



# THE PROVINCIAL ELDERS' CONFERENCE

(EXECUTIVE BOARD)

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## THE MORAVIAN CHURCH

• Northern Province

### **Moravian Church Northern Province Action Plan Toward Racial Justice and Healing**

For decades, the Moravian Church Northern Province has made statements through synod legislation and pastoral letters naming racism as sin, opposing discrimination, affirming that all people are created in the image of God and loved by God. Often these synod resolutions, statements, and letters were in response to specific incidents of racial injustice. Our foundational documents, including the *Ground of the Unity* and the *Moravian Covenant for Christian Living*, condemn racism and discrimination based on color, gender, race, creed, or land of origin.

In 2018, the Synod of the Moravian Church Northern Province directed us to begin the work of dismantling racism in all its forms. In response to this legislation, the Provincial Elders' Conference named a Racial Justice Team to assist in fulfilling this call to action. Since then, the province and the team have:

1. Listened to the stories and experiences of racism from the clergy of color currently serving in the Northern Province.
2. Planned a pilgrimage toward racial justice and healing for all clergy of the Northern Province for September 2020 that has been postponed to September 2021 due to COVID-19. Bishops, members of the PEC, and the Racial Justice Team journeyed to Montgomery, AL in January 2020 to prepare for the province-wide pilgrimage.
3. Offered "Race: The Power of an Illusion" to 50 clergy and others via an online platform and equipped local parish pastors to lead similar educational opportunities for their congregations.
4. Offered a workshop, "Road to Racial Justice" led by Dr. Timothy Berry, for sixty clergy and others in the province.
5. Distributed a bibliography of resources on racial justice for clergy to read or view and share with their congregations.
6. Curated stories of Moravians directly and negatively impacted by racism and white supremacy.
7. Promoted an online workshop "Powers and Principalities" led by Dr. David Hooker and offered by the Southern Province Moravian Ministry Retreat.

There is much more work to be done. Sensing a clear call from our Lord Jesus Christ to work toward forming beloved community, and having our congregations reflect the diversity of their communities, we commit ourselves to making every place in the Moravian Church a safe place – physically, emotionally, spiritually, and racially – for all people, especially black, indigenous, and other people of color. We will work toward the healing of the wounds our church has inflicted on our communities who have experienced racism at our hands and from the society and the system of white supremacy in which we live. We will listen to the pain of our sisters and brothers, acknowledge our complicit or implicit role in this pain, seek a path forward toward reconciliation and healing, and claim the work of racial justice and healing as integral to our identity. We will:

1. Educate our congregations about racism and racial injustice and offer hopeful, helpful ways for white people to be allies in the struggle for racial justice. We will accomplish this through workshops, book studies, and sharing resources available through our website and other media.

2. Extend this education on racial justice and healing to our Christian Education and Sunday School leaders, our professional and volunteer camping staff, and our commissions, committees, and board members who serve in our congregations and who represent us on various agencies and entities of our church. We will urge our District Boards to include training on racism and racial injustice as part of the initial activities of the call process.
3. Invite clergy to deepen their understanding of the injustices of racism through a pilgrimage toward racial justice and healing to Atlanta and Montgomery in September 2021, engage their congregations in prayer for the pilgrimage, and share their experiences when they return. Develop ongoing racial justice and healing pilgrimage opportunities for members throughout the province.
4. Teach the history of the Moravian Church in order to acknowledge and confront our role in slaveholding, racist practices, and our complicity in perpetuating racism. Make existing and new resources and lectures available through online platforms to our congregations and agencies.
5. Conduct a racial justice ‘audit’ at every level of our province toward becoming a racially inclusive and racially just and equitable church that works continuously toward racial justice and healing.
6. Examine provincial financial investment strategies and consider investing in businesses that are racially just, explore how to support businesses in communities that have been marginalized by racism, and encourage congregations, along with provincial and district organizations, to do the same.
7. Develop a deliberate and just plan to start more Moravian Churches and ministries in communities of color.
8. Recruit African Americans for ministry in the Moravian Church. (How is it possible that Mark Breland remains the only ordained African American Moravian clergy?)
9. Commit the funding – from Common Ministries Commitments and other identified funds – to work toward these goals.
10. Pray and urge the province to pray that the work of racial justice and healing takes root in our hearts and by the power of the Holy Spirit transforms our province, its members, congregations, and entities until we truly are beloved community.

The Provincial Elders’ Conference  
The Racial Justice Team  
September 2020

David Bennett  
Susan Dreydoppel  
Betsy Miller  
Bruce Nelson  
Bruce Shoger  
Valerie Wagner  
Ralph Wanamaker, Jr.  
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