

Fear Not!

Editor's note: This was intended to be the Easter sermon for April 12. Since it is unlikely that the current state of emergency will be lifted by then, the sermon has been revised and we are posting this message here for our members.)

Do you remember the first words spoken on Easter morning? They were not "He Is Risen!" but "Fear not!" These same two words run like a river from one end of the Bible to the other. When Abraham is called to leave for a distant country, the Lord says, "Fear not!" When He sends Moses to Pharaoh, the Lord says, "Fear not!" At the border of the promised land, God says to Joshua, "Fear not!" The angel Gabriel says to Mary, "Fear not!" He says the same thing to Joseph. The risen Jesus says to his disciples, "Fear not!" In our world today, these are the two powerful that you and I need to hear: "FEAR NOT!"

Why are we so fearful? Why does the Lord need to reassure us over and over again? We fear losing our money. We fear losing our jobs. We fear growing old. We fear getting sick. We fear going to the nursing home. We fear getting shot in a school or in a mall. We fear catching the coronavirus. We fear running out of toilet paper. We fear for our children, and for our grandchildren. What kind of a world are they growing up in?

In short, we fear everything over which we have no control! I am afraid of flying. At the bottom of my concern I understand that it is fear of being out of control.

The Gospel accounts of Good Friday and the first Easter show us that the disciples were very much afraid. What better message could have been given to those frightened disciples than "Fear not!" And what better message can there be for us in the crisis our world faces today? Why were they not supposed to fear? Let's look at the words of Matthew 28:5-6: "Fear not! He is not here for He has risen as He said ..."

HE IS NOT HERE. When the women went to the tomb on Easter morning, they didn't come to witness a resurrection, but to finish a burial. Finding the tomb empty gave them the surprise of a lifetime. I once heard about a sign on a gravestone which declared, "Not here!" The same sign could have been posted over the tomb of Jesus. But, if He was not in the tomb, what had happened to Jesus? I believe there are but two possibilities. Either someone moved the body, or Jesus had risen! All the attempts to explain away the facts of the resurrection always fail at this point. "What happened to the body of Jesus?" All the Jewish authorities would need to do to stop the early Church in its tracks would be to produce the dead body of Jesus. Why didn't they do this? The body of Jesus was never found. Why not? Because, "HE IS NOT HERE, BUT HE IS RISEN!"

If this message is true, if Jesus is risen, then we are living in a whole new world! For believers, death is no longer a dreaded enemy, but a temporary interruption on the way to life everlasting. This is what the apostle Paul proclaims in I Corinthians 15, "O death where is your sting? O grave where is your victory?" Paul is claiming that death has lost its teeth.

(Continued on page 4)

Worship Wednesday!

Check out First's Facebook page on Wednesdays!
Every Wednesday there will be a "mini" personal worship devotion
to get you through the rest of the week!



News from the Board of Elders

The Elders met on Monday, March 9 and conducted their business in the absence of our pastor who is on maternity leave. Worship services for the month of February were reviewed. The Elders planned to support two Sensory Room programs, the first being a Spring Fling Festival in our church hall on Wednesday, March 18 and Saturday, March 21. Judy Martin and Missy Wurzbach will decorate a spring-themed photo booth to be maintained both days. Linda Rishel and Steve Nicholas will accompany a group from the Sensory Room on a trip to the Curious Little Playhouse on W. Market St. in downtown York on Thursday, March 16. The church is paying for this trip, partly with money collected from our Joyful Noise offerings. Due to the coronavirus pandemic, these outings were postponed.

Racism training is required for all Moravian pastors, but our pastor has received permission from the Provincial Elders to do this locally.

The Elders agreed to move their meeting time from 6 pm to 7 pm while our pastor is on maternity leave.

A list of members who will need pastoral visits and private communion was drawn up and Steve will make these visits.

Our pastor had to go on maternity leave two weeks early and the Elders (later joined by the Trustees) decided to keep our original schedule of guest preachers and grant the pastor the additional two weeks as sick leave.

