

THE
BOOK OF ORDER
of the
Moravian Church
(Unitas Fratrum)
Northern Province



2018
(Contains changes made at the 2018 Provincial Synod)

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CHAPTER I

THE UNITY

(This portion of the *Book of Order* consists of excerpts from the *Church Order of the Unitas Fratrum* published by order of the Unity Synod held at Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, August 13-25, 1995. The language used conforms to that of the *Church Order*. Paragraph numbers in parentheses are those used in the *Church Order*.)

INTRODUCTION

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 recognizes 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.

PART I

THE GROUND OF THE UNITY

(Originally accepted by the General Synod held in Bethlehem, PA, USA, August 13-September 10, 1957. Revised by the Unity Synod held on Antigua, West Indies, July 3-15, 1988, and by the Unity Synod held in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, August 13-25, 1995.)

- ¶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 mankind by proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ. It recognizes 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 the 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 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. 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 recognizes the Word of the Cross as the center 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 recognizes 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 Savior. 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 fathers 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 recognize 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 ourselves hinder the message and power of the Gospel. We recognize 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 recognizes 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 Neighbor

- ¶9. Our Lord Jesus entered into this world's misery to bear 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 neighbors, 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 recognizes 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

- ¶12. (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.
- ¶13. (51) 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. 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.

- ¶14. (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 neighbors and seeks fellowship with all who confess Christ;
 - proclaims to the world the tidings concerning the Savior;
 - awaits wholeheartedly the coming of its Lord as King.
- ¶15. (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.
- ¶16. (54) Such congregations are "living stones" out of which the Lord will build His Church on earth.
- ¶17. (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.
- ¶18. (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

- ¶19. (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 (*I Cor. 1:18, 30*);

the word of reconciliation as God making peace with His whole creation (*I John 2:2*);
the word of personal union with the Savior as the vitalizing and molding 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.

- ¶20. (101) (a) From its beginning, the Unitas Fratrum has emphasized fellowship among its members. It recognizes 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.

- ¶21. (102) (a) In this fellowship, the Unitas Fratrum has received a new and transformed congregational 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 recognize our responsibility to the civil authorities insofar as human law does not contradict the "government of the Savior."
- (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.

- ¶22. (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 the ministers and their fellow-laborers, every member who has experienced the saving love of his 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 judgment 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 offenses and not the punishment of the individual.
 - (e) In the exercise of corrective discipline the following aspects are recognized:
 - 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.
- ¶23. (104)
- (a) 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.
 - (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 recognizes and confesses that in reality it is its Lord and Head, Jesus Christ, Who calls and ordains, whether in the case of 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

- ¶24. (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.
- ¶25. (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 recognizes 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 recognizes 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.

PART III

CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITAS FRATRUM

Chapter I

The Unity and its Provinces

A. General Features

- ¶26. (200) The Unitas Fratrum consists of Provinces.
- ¶27. (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 (cf. ¶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.

- ¶28. (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 organization.
- ¶29. (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.

B. Tasks, Rights, and Duties of the Provinces

- ¶30. (204) The individual congregations or members of the Unitas Fratrum are such by virtue of their membership in one of the Provinces.
- ¶31. (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.
- ¶32. (206) 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.

¶33. (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. An affiliated Province is privileged to have a Provincial Conference (or Church Conference). It may at any time apply to the Unity Synod or Unity Board for the right to elect its own Synod.

¶34. (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.

¶35. (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.

¶36. (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 herein set forth (cf. ¶33, ¶34, ¶35). Such associations are mutually agreed upon by the participating Provinces. The Unity Synod shall be informed of such associations.

¶37. (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.

¶38. (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.

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

¶40. (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.

- ¶41. (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.
- ¶42. (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.

- ¶43. (217) Each Province of the Unity is entitled to apply for membership in the World Council of Churches.

C. Extent of the Church

- ¶44. (218) The Provinces of the Unitas Fratrum are:
- (a) The Czech Province (1457, renewed 1862): Jednota Bratrská in the Czech Republic.
 - (b) The European Continental Province (Evangelische Brüder-Unität) (1722): Sweden, Denmark, Estonia, Germany, The Netherlands, Switzerland.
 - (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.
 - (d) The Suriname Province (1735): The Evangelische Broedergemeente in Suriname and the Netherlands Antilles.
 - (e) The Southern Africa Province of the Moravian Church in Southern Africa: Western Region (Evangeliese Broederkerk 1737, renewed 1792), Eastern Region (1828).
 - (f) The Northern Province of the Moravian Church in America (1741): The Moravian Church in the District of Columbia and in the States of New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota, North Dakota, Arizona, and California, and in the Dominion of Canada, the Provinces of Alberta and Ontario.
 - (g) The British Province (1742): The Moravian Church in the United Kingdom and Eire.

