



JULY 2022

THE LAMPLIGHTER

YORK FIRST MORAVIAN

What's happening with the search for a pastor?

Our Elders and Trustees have been meeting with the church boards of Covenant Moravian Church and we have decided to work together to find a pastor. Since there are eight churches in the Moravian Church, Eastern District, looking for a pastor, instead of First and Covenant looking separately, it makes more sense to work together. We are seeking a pastor who would give half of his or her time to each congregation. All the details have not yet been worked out; how the Sunday worship will be divided, which parsonage the pastor will live in, etc. Neither set of church boards is considering a formal merger, but when we share the same Pastor we will seek to do more things with Covenant Moravian. Our next board meetings with Covenant will take place in August. Please continue to pray that the Lord will lead us to the pastor whom He has prepared for us.

Cliff Bergstresser, Trustees Chair
Steve Nicholas, Elders Vice-Chair



JOHN HUS AND JULY FOURTH

I remember a scene from the movie "Barabbas" where Anthony Quinn, who played Barabbas, takes a spear in the stomach rather than deny his newly found faith in Jesus. A true story is told about Polycarp, the Bishop of Smyrna, who was dragged before the Roman magistrate and given the choice of offering a small tribute to Caesar or being put to death. The magistrate did not want to execute the old man and he urged him, "Come now, what harm is there in saying 'Caesar is Lord' and offering a pinch of incense?" Polycarp answered, "80 and 6 years have I served him and he has done me no wrong. How then can I deny my Lord who loved me and gave himself for me?" Many times I have pondered what I would do in that situation? What would you do?

I thank God there have always been faithful Christians who were willing to die before they denied their Lord! John Hus was one of them - and today we remember his death on July 6, 1415. Forty years later a small group of his followers founded the Jednota Bratska, or Unity of Brothers, which later became known as the Moravian Church. Without the witness of John Hus, there would not be a Moravian Church today and I'm not certain we would be celebrating the Independence of our country either.

A bold claim which needs to be supported. John Hus is known to historians as "The forerunner of the Reformation." Hus was to Martin Luther as John the Baptist was to Jesus - he prepared the way. I believe there is a highway which runs directly from John Wyclif in England to John Hus in Bohemia and Moravia to Martin Luther in Germany.

In the Middle Ages there was very little freedom of choice for the average person. If you were a peasant you had to follow the dictates of your Lord. You did get to choose your church, you automatically belonged to the church where you lived. And you had to attend that church or you were guilty of a mortal sin. When the Bible was read in worship you heard it in Latin and the only people who understood Latin were the priests and scholars. Where did that leave the common people?

In 1382, an English priest who taught at Oxford University began to change all this. His name was John Wyclif and translated the Bible into English. Wyclif taught that the Bible was the only rule of the Church. He said the Church is the entire body of believers, not just the priests and bishops, and that the head of the Church is Christ and not the pope. Wyclif died of natural causes soon after he finished the Bible in English, but his Bible and his teaching lived on and his followers went up and down the country teaching from the Bible. In 1383, Princess Anna of Bohemia married King Richard of England and soon students from her country began to study at Oxford and take the things they learned from Wyclif back to Bohemia and Moravia.

About ten years after the death of Wyclif, a young priest named John Hus began to teach at the University of Prague where he read the writings of John Wyclif. Hus began to preach and teach many of these same truths. He preached that the final authority in all matters of faith was the Bible, not the Church or the Pope. He preached that we are all equal in the sight of God, whether we are cardinals or peasants. He taught that worship should be accessible to every person in their own language. He taught that God's forgiveness is offered to us freely and cannot be purchased by money. Hus translated the Bible into Czech, the language of his country and he wrote hymns in Czech and taught his congregation to sing them.

The Church viewed the teaching of Hus and Wyclif as a threat to its authority and unity and on May 5, 1415, the Council of Constance declared Wyclif a heretic. Now, since Wyclif was already dead and buried, the Council ordered that his bones be dug up and burned. This was NOT good news for Hus. The Council offered Hus the chance to spare his life if he would recant and take back his teaching. Hus replied that he would gladly do this if the Council would show him from the scriptures where he was in error and needed to change his teaching. On July 6, 1415, Hus was tied to a stake and burned to death as a heretic. He died singing in the flames! The death of John Hus is remembered in every Moravian Church all over the world on the Sunday nearest July 6.

