

Welcome to a Celebration of Ordination to Service as Deacon

For Sister Byrnes Craig

Moravian Theological Seminary | March 7, 2026 3:00PM

Welcome to this service of ordination for Sister Byrnese Craig
Clergy and their families are invited to gather down the hall in the Genadendal
classroom before the service begins.

Restrooms are available outside the Saal. There are gendered restrooms available
outside the kitchen, and a non-gendered and family friendly restroom with a
changing table which can be found if you turn right at the first hallway towards the
offices.

There is a crafting table to the side of the room with activities for children and
people of all ages. Feel free to move around the room during the service in
whatever way you are most comfortable. There will be live and recorded music at
various points during this service and the lights will remain on. To the right of the
room is a door that goes directly outdoors to the seminary courtyard, it is not
locked or alarmed, you are welcome to use it if needed. This service is being
recorded.

Please join us for a reception after the service.

Prelude

Becky Lepore

Welcome and Prayer of Invocation

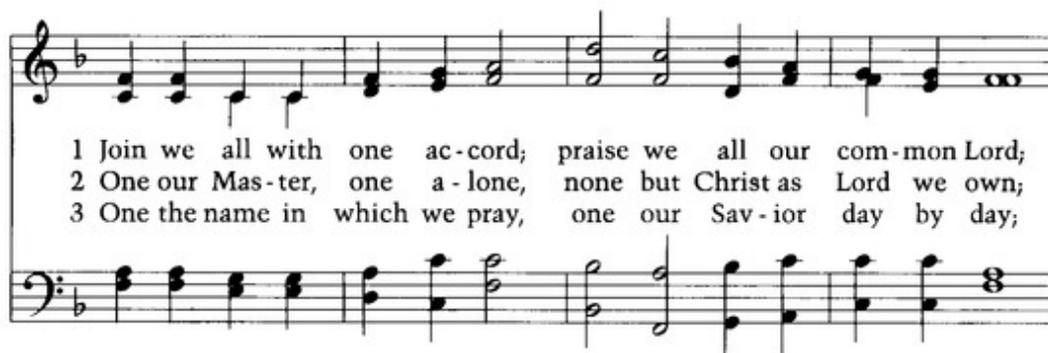
Rev. Dr. Eileen Edwards

We greet you as we join with our Savior in the ordination of Byrnese Craig
as a deacon in the Moravian Church.

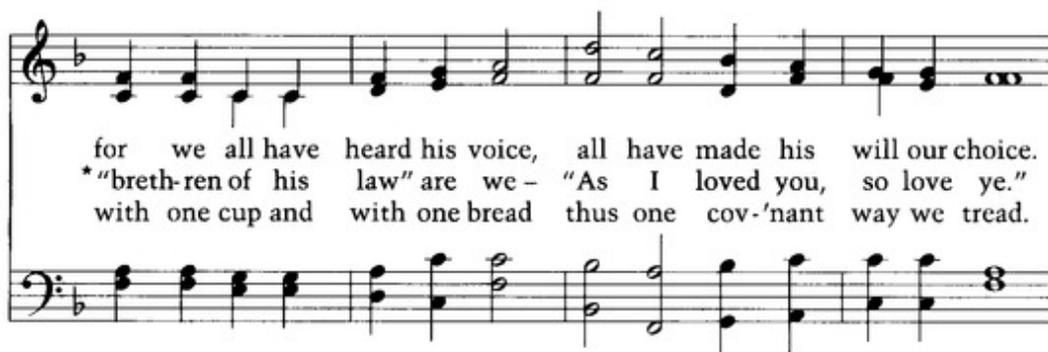
*You are invited to rise **as you are able**, in body or in spirit,
to join in this first hymn and following liturgy.*

