

# **BOOK OF ORDER**

## **MORAVIAN CHURCH IN AMERICA, SOUTHERN PROVINCE 2016**



### **PROVINCIAL ELDERS' CONFERENCE**

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## **Preface**

This edition of the Book of Order of the Moravian Church in America, Southern Province, includes materials found in previous versions, changes approved at the 2009 Special Synod, and revisions as directed by the Synod of 2010 which were approved by the Synod of 2014.

Due to the extent of revision, chapter, section and page numbers in this edition are no longer consistent with those in previous editions. Paragraph numbers for the Section titled "Church Order of the Unitas Fratrum", and in the Moravian Covenant for Christian Living are as found in those documents. The Table of Contents and Index reference the page numbers of the book.

As directed by 2010 Synod Resolution # 19, this edition also includes the Church Order of the Unitas Fratrum as revised by the 2016 Unity Synod.

The Provincial Elders' Conference commends this Book of Order to the members and leaders of the Province and its congregations and prays that it will help to guide us in our life and witness.

March 2018

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## **Origin and Growth of the Unitas Fratrum**

The Unitas Fratrum, or Moravian Church, is that branch of the Christian Church which began its distinct life at Kunvald in Bohemia in the year 1457. It was born of the great revival of faith at the close of the Middle Ages, arising from the national revival of religion in Bohemia, in which the writings of Wyclif had great influence, and of which John Hus was the greatest leader. Within the movement Peter of Chelcic represented the traditions of Eastern puritanism and freedom from official control in matters of religion.

Amidst these influences, the Unitas Fratrum was founded, under the leadership of Gregory the Patriarch, with a three-fold ideal of faith, fellowship and freedom, and a strong emphasis on practical Christian life rather than on doctrinal thought or church tradition. The statutes of Reichenau, 1464, contain the earliest statement of this common mind.

Its numbers grew rapidly. This extension drew the attention of the church authorities to the Brethren, who were denounced as heretical and treasonable. They sought to maintain a living contact with the early Church, having obtained from the Waldenses the traditional orders of the ministry, including the episcopacy, and thus became an independent ecclesiastical body. The power of the state was then called in to suppress them, but persecution furthered their growth. The impact of the Brethren on the spiritual life in their country and over the boundaries of their homeland far exceeded the numerical strength of membership.

The Brethren were enabled to maintain a living fellowship in Christ with the help of the Bible and hymns in their own tongue, a careful system of discipline and schools for the young. The Brethren met Luther and other reformers on equal terms, taught them the value of an effective church discipline, and gained from them new insights into the nature of a saving faith.

In the troubles of the reaction against the Reformation, times of persecution alternated with times of comparative calm, until at last in 1620 the Roman Church was placed in power by foreign armies, and the Unitas Fratrum with other Protestant bodies was utterly suppressed. The influence of Bishop John Amos Comenius, who had preserved the discipline of the Church, and who had pioneered educational methods, was a great source of strength after the disruption of the Church. He never ceased to pray and to plead publicly for the restoration of his beloved Church. Strengthened by this faith, a 'Hidden Seed' survived in Bohemia and Moravia, to emerge a hundred years later in the Renewed Church.

Between 1722 and 1727, some families from Moravia, who had kept the traditions of the old Unitas Fratrum, found a place of refuge in Saxony, on the estate of Nicolaus Ludwig, Count Zinzendorf, and built a village which they called Herrnhut. Other people of widely differing views also found there a place of religious freedom, but their differences threatened to make it a place of strife. Zinzendorf gave up his position in state service to devote himself to unite these various elements into a real Christian fellowship. He became their spiritual leader, as well as their patron and protector against interference from without.

By his example and pastoral care Zinzendorf quickened their Christian fellowship and united them for communal life under the Statutes of Herrnhut (May 12, 1727), which were found to

follow the pattern of the old *Unitas Fratrum*. Through earnest and continued prayer they realized more and more the power of the Cross of Christ in reconciling them one to another. A profound and decisive experience of this unity was given them in an outpouring of the Holy Spirit at a celebration of the Holy Communion on August 13, 1727.

From this experience of conscious unity came zeal and strength to share this fellowship in Christ with other branches of the Church Universal, and joy to serve wherever they found an open door.

In following out this impulse, relations were established with earnest Christians in many lands of Western Europe, in England from 1728, and in North America from 1735, while in 1732 their first mission to the heathen began among slaves of St. Thomas in the West Indies.

In order to secure official recognition for their workers, and to set a seal upon the links with the old *Unitas Fratrum*, they decided to continue its episcopal orders, which had been handed down through Bishop Comenius and a line of Bishops in the Polish Province of the ancient Unity. In 1735 Bishop Daniel Jablonsky consecrated David Nitschmann as the first Bishop of the Renewed Church. The branches of the Church thus established on the Continent and in Great Britain and America continued to develop in accordance with the differing opportunities presented to them, maintaining their association and uniting especially in the work of the spread of the Gospel in other lands.

Thus today the *Unitas Fratrum*, which has asserted throughout its history that Christian fellowship recognises no barrier of nation or race, is still an international Unity with congregations in many parts of the world.

The *Unitas Fratrum* cherishes its unity as a valuable treasure entrusted to it by the Lord. It stands for the oneness of all mankind given by the reconciliation through Jesus Christ. Therefore the ecumenical movement is of its very lifeblood. For five centuries it has pointed towards the unity of the scattered children of God that they may become one in their Lord.

## **Origin and Growth of the Southern Province**

Worship, service, mission — these are hallmark traits of the Moravian Church, Southern Province stretching back to its beginning more than a quarter millennium ago.

In 1753 the worldwide Unity purchased a large tract of land, almost 100,000 acres, in the — at the time — wilderness of the North Carolina colony. We called that tract “Wachovia,” after an ancestral estate of Count Zinzendorf. There in Wachovia we built our church communities, where we could worship according to our Moravian practices and customs, putting into practice our ideals of Christian living.

Neighbors traveled as much as a hundred miles to consult the Moravians’ doctors, purchase goods and wares provided by the church communities’ potters, tanners, blacksmiths, shoemakers, weavers, and bakers. These early Moravians also built taverns to provide hospitality to visitors including governors, state legislators, even President George Washington.

Wars called on the Moravians to extend even further service. We gave refuge to many families seeking shelter in the French and Indian War (1754-62) and bound up wounds of both British and Patriots after the Battle of Guilford Courthouse (1781) in the American Revolution. Mission — taking the Gospel to those who had never had it — was slow to begin, but as peace settled over the frontier, the Southern Province was quick to send missionaries beyond the Appalachian Mountains to begin Springplace in 1801, the first mission post in the great Cherokee Nation. The mission work at Springplace and its successors continued for 90 years, going beyond the Trail of Tears to the Indian Territory in today’s Oklahoma.

St. Philips (1822), just blocks from the Salem (Home) Church, was begun as a mission to the African Americans in the neighborhood. Other churches answered the call of neighbors seeking a Moravian place of worship where they lived, and a home mission opened in the mountains of Virginia.

The Sunday School movement in the 19th and early 20th centuries gave the Southern Province its greatest period of growth with lay members joining ministers to found a number of churches. The Southern Province also found fertile ground for growth and service in growing towns and cities: Kernersville, Winston, Clemmons, Greensboro, Charlotte.

The periods following World War I and World War II saw bursts of growth as young men and women coming home from war set to building churches. Young church families needed a summer camp for fellowship and spiritual growth, and so Laurel Ridge, the Southern Province’s camp and conference ground in the mountains, opened its doors in 1960.

As the Ancient Unity made use of the “new” invention, the printing press, to spread the Word of Christ, the Southern Province took to the airwaves in the early days of radio, broadcasting the Easter Sunrise Service in Salem, now streamed live worldwide over the Internet as are many services of the Province’s congregations.

Moravians often turn to music as our expression of faith, and so it was a natural in 1956 for the Southern and Northern Provinces to join in the founding of the Moravian Music Foundation, now serving more than half a century in preserving “old” music and fostering “new.”

The Southern Province celebrated the Quincentennial, the 500th anniversary of the worldwide Moravian Church, with a service March 3, 1957, that filled Winston-Salem’s new Memorial Coliseum with about 8,000 worshipers. Enthusiasm from the Quincentennial propelled the Southern Province beyond North Carolina to Florida, where several churches were established to serve the growing population. Sadly, of the original four congregations only one survived, but the Province’s presence in Florida prepared it to receive waves of Moravians arriving from the West Indies and Central America and welcome them into new churches.

Our congregations have always answered Christ's call for service and mission to their local communities, and especially to those in need. One example is Sunnyside Ministry, which opened its doors in 1978 to provide emergency assistance in Winston-Salem, NC, and is supported by more than 15 of our congregations.

The tumultuous times of the late 20th century and early 21st have confronted and challenged mainline Christian churches, including the Moravian Church. Our Province, together with the Northern Province, has maintained active membership and participation in various world, national, and state ecumenical bodies. We have, reached out to other Christian churches to establish full communion with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, The Episcopal Church, the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, and discussions continue with the United Methodists, furthering fellowship with other Christian churches.

From the providential purchase of land in the North Carolina wilderness more than a quarter millennium ago, the Moravian Church, Southern Province stretches in the 21st century from Virginia to southern Florida, the Atlantic Ocean to Atlanta suburbs, numbering more than 55 churches and a number of fellowships, all in worship, service, mission as we follow Jesus Christ, our Lord and Chief Elder.



Church Order  
of the Unitas Fratrum

2016

## PART I

### THE GROUND OF THE UNITY

# 1. The Lord Jesus Christ calls His Church into being so that it may serve Him on earth until He comes. The Unitas Fratrum is, therefore, aware of its being called in faith to serve humanity by proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ. It recognises this call to be the source of its being and the inspiration of its service. As is the source, so is the aim and end of its being based upon the will of its Lord.

### THE BELIEF OF THE CHURCH

#2. With the whole of Christendom we share faith in God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. We believe and confess that God has revealed Himself once and for all in His Son Jesus Christ; that our Lord has redeemed us with the whole of humanity by His death and His resurrection; and that there is no salvation apart from Him. We believe that He is present with us in the Word and the Sacrament; that He directs and unites us through His Spirit and thus forms us into a Church. We hear Him summoning us to follow Him, and pray Him to use us in His service. He joins us together mutually, so that knowing ourselves to be members of His body we become willing to serve each other.

In the light of divine grace, we recognise ourselves to be a Church of sinners. We require forgiveness daily, and live only through the mercy of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. He redeems us from our isolation and unites us into a living Church of Jesus Christ.

### PERSONAL BELIEF

#3. The belief of the Church is effected and preserved through the testimony of Jesus Christ and through the work of the Holy Spirit. This testimony calls each individual personally, and leads him/her to the recognition of sin and to the acceptance of the redemption achieved by Christ. In fellowship with Him the love of Christ becomes more and more the power of the new life, power which penetrates and shapes the entire person. As God's Spirit so effects living belief in the hearts of individuals, He grants them the privilege to share in the fruits of Christ's salvation and membership in His body.

### GOD'S WORD AND DOCTRINE

#4. The Triune God as revealed in the Holy Scripture of the Old and New Testaments is the only source of our life and salvation; and this Scripture is the sole standard of the doctrine and faith of the Unitas Fratrum and therefore shapes our life.

The Unitas Fratrum recognises the Word of the Cross as the centre of Holy Scripture and of all preaching of the Gospel and it sees its primary mission, and its reason for being, to consist in bearing witness to this joyful message. We ask our Lord for power never to stray from this.

The Unitas Fratrum takes part in the continual search for sound doctrine. In interpreting Scripture and in the communication of doctrine in the Church, we look to two millennia of ecumenical Christian tradition and the wisdom of our Moravian forebears in the faith to guide us as we pray for fuller understanding and ever clearer proclamation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. But just as the Holy Scripture does not contain any doctrinal system, so the Unitas Fratrum also has not developed any of its own because it knows that the mystery of Jesus Christ which is attested to in the Bible, cannot be comprehended completely by any human mind or expressed

completely in any human statement. Also it is true that through the Holy Spirit the recognition of God's will for salvation in the Bible is revealed completely and clearly.

### CREEDS AND CONFESSIONS

#5. The Unitas Fratrum recognises in the creeds of the Church the thankful acclaim of the Body of Christ. These creeds aid the Church in formulating a scriptural confession, in marking the boundary of heresies, and in exhorting believers to an obedient and fearless testimony in every age. The Unitas Fratrum maintains that all creeds formulated by the Christian Church stand in need of constant testing in the light of the Holy Scriptures. It acknowledges as such true professions of faith the early Christian witness: "Jesus Christ is Lord!" and also especially the ancient Christian creeds and the fundamental creeds of the Reformation.\*

\* Note: In the various Provinces of the Renewed Unitas Fratrum the following creeds in particular gained special importance, because in them the main doctrines of the Christian faith find clear and simple expression:

- The Apostles' Creed
- The Athanasian Creed
- The Nicene Creed
- The Confession of the Unity of the Bohemian Brethren of 1535
- The Twenty-One Articles of the unaltered Augsburg Confession
- The Shorter Catechism of Martin Luther
- The Synod of Berne of 1532
- The Thirty-Nine Articles of the Church of England
- The Theological Declaration of Barmen of 1934
- The Heidelberg Catechism

### THE UNITAS FRATRUM AS A UNITY

#6. We believe in and confess the unity of the Church given in the one Lord Jesus Christ as God and Saviour. He died that He might unite the scattered children of God. As the living Lord and Shepherd, He is leading His flock toward such unity.

The Unitas Fratrum espoused such unity when it took over the name of the Old Bohemian Brethren's Church, 'Unitas Fratrum' (Unity of Brethren). Nor can we ever forget the powerful unifying experience granted by the crucified and risen Lord to our forebears in Herrnhut on the occasion of the Holy Communion of August 13, 1727, in Berthelsdorf.

It is the Lord's will that Christendom should give evidence of and seek unity in Him with zeal and love. In our own midst we see how such unity has been promised us and laid upon us as a charge. We recognise that through the grace of Christ the different churches have received many gifts. It is our desire that we may learn from each other and rejoice together in the riches of the love of Christ and the manifold wisdom of God.

We confess our share in the guilt which is manifest in the severed and divided state of Christendom. By means of such divisions we our-selves hinder the message and power of the Gospel. We recognise the danger of self-righteousness and judging others without love. Since we together with all Christendom are pilgrims on the way to meet our coming Lord, we welcome every step that brings us nearer the goal of unity in Him. He Himself invites us to communion in His supper. Through it He leads the Church toward that union which He has

promised. By means of His presence in the Holy Communion He makes our unity in Him evident and certain even today.

#### THE CHURCH AS A FELLOWSHIP

#7. The Church of Jesus Christ, despite all the distinctions between male and female, poor and rich and people of different ethnic origin, is one in the Lord. The Unitas Fratrum recognises no distinction between those who are one in the Lord Jesus. We are called to testify that God in Jesus Christ brings His people out of every ethnic origin and language into one body, pardons sinners beneath the Cross and brings them together. We oppose any discrimination in our midst because of ethnic origin, sex or social standing, and we regard it as a commandment of the Lord to bear public witness to this and to demonstrate by word and deed that we are brothers and sisters in Christ.

#### THE CHURCH AS A COMMUNITY OF SERVICE

#8. Jesus Christ came not to be served but to serve. From this, His Church receives its mission and its power for its service, to which each of its members is called. We believe that the Lord has called us particularly to mission service among the peoples of the world. In this, and in all other forms of service both at home and abroad, to which the Lord commits us, He expects us to confess Him and witness to His love in unselfish service.

#### SERVING OUR NEIGHBOUR

#9. Our Lord Jesus entered into this world's misery to hear it and to overcome it. We seek to follow Him in serving His brothers and sisters. Like the love of Jesus, this service knows no bounds. Therefore we pray the Lord ever anew to point out to us the way to reach our neighbours, opening our hearts and hands to them in their need.

#### SERVING THE WORLD

#10. Jesus Christ maintains in love and faithfulness His commitment to this fallen world. Therefore we must remain concerned for this world. We may not withdraw from it through indifference, pride or fear. Together with the universal Christian Church, the Unitas Fratrum challenges humanity with the message of the love of God, striving to promote the peace of the world and seeking to attain what is best for all. For the sake of this world, the Unitas Fratrum hopes for and looks to the day when the victory of Christ will be manifest over sin and death and the new world will appear.

#### CONCLUSION

#11. Jesus Christ is the one Lord and Head of His body, the Church. Because of this, the Church owes no allegiance to any authority whatsoever which opposes His dominion. The Unitas Fratrum treasures in its history the vital experience of the Headship of Christ of September 16, and November 13, 1741.

The Unitas Fratrum recognises that it is called into being and has been sustained hitherto only by the incomprehensible grace of God. Thanksgiving and praise for this grace remains the keynote of its life and ministry.

In this spirit it awaits the appearing of Jesus Christ, goes forward to meet its Lord with joy, and prays to be found ready when He comes.

## PART II

### ESSENTIAL FEATURES OF THE UNITY

#### CHAPTER I

##### THE UNITAS FRATRUM AND ITS CONGREGATIONS

#50. The Unitas Fratrum was called into being by God as a Church which stresses fellowship. After its apparent destruction in the land of its origin, it was renewed in Herrnhut, Germany.

#51. We recognise that it is the Lord's will to confront and call to Himself each individual through His Spirit and that formal membership in a congregation is for no one a substitute for a personal encounter with the Saviour, nor does it relieve any from making a personal decision to accept Him. We learn from the Scriptures however that it has pleased God to make the Church the place where God's fellowship with men and women becomes a reality. A living Church is the clearest witness for its Lord to the world.

#52. A Church is and remains a living one when it:

- is attentive to God's Word;
- confesses its sins and accepts forgiveness for them;
- seeks and maintains fellowship with its Lord and Redeemer by means of the Sacraments;
- places its whole life under His rule and daily leading;
- ministers to its neighbour and seeks fellowship with all who confess Christ;
- proclaims to the world the tidings concerning the Saviour;
- awaits wholeheartedly the coming of its Lord as King.

#53. Within each congregation the various groups may become aware of, and participate in, the special gifts and tasks which can be drawn from the pattern of Jesus' life on earth.

# 54. Such congregations are "living stones" out of which the Lord will build His Church on earth.

#55. Wherever such congregations exist in the various parts of the Unitas Fratrum they form a living Church - a member of the body of Christ on earth.

#56. Communicant members of the Unitas Fratrum are those who have been received in one of the following ways:

- a) Baptized and received into communicant membership by confirmation;
- b) Received by adult baptism;
- c) Received from other Christian churches by Letter of Transfer and by the Right Hand of Fellowship;
- d) Received by reaffirmation of faith.

## CHAPTER II

### THE VOCATION OF THE UNITAS FRATRUM AND ITS CONGREGATIONS

#100.

- a) The Unitas Fratrum lives by the gifts which the Lord has given His Church on earth: His Word and the Sacraments of baptism and Holy Communion. Its vocation is to proclaim His Word to its congregations and to the world and to administer the Sacraments aright.
- b) The Unitas Fratrum considers it to be its mission to emphasize especially the following truths from the fullness of the Word of God:
  - The word of the Cross as the testimony of the Lord who was crucified for us and who rose again (1 Cor.1:18, 30);
  - the word of reconciliation as God making peace with His whole creation (1 John 2:2);
  - the word of personal union with the Saviour as the vitalizing and moulding power of the believer's life (John 15:5);
  - the word of love between one another as the fellowship of members, brought about by Jesus Christ, the Head of His Church (Eph. 4:15,16).
- c) Baptism into the death of Jesus is administered in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit in the presence of the congregation. Customarily in the Unitas Fratrum children are baptized and later received by confirmation into the communicant membership.
- d) In the celebration of the Lord's Supper, the congregations of the Unitas Fratrum have the assurance of being united with their Lord, enjoy the fruits of His sufferings and death for the forgiveness of sins, unite with each other anew as members of His body, and rejoice in the hope of His return in glory.

#101.

- a) From its beginning the Unitas Fratrum has emphasized fellowship among its members. It recognises its calling to preserve this gift both by united adoration, self humiliation and intercession, and by ordering its life and service:
  - as a fellowship within the congregation and with the Unitas Fratrum;
  - as a fellowship with the Universal Church of Christ on earth;
  - as a fellowship with the Church triumphant before the Throne.
- b) As a fellowship of the redeemed it extols the Lamb with joyful song. As a fellowship looking to the future it proclaims to the world the victory of Him who is to come. In the liturgical form of its services the Unitas Fratrum gives expression to its union with the whole Church of Christ on earth, and as a living fellowship it will create ever new forms within the framework of its own tradition.

#102.

- a) In this fellowship the Unitas Fratrum has received a new and transformed congregation life:
  - in which Jesus Christ is Lord of every phase of life;
  - in which we live no longer unto ourselves but unto Him who died for us and rose again;

- in which we rejoice in the hope of His glorious return;
  - in which the congregation and its members are willing to share the sufferings of Christ.
- b) We recognise our responsibility to the civil authorities in so far as human law does not contradict the "government of the Saviour".
- c) The life in the congregations of the Unitas Fratrum is not the fruit of its own piety but of the love of Christ which constrains those who are His to love one another.

#103.

- a) The new life of the congregation is nourished by the cure and care of souls and the exercise of congregation discipline.
- b) Though the cure and care of souls is the special task of ministers and their fellow-labourers, every member who has experienced the saving love of the Redeemer is called to undertake this service.
- c) In Church discipline the sins and errors of the individual are considered and borne as the burden of the whole congregation. The congregation stands beside the erring one under the judgement of the Cross, ever mindful of its own need of forgiveness and brings the fault before the only One Who can redeem us from our guilt.
- d) Church discipline is exercised in the confident faith that it is not the Lord's will that a single member should be lost, nor that the clear witness of the congregation should be hindered. This discipline is especially necessary when by word or deed the Gospel is falsified and the Lord denied, Therefore the main object of church discipline is the prevention of offences and not the punishment of the individual.
- e) In the exercise of corrective discipline the following aspects are recognised:
1. Admonition by the minister, either alone or in fellowship with other members (church council, elders etc.) in private, in a spirit of love;
  2. Further admonition with temporary suspension from the fellowship of the congregation as it is visibly expressed in certain privileges;
  3. Exclusion from the membership of the congregation;
  4. Persons who are excluded shall be welcomed back into the membership of the congregation after a profession of repentance on their part.

#104.

- a) The Unitas Fratrum recognises the priesthood of all believers but also has specially appointed ministers who receive commission and authority for their service from the hands of Jesus Christ, Whom the Church acknowledges as its Chief Elder. All members may gladly and confidently carry on their work in and for the congregation and by their devotion and faithfulness all can render service to the whole Church.
- b) At the same time the Unitas Fratrum gratefully acknowledges the gift of the offices of the ministry which it has received from the Lord. It recognises and confesses that in reality it is its Lord and Head Jesus Christ Who calls and ordains, whether in the case of the reception as an acolyte or the ordination to the office of Deacon, or the consecration as a Presbyter or Bishop.
- c) The same is true for the brothers and sisters who are called or elected to service in any official capacity. They can render their service well only through the grace of their Chief Elder.

## CHAPTER III

### THE WITNESS OF THE UNITAS FRATRUM

#150. The Unitas Fratrum is committed to the unity of the children of God as a reality created by God in Jesus Christ. This unity has been granted and preserved within it as a Church formed out of various peoples, languages and denominations. Its very life, therefore, is to be of service to the Church Universal.

#151.

- a) The Unitas Fratrum is committed to the victory of the Lamb of God that was slain as the hope of the world. It accepts as its central commission the proclamation of this message in every place where the Lord Himself opens the door.
- b) The Unitas Fratrum acknowledges its vocation to service in the homelands:
  - to bring the Gospel to those who are far from God;
  - to serve the youth by means of schools, camps, and other agencies;
  - to serve in caring for the sick, for the aged, and for those in special homes;
  - and to serve by means of the printed word especially the Daily Texts of the Moravian Church.
- c) The Unitas Fratrum experiences in its missionary enterprise active help from wide circles throughout all evangelical Christendom through prayer, gifts, and individuals ready to serve. In this way also the unity of the children of God becomes visible.
- d) The Unitas Fratrum appreciates the inestimable value of each human being for whom Jesus Christ gave His Life and counts no sacrifice too great to "win souls for the Lamb".
- e) The Unitas Fratrum recognises that its members are united by their Lord in congregations and are called to be pilgrims and messengers to carry the Gospel to all mankind and into all human relationships. The "first fruits" of their witness are the pledge of the whole harvest.
- f) The Unitas Fratrum recognises its duty to grant the young churches full freedom concerning the future. God's Spirit must and will show them whether to remain a part of the Unitas Fratrum as a Province of the Unity, or to become a self-dependent church, or to unite with some other indigenous church or church group.
- g) The Unitas Fratrum looks beyond this earthly witness of the Church to the great consummation when the Lord will "draw all people unto Himself" and His Kingdom be fully established.

#152. "Our lamb has conquered. Let us follow Him" is the motto of the Unity.



PART III  
CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITAS FRATRUM

CHAPTER I

THE UNITY AND ITS PROVINCES

A. GENERAL FEATURES

#200. The Unitas Fratrum consists of Provinces.

#201. The Provinces of the Unitas Fratrum are found in many areas of the world and are among many races and of many tongues. All are indigenous to their geographical and national location. Some are found in highly industrialized communities; others are in developing regions of the earth. As a consequence, the Provinces of the Unity offer a wide variety of economic, social and political development. Yet all are one, without distinction, in their membership in the Unity (COUF, #7).

Because of this divergence in circumstances and development, some Provinces must of necessity look to other Provinces or to the Unity as a whole for assistance with workers and money, and for encouragement and advice. Such Provinces are considered to be in affiliation with the supporting Province. This support is given and received in a spirit of mutual love and concern, and is an essential feature of the fellowship of the Unitas Fratrum.

STAGES OF DEVELOPMENT OF PROVINCES

Four important points must guide the use of the following criteria:

- a) It is assumed that each stage of transition will be monitored and recommended by representatives of the Unity to the Unity Board for ratification by the Unity Synod.
- b) It is not assumed that it is inevitable that each new area of work will automatically develop towards the status of a full Unity Province. Some may remain at a stage which, due to circumstances, best suits their situation.
- c) The criteria outlined here are not hard and fast rules or requirements, but guidelines as a basis for further consideration by the Unity Board and/or Unity Synod.
- d) The Unity Board is empowered to change the status subject to meeting the relevant criteria.

RECOGNITION

A new Unity Undertaking, Prospective Mission Area, Mission Area, Mission Province or Unity Province shall be so designated by the Unity Board and then ratified by Unity Synod.

Responsibility for administering or supervising a Unity Undertaking, a Prospective Mission Area, Mission Area or a Mission Province shall be assigned by Unity Board to a Province or a Mission Board.

1. Prospective Mission Area

a) What and Where?

A Prospective Mission Area is a new work of one or several groups of people, who have a desire to be part of the Moravian Unity, and who are being recognized as such by a Moravian Unity

Province or Mission Province, or it is an area in which a Province or a Mission Agency seek possibilities to bring witness of Christ to non-Christian or un-churched people.

Such a Prospective Mission Area is subject to the attention by a Province, and/or a Mission Agency and/or the Unity and possibly the Province, Mission Agency or the Unity will give guidance as to how the work might continue and develop.

A Prospective Mission Area might be granted the status of a Mission Area, once it fulfills the criteria for that, or the Prospective Mission Area might be terminated if not showing the desired development.

The geographical boundaries and extent of new areas of mission need to be defined by the supervising body of the Unity.

A Prospective Mission Area can be situated within a country where the Church is already working and established but where there are people and communities unreached by the Gospel. This would be a mission outreach from an established base, or the Prospective Mission Area can be within a country or area in which the Moravian Church has not previously had any work.

#### b) Authorization and recognition

A Prospective Mission Area can be working as such under the authority of an established Province, which would be the normal situation or in some cases, under a Mission Agency or directly under the Unity Board Office.

Normally, an area should be classified as a Prospective Mission Area no longer than 3 years, then a decision must be taken, as to whether it should be recognized as a Mission Area or should cease to exist within the Moravian Unity.

#### c) Organization

1. When a new Prospective Mission Area is initiated, the associated Unity Province or Mission Agency will seek the possibility of making adequate resources available for the development of the work.
2. The constituency of the Prospective Mission Area should show interest in the Unitas Fratrum and in Moravian Identity, and should decide whether it can identify itself with the Moravian ecclesiology and with the Brotherly Agreement. The leadership should show willingness to start developing rules and regulations which are consistent with COUF. The initiation of this process can lead to the establishment of a Mission Area.
3. The supervising Province, supervising Mission Agency or the staff of the Unity is accountable to Unity Board for the work within the Prospective Mission Area, and has the responsibility to keep the Unity informed about any progress.
4. Moreover, the responsible body of the Unity must seek to lead the constituency of the Prospective Mission Area according to the ecclesiological principles of the Unitas Fratrum
5. Once, when after instruction, members are ready to be received into congregations by baptism or confirmation, and proper records are kept with lists of members, it is normally time to establish the work as a Mission Area proper.

