

The Messenger

Spreading the Good News since 1866

September, 2021

The Freedom Moravian Church is a Christian Community seeking together to discover Jesus Christ through worship, education, and fellowship; so that all may know they are loved by God and become responsible members of His church.

Your Pastor's Page

After Alli graduated from PA school in Oregon, the two of us started the long road trip to move her back home to Wisconsin. Our path home would allow us to stop at the Grand Tetons and the Badlands National Parks for some sight-seeing. Let me tell you, the parks were a much-needed break from the vast emptiness we found ourselves in for the majority of the drive.

We wanted to spend a day hiking in the Tetons and chose something called the "Jenny Lake Trail." If the name didn't give it away, it's a trail that goes all the way around Jenny Lake. There is a ferry that can take you to the other side of the lake, but the total route around was 6-7 miles and we thought we could manage that. What we didn't know is that branching out from the main loop were trails that went up into the mountains – trails that were much more challenging and provided breath-taking views. We reached those trails after a few miles of hiking and decided to take a little detour. There was talk of a waterfall and a massive canyon waiting to be found.

We found the waterfall quickly enough, and then we followed the signs for the canyon. We went up, we turned, then we went up some more for what must have been at least an hour; all the while getting further away from the main trail and the ferry that could swiftly take us back to our car. It was getting later in the afternoon and we started to wonder if we had enough time and energy to keep venturing after this canyon and make it back in one piece. At one point the logical choice seemed to turn around to avoid a mad dash on the return. But we kept going. At each corner, we hoped we'd find ourselves on the doorstep of this canyon, but it refused to appear. We even asked hikers who were on their way back how much further we had to go. They all promised, "you're almost there." Apparently, being in a national park turns you into a liar. Just when we thought we should give up, we noticed a little commotion in front of us. Several hikers were peering into the woods and pointing. When we caught up to them, we saw the giant moose they were captivated by, quietly enjoying his lunch. After being frozen in awe for a few minutes, we kept hiking and immediately saw the trail open up to a massive canyon that stretched as far as the eye could see. We enjoyed the canyon, turned around, and made it back just as a ferry was arriving to scoop us up and return us to the visitor center.

There are times in our lives when giving up or turning around seems to be the sensible decision to make. Sometimes in order to spare ourselves the energy, the pain, or the time, we cut our losses and play it safe. This is often the smart thing to do. But when the reward is worth it, you never regret those tiring steps that get you there. As Christians, life throws us any number of things that tempt us to return on our faith. There are times when it is easier and more logical to discredit God and to limit God's role on our lives. It can be frustrating, confusing, and exhausting to carry on in our quest to follow Christ through this broken world. But I've found that whenever I'm on the verge of caring a little less about God, whenever I think it would be wiser to turn around and abandon my walk with Jesus, something humbles me and takes my breath away when I'm able to carry on just a bit longer. And so, we must carry on, waiting and hoping for God to intervene with a lesson, with a blessing, or with a moment of divine love that warms our hearts. It is exciting to think about what God has in store for us around life's next corner, I just hope we can be brave enough (perhaps foolish enough as well) to keep walking with Christ when it would be far easier to throw in the towel.

Pastor James



Joint Board Meeting - August 10, 2021

Present: Pastor James, Jim Muenster, Chelsey Thiel, Norm Blohm, Rob Sprister, John Merkel, Ben Muenster in person and Sami Petit, Alyssa Seitz, Michelle Remter, Shari Leisch via Zoom.

General Updates

Elders: Pastor James recapped the Elders update on pastoral care, worship, vacation, special Sundays and special Sunday with the Joint Board.

Trustees: Pastor James recapped the Trustee discussion on the parsonage roof, air conditioning, and leak in basement with Joint Board

Approach to Covid and Worship-Update from the Province on Worship and 2022 Synod-No new recommendations at this time but, potential they will be recommending to go back to COVID recommendations if things continue to trend in the wrong direction.

Chili Supper-We discussed our approach to Chili Supper this year and it was decided with current trends we will plan to do the similar format as last year. Our Chili Supper will be Drive-Thru/To-Go format and be Thursday October 7.

Next Meetings Tuesday, September 7, 2021 at 6:00 pm

Pastor James closed our Joint Board meeting in prayer.

Elders Update - August 10, 2021

Present: Pastor James, Jim Muenster, Chelsey Thiel in-person and Sami Petit, Michelle Remter, and Alyssa Seitz via Zoom.

Pastor James led us in devotion and prayer and then gave us a Pastoral Care update.

Old Business

Worship-No new recommendations from the PEC at this time. As of now we will proceed as we have been.

Sunday School and Youth Group this Fall-Pastor James did receive an update from the PEC recommending churches in Northern Province do not hold indoor classes with the youth. We will plan to have youth gatherings outside as much as possible or in the sanctuary spread out. We will continue to base what we do on what the schools are doing.

Elder of the Month/Communion-Current schedule:

Sami – September, Michele – October, Chelsey – November, Jim – December.

