

Missional Engagement in our Neighborhoods #10 (bright red)

First Partial Report
of the Missional Engagement in our Neighborhoods

RE: Moravian Open Door

Whereas, we have received and reviewed the Report to the 2023 Synod of the Moravian Church Northern Province from Moravian Open Door, Inc.

Whereas, the inter synodal period has been through unprecedented times, we have been amazed by the continued work and resilience of this vital ministry

Resolved: (1) The 2023 Synod of the Moravian Church Northern Province shall accept with gratitude the Report to the 2023 Synod of the Moravian Church Northern Province from Moravian Open Door, Inc.

And be it further

Resolved: (2) The 2023 Synod of the Moravian Church Northern Province wishes to express our thanks to staff, volunteers and board members of Moravian Open Door, noting particularly the difficulties of the pandemic and the challenges that arose with the property.

And be it further

Resolved: (3) The 2023 Synod of the Moravian Church Northern Province congratulates Moravian Open Door on over 35 years of ministry.

Mandy Mastros, Chairperson
Katie Van Der Linden, Secretary
June 22, 2023

Missional Engagement in our Neighborhoods #10 (bright red)

Second Partial Report
of the Missional Engagement in our Neighborhoods

RE: Provincial Women's Board

Whereas, we have received and reviewed the Report to the 2023 Synod of the Moravian Church Northern Province from the Provincial Women's Board

Whereas, the Provincial Women's Board has faithfully served the spiritual needs of women across the Northern Province in the intersynodal period

Resolved: (4) The 2023 Synod of the Moravian Church Northern Province shall accept with gratitude the Report to the 2023 Synod of the Moravian Church Northern Province from the Provincial Women's Board

And be it further

Resolved: (5) The 2023 Synod of the Moravian Church Northern Province wishes to affirm and encourage the Provincial Women's Board in their endeavor to "think outside the box to reach ALL Moravian women and their needs in today's world."

Mandy Mastros, Chairperson
Katie Van Der Linden, Secretary
June 22, 2023

Missional Engagement in our Neighborhoods #10 (bright red)

Third Partial Report
of the Missional Engagement in our Neighborhoods

RE: Sperling-Zimmerman Memorial Home

Whereas, we have received and reviewed the Report to the 2023 Synod of the Moravian Church Northern Province from the Sperling-Zimmerman Memorial Home

Resolved: (6) The 2023 Synod of the Moravian Church Northern Province shall accept with gratitude the Report to the 2023 Synod of the Moravian Church Northern Province from the Sperling-Zimmerman Memorial Home

And be it further

Resolved: (7) The 2023 Synod of the Moravian Church Northern Province wishes to affirm the work of the board of the Sperling-Zimmerman Memorial Home and their dedication to provide affordable housing to retired Moravian clergy.

Mandy Mastros, Chairperson
Katie Van Der Linden, Secretary
June 22, 2023

Missional Engagement in our Neighborhoods #10 (bright red)

Fourth Partial Report
Of the Committee on Missional Engagement in our Neighborhoods

RE: Local and Global Medical “Debt Jubilee Project: For the Healing of the World”

- Whereas, as followers of Christ, we are called to care for the sick in Matthew 25 and in Luke 4:18-19 (NRSV) we are reminded ‘The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favour.’, which is in keeping with the concept of jubilee from Leviticus 25; and
- Whereas, 1 in 4 people in America owe medical debt that cannot be immediately paid and more than half the personal bankruptcies in the U.S. are due to medical debt; and
- Whereas, the recent work of Moravian congregations such as Trinity Moravian Church in Winston-Salem, N.C. (which recently raised \$15,000 and thus erased over \$3 million in medical debt for people living in the Triad area of North Carolina) has demonstrated a tangible way for Moravians to answer our biblical call to care for the sick, while providing a positive example and witness to the world; and
- Whereas, the Ahuas Clinic in Honduras, a Moravian ministry that has offered life-saving care for over 75 years, also holds debt from patients without access to insurance or other means to repay the debt incurred for the treatment they received, such that assistance in payment of these debts would help expand the medical services the Ahuas Clinic can provide to care for patients in the remote La Mosquitia region of Honduras; and
- Whereas, working with an organization dedicated to medical debt relief like RIP Medical Debt can allow funds raised to purchase debt obligations for pennies on the dollar, potentially alleviating millions of dollars of medical debt of families most in need in U.S. counties where a Moravian church or ministry is present; and
- Whereas, there are many individuals and multiple congregations that have expressed interest in participating in a similar campaign to the one undertaken by Trinity Moravian Church (Winston-Salem, N.C.) but who may not have the financial capacity to meet the minimum requirement of RIP Medical Debt of raising \$10,000 on their own; and

