

REPORT TO THE SYNOD OF 2022

FROM: PROVINCIAL ORGANIZATION CORE TEAM (POCT)

MISSION, PURPOSE, AND VALUES:

The Provincial Organization Core Team (POCT) was formed by the PEC to focus on Resolutions 17 and 18 from the 2018 Synod. POCT's members share a deep commitment to our mission heritage and a desire to help guide the MCSP as it meets the emerging future with courage.

RESPONSIBILITIES:

Resolution 17 asked the Team to clarify primary functions of the provincial system, educate themselves and SP Moravians about other organizational models, provide practical recommendations, seek input, opinions, and advice, provide ongoing reports to the province, and submit recommendations to the PEC by spring 2020.

Resolution 18 asked the Province to evaluate and organize its faith communities to reflect their specific ministry context and audience, to create a framework for ministry organization, and to establish initial faith community designations by January 2021 through a process including self-reflection and other inherent factors to be evaluated on a bi-annual basis. Resolution 18 had some additional action items that were not the focus of POCT's work.

SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES *(including positive resources or gifts identified in your work)*

PEC appointed Zach Dease, Betsy Bombick and Chris Thore as coordinators of the POCT. POCT began its work in May 2019 with the following additional individuals: Sherry Edwards, Patricia Garner, Andrew Heil, Hazel Hooker, Kekka Klingerman, Neil Routh, Rusty Rushing, Amanda Schumpert, Laura Watson, Leibia Willis. Over time, various members had to step away for other commitments. For the past several months, the work has been conducted by Betsy, Zach, Andrew, Kekka, Neil, Rusty, Amanda, Laura and Leibia. We are grateful for everyone's contributions. The POCT set up two subgroups to focus on each resolution under our purview. We met monthly as a full team to share our activities and findings, as well as to consult with Moravian and non-Moravian denominational leaders and resources. Our work was significantly impacted by challenges associated with the COVID pandemic.

Resolution 17

The full POCT and the Resolution 17 Subgroup relied on extensive information and feedback received from Moravian sources such as the Provincial Support Services Board, Board of Cooperative Ministries, the Board of Salem Congregation, pastors, Christian educators and other staff who make up the Moravian Ministry Association, and the Provincial Elders Conference. We also consulted with experts from other denominations, including the United Methodist Church (Susan Nienaber), the Episcopal Church, the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, Pinnacle Leadership Associates (Mark Tidsworth), the Center for Congregational Health (Beth Kennett) and others.

The Resolution 17 Subgroup planned congregational meetings on a regional basis, to begin late March 2020; due to Covid, those did not take place.

Through our conversations and research, we realized that rather than making a structural recommendation, POCT first needed to focus on the deeper, cultural themes that we continually observed as we listened to Moravians in the Southern Province.

As a result of extensive conversations as a subgroup and the full POCT, the team identified four “key areas for growth” for the Province:

- Aligning for Mission
- Deepening Our Commitment to the Leadership of Jesus
- Building Trust Across Partners
- Embracing the Whole Church

These key areas for growth were shared with the Provincial Elders Conference in January 2022. Subsequently they have been shared with various planning committees for the 2022 Synod, as well as with Rebecca Craver, director of the newly formed Commission for Congregational Development, and as part of a Proposal to Synod 2022.

Resolution 18

The Resolution 18 Subgroup included two individuals who did not participate in full POCT meetings: Ruth Burcaw and Kirk Sanders. This Subgroup developed a proposal titled “Reimagining Faith Communities” (RFC), with three detailed documents:

- Process Overview
- Self-Discovery Assessment for Individuals
- Conversational Guidelines

POCT reviewed and subsequently endorsed the proposal/documents, which were presented to the Provincial Elders Conference in late February 2021. The PEC reviewed and discussed the RFC proposal and provided feedback, followed by a joint meeting of the provincial elders and POCT members in June 2021. The PEC affirmed some aspects of the RFC proposal and requested refinement and significant changes in other aspects. PEC made the decision to not begin the implementation of Resolution 18 prior to the 2022 Synod. PEC stated that their decision to not implement Resolution 18 “gives POCT and the PEC the freedom to revise and hopefully strengthen it for consideration by Synod in 2022.” However, the POCT decided in July 2021 to place work on Resolution 18 on hold for two primary reasons: a clear lack of time and energy for reworking the RFC proposal, and the desire to switch focus to Resolution 17 work.

The “Reimagining Faith Communities” proposal was shared with Rebecca Craver in her capacity as Director of the Commission for Congregational Development, along with encouragement to incorporate aspects of the findings within the work of the Commission. Further work is recommended in a Proposal to the 2022 Synod.

FUTURE DIRECTION AND OPPORTUNITIES

1. In addition to this Report to Synod, POCT will also submit a more extensive report to the Provincial Elders Conference. That report will include a bibliography, more detailed information about the four key areas for growth, and full copies of the “Reimagining Faith Communities” proposal.
2. POCT has submitted two proposals to the 2022 Synod:
 - **“Four Key Areas for Growth in the Moravian Church, Southern Province”** to further the work of Resolution 17, 2018 Synod.

POCT feels strongly that the four key areas for growth developed through the focus on Resolution 17 will provide a foundation for the health and vitality of the Province. Future structural and/or organizational changes should embody the four areas. The “Four Key Areas for Growth” proposal encourages this work. Our world will continue to change rapidly. We must take what we have learned over the past three years and continue to explore new ways of doing and being the church; re-energizing our congregations as places for cultivating spiritual growth, community, and mission for future generations. Being disciples of Christ is an on-going, forever adapting process as we seek to follow and spread God’s Word in our continually changing world.

- **“Renewing and Reimagining Faith Communities”** to further the work of Resolution 18, 2018 Synod.

POCT feels strongly that the “Reimagining Faith Communities” proposal developed through the focus on Resolution 18 is a good reference for future work by the Province in this area. A process that provides space, resources, and support for Moravian communities of faith to explore who they are and embark together on a journey to live into God’s call will strengthen ministry within groups and across the Province as a whole. The “Renewing and Reimagining Faith Communities” proposal places this responsibility with the Commission for Congregational Development (or a committee appointed by the CCD), with focused work on clarification of the framework of designations for congregations and ministry organizations, and on building capacity for transformative ministry.