

THE STAR

DECEMBER 2018

Given in Love

There is a story about how the poinsettia came into existence and why it has become a symbol of Christmas . . .

Long ago in the high mountain village where Mario lived, the custom on Christmas Eve was for everyone to take flowers to church to give Jesus. But Mario was so poor that he had no money to purchase a flower for the beloved baby.

Walking slowly to church that Christmas Eve, Mario hoped he could find a wildflower to give the Christ Child. He searched carefully along the roadside but found only weeds. Then, in the darkness, he heard a gentle voice calling to him.

“Mario, pick the weeds, and remember that anything given in love is precious.” Obeying the voice, Mario picked the weeds and took them to church, where he placed them at the foot of the manger.

When the other children saw his gift, they made fun of it. But when they looked again, the weeds had turned into brilliant red flowers – the beautiful plant we know today as the poinsettia. Mario knew then that the voice had been right: it is love that makes a gift beautiful.¹

When we hear stories like this one, we are reminded that the cost of the gifts we give at Christmas is not the best indication of their value. So each year many of us strive to make our celebrations a little simpler, with varying degrees of success. As Christians, we want desperately to hold on to the *true* meaning of Christmas, not getting caught up in the growing materialism of the season. We want our families to focus on the meaning of Jesus’ birth, even while we’re bombarded with advertisements, over-played music, and the frenzy of the holidays.

The season of Advent is a gift for us. Dating back to the Sixth Century, Advent has been recognized as a season of the church year that focuses on the One Who Is Coming and the people who wait faithfully. It is an opportunity for us to prepare our lives and hearts for Christ’s coming, much as we might prepare our homes for someone very important to come and stay.

Let Advent be the gift that allows you to pay attention to the most important parts of this coming month. Enjoy the holiday shopping and gift exchanges, even as you adopt a family or a project that your family can pray for or help throughout the season. Delight in the pictures with Santa, even as you scatter your nativity set around your house and retell the story of Christ’s birth by bringing the figurines closer to the stable. Make wonderful memories at all the parties, even as you create a small Advent wreath on your kitchen table, making memories of daily devotions for yourself or your family. Advent is a gift – just for you – given in love.

Pastor Missy

¹ Papa, Carrie. *The Brightest Star of All: Christmas Stories for the Family*. Nashville: Abindgon Press, 2008.

DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

- 3 Joshua Miller
- 5 Mary Wright
- 8 Steven Antonis
- 9 LeRoy Miller, Jr.
Rita Lintner
- 11 Mark German
- 13 Christopher Fegley
- 14 Donna Ambler
Emma German
- 15 Lisa Peterson
- 17 George Wilson
- 19 Erika Still
Eric Fritz
- 21 Jeremiah Reuber
- 24 Barbara Egerton
- 25 Caitlin Mansell
- 26 Marlene German
- 28 Stephen Weida
- 30 Mary Harris
- 31 Randolph Kramer

DECEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

- 26 John and Diane Chladni
- 27 Larry and Sharon Guzzo
- 31 Michael and Sherry Reinhart



The November 2nd Mile Offering will be given to Northeast Ministries. The total as of November 25th is \$503.
The December 2nd Mile Offering will benefit Moravian Open Door.

CHILDREN:

- 18 Carter Kempinski
- 21 Abigail Fegley
- 25 Benjamin Wisnoski
- 31 Emma Boshell

Don't forget to sign up to sponsor flowers and bulletins. Sign-up sheets are in the Narthex!

Moravian Daily Texts 2019 will be available for purchase in the office. Regular print - \$10 and Large print - \$12.

SUPPORT ADVENT'S MISSION WHEN YOU USE AMAZON

Advent is now registered as a charitable organization through Amazon Smile. 0.5% of each qualifying purchase will be donated to our church to help with our mission! To start contributing, go to: <https://smile.amazon.com/ch/24-0799587> for your qualifying purchase percent to be donated.

JUST A REMINDER ... ALL CONTRIBUTIONS FOR 2018 must be postmarked or received in the church office NO LATER THAN Monday, December 31st to be credited to your 2018 financial statement.

ALL THINGS ADVENT MORAVIAN

Singers Needed

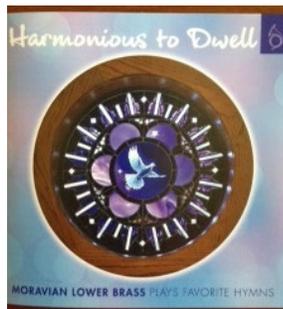
If you would like to join the choir for the Christmas Eve services, rehearsals will be Wednesday evenings, Dec. 5, 12, and 19, from 7:30 to 8:45 p.m. All voice parts are encouraged to sing!



Morning Star Soloists

Our soloists for the Morning Star hymn on Christmas Eve will be Sara Ribau who will sing at the 5:00 service, and Quincy Johnson who will sing at the 8:00 service. Thank you to all the children who expressed interest!