## 1. Mission Area

### a) What and Where?

The geographical boundaries and extent of new areas of mission need to be defined and approved by Unity Board.

1. They can be within a country where the Church is already working and established but where there are people and communities unreached by the Gospel. This would be a mission outreach from an established base.
2. They can be in a country or area where the Church has not previously had any work.

### b) Authorisation for new work

If this mission cannot be funded from existing work and is more than just a natural development and growth out of an established Province, then authorization for it should come from the Unity through the Unity Board, after representatives of the Board have visited it or delegated others to do so and reported back. It is envisioned that much new work would, in the first instance, be identified by one of the established Provinces of our Church to which it would be primarily attached.

### d) Organisation

1. When a new Mission Area is initiated, the associated Unity Province or Mission Agency will make sure that adequate resources are available for the development of the work.
2. The Mission Area should set its own goals and strategies. The leadership and the constituency should together develop rules and regulations which are consistent with COUF. This process leads to the formation of a Church Conference.
3. It is the responsibility of the Unity Province in concert with the Mission Area to define clearly the relationship/accountability between the supervising Province and the Mission Area. In most cases, work should be leading toward formation of congregations. After instruction, members should be received into congregations by baptism or confirmation, and proper records kept with lists of members.
4. Leadership initially comes from inside the new Mission Area, in accompaniment by the designated Unity Province. Training in pastoral and administrative leadership, (including theological training, management, stewardship, and development) should be encouraged from the outset.
5. The Mission Area should carry initial operational costs before outside financial support is rendered. Subsequently financial support for special needs can come from the Unity Mission and Development Fund or other sources. The accompanying Unity Province makes sure that regular reporting on the development of the work is forwarded to the Unity Board.
6. Prior to becoming a Mission Province, the Church Conference must approve a Constitution consistent with COUF for approval by the Unity Board.

## 2. Mission Province

The Mission Province should satisfy the following criteria:

- a) It has a Church Constitution, which is consistent with COUF. The civil authorities of the country in which it operates, should recognise this Church Constitution.
- b) It has its own Synod representing the membership in the congregations that have been established.

- c) It should elect a Provincial Board. The Mission Province continues to be accompanied by and accountable to the designated Unity Province.
- d) It should establish an infrastructure with several recognised congregations or centres for regular preaching and teaching ministries. After instruction, members should be received into congregations by baptism or confirmation, and proper records kept with lists of members. Congregations are recognised in accordance with the regulations in force for the supervising Province.
- e) The Mission Province should carry its own operational costs before outside financial support is rendered. The Mission Province should develop its own strategy for self-reliance. Financial support for special needs can come from other sources.
- f) It should contribute to the Unity budget.
- g) It should produce its own devotional literature if this is in a language not already covered in the Unity. (Some books of the Bible/NT, Daily Texts, hymnbook/songbook, etc.)

### 3. Unity Province

The criteria for recognising a full Unity Province are implicit in the above sections of Church Order of the Unitas. Fratrum, but they can be summarized as follows:

- a) It is governed by a Synod.
- b) It elects a Provincial Board to administer its life and work.
- c) It has a Constitution/Church Order that is appropriate to its work in line with COUF.
- d) It is faithful to the Great Commandment (Matthew 22:17-39) and the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19-20) by providing programmes of worship, Christian education, evangelism, diaconal service, and fellowship.
- e) It is able to supply its own ministers and other church workers and the means to train and support them in service.
- f) It is financially self-supporting or has an approved strategy for moving toward this in a definite time frame.
- g) It contributes to the whole Unity in terms of resources, personnel, and meeting its assessment for the Unity budget.
- h) It has the Bible (or at least the New Testament), hymnbook, liturgy, and Daily Text Book in the language of its members.

#202. All Provinces share equally in the common faith, tradition and witness of the Church. The members of all the Provinces are in relationship to one another. The goal set before each Province is to fulfill the calling of Christ in its life, worship and organisation.

#203. All Provinces are linked together in a constitutional form of government which, while encouraging the liberty of provincial development, may provide mutual help and cooperation and provide the corporate responsibility of the Unity towards its Provinces.

The Saviour, through the work of the Holy Spirit, has given each Province gifts which can be of help and blessing to the other Provinces of the Unity. Each Province is in need of the strength and ministry which can be offered by the other Provinces of the Unity. Thus mutual guidance can be given by Provinces to each other under the guidance of Unity Board and Unity Synod. By such guidance, the Provinces will value the concerns expressed by one another. This ministry of guidance is provided in various forms, including visits to Provinces by the Bishops of the Unity, gatherings of leaders and members from various Provinces for mutual sharing of concerns and

ideas, and the ministry of those gifted in mediation when this is deemed advisable. The Unity Board in cooperation with the leaders of the Provinces shall administer this ministry of mutual guidance and accountability.

## B. TASKS, RIGHTS AND DUTIES OF THE PROVINCES

#204. The individual congregations or members of the Unitas Fratrum are such by virtue of their membership in one of the Provinces.

#205. The constitutional rights and duties apply to persons recorded in an official list of members, as is provided for in the Constitution of that particular Province.

#206.

1. Congregations, districts, institutions and undertakings of a Province of the Unity can pass into the care of another Province with the agreement of the Provincial Boards concerned. If no agreement is reached then the matter may be referred to the Unity Synod or the Unity Board.

2. Any new Moravian congregation, even when made up by persons originating in another Unity Province or Mission Province, shall be part of the Unity Province or Mission Province in which the new congregation is situated and serve under the authority of the Provincial Board of this Province or Mission Province. The geographical borders of a Unity Province or a Mission Province shall be respected at all times.

#207. Each Province which is governed by a Synod orders its own affairs and holds and administers its property independently, but subject to the general principles which set the standard for the whole Unitas Fratrum in constitution, doctrine and the life of the individual congregation. It is responsible through its constitutional Synod and Boards to the Unity Synod for the carrying out in its own sphere of these general principles.

In a Province which has not yet formed a Synod of its own, the administration of its internal affairs is developed in mutual understanding and agreement with the Province with which it is affiliated.

#208. In each Province of the Unity governed by a Synod, the Synod represents its highest authority which elects its Provincial Board. It develops a Constitution and Church Order for its particular area adapting it to the local conditions. Each Province should aim to have the Bible, or at least the New Testament, hymnbook, liturgy and Daily Text Book in a language with which the congregations are familiar.

#209. Each Province which is governed by a Synod should be able to supply its own workers and train its own leaders. Each Province, therefore, is responsible for the training of its own ministers. It authorizes the ordination of candidates for its own ministry and is responsible for their support.

#210. Provinces governed by a Synod may be in association with each other in the interchange of personnel, the sharing of material resources and mutual encouragement. Such interchange shall

in no way impinge upon or negate the rights of such Provinces as herein set forth (COUF, ##207, 208, 209). Such associations are mutually agreed upon by the participating Provinces. The Unity Synod shall be informed of such associations.

#211. If a Province is not yet able to supply its own needs regarding leadership, staff and money, but has to refer in these matters to the Unity as a whole or to some other Province, it is urged to develop its own resources in order to take its full share in the life of the whole Church.

#212. Provinces are affiliated with other Provinces of the Unity which are able to help them on their way to full provincial status with staff, money and advice. Such affiliations are regulated by agreement of the Provinces concerned.

#213. Affiliations and changes in affiliation between Provinces may be made only with the consent of the Unity Synod or Unity Board.

#214. Each Province works for the extension of the Kingdom of God in its own area and wherever possible among people who do not belong to the race, nation or language group of the majority of the members of the Province concerned. Therefore, it does its best to educate its congregations for the mission of the Church at home and abroad.

#215. Each Province should show interest in the work of the Unitas Fratrum in its several Provinces and give evidence of its willingness to cooperate with the other Provinces.

#216. Each Province is encouraged to cooperate with other Christian Churches established throughout its general area in dealing with regional problems which confront those Churches as a whole.

Where a Province feels that a merger or union with another Church or group of Churches is in accord with the will and purpose of the Lord of the One Church, that Province is free to enter into consultations looking toward such merger or union.

The consent of the Unity Synod or Unity Board is required before a Province may enter into an agreement involving Church merger or organic union.

#217. Each Province of the Unity is urged to apply for membership in the World Council of Churches.

## C. EXTENT OF THE CHURCH

#218. The Provinces of the Unitas Fratrum are:

### 1. Unity Provinces

- a) The Czech Province (1457, renewed 1862): Jednota bratrská in the Czech Republic;
- b) The European Continental Province (1722): Evangelische Brüder-Unität in Sweden, Denmark, Germany, The Netherlands, Switzerland, Estonia, Latvia;
- c) The Eastern West Indies Province (1732): The Moravian Church in the islands of St Thomas, St John and St Croix of the Virgin Islands of the United States of America; Antigua, St Kitts, Barbados, Tobago and Trinidad in the West Indies; Tortola of the British Virgin Islands;

- d) The Suriname Province (1735): Evangelische Broedergemeente in Suriname and the Netherlands Antilles;
- e) The South Africa Province: Moravian Church in South Africa: formerly Western Region (Evangeliese Broederkerk 1737, renewed 1792) and Eastern Region (1828); amalgamated 1998;
- f) The America, North Province (1741): The Northern Province of the Moravian Church in America in the States of New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota, North Dakota and California; and in the Dominion of Canada, the Provinces of Alberta and Ontario;
- g) The British Province (1742): The Moravian Church in Great Britain and Ireland;
- h) The America, South Province (1753): The Southern Province of the Moravian Church in America in the States of North Carolina, South Carolina, Virginia, Florida, and Georgia;
- i) The Jamaica Province (1754): The Moravian Church in Jamaica and the Cayman Islands;
- j) The Nicaragua Province (1849): La Iglesia Morava en Nicaragua;
- k) The Alaska Province (1885): The Moravian Church in Alaska;
- l) The Tanzania, South Province (1891): Kanisa La Moravian Kusini Tanzania;
- m) The Tanzania, West Province (1897): Kanisa La Moravian Tanzania Magharibi;
- n) The Honduras Province (1930): La Iglesia Morava en Honduras;
- o) The Tanzania, South West Province (1978): established from the Tanzania, South Province: Kanisa La Moravian Tanzania Jimbo la Kusini Magharibi;
- p) The Costa Rica Province (1980): La Iglesia Morava en Costa Rica.
- q) The Tanzania, Rukwa Province (1986), established from the Tanzania, West Province: Kanisa La Moravian Jimbo Rukwa;
- r) Moravian Church in D. R. Congo (2010), established from the Tanzania, West Province and the Tanzania, Rukwa Province: Eglise Morave au Congo
- s) Moravian Church Tanzania, Northern Province (2012), established from the Tanzania, South-West Province: Kanisa la Moravian, Tanzania, Jimbo la Kasikasini
- t) Moravian Church in Malawi (2012), established from the Tanzania, South Province: The Moravian Church in Malawi
- u) Moravian Church in Tanzania, Lake Tanganyika Province (2012), established from the Tanzania, West Province: Kanisa la Moravian Tanzania, Jimbo la Ziwa Tanganyika
- v) Moravian Church Zambia (2014), established from the Tanzania, South-Western Province: Moravian Church in Zambia.
- w) Moravian Church Tanzania, Eastern Province (2014), established from the Tanzania, Southern Province: Kanisa la Moravian Tanzania, Jimbo la Mashariki.
- x) Moravian Church Guyana (2016), was affiliated with the American Provinces

## 2. Mission Provinces

- a) The Labrador Province (1771): The Moravian Church in Newfoundland and Labrador, Canada (affiliated with the American Provinces);
- b) Honduras Unity Undertaking (2012). The Moravian Church Mission Province in Honduras (under supervision Moravian Church in Nicaragua).
- c) Czech Unity Undertaking (2012). The Moravian Church Mission Province in the Czech Republic, (under supervision: European Continental Province).
- d) Moravian Church in Burundi (2014). (under supervision Moravian Church Western Tanzania.
- e) Moravian Church in Cuba (1997, 2016). (under supervision Moravian Church Southern Province, America.

### 3. Mission Areas

- a) Albania (1993): (under supervision of the European Continental Province);
- b) French Guiana: (under supervision of the Suriname Province);
- c) Garifuna: (under supervision of the Honduras Province);
- d) Belize: (under supervision of the Honduras Province);
- e) Peru: (under supervision of the Northern Province, North America);
- f) Rwanda (1998): (under supervision of the Tanzania, West Province);
- g) Kenya (2001): under supervision of the Tanzania, West Province);
- h) Uganda (2007): (under supervision of the Tanzania, West Province).
- i) South Asia (1856, former Unity Undertaking, Mission Area 2010). (under supervision of the British Province)
- j) Sierra Leone (2010). (Under supervision of the Southern Province, North America)
- k) Zanzibar (2010). (under supervision of the Moravian Church Tanzania, Eastern Province
- l) Ruvuma + Njombe (2010). (under supervision of the Moravian Church Tanzania, Southern Province
- m) Moravian Church in Sud Kivu and Katanga, Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (2014). (Under supervision of the Moravian Church Tanzania, Lake Tanganyika Province.
- n) Moravian Church Iringa (2014). Supervision: Moravian Church Tanzania, South-Western Province
- o) Moravian Church Kiwele (UB2016). Supervision Moravian Church Tanzania, Western Province

#219. The Undertakings of the Unitas Fratrum that are related to the Unity as a whole or to one of its Provinces are:

- a) The Moravian Church Rehabilitation Centre, Star Mountain near Ramallah (1981) (formerly The Leper Work on the Star Mountain near Ramallah, started 1867 in Jerusalem);
- b) The Unity Archives, Herrnhut, Germany. (See also #500-503) #220. Church Union in the Dominican Republic: The Moravian Church in the Dominican Republic (1902) joined the Dominican Evangelical Church in the Dominican Republic in 1959.

#220. Church Union in the Dominican Republic: The Moravian Church in the Dominican Republic (1902) joined the Dominican Evangelical Church in the Dominican Republic in 1959.

#### D. LEGAL POSITION

#221. In Germany the legal recognition of the Unitas Fratrum as a free self-dependent Church is based as follows: In the First General Concession of December 23, 1742, granted by King Frederick of Prussia, the Renewed Moravian Church, or "Bohemian-Moravian Brethren's Unity" was recognised by the state as a self-dependent Church, with the right to freedom in constitution and conscience (that is, teaching), and the right of founding self-dependent congregations. In Saxony the Decree of Assurance, September 20, 1749, guaranteed to the Protestant Moravian congregations toleration and full government protection, and promised also full freedom of conscience for the exercise of religion. The Moravian Church in Germany and its congregations in Saxony were recognised by the Saxon Government as a legal corporation within the meaning of Article 137, Paragraph 5 of the Constitution, under date, July 5, 1922. On February 19, 1948,



the Government of Baden-Württemberg recognised the Europäisch-Festländische Brüder-Unität (Herrnhuter Brüdergemeine) as a legal corporation.

The Moravian Church (Brødremenigheden) is legally recognised in Denmark by Royal Concession of December 10, 1771. In the Netherlands the legal recognition of the Moravian Church is founded on Article 1 of the law of September 10, 1853. The congregations in the Netherlands appear on the official list of Churches recognised by the Dutch Government. In Switzerland the statutes of the "Unité des Frères en Suisse" of March 26, 1910 were legalized by Article 20 of the "Eidgenössische Handelsgesetzbuch" and by registration in the Swiss Commercial Register (see Schweizerisches Handelsblatt, 1909 Nr. 96 dated April 20).

#222. For Great Britain and her colonies the Unitas Fratrum or Moravian Church was recognised (1749) by Act of Parliament 22 George II, Chapter 120, as an "Ancient Protestant Episcopal Church". The legal position of the Moravian Church in the nations of the British Commonwealth today is regulated by the Civil Law under which there is full freedom of association for religious worship and work and for the incorporation of legal bodies for the holding of property and funds for Church purposes.

#223. The Moravian Church in America, Northern and Southern Provinces, and the Moravian Church in Alaska, enjoy legal recognition in that the several state authorities and the authorities of the Dominion of Canada grant corporate rights to provincial and district bodies and institutions, and to single congregations.

#224. The recognition by the state of the Moravian Church in the Czech Republic (Jednota bratrská) is based on the Government Decree of March 30, 1880. In addition the proclamation of the Czechoslovak Ministry of Education dated July 11, 1921, is authoritative.

#225. The Evangelische Broedergemeente in Suriname was recognised by the Government as a legal corporation in 1928.

#226. The legal position of the Moravian Church in South Africa is regulated by the Civil Law of the Republic of South Africa. The Moravian Church was recognised by the Department of Native Affairs in 1953.

#227. The Moravian Church in Jamaica was officially recognised by Law 10 of 1884 under the title "The Corporation of the Church of The Unity of the Brethren (commonly called Moravians) in Jamaica".

#228. The Moravian Church in Nicaragua was incorporated in 1964 by the Congress of Nicaragua under the title: La Iglesia Morava en Nicaragua.

#229. The Moravian Church in Honduras was officially recognised by the Government of Honduras, C.A., in 1966 under the title: La Iglesia Evangelica Morava en Honduras.

#230. Legal recognition was granted to the Moravian Church in Guyana through the incorporation of the Moravian Mission Council by an act of the Guyana Legislature dated April 12, 1911.

#231. The Moravian Church in Tanzania, South was legally registered in 1966 with the Society Ordinance of the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania.

#232. The Moravian Church in Tanzania, West was legally registered in 1965 with the Society Ordinance of the Government of the Republic of Tanzania.

#233. The Moravian Church in Labrador was officially incorporated on June 18, 1970 under the name of Moravian Church in Newfoundland and Labrador with "An Act to incorporate the Moravian Church in Newfoundland and Labrador" by the Lieutenant-Governor and House of Assembly of the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador, Canada.

#234. The Moravian Church in Tanzania, South-West was legally registered on 16th November, 1978.

#235. The Moravian Church in Tanzania, Rukwa was legally registered on 12th April 1990.

#236. The Moravian Church in Costa Rica was officially recognised by the Government of Costa Rica on 11th January 1983 under the title: Asociación la Iglesia Morava de Costa Rica.

#237. The Moravian Church in Zambia was legally registered with the Registrar of Societies on 20th January 1995.

#### E. CHURCH ORDER OF THE UNITAS FRATRUM

#240. The "Church Order" published after each Synod, contains the statement of general principles in regard to constitution, doctrine, congregation life, ministry and missions which are in force for the Unitas Fratrum as a whole.

#241. Immediately after the close of a Unity Synod the Presiding Committee or a committee appointed by it shall collect all the resolutions of Synod remaining in force and shall separate them into two classes, viz. those affecting, and those not affecting, the "Church Order" of the Unity.

#242. The President of the Unity Board shall receive the resolutions so classified and shall arrange for their publication in the two parts set down in ##244 and 245(a) and (b) below. To these shall be added a list of the members of Synod together with their office at Synod.

#243. The official text of all resolutions passed by Synod shall be in the English language. Translations into other languages shall be authorized by the Unity Board.

#244. The resolutions of a Unity Synod which have application to the Unity as a whole and affect the Church Order are published by the Unity Board with the authority of Synod under the

title "Church Order of the Unitas Fratrum or Moravian Church", and become the official Book of Order of the Unity.

#245.

- a) The resolutions and declarations of a Unity Synod which though having force after the close of Synod, do not form part of the Church Order, are published under the title: "Resolutions and Declarations of Unity Synod not affecting the Church Order of the Unitas Fratrum".
- b) These resolutions remain in force unless altered by the Unity Board.

## CHAPTER II

### THE UNITY SYNOD

#### A. CONSTITUTIONAL POSITION

#250. The Unity Synod is the constitutional body representing the Unitas Fratrum or Moravian Church as a whole.

#251. The members of the Unity Synod are representatives of the Church as a whole. They vote according to their own conviction and are not bound by detailed instructions of their electors.

#### B. SPHERE OF ACTION

The functions of the Unity Synod are:

#252. To represent the Unitas Fratrum in all matters which concern the Unity as a whole.

#253. To decide on official statements of the general principles of the Unitas Fratrum in regard to constitution, doctrine, congregation life and the ministry and the spread of the Gospel

#254. To determine matters touching the Constitution of the Unity as a whole and to assign to each Province its constitutional rights within the Unity.

#255. To uphold and further the fellowship of the several Provinces as parts of the Unitas Fratrum.

#256. To determine the boundaries of the several Provinces of the Unity and their respective spheres of work.

#257. To determine the spheres of work of the Unity and lay down the guiding principles for such work.

#258. To determine the principles governing the relations of the Unity as a whole and its Provinces to the other parts of the universal Christian Church, and to further the cause of Christian unity.

#259. To foster a common responsibility in regard to the problems of contemporary life and to further a spirit of mutual understanding and peace among the nations and the races.

#260. To elect Bishops on the proposal of any Province, should the occasion arise.

#261. To make the necessary arrangements for its own meetings and procedures.

#262. To provide for the holding of funds or other property belonging to the Unity as distinct from the several Provinces and for the safe-keeping of title deeds, minutes and other documents belonging to the Unity.

#263. To elect the directors of the Moravian Church Foundation, as provided for in its Charter.

#264. To act as the final court of appeal in all matters belonging to its sphere of action.

### C. MEMBERSHIP

#265. The number of delegates to the Unity Synod shall be according to the following schedule:

- a) The Mission Provinces shall have one delegate each with the right to vote. The delegate and alternate shall be appointed by the Provincial Board.
- b) The Unity Provinces shall have three delegates each with the right to vote, two elected by Provincial Synod and one appointed by the Provincial Board.
- c) The President of the Unity Board shall have a seat with the right to vote.
- d) The Moravian Church Foundation shall have one delegate with the right to vote.
- e) The Bishops of the Unitas Fratrum shall have two delegates without the right to vote, elected from among them.
- f) The Unity Board may invite representatives from Unity Undertakings and Mission Areas to attend as advisory delegates without vote.
- g) In case two or more Provinces join one another to form one Province, following the merger they are entitled to send to Unity Synod the number of delegates which they had previously. At future Unity Synods, the new Province shall have three delegates.
- h) Each Province elects alternates to take the place of any delegates who are unable to attend Synod.
- i) Unity Provinces are mandated to elect at least one female delegate into their delegations to Unity Synod;
- j) The Unity Women's Desk is given the right to send one delegate without vote to Unity Synod to report about its work and to contribute to the deliberations at Synod.

### D. ELECTION OF MEMBERS

#266. Eligible are all members of the Moravian Church of at least two years' standing, who are communicants and who have completed the 24th year of their age by January 1st of the year in which the election takes place and who possess all the other requisite qualifications for membership in their Provincial Synod. All Provinces are encouraged to consider gender equity in choosing delegates to their respective Provincial Synod and to Unity Synod.

#267. Each Province represented at Unity Synod elects, according to the procedure appointed by its constitution, its delegates and their alternates at the Provincial Synod, if possible at the one immediately preceding the Unity Synod. (See exceptions stated in #265.a) and b).

#268. As evidence of election, or appointment, a statement by the Provincial Board, signed by the President must be sent to the President of the Unity Board to be laid before the Unity Synod.

#### E. TIME AND PLACE OF MEETING

#269. Unity Synod shall convene every seven years.

#270. The exact date and place of convening Synod is set by the Unity Board in a resolution which must be adopted at least two years prior to the date set for the Unity Synod.

#### F. EXPENSES

#271. The expenses of the Unity Synod, i.e. cost of travelling, board and lodging of members, and printing and secretarial expenses, are met from the income of the Unity Fund.

#272. Unless otherwise agreed among the Provinces, any excess of synodal costs over the income of the Unity Fund is divided among the Provinces according to the ratio of representation.

#### G. REPORTS AND PROPOSALS

#273. The President of the Unity Board arranges for the printing and distribution to the members of Synod of the following papers at least two months before the meeting of Synod:

- a) A list of the members of Synod and the proposed auxiliary officials;
- b) The arrangements for the opening of Synod;
- c) A copy of the Rules of Order as in force at the end of the last Synod;
- d) A proposed agenda, enumerating the official reports and the regular proposals which are to be laid before Synod, as well as the necessary elections;
- e) The official reports of the boards, committees, or persons appointed by Unity Synod or Unity Board;
- f) The latest statistics of the whole Unity;
- g) The official reports of the Provincial Boards. These reports shall deal in a very concise manner with the activity and development of the Province in question since last Unity Synod and its present state in general. Short references shall be made especially to: the changes in the number of ministers, congregations, baptized and communicant membership; the exact measure of self-support attained and the source of any outside help received; the support given to the work of the Unity as a whole; the endeavours to make the Gospel known in its own provincial territory and outside;
- h) The proposals which fall within the purview of Unity Synod, printed in English, without comment or explanation. They shall bear the name of the person or persons by whom they are pro-posed and the name of the voting delegate by whom they are to be moved at Synod;
- i) A statement on the Unity Fund as far as can be determined by the Unity Board.

#274. Apart from these papers nothing is printed before the Synod at the expense of Synod.

#275. All other memorials and proposals are held over by the President of the Unity Board to be dealt with by the Synod.

#276. Proposals intended to be included in the draft of the agenda shall be in the hands of the President of the Unity Board four months prior to the day fixed for the opening of Synod. Other proposals which are in order are placed before Synod at its meeting.

#277. Proposals involving a change in the Constitution of the Unitas Fratrum shall be in the hands of the President of the Unity Board not later than six months before the convening of Synod and be forwarded by him/her at once to the Provincial Boards.

#278. All proposals are to be presented in English.

#279. Any member of the Unitas Fratrum who qualifies as a candidate for election to Unity Synod and any group of such members is entitled to present memorials and proposals to Unity Synod on subjects which fall within the purview of the Unity Synod. A copy thereof shall be sent to the respective Provincial Board.

#### H. PROCEDURE FOR UNITY SYNOD

#280. Two-thirds of the total number of voting delegates entitled to attend Synod is the quorum required to be present, so that Synod may constitute itself in its first session.

#281. Except for the first session, the quorum required for the transaction of business is a majority of the voting delegates entitled to attend the Synod.

#282. The President of the Unity Board opens Synod with a public religious service and the President of Synod conducts the election of the Presiding Committee of Synod according to the Rules of Order of the last Synod.

#283. The Synod examines, through a committee, the statement of election or appointment of delegates, decides accordingly on the validity of these elections or appointments, and resolves on the agenda and the Rules of Order.

#284. The Rules of Order of the previous Synod remain in force insofar as they have not been altered by the Synod.

#285. During the sessions of the Synod proposals must be handed in to the Presiding Committee.

#286. Resolutions involving a change in the Constitution of the Unitas Fratrum require for their adoption a two-thirds majority of the voting delegates present; other resolutions require a majority of the voting delegates present.

#287. The Unity Board shall appoint a President and a Secretary of Synod at least six months before the convening of Synod. The President of the Unity Board shall not be eligible to be the

President of Synod. The President may or may not be a delegate; the Secretary shall not be a delegate.

#288. The Presiding Committee is responsible for the attestation and collection of the minutes and for handing them over to the President of the Unity Board for filing and safe keeping.

#289. After the close of Synod the minutes, official reports and other official papers of Synod are deposited in the archives of the Unity.

#290. The date of the close of Synod is decided by the Synod itself.

### CHAPTER III

#### THE GENERAL DIRECTORY (UNITY ELDERS' CONFERENCE)

#300. The General Directory consists of the Provincial Boards of the Unity Provinces.

#301. The General Directory is recognised as a legal corporation with its registered office in Herrnhut and is duly appointed by the Unitas Fratrum as administrator of its property and for other purposes (cf the Ordinance of the Saxon Ministry of Worship and Public Instruction, dated April 30, 1895 and the Certificate of the Appeal Court in Bautzen, October 30, 1844).

#302.

- a) The President, who is charged with the making of depositions of a legal nature bearing the authority of the General Directory and in particular with the granting of Power of Attorney either general or special on behalf of the Unitas Fratrum and of the General Directory, is a member of the Provincial Board of the Continental Province of the Moravian Church and is elected by the Unity Synod.
- b) The President signs in the name of the General Directory by authority of a special Resolution of the Directory in each case.
- c) If the office of President becomes vacant during an inter-synodal period, it is filled by election by the Unity Board (formerly the Unity Directory).

### CHAPTER IV

#### THE UNITY BOARD

#350. The Unity Board consists of one member from the Provincial Board of each of the Provinces governed by a Synod. Such a member is appointed by the Provincial Board. The representatives of the Mission Provinces attend the meeting of the Unity Board with a voice but without the right to vote.

#351.

