

Frequently Asked Questions

Regional Conferences of Churches (RCCs)

What's an RCC and who's on it?

RCCs or "Regional Conference of Churches," are entities usually made up of 4-6 congregations and fellowships of the Moravian Church, Southern Province. Two lay representatives from each church (one representative from fellowships), as well as the pastor of that congregation serve on a leadership group that oversees the cooperative efforts of churches.

What are the responsibilities of RCC representatives?

RCC representatives are individuals appointed by a local church board to serve a two-year term and represent his or her congregation on a leadership group for their Regional Conference of Churches. To ensure a stronger connection between RCCs and church boards, the PEC strongly recommends that at least one member of the church board(s) be appointed as a member of the RCC leadership group. Specific duties and responsibilities are to:

- Attend meetings of leadership group hosted by the various congregations of the RCC.
- Share and discuss upcoming events at his or her congregation.
- Offer assistance where possible with the events of other congregations.
- Consider, encourage, facilitate, and strengthen opportunities for shared ministry between the congregations of the RCC. Ministry areas include: worship, Christian education, mission, outreach, discipleship, spiritual formation, lay leadership development, and more.
- Assist in the planning and marketing of RCC-sponsored events.
- Seek to attend all RCC-sponsored events.

(Adapted from provincial information and a job description for South Branch RCC members.)

What are the responsibilities of RCC representatives to the BCM?

The RCC will choose a representative to the Board of Cooperative Ministries (BCM) who will serve as a liaison, who will be welcome to attend all meetings of the BCM, and who will be expected to attend certain meetings throughout the year. RCC appointees to the BCM:

- provide periodic updates to BCM on RCC activities and participants,
- communicate with BCM regarding any RCC questions, challenges, or ways BCM may support the work of the RCC, and
- serve as a liaison between RCC and BCM by:
 - providing BCM with a current list of RCC participants,
 - sharing information about upcoming RCC events and projects, and
 - sharing information about BCM activities and events with their RCC.

How often do RCCs meet?

According to the Provincial Elders Conference, RCC leadership groups should meet at least quarterly. In practice, most RCCs find it helpful to meet more often – monthly, every other month, or as needed for planning special projects and events. A best practice would be to schedule the RCC meetings in the first RCC meeting of the year.

Who can attend RCC meetings?

There are no restrictions related to meeting attendance. Sometimes, board members or other church leaders join meetings to offer feedback or ask questions. Church educators employed by RCC congregations sometimes attend

to provide support and coordination of RCC projects. Staff from a variety of Provincial boards and agencies may also attend to offer support and share information. While having RCC representatives ensures that each church has a voice in the RCC process, RCCs should provide opportunities for all members of all congregations to engage with one another, not just those serving in a formal capacity.

What kinds of things do RCCs do?

It depends on the RCC. Many believe RCCs provide a way for congregations to do things together that they might not otherwise be able to do. Some RCCs have held joint renewal services and pulpit swaps, others have picnics and social gatherings like square dances and potlucks. Some get together with their senior friends' or youth groups. Many worked on mission projects, both nearby and far away. Some have held joint music concerts, leadership workshops, Vacation Bible School, children's festivals and lovefeasts, and weekend retreats. The sky is the limit!

RCCs may periodically be asked to meet by the PEC, or utilized by the BCM or by the Core Team for Synod 2018 Resolution 17 (reviewing our Provincial organization) to gather and share information, and to engage ministry "affinity" groups (youth leaders, teachers, etc.) or networks for information, training, etc.

What are RCCs supposed to be doing?

Here's what the *Book of Order* (the Southern Province's governing document) says about RCCs:

- 1) The Regional Conferences of Churches shall enable communication, build unity and expand community throughout the Moravian Church, Southern Province in order to contribute to the growth of healthy congregations.
- 2) It shall be the duty of Regional Conferences of Churches to:
 - a) Facilitate better communication within the Province and among congregations.
 - b) Serve as a resource for input to the BCM on local congregation's needs and perspectives in order to enable the BCM to provide practical and professional help.
 - c) Promote ownership, interaction and participation in shared ministries as defined by Synod priorities and direction.
 - d) Promote sharing of strengths, gifts, assets and best practices of each congregation.
 - e) Identify and facilitate connection for initiatives arising across the Conference's churches.
 - f) Identify and recommend candidates for provincial appointments and assist in their recruitment.

Are there any other fundamental guidelines by which RCC members should abide?

Much is left to the individual RCCs to determine for themselves the best way to function and fulfill the expectations of Synod. Over time, however, we have realized certain efforts and activities can make an RCC more effective:

- **Meeting Regularly:** Members agree on a regular meeting schedule, usually more frequent than quarterly.
- **Communicating Regularly:** Members have ways to communicate in between meetings, so that planning and coordination continues whether face-to-face meetings are held or not. Minutes from each RCC meeting are promptly sent to the group after each meeting.
- **Fostering Congregational Communication:** Congregations entrust their RCC representatives and pastors with the ability to make many decisions on their behalf. Effective RCCs make an effort to keep their congregations "in the loop" about RCC activities. Most RCC members have discovered it is helpful to bring an updated church calendar to RCC meetings, in order to facilitate scheduling of RCC events and activities. There is a lot to coordinate among 4-6 different faith communities! Most RCCs find it's more effective and less time-consuming to provide information regularly to their boards on proposed RCC activities rather than always

seeking permission of boards, unless such a project requires an unusual amount of resources and investment. Effective congregational communication could include:

- regular announcements in worship or at church gatherings,
 - publishing of RCC meeting minutes in monthly newsletters,
 - inclusion of RCC events in the bulletin or calendars,
 - announcements, picture sharing and reporting on Facebook or other social media, and
 - timely reports to church boards on proposed activities (some boards have a standing item for RCC reports on their monthly agenda).
- **Mutually-Established Guidelines:** RCC members take the time to develop and agree on guidelines or “ground rules” for the general operation of the RCC. These guidelines could include:
 - **Location of Meetings:** Most RCCs rotate the location of each meeting from church to church. Some with long distances between churches choose the most centrally-located church each time.
 - **Chairing of Meetings:** Some RCCs rotate the convener’s role for each meeting. Other RCCs choose or elect one individual responsible for providing this function for a specified period of time, usually a year.
 - **Recording of Meetings:** Many RCCs also rotate this important function, often in relation to the location. So, again, if Salem Moravian is hosting, a representative from Salem will take minutes for that meeting. Other RCCs appoint one “scribe” or secretary to take notes for every meeting.
 - **Project Participation:** RCC members understand that it is not always possible for every RCC congregation to participate in every RCC project, though efforts should always be made to be as collaborative and inclusive as possible.

What seems most important is that all agree on acceptable practice for that RCC and that member congregations participate in a meaningful way in most RCC activities. A survey of RCC representatives revealed that there are several factors that do contribute significantly to healthy RCCs.

Secrets to RCC Success:

- Meeting at least every other month and communicating regularly between meetings,
- Communicating with congregations about RCC opportunities,
- Using a variety of resources and ad-hoc groups to accomplish their work,
- Moving forward on a variety of projects even if not every church can always participate,
- Engaging the gifts of both clergy and lay people, and
- A real effort on the part of each individual congregation to participate in RCC activities.

What do we do if we believe our RCC is struggling or not as effective or active as it could be?

Please let BCM know if you have any questions or concerns about RCC activity or inactivity. Executive Director Ruth Cole Burcaw is available to meet with RCC leadership or to attend RCC meetings for a discussion about ways to improve effectiveness or collaboration within the group. BCM works to:

- Stay abreast of the meeting schedules and activities of the RCC;
- Attend a variety of RCC meetings and activities;
- Identify and engage the strengths and needs of RCC groups;
- Provide suggestions and resources as RCCs plan and discuss possible activities and programs; and
- Work directly with RCC congregations (individually or as a group) on topics specific to their expertise OR work to direct congregations to the appropriate resource.

RCC members are also welcome to make full use of the RCC toolkit found on the BCM website and to explore the many resources useful to RCCs in their operations.

Regional Conferences of Churches (BCM Members)

Dan Springs (vacant)

- First Church (Greensboro)
- Leaksville (Eden)
- Mayodan (Mayodan)
- Moravia (Oak Ridge)
- Come & Worship (Winston-Salem)

Florida District (Cecile Peters, Rolling Hills)

- First Church (Stone Mountain, GA)
- King of Kings (Miami)
- New Hope (Miami)
- Palm Beach (West Palm Beach)
- Prince of Peace (Miami)
- Rolling Hills (Longwood)
- Margate Fellowship (Miami)
- New Covenant Fellowship (West Palm Beach)
- Nueva Esperanza Fellowship (Miami)
- Suriname Fellowship (Miami)
- Rayaka Ingnika Fellowship (Sarasota)
- Tampa Fellowship (Tampa)

Mount Ararat (Adam Rudisill, Willow Hill)

- Crooked Oak (Cana, VA)
- Grace (Mt. Airy)
- Mt. Bethel (Cana, VA)
- Willow Hill (Ararat, VA)
- Mount Laurel F'ship (Ennice)

North Branch (vacant)

- Bethania (Bethania)
- King (King)
- Olivet (Winston-Salem)
- Rural Hall (Rural Hall)
- Mizpah (Rural Hall)

Petersbrook (vacant)

- Ardmore (Winston-Salem)
- Calvary (Winston-Salem)
- Christ (Winston-Salem)
- Fries Memorial (Winston-Salem)

Pilot Mountain (Dana Wolfington, Oak Grove)

- Bethabara (Winston-Salem)
- Fairview (Winston-Salem)
- Fulp (Walnut Cove)
- Oak Grove (Winston-Salem)
- Providence (Winston-Salem)

Salem Creek (June Edwards, Trinity)

- Anthony's Plot (Winston-Salem)
- Home (Winston-Salem)
- Messiah (Winston-Salem)
- St. Phillips (Winston-Salem)
- Trinity (Winston-Salem)

Salisbury Road (vacant)

- Friedberg (Winston-Salem)
- Little Church on the Lane (Charlotte)
- New Beginnings (Huntersville)
- Peace (Charlotte)
- Palmetto Fellowship (Spartanburg)

South Branch (Ginger Haynes, Advent)

- Advent (Winston-Salem)
- Hope (Winston-Salem)
- Hopewell (Winston-Salem)
- Konnoak Hills (Winston-Salem)
- Community Fellowship (Welcome)

South Wachovia (Dee/Barry McGee, Union Cross)

- Enterprise (Lexington)
- Friedland (Winston-Salem)
- Immanuel-New Eden (Winston-Salem)
- Pine Chapel (Winston-Salem)
- Union Cross (Winston-Salem)

Sunrise (vacant)

- Christ the King (Durham)
- Covenant (Wilmington)
- Kernersville (Kernersville)
- Raleigh (Raleigh)

Yadkin View (Lynn Spillman, New Philadelphia)

- Clemmons (Clemmons)
- Macedonia (Advance)
- New Hope (Newton)
- New Philadelphia (Winston-Salem)
- Unity (Lewisville)