Christmas gift idea from the Moravian Music Foundation



A new CD, *Harmonious to Dwell*, is available for \$16.00. The title of the CD comes from verse 2 of *What Brought Us Together*, which emphasizes the joyful fellowship of the family of God. There are 38 tracks of your favorite hymns played by the Moravian Lower Brass. Order your copy from Donna Ambler. Payment must be included with your order. Make checks payable to Moravian Music Foundation.

Women's Fellowship

The Circle groups continue their studies of the book of Genesis. In Session #3 - "The Fall: One Little Mistake" - Scripture reading Genesis 3 & 4.

Meetings: Circle #1 - Monday, December 10 at 10:00 a.m.

Circle #2 - Tuesday, December 11 at 7:00 p.m.

REMINDER: Women's Fellowship Rummage Sale

Put May 18, 2019 on your calendar. Women's Fellowship is beginning to organize an indoor rummage sale at Advent for that day. We are NOT accepting any items now, but stay tuned for more info about the sale, how to help and when to bring donated treasures to church for the sale or to reserve a table to sell items.

MINISTRY OF CARE

It is important for people to know that we care, especially during times of illness or great stress. Please call the church office at any time if you know of someone who would like a visit or a meal.

ALL THINGS ADVENT MORAVIAN (CONT'D)

THIS IS OUR SECOND MILE OFFERING FOR DECEMBER



Advent's Special Gifts for Moravian Open Door

Moravian Open Door (MOD) in New York City, a ministry of the Northern Province of the Moravian Church, provides transitional housing and supportive services to 40 homeless men and women over the age of 50. MOD provides a clean, safe environment for those with no other place to go. Individual service plans help to rebuild lives, obtain appropriate jobs and benefits, and teach life skills. MOD provides breakfast as part of a health and wellness program, and helps residents to find affordable independent permanent housing.

Advent Moravian Church has a long tradition of generous giving of material gifts to Moravian Open Door during the Christmas season. MOD also will be the recipient of our special "Second Mile" offering for the month of December.

Beginning December 2, a box to collect gifts will be in the church lobby. These gifts are distributed throughout the year, so please do not gift wrap or put into individual packages.. The following items are specifically requested (please keep in mind that most residents are men):

- pillows
- twin size sheet sets, blankets
- washcloths, bath towels
- toothpaste, tooth brushes (soft and medium), mouthwash, body wash, body lotion, hand cream, shampoo, disposable razors, Q-tips, tissues, small hand sanitizers
- combs, hairbrushes, nail clippers, emery boards
- snack items--individual snack pack items (crackers, chips, cookies, candy, fruit cups, pudding); microwave snacks (soup mix, popcorn)

Please do not bring small hotel samples or cosmetics.

Please bring your gifts to the church by December 23. Your support means a great deal to the residents of Moravian Open Door!

Looking Ahead – Mark Your Calendar!

January 13 & 20, 2019, 9am-10pm

Inquirer's Class for anyone interested in learning about the Moravian Church and/or becoming a member of Advent Moravian! Let Pastor Missy know if you or someone you know might be interested.

January 27, 2019

Annual Church Council meeting. Watch for more information to come!

February 2, 2019, 5pm-7pm

Annual Super Bowl Spaghetti Dinner

ALL THINGS ADVENT MORAVIAN (CONT'D)

FINANCIAL NEWS

Through October 2018 our envelope giving totaled \$137,477 vs. \$136,857 for the same period in 2017. That's a \$620 or .00450% increase year over year. All other sources of income have essentially remained flat year over year. Total expenses through October 2018 were \$202,329 vs. \$194,724 for the same period in 2017. That is an increase of \$7,605 or .039% year over year. We have had some unexpected additional expense in 2018 like a new A/C unit at the parsonage and a new HVAC unit at church. So far, we've had to dip into our cash reserves for \$40,000 to cover operating costs in 2018.

The Board of Trustees would like to thank everyone for maintaining their pledged and non-pledged giving throughout the year. We would also like to thank those who made "special" one time gifts to cover some of the unexpected expenses we incurred.

May God extend His blessing to everyone during this season of Advent and Christmas.

