



Happy New Year!

Looking for new ways to make an impact in the year ahead? Join us as we kick off a new year of mission and ministry for 2015.

Read on to learn how Morrow Church makes an impact in our local community and around the world--and how you can, too!

Save the Date! Church Leader Workshop

JAN.

3

SAT.

All members of church committees and ministry teams are asked to attend our Church Leader Workshop on Saturday, January 3, from 9am-11am, in Fellowship Hall.

We'll workshop goals and objectives for the church in the coming year and the roles of each ministry team in helping to fulfill them.

In This Issue

- Pastor's Letter
New Year's Greetings Pg 2
- Family Ministry Events
Partner Update Pg 3
- Christmas Highlights Pg 4
- Upcoming Events Pg 5
- Morrow Church Calendar Pg 7
- Stay Connected Pg 8

Beginning Again, But Never Alone

New Year's Greetings from Pastor Chris Heckert

As the new year approaches, many of us are making resolutions for fresh beginnings, a way to leave behind us the year of old and begin anew the season that awaits us.

We may be drafting lists of old habits to break and new habits to adopt, or sketching outlines of goals and plans for the year ahead. At the beginning of this new year, we actively seek renewal and reconciliation.

We seek ways to make all things new. And we are not alone in this work.

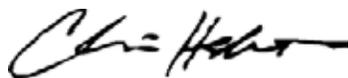
The beauty of our Christian faith is that we worship a God who not only created, but continues to create. God creates new opportunities, new relationships, and grace anew.

In our faith, we can find renewal for the year ahead. We can find the eyes to see what is created anew in our lives and in our world.

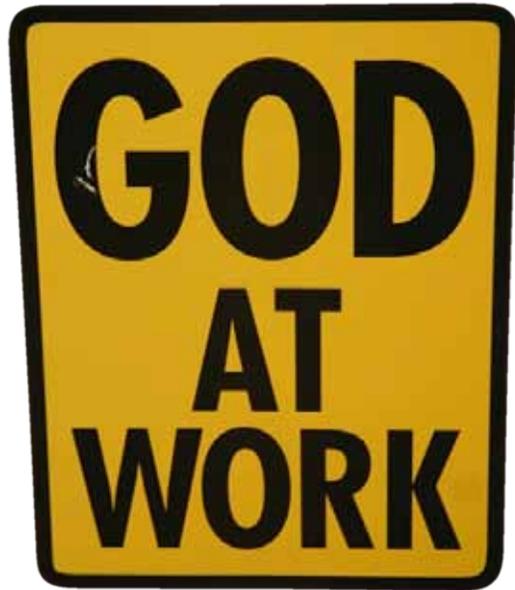
What do you hope for in this newness? Where do you need renewal?

As we encounter a fresh season—a new beginning in our lives, our communities, and our world—let us think about how we, alongside and with our God, might make all things new.

Grace and peace,



Rev. Chris Heckert, Senior Pastor



Youth & Family Ministry Events

Welcome in the new year with these fun and exciting events for youth and families!

JAN.

19

Martin Luther King, Jr.
Day of Service

MON.

Join us in our commemoration of Martin Luther King, Jr. with a day of service for our local community.

Check the website for a schedule of service opportunities throughout the day.

JAN.

24

Family Beach Party,
4:00-6:30pm

SAT.

Escape the winter weather at our beach party, held right here in our very own Fellowship & MacDonald Halls. It's all the fun & magic of Vacation Bible School, but for the whole family!

Join us for an evening of fun & sharing as we turn up the heat, don our summer clothes, & make-believe we're at the beach. We'll play games, snack on beach-shack food, make crafts, learn about beach science, & share bonfire stories!

Supporting Recovery Efforts in Sierra Leone

As public health in Liberia improves, we pray that the help now arriving in Sierra Leone—including the ambulance we sent—will help people there make similar progress in tackling Ebola. Yet our work does not end there.

Bishop John Yambasu says,

It has and will continue to be busy for me till the next two months, when we hope the Ebola epidemic will begin to show signs of tipping down. Leading the UMC and the interfaith Ebola response programs has been challenging, but at the same time wonderful experiences for me. Thanks to our many partners and friends like you who help to carry some of the load off our shoulders... There has been a great decline of the disease in Kailahun, Kenema, and Bo, the initial epicenters of the disease. The concentration of the disease is now in the densely populated capital city Freetown and in the Port Loko, Bombali and Koinadugu districts.

The next challenge for Sierra Leone and the UMC there will be recovery. The economy, which had been improving before the Ebola crisis, has been set back in fundamental ways. In addition to the loss of trade and jobs, funding for basic needs like health and education has been greatly diminished.

