



## UNITY BISHOPS' CONFERENCE March 15-22, 2023 DOORN, NETHERLANDS

### A Pastoral Letter to the Congregations of the Moravian Unity

Dear Sisters and Brothers, and friends of the Moravian Church,

We – a group of bishops of the world-wide Moravian Church – greet you from Doorn in the Netherlands, where we have met for one week.

We have experienced the richness and diversity of the world-wide Moravian Church. As we have prayed together and looked into each other eyes we found the openness to cut through barriers of language, culture and history. We can see the same beauty in the world-wide Moravian Church, and indeed in the sum of all of God's children.

We have faced the reality that there is also evil in the world-wide Moravian Church and among all God's children.

The topic of our gathering is **"Learn to do good, seek justice"** (*Isaiah 1:17*).

We have listened to reports which describe structural injustices, corruption and malfunctioning of whole societies. Wars are raging, more weapons are made and used. Violence against and oppression of women and children continues. Modern slavery is still going on and even increasing. Self-inflicted climate change is destroying God's creation and the habitat of all living. The poor, who have caused the least of this, suffer the most and their opportunity for a dignified life is reduced. Tens of thousands of people are refugees as a consequence.

We have heard reports of divisions within the church.

We say clearly: All this is against God's will. We pray that God may open our eyes and hearts for where we are involved in these things, and may give us the grace and strength to bring ourselves in line with God's intentions.

We are immensely grateful that God in Jesus has come into all this mess, that he has taken the suffering of the whole world on his shoulders, and eventually given a death-blow to death. New life is emerging.

We would like to encourage you to speak up against such injustices and destruction, and to look out for opportunities that lead towards the restoration of God's creation and towards functioning societies. In this way we can begin or continue a pilgrimage of grace towards healing.

We have listened to each other, and to reports from congregations and individuals in our world-wide church. We have shared life-stories. We have learnt anew how Jesus calls people into ministry which focuses on God's living word and deed. We are greatly encouraged, and would like to thank you all for the part you play in building the kingdom of God. Know that we also pray for ways in which you can encourage youth in participation and discipleship in the body of Christ.


We have listened to heart-warming accounts of refugees being taken into the fellowship of a church. Body and soul are cared for. Human dignity is restored. Heaven has come to earth, and earth has been lifted up towards heaven. Jesus is at work in our midst.

We would like to encourage you to reach out and care for body and soul, not just for those who are "like us", but for everyone we come across.

We are on a pilgrimage through life together. We are learners at all times, until we enter God's kingdom. It is our fervent prayer that God's offer of healing in Jesus Christ may be accepted and spread by you, and by people all over the world, "so that they may be one" (John 17:21).

Bless each other in the name of God. Speak words of life into each other's situations. Be generous in your actions of love. Pray without ceasing. Let your love be known to all people.

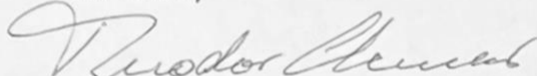
With love and God's blessing,



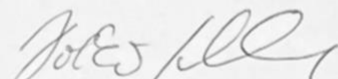
Armando Rusindo



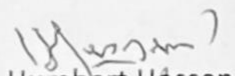
Petr Krasny




Theodor Clemens



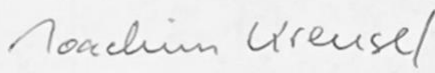
Volker Schulz



Humbert Hessen



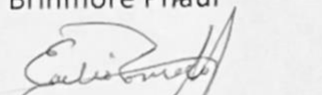
Kingsley Lewis



Joachim Kreusel



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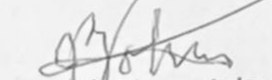
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Sandoval Martinez Atas



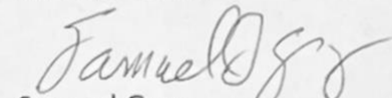
Rogelio Zacarias



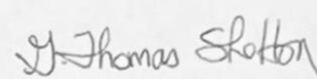
Joseph Rivera John



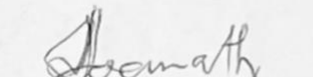
M. Blair Couch



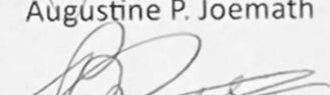
Samuel Gray



G. Thomas Shelton



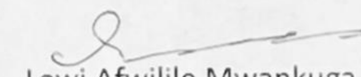
Augustine P. Joemath



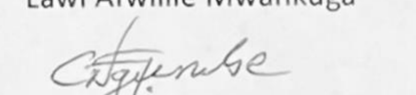
Rodger Ruiters



Renold Pansa



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Conrad Nguvumali Sikombe



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