

Provincial Ties: In the Spirit of Simplicity



# PROVINCIAL TIES

February 2024



## 2024 Watchword

Listen to me, my people; hear me, my nation: Instruction will go out from me; my justice will become a light to the nations. **Isaiah 51:4 NIV**

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—LATEST NEWS AND EVENTS—

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## Simplicity of Spirit

A retired pastor and friend recently reminded me of a core value of the Moravian Church that Christians from other traditions admire - simplicity. I knew my friend was not stating that ours is a tradition of shallow or simplistic customs and practices, nor that we lack depth or complexity. The Moravian Church has remained vibrant for nearly 570 years because of the focus we share for Christ and our daily journey of responding to God's redeeming grace with faith, love, and hope.

One of the great descriptions written about the core values and character of being Moravian can be found in *The Spirit of the Moravian Church*, by The Rt. Rev. Clarence H. Shawe (1957). It was later revised for American audiences by The Rt. Rev. Edwin K. Kortz (*Moravian Church in America: 1979*).

It is important to consider that this work began as a series of lectures given in the British Province. They would become a gift to the larger Unity, especially as they were first published on the 500th anniversary of the Moravian Church in 1957. That same year Shawe passed into the more immediate presence of his Savior, making his words all the more important. Shawe was noted as a key figure who kept the Unity from disintegrating during World War II. His writing remains valuable today as we seek to stay focused on the common ground for Moravians around the world.

Shawe points to four features that define Moravian faith. Consider here what he felt was the most significant of them - simplicity. It is getting "to the point" (3). As part of responding to God with faith, love, and hope it reveals genuineness and practicality. He reminds us that our spiritual ancestors could not "endure a life in which there is a contradiction between profession and the practice (of faith)" (3). Simplicity is a focus on walking the talk - to live our faith in consistent witness to our beliefs. He includes that also means avoiding arguments over theology or adopting complex theological understandings, especially those that present contradictions to the focus on the boundless love of Jesus given to all.

Shawe stated "our church has never had an interest in doctrinal disputes" (3). He notes this as an outcome of simplicity. We have always valued sound doctrine, with focus on living out what it means to be a follower of Jesus. Throughout the world, even today, this includes an emphasis on collaborating for shared service and fellowship with fellow Moravians and more broadly with Christians and non-Christians in general.

Shawe notes that during our renewal period (1720s-1760s), and the vast mission campaigns of that era, tolerance was introduced as the added expression of our simplicity. Moravians leave room for varying opinions and expressions of worship and faith. Shawe noted that Zinzendorf affirmed the importance of diversity in our communities, which God uses to help us see more clearly how grace calls us to put into practice the vastness of Christ's love, by sharing it broadly with others. The presence of the diversity of religious expression gives witness to the love of the Savior who

“adapts himself to every race and nation and even to every temperament in order to bring all” to the reality of Christ’s redeeming love (6).

Why was simplicity singled out as the most important feature of the Moravian Church? Because it keeps us centered on being a living example. Because it takes a commitment to simplicity to avoid contention and arguing. Because Moravians have discovered again and again the fruit of faithful simplicity includes holding space for each other despite our different worship styles and spiritual expressions. Because it is how we face the daily challenge of seeking to walk the path of faith. All the while, keeping the word of the Cross at the center of our understanding of scripture, expressions of worship, and daily actions of faith, love, and hope.

It is very significant that this is mainly transmitted through living examples of faith’s simplicity. Shawe noted that giving living witness is far preferable over well stated doctrines and theological expressions. I have seen this to be true in the congregation where I grew up, in all those I have served, and all those I have experienced across the Unity. Simplicity remains at the core.

Shawe notes the importance of simplicity, but as connected to other values. Next time we will explore happiness, especially in the context of what our Moravian ancestors felt about Good Friday and the sacrifice of Jesus for our salvation.

When simplicity we cherish  
Then the soul is full of light;  
But that light will quickly vanish  
When of Jesus we lose sight.

Coming soon a weblink to a copy of *The Spirit of the Moravian Church*, by Clarence H. Shawe.

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

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## *Join Us for Moravian Day of Giving 2024!*

Join us on February 13, 2024, for a day of impact and generosity during the 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Moravian Day of Giving! It's more than a date— it's an opportunity to embrace the spirit of our community, driven by shared values and a commitment to making a difference.

In celebration of MMFA's 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary, we have identified matching donors for all of our Moravian Field of Interest Funds, up to \$2,500 per fund. These sponsors are deeply committed to the specific service areas represented by the FOI Funds. We invite you to partner with us and donate to the field of interest funds on the Day of Giving. This will help us unlock the matching contributions of \$2,500 for each of the 8 FOI funds.

