

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

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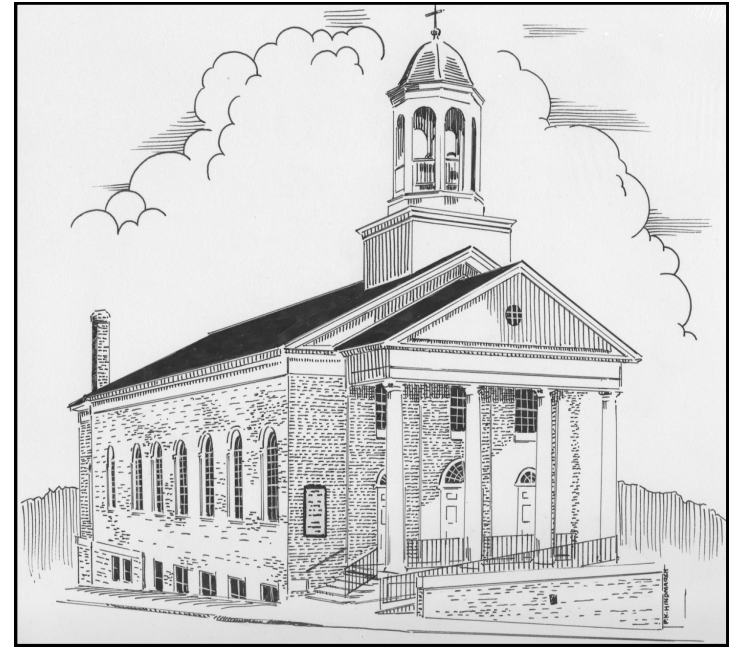


Worship Sundays 10:45 AM
Summer through Labor Day 10 AM

**Join us for worship! All are welcome at
First Moravian!**

THE FM STEREO NEWSLETTER

February 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 14:1-2

Dear Friends in Christ,

You may be familiar with the names **Katherine Goble Johnson**, **Dorothy Vaughn**, and **Mary Jackson**, particularly if you have watched the 2016 film, **Hidden Figures**. If you are like me, you never heard their names or stories before the film was released. *Hidden Figures* tells the story of three female African-American mathematicians who worked at NASA during the Space Race, and it depicts some of the forms of discrimination faced by Black Americans in the US, and their brave persistence in overcoming the obstacles placed in their paths. Katherine Goble Johnson went on to calculate the trajectories for the Apollo 11 and Space Shuttle missions. She was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 2015; and in 2016, NASA dedicated the Langley Research Center's Katherine Johnson Computational Building in her honor.

It was only last week, that I learned about the **Six Triple Eight** and **Major Charity Adams** from a movie released just last year. "The 6888th Central Postal Directory Battalion... was an all-Black battalion of the US Women's Army Corps (WAC) that managed postal services. The 6888th had 855 women and was led by Major Charity Adams. It was the only predominantly Black US Women's Army Corps unit sent overseas during World War II. The group motto was "No mail, low morale". The battalion was organized into five companies: Headquarters, and Companies A, B, C, and D. Most of the 6888th worked as postal clerks, but others were cooks, mechanics and held other support positions, so that the 6888th was a self-sufficient unit. The 688th were repeatedly set up to fail in their mission. But they exceeded all expectations. (The film is on Netflix.)

Just as most life-long Moravians never heard of The Rev. Dr. Charles Martin and The 1917 Silent Protest Parade until the MCNP Synod of 2023, there is much to learn in every month of the year about Black History. The 2025 Calendar from the Equal Justice Initiative is an invaluable tool for daily learning. I have participated in three series of *Sacred Ground*, "a film and readings-based dialogue series focused on race and grounded in faith, designed to facilitate open and respectful conversations about America's history of racism by examining personal experiences within the context of broader societal issues." In every *Sacred Ground* group, the phrase heard most often is, "No one ever taught me that." *Sacred Ground* will be offered again starting in August. I hope you will join us. **Black History Month** is one opportunity for intentionally learning some of what we have not been taught. *Pr. Sue*

THANK YOU NOTE RECEIVED

Dear First Moravian Church,
Thank you for making a difference in the lives of children and families in Easton! Your generous donation of \$196.00 will ensure that our programs continue to thrive! Donations like this one ensure that 1,500+ Easton children and families secure basic needs and receive case management services, parenting support, health & wellness guidance, early education home visits, after-school tutoring, transition assistance, and more.

For more information on our programs and ways to get involved, visit our website at www.familyconnectionofeaston.org or "Like" us on Facebook or Instagram @familyconnectpa! If you have questions or would like more information, please feel free to contact me anytime at 610-250-2551, x24075 or vincentk@eastonsd.org. Thank you for making our work possible! We appreciate your support!