- (h) The Southern Province of the Moravian Church in America (1753): The Moravian Church in the States of North Carolina, South Carolina, Virginia, Florida, and Georgia.
- (i) The Jamaican Province (1754): The Moravian Church in Jamaica.
- (j) The Labrador Province (1771): The Moravian Church in Labrador and Newfoundland, Canada.
- (k) The Nicaraguan Province (1849): The Moravian Church in Nicaragua.
- (l) The Guyana Province (1878): The Moravian Church in Guyana.
- (m) The Alaska Province (1885): The Moravian Church in Alaska.
- (n) The Southern Tanzania Province (1891): The Moravian Church in Southern Tanzania.
- (o) The Western Tanzania Province (1897): The Moravian Church in Western Tanzania.
- (p) The Honduran Province (1930): The Moravian Church in Honduras.
- (q) The South Western Tanzania Province (1978), established from the Southern Tanzania Province: The Moravian Church in South-West Tanzania.
- (r) The Costa Rica Province (1980): The Moravian Church in Costa Rica.
- (s) The Rukwa Tanzania Province (1986), established from the Western Tanzania Province: Moravian Church in Rukwa Tanzania.
- (t) The Moravian Church in Tanzania was established as an overall structure for the Provinces of Tanzania in 1986.

¶45. (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 in North India (1853): In addition to the congregations already existing in Ladakh, work was started in 1959 among Tibetan refugees at Rajpur. The work of the Moravian Church in Northern India is under the supervision of the Provincial Board of the British Province on behalf of the Unity.
- (b) The Moravian Church Rehabilitation Center, Star Mountain near Ramallah (1981): formerly the Leper Work on Star Mountain near Ramallah (started 1867 in Jerusalem).

¶46. (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. It is supported by a Board which includes representatives of the cooperating denominations, including the Board of World Mission of the Moravian Church in America.

The CHURCH ORDER OF THE UNITAS FRATRUM, published after each Unity 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. It is available from the Moravian Church Center, Bethlehem, PA.

CHAPTER II

PROVINCIAL REGULATIONS

THE CONSTITUTION OF THE PROVINCE

(First adopted by the Provincial Synod of 1908 and modified thereafter by subsequent Synod legislation.)

Name and Title

- ¶100. The name and title of this province of the Unity shall be “The Moravian Church-Northern Province.”

The Boundaries of the Province

- ¶101. All Moravian Congregations in the District of Columbia and in the States of New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota, North Dakota, Arizona, and California, and the Canadian Provinces of Alberta and Ontario shall constitute the Moravian Church-Northern Province. This territory may be changed as the Provincial Synod may direct.

The Government of the Province

- ¶102. The authority of the Unity Synod of the Moravian Church in all things assigned to it by the constitution of the Church is supreme; in all other business or affairs pertaining to the Church in the province, the government of the province is vested in the Provincial Synod and in its subordinate synods, conferences, boards, or officials.

The Provincial Synod

- ¶103. The Provincial Synod is the highest judicatory in the province, with supreme legislative powers in all matters not committed to the Unity Synod; and shall consist of elected delegates and official members; shall have power to determine the number and qualifications of its own membership, to prescribe the bodies which shall be entitled to representation in its membership, the basis of representation, the manner of election, and the persons who shall be entitled to membership by virtue of office.
- ¶104. The Provincial Synod shall have power to fix the time and place of its meeting; to elect a governing board to be called the Provincial Elders’ Conference; to create districts and district synods, enact laws and regulations governing membership, powers, duties, and functions; to elect or appoint, or make rules for electing or appointing, such other boards or officials as it may deem advisable for administering its government or the proper management of its finances and institutions; to elect the delegates which the province is entitled to send to the Unity Synod; to elect Bishops; to have the oversight and direction of the agencies, institutions, and funds of the province; to control all church publications, subject to the established doctrine and liturgy;

to regulate the organization of congregations; and to exercise general supervision over all church activity in the province.

The Provincial Elders' Conference

- ¶105. The powers and duties of the Provincial Elders' Conference, incorporated as "The Moravian Church-Northern Province," are the following: — As the executive of the Provincial Synod, to administer the government of the Church under the rules and regulations adopted by the Provincial Synod; to see that the enactments of the Unity and Provincial Synods are faithfully executed in the province; to guard against deviations from the spirit and principles of the Church; to appoint and supervise all the ministers of the province under the rules and regulations of the Provincial Synod; to pass upon the admission of congregations to the provincial rights and privileges; to convene the Provincial Synod in an emergency; to provide for its temporary organization; and to perform the duties of a "Standing Committee on Credentials."