Whereas, the Moravian Board of World Mission (BWM), Moravian Ministries Foundation in America (MMFA), Interprovincial Board of Communications (IBOC) and Southern Province Commission on Congregational Development (CCD) have recognized the power, potential, and importance of collaboration to help multiply the impact of ministries originated at the congregational level; and

Whereas, collaboration of these agencies has resulted in the creation of the “Debt Jubilee Project: For the Healing of the World”, an opportunity for all who wish to participate collectively in the elimination of burdensome medical debt locally and globally by giving financially toward the goal of raising \$50,000 in 50 days (June 25, 2023 to August 13, 2023); and

Whereas, 75% of each gift will support the elimination of medical debt in the U.S., accomplished via a partnership with the organization RIP Medical Debt where each \$1 could eliminate up to 100x that amount in U.S. medical debt (for families earning less than 4x the federal poverty level or whose debt is greater than 5% of their annual income) in counties where a Moravian ministry is present, while also supporting the critical background work being done by RIP Medical Debt to identify and purchase medical debt to make this effort possible; and

Whereas, 25% of each gift will support the elimination of debt held by patients served at the Moravian Clinic in Ahuas, Honduras, with each donation helping to relieve families of this burden, while also supporting the lifesaving work of the clinic to expand services it otherwise could not provide without this funding; and

Whereas, MMFA will handle the collection of donations on its Moravian Giving Portal at mmfa.com/debt-jubilee-project while working collaboratively with BWM, IBOC, and CCD to promote this opportunity and report on the amount of money raised, quantity of debt erased, and number of families positively impacted; and therefore be it

RESOLVED (8): the 2023 Synod of the Moravian Church, Northern Province affirms the collaborative work of Moravian Board of World Mission (BWM), Moravian Ministries Foundation in America (MMFA), Interprovincial Board of Communications (IBOC) and Southern Province Commission on Congregational Development (CCD), to create a tangible goal and collective opportunity for Moravians to work together to address the burden of medical debt for families in the U.S. and Honduras via the “Debt Jubilee Project: For the Healing of the World”, which has the goal of raising \$50,000 in 50 days, June 25, 2023 through August 13, 2023;

And be it further

RESOLVED (9): Through the sharing of information and resources about the positive impact of the “Debt Jubilee Project: For the Healing of the World” meeting its goal to raise \$50,000 in 50 days ending on August 13, 2023, the 2023 Synod of the Moravian Church Northern Province will use this challenge to witness and live out of the words of the Synod theme (“For the Healing of the World”) in tangible service and ministry.

Mandy Mastros, Chairperson
Katie Van Der Linden, Secretary
June 23,2023

In concurrence with the Committee on Stewardship (#13) and
the Committee on Missional Engagement Around the World (#9)

Missional Engagement in our Neighborhoods #10 (Bright Red)

