



Provincial Update: August 2023

The Northern Province Moravian Church in America

"Birthquakes"

August 13th. August.....13th! To most anyone else in the world this date brings little if any significant memory, emotion, or inspiration. For the fun of it, I googled Britannica to see what they published as significant on this day. Sadly, American cooking icon Julia Childs and baseball legend Mickey Mantle passed away on that day. If you want to dive really deep into history, the fall of the Aztec empire is attributed to this day. However, you mention August 13th in the presence of Moravians and it brings a sacred pause and a shattering of the heart and soul. For on this date, we commemorate a birthing. Interestingly, it is also a date which was paved with what one might call 'birthquakes.' Our little faith community was shaken by very real tensions and disagreements which coincide with any communion seeking desperately to understand God's leading and direction – and in the moment sensing a leading which could have taken the remnant community of our Moravian ancestors in quite different directions. I can only imagine the fear of broken fellowship. I can only imagine the desire to follow deep seated convictions while enduring the pains of laboring toward reconciliation and common ground. In the end, I can only imagine what it was like, in the midst of those 'birthquakes,' to experience the Spirit of Christ walking directly amidst the turmoil and transforming dispute into discernment ...controversy into concord....bereavement into birth.

I've always been moved by the English Moravian poet, James Montgomery, who wrote of this sacred time in our history, as found on our Northern Province website:

*“They walked with God in peace and love, but failed with one another;
While sternly for the faith they strove, brother (sister) fell out with brother (sister).
But He in whom they put their trust, who knew their frames that they were dust,
pitied and healed their weakness.
He found them in His house of prayer, with one accord assembled,
and so revealed His presence there, they wept for joy and trembled.
One cup they drank, one bread they brake, one baptism shared, one language spake,
forgiving and forgiven.
Then forth they went, with tongues of flame, in one blest theme delighting;
the love of Jesus, and His Name, God's children all uniting.
That love our theme and watchword still; that law of love may we fulfill
and love as we are loved.”*

August 13th. August.....13th! In a day when there is still so much which challenges and seeks to divide us, may we still be open to the possibility...even the probability....of “birthquakes.”

– Rev. Dave Bennett



2023 Provincial Synod

We extend our deep gratitude for each synod delegate, officer, worship leader, presenter, and support staff member who offered their unique gifts to make our provincial synod a wonderful experience for everyone gathered. Resolutions and reports, along with other news from the synod, are now publicly available at <https://www.moravian.org/northern/synod2023>. We will continue to update you as action is taken on these resolutions and additional resources are available.



Moravian Day of Service

The 2023 Moravian Day of Service is set for September 17. This celebratory day raises awareness of the importance of mission work in our Moravian faith, encourages congregations to think of new ways to make a difference in their communities, and demonstrates our desire to be the hands and feet of Christ in the world. For your congregation, this can be a day to celebrate the

service that you do all year long and highlight ways more of your members can get involved. We also encourage you to plan a special service opportunity that might invite a sense of community engagement and excitement among your members. Learn more and find ideas for this Moravian Day of Service at <https://www.moravian.org/northern/engage/>.

Upcoming Consecrations of Bishops of the Unity

The Synod of the Northern Province of the Moravian Church in America, held in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, June 22-25, 2023, elected Sister Amy Gohdes-Luhman and Brother Michael Johnson bishops of the Unity. This is a time of spiritual celebration, a time to take seriously our connection to our Savior and a time when the Unity itself has the opportunity to join in prayer. We invite your presence and/or covet your prayers, and the prayers of your congregation, as we prepare for and participate in the consecration of the bishops elected by our recent Provincial Synod.



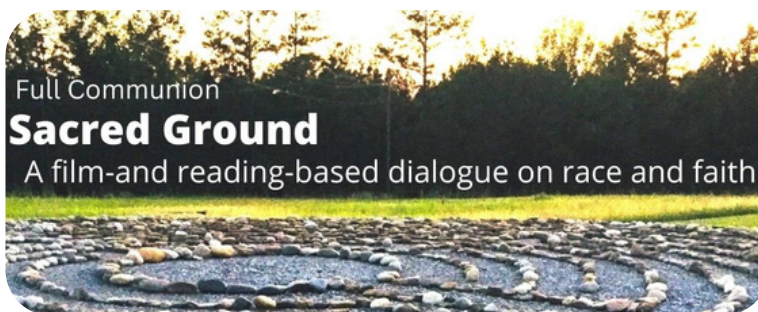
The consecration of Brother Johnson has been scheduled for October 1, 4:00 p.m. at John Hus Moravian Church in Brooklyn, NY.

