

Ephraim Moravian Church
168th Anniversary
May 16, 2021 at 10:00 a.m.

Order of Service

“Praise to the Lord, the Almighty” – Chorale Prelude by Sigfrid Karg-Elert

Welcome & Announcements

“Take Care of this House” – by Leonard Bernstein

Ephraim Moravian Church Watchword: *The Lord said, ‘I will instruct you and teach you the way you should go’ - Psalm 32:8*

Hymn #521 (v. 1, 2 & 4): “Sun of Righteousness”

Sun of righteousness, arise, dawn upon our clouded skies
Shine within your church today that the world may see and say, “Have mercy, Lord!”

Wake your sleeping church to live, not afraid our all to give
Let the mighty acts of God spread through all the world abroad, have Mercy, Lord!

Open gates for souls to find your true way with heart and mind.
Come with all your gentle might, bringing light to darkest night, have Mercy, Lord!

Prayers of the Church/Lord’s Prayer

Congregational Sung Response (#445 Red Hymnal, v. 2)

*Sweet hour of prayer, sweet hour of prayer, thy wings shall my petition bear
To Him, whose truth and faithfulness engage the waiting soul to bless.
And since He bids me seek His face, believe His word and trust His grace,
I’ll cast on Him my every care, and wait for thee, sweet hour of prayer.*

The Holy Scriptures: Ephesians 1: 15-23
Acts 1: 1-11

Reflection

“I Love to Dwell in Spirit” - 18th Century Moravian sacred song by David Moritz Michael

Sermon

Benediction

“Gavotte” from Suite No. 3 in D Major – by J.S. Bach

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Reflection: “Take Your Pick” - by Kathleen Harris

Ephesians 1: 15-23 & Acts 1: 1-11

For me, reading passages from the four Gospels is a go-to remedy when connections to God seem frayed. The writing is alive with mystic symbolism, yet familiar. The pastoral village settings are soothing.

The Book of Acts, on the other hand, quoted this Sunday and next, sounds different. Acts tells what happens to Jesus’ friends *after* he left this earthly realm. Traumatized by violence seen during the Crucifixion, the disciples were immobilized and languishing* in an upper room in Jerusalem. Suddenly, the resurrected Christ appeared and told them, “You shall be witnesses for me,” (*Acts 1:8*) empowered by the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit, it turns out, offered strength, the ethereal kind. Another name for this spiritual kind of strength is *grace*.

Luke, the writer of Acts, reveals why and how the believers traveled 1,400 miles from Jerusalem to Rome. Unlike mostly gentle locales of the Gospels, Rome is built, brazen, and brutal. Luke further enlivens the reality tale with flamboyant main characters and peculiar sidekicks. Scenes show ways to handle topsy-turvy situations that, on the surface, seem to turn out badly. Acts is an adventure story.

Have you ever read Acts start to finish? It’s about living the unplanned life. Men and women of Acts recognize their talents, but don’t stop there. They welcome in grace, too. They trade detours for a divine destination. You may discover new relevance in Acts, especially after this past year.

Max Lucado, trained as a Church of Christ pastor, put it this way: “The wizard [of Oz] says look inside yourself and find self.” There’s another choice. “God says look inside yourself and find [the Holy Spirit]. The first will get you to Kansas. The latter will get you to heaven. Take your pick.”

[*Feeling Blah During the Pandemic? It's Called Languishing - The New York Times \(nytimes.com\)](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/12/health/coronavirus-feeling-blah.html)

Pastor.....Dawn Volpe
Music Director.....Colin Welford
Guest Singer.....Cynthia Stiehl



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