

# Resolution

Subject: Renewing and Imagining Faith Communities  
From: Vision and Mission Committee

**WHEREAS**, the 2014 Book of Order, pg.72, ch.1A, reads: “Congregations of the Southern Province are very different in their outward form, and exist in different contexts. Each of these types has its own value for the stability and extension of our church. The establishment of new congregations of every kind needs the sanction of the Provincial Elders' Conference.”; and

**WHEREAS**, Resolution #18 of the 2018 Synod of the Moravian Church, Southern Province approved the organization of faith communities in ways that reflect their specific ministry context and audience; and

**WHEREAS**, the existing language in the Book of Order regarding congregations is directly linked to policies and procedures that affect decisions in the following key areas of congregational life: community leadership, the call process, member participation and record-keeping, the administration of rites & sacraments, fundraising, provincial share allocation, governance, as well as synod participation and voting privileges; and

**WHEREAS**, numerous Moravian ministries and communities of faith exist today, in partnership with the Southern Province, who have yet to be formally recognized as congregations in accordance with the Book of Order; and

**WHEREAS**, the absence of any formal recognition of ministry partnership is a detriment not only to the communities affected, but to the missional growth and development of the Southern Province as a whole; and

**WHEREAS**, Resolution #18 of the 2018 Synod of the Moravian Church, Southern Province created a framework for congregational and ministry organization under the following classifications: parish communities, chapel communities, and mission communities; and

**WHEREAS**, the Provincial Organization Core Team was established by the Provincial Elders' Conference for the purpose of re-energizing our congregations and other ministry groups as places for cultivating spiritual growth, community, and mission now and for future generations; and

**WHEREAS**, the Provincial Organization Core Team was assigned to carry out the aims of Resolution #18 under the guidance of the Provincial Elders' Conference; and

**WHEREAS**, the Provincial Organization Core Team has outlined the progress it has made regarding Resolution #18 in its report to the 2022 Synod, making note of the work that remains to be completed for further evaluation of the relationship between the existing congregational designations in the 2014 Book of Order, provincial policies and procedures, as well as the need for each congregation to engage in an ongoing process of community development and formation; therefore be it

**RESOLVED, that** the 2022 Synod of the Moravian Church, Southern Province appoint the Commission for Congregational Development, or a committee appointed by the CCD leadership, in partnership with the Provincial Elders' Conference, to continue and build upon the work of the Provincial Organization Core Team on "Reimagining Faith Communities," and to coordinate further clarification of the framework of designations for congregations and ministry organizations in the Southern Province; and be it

**RESOLVED, that** the Commission for Congregational Development begin a pilot program/prototype process to test the efficacy of the plan for "Reimagining Faith Communities" no later than June of 2023; and be it

**RESOLVED, that** that the Commission for Congregational Development, be charged with submitting recommendations during the 2026 Synod for adoption in the Book of Order, with a focus on building capacity for transformative ministry in congregations; and be it

**RESOLVED, that** the Commission for Congregational Development provide ongoing reports to provincial and congregational leadership during the intersynodal period; and be it

**RESOLVED, that** the Provincial Elders' Conference review any recommendations made by Commission for Congregational Development (CCD) throughout the intersynodal period and partner with the CCD regarding the implementation of changes to the structure of the Moravian Church, Southern Province as well as existing policies and procedures; and be it

**RESOLVED, that** the Provincial Elders' Conference be authorized to implement any such changes on an interim basis during the intersynodal period with plans to submit a summary report during the synod of 2026.