The Elders had a lengthy discussion about what to do with worship during the coronavirus pandemic. We decided to meet for worship on Sunday, March 15, omit the right hand of fellowship and omit passing the microphone for joys and concerns. We feel that social distancing is easily possible because we have so few people in our sanctuary for worship. We decided that when the virus comes to York County, we will then suspend worship until the emergency is over. If we need to suspend worship, the Elders will call those who come regularly. (See related article on page 3).

Tithes & Offerings

The Moravian Ministries Foundation has set up an online Giving Portal. You can find a link to First(York) on the list of churches from the link below. There is also a FAQ link on the same page to keep you updated on the Moravian Church's responses during the COVID-19 pandemic.

<https://mmfa.info/giving-portal/>

You may also send weekly tithes and offerings to either the church office or to Wanda Hendricks. If you send a check to the church please earmark it "Attention: Wanda Hendricks."

First Moravian Church
39 North Duke St.
York, PA 17401

Wanda Hendricks
3715 Fox Chase Drive
Dover, PA 17315

A Prayer from the Bishops of the Moravian Church

Creator of the heavens and earth, praise be to your holy name. We pray that the gracious ways of heaven may be made real in the world in which we live. We hunger for much more than food today, and we pray that you will satisfy us, and all who have need. We are awed by your forgiving nature and pray that you would inspire us to forgive each other in like manner. While we know that you have created us to be holy, we ask that you keep us from the temptation of living a life which would tarnish your image within us. You have created a world that is holy, and your glory and power are displayed in many wonderful ways. We give you thanks for your daily blessings even as we live into eternity. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.



Sunday Worship Temporarily Suspended

The Elders met following worship on Sunday, March 15 and decided that due to the large amount of empty space in our sanctuary, we would continue to worship until the coronavirus reached York County. On Wednesday, March 18, the first two cases of the virus were found in York. For the safety of our members, and following the urging of Governor Wolf and President Trump, the Elders have determined to suspend Sunday worship until such time as the Governor and the President lift their state of emergency. In a recent letter, the members of the Provincial Elders' Conference of the Northern Province stated, "Provincials Elders' Conference urges, in the strongest possible terms, that every congregation refrain from holding all worship and fellowship gatherings, effective immediately, and at least until April 30 or until we receive further guidance from government sources." The Elders have tried to telephone all of our members and friends who worship regularly. After this crisis has passed, and when we begin worship again, we will notify you by phone. We hope this will be sooner rather than later. Since we anticipate that worship will not resume until after Easter, the planned sermon, "Fear Not!" has been included in this newsletter.

Our pastor, Rev. Sayward Lippincott, is on maternity leave until Monday, June 8. Pastor Sayward is caring for her new daughter, Hadessah Grace, at home with Thaddeus and Spencer. Members who need pastoral care during this time are invited to call a member of the Board of Elders: Steve Nicholas, vice-chair (717.755.7412); Linda Rishel (717.764.3841); John Knokey (717.848.9220); Jeannette Sprenkle (717.225.4304); Heidi Robinson (717.846.0094).

The Board of Trustees would like to remind our members that salaries of our church staff still need to be paid during the coronavirus recess and request that you mail your regular offerings to either the church office or to Wanda Hendricks. Thank you for your faithful support.

We need to help one another during this time of emergency. A Moravian worship service sponsored by our Provincial Elders' Conference can be found online on Sundays at 11 am. Go to www.moravian.org and click on "Covid-19 Resources" in the upper left-hand side of the window. There you will find a link entitled, "Join us for worship on Sunday ..." Click that link.



Hadessah is a little over a month old. The last time we weighed her she was 10 lbs! She is growing in weight and height and is beginning to enjoy "playing" with her brothers. They love her so much! She really likes to be walked around the house to look at things. In fact, sometimes she gets upset if you don't take her on a tour! She has a "well baby" doctor visit scheduled for April 6th, so we will get her official weight and height during that visit. I am doing well. I am tired as soon as I get up in the morning, but that's to be expected with a little one! I look forward to the moment when sleep will become part of my normal daily schedule! Kevin was laid off for a day, but Apex got their exemption and now everyone has returned to work. As for right now, we are all safe and well here in Dover. Please continue to pray for our country and our world during this time.