Join We All with One Accord

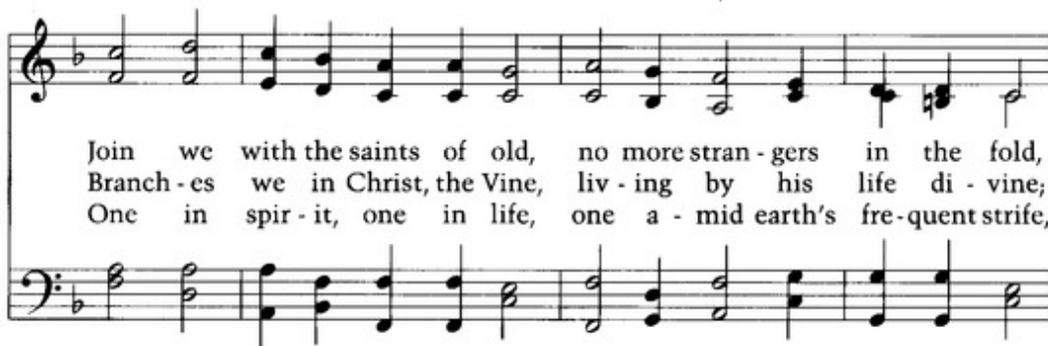
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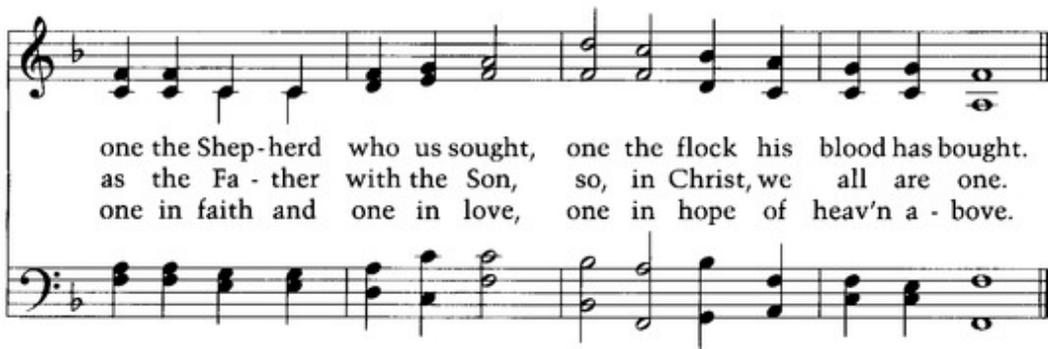
1 Join we all with one ac-cord; praise we all our com-mon Lord;
 2 One our Mas-ter, one a-lone, none but Christ as Lord we own;
 3 One the name in which we pray, one our Sav-ior day by day;



for we all have heard his voice, all have made his will our choice.
 * "breth-ren of his law" are we - "As I loved you, so love ye."
 with one cup and with one bread thus one cov-'nant way we tread.



Join we with the saints of old, no more stran-gers in the fold,
 Branch-es we in Christ, the Vine, liv-ing by his life di-vine,
 One in spir-it, one in life, one a-mid earth's fre-quent strife,



one the Shep-herd who us sought, one the flock his blood has bought.
 as the Fa-ther with the Son, so, in Christ, we all are one.
 one in faith and one in love, one in hope of heav'n a-bove.

* This was a name applied to itself by the Moravian Church in the fifteenth century.

TEXT: Matthew of Kunwald (1457) or Gabriel Komarovsky (1467)
 Tr. Michael Weisse (1531). Moravian tr. (1904)

7.7.7.D. Trochaic

TUNE: Jan Roh (1544), alt.

GAUDEAMUS PARITER

One: We praise you, Oh God, our Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer; your saving work shines through all the ages.

All: You have never turned away from us, even when we have turned away from you; but in your covenant of salvation, you call us through the law and the prophets to be your holy people.

One: We thank you for fulfilling your covenant through the eternal ministry of Jesus Christ, our only Lord and Savior.

All: Christ freely accepted our human nature to live, teach, suffer, die, and rise again for the forgiveness of sins, that we might share in eternal life.

