

A Memorabilia of 2010

For the second year in a row, the nuts and bolts topic of Provincial structure leads off a Memorabilia of “things worthy of remembrance” for the Moravian Church, Southern Province. And that is as it should be when the entire structure of the Province is being revamped.

For 2010, it has been a matter of putting into practice the sweeping reorganizing of the Province adopted by the Special Synod of 2009. Gone is the longstanding structure of Provincial Boards, as the Board of Evangelism and Home Missions, Archives Board, Board of Christian Education, even the Provincial Financial Board, all held their final meetings in 2010. In their place are three new entities — Provincial Support Services, Board of Cooperative Ministries, and Regional Conferences of Churches — aimed at providing a new framework of shared ministry.

In the new structure, Synod continues to give strategic direction for the Southern Province. PEC has been enlarged to seven members from the former five, and will implement Synod strategies and provide oversight for Provincial Support Services (treasurer’s office, archives, and human services), the Board of Cooperative Ministries (ministry and mission), and congregations. Two affiliated boards will be Laurel Ridge and Sunnyside Ministry. Last May new Regional Conferences of Churches began meeting, with congregations organizing by region or interest for mutual support in ministry.

The transition from old Provincial structure to new cooperative ministry has gone very smoothly, and for that we can thank the long hours and hard work of the Implementation Steering Committee along with PEC and the old Boards. The goal remains to “realize our potential, thereby making our ministries more available and active by improving communication, polity, unity and community building, and discover how we might better organize ourselves for the service of Christ.”

The first good test of the new system was the regular quadrennial Provincial Synod, meeting last September 9-12 at Black Mountain, North Carolina. Under the watchword of, “God is making all things new,” Synod set about confirming the new Provincial structure by making the necessary changes to the Southern Province constitution and Book of Order. In addition, Synod addressed financial concerns and human resources needs and passed a resolution better defining and clarifying its own powers and responsibilities. All resolutions of Synod are posted on the Southern Province web site, www.mcsp.org.

In an action that we will probably never see again, Synod got to elect all seven new members of the newly expanded Provincial Elders Conference, only one of whom has had PEC experience (though all have wide experience in serving the Moravian Church on other boards and committees). For president of PEC, Synod elected Br. David Guthrie, late director of the former Board of Evangelism and Home Missions, to succeed Br. Wayne Burkette, who was retiring after one term as president.

Lengthy debate preceded Synod’s resolution for full communion with the Episcopal Church. Though it did not satisfy everyone, it did continue the ecumenical tradition of the Moravian Church going back to the earliest days of the Ancient Unity.

But the life of a Church is not just its structure or Synod resolutions. It is in its worship and service throughout the year. And 2010 gives us ample evidence of a very active Southern Province of the Moravian Church.

Beginning at the first of the year *The Moravian* magazine arrived in our mailboxes in eye-catching full color. The informative articles and attractive layout make *The Moravian* eagerly anticipated every month it is published. After nine years as editor of *The Moravian* and executive director of the Interprovincial Board of Communication, Deanna Hollenbach began a new chapter in her life with marriage and a move.

Succeeding her was Mike Riess, who professes a love for graphic design, print production, web-site management, etc., and history (yeah!).

Several other changes took place during 2010. Mike Warren resigned as director of Laurel Ridge after 10 years of service and a brand-new Higgins Lodge. Will Sibert stepped down as executive director after guiding the Board of World Mission for six years and opening mission service to more people with wider variety of skills. After 12 years of serving two PEC presidents — and many pastors, church boards, and congregations of the Southern Province — Bob Hunter was “given permission” to retire as assistant to the president of PEC. One Board not touched by the restructuring of the Southern Province was the Provincial Women’s Board, but change came nonetheless when after 30 years as its administrative assistant, Mildred White retired — and brought a bunch of stuff to the Archives.

Also in January 2010 a deadly earthquake devastated the island nation of Haiti, which brought an outpouring of support and relief efforts funneled through the Moravian Volunteer Resources of the Board of World Mission. Don’t let volunteer ministries director Mark Ebert hear you say there is nothing you can do, for you could be doing flood relief work in Nashville, Tennessee, reroofing a Moravian church in Labrador, continuing rebuilding on the Gulf Coast from hurricane Katrina, or teaching English in China.