- a) A President of the Unity Board shall be elected from among its members for a term of two years. He/She may serve for a maximum of two terms, A Vice-President shall also be

elected, from a different region, and shall take over the duties of the President if the office of President becomes vacant.

- b) A Unity Board Administrator (UBA) of the Unitas Fratrum shall be appointed as follows:
1. The UBA should be integrated in or connected to an existing Provincial or Mission Board office.
  2. The UBA must have a good knowledge of the Unity, and should have a basic theological education or practical theological experience as well as:
    - i. Good administrative skills;
    - ii. Good communication skills;
    - iii. Proficiency in written and spoken English and at least a working knowledge of one other language spoken in the Unitas Fratrum;
    - iv. Computer skills ;
    - v. Finance skills; and
    - vi. Professional education and training.
  3. The UBA shall be appointed by the Unity Board preferably for an initial period of five years; reappointment is possible.
  4. The UBA is responsible to the Unity Board through its President.
  5. The core tasks of the UBA are:
    - to prepare, execute and monitor elections within the Unity (e.g. President/Vice-President of the Unity Board);
    - to prepare for the Unity Board meetings/the Unity Synod together with the President of the Unity Board and to function as secretary during these meetings;
    - to prepare for other meetings/conferences within the Unity;
    - to monitor the execution of the decisions taken by the Unity Synod/Unity Board, including the meeting of committees;
    - to edit and publish the Unity Newsletter and other sources of information within the Unity;
    - to assist in financial matters of the Unity (e.g. monitoring payments by Provinces for Unity projects and Unity undertakings);
    - to monitor the finances of the Unity Mission and Development Fund in consultation with the MCF and with the Unity Board to oversee compliance with the criteria for the Unity Mission and Development Fund as specified in COUF #874;
    - to represent the Unity wherever the Unity Board/President deems this necessary;
    - to organize and maintain the archive of all Unity Synod and Unity Board documents, including COUF;
    - act as liaison between Provinces;
    - act as Unity Mission and Development Board convenor;
    - any other duties assigned by the Unity Board.
  6. The UBA shall be financed by the Unity budget and the Moravian Church Foundation; his/her salary, office and travel expenses must be included in the Unity budget.
  7. The UBA is given the right to speak to Unity Synod



#352. The Unity Board will normally conduct its business by correspondence, with voting papers mailed to all members on any question requiring a vote. This vote shall in each case reflect the opinion of the Provincial Board which each member represents. After a period of two months from the time the voting papers are mailed, the President is authorised to count and announce the vote. The replies of nine members are required before a mail vote can be considered complete. A majority of this quorum of nine is sufficient to determine the vote, provided the above mentioned two-month period has elapsed.

#353.

- a) An Executive Committee shall be formed consisting of the President and Vice-President of the Unity Board and one representative of each of the four regions of the Unity not represented by those officers. The members of the Unity Board shall elect the regional representatives. In order to facilitate replacements, the Unity Board shall elect also one alternate for each of the four regions.
- b) This Executive Committee executes tasks as assigned by the Unity Board. The Executive Committee shall report on its actions to the Unity Board.
- c) The Executive Committee will conduct its business by correspondence. In addition it is entitled to meet once annually in those years when neither the Unity Board nor the Unity Synod meets. The Unity Fund shall meet the cost of such meetings.

#354. The sphere of action and responsibility of the Unity Board is the following:

- a) To uphold and further the development of the Unity in all parts of the world.
- b) To foster the union of the several Provinces as branches of an international Church.
- c) To act on behalf of the Unitas Fratrum during inter-synodal periods in all matters which fall within the function of a Unity Synod.
- d) To carry out all tasks given to it by the Unity Synod.
- e) To arrange for interchange of opinion on any divergences from the principles and rules of the Church Order of the Unitas Fratrum with a view towards the correction of these divergences.
- f) To decide questions laid before it by the Unity Synod, the Regional Conferences, the Provincial Boards and the Moravian Church Foundation.
- g) In case of necessity to authorize exceptions from decisions of the Unity Synod upon request by one of the Provincial Boards.
- h) To transmit periodic reports on Unity matters to the Provinces of the Unity.
- i) To call the Unity Synod and to decide on the place and date of convening.
- j) To hold and administer the funds and property of the Unitas Fratrum.
- k) To compile an annual report on the Unity Fund income and expenditure and to submit it to all the Provinces of the Unity.
- l) To transmit all official documents, records and publications of the Unitas Fratrum to the Unity archives.
- m) To act as a court of appeal in all matters falling within its sphere of action.
- n) To be the decision-making body on behalf of the Unitas Fratrum during the inter-synodal periods.

#355. The Unity Board is responsible to Unity Synod. It shall prepare a written report for each meeting of the Synod.

#356. The Unity Board is entitled to meet three times in an inter-synodal period, one of these meetings to take place immediately following the Unity Synod. The costs of such meetings will be met by the Moravian Church Foundation. A majority of the members of the Unity Board shall constitute a quorum. Advisory members may be invited and the place of the meetings determined by a majority vote of the Unity Board. In addition, a meeting of the Unity Board may be called in cases of emergency if the majority of the members request it. The expenses of the emergency meeting will be met from the income of the Unity Fund.

## CHAPTER V

### THE PROVINCES

#### A. CONSTITUTION OF PROVINCIAL SYNOD

#400. The highest constitutional body representing a Province is its Synod (Provincial Synod). Mission Areas, not having a Synod, are privileged to have a Church Conference or other representative bodies constituted on similar lines.

#401. The Provincial Synod is made up of both ex-officio members and members elected to represent congregations or districts of the Province.

#402. Details as to the members (ex-officio and elected), the time of meeting, and Rules of Order are decided by each Provincial Synod for its own Province.

#403. In representing the interests of their electors or their office, members of Synod must not lose sight of the interests of the Province and of the Unity as a whole. Members of Synod vote according to their own conviction and are not bound by instructions of their constituents given beforehand.

#### B. SPHERE OF ACTION OF PROVINCIAL SYNODS

#404. The Provincial Synods have the following powers and duties within the bounds of their own Provinces:

- a) To carry out the principles of the Unitas Fratrum laid down by the Unity Synod for constitution, doctrine, worship and congregation life.
- b) To legislate in regard to constitution, worship and congregation life for its own Province.
- c) To have the oversight of the affairs of the Province administered on its behalf by the Provincial Board.
- d) To elect the administrative boards of the Province.
- e) To acquire property and dispose of property belonging to the Province and to determine the method of its legal holding.
- f) To elect Bishops or to order provincial election of Bishops under regulations contained in the Constitution and authorize their consecration.
- g) To elect delegates to the Unity Synod.
- h) To determine the provincial undertakings and fields of work, such as education, home missions, diaspora work, church extension and evangelization, The Synod decides as to

the taking in hand of new fields of work and the giving up of existing work, also on the admission of new or the giving up of existing congregations.

- i) To further the missionary work of the Unitas Fratrum, especially in those areas entrusted to the Province by the Unity Synod.
- j) To act as the final court of appeal for individual members, congregations, institutions and boards of its own Province, and of Mission Provinces and Mission Areas related to it.

#### C. SPHERE OF ACTION OF CHURCH CONFERENCES

#405.

- a) The constitutional body representing a Mission Area is called the Church Conference. Its membership shall consist of both ordained ministers and lay members, as provided for in the constitution of the Mission Area concerned which has received the approval of the Province to which it is related.
- b) The powers and duties of such Conferences are the following:
  - 1. To carry out the principles of the Unitas Fratrum laid down by Unity Synod for constitution, doctrine, worship and congregation life, being responsible for this to the Province with which the Mission Area is related.
  - 2. To order the worship and congregation life of the Mission Area in harmony with the spirit of the enactments of the Unity.
  - 3. To acquire property and to dispose of property belonging to the indigenous church.
  - 4. To participate in the administration and development of the Mission Area under whatever regulations may be in force.
  - 5. To aid in every way possible the spiritual, educational and social development of the entire area in which the Mission Area is situated.
  - 6. To act as the first court of appeal for the individual members and congregations. The second court of appeal shall be the Provincial Board of the Province to which the Mission Area is related. The final court of appeal shall be the Provincial Synod of the Province to which it is related.

#### D. THE PROVINCIAL BOARDS

#406. The Synods of the Provinces elect the Provincial Boards as the highest administrative authorities of these Provinces. These Boards act in the name and by the commission of their Synods, are responsible to them, and shall render account to them of their administration.

#407. These Boards are responsible for carrying out the Church Order laid down for their own Province, its districts, congregations, and fields of work, and the other resolutions of the Provincial Synod.

#408. These Boards must also keep in view the general tasks and objects of the Unitas Fratrum and thus take their stand for Christian discipline and order, justice and charity.

#409. The special sphere of action of the several Provincial Boards includes the whole extent of provincial administration and representation as laid down in the provincial Books of Order.

#### E. THE CONGREGATIONS

#410. The individual congregations and districts of each Province are recognised in accordance with the regulations in force for that Province.

#411. The constitutional boards and councils of the congregations shall include both ministers appointed on behalf of the Province and representatives of the local membership, in order that ministers and members may act jointly and harmoniously for the advancement of the work of the Church and the welfare of its members.

#### F. PROVINCIAL BOOKS OF ORDER

#412. Each Province governed by a Synod issues its own Book of Order, which must be in agreement with the "Church Order of the Unitas Fratrum (Moravian Church)".

#413. Each such Book of Order is valid only for its own Province. In the event of an appeal, the "Church Order of the Unitas Fratrum (Moravian Church)" in force at the time is authoritative.

#### G. A UNITAS FRATRUM CODE OF CONDUCT

#414. In the event of a major conflict within a Moravian Church Province, a code of conduct in the Unity is required; The code of conduct will include the following:

- When a conflict, as a rule between several groups or entities within a Province<sup>1</sup> develops and the conflict involves the leadership, and in the event that the synod, being the highest appeal body within the Province, is unable to find a solution to the said conflict, the Provincial Board notifies the Unity office as early as possible;
- In that case, the Unity office strives at its earliest convenience to visit the area with a Unity Delegation in order to learn about the situation, and if possible to call the parties together to a common meeting in order to find a way forward. As no conflict must be left to develop for a longer period of time and subsequently get out of hand, the Unity has the right and the duty to intervene with measures of mediation, even if not invited to do so by one or both parts;
- The Unity Synod, the Unity Board and the Unity Executive Committee, whichever is applicable, has the right and duty to hear both parties, to give careful consideration to all matters, to seek to understand the issues and seek a way forward.
- Because differences in the understanding of Moravian identity and theology are accepted within the Unity, based on the fundamental notion of seeking unity in essentials, liberty in nonessentials and love in all things, the ruling principle is that the Unity, through its structure of leadership, does its best to ensure that all members, who wish to be part of the Unity, can remain so.
- This however, does not mean that everything and anything is accepted. Clear obedience to and agreement with COUF and the Constitution of the Province is paramount. In cases of doubt as to how to understand COUF, the structure of leadership of the Unity will offer an interpretation. In cases of a group not wishing to accept COUF, this group might be better off leaving the Unity.
- But first and foremost, all Provinces, all leaders, all ministers are asked always to consider carefully, what builds the Kingdom of God and what is to His glory.

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<sup>1</sup> From time to time, a conflict with an individual arises within a province and is dealt with by the province and/or its synod and it may not need Unity interventions.

## CHAPTER VI

### THE UNITY FUND

#450. The entire assets of the Unity as a whole, as distinct from the property of the individual Provinces, are vested by the Unity Synod or the Unity Board as the Unity Fund in one or more of the Provinces. (This shall, however, not be deemed to include the assets of the Moravian Church Foundation [see Chapter VIII].) The capital assets are to be administered by the Provinces governed by a Synod and invested as a trust fund in securities legally approved for the investments of trust funds. The expenditure of the income is under the direction of the Unity Synod or the Unity Board. A report shall be furnished by each Province to the President of the Unity Board within three months after the end of its fiscal year, and the President of the Unity Board shall furnish to all Provinces an annual report on the Unity Fund income and expenditure.

#451. Each Province of the Unity is required to make an annual contribution to the Unity Fund on a percentage basis. These contributions shall be budgeted and paid annually on or before the end of each fiscal year of each Province.

#452. The income of the Unity Fund from investments and annual contributions is intended to maintain the Unitas Fratrum by means of Unity Synods and the Unity Board, and to make possible other joint activities of the Unity which have been approved by the Unity Synod or the Unity Board. Any excess of Unity expenses over the income of the Unity Fund shall be borne by the Provinces on a pro rata basis.

#453. Failure to fulfill the above requirements in whole or in part shall affect the right of the Province to representation at Unity Synod. Each case shall be considered by the Unity Board, whose decision shall be subject to confirmation by the Unity Synod.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE UNITY ARCHIVES

#500. The archives at Herrnhut occupy a special position in the Unitas Fratrum as the official repository of historical documents relating to the entire Unity. All Provinces of the Unitas Fratrum, therefore, have a special responsibility for the maintenance, preservation and further development of these archives.

#501. All Provinces of the Unitas Fratrum are responsible for developing provincial archives, and for housing archival collections in fire resistant buildings.

#502. Sufficient copies are to be made of all official documents drawn up and signed on behalf of the Unity as a whole and also of the results of the Unity Synods and of the meetings of the Unity Board so that one copy of each may be preserved in the Herrnhut archives and in the

archives of all the Provinces. Each member of the Unity Board is charged with the responsibility of placing a copy of each of these official documents to the archives of all the Provinces.

#503. Each member of the Unity Board is also requested to send one copy of all official and unofficial Moravian publications, at the expense of the Province which he/she represents, to the Herrnhut archives, and to the several provincial archives throughout the Unity.

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE MORAVIAN CHURCH FOUNDATION

#550. Status of the Moravian Church Foundation.

- a) The Moravian Church Foundation, hereinafter cited as the Foundation, is a non-profit corporation created under the authority of the Unity Synod of the Moravian Church (Unitas Fratrum) for the financial support of the work of the Moravian Church (Unitas Fratrum) as further defined in Article 2 of the Foundation (#551).
- b) The name "The Moravian Church Foundation" shall henceforth be the new name of the Zendingstichting der Evangelische Broederuniteit (The Mission Institute of the Moravian Church) which was incorporated at Zeist, Holland, on June 6, 1951, as successor to the Missionsanstalt. (The latter had existed as a legal body in Saxony, Germany, since June 2, 1894. The Royal Saxon Ministry of Worship [Dresden, March 15, 1900 and March 14, 1904] recognised it as a legal body under the law of June 15, 1868).
- c) The Foundation being a legal body under its own Charter and none of the Provincial Boards being entitled to intervene in its financial administration, the individual Provinces cannot be held responsible with their property for any losses or excess expenditure incurred by the Foundation.
- d) The Articles of the Charter of the Foundation must always be kept in agreement with the resolutions of the Unity Synod of the Moravian Church (Unitas Fratrum).

### THE CHARTER

#551. This seventh day of July nineteen hundred and eighty-seven appeared before me Meister Cornelis Pieter Boodt notary public officiating in Amsterdam in the presence of the two witnesses to be mentioned hereafter, Malcolm Roger Healey Executive Director and Chairman of the Board of Directors of the "Moravian Church Foundation" ("Sticthing der Evangelische Broederuniteit") established at Zeist.

Whereas:

The Unity Board of the Moravian Church ("Unitas Fratrum") by correspondence during 1986, which Board, representing the Moravian Church (Unitas Fratrum, Brüder-Unität) in the widest sense in accordance with "Church Order of the Unitas Fratrum (Moravian Church) 1981", Part III, Chapter VIII, ##550-551, has expressed the desire that the Chapter and Articles of the Moravian Church Foundation be amended in accordance with and as a result of the changes in "the Kingdom Act on Voluntary Transfer of Seats of Legal Entities" which Act is, due to its independence no longer applicable to Suriname;

In consultation between the Board of Directors of the Moravian Church Foundation and the said Unity Board of the Moravian Church (Unitas Fratrum), the Act described hereinafter will now be proceeded to by said applicant.

The revised Articles of Association will be as follows:

#### ARTICLE I

1. The Foundation shall bear the name "Stichting der Evangelische Broederunitiet" ("The Moravian Church Foundation"). It is established at Zeist, the Netherlands.
2. The terms:  
Evangelische Broederuniteit (Moravian Church {Unitas Fratrum})  
Uniteits Synode (Unity Synod)  
Uniteits Bestuur (Unity Board)  
Raad van Bestuur (Board of Directors)

should be considered in these Articles of Association in the sense which is attributed thereto in the Church Order of the Unitas Fratrum (Moravian Church) 1981 and 1988, which is an integral part of these Articles of Association.

#### ARTICLE 2

The object of the Foundation shall be the support and furtherance of the specific work of the Moravian Church (Unitas Fratrum) within or outside its existing Provinces, which work the individual Provinces concerned are not yet able to initiate or sustain themselves.

#### ARTICLE 3

1. The Foundation will obtain the means necessary for the execution of the object described in Article 2 from the proceeds of its property.
2. The Foundation shall be entitled, for the purpose of protection of its equity to transfer all the component parts of its equity that are situated outside the territory of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Europe – inclusive of shares in companies governed by a system of law other than that of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Europe - or a portion of the aforesaid component parts of its equity, whether revocable or irrevocable, in trust or in accordance with any Anglo-American system of law, or to transfer these by means of a fiduciary passing of ownership, as a nominee, to one or more trustees or confidential persons, corporate bodies or companies, that is to say that those component parts of its equity shall be the trustee(s) or confidential persons for the benefit of the Foundation, its creditors or other persons, appointed by the Board of Directors, all of this in accordance with the provisions by which the trust relationship or the fiduciary ownership are governed.
3. By virtue of this Paragraph the Board of Directors shall enact regulations and safety measures to protect the assets of the Moravian Church Foundation.

#### ARTICLE 4

Subject to the limitations contained in the Foundation's Articles of Association, the Board of Directors shall be in charge of managing the affairs of the Foundation. The Board of Directors is authorized to transfer the component parts of the Foundation's equity that are situated outside the

territory of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Europe, or part thereof, in any one of the ways that are described in the last sentence of Article 3, Section 2, thereof.

#### ARTICLE 5

The Board of Directors of the Foundation shall consist of not less than six and not more than nine members. The majority of these members must have a professional knowledge of business and finance; the other members must have a thorough knowledge of the Unitas Fratrum as a world-wide Church community. Each of the four regions of the Unity shall be represented by at least one member; in addition the Province of Suriname and the European Continental Province shall both be represented by one member.

The members shall be elected by the Unity Synod upon nomination by the MCF. At least six months prior to Synod, the MCF shall consult with the Provinces with regard to possible candidates to be presented to Unity Synod by the MCF. In the case of vacancies occurring in the membership of the Board of Directors during the inter-synodal period, the Board of Directors shall make two nominations to the Unity Board for each vacancy and the Unity Board shall carry out the election.

The members of the Board of Directors may be dismissed at any time by the Unity Synod as well as by the Unity Board for cause. Furthermore, a member of the Board of Directors shall cease to function as a Director:

1. After the first annual meeting to be held after having reached the age of 70 years;
2. When the term of election has expired;
3. When the member is legally not in the position to dispose freely over his/her property;
4. When the member is dismissed according to the law.

The Board of Directors shall elect from among its own members:

1. President and a Vice-President (to be translated Voorzitter and Onder voorzitter);
2. An Executive Committee, consisting of at least three members and the Chairman, responsible to the full Board of Directors. The Board of Directors shall inform the Unity Board on the elections.

#### ARTICLE 6

After the expiration of each calendar year and before the first of September of the following year the Board of Directors shall issue a report in writing concerning the management and financial position of the Foundation to the Unity Board. This report shall be accompanied by a balance sheet and operating account of the Foundation. The Board of Directors shall at all times give its cooperation in any measure of verification that may be considered necessary by the Unity Board and shall on its request supply all information desired in respect of the management and work of the Foundation.

#### ARTICLE 7

The Board of Directors may lay down further regulations concerning the management and work of the Foundation. These regulations shall not contain any provisions conflicting with the Articles of Association of the Foundation. They shall not become effective until they have been confirmed by the Unity Board.

#### ARTICLE 8



The Board of Directors of the Foundation is a strictly collegiate body. The Chairperson or Vice-Chairperson of the Board of Directors shall represent the Foundation judicially and extra judicially. He/she is entitled to appoint another member of the Board of Directors or if deemed necessary another person in writing for the purpose of representing him/her, either in general, or in case he/she is not in the position to act. The rights which such a representative may exercise may be unlimited if he/she is a member of the Board of Directors. If power of representation is extended to a third party, such representation shall only be exercised for specific purposes or countries, or for specific matters of business or for individual cases.

#### ARTICLE 9

The Board of Directors is authorized to conclude contracts regarding purchasing, alienating or encumbering registered goods, as well as concluding agreements whereby the Moravian Church Foundation commits itself as guarantor or co-debtor or to vouch for third parties or commits itself as security for a debt by a third party.

If the Foundation has an interest contrary to a) an individual member of the Board of Directors or b) an individual member of the Board of Directors has become a person as meant in Article VII of "the Regulations with regard to Security Measures" of the "Stichting der Evangelische Broederuniteit" (the Moravian Church Foundation), the Foundation shall be represented by another individual member to be appointed by the Board of Directors.

#### ARTICLE 10

The Board of Directors will meet as often as the Chairperson or his/her substitute or at least two members of the Board of Directors find(s) it desirable. The Chairperson or as the case may be his/her substitute convenes meetings. Extracts from the minutes of the meeting of the Board of Directors dealing with other than purely administrative matters are communicated to the Unity Board by the Board of Directors.

Between two Unity Synods of the Moravian Church (Unitas Fratrum) the Board of Directors is responsible to the Unity Board for the accounts of the Foundation.

#### ARTICLE 11

The Board of Directors is entitled to make decisions with or without a meeting.

When there is a meeting voting will take place orally, unless one member of the Board of Directors desires voting in writing. Voting by acclamation is permitted if none of the members of the Board of Directors is opposed.

When no meeting is held it is essential that the proposal in question be submitted to all members of the Board who shall cast their vote in writing.

Unless a larger majority is required, decisions are taken by an absolute majority.

In case the voting concerns persons and at the first ballot no majority is obtained, then a new ballot will take place. If at the second ballot no majority is obtained a vote will decide which persons shall be included in a further ballot. If at any of these subsequent ballots the votes are evenly divided, lots will be drawn. In case a proposal concerns affairs and the votes are evenly divided, the proposal will be deemed rejected.

#### ARTICLE 12

The Unity Synod, or in the period between two consecutive Synods, the Unity Board, shall have the right, after consulting with the Board of Directors, to make proposals to the Board of

Directors to amend or to supplement the Articles of Association. The Board of Directors shall execute said proposal.

Furthermore, the Board of Directors is qualified to decide to dissolve the Foundation or to amend the Articles of Association, without suggestions from the Unity Synod or as the case may be the Unity Board provided the Board of Directors has obtained the prior approval of the Unity Synod or as the case may be the Unity Board in an inter-synodal period.

For a decision to amend or dissolve the Articles of Association as meant above, a two-third majority of the votes is required, which votes then may be entered by all members then in function.

The alteration shall be effected by notarial deed under penalty of nullity. The Board of Directors is obliged to register an authenticated copy of the Deed of Alteration as well as the altered Articles of Association with the offices of the Public Registry of Foundations, kept at the Chamber of Commerce at Utrecht.

#### ARTICLE 13

With due observance of the regulations being enforced by the "Kingdom Act of Voluntary Transfer of Seat of Legal Entities" or any other law, resolution, by-law or regulation in force, the Foundation and/or any of its organs and/or legally denominated and/or appointed person/persons, may transfer its seat or may have its seat transferred to another part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands or to any other country possible under the applicable law, legal settlement, resolution, by-law or regulation.

#### ARTICLE 14

A resolution to dissolve the Foundation shall require a two-third majority of the Board of Directors and must be ratified by the Unity Synod or the Unity Board before becoming operative. Furthermore, the Foundation shall be dissolved by insolvency after a declaration of bankruptcy or by a dissolution of the bankruptcy because of the state of the property; by Court verdict cases as stated by law. During liquidation the Articles of Association will remain applicable in as far as is possible.

#### ARTICLE 15

Settlement of accounts will be carried out by the Board of Directors. The Foundation will endure after dissolution if and in as far as is necessary to settle its affairs. During the settlement of accounts the regulations of the Articles of Association will remain in force in as far as possible and necessary. The Board of Directors will, after settlement of all debts, decide upon the appropriation of the remaining assets of the Foundation on the understanding that the balance will be intended for a purpose according to the object of the Foundation.

#### ARTICLE 16

The Board of Directors will decide in all cases not covered by these Articles of Association.

Act of Incorporation, executed at Amsterdam, dates as above in the presence of J van Hinsbergen established at Zeist and R M I Kensenhuis as witnesses, having signed this deed immediately after lecture, as well as attendant, all known to me, notary public.

Signed  
C P Boodt

## CHAPTER IX

### APPEALS

The provisions as to appeals in the Unitas Fratrum are as follows:

#600. In the case of a Mission Area the individual members, congregations, institutions and boards shall have the right of appeal successively to their own Church Conference and to the Provincial Board of the Province to which the Mission Area is related. The final court of appeal shall be the Provincial Synod of the Province to which it is related. (Concerning the Provincial Boards, see COUF #602, #604).

#601. In the case of the Provinces governed by a Synod, the individual members, congregations, institutions and boards shall have the right of appeal to their Provincial Board. The final court of appeal in these cases shall be their Provincial Synod. (Concerning Provincial Boards, COUF #602, #604).

#602. The Provincial Boards of the Provinces governed by a Synod shall have the right of appeal to the Unity Board and the Unity Synod on matters falling within the purview of these bodies. Such an appeal must be supported by at least one-third of the members of the Provincial Board entering the appeal.

#603. A minority of a Provincial Synod may appeal to the Unity Board and the Unity Synod on matters falling within the purview of these bodies. Such an appeal must be supported by at least one-third of the voting members of the Synod entering the appeal.

#604. In the case of an appeal to the Unity Board entered by the Provincial Board or the minority of the Synod of a Province, the representative of the Province concerned may take an advisory part in the proceedings but shall have no vote.

#605. The Unity Board and Unity Synod shall receive appeals only on matters falling within the sphere of action of these bodies.

#606. The Board of Directors of the Moravian Church Foundation shall have the right of appeal to the Unity Board and the Unity Synod.

#607. Those engaged in Unity Undertakings related to the Unity as a whole shall have the right of appeal to the Board of the Province supervising that work and to its Synod. The final court of appeal shall be the Unity Board.

#608. In the case of an appeal to the Unity Synod the ruling of the Unity Board shall remain in force until the Unity Synod has given its decision.

## PART IV

### CHURCH LIFE IN THE UNITAS FRATRUM

#### CHAPTER I

##### CONGREGATION LIFE

#650. In the course of its development and growth the organisation of the church life of the Unity has varied according to local circumstances and the needs of the time. It can be said that there is today no rigid pattern of congregation life since the congregations of our Church are very different in their outward form, according to their origin, their country, their age and their development; also according to their financial capacity to maintain themselves and contribute towards the stability and work of the Church.

#651. The division of a congregation into what we have been accustomed to call 'choirs', according to age, sex and station in life, can be a practical help to church life. It has often proved serviceable in pastoral work, and where this is still the case we gladly avail ourselves of this means of furthering our congregation life, but not to the exclusion of other methods which may be more suitable in the particular circumstances and environment of the congregation concerned.

#652. These various types of spiritual life serve to foster a deeper sense of fellowship and an outward concern for evangelism.

#653. Another sphere in which the sense of fellowship and concern for evangelism is realised is the Church's service to persons in special need, such as the sick and aged, orphans and refugees, retarded children and children of working mothers, and students away from home.

#### CHAPTER II

##### CHURCH DISCIPLINE

#654. The life of the congregation is nourished by the cure and care of souls and the exercise of congregation discipline.

In the exercise of corrective discipline the following aspects are recognised:

- a) Admonition by the minister, either alone or in fellowship with other members (church council, elders, etc.) in private in a spirit of love;
- b) Further admonition with temporary suspension from the fellowship of the congregation as it is visibly expressed in certain privileges;
- c) Exclusion from the membership of the congregation;
- d) Persons who are excluded shall be welcomed back into the membership of the congregation after a profession of repentance on their part. (See also #103).

## CHAPTER III

### THE FAMILY

#655. The importance of the family in the life of the congregation cannot be overemphasized. The family is a "natural choir" within the congregation, and a Christian home is the "natural school" where the foundations of the Christian life are laid among young people.

#656. It is therefore a duty and a privilege among all members of the Church to uphold the highest ideals of Christian marriage and family life, and to avoid anything that would bring dishonour upon it.