Amendments

- ¶106. (a) Any proposed alterations in this constitution, insofar as such alterations are within the powers of the Provincial Synod, shall be referred to a "Committee of Nine on Constitution," to be elected by ballot at the synod. When this committee shall have reported upon the proposed alterations, the same shall be read in synod, discussed and voted upon on three separate days, and shall be considered as adopted only when at each reading and voting three-fourths of the members present vote in their favor.
- (b) Any proposed alterations in the Bylaws shall be considered as adopted only by a vote of two-thirds of the members present at a regular session of the Provincial Synod.

BYLAWS

(First adopted by the Provincial Synod of 1913 and revised by later synods)

THE PROVINCIAL SYNOD

Definition

- ¶107. The Provincial Synod is the highest judicatory in the province with supreme legislative powers in all matters not committed to the Unity Synod, and the Provincial Elders' Conference, which it shall elect, is in every respect responsible to it.

Membership of Synod

- ¶108. (a) By Virtue of Office.
1. All ordained ministers of the Moravian Church-Northern Province serving under call, appointment, or in specialized ministries.
 2. Any other persons in pastoral service under appointment by a District Executive Board.

3. All bishops residing in the Northern Province not included in 1. above.
4. All lay members of the Provincial Elders' Conference and all District Executive Board members.
5. The President of Moravian College, a representative of Moravian Academy, a representative of Linden Hall School for Girls, a representative of the Provincial Women's Board, the Provincial Comptroller, and the Provincial Chancellor, provided they are members of the Moravian Church.

(b) By Election

1. One or more lay persons selected by each congregation on a ratio of one person for each 250 confirmed communicant members or fraction thereof. The number of delegates shall be based on the congregation's most recent Annual Report.
2. Retired ministers holding membership in a Moravian Church in the Northern Province will elect 10% of their members to represent them as official delegates. The method for nomination and election will be determined by the Provincial Elders' Conference. The expenses for these delegates will be paid by the Northern Province.

(c) By Selection

1. Two youth delegates holding membership in a Moravian Church in the Eastern District.
2. Two youth delegates holding membership in a Moravian Church in the Western District.
3. Two youth delegates holding membership in a Moravian Church in the Canadian District.

Each respective district shall determine delegate selection.

Time, Place, Organization, and Business

- ¶109. (a) The Provincial Synod shall meet once every four years. Unless otherwise ordered by the Synod, the Provincial Elders' Conference is directed to fix the date and place of such meeting.
- (b) The officers of Provincial Synod, the committees, and committee officers shall be appointed by the Provincial Elders' Conference prior to the convening of Synod.
- (c) The rules of order published in the most recent edition of the *Book of Order*, and amended by subsequent synods, shall be in force whenever Synod is in session, without a

motion to adopt.

- (d) Business may be presented to the Provincial Synod by provincial boards and officials, by the district synods through district executive boards, by congregations and individuals in the form of memorials, and by individual members of Synod. All business after presentation shall be referred to the proper standing committees of Synod, and shall by them be arranged for the consideration of Synod, with such recommendations as they shall deem proper.
- (e) In seeking the approval of Synod for major financial efforts, the boards and agencies of the Church shall, six months prior to Synod, present such requests to the Provincial Elders' Conference, who, after consultation with the proper advisory committee or committees, shall submit its report to the appropriate synodal committees.
- (f) Memorials and resolutions affecting the constitution or bylaws of the Province shall be in the hands of the Provincial Elders' Conference not less than three months before the convening of Synod. The Provincial Elders' Conference shall mail such proposals to all accredited delegates not less than two months before the opening of Synod.
- (g) The local congregations, boards, agencies, or institutions shall be responsible for the costs of room and board of their delegates, lay and clergy, to Provincial Synod. Other expenses of Provincial Synods shall be met by the Provincial Administration Account.

Powers of the Provincial Synod

¶110. The Provincial Synod shall have power:

- (a) To fix the time and place of meeting for the next Provincial Synod; but in case of emergency the Provincial Elders' Conference may convene the Provincial Synod at a time and place other than originally designated.
- (b) To determine, from time to time, the number of ministerial and lay delegates who shall be entitled to membership in the Provincial Synod.
- (c) To elect the delegates whom the province is entitled to send to the Unity Synod, not being limited in its choice to persons in attendance at synod.
- (d) To elect the Provincial Elders' Conference, except for the ex officio members, from among the clergy and laity of the province.
- (e) To elect bishops for service in the province. [See *Book of Order* ¶206; 1995 COUF ¶687]
- (f) To examine and direct all financial matters of the province, and prescribe rules for their management.
- (g) To have the oversight and direction of the agencies and institutions of the province and to elect boards of trustees for the same.

