



# PROVINCIAL TIES

August 2023



— LATEST NEWS & EVENTS —

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## What Is Essential? (Part 2)

Our spiritual ancestors (the Ancient Unitas Fratrum) organized a way of describing their core spiritual beliefs as the “essentials, ministerials, and incidentals.” I invite you to ponder how their understanding operated in daily community life and its relevance for Moravian faith and practice today.

Earlier in this series, I noted that the “essentials, ministerials, and incidentals” are nested in the essentials. But what makes up the ministerials and incidentals are not essentials in themselves. It is the relationship with God in Jesus Christ that stands alone at the center as the essential.

It is tempting to assume our spiritual ancestors did not take the ministerials and incidentals seriously. I wonder if this comes from confusion because of the motto: “In essentials - unity; in non-essentials - liberty; in all things - love.”

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When these two concepts are put together there is often an unintended assumption that the motto is referring to the “essentials, ministerials and incidentals.” More to the point, that “non-essentials” means the “ministerials and incidentals” are insignificant. The motto can be applied to how our ancestors arranged essentials-ministerials-incidentals. For instance, there should be unity of agreement that our essentials refer to our connection to God and our response to God’s grace with our choices to reflect faith, love, and hope. But the motto is not referring to the ministerials and incidentals.

The Ancient Unity took the ministerials and incidentals to be critical parts for how we “do” or “give witness to” expressing faith, love, and hope. They were viewed as necessary for a healthy and dynamic relationship with God and one another. Specifically, they helped to shape the “how” we lived out the essentials.

The Moravian Catechism (IBOC:2020) notes four key categories for the ministerials: the Bible, the Church, the Sacraments & Rites, and Doctrines & Creeds. None of these categories are “essential for salvation” but they are important for salvation. They provide key resources for understanding and living as a follower of Christ (p. 25). For anyone interacting with church communities of the Ancient Unity, it was clear to see that the Bible was held in great regard. The sacraments and rites of the church were great moments of sacred expression and intimate connection to God. While there was not a central creedal statement, they held the Apostles’ and Nicene Creeds as foundational expressions of shared Christian faith with other Christian groups.

Regarding the incidentals, the Catechism notes that they include things that are not necessary for salvation or for understanding salvation, yet they are helpful in supporting healthy and dynamic Christian life for individuals and congregations. Specifically, congregations and individuals are not required to perform incidentals in the same way. They also serve as a reminder that one church should not require another Christian church community to practice these expressions in exactly the same manner. Consider the diverse ways Moravian Lovefeasts are celebrated in the many provinces of the Unity or the vast diversity of hymns and music styles from congregation to congregation, and region to region. There is not one standard way, yet each congregation has much tradition and value invested in their customs. The incidentals point to those things that help us grow in faith and strengthen the church. Our ancestors stressed how important it is to be reminded from time to time that while important, ministerials and incidentals are not among the essentials.

To understand the “how” our spiritual ancestors went about doing their faith in daily life, we must see the connection to their custom of meeting frequently for prayer, study, and mutual accountability in small groups. They took to heart and mind the admonition to respond to all life situations with faith, love, and hope. Their “how” for doing this was very much tied to meeting regularly and frequently in small groups. This was incredibly unique for the 1450s-1600s. It is not clear if in all cases groups met daily or weekly, but it is highly likely it was more frequently than once a

week. This was revived in the Renewed Moravian communities beginning in 1727 and the “choir system.”

Living into the ministerials and incidentals included sharing frequent experiences through worshipping communally and individually and doing so as congregations and in small groups. This rhythm was a big part of how they lived out their shared response to God’s grace. These interlocking experiences, especially small group study and prayer, carried them out into the world to impact others - especially as they sought out the least, the last, and those society had forgotten or rejected.

Stay tuned for more of the story in the next issue of the Provincial Ties.

*Submitted by The Rev. Dr. Neil Routh, President, PEC*

## Free stewardship help for the asking

By Vince Holbrook

*“Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you.”*

These often-quoted words from Matthew 7:7 still ring true. Many Moravian congregations struggle with stewardship. But surprisingly few take advantage of the **free** Stewardship Services available from the Moravian Ministries Foundation in America.

If your church or ministry requires time, talent, and treasure to continue to do God’s work, why not ask for help?

(336) 725-2589  
[lwatson@mmfa.com](mailto:lwatson@mmfa.com)



### How we can help, free of charge:

#### Training

- In-person and online
- Topics include best practices, trends, and more

#### Tools

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- Financial stewardship programs from ecumenical partners
  - Guide for year-round financial stewardship planning
  - Thematic campaigns
- Congregational gift planning support

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- Health assessment
- Action plan development

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- Connecting ministries

#### Development services

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- Capital campaign consultation and resource-sharing
- Fundraising
- Board training

Scan QR Code or visit  
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for more information



## ***Commission on Ministry***

The Commission on Ministry is pleased to announce that we currently have two new candidates pursuing certification as church educators in the Southern Province: **Jeannie May** and **Cat Long Jones**. Jeannie is a member of Trinity Moravian Church in Winston-Salem and Cat is a member of Covenant Moravian Church in Wilmington, NC.

To seek certification, educators must have an undergraduate and/or graduate degree from an accredited institution and a minimum of one year church work experience. Those seeking certification are interviewed by the Commission on Ministry and then approved to officially begin the process by being placed with a mentor. The certification process includes three courses or 30 hours from a combination of the following: Biblical interpretation, Moravian theology, religious education and practice, worship and the sacraments, spiritual formation, mission, and polity. Students are also encouraged to interact with the Opening Doors to Discipleship modules through the Presbyterian Church USA. (many of our Moravian educators have created or written modules for this program). The certification process also includes participation with the Provincial/Ecumenical Educator's Group as well as a culminating project. After completing this work, students meet with the Commission on Ministry who then recommends the student to the Provincial Elders 'Conference for approval as a certified educator. Once approved, the PEC formally installs the certified educator at her/his local church.

