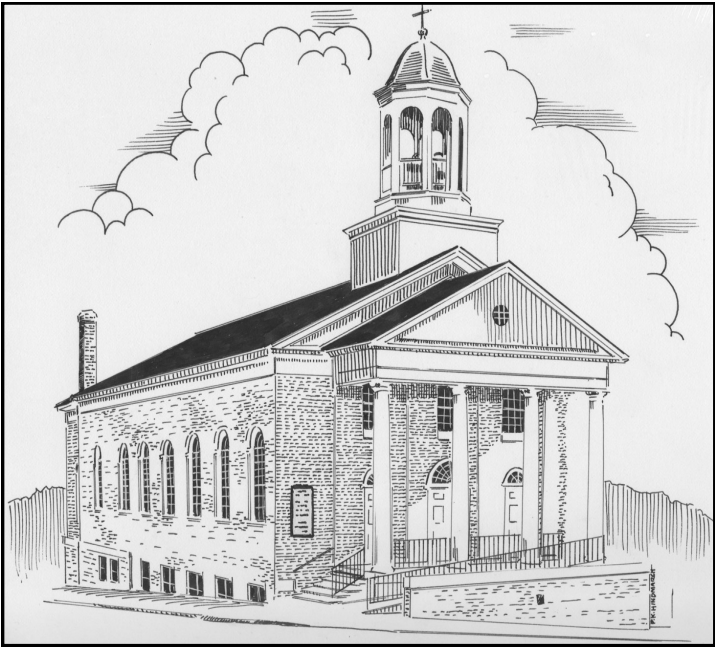


# THE FM STEREO NEWSLETTER

## January 2025



**In Essentials, Unity  
In Nonessentials, Liberty  
In All Things, Love**  
**Congregational Watchword for 2025**

Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me. In my Father's house there are many dwelling places.

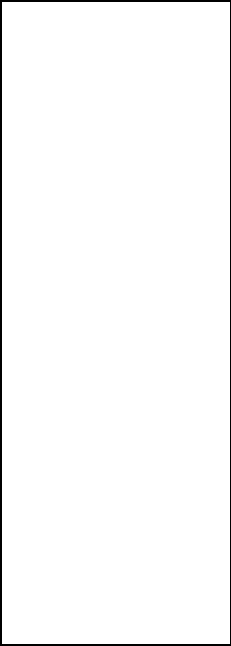
John 14:1-4

FIRST MORAVIAN CHURCH  
225 N. 10TH STREET  
EASTON, PA 18042-3370  
The Rev. Sue Koenig, Pastor  
Laurie Toyberg, Secretary

[www.firstmoravianeaston.org](http://www.firstmoravianeaston.org)  
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Phone: 610-258-6317



**Worship Sundays 10:45 AM**  
Summer through Labor Day 10 AM  
Fall/Winter/Spring 10:45 AM



Dear Friends in Christ,  
 Early Christians celebrated Sundays as “The Eighth Day,” the day of Christ’s resurrection and the beginning of God’s new creation. The first known written mention of the language of “The Eighth Day” was in the epistle of Barnabas from about 100 CE. The Eighth Day symbolized baptism and baptismal fonts were often in the shape of an octagon. In the sixth century, the eighth day of Christmas began to be recognized as “The Circumcision and Name of Jesus. Jewish boys were circumcised and formally named on the eighth day of their lives; circumcision was a sign of God’s covenant. Later, the “octave” of Christmas, January 1, was called, “Name of Jesus.” It is in the name of Jesus, and into his death, that we are baptized and raised to new life.

Jesus is known by many names. He is the Alpha and Omega, the Lamb of God, the Son of God, the Good Shepherd, the Redeemer, the Bread of Life, the Resurrection and the Life. In the Christmas season especially, he is named Immanuel, Savior, The Word, The Light of the World, and Wonderful Counselor, Almighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace (Isaiah 9:6).

Isaiah’s prophecy is heard through the centuries by people who sit in darkness. On them, a great light is shining. Jesus fulfills God’s promise of One who will order all things new, who will bring the kingdom of heaven to earth where there will be “peace and prosperity marked by justice and righteousness. Jesus announces his mission in the words of Isaiah in Luke 4:18-19:

“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,  
 because he has anointed me  
 to bring good news to the poor.

He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives  
 and recovery of sight to the blind,  
 to set free those who are oppressed,  
 to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.”