The consecration of Sister Gohdes-Luhman has been scheduled for November 5, 4:00 p.m. at Waconia Moravian Church in Waconia, MN.

Let us take this opportunity to unite in prayer as we pray for the influence of the Holy Spirit upon Christ's work assigned to the worldwide Moravian Church and the Moravian Church, Northern Province.

Full Communion Sacred Ground

All are invited to join a film- and reading-based dialogue on race and faith on Monday afternoons or evenings throughout the fall and winter. Full Communion Sacred Ground is designed by the Episcopal Church and facilitated by Episcopalians, Moravians, Lutherans and other clergy and lay people. Contact the Rev. Maria Tjeltveit to register: sacredground.beth@gmail.com.



Dialogue sessions will be held every other Monday Aug. 28-Nov. 20, 2023 and Jan. 8-Feb. 12, 2024 at 1-3pm ET or 7-8:30pm ET

DEBT JUBILEE PROJECT

FOR THE HEALING OF THE WORLD

Debt Jubilee Project Concludes

The Debt Jubilee Project: For the Healing of the World, a collaborative effort of several of our Moravian agencies, was affirmed by the 2023 Northern Province Synod. Inspired by the recent debt relief projects undertaken in the Southern Province, this project offered an opportunity for more Moravians to be involved in offering grace and hope through the forgiveness of medical debt.

The project launched on the last day of our provincial synod and concluded on August 13th. Surpassing the initial goal of \$50,000 in 50 days, the project has now raised over \$80,000 to relieve medical debt in U.S. counties with a Moravian presence and at the Moravian medical ministry in Ahuas, Honduras. The Moravian Ministries Foundation, Board of World Mission, Southern Province Commission on Congregational Development, and Interprovincial Board of Communication are currently processing the final donations to this effort and communicating with their partners at RIP Medical Debt to determine how these funds can make the biggest impact in U.S. counties with a Moravian presence. They will share how much total debt your gifts have forgiven in the United States and Honduras as soon as they can. Thank you for your generous support of this project. Find the latest information at www.moravian.org/debtjubilee/.

2023 Summer Camps

Thank you to each person who gave of their time and talents to ensure our youth and young adults had the opportunity to build new relationships, grow in faith, learn about the worldwide Moravian Church, and enjoy our beautiful camping facilities. We are grateful to the staff of each camp held at Camp Hope, Mt. Morris, Camp Van Es, and Tar Hollow.



National Conference in Peru

Earlier this month, the Moravian Church in Peru held their third National Conference in Chiclayo, where they elected new leadership and discussed the future of their ministry. The Northern Province is the supervising province of the Mission Area of Peru and was represented by former PEC President Betsy Miller. The new board includes the Rev. Ana María Huamán Dávila as president, Br. Andrew Chicchón

Gutarra as vice president, Rev. Joaquín Santa Cruz Muro as secretary, Sr. Lucero Carrasco Camacho as treasurer, and Rev. Walter Calle Peralta. In addition to these important elections, a new Covenant Agreement between the Moravian Church in Peru, the Northern Province, and the Board of World Mission was agreed upon and signed by all parties.

After the conference adjourned, Sr. Ana María was ordained, with the Rt. Rev. Sam Gray officiating. In addition to being the mission area's first female board president, she is the first female pastor of the Moravian Church in Peru. The Northern Province had the honor of presenting her with a surplice.

2023 Unity Synod

We invite your prayers for the upcoming Unity Synod which will be held at the beginning of September in Cape Town, South Africa. Unity Synod is the constitutional body of the Unitas Fratrum and includes representatives from each province of the Worldwide Unity. PEC President David E. Bennett, the Rev. Jason Andersen, the Rev. Dr. Amy Gohdes-Luhman, and the Rt. Rev. Blair Couch will be attending from the Northern Province of the Moravian Church in America. Please be in prayer for Brother Bennett, Brother Andersen, Sister Gohdes-Luhman, Sister Couch, and delegates from throughout our Unity as they prepare their hearts and minds to be in fellowship with one another and to make important decisions about the global work of the Moravian Church.



**2024 Moravian Daily Texts are
Available for Preorder in the IBOC store:
[https://store.moravian.org/product-
category/2024dailytexts/](https://store.moravian.org/product-category/2024dailytexts/)**