

Healthier Congregations #7 Pink

First Partial Report

of the Healthier Congregations #7

RE: Thanksgiving for the Healthier Congregations Task Force

Whereas: The Second Partial Report of the 2018 Healthier Congregations Committee proposed to continue the support of the Healthier Congregations Task Force (HCTF), and to appoint members to expand and continue that work. At the time, members included Rebecca Craver, Laura Gordon, Kerry Krauss, Amy Linville, and Rebecca Sisley; and

Whereas: Since the 2018 provincial synod, the Healthier Congregations Task Force worked diligently to provide resources for congregations and leaders to develop process to assess and improve congregational health, including online resources, a method of using the questions on Annual Reports as focal points for monthly board meetings, and the development of a robust website dedicated to healthier congregations; and

Whereas: The Healthier Congregations Task Force was impacted by several factors outside its control: a new (and welcome) focus on racial justice and healing, the Covid-19 pandemic, and changes in the membership of the Task Force. The Healthier Congregations Task Force requested to be relieved of their charge and entrust the work of congregational health to the districts and province, stating: “congregations and their leaders need what we have offered. We believe the foundation of congregational life is congregational health.” Yet the current members of the HCTF feel that the make-up and direction of the Task Force are not sustainable. Therefore be it

Resolved: (1) The 2023 Synod of the Moravian Church Northern Province extend its deep gratitude to the members of the Healthier Congregations Task Force and their good work fostering improved congregational health.

Tammy Lavoy, Chairperson
Jamie Almquist, Secretary
June 2, 2022

Healthier Congregations #7 Pink

Second Partial Report
of the Healthier Congregations #7

RE: Moravian Archives

Whereas, we have received and reviewed the Report to the 2023 Synod of the Moravian Church Northern Province from the Moravian Archives; and

Whereas, despite the unprecedented events of this inter synodal period, we have been impressed by the work the Moravian Archives has accomplished, including and especially the important work of digitizing several collections; be it

Resolved: (2) 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 Archives,

And be it further

Resolved: (3) The 2023 Synod of the Moravian Church Northern Province would like to extend our deepest gratitude to the staff, volunteers, board members, donors, and friends of the Moravian Archives for their continued work preserving our Moravian history.

Tammy Lavoy, Chairperson
Jamie Almquist, Secretary
June 19, 2023

Healthier Congregations #7 Pink

Third Partial Report of the Healthier Congregations #7

Re: Training for Gender Inclusion

Whereas: Holy Scripture reveals that all humankind is made in the image of God, blessed by God, and declared “good” by God (Genesis 1:26-31); and

Whereas: The 2018 Synod of the Moravian Church, Northern Province affirmed that persons of all gender identities shall be supported and affirmed by being allowed to celebrate their lives as individuals, couples, and families within the bounds of the church (R&E 2018, pg. 17-18, R. 21-26); and

Whereas: The 2018 Synod of the Moravian Church, Northern Province encouraged pastors and church leaders to engage in training and education related to the understanding and care for persons of all gender identities (R&E 2018, pg. 17-18, R. 21-26); and

Whereas: The mission statement of the Northern Province (as found on the Moravian Church Northern Province website) states: “The Northern Province of the Moravian Church in America equips people and congregations to be agents of God’s transforming love in the world. No matter who you are or how you identify, you are embraced and affirmed by God’s expansive love;” and

Whereas: An understanding of gender identities and issues as they relate to matters of faith and church life may still be confusing for many; and

Whereas: Trainings on matters of gender identity such as those led by the Bradbury Sullivan Center (www.bradburysullivan.org/educationinstitute) are available and have been utilized by some church leaders; therefore be it

Resolved: (4) The 2023 Synod of the Moravian Church Northern Province urges the Provincial Elders Conference to research the topic of gender identity and faith life, and to discover or create training material that will be required by all Northern Province clergy, and strongly encouraged for all other tiers of church leadership;

and be it further

Resolved: (5) The 2023 Synod of the Moravian Church Northern Province encourages the Provincial Elders Conference to task appropriate committees or staff to make the Northern Province’s mission statement more widely known by both our congregations and the general public.

