

The Epistle

The Newsletter of St. Paul's Moravian Church
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Office Hours: Tuesday - Friday, 9.30 AM - 2.30PM



December 2019

O GREAT MYSTERY

O magnum mysterium, et admirabile sacramentum, ut animalia viderent Dominum natum, iacentem in praesepeio! Beata Virgo, cujus viscera meruerunt portare Dominum Iesum Christum. Alleluia!	O great mystery, and wonderful sacrament, that animals should see the newborn Lord, lying in a manger! Blessed is the virgin whose womb was worthy to bear the Lord, Jesus Christ. Alleluia!
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This beautiful prayer may date from as far back as the 6th century. We are invited to contemplate the contrasts that show us the true meaning of Christmas. The immortal Ruler of the universe lays next to common farm animals. The Virgin has given life to the One who created all things, and her. The ordinary stable becomes the throne room of the King of Kings! Take a moment and read the poem slowly, paint a picture in your mind, and remember that it was for you that God gave, she bore, and He came. May your Christmas be deep and give you life!

DECK THE HALLS NEEDS YOU!!

You are invited to come out and Deck the Halls with us on December 1st, after worship Please join the Sacristans as we decorate the church for Advent!



Christmas Eve Service Tuesday, December 24, 7:30

WORSHIP IN DECEMBER!

Make worship part of your Christmas season! Your faith will be inspired, and your heart encouraged by the true meaning of Christmas!

- ◆ December 1: Holy Communion –begin the season close to Christ. Please join us for a Snack and Yak after service.
- ◆ December 8: Advent Concert – music from the Choir and soloists will stir your soul and fill your heart with love.
- ◆ December 15, 4:00PM: Marlton Community Christmas Carol Sing!
- ◆ December 22: Lovefeast –and special music to bless your body and soul.
- ◆ December 24, 7:30 PM: Christmas Eve Candlelight Service –We look forward to seeing you and your family as we worship the Newborn King together!
- ◆ December 29: Lessons and Carols — a time to meditate on the meaning of the season.

CHRISTMAS EVE

You are invited to experience the joy of Christ's birth at St. Paul's on Christmas Eve. The service is at 7:30 PM and will excite you with the sights, sounds and smells of a Moravian Candlelight Service. This is a wonderful opportunity to invite someone to join you at church - people's hearts are more open and Christmas offers a beautiful message of faith, hope and love. If you are willing to serve as an usher or fire watcher for the service, we could use your help! Contact the church office to explore ways you can participate.

YOUR PRAYERS MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Members of the 18 Moravian Provinces all over the globe take a turn to pray for each other 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. St. Paul's prays on the 1st. We share these 24 hours with the Faith, Graceham and Trinity congregations, so we are only responsible for six hours. You can be a part of this important work by signing up for a 20 minute slot. Materials are available to inform and guide your prayers. Sign up after worship soon! God bless you as you pray!

UNITY PRAYER WATCH DECEMBER 1, 2019

COMPLETING YOUR 2019 GIVING

We are grateful for the many faithful members who are very careful to complete their giving by the end of the year. Listed below are the options and timelines set by law for credit in 2019. Contact Marissa to discuss your giving as the year closes.

- Give at one of the remaining worship services of 2019
- Mail your check **postmarked by 12/27/2019**.
- Use your bank's **bill pay system by 12/27/2019**
- Bring your gift to the church office **by 12/30/2019**.

Thank you for making a difference in countless lives in this community and around the world.

2019 giving statements will be emailed or posted in January 2020.

KIDS CLUB – DECEMBER 13

God is blessing Kid's Club! Children from the community are coming to this exciting program for students grades K-6 where they hear messages from God's Word, sing, do a craft and even have a snack! You can help make this important outreach ministry a success! You can serve as a staff member, make a financial contribution, but most importantly you can pray for God's continued blessing on Kid's Club.

PASTOR'S BIBLE CHALLENGE HUDDLE DECEMBER 22 AFTER WORSHIP

OPPORTUNITIES

ADULT BIBLE CLASS: The group is studying, "Discipleship, the Growing Christian's Lifestyle". We meet on Sundays at 8:45 AM. We would love to have you join us!

WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY Tuesdays, 10:30 AM – 11:45 AM, led by Sister Kay Jung.

PRAYER & HEALING SERVICE You are invited to join us as we pray for one another on **December 6**, at 7:30 PM

MEN'S BREAKFAST All men are invited to attend on Saturday, **December 14** at 8:00 AM. Join us at the Marlboro Grill in the town of Upper Marlboro.