One hundred years after the death of Hus, a parish priest in Germany named Martin Luther posted 95 statements calling for reform in the Church on the front door of the cathedral in Wittenburg, Germany. Because the printing press had now been invented, copies of Luther's call for reform were printed and spread throughout Germany.

When Luther was given a chance to defend his views, he was asked, "Martin Luther, do you think you are the only one who knows the truth?" Luther replied, "I will tell you what I think. I have the right to believe freely, to be a slave of no man. A simple plowman armed with scripture and the Holy Spirit is mightier than the greatest pope without them!" When he was told that he was repeating the heresies of John Hus, Luther replied, "Hus was right!" Luther was ordered to appear before the German parliament to be examined and, like Hus, he was given the opportunity to save his life by recanting his teaching. He responded in these never to be forgotten words,

"I am bound to my beliefs by the text of the Bible. My conscience is captive to the word of God. To go against conscience is neither right nor safe. Therefore, I cannot and I will not recant. Here I stand. I can do no other. God help me. Amen!"

Brothers and sisters, I believe that the cry for reform made by Wyclif, Hus, Luther and other Reformers has everything to do with the ideas which led to the birth of our nation.

All men are created equal,
All men are entitled to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness,
All men have the right to follow their conscience and believe freely.
All men have the right to freedom of speech and freedom of religion...

Where do these ideas come from? You know where they came from! They came from Martin Luther, John Hus, and John Wyclif. Luther said, "Each one must do his own believing just as each one must do his own dying..."

I thank God for men like John Hus who chose to sacrifice his life rather than take back the things he believed and preached. When he was offered the chance to save his life if he would stop preaching, Hus answered, "To bear witness to the truth is more important than life itself." I thank God for men like Patrick Henry, who was a committed Christian and who uttered these famous words in a speech to the Virginia Assembly in 1775, "Is life so dear, or peace so sweet, as to be purchased at the price of chains and slavery? Forbid it, Almighty God! I know not what course others may take; but as for me, give me liberty or give me death!"

Brothers and sisters, we who are Christians ought to know something about giving up our lives. Today we are living in the middle of a culture which teaches us "It's all about me" and this has influenced us in the Church. I know people who shop for churches the way we shop for mattresses. We go from place to place until we find one that makes us feel comfortable. We want a God who is understanding, supportive and not too demanding. A God who will make us feel comfortable and secure. The danger is that we will end up creating a God in our own image. We say, "I'll be happy to serve if I can fit it into my schedule..." I remember talking to a minister who was a new church planter. He had started four new churches and he told me that the consumer mentality had drastically changed the environment for starting new churches. Years ago when he first started he found that people were eager to be part of a new church. They felt it was exciting to be pioneers, and begin something new. Now, he was finding to his despair that people did not want to be part of a new church where they had to build from scratch, but they wanted to be part of a large church which already had everything they wanted.

I thank God that John Hus was not concerned with being comfortable or making his life easy. He said "it is better to die well than to live ill..." It is fitting and proper that we set aside this day to remember John Hus, and that we set aside a day to remember the ideals upon which our country was founded. The question for you and me today is not will we remember John Hus, but would Hus acknowledge us as his followers?

Rev. Steve Nicholas
July 3, 2022

Elders and Trustees News

The Joint Board met on June 13th via zoom. Congregational needs were discussed and contact lists were shared. Work continues at the parsonage. Finances were also reviewed. Trustees will meet again on July 18th via zoom.

Upcoming Worship Services

July 10th - Rev. Dick Godfrey
July 17th - Mr. Lloyd Purswell
July 24th - Rev. Terry Folk

Summer Worship schedule - We will be holding worship services downstairs starting Sunday, June 4th. (We will continue to use the blue worship hymnal.)

The offering plate will be placed on the communion table instead of in the back for future services.

