



PROVINCIAL TIES

October 2023



— LATEST NEWS & EVENTS —

What Is Next? (Part 4 of the Series on the “Essentials.”)

Part one of this series explored “what” our spiritual ancestors within the Unitas Fratrum expressed as their core faith values. Part two explored “why” our ancestors chose this pattern, which took the Bible as essential to understanding our relationship to our Triune God, along with the sacraments and the church. Part three explored “how” they lived in a structure of small groups for developing dynamic relationships with God and one another through faith, love, and hope. This final part will explore “what’s next” - what is important today for life in Christian community together while staying engaged with our spiritual roots in the Unitas Fratrum?

There is a huge misread of the importance of the Bible, as well as the “Ministerials” in general. It comes from assuming that if something is not specifically noted as “essential” it isn’t important at all or it is being disregarded. This comes at a time when specific interpretations of scripture have led to great harm and broad sweeping rejection of large portions of

fellow Christians. Assuming our spiritual ancestors, or our present teachers of Moravian faith, do not take the Bible as critically important, is a false conclusion. The Ancient Brethren specifically held that the Bible as the most critical tool for understanding and engaging a dynamic relationship with God in Jesus Christ. Equally important to them was being in a community of mutual support where the Bible could be studied and interpreted together. And personal interpretations could be evaluated and challenged appropriately. The Sacraments, the rites, the church, creeds, and doctrines also played a crucial role in supporting and developing their connection to God, as they continue to do for us today.

Our ancestors did not devalue the importance of the Bible and biblical interpretation or the role doctrines. By saying that relationship with the Triune God - personally and as a community - is the only "Essential," they were also staking the claim that one's interpretation of scripture or doctrine should not be an obstacle for others who are seeking God. Or lead to harm and division in the church community. They understood the ongoing endeavor to interpret God's living word would remain a great responsibility, especially when the community found it hard to arrive at a clear shared perspective on a given point of faith (i.e., the role of women as clergy, the abolition of slavery, or bearing arms).

They took the importance of the study of scripture, alongside of the shared study of God's word, so seriously that members of the church were expected to attend frequent small group meetings during the week centered in the study of scripture and prayer. Additionally, they allowed the conversations within these groups to shape worship and the direct way they disciplined members toward becoming more mature in faith. They believed God's Spirit was ever fresh and new and always seeking to open their hearts, minds, and hands to the unfolding of God's grace. When people like John Calvin first encountered congregations of our spiritual ancestors, they were amazed how well they cared for one another and maintained a high regard for faith formation through their small group ministry model.

Do not assume this was easy, or that community life beginning in 1457 unfolded in unbroken harmony for the next half century (or longer). In fact, about every 10-15 years conflict would pop up over differences of interpretation of scripture and cultural change. Sometimes this led to Synods being called to wrestle with the questions of the day. But each time they moved forward, even if in small steps, seeking to be faithful to God and their pledge of respect for one another. Their expressions of polity and order remained centered on Christ and focused on a faith expression of responding to the challenges of life with faith, love, and hope.

What is next? In our present society, in America and beyond, there are far too many Christian expressions of one perspective demanding all others comply for agreement before working together can happen. Meanwhile, there are not enough examples of building bridges to one another and committing to common goals.

continued on page 3

In recent weeks I have had the privilege of being in spaces of dialogue with leaders of our Moravian Unity, as well as leaders across the ecumenical Christian landscape of our country. It is surprising that many if not most of the divisions across the world are rooted in cultural struggles around change, specially where resistance to change and working together is framed as a doctrinal difference. The demand for listening to one another and working together has never been more important.

The basic effort to gather through a shared commitment to Jesus, and to responding to Spirit of God remains our core task - in the Southern Province and in each congregation and ministry expression. It will never be easy or without struggle. I believe that reclaiming a commitment to some form of small group fellowship rooted in the study of God's word, prayer and shared actions of faith, love and hope is key to what is next. It is what our ancestor discovered in 1457 and rediscovered in 1727. The challenge today is making space for people to be in your group that represent diverse views. And to resist the temptation to gather with folks who create an echo chamber with little to no openness to change and ongoing development of God's leading. What's next is a process of making space for one another and for God's Spirit. Stay tuned for more to come.