Tammy Lavoy, Chairperson
Jamie Almquist, Secretary
June 22, 2023

Healthier Congregations #7 Pink

Fourth Partial Report
of the Healthier Congregations #7

Re: Prioritizing Accessibility in our Congregations and Church Buildings

Whereas, The inclusion and empowerment of individuals living with disabilities within our congregations and communities is important to more fully living out the love with which Christ calls us to live, and

Whereas, ministry should not just be to people with disabilities, but with or alongside people who have disabilities, and

Whereas, many people living with disabilities struggle to feel welcomed and accepted into places of worship and overall faith communities, and

Whereas, Universal Access refers to creating environments, programs, and services that respond to the needs of the widest population range possible, enabling persons with varying abilities and ages to access the physical environment on an equitable basis, and

Whereas, some of our congregations struggle to create cultures that are empowering and uplifting to individuals and families touched by disability, and

Whereas, many of our current church buildings create physical barriers for individuals living with disabilities, and

Whereas, being truly inclusive goes beyond physical spaces, and other aspects such as sensory modifications, intellectual needs, and alternative communications must be considered, therefore be it

RESOLVED: (6) The 2023 Synod of the Moravian Church Northern Province urges the Provincial Elders Conference to research the topic of all barriers to full accessibility including but not limited to physical, mental, emotional, intellectual, learning, developmental, or sensory limitations; and be it further

RESOLVED: (7) The 2023 Synod of the Moravian Church Northern Province urges the Provincial Elders Conference to distribute current best practice materials related to full accessibility, that goes beyond our physical spaces, recognizing that those with lived experience are often our best resources. Examples of best practice materials include those developed and made available by You Belong, a recognized Emerging Ministry, through its website, <https://www.youbelongwi.org/>; and be it further

RESOLVED: (8) The 2023 Synod of the Moravian Church Northern Province encourages all congregations within the Moravian Church Northern Province to examine their facilities and overall operation, being mindful of all barriers to full accessibility, and to develop a plan leading toward ever-improving accessibility, and be it further

(9)The 2023 Synod of the Moravian Church Northern Province charges the PEC to commit to a policy whereby accessibility best practices will be implemented at all events and gatherings they plan, support, or endorse, and that activities which do not comply with accessibility best practices through reasonable accommodations will not be permitted, and materials which do not comply with accessibility best practices through reasonable accommodations will not be used at those events and gatherings.

And be it further

(10) The 2023 Synod of the Moravian Church Northern Province directs the PEC to form a task force to:

1. Provide information and guidelines regarding accessibility best practices to those facilitating events and gatherings the PEC plans, supports, or endorses.
2. ensure compliance with accessibility best practices through reasonable accommodations at events and gatherings the PEC plans, supports, or endorses.

Tammy Lavoy, Chairperson
Jamie Almquist, Secretary
June 23, 2023

Fifth Partial and Final Report
of the Committee on Healthier Congregations

Re: Strengthening Youth Impact

Whereas, Youth are significant members of our District congregations, and;

Whereas, “Don’t let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith, and in purity” 1 Timothy 4:12 (NIV) and;

Whereas, The youth of the Moravian church believe their voices make a significant impact on the church, and;

Whereas, The youth of the Moravian Church seek to have their insights and vision acknowledged, and;

Whereas, There are more than six youth and young adult Northern Provincial Synod delegates in attendance today, and;

Whereas, There is currently no designated Provincial or District Youth and Young Adult minister and or ministries,

Therefore, be it

RESOLVED: (9) The 2023 Synod of the Moravian Church Northern Province urges The Provincial Elders Conference to establish a Provincial Youth Council composed of one youth and/or young adult representative from each of the Northern Province Districts, two youth and/or young adult representatives at large, and two adult mentors, one of which being an ordained or licensed lay pastor, selected in conjunction with the PEC, and;

Whereas, The youth and young adults in attendance at the 2023 Synod of the Moravian Church Northern Province have felt welcomed and valued, yet experience passive reception to their input, vision, and spiritual insights,

Therefore, be it

RESOLVED: (10) The 2023 Synod of the Moravian Church Northern Province urges the PEC, the District Boards, and local congregations to cultivate a stronger committed relationship between the youth and the people called to be the mentors, leaders, and role models of our church. This relationship will thrive through communication, conversation, and idea development in communion with one another, youth participation in local church boards, committees and ministries, and in participation with the Provincial Youth Council, and;

Whereas, Adults, seek to do anything to protect our youth: to encourage their growth and strengthen their future, and we are called to strengthen the youth leadership, participation, and longevity within our communities, congregations, districts, and province, and;

Whereas, The youth and young adults' desire to be at the forefront of change and growth in the Moravian Church,

Therefore, be it

RESOLVED: (11) The 2023 Synod of the Moravian Church Northern Province encourages the PEC to consult with the Provincial Youth Council on a regular basis and if possible at an annual in-person meeting or video conference.

Tammy Lavoy, Chairperson
Jamie Almquist, Secretary
June 24, 2023