

**2018 Provincial Synod
Moravian Church in America, Southern Province**

Summary Report

Elections

The Provincial Elders' Conference

President: David Guthrie (New Philadelphia). Clergy: Jeff Coppage (Fries Memorial), Judy Knopf (retired pastor), Nola Knouse (Home). Laity: Peggy Carter (Fries Memorial), Tommy Cole (Home), Keith Kapp (Raleigh).

The Board of World Mission

Joe Jarvis (New Philadelphia), Hilda Regalado (Friedland).

The Board of Directors, Mission Society of the Moravian Church (South)

Sara Brent (Friedland), Jeff Coppage (Fries Memorial), Alina Cukiernik (Olivet), Michael Hastings (Christ), Sara Jennings (Home), Cindi Jones (New Philadelphia), James Newsome (Friedberg), Robert Peterson (retired pastor), Angelica Regalado (emerging ministry), Donna Tesh (Christ), Cindy Williams (Kernersville), Mary Winters (Olivet).

The Board of Trustees, Moravian Theological Seminary

Zachary Dease (Macedonia), Fran Saylor (Mizpah).

The Board of Trustees, Salem Academy and College

Beth Baldwin (Home), David Guthrie (New Philadelphia), Victoria Lasley (Fairview), Camille McDowell (Home), Mary Lou Stott (Home).

The Board of Trustees, Salemtowne

John Elster (Home), Kathleen O'Brian (Kernersville), Graham Rights (Home), Keith Stirewalt (Home).

The Provincial Women's Board

Idalia Canter (Bethania), Julia Horton (Friedland), Martha Johnson (Konnoak Hills), Rebecca Lanier (Christ), Susan Parker (Macedonia), Dorothy Pettus (St. Philips), Ann Radford (Home), Jan Trivette (Calvary), Becky Ward (New Philadelphia), Linda Worley (Hope),

Bishop of the Unitas Fratrum

Carol Foltz (Moravia), Tom Shelton (Rolling Hills).

Resolutions

Twenty-two Proposals were approved and became Resolutions of the 2018 Synod. Full texts for these resolutions and related information will be posted on the Provincial website: mcsp.org

Resolution 1 (Proposal 9)

Full Communion between the United Methodist Church and Moravian Church, Southern Province

Affirms a full communion relationship which includes: recognizing the gifts of each church; respecting each other as part of the one holy catholic and apostolic church; cooperating in evangelism, witness and service; mutual recognition of baptism (membership) and ordination, allowing for transfer of membership; continued work for the unity of the church.

Resolution 2 (Proposal 15)

Moravian Day of Service

The PEC will: designate a Saturday to be an annual “Moravian Day of Service” starting in the spring of 2019; provide an outline for worship; commission a core group to develop this day. Individuals will serve together in congregations and regional conferences of churches, or other groups on this day. Pictures and stories will be shared and communicated within the Province and beyond.

Resolution 3 (Proposal 16)

Interprovincial Collaboration

Within the next year, agency heads and representatives from all provincial and interprovincial agencies, and from both PECs (Southern and Northern) will meet for a multi-day summit to develop collaborative initiatives between the provinces. This group will report its activities at any upcoming synod or intersynodal gatherings. This resolution will be provided to the Northern Province PEC for consideration at the 2018 Northern Province Synod.

Resolution 4 (Proposal 10)

Election of Bishops

The Synod resolved to elect two bishops. Carol Foltz and Tom Shelton were elected.

Resolution 5 (Proposal 30)

Sharing Moravian Best Practices with Southern Province Families

The Board of Cooperative Ministries will add a link to its website so that parents/guardians can sign up to receive weekly communication from *Loving Hearts United: A Moravian Guide for Family Living* (a spiral-bound, printed resource for forming a spiritual bond in family church and home.)

Resolution 6 (Proposal 24)

Membership Status for Election by Synod

The Constitution was changed to state that “Members of the PEC and of other boards shall be elected at stated Synods from among the communicant membership or Moravian clergy serving under call of or appointment by the Southern Province.”

Resolution 7 (Proposal 23)

Term of Office for PEC President

The Constitution was changed to state that, “Members of the PEC (with the exception of the President, who shall not be subject to term limits) and members of the various boards elected by synod, shall serve for one term of four years after which they may be eligible for re-election to a second term of four years, subject to a reasonable rotation of membership established by the board.”

