

Statement To Be Read for Moravian Music Sunday 2026

An argument has been made that perhaps every Sunday is Moravian Music Sunday and on a certain level that is true. Imagine a service without a liturgy, without hymns, anthems, or a benediction. The message of the service might remain, but all the color would be gone. The qualities that make us who we are would disappear. From the earliest years of the church, music has been used by the Moravians to spread God's message, to build community, and to praise the beauty and glory of God.

This year in the United States we are marking the Semiquincentennial—the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence. Through all the ups and downs that this country has faced, the Moravians have been there. Back in 1783, with the Revolutionary War finally coming to an end, the Moravians in North Carolina received a letter from Governor Alexander Martin proclaiming July 4th as a day of celebration and thanksgiving. The war had been a trying time for the Moravians, who had found themselves villainized by both sides for their pacifism. The reality was that they had much to lose. Despite the end of the war, their future was far from certain. Their response to this proclamation, however, was a remarkable Lovefeast Ode, which Johann Friedrich Peter named the *Psalm of Joy*. Written to celebrate the end of the conflict, the Moravians, notably, did not revel in victory, but rather sought unity in the promise of peace. In this year of celebration, turmoil, joy, and anxiety, we choose to honor that legacy by searching for peace in whatever form it can be found. As Moravians have done for centuries, we choose to turn to God and our music. Whether it is on an international, national, local, or even personal level, we are all searching for and praying to find the peace that comes from God's love and presence. On this day, let us remember all of those who are desperately searching for peace in their lives. May we each feel a small part of that peace in the practice of raising our voices together in harmony.

Moravian Music Sunday offers the opportunity to celebrate the joy of music and its importance in the lives of so many Moravians over the centuries. We are reminded today of the importance of our musical heritage and the beauty and comfort it has provided us for generations. The Moravian Music Foundation is an interprovincial agency of the Moravian Church in America, Northern and Southern Provinces. It preserves, shares, and celebrates Moravian music through publications and recordings, workshops and events, educational outreach, and Moravian Music Festivals. The Foundation is the custodian of this legacy, but as Moravians, this music is your inheritance. While we enjoy and cherish our music, we must also protect it for those who have yet to come. Visit the Foundation's website – MoravianMusic.org – for more information, and please contact the Foundation's office in Bethlehem or Winston-Salem if the staff can serve you or this congregation.

Sing to the Lord a new song, for God has done marvelous things!