- (h) To direct and control all church publications in the province, subject to the established doctrine and liturgy.
- (i) To regulate the organization of congregations and to exercise general supervision over all church activity in the province.
- (j) To hear and redress such complaints and grievances on appeal, as are not otherwise provided for.
- (k) To direct all matters which belong to the government of the Church in the province, and to adopt such rules and regulations concerning the same as do not encroach upon the prerogatives of the Unity Synod.
- (l) To require reports from all provincial boards and institutions, and legislate on provincial affairs, and on all matters brought for consideration by district synods.
- (m) To commit to district synods such legislation as may demand regard for sectional conditions and shall not conflict with the Constitution and Principles of the Moravian Church.
- (n) To determine the number and boundaries of Districts.

Reports

- ¶111. All officials, boards, and committees elected or appointed by the Synod shall report to the Provincial Synod soon after it convenes. Reports on the status of all provincial funds, agencies, and institutions shall be presented at the meeting of every Provincial Synod.

Nominations

- ¶112. (a) A Committee on Nominations shall be an intersynodal committee and shall be named by the Provincial Elders' Conference no later than one year prior to the convening of Provincial Synod. The committee members shall serve until the appointment of their successors.
- (b) The Committee on Nominations is charged with providing the members of Synod information concerning nominees, such information being limited to name, address, congregation, age, occupation, years of incumbency in the position to which nominated, and position held in a local congregation.
- (c) The intersynodal Committee on Nominations shall also serve to aid in the filling of vacancies of all positions elected by Provincial Synod, except where the boards or agencies have other defined procedures for the filling of such vacancies.
- (d) The Committee on Nominations shall nominate at least two candidates for each office to be filled by election at Synod, except that of President of Provincial Elders' Conference and bishops and those nominated by other procedures.

- (e) The Committee on Nominations shall submit a written report to be distributed to each delegate prior to Synod.
- (f) The Committee on Nominations shall provide biographical and qualification information (including the willingness to serve) on all lay nominations as a part of their report to all delegates. It is recommended that such information be supplied about all clergy in a ministerial directory.
- (g) Nominations in addition to those made by the Committee on Nominations may be made from the floor of Synod. Any nominations from the floor shall be accompanied by biographical and qualification information sheets (including the willingness to serve) for distribution to delegates of Synod.

Delegates to the Unity Synod

- ¶113. (a) Representation at the Unity Synod consists of two delegates elected by the Provincial Synod, and one delegate appointed by the Provincial Elders' Conference. The election of delegates and alternates to the Unity Synod shall be by ballot according to the qualifications in the *1995 Church Order of the Unitas Fratrum*, ¶266.
- (b) Delegates to the Unity Synod shall make an official report to the District Synods and Provincial Synod.

THE PROVINCIAL ELDERS' CONFERENCE

Membership

- ¶114. The Provincial Elders' Conference shall consist of eight (8) members, namely, president of the Provincial Elders' Conference, the presidents of the Eastern, Western, and Canadian Districts, and four (4) lay members at-large.
- ¶115. (a) The Provincial Elders' Conference shall be elected by the Provincial Synod, with the exception of the presidents of the Eastern, Western, and Canadian Districts, who are ex officio members.

The election of the president of the Provincial Elders' Conference shall be by ballot, without nomination.

A two-thirds majority of the votes cast shall be necessary for the election of all members of the Provincial Elders' Conference.

- (b) The order of election shall be as follows:

The president of the Provincial Elders' Conference, any minister of the Northern Province of the Moravian Church in America being eligible [*see Book of Order* ¶125]. Following the first ballot, all who have received votes for P.E.C. president shall be requested to submit an information form. The ballot shall remain open at all times, and

additional nominees for P.E.C. president shall be requested to submit an information form as their name is placed on the ballot.

Four lay members at-large to be elected on consecutive ballots.

