

SPRING 2023

MISSION MESSAGE

Official Newsletter of the Board of World Mission



A Note From the Executive Director

While sitting at a retreat with pastors from the Northern and Southern Provinces a few years ago, a BWM staff member asked a group of individuals who have written about Moravian history, "When will the story of the work being done now be written?" The reply, "Whenever you get us the source material!"

That story has stuck with me since I was told about that reply. I realized that when BWM staff visit our global partners, we are witnessing history in progress!

It is our job to not only be in the room and eat delicious food prepared by our hosts - fresh garlic shrimp (Cuba) and iguana (Honduras) are two recent examples - but to also record it! This newsletter is just one of the ways BWM shares a "snapshot" of the work being done now, today, across the Moravian Unity.

In February, BWM staff were present at the Synod of the Cuban Mission Province as they elected their second-ever Bishop of the Unity, Rev. Obed Martinez. In March, BWM directors unanimously approved the formation of a new partnership with the Northern Province in Tanzania. In May, I will travel as a part of the first-ever Moravian delegation to visit new prospective work in Brazil and Bolivia.

On a recent Zoom meeting with Latin American partners, one person predicted that the Moravian work in Latin America will someday describe its work as "before Panama" and "after Panama", referring to the BWM-sponsored Moravian Resource Conference held last October - a sign that some folks viewed that chance to be together and learn and grow together as a history-making event.

When you read about and share the stories of our global partners, and when you support the BWM through financial gifts and prayer - you are taking an active role in what I hope will one day be seen as "one of the most important timeframes in Moravian mission work"!

Let's make history together! -- Justin Rabbach



Cuban Synod Elects Second Bishop

In February, the Cuban Mission Province held their provincial synod in Havana, where they elected a new Bishop, Rev. Obed Martinez. They also held Provincial Board elections and re-elected Rev. Tania Sanchez Fonseca as provincial president.



COMING UP...

Service Camps!

The Board of World Mission, together with the staff of our Moravian camping ministries, invites volunteers to join in preparing for summer programming! Come enjoy fellowship time while also painting, cleaning, and generally freshening up our camping facilities ahead of 2023 summer camps.

Service camps are **open to all adults (18+)** and are free to attend. Food and lodging will be covered by the Board of World Mission.



Mt. Morris Camp & Retreat Center

Wautoma, WI | May 17-23, 2023

Come for as many days as you are able! Free time will be casual -- explore, have campfires, and enjoy fellowship! Contact Jill Kolodziej at jill@moravianmission.org or (920) 256-9472 to register.

Hope Conference & Renewal Center

Blairstown, NJ | May 16-21, 2023

Come for as many days as you are able! There will be free time each afternoon to enjoy swimming, boating, fishing (bring your own equipment), or relaxing. Please pre-register at CampHope.org.



A New Partnership!

On Thursday, March 30th, the Board of World Mission and the Moravian Church in Northern Tanzania (MCNT) signed a covenant signifying the beginning of a new partnership between the BWM and the MCNT Provincial Board. This covenant signing took place over Zoom and was a joyful occasion, with representatives of the MCNT Provincial Board, North American Provincial Elders' Conferences, and Board of World Mission present. Through this partnership, we aim to work closely together to support and affirm building a Christian witness in each of our contexts. We hope to do this through frequent collaboration, consultation, prayer, and information sharing.

Much of the preparation for this new covenant was completed during an in-person visit in November of 2022 to Arusha, Tanzania, located near Mt. Kilimanjaro. Justin Rabbach, Executive Director of the BWM, and the Rt. Rev. Chris Giesler, Director of Mission Engagement, met with the MCNT Provincial Board, under the leadership of its president, the Reverend Isaac G. Siame.

As of 2021, MCNT had 26 Congregations, 8 outstations, 34 ordained ministers, and a total membership of 5,482. They will be holding their next Provincial Synod in November of 2023, at which time they hope to elect their first Bishop. The BWM looks forward to many years of partnership that will bring God's grace and peace to the world.



New BWM Apparel



MoravianMission.org/Shop

For a limited time, the Board of World Mission is selling t-shirts, polo shirts, fleece vests, and quarter-zip sweatshirts. Go to MoravianMission.org/Shop to see your options and put in an order! We can't wait to see you representing Moravian mission everywhere you go.

May 5th is the last day to order.

láska Czech	प्यार Hindi
amor Spanish	upendo Swahili
latwan Miskito	liebe German

In all things
love

Bean Harvest in La Mosquitia

In the winter edition of this newsletter, we shared about our recent Moravian Disaster Response work to send 13,000 pounds of bean seeds to about 650 families in the La Mosquitia region of Honduras and Nicaragua. After nine months of heavy rains and flooding, the most recent harvest felt like a distant memory and we were receiving reports of families living on one meal per day and often surviving on fish they were able to catch from the riverbanks. The bean seeds were received with gratitude and planted with prayers that they would be unaffected by floods and pests.

When BWM staff members visited Ahuas, Honduras, in March, we were overjoyed to see that the bean harvest was underway and many families were drying beans on their lawns. This harvest is a sign of hope for these communities after an extremely difficult year.

Photo: Beans drying in front of a Moravian Church in Paptalaya, Honduras



Ukraine Crisis: Congregation Spotlight on Friedberg Moravian Church

Friedberg Moravian Church recently sponsored a Ukrainian family, the Ostovskys, to come to the U.S. This journey began when the Friedberg mission committee prayerfully decided to learn about the requirements for sponsorship. When the BWM was made aware of a family that needed to be relocated, God moved mountains and Friedberg's sponsorship request was approved in just two days! Learn more about Moravian efforts related to the Ukraine crisis at MoravianMission.org/Ukraine.