Fifth Partial Report

Of the Committee on Missional Engagement in Our Neighborhoods

Re: For the Care and Healing of God's Creation

- Whereas, the first command in scripture is for humanity to be fruitful and replenish God's creation (Genesis 1:28), establishing care for creation as a primary concern for humankind, particularly for the people of God; and
- Whereas, Jesus tells us in John 10:10 that his purpose for coming was that we might have life and have it abundantly; and
- Whereas, our 2023 Synod theme, "For the Healing of the World," is a call for Moravians of the Northern Province to affirm the sanctity of the natural world and to love our neighbors as ourselves by seeking both the well-being of creation's great web of life and the well-being of the human community; and
- Whereas, the 1990 and 2014 Northern Provincial Synods passed resolutions stating that "the Priority Initiative for Stewardship shall be: We will claim and affirm our stewardship of creation and all God has given us as an essential part of our discipleship with Jesus Christ" and instructed Northern Province boards, agencies, clergy, and the Provincial Elders' Conference (PEC) to provide educational materials around care for the environment and around changing personal consumption habits; and
- Whereas, the land, air, water, and energy from which God's miracle of life on earth has sprung, continue to be polluted, depleted and harmed from misuse; and,
- Whereas, tangible, accountable actions are urgently required to reduce and reverse the damages being inflicted on God's creation; and
- Whereas, it is important to act with compassion and courage, and to recognize that ecological degradation, pollution, catastrophic storm events, wildfires and drought create harm, loss and grief, as well as recognizing that peoples' sense of loss and grief prevents them from changing behaviors that lessen environmental harms; and
- Whereas, addressing the concern for creation as a collaborative effort increases our ability to leverage assets; and
- Whereas, many of our congregations are already bearing witness to the stewardship of creation through organic efforts to be responsible for the environment in our care; and therefore be it
- RESOLVED: (10) The 2023 Synod of the Moravian Church Northern Province encourages congregational leaders and leaders of Moravian entities to prayerfully consider and collaborate within our congregations and

communities what we are each willing to change individually and collectively to decrease harm to God's creation,

And be it further

- RESOLVED: (11) The Provincial Elders' Conference shall create a task force from across the Province to address aspects of the care of creation which may include but not be limited to:
- A. The dissemination of information and resources regarding the impact of pollution, catastrophic storm events, wildfires, and drought.
 - B. The distribution of information defining an energy, water, and materials procurement baseline and best practices for preparing, interpreting, and implementing improvement goals to this baseline.
 - C. The creation of and/or sharing of existing resources for worship, spiritual formation, prayer, grief, and lamentation.
 - D. Explore and share any relevant grant opportunities for professional energy and/or environmental audits, and environmentally conscious property improvements including but not limited to: rooftop solar, geothermal, air source heat pumps, and insulations.
 - E. To collect, celebrate and disseminate information about what different congregations and entities have tried and found successful in relations to care of creation.
 - F. Work with ecumenical partners to access resources, best practices and possible partnerships

And be it further

- RESOLVED: (12) The Provincial Elders' Conference shall ensure a report be provided to the 2026 Northern Province Synod that shares what has been done during the intersynodal period regarding efforts to care for God's creation; and be it further

- RESOLVED: (13) The 2023 Synod of the Moravian Church Northern Province asks the Provincial Elders' Conference to explore the possibility of divesting its Provincial assets from fossil fuels.

Mandy Mastros, Chairperson

Katie Van Der Linden, Secretary

June 23, 2023

In concurrence with the Finance Committee (#5)

Missional Engagement in our Neighborhood #10 (bright red)

Sixth Partial Report
Of the Committee on Missional Engagement in Our Neighborhoods

Re: Provincial Women’s Board Restructuring

Whereas, the Provincial Women’s Board is an integral Ministry in the Northern Province of the Moravian Church; and,

Whereas, the Provincial Women’s Board consists of women from across the Northern Province; and,

Whereas, the Provincial Women’s Board, according to the Book of Order, is made up of representatives from the Eastern, Western and Mid-States Regions; and,

Whereas, the Mid-States region at a meeting on August 20th, 2022, has officially been dissolved due to demographics including age, declining health, and other opportunities for spiritual development among women; and,

Whereas, if there are any congregation(s) from the Mid-States Region desirous of continuing to be involved in the Moravian Women, NP; they may be a part of the Western or Eastern Region as geographically feasible;

Therefore, be it

Resolved (13) the Book of Order of the Moravian Church Northern Province Paragraph 801 shall be changed

FROM:

The Provincial Women’s Board shall be divided into geographical regions — the Eastern Region, the Middle States Region, and the Western Region.

TO:

The Provincial Women’s Board shall be divided into two geographical regions — the Eastern Region and the Western Region.