As Olivia Fonnies, Director of Youth & Education for the UMC of Sierra Leone, says: "My family is well, by the grace of God. Thanks so much for your concern and prayers... [But] schools are still closed. Our children are being taught over the radio and television, just those who can afford it. Some of the children are out in the street doing petty trading, thus exposing them to so many things, especially the girls. It's really sad."

Our new task at Morrow Church is to adapt our support to help in the rebuilding work of the UMC in Sierra Leone. To learn more about our efforts, including how to support our work, please contact Tim Roebuck at timroebuck@aol.com.



Indeed, we the people of Sierra Leone are going through difficult times. But we continue to trust our God and believe very soon Ebola will be of the past.



**- Olivia Fonnies,
Director of Youth and Education for the UMC of Sierra Leone**

Don't Miss These Holiday Highlights!

Celebrating the Season with Candlelight Carols



Two bell ensembles, three choirs, and the Lyrica Chamber Orchestra—65 musicians in all—led the congregation in familiar carols and other special offerings to celebrate the Christmas season during this year's Candlelight Carols.

Heavenly Handbells opened the evening with "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel" on chimes from the balcony as part of the service's prelude. The featured work for the evening was the Gloria, by John Rutter, a 20-minute piece for choir and brass performed by the Chancel Choir and Lyrica Chamber Orchestra.

Other special features included the Worship Arts choir singing "The Holly and The Ivy" and the Youth Choir singing "It Came Upon A Midnight Clear" as re-imagined by recording artist Sara Groves. Pealing Bells played arrangements of beloved Christmas classics like "The First Noel" and "Infant Holy, Infant Lowly." At the offering, which was designated for the Pastor's Discretionary Fund, the Chancel Choir sang "Ding Dong Merrily on High" and Heavenly Handbells played "Carol of the Bells" for some lighter entertainment.

The congregation joined in the singing with Christmas favorites like "Once in Royal David's City," "Hark The Herald Angels Sing," "Angels We Have Heard on High," and "O Come All Ye Faithful."



Gifts that Keep On Giving...

Interfaith Hospitality Network

Once again, for one week during the holiday season, Morrow Church became home to 4 families from the Interfaith Hospitality Network (IHN). Our guests included 6 adults and 7 children.

Because of this one week, a grandmother was able to stay with her grandson while her daughter was exiting another shelter program. A young family, living apart was finally reunited. A couple was able to get married and find sponsored veteran housing for a year. And finally, a single mother was able to find a new job and begin her search for an apartment without disrupting her daughter's schooling.

This was all made possible by a "village" of volunteers from our Morrow Church community and beyond. We are ever grateful for your generosity, not only of time and effort but also of heart and spirit.

Help-a-Family-at-Christmas

This Christmas, Meeting Emergency Needs With Dignity (MEND) provided more than food for those in need through Morrow Church. MEND is a coalition of 18 faith-based food pantries in Essex County, NJ, whose anti-hunger network has provided emergency food to individuals & families in crisis for more than thirty years.

Once again, our church community came through with an overwhelming response to the call to help provide Christmas for families in Essex County. 26 donors from Morrow Church helped make Christmas for 18 families, totaling 75 individuals. Not only were gifts generously purchased and beautifully wrapped, monetary donations were given in the amount of \$1,000.00, which provided grocery gift cards for each family.

Thank you, Morrow Church, for once again helping to meet the needs of our local community at Christmas!

Advent by Candlelight: A Gallery



One Starry Night



On December 20, Morrow Church became the sight of 90 time-travelers going back more than 2,000 years to ancient Bethlehem.

Our 4- to 10-year-olds toured the marketplace of Bethlehem for the morning, visiting merchants and other residents as they heard about the spectacular events of the first Christmas.

Thanks to our high school and college volunteers, children were able to make dreidels, learn new music and dances, visit the inn and stable, and meet the music maker, the tinsmith, and the basket weaver--all while hearing the different experiences of shepherds and angels who witnessed the birth of a special baby.

Worship at The Table January 7, 8pm



We invite you to join us in the chapel on Wednesday, January 7, at 8pm for The Table, a unique worship service specially designed by

Pastor Chris.

We will gather for prayer, receive inspiration, and share in communion. This monthly service will engage your senses through art, ritual, and diverse music styles.

All who hunger for a deeper spiritual experience, come to the table.

Pre-Register for Preschool January 5-9



Interested in enrolling your child in preschool? Now's your chance!

From January 5 through January 9, Morrow Church families can pre-register for

enrollment at Morrow Memorial Preschool for the 2015-16 school year.

Copies of the registration forms for 2 1/2-year-old, 3-year-old, and 4-year-old classes will be available outside of the Director's office beginning on December 15.

More information, including additional copies of the registration form and the tuition policy, are available online at www.morrowpreschool.org.