Blessings to all of you! Pastor Sayward

Maternity Leave

Pastor Sayward's maternity leave will continue to June 7th. Thank you to all — pastors and lay persons — who have volunteered to lead services. The May services are tentatively scheduled and are subject to change as we are continually updated by our government on the coronavirus pandemic restrictions.

May 3: Rev. Wanda Weidman, Christine Dobron, worship leader

May 10: Rev. Ken Ross, Linda Rishel, worship leader

May 17: Rev. Wanda Weidman, Steve Nicholas, worship leader

May 24: Rev. Blair Couch, Abby Wurzbach, worship leader

May 31: Rev. Carol Dague, Steve Nicholas, worship leader

June 7: Rev. Ken Ross, Linda Rishel, worship leader

No worship leaders, lecturers, children's chat volunteers, ushers, or gatekeepers will be needed in April as all services have been suspended.

(Continued from page 1)

Like the bear we met in the Great Smokies on our honeymoon. It came into our campsite followed by several young children who assured us, "Mister, you don't have to be afraid of that bear. It has no teeth..."

He is risen. AS HE SAID. Easter is not only the proof of life everlasting, but the assurance that everything else that Jesus taught is true. Six times in the Gospels, Jesus teaches that He is going to be put to death and rise in three days. What if Jesus was wrong? What does that do to the rest of His teaching? Well, what happens to the credibility of a witness in court if a lawyer can catch them in a lie? Well, Jesus has risen, "AS HE SAID." Does it help you and me to know that Jesus knew what He was talking about? What does that do to our anxieties and fears? It means there is one person whom we can absolutely believe and trust. When Jesus said, "I go to prepare a place for you..." HE KNEW WHAT HE WAS TALKING ABOUT! When He said, "Do not worry ... for your heavenly Father knows what you need..." HE KNEW WHAT HE WAS TALKING ABOUT! When Jesus said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you ...", HE KNEW WHAT HE WAS TALKING ABOUT! So, my brothers and sisters, we may have confidence instead of fear because, "He has risen, AS HE SAID!"

So, I ask, what is it that makes you fearful today? What are you afraid of? I'm afraid of getting sick. I'm afraid of losing my money in the stock market. I'm afraid of having all my plans changed. I'm afraid of having my hopes and dreams wiped out. I'm afraid of dying. We once had a friend who would ask us in the midst of any crisis, "What is the worst thing that could happen?" And the answer usually was, "We could die ..." "What would happen then?" he would ask. "We would go to heaven and be with Jesus ..." we would answer. Then he would reply, "Would that be so bad?"

Dear brothers and sisters, Jesus experienced the worst that could happen and He overcame it on Easter. And He says to us, "Because I live, you too shall live..." The testimony of countless Christians through the ages is that there is nothing so difficult that Jesus cannot help us to deal with it! Some of you no doubt have heard the story of Corrie ten Boom, a Christian lady from the Netherlands who survived the Nazi concentration camps. When asked what that awful experience had taught her, she replied, "There is no pit so deep that His love is not deeper still ..."

Fear not, Corrie. Fear not, Mary. Fear not, Ruthie. Fear not, Clifton. Fear not, Stephanie. Fear not, Jemon. Fear not, Spencer... My dear brothers and sisters, the word for you and me this Easter is the same word that Jesus and the angels gave to his fearful followers more than two thousand years ago. That word for each one of us is "FEAR NOT!"

—Steve Nicholas

PLEASE NOTE THAT ALL CHURCH ACTIVITIES & EVENTS HAVE BEEN CANCELLED THROUGH APRIL 30TH—THIS INCLUDES ALL BOARD MEETINGS, CHOIR REHEARSALS, AND BIBLE STUDY. Activities, Sunday School & Worship Services Will Resume as Normal when the Current Coronavirus Pandemic Restrictions Are Lifted.

