

# Connected

October 2015



## Our Newsletter Got a Makeover!

You may have noticed something different about this month's issue... Our newsletter, previously known as "Grafted," is now called "Connected." With this new name, we hope to reflect the warm, friendly, and inviting community that is Morrow Church. So grab a copy for a friend, flip through these pages, and get connected!

### Upcoming Worship Celebrations

OCT.

4

SUN.

World Communion  
Sunday

OCT.

11

SUN.

Blessing of the  
Animals

OCT.

18

SUN.

Laity  
Sunday

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# We Are Called to Be a Family

Fall Greetings from Rev. Bradford Motta

During worship on Sunday mornings, we gather with many people we may not typically meet, spend time with, or otherwise get to know. For many of us, the same may be true for our birth families! Every family seems to have that one relative -- the aunt who marches to the beat of her own drum, let's say, or the uncle who no one ever seems to know much about but who nonetheless becomes the subject of endless talk around the dinner table. There are the vocal family members and the quiet ones; there are those who are quite successful and those who never really found their niche. Families are made up of people of all kinds of gifts, abilities, personalities, and idiosyncrasies. That's what makes family so interesting!



Church families are no different. While most of us are not connected by any blood relationship, by gathering together as a church we become a family by choice. We claim one another. We recognize that we come from different backgrounds and situations but we choose to consider that difference a strength rather than a liability. We may not always like the same things or agree on everything, but we make a commitment to listen to, learn from, and walk alongside one another in faith. This is what it means to be family.

I've only been here for a few months as your pastor, and yet already I feel a deep connection to our Morrow Church family. I think of the people in our nearby communities who feel isolated and alone. There are people who miss the childhood experience of church but feel intimidated by the thought of entering a new, unfamiliar one. Others, having never belonged to a church (or to a church that welcomed them), have never experienced the joy and fellowship a church family like ours can offer. I believe that every person who walks through our doors is a potential "family member." I think many of you feel the same way. So let's do all we can to greet one another, new visitor and longtime member alike, as if we were at one big family reunion.

In Christian love,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Brad".

Rev. Dr. Bradford L. Motta, Senior Pastor

# Church Conference on October 13

It's that time of year!

Our Church Conference is on Tuesday, October 13, at 7:30pm here at Morrow Church.

We'll meet in Fellowship Hall to review the amazing work we've done over the past year and revitalize our mission and ministry for the year ahead.

Attending Church Conference offers members of our community a unique opportunity to help make decisions and provide vital input about our ministry goals and mission work.

Join us for this yearly event as we gather for learning, fellowship, and community-building.

# Finance Update

## Support Morrow Church

We have an exciting new year ahead of us here at Morrow Church! Please prayerfully consider giving what you are able to support our church community's vital mission and ministry.

Here is our current financial situation:

Total income year-to-date: \$496,049.53

Total expenses year-to-date: \$532,330.05

Total deficit year-to-date: \$36,280.52

If you haven't made or completed your pledge yet, or if you think you can give a little more, now's the time!

We're grateful for any additional gifts we receive.

## Welcoming Our IHN Guests in True Morrow Style



Last month, from September 13-20, we welcomed 4 families from the Interfaith Hospitality Network. We transformed our Learning Celebration classrooms into cozy, private living spaces for each family. Here are just a few highlights from our guests' stay:

On Monday evening, our guests enjoyed a hearty dinner of meatloaf, mashed potatoes, and green beans. The night was action-packed with fun games like Twister, Duck-Duck-Goose, Chutes & Ladders, and more. Rumor has it there was even a brief dance session to a "Heart and Soul"

duet on the piano! On Tuesday, Paula Marchese and her daughters, Siena and Gabriella, provided pizza and spinach salad for dinner with make-your-own sundaes for dessert. The next evening, Route 45 (our new youth group for 4th- and 5th-graders) prepared delicious burritos for our guests. On Thursday, after a tasty meal of burgers and potato salad, with blondies for dessert, church member Andrew Capone entertained everyone with his mad yo-yo skills. At the end of the week, on Friday evening, some of our guests had a movie night in the Media Center while others explored downtown.

Saturday was the busiest day by far! Our guests enjoyed a gourmet breakfast of omelets, croissants, turkey bacon, and fruit, prepared by church member Elma Witherspoon. (She even brought some of her brother's homemade donuts!) Church member Shanta Gyan and her daughter's Girl Scout troop entertained our younger guests with games, crafts, and healthy snacks and played with them outside on the playground.