Resolution 8 (Proposal 20)

Laurel Ridge 60th Anniversary Capital Campaign

In consultation with the PEC, the Board of Directors of Laurel Ridge will conduct a capital campaign of no more than \$1,500,000, the proceeds of which will be used for: renovations, repairs and improvements to Higgins Lodge and the Tise Building; all financial debt obligations; and, for building an endowment and maintenance reserve fund for Higgins Lodge.

Resolution 9 (Proposal 25)

Southern Province Mission and Ministry Fund

Synod recognized the creation of this fund by the PEC; authorized PEC to adjust details and implementation, and to communicate throughout the province about this fund; and to bring a report of any fund activity to the 2022 Synod. This fund is a permanent endowment to which individuals, groups and congregations may contribute. Every four years, an oversight committee will bring to Synod recommendations of priority needs and opportunities for use of the fund earnings in three areas: sustaining pastoral leadership, mission and outreach, and congregational development and renewal. As approved by Synod funds will then be allocated to support these priorities by the PEC.

Resolution 10 (Proposal 8)

Provincial Share Methodology

The methodology for determining the provincial share allocation for congregations was revised to include a four-tiered percentage approach (10%, 12%, 15%, 18%) based on several factors: average worship attendance. Line 1 income in church budgets, relief granted in prior years, success in meeting prior provincial share allocations, and transfers from reserves to meet operating costs. The assigned percentage will remain the same during the intersynodal period.

Resolution 11 (Proposal 7)

Our Church's Concern for Ministry in Prisons

Prison ministry was commended to all of our congregations, and they are invited to participate on the Sunday designated in the province as the day of prayer for prison ministry, using a prepared liturgy. Churches are encouraged to provide ongoing support to prison ministries through prayer, mission committees, fellowship fund-raising, and individual financial giving.

Resolution 12 (Proposal 6)

Moravian Statement Concerning Immigration

Synod reaffirmed the position of opening our church doors to share the Gospel with everyone in the community, including immigrants regardless of their legal status; and stated that “both as individuals and as a Christian body, our Moravian Church should stand against injustices to the marginalized and the voiceless among immigrants.” Congregations should be aware of challenges the church faces in working with immigrants within local communities, and to support mission efforts to go and share the Good News of Christ to everyone and anyone in love.

Resolution 13 (Proposal 37)

Mutual Respect and Acceptance

Synod resolved that “the Moravian Church, Southern Province, will recognize among its members the adherence to and expression of differing opinions related to homosexuality,” and resolved that “any person, group, congregation, agency and entity within the Southern Province retains the right to make opinions related to LGBTQ+ issues known, without fear of recrimination, provided such opinions live up to our covenant: ‘We will not hate, despise, slander or otherwise injure anyone.’” (Moravian Covenant for Christian Living).

Resolution 14 (Proposal 28)

Leadership Roles and Diversity of Views

Synod received the report of the 2014 Resolution 12 Steering Committee, accepted its conclusions and observations, and affirmed “that through this conversation process, we have learned and experienced that our unity in Christ is far greater than our differing views and understandings about homosexuality and the church, and we can be welcoming, respectful and loving toward one another in our differences.” Synod affirmed: the role of pastors and Boards of Elders (or Church Boards) in determining within the congregation “who is or is not admitted into membership or leadership, who may or may not participate in rites (confirmation, marriage) and sacraments (baptism, communion) and the purposes for which church buildings [and properties] may be used.” Synod affirmed the “freedom of conscience of pastors to decide whether or not to administer a rite or sacrament in any particular situation.” Synod affirmed the role of the PEC in matters related to candidacy for ordination, approving ordinations of deacons and consecration of presbyters, administering the call process and calling and superintending the ministers of the province. Synod affirmed the respective roles, discernment and decision making of the following in the call process: the PEC, church boards, and pastors. Synod affirmed “there are differences among us in [these] matters, and we will be respectful of one another’s viewpoints, and of the roles, discernment and decision of our pastors, church boards and of the PEC.” Synod directed PEC to develop resources and materials to assist pastors, church boards, and congregations in their dialogue, discernment and decision-making; and encouraged all congregations to make use of these resources.

Resolution 15 (Proposal 39)

Representation at Synod (a)

The Constitution was revised to add the following as voting members of Synod: Director of Laurel Ridge Camp and Conference Center, Executive Director of the Interprovincial Board of Communication, Director of the Moravian Music Foundation, President and Chief Executive Officer of the Moravian Ministries Foundation in America, and Director of Sunnyside Ministry of the Moravian Church. The title of the Provincial Treasurer was changed to Provincial Chief Financial Officer.