Diners' Club

Please consider joining our delightful little group — and **bring a friend or two** for some **quality mingling with fellow Christians!** There will be no May or November Diner's Club due to the holidays.

May 25—Memorial Day—No Diner's Club
 June 22— Fiesta Mexico
 July 27— Taj Mahal, Lancaster
 August 24— The Paddock
 September 28— Smokey Bones
 October 26— Tokyo Diner
 November 23—No Diner's Club
 December 28— Logan's

From the Parsonage Table

Easter Story Cookies

Recipe by Sonia

(These cookies are great to do with the kids. They are to be prepared the night before Easter. The spiritual preparation goes along with the physical preparation of the cookies)

Ingredients:

- 1 cup pecan halves
- 1 teaspoon distilled white vinegar
- 3 egg whites
- 1 pinch of salt
- 1 cup white sugar

Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 300°.
2. Place pecans on a resealable plastic baggie. Crush the pecans into small bits.
Read: John 19:1-3
3. Put 1 teaspoon vinegar into a medium bowl. **Read: John 19:28-30**
4. Add egg whites to the vinegar. **Read John 10:10-11**
5. Sprinkle salt into the egg whites. **Read Luke 23:27**
6. So far, the mixture isn't very appetizing. Add 1 cup sugar. **Read: Psalm 34:8 and John 3:16**
7. Beat with mixer on high speed for 12 to 15 minutes until stiff peaks are formed. **Read: Isaiah 1:18 and John 3:1-3**
8. Fold in broken nuts.
9. Drop by teaspoons onto parchment paper-lined baking sheet. **Read: Matthew 27:57-60**
10. Place cookies in the oven, close the door and turn the oven off. **Read: Matthew 27:65-66**
11. Go to bed. **Read: John 16:20 and 22**
12. In the morning, open the oven door and take out the cookies. **Read Matthew 28:1-9**



A "Good" News Story

An emergency like the COVID-19 pandemic which we are now going through can bring out the best (and the worst) in people. Here's an example of a "Good" news story that's happening in our East York community. "Next-Door Haines Acres" is a community chat room with approximately 1200 subscribers. Folks can post stories or ask where to find a dentist, an auto mechanic, a veterinarian, or they can advertise a free couch to give away, etc. A man named Michael recently posted on the chat room, offering to purchase supplies for elderly and immune-compromised neighbors who were afraid to leave their homes because of the coronavirus. It received 33 replies. Within several hours of the initial posting by Michael, nine other neighbors had added their names as people who were willing to do shopping for those who could not get out. Two days later there were a total of 21 people on the site who offered to shop for others. People who worked during the day even offered to do shopping for others in the evening. What a wonderful story!

Editor's Note: Of interest, we at Wellspan Geriatrics are fortunate to have a doctor in our practice whose teen-aged children have offered to pick up supplies and groceries for our elderly patients, many of whom have health concerns that put them at high-risk. We are fortunate to have these special people in our community who put others' needs above their own. Please, pray for our first responders, and various medical personnel who are in daily contact with individuals who have tested positive for the coronavirus and are exhibiting symptoms. They are our COVID-19 heroes!

April Birthdays

- 3 Joseph Kotchmar
- 4 Spencer Lippincott
- 11 Kathy McDannell
- 12 Georgia Rishel
- 13 Miriam Boll

- 18 Julia Folk
- 24 Gloria Moore
- 28 Kevin Lippincott
Lori Lehigh

April Anniversaries

- 10 Glenn & Cheri Miley
- 13 Stan & Sally Senft

Prayer Concerns

Members & Friends

- Amy Ardison (Betsy Senft's sister)
- Jeanne Barshinger
- Miriam Boll
- Pastor Jeff Coppage
- Ann Coppage
- Don Eckert
- Marie Enterline

