



THE LAMPLIGHTER YORK FIRST MORAVIAN

MAKING THE INVISIBLE KINGDOM VISIBLE

WHEN JESUS WAS ON TRIAL FOR HIS LIFE BEFORE PONTIUS PILATE, THE ROMAN GOVERNOR ASKED HIM, "ARE YOU A KING?" DO YOU REMEMBER HOW JESUS ANSWERED? "MY KINGDOM IS NOT OF THIS WORLD." IN OTHER WORDS, JESUS IS SAYING, "I AM A KING, BUT MY KINGDOM IS AN INVISIBLE KINGDOM!" NOT EVERYONE CAN SEE IT.

HOW MANY OF YOU REMEMBER 3-D GLASSES IN THE MOVIES? IT'S LIKE THAT WITH JESUS! JESUS IS A KING, BUT HIS KINGDOM IS ONLY VISIBLE WITH THE RIGHT KING OF GLASSES. PASTOR WHAT GOOD IS AN INVISIBLE KINGDOM? HOW CAN WE SEE THIS INVISIBLE KINGDOM?

WE SEE THE KINGDOM BECOME VISIBLE IN THE LIFE AND MINISTRY OF JESUS! THE FIRST WORDS FROM JESUS IN THE GOSPEL OF MARK WERE, "THE TIME IS FULFILLED. THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS AT HAND. REPENT AND BELIEVE THE GOSPEL." (V 1:15)

THE KINGDOM BECOMES VISIBLE IN THE LIFE, THE TEACHING AND THE HEALING MINISTRY OF JESUS. ONE TIME THE SCRIBES AND PHARISEES SENT MEN TO ARREST JESUS AND THEY RETURNED EMPTY HANDED. WHEN ASKED WHY THEY DECLINED TO ARREST JESUS, THEY REPLIED, "NO ONE EVER SPOKE LIKE THIS MAN..." ((JOHN 7:46) EVEN 2000 YEARS LATER, HIS **TEACHING** STILL RINGS TRUE! "WE SHOULD RETURN GOOD FOR EVIL. BLESSING IS BETTER THAN CURSING. FORGIVENESS IS BETTER THAN VENGEANCE. WE NEED TO TREAT OTHERS THE WAY WE WANT TO BE TREATED..." "YES" WE SAY TO OURSELVES, "THIS IS THE WAY THINGS **OUGHT** TO BE...."

AS A TEENAGER I WAS DISILLUSIONED WITH MY SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHER. HE KNEW THE BIBLE AND COULD EXPOUND ON IT FOR FORTY-FIVE MINUTES WITHOUT NOTES. I GREATLY ADMIRER HIM - UNTIL HE GOT ME A SUMMER JOB WITH HIS COMPANY. ONE DAY I HEARD HIM CHEWING OUT AN EMPLOYEE IN LANGUAGE THAT WAS NOT FIT FOR SUNDAY SCHOOL. BUT MANY YEARS LATER I HAVE DISCOVERED THIS IS THE WAY WITH EVERY ONE OF US! JESUS WAS THE ONLY ONE WHO PRACTICED WHAT HE PREACHED COMPLETELY! ALL OF US HAVE OUR WEAKNESSES AND SINS. I ONCE HEARD SOMEONE SAY, "EVERY ONE OF US IS LIKE THE MOON - WE ALL HAVE A DARK SIDE..."

JESUS IS THE ONE WHO FULLY PRACTICED WHAT HE TAUGHT. HE TAUGHT PEOPLE TO LOVE THEIR ENEMIES AND HE ALSO SHOWED THEM WHEN HE SAID ABOUT THOSE WHO WERE CRUCIFYING HIM, "FATHER FORGIVE THEM..." THERE IT IS! THIS IS THE WAY LIFE OUGHT TO BE. THIS IS AN EXAMPLE OF THE INVISIBLE KINGDOM BECOMING VISIBLE.

THE KINGDOM OF GOD ALSO BECOMES VISIBLE IN THE MIRACLES OF JESUS. IN MATTHEW 12:22-28, JESUS ENEMIES ACCUSE HIM OF CASTING OUR DEMONS BY THE POWER OF BEELZEBUB, THE PRINCE OF DEMONS. JESUS REPLIES IN THE FAMOUS WORDS USED BY ABRAHAM LINCOLN, "A HOUSE DIVIDED AGAINST ITSELF CANNOT STAND." IF I CAST OUT DEMONS BY THE POWER OF SATAN, THEN HIS KINGDOM IS DIVIDED, BUT IF I AM USING THE POWER OF GOD, THEN THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS HERE.