Before coming, one of our guests had been told, "You're going to like Morrow!" During their stay, our families told us time and again how much they enjoyed their stay with us and the kindness we showed them. Thank you, Morrow Church Family, for your warmth, generosity, and hospitality!

# Lock-In for Junior Youth Fellowship

October 23-24

Break out your sleeping bags and pillows!

The first overnight for Junior Youth Fellowship (Grades 6-8) will be held on Friday, October 23, at 7pm, to Saturday, October 24, at 8am.

We'll take over the church and stay all night so we can do more, play more, and care more! Friends are always welcome.

For more details, contact Rev. Brenda Ehlers, Associate Pastor, at [behlers@morrowchurch.org](mailto:behlers@morrowchurch.org).

# Feast on Food & Fellowship at the UMW Luncheon

On Wednesday, October 7, the United Methodist Women will be hosting a luncheon at 12:30pm in Fellowship Hall.

Please bring a covered dish to share. We also welcome a small freewill donation for those who would like to come but are unable to bring a dish.

The UMW luncheon offers people a wonderful chance to gather for food and fellowship while learning more about who the United Methodist Women are and what we do here at Morrow Church. We welcome both men & women at our luncheon.

There's no need to sign up in advance.

# Paddle Tennis Raises \$4,000 for Sierra Leone



Through our Paddle Tennis Marathon, held on September 26, we raised

\$4,000 for schools in Sierra Leone, which have been struggling to serve students in the aftermath of the Ebola crisis.

The weather was perfect, and we had a fun day of playing paddle tennis for a wonderful cause. In all, we played 14 hours of tennis!

We also were able to engage a lot of new people from outside our current church membership.

Check out more of our pictures on page 6!

# Maggie Barra Fighting Lyme Disease

Church member Jim George has initiated an effort to help Maggie Barra, the daughter of Jonelle Bonta, who has been in and out of the hospital for six months fighting Lyme disease.

Medical expenses run about \$1,000 per week and are not covered by insurance.

This is a tremendous financial and emotional burden on her family.

If you'd like to make a donation, you may send it to:

Maggie Barra  
P.O. Box 363  
South Orange, NJ, 07079

You may also give online via [www.gofundme.com/Maggie-Barra](http://www.gofundme.com/Maggie-Barra).

Any donation is appreciated.

# Blessing of the Animals on October 11



At our 10:30am worship celebration on Sunday, October 11, we'll hold a special Blessing of the Animals, a tradition that goes back hundreds of years.

Most people attribute the celebrations to St. Francis of Assisi, founder of the Franciscan Order and patron saint of animals and the environment, who believed that all of God's creation reveals the nature of God and God's love. Saint Francis was canonized as a Roman Catholic saint by Pope Gregory IX on 16 July 1228, but many Christian traditions celebrate the event, including United Methodists.

We invite you to bring your friendly, well-behaved pets to our 10:30am worship celebration on Sunday, October 11, for our church community's Blessing of the Animals.

Please note that all animals should be under control and kept on leashes or in carriers. Nervous or aggressive animals, or pets who have already passed, can be represented via photos, stuffed animals, drawings, or statues. Children are also invited to bring their stuffed animals. We'll have a photo board available to post pictures of beloved pets who cannot be present with us.

There will be a general blessing over all the animals, followed by a blessing of individual pets for people who would like them. A section of the sanctuary will be reserved as a pet-free zone for people with allergies.

## World Communion Sunday on October 4

On October 4, we'll celebrate World Communion Sunday with other Christians from diverse denominations around the world as we share holy communion during worship.

While each of us may celebrate communion differently, World Communion Sunday is a day to remember our unity around the table.

That unity is even more important now, as many of our Christian communities grapple with and disagree on various issues.

Join us on this special day as we gather to remember the sacrament that Jesus himself gave us by sharing communion with different breads from around the world.

## Laity Sunday on October 18

Our vibrant faith community here at Morrow Church is made up of diverse, gifted individuals who contribute to our mission and ministries in invaluable ways.

Each year we have the opportunity to recognize and celebrate these people on Laity Sunday, when we gather to celebrate the gifts of non-clergy in the life of our church community.

This year we'll celebrate Laity Sunday on October 18 with a special worship service led by our laity, or lay people (members of our congregation who are not clergy).