One: We thank you for the ministry committed by Christ to the whole church to proclaim the gospel.

All: Through the gifts of your Holy Spirit, you call each of us into church and empower us to make the saving work of Christ visible on earth.

One: We thank you that you call individuals from among us to the ordained ministry of Word and Sacrament.

All: They serve among us to lead, strengthen, challenge, and nourish our ministry together in Christ.

One: Especially on this day, we thank you for your call to Byrnes and for her dedication to serve in your name.

All: To you be the glory, praise, adoration and thanksgiving both now and forever. Amen.

Please be seated.

Readings from Scripture

Victoria Teller

Jeremiah 31:31-34

The days are surely coming, says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah. It will not be like the covenant that I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt—a covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, says the Lord. But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. No longer shall they teach one another or say to each other, “Know the Lord,” for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, says the Lord, for I will forgive their iniquity and remember their sin no more.

Luke 1:46-55

And Mary said,
“My soul magnifies the Lord,

and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,
for he has looked with favor on the lowly state of his servant.
Surely from now on all generations will call me blessed,
for the Mighty One has done great things for me,
and holy is his name;
indeed, his mercy is for those who fear him
from generation to generation.
He has shown strength with his arm;
he has scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.
He has brought down the powerful from their thrones
and lifted up the lowly;
he has filled the hungry with good things
and sent the rich away empty.
He has come to the aid of his child Israel,
in remembrance of his mercy,
according to the promise he made to our ancestors,
to Abraham and to his descendants forever.”

Reading from the Gospel

Mark Whitman

Luke 24:28-35

“As they came near the village to which they were going, he walked ahead as if he were going on. But they urged him strongly, saying, “Stay with us, because it is almost evening and the day is now nearly over.” So he went in to stay with them. When he was at the table with them, he took bread,

blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. Then their eyes were opened, and they recognized him, and he vanished from their sight. They said to each other, “Were not our hearts burning within us while he was talking to us on the road, while he was opening the scriptures to us?” That same hour they got up and returned to Jerusalem, and they found the eleven and their companions gathered together. They were saying, “The Lord has risen indeed, and he has appeared to Simon!” Then they told what had happened on the road and how he had been made known to them in the breaking of the bread.” The word of God for the people of God.

All: Thanks be to God.

Special Music - *Dear Me* by Nichole Nordeman

Message - Rt. Rev. M. Blair Couch

Presentation of the Candidate

(A representative of the Provincial Elders’ Conference (Rev. Melissa Johnson) and two other representatives, one from the clergy (Rev. Mikayla Sauerbrey) and one from the laity (Eli Craig), escort the candidate to the chancel as the following hymn is sung. According to tradition this text was written for the ordination of the first Moravian ministers in 1467.)

FREUEN WIR UNS

Come, let us all with glad - ness raise
 God gave us faith - ful ones to lead
 Fa - ther in heav'n, ful - fill your word,

a joy - ous song of thanks and praise
 and help us in our time of need;
 grant us the Spir - it of our Lord;

to God, who rules the heav'n - ly host,
 but, Lord, all pow'r is yours a - lone,
 that through your truth, which can - not fail,

God, Fa - ther, Son, and Ho - ly Ghost.
 and you the work must car - ry on.
 we may o'er ev - 'ry ill pre - vail.

*(The Rev. Melissa Johnson, as representative of the Provincial Elders’
Conference addresses the Rt. Rev. Couch)*

On behalf of this province of the Moravian Church, we request that Byrnese Craig be ordained as deacon. We believe that she is sound in doctrine and faith and has a sincere intention to serve Christ and the church through the power of the Holy Spirit.

The Bishop responds:

In response to your request, it is my joy to carry out this ministry of ordination on behalf of the whole church.

*The representatives return to their seats and the bishop addresses the
candidate.*

Byrnese do you trust that you have been brought by divine grace to know Jesus Christ as your Savior?

This is my humble trust.

