

The Messenger

Spreading the Good News since 1866

December, 2020

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.

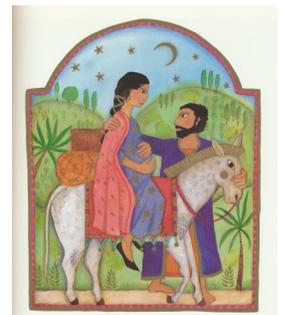
From Your Pastor's Desk....

As we embark on a holiday season that is going to look much different than we would like, I want to use this space to celebrate the sacrifices you have been making and to ask you to push in the same way for the sake of our community. It is heartbreaking that we remain so physically distant from our families, it is frustrating that our celebrations will be without several precious traditions, but this is simply not the time to choose comfort and familiarity over caution and care. The most loving thing we can do is to be apart, to not gather with distant relatives or large groups, to keep things on the quieter side. Presents can still be sent, calls and Facetimes can be made, and on Christmas morning we will welcome Jesus into our hearts, needing his love more than ever this year. It will be a Christmas to remember, and we can either think of it for the losses and the challenges, or we can think of how we are going to make the most out of it. I certainly join you in wishing things were different, but I hope you will join me in making this year special rather than a waste.

Just days after your Joint Board confirmed our plans for Christmas Eve, we received word from the Province to pause inside worship and gatherings, all but throwing those plans out the window. It seems likely that we won't be able to gather in the sanctuary (not even socially distanced) for Christmas Eve. It is a difficult decision to make, but one that the Province has my full support of. We can have our special services in a way that makes safety a priority, and the best way to do that is to refrain from gathering inside the building. I would much rather worship in different ways while longing for our normal services than ignore the severity of the virus in our area to push for a more familiar Christmas. I fear the latter would only produce regret.

So whether on the radio, on YouTube, or on Zoom join us for the season of Advent and Christmas as we welcome Jesus in a special way this year. We will still have carols, we will still have our candles, and we will still have our connection to each other on this journey. I pray for each of you, for the changes you've had to make, for the precautions you are taking, and for the burden you are carrying of looking toward a Christmas unlike any other. Jesus was born in unprecedented circumstances, and our faith in him will bring him close to our hearts in this unusual year.

Pastor James



Joint Board Meeting—November 17, 2020

(Please note that our outlook on Christmas Eve will have to change, but the details are a work in progress.)
Jim Muenster, Alyssa Seitz, Sami Petit, Michele Remter, Norm Blohm, John Merkel, Rob Sprister, and Shari Liesch were in attendance on Zoom.

ELDERS UPDATE:

We discussed Joey's confirmation a few weeks ago as well as continuing to monitor what youth group could look like in the future. We continue to send out Sunday school lessons each week and Pastor James just started an audio bible study. If there is enough interest in the study, we could add a discussion group to go over the material in more detail. Much of our time together was spent talking about Christmas Eve. We are planning on at 4:30pm and 7:30pm services at the church. At these services people can listen in their cars or come inside and practice social distancing. If 50 people are in the sanctuary, people who would like to be inside can watch on the TV in the social hall as well. These services will also be broadcast on Facebook Live. At 6:00pm we will have a zoom service for people to join at home. There will be sign-up sheets in the narthex for people to indicate which service they plan to attend. This will be a great help for us to get an idea of the crowd size. As always, these plans are subject to change in the world of Covid.

TRUSTEES UPDATE:

We want to express our gratitude to Marilyn for her leadership on the board the last several years. We already miss having her as our secretary. Another thank you goes out to Jim and Deb Bernetzke for their help taking care of the leaves on the church grounds. Our furnaces will be cleaned in the beginning of December and we are anticipating our fire extinguishers being inspected in the near future as well. We are working on the lamps that line the road – thank you to John Merkel for his help with that. We also discussed our approach to dealing with the snow this winter and Rob is going to check the snow blower to make sure it is ready. Giving envelopes will be ready for folks to pick up before the end of the year. We will be looking to fill one vacancy on our board at church council. If you'd be interested in joining us or learning more about the board, feel free to ask one of us.

JOINT BOARD:

Much of the evening was spent working through our annual report that we send to the province. It was an opportunity to consider how Covid has changed our ministry this year. We will complete the packet at our next meeting. We narrowed down dates for church council to 1/17 or 1/24 (depending on the Packers' schedule). There will be no potluck this year and to adequately distance ourselves we will hold church council in the sanctuary. People can also attend from home via zoom.

Offering envelopes for 2021 will be in the Social Hall for those who may need them.

Sign your name and indicate the box number.

If you want a 2021 Daily Text, there is a signup sheet in the Social Hall. You may email the office also with your order. (freedommoravian@gmail.com) or leave a message at 920-734-1278. Regular size text cost is \$12.00 and Large print is \$15. Orders in by 12/15/2020, please with payment due prior to distribution.



DECEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

12/02: Don and Lynne Behnke

DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

12/2: Ron Dombrowski

12/4: Blake and Kelcie Conrad

12/8: Deb Seitz

12/9: Caitlyn Forbes

12/13: Jan Eggert

12/31: Sawyer Ratjczak

CHANGE IN PRAYER CHAIN PHONE CONTACT NUMBER

Please Note: The primary contacts for the Prayer Chain remain Pastor James and Carol Jens. Pastor's number is 920-495-5400 ; **Carol's phone number is now 920-740-7981.**

Please make a note of the change. No late evening calls, please.

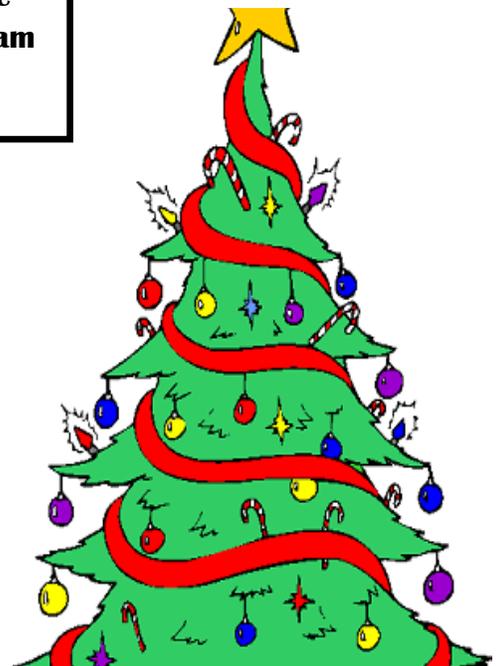
In person Worship on Sunday mornings has been temporarily suspended on the recommendation of Provincial Elders Council. We will have a 9 am ZOOM service and a Parking lot Prayers at 10 am and of course on YouTube.

STILL TIME TO ORDER SCRIP CARDS AS CHRISTMAS GIFTS

Christmas is coming, Gift Cards make great gifts and stocking stuffers and can be used to order online!

Please order your Gift Cards from the Scrip Card Program.

Order sheets and envelopes are available in the Church entrance or can be mailed/mailed to you.



Larger Than Life Grants Monies for Tile Repair

Your Trustees had the foresight to apply for a grant from the Larger Life Foundation to help defer the costs of the tile repair that was done in the early Fall. Their efforts resulted in the church receiving \$4600.00, which covers the entire bill.

Rob Sprister spearheaded this effort and we owe him and Norm Blohm, Shari Liesch, John Merkel and Marilyn Zimmer a thank you for their efforts to save all of us a lot of money.

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



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FREEDOM MORAVIAN CHURCH