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

4th Moravian Unity Brass Festival

Close to 300 Moravian Brass musicians attended the 4th Moravian Unity Brass Festival (UBF) in Jeffrey's Bay, Eastern Cape, South Africa, brilliantly organized by the Brass Band Union of South Africa (BBSA) in September. There were 5 of us from the US and 26 from Europe who joined Moravians from throughout South Africa for a joyful week of music and worship and fellowship. The BBSA nurtures individual musicians and shares the language of music with which joyfully praise their Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. They develop relationships and partnerships between countries, between provinces, between congregations, between bands, and among musicians. They very effectively incorporate music education into their programs, encouraging the next generation to *join the band*. We thank the BBSA for the invitation, and thank the members for their warmth and hospitality!

Our sisters and brothers of the European Continental Province (Herrnhuter Brüdergemeine) have announced that the next Unity Brass Festival (5th) will be in Europe (location TBD) on Pentecost (Pfingsten) weekend of 2027 and you are invited! This will be the 300th anniversary year of the Renewed Moravian Church (1727). It will also align with their biennial Bläserntag (brass festival).

Submitted by Erik Salzwedel, MMF, who attended UBF, along with Mary Elen Kollman, Jan Stein, Donna Rothrock, and David Bergstone.

Moravian Ministries Foundation Association

Improved Technology Coming Soon to MMFA by Chris Spaugh

Technology changes are coming to MMFA. In late October we are converting to a new system called [CommunitySuite](#) by the technology firm Foundant. For years we have needed one system that fully integrates the ministry work of MMFA and now we have that solution. This new system will integrate our accounting with the Giving Portal. It will also enable us to both track communications with Moravians while performing the complex accounting required by the [Common Fund](#), and to take online grant applications starting in 2024.

Please [click here](#) to continue reading.

Concerns and Celebrations

Pastoral Change:

The Rev. **Kelly Moore**, on loan to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, recently accepted a call to serve as Pastor of Our Saviour's Lutheran Church in Welcome, NC. Kelly completed her pastorate with Holy Cross Lutheran Church in Advance, NC on September 17 and will be installed at Our Saviour's Lutheran at 4:00 pm on Sunday afternoon, October 22, 2023. The church is located at 641 Critcher Drive, Lexington, NC 27295. Please keep Kelly, Joe and their son, Zach in your prayers during this time of transition.

Death:

Mrs. **Johnnie Hauser**, past Provincial Women's Board Chair, passed away on Thursday, September 21, 2023. She was a member of New Philadelphia Moravian Church and the mother of Jane Shore, Administrative Assistant, Home Moravian.

Ordination Anniversaries for October 2023

Jeffrey Carter.....25 years
James Demby.....14 years
Betty Helms.....11 years
Judy Knopf.....18 years
Tripp May.....47 years
Daniel Nelson.....36 years
Robert Peterson.....47 years
John G. Rights.....27 years
Aaron Linville.....9 years
Reed Lawson.....2 years
Adriana Craver.....2 years
Dana Myers.....1 year

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.

CCD Staff Announcement

In meeting and working with congregations over the past two years, we've listened to learn the kind of support you are looking for to help you thrive in the ministry into which God has called you. We recognize that much is changing in how we connect with our communities, how we share our stories and how we can bring people closer to God.

To help meet your most pressing needs for congregational development and faith formation, the CCD is changing how we're staffed. The changes will expand our capabilities and offer the resources necessary to strengthen our support to congregations, especially in the areas of communication, education and discipleship. In light of the changes the Operations Coordinator position has been discontinued.

Over the next few months, we will be bringing in a new staff member to help you strengthen your local faith formation efforts. The Faith Formation Specialist will offer expertise in Christian education and work to actively engage with congregations to explore the possibilities for deepening faith practices for your particular contexts. This role on our staff will focus on the particular needs of discipleship for all ages by working directly with congregations to discern ways to share Jesus in a changed and changing world.

In addition, we recognize we need to improve communication on both provincial and congregational levels, so we will be hiring a communications professional dedicated to the Southern Province to guide us in best practices, skill development and access to resources that will aid in our ability to share God's purpose and vision internally as well as with a broader audience.