I BELIEVE THIS IS WHAT JESUS IS DOING ON PALM SUNDAY. HE IS MAKING A DELIBERATE STATEMENT, "THE KINGDOM IS COMING. THE KING IS HERE!" ON PALM SUNDAY JESUS STEPS OUT OF THE PHONE BOOTH AND THE DISGUISE COMES OFF. "HOSANNA, BLESSED IS HE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD!" AS THIS HAPPENS, HIS ENEMIES DEMAND THAT HE TELL HIS DISCIPLES TO BE QUIET. JESUS REPLIES THAT IF THEY WERE SILENT THE STONES WOULD CRY OUT.

HERE SEE THE TRAGEDY OF PALM SUNDAY... THE MULTITUDES ARE REJOICING AND THE PHARISEES ARE IN THE BACKGROUND PLOTTING TO GET RID OF JESUS. DO YOU SEE THE CONTRAST ON PALM SUNDAY? DO YOU SENSE THE DARKNESS? NOT EVERYONE RECOGNIZES THE KING. NOT EVERYONE SEES THE KINGDOM. THE KINGDOM IS ONLY RECOGNIZED THROUGH THE GLASSES OF **FAITH!**

THE BIBLE TEACHES THAT A DAY IS COMING WHEN THE KINGDOM WILL BE MADE VISIBLE TO THE WHOLE WORLD! AT HIS TRIAL, AS RECORDED IN MARK 14:61-62, JESUS TELLS THE HIGH PRIEST WHO ASKS. "ARE YOU THE CHRIST?" "I AM. AND YOU WILL SEE THE SON OF MAN SEATED AT THE RIGHT HAND OF THE POWER AND COMING WITH THE CLOUDS OF HEAVEN." SCRIPTURE TELLS US THERE ARE **TWO** COMINGS OF JESUS: THE **FIRST** HAPPENED 2000 YEARS AGO - THE **SECOND** IS STILL TO COME. THE FIRST TIME HE CAME HUMBLY AND QUIETLY - THE SECOND TIME HE COMES WITH LEGIONS OF ANGELS. THE FIRST TIME JESUS CAME TO SERVE AND TO DIE - THE SECOND TIME HE COMES TO RULE AND TO JUDGE! THE NEW TESTAMENT TEACHES THAT A DAY IS COMING WHEN EVERY KNEE SHALL BOW AND EVERY TONGUE CONFESS THAT JESUS CHRIST IS LORD!

"JESUS SHALL REIGN WHERE'ER THE SUN,
DOETH HIS SUCCESSIVE JOURNEYS RUN;
HIS KINGDOM STRETCH FROM SHORE TO SHORE,
TILL MOONS SHALL WAX AND WANE NO MORE"

THIS IS WHAT WE CONFESS EVERY TIME WE TAKE COMMUNION, "AS OFTEN AS YOU EAT THIS BREAD AND TAKE THE CUP YOU REMEMBER HIS DEATH," AND WE RESPOND IN THE WORDS, "**UNTIL HE COMES**" IN OTHER WORDS, THERE IS A DAY COMING WHEN WE WILL NOT HAVE TO REMEMBER JESUS ANYMORE BECAUSE WE WILL SEE HIM FACE TO FACE!

UNTIL THAT DAY COMES, THE JOB OF YOU AND ME, AND EVERY CHRISTIAN IS TO MAKE THE INVISIBLE KINGDOM VISIBLE WHEREVER WE HAPPEN TO BE. THIS IS WHAT JESUS IS SAYING IN MATTHEW 5:16, "LET YOUR LIGHT SO SHINE BEFORE MEN THAT THEY MAY SEE YOUR GOOD WORKS AND GLORIFY YOUR FATHER WHO IS IN HEAVEN." ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON WROTE A POEM ABOUT AN OLD-FASHIONED LAMPLIGHTER IN WHICH HE DESCRIBES THE JOB OF THE LAMPLIGHTER AS "PUNCHING HOLES IN THE DARKNESS." THIS IS WHAT YOU AND I ARE CALLED TO DO AS FOLLOWERS OF JESUS; "TO PUNCH HOLES IN THE DARKNESS." - TO MAKE THE INVISIBLE KINGDOM VISIBLE!

