



*Growing in Christ, sharing God's love.*

**October 2011**

A Newsletter from **Church of the Redeemer Moravian Church**

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**Rev. Jeff Van Orden, Pastor**  
**[www.redeemermoravian.org](http://www.redeemermoravian.org)**

### **Pastor's Corner:**

I'm not sure when I first heard this story, but it's one of my favorites:

A mouse looked through a crack in the wall to see the farmer and his wife open a package. "What food might this contain?" The mouse wondered. He was devastated to discover it was a mousetrap.

Retreating to the farmyard, the mouse proclaimed the warning: "There is a mousetrap in the house! There is a mousetrap in the house!"

The chicken clucked and scratched, raised her head and said, "Mr. Mouse, I can tell this is a grave concern to you, but it is of no consequence to me. I cannot be bothered by it."

The mouse turned to the pig and told him, "There is a mousetrap in the house! There is a mousetrap in the house!" The pig sympathized, but said, I am so very sorry, Mr. Mouse, but there is nothing I can do about it but pray. Be assured you are in my prayers."

The mouse turned to the cow and said, "There is a mousetrap in the house! There is a mousetrap in the house!" The cow said, "Wow, Mr. Mouse. I'm sorry for you, but it's no skin off my nose."

So, the mouse returned to the house, head down and dejected, to face the farmer's mousetrap alone.

That night a sound was heard throughout the house - the sound of a mousetrap catching its prey. The farmer's wife rushed to see what was caught. In the darkness, she did not see it was a poisonous snake whose tail the trap had caught. The snake bit the farmer's wife. The farmer rushed her to the hospital, and she returned home with a fever.

Now, everyone knows you treat a fever with fresh chicken soup, so the farmer took his hatchet to the farmyard for the soup's main ingredient.

But despite the soup, his wife's sickness continued, so friends and neighbors came to sit with her around the clock. To feed them, the farmer butchered the pig.

The farmer's wife did not get well; in fact, she died. And so many people came for her funeral that the farmer had the cow slaughtered to provide enough meat for all of them.

The mouse looked upon it all from his crack in the wall with great sadness.

The next time you hear someone is facing a problem and think it doesn't concern you, remember - when one of us is threatened, we are all at risk.

The message of this parable-like story is simple, and central to our Moravian faith: Community matters. A lot. As members of the Body Of Christ we are connected to one another. This truth defines who we are and informs our interactions with one another. It is how we experience God. When we separate ourselves from one another we sadden our Lord and miss out on the experience of Grace.

Blessings,

Jeff Van Orden

## Core Values

Following a series of discussions that have involved many members of our congregation, and in order to express what we believe to be the essence of our congregation and give visitors and seekers the opportunity to know who we are, the Church of the Redeemer Moravian Church is pleased to articulate the following Core Values:

The Church of the Redeemer Moravian Church is:

### **Committed to Growing in Christ**

We believe in the transforming power of the Holy Spirit, the Word of God and prayer to make each of us more and more like Jesus Christ as we grow in Him.

### **Welcoming**

A family-friendly congregation, we emphasize hospitality and fellowship in all that we do. We welcome people who are at all points along their faith journeys.

### **Devoted to Lifelong Learning**

We believe that learning is a lifelong process and strive to provide opportunities for growth and development for young and old alike.

### **Joyful**

Our worship is both upbeat and traditional, drawing on the Moravian Church's rich music and liturgical traditions, as well as the talents of our members, to praise God with instruments and voices.

### **Hands-On**

We affirm the priesthood of all believers and recognize that involvement in the church means being good stewards of our time, talents and treasures.

### **Missional**

Building upon the Moravian Church's rich missionary heritage, we support the church's ongoing work around the world and seek to find new ways to foster discipleship.

### **Outward Focused**

We engage in our community and foster partnerships with other Christians to cooperatively reach out to spread the good news of God's love.

### **Compassionate**

We appreciate the needs of our community and serve God by serving friends, neighbors and strangers alike in Jesus' name.