Resolution 16 (Proposal 29)

Representation at Synod (b)

The Constitution was revised so that congregations who do not meet the financial requirements stated in the Constitution will not have delegates seated at Synod. The PEC retains the authority to grant representation with voting privileges if it deems there are justifiable reasons to do so.

Resolution 17 (Proposal 44)

Provincial Organization Core Team

Synod directed the PEC to form a core team by Sept. 2108 which, with the assistance, input and support from PEC and provincial agencies shall “clarify primary functions of the provincial system” as to: support of the mission of congregations and other groups, support and development of clergy and lay leaders, collaborative partnerships and initiatives in the wider community and with other provinces and denominations; administrative support for local communities of faith, and accessible, relevant faith formation resources. The core team will learn about organizational models and make recommendations to the PEC by the spring of 2020. The PEC will review these and propose organizational changes, and is authorized to determine whether to implement these changes during the intersynodal period.

Resolution 18 (Proposal 31)

Renewing and Reimagining Faith Communities

Synod agreed to create a framework for congregational and ministry organization with three designations: parish communities, chapel communities, and mission communities. Current congregations will determine their designations by January 2021, with support from a team and a process selected by the PEC. Once designated, these faith communities will continuously work on development, and evaluate their future course once every two years. The Provincial Support Services Board will revise the provincial share allocation methodology to reflect these three, new designations. The PEC is authorized to administer this process with flexibility regarding current criteria and definitions within the Book of Order.

Resolution 19 (Proposal 26)

Continuing the Journey of Reconciliation

Synod reaffirmed the 1998 “Statement on Racism and the Church” as the official position of the Southern Province, and called the province to live what is professed in the Ground of the Unity regarding opposing discrimination. Synod supported the work of the former Moravian Team for Racial Reconciliation and renamed it the Moravian Team for Racial, Cultural, and Ethnic Reconciliation. Synod requested this team develop resources, materials, experiences and programs for congregations. Congregations will report annually to the PEC how they are using the Statement and these resources. PEC will initiate intentional conversation with one or more churches or denominations of diverse racial, cultural, or ethnic membership to explore cooperation in mission and service.

Resolution 20 (Proposal 4)

Global Missions

Synod adopted an ecumenical statement, which was also adopted at the 2017 Unity Mission Conference, in Cape Town, South Africa: “*Christian Witness in a Multi-religious World.*” This will be communicated to the Board of World Mission, the Mission Society, and all our congregations, and the statement will be posted on the provincial website.

Resolution 21 (Proposal 13)

Gun Safety

Synod resolved that the province call upon the President and Congress of the United States, and the Governors and Legislatures of the states in which we have congregations and fellowships to “enact laws banning the sale of military style assault weapons, and requiring universal background checks for all purchases of firearms.” Synod tasked the PEC to communicate this resolution to the national and state leaders mentioned above, by whatever means the PEC deems most effective (letter, open letter, petitions, etc.).

Resolution 22 (Proposal 11)

Affirming the Essentials

Synod affirmed the “ancient Moravian understanding that the Essentials are; God creates, God redeems, and God makes us holy; and we respond in Faith, Love and Hope.” Synod resolved that “Moravians in the twenty-first century are grounded in the living experience of faith in Christ, active love for others, and joyful hope,” and “this living relationship with Christ is born and nurtured in faith communities, in relationship with and in service to one another and the world.” The PEC was encouraged “to prepare resources that enable us to study, further understand, and live out the Essentials of the Moravian Church.” This Resolution will be shared with the PEC of the Northern Province for potential inclusion in their 2018 Synod.

Reports

There were two Reports to Synod from Committees. These were not discussed or voted on, but were received by Synod and will be included into the proceedings of Synod.

Mission Committee: Inclusion of Young Adults in the Church

Stewardship Committee: Communications Working Group

Proposals Commended to the PEC

The following Proposals were adopted by Synod Committees but time did not permit consideration and action by Synod itself. There was a motion to deliver these to the PEC as information.

Moravian Church in North America

Review of the Call Process

Stewardship of Creation

Interprovincial Commission on Music and Worship

Moravian Evangelism Commission

External Public Relations Committee

Development of Lay Pastors

Awareness of Violence against Women

Vitality of Spiritual Growth