Do you believe in the truth of the Old and New Testaments, as inspired by the Holy Spirit?

I do.

Do you freely accept the obligations of an ordained minister to study, pray, care for souls, preach, teach, and administer the sacraments in Christ's church?

I freely accept them.

Do you accept the commission to evangelize and give witness to the saving grace which is found in Jesus Christ?

I do.

Do you solemnly promise, as you serve in our Unity, to give obedience to the faith and order of the Moravian Church as these are formulated under Scripture and the Holy Spirit by our Synods and constituted authorities?

I solemnly promise obedience to them.

The Bishop addresses the congregation:

Members in God's Family, as representatives of the Body of Christ, will you uphold, affirm, and encourage Byrnese in this ministry?

We will.

In the presence of God and this congregation I acknowledge these testimonies with gratitude and praise to our Savior.

The candidate kneels as the following song is sung.

'Veni, Creator Spiritus' has been used at ordinations in the Christian Church since the 9th century.

VENI, CREATOR SPIRITUS (220)

Come, Ho - ly Ghost, our soul in - spire, and
 Thy bless - ed unc - tion from a - bove is
 A - noint each heart and cheer each face with
 Teach us to know the Fa - ther, Son, and

light - en with ce - les - tial fire; thou the a - noint - ing
 com - fort, life, and fire of love. En - a - ble with per -
 the a - bun - dance of thy grace; keep far our foes; keep
 thee, with both to be but one, that through the a - ges

Spir - it art, who dost thy seven - fold gifts im - part.
 pe - tual light the dull - ness of our blind - ed sight.
 peace at home: where thou art guide, no ill can come.
 all a - long thy praise may be our end - less song.

The Bishop offers this prayer of ordination:

Eternal God, in wisdom you govern all things, and from the beginning you have chosen faithful people to serve you in ministry, calling some apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, to equip all your people for the work of ministry and for the building up of the Body of Christ. Now bless and sanctify by your Holy Spirit, your servant Byrnese, who we, in your name and in obedience to your will, by prayer and with the laying on of hands, ordain for the ministry of the church.

*The congregation is invited to rise
as the bishop lays hands on the candidate and continues:*

Eternal God, through your Son, Jesus Christ, pour out your Holy Spirit upon Byrnese, fill her with grace and power, and make her a deacon in your church.

O Lord, give to this your servant the grace and power needed to serve you in the ministry. Bless her proclamation of the word and administration of your sacraments so that your church may be gathered for praise and strengthened for service. Make her a wise pastor, a patient teacher, and a faithful witness. Grant that in all things she may serve without reproach, that your people may be renewed, and that your name may be glorified in the church; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever. Amen.

The Lord bless you and keep you;

The Lord make his face shine upon you and be gracious unto you;

The Lord lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace;

(539 B)

In the name of Je - sus. A - men.

The musical score is written in 4/4 time with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The melody is in the treble clef, and the bass line is in the bass clef. The lyrics are: "In the name of Je - sus. A - men." The melody consists of quarter and eighth notes, with a final cadence on the word "men."

The Bishop continues, reciting the following doxology:

Glory be to your most meritorious ministry, Christ, the servant of the true tabernacle, who did not come to be ministered unto, but to minister. Amen, hallelujah, hallelujah, amen.

The newly ordained ministry stands and receives a personal charge from the Bishop.

The following song is sung as the clergy present are invited to greet the newly ordained minister with the right hand of fellowship.

