



# The Messenger

Spreading the Good News since 1866

January 2023

*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 the Pastor's Desk:



Christmas Eve has been a strange thing for me the last several years. Growing up, I had gotten used to receiving candles, serving candles, or maybe singing in the choir. There were a few times that I was tasked with singing Morning Star. There were a few years that I had to read scripture. Each role had importance, no doubt, but the service was still able to be mainly enjoyed. The prep work was minimal. The tasks didn't take anything away from sitting and considering the wonder of Christ's birth.

As my first Christmas Eve as a pastor approached, my fear was that Christmas Eve as I knew it was being stolen from me. I thought that I would be too involved in the service itself, both the planning and the leading of it, that I would head home feeling like it wasn't Christmas Eve at all. Halfway through the service, my fears were realized. From playing in the Chimes Choir, leading the liturgy, preaching, and worrying about the other details, it was hard work. The Christmas story didn't feel like how I remembered it and I was wishing I could just blend into the crowd in the pews.

Once the candles were lit, however, I quickly realized how special my perspective as a pastor could be. From the front of the sanctuary, not only did I see every single flame in the crowded room, but I saw each face that the light illuminated. I could see a giant wave of light as well as the individual hopes and dreams that each face carried into the Christmas celebration. It was almost overwhelming to witness. It quickly became my favorite moment of the church year when I was convinced that it was bound to be a moment of frustration.

I hope that sense of life and light stays with you into 2023. It is a beautiful thing to be filled the hope and love that Christmas brings, and I know how quickly the world can try to take that away. Remember what we celebrate as we remember Christ's birth – a light that the world could not diminish. Know that light is walking with you into whatever you face in the coming year. May it be an overwhelming presence of peace, love, and joy.

Pastor James

## **BOARD OF ELDERS MEETING MINUTES 12/13/2022**

Present: Pastor James, Jim Muenster and Chelsey Thiel in person, Michele Remter and Alyssa Seitz joined on Zoom.

Pastor James opened our meeting with devotions and then gave us an update on pastoral care.

### **Old Business**

**Worship and YouTube Streaming** – Pastor James is working on another spot to place the camera as we have our Christmas services coming up so we can have the extra space in the front pews where the stand currently is stationed.

**Elder of the Month and Communion for January** - Alyssa will be our Elder of the Month for January. We will have communion on January 8<sup>th</sup>.

**Youth Group and Confirmation** – Confirmands are all reading at the early Christmas Eve Service and serving candles. They are also helping with Children's Program. Both youth groups have been meeting regularly. Greg Behrend with You Belong was here recently to talk with the group and hoping to join up with the groups once settled into their new building.

**Website** – Pastor James is now setup with our church Gmail account email that we use for document storage. However, we still have to have the account tied to an individual which makes using GMAIL difficult to use so we are exploring other options. Pastor James will coordinate a time with Alyssa and Samantha to finish getting the domain purchased.

**Christmas Schedule** - 4:30pm and 7:30pm will be the Christmas Eve Services, Chimes will be playing at the 4:30pm service on Christmas Eve. There will be worship at 10am on Christmas Day. The Children's Program will be on December 18.

**Consecration Service 1/14/2023** – This is a Saturday afternoon at 3:00pm. Pastor James is working on details for the service. We will be taking RSVPs so we know a headcount for the dinner.

**2023 Church Council** - We have the date set as January 22, 2023 following worship. We have one opening on Elders and two openings for Trustees. We discussed possible members to nominate and will reach out to them individually. If anyone is interested in any position please let Pastor James, an Elder or Trustee know. We also discussed bylaws briefly and Pastor James will be emailing out the bylaws for the Joint Board to review. The Joint Board will specifically review the sections on membership and board term limits to adjust wording as needed so it is ready propose at Church Council.

### **New Business**

**Annual Report** – We will work on this at our next Joint Board meeting.

**Our Next Joint Board Meeting will tentatively be Monday January 9<sup>th</sup> at 6:30pm.**

**Pastor James closed our meeting in prayer and we adjourned.**

**Respectfully Submitted,**

**Chelsey Thiel, Board of Elders Secretary**

## BOARD OF TRUSTEES

### **12/13/2022 Minutes**

We continue to monitor the progress in the basement as work was done to keep the walls from continuing to creep in. We are scheduled to have the company come back out and tighten the screws to keep things in place. The fire extinguishers have been checked and cleared for another year. Rob was able to install the AED system near the door the connects the social hall and the sanctuary. Part of our financial update involves our discussion on how to best share Bob's gift in his memory. We have reached out to a couple of organizations with close connections to our church to see how we can best help them. Looking forward to Church Council, we will discuss the possibility of rewording our by-laws. We always encourage and welcome new voices on the boards, but if no replacements can be found we'd like to have a clearer idea of what we can do. We will also be looking at what our definition of a member is as it pertains to folks who are mainly connected online.

Our next meeting will be a Joint Board meeting on 1/9.

Submitted by Pastor James



Thank You to all who remembered me and our family in your thoughts & prayers in the passing of my brother Cliff Jr. Thanks for all the sympathy cards & to those who came to the visitation & funeral.

Cliff Jr was the last one left of his confirmation class of five at the Freedom Moravian Church.

(Carol Jens-Welhouse)(Carol Muenster-Kressin)(John Trow)(Glen Rohm)(Cliff Jr Fiestadt)

God Bless You All

Arden

## CONSECRATION SERVICE

Pastor James will be consecrated as a Presbyterian of the Moravian Church on January 14th, at 3pm, at Freedom Moravian. All are invited to attend and enjoy a meal afterwards. Please RSVP Pastor James so we have a head count for dinner.

### WEEKLY OFFERING

12/4 \$1,545

12/11 \$1,087

12/18 \$1,475

All Services Christmas—\$1,168

On line—\$1,150

### FELLOWSHIP BREAKFAST

JANUARY 7TH AT 8 AM

Freedom Moravian Church Social Hall

### JANUARY ANNIVERSARIES

1/4 Dave & Tracy Maass



### JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

1/1 Lori Mischnick

1/1 Terrie Carpenter

1/9 Nancy Sibley

1/10 Deb Bernetzke

1/16 Erin Conrad

1/21 Carter Kositzke

1/23 Olivia Micke

1/25 Dustin Muenster

1/29 Doug Lillge

1/31 Darlene Missling

**HAPPY ★ NEW ★ YEAR**

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



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FREEDOM MORAVIAN CHURCH

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