We hope you'll join us for this joyful worship celebration as we give special thanks for the lay members of our congregation.

# Give Us 5! What We Love about Morrow



Love Morrow Church as much as we do? Show off your favorite things about Morrow Church with our new “Give Me 5!” campaign.

Use social media (#high5morrow) to post 5 words or phrases that best describe what you love and appreciate most about our church community. You can also email your list of five words to us directly at [opendoors@morrowchurch.org](mailto:opendoors@morrowchurch.org). And if you prefer to send in your five words the old-fashioned way, just pick up a “Give Me 5!” card at church and drop it in the collection basket or bring it by the church office.

As a church community, we seek to be a movement for positive and lasting change in the world. Be a part of that change! Connect with others through our “Give Us 5!” campaign as we discover new ways to be the presence of Christ in a world that’s constantly changing. We’ll share everyone’s responses online and at worship celebrations on Sunday.

## Fall Picture Gallery



**OCT.**  
**1**  
**THURS.** 9:30am, Sisters in Faith  
7:00pm, aPealing Bells Rehearsal  
7:45pm, Chancel Choir Rehearsal

**OCT.**  
**2**  
**FRI.** 7:00pm, Junior Youth Fellowship Meeting

**OCT.**  
**4**  
**SUN.** WORLD COMMUNION SUNDAY  
8:15am, Worship in the Chapel  
9:00am, Community Breakfast  
9:15am, Learning Celebration  
10:30am, Worship in the Sanctuary  
11:30am, Fellowship Hour  
1:00pm, Women's Ministry Retreat  
7:00pm, Morrow Youth Fellowship Meeting

**OCT.**  
**6**  
**TUES.** 9:00am, Caregivers Ministry

**OCT.**  
**7**  
**WED.** 4:00pm, Cherub Choir  
4:00pm, Wesley Choir  
6:45pm, Youth Choir  
7:30pm, Finance Committee Meeting

**OCT.**  
**8**  
**THURS.** 9:30am, Sisters in Faith  
7:00pm, aPealing Bells  
7:45pm, Chancel Choir Rehearsal

**OCT.**  
**9**  
**FRI.** 7:00pm, Junior Youth Fellowship Meeting

**OCT.**  
**11**  
**SUN.** BLESSING OF THE ANIMALS  
8:15am, Worship in the Chapel  
9:00am, Community Breakfast  
9:15am, Learning Celebration  
10:30am, Worship in the Sanctuary  
11:30am, Fellowship Hour  
3:00pm, Coffee Hour with Pastor Brad  
6:30pm, Morrow Youth Fellowship Meeting

**OCT.**  
**13**  
**TUES.** 9:00am, Caregivers Ministry  
5:30pm, UMW Budget Meeting  
7:30pm, Church Conference

**OCT.**  
**14**  
**WED.** 4:00pm, Cherub Choir  
4:00pm, Wesley Choir  
5:30PM, Route 45  
6:45pm, Youth Choir

**OCT.**  
**15**  
**THURS.** 9:30am, Sisters in Faith  
10:00am, Martha Circle  
7:00pm, aPealing Bells  
7:45pm, Chancel Choir Rehearsal

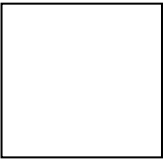
**OCT.**  
**16**  
**FRI.** 7:00pm, Junior Youth Fellowship Meeting

**OCT.**  
**18**  
**SUN.** LAITY SUNDAY  
8:15am, Worship in the Chapel  
9:00am, Community Breakfast  
9:15am, Learning Celebration  
10:30am, Worship in the Sanctuary  
11:30am, Fellowship Hour  
3:00pm, Coffee Hour with Pastor Brad  
7:00pm, Morrow Youth Fellowship Meeting

**OCT.**  
**19**  
**MON.** 7:30pm, Building and Grounds Committee Meeting

**OCT.**  
**20**  
**TUES.** 9:00am, Caregivers Ministry

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

## Check Out Our New Database!



Update your profile in our new online directory!

With Ministry Tracker, you can find contact information for fellow community

members, upload important documents like medical forms and permission slips, and sign up for upcoming events.

Look for the link to your unique membership portal in your in-box!

You can also scan the QR code above or visit [www.morrowchurch.org](http://www.morrowchurch.org) to log in (under "Resources").