Vacancies

- ¶116. (a) In the case of a vacancy in the Provincial Elders' Conference caused by the resignation or death of a Provincial Elders' Conference **lay** member, the remaining members of the Provincial Elders' Conference shall arrange for the election of a new member. The intersynodal Committee on Nominations shall provide nominees, according to its rules, for submission to the voters in a ballot with provision for write-in candidates (which shall follow the requirements of *Book of Order* ¶112.(g) on nominations from the floor). In such election each minister in active service in the province under call or appointment of the Provincial Elders' Conference shall have one vote, the joint board of each recognized congregation in the province shall have one vote, each lay member of the Provincial Elders' Conference shall have one vote, and each bishop residing in the province shall have one vote. Two-thirds of the votes cast shall be necessary for election.
- (b) When the vacancy is in the position of the Provincial Elders' Conference President (clergy member elected at-large), a successor shall be elected by the same balloting procedure except that it shall be without nomination.
- (c) In case of a vacancy in the Provincial Elders' Conference caused by the resignation or death of a member who is a district president, the remaining members of the District Executive Board of the district which he represents shall arrange for the election of a new president in which election each minister under appointment of the Provincial Elders' Conference in the district affected shall have one vote, the joint board of each recognized congregation in the district shall have one vote, each lay member of the District Executive Board shall have one vote, and each bishop residing in the district affected shall have one vote. The ordained person receiving an absolute majority of the votes cast shall be declared president of the district, and shall take the vacated position on the Provincial Elders' Conference.
- (d) In the event that the presidency of the Eastern or the Western District becomes vacant at the time of Provincial Synod for any reason, the vacancy shall be filled in accordance with the following procedure: The delegates representing the district shall meet for the purpose of electing a new president to fill the vacancy, and subsequently report the result of their election to synod.
- (e) Twenty-one days after the Provincial Elders' Conference or District Executive Board has issued a call for an election, a member of the respective board, in the presence of three other members of the Moravian Church-Northern Province, shall open and count the ballots and announce the result. Should no one have received two-thirds of the votes cast in elections according to *Book of Order* ¶116.(a) or an absolute majority in those according to *Book of Order* ¶116.(c), a second and subsequent ballots must be cast in

order to arrive at a result.

Organization

- ¶117. (a) The president of the Provincial Elders' Conference shall be elected by the Provincial Synod, any minister of the Northern Province of the Moravian Church being eligible for election [see ¶125 of *The Book of Order for tenure limitations*]. Election shall be by ballot, without nomination, with two-thirds of the votes cast necessary for election.

The functions of the president of the Provincial Elders' Conference are:

- to provide visionary leadership for the Moravian Church-Northern Province, seeking to discern the movement of the Spirit, ensuring that the life of the church is expressed in witness, evangelism, stewardship, Christian education, and nurture, and serving as a prophetic voice;
 - to facilitate the meetings of the Provincial Elders' Conference; because of the collegial nature of the P.E.C., the P.E.C. president shall always have both voice and vote;
 - for the purposes of ecumenical and interfaith relationships, to serve as "head of communion"; this function shall not be construed as supplanting Christ as the Head of the Church; neither should it imply an executive authority apart from that exercised collegially by the Provincial Elders' Conference;
 - to interpret the common identity, mission, and ministry of the Moravian Church-Northern Province to its laity, clergy, and congregations, to other religious bodies, and to society at-large, as determined by the Provincial Elders' Conference;
 - to represent the Moravian Church-Northern Province in Unity (world-wide Moravian Church) matters; and
 - to perform administrative and representative functions on behalf of the Provincial Elders' Conference, as it determines.
- (b) The Provincial Elders' Conference shall organize by electing one or more vice-presidents, secretary, and comptroller, the Conference not being limited to its own membership in the choice of a secretary and comptroller.

Term of Office

- ¶118. (a) The term of office of the President of the Provincial Elders' Conference shall begin thirty days following the adjournment of the Synod at which she or he is elected and shall continue until a successor is seated. All other members shall take office upon election.
- (b) 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. If additional time for orientation is needed, compensation is to be provided for consultation on a day-to-day basis.
- (c) The incoming Presidents of the Eastern and Western Districts shall be placed on salary and housing allowance upon assuming office. To allow for an orderly transition between

outgoing and incoming District Presidents, the outgoing Presidents may continue to receive salary and housing allowance for a period of up to one month from the date of leaving office, as determined by the Provincial Elders' Conference.

Rights and Duties

- ¶119. The privileges and responsibilities of the Provincial Elders' Conference are the following:
- (a) to provide visionary leadership for the Moravian Church-Northern Province, seeking to discern the movement of the Spirit, ensuring that the life of the church is expressed in witness, evangelism, stewardship, Christian Education, and nurture, and serving as a prophetic voice;
 - (b) to carry out that mission and ministry which cannot be accomplished effectively and efficiently by congregations or districts;
 - (c) as the executive of the Provincial Synod, to administer the government of the church during the intersynodal period under such rules and regulations as shall be adopted by the Provincial Synod.
 - (d) to see that the enactments of the Unity and of the Provincial Synods are faithfully executed in the province, and to guard against deviations from the spirit and principles of the church;
 - (e) to accept qualified individuals into the ministry of the church; to cooperate with the District Boards in the appointment and supervision of all the ministers of the province, under the rules and regulations of the Provincial Synod;
 - (f) to commission bishops to carry out ordinations or consecrations as stated in the 1995 COUF, ¶688;
 - (g) to control and regulate the funding of our common ministries and the initiating of capital fund campaigns by boards and agencies of the church on a provincial level;
 - (h) to grant to congregations official recognition as congregations of the Moravian Church in accordance with provincial rules and regulations;
 - (i) to dissolve congregations in accordance with provincial rules and regulations;
 - (j) to convene the Provincial Synod in cases of emergency;
 - (k) to prepare and lay before the Provincial Synod, at each meeting of the same, a report of the transactions of the Conference since the last meeting of that synod;
 - (l) to submit to District Synods matters relating to the province which should have preparatory consideration by them;