Closer to home, Sunnyside Ministry benefited from the work of Moravian Volunteer Resources (much of it the New Philadelphia division) with the demolition and reconstruction of its facilities on Haled Street in Winston-Salem. The result is a much enlarged space for reception and interview areas as well as more storage space for food and clothing. A fervent wish is that someday director Tommy Cole and his Sunnyside Ministry staff and volunteers will have nothing more to do. But until that happy day bear this in mind: For the first 11 months of 2010 Sunnyside Ministry conducted 5,611 interviews, 1,690 of them first timers. The total clients interviewed represented 15,536 household members. Sunnyside gave 3,701 grocery orders, providing food for 10,784 people. Clothes or household goods were given to 2,139 families or 6,179 people. And financial assistance totaling \$451,914 was given to 2,554 clients. Sad to say, the need continues to grow.

From “the former” Board of Christian Education, as he described it, director Rick Sides reports a busy year. The fourth annual Leadership Focus was held in Winston-Salem and in Florida. This year’s theme was “Following the Leader . . . leading the followers.” Christian Education hosted the Mid-Atlantic Association of Presbyterian Church Educators in October at Laurel Ridge. Among the 40 participants were 10 Moravian educators. Forty-eight college agers, 22 of them from the Southern Province, are taking a New Year’s CONVO visit to the Holy Land. We wish them safe journey.

Br. Sides also reminds us that the Resource Center at 500 S. Church Street in Winston-Salem continues in operation, and has organized materials and resources (including bibliographies) for building “healthy congregations.” The Resource Center is where we can get our Daily Texts every fall. It is also where we can buy the new Moravian guide for family living entitled *Loving Hearts United*. This publication of the Interprovincial Board of Communication focuses on activities outside of church that lead to a path of faith in our daily lives.

For one of its most ambitious projects, Board of Christian Education headed for the great outdoors with a garden ministry, led by Lisa Mullen, director of children and family ministries. Each Tuesday evening from 6 till dusk participants gathered on the old Agnes Belo lot in Salem to rake, hoe, and harvest a bounty of produce to share with the needy. That time happens to be when the Salem Band practices across Bank Street in the “former” Board of Christian Education building, so music is provided.

The Salem garden ministry happens to be on property owned by Salem Congregation, which of course had to give its blessing for the project before the first spade was turned. But Gene Johnson, chair of Salem Congregation’s Central Board of Trustees, expressed approval this way: “How about the enthusiastic success of the

Salem Youth Gardeners on Cedar Avenue. It is amazing. Incredibly, it was planned by Lawyers, a Lady Preacher, and helpers. They are not even fazed by wire grass, poison oak, record breaking heat, and drought! Now they are asking permission to plant a fruit orchard and do beekeeping. May the Lord bless them all, each and every one."

Usually Salem Congregation, the collegial association of Moravian churches in downtown Winston-Salem, stays so much in the background quietly maintaining the Salem God's Acre, sponsoring the Great Sabbath Service of Music, the Easter Sunrise Service in Salem, and the New Year's Eve Watchnight Service, that even lifelong Moravians often say, "Who?" when Salem Congregation is mentioned. Shame on us. Salem Congregation remains a vital part of the Southern Province long after it grew out of the original Salem church, now called Home Church, to encompass other downtown Winston-Salem churches. In fact, the latest member church of Salem Congregation, as of last April 22, is our seventh oldest church of the Southern Province, St. Philips, begun in 1822 as a mission congregation to those of African heritage in Wachovia. This is as it should be, for Salem Congregation also maintains the "new" African Church graveyard east of Salem Cemetery, where Phoebe, one of the first three members of St. Philips, is buried.

Can you imagine bubbly Sr. Nola Reed Knouse actually "dreading" giving a year-end summary of activities at the Moravian Music Foundation? Hold onto your hats, here goes her whirlwind account: "The Moravian Music Foundation has had a very active year, with several notable accomplishments. We sponsored our first ever European Concert Tour, with 70 participants singing five concerts to very enthusiastic audiences in Bethlehem (Pennsylvania), Prague, Herrnhut, and Niesky. Last April 58 low brass players spent a long, hot weekend recording Advent and Christmas tunes at Salemtowne, resulting in "Once He Came in Blessing," a CD which was very favorably reviewed in the *Winston-Salem Journal*, and of which sales are quite brisk. [Actually a hit with more than 1,300 CDs sold. If you haven't gotten your dozen and a half copies yet, drop in at the Archives (excuse us) at the Music Foundation, and pick up your copy. Remember, the more CDs you buy (10 or more), the cheaper they are. End commercial for Sr. Knouse.]

