



BOARD OF WORLD MISSION

of the Moravian Church • North America

Report to the Synod of 2022
From: Board of World Mission

Mission, Purpose and Values

The Board of World Mission of the Moravian Church in North America (BWM) represents the Moravian Churches of the Southern, Northern and Alaskan Provinces in our collective global mission work. We are guided by our purpose statement: *The Board of World Mission builds relationships through Mission Outreach and Mission Engagement to be faithful to the Great Commandment and the Great Commission.*

From this statement comes our established priorities of Mission Outreach (sharing the Gospel outside of our constituencies) and Mission Engagement (engaging and equipping our congregations and members in the mission of the church).

The three primary focus areas of Mission Outreach are: Area Development according to COUF; Leadership Development within our areas of work; and building capacity for Mission Outreach initiated by our mission partners.

The three primary focus areas of Mission Engagement are: Education about mission efforts and the theology of mission in a global Moravian context; providing opportunities for individuals to engage in service and mission; and seeking mission support through a variety of ways including offerings of financial resources.

The BWM builds relationships through Mission Outreach and Mission Engagement to be faithful to the Great Commandment and the Great Commission.

Responsibilities:

We have seven traditional partner provinces: Nicaragua, Honduras, Costa Rica, Guyana, Eastern-West Indies, and Western Tanzania. Additionally, the BWM accompanies two Mission Provinces (Cuba and Labrador), and supervises two Mission Areas (Sierra Leone and Peru) on behalf of the Southern and Northern Provinces in North America, respectfully.

Summary of Activities

The balance of the work of the Board of World Mission in 2020-2022 has been balancing a focus on the items set out as priorities at the beginning of last year according to our strategic planning process and responding with great flexibility to the unique situations each of our partners has faced in light of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Recent need has resulted in a large amount of support (nearly \$30,000) going to 50+ North American congregations and agencies who submitted requests for Moravian Disaster Response funding to help transition worship and ministries impacted by COVID-19. These grants, given in

two separate rounds, have allowed many congregations to set up online worship opportunities and broaden the opportunities people will have to engage in worship on a weekly basis.

Disaster Response funding has been granted to nearly all of our global partners to help sustain Moravian businesses, help provide much needed medical equipment to health centers, provide emergency food and hygiene items to communities cut off by local travel restrictions, etc. In addition to funding, the BWM has worked to distribute the most up to date health and sanitation information around the virus to help church leadership disseminate information to help keep their members safe and healthy. The BWM also helped to advocate to the President and legislature in Honduras to enact a special travel permission plan allowing family to reunite in La Mosquitia. This plan was enacted following BWM communications, and many Moravians and others were granted permission to make special trips to return home during the time of quarantine.

BWM saw large staffing changes since the last Synod. The office in the Southern Province was closed during the pandemic, and with the retirement of administrative assistant Sheila Beaman, and transition of Rt. Rev. Sam Gray to congregational ministry, it was not reopened. This move was done in coordination with the Southern Province Mission Society, who had shared the office with the BWM. Rev. Angelica Regalado Cieza accepted a part-time call to serve as the Director of Mission Outreach for the Board of World Mission while continuing her work with the emerging ministry Estamos Unidos. Sylvie Hauser was hired as the Director of Communications and Development, and Elizabeth Thiele was hired as the new administrative assistant in our Bethlehem, PA office.

Yearly subsidies to partner provinces were reduced in 2021 according to a long-standing plan, and only newer mission areas and mission provinces continue to receive the block grant funding. The funds saved from these reductions have been re-allocated in large part to a Mission Grant fund, which has distributions three times a year. Funding requests are prioritized based on stage of development (Mission Area as top priority) and alignment with Mission Outreach goals.

In 2021 our mission grant program continued to grow, and here are a few of the projects funded:

- A sustainable agricultural initiative in Honduras
- Scholarship for medical school education for a future Ahuas Clinic doctor
- Remodeling efforts of a congregation/parsonage in San Jose, Costa Rica
- Purchase medical equipment for the Bilwaskarma Clinic in Nicaragua
- Funding of a speech therapist to be on staff at Star Mountain Rehabilitation Center in Palestine
- Scholarships for advance training for school teachers and administrators in Sierra Leone

2021 marked the special 75th anniversary of the establishment of the Ahuas Clinic. A special anniversary celebration was held at the Clinic on June 16th of last year. The Ahuas Clinic Committee of the BWM has been offering special publications (in the Ahuas Spotlight Newsletter) to tell the story of the history of the Clinic, and the BWM was able to surpass a \$75,000 goal in honor of the clinics anniversary to help set it up for its next 75 years of work. Thousands of patients a year are treated at the clinic (surgeries, births, emergency medicine and preventative care) and the clinic is a base for community programs like the infant feeding program which helps support childhood nutrition efforts, changing health outcomes for these

children for the rest of their lives.

In early 2020, the Mission Area of Sierra Leone took a large step forward in its development as it hosted its first ever National Conference. Representatives from five villages came together to share reports on their ministry and plan for the future. A steering committee was elected, and three individuals were tasked with writing the first draft of their Book of Order. The BWM will continue to accompany this process, and provide pastoral training, as well as courses in Moravian Theology and History.

Future Direction and Opportunities

The BWM is currently in the second year of its 2021-2023 strategic plan. This plan has been very helpful in guiding the work of the BWM. Future goals include increased annual funding of Mission Grants – specific projects initiated by our global partners, as well as a focus on individual leadership development and theological education.

A conference is planned for late 2022 for all of BWM’s Spanish speaking partners. This will be the first time many of the current leaders in these areas will have a chance to gather together as peers, share resources, and dialogue with the BWM about their future plans, needs for support, and opportunities to reach out in mission in their context.

The BWM also hopes a multi-year pause on mission teams will come to an end soon. BWM plans to offer a leadership cohort for individuals wishing to lead mission teams and share their gifts with our global partners. Internationally, teams are returning to volunteer at the Ahuas Clinic in Honduras, and other opportunities are sure to follow. Domestically, the BWM is helping to facilitate two mission and service retreats at Moravian Camps in the Northern Province in 2022, while continuing to help with the Mission Camp programming offered at Laurel Ridge each summer.

Respectfully submitted,
Justin Rabbach
Executive Director