Sincerely, Karen Vincent, Executive Director

This gift was made with donations to the Children's Christmas Shop Program in December 2024.

LOOKING AHEAD...

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

- 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
- 03/12 Choir rehearsals resume
- 03/16 Second Sunday in Lent
- 03/20 First Day of Spring
- 03/23 Third Sunday in Lent
- 03/30 Fourth Sunday in Lent
- 03/31 Eastern District Clergy Retreat (03/31-04/02)

Palm Sunday, 04/13
Holy Week, 04/13-04/19
Easter, 04/20



FIRST MORAVIAN UNIFIED BOARD

Members of the Unified Board met on January 5 at 12:15 pm. Pastor Sue opened the meeting with prayer. The agenda, December 15, 2024 meeting minutes and Pastor's December 2024 report were approved by those present. Highlights from the December meeting include:



- ◇ Frank provided a brief financial status report and advised of a notice we received of a change in our insurance broker. Earlier we learned that our deductible would be increasing from one to five thousand dollars (an industry change) and our premium would be increasing.
- ◇ Frank reviewed the 2025 budget that is the same as 2024 at \$130,000. Board members approved the proposed budget for submission to Church Council for consideration. Frank also advised that he will be completing paperwork to renew our PA tax exemption status as required every five years. The Unified Board expressed its gratitude to Frank for serving as our Treasurer and Financial Secretary.
- ◇ The Nominating Committee updated the Board on its progress. Mike LoQuasto, Sr. will assist as a member of this year's Nominating Committee. Wendy Mamana is serving as the at-large congregational member.
- ◇ Pastor Sue reported briefly on the worship, music, spiritual formation and other ministries of the church. Advent and Christmas services all went well, with the Longest Night/Blue Christmas service increasing in attendance this year over last. Sunday School on February 2 will conclude the module on the Birth of Jesus, and we will need to purchase new curriculum for March. The next service of Holy Communion will be for Epiphany on January 12. The Open House at the parsonage will also be on January 12.
- ◇ The Board reviewed and approved the draft 2025 Calendar.
- ◇ The lease with Oasis concludes January 31, 2025; we have confirmed with Oasis that they would like to renew the lease for 2025. Snow removal arrangements have been made.

The next Unified Board meeting will be February 2, 2025 at 12:15 pm. Installation of church leaders will be held that day in worship.

CHURCH PAINTING

First Moravian is blessed to have been awarded a \$10,000 grant from the Moravian Larger Life Foundation to assist with the remaining church painting. **Three things are needed:** ongoing donations to the Paint Fund, help with painting the lower portions of the church, and recommendations for a painter to paint the higher portions of the church. Thank you for your gifts of all kinds!

WORSHIP IN FEBRUARY 10:45 am

The season of the revealing of Jesus as the Christ will continue through March 2 this year, and God's glory will be revealed in unexpected times and places. Ash Wednesday is March 5; First Sunday in Lent is March 9.

Feb. 2, 4th Sun. after Epiphany, Sunday School (Robotics, Unified Board)

Jesus, teaching back in his hometown of Nazareth, is first received with delight and amazement by his community. This changes quickly and turns deadly, as Jesus invites them to consider that God has welcomed outsiders and treated them with kindness. (Luke 4:21-30) Sunday School for children will meet during worship following the Children's Message. To prepare, read the Epistle text, 1 Corinthians 13:1-13.

Feb. 9, 5th Sun. after Epiphany/Prayer & Anointing for Healing

The first disciples hear and respond to the call of Jesus to follow him, leaving all things behind. Three fisherman become apostles of the Lord after the creative powers of Jesus are revealed. Slowly they come to understand the risk and sacrifice involved in following Jesus. (Luke 5:1-11)

Feb. 16, 6th Sun. after Epiphany

The *Sermon on the Plain* is the gospel text from Luke 6:17-26. As Jesus teaches among the people, he is touchable, near to those who gather to listen to his words and to be touched and healed. Blessings and woes describe the "great reversal" of God. We will welcome Pastor Pat Honszer as our guest preacher this Sunday.

Feb. 23, 7th Sun. after Epiphany

Radical love for all is Jesus's message today: Luke 6:27-38.

INSTALLATION OF CHURCH LEADERS

Our newly elected and continuing Board members, officers, and sacristans will be installed into their positions during worship on Sunday, February 2, 2025. Please welcome, thank, and congratulate them following the worship service.

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! Handbell ringers are needed.