These new members of our team will help cultivate greater collaboration among provincial staff, clergy, educators, acolytes, lay leaders and congregation members. Meeting the growing needs of the province requires new and expanded skills and capabilities that we did not have. These changes do not diminish our deep gratitude for the faithfulness and commitment of those who have served as partners in this ministry.

continued on page 6

As we move forward, we will be sure to share the transitions in our staff functions and the direction of our Province. Know that the efforts we are making now will help make our work as Moravian Christians stronger as we move into the future with Faith, Love, and Hope in response to Christ the author and perfecter of our faith (Heb. 12:2)



College Age/Young Adult Retreat 2023 “Relax and Reconnect”

Laurel Ridge Bishop’s Wing at Higgins
November 10-12

This is for all those who have graduated high school and still consider themselves young adults.

\$100 per person based on double occupancy. \$165 for a single room.

Deans: Cat Long and The Rev. Jeff Jones

Register here:

Schedule:

Friday

1pm-3pm - Check in

3pm - Getting to know you, possible hike around the mountain

6pm - Dinner at Higgins

7:30 - Worship and programming in the sunrise room

Saturday

9am - Breakfast at Higgins

10:30 am - Worship and small group

12pm - 6 pm - Free afternoon (activity suggestions available soon)

6:30pm - Campfire hotdogs, sides, and smores around the firepit

8pm - Worship, small group, and games

Sunday

9am - Breakfast at Higgins

10:30am - Closing Worship

12pm - Lunch at Freeborne’s (optional)

Submitted by The Rev. Rebecca Craver, Director, CCD

From the Commission on Ministry

Currently, the Southern Province is blessed to have four candidates preparing for the ordained ministry of the Moravian Church:

Josh Follweiler is a senior at Moravian Theological Seminary. Josh currently serves as student intern at Calvary Moravian Church in Allentown, PA.

Ethan Smith is a second-year student at Moravian Theological Seminary and currently serves as a student intern at Covenant Moravian Church in Wilmington, NC.

Caleb Carter is a second-year student at Moravian Theological Seminary and currently serves as student intern at the Abbey, a new and emerging ministry of the Episcopal Church in Birmingham, AL.

David Jackson is a first-year student at Moravian Theological Seminary and lives in Winston-Salem. David is a full-time fireman with the Winston-Salem Fire Department.

Currently, the Southern Province is also blessed to have four candidates engaged in the process to become certified Church Educators:

Meredith Cohoon - Church Educator at First Moravian,

Jeannie May - a member of Trinity Moravian Church, Winston Salem, NC

Cat Long Jones - a member of Covenant Moravian, Wilmington, NC

June Edwards- a member of Trinity Moravian Church, Winston-Salem NC

Please keep these individuals in your prayers as they continue the journey toward ordination/certification.

Submitted by The Rt. Rev. Lane Sapp

Moravian Music Foundation

The Long Eighteenth Century; The Golden Age of Moravian Music Concert by Moramus Chorale, Mary Lou Kapp Peeples, Sung Lee, Stephanie Vial, and soprano, Kathleen Janiskas.

Friday, October 27, 2023 [TICKETS](#)

7:00pm

Old Salem Museums and Gardens, Visitor Center

900 Old Salem Rd., Winston-Salem, NC

Please join us in Old Salem in Winston-Salem for music of the early Moravians presented by the Moramus Chorale, with Mary Louise Kapp Peeples on organ. Additionally, in recognition of the Salem Collegium Musicum and their extensive and varied repertoire, a consort of early instruments will play music by a variety of classical composers from the long 18th century, featuring [Sung Lee](#) on woodwinds; [Stephanie Vial](#), cello; and soprano, [Kathleen Jasinkas](#). <https://moravianmusic.ticketspice.com/moravian-music-foundation-serenade-series>



NEW THIS YEAR!

ChristmasFest will have space available for Moravian churches, groups, or agencies to set up a tent or display.



More at www.moravianmusic.org

ChristmasFest

**A Free Moravian Advent & Christmas Festival
Family Fun & Festivities!**

Music by a variety of choirs/ensembles

Food & Drink Vendors

Artists and Craftspeople

Activities for Children and Santa! Moravian Music Foundation, Archie K Davis Center (457 S. Church St.) and Elberston Fine Arts Center (for parking, use 412 Rams Dr. in your GPS) in Winston-Salem, NC. Free. www.moravianmusic.org

Submitted by Erik Salzwedel, Moravian Music Foundation

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The Provincial Elders' Conference, Southern Province

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