- (m) to provide a regular presence and collegial cooperation with the District Executive Boards in all matters which relate to the Districts;
- (n) to determine from time to time the number of delegates which each congregation shall send to Provincial Synod, on the basis of the communicant membership at the close of the preceding year;
- (o) where conflicts arise out of *The Book of Order*, or in the interpretation of legislation of previous Synods, over division of authority and responsibility, or over procedure, these differences shall be interpreted in the light of the expressed wish of the church that increased authority and responsibility shall be given to the executive boards of the several districts.

Special Instructions

- ¶120. (a) The minutes of the Provincial Elders' Conference shall be kept in full, and shall be open to the inspection of the chairman and/or secretary of any standing committee of the Provincial Synod, when such a request is approved by the majority of the officers of the Provincial Synod.
- (b) The congregations and the Provincial Elders' Conference shall be kept in close contact by means of visitation. This duty shall devolve primarily upon the members of the Provincial Elders' Conference who are District Presidents, but it may also be assigned to any member of P.E.C.
- (c) Synod directs the Provincial Elders' Conference to hold at least two meetings annually.

Statistics

- ¶121. The Provincial Elders' Conference is instructed to prepare and publish annually statistical tables of the congregations in the province. It shall also give a general survey of the work of the Church and its condition, and report on such other business to which it may deem advisable to call the attention of the membership.

Amendments of the Bylaws

- ¶122. All paragraphs of the foregoing Provincial Bylaws, excepting paragraphs that contain constitutional requirements, may be amended by a vote of two-thirds of the members present at a regular session of the Provincial Synod.

PROVINCIAL REGULATIONS (Not Bylaws)

THE PROVINCIAL SYNOD

Relation to the Unity Synod

- ¶123. Provincial Synods are vested with the supreme direction of all provincial affairs, but remain

responsible to the Unity Synod for the general principles in accordance with which they legislate. The Provincial Synod has the right and responsibility so to legislate that the principles laid down by the Unity Synod shall be carried out in the province.

Delegates

- ¶124. The Provincial Synod is constituted of ex officio and elected members. The ex officio members are essential so that they may render an account, contribute of their experience toward wise legislative action, and give to the deliberations of the Synod a conserving spirit and purpose. The electors have the right to choose delegates who represent the views of their constituents, but it is also their duty to elect only such delegates who will consider the welfare of the whole Church, who possess knowledge of its affairs, who lead an exemplary life, and who can conscientiously undertake the duties involved.

Tenure

- ¶125. (a) Elected membership on all provincial boards (with the exception of the boards of trustees of the educational institutions and the Larger Life Foundation) shall be limited to three consecutive terms in the same office. The salaried officers of the Provincial Elders' Conference shall not be eligible for election if their term cannot be completed before reaching the age of 70.
- (b) This shall not be construed to apply in any way to the executives of our denominational service agencies and educational institutions who are appointed by the elected boards of those agencies and institutions.
- (c) A member of an elected board who has retired because of tenure restrictions may be elected to that board again after the lapse of one intersynodal period and may again serve for three consecutive terms.
- (d) Future nominating committees must bear in mind any tenure restrictions when submitting nominees for the various provincial offices.

Expenses of Synod

- ¶126. (a) The expenses of the Provincial Synod are borne by the Provincial Administration Account. They include the expenses of delegates, the compensation of secretaries, the cost of publishing the *Resolutions and Elections* and of other printing, special appropriations, the expenses of special committees in the intersynodal periods, and other necessary expenses. [See also *Book of Order* ¶109.(g)]
- (b) The Provincial Elders' Conference shall be given authority to establish the basis on which expenses are to be paid for travel costs of delegates and other costs during the time Synod is in session.