This Elder will assist with communion on the first Sunday of the month and will also arrive early on their communion Sunday to do a walkthrough of the Online Streaming with Pastor James so we have a few more people knowing how to operate the system.

Pastor James on Vacation 8/12 – 8/18-Pastor Vicki Jens-Page will be on call for pastoral care. Jim Muenster and Jim Bernetzke will be leading worship and Spencer Tank will be doing the readings.

Rummage Sale-Thank you to all that helped!

New Business

8/29-Jim Quales will be leading worship with special music and there will be the Blessing of Backpacks.

9/12 - "You Belong Sunday"-Greg and Amy Behrend will be visiting and leading us in worship as well as teaching us about their new ministry.

9/19-Moravian Day of Service Sunday-We will be taking time to recognize those who serve our church and all they do.

Updates from Province-Pastor James received information regarding the next Provincial Synod. There is nothing we need to do right now but, to keep in mind when choosing a delegate that it may have to be online again and to make sure our delegate is someone who may be comfortable with that format. Provincial Synod will be June 23-26, 2022 at the Moravian College Campus in Bethlehem, PA.

Next Meeting: Tuesday, September 7, 2021 at 5:30pm

Mary Martha Update:

Mary Martha Ladies will meet on Thursday, September 9 at 1 p.m. All are welcome as we plan for the Bazaar that will run during the Chili Drive Thru/Pickup/Takeout event on October 7.

SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS

9/3: Deb Merkel
9/5: Jacob Bernetzke
9/7: Patti Dombrowski
9/11: Mike Land
9/13: Aaron Merkel
9/17: Joel Schultz
9/18: Joe Tank
9/22: Sam Tank
9/29: Keegan Bernetzke

CHILI SUPPER UPDATE:

The format will be similar to last year with drive thru/carryout only. Date is OCTOBER 7!

Elder of the Month: September is Sami Petit

October is Michele Remter

SEPTEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

9/12: Trevor & Sarah Rohloff
9/16: Ben & Karen Muenster
9/23: Jason & Toni Micke
9/24: Andrew & Crystal Ambrosius
9/26: Pete Pfundtner & Cindy Strong

Successful Rummage Sale!!

Our annual rummage and bake sale held on August 5 and 6 was a big success! We had many volunteers helping with the sorting, marking and organizing of the items. There was a wide assortment of scrumptious baked goods to choose from, and I thank all of you who baked and provided items to sell at the bake sale. We were blessed with beautiful weather Thursday, and we had a steady flow of people all day long. Friday started out with some rain, but by mid-morning, we had blue sky once again. **With the rummage sale and bake sale, we made \$2,087.75.**

Thank you to all who helped in any way to make this a success! A special thanks to all who helped box up the remaining items late Friday afternoon for donation to the Fox Valley Thrift Shoppe and also

Thank you from Jeanne Sprister

THINGS TO KNOW

Youth and Sunday School groups will be following PEC recommendations by gathering outside when weather permits (no meeting indoors)

September 9 is first Youth Group

September 12 is 'You Belong' Sunday. Greg & Amy Behrend will lead Worship and outline their new Ministry.

Moravian Day of Service is scheduled for Sunday, September 19. We'll be recognizing and thanking those who serve the Church



CEC Update

We look forward to another school year and fall season starting and we're glad to be restarting a few of our programs. Youth Group and Sunday School will start again, but they'll have a bit of a different look to them.

For Sunday School, we've been asked by the Province to not hold classes in-person and inside for now. This is from an understanding that most church classrooms don't have the necessary space to spread out the children and due to the fact that our Sunday School aged children do not have access to the Covid vaccine yet. We are also transitioning this year as Deb Merkel is stepping down from teaching after many years of providing lessons to for our kids (thank you, Deb!). Our plan for now is to have more in-depth children's message during our worship services. They'll be 5-7 minutes long and the kids will head back to the pews with something to work on. This will be a nice way to have the kids join us in worship while also providing a lesson designed for them. **We'll start these children's messages on 9/19 as part of our Day of Service celebration.**

For Youth Group, we'd like to spend all our time outside while the weather is nice, but the mosquitos in the backyard seem to be determined to make that impossible. We'll use the space in the sanctuary and the social hall, distance as much as possible, and we will be vigilant on washing hands and not having any unnecessary contact. For the time being, we won't be providing a meal like we have done in the past but we hope to bring that back soon! Due to the fact that our youth group members come from a variety of school districts, each with their own mask policy, we will be requiring masks to attend. We will continue to monitor the ongoing Covid situation as the fall season progresses. **We will have our first youth group of the year on 9/9 from 6-8pm.**

In essentials, unity; in non-essentials, liberty; in all things, love.



www.freedommoravianchurchsite.org
Email: freedommoravian@gmail.com
Phone: 920-734-1278

W3471 Center Valley Road
Appleton, WI 54913

FREEDOM MORAVIAN CHURCH