Hymn: Your Peace Will Make Us One

Becky Lepore

Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord
You are speaking truth to power, you are laying down our
swords

Replanting every vineyard til a brand new wine is poured
Your peace will make us one

Glory! Glory! Hallelujah!
Glory! Glory! Hallelujah!
Glory! Glory! Hallelujah!
Your peace will make us one

I've seen you in our home fires burning with a quiet light
You are mothering and feeding in the wee hours of the night
Your gentle love is patient, you will never fade or tire
Your peace will make us one
Refrain

In the beauty of the lilies you were born across the sea
With a glory in your bosom that is still transfiguring
Dismantling our empires til each one of us is free
Your peace will make us one
Refrain

*'Your Peace Will Make Us One' Lyrics by Audrey Assad
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Tune: Traditional Battle Hymn of the Republic*

*You are invited to remain standing as the newly ordained minister
leads the Festal Doxology*

Unto the Lamb that was slain

And has redeemed us out of all nations of the earth;

Unto the Lord who purchased our souls for himself;

**Unto that Friend, who loves us, and loosed us from our sins by his
own blood;**

Who died for us once,

That we might die unto sin;

Who rose for us,

That we also might rise;

Who ascended for us into heaven,

To prepare a place for us;

And to whom are subjected the angels, and powers, and dominions; to him
be glory at all times,

In the church that waits for him, and in that which is around him,

From everlasting to everlasting,

Amen.

Benediction

Rev. Byrnese Craig

Presentation and Greetings

Seth Angel

Postlude

Eli Craig

Special Thanks -

For all those folks who have helped make this service possible, please accept my sincere gratitude, especially Kayce Fava, Becky Lepore, Eileen Edwards, Mikayla Sauerbrey, Jennika Eckhaus, Blair Couch, Missy Johnson, Tori Teller, Mark and Debi Whitman, Dave Geyer, Seth Angel, my husband, and my children.

Special thanks also to the boards and members of Fry's Valley Moravian Church and Ohio Shared Moravian Ministry, Emmaus Moravian and Morningstar Moravian churches, the Moravian School of Theology and Moravian Theological Seminary, the Eastern District Executive Board, and the Emerging Ministries Committee for their encouragement and support during these last three formative years of ministry.



One is not encouraged to give an Oscar's style acceptance speech to express their gratitude during their ordination service - but one is permitted to put whatever she likes into the bulletin. And so, I write today with immense gratitude for the support that I have received from so many over the last several years as I prepared for and engaged ministry with the Moravian church. I could not stand before you today and accept the honor and responsibility of service as an ordained minister if not for the love and care of many, especially of Mark and Debi Whitman, and Victoria Teller who were among the first to create space for me to be my whole self. I wouldn't be the bread lady today if not for Ma and her oatmeal bread some 15 years ago.

As the Spirit has led our family through seasons of change and ministry, the Fry's Valley congregation met us and cared for us, encouraging me to get to know the Moravian tradition and pursue ordained ministry. I wouldn't be here today if they had not let me preach with a baby on my hip (it's fitting that he was the one to help Blair today), and if Dave Geyer had not supported and encouraged me throughout these years of seminary.

There are not enough pages to share how the Moravian community in the church and the seminary has shaped my understanding of both God and myself since our arrival in Bethlehem. To all of my friends, role models, mentors, teachers, pastors, **thank you**. None of this is possible without your joyful companionship, steadfastness, patience and support.

To my family, you are the greatest joy and delight of my life. This journey has been ours, not mine, and I could not be more grateful to walk this path together. Eli, I promise that I will not get another Mdiv, and that someday I will do an equal amount of the dishes. To my children, I never would have known that God was calling me to this if not for you. It is the greatest hope of my life that I will help to leave this world, all the parts of it that I can, better than I received it, for your sake.

“The children are always ours, every single one of them, all over the globe”
James Baldwin

“The practice of love is the most powerful antidote
to the politics of domination.”
bell hooks

“Even in a world that is being shipwrecked, remain brave and strong.”
St. Hildegard of Bingen

Who are the Moravians?

A Christian denomination with a legacy of faith that stretches back to before the Protestant Reformation - the Moravian Church (known worldwide as the *Unitas Fratrum*) is a multicultural unity of believers from all walks of life.

