feet of their facility, causing the most damage in the kitchen and the Adventure Zone play center. If you would like to help support their restoration, you can send items from the Amazon wish list or make a monetary donation. If you prefer to send a check in the mail, please send checks payable to "You Belong" to 2960 Allied Street, Suite 103, Green Bay WI, 54304. Thank you!



Donations



Amazon Wishlist



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## Congregational Spotlight

### *Fry's Valley Moravian Church: Serving the Homeschool Community through 'Wonder and Wander*

Written by Seth Angel

Fry's Valley Moravian Church is a small rural congregation located in southern Tuscarawas County Ohio. It's one of those country churches where visitors become family when they walk through the doors, and no one is surprised when a three and a six-year-old are taking up the offering. One member of our congregation, Freda, always bakes cookies and folks usually visit around the coffee pot for at least an hour after the service.

Even though we are a small congregation, Fry's Valley has always searched for ways to serve our community. Over the years, Cub Scout packs and 4-H clubs have called Fry's Valley their home. We adopt and support families who are in need, and our fellowship hall is a place where the community can gather to celebrate the lives of family members. One of our focuses for mission is the local Friends of the Homeless organization, where we provide meals for the county shelter each month. Since becoming part of Shared Moravian Ministries Ohio, we have found new opportunities for mission by supporting the outreach efforts of our sister congregations.

Because we are located in the Central Appalachian region of Ohio, there are many needs in our community. A new opportunity presented itself last year when members of a local homeschool co-op approached the joint boards with a proposal. They were looking for a location to establish a learning resource center and asked if Fry's Valley could be that place.

The Covid pandemic brought a large increase in the families who chose to educate at home. In our area, the numbers have remained fairly constant since that time. There are many reasons why parents decide to home school. In a rural area like ours, these include parents' work schedules and both the distance and transportation time for their children.

After reviewing the proposal, the Fry's Valley joint board found that the needs of the home school group fit well with the resources of our congregation. A new committee was established, with members from both the boards and home school parents, to oversee the project. A seldom used room in the church was converted into a resource library and an Eastern District Mission Grant was secured to help with startup costs.

Wonder and Wander home school resource center began programs during September of 2025. The students currently meet weekly, with an average of 20 in attendance. Art and science are the favorite subjects, and local experts are often invited to be guest speakers on a variety of topics. The group has recently taken field trips to a botanical garden and a fish hatchery. Classes are frequently scheduled based on local events and the time of year. With the end of winter just around the corner, the students are now learning about maple trees and syrup production.

The Wonder and Wander program is continuing to grow with plans for more programming and activities in the future. The resource library now includes books and materials ranging from preschool projects to high school level math and science. The home school group is currently working to replace the church playground equipment, with the congregation supporting site preparation and installation. This is a project that will benefit both the church and the community.

The Fry's Valley congregation is looking forward to a continuing partnership with Wonder and Wander. We feel truly blessed to support these students and help fill a need in our community.

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## Moravian Music Foundation Eastern District Opportunities

A **German and English Moravian Singstunde** will be held this year at the Moravian Historical Society (Whitefield House) in Nazareth, PA, on the first Sunday in Advent, Nov. 30, 2025 at 2:00pm. It will be led by Kyle Johnston, Assoc. Director of the Moravian Music Foundation, and accompanied by the 1776 Tannenberg organ! The historic Singstunde, or singing hour, will celebrate the Advent and Christmas season, and will be sung in both English and German. The sing will take place in the Moravian Historical Society's museum Saal and is free to attend. Seating is limited in the museum; reservations are recommended. Learn more and reserve your seat at [MoravianMusic.org](http://MoravianMusic.org).

**Monday Morning Music:** a musical moment with Kyle Johnston at the keyboard – Mondays, 10am  
Start your week off with your favorite hymns! Join Kyle Johnston every Monday morning as he plays through a variety of hymns from multiple sources. Hear old favorites, discover new favorites, and relax to the sound of classic hymns at home, in your office, or on your commute. Recordings are available now on the MMF YouTube Channel.

**Monthly (South Side) Shape-Note Sing** (Lehigh Valley Shape-Note Singers) 6:00-8:00 (Every 4th Tuesday)  
Come join Kyle Johnston and the Lehigh Valley Shape Note Singers in learning to sing an authentic, historic American style of singing. Singers of all ages and skill levels are welcome. Godfrey Daniels in Bethlehem.

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## Prayer & Lay Leadership: A Three-Part Educational Webinar Series

### Session 3 is still to come - and We've Added a Session Four!

Join us for the remaining sessions in our four-part Zoom series exploring how prayer shapes personal faith and congregational leadership. Each 90-minute session stands alone and offers practical insight you can use right away.

#### Session 3: Prayers for Worship

Led by the Rev. Dr. Riddick Weber

Date CHANGED: March 17, 2026, at 7:00 p.m.

Wondering how pastoral, intercessory, and invocation prayers differ or what to say in an offertory prayer? Learn the purpose of key worship prayers & simple ways to craft them.

#### NEW Session 4: Praying on the Spot

Led by the Eastern District Executive Board

Date: April 27, 2026, at 7:00 p.m.

Have you ever been asked to pray in public without any warning? What goes through your mind in that moment? Are there tips that can help you offer a meaningful prayer? Yes! Come and explore with us as we share practical guidance and encouragement for praying confidently and faithfully when called upon.

Recordings of Sessions 1 and 2 are coming soon and will be posted on our website. [www.moravian.org/equip](http://www.moravian.org/equip)

- **Who Should Attend:** Lay leaders, worship assistants, educators, musicians, and anyone seeking to deepen their understanding and practice of prayer.
- **Format:** 90-minute live webinars via Zoom. Registration at [the QR code](#)
- **Hosted by:** The Eastern District Executive Board



## **“Finding Your Way” Young Adult Retreat at Camp Hope**

*March 27-29, 2026*

*Ages 18-30*

Join us for a weekend retreat at Camp Hope as we worship, connect, explore and wonder together. Led by Moravian Pastor Jennika Eckhaus, Director of Moravian Church Relations at the Moravian School of Theology this retreat will be full of love, joy, and fellowship as we gather together in the beautiful New Jersey forests around Little Silver Lake.

Program cost is \$145 for the weekend, but we do not want cost to be a barrier for participation. Scholarships are available, please contact Jennika for financial assistance via email at [eckhausj@moravian.edu](mailto:eckhausj@moravian.edu)



Visit [camphope.org](http://camphope.org) or scan the QR code to register.