THE PROVINCIAL ELDERS' CONFERENCE

Principles of Administration

- ¶127. The Provincial Elders' Conference must always keep in mind the calling, purpose, and spirit of the Moravian Church. As the supreme executive board of the province, it must stand for Christian discipline and order in Church administration, but ever be actuated by the spirit of Christian love. The Provincial Elders' Conference, as elected and vested by the Provincial Synod with supreme control and administration of provincial affairs, is responsible to the Provincial Synod, in whose name it acts. When found necessary to act on its own responsibility, a special report shall be made to the Provincial Synod. Final authority for or approval of any new program or effort touching the entire province shall be vested in the Provincial Synod or the Provincial Elders' Conference. Where projects or programs affect one District only, the approval of the District Synod or of the District Board shall be sufficient.
- ¶128. The Provincial Elders' Conference shall divide its work according to the best judgment of its members, keeping in mind, however, that Synod recognizes the administrative work of their respective districts as the primary responsibility of the district presidents. The Provincial Elders' Conference may engage program, administrative, and support staff as needed to carry on its work with efficiency and in keeping with sound budgeting practices.
- ¶129. The Provincial Elders' Conference shall be encouraged to draw upon the resources and talents of members of the province in developing and carrying out the mission of the church.

Expenses of the Provincial Elders' Conference

- ¶130. (a) The expenses of the Provincial Elders' Conference are met from the Provincial Administration Account, including salaries, remunerations, rent of homes, visitations, either by one of its body or by someone commissioned by it, and other necessary expenses in the administration of its office or in the execution of the trusts imposed upon it.
- (b) The four (4) lay members at-large of the Provincial Elders' Conference shall annually determine the salaries of the president of the Provincial Elders' Conference, the president of the Western District, and the president of the Eastern District.
- (c) Expenses to be paid for travel shall be fixed annually by the Provincial Elders' Conference. This rate shall apply to the official travel of provincial officers, the moving of ministers, Provincial Synod delegates, and others who might come under provincial jurisdiction.

PUBLICATION AND AUTHORITY OF CHURCH LAW

Resolutions and Elections of the Provincial Synod

- ¶131. The Resolutions and Elections of the Provincial Synod are published by its authority and are the authoritative publications of the regulations of the province as passed by the Provincial

Synod, and of the transactions of said Synod.

Provincial Book of Order

- ¶132. (a) *The Book of Order of the Moravian Church-Northern Province* is published by the authority of the Provincial Synod, and is the canon of the province insofar as it is complete or is not changed by the acts of subsequent Synods, and agrees with the *Results of the Unity Synod* and the minutes and *Resolutions and Elections* of the Provincial Synod.
- (b) The Provincial Elders' Conference, Northern Province, shall form a standing codification committee who shall be charged with updating the *Book of Order* and forwarding its changes to the Provincial Elders' Conference for approval prior to submission to Provincial Synod.

CHAPTER III

THE MINISTRY

THE SPIRIT OF SERVICE

- ¶200. The Church of Jesus Christ forms one body, of which Christ is the Head. All the members should help one another, according to the working in due measure of each separate part, which “promotes the body’s growth in building itself up in love” [*Eph. 4:16 NRSV*]. In our fellowship, therefore, all must regard themselves as servants of the Church. The conviction, “I serve the Lord and the Church,” gives worth to all our work, even to the least service, and enables us to do all to the glory of God.

In the narrower sense of the word, after the precedent of Scripture, we designate as servants of the Church all those who are called to be ministers of the Church, and to whom is entrusted the care and oversight of its spiritual and temporal welfare, the ministry of the Word and Sacraments, the care of souls, and the management of its outward affairs. It is expected of the servants of the Lord and His Church that they be resolved to dedicate themselves, body and soul, to this service. They must seek to gain a clear insight into the special tasks which the Lord has assigned to our communion in the Kingdom of God. They must gain a right understanding of our constitution, and a sure judgment as to how its provisions are to be applied in particular cases.

Yet more important for them are the gifts of grace, wrought by the Holy Spirit, a mind humbled by the Savior’s mercy, a joyful spirit, strengthened and uplifted by His power, a heart filled with His love, an attentive ear for the guiding, warning, and reproving voice of God’s Spirit, a working out of their own salvation with fear and trembling, and a hearty desire for the salvation of those among whom they are allowed to work. They must seek not their own, but what is the Lord’s. They must know that, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God, they are not judged merely by humans, but that they have to render an account to the Chief Shepherd concerning the discharge of their office and the faithfulness of their service, their words and deeds, and the souls entrusted to them [*I Cor. 4:1-5; Heb. 13:17; Ezek. 33:7-9*]. They should not allow themselves to be led by the fear of others, or the desire to please, nor shrink from the reproach of Christ. They must regard all faithfulness in the discharge of office not as a matter of merit, but of grace.

If the Lord blesses their work, they should be so much the more conscious of their unworthiness; and if the fruits of their labor be hid from them, they should earnestly examine into their own shortcomings, yet not despair, but in quietness and confidence become strong, and in humility wait upon the Lord, who alone can give success. Their only strength and power and their great example is Christ, who came as one who serves. From Him they learn and receive all they need for heart and office.