And be it

Resolved (14): the Book of Order of the Moravian Church Northern Province Paragraph 802 be changed

FROM:

The Provincial Women's Board shall consist of the following:

- (a) Three members, one each from the Eastern, Mid-States, and Western Regions, who shall be elected by Provincial Synod to serve for the intersynodal period.
- (b) Three members shall be presidents of the Regional Women's Boards, each of whom shall be elected by her Region in accordance with the method of election defined by its bylaws.
- (c) Three members at-large shall be elected by the Provincial Women's Board, to serve for the same number of years as the intersynodal period.
- (d) The employed Administrator.

TO:

The Provincial Women's Board shall consist of the following:

- a) Two members, one each from the Eastern and Western Regions, who shall be elected by the Provincial Synod to serve in the intersynodal period and,
- b) Two members shall be presidents of the Regional Women's Boards, each of whom shall be elected by her Region in accordance with the method of election defined by its bylaws, and
- c) Three members at large shall be elected by the Provincial Women's Board, one from the Eastern Region, one from the Western Region and one from either region, to serve the same number of years as the intersynodal period.
- d) A non-voting employed Administrator, if needed.

AND;

Whereas, no member from the district Executive Board Northern Province, nor the Executive Director of the Board of World Missions has functioned in the role of advisor to the Provincial Women's Board as stated in paragraph 802(e) of the Book of Order; therefore be it

Resolved (15): Paragraph 802(e) of the Book of Order of the Moravian Church Northern Province, which reads, "The advisory members of the Board shall be the Presidents of the District Executive Boards of the Northern Province and the Executive Director of the Board of World Mission of the Moravian Church in America," shall be struck from the Book of Order;

And

Whereas, the previous language used in paragraph 803, implied limitations to the ministry of women, with the phrasing "women's work," therefore be it

Resolved (16): Paragraph 803 of the Book of Order of the Moravian Church Northern Province be changed

FROM:

The Provincial Women's Board shall encourage the organization and strengthening of the Moravian Women in the Regions and shall aid these organizations in their educational program. Program materials and service projects shall be coordinated where appropriate with other Provincial Boards. ***It shall represent the women of the Northern Province in denominational activities and cooperate in matters of mutual interest with organizations for women's work in other Provinces of the Moravian Church, both at home and abroad.*** It shall, under the approval of the Provincial Elders 'Conference, represent the women of the Northern Province in interdenominational activities, and it shall in all instances be responsible to the Provincial Elders 'Conference.

TO:

The Provincial Women's Board shall encourage the organization and strengthening of the Moravian Women in the Regions and shall aid these organizations in their educational program. Program materials and service projects shall be coordinated where appropriate with other Provincial Boards. ***It shall represent the women of the Northern Province in denominational activities and cooperate in matters of mutual interest with Provincial Women's Boards or their equivalent in other provinces of the Moravian Church.*** It shall, under the approval of the Provincial Elders 'Conference, represent the women of the Northern Province in interdenominational activities, and it shall in all instances be responsible to the Provincial Elders 'Conference.

Mandy Mastros, Chairperson
Katie Van Der Linden, secretary
June 23, 2023

With concurrence of the Governance Committee

Missional Engagement in our Neighborhoods #10 (bright red)

Seventh Partial Report
of the Committee on Missional Engagement in our Neighborhoods

RE: Hospitality over Hostility

Whereas, the recent elections in the United States and Canada have caused many of our church members and communities to be divided; and

Whereas, the Moravian faith tradition is rooted in relationships, embracing our dedication to “in all things love” as paramount over doctrines and disciplines that have a variety of understandings and interpretations that we encourage in the Moravian Church; and,

Whereas, we are aware of the growing political discord in North America and in other regions around our world, leading to stressors within our community affecting physical, emotional, spiritual, and mental health; and

Whereas, discussions around politics, religion and other passionate issues are often avoided due to a lack of training in how to approach these subjects with compassion, understanding and grace; and

Whereas, we realize that this discord and tension will continue and most likely worsen due to increasingly polarized political environments, especially given the United States presidential election of 2024; therefore be it

RESOLVED: (17) The 2023 Synod of the Moravian Church Northern Province encourages all Moravian congregations and faith communities to be proactive in building bridges and showing hospitality, understanding that differences of opinions are encouraged and welcomed in our faith understanding and modeling respectful dialogue and love for all.