IN MY FIRST CHURCH THERE WAS A MOTHER WITH YOUNG CHILDREN WHO HAD A DIFFICULT NEIGHBOR. ONE DAY THE MOTHER ASKED TO TALK TO ME BECAUSE SHE FOUND HER SPIRIT BECOMING BITTER TOWARD HER NEIGHBOR. I SUGGESTED SHE TRY TO PUT THE TEACHING OF JESUS INTO PRACTICE, TO RETURN GOOD FOR EVIL. "HOW CAN I POSSIBLY DO THAT?" SHE PROTESTED. I KNEW SHE HAD A REPUTATION AS A WONDERFUL COOK, SO I ASKED, "WHAT IS THE BEST THING YOU COOK?" SHE TOLD ME SHE BAKED A MEAN APPLE PIE. I SUGGESTED THE NEXT TIME SHE FELT ANGER RISING IN HER SPIRIT, SHE TURN THE FORCE OF HER ANGER INTO BAKING AN APPLE PIE, THEN GIVING IT TO HER NEIGHBOR. WITH MUCH DIFFICULTY, SHE CONSENTED TO TRY THIS, AND OVER THE COURSE OF MANY MONTHS, AND SEVERAL PIES, SHE AND THE NEIGHBOR DEVELOPED A FRIENDLY RELATIONSHIP. AN EXAMPLE OF THE INVISIBLE KINGDOM BECOMING VISIBLE...

IN ANOTHER CHURCH THE ELDERS GATHERED AT THE FRONT EVERY SUNDAY AFTER WORSHIP TO PRAY FOR ANY MEMBERS WHO NEEDED PRAYER. OUR CHOIR DIRECTOR HAD SHATTERED HIS ANKLE IN AN ACCIDENT AND IT NEVER HEALED PROPERLY. EVERY SUNDAY HE LIMPED BEHIND THE CHOIR AS THEY PROCESSED TO THE CHOIR LOFT AT THE FRONT OF THE SANCTUARY. ONE SUNDAY HE CAME AND ASKED THE ELDERS FOR PRAYER. THE NEXT SUNDAY THE CONGREGATION WAS AMAZED AS HE PROCESSED STRAIGHT AND CONFIDENTLY TO THE FRONT OF THE SANCTUARY. WHEN HE TOLD THE CONGREGATION WHAT HAD HAPPENED, SPONTANEOUS APPLAUSE BROKE OUT. WE HAD WITNESSED THE INVISIBLE KINGDOM BECOME VISIBLE. NOW, THAT DID NOT HAPPEN OFTEN, BUT EVERY ONCE IN A WHILE, WE DID SEE THE KINGDOM BECOME VISIBLE.

BROTHERS AND SISTERS, THIS IS PART OF WHAT WE PROMISE TO DO WHEN WE JOIN THE CHURCH; TO OFFER OUR LIVES FOR THE PURPOSE OF MAKING THE INVISIBLE KINGDOM VISIBLE WHERE WE LIVE AND WORK AND GO TO SCHOOL! THE MEMBERS OF FIRST MORAVIAN HAVE BEEN TRYING TO DO THIS, WITH VARYING DEGREES OF SUCCESS FOR THE PAST 272 YEARS! THE QUESTION FOR US IS THIS, "HOW LONG WILL WE GO ON TRYING TO MAKE THE INVISIBLE KINGDOM VISIBLE?" AND THE CONGREGATION ANSWERED, "**UNTIL HE COMES**"!

REV. STEVE NICHOLAS' SERMON AT
THE 272ND ANNIVERSARY OF
FIRST MORAVIAN CHURCH, YORK, PA



Congratulations to Brother Cliff Bergstresser who was installed as our licensed lay pastor on Sunday, March 3 here at First Moravian Church. Cliff is a student in the Crossroads Lay Leadership Program at Moravian Theological Seminary. Please join us in prayers of celebration for First and Brother Cliff. May God bless Cliff in his ministry to the church.

If you would like a visit or call from Cliff or communion, please contact him at 301-466-3775 or email at cbergstresser@verizon.net. He is looking forward to getting to know all members!