"In a decision" [Sr. Knouse continues] "which will have long-lasting effects, the Moravian Music Foundation Board of Trustees (at the request of the PECs of both Provinces) voted to assume full responsibility and oversight of Moravian Music Festivals, beginning with the 24th Festival scheduled for July 14-20, 2013, in Bethlehem. Plans are under way for 'Moravian Music Weekends' at Laurel Ridge this coming February and at Lake Mills, Wisconsin, next July. MMF continues to work with the Moramus Chorale (North Carolina) and Unitas Chorale (Pennsylvania) as well as with other performing groups, and to assist church musicians and researchers in many and various ways!"

One thing Sr. Knouse overlooked in her busy schedule is the publication of *Singing from the Heart*, a new shorter hymnal of the Moravian Church. Not only does it contain "old favorites" of diehard Moravians, but it also features new liturgies for the church year in surprisingly updated and refreshing language. All that, and in a handy spiral-bound soft-cover booklet selling at a dirt-cheap \$9.70 including sales tax at the Music Foundation. [Archives folks grouse it is so good it should sell at \$15 at the least, so you had better get yours before the price goes up.]

Last April the Moravian Archives turned out *Records of the Moravian among the Cherokees*. Hallelujah, at last! This was only volume 1 of a multi-volume collection of the Moravian Church's century-long mission to the Cherokee, encompassing the years of first contact and exploration, 1752-1802. Any day now we expect arrival of volume 2, telling of the new mission and the arrival of Br. and Sr. Gambold, who made the mission a success until the Trail of Tears and removal to the Indian Territory.

While Provincial agencies give direction and leadership to the Southern Province, it is the churches themselves and their members who make it all possible. And so let us look briefly at the activities and achievements of the Province's churches.

Director/minister John Jackman of **Trinity** late last year saw the premiere of the motion picture *Wesley*. This film biography of the early ministry of John Wesley was filmed almost entirely within a five-mile radius of Trinity and featured such landmarks as Old Salem, Historic Bethabara Park, and Centenary United Methodist Church.

A number of Moravian churches are investing in the future with capital improvements. Despite any bedrock (which it blasted away in 1948) **Union Cross** is aiming to build a new family life center which will entail a larger parking lot, new portico, and pavilion. On March 14 **Enterprise** dedicated its spanking-new easy-access fellowship building. This is definitely a step up from the cramped fellowship hall down a narrow staircase in the basement of the original (and only) 1898 church building. Then on March 20 Enterprise held its first chicken pie and ham supper in its new fellowship hall, and the crowds lined out the door like **Friedberg**. Enterprise's supper and new building were such a hit that an hour before closing the unthinkable happened: the food ran out. After years of planning, fund raising, and finally building, **Clemmons** completed its new worship center, with dedication on October 10. The building fund began October 2002 — that's eight years ago — with \$124,000. After more than \$2.1 million in bills paid, the fund still has almost \$50,000 remaining. That's a lot of contributions in between. After a month of worship in its fellowship hall, **Oak Grove** got to move back into its newly renovated sanctuary on March 21, and reports are it is truly beautiful, very warm and inviting. In fact, all went so well that Oak Grove is setting its sights on an enlarged capital campaign for a new kitchen, restrooms, and covered drop-off. **Konnoak Hills** refurbished and upgraded its organ to the tune of \$38,600. **King** made it official to purchase a full-blown pipe organ to accompany its choir and congregation for \$440,000. **New Hope** (Newton) installed a new organ in its sanctuary, culminating more than a year of fund-raising. Good things are happening at **Moravia**, with a complete renovation of the parsonage, the basement waterproofed, and the exterior landscaped. The entire interior was gutted and redone with a new bathroom added and hardwood floors installed throughout the home. The project was completed at a cost of \$29,000 with the members doing all of the work except the waterproofing.

Finally "Invite a Friend" Sunday was October 17 in most churches (October 24 in some). That is when we got to bring friends, neighbors, co-workers to church. After all, the greatest "growth engine" for the Lord is we who follow Him. And really we can "Invite a Friend" every Sunday.

— Richard W. Starbuck
Moravian Archives
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