#657. The Unitas Fratrum regards it as a sacred obligation to hold an ideal of Christian marriage as pure as it is given by our Lord in his teaching, viz. that Christian marriage is an indissoluble union and requires the lifelong loyalty of the man and the woman towards each other in thought and deed.

#658. It is therefore urged that the young people in our churches be instructed, not merely immediately before marriage but from years of adolescence, in the meaning and obligation of the true Christian marriage.

#659. The Unitas Fratrum, honouring the example and injunction of our Lord, acknowledges the responsibility of dealing compassionately and redemptively with human frailty and sin in every area of life, including failure in the marriage state.

#660. Therefore in every case where action is taken in regard to divorced persons, the Unitas Fratrum urges upon its pastors and congregations the need to make every effort to avoid both a rigid legalism and an irresponsible abuse in the discharge of this sacred responsibility.

## CHAPTER IV

### SCHOOLS AND EDUCATION

#661. From the beginning, the Moravian Church has recognised the importance of education, not only for equipping the minds, but also for building the character of young people. It has therefore in the course of its development established schools and colleges wherever this lay in its power.

#662. The nature and scope of these schools has changed considerably over the years, and today they serve the needs of a community far beyond the confines of the Moravian Church. In this respect they have a special task to fulfill and a distinctive role to play in the modern world.

#663. While aiming to maintain the highest standards possible, our schools must also foster Christian ideals. This is true in a special sense of the boarding schools which provide a home for the children entrusted to them. In its schools therefore, the Church has an opportunity to minister not only to the children who come from Moravian congregations, but also to those from other

backgrounds as well, particularly those who have not had the experience of Christian life at home.

#664. In many areas the Sunday school has become an important arm of the Church in supplementing religious instruction provided by the home, or the week-day school. The congregations are urged to recognise the importance of this and other Christian organisations which seek to strengthen the commitment of young people to Christ.

## CHAPTER V

### RELATION TO THE CIVIL AUTHORITIES

#665. The Moravian Church recognises as important the insights contained in the Bible concerning the relationship of individuals as also of the Church to the civil authorities. It is a duty and a privilege of the individual Christian to make intercession for the civil authorities and to take a full and active share in the civil life of his/her country, and as far as possible to ensure that Christian principles govern the life of the community and country.

We will, therefore, observe the orders of the civil authorities, as long as they do not require us to deny the will of God.

## CHAPTER VI

### PEACE

#666. In obedience to the command of Christ it is the solemn obligation of the Church to work for the continuance and keeping of world peace. The Moravian Church, through its international character, is placed in a particularly favourable position to use its influence to this end. Its constant aim should be to encourage and help to establish world peace in the name of Jesus Christ who Himself is the source of true peace and reconciliation.

## CHAPTER VII

### WORSHIP

#667. The Moravian Church has inherited from the past a rich tradition of congregation worship, hymn singing, liturgies, rites of the Church and the observance of the church year. It has, however, been recognised that forms of worship are not ends in themselves, but means to an end, namely, the adoration of God in Jesus Christ and renewed dedication to His service.

#668. It has further been a principle of the Moravian Church that in all worship the congregation should have an active part. Liturgical practice in the Moravian Church has, therefore, not remained fixed or rigid, but has been subject to change so as to serve best the needs of the Church.

## CHAPTER VIII

### HOLY COMMUNION

#669. As a matter of principle the Moravian Church maintains an "open Communion", welcoming the presence and participation of members of other Christian churches in the celebration of the Sacrament (#6).

Baptized children are admitted by the rite of Confirmation (#680).

#670. Where permitted by the local Province, baptized children, on request of parents and after instruction by the Church as to the meaning and value of the Holy Communion, according to age level, may be admitted to Holy Communion.

#671. While the Lord's Supper itself stresses the unity and fellowship which believers have with Christ and each other, no matter what form may be followed in its observance, Moravian traditions emphasize this aspect of the Sacrament and have thereby brought blessing to many through the years. In this service also, the believers express thanksgiving for the blessings of the new covenant and look forward to the consummation of all things at the second coming of Christ in glory.

## CHAPTER XI

### THE LOVEFEAST

#672. The lovefeast (agape) is taken over from a similar usage in the early Christian Church and was revived by the Renewed Unity in 1727. It may be held in a free and flexible form on Sundays or festival days.

#673. Lovefeasts are of two kinds:

- a) The lovefeast preceding the usual celebration of the Lord's Supper is a more formal service. By the intimate talk on the affairs of the Church and the congregation, and by the meditation on some aspect of the Lord's Supper, usually based on the text for the day from the Moravian Text Book, this service has the object of deepening our sense of fellowship with one another through our covenant to follow Christ our Lord.
- b) The lovefeast celebrating a "festival", whether of the whole Church or of a local congregation or of a smaller group such as a Moravian choir, is held both to demonstrate and to promote the fellowship of Christian believers through their fellowship with Christ.

There is no set form for the service, but the characteristic features are the singing of hymns, addresses on some topic appropriate to the occasion, and the serving of a simple meal.

## CHAPTER X

### THE CUP OF COVENANT

#674. The cup of covenant is a liturgical usage of the Moravian Church which is, however, not a Sacrament and must not be confused with the Holy Communion. A celebration of the cup of



covenant may be held whenever the members of the congregation wish to strengthen themselves anew for the service of their common Lord.

## CHAPTER XI

### BAPTISM AND CONFIRMATION

#675. All children are called of God to the fullness of life within His Kingdom. Those born to Christian parents share in that covenant relationship between God and His people, the expression of which is the Church on earth. Their visible incorporation into the Church, the body of Christ, is made in the Sacrament of baptism.

#676. The congregation, in whose presence a child is baptized, ought, by its participation in the act, practically to show that, along with the parents, it undertakes the duty of bringing up the child in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

#677. Only such persons should be witnesses or sponsors as are able to appreciate the significance and seriousness of the matter, and are members of a Christian Church. Whilst it is true that no legal obligation rests on them to care for the welfare of the children to whose baptism they are invited as witnesses, they should all the more recognise it as a duty of Christian love to make such a child a special object of their prayers, and, if it becomes an orphan, to look after it faithfully to the best of their ability.

#678. Adults who have not been baptized as children are, at their request, and after thorough instruction in the truths of salvation, to be baptized, and are received by their baptism into the Christian Church as communicant members.

#679. Baptisms are, as a rule, to be performed in public meetings of the Church.

#680. In the rite of confirmation those baptized in infancy publicly confess their faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour, and are admitted to the Holy Communion if such admission has not previously taken place (see #670).

## CHAPTER XII

### CHURCH FESTIVALS AND MEMORIAL DAYS

#681. In addition to the festivals which are generally celebrated by the Christian Church, Moravians also observe special historical Memorial Days.

They are as follows:

1st March 1457	The founding of the Unitas Fratrum
26th March 1467	The election of the first ministers of the Unitas Fratrum
12th May 1727	The signing of the "Brotherly Agreement"
17th June 1722	The Founding of Herrnhut
6th July 1415	The Martyrdom of John Hus

13th August 1727      The Manifestation of Unity through the Holy Spirit at Herrnhut  
21st August 1732      The beginning of missionary work  
16th September 1741   The experience of the Headship of Christ in the Moravian Church  
13th November 1741   The proclamation of the Headship of Christ in the Moravian Church

## CHAPTER XIII THE MINISTRY

### Introduction

The understanding of Christ being the Chief Elder is the basis for the understanding of the Ministry in the Moravian Church. *Unitas Fratrum* underlines the priesthood of all believers, as well as the calling of specially appointed and ordained ministers. The offices of the ministry are a gift from the Chief Elder. Those called into the constituted orders of the Moravian Church are called and ordained by Christ.

The ordained minister, whether Deacon, Presbyter or Bishop, is a servant of God and the congregation. He or she is never considered the head or the body of the congregation, but often serves as the congregation's mouth, hands, and feet as the church bears witness to the love of Christ. The ordained minister is solely a servant to the Lord, ministering to Christ by serving the congregation and its neighbors. In this role of a servant, he or she is called together with the Board of Elders to lead the congregation with Godly conduct essential to effective ministry. Ordained ministers are also called to maintain within the congregation the structure and order provided by Provincial and Unity Synods.

The ordained minister must be knowledgeable about the Moravian understanding of the role of ministry and live and act accordingly.

### A. ORDINATION

#### 1. Ordination in General (#104)

#682. The constituted orders of the ministry in the Moravian Church are those of Deacons, Presbyters and Bishops. Those who are ordained, are authorized to administer the Sacraments in the Moravian Church.

This ministry of the ordained is an expression of the ministry of the whole people of God and a response to the call and gifts of Christ Who is Chief Elder of the Church and its ministry.

The orders are expressions of service rather than rank. Only One is recognized as having authority in Himself: Jesus the Christ Who also served.

Persons feeling a call to ordained ministry in the Moravian Church shall be given equal consideration without reference to their sex.

#683. Only the Provincial Board, the Provincial or Unity Synod has the authority to commission ordination. In extending such a commission, they are guided by careful consideration of the spiritual, mental and physical qualifications of the candidate for ordination. Ordination should be preceded by appropriate ministerial training (see #692).

In the event that an ordained minister is received from another denomination, the Provincial Board is free to receive him or her as a Deacon or Presbyter as it deems appropriate.

#684. The ordained minister remains a servant of Christ and the Church as a whole, not merely of the congregation to which he/she is called. Even as Jesus Christ came not to be ministered unto but to minister, so His servants should be willing to minister wherever the Church calls them under the leading of the Holy Spirit. The minister is a brother or sister, who is called to the ordained service, and to whom the church has certain expectations concerning conduct and lifestyle as spelled out in Provincial constitutions. To be ordained as a minister means to be under the order and authority of the church.

#684.a. Ordination and consecration as a rule is for life. However, under specific circumstances, spelled out in Provincial constitutions, the ordained minister may be placed under corrective discipline by the PEC and is not any longer considered an ordained or consecrated minister. The ordination is suspended as long as the minister is under corrective discipline, but may in case of repentance followed by the authorization of the PEC be put into effect again. This reinstatement of the ordination takes place in a special service led by a Presbyter or a Bishop appointed by the PEC. In the event of a Bishop's ordination and consecration being put into effect again, a Bishop of the Unity shall preside. It is not a reordination.

- Corrective discipline for ordained ministers is exercised by the Provincial Board, after a process of testing other possible corrective measures and after careful consideration of the Provincial Board and bishops. The excluded minister can appeal to the Provincial Synod.
- Reasons for corrective discipline measures for ordained ministers are those mentioned in 103.c-e. and any reasons mentioned in Provincial constitutions concerning expectations of ministers.
- In case of imposing corrective discipline measures on a bishop, the PEC must contact the chairman of the region and at least one other bishop prior to starting the process of corrective discipline.
- The Unity Board must be advised of any bishop in the respective Province that has been placed under corrective discipline. The Unity Board may ask the PEC to investigate the need for corrective disciplinary measures against a bishop.

## 2. Orders of the Ministry

### a) Deacon

#685. The ordination of a Deacon admits him/her to the first order of the ministry. As a Deacon he/she has authority to serve in the pastoral office and to administer the Sacraments under the rules and regulations of the Church in effect for such an office. The ordination as a Deacon embodies the understanding of ministry as service, which underlies all the orders. The newly ordained minister is normally guided and nurtured in establishing his/her work in the ministry by a Presbyter who lives nearby or by someone appointed for this purpose by the Provincial Board.

### b) Presbyter

#686. Deacons are consecrated to the office of Presbyter after a number of years in the ordained ministry. In the service of consecration the Church spiritually encourages the Deacon, recognizes his/her professional and spiritual maturity, affirms his/her ministry since ordination and renews its own commitment to serve Christ.

For the individual, the service of consecration should be an occasion to give witness to the Christian faith and to rededicate him/ herself to the ordained ministry.

The consecration of a Presbyterian is also a celebration of the whole Church, calling all to renew their commitment to serve Christ.

A Provincial Board might assign a particular duty to Presbyters in order to share leadership responsibilities and/or provide support for Deacons.

### c) Bishop

#### i. The Office of Bishop

#687. We hold to the understanding, common both to the Ancient and Renewed Unity, that only Christ is Head of the Church and pastoral oversight is exercised in responsibility to Him.

The Renewed Unity received the episcopacy as an inheritance from the Ancient Unitas Fratrum.

The Renewed Unity understands the fundamental function of a bishop as being a pastor of pastors.

A Bishop of the Moravian Church is consecrated to a special priestly pastoral ministry in the name of and for the whole Unity.

The office of Bishop represents the vital unity of the Church and the continuity of the Church's ministry, although the Unity does not place emphasis on any mechanical transmission of the apostolic succession.

The office and function of a Bishop is valid throughout the Unity as a whole.

Before consecration, a Bishop-elect shall receive appropriate orientation regarding the role and function of the office from at least one other Bishop of the Unity.

The PEC appoints a bishop to give the orientation, with the affirmation of the Unity Executive Committee.

By virtue of their office, all Bishops shall have a seat at the Synod of the Province in which they reside, with the right to vote determined by each Province.

Bishops serve under the authority of the Provincial Board and Synod of the Province in which they reside. Once decisions have been reached by a provincial board or synod, Bishops are not to interfere with such decisions.

A Bishop is not by virtue of his/her office member of the PEC, but can be elected on the PEC. However, the bishop cannot serve as President of the PEC.

#### ii. Duties of Bishops

#688. A Bishop as a Bishop has responsibility primarily for providing pastoral care to pastors and the Church and assisting the Church in its faithfulness to Christ and the Gospel.

A Bishop has a special duty of intercession for the Unity, and also for the Church of Christ as a whole.

The opinion of a Bishop (Bishops) shall customarily be sought and given due consideration and weight in matters of doctrine and practice.

A Bishop represents the Church in the act of ordination

Only Bishops have the right to ordain or to consecrate to the various orders of the ministry, but only when commissioned to do so by a Provincial Board or Synod.

A Bishop, however, has the right to decline a commission to ordain, should he/she wish to do so.

In exceptional cases, the ordination of a Deacon may be performed by a Presbyter on behalf of the Church, commissioned by the PEC.

Bishops in active service should be enabled to visit congregations for the deepening of their spiritual life.

A Bishop (Bishops) should share in the decisions regarding the training of candidates for the ministry and should maintain a special pastoral relationship with such candidates throughout their training.

A Bishop may be assigned by his/her Province to represent the Province in ecumenical gatherings and before governmental agencies.

Each Province shall decide if it wishes to free its Bishops from congregational duties to enable them to function properly as pastors for all workers.

### iii. Election and consecration of Bishops

#689. Wherever possible, every Mission Province and Unity Province shall have at least two bishops.

A Bishop shall be elected from among the Presbyters of a Province by a Provincial Synod with a secret ballot

A majority of two-thirds shall be required to secure the election of a Bishop.

On the occasion of the consecration of a Bishop, at least two Bishops of the Unity must officiate. Whenever possible, at least one of the officiating Bishops shall come from another Unity Province. The Provincial Board (or when applicable, the Provincial or Unity Synod, see #687), designates two or more bishops. Authorization for these bishops to officiate the consecration is sought from the Unity Executive Committee's office.

The President of the Unity Board or his or her representative, on behalf of the Unity, shall attend the consecration of a Bishop.

#690. All Provinces entitled under the Constitution of the Unitas Fratrum to elect and consecrate Bishops shall, on the occasion of the consecration of a Bishop, send to the office of the President of the Unity Board notification of such consecration, giving the name of the brother or sister so consecrated, the names of the officiating Bishops and the date and place of the consecration, and the office of President of the Unity Board shall transmit this information to all Provinces of the Unity and to the Archivist at Herrnhut.

### iv. Bishops' Conference

#691. A regular conference of Bishops for the purpose of furthering the faith, spiritual life, unity and doctrine of the Church shall be convened once in every seven years prior to Unity Synod and prior to a meeting of the Unity Board and the Bishops have the authority to organize such a conference. Each conference should include an in depth reflection on the understanding of the role of the Bishop in the Unity.

- a. Each participating Province will pay the average cost of travel for one Bishop. If additional Bishops attend the full cost must be met by the respective Province.
- b. The expense of hosting the conference shall be met by the Moravian Church Foundation.

### 3. Reception of Acolytes

#692. The Renewed Moravian Church has taken from the Ancient Church the title of "Acolyte" which was one of the seven steps of ordination and has transformed this into a call of discipleship in the congregation and Church. Such a call is extended to any brother or sister who carries a particular responsibility in the congregation or Province who, upon acceptance of the call, is then received as an Acolyte. This takes place in the presence of the assembled congregation by the Right Hand of Fellowship, given by the presiding pastor.

An Acolyte's selection should be made by the local congregation's board or boards and approved by the Provincial Board, and his/ her reception authorized by the Provincial Board. The Provincial Board has the right to authorize the reception of Acolytes for denominational service. He/she should be a person who exemplifies the teachings of Christ and who is respected by fellow members of the Church.

The duties may include assisting the pastor in pastoral duties, special supervision for specific areas of service within the local congregations, assisting in serving the elements in Holy Communion when an ordained minister is present to consecrate the elements and preside at the Sacrament.

Provincial Boards shall have the authority to appoint a qualified person as an Acolyte to serve as pastor of a specific congregation. Such appointments shall be for a period of one year. These can be renewed. When an ordained person is not available for the administration of the Sacraments, the Provincial Board may, after special instruction regarding the meaning and observance of the Sacraments.

#693.

**A MINISTER BEING DEPRIVED OF THE RIGHTS CONNECTED WITH ORDINATION**  
A minister deprived of the rights connected with his/her ordination, is deprived of the said rights, whether being a Deacon, a Presbyter, or a Bishop.

## PART V

### MISSION OUTREACH

#700. The Moravian Church still accepts the challenge and command of the Lord, "Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost". It does this confessing that only by continuing to bring the message of the Cross to other people will it continue to be a living Church.

#701. The Moravian Church is a living Church with a mission relevant to the everyday life of all mankind. Therefore the Church will, and must, meet the demands made upon it by society as a whole by ministering to the spiritual, social, physical and economic needs of humanity. This total ministry will express itself in the preaching of the Word, which may include the healing of the sick, the education of both the young and adults to fit them to face life in a competitive society and by social service to the needy in mind and body (see #150 and #151a, c, d, e).

#702. Opportunities for mission outreach are to be found within the borders of every Province. Therefore each has the responsibility of awakening its own congregations to this challenge.

#703. Through the years the Moravian Church has responded to calls for service in difficult places of the earth and still holds itself ready to follow the leading of the Lord into areas where the Gospel has never been preached or where other churches need support.

#704. If a call of the Lord is heard by any Province to carry the Gospel to people who do not belong to the race, nation or language group of the majority of its members, it shall be free to answer it with its own personnel and resources and shall decide upon the policies for the organisation and administration of the new churches in accordance with the Church Order of the Unity.

#705. The Moravian Church recognises the importance of cooperation with other Christian churches in joint action for mission. It also recognises the strengthening values of Christian service organisations, such as "The Theological Education Fund", "Bread for the World", "Church World Service", "Christian Literature Fund", "Agricultural Missions Inc.", "Christian Aid" and "Mission Aviation Fellowship".

#706. Every mission outreach should aim at the development of a local church as soon as possible by a vigorous programme of evangelism, leadership training, stewardship and Christian education.

#707. We expect to find in all sections of our Church those who are ready to answer the call to the Lord's service for any phase of work. We commission them in the name of the Lord and the Church, that is, at His command. They should be able to rely on the constant intercession, love and support of our congregations.

#708. Unity Synod 1988 acknowledged that throughout the Unity various mission boards, committees and other bodies for cooperative mission work have been developed, and stated:

- a) Every Province of the Unity should be a participant in mission at home and abroad.
- b) As far as possible Provinces should cooperate in this mission and seek appropriate instruments to make this possible. These may include existing mission boards, regional committees or other appropriate groups.
- c) Each mission body shall circulate to the Unity Provinces and to the Unity Board, information on mission development and needs in their respective areas.



Church Order  
of the Southern Province

2014

**The Moravian Covenant for Christian Living**  
(Principles by Which We Live and Bear Our Witness)

**The Ground of Our Witness**

1 We are called into a Christian fellowship by the Lord Jesus Christ, according to the eternal purpose of God the Father (Eph. 3:11) by the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:18-21) and as members of Christ's Body, the church, to serve all people by proclaiming the gospel and witnessing to our faith by word and deed.

2 The Triune God as revealed in the Holy Scripture of the Old and New Testaments is the only source of our life and salvation; and this Scripture is the sole standard of the doctrine and the faith of the Unitas Fratrum and therefore shapes its life.

3 With the universal Christian Church, we share our faith in the Triune God, who revealed Himself in the Lord Jesus Christ as the only Saviour of all people. We particularly declare His living presence and Lordship over the Church, joy in the benefits of His life, sufferings, death and resurrection and emphasize a close bond of fellowship with each other in His name. We believe that Christ is present with us in Word and Sacrament. We decline to determine as binding what the Scriptures have left undetermined, or to argue about mysteries impenetrable to human reason. In this regard, we hold to the principles: "In essentials, unity; in non-essentials, liberty; and in all things, charity."

4 We thankfully recognize the value of the historic creeds of the Christian Church in calling upon believers in every age to give an obedient and fearless testimony, recognizing Jesus Christ as Lord. A Moravian confession of faith is to be found in the Easter Dawn Liturgy.

**I. The Witness of the Christian Life**

5 We believe that as in baptism we have been united with Christ in His death and resurrection, so we have died to sin and should walk in newness of life (Rom. 6:1-11).

6 When seeking guidance we find that the simplest expression of Christian living is contained in the earliest of Christian confessions, "Jesus Christ is Lord." This implies that obedience is due Him as an absolute Ruler and Lord of our lives. Not only His teachings (e.g. Matt. 5-7), but even more, the example of His life (Phil. 2:5); (Eph. 4:20) provide an understanding of the obedience that He desires. Although the early Church, guided by the spirit of Jesus, did not develop a code covering all issues, it offered guidance, in various areas of Christian living (e.g. Col. 3:1-4, 6); (I Peter 2:11-3:12); (Eph. 4:1-6:20).

7 Living the Christian life depends not only on our own effort but upon God our Father, who in Jesus Christ accepts us as heirs of God (Gal. 4:4-7) and strengthens and sustains us (Phil. 4:13).

8 We realize that our Christian faith must continually be nourished if it is to remain living and vital. Therefore, we desire to grow in our Christian lives through family devotions, personal prayer and study, and the opportunities for spiritual development offered by the church.

## II. The Witness of a Living Church

### A. The Moravian Unity

#### 1. Recognition of Authority:

9 As members of the Moravian Church we will abide by the decisions made by the official boards of our congregation, and agree to be governed, both as individuals and as a congregation, by the enactments of the Unity Synod of the Moravian Church and of the Synods of the Province to which our congregation belongs.

#### 2. Stewardship:

10 We deem it a sacred responsibility and genuine opportunity to be faithful stewards of all God has entrusted to us: our time, our talents, and our financial resources. We view all of life as a sacred trust to be used wisely.

11 We will support, according to our ability, the financial needs of the local congregation, the District, the Province, and the Unity. We will consider the support of the benevolent causes of the Moravian Church, both at home and abroad as a privilege, an opportunity and a responsibility.

12 We will also recognize the support of worthy causes outside of the Church as part of our stewardship.

#### 3. Personal Relationships:

13 Since disciples of Jesus are to be known by the love they have to one another (John 13:35), we will cherish Christian love as of prime importance.

14 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.

15 We will endeavor to settle our differences with others in a Christian manner (Gal. 6:1), amicably, and with mediation, and if at all possible avoid resort to a court of law (Matt. 18:15-17).

#### 4. Worship and Sunday Observance

16 Remembering that worship is one of our proper responses to Almighty God, an experience designed for our benefit, and a part of our Christian witness, we and our children will faithfully attend the worship services of the Church.

17 We, therefore, will be careful to avoid unnecessary labor on Sunday and plan that the recreations in which we engage on that day do not interfere with our own attendance or that of others at divine worship.

#### 5. Holy Communion:

18 In celebration of this Sacrament we receive the renewed assurance of the forgiveness of our sins, and of our fellowship with Christ; unite with one another as members of His body; and rejoice in the hope of His return in glory. Therefore, we will commune faithfully and thus renew our pledge of allegiance to Him.

## **B. The Unity We Seek**

19 We will have fellowship, in all sincerity, with children of God in other Christian Churches, and will carefully avoid all disputes respecting opinions and ceremonies peculiar to one or another church. In this fellowship we will cooperate with other churches in the support of public charities or Christian enterprises, which have a just claim upon us as followers of the Lord Jesus Christ.

20 We realize that it is the Lord's will that the Church of Jesus Christ should give evidence of and seek unity in Him with zeal and love. We see how such unity has been promised us and laid upon us as a charge. We recognize that through the grace of Christ the different denominations have received many gifts and that the Church of Christ may be enriched by these many and varied contributions. It is our desire that we may learn from one another and rejoice together in the riches of the love of Christ and the manifold wisdom of God. We welcome every step that brings us nearer the goal of unity in Him.

## **III. The Witness of the Christian Home**

### **A. Marriage**

21 We regard it as a sacred obligation to hold to the ideal of Christian marriage as a lifelong commitment given by our Lord in His teaching. We consider it essential, therefore, that all persons contemplating marriage should receive premarital counseling and that our young people should be instructed, beginning in adolescence, in the meaning and obligation of Christian marriage. This instruction should be given through the church and home.

22 We regard Christian marriage as a lifelong covenant before God which requires the continuous loyalty of the man and the woman toward each other. Any breaking of the marriage bond is a result of sin and causes human suffering; therefore it is the duty of husband and wife to meet all frictions, offenses and disagreements with a humble, forgiving spirit that persistently works for reconciliation. If at any time the stability of the marriage is threatened, the couple is to seek the counsel of a pastor, of other spiritual leaders in the church, or of other professional Christian counselors as soon as possible before any other action is taken.

23 Following the example and teaching of our Lord, we acknowledge the responsibility to deal compassionately and redemptively with human frailty and sin in every area of life, including the failure of the marriage. As ambassadors of Christ we are called to be agents of reconciliation, we recognize that persons of sincere faith and with good counsel may still decide or be forced to divorce. We believe it our Christian responsibility to pray for, support and encourage those who have divorced, the children of the divorced and all who are wounded by divorce.

## **B. Family Life**

24 1. As parents, remembering that our children are the property of the Lord Jesus Christ (Acts. 20:28) (I Peter 1:19) we will bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord (Eph. 6:4) and take all possible care to preserve them from every evil influence. For this reason we will seek to approve ourselves as followers of the Lord Jesus Christ, setting an example for our children. We will give faithful attention to the spiritual development of our children, both in the home and in the church. We will endeavor to conduct regular family devotions.

## **IV. The Witness of a Christian Citizen**

### **A. Recognition of Civil Authority**

25 We will be subject to the civil authorities as the powers ordained of God, in accordance with the admonitions of Scripture (Rom. 13:1) (I Peter 2:13-14) and will in nowise evade the taxes and other obligations which are lawfully required of us (Rom. 13:7).

### **B. Responsibilities**

26 Considering it a special privilege to live in a democratic society, we will faithfully fulfill the responsibilities of our citizenship, among which are intelligent and well-informed voting, a willingness to assume public office, guiding the decisions of government by the expression of our opinions, and supporting good government by our personal efforts.

### **C. A Higher Loyalty**

27 Though giving our loyalty to the state of which we are citizens, we do recognize a higher loyalty to God and conscience. (Acts 5:29)

### **D. Peacemakers**

28 For the sake of the peace, which we have with God, we earnestly desire to live peaceably with all people and to seek the peace of the places where we dwell.

## **V. Our Witness in the World**

### **A. Love Toward All**

29 We will not hate, despise, slander or otherwise injure anyone. We will ever strive to manifest love towards all people, to treat them in a kind and friendly manner, and in our dealings with them to approve ourselves upright, honest, and conscientious, as becomes children of God. Together with the universal Christian Church, we have a concern for this world, opening our heart and hand to our neighbors with the message of the love of God, and being ever ready to minister of our substance to their necessities (Matt. 25:40).

### **B. Our Manner of Life**

30 We will at all times be ready cheerfully to witness to our faith (I Peter 3:15, 16) and if need be, to suffer reproach for Christ's sake (Luke 6:22, 23). Being aware that our witness is made both by what we do and what we avoid doing, we will endeavor to let our manner of life "be worthy of the gospel of Christ," (Phil. 1:27) "not being conformed to this world" (Rom. 12:2). But in our yearning for the redemption of the whole creation, we will seek to meet the needs of the world in self-giving love, and as true yokefellows of Jesus Christ,

willingly share in the fellowship of his sufferings, walking in his strength, by whom all things “are given us that pertain to life and godliness” (II Peter 1:3).