ELDERS NEWS

THE ELDERS MET ON TUESDAY, MARCH 12, 2024 AT 7:00 PM VIA ZOOM. WORSHIP SERVICES WERE REVIEWED. THE SCHEDULE FOR GUEST PASTORS FOR THE UPCOMING MONTH WAS DISCUSSED. PASTORAL CARE FOR OUR SHUT-INS WERE REVIEWED. THE LOVEFEAST ANNIVERSARY SERVICE ON PALM SUNDAY WAS PLANNED. CLIFF WILL BE CONTACTING MEMBERS TO INTRODUCE HIMSELF AND CHECKING WITH PARENTS TO SEE IF THERE IS ANY INTEREST IN FAITH FORMATION CLASSES FOR THE CHILDREN OF THE CHURCH. KEITH VOLUNTEERED TO ATTEND SYNOD AS OUR DELEGATE. CLIFF IS NOW ATTENDING AS OUR PASTOR. PLEASE PRAY FOR PASTORAL LEADERSHIP FOR FIRST AND COVENANT AND FOR ALL CHURCHES WITHOUT PASTORS. OUR NEXT MEETING WILL BE HELD ON TUESDAY, APRIL 9 AT 7:00 PM VIA ZOOM.

TRUSTEES NEWS

THE TRUSTEES MET ON TUESDAY, MARCH 26, 2024 AT 7:00 PM VIA ZOOM. ACTIVE PROJECTS FOR THE PARSONAGE, ANNEX, AND CHURCH WERE DISCUSSED AS WELL AS REPAIRS THAT CAN BE COMPLETED AT A LATER TIME. NEW SMOKE/CO2 DETECTORS WERE INSTALLED IN THE ANNEX. RECEIVING QUOTES FOR WINDOWS REPLACEMENT IN CHURCH AND QUOTES FOR LIGHTING REPLACEMENTS. WANDA REVIEWED THE TREASURER'S REPORT FOR THE MONTH AND REVIEWED MORGAN STANLEY ACCOUNT. THE NEXT WORKDAY WILL BE SATURDAY, APRIL 13 AT PARSONAGE AND THEN GOING TO THE CHURCH. OUR NEXT MEETING WILL BE HELD ON TUESDAY, APRIL 30 AT 7:00 PM VIA ZOOM.

THANK YOU TO KEITH RISHEL WHO HAS VOLUNTEERED TO BE OUR SYNOD DELEGATE TO REPRESENT YORK FIRST MORAVIAN AT THE EASTERN DISTRICT SYNOD ON JUNE 26TH - 29TH. CLIFF BERGSTRESSER WILL BE IN ATTENDANCE AS PASTOR FOR FIRST.



**TOTAL INCOME & OFFERINGS FROM
SUNDAYS 3/3/2024 - 3/24/2024**

\$ 4,811.00 GENERAL FUND

101.00 CHURCH ANNIVERSARY

185.00 REFURBISHING FUND

20.00 EMERGENCY NEEDS FUND

161.50 FLOWER FUND (EASTER FLOWERS)

\$ 5,278.50 OFFERING INCOME

50.00 PARKING RENTAL

1,000.00 PARSONAGE RENTAL

616.44 PARSONAGE UTILITIES PAID INCOME

58.84 ADAMS ELECTRIC OWNERSHIP REWARDS CK.

\$1,725.28 OTHER INCOME

\$7,003.78 TOTAL INCOME FOR MARCH

\$7,758.38 TOTAL EXPENSES FOR MARCH



April Birthdays

- 3 Joseph Kotchmar*
4 Spencer Lippincott*
11 Kathy McDannell*
12 Georgia Rishel
18 Julia Folk*
Meagan Purswell*
24 Gloria Moore
28 Kevin Lippincott*
Lori Lehigh*



**For Pastoral needs,
please contact:**

Cliff Bergstresser - 301-466-3775

or any of the Elders:

Steve Nicholas - 717-755-7412

John Knokey - 717-848-9220

Keith Rishel - 717-472-6793

Jeannette Sprenkle - 717-424-5636

Kasi Steinbrenner - 717-965-2032

Did you know...

We have an online giving portal! If you prefer to worship 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

April Anniversaries

- 10 Glenn & Cheri Miley*
13 Stanley & Sally Senft



Prayer Concerns

Mary Jones

Kathie Nicholas

Karrie Rishel

Cliff Rowell

Ruth & Clair Seiple

Jemon Grant

Gary Paules

Elaine Patrick

April Schedule for Guest Pastors

4/7 - Lay Pastor Cliff Bergstresser

4/14 - Rev. Terry Folk

4/21 - Rev. Marion Haynes-Weller

4/28 - Rev. Terry Folk

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www.yorkfirstmoravian.org



2024 Watchword

"May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace
as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope
by the power of the Holy Spirit."

Romans 15:13