## Super Sunday, October 23<sup>rd</sup>

If you haven't already done so, please mark Sunday, October 23 on your calendar and plan to spend the bulk of the day with your brothers and sisters at Redeemer. Why? Here are four reasons why:

- It's the conclusion of our Stewardship Campaign – also known as "Commitment Sunday." All members and friends of our congregation are invited to return their 2012 Commitment Cards that Sunday during worship, signifying their promise to support the ongoing work of our congregation. Gary Marsh, Director of Stewardship for the Northern Province, will be in our pulpit that morning helping us to conclude our stewardship program for this year.
- It's the 26<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of our Congregation. During worship, we will celebrate this milestone in the life of Redeemer with a traditional Moravian Lovefeast.
- We'll be enjoying lunch together. To continue our Anniversary celebration and to recognize another successful stewardship campaign we will gather, following the service, in our fellowship hall for a pot-luck lunch.
- After lunch, we will join with our friends from The Promise to have the first of several "holy conversations" regarding the ordination of gay and lesbian pastors in committed relationships (Please see the related article below). Bro. Marsh will be facilitating this two-hour event.

## Stewardship Campaign

Our annual Stewardship program is underway. It will conclude with Covenant Sunday October 23<sup>rd</sup>. On that last Sunday of our campaign, Gary Marsh, the Director of Stewardship for the Northern Province, will preach and we will celebrate our refreshed commitment in the work of the Lord and follow the service with a

coffee hour. We encourage all to participate in the events of that day.

Our theme, this year, is "Percentage Living," and is focused on helping each member and friend of our congregation grow in discipleship formation and, by so doing, enhance the health of our congregation.

Please take the opportunity, during this time, to reflect on the elements of Percentage Living:

- Giving God a percentage of my day,
- Giving God a percentage of my Sabbath,
- Giving God a percentage of my time.
- Glorifying God in what I earn and
- Giving God a percentage of my income.

### **From the Board of Trustees**

Over the past months we have been fortunate to benefit from God's blessings. Thanks to the time, talent, and generosity of the members of our congregation, we continue to meet our obligations, maintain our buildings and grounds, and provide ministry to our community. Thanks be to God!

We have almost completed the refurbishing of the parsonage. This project started in July of 2010. Since that time we have spent over 850 hours and over \$7000. But there is more to do. Additional expenses of about \$5000 will be required to complete the project.

We are moving forward with the repair of the soffits and cedar trim on the church building. Bids are being circulated and we expect to begin the project this fall. The project is being funded through a grant from the Larger Life Foundation.

Several members have volunteered to remove the dead Ash trees from our property. They are also working on the parking lot islands and trimming the shrubs and bushes around the property. The Jesus People congregation has offered to help with our outside work with volunteers occasionally helping with the mowing and trimming. In addition, members

are reconditioning our tile floors throughout the building. We thank all who are helping.

Since the building is over 25 years old, the mechanical equipment is starting to wear out. As a result we are experiencing failures in window seals, furnace blowers, thermostats, drinking fountain compressors, toilet valves, and other plumbing fixtures. Thus far, we have been able to repair or replace the defective parts.

As a result of our limited spending for the operation and maintenance of the building and parsonage, the conservation of utilities, the unselfish donation of our time and talents, and the sacrificial giving of our congregation, we are able to continue our ministries. However, we find ourselves again, facing major obstacles throughout the remaining days of 2011.

Our financial condition as of the end of September shows that we have about the same income from offerings as in recent years; however, we have had an increase in maintenance expenses. As a result, we find a shortfall of about \$13,000 in our 2011 budget. There are several factors that are interrelated in these results including stipends from the domination, gifts from members, unexpected repairs, and other unplanned expenses.

As we continue to be challenged to acquire the financial means to meet our needs, we must continue trusting God; remembering He is always with us and with Him all things are possible. Please pray for God's continued guidance in managing our financial matters. May our response to His grace and abundance be acceptable and pleasing to Him..