Fall Updates



Morrow After-School Enrichment Program

Every Tuesday and Wednesday, 18 third- and fourth-graders from Seth Boyden Elementary School explore science, engineering, and technology here at Morrow Church.

Thanks to support from the United Methodist Women, the students participate in the Inventors Hall of Fame after-school program, where they take on science and engineering problems each week. They also are part of the First Lego League, a fun and rich program in

which students learn to tackle design and software programming challenges.

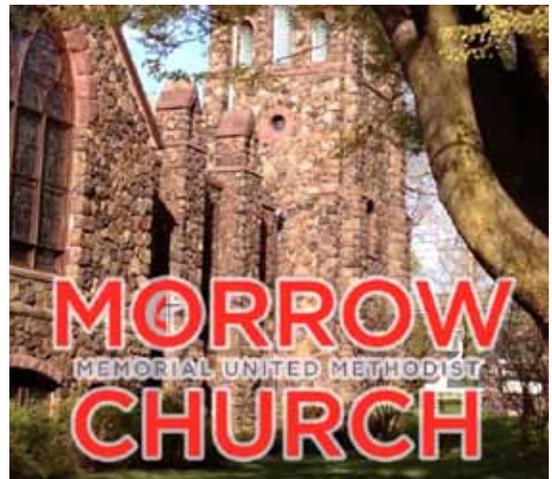
In addition to all the STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) fun, students get homework support from our dedicated volunteers. Program Director Jonelle Bonta and Education Director Turner Zimmermann have amazing volunteer tutors that help support all the fun learning experiences. Look out for castles and catapults--as well as Lego robots--when you walk the halls of Morrow Church on Tuesdays and Thursdays!

Morrow Church Financial Report for Year-End 2014

Our financial year ends on December 31, 2014. Morrow Church will end the year in the financial position we projected – with neither an income nor a loss - if all pledged giving is received.

If you haven't fulfilled your 2014 giving, we pray that the year has been good to you and that you'll be able to fulfill the gift you've pledged with joy and thanksgiving.

You may contribute electronically at www.morrowchurch.org or by check. Please indicate "2014 Pledge." Thank you!



Where's Your Name Badge?

We hope to have a name badge for everyone who attends worship here.

If you don't have one, please put a note in the offering plate or send an email to Margaret Prentice, Membership Secretary, at prentice.margaret@gmail.com.

Help us make Morrow Church a place "where everybody knows your name!"

Morrow Church Calendar

JAN.

1

THURS.

New Year's Day
Church Office Closed

JAN.

3

SAT.

Church Leader Workshop,
9am

JAN.

4

SUN.

Communion Sunday

JAN.

5

MON.

Pre-Registration for Morrow
Memorial Preschool Begins

JAN.

7

WED.

The Table: Music and
Communion, 8:00pm

JAN.

11

SUN.

United Methodist Women
Board Meeting, 11:45am

JAN.

13

TUES.

Church Council Meeting,
7:30pm

JAN.

19

MON.

Martin Luther King, Jr.
Day of Service
Church Office Closed

JAN.

24

SAT.

Family Beach Party, 4pm

JAN.

27

TUES.

Board of Trustees Meeting,
7:30pm

JAN.

30

FRI.

Morrow Youth Fellowship
& Junior Youth Fellowship
Retreat Begins

FEB.

1

SUN.

Morrow Youth Fellowship
& Junior Youth Fellowship
Retreat Ends

FEB.

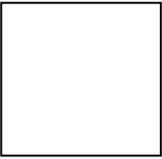
4

WED.

The Table: Music and
Communion, 8pm

Check our online calendar for more event details!

We seek to live as a diverse, multi-generational, Christian community where lives are transformed.



MORROW MEMORIAL UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
600 Ridgewood Rd,
Maplewood, NJ 07040

Stay Connected

Find out more about upcoming events and new opportunities to grow in faith and serve others.

“Grafted” Newsletter

Read our monthly newsletter, which is distributed online, by email, & by post. Print copies are available by request.

Morrow Church App

Search for “Morrow Memorial UMC” or “Morrow Church” in the app store on your iPhone or Android device. Download it for free to access devotional resources, an events calendar, & more!

Facebook

Join our Morrow Church Facebook page and Morrow Church Facebook group.

Morrow News

Stay up-to-date with this weekly e-blast featuring Morrow Church community news and events.

Children & Youth

Check out our weekly e-blast for children & youth, which includes upcoming service activities, ministry events, & more!

Morrow Church Website

Visit us online at www.morrowchurch.org. Read the latest news, subscribe to our calendar, & more!

Download the App!



Our Morrow Church app is available for iPhones and Android phones.

Download it today!