The Northern Province of the Moravian Church in America equips people and congregations to be agents of God's transforming love in the world. **No matter who you are or how you identify, you are embraced and affirmed by God's expansive love.**

Three Orders of Ministry

The Moravian Church holds to three orders of ordained ministry, those of **Deacon, Presbyter, and Bishop**. According to the Northern Province Book of Order (the governing document of the denomination) "The ordination as a **Deacon** embodies the understanding of ministry as service, which underlies all the orders. The newly-ordained minister is normally guided and nurtured in establishing his/her work in the ministry by a Presbyter who lives nearby or someone appointed for this purpose by the District Board." A minister consecrated as a **Presbyter** is one whose ministry is affirmed by the church community as we "recognize their professional and spiritual maturity and renew own own commitment to serve Christ." The ministry of a **Bishop** is "a special priestly pastoral ministry in the name of and for the whole Unity (the worldwide Moravian Church). The office of Bishop represents the vital unity of the Church and the continuity of the Church's ministry."



**Our mission is to encounter
God around the table through
worship, fellowship,
and service.**

**Want to learn more? Scan this
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Linocut art on the front and back covers by Sarah Vatne

Special Music Lyrics:

Dear me, this is a letter to the girl I used to be
Dear me, here are some things that you should know
It's not my intention to embarrass or to shame you
What's inside the rear-view mirror is closer than it appears
We do the best that we know how, with what we have been given
And the difference between you and I is, I've been given time
In time, you'll see

Dear me, this is a letter to the girl I used to be
Some things are not as simple as we said
Remember when we thought there were a handful of some magic words to pray, a guarantee and a down payment on a mansion?
Remember all the rules we made about the Body and the Blood, the hoops we made them jump through though He offers it to everyone?
I'm so sorry

Do you remember now the things I said I thought that I deserved?
My flag, and safety, a place to learn, the things I know I didn't earn
And bless their hearts, I'm sure it's hard, but handouts don't help anyone
And all the talk about the system, I sure hope someone can fix them
I said those things

Dear me, this is a letter to the girl I used to be
You'll see, you're gonna take the long way
And there is nothing you could do or say to separate you
From the love of God who made you just exactly as He meant to
And you cannot imagine all the places you'll see Jesus
But you'll find Him everywhere you thought He wasn't supposed to go
So, go.

And hold all the mothers, whose babies bleed from bullet holes
And feel all the hunger, the bellies, and the bones
Shout for the prisoner, cry for justice, loud and long
And march with the victims, as Jesus marches on
And sit at all the tables, 'cause Jesus eats with everyone
And dance to the music, if you can't sing its native tongue

And cry for the wombs, the mothers and the empty arms
And hold high the warriors, fighting now for freedoms' song
And love, like it's your own blood
And love, as you have been loved
It's all about love! His name is love

Dear me, you did not learn this in a day or two or three,
So ask a lot of questions
But Jesus loves us, this I know, and there are no exceptions

Postlude Lyrics:

I was raised up believing I was somehow unique
Like a snowflake distinct among snowflakes, unique in each way you can see
And now after some thinking, I'd say I'd rather be
A functioning cog in some great machinery
Serving something beyond me

But I don't, I don't know what that will be
I'll get back to you someday soon you will see

What's my name, what's my station?
Oh, just tell me what I should do
I don't need to be kind to the armies of night
That would do such injustice to you
Or bow down and be grateful and say,
"Sure, take all that you see"
To the men who move only in dimly-lit halls
And determine my future for me

And I don't, I don't know who to believe
I'll get back to you someday soon you will see

If I know only one thing, it's that everything that I see
Of the world outside is so inconceivable often I barely can speak
Yeah I'm tongue-tied and dizzy and I can't keep it to myself
What good is it to sing helplessness blues,
Why should I wait for anyone else?

And I know, I know you will keep me on the shelf
I'll come back to you someday soon myself

If I had an orchard, I'd work 'til I'm raw
If I had an orchard, I'd work 'til I'm sore
And you would wait tables and soon run the store
Gold hair in the sunlight, my light in the dawn
If I had an orchard, I'd work 'til I'm sore