### **C. Temperance in All Things**

31 Remembering the admonition of Scripture to be temperate in all things (I Cor. 9:25), we shall endeavor to look upon our bodies as temples of God’s spirit (I Cor. 6:19). We must also remember to respect the welfare of others who may be affected by our actions (Rom. 14:20, 21). We are aware of the problems that can be caused by the intemperate use of such things as alcoholic beverages, food, tobacco, drugs, and other things. We consider it the responsibility of every Christian to decide most carefully how they can be used in good conscience. We regard intemperance in any area of living as being inconsistent with the Christian life.

### **D. Unity**

- 32 1. Christian: We recognize no distinction between those who are one in the Lord. We believe that God in Jesus Christ calls His people out of “every race, kindred and tongue,” pardons them beneath the Cross, and brings them into a living fellowship with Himself. We regard it as a commandment of our Lord to bear public witness to this and to demonstrate by word and deed that we are one in Christ.
- 33 2. Universal: Because we hold that all people are God’s creatures (Gen. 1:27) and that he has made of one blood all nations (Acts 17:26) we oppose any discrimination based on color, race, creed or land of origin and declare that we should treat everyone with love and respect.

### **C. Other Areas**

34 We realize that all areas of Christian life and conduct cannot be covered in this statement of principles by which we live and bear our witness, and we call attention, therefore, to the Christian’s responsibility to follow Christ as Lord of all areas of life.

## **VI. Discipline**

35 We make it a duty of the Board of Elders, which is charged with the spiritual welfare of the congregation, to see that this “Moravian Covenant For Christian Living” be adhered to and faithfully observed; and we will cooperate with the Board of Elders in its efforts to maintain the discipline of the congregation. As a redemptive community we will be much more concerned in aiding than censuring those who falter, being conscious of our own need for correction and forgiveness.

## **Constitution of the Moravian Church in America, Southern Province**

### **Section 1. Name and Title**

The name and title of this Province of the Unitas Fratrum shall be the "Moravian Church in America, Southern Province."

### **Section 2. The Government of the Unity**

The Unity Synod of the Moravian Church is supreme in all things assigned to it by the Constitution of the Unity. In all other affairs of the Unity in the Southern Province, the Government is vested in the Provincial Synod, and in the Boards elected and authorized by the Provincial Synod.

### **Section 3. The Provincial Synod**

The Provincial Synod has the supreme legislative power of the Province in all things not committed to the Unity Synod. It shall consist of elected delegates and official members; it shall determine the qualification of its own members; it shall prescribe what bodies shall be entitled to representation, and on what basis, and in what manner to be elected.

### **Section 4. Duties and Functions of the Provincial Synod**

The Provincial Synod shall have power:

1. to carry out the principles of the Moravian Church (Unitas Fratrum) laid down by the Unity Synod for constitution, doctrine, worship and congregational life;
2. to examine and oversee the spiritual and temporal affairs of the Province and its congregations;
3. to legislate in regard to constitution, worship and congregational life for the Province;
4. to provide the vision, direction and expectations for Provincial mission and ministry and to review the results thereof;
5. to elect the Provincial Elders' Conference which shall constitute the administrative board of the Province and which shall be responsible to the Synod for the management of the affairs committed to it;
6. to elect representatives to inter-provincial agencies, boards and such other entities as it deems appropriate;
7. to elect Bishops;
8. to elect Delegates to Unity Synod;
9. to act as the final court of appeal to hear and redress grievances; and,
10. to perform such other acts as shall be designated to it by the Constitution and such other acts as shall be lawful under its Articles of Incorporation.

### **Section 5. Provincial Synods**

1. The stated Provincial Synods of the Moravian Church in America, Southern Province, shall meet every four years.
2. Special Synods may be called in the interval by the Provincial Elders' Conference or upon a written request of 300 or more communicant members.

3. At least sixty days prior to the opening date of each stated Synod, the Provincial Elders' Conference shall appoint its chairperson, vice-chairperson, secretary, and parliamentarian.
4. At least sixty days prior to the opening date of each stated Synod, the Provincial Elders' Conference shall appoint a Committee on Government, and a Nominations Committee, which shall present to Synod nominations for all boards to be elected by Synod unless otherwise provided for. After presentation of the Nominating Committee's report, additional nominations may be made from the floor.
5. Each Provincial Board shall prepare a written report of its work during the inter-synodal period to be submitted to the Provincial Elders' Conference at least thirty days prior to the date of Synod. A copy of those reports shall be distributed at least two weeks in advance of the opening of Synod to all official delegates.
6. Only the report of the Provincial Elders' Conference may be read in full during the meeting of Synod.
7. The Provincial Elders' Conference shall appoint synodal committees as may be needed. Each committee shall study the state of the church in the field assigned to it, pass upon resolutions of Synod referred to it, and render a report to Synod.

### **Section 6. Conferences**

Whenever in the judgment of the Provincial Elders' Conference a non-legislative Church Conference upon any subject is desirable, such Conference shall be called by the Provincial Elders' Conference, which shall fix the ratio of representation and time and place of meetings

### **Section 7. Members of Provincial Synods**

The following shall be members of the Provincial Synods, provided however, that in the event one or more of the entities below shall cease to exist, then such entity shall cease to have a representative at Provincial Synods:

1. Delegates from the congregations in the Province.
2. Members of the existing Provincial Elders' Conference.
3. The Chair of the Provincial Services Support Board.
4. The Provincial Treasurer.
5. All Bishops residing in the Southern Province.
6. All ordained ministers serving under call in the Southern Province and all ordained ministers or Provincial Acolytes, who are in full charge of organized congregations in the Southern Province.
7. One representative of Salem Academy and College.
8. The President of the Provincial Women's Board.
9. The Chair of the Board of Cooperative Ministries.
10. The Executive Director of the Board of Cooperative Ministries.
11. The Executive Director of the Bd. of World Mission of the Moravian Church in America.
12. One representative of the Moravian Home (Salem towne).
13. All retired ordained ministers residing in the Southern Province or retired from the Southern Province.
14. The Archivist of the Moravian Church in America, Southern Province.
15. The President of the Mission Society of the Moravian Church, South, Inc.



16. All certified Moravian full-time professional Church Educators currently employed by congregations or provincial boards and agencies in the Southern Province.
17. The Assistant to the President of the Provincial Elders' Conference who is a member of the Moravian Church.

### **Section 8. Representation at Synod**

1. Every regularly organized congregation shall be entitled to one delegate for every one hundred twenty-five (125) adult communicant members or major fraction thereof, based on the membership list at the close of the last statistical year as determined by the Provincial Elders' Conference; provided, however, every regularly organized congregation shall be entitled to at least one delegate. Communicant members are those described in the Synod Approved Recommendations of Rules and Regulations (in an Appendix of this Book of Order). Such entitlement shall, however, be subject to the fulfillment of the following requirements:
  - a. The payment of the pastor's salary, such salary to be agreed upon by the Board of Trustees or the Church Board of the Congregation and the Provincial Elders' Conference.
  - b. The payment of its current expenses.
  - c. The payment annually of all contributions required by Synod as described in the Constitution.

Congregations that do not meet these requirements shall have their delegate(s) seated at Synod with privilege of the floor and participation in committees but without vote. If the Provincial Elders' Conference deems there are justifiable reasons for waiving the prohibition to voting for a particular congregation, they may recommend to each Synod that such congregation's delegate(s) have voting privileges.

2. All members of a congregation who are entitled to vote in elections having reference to the affairs of their own congregations shall have the privilege of voting for delegates. A majority of the votes cast is necessary to decide the election, which is to be held by ballot.
3. In the election of delegates where nominees are presented at a Congregation Council, at least 20% of these official nominees shall be members of the official Board or Boards.
4. The delegates must be full communicant members.
5. Alternates are to be elected according to the same rule that applies to delegates.
6. The delegates and alternates must be furnished with the necessary credentials.

### **Section 9. Elections and Appointments**

1. Members of the Provincial Elders' Conference and of other boards shall be elected at stated Synods.
2. Resolutions calling for the election of a bishop or bishops shall be referred to the appropriate Synod committee dealing with the ministry. In the event no such resolution is presented, the appropriate committee may recommend to Synod the election of a bishop or bishops.
3. A majority vote of two-thirds of the votes cast shall be necessary for the election of bishops (by ballot without nomination) and the President of the Provincial Elders' Conference (by ballot without nomination). A majority vote of two-thirds of the votes

cast shall be necessary for the election of each clergy and lay member of the Provincial Elders' Conference (by ballot with nomination).

4. All other elections shall be by a majority of the votes cast.
5. Members of the Provincial Elders' Conference and the various boards elected by synod, shall serve for one term of four years after which they may be eligible for re-election to a second term of four years, subject to a reasonable rotation of membership established by the board. After serving two consecutive full terms, they may be eligible again for election after an interval of four years.
6. Any board may designate among the members it is authorized to appoint a position or positions to which members may be appointed for less than a four-year term, provided no such member serves more than eight consecutive years.
7. In the event of a vacancy on a board, or a member fails to be re-appointed or re-elected, the one appointed or elected to fill the vacancy shall serve the unexpired portion of the term of the person being replaced. The new member's eligibility to a succeeding four-year term shall be determined by the remaining eligibility of the person being replaced. Members who serve less than four years of the second term of the person replaced shall be eligible for election or appointment to two terms in their own right.
8. Vacancies occurring on boards to which synod elects members shall be filled as follows:
  - a. Vacancies occurring on interprovincial and interdenominational boards of members elected by the Synod of the Southern Province shall be filled by the Provincial Elders' Conference.
  - b. Vacancies occurring among the members of any board other than specified in Paragraph 7 above shall be filled by the remaining members of the elected board.
  - c. A member of any board may be removed for cause, such as failure to attend meetings or enter into the work of the board. Such removal shall be by 2/3 vote of the affected board.
9. In the event the office of the President of the Provincial Elders' Conference becomes vacant between Synods, the Conference may appoint a person to bring the Conference to full membership. The Conference may then choose one of its members President. If a member of the conference other than the new appointee becomes its president, the new appointee's eligibility for election to a succeeding four-year term shall be determined by the remaining eligibility of the person elected president. The order of rotation shall be preserved in the terms of the members of the Conference other than that of president.
10. Individual boards and agencies of the Province as constituted as of the date of synod are authorized to determine the best date on which their newly elected members shall take office. The date selected shall not be later than the first day of the second month following their election.

#### **Section 10. Provincial Elders' Conference**

1. The Provincial Elders' Conference shall provide priority-based leadership of all church ministries and administer the polity of the province.
2. The Provincial Elders' Conference shall consist of seven persons to be elected by Synod: a President who may be a layperson or clergy, three (3) laypersons and three (3) clergy.
3. The Synod shall elect the President of the Conference, after which the remaining six (6) members shall be chosen in accordance with the Constitution.

4. The term of office of the President of the Provincial Elders' Conference shall be from the first day of the second month following the adjournment of Synod until a successor is seated. All other members shall take office upon election. The outgoing President of the Provincial Elders' Conference shall be continued on salary and housing allowance for a period of two months after the end of Synod to permit an orderly transfer of authority to the incoming President.
5. It shall be the duty of the Provincial Elders' Conference to:
  - a. See that the enactments of Synod are carried out, including implementation of strategic directives of Synod and setting plans and priorities for the Board of Cooperative Ministries.
  - b. Oversee candidacy and clergy development.
  - c. Approve ordination of Deacons and consecration of Presbyters.
  - d. Administer the call process and appointment procedures including calling and superintending the ministers of the Province.
  - e. Set and monitor guidelines for compensation and benefits of clergy.
  - f. Supervise the congregations of the Province, encouraging them in their work and service and hold Quadrennial Reviews with each congregation.
  - g. Determine the formation and structure of the Regional Conferences of Churches.
  - h. Provide Conflict Management support as needed.
  - i. Make necessary appointments to boards, commissions, and task forces.
  - j. Supervise and manage the day-to-day operations of the Province.
  - k. Oversee Board of Cooperative Ministries (BCM), and Provincial Support Services Board (PSSB), and the Archives, including the appointment of professional staff.
  - l. Oversee Unity and ecumenical relationships.
  - m. Oversee planning and preparation for Synod, including: fixing the date and place of the meeting of Synod, calling special Synods, acting as the standing committee of credentials at all Synods, and appointing the officers, committees and committee chairpersons prior to the convening of Synod.
  - n. Oversee new church development and pass upon the admission of new congregations.
  - o. Approve the Provincial Budget.
  - p. Allocate available financial resources of the province based on Synod priorities.
  - q. Act on requests from congregations for relief from provincial share allocations.
  - r. Act on requests from congregations to obtain loans for buildings, property, renovations and equipment.
  - s. Upon review by the Provincial Support Services Board, act on requests for any fund raising solicitation of the congregations or their members by other congregations, boards, agencies or individuals.
  - t. Exercise joint responsibility, with the Provincial Elders' Conference of the Moravian Church in America, Northern Province, as members of the corporation of the Moravian Ministries Foundation in America.
  - u. Manage, report and communicate progress and successes from Synod directives.
  - v. Communicate with the Bishops' Conference.

6. It shall be the duty of the President of the Provincial Elders' Conference:
  - a. To preside at meetings of the Conference and to carry out the directives of the Conference.
  - b. To be knowledgeable about the talents and capabilities of the ministers and students preparing for the ministry in order to recommend to the Conference the best use of ministerial personnel.
  - c. To be knowledgeable about the needs and opportunities for growth and service of the congregations, and to assist them in achieving maximum results.
  - d. To represent the province or to provide for representation at the meeting of ecumenical bodies of which the province is a member.
  - e. To represent the province on the Unity Board.
  - f. To appoint provincial committees as needed with the approval of the Conference.
  - g. To lead the Conference in establishing and achieving its goals and priorities.

### **Section 11. Board of Cooperative Ministries**

1. The Board of Cooperative Ministries shall provide support to congregations and Regional Conferences of Churches groupings to develop and maintain a high level of health and growth.
2. The Board of Cooperative Ministries shall be composed of one (1) member appointed by each Regional Conference of Churches, an equal number of members appointed by the Provincial Elders' Conference, and the President of the Provincial Elders' Conference, ex officio. The Chair of the Board shall be elected from among the appointed members.
3. It shall be the duty of the Board of Cooperative Ministries to:
  - a. Oversee the development and implementation of specific plans set by the PEC for ministry and direction.
  - b. Recommend to the PEC staffing needs for the Board of Cooperative Ministries, including staffing structure, as well as professional staff for call and appointment.
  - c. Recommend to the PEC special commissions, committees and task forces (including recommendations for appointment).
  - d. Measure and report to the PEC effectiveness and results of plan implementation and action.
  - e. Promote, facilitate and assist as needed in the identification and use of gifts of ministry at the congregational level.
  - f. To maintain a high level of effectiveness of the staff charged with assisting congregations, RCC groups, and leaders in general within the province seeking to foster congregation health and growth.

### **Section 12. Provincial Support Services**

1. The Provincial Support Services shall provide ancillary services (Financial, Human Resources, Archival, and Risk Management) to all organizational levels of the province.
2. The Provincial Support Services Board shall be composed of two (2) members of the Board of Cooperative Ministries, three (3) at-large appointments by the Provincial Elders' Conference, one of which shall be an ordained pastor serving a congregation of the Southern Province, the President of the Provincial Elders' Conference, ex officio, and one (1) additional members of the Provincial Elders' Conference.
3. The Board shall elect one of its members as Chair.

4. It shall be the duty of the Provincial Support Services Board to:
  - a. Oversee the coordination of support for ancillary services to all organizational levels of the Province.
  - b. Recommend to the PEC staffing needs for the Provincial Support Services Board, including staffing structure, as well as professional staff for call and appointment.
  - c. Provide analytical support for measuring results.
  - d. Monitor the financial health for the Province providing information to the Provincial Elders' Conference and the Board of Cooperative Ministries.
  - e. Assess financial health of churches and cooperative ministries.
  - f. Evaluate and recommend action on financial forgiveness requests from churches.
  - g. Review requests from congregations to obtain loans for buildings, property, renovations, and equipment and make recommendations to the Provincial Elders' Conference.
  - h. Review requests for any fund raising solicitation of the congregations or their members by other congregations, boards, agencies or individuals, and make recommendations to the Provincial Elders' Conference.
  - i. Assist the Provincial Elders' Conference in the preparation of the provincial budget and allocation of financial resources to cooperative ministries based on realistic church share expectations.
  - j. Monitor compliance and address issues regarding human resources, financial audits, operating risks and legal risk.
  - k. Provide oversight to the benefit plans.
  - l. Provide and maintain a Provincial hazard insurance group policy for all church properties.
5. The Board shall have oversight of the following:
  - a. Treasurer's Office
    - i. The Treasurer's Office shall provide financial services and support to all organizational levels of the Province.
    - ii. It shall be the duty of the Treasurer's Office to:
      1. Provide financial services to provincial entities of the Moravian Church, Southern Province.
      2. Be a resource for churches for all accounting matters.
      3. Assist churches in the preparation of requests for financial forgiveness.
      4. Assist the Provincial Support Services Board as needed in tracking support for measuring results of provincial goals.
      5. Support the financial monitoring request from the Provincial Support Services Board for the Moravian Church, Southern Province.
      6. Serve as liaison for the Moravian Church, Southern Province, with contract services.
  - b. Human Resources
    - i. Human Resources shall provide human resource services and support to all organizational levels of the province.
    - ii. It shall be the duty of Human Resources to:

1. Ensure compliance with all human resource regulatory requirements.
2. Be a resource for churches and the Province for all human resource matters.

### **Section 13. Congregations**

1. A congregation is a Christian community in which individuals can respond to the love of God in Jesus Christ by growing in their love of God, in their discipleship as followers of Jesus Christ, and in their love, and service toward others.
2. It shall be the duty of a congregation to:
  - a. Develop within its life the characteristics of a healthy congregation, implement the strategies determined by Synod, and meet the resulting goals and objectives developed by the PEC.
  - b. Actively participate with other Moravians provincially and in the Regional Conferences of Churches.
  - c. Pastors and representatives to the Regional Conference of Churches have the responsibility of fostering the active involvement of their members in the life of the Province and of the Regional Conference.
  - d. Actively serve in the community and with the wider church.
  - e. Seek to fulfill its purpose, role and responsibilities by supporting the efforts of pastors and lay leaders.
  - f. Members of congregations are called to participate actively in opportunities for worship, study and service in the congregation, region and Province supporting the ministry of the church through providing time, talent and treasure.

### **Section 14. Provincial Contributions**

1. Each congregation's share of the Provincial Budget shall be determined by a methodology set forth in a Synod-approved policy and implemented by the Provincial Support Services Board at the direction of the Provincial Elders' Conference.
2. Every congregation is required to contribute through its annual budget an amount agreed upon between the congregation and the Provincial Elders' Conference to the following causes:
  - a. World Missions, to be administered by the Board of World Mission of the Moravian Church in America.
  - b. The education of candidates for the ministry in the Moravian College and Theological Seminary.
  - c. Provincial Self-Support, to cover the general administrative expenses of the province.
  - d. The Clergy Pension Fund of the Southern Province of the Moravian Church.
  - e. Laurel Ridge Moravian Camp and Conference Center.
  - f. The Moravian.
  - g. Salem Academy and College for the Department of Religion.
  - h. Unity and Inter-Denominational Causes.
  - i. Archives.
  - j. Moravian Music Foundation.
  - k. Music Festival and Commission on Music and Worship.

1. Retiree's Medical Insurance Plan.
- m. Provincial Elders' Conference, Board of Cooperative Ministries, Provincial Support Services, Regional Conferences of Churches, Congregations and such other ministry as the Provincial Elders' Conference shall from time to time determine.
3. Every congregation is requested to contribute through its annual budget an amount agreed upon between the congregation and the Provincial Elders' Conference to the National Council of Churches and World Council of Churches.
4. The Provincial Elders' Conference shall determine those congregations that are delinquent at the end of each fiscal year.
5. In any case where a church board takes exception to the amount of contribution or contributions requested of it by the PEC, it shall be the duty of the Church Board, prior to the adoption of its budget, to request consultation with the PEC for the express purpose of reaching an agreement on the amount of the contribution.

### **Section 15. Congregation Finances**

1. The Board of Trustees or Church Board of each congregation shall prepare prior to the beginning of each calendar year, a budget of income and expenses for the guidance of the financial affairs of the congregation. A copy of this budget shall be filed with the Treasurer of the Province on or before December 15 preceding the beginning of such year.
2. The Board shall appoint a committee of auditors from the membership of the congregation or an auditor outside the membership to examine in detail the accounts of the Treasurer at the end of each calendar year and make a report to the Board.
3. At the close of each calendar year, the Treasurer of the congregation shall submit a full report of all financial transactions to the Church membership.
4. A copy of the annual report of the Treasurer of the congregation and a Certificate of the Audit shall be filed with the Treasurer of the Province by May 15 following the close of each year.
5. In the event the Budget or Financial Report or Audit Certificate is not filed by the appointed date, the Provincial PEC shall have the authority to require the Chairperson of the Joint Board of the Church to call a meeting of the Joint Board, or if necessary, a Church Council to effect compliance immediately.
6. All church treasurers or other financial officers of congregations shall be covered by a position-type fidelity bond, with limits recommended by the Provincial Support Services Board, the cost of which shall be borne by the individual congregations.
7. Each congregation shall maintain broad hazard insurance coverage for its properties, either through participation in a Provincial group policy or through a separate policy secured by the congregation and approved by the Provincial Support Services Board.
8. A self-supporting congregation is one that provides, either from the contributions of its membership and adherents or from the income of its own funds, without any fixed or regular aid from provincial funds, an adequate salary for its pastor and the means for the defrayal of all other expenses of its church establishment, besides meeting its obligations to the regular causes of the church.

## **Section 16. Fellowships**

Fellowships may be organized by Moravians or former Moravians (communicant members of existing Moravian or other Christian churches) in places where no Moravian Church exists to provide spiritual enrichment for their members and to offer opportunities to enjoy practices unique to the Moravian experience. Fellowships follow guidelines established by the Provincial Elders' Conference and are not required to grow into and become established congregations.

## **Section 17. Regional Conferences of Churches**

1. The Regional Conferences of Churches shall enable communication, build unity and expand community throughout the Moravian Church, Southern Province in order to contribute to the growth of healthy congregations.
2. It shall be the duty of Regional Conferences of Churches to:
  - a. Facilitate better communication within the Province and among congregations.
  - b. Serve as a resource for input to the BCM on local congregation's needs and perspectives in order to enable the BCM to provide practical and professional help.
  - c. Promote ownership, interaction and participation in shared ministries as defined by Synod priorities and direction.
  - d. Promote sharing of strengths, gifts, assets and best practices of each congregation.
  - e. Identify and facilitate connection for initiatives arising across the Conference's churches. Identify and recommend candidates for provincial appointments and assist in their recruitment.

## **Section 18. Florida District**

1. For the purposes of cooperation and communication the Moravian Churches and Fellowships in Florida are designated as the Florida District of the Moravian Church, Southern Province, to be administered under by laws approved by the Provincial Elders' Conference.
2. The Florida District Board shall be directly responsible to the Provincial Elders' Conference and take no action inconsistent with its policies or the enactments of Provincial Synods.

## **Section 19. Board of Trustees of Salem Academy and College**

1. The Board of Trustees of Salem Academy and College shall consist of thirty members, of which five members shall be elected by the Provincial Synod of the Southern Province and five members shall be appointed by the Provincial Elders' Conference of the Southern Province in consultation with the Salem Academy and College Board of Trustees.
2. The five trustees elected by the Provincial Synod shall be elected for terms of four years each. The terms of other members of the Board of Trustees, including those appointed by the Provincial Elders' Conference, shall be rotated in such a manner as to result in, as much as possible, an equal number of expiring terms each year.
3. In order to insure that the ongoing needs of Salem Academy and College and its Board of Trustees are addressed, the nominees to the Salem Academy and College Board of Trustees presented to each Synod by the Synod Committee on Nominations shall be reviewed and approved prior to Synod by the Salem Academy and College Board of



Trustees. This shall in no way preclude the possibility of additional nominations from the floor of Synod.

4. It shall be the duty of the Board of Trustees to adopt by-laws, elect officers, and generally to direct the business and affairs of the Institution.
5. It shall be the duty of the Board of Trustees to submit to each stated Synod of the province, through its representative, a report on the general condition of the Institution.
6. Articles of Incorporation for Salem Academy and College are on file in the office of the Provincial Elders' Conference.

#### **Section 20. Board of World Mission of the Moravian Church**

1. The Synod of the Southern Province shall elect two directors of the Board of World Mission of the Moravian Church. The Provincial Elders' Conference shall appoint one of its members as a director of the Board of World Mission of the Moravian Church. The Board of Directors of the Mission Society of the Moravian Church, South, Inc. shall appoint one of its members as a director of the Board of World Mission of the Moravian Church.
2. The Board of World Mission of the Moravian Church administers the mission work of the two provinces of the Moravian Church in America. It is incorporated under the laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and operates under its own Constitution and By-Laws approved by the Synods of the Northern and Southern Provinces.
3. Articles of Incorporation for the Board of World Mission are on file in the office of the Provincial Elders' Conference.

#### **Section 21. The Board of Directors of the Mission Society of the Moravian Church, South, Inc.**

1. The Board of Directors of the Mission Society of the Moravian Church, South, Inc., shall be composed of the two elected directors of the Board of World Mission of the Moravian Church in America and twelve directors elected by the Synod from among the membership of the Society.
2. The Mission Society of the Moravian Church, South, Inc., is incorporated under the laws of the State of North Carolina. As the auxiliary provincial mission society it is responsible for the promotion in the Southern Province of interest in and support of foreign missions. It shall administer the invested funds entrusted to its control, and the surplus of its income shall be turned over to the Board of World Mission of the Moravian Church in America.
3. The Charter of the Mission Society of the Moravian Church, South is on file in the office of the Provincial Elders' Conference.

#### **Section 22. The Provincial Women's Board**

1. The Provincial Women's Board shall consist of ten members elected by Synod.
2. The Provincial Women's Board shall have the right to elect for a term of four years subject to re-election for a second term of four years, six persons to serve on the Board with all the rights and privileges enjoyed by members elected by Synod, provided the rules governing rotation in office as given in this Constitution are followed.

3. The seventeenth member of the board will be a female clergy member appointed by the board to serve a two-year term with the option to be re-appointed for another two-year term.
4. It shall be the duty of this Board:
  - a. To promote the acquaintance and fellowship of the women of the Province and seek to encourage their growth in Christian character and service.
  - b. To formulate and present a program for the united effort of the Women's Fellowships of the congregations and to enlist their cooperation in carrying it out.
  - c. To lend its assistance to the Provincial Elders' Conference or other boards of the province, whenever called upon, towards the accomplishment of the work assigned to them.
  - d. To further the cause of Christ and the Kingdom among the women of our Southern Province.
5. This Board shall render a report to each stated Synod.
6. The Provincial Women's Board shall appoint four representatives to serve on the Inter-Provincial Women's Board of the Moravian Church in America, which Board is hereby recognized as such, and to which the Northern Provincial Women's Board sends an equal number of representatives. The functions of the Inter-Provincial Board are stated in its own Rules and Regulations, which have been ratified by both the Northern and Southern Provincial Women's Boards.

**Section 23. The Board of Trustees of Moravian Theological Seminary**

1. The Synod of the Southern Province shall elect two members of the Board of Trustees of Moravian Theological Seminary for a term of four years, subject to re-election for a second term of four years.
2. Any vacancy occurring among the two members shall be filled by the Provincial Elders' Conference until the next stated Synod.

**Section 24. The Board of Directors of Salemtowne (Moravian Home, Incorporated)**

1. The Board of Directors of Salemtowne shall be composed of no more than eighteen members, of whom four members shall be elected by the Provincial Synod of the Southern Province, and six members shall be appointed by the Provincial Elders' Conference.
2. The four directors elected by the Provincial Synod and the six appointed by the Provincial Elders' Conference, shall serve for terms of four years each. All other members shall be selected by the Board of Directors to serve four-year terms and shall be rotated in such a manner as to result in, as much as possible, an equal number of expiring terms each year.
3. The Board shall elect its own Chairman and other officers.
4. Salemtowne is incorporated under the laws of the State of North Carolina as a non-profit corporation for the purpose of erecting, maintaining, and operating a continuing care retirement community.
5. The Board of Directors shall appoint a President who shall be responsible for the care of the residents and for the administration of the retirement community in all its departments. If the President is an ordained minister of the Moravian Church, he/she shall serve under call of the Provincial Elders' Conference.

6. The Board of Directors shall submit to each stated synod a report of its operations and financial condition.
7. The Articles of Incorporation for the Moravian Home, Incorporated (dba Salemtowne) are on file in the office of the Provincial Elders' Conference.