We have been baptized in the name of Christ, the Prince of Peace. May we who bear his name be bearers of light, committed to peace, justice and righteousness *in the name of Jesus, Amen.* Pr. Sue



For news from the MCNP and Eastern District and to sign up for the Moravian Monthly visit <https://www.moravian.org/northern/>

For news from the Board of World Mission, including updates on disaster relief efforts and volunteer opportunities in North Carolina, visit <https://www.moravian.org/mission/>

## **CHURCH COUNCIL 2025**

Our annual Church Council meeting will be held on **Sunday, January 19, 2025**, with an inclement weather date of January 26. We will worship together, share a covered dish lunch, and then convene as Church Council. Staff and committee reports are requested by January 7. Annual Reports will be available on January 12. The Unified Board asks every member who is able to attend worship and the meeting to hear about the ministries of the congregation in the preceding year, and to assist with planning for the future. If you are asked to serve on the Unified Board, please give this request your prayerful consideration. Information on the responsibilities of Unified Board members is available from the church office.



## **CHURCH & SOCIETY COMMITTEE’S 2024 CHRISTMAS PROJECT**



Thank you for supporting this year’s Christmas Project to benefit the clients of Turning Point of the Lehigh Valley. Turning Point is a non-profit community-based agency that provides shelter and other valuable services for victims of domestic violence in Northampton and Lehigh Counties. With your support, we were able to provide \$550 of gift cards to Turning Point. Your love and compassion made the holidays much brighter for residents of Turning Point and your gifts are greatly appreciated!

~Church & Society Committee

## **WITH HEARTFELT GRATITUDE**

Dear Beloved Friends in Christ,  
 We give thanks to God daily for the opportunity and the joy of serving Christ with you here at First Moravian. At Christmas, and always, our hearts are filled year-round with love and appreciation for each of you. Please receive our deepest gratitude for your most generous year-end gifts, and for your kind gestures and blessings throughout the year. We look forward to all the ways in which God will call and lead us in ministry together in the new year. Thank you so very much. May God bless you in marvelous and surprising ways.

Pastor Sue

## **PRAYERS FOR CONCLUDING MINISTRIES**

We hold in our prayers our dear siblings in Christ of the Mountainview, MorningStar, and Esperanza for Bethlehem congregations as they conclude their ministries that touched so many lives with the love of Jesus.

## **FIRST MORAVIAN UNIFIED BOARD**

Members of the Unified Board met on December 15 at 12:30 pm. Pastor Sue opened the meeting with prayer. The agenda, November 24, 2024 meeting minutes and Pastor's November report were approved by those present, motion by Sue Ficzk, second by Gwen Triolo. Highlights from the December meeting include:



- ◇ Pastor Sue noted that the FSA and Record of Action Forms related to payroll for the new year were available for signature.
- ◇ We received with joy the news of the birth of Melanie Mae Boyd to parents Jada Bullock and Roger Boyd. Janet Balogun called with Christmas greetings and blessings for the congregation.
- ◇ Treasurer Frank Chisesi provided a written report on our current financial status. Collections for December 8, 2024 showed a significant increase, permitting October and November Medical/LTD and Insurance payments to be made, so that only December's payment is due. With the exception of our Common Ministries, all other payments are up-to-date. We will submit an additional payment for the Provincial and District Common Ministries at an amount to be determined based on year-end gifts. The current General Fund balance at the time of the report was \$9,227.
- ◇ Frank reported our investment account with MMFA has now recovered to our initial investment with slight earnings of \$211.
- ◇ The formation of the Nominating Committee was discussed. Sue Ficzk and Susanne Kessler (as needed and available) will be the Board members for the Committee; an at-large member from the congregation will be invited to serve on the Nominating Committee. The Nominating Committee will be extending invitations to members to serve on the Unified Board.
- ◇ Fundraising possibilities were discussed. A "Pound Auction" will be added to next year's calendar. Other suggestions included pizza kit sales, restaurant fundraisers, and soup and hoagie sales. Some helpful feedback and suggestions were offered to increase the gift card sales.
- ◇ The Miracle of Christmas event and Children's Christmas Shop were reviewed; Church Council date of January 19, 2025 was confirmed; and upcoming services were highlighted (Blue Christmas, Carols & Lullabies, and Christmas Eve.)
- ◇ The renewal date for the rental agreement with Oasis is January 31; Frank has arranged for snow removal as needed.
- ◇ The meeting concluded with prayer.

The next Unified Board meeting will be January 5, 2025 at 12:30 pm.

