

Committee # 1 (bright lemon)

Fourth Partial Report  
Committee on Church and Society

Re: Elimination of Racism: Institutional, Systemic, and Personal

- Whereas, The Ground of the Unity states: “The Unitas Fratrum recognizes no distinction between those who are one in the Lord Jesus Christ. We are called to testify that God in Jesus Christ brings His people out of ‘every race, kindred and tongue’ into one body, pardons sinners beneath the cross and brings them together. We oppose any discrimination in our midst because of race or standing, and we regard it as a commandment of the Lord to bear public witness to this and to demonstrate by word and deed that we are brothers and sisters in Christ.”<sup>1</sup> and
- Whereas, “The Moravian Church consisted from the beginning of people of many ethnical backgrounds, and is known for respecting and embracing ethnic and cultural diversity. In the very core of Moravian understanding of humanity, the God-given equality of all people is fundamental.”<sup>2</sup>; and
- Whereas, The Moravian Covenant for Christian Living teaches that Moravians oppose any discrimination based on color, gender, race, creed, or land of origin<sup>3</sup>; and
- Whereas, the 1998 Synods of the Moravian Church Northern and Southern Provinces approved A Statement on Racism and the Church developed by the Interprovincial Faith and Order Commission, declaring that racism is a sin “...because it contradicts the teaching of Jesus and violates the known will of God.”<sup>4</sup>; and
- Whereas, the Synod of the Moravian Church Northern Province has in 2006 passed the following resolution:  
“The 2006 Synod of the Northern Province shall endorse a mandate to the Provincial Elders’ Conference to work diligently to develop programs and efforts which will move in the direction of the elimination of institutional racism, and the fostering of diversity in churches of the Northern Province.”; and
- Whereas, institutional and systemic racism continues to devastate the lives of people of color; therefore be it

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<sup>1</sup> Synod of the Unitas Fratrum 1995, *The Ground of the Unity, A Doctrinal Statement*, p. 6

<sup>2</sup> Letter to the Worldwide Unity, January 15, 2018, from Rev. Dr. Cortroy Jarvis, President of the Unity Board, and Rev. Dr. Jorgen Boytler, Unity Board Administrator.

<sup>3</sup> Northern Province Synod, 1982, *The Moravian Covenant for Christian Living* (Bethlehem: Interprovincial Board of Publications and Communications, 1982) Section, V, p. 32.

<sup>4</sup> “A Moravian Church Statement on Racism and the Church, Interprovincial Faith and Order Commission, Moravian Church in America, 1998, p. 2

RESOLVED: (14) The 2018 Synod of the Moravian Church Northern Province affirms the historic position of the Moravian Church as stated in the letter to the worldwide Unity from the Unity Board dated January 15, 2018, that: “In the very core of Moravian understanding of humanity, the God-given equality of all people is fundamental;” and condemns in the strongest terms racism and discrimination in all its forms; and be it further

RESOLVED: (15) The 2018 Synod of the Moravian Church Northern Province reaffirms the attached “A Statement on Racism and the Church” approved by the 1998 Synods of the Southern and Northern Provinces; and

Whereas, “A Statement on Racism and the Church” directs the church as follows:  
“Thus the church shall practice racial inclusion in every area of its congregational and denominational life, and individual Christians and congregations shall work actively to identify and eliminate the patterns of discrimination both within the church and within society at large.”  
Therefore, be it

RESOLVED: (16) The 2018 Synod of the Moravian Church Northern Province calls upon the Provincial Elders’ Conference to require all pastors, licensed ministers and candidates for ordination to receive anti-racism training; and be it further

RESOLVED: (17) The 2018 Synod of the Moravian Church Northern Province calls upon the Provincial Elders’ Conference to guide all congregations to offer anti-racism training for their members through resources in their communities, or resources prepared and/or recommended by the Moravian Church Northern Province; and be it further,

RESOLVED: (18) The 2018 Synod of the Moravian Church Northern Province commends to all congregations the incorporation of resources from the National Council of Churches into their congregational life, including the recent ecumenical publication, “United Against Racism – Churches for Change;” and be it further

RESOLVED: (19) The 2018 Synod of the Moravian Church Northern Province offers its support, encouragement, and prayers to clergy as they proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ for all people, name and denounce the sin of racism, and lead congregations in efforts to understand, dismantle, and eliminate racism; and be it further

RESOLVED: (20) The 2018 Synod of the Moravian Church Northern Province calls upon all members to be strengthened by faith in Jesus Christ to overcome fear and become informed about racism and its impact on all human lives; confess the sin of racism; speak and act in love for all people; and work in

every aspect of life to eliminate institutional, systemic, and personal racism.

Marian Boyle Rohloff, chair  
Paul Peucker, secretary  
June 23, 2018