### **Section 25. Other Boards and Commissions**

The following entities, while not separately incorporated, determine their own By Laws and operate under the oversight of a Board with members elected by the Provincial Synod, or under a Board the members of which are appointed by a Board elected by the Provincial Synod:

1. The Archives Commission, overseen by the Provincial Elders' Conference. The Archives are jointly owned, and funded in equal shares by the Moravian Church in America, Southern Province, and Salem Congregation.
2. The Board of Directors of Laurel Ridge Moravian Camp and Conference Center, overseen by the Provincial Elders' Conference.
3. The Sunnyside Ministry Program Board, overseen by the Board of Cooperative Ministries.

### **Section 26. Amendments**

Any proposed changes in this Constitution shall be submitted to a Provincial Synod, and then referred to the Committee on Government, and when reported back by the said committee, may be adopted by a majority of two-thirds of the votes cast by Synod.

## **Church Life in the Southern Province**

Note: For a full understanding of the topics in "Church Life in the Southern Province", see also the corresponding chapters in "Church Life in the Unitas Fratrum", which provide a mutually-agreed statement of our world-wide church.

### **CHAPTER 1 Congregational Life**

#### **A. Congregations and Membership**

The congregations of the Southern Province are very different in their outward form, and exist in different contexts. Each of these types has its own value for the stability and extension of our church. The establishment of new congregations of every kind needs the sanction of the Provincial Elders' Conference.

The main object of the different groups is the same, whatever form of constitution the several congregations may adopt. The essential features are always the care of the souls, church discipline, and the rules and regulations that serve for the furthering of godly life and conduct. Although the rules and regulations should be adapted to the various circumstances in which the congregations of the Province are placed, any and all changes or amendments must be approved by the Provincial Elders' Conference. Synod-approved suggested rules and regulations are included in an appendix to this Book of Order.

#### **B. Membership in the Moravian Church, Southern Province**

A member of the Moravian Church is such by grace through faith. This is a living personal faith, deeply felt, to which public witness is made and fruitfulness in daily life is the result. A person is a member of the Southern Province of the Moravian Church by virtue of his or her membership in a congregation of the Province.

Opportunities for members of the Moravian Church to bear public witness to their faith in God and in Jesus Christ as Lord are found in the services of Baptism and Confirmation and Affirmation of Baptism in the Moravian Book of Worship.

The Moravian Church recognizes the validity of Baptism and Confirmation in other Christian churches, and demonstrates that recognition by receiving such persons by letter of transfer or by proof of baptism or confirmation.

In the fellowship of the church, members are called upon to witness faithfully to their dedication to Christ as Lord and Savior by:

1. Attending the public services of congregational worship.
2. Participating in the Sacrament of Holy Communion.
3. Responding to opportunities to grow in faith, love and hope as disciples of Jesus Christ.
4. Contributing as the Lord prospers them to the work of the congregation of which they are a member.
5. Supporting the work of the Moravian Church as a whole in a way that advances the mission and service of Christ to the world.

6. Responding positively to opportunities both inside and outside the church to use abilities and time in the service of others.

Membership in the Moravian Church is founded in the Biblical affirmation, "The one who believes and is baptized will be saved." (Mark 16:16) True faith admits any and all persons, not just to membership in the Moravian Church, but to membership in Christ's Body, the Universal Christian Church. Membership in Christ's Body is a gift of grace. "For by grace you have been saved through faith; and this is not your own doing, it is the gift of God" (Eph. 2:8). This is a gift that no other human being or earthly institution can take away. Only the members themselves can forfeit this membership in the Universal Christian Church.

The Moravian Church accepts as a task of great importance the nurture of the life of each member so that no one may be lost. (See the section on "Church Discipline") No member of the Moravian Church in the Southern Province may be dismissed from membership in the local congregation without a sincere effort to notify the member of the grounds upon which determination has been made that the member has excluded himself or herself from such membership.

### **C. Christian Education**

The pastors and boards of the congregations of the Southern Province are urged to place the program of Christian Education in its proper setting in the total life of the church. The various schools of the congregation are not something apart from "the church." They are instruments through which the congregation fulfills its teaching ministry. In the Southern Province the program of Christian Education is the responsibility of the Church Board or the Board of Elders. It is because of the fact that Christian Education is the responsibility of the entire Church that many congregations have found it helpful to organize a board or committee of Christian Education to supervise this phase of congregational life.

The local congregations of the Southern Province fulfill their responsibility in the field of Christian education in many ways. This includes the work and programs provided by organizations such as the Sunday Church School; Vacation Bible School; Youth, Women's, and Men's Fellowships; graded choirs and bands; family ministries; Senior Friends; membership instruction classes; leadership training; summer camp and conferences; and special emphases on spiritual life, mission, and social issues.

An instruction program including doctrine, church history, and customs and practices of the Moravian Church shall be provided for Moravian and non-Moravian transfers, and required for candidates for adult baptism.

Congregations should be encouraged to use the educational resources recommended to them by the Board of Cooperative Ministries as well as by other provincial or interprovincial organizations.

### **D. Care of the Sick and Needy**

The care of the sick should not be left to depend entirely on the voluntary impulse of the individual member, but, wherever possible, some definite provision for organized effort in this direction should be made by every congregation.

There should be some definite provision made in every congregation for the relief of the poor. For this purpose funds for the relief of the poor shall be established.

### **E. Required Records**

The Pastor of every congregation is responsible for seeing that the following records are kept:

The Register, on the form provided by the Provincial Elders Conference office, containing an accurate record of all baptisms, confirmations, receptions, marriages, burials, dismissals etc.

The catalog, containing the names and vital information of the entire membership. This may be on cards or in electronic format.

Attendance records of regular and special services on forms provided by the Provincial Elders Conference office.

The pastor will also see that the most important events in the life of the congregation are recorded in a diary, newsletters, or other suitable means, and that minutes are kept by the Church Board(s), Church Council, and other organizations of the congregation.

### **F. Deposit of Records in the Provincial Archives**

#### **1. Provincial and Interprovincial Records**

The President of the Provincial Elders' Conference will see that minutes and other records of Provincial Synods and Conferences are deposited in the Provincial Archives soon after adjournment.

Heads of Provincial Boards and Agencies, Heads of Inter-Provincial Boards and Agencies headquartered in the Southern Province, and the Secretary of each Regional Council of Churches will see that their minutes and other items of historical interest are deposited in the Provincial Archives on a regular basis. Official Minutes and Correspondence of the past 70 years may be consulted only by written permission of the Chair of the relevant board or agency.

#### **2. Congregational Records**

The Pastor, with the assistance of the Congregational Archivist, will see that the following materials are deposited in the Provincial Archives in a timely manner. These materials are available for use in the Archives immediately, with the exception of Board Minutes and Correspondence of the past 70 years, which may be consulted only by written permission of the Chair of the relevant board.

1. Items which should come to the Archives at the end of the year:
  - a. Elders and Trustees (or Church Board) minutes

- b. Joint Board minutes
  - c. Congregation Council minutes
  - d. Year-end reports given out at Congregation Council
  - e. Year-end financial report (if not included in the previous item)
  - f. Attendance records
  - g. Minutes and year-end reports of other committees, such as Stewardship or Christian Education
2. Items which should come to the Archives as they are produced (or may be placed in a folder for the Archives and deposited each year):
- a. Directories of members
  - b. Memoirs
  - c. Histories of the Congregation and organizations within it
  - d. Special programs and printed materials for special occasions ,anniversaries, dedications, projects, etc.
  - e. Newsletters
  - f. Photographs (with locations, persons, and dates identified on the back)
3. Items which should come to the Archives when they are completed or filled up and are no longer needed for regular consultation:
- a. Church Registers
  - b. Congregation Diaries (if maintained)
  - c. Building Plans
  - d. Any other material that would be of value to future generations.

Hard copies of all the above are to be provided to the Archives. In addition, electronic forms may be submitted along with the hard copies.

#### **D. Compliance with the Above**

The Provincial Archivist will contact pastors of congregations and the heads of Provincial and Inter-Provincial Boards or Agencies and Regional Conferences of Churches which have not sent in the required records for a number of years, in order to arrange for their orderly deposit in the Archives. If these records are not forthcoming within a time agreed upon, the Provincial Archivist will inform the Provincial Elders Conference, which has authority to enforce these regulations in such manner as it determines.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **Church Discipline**

"As a redemptive community we will be much more concerned in aiding than censuring those who falter, being conscious of our own need for correction and forgiveness." (from the Moravian Covenant for Christian Living, paragraph 34).

The following is adapted from the Church Order of the Unitas Fratrum, paragraph #103)

The new life of the congregation is nourished by the cure and care of souls and the exercise of congregation discipline.

Though the cure and care of souls is the special task of ministers and their fellow-labourers, every member who has experienced the saving love of the Redeemer is called to undertake this service.

In Church discipline the sins and errors of the individual are considered and borne as the burden of the whole congregation. The congregation stands beside the erring one under the judgement of the Cross, ever mindful of its own need of forgiveness and brings the fault before the only One Who can redeem us from our guilt.

Church discipline is exercised in the confident faith that it is not the Lord's will that a single member should be lost, nor that the clear witness of the congregation should be hindered. This discipline is especially necessary when by word or deed the Gospel is falsified and the Lord denied, Therefore the main object of church discipline is the prevention of offences and not the punishment of the individual.

In the exercise of corrective discipline we find guidance in Scripture, and particularly Matthew 18:15-22. The following aspects are recognized:

1. Admonition by the minister, either alone or in fellowship with other members (elders etc.) in private, in a spirit of love;
2. Further admonition with temporary suspension from the fellowship of the congregation as it is visibly expressed in certain privileges;
3. Exclusion from the membership of the congregation;
4. Persons who are excluded shall be welcomed back into the membership of the congregation after a profession of repentance on their part, and with the approval of the Board of Elders (or Church Board.)

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **The Family**

Please see Chapter 3 in "Church Life in the Unitas Fratrum".

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **Schools and Education**

Please see Chapter 4 in "Church Life in the Unitas Fratrum".



## **CHAPTER 5**

### **Relation to Civil Authority**

Note: In addition to the following statement, please see Church Order of the Unitas Fratrum, paragraph 665, and the Moravian Covenant for Christian Living, paragraph 29.

To our ministers and laity is commended the importance of carrying into their relationship with society such practices as the following:

- The assumption of individual responsibility for acquainting ourselves with the philosophies of the political parties, knowledge of the qualifications of the candidates, and an awareness of the issues in our domestic government.
- The sacred obligation of voting in all elections, primary, general, and special.
- The willingness of qualified persons to offer themselves for political office.
- The refusal to ask favors of our political servants at the expense of, and to the disadvantage of, fellow citizens.
- The assumption of individual responsibility for acquainting ourselves with international issues affecting our country.

## **CHAPTER 6**

### **Peace**

Please see Chapter 6 in "Church Life in the Unitas Fratrum".

## **CHAPTER 7**

### **Worship**

Note: In addition to the following, please see Chapter 7 in "Church Life in the Unitas Fratrum."

#### **A. Services**

Worship is both a privilege given by grace and an obligation for the church and its individual members. In worship we give adoration and thanks for the gracious good will of God the Father for our salvation, the saving works of Christ, and the gifts of the Holy Spirit, and respond to these with faith, love, and hope. Other elements of worship include the reading and proclamation of Scripture and prayers of confession, thanksgiving and intercession, and hymns and other music.

All services of worship should be conducted in accord with our Moravian principles of simplicity and dignity. The essence of our services is not found in the form, but rather in the religion of the heart which is expressed in the form.

An especially important means for personal appropriation of the Gospel is the celebration of the Sacraments, Baptism and the Lord's Supper. God gives these as means of grace for the founding and strengthening of life in faith, love, and hope. [See also Church Life in the Southern Province, chapters 8 and 11].

The importance of worship requires that worship leaders prepare prayerfully and carefully for conducting these services. Likewise, all members should participate fully and attentively in the worship services so that each may be built up in the faith and joined more closely in the Spirit to one another.

### **B. Orders of Worship and Liturgies**

While complete uniformity in everything connected with worship services is neither possible nor desired within our congregations throughout the Province, and while worship leaders should have liberty in specific details, all services should reflect our basic doctrinal statements and emphases.

The Liturgies in our Synod or PEC-approved worship book(s) and supplements provide an official, public, and authoritative statement of who we are and what we believe, and are therefore to be used regularly in our congregations.

The rites and sacraments are to be administered in a way consistent with the theology and liturgical forms in the current Synod or PEC-approved worship book(s) and supplements, unless alternate forms are approved by the PEC.

Additional services for Holy Communion using other hymn stanzas may be prepared, but these stanzas are to be in accord with the teaching of the official services, and the spoken words must be those in the official worship book(s).

Major alterations in the times of services or the forms they take require the approval of the Board of Elders or Church Board, and the wishes of the congregation should be consulted and taken into consideration.

### **C. Church Music**

As with the Liturgies, our hymns, anthems, and other musical works give outward expression to our faith. The joining of the members' voices in heartfelt singing is a powerful sign of the spiritual health of the congregation.

Unity, not uniformity, is the goal. Music from other traditions may enrich our worship, but the hymns provided in the Province's officially sanctioned hymnal and supplements are to be given preference and used regularly.

All music of whatever style used in the church should be of good quality and rendered to the best of one's abilities. At the same time, the music is to nurture and edify, and in the spirit of simplicity is never to become an object in itself to distract from rather than assist the congregation's worship.

Choir directors, organists, band leaders and other musicians do not have to be members of the congregation, but since theirs is a spiritual responsibility they must be supportive of the mission and goals of the church.

The Pastor, as chief worship leader for the congregation, has general supervision of the musical program of the church and the specifics of the order of service.

#### **D. Church Seasons and Moravian Memorial Days**

[For a list of Moravian Memorial Days see COUF: Church Life in the Unitas Fratrum, Ch. XII #681 and Church Life in the Southern Province, chapter 12.]

The observance of the seasons and festivals of the Church Year, supplemented by our specific Moravian observances, such as the reading services during Holy Week, assists the members' learning and application of the great truths of Scripture, and this observance is the norm in our congregations.

Regular use of the Moravian version of the Common Three Year Lectionary enhances this learning and application, and provides another means of unity within the Province and enhances our ecumenical witness with other denominations.

### **CHAPTER 8 Holy Communion**

The liturgical form of our celebration of Holy Communion celebration as found in the Book of Worship and its supplements is in beautiful accord with the essence of our Lord's words of institution, and has approved itself among us as speaking to the heart and rich in blessing. The Moravian Church practices an "open communion" in which communing members of other Christian churches are welcome to partake of the Sacrament.

As regards the day and the frequency of the celebration of the Lord's Supper, no general rule can be made for all congregations.

With all true Church members it will be a spiritual need to take the Lord's Supper often. It is a blessed means of grace for the strengthening and confirming of the inner life. When we look upon the Sacrament as a recurring opportunity for self-examination, and faithfully use it as a renewed union with the Lord and with each other, it stresses the unity and fellowship which believers have with Christ and with each other. No one should ever come from any unworthy or outward motive, for instance, because it has become a matter of habit or because they look on abstaining as a disgrace in the eyes of their brothers and sisters.

Nor should anyone persistently withdraw from participation from indifference, from unfriendly and hostile feelings towards anyone, or from other unworthy reasons.

The Holy Communion is to be given to the sick when they expressly desire it and the circumstances of the illness permit. The "Communion" character best finds expression when some members of the Church are present at such a celebration.

In the Southern Province, baptized children, on request of parents and after instruction by the Church as to the meaning and value of Holy Communion, according to age level, may be admitted to Holy Communion.

### **CHAPTER 9**

## **Lovefeast**

Our Lovefeasts are based on a similar custom in the primitive Church. Besides the Communion Lovefeast, which is specially intended as a preparation for the enjoyment of the Lord's Supper, Lovefeasts are held both on Sundays and festivals as aids to a social, festival celebration. Sometimes addresses are given, not only by the presiding minister, but also by others who have been invited to take part.

## **CHAPTER 10 The Cup of Covenant**

Related to the Lovefeast is the "Cup of Covenant," a liturgical usage of the Moravian Church, which must not be confounded with the cup in the Lord's Supper. This is used when, on special occasions, the whole congregation, or some division of the same, desire anew to pledge themselves to the service in which they stand.

## **CHAPTER 11 Baptism and Confirmation**

Our children are already by their birth within the Christian Church, called of God to participation in the kingdom of Jesus Christ, I Cor. 7:14, and Christ Himself blessed little children and promised to them the kingdom of God, Mark 10:14-16. It is therefore, in the Moravian Church expected of parents to bring their children for baptism at the earliest age, as soon as circumstances permit. Baptisms are, as a rule, to be performed in public meetings of the church. The congregation, in whose presence a child is baptized, demonstrates, by its participation in the act and in practice that, along with the parents, it undertakes the duty of bringing up this child in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. Although it is the parents' duty "...to bring their children," there are children who may not be brought for baptism unless brought by adult member(s) of the congregation other than their parents. In the case where an adult other than a child's parent desires to bring the child for baptism, such an adult should be the child's legal guardian or primary spiritual caregiver. In such a case, with consent of the child's parent(s) or legal guardian, it is permissible for a child, upon approval by the Board of Elders, to be presented for baptism by individuals who will meet such criteria and will be responsible for the child's regular participation in the on-going life of the congregation.

Only such persons should be witnesses, or sponsors, as are able to appreciate the significance and the seriousness of the matter. While it is true that no legal obligation rests on them to care for the welfare of the children to whose baptism they are invited as witnesses, they should all the more recognize it as a duty of Christian love to make such a child a special object of their prayers.

Persons baptized as infants publicly profess their faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior through the rite of Confirmation and are admitted to the Holy Communion if such has not previously taken place. Confirmation should be preceded by appropriate instruction in the Christian faith, the history and heritage of the Moravian Church and the responsibilities of church membership.

Adults who have not been baptized as children are, at their request, after thorough instruction in the truths of salvation, and the responsibilities of church membership, to be baptized, and are received by their baptism into the Christian Church as communicant members.

## **CHAPTER 12**

### **Church Festivals and Memorial Days**

#### **A. Special Festivals**

Peculiar to individual congregations in the time of their celebration are the anniversaries of congregations. These relate to the organization of the congregation or the consecration of the place of worship. At these times are called to mind, with heartfelt thanks before the Lord, the proofs of God's grace and help which the congregation has experienced since its organization and in the past year.

#### **B. Ministers' Covenant Day**

On September 16 the ordained servants of the church reflect upon their calling and bind themselves before the Lord to new faithfulness. This is usually done through sharing in the Cup of Covenant. All members of the church are reminded to remember their ministers in prayer.

#### **C. Choir Festivals**

The Choir Festivals, which, however, are no longer kept in all parts of the church, fall on the following days:

April 30	The Widows' Festival
May 4	The Sisters' Festival
June 4	The Girls' Festival
June 24	The Boys' Festival
Aug. 17	The children's Festival
Aug. 29	The Brethren's Festival
Sept. 7	The Festival of the Married

## **CHAPTER 13**

### **The Ministry**

See Also: Church Order of the Unitas Fratrum, Chapter 13.

#### **A. Ordained Ministry**

The constituted orders of the ordained ministry in the Moravian Church are Deacon, Presbyter, and Bishop. Those who are ordained are authorized to administer the Sacraments in the Moravian Church.

Only the Provincial Elders' Conference, the Provincial or Unity Synod has the authority to commission ordination and consecration. In extending such a commission they are guided by careful consideration of the qualifications of the candidate. The Provincial Elders' Conference commissions the Bishop who is to officiate.

The ordained minister remains a servant of Christ and the Church as a whole, not merely to the congregation to which he/she is called. Even as Jesus Christ came not to be ministered unto but to minister, so his servants should be willing to minister wherever the Church calls them under the leading of the Holy Spirit. The ordination of Deacons and the consecration of Presbyters and Bishops are matters of function and not of status.

### **1. Deacons**

- a. The ordination of a Deacon admits him/her to the first order of the ministry and carries with it the privilege of serving under call and administering the Sacraments according to the rules and regulations of the Church.
- b. A candidate for ordination shall meet with the Provincial Elders' Conference. The approval of the Provincial Elders' Conference is required before the candidate's name can be submitted to any congregational board for a call or plans made for ordination.
- c. A call must be extended and accepted before ordination shall take place.
- d. The candidate may choose the ordaining bishop and the place for the service with the approval of the Provincial Elders' Conference.
- e. The Provincial Elders' Conference shall commission the Bishop to represent the Church in the act of ordination.
- f. Ordination as a Deacon begins a period of ministry during which time the newly-ordained minister is placed under the counsel of a Presbyter who lives nearby, or someone appointed for this purpose by the Provincial Elders' Conference or other administrative board under whose jurisdiction he/she is serving. The role of such a counselor shall be clearly defined by the Provincial Elders' Conference.
- g. The Provincial Boards shall also have the authority to accept as Deacons theologically trained and qualified persons who are not employed full time by the Church but are willing to serve the Church while they earn their living in other types of employment.

### **2. Presbyters**

- a. After a period of time, normally from three to five years, a Deacon may be consecrated as a Presbyter. Such a service of consecration shall represent on the part of the Church an act of spiritual encouragement and affirmation of the individual's witness in the ministry and approval of service rendered since ordination. For the individual Deacon it shall be an occasion of earnest heart-searching and renewed commitment to the ordained ministry of Christ and His Body, the Church.
- b. The Provincial Elders' Conference, after consultation with the Deacon's designated counselor and the local church boards or other administrative board being served by the Deacon, approaches the Deacon concerning his/her readiness to accept consecration as a Presbyter.
- c. The consecration of a Presbyter is an act of approval of the entire Moravian Unity. The candidate may choose the consecrating Bishop and the place for the service with the approval of the Provincial Elders' Conference.

### **3. Bishops**

- a. The Renewed Unity received the episcopacy as an inheritance from the Ancient Unitas Fratrum. Today we regard the episcopacy in the Renewed Unity in a different way from that in the Ancient Unitas Fratrum. Formerly, a Bishop had a church-government and administrative function. In our day, this function is not necessarily linked to the episcopal office. A Bishop in the Moravian Church is consecrated to a special priestly-pastoral ministry in the name of and for the whole Unity. A Bishop is a living symbol of the continuity of the church's ministry, although the Unity does not place emphasis on any mechanical transmission of the apostolic succession. The office and function of a Bishop is valid throughout the Unity as a whole. Wherever possible at least one Bishop should be resident in every Province.

#### **b. Duties**

A Bishop primarily has spiritual responsibility in the Church. The Synod of the province may add administrative responsibility by electing the bishop a member of the Provincial Board. All Provincial and District Boards shall consult a Bishop(s) in all matters concerning the work of the Province or District, which fall within his/her sphere of responsibility. A Bishop has a special duty of intercession for the Unity and also for the Church of Christ as a whole. A Bishop is a pastor to pastors. Bishops in active service should be enabled to visit congregations for the deepening of their spiritual life. The opinion of a Bishop(s) shall customarily be sought and given due consideration and weight in matters of doctrine and practice. A Bishop represents the Church in the act of ordination. A Bishop alone has the right to ordain or to consecrate to the various orders of the ministry, but only when he/she is commissioned to do so by the Provincial Board or synod of a Unity Province. A Bishop, however, has the right to decline a commission to ordain should he/she wish to do so. In exceptional cases, the ordination of a Deacon may be performed by a Presbyter in the name of and by commission of a Bishop. A Bishop(s) should share in the decisions regarding the training of candidates for the ministry and should maintain a special pastoral relationship with such candidates throughout their training.

#### **c. Election**

A Bishop is not appointed by any Provincial Board, but shall be elected from among the Presbyters either by a Unity Board, a Provincial Synod, or in a Provincial Election ordered by the Synod under regulations contained in its constitution. The election of a Bishop in an affiliated Province shall be carried out under the regulations laid down by the Synod of the Province to which it is related. On the occasion of the consecration of a Bishop, at least two Bishops of the Unity should officiate.

#### **d. Conference of Bishops**

- i. The Conference of Bishops of the Southern Province shall consist of the bishops elected by the Synod of the Southern Province residing in the province. The number of bishops able to perform the rites of ordination and consecration should not be fewer than two at the adjournment of any Synod.

- ii. Any other bishop of the Unity becoming a member of a congregation in the Southern Province shall become a member of the Conference.
- iii. After the adjournment of Synod, the Conference will be convened for the first time at the direction of the Provincial Elders' Conference; thereafter, the bishops shall meet periodically as they determine in conference as equal participants without permanent officers.
- iv. The Conference shall not interfere in any way with the duties and privileges granted by the Church to the bishop as an individual, but shall direct its attention to those matters of a spiritual nature that are a concern to all. Among these concerns are:
  - 1. To discover through briefings from the Provincial Elders' Conference areas of need in which they may be of assistance and take steps to meet these needs.
  - 2. To meet as a conference or individually with ordained ministers of the province, at the request of the minister, to discuss personal or pastoral concerns.
  - 3. To give advice and opinion on matters of doctrine.
  - 4. To join in intercession for the Church as a whole.

**e. Reimbursement of Bishops' Expenses**

According to policies established by the Provincial Elders' Conference, reimbursement shall be provided for approved expenses incurred by bishops residing in the province for the performance of their official duties.

**4. Acolytes**

- a. The Renewed Moravian Church has taken from the Ancient Church the title of "Acolyte" and has transformed it into a discipleship in the congregation and Church.
- b. A Congregational Acolyte is selected by the local congregation's board(s) and approved by the Provincial Elders' Conference. Reception takes place in the presence of the assembled congregation by the right hand of fellowship given by the presiding pastor. The duties may include assisting the pastor in pastoral duties, special supervision for specific areas of service within the congregation, and assisting in serving the elements in Holy Communion when an ordained minister is present to consecrate the elements and preside at the sacrament.
- c. The Provincial Elders' Conference has the right to authorize the reception of Provincial Acolytes for denominational service. They should be persons who exemplify the teaching of Christ and are respected by fellow members of the Church. The Provincial Elders' Conference shall have the authority to appoint a qualified person as a Provincial Acolyte to serve as pastor of a specific congregation. Such appointments shall be for a period of one year. These can be renewed. The reception of a Provincial Acolyte takes place in the presence of the assembled congregation by the right hand of fellowship given by a representative of the Provincial Elders' Conference. When an ordained person is not available for the administration of the sacraments, the Provincial Elders' Conference may, after giving special instruction regarding the meaning and observance of the



sacraments, authorize the Provincial Acolyte to administer the sacraments in the congregation for the period of time in which he/she has been appointed.

## **B. Calls**

The Lord Jesus Christ calls His Church into being so that it may serve Him here on earth until He comes. The Unitas Fratrum is, therefore, aware of its being called in faith to serve humanity by proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ. It recognizes this call to be the source of its being and the inspiration of its services. As is the source, so is the aim and end of its being based upon the will of its Lord. (From the Ground of the Unity, Section 1).

The Unitas Fratrum recognizes the priesthood of all believers but also has specially appointed ministers who receive commission and authority for their service from the hands of Jesus Christ whom the Church acknowledges as its Chief Elder. All members may gladly and confidently carry on their work in and for the congregation and by their devotion and faithfulness all can render service to the whole Church. (From the Essential Features of the Unity paragraph 104)

In the Moravian Church, an ordained minister is first of all a servant of Christ. It is Christ who calls, ordains, and sends forth to serve. Through ordination, the minister becomes a minister of the Church as a whole, not just the congregation or agency to which he or she has been called.

The ordained minister is a pilgrim during active ministry with no fixed and permanent home. His/her roots are not in any one place or congregation. It is a demand, for which there is no compromise, that the ordained servant of Christ keeps an open mind and spirit toward this concept of pilgrimage. The minister is under compulsion to follow the Lord's leading and to go wherever the Lord calls.

It is the Province that issues such calls, according to policies and procedures developed by the Provincial Elders' Conference. The responsibility for the issuance of a call to serve in the Southern Province is committed to the Provincial Elders' Conference alone. By the acceptance of such a call the ordained brother or sister comes under the authority of the Southern Province and is under the supervision of the Provincial Elders' Conference.

A call to a specific task or ministry is arrived at under the guidance and leading of the Holy Spirit, is to be held in the highest respect and given the fullest possible recognition and consideration by all who participate in the process. The issuance of a call to a brother or sister comes after all needful conferences are held between the Provincial Elders' Conference and the Responsible Board and agreement is reached. [Responsible Boards are the Joint Boards of a congregation, the Church Board in congregations with only one board, and the official boards of Provincial Boards and Agencies.]

The need for the Provincial Elders' Conference to preserve confidentiality is assumed, and the right of the Provincial Elders' Conference to refuse to issue a call remains unquestioned and should be respected by all parties without resentment.

