



## MORAVIAN CHURCH IN AMERICA, SOUTHERN PROVINCE

*Provincial Elders' Conference*

459 South Church Street ▪ Winston-Salem, NC 27101-5314  
(336) 725-5811 ▪ (888) 725-5811 ▪ fax: (336) 723-1029 ▪ pec@mcsp.org

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Colleagues & Friends,

We have been shocked and saddened by the images and information coming out of Uvalde Texas as those most precious among us have experienced the essence of evil in this world. Words can feel empty in moments like this because of their inability to make sense of such horror & tragedy. Our nation has experienced two mass shooting in as many weeks. Our society must find a way to be better than this with all aspects of violence committed against innocent people. Dr. King once said, 'Darkness cannot drive out darkness, only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate, only love can do that.' So this is where we must begin anew.

I have asked the Bishops in the Moravian Church, Southern Province to lead us in a collective prayer that they have authored.

Chris

### *\*Bishop's Prayer*

Merciful and Loving God,

“Like the psalmist so many years ago, we cry out, “How long, O Lord?” How long will it be before there is peace in our sinful world? Sometimes it feels like you have hidden your face from us, that you have forgotten us in our need. How long will we have sorrow in our hearts? How long shall the enemy be exalted over us? O Lord, have mercy. Hear our cries and our prayers!

Our Father in heaven, by the power of your Spirit, be present with each person affected by this horrible act of violence in Uvalde, Texas. Their suffering is inexpressible, and human comfort fails. Our prayers for those who have lost their children and teachers seems so little in this time of overwhelming grief, yet we offer them as your children. God of all comfort, intervene in a mighty and compassionate way. Gather those who weep under your wings, like a hen comforts and protects her little ones. Comfort and uphold those who have been torn apart by this terrible act of violence. Bring healing and hope to the community.

Spirit of God, awaken and inspire our nation! Give us hearts of compassion and a new resolve to know and do the things that make for peace. Guide us to discover the causes of these destructive actions, and help us reach out to people who are hurting before they act destructively. Give to those in authority the wisdom and guidance they need, so that we can move beyond words into actions that can reduce this kind of horrible suffering.

O God, we put our trust in you alone. We lift our hearts to you. Hear and answer our prayers, offered in the name of your Son, the Prince of Peace, the Lamb who has conquered death, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. Amen.”

\*Contributors; L. Sapp, D. Burkette, G. Rights, S. Gray, T. Shelton, C. Foltz

The Rev. Christopher Thore, President ▪ The Rev. Dr. Nola Knouse, Vice President ▪ Mrs. Peggy Carter  
The Rev. Matthew Allen ▪ Mr. Tommy Cole ▪ Mr. Keith Kapp ▪ The Rev. Judy Knopf  
The Rev. Dr. David Marcus, Assistant to the President