

Report to the Synod of 2022 From the Bishops

During the current quadrennium, the following have been serving as bishops in the Southern Province: Wayne Burkette, Carol Foltz, Sam Gray, Graham Rights, Lane Sapp, Tom Shelton, and John Wilson.

The province was blessed by the election of Carol Foltz and Tom Shelton as bishops of the Moravian Unity at the Synod of 2018. Following their election to the episcopacy, Sister Foltz was consecrated on June 10, 2018, at Trinity Moravian Church, and Brother Shelton was consecrated on June 17, 2018 at Friedberg Moravian Church. Both services were times of great celebration that were enriched by the participation of bishops from our full communion partners: the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America and the Episcopal Church in America.

Responsibilities

The ministry of bishops is set forth in the Church Order of the Unitas Fratrum, par. #688. This service includes officiating at ordinations and consecrations, serving as pastor to pastors and congregations, being available for consultation with the Provincial Elders' Conference (PEC) and providing intercession for the Unity and for the Church of Christ as a whole. In addition to these ministries, the bishops offer guidance, support, and encouragement to candidates preparing for the ordained ministry of the Church.

Activities

For ordinations and consecrations at which the bishops have officiated, see the report from the PEC.

The bishops have been available for consultation and pastoral care as called upon by pastors and congregations. This often involves consultation by a pastor with a bishop who has served as his or her ordaining or consecrating bishop.

The ministry of intercession to which the bishops are called is aided by a monthly meeting with the President of the PEC, who shares a list of concerns that are matters for prayer. During the COVID-19 pandemic, these

monthly meetings have continued, aided by an online communications platform.

Matters about which the PEC wishes to consult with the bishops are generally discussed at the monthly meeting. Leadership for these meetings is shared by rotation with each bishop serving two months at a time. The bishops also rotate responsibility for leading intercessory prayer and the monthly meetings of the Moravian Ministry Association.

Currently, bishops serve as representatives to the following: Leadership Team for the Moravian Ministry Association, Ordination Review Committee, the Interprovincial Faith and Order Commission, Moravian-Episcopal Coordinating Committee, Moravian-Methodist Coordinating Committee, and the Georgia/Florida Regional Conference of Churches.

On several occasions during the quadrennium, bishops were asked to participate in the annual August Children's Festival that was sponsored by the Board of Cooperative Ministries.

As a result of the full communion agreement of the Northern and Southern Provinces with the Episcopal Church, this quadrennium Bishop Tom Shelton participated in the ordination of Episcopal Bishop Ruth Woodliff Stanley in the Diocese of Upper South Carolina.

During the quadrennium, Bishop Graham Rights participated in the episcopal consecration of Sarah Gillian Groves in the British Province, and Bishop Sam Gray participated in the episcopal consecrations of Brinmore Pfaul in the Guyana Province and Ezekiel Yona in the Province of Western Tanzania.

August 26-30, 2019 the bishops of the Southern Province hosted the 17th Interprovincial Bishops' Conference which was held at Laurel Ridge Camp and Conference Center. Bishops residing in North America assembled during this time for business sessions, worship, and fellowship.

The bishops are grateful for the close sense of cooperation we share with the PEC, pastors, and congregations as we seek to fulfill the call given to us by Jesus Christ, our Lord and Chief Elder.

D. Wayne Burkette
Carol Foltz
Samuel J. Gray
Graham H. Rights
Lane A. Sapp
G. Thomas Shelton
John F. Wilson