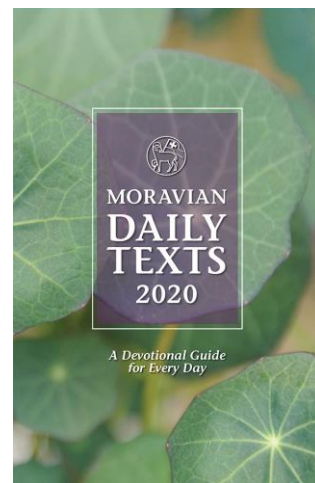
MORAVIAN STARS

It is a Moravian tradition to light our homes with stars during the Advent season. We offer 21" and 12" illuminated **Moravian Stars**, for a donation of \$25 and \$20, respectively. You may purchase stars after worship or through the church office. These stars make excellent gifts!



2020 MORAVIAN DAILY TEXTS

The Daily Texts is available in journal (\$16), large print (\$12) and paperback (\$15) editions. They will be available on the table in the Narthex after worship beginning December 7. They make great Christmas gifts!



MARLBORO CHURCHES FOOD BANK

We gave out 126 bags to 43 families in November. We had 2 new families who received bags also. We are packing 140 bags this month.

Please bring your food bank donations to church by Sunday, December 8th.

Food Bank volunteer activities for December are:

- Truck Unloading will be Wednesday, December 11th, 1 PM at Trinity Episcopal – volunteers are especially needed for the truck unloading
- Thursday, December 12th, 7 PM set up food at Trinity Episcopal
- Friday, December 13th, 8 AM bag food at Trinity Episcopal – volunteers are especially needed for the Friday morning bagging
- Saturday, December 14th, 7 AM distribute food at Trinity Episcopal

MERRY CHRISTMAS FROM THE ANDREWS

On behalf of Gail and I please accept our heartfelt wishes for a truly Merry Christmas to you and yours. We are blessed to serve a wonderful loving congregation and pray that 2020 will be filled with blessings for the entire St. Paul's family!

POINSETTIA FUND

Poinsettias beautify our Sanctuary for Christmas. You are invited to support this project by donating towards the cost of the plants. Your gift of any amount will help others worship the Savior. Envelopes are available at the Opportunity Table. All donors will be recognized in the bulletin on Christmas Eve.



THANK YOU

Dear Pastor Andrews, 11/11/19

Thank you so much for everything. The service was wonderful. The set up for the photo display and repast were perfect. I so appreciate all you did for our family.

God Bless, Ginny & Family of Ina Bolton

PASTOR'S BIBLE CHALLENGE

Fifteen signed up to participate in the Bible Challenge during 2019 - a large number of people for our church! They signed up to read the Bible in a way and amount that fit their schedule and level to which they wanted to grow. "Huddles," brief meetings after Sunday service were held many times during the year for readers to check in with each other. We shared our challenges and struggles and also our joys and successes. All participants reported that being part of the Pastor's Bible Challenge was time well spent and that the experience of reading the Bible in any amount was always a blessing. Thank you to all participants! I hope Bible reading will be part of your walk with Jesus in 2020.

Pastor Bill



2020 OFFERING ENVELOPES

Offering Envelopes for 2020 will be ready for YOU to pick up, Sunday December 8th, 2019 (on the table in the narthex). Envelopes are prepared for all members and regular attendees. If you have not yet made a commitment for 2020 and would like to, forms are available on the narthex table. Let's all do our part to serve the LORD. Thank you!

PASTOR'S PRAYER CHALLENGE

Many people want to pray "better" but don't know how. St. Paul's will focus on prayer in 2020 and you are invited to take a step forward in prayer by participating in the Pastor's Prayer Challenge. Will you make a commitment to pray more in 2020? The goal is to start where you are and grow in the way you pray and in how long you spend in prayer. Regular "huddles" will be held so we can give one another mutual support and encouragement. Let 2020 be the year your prayers become more meaningful and real!

SPECIAL OFFERING FOR NO ROOM AT THE INN

Your contribution to the “No Room at the Inn” offering will help with this important ministry of the Moravian Church. St. Paul’s is happy to give you the opportunity to make a special offering to support Moravian Open Door’s ministry. Please give as you are able and make your check payable to St. Paul’s Moravian Church, earmarked “No Room at the Inn.” The offering will be received at the Christmas Eve service.



Moravian Open Door
*Since 1987 helping the homeless
help themselves*

WHO WE ARE: A transitional housing ministry of the Moravian Church that provides safe, clean accommodation in single and double rooms together with supportive services for up to 40 older homeless adults.

GOAL: To find affordable permanent housing and restore an independent life for each resident.

