

Moravian Lovefeast and Candlelight Service

Prelude

Gathering and Welcome

***Hymn:** Joy to the World: #246 v1,2,4

Call to Worship

Leader: Creator of heaven and earth, we gather around
your table hungry and thirsty for your presence.

People: Our spirits need the sweetness of your

mercy and the immortal bread of Jesus

Christ to fill us.

Leader: Bless us with your Spirit, as we remember the
ways your love draws us nearer to you and one
another.

People: Let's feast with God who is with us. Amen!

Lighting of the Advent Candle *The Halley Family*

***Hymn:** O Come, O Come Emmanuel # 211 v.4

Giving of Tithes and Offerings

*Doxology

Introduction to the Moravian Tradition

Scripture Reading John 6: 26-35

Hymn: Come Thou Long Expected Jesus #196 v1-2

Scripture Reading 1 John 4:7-12

Hymn: It Came Upon the the Midnight Clear #218 v 1,2,4

Moravian Blessing

“Come, Lord Jesus, our guest to be, and bless these gifts
bestowed by Thee. Bless our loved ones everywhere and
keep them in Thy loving care. Amen.”

***Feasting and Fellowship** (Enjoy your hot cocoa and
cookies while you visit with one another.)

Special Music: Still, Still, Still (Handbell Choir with piano)

Scripture:

Message:

Distribution and Lighting of Candles

*May the candle you hold inspire you to welcome the light of
Christ's love this season. “Let your light shine before
others, so they may see your good work and give glory to
your Father in heaven.” Expect Christ to be your morning
star warming and brightening your way.*

***Hymn:** O Come All Ye Faithful #234 v1,3

*Christmas Blessings

**Please stand if you are able.*

History and Meaning of the Moravian Lovefeast

The Early Christians met and broke bread together to signify their union, fellowship, and love. In 1727, the Moravian Church revived this practice, establishing the tradition of celebrating the great church festivals by partaking in a simple meal known as a “Lovefeast.” The first Lovefeast of the Moravian Church in North America was held in Savannah, Georgia, during the years 1735 to 1740. The initial Lovefeast in Wachovia occurred on the evening of the arrival of the first Moravian colonists in North Carolina on November 17, 1753, at Bethabara.

The Christmas Eve Lovefeast, with its lighted candles, is one of the most beautiful services of the Moravian Church. This custom originated on the European continent at Marienboro in the year 1746 and spread throughout the Moravian world.

The first Christmas Eve Lovefeast held at Bathabara was in 1753, and at Salem in 1771. In North Carolina, candles were used for the first time in the children's Lovefeast of Bathabara and Bethania in 1762.

Every person is given a lighted candle as a reminder that Christ said, “I am the light of the world,” and “you are the light of the world.” Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father, who is in heaven.

Coming Events and Announcements

No Youth Group tonight but we have something special coming in January! Pastor Rick Jones will be starting a new youth ministry here on Sundays at 5:00 pm. If you like to play video games, this is for you! Start date is planned for January 7th. Watch for more information. Merry Christmas!

Prayer with the Pastor will not meet on December 28th. The next gathering will be on Thursday, January 4th at 4 pm in the sanctuary.

Holiday Food Drive: Please bring in your non-perishable donations by December 31st and we will deliver to Operation Reach Out in Monroe.



Need a last minute gift?

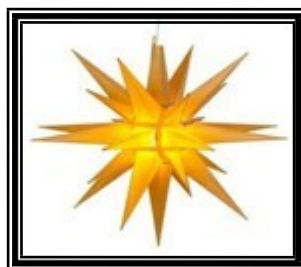


Salt of the Earth
MAKES A GREAT CHRISTMAS GIFT OR STOCKING STUFFER!

Purchase some from the church office or pick some up on Sunday at the back of the sanctuary. Christmas shop and support missions at the same time!

Prayer Requests

Carter Plyler	William Pfister
Enza Carr	Alan Mears
Loretta Hatley	James Samuel
Jane McNeely	Patsy McGee
Jamie Reid Johnson	Rita Brunson
Family of Minerva Adame Carnahan (Pastor Norma's Aunt)	



Church Office: 704-843-3931
amy@waxhawumc.com
Pastor Norma: 816-351-4232
pastornorma@waxhawumc.com
www.facebook.com/waxhawumc
www.waxhawumc.com

On December 17th

Number in attendance at Worship: 36
Giving: Regular offering \$2,503
Christ Child offering: \$1,420

Moravian Love Feast

A unique worship celebration



Waxhaw United Methodist Church

Sunday, December 24, 2023

Pastor Norma Villagrana