

Report to the 2022 Synod
Moravian Ministries Foundation in America (MMFA)

We are in year four of our strategic plan, and I am thrilled to say we have largely met the goals it established. Those goals included:

- Increase the awareness and impact of MMFA in the Moravian Church
- Be the preferred partner for money management, stewardship development, and charitable planning
- Be a learning organization

Our board will engage in strategic planning again this fall; in the meantime, throughout 2022 MMFA will focus on how we reengage with churches, donors, and friends to move ministries forward, together.

Before I share specifics of each area of MMFA's services, I'd like to mention three highlights from the past four years of our work.

- First, our signature effort of the pandemic has without a doubt been the Giving Portal. As of this report, over \$1,000,000 in online gifts to 163 different Moravian entities have been processed through our Giving Portal. We have had over 4,000 transactions and over 35,000 views on the portal webpages. In July of 2021, MMFA started covering the banking and credit card fees for all donations. The churches and agencies we serve now get **100% of the donation**. We process distributions twice a month to help churches with cashflow.
- On February 16, 2021, we sponsored the first Moravian Day of Giving which raised over \$80,000 for Moravian congregations and agencies. On that day, 200 gifts were received through the Giving Portal, and 70 people used the portal for the first time. We will host the Moravian Day of Giving annually on Fat Tuesday or Mardi Gras; dates will vary depending on the placement of Easter. Look for our promotion and give a special gift to the church or ministry of your choice on the Moravian Day of Giving.
- Finally, in 2019 we launched our field of interest funds to enable generosity for specific areas such as hunger and thirst, housing, healing, and more. Each year Moravian communities of faith are encouraged to apply for a grant to help them with a project that addresses the fund's area of focus. In 2020 MMFA made our first hunger/thirst grant awards to 13 ministries and churches totaling \$6500. Later that year we awarded grants to 3 congregations; the amount distributed totaled \$3,400. In 2021 our field of interest funds awarded a total of \$32,050 to 18 different Moravian churches and agencies. Our Day of Giving is the primary way we raise funds for these grants, so we promote matching gifts and other methods to encourage donations. Grant cycles occur in the summer, but thanks to a very generous gift to the Hunger and Thirst fund late last year, on March 1, 2022, over \$360,000 was awarded to 17 very deserving applicants.

The following is an update on each of our key areas.

Moravian Common Fund

Abbot Downing is now part of the larger Wells Fargo Private Bank and we continue to be pleased with our investment partners. Performance of both the market and our portfolios were beyond expectations through 2021. As of 12/31/21 we had over \$207 million under management and the Common Fund really represents a blend of Moravians across the United States.

We launched a new ESG (Environmental/Social/Governance) pool in April 2021 that we call our ESG Moderate/Aggressive pool. We renamed our other ESG pool to call it ESG Blended. Blended is a diversified 60/40 blend while Moderate/Aggressive is more like a 70/30 mix of assets. We now have six investment pools that make up the Common Fund with the Growth Pool holding roughly 78% of the investments. Statements continue to be produced in-house.

We continue to deliver solid performance at a low cost. As part of our reengagement, we are focusing on having conversations with those in the Moravian world who do not use MMFA's investment services. We are also working with current investors to review accounts and recent performance, as well as to set goals.

In 2021, MMFA received \$8.83 million into the Common Fund; this represents two churches that invested with us for the first time, one new agency investor, one new donor advised fund, three new perpetual funds, one new field of interest fund, seven additional accounts for existing church investors, and two additional accounts for agency investors.

Stewardship Services

We continue to help pastors, lay leaders, and communities of faith discover, strengthen, and renew their stewardship by shaping leaders, educating believers, and developing holistic and sustainable stewardship ministries.

Our stewardship model includes benchmarks in the areas of:

- theology
- mission and vision
- leadership
- year-round action

Our model is also grounded in the knowledge that stewardship is about much more than money, and it's more than what we do through our churches; stewardship is both a way of life and our identity. MMFA's stewardship services work to help people to see themselves as stewards, to claim and celebrate that identity, and to use their lives to reflect God's love and generosity in who they are and all they do.

In 2021 we began evaluating our stewardship services for three primary reasons:

- First, the church of today looks very different than the church of 2000 when MMFA began offering stewardship development, and it looks even more different as we navigate a global pandemic, societal divisions, generational changes, and more. MMFA wants to make sure our stewardship services meet the needs of today's Moravian Church.

- Second, we're evaluating what we offer because many churches who contact us for stewardship assistance are already in financial trouble and unfortunately there is no quick fix. We would like to figure out how to partner with churches sooner.
- Finally, even though we do not charge for stewardship services, we are not engaging with a high number of congregations in a transformative way. Part of this is due to the pandemic, of course. But is it also because churches are receiving stewardship coaching elsewhere? We do not think so. Is it because our content isn't of interest to or helpful for Moravians? Again, we don't think so. We need everyone's help to remove obstacles in our engagement with churches, as well as to identify ways we can both improve and grow our stewardship services, while making better connections with churches.

We celebrate successes from the past four years such as:

- 2019's Celebrate Stewardship events in Winston-Salem (NC), Bethlehem (PA), and Watertown (WI)
- 2021's Steward Sparks monthly bible study, which engaged participants from Moravian congregations from Florida to New York to Wisconsin to Edmonton
- Our first ever virtual stewardship conference, Celebrate Stewardship 2021, which brought together attendees from 23 congregations last fall

In 2022 we are excited to engage with people to evaluate what we offer in the area of stewardship, and to form and nurture faithful and generous stewards, together.

Gift Planning

MMFA relaunched our gift planning service in 2021; as with stewardship services, gift planning is free of charge. We customize work plans and content for each church/agency to address their individual needs and support their missions. The time for this work is **now**. Churches and agencies need to help people support the ministries they know and love by having a lasting plan in place; MMFA is ready to partner with you on these critical steps.

We also continue to do gift planning work with individuals who contact us or who are referred to us by agencies and or churches/clergy.

MMFA has been helping individuals, churches, and agencies grow and sustain the ministries that are central to our Moravian faith for almost 25 years. We look forward to partnering with you and to where God will lead us, together, over the next 25 years.

