

MISSION MESSAGE

Official Newsletter of the Board of World Mission



A Note From the Executive Director

On January 1, just as many Moravians around the world were choosing their watchword to be a message of guidance and reflection in the year ahead, BWM was doing the same. The Watchword for our organization in the year ahead is from John 8:31 - "If you continue in my word, you are truly my disciples". I find this verse to be both energizing and enlightening when reflecting on the work of the BWM before us this year. Many times the "New" Year is associated with wanting to be a "new" me... or trying something "new." Well, in the decades-long work of the BWM, we are continually trying new things or facing new challenges... but the greatest strength of our work is our continued, or even "old", relationships. Our prayer at BWM is that our work is always guided by God's presence and that as we attempt to live out the Great Commission and "make disciples", that we also are doing a good job of following the path laid out before us. So, even as we meet new challenges and explore new opportunities in the year ahead, look for us to continue in God's word, building relationships through our established Mission Engagement and Mission Outreach programs to be faithful in our mission to the Great Commandment and the Great Commission. Our day-to-day may change and adapt, but our purpose remains the same.



Board of World Mission 2023 Watchword

If you continue in my word, you are truly my disciples.

JOHN 8:31

Service Spotlight!

Will Cuthbert, a Moravian youth pastor from Costa Rica, and David Sommers, a Spanish, Art History, and Comparative Religions teacher at Moravian Academy in Bethlehem, PA, connected at our recent Moravian Resources Conference and, as a result, David recently traveled to Costa Rica to share art workshops in multiple congregations. Other conference participants were present at the art workshops via Zoom, including brothers and sisters from Brazil, Peru, Honduras, Cuba, and from the BWM staff. We give thanks to God for his presence in these relationships, nurturing them to grow and to be a blessing to others.



COMING UP...

February 21: Moravian Day of Giving

The third annual Day of Giving provides individuals and congregations a special opportunity to support their local congregations, Moravian ministries, and agencies like the Board of World Mission. Stay tuned for giving challenges as the Day of Giving approaches. In deciding where to designate your gift, we encourage you to consider contributing to our general fund, which allows us to devote the gift to the area of greatest need. After all, we don't know yet where this year will take us!

Gifts for the Day of Giving can be made online at MoravianMission.org/Give.

Those in the US can send checks to Board of World Mission, 1021 Center Street, Bethlehem, PA 18018.

Canadians can send checks to: Moravian Church in Canada, 600 Acadia Drive SE, Calgary, AB T2J 0B8. Interac e-Transfer donations may be sent to treasurer@moravian.ca.

March 1: Unity Prayer Day Offering

This year, Moravians across the world will join together to support a new worldwide effort to develop a Moravian Unity Disaster Relief Fund. Established at the 2016 Unity Synod (and delayed in rollout due to Covid), this offering is designed to kickstart the fundraising efforts for this important fund. The purpose is to be able to respond quickly to disasters around the Unity with funds that are available for speedy disbursement. Please contribute online at MMFA.com/Giving-Portal. Find mailed giving information at MoravianMission.org/UnityPrayerDay.



2023: A Synod-full Year!

Just as Northern Province Moravians here in North America are preparing for a synod this summer, our partners in Cuba and Peru are planning their own provincial synods this February and August, respectively, and our brothers and sisters throughout the world are organizing Unity Synod in the fall.

Representatives from our Spanish-speaking partner areas began sharing resources and learning Synod-planning best practices from presenters and fellow participants at our 2022 Moravian Resources Conference. Since that conference, the BWM has held a series of pre-synod workshops with Cuba and Peru in preparation for their 2023 synods. These workshops share information about synodal processes and elections, as well as financial reporting and presenting provincial budgets. Provincial leaders and area pastors are invited to participate; leaders have the opportunity to ask questions about the Book of Order and normal procedures of synod. We will continue to prepare leadership within these areas as they move forward with the preparations at their synod.

We invite your prayers for wisdom, creativity, unity, peace, and joy as many of our provincial leaders and Unity leaders prepare for these important gatherings.



Moravian Disaster Response Updates

Disaster Relief in Central America

A recent priority of our disaster response work has been providing bean and vegetable seeds for replanting after disasters wiped out existing crops in Honduras and Nicaragua. After nine months of heavy rains and flooding, we continue to receive reports of families in La Mosquitia living on one meal per day and surviving on fish that they are able to catch from the riverbanks. In addition to emergency meal distribution, we have provided 13,000 pounds of bean seeds, which will be shared with about 650 families. If unaffected by flood or insects, this will be the first harvest of a major food crop in the last year. We are also pleased to report that, thanks to Sturgeon Bay Moravian Church and a North Carolina organization called Seed Programs International, hundreds of families will also soon be able to plant tomato, squash, kale, and more.



Ukraine Crisis

Moravians continue to be a welcoming presence for Ukrainian refugees worldwide. In recent months, much of our funding has been dedicated to supporting education efforts for Ukrainian children in Kyiv and abroad. Through your generous gifts we have been able to cover teachers' salaries at a partner school in Kyiv, Ukraine and Nová Paka, Czech Republic. Additionally, a Moravian High School in Hejnice, Czech Republic, has expanded their capacity in order to accept Ukrainian students who had recently relocated to their area. The BWM also continues to support other resettlement efforts, including welcoming Ukrainian families to Moravian communities here in North America. We invite you to visit MoravianMission.org/Ukraine to view all of our recent updates.

We also ask that you lift up in prayer those Ukrainian families who have stayed in Ukraine and are facing continued violence and disruptions to their normal life, as well as those families who have made the difficult decision to move abroad and are now adjusting to new languages and cultures.

Last Call for 2023 Mission Service Award Nominations!



Each year, the Board of World Mission presents the Ted Wilde Mission Service Award and the Herrnhut Congregational or Organizational Affirmation to Moravians who have given of themselves for the benefit of others either down the street or around the world.

Nominations for both of these awards are open continuously, but nominations submitted by February 15th, 2023 will be considered for 2023 awards.

Learn more about the awards and submit nominations at MoravianMission.org/Awards.

Our Director of Mission Engagement, Bishop Chris Giesler, is also happy to answer any questions. He can be reached at chris@moravianmission.org.