If you or someone you know is interested in being certified as a church educator, please contact me at [lsapp@mcsp.org](mailto:lsapp@mcsp.org) or 336-725-5811.

*Submitted by the Rt. Rev. Lane Sapp, Director, COM*

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## ***TUESDAY NIGHT BAND***

**BEGINNING BAND CLASS** will start on Tuesday September 5, 2023, at Home Moravian Church. Sponsored jointly with Salem Congregation, Beginning Band Class will once again be offered under the leadership of Robah Ogburn and Connie Merritt. Each Tuesday night, the class will meet at 6:30pm for all ages 6th grade and up (we have had students starting in their 80's). If you do not know what instrument you want to learn, the leaders will help you make that decision on the first night.

**Salem Congregation Chorale Band** will meet at 7:30 each Tuesday and is open to all interested players. This group will use both green and blue Moravian Chorale books and perhaps some band arrangements. This group is targeted for all players that have at least completed Beginning Band as well as those that have played for many years.

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Both the Beginning Band Class and the Salem Congregation Chorale Band will meet in the Rehearsal Room on the lower level of the Rhondthaler building. Please contact Connie ([kapwing@triad.rr.com](mailto:kapwing@triad.rr.com)) or Robah ([RobahOgburn@Yahoo.com](mailto:RobahOgburn@Yahoo.com)) if you have questions or need additional information.

*Submitted by Bridget Smith, Salem Congregation*

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## From The Provincial Financial Office

**2024 Provincial Budget Presentation** -Please mark your calendars for Tuesday night, October 10, 2023. This is the date for this year's Provincial Budget Presentation. This year's event will be virtual like last year. There will be opportunities for questions and answers during the presentation.

**Payroll Fees** - Due to an increase in the fees we pay for payroll processing, we must increase the current fees we charge. New hire fees will go from \$25.00 to \$28.00 per employee. Monthly processing fees for Preschools and other non-church employees will go from \$7.00 to \$8.00 per employee. The fees are based on each employee that is active on payroll regardless of whether they are paid that month. That is the way we are charged by Paycor. This change will go into effect with the October payroll.

**Required Employee Training**- Each employee will be **required** to complete two online video training courses within the next 2 months. They are: Abusive Workplace Conduct Prevention and Anti-Harassment Training for Employees- Multistate. These classes should only take 30 minutes each to complete. You will be sent an email with your "Assigned Task link" indicating the deadline to complete in either August or September.

Thanks to all the clergy and managers that have completed their training for these classes. Feedback from those taking the courses has been very positive, mentioning the information was very helpful and enlightening. While participation was 90%, there are still those that have not completed the training. Please do so as soon as possible.

Any church board member and/or personnel committee member interested in taking these same courses are welcome to do so. There is no charge. Please contact Robyn Glance at [rglance@mcs.org](mailto:rglance@mcs.org) and she can get you signed up.

*Submitted by Robyn Glance, Chief Financial Officer*

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## *Cup of Covenant*

This year's Cup of Covenant Service will be held during the Moravian Ministry Association's meeting on **Thursday, September 7, 2023, at 10:30 AM at Trinity Moravian Church**. Members of the MMA and their spouses are invited to attend. The bishops will lead the service and the Rt. Rev. Sam Gray will be the guest speaker.

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The Cup of Covenant Service has traditionally been held on the evening of September 16, Moravian Ministry Covenant Day. We hope that hosting the service at a regularly scheduled meeting during the day will enable more people to participate. The service will be available by livestream on the web: <https://trinitymoravian.org/content/webcast/> or on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/TrinityMoravian>. We encourage those participating virtually to prepare a cup ahead of time so we can together join in renewing our covenant to serve Jesus Christ, our Lord and Chief Elder. We look forward to seeing you on **Thursday, September 7** as we renew our covenant together.

*Submitted by The Rt. Rev. Lane Sapp, Director, COM*

## ***Concerns and Celebrations***

### **Death:**

**Herb Spaugh, Jr.** passed into the more immediate presence of the Savior on Friday, July 14. His generosity provided the resources for the Bishop Herbert Spaugh Fund, in memory of his father, an endowment for clergy seminary education, continuing education, and scholarships for children of pastors.

Please keep the Spaugh family in your prayers.

## ***Ordination Anniversaries for August 2023***

|                      |          |
|----------------------|----------|
| Worth Green.....     | 46 years |
| Donald Griffin.....  | 40 years |
| Suzanne Miller.....  | 15 years |
| Tracy Pryor.....     | 24 years |
| James Salzwedel..... | 62 years |
| Arkon Stewart.....   | 33 years |
| Sandra Thigpen.....  | 31 years |
| Scott Venable.....   | 44 years |
| Frank Barker.....    | 60 years |
| Andrew Craver.....   | 5 years  |
| Scott Rainey.....    | 2 years  |

## ***Congratulations and God Bless You!***

## **Provincial Events Calendar**



Going forward, using this link [Provincial Event Calendar](#), you will find all Provincial events scheduled in the Southern Province. The calendar will be updated when the PEC office has knowledge of an event. Please refer to the link often as it will probably change weekly. This link will take the place of the usual calendar items listed in the Ties.

## MISSION CAMP REUNION

Have you participated in Mission Camp at Laurel Ridge?  
Mark your calendars for a reunion with other Mission Camp alums on  
October 7, 2022, 3:00 - 7:00 pm.  
Hope to see you there!



*Submitted by The Rev. Dana Myers*

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### For Your Address Book:

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