Additionally, MMFA will grant \$2,500 to the 5 Moravian organizations (churches, agencies, camps, etc.) with the most unique individual donors.

## What could your ministry do with \$2,500?

### How to Participate:

**Make a Donation:**  
Visit the [Moravian Giving Portal](#) to contribute to your congregation, ministry, or organization on Tuesday, February 13th.

**Support Field of Interest Funds:**  
Contribute to our Field of Interest Funds, unlocking matching contributions of \$2,500 for each of the 8 funds.

**Spread the Spirit on Social Media:** Use #IGiveMoravian to share your reasons for giving and inspire others to join the day of generosity.

In honor of MMFA's 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary, we challenge everyone to donate at least \$25 to one of our FOI funds so that we can reach the matching contribution for each fund!

Let's come together on Tuesday, February 13th with open hearts and giving spirits! Visit [MMFA.com](#) for more information.

## Give. Unite. INSPIRE!

*Submitted by Moravian Ministries Foundation of America*

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### Unity Prayer Day Offering

Each year Moravian churches around the world celebrate the founding of the Unitas Fratrum (March 1, 1457) and receive a special "Unity Offering" for an important project or cause somewhere in the Moravian world. Sunday, March 3, 2024, is the Day of Prayer for Unity Work. Congregations are invited to pray for our worldwide church and to receive a special offering. The Unity Prayer Day Offering, 2024, will support the work among Ukrainian refugees in Germany and the Czech Republic.

After gathering contributions, congregations may send one check to the Provincial Finance Office clearly indicating that it is for the Unity Offering.

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## Day of Prayer Services for 2024

**February 14**, 11:00am. Home Moravian, Ash Wednesday, Speaker: The Rev. Nancy Johnson Vaders, Director of Outreach for St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Winston-Salem. Coffee Fellowship at 10am. The service will be available in person and live streamed on the Home Church web page. Click on Live broadcasts to access the service.

<https://www.homemoravian.org/index.php/live-broadcasts/>

**February 18**, 2:00 P.M., Lovefeast, Christ Moravian, Speaker: The Rt. Rev. Lane Sapp. Lovefeast. Nursery provided.

**February 21**, 11:00 A.M. Trinity Moravian, Speaker: The Rev. Dana Myers. Lunch will be served after the service.

**February 28**, 11:00 A.M. Ardmore Moravian, Speaker: The Rev. Kelly Moore. Refreshments will be served at 10:00 A.M. The service will be in person and online: [www.FACEBOOK.com/ArdmoreMoravian/videos](http://www.FACEBOOK.com/ArdmoreMoravian/videos)

**March 6**, 11:00 A.M. Bethania Moravian, Speaker: The Rev. Russ May. Coffee served at 10:00 A.M. This service will be in person only.

**March 13**, 11:00 A.M. Fairview Moravian, Speaker: The Rt. Rev. Tom Shelton. The service will be in person and include communion. The service will be available on YouTube and Facebook.

**March 20**, 11:00 A.M. Konnoak Hills Moravian, Speaker: The Rev. Margaret Norris. Lovefeast. The service will be in person and online: <http://www.khmoravian.org/> Select "YouTube Channel" at the top of the page.

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## Great Sabbath Singers Wanted

Under the direction of Amanda Schumpert, with Mary Louise Kapp Peebles as organist, the Great Sabbath Chorus will present a Great Sabbath Service of Music and Worship on Saturday, March 30.

Chorus rehearsals begin on Sunday, February 18 from 3:30 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall of Home Moravian Church. Sunday afternoon rehearsals will continue on February 25 and March 3, 10, 17, and on Friday, March 22, at 7:00 pm.

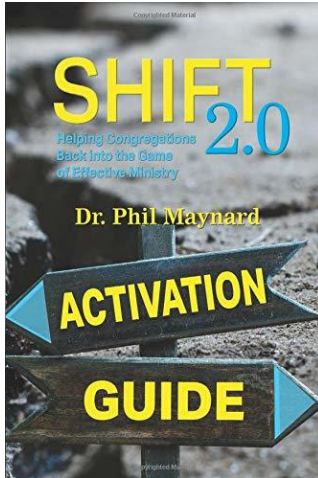
Singers from all our churches are encouraged to sing. Community singers are also invited. The music this year will include Great Sabbath anthems and hymns.