## **WORSHIP IN JANUARY 10:45 am**

*The Epiphany of the Lord is January 6 and the season after Epiphany begins in worship services on Sunday, January 12. This season of the revealing of Jesus as the Christ will continue through March 2 this year. Ash Wednesday will be March 5 and the First Sunday in Lent is March 9.*

### **Jan. 5, Second Sun. of Christmas/Sunday School (Robotics, Unified Board)**

We will continue our celebration of the birth of Jesus with the Christmas liturgy and carols. The gospel text is John 1:(1-9), 10-18: "The Word became flesh and brought grace and truth into the world." Sunday School for children will meet during worship following the Children's Message.



### **Jan. 12, First Sun. after the Epiphany/Holy Communion (Parsonage Open House)**

On this day we will read of the Baptism of Our Lord, in Luke 3:15-17, 21-22, and celebrate a service of Holy Communion for Epiphany. We rejoice in God's gift of the holy sacraments.

### **Jan. 19, Second Sun. after the Epiphany (Covered Dish and Church Council)**

Jesus reveals his glory at a wedding in Cana, showing by turning water into wine that God's creative power and joy are manifest in the world in him. In Christ, there is always an invitation to come to the wedding banquet! We will recognize Martin Luther King, Jr. Day with a special liturgy.

### **Jan. 26, Third Sun. after the Epiphany/Ecumenical Sunday (inclement weather date for Church Council)**

In the reading from Luke 4:14-21, Jesus claims his identity, purpose, and mission, from which the followers of Jesus take their own purpose and mission.

### **HANDBELL AND VOICE CHOIRS**

The congregation extends its gratitude to the members of the handbell and voice choirs for the blessing of their music for our Advent and Christmas services. Rehearsals will resume on March 12 in preparation for Lent, Holy Week, and Easter. All are welcome to join the choirs!





### CHILDREN'S SUNDAY SCHOOL

**First Sunday** Sunday School will meet on Sunday, **January 5 at 10:45 am.** Children will continue to learn a fuller story of *The Birth of Jesus*. This month's lesson is "Surprise Visitors," Luke 2:8-20. Children will meet the shepherds and learn what they heard and saw as *they* learned of Jesus' birth.

Children will spend a brief time with their families and the congregation at the start of the service, and then go to the Fellowship Hall for Sunday School. Registration forms and other materials are available at the church or by calling the church office at 610-258-6317. Children ages three through 13 are invited. Older children may serve as helpers.

*If you would like to assist with this ministry, to teach or serve as a helper, please let Pastor Sue know of your interest. Thank you!*

### **ROBOTICS**

Children and youth and their families are invited to the Robotics Ministry sessions with Mike Koenig offered the first Sunday of each month following worship and Sunday School. The next session will be **Sunday, January 5 at 12:15 pm.** Meet in the rooms behind the sanctuary. A light lunch will be provided.



*Your Invited*

### OPEN HOUSE AT THE PARSONAGE

Sunday, January 12 12-2:30 pm

Everyone is invited to the parsonage following worship on Sunday, January 12 for lunch and a time of fellowship. Please join us as we celebrate the blessings we have experienced as a congregation during the Christmas season and throughout the past year.

*Mike, Pastor Sue and Quinny*

*Please note the date change from the December newsletter.*

### GRATITUDE FOR SPECIAL EVENTS AND SERVICES FOR ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS

#### SIGHT AND SOUND'S "MIRACLE OF CHRISTMAS"

First Moravian was delighted to present Sight and Sound Theatres' production, "Miracle of Christmas," right in our own sanctuary! It was a marvelous gift given to the congregation to share with family, friends, and those in the community. Forty-three people enjoyed this musical adaptation of the story of the birth of Jesus, and 37 people stayed for a meal and time of fellowship. Both the film and the meal were donated. A generous offering from those who wished to contribute to the dinner was received. This event was so well-received, that an "encore" performance and covered dish meal were planned for December 28. We will explore the possibility of showing other Sight and Sound productions in the future.

#### CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS SHOP

The Children's Christmas Shop was "open" on December 14, and children came to shop for their family members, making careful selections from all the wonderful donated items. A special "thank you" to all who donated time and gifts for the event, and to the families who came. A special word of thanks to Stella Harling and Frances Goode Rivera for their generous support. The Children's Christmas Shop was able to donate \$96 to Family Connections of Easton.

#### "LONGEST NIGHT/BLUE CHRISTMAS SERVICE AND "LULLABIES AND CAROLS"

First Moravian offered a Longest Night and Blue Christmas service on Saturday, December 21, with our guest, James Dronenburg providing music on the harp. It was a very meaningful service, and we saw increased attendance this year. We look forward to continuing this service of prayer, lament, healing, remembrance, and candle lighting in the future. Many thanks to Lila Triolo who assisted with the readings on very short notice, and to all who attended.