CHILDREN'S SUNDAY SCHOOL

First Sunday Sunday School will meet on Sunday, **February 2 at 10:45 am**. Children will complete the fuller story of *The Birth of Jesus*. This month's lesson is "Visitors from the East," Matthew 2:1-12. Children will meet the wise men and learn of their journey to find the Christ Child and the gifts they bring to honor him. 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, February 2 at 12:15 pm**. Meet in the room behind the sanctuary. A light lunch will be provided.

SERVING LOCAL AND WORLDWIDE COMMUNITIES

BLANKET SUNDAY

First Moravian's Church and Society Committee will hold a "Blanket Sunday" for Church World Service again this year, with the date in late February or early March to be announced. Church World Service (CWS) is a non-profit organization that works to end hunger and poverty, and promote peace and justice. CWS was founded in 1946 after World War II. The Moravian Church in North America is a Covenant Member of Church World Service.



FREEZER MINISTRY SOUP SALE

The annual Freezer Ministry & Garden Gatherers Soup Sale is coming up. Please place your orders for a variety of types of soup by February 14 by calling 610-867-0537. Quarts are \$9 and include Wedding Soup, Chili, Chicken Noodle, Ham & Bean, and Cream of Broccoli. Pick up dates are Feb. 21, 3-7 pm and Feb. 22, 3-5 pm at East Hills Moravian Church, 1830 Butztown Rd., Bethlehem.

PROVINCIAL AND DISTRICT NEWS

February's Moravian Monthly: Selected Titles

Resources for Caring for Immigrant and Refugee Neighbors

Who Lynched Willie Earle—A Question for the Church
A Reflection for February from the Racial Justice Team Calendar
by Bishop Amy Gohdes-Luhman

From the Board of World Mission: Prayer Day for Star Mountain Rehabilitation Center in Ramallah

Other News

The Rev. Judith M. Ganz (formerly serving with her spouse at First Moravian) has published a book entitled, **Compassionate Giving—Promoting Dignity and Self-Reliance in Our Mission**. A Bible Study on this important and timely book will be offered in the spring on Zoom at First Moravian.

Unity Prayer Day Offering 2025—Sunday, March 2, 2025

Common Moravian Theological Curriculum in Spanish

Since our earliest days, the Unitas Fratrum has placed an emphasis on education, both vocational and theological. Today, there are Moravian seminaries and theological training centers across the world. These institutions are central to our ministry as a Church because they train the leaders of our Unity and give them the knowledge needed to serve our Chief Elder in their respective cultural and political contexts.

Through this Unity Prayer Day Offering, the American Board of World Mission (ABWM) will work with the Unity Committee on Theology (UCOT) and Moravian leaders and educators worldwide to produce a common theological training curriculum that can be adapted and used throughout the Unity and starting specifically with our Spanish speaking partners. This curriculum will include training in the Bible and Biblical Languages, Theology and Church History, and Pastoral Theology. **The special offering for the Unity Prayer Day will be received on March 2, 2025.**

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/>



**WINTER “AN EVENING OUT” EVENT
COVERED DISH DINNER & POUND AUCTION**

Bring a covered dish and a friend and come to the Pound Auction! On Saturday, February 22 at 5 pm, we will gather to share a covered dish dinner, sure to be delicious with all our wonderful cooks, to visit, and then have our first **Pound Auction**. Wrap up a pound (or thereabouts) of anything that you think would be appreciated by someone who has no idea what it is! Our auctioneer will raise the roof and the stakes as we bid competitively on the beautifully decorated surprise gift packages. It's always interesting to discover the mystery pound inside! This is an “all ages” event open to all, and there will be something for everyone to enjoy! Stumped for pound ideas? Visit <https://2peasrefugees.boards.net/thread/41185/ideas-pound-auction> for a few suggestions! (Swaps may be negotiated. All proceeds will support the ministries of First Moravian Church of Easton.

MORAVIAN MONEY GIFT CARDS FUNDRAISER

Plan ahead to use Moravian Money Gift Cards for your purchases at grocery stores, restaurants, movies, department stores, book stores and home improvement stores. Please let Frank Chisesi know when you plan to purchase major items. This will give Frank time to have extra cards on-hand. An order form containing a list of participating merchants has been placed in the narthex for your convenience, or visit the church website to download a copy (or call the church office.) Check-off the cards that you want to purchase and bring your order form to Frank (with cash or a check) at the church office after Sunday worship each week. He will process your order the same day and give you the cards (provided they are on hand.) There are no fees for purchasing or using Moravian Money Gift Cards. Please contact Frank if you need to purchase cards other than on Sunday, or if you have any questions. **Our church benefits each time you make purchases using Moravian Money Gift Cards.** Watch for coming announcements about this fundraising program!

Why do we call it “Moravian Money?” Gift card purchasers have raised **\$35,000** for the church since the program’s inception.