The communion elements will be placed on the communion table using the glass cups and wafers for future services. Members will be asked to come up to take the elements back to the pews with them.

Total Income & Offerings from Sundays 06/05/2022 to 06/26/2022:

General	\$5,419.05
Refurbishing	\$205.00
Parking	\$50.00
Memorial Fund (In memory of Rudy Moore)	\$150.00
TOTAL	\$5,824.05



Did you know...

We have an online giving portal! If you prefer to catch the service via Zoom you can send your offering online! Just go to

- mmfa.info
- click Giving Portal at the top
- Click 'F' and select First Moravian Church - York, PA

If you prefer to mail your offering you can send it direct to:

Wanda Hendricks
3715 Fox Chase Drive
Dover, PA 17315

July Birthdays

1 Keith Rishel
5 Makenna Eckert
12 Annette Tyson
 Jeannette Sprenkle
14 Karrie (Earnst) Rishel*
15 Timothy Rishel
17 Nancy Danneberger*
18 Cheri Miley*
22 Stanley Martin*
23 Laura Shealy
25 David Bailey
 Christopher Rishel

July Anniversaries

1 Kathy & Doug McDannell
13 Rev. Norman & Maria Prochnau
30 Clifton & Elaine Rowell



Prayer Concerns

Amy Ardison (Betsy Senft's sister)
Pastor Jeff Coppage
Ann Coppage
Don Eckert
Mary Jones
Kathie Nicholas
Karrie Rishel
Cliff & Elaine Rowell
Ruth & Clair Seiple

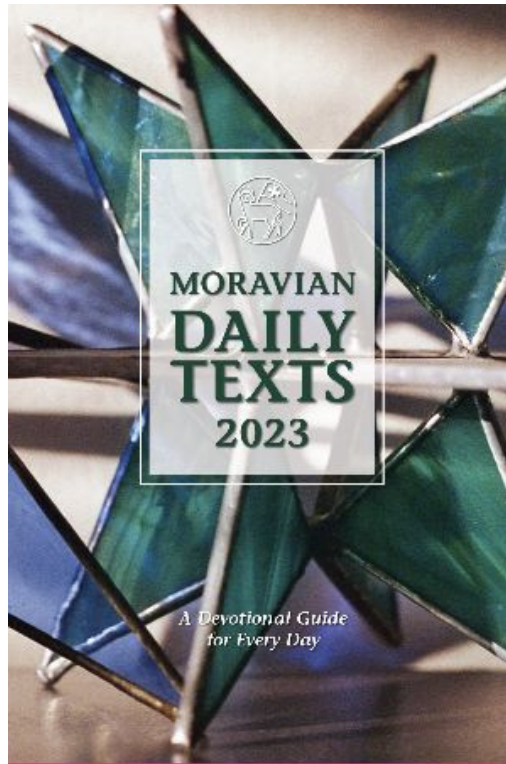
**For pastoral care until
our new Pastor is received,
please feel free to call any of the
3 elders listed below.**

Jeannette Sprenkle 717-225-4304

John Knokey 717-848-9220

Steve Nicholas 717- 755-7412

***Please do not call Steve
on a Monday***



It's time to pre-order the 2023 Moravian Daily Texts

"The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases, his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning." Lamentations 3:22,23

Pre-ordering for the 2023 Moravian Daily Texts is open now through August 13, 2022. The Interprovincial Board of Communication offers a 10% pre-order discount for the 2023 editions, including:

- Paperback: reg. \$11.50, pre-order \$10.35
- Hardcover: reg. \$16.75, pre-order \$15.10
- Large Print: reg. \$14.50, pre-order \$13.05
- Journal: reg. \$18.00, pre-order \$16.20
- Spanish or German, reg. \$12.50, pre-order \$11.25
- Large Print German, reg. \$12.50, pre-order \$11.25

**If you are interested in ordering a daily text please
contact Wanda Hendricks to order
before August 7th to
receive the discounted price.**

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2022 Watchword

“Happy is the one who trusts in you, O lord of hosts.”

Psalm 84:12