On Sunday, December 22, Jim played the harp for a service of lullabies and carols. He joined Andy Dormarunno on congregational hymns for several lovely duets. We extend our appreciation to Jim for sharing his extraordinary gift with us and for his willingness to travel from Maryland to play for our services.

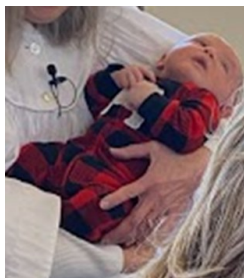
*Let there be peace*

## CELEBRATIONS OF NEW LIFE



Congratulations and prayers of rejoicing for Talia Austin and Zakk Davis on the birth of their son, **Luke Michael Davis** on December 3, 2024. Luke is the great-grandson of Susanne Kessler and Carl Lerch, and the little brother of Robby and Liam. Welcome, Luke!

Luke Michael Davis was baptized at First Moravian on Sunday, December 8, 2024, in a joyous celebration of the church! Many thanks to the family who invited the congregation to a lovely luncheon reception following worship.



Congratulations and prayers of rejoicing for Jada Bullock and Roger Boyd on the birth of their daughter, **Melanie Mae Boyd** on December 11, 2024. Melanie is the granddaughter of Bill and Laurie Bullock. Melanie made her first visit with the congregation on Christmas Eve! Welcome, Melanie!

## LOOKING AHEAD...

Here are highlights of what is ahead for **February and March 2025**:

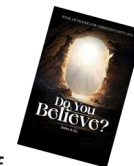
- 02/02 Fourth Sunday after the Epiphany, Installation of Church Officers and Leaders
- 02/09 Fifth Sunday after the Epiphany, Prayer and Anointing for Healing
- 02/16 Sixth Sunday after the Epiphany
- 02/22 Covered Dish and "Pound" Auction Fundraiser
- 02/23 Seventh Sunday after the Epiphany
- 02/28 Annual Report for the MCNP/ED Due
  
- 03/01 Founding of the Unity, March 1, 1457
- 03/02 Transfiguration Sunday/Last Sunday after the Epiphany, Unity Offering
- 03/05 Ash Wednesday
- 03/09 First Sunday in Lent, Holy Communion, DST Begins

## WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY

January 18-25, 2025

**Do you believe? (Jn. 11:26)**

*By James Loughran, SA*



The prayers, reflections and theme for the 2025 Week of Prayer for Christian Unity were developed by the ecumenical monastic community of Bose in northern Italy. This community of predominately lay women and lay men has several monasteries in Italy by approval of the Catholic Bishops Conference of Italy and invites all Christians to retreats and participation in the Benedictine tradition of prayer and work. The theme and texts were the result of meetings at Bose with representatives of the Faith and Order Commission of the World Council of Churches and the Holy See's Dicastery for Promoting Christian Unity in the autumn of 2023.

In 2025, the whole Church commemorates the 1,700th anniversary of the first Ecumenical Council of the entire church at that time, called by the Emperor Constantine at Nicaea (presently in the country of Turkey) in the early summer of 325. Aside from important disciplinary agreements, such as a common date for Easter, the Council discussed and debated orthodoxy of doctrine, especially about what Christians believe about the nature of God as Trinity and the two natures, human and divine, of Jesus Christ. The result was an agreed upon Creed, what we today call the Nicene Creed...It is only appropriate then, in remembering this event of common confession, that Christians today may celebrate that which unites them. Spiritual ecumenism, according to Vatican II, is the "soul" of the ecumenical movement. It is our common faith in the Risen Christ that brings us together for prayer. In turn, the prayer itself is effective in nourishing and confirming our unity. In the year of 2025, all Christians East and West will have a common date for Easter, something Nicaea tried most seriously to settle...Easter will be celebrated on April 20.

## ECUMENICAL SUNDAY, January 26, 2025

The Northern Province of the Moravian Church in America shares full communion relationships and ecumenical partnerships with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), the Episcopal Church, the United Methodist Church, the Presbyterian Church (USA), the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada (ELCIC), and the Anglican Church of Canada. Churches in full communion do not need to agree on every doctrinal point, but are understood to have enough in common to worship together. In practice, this means that members of both denominations can participate in the same sacraments, and clergy of one denomination can serve a congregation of the other denomination. (mcnp.org)



**ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS APPRECIATION**

We extend our appreciation to everyone who participated in and contributed to our Advent and Christmas Eve preparations and services. Many thanks to those who decorated the sanctuary on Saturday of Thanksgiving weekend; to our Advent Wreath liturgists and Candle lighters (Walt, Carrie, & Esther Cigus, David & Sandra Morrisette, Dale

& Pat Johnson, Seth & Destiny Conard, and The Smith Family (Brian, Samantha, Nico, and Rosie); to Lila Triolo for a beautiful offering of “Morning Star;” to choir members Dawn Hughes, Pat Johnson, Wendy Mamana, Jan Morrow, Donna Pritchard and guest bellringer, Laurie Toyberg; to our dieners and assistants, Walt, Carrie, and Esther Cigus, Patrick and Giada LoQuasto, Bill Bullock, Frank Chisesi, Jim Mamana, and Eric Wexler; to youth liturgists Lila and Noah Triolo and Nico Smith; to organist Andy Dormarunno for all his marvelous playing; to our AV technicians Matthew Dormarunno, Mike Koenig, and Brian Smith; to Mike Koenig for the planning and installation of screens and sound in the narthex and balcony; to our secretary, Laurie Toyberg for an amazing job keeping everything organized; to everyone who came to worship Christ, the New-born King and all who invited guests—we give thanks to God for you. God’s blessings to all in the new year.

**PRAYER AND SPIRITUAL FORMATION OPPORTUNITIES**  
**“SWEET HOUR OF PRAYER”**

Everyone is invited to gather for prayer at 4 pm on Wednesday afternoons. Those who would like may bring a short devotion, poem, or story to share. The *Sweet Hour of Prayer* is held virtually using Zoom and may be accessed by everyone via a regular phone. To join via phone, call Zoom at 301 715 8592, enter the Meeting ID 934 9796 5599 followed by #. Enter # when asked for your participant ID; enter the passcode 892624, #.

**PRAYER AND VISITATION MINISTRIES**

Please contact Pastor Sue if you would like a visit at home, care facility, or hospital; if you would like to receive Holy Communion at home; or if you are in need of prayer. Members of our Prayer Chain are always ready to pray for you or to join you in prayer for others. We would also like to assist you with getting on ZOOM for worship or by providing frozen meals. Call the Church Office at 610-258-6317. Meals are for everyone.

**PRAYER CONCERNS**

Members of First Moravian Church

**Those in care facilities**

Gloria Bolmer	Leah & Andrew Brown	James Shook
Anne Hajdu	Anita Johnson	Cal Wexler
Dorothy Price	Tom Wolfe	

**Those at home**

Janet Balogun	Donald Bodden	Mary Buccos
Bill & Laurie Bullock	Bob and Stella Harling	Donna Pritchard
Julie Loquasto	Frank Cigus	Zakk Davis
Barb Leshner	Bettemae Weiss	Dawn Hughes
Jose & Pam Morrow-Henriquez		

**Friends of our First Moravian Church Family**

Gilbert Hendershot	Baby Dominic and Family	
Tyler & Alicia Cox	Bob Morgenstern	Deena Kohler
Dave & Deb	Elyse	Russell Timberman
Ellie and family	Jeannette Leshner	John Morgenstern
Pastor Jean Huber	Jeff & Brenda Fogel	Ryan & Dave
Sharon Long	Helen Lerch	Noah Shook
Dorey Smith	Phil Shell	Melody & Dan
Anne, Brian, Thomas & Nancy MacIntosh		Lauren Hensley

Seth & Destiny Conard upon news of Seth’s grandfather Roger Conard entering hospice care. Family of Leo Pitts.

*The world and nation; an end to violence and war in Gaza, the West Bank, Lebanon, and Israel, and surrounding areas, Sudan, Ukraine, and other war-torn areas of the world, with peace with justice and freedom for all people. We continue to pray for all victims of injustice and violence; those suffering from the ongoing effects of trauma and the pandemic; those affected by human and natural disasters; and all suffering from abuse, addiction, and their repercussions.*



**JANUARY BIRTHDAYS**

01/03 Noah Triolo  
 01/04 Jenna Mamana  
 01/07 Michael LoQuasto, Jr.  
 01/11 Thomas Wolfe  
 01/12 Lila Triolo  
 01/14 Kayden Stocker  
 01/16 Jamie Sliker  
 01/17 Susanne Kessler  
 01/25 William Miller  
 01/28 Robert Seip  
 01/31 Carl Lerch



*With your presence,  
 Lord our Head and Savior,  
 bless them now we humbly  
 pray...*

**JANUARY ANNIVERSARIES**

01/18 Ray & Del Folweiler, IV  
 01/30 Joan & John Nicoletta