CHURCH COUNCIL 2025



Our annual Church Council meeting was held on Sunday, January 26, 2025, after snowy weather caused us to change the date from January 19, 2025. We enjoyed a marvelous and plentiful covered dish lunch, and then convene as Church Council at shortly after 1 pm. We extend out gratitude to everyone who participated in the very informative meeting, with insightful questions and conversation that will continue and which has generated new ideas.

We remembered those dear members of the congregation who had entered the more immediate presence of the Savior in the preceding year: Mina Cigus, Ruth Erb, Evelyn Gulick, and Paul Peifer; and gave thanks for our 11 new members: Brian, Samantha, Nico and Rosie Smith, Chad Hendershot, Carl Lerch, Dale and Pat Johnson, David and Sandra Morrisette, and Luke Michael Davis. We were honored to take part in the marriage celebration of the Seth and Destiny Conard, and the birth of Melanie Boyd. From the reports, the highlights included appreciation to the Church & Society Committee for the return of Blanket Sunday, and to Laurie Toyberg for excellent work and support of the congregation.

We expressed our appreciation for those who have served on the Unified Board this past year, and especially to Talia Austin and Deb LoQuasto whose two– and three-year terms were expiring. We are grateful for their service. We also thanked those whose terms are continuing for their service: Zakk Davis, Sue Ficzko, Susanne Kessler, and Gwen Triolo. We are delighted that Mike LoQuasto, Sr. will serve a second three-year term. We will welcome to the Unified Board four new members for a first three-year term. Elected with gratitude for their willingness to serve were Carrie Cigus, Esther Cigus, Walt Cigus, and Destiny Conard.

Pastor Sue shared that the MCNP requires pastors to retire at 70. However, pastors may continue in their positions contractually in one-year increments. It is planned that Pastor Sue will continue to serve as pastor of First Moravian under contract beginning in July.

Frank presented the 2025 budget of \$130,000 which was approved. Frank also gave a report on the “Moravian Money” gift cards and encouraged the congregation to purchase gift cards as a way to easily raise funds for the church’s ministries. Frank also asked that anyone who is traveling where there is a Ruby Tuesdays to please buy a gift card. All their sites in our area have closed. The meeting ended at 2:10 pm (in time to watch the Eagles!

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, #.

INQUIRERS/NEW MEMBERS CLASS

Are you feeling God’s call to join First Moravian as a member of the congregation? There will be an Inquirers Class on Saturday, **February 8 from 10 am to noon**. This will be an opportunity to learn about the faith, practices, polity and history of the Moravian Church, and to ask any questions you may have about the church or being a member. This class is open to everyone including members who would like a “refresher course.” Please let Pastor Sue know by February 5 if you plan to attend. New members will be received into the congregation during our worship service on February 23 at 10:45 am. Please plan to be present to welcome and celebrate with our new members. *If you are interested in the Inquirers Class, and unable to attend on February 8, please let Pastor Sue know of your interest.*

SAVE THE DATE

A Lenten Retreat will be offered on **Monday, March 10 from 11 am until 1 pm**, with a light lunch to follow. We will spend time listening to the profound voice of Evelyn Underhill (1875-1941), from her classic devotional writings on prayer, as we prepare for the season of Lent and Holy Week. “After all it is those who have a deep and real inner life who are best able to deal with the irritating details of outer life.” *Evelyn Underhill*



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.

Members of First Moravian Church

Those in care facilities

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

Those at home

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

Friends of our First Moravian Church Family

Gilbert Hendershot	Baby Dominic & Family	
Tyler & Alicia Cox	Bob Morgenstern	Deena Kohler
Dave & Deb	Elyse	Russell Timberman
Ellie and family	Jeannette Leshner	John Morgenstern
Jeff & Brenda Fogel	Ryan & Dave	Karen Statler
Sharon Long	Helen Lerch	Noah Shook
Dorey Smith	Phil Shell	Melody & Dan
Lauren Hensley	Tammy Bane	Anne MacIntosh & Family
Jamie Chisesi		

The world and nation. We pray for a permanent ceasefire, release of hostages and prisoners in Gaza and Israel, and steps to a lasting and just peace. We pray for an end to the conflicts and wars in the Middle East, Sudan, Ukraine, and other war-torn areas of the world, for 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. We pray that we may work together for justice and righteousness, for the peace and well-being of all people and creation.



FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

02/05 Matthew LoQuasto
 02/07 Jada Bullock
 02/07 Frank Cigus
 02/08 Danine Mamana
 02/11 Jackson Light
 02/12 Nico Smith
 02/15 Kimberly Deininger
 02/17 Roberta Sampson
 02/19 William Bullock
 02/24 Alanna Kichline
 02/26 Bryttany Gaines



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



For Donna who loves Groundhog Day!