- Mary Jones
- Peg & John Knaub
- John Knokey
- Glenn & Cheri Miley
- Kathie Nicholas
- Sam Pauley

- Stanley Remley
- Karrie Rishel
- Cliff & Elaine Rowell
- Ruth & Clair Seiple
- Wes Senft
- Lewis Swartz

Shut-Ins

- Jeanne Barshinger
- Miriam Boll

- Marie Enterline
- Lewis Swartz

New Address

Gary Paules
 189 S. East Street
 Spring Grove, PA 17362-1215



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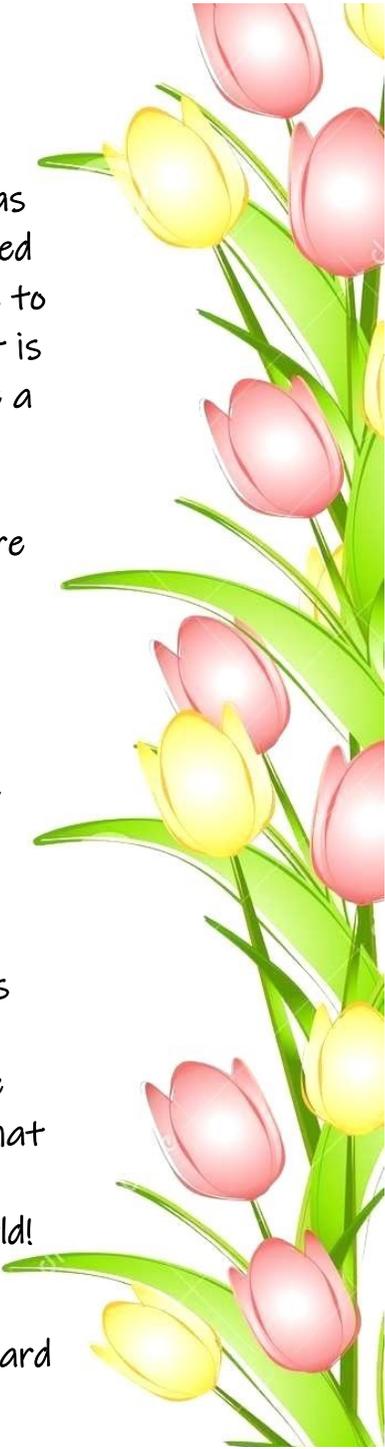
Beloved Congregation,

Grace and peace, I pray for you in these ongoing days of uncertainty. I know a lot has happened and is happening, and it has created fear and panic. The information that comes to us is like a tidal wave from all directions. It is hard to not get caught up. But we do have a choice in how we handle it.

We can choose panic and fear, or we can choose peace and calm. As Christians. We are reminded through scripture that Jesus will never leave us nor forsake us and that God "did not give us a spirit of cowardice, but rather a spirit of power and of love and of self-control" (2 Timothy 1:7). Just as panic and fear can radiate outward, so can peace and calm. What the world needs is for the disciples of Christ to live out their calling as instruments of peace, even amid chaos. This is not an easy task. We must be diligent in prayer and trust the Holy Spirit for courage and strength. Christ will provide a peace that surpasses all understanding.

Keep praying for each other and the world!
Choose peace!

Pastor Sayward

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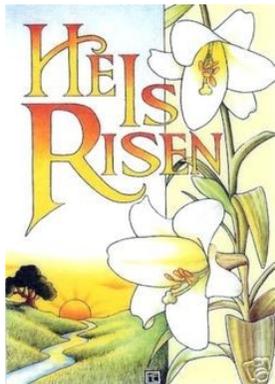
FIRST MORAVIAN CHURCH
39 NORTH DUKE STREET
YORK, PA 17401

Phone: 717.843.2239

Check out our **NEW** website!

www.yorkfirstmoravian.org

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APRIL 2020 NEWSLETTER

2020 Watchword

O Lord, you will hear the desire of the meek;
you will strengthen their heart,
you will incline your ear.

Psalm 10:17