WHAT WE DO:

- Help residents find jobs and obtain benefits
- Assist with housing applications
- Serve a nutritious breakfast for health and wellness
- Provide holiday meals, often hosted by church groups
- Provide computers for residents in the Life Skills center
- Provide postal address and personal email addresses
- Provide a supportive community

WHAT YOU CAN DO:

- Provide essential financial support: **MOD receives no government funding**
- Volunteer to paint and make minor repairs
- Provide meals, entertainment, technology services
- Collect and bring material gifts for residents
- Visit MOD’s website
www.moravianhouse.org
- Follow us on *Facebook*

Please consider a generous financial gift to MOD.

Moravian Open Door
347 E. 18th Street, New York, NY 10003 212-995-5810

MARLTON COMMUNITY CHRISTMAS CAROL SING!

On Sunday, December 16 at 4:00 PM our doors will be open to the entire community to enjoy some of the best-loved music of the season. Sacred carols will be combined with some popular tunes to help us open our hearts to the spirit of Christmas. Refreshments will be served. You are invited to come and sing, and to invite someone to join you. For more information contact Diane Rausch or Pat Jones.



ST. PAUL’S MORAVIAN CHURCH

Invites You to Our Second Annual

MARLBORO COMMUNITY CHRISTMAS CAROL SING!

with Handbells Choir!

**Sunday, December 15, 2019
4:00 pm**

ST. PAUL’S MORAVIAN CHURCH
8505 Heathermore Boulevard
Upper Marlboro, Maryland 20772

Come As You Are! Sing With Us! Christmas Cookies & Punch!

Info: 301-627-4200 www.spmoravian.org



LESSONS AND CAROLS READERS

On December 29 we will have a service of Lessons and Carols. This inspiring traditional Christmas presentation uses the voices of nine different individuals to present the story of Christ’s birth. If you would like to be one of the readers, please sign up at the Opportunity Table. Here is a way for you to serve the Lord and the body of Christ!

COMPASSION CORNER NOVEMBER 2019

We received this delightful letter from our child in Honduras, he is 13 years old.

Hello dear friends, may the Lord bless you. Your dear child Erick Fernando Acosta Moreno is writing to you. I am very grateful for the picture that you sent me, and it is very beautiful and I want to thank the Lord for the most lovely person in the world. How is your family? How is your health? I want to tell you that we had a parade with torches at school and at the CDC and on September 15 I went out in the platoon of metallic structures and they are teaching me to weld and to do gates, balconies and I send you a biblical verse that is in Psalms 40:1, "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble." I want to tell you that I'm going to a soccer Academy and I am very happy to go, and I say goodbye with kisses and hugs. With love, Erick Fernando Acosta Moreno. I want to answer your questions, I am still the goalkeeper, my dog and my rabbit are at home and my parrot escaped and I like very much the class of Spanish Picture caption: thank you. Sincerely, Erick

I will send letters via e-mail to all 4 of them next week. Kay

We have full time openings for children ages 2-5 in our Pre-K program. If you know anyone who needs high quality child, have them call us at 301-627-4202 for a tour. More information can be found on our website at stpaulsccc.org.

"Praise be to the LORD for He has heard my cry for mercy. The LORD is my strength and my shield; my heart trusts in him, and he helps me. My heart leaps for joy, and with my song I praise him."

Psalm 28:6-7

Mr. Christopher Antoine, Director

CHILDREN'S CENTER



At the end of the year, we like to reflect on all the things we have been blessed with at the Children's Center. We have been blessed with strong and healthy staff members who continue to work hard teaching and raising the families in our community to have a stronger relationship with Jesus. We have been blessed with equipment to help us achieve our missions such as an AED to help keep our staff, families, and children safer, and a new refrigerator to enable us to fully participate in the Child and Adult Food Care Program, providing highly nutritious foods to all our children (both received through special donors). We have been blessed with many opportunities to work with other centers and programs to help increase our community engagement. Jesus has truly watched over us and we thank him for all that he has done for us. We would like to thank all who supported us in raising funds through our spaghetti dinner – we raised \$450! I would also like to thank Mrs. Plummer and Mrs. Bradford for cooking and coordinating it. Also, we were able to donate about 40 food items through our families and staff as part of our Thanksgiving Food Drive and send 4 boxes full of gifts and necessities to children all over the world through Operation Christmas Child.

In December, we are celebrating the birth of Jesus and the sacrifices he made for us with our annual Christmas Program. The children are practicing daily to put on a performance to showcase the love we feel for Jesus. All are welcome to support us on **Wednesday, December 11 from 7:00 – 8:00 pm.** We are also excited to announce our first accreditation visit on Dec. 16. Please pray for us as we start the evaluation process with the final goal of being accredited through the Maryland State Department of Education.

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