In the procedure for the call of a minister it is the duty of the Responsible Board to act for the Congregation or the Provincial Board or Agency. Except as directed by the Provincial Elders'

Conference as part of the pre-call congregational review, the church board(s) shall not consult the congregation before any particular call is issued. It is expected that the congregational board hold in strictest confidence the discussions and decisions made in these procedures.

Any minister, who by ordination is committed to the service of Christ in the Moravian Church, will consider any and every call carefully and conscientiously before accepting or declining the call.

### **1. Request for Change**

Just as the issuance of a call to service in the Southern Province is a responsibility committed only to the Provincial Elders' Conference; likewise, the termination of a minister's service under a call is the responsibility of the Provincial Elders' Conference alone.

A Responsible Board, in case it conscientiously and for good reason desires a change of pastor, may present the matter before the Provincial Elders' Conference. The Conference shall make a thorough investigation, after which it shall take whatever action it may consider wise and in the best interest of all concerned.

A pastor who conscientiously and for good reason desires a change of pastorate may request the Provincial Elders' Conference to consider him or her in its recommendations to a Responsible Board for a call.

### **2. Recognized Ministries**

The Provincial Elders' Conference shall determine what ministries, in addition to pastoral ministries, shall be recognized as legitimate ministries and the ordained individuals filling them as under call with the understanding that the individual is subject to the discipline of the Moravian Church and is open to call by the Provincial Elders' Conference to a congregation or other position in the Moravian Church.

A specialized ministry is one for which ordination is determined by the Provincial Elders' Conference to be either an absolute or highly desirable requirement for functioning in the position.

### **3. Compensation and Benefits for Clergy under Call**

The Provincial Elders' Conference shall develop and maintain policies governing the compensation and benefits for clergy serving under call including, but not limited to:

1. Minimum salary guidelines for years of service.
2. Housing allowance for clergy not provided a parsonage or, a Housing Equity Allowance for those living in a parsonage.
3. Minimum parsonage requirements including all furnishings and guidelines for utility expenses.
4. A pension plan.
5. Health, dental, life and disability insurance in compliance with the plans as established by the province.
6. Travel allowance or expense reimbursement.
7. Continuing education allowance.
8. Vacations and conference participation.

9. Leaves of absence (including for medical reasons) and sabbaticals.
10. Personal time while moving from one call to another.
11. Moving expenses.

#### **4. Withdrawal from the Ministry**

A minister may resign from the ministry of the Moravian Church by giving the Provincial Elders' Conference a written notification at least one month in advance of the date of leaving. On the date of leaving the ministry, his/her name shall be removed from the official directory of ministers. If the minimum number of years to qualify for pension has been served, pension rights shall be frozen on the date of leaving.

A person who has withdrawn from the ministry has the privilege at a future time of submitting in writing a request to the Provincial Elders' Conference to be reinstated as an active minister of the Moravian Church. The acceptance of such an application by the Provincial Elders' Conference does not imply an automatic reinstatement. The Provincial Elders' Conference shall consider the candidate and the service opportunities with the Church at that time, as well as meet with the candidate.

Leave of absence and withdrawal from the ministry of the Moravian Church do not imply abrogation of ordination but only the cessation of official service with the Moravian Church.

#### **5. Official Directory**

Ministers who are without call for a period of three years, within which time a call has not been issued and accepted, provided that no other category be applicable, shall be removed from the official directory of the church.

Persons who are not in the official directory of the Moravian Church ministry should not perform any of the functions of an ordained minister within the Moravian Church without specific authorization from the Provincial Elders' Conference.

#### **6. Clergy from Ecumenical Partners and Other Denominations**

Clergy from denominations with which the Southern Province has a full communion, covenant partnership or other formal agreement may be received for service in the Moravian Church following the agreed guidelines administered by the Provincial Elders' Conference.

A minister who has been ordained for service in a Christian church with which we do not have a formal agreement, and who desires to become a member of and to serve as an ordained minister of the Moravian Church, shall follow the candidate procedure established by the Provincial Elders' Conference. The minister will be received as a Deacon or Presbyterian, as the Provincial Elders' Conference deems appropriate.

#### **C. Salaried Church Educators**

Since it is in the interest of the Southern Province to have uniform procedures in reference to the purposes, qualifications, training, status, employment, and general supervision of salaried church educators or directors of Christian education, the following procedure is to be used:

1. The Provincial Elders' Conference will serve as the clearing-house for the pastors, church boards, salaried church educators, and applicants for employment as salaried church educators or directors of Christian education by establishing and maintaining a file of applicants and persons who are employed as salaried church educators. The Provincial Elders' Conference will be responsible for consultation, as needed, in matters related to salaried church educators.
2. The Provincial Elders' Conference will provide information and guidelines on the nature and work of salaried church educators; salary and benefits; job descriptions and evaluations; education, qualification, and certification standards; and other guidelines that will help salaried church educators, pastors, and church boards to carry out their ministries and responsibilities.
3. Pastors and church boards will make their own decisions about interviewing, employing, and installing salaried church educators after consulting with the Provincial Elders' Conference to obtain guidelines and pertinent information.
4. The Provincial Elders' Conference will work in consultation with congregations employing church educators, full time or part time, to provide them provincial appointment in accordance with current guidelines. Such appointments shall be understood to provide empowerment and the blessing of the wider church, recognition of one's call and gifts for educational ministry, and mutual accountability for the educator, local congregation and the wider province.

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### **Synod-Approved Policies**

(with date of approval)

*These are included in the Appendices to this Book of Order.*

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The Standing Rules of Synod .....	(2014)
Standards of Responsible Behavior for Ordained Ministers.....	(1998)
Policy on Sexual Misconduct of Persons Under Call or Appointment.....	(1998)
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### **Administrative Policies**

(with most recent date of approval or revision)

*These are available as needed from the Provincial Elders' Conference office*

Administrative Manual for Ordained Pastors .....	(PEC 2014)
Policy on Family Relationships Between Provincial Employees .....	(PEC 2012)
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# **Synod Approved Recommendations of Rules and Regulations**

## **Article I Organization**

### **Section 1. Name:**

This church shall be known as the [name of congregation], a congregation of the Moravian Church in America, Southern Province.

### **Section 2. Organization:**

It is organized under the Constitution of the Moravian Church in America, Southern Province, by authority of the Provincial Elders' Conference of the Southern Province of the Moravian Church, or Unitas Fratrum. It owes its allegiance and renders its reports to the Synod of the Southern Province under whose constituted authority it carries on its work.

### **Section 3. Object:**

Its object is to be a true church of Jesus Christ and to further the interest of the Kingdom of God according to the teaching of His Holy Word, and according to the doctrines and practices of the Moravian Church as determined by its Unity Synods, and Provincial Synods.

## **Article II Membership**

### **Section 1. Communicant Members:**

1. Persons applying to become communicant members of this congregation by the rite of Confirmation or Adult Baptism, on profession of faith, or by re-affirmation of faith shall receive such instruction as their circumstances may require. When they have been prepared, their names should be submitted to the Board of Elders or the Church Board that has power to grant or refuse their application.
2. Persons who have been full members of another Moravian Congregation or of another Christian church, and who desire to unite with this congregation, shall present their letters of transfer or dismissal from their former church. In case such letters of transfer cannot be obtained, they shall submit the proper evidence of their previous membership. If their applications for membership are approved by the Board of Elders or Church Board, they shall be received by the right hand of fellowship.
3. All persons becoming communicant members of this congregation shall be furnished with a copy of Rules and Regulations of the congregation and such other literature and/or instruction as shall inform them concerning the doctrines, history and practices of the Moravian Church.

### **Section 2. Non-Communicant Members:**

All baptized children of communicant members of this congregation shall be called non-communicant members. They shall remain non-communicant members until they become communing children or in later years become communicant members of this or some other Moravian congregation or some other denomination. Non-communicant members and communing children shall be under the care of the church until their twenty-first birthday. At

this time, unless they have become communicant members, they will have forfeited their church membership.

**Section 3. Children of the Church:**

Unbaptized children of members and children under the care of the church until their twenty-first year shall be listed as children of the church.

**Section 4. Communing Children:**

Baptized children may be admitted to Holy Communion after appropriate pastoral instruction and counseling with the children and their parent(s) and/or guardian concerning the meaning and observance of the Lord's Supper.

**Section 5. Associate Members:**

1. Any communicant members of this congregation in good standing may transfer their membership to another Moravian congregation or to the congregation of another Christian Church and retain an associate membership in this congregation provided the following conditions are fulfilled:
  - a. That along with the request for a letter of transfer permission to retain an associate membership be applied for in writing.
  - b. That the annual assessment for associate members as fixed by the Board of Trustees (or Church Board) be paid in full.
2. Associate members may not vote in the Congregation Council or hold office on the official board(s) of the congregation, but shall exercise all other rights and privileges of communicant members as long as the above conditions are fulfilled.
3. Associate members who are communicant members in another Moravian congregation are not included in the annual membership statistics of this church.
4. Students while attending school in this community, who are communicant members of another Moravian congregation or the congregation of another Christian Church, may become associate members of this congregation provided approval of such association is received in writing from the congregations of which they are communicant members in good standing.
5. Baptized children of associate members shall be non-communicant members or communing children in either one of the congregations as the parent or parents may choose and will be included in the statistics of the chosen church.

**Section 6. Inactive Members:**

1. Members who became inactive over a period of time and who cannot for the present be reclaimed to active membership will be placed on an inactive roll by action of the Board of Elders or Church Board. (Such members may likewise be returned to the active roll by action of the Board of Elders or Church Board when the board determines that such members have become active again in the life of the congregation.)
2. Those placed on such an inactive roll will be informed that by virtue of their status as inactive members they would:
  - a. Be visited and extended the ministries of caring that other members receive, including admission to the Lord's Supper.

- b. Receive regular communications of the church including The Moravian for a period of three years.
  - c. Be ineligible to vote at Congregation Council or hold church office.
  - d. Not be counted in the statistics of the congregation.
  - e. Be given a qualified letter of transfer if they request a letter of transfer.
  - f. Have no privilege of burial in the church's designated graveyard.
3. If after repeated efforts to minister to an inactive member and to bring him or her back into active fellowship within the congregation the person remains inactive, the Board of Elders or Church Board may remove that person from the roll of that church.

**Section 7. Discipline of Members:**

The Board of Elders or Church Board will make every effort to determine what pain or need lies behind behavior of any one of its members who displays conduct unbecoming a Christian and will fulfill appropriate ministries to him or her. When such ministry is rejected, the Board of Elders or Church Board may enact discipline, consistent with the Book of Order, that is deemed constructive for the spiritual growth of that person.

Members who have been disciplined shall in all cases have the right to appeal to the Provincial Elders' Conference.

**Section 8. Transfer to Other Churches:**

Any member desiring a letter of transfer to another Moravian Congregation or another Christian Church shall make application either in person or by letter to the pastor, who shall issue such transfer or dismissal upon approval of the Board of Elders or Church Board.

**Article III  
Congregation Council**

**Section 1. Composition of Congregation Council:**

The Congregation Council is composed of all communicant members of the congregation who are in good standing.

**Section 2. Secretary:**

The Congregation Council shall elect a secretary who shall remain in office until a successor is elected and shall keep a true and accurate record of the proceedings of the Council which record shall be carefully preserved.

**Section 3. Chairperson, Place of Meeting, Notice of Meeting, Duties:**

The Pastor shall be chairperson of the Congregation Council. In the absence of the Pastor the vice-chair of the Board of Elders or the Church Board shall convene Council and shall preside until a chairperson is elected. All meetings shall be announced on at least two occasions of public worship, and in such manner as the Board of Elders or Church Board may determine. It shall be the duty of the Council to elect delegates to the Provincial Synod; members of the Board of Elders and the members of the Board of Trustees or the members of the Church Board, Regional Conference of Churches representatives, and other officers and Boards of the Church not otherwise provided for. Matters that relate to temporal or spiritual welfare of the church,

may be discussed in the Council at the request of any member, or by the Board of Elders or the Board of Trustees or the Church Board. In all matters the Congregation Council shall acknowledge and respect the authority and duties of the Church Board(s) and the Provincial Elders' Conference.

**Section 4. Annual Meeting:**

A meeting of the Council shall be held at least once each year, at which time the Church Board(s) must render a report for the work of the previous year. The time and place of holding the Council shall be determined by the Council itself or may be left to the direction of the Board of Elders or the Church Board. It should, however, be held under such conditions as will secure the largest possible attendance, interest and cooperation of the membership. At least ten percent (10%) of the communicant membership shall constitute a quorum at any meeting of the Council.

**Section 5. Special Meetings:**

The Board of Elders or the Church Board shall have authority at any time to convene a special meeting of the Council. They shall likewise call a special meeting upon application of the Board of Trustees or the number of members in good standing equivalent to the number of members on the Church Board or Joint Boards.

**Section 6. Elections:**

All standing officers of the Church elected by the Council shall continue in office until their successors are elected. All elections shall be by ballot, and the majority of votes cast shall be necessary to a choice. Thirty days prior to the Council the Board of Elders or Church Board shall appoint a Nominating committee whose duty it shall be to submit to Council names of members eligible and qualified for election to the Boards. However, nothing in this section shall prevent nominations from the floor by any member of the Council, provided the nominee has indicated willingness to serve.

**Section 7. Annual Report and Fiscal Year:**

The annual report of the Board of Elders, the annual report of the Board of Trustees, including the financial statement or the annual report of the Church Board shall be submitted in writing to the annual meeting. The fiscal period shall end on December 31 of each year.

**Article IV  
Executive Boards**

For the management of the affairs of the congregation there shall be two executive boards, the Board of Elders and the Board of Trustees. Each shall consist of three or more members to be elected by ballot at the annual meeting of the Council. Members shall serve for three years and shall be so elected that as nearly as possible one-third of them shall retire each year. No member shall be elected for more than two consecutive terms, although he or she may be re-elected after an intermission of one year.

*[[Note: Where there is a single Church Board, the Board shall assume all duties under Sections 2, 3, and 4 of this Article. ]]*

### **Section 1. Joint Meetings:**

The Boards of Elders and Trustees each have their separate sphere of activity and responsibilities and should respect one another in the performance of their respective duties. Yet, it is desirable that they should be on terms of cooperation and confer together in such cases as may arise where each Board is interested, or where such mutual conference may result for the good of the congregation. In the absence of the Pastor, the presiding officer of the Board of Elders shall preside over all joint meetings.

### **Section 2. Duties of the Joint Board:**

1. To cooperate with the Provincial Elders' Conference in carrying out the rules and principles enacted by Synod.
2. To confer with the Provincial Elders' Conference concerning the issuance of calls to prospective Pastors and Associate Pastors, and matters related to expectations for, and review of the Pastor(s) service.
3. To confer with the Provincial Elders' Conference concerning the appointment of directors of Christian education.
4. To appoint a Stewardship Committee composed of members of the Church Board(s) and others from the congregation.
5. To approve the annual budget.

### **Section 3. The Board of Elders**

1. Officers. The Pastor shall serve ex-officio as chairperson, and at the first meeting after the annual election of the Board, the Board shall elect from its lay members a vice-chair and a secretary. All ministers serving under call to a congregation shall be regular and voting members of the Board.
2. Duties
  - a. To watch over the spiritual and moral well being of the congregation, originating such plans as will encourage the development of the church's spiritual life.
  - b. To plan, schedule, and publicize the various services of the church.
  - c. To determine the purposes for which the church building may be used.
  - d. To maintain the proper exercise of church discipline among the members.
  - e. To assist the Pastor(s) in the administration of the church music and to appoint music personnel such as organist and choir director.
  - f. To pass upon all names of persons presenting themselves for membership, and the names of members to be transferred to other churches, also the names of members to be suspended, excluded, dropped or placed on the inactive roll.
  - g. To have the oversight of the Church School.
  - h. To appoint non-salaried personnel engaged in the various activities of the Church, such as Chief Usher, Head Diener, etc.

### **Section 4. The Board of Trustees**

1. Officers. The Board of Trustees shall organize at the first meeting after the annual election by electing from their number a chairperson, a vice-chair, a secretary and a treasurer, which latter may or may not be a Trustee, and such other officers as may be necessary.

2. Duties.
  - a. To plan the annual budget in consultation with the Board of Elders.
  - b. To fix compensation of personnel (including Pastors) and appoint all paid personnel not appointed by the Joint Board or the Board of Elders.
  - c. To have charge of the maintenance of all church property.
  - d. To administer the financial program of the congregation
  - e. To make full settlement with the treasurer of the Southern Province promptly before the close of the fiscal year, and furnish said treasurer, as early as possible thereafter, an audited statement of the financial affairs of the Church.
  - f. To furnish to the Provincial Treasurer a budget for the coming year.

**Section 5. Vacancies:**

Any vacancy occurring among the members of any board elected by the congregational Council may be filled by the remaining members of the board at a regular meeting and such an appointee serve the remaining portion of the unexpired term.

**Article V  
Congregation Finances**

In regard to congregation finances, the following are duties of the Board of Trustees or Church Board:

1. The Board of Trustees, or Church Board, of each congregation shall prepare a budget of expenses and contributions for the guidance of the financial affairs of the congregation at the beginning of each fiscal year. This budget is to be covered by subscriptions from the membership.
2. The Board shall appoint a committee of auditors from the membership of the congregation to examine in detail the accounts of the treasurer at the end of each fiscal year.
3. At the close of each fiscal year, the treasurer of the congregation shall submit a full report of all financial transactions to a Congregation Council. This report is to be accompanied by a certificate of the auditors.
4. A copy of the annual report of the treasurer of each congregation and a certificate of the audit shall be filed with the Treasurer of the Province.

**Article VI  
Amendments**

These Rules and Regulations may be altered, amended or added to at any time by a majority of two-thirds of all votes cast in the Congregation Council, provided that no proposed amendments shall conflict with legislation adopted by Provincial Synod, and such amendments have been approved by the Provincial Elders' Conference prior to their adoption by the Congregation Council.

**ARTICLES OF AMENDMENT  
TO THE CHARTER OF  
BOARD OF PROVINCIAL ELDERS OF THE SOUTHERN PROVINCE  
OF THE MORAVIAN CHURCH, OR UNITAS FRATRUM**

WHEREAS, The General Assembly of North Carolina, at its session of 1876-77, Chapter XIII, did on the 26th day of January, AD, 1877, ratify a Private law as an act to incorporate the Board of Provincial Elders of the Southern Province of the Moravian Church, or Unitas Fratrum; and

WHEREAS, there are no members of the corporation having voting rights, and the current members of the Board of Provincial Elders, to-wit: Richard F. Amos, Wilson E. Edwards, C.T. Leinbach, Jr., Henry E. May, Jr., and Elmer R. Stelter, have met and considered these Articles of Amendment to the Charter and have unanimously approved the changes to the Articles of Incorporation that result in it reading in its entirety as follows:

“(1) The name of the corporation is MORAVIAN CHURCH IN AMERICA, SOUTHERN PROVINCE

(2) This corporation shall be a non-profit corporation, which shall not have any capital stock

(3) The period of duration of the corporation is perpetual.

(4) The purposes for which the corporation is organized shall be:

a. To administer the government of the Province according to the Constitution and Rules and Regulations of the Moravian Church in America, Southern Province, as laid down by the Provincial Synod to which it is responsible and to make, alter and amend its bylaws to affect the purposes set forth in this paragraph (4).

b. To promote religion, education, missions, and other programs and purposes of the Provincial Synod to which it is responsible and to carry out the directions and duties imposed by such Synod.

c. To purchase, receive (by gift and bequest, or either), hold, and improve all types of real and personal property, either absolutely or in trust, and to mortgage, pledge, sell or otherwise dispose of the same.

d. To carry on and perform any other lawful acts allowed by law for non-profit corporations.

(5) No misnomer of this corporation shall defeat or annul any gift, grant, devise or bequest to or from this corporation provided that the intent of the party or parties shall sufficiently appear upon the face of the gift, grant, will or other writing where y any estate or interest was intended to pass to or from this corporation.

(6) Amendments to this Charter may be made hereafter by the majority vote of the Provincial Elders' Conference of the Moravian Church in America, Southern Province and their successors.”

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, these Articles are signed this 4th day of September, 1979, by all the present members of the Provincial Elders' Conference and the Secretary of the corporation.

S/Richard F. Amos  
President of Corporation

Wilson E. Edwards  
C.T. Leinbach, Jr.

Henry E. May, Jr.  
Elmer R. Stelter

Ronald R. Hendrix  
Secretary of Corporation

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA  
COUNTY OF FORSYTH

I, Bobbie H. Blackburn, a Notary Public of said State and County, do hereby certify that on this 4th day of September, 1979, personally appeared before me, Richard F. Amos (President of the Corporation), Wilson E. Edwards, C.T. Leinbach, Jr., Henry E. May, Jr., and Elmer R. Stelter, as members of the Board of Provincial Elders, and Ronald R. Hendrix as Secretary of the Corporation, each of whom being by me first duly sworn, declared that he signed the foregoing document, that he was authorized so to sign as a member of the Board of Provincial Elders as Secretary of the Corporation, and that the statements therein contained are true.

S/Bobbie H. Blackburn  
Notary Public

My Commission Expires: March 7, 1981

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA  
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

To all to whom these presents shall come, Greeting:

I, Thad Eure, Secretary of State of the State of North Carolina, do hereby certify the following and hereto attached (3 sheets) to be a true copy of Articles of Amendment of Board of Provincial Elders of the Southern Province of the Moravian Church, or Unitas Fratrum (which changed its name to: Moravian Church in America, Southern Province) and the probates thereon, the original of which was filed in this office on the 1st day of October, 1979, after having been found to conform to law.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed my official seal. Done in Office, at Raleigh, this 1st day of October in the year of our Lord 1979.

S/Thad Eure  
Secretary of State



## STANDING RULES OF SYNOD

1. In the plenary sessions of synod, where the Standing Rules of Synod do not cover parliamentary procedures, and where there is no conflict with these rules or the Constitution of the Southern Province, the basis for procedure shall be Roberts' Rules of Order.
2. Resolutions duplicated and distributed to the members before synod convenes shall be referred to proper synod committees for consideration without being read.
3. Synod minutes shall be reviewed by a committee of three appointed by the chairperson of synod so that they need not be approved by the full synod.
4. After the initial roll call of delegates, further roll calls shall be made by delegates signing attendance slips. The secretaries of synod shall immediately record the roll.
5. All resolutions coming from synod committees shall be referred to the Steering Committee. This committee does not have the power to alter or reject resolutions, but to see that resolutions are duplicated and distributed to delegates before they are presented for action.
6. At the beginning of synod the Committee on Nominations shall distribute to the delegates a list of the names to be filled by election and the nominations for these names.
7. Ballots for all board elections shall be cast at the same time, except boards for which nominations are not permitted.
8. To provide for number 7 above, the ballot with nominations for all board elections, except boards for which nominations are not permitted, will be presented to synod delegates at the convening of synod, and
  - a. At the first appropriate time, opportunity will be given to present nominations from the floor. A delegate wishing to place a person in nomination shall provide an Information Form completed by the person to be nominated. The Information Form shall be designed by the Nominating Committee and shall include a statement to be signed by the nominee indicating a willingness to serve if elected.
  - b. After nominations from the floor have been closed, the ballots shall be prepared so that the names nominated by the Committee on Nominations are distinguished from those nominated from the floor. (A suitable difference in type will make this distinction.)
  - c. As soon as appropriate, the ballots having been printed, the voting for all boards, except boards for which nominations are not permitted, shall take place.
9. To provide for further balloting, ballots in numerical sequence shall be distributed in pack form at one time.

10. Reports of task forces, study groups or committees authorized or appointed by Synod during the intersynodal period shall be referred to the appropriate Synod Committee.
11. All legislation requiring funding either on a provincial basis or by the local congregation in the total amount of \$2,500 or more must be received by the Finance Committee by a deadline set at each synod by the Steering Committee. Such legislation should be reported to synod by the Finance Committee, regardless of the committee from which it originates. All such legislation should be presented at one time before any single item is voted on, with the total possible cost to the province and individual churches being indicated, and subsequent to the presentation, each item shall be given careful consideration and voted upon. Any amendment on the floor of synod to legislation requiring funding which causes a net change of \$2,500 or more in any item must be referred back to the Finance Committee prior to being voted upon.
12. At the close of each synod the Provincial Elders' Conference shall appoint a committee to review the Book of Order of the Southern Province and bring it into conformity with the acts of synod.

# **Standards of Responsible Behavior for Ordained Ministers of Moravian Church**

## **I. Introduction: The Call to Live in Christ**

“The Unitas Fratrum recognizes the priesthood of all believers...[and]... gratefully acknowledges the gift of the offices of ministry which it has received from the Lord. It recognizes and confesses that in reality it is the Lord and Head, Jesus Christ, who calls and ordains.” [The Church Order of the Unitas Fratrum, Essential Features of the Unity, Paragraph # 104, a, b]

The expectations the Moravian Church has of its ordained ministers are grounded in the sacrament of Baptism, and the rite of Ordination.<sup>1</sup> The work of ordained ministers is part of the ministry of all the baptized. The baptized are called to live in a particular way because of who they have become in Christ through this Sacrament (Romans 6:4). All the baptized are called to live in response to God’s grace received through baptism into Christ’s death. The ordained also are called to live in response to God’s grace received through ordination. Both recognized that “they can render their service well only through grace of their Chief Elder.” [Essential Features of the Unity, Paragraph #104, c]

At ordination, candidates “freely accept the obligations of an ordained minister to study, pray, care for souls, preach, and administer the sacraments in Christ’s church.” [Liturgy for Ordination of a Deacon], and the prayer of the church for the one ordained is: Grant that in all things he/she may serve without reproach, that your people may be renewed, and that your name may be glorified in the church.” [Liturgy for Ordination of Deacon]

## **II. The Ordained Minister in Relation to God**

“We recognize that it is the Lord’s will to confront and call to Himself each individual through His Spirit, and that formal membership in a congregation is for no one a substitute for a personal encounter with the Savior, nor does it relieve any from making a personal decision to accept Him.” [Essential Features of the Unity, Paragraph # 51]

At heart, the ordained minister is a person carrying on a living, personal relationship with the Triune God.<sup>2</sup> The ordained know both intellectually and experientially the joys of walking with the Savior.

This fellowship with God in Christ finds expression in a life of personal worship, the study and appropriation of God’s Word, regular prayer, confession of sin, being fed in Holy Communion, and a growing willingness to place one’s “whole life under [God’s] rule and daily leading.” [Essential Features of the Unity, Paragraph # 52]

“We realize that our Christian faith must be continually nourished if it is to remain living and vital.” [Moravian Covenant for Christian Living, Paragraph # 8] The ordained, together with all members of our church, are called to a life of intimacy with God and spiritual growth toward maturity in Christ (Eph. 4:15-16).

### **III. The Ordained Minister in Relation to Self**

#### **1. Called by God to Obedience**

“We are called into a Christian fellowship by the Lord Jesus Christ, according to the eternal purpose of God the Father (Eph. 3:11) by the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:18-21), and as members of Christ’s Body, the Church, to serve all people by proclaiming the gospel and witnessing to our faith by word and deed.” [Moravian Covenant for Christian Living, Paragraph #1]

Ordained ministers understand themselves as called by God -- called to faith, called to fellowship with other believers in the church, called to serve Christ through the ordained ministry of Word and Sacrament.

“...the simplest expression of Christian living is contained in the earliest of Christian confessions, ‘Jesus Christ is Lord.’ This implies that obedience is due to Him as an absolute Ruler and Lord of our lives. Not only his teachings (e.g. Matt. 5-7), but even more, the example of his life (Phil. 2:5; Eph. 4:20) provides an understanding of the obedience he desires.” [Moravian Covenant for Christian Living, Paragraph # 6]

The ordained live in response to Christ’s call to obedience in every aspect of life. They submit themselves to live under the authority of the Triune God as revealed in Scripture.

#### **2. Gifts and Limitations:**

“Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of services but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.” (I Cor. 12:4-7 NRSV)

Ordained ministers discover the spiritual gifts they have been given by God, and use them for building up the Body of Christ. They value not only their own gifts, but also those that others bring to the ministry of the Body of Christ.

“In the light of divine grace, we recognize ourselves to be a church of sinners. We require forgiveness daily, and live only through the mercy of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.” [The Church Order of the Unitas Fratrum, The Ground of the Unity, Paragraph # 2, The Belief of the Church]

“Do you in this faith turn away from sin, evil, and selfishness in your thoughts, words and actions...?” [Liturgy for Baptism]

Just as they are aware of their gifts, ordained ministers are also conscious of their own sinfulness and shortcomings. They seek the forgiveness assured by God (I John 1:9). They rely upon the convicting and strengthening power of the Holy Spirit (John 16:7-15; 14:15-21) and strive to discover and grow beyond faults and limitations into the likeness of Christ (2 Cor. 3:18). They seek appropriate counsel (from bishops, pastoral counselors, mentors, and peers) in overcoming personal barriers to growth and effective ministry.

