



Moravian Church in America

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Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

“We will be eager to maintain the unity of the Church. Realizing that God has called us from many and varied backgrounds, we recognize the possibility of disagreements or differences. Often these differences enrich the Church, but sometimes they divide. We consider it to be our responsibility to demonstrate within the congregational life the unity and togetherness created by God who made us one. How well we accomplish this will be a witness to our community as to the validity of our faith.”

Moravian Covenant for Christian Living

We greet you in the name of Jesus, Chief Elder of the Church and Savior of our lives. Members of the Southern and Northern Province Provincial Elders’ Conferences held our annual gathering on November 11-12, 2020 via Zoom. During our time together, we prayed for the witness of our congregations, met with the heads of the agencies that serve our common ministry, and explored ways to work together more collaboratively. We prayed for those who have been horrifically impacted by COVID-19, for those who grieve, suffer, and for those who are researching for an effective vaccine and planning for a speedy, equitable distribution of such a vaccine. We met in the context of the US election and prayed for a spirit of healing and unity in the country. We found hope in the good news that Jesus is Chief Elder throughout time and is not up for election every four years.

Our mission is to *equip people and congregations to be agents of God’s transforming love in the world.* How might we, in this divided political landscape, be agents of God’s transforming love to our neighbors in God’s world? How might we offer a spirit of hospitality and humility of heart and mind, all while looking for the face of Christ in the other? How might we live out the goal of unity articulated in the *Moravian Covenant for Christian Living*? We profess that we *all* are made in the image of God, and collectively seek what is best for God’s world. The fact that we may have a different understanding of ‘what is best’ can be a cause for creative discourse – or bitter contempt. As followers of the Prince of Peace, we call on Moravians across both provinces to choose creative discourse, to choose the way of peace, to

seek common ground, not for the sake of a political party, but for the sake of our Christian witness and for the sake of the world.

We acknowledge, in this election year, that the United States is deeply divided. We are grateful that we live in a country where we are allowed to vote our conscience without fear of reprisal or harm. Our faith invites us to weep with those who mourn and rejoice with those who celebrate. We acknowledge that a statement from provincial leaders will not end the bitter divisions that grip the country; yet we pray that a reminder of our primary call as citizens of the heavenly realm will invite us to talk through our differences so that we might walk in unity and hope in the days and months ahead. Our desire and capacity to work – and walk – together, despite our differences, forms part of our witness of faith.

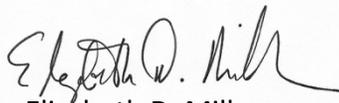
We offer these words for your prayerful consideration, from the Liturgy for Christian Unity:

One: Teach us to know and love the world-wide church called out of all peoples and nations. Make visible the unity that you desire as we express a spirit of reconciliation in all our relationships. Show us that we are part of the one and only body of Jesus Christ, unified by faith, scattered for witness and service. Lead us to appreciate the richness of our diversity and your creative power at work in our various traditions and customs. Make us all one with you by the inspiration and guidance of your Spirit.

All: Lead us into lives worthy of our calling in Christ, with all lowliness, meekness, and patience, bearing with one another in love, and eager to maintain the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace. We pray for this in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

-- From Liturgy for Christian Unity, 1995 Moravian Book of Worship. Used with permission.

In Christ's abiding faith, love, and hope,


Elizabeth D. Miller
President


David B. Guthrie
President

November 20, 2020