

Devotional

Dick Joyce's scripted devotional message to the meeting of the Concerned Moravians on 9/19/2020

Bethabara! Bethabara! Bethabara! What a fitting name for the area that we meet for worship today. Bethabara - the name of the traditional site of the baptism of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior. It means "House of Passage".

As we meet this morning, let us be mindful of the fact that we're meeting on hallowed ground.

On October 8, 1753, eleven uniquely skilled tradesmen and four scouts headed out on an expedition from Bethlehem Pennsylvania to Bethabara, which was within a large 100,000 acre tract of land that had been purchased from Lord Granville. In the name of Jesus Christ (and for the cause of the Unity), these fairly ill-equipped congregants headed out on what would be a 40 day, 520-mile journey. Their mission was to establish a community to help resettle refugees who were escaping persecution in Europe. They were also tasked with generating money for the Moravian Church and its missions.

November 17, 1753 was an extremely frigid day! They arrived in the Bethabara to establish the new community. It was never meant to be a permanent settlement. It was intended to house the Moravians until a more suitable location for a central village could be found.

They suffered many obstacles because the French and Indian War began within a few months of their arrival. But they stayed firm in their commitment to God's call.

Today, we, as Concerned Moravians, are finding ourselves having to deal with some awfully strange obstacles. Do we have the tenacity to stay strong and on course? Will our determination display some of the same quality and characteristics of those early settlers?