And be it further

RESOLVED: (18) The 2023 Synod of the Moravian Church Northern Province invites pastors and lay members to find educational opportunities and trainings to further develop skills in dialogue and hospitality, which could include but are not limited to *Braver Angels*, *Center for Courage and Renewal*, and *Living Room Conversations*

And be it further

RESOLVED: (19) The 2023 Synod of the Moravian Church Northern Province encourages all congregations and entities to create brave spaces for persons to have sensitive conversations without judgment; and

Whereas, the Moravian Church tradition of a “Saal,” understood as a community or gathering space meant for a variety of activities including worship, meals, celebrations and discussions, encouraged dialogue and hospitality to church members and the broader community; therefore be it

RESOLVED: (20) The 2023 Synod of the Moravian Church Northern Province encourages the creative use of our Moravian buildings and spaces to greet our neighbors, show hospitality, be open to non-traditional uses and support partnerships with others to reclaim our heritage of the Saal and be good stewards of the buildings and spaces entrusted to our care.

Mandy Mastros, Chairperson
Katie Van Der Linden, Secretary
June 23, 2023

Missional Engagement in our Neighborhoods #10 (Bright Red)

Eighth Partial and Final Report

From the Committee on Missional Engagement in our Neighborhoods

Re: Discovering God Through Acts of Kindness in Our Neighborhoods and Congregations

Ephesians 4:32 tells us to be kind to one another. We find it important to share the stories of what our churches are doing in our neighborhoods...many congregations in the Northern Province are doing this in their local communities in a variety of ways:

The Lancaster Moravian Congregation partners with the Islamic Community Center of Lancaster in ministry and mission. They also do monthly prayer walks praying for and interacting with those who live, work and play in their community with an invitation to other churches and individuals to walk with them.

The Lititz Moravian Congregation is showing God's Love in a practical way through doing kind things by paying to do people's laundry, visiting new friends in the community, handing out water bottles and paying for public parking spaces.

The East Hills Moravian Church sets up a table on the front lawn to celebrate with the students and families from the neighboring school. This includes Halloween goody bags, Hello Holidays during Advent, and ice pops and children's books on the last day of school.

Watertown and Ebenezer Moravian Church serve a free meal every Monday night to address the issue of loneliness among those that don't always have another person to eat with.

Ephraim Moravian Church participates in their local Fyrball festival by serving free Sugar Cake and offering opportunities for a tour of the church.

The Lake Mills Moravian Church has a plant sale in which community members connect with congregation members talking about favorite flowers and personal experiences with gardening. They then pass the extra plants on to the London Moravian Church so they can do the same.

The Calvary Moravian Church, coming out of the pandemic, has set up monthly summer gatherings called "Cool Treats, Summer Nights" with live music, an ice cream truck, lawn games and children's activities for low-cost gatherings intentionally geared to their neighborhood. Other seasonal gatherings in the fall, Christmas, and Easter have also striven to gather their neighbors together in community, through music and other activities. Their Reading Room shares free books to children of all ages at such events, as well as their local elementary schools in reading programs.

The primary intention of these efforts is to make acquaintances that often lead to opportunities for relationship building. These ministries also emphasize 'being with 'rather than 'doing for ' other individuals.

We encourage Moravian congregations and entities to explore and experiment with these or other acts of kindness to engage individuals in their own neighborhoods.

In the work of synod, "for the healing the world," we, the members of the Committee for Missional Engagement in our Neighborhoods covenant to share their successful efforts with nearby Moravian congregations and ecumenical partners.

We also covenant to provide a year's worth of stories to the Interprovincial Board of Communication (IBOC) for publication in the Moravian Magazine and other outlets as deemed useful by the IBOC. We ask and encourage other Moravian congregations and entities to provide similar stories.

We believe this work will benefit the Moravian Church Northern Province by way of:

- encouragement, and solidarity. We are not alone, though we are far apart.
- idea-sharing in ministry. What works across the province may work in your congregation too!
- showing the world that Moravians live their faith.
- relationship-building – getting to know our neighbors better (the neighborhood directly outside the doors of the church building)

Mandy Mastros, Chairperson

Katie Van Der Linden, secretary

June 23, 2023