### **3. Personal Growth**

“...we desire to grow in our Christian lives through personal prayer and study, and the opportunities for spiritual development offered by the Church.” [Moravian Covenant for Christian Living, Paragraph # 8]

Ordained ministers are recommitted to a process of life-long learning, personal spiritual development, and improvement for ministry. These include regular disciplined prayer, personal study, study with others, and continuing education.

### **4. Stewardship**

“We deem it a sacred responsibility and genuine opportunity to be faithful stewards of all God has entrusted to us: our time, our talents, and our financial resources.” [Moravian Covenant for Christian Living, Paragraph 10]

Ordained ministers practice good stewardship. This includes, but is not limited to the management of time to balance personal, family, work and community responsibilities. They accept their sacred responsibility to manage their personal finances to the glory of God. They are generous givers to the financial support of the church and other worthy causes. They avoid excessive debt or other obligations, which hinder their freedom to respond to God’s leading. They care for the resources of the church with which they may be entrusted. They are conscientious in fulfilling their ministry (2 Timothy 4:5).

### **5. Physical Well-being:**

“I appeal to you, therefore, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship.” (Romans 12:1 NRSV)

“Remembering the admonition of Scripture to be temperate in all things, we shall endeavor to look upon our bodies as temples of God’s spirit... We regard intemperance in any area of living as being inconsistent with the Christian life.” [Moravian Covenant for Christian Living, Paragraph # 30]

The ordained ministry is frequently physically demanding. The ordained care for their bodies’ health and needs. This includes proper balance between times of work and times of rest; the avoidance of the abuse of food, alcohol, tobacco, medicines, etc.; a healthy diet; and attention to exercise.

### **6. Integrity**

“Grant that in all things he/she may serve without reproach, that [God’s] people may be renewed, and that your name may be glorified in the church.” [Liturgy for Ordination of a Deacon]

The ordained are faithful to their commitments, honest, upright, living as examples of love, faith and purity (I Tim. 4:12). Godly conduct is essential to effective ministry for the renewal of God’s people and the glorification of Christ. Therefore, ordained ministers strive always to live with sincerity and integrity.

## **IV. The Ordained Minister in Relation to Others**

### **1. Family**

“We regard it as a sacred obligation to hold to the ideal of Christian marriage given by our Lord in his teaching...We regard Christian marriage as an indissoluble union, which requires lifelong loyalty of the man and the woman towards each other. Because any breaking of the marriage bond involves sin against God and causes human suffering, it is the duty of husband and wife to meet all frictions, offenses, and disagreements with a forgiving spirit that persistently works for reconciliation. Furthermore, if at any time the stability of their marriage is threatened, they are to seek the counsel of their pastor, or other spiritual leaders in the church as soon as possible and before any other action is taken.” [Moravian Covenant for Christian Living, Paragraph # 21, 22]

“As parents, remembering that our children are the property of the Lord Jesus Christ, (Acts 20:28; 1 Peter 1:19) we will bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord (Eph. 6:4) and take all possible care to preserve them from every evil influence. For this reason we will seek to approve ourselves as followers of the Lord Jesus Christ, setting an example for our children. We will give faithful attention to the spiritual development of our children, both in the home and in the church. We will endeavor to conduct regular family devotions.” [Moravian Covenant for Christian Living, Paragraph # 23]

Ordained ministers, both publicly and privately, uphold the importance God gives to the family and to marriage. Those who have spouses and children will honor them as gifts from the Lord with love, respect and commitment, striving always for unity, reconciliation and mutual care. When needed, the ordained will seek the counsel of trusted others for the healing and strengthening of their family relationships. Should such relationships be broken, the ordained are assured of God’s grace, forgiveness and healing as mediated through the church and its bishops. The ordained attend to the welfare and support of their parents and other relatives (1 Tim 5:8).

### **2. Sexuality**

“We view all of life as a sacred trust to be used wisely.” [Moravian Covenant for Christian Living, Paragraph # 10]

Ordained ministers view their sexuality as a gift from God, intended for good, to be held in reverence.

“We will ever strive to manifest love toward all people, to treat them in a kind and friendly manner, and in our dealings with them to approve ourselves upright, honest, and conscientious, as becomes children of God.” [Moravian Covenant for Christian Living, Paragraph # 28]

The ordained view their bodies as the property of the Lord (1 Cor. 6:12-20) and conduct themselves in ways that will honor Christ. With regard to family members and those to whom they minister, they honor every individual’s sexual integrity. This means the ordained avoid promiscuity; manipulating others (both adults and children) for personal sexual gratification; sexual seduction; and sexual harassment, including physical, verbal, or emotional violence.

Ordained ministers, while single, are called to a life of celibacy (sexual abstinence); those who are married are called to a life of sexual fidelity to their spouse.

### **3. The Church**

“Do you intend to participate actively in Christ’s church, serving God all the days of your life?”  
[Liturgy for Baptism]

“Do you freely accept the obligations of an ordained minister to study, pray, care for souls, preach, and administer the sacraments in Christ’s church?” [Liturgy for Ordination of a Deacon]

The ordained minister, as a servant of Christ and the church, is a pilgrim. Consequently, she or he is obligated to keep an open mind and spirit to the call of the church under the Lord’s leading.

The ordained minister is faithful to the ministry of Word and Sacrament. Persons are ordained for leadership among God’s people, in parish and other ministry settings. This leadership includes such activities as prayer, pastoral care, preaching, teaching, evangelism, and administering the work and witness of the church. The ordained minister equips the people of God for the work of ministry, to build both individuals and the church into maturity in Christ (Eph. 4:11-12).

#### **A. Accountability**

“Do you solemnly promise, as you serve in our Unity, to give obedience to the faith and order of the Moravian Church as these are formulated under Scripture and the Holy Spirit by our Synods and constituted authorities?” [Liturgy for Ordination of a Deacon]

Ordained ministers are first and foremost servants of Christ. Their service to Christ is not as individuals, but as members of Christ’s Body, and in particular the *Unitas Fratrum* (Moravian Church). The ordained live under the authority of Scripture and accept the authority both of our Synods and the leaders elected or appointed by Synods.

Spiritual gifts for ministry are confirmed by, and are exercised within the community of faith. Those who are ordained are accountable to God and to those they serve. They seek and accept regular periodic evaluation of their ministry as to its effectiveness in building up the Body of Christ.

#### **B. Power of the Office**

“We will not hate, despise, slander or otherwise injure anyone. We will ever strive to manifest love towards all people, to treat them in a kind and friendly manner, and in our dealings with them to approve ourselves upright, honest, and conscientious, as becomes children of God...Being aware that our witness is made both by what we do and what we avoid doing, we will endeavor to let our manner of life ‘be worthy of the Gospel of Christ’ (Phil. 1:27).”  
[Moravian Covenant for Christian Living, Paragraph #28, 29]

The ordained ministry is a position of trust. Therefore, it is a position of power, which may be subject to abuse. Ordained ministers are careful to live and minister as Christ, who came not to be served but to serve. They do not use their office for personal advantage. They seek to be

aware of, to reveal, and to address any conflict of interest. They preserve confidences that have been entrusted to them. Ordained ministers uphold the sacred responsibility entrusted to them in the administration of church finances. They avoid coercive or manipulative leadership. They strive in all things to lead a life worthy of their calling (Eph. 4:1).

The ordained are aware that the power of their position may be misused for personal sexual gratification. They avoid any sexual activity with those whom they serve.

### **C. Collegiality**

“We consider it to be our responsibility to demonstrate within the congregational life the unity and togetherness created by God who made us one.” [Moravian Covenant for Christian Living, Paragraph # 14]

Ordained ministers recognize and value the variety and interdependence of spiritual gifts in the church. They are open to mutual ministry, cooperation with and support of other servants of Christ, ordained and non-ordained. They demonstrate courtesy to those who precede or follow them in ministry, including the severing of all pastoral responsibilities from previous ministries. They are thankful for the partnership of others in the gospel (Phil. 1:5).

### **D. Ecumenism and Inter-faith Relations**

“We will have fellowship, in all sincerity, with children of God in other Christian churches, and will carefully avoid all disputes respecting opinions and ceremonies peculiar to one or another church. In this fellowship we will cooperate with other churches in the support of public charities or Christian enterprises, which have a just claim upon us as followers of the Lord Jesus Christ.” [Moravian Covenant for Christian Living, Paragraph # 19]

“A Church is and remains a living one when it seeks fellowship with all who confess Christ.” [Essential Features of the Unity, Paragraph # 52]

From its beginning the *Unitas Fratrum* has sought unity with other churches in the work of God’s Kingdom. Wherever ordained ministers serve, they take “every step that brings us nearer the goal of unity in [Christ].” [Moravian Covenant for Christian Living, Paragraph # 20]

Ordained ministers are open to dialogue and cooperation with persons of other faiths.

## **V. The Ordained Minister in Relation to the Community and World**

### **1. Citizenship**

“We will be subject to the civil authorities as the powers ordained by God, in accordance with the admonitions of Scripture, and will in no wise evade the taxes and other obligations which are lawfully required of us... We will faithfully fulfill the responsibilities of our citizenship, among which are intelligent and well-informed voting, a willingness to assume public office, guiding the decisions of government by the expressions of our opinions, and supporting good government by our personal efforts.” [Moravian Covenant for Christian Living, Paragraph # 24, 25]

Ordained ministers willingly fulfill their duties and responsibilities as citizens.



## **2. Prophetic Ministry**

“Though giving our loyalty to the state of which we are citizens, we do recognize a higher loyalty to God and conscience.” [Moravian Covenant for Christian Living, Paragraph # 26]

Just as the prophets spoke God’s word in a particular time and context, ordained ministers are open to the leading of God’s Spirit to declare and act upon God’s prophetic word in the communities in which they live.

## **3. Peace, Justice, and the Care of Creation**

“Jesus Christ maintains in love and faithfulness His commitment to this fallen world. Therefore, we must remain concerned for this world. We may not withdraw from it through indifference, pride or fear. Together with the universal Christian Church the Unitas Fratrum challenges all with the message of the love of God, striving to promote the peace of the world and seeking to attain what is best for all people.” [The Ground of the Unity, Paragraph #10, Serving the World]

“...we have a concern for this world, opening our heart and hand to our neighbors with the message of the love of God, and being ever ready to minister out of our substance to their necessities.”[Moravian Covenant for Christian Living, Paragraph #28]

Ordained ministers work for peace and justice, recognizing the complex interrelation of these issues. They appreciate the gift of God’s creation and promote its preservation as a sacred trust. They uphold the dignity of all people, recognizing that they are created in the image of God (Gen. 1:27). They are open to God’s call to be advocates for the poor, the oppressed, and the outcast. They seek reconciliation and the peaceful resolution of conflict. Ordained ministers are called to be witnesses for Christ and by word and deed communicate the Good News of God’s love to all.

## **VI. Conclusion**

We realize that all areas of Christian life and conduct cannot be covered in this statement of principles by which we live and bear our witness, and we call attention, therefore, to the Christian’s responsibility to follow Christ as Lord of all areas of life. [Moravian Covenant for Christian Living, Paragraph # 33]

Joint Provincial Elders’ Conferences  
Moravian Church in America, Northern and Southern Provinces  
January 31, 1998

## **Endnotes**

1. In the sacrament of Baptism the laying of hands upon the candidate is coupled with the statement: “Now through God’s grace and the pouring out of the Holy Spirit, you have been brought into the covenant; therefore live, yet not you alone, but Christ live in you; and the life

which you live now, live by faith in the Son of God, who loved you and gave his life for you.”  
[Liturgy for Baptism]

2. In the rite of Ordination, at the laying of hands upon the candidate, the bishop prays:  
“Eternal God, through your Son, Jesus Christ, pour out your Holy Spirit upon (name); fill  
him/her with grace and power and make him/her a deacon/presbyter/bishop in your church.”  
[Liturgy for the Ordination of a Deacon]

3. This relationship finds expression in living out the answer to the following questions: “Do  
you believe in God as your Creator and loving heavenly Father, in Jesus Christ as your Savior  
and Lord, and in the Holy Spirit as your Comforter and Sustainer according to the Holy  
Scriptures?” [The Liturgies for the Sacrament of Baptism, Confirmation and Affirmation of  
Baptism], and, “Do you trust that you have been brought by divine grace to know Jesus Christ as  
your Savior?” [Liturgy for Ordination of a Deacon]

**POLICY ON SEXUAL MISCONDUCT OF PERSONS UNDER CALL OR  
APPOINTMENT BY THE PROVINCIAL ELDERS' CONFERENCE/DISTRICT  
BOARDS IN THE MORAVIAN CHURCH,  
NORTHERN AND SOUTHERN PROVINCES**  
(January 31, 1998)

The Joint Provincial Elders' Conferences of the Northern and Southern Provinces, recognizing their responsibility to administer the Church's discipline over ordained ministers and others under Provincial or District appointment, are addressing the particular issues of allegations of sexual misconduct. The great changes in standards in our society and the increased sensitivity to questions of appropriate sexual conduct by persons in positions of leadership and counseling give the matter urgency. The procedures set forth in this policy may also be applicable to other aspects of conduct by ministers where that conduct is injurious to individuals or congregations.

**A. Premises:**

1. Over the years, the worldwide Moravian Church has taken the position that the Church has deep concern for the professional conduct of its clergy. To protect its integrity and to carry out the spirit of Jesus Christ, when He chose and commissioned the apostles, it must act to prevent misconduct from causing harm to church members or the community at-large.
2. While the District Boards in the Northern Province and the Provincial Elders' Conference in the Southern Province assist congregations in finding ministers who meet their descriptions of need in ministering to their congregations, when a minister is installed to work in a local congregation (or a Provincial Board as staff), the District Board or the Province is not in a day-to-day supervisory relationship with that minister. The day-to-day ministry of an ordained minister can only be observed and evaluated by the official Boards of the congregation (or the employing Provincial Board).
3. In every sexual misconduct case, the president and his or her staff will attempt to see that pastoral care is provided to the victim of the misconduct, the victim's family, the minister accused of committing the misconduct, the minister's family, the members of the minister's congregation, the minister's colleagues, and others. However, the president and his or her staff cannot themselves function as a minister, counselor, advocate, attorney, or other "fiduciary" of any of these people. The ultimate responsibility of the president and his or her staff is to the Province, and not to any individual within the Province. If a conflict arises between what is in the Province's interests and what is in the interests of someone else, the president and his or her staff are obligated to act on the Province's behalf.
4. Every report of clergy sexual misconduct involves unique circumstances. This policy merely describes the general approach that the Province will follow in responding to reports of clergy sexual misconduct. It will not be appropriate or even possible for the Province to follow this approach in every case. The Province reserves the right to depart from this policy at any time and for any reason.

## **B. Background:**

When one assumes the role of minister, one is entrusted with a sacred responsibility of caring for the church -- that is, God's people. When parishioners accept one as a minister, the very trust that is normally given the minister results in authority and power over the parishioner and, therefore, the minister has increased responsibility in the ministerial role.

Therefore, for a minister to violate that trust and power for the sake of personal gratification is especially reprehensible. Some ministers do betray that trust placed in them in a variety of ways. In this document, we are particularly concerned for sexual advances toward or contact with those for whose spiritual welfare the minister is responsible, and for those who may be employed by the church or come to it for ministry, even if they are not members. Recognizing that improper sexual conduct is damaging in any circumstance, it is multiplied when the contact comes from a minister from whom there should have been security and wise counsel.

Any sexual activity (including sexual harassment and/or romantic conversation) or contact (not just sexual intercourse) which takes advantage of the vulnerability of the parishioner, employee or other persons looking to one in his or her pastoral role, may very well be a matter of playing upon the vulnerability that comes when one is under the care of a minister.

Any sexual conduct or romantic conversation by a pastor with a minor must be avoided.

## **C. Procedures:**

1. A complainant or anyone who knows or suspects with good cause that a minister may have been involved in sexual misconduct should report that knowledge or suspicion to the President of the Provincial Elders' Conference in the Southern Province or to the appropriate District Board president in the Northern Province.

a. If, for any reason, any complainant should be hesitant to contact the appropriate president, there will also be made available a "First Contact Team" (a group of men and women, clergy and lay, Moravians and non-Moravians) who would agree to be available to receive reports of sexual misconduct from complainants who are uncomfortable with contacting the president directly.

b. However, it will be stressed that these people are acting on behalf of the Province and that any information that they are given will be shared with the president (unless it is the president who is being accused of sexual misconduct, in which case someone else would have to be designated to receive the information).

2. Upon receipt of the complaints of sexual misconduct, the first action should be taken by the president or a designated back-up person. (Obviously, if the president is being accused, the back-up person will have to act.)

a. The president (who may choose to be accompanied) will seek to meet with the complainant, (who also may choose to be accompanied) will seek to gain the complainant's trust, will obtain

specific details of the alleged misconduct, and make confidential preliminary inquiries about the minister.

b. The president will then approach the accused minister personally with what has been learned and inform him/her that this contact is pursuant to the Policy on Sexual Misconduct. If the minister does not deny the allegations and the president deems a resignation appropriate, such resignation could be requested and received.

3. If this initial contact with the complainant and the accused clergy person does not result in resolving the case, then the president will turn to one or more "Response Teams" that have been appointed to investigate such accusations. The Response Team:

a. Shall be appointed by the District Executive Board or the Provincial Elders' Conference and will normally consist of at least two persons (at least one man and one woman, at least one lay person, and would appropriately include a clergy person; a mental health professional might very well be appointed to such a Response Team); and

b. Will normally receive training in crisis intervention and in interviewing alleged offenders, victims, and witnesses.

c. Response Team members will not normally be assigned to investigate any accusation where their judgment or objectivity may be impaired due to a relationship with or knowledge of any of the parties or witnesses to a complaint.

d. The Response Team will investigate the accusations thoroughly and will give equal weight to fairness to both the alleged victim and the accused minister.

(1) The Response Team will be responsible for meeting with the alleged victim and any persons identified by the alleged victim who may help supply witness and/or evidence of the truth of the accusation.

(2) The accused minister would be supplied with written notice of the accusations made, and to learn what verbal and written evidence is being considered and, then, be given the right to respond to that evidence, to confront the witnesses (and within reason) the right to question those witnesses.

(3) The alleged victim should also be informed of what the minister has said. Each party should have the right to expose obvious lies, to review and correct written evidence, and to know the identities of those who are supporting the adversarial party.

e. The Response Team, in carrying out its work, will be careful that copious notes and record keeping are done of all that is said. It might be desirable to have a recording of all testimonies and evidence from which an exact transcript can be prepared.

f. The Response Team will act promptly and thoroughly in completing its task. Should the completion of its task require an extended period, it may be appropriate to provide a preliminary report to the District Board/Conference.

4. If the accusation alleges sexual abuse by a clergy person of a minor or vulnerable adult, the president will notify relevant law enforcement authorities to the extent required by the laws of the relevant state.

5. The president of the Board/Conference will usually:

- a. Communicate with appropriate persons to provide pastoral care to the alleged victim and any appropriate family members and to the accused and the family of the accused;
- b. If deemed appropriate, immediately place the accused on paid leave of absence for a period not to exceed 60 days, with compensation to be paid by the Provincial Elders' Conference/District Executive Board, making clear that this action is without prejudice and does not imply the guilt or innocence of the accused;
- c. Notify the Board leaders of the congregation in which the accused is serving (or if service is with a board of the Church, the responsible board).

6. As soon as the Response Team feels it has done a thorough investigation, even though it may have some remaining work to do, it will make a report to the District Executive Board/Provincial Elders' Conference.

7. The District Board/Provincial Elders' Conference based on this final report (or if it deems it necessary to act on the preliminary report):

- a. May choose to meet with the accuser, the alleged victim (if other than the accuser), and the accused. The accused shall be entitled to a hearing before the Provincial Elders' Conference/District Executive Board. Generally, the Board/Conference will then make a determination as to whether the accusation has been sustained.
- b. When a determination has been made, the president of the Board/Conference normally will immediately inform the accuser, the alleged victim (if other than the accuser), and the accused. If at all possible, this should be a personal meeting between the president and the parties involved; and
- c. If the determination is that the accusation is substantiated, then in a personal meeting with the victim, the president will express the Church's deepest regret and discuss appropriate responses of the Church to assist in the victim's healing. If the accusation is not substantiated, the Board/Conference will undertake reasonable efforts to bring healing and to restore the good name of the one falsely accused.
- d. The president will meet with the offender and will discuss disciplinary action that the Board/Conference intends to take.
- e. The offender shall have the right to appeal.
- f. The president, if appropriate, will meet with the offender's spouse and/or family to discuss how the Church may assist them.

8. Appeals:

- a. Should the accused offender request an appeal, a decision to reverse the initial conclusion will be based on the submission of new testimony, new written evidence, or a new argument.
- b. The accuser will be permitted to appeal an unfavorable decision for the same reasons.

9. Procedure for the Care of a Congregation:

- a. The Board/Conference shall seek to balance the privacy of the victim(s) against the importance of openness with the congregation.
- b. Appropriate persons, trained in crisis ministry, shall be identified by the Board/ Conference to assist congregations through the trauma they may be expected to experience in such situations.
- c. The Board leadership of the congregation should be made aware of the situation as soon as possible.
- d. An open meeting would ordinarily be held with the congregation as soon as possible. The meeting shall be convened by the appropriate Board leader of the congregation, who shall call upon the Board/Conference president or designee to explain the purpose of the meeting. A leader for the trauma debriefing process would then be introduced and lead the congregation through the following: presentation of the facts of the situation, invitation for expression of feelings, exploration of repercussions of the event, placement of the event within a context or perspective, and planning for the future, including the scheduling of a follow-up session, ways ministerial needs of the congregation are to be met, and description of resources available to those who may need counseling or other specialized attention. The leader would be available to groups or individuals following the meeting.
- e. The Board/Conference will continue communication with the lay leadership of the congregation to assess the healing process and to identify any areas needing attention.

10. Care of Offending Minister:

- a. If inappropriate behavior has been determined, confronting an offending minister with the disciplinary action of the Provincial Elders' Conference should be understood as a pastoral and caring act of the Church. It provides the greatest potential for both vocational and personal redemption and healing. The Provincial Elders' Conference may also at this stage suggest a therapeutic evaluation and/or treatment. If accepted, this procedure should be clearly communicated and monitored, as appropriate, over time. A therapist qualified to deal with sexual offenses and sensitive to issues of professional ethics should be selected by the offending minister from a list provided by the Provincial Elders' Conference. A bishop of the Church or a clergy person from another denomination may also be selected with the assurance that such a one need not report to the Provincial Elders' Conference.
- b. Throughout all the above procedure, the Provincial Elders' Conference should encourage the accused minister to seek out the counsel and assistance of qualified professionals and also to seek spiritual counsel and support from a bishop of the Church, recognizing that admission of a problem is a necessary step to recovery.

11. The complete records of the Response Team's investigation will be turned over to the District Board/Provincial Elders' Conference, and the Board/Conference will have also kept careful records of its discussions and actions.

The Response Team, Board, and Provincial Elders' Conferences will be expected to keep all the discussion in confidentiality since individual's, families', and the Church's well-being are wrapped up in these serious matters.

12. Throughout this whole process, the Church believes the redemptive power of God is at work, and therefore the Church will ever strive to create conditions where clergy and laity alike feel

this power present, and find members of Christ's Body eager to be instruments of justice and healing.

Joint Provincial Elders' Conferences  
Moravian Church in America, Northern and Southern Provinces  
January 31, 1998



## **Allocations for Provincial Ministry**

(Resolution #6, 2014 Synod)

Each congregation's Provincial Share shall be based on its most recent three-year moving average revenue history. The total Provincial Share requested from each congregation for the past three audited years shall be divided by its Annual Operating Receipts as defined by the Provincial Treasurer (See Exhibit A, Excerpt of the "Receipts" portion of the Annual Church Audit Form, and Exhibit B, "Definition of Annual Operating Receipts (Line 1 Income, attached.) for the past three audited years to determine the percentage given. This three-year moving average percentage shall be applied to the Annual Operating Receipts, above, for the last audited year to determine the requested amount for the next budget year. The total amount required from the congregations using this method shall form the basis for establishing the Provincial Budget along with other Provincial sources of income.

All congregations are required to contribute a minimum of 10% and a maximum of 20% of their Annual Operating Receipts, above, as their Provincial Share. The Finance and Administrative Support Committee, in conjunction with the Provincial Support Services Board and the Provincial Elders' Conference, shall work directly with those congregations falling below the 10% minimum to develop and implement programs to achieve the minimum requirement.

The Finance and Administrative Support Committee shall review the status of congregational giving and ongoing effectiveness of the Provincial Share methodology and make recommendations to the Provincial Support Services Board for necessary action or changes.

The Provincial Elders Conference shall be given the authority to make any adjustments in the required amounts of Provincial Share, as determined by the formula prior to the submission of the requirements to the congregations when, in the opinion of the Provincial Elders Conference, such adjustments are needed for an equitable allocation.

The Provincial Elders Conference shall be given the authority to adjust the amount required of a congregation if, after consultation with the Board of Trustees or Church Board of a congregation, the circumstances warrant an adjustment.

The Provincial Support Services Board may be given the authority by the Provincial Elders' Conference to make adjustments to this policy during the Inter-synodal period.

**Exhibit A**

[Excerpt of the "Receipts" Portion of the Annual Church Audit Form]

**RECEIPTS:**

- 1. Annual Operating Receipts:
  - a. Pledges and Offerings (including pledged, unpledged, & loose offerings) \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. Memorial Gifts not designated to a non-operating fund \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. Receipts from fundraising not designated to a non-operating fund \_\_\_\_\_
  - d. Transfers into operating account from investment or non-operating funds \_\_\_\_\_
  - e. Income from operating account funds \_\_\_\_\_
  - f. Receipts from rentals not designated to a non-operating fund \_\_\_\_\_
- TOTAL ANNUAL OPERATING RECEIPTS (Total Line 1) \_\_\_\_\_
  
- 2. Receipts into Trust or Endowment Funds \_\_\_\_\_
- 3. Receipts into Designated or Restricted Funds \_\_\_\_\_
- 4. Investment Income, gains/losses designated to a non-operating fund \_\_\_\_\_
- 5. Sales Tax Refunds \_\_\_\_\_
- 6. Rental receipts designated to a non-operating fund \_\_\_\_\_
- 7. Deferred Receipts / Prepaid pledges \_\_\_\_\_
- 8. Miscellaneous \_\_\_\_\_
- 9. [blank] \_\_\_\_\_
  
- 10. TOTAL RECEIPTS (lines 1 to 9)** \_\_\_\_\_

## Exhibit B

### Definition of “Annual Operating Receipts” (Line 1 Income)

The definition of what has been termed “Line 1 Income” shall mean all components of “Annual Operating Receipts” as broken out under Line 1 on the budget form. Annual Operating Receipts shall include receipts garnered for the general operations of the church congregation, as follows:

1. Offering Plate Collections, in the year received:
  - a. Regular pledged tithes and offerings of church members;
  - b. Unpledged tithes and offerings of church members;
  - c. Offerings/donations from non-members of the congregation;
  - d. All loose offerings;
2. Memorial Gifts not designated to a specific non-operating cause;
3. Fundraising Income not designated to a specific non-operating cause;
4. Transfers into the Operating Account from investment accounts or other funds – if funds are originally classified as “non-operating,” but are subsequently transferred into the operating account, they should be treated as “Line 1 Income” when they are moved to the operating account;
5. Income on operating funds (e.g. interest on the operating fund checking account);
6. Rental Income if not designated for a specific non-operating cause.

### Exceptions

The following items shall be excluded from “Annual Operating Receipts” when received:

1. Irregular gifts, tithes, offerings of a significant amount – for example, someone makes an abnormally large gift or donation, whether restricted or not, which greatly exceeds a regular offering amount, and which the congregation does not immediately need to meet regular operating expenses (including provincial share);
2. Deferred Income (i.e. Prepaid Pledges) – that is, contributions received in one year that are prepaid for the following year. These should be shown on a separate line item (not Line 1 Income) for current year contributions, and cash recorded when received. Deferred Income items would then be re-classified (transferred) into “Annual Operating Receipts” the following year;
3. Memorial Gifts designated to a specific non-operating cause;
4. Fundraising Income designated to a specific non-operating cause;
5. Rental Income designated to a specific non-operating cause;
6. Income and capital gains associated with non-operating funds, which are not transferred to the operating account;
7. Benevolence gifts designated for a specific non-operating cause;
8. Gifts, Trusts, Bequests designated by the donor for the benefit of specific non-operating causes;
9. Sales tax refunds;
10. Funds raised for capital campaigns.