Interested singers should email Ted Leinbach at [tedleinbach@aol.com](mailto:tedleinbach@aol.com)

*Submitted by Ted Leinbach for the Great Sabbath Committee*

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## **Shift 2.0 at Intersynodal Conference 2024**



This year, the Commission on Congregational Development is using, *Shift 2.0: Helping Congregations Back into the Game of Effective Ministry* by Dr. Phil Maynard, as a launching pad for work within Southern Province congregations. The book outlines 5 shifts in congregational focus that result in more vibrant and vital experiences of faith in community. We are beginning our provincial reflection on the work by connecting with clergy, educators and board leaders, but encourage inviting congregations to begin exploring the book and material too.

We believe this book will be a helpful tool and give each congregation ideas to dig deeper into your ministry goals and work towards the growth and vitality in your ministry. The book is full of practical tools, ideas and strategies to support congregations as we all seek to continually embrace God's call to ministry in your local contexts. We will share more resources in the book and opportunities to engage the material in the months leading up to our Intersynodal Conference on October 25-26, 2024 where Dr. Phil Maynard will be the keynote speaker!

We have purchased copies of the book for clergy, educators and an additional book for lay leadership, if you have not received your books please come by Cedarhyrst to pick them up or contact our office for arrangements.

*Submitted by Rebecca Craver for the Committee on Congregation Development*

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## **Moravian Band Festival Concert**

# Moravian Band Festival CONCERT

Saturday, February 3, 2024

4:00p - 5:15p

Advent Moravian Church  
1514 W. Clemmons Rd.  
Winston-Salem, NC



*free and open to the public*  
**[www.moravianmusic.org](http://www.moravianmusic.org)**

Please plan to join us for a free informal **Band Festival Concert** at 4:00pm for the public; Advent Moravian Church Fellowship Center, 1514 W. Clemmons Rd., Winston-Salem, NC. Participants and Directors will share the music they have prepared during their full day of music and fellowship. More at <https://moravianmusic.org/bandfest/>

*Submitted by Erik J. Salzwedel of the Moravian Music Foundation*

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—Concerns and Celebrations—

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The Rt. Rev. **C. Hopeton Clennon** was called to his heavenly home on Sunday, January 7, 2024 surrounded by his loving family. Ordained in 1983, he ministered to the flock of the Jamaica Province of the Moravian Church. In 1989, the Lord called him to new pastures in the United States. There, he shepherded the congregations of Faith Moravian Church in Washington, DC, Schoeneck Moravian Church in Nazareth, PA, and the Moravian Church of Downey, near Los Angeles, CA. His devotion and service were recognized in 1998 when he was consecrated as the 320th bishop of the worldwide Moravian Unity. In 2013, Hopeton became the Senior Pastor for Central Moravian Church, Bethlehem. A Funeral Service

was held at 11 A.M. on Saturday, January 20, 2024, at Central Moravian Church. Burial will be private.

The Rev. **Sandra Thigpen** joined the heavenly church triumphant on Monday, January 15, 2024. Sister Thigpen was educated at the University of Louisville and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, KY. After graduation she performed social work and was commissioned for prison ministry. In 1992, Sister Thigpen was ordained by the Rowan Baptist Association. She continued to serve our Lord through chaplaincy with the Forsyth Jail and Prison Ministries in Winston-Salem and served on short-term mission efforts to the Caribbean and Africa. Sister Thigpen served for one year as pastor of St. Philips Moravian Church, Winston-Salem, NC. After serving at St. Philips, she then served as pastor at Grace Moravian Church in Queens, NY. After moving back to Winston-Salem, she served as interim pastor at St. Philips Moravian Church. A memorial service was held February 3, 2024, 11:00 a.m. at Calvary Moravian, Winston-Salem, NC with burial in God's Acre, Winston-Salem, NC. Please remember Sandra's family and friends in prayer in the days and weeks to come.

**Ethan Smith**, Moravian Theological Seminary student, and **Kelsey Kirkman** were united in marriage on December 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2023, at Sky Retreat in Purtlear, North Carolina. Congratulations to you both! Should you wish to send them a card, their mailing address is **2316 W Dolphin Dr, Oak Island NC 28465**. Again, congratulations and God's richest blessings on your marriage!

### **Ordination Anniversaries for February 2024**

Paul Couch, Jr.....30 years  
Tim Sapp.....18 years  
Craig Troutman.....42 years  
Steve Wilson.....48 years  
Andrew Heil.....11 years  
Fran Saylor.....6 years

### **DCE Anniversary for February 2024**

Joyce Vance.....24 years

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

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