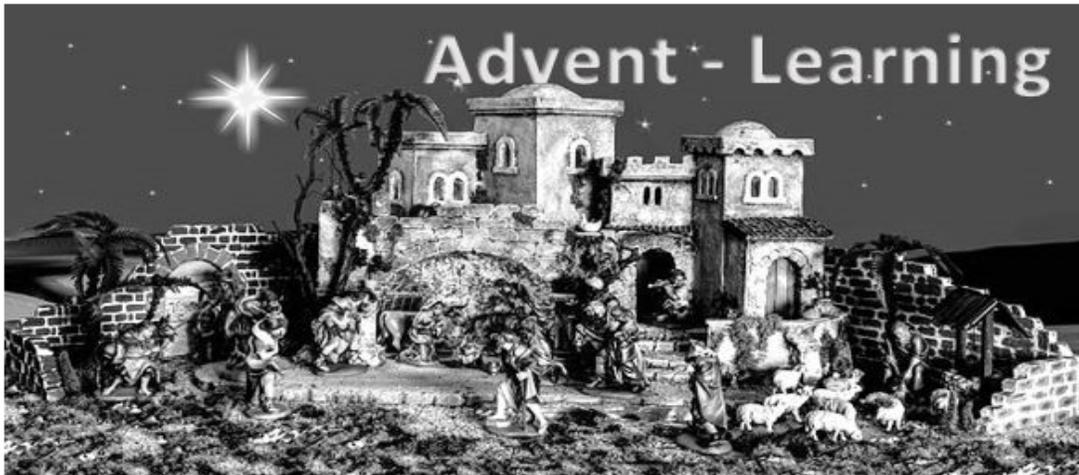
God Works in Mysterious Ways

On Saturday, October 20th I was overcome with thankfulness when a young couple came to my home to return a memento that is 63 years old to me. It is a small brass and leather photo album only 2 ½ inches by 1 ¾ inches. Upon opening it, there you find my name maiden name and address. This was a small album I evidently filled when I was at Moravian College. The mystery unfolds when I learned that this couple found this at Renninger's flea market in Kutztown in August. It was in a bin filled with old tools and other metal objects. Something prompted them to pick it out and purchase it. They opened it when they got home and saw the photos inside and my picture that was in the newspaper with my engagement announcement. They said they knew immediately that they just had to find me and return this to me. They began to search for me and seeing that I was at Moravian College they called Moravian's Alumni office and found my 2 daughters' email addresses. Because I had recently moved they hadn't updated my information. Through the emails I got their phone number and called them. They said they would come to my place and give me the little album in person as they were anxious to meet me. They came on October 20th and were so loving and kind, and through this I have made new friends. Although they live in Boyertown they insisted on coming which I appreciated so much. They said they just knew they had to find me and return something this special. God surely blessed me with sending kind, wonderful people to me. In our world of today, there aren't many younger folks who would be so considerate as to look up an old "senior" to give back a small item. This is such a fine example of what God wants us to be. ~ **JoAnne Hoodmaker** ~ **Please note my new address/phone number: 4651 Cheryl Drive, Bethlehem, PA 18017 – phone# 610-419-1155.**

ALL THINGS ADVENT MORAVIAN (CONT'D)

*Prepare for
The Advent Season!*

December 3rd is the deadline to order poinsettias to decorate our sanctuary. Please use the forms in the narthex area and return with your payment as indicated.



Sunday School class time will focus on learning about the season we hold dear – the coming of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

There are classes for all ages from three to 103 in which you can learn about the aspects of hope, trust, joy and love in the stories of those who awaited the coming of the Messiah to bring light and peace to our world.

Class times are 9:00 am on December 2, 9, 16 and 23. On the 23rd, we will prepare for a special program component during the worship service at 10:15 involving readings, music and candles. Participants **MUST** attend 9AM rehearsal.

There will be **NO SUNDAY SCHOOL** on December 30th.

All of the people who helped with the **OUTREACH** to our neighbors in the Marvine-Pembrooke neighborhoods deserve a huge **THANK YOU**. With the help of donations of food, money, dining out proceeds, packing and transporting – Advent was able to provide full meals to 35 families in need. Amazing Grace was sweetly shared.

**THANK
YOU**

If you want to get involved in sharing your faith and love with others at Advent, why not join our teaching team? We could use a few additional helpers! Give Mollie Santee a call or email. Your involvement is a **GIFT** and **BLESSING**.

ALL THINGS MORAVIAN AND BEYOND

2019 Girls' Retreat at Camp Hope

Girls in 3rd through 8th grades are invited to come to Camp Hope for a weekend of fun-filled learning, sharing, singing, and crafting. Friday, January 25th 7:00 pm – Sunday, January 27th 1:00 pm. Registration forms and Health forms are available by contacting: Rev. Jodie Harney at Mountainview Moravian Church – jlharney212@gmail.com 610-838-9344.

SENIOR FRIENDS

1st Thursday of the Month
September thru May at 11:30 A.M.

BRING A SANDWICH Beverage and
Dessert is provided
You do not need to be a senior to
attend.

All our welcomed!!!

West Side Moravian Church



Food Collection

Advent Moravian Church is hosting a food collection for Northeast Ministry's food pantry

Possible items include...

Personal Hygiene Products
Toiletries
Non-perishables
Canned goods
Dish liquid
Laundry detergent
Toothpaste
Etc



NORTHEAST
meeting the needs **MINISTRY**
of the community

Northeast Ministry is a non-profit social service agency located in the Marvine-Pembroke low-income housing community. Our goal is to offer programs and services to those in need in the community and to help them reach their highest potential.

Calvary Moravian Church Reading Room

Open Now! FREE books for pre-school, elementary & middle school children. Open every Thursday, 1-7 p.m. Special programs for children at 3:30 pm (stories, crafts, snacks – parent/guardian must attend). Located at 948 N. 21st St., Allentown. 610-435-6881 CALVARYM@PTD.NET

Plan for the Holidays with Historic Bethlehem

The holiday season is officially here! Get into the spirit with festive events and programs such as the Christmas Kiffles & Groman's Sugar Cookies, Trees of Historic Bethlehem, Horse-Drawn Carriage Rides, Holiday Tours, and much more! More info. on the bulletin board and on their website: www.HistoricBethlehem.org