**In order to address some of the items that need attention, we have planned a workday for Saturday, October 8, beginning at 9:00 AM at the Church. Come, bring your tools and plan to roll up your sleeves and work.**

In Christ,

The Board of Trustees  
Phil Garrett, President

## Invitation to Holy Conversation regarding Human Sexuality

Rooted in a heritage of faith, we invite you to attend one in a series of Regional gatherings (Holy Conversations) that have been planned as a response to the Provincial Synod of 2010 to discuss the ordination of gay and lesbian pastors in committed relationships.

Remembering our long history of working collaboratively in church matters, we are planning to gather in regional forums for 2 hour meetings for a conversation that matters to all of us. We are seeking the collective wisdom of our brothers and sisters by considering a number of questions, for the sake of our future together. These questions have been designed by the Human Sexuality Task Force of the Northern Province.

We are confident of the leading of God's Spirit in this process and we seek to hear from the variety of voices across the Northern Province. Each person is invited to come prayerfully and to offer what they can as they participate in responding to the questions. If you are a pastor, board member, or lay leader mark your calendar for this regional gathering. **Join us as we gather on Sunday, October 23 at 1:30 PM.**

To let you know what to expect, the following description may be helpful: The format of our gathering will use a circle or circles to facilitate the holy conversation.

In the circle:

- We agree to be respectful, honest, and creative in our holy conversations for the sake of our future together.
- We trust that God will supply what we need to come together for our future and we will let our voices be heard and offer what we can.

- We will listen to each other with respect, freshness, curiosity, compassion, and sensitivity. Each person will speak his or her own truth. Stories shared in holy conversations are confidential.
- We will pause in silence, from time to time for prayer and discernment.

The Board of Elders of our congregation encourages every member to participate in this conversation. Please plan to do so if at all possible.

## Call to the 2012 Synod of the Eastern District, Moravian Church

The Eastern District Synod will convene at Moravian College in Bethlehem from June 20 to 23, 2012. The vision of this synod is taken from the 84<sup>th</sup> Psalm, Blessed Are Those Who Dwell in Your House, Ever Singing Your Praise.

Acknowledging the commission of the 2010 Provincial Synod for each district to "establish time within the synod process for non-legislative, collaborative dialogue and prayerful discernment regarding the Christian service of homosexual persons," the District Board realizes that this 2012 Synod will be extraordinary in nature. Given this, the District Board has decided to invest in this synod's delegate representation by subsidizing two lay delegates for each congregation.

Accordingly, Redeemer will be eligible to send three lay delegates to this synod, in addition to the pastor. If you would like to be considered as a delegate, please let Pastor Van Orden know of your interest. Delegates will be elected at our 2011 Church Council in November.

Also, a pre-synod "Discerning Circle" will be held on Saturday, November 19 in order to set the direction of our Eastern District ministry and mission. The Circle for this region will be at the Dover First Church in Dover, OH. All interested persons are encouraged to attend this session.

## Mid-States Fall Retreat

Fall Retreat is only a month away. It will be held in Albion, IN, November 4-6, 2011. Brother Mark Ebert has accepted to serve as the program leader for this event. Bryce Bell, will serve as musician in charge, and Joy and Tom Lux are in command of the Kitchen and food glorious food... JoAnn Keller has accepted the call for Nurse.

Details are as follows:

**Location:** Camp Luther Haven in Albion, Indiana

**Ages:** 6th Grade through Age 21 (campers) and 22 years of age and up (non-campers)

**Registration:** Registration and health forms are found on [www.midstatesmoraviancamps.webs.com](http://www.midstatesmoraviancamps.webs.com)

**Arrival:** Dinner and registration will occur between 6:30 and 8:00 Friday evening

**Cost:** \$55.00 for one and \$50.00 for 2 or more from the same household. No late fee, however roommate requests not guaranteed after 10/29.

**For more information:** Contact Dan Meikle: 734 657 3377

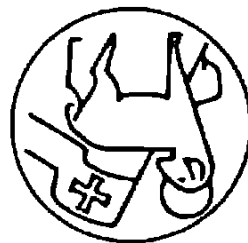
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