THE MINISTER AS TEACHER

- ¶201. Just as the Moravian Church as-a-whole abides by the manner in which it has previously given expression to its understanding of the mystery of Christ, so the preaching of the Word in its midst, and the Christian instruction of the young, may not depart from this foundation. In regard to its own fellowship, it is considered neither needful nor wholesome to bind the conscience or quench the spirit by laying down a definitely formulated confession on individual points of doctrine; and the welfare of the Church does not lie in the pledging of its ministers to any such confession, but rather in the quickening and strengthening of the spirit of the church by the grace of the Lord. But just as little can the church suffer anyone in its midst to teach and preach anything contrary to the Holy Scripture; especially anything contrary to the truths which, according to our understanding, we regard as the chief content of the Holy Scriptures. The highly important office of preaching the Word in the church and the Christian instruction of the young may not be entrusted to persons who are in inward disagreement with these truths.

Before anyone receives the commission to discharge the function of the ministry, or to take part in the public proclamation of the Gospel, or to impart religious instruction, careful examination is needed, whether such a one is fitted for it in mind and heart and stands on the foundation of the church's faith, or at least is willing dutifully and conscientiously to respect that faith and hold it sacred. The Church may, therefore, entrust the responsible work of training its future servants only to those in whom it has full confidence that they stand in the living faith of the Church and in conscientious subordination to the Holy Scriptures; and who are ready to promise that they regard it as their most sacred task to lead their students, as God gives them grace, to such subordination to, and inner understanding of, the Holy Scriptures as has been, from the days of our ancestors, the foundation of the Church's faith and the strength of its work for the Lord and His Kingdom.

It is, above all, required of teachers of the Word of God that they have a thorough acquaintance with the Holy Scriptures, that they seek, through the enlightening of the Holy Spirit, to penetrate ever more deeply into their meaning, and allow the power of the divine truths to work on their hearts, so that it may be more and more said of them, "The love of Christ urges us on" [*II Cor. 5:14 NRSV*]. Essentials in the preparation of sermons and other addresses are, above all, prayer, a thorough study of the portion of the Scripture, followed by the application of what is to be said to the speaker's own heart and life. A testimony that is accompanied by warm and living feeling, and that rests on one's own actual experience, will always make most impression on the heart. "To preach aright," said Count Zinzendorf, "take three looks before every sermon; one at the depth of your own wretchedness, another at the depth of human wretchedness around you, and the third, at the divine love of Jesus; that, empty of self, and full of compassion towards your companions, you can impart God's comfort to their hearts."

All our religious addresses should expound the Scriptures and apply them to the heart, and should be instructive, well-considered, and arranged; they are not to consist in lofty words of human wisdom and oratory, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power. This power rests herein, that the Spirit of God teaches us rightly to expound and apply the divine message given in the Holy Scriptures [*I Cor. 2:1, 4, 13*]. Ambassadors for Christ should see to it that they

faithfully declare the whole counsel of God unto salvation; that they rightly divide the Word of Truth according to the varied need and spiritual state of their hearers, believing and unbelieving. As those learned in the Scriptures, and instructed unto the kingdom of heaven, they should bring forth out of their treasure things new and old and, with the assistance of the Holy Spirit, guide souls into all the truth. They may never forget that they stand as sinners among sinners, and that equally with them they need grace and pardon. They must pray for the Spirit in order that they may rightly reprove and rightly comfort and may not, by their correction, close the hearts of their hearers, or cause in them sloth instead of earnestness, or self-complacent judging of others, instead of penitence and joy in the Lord.

THE CARE OF SOULS

- ¶202. (a) If the ministers are to discharge their office with blessing, the relation in which they stand to the congregation, and the congregation to them, must be one of mutual confidence. Every appearance of difference between the interests of the congregations and of their ministers must vanish. Only then can the care of souls prosper, and the public preaching of the Gospel bear fruit, and church discipline work with blessing. Such a relation of confidence cannot, however, be established unless both work together.

The ministers must, above all, bear our Savior's words in their hearts: "You have one teacher, and you are all students" [*Matt. 23:8, 10 NRSV*]. They must, accordingly, meet their brothers and sisters with frankness and straightforwardness, with love and hearty interest in the spiritual and temporal welfare of individuals. In their own outward conduct, and especially in their domestic life, they must avoid offense and stumbling, taking to heart the admonitions which the apostle Paul gives to Timothy and Titus [*I Tim. 3:1-7; Titus 1:6-9*]. They must shun whatever estranges hearts from them, all arrogance, pride, and presumption. They must seek for the gift of humble love, in which each counts the other better than oneself, that in all things they may approve themselves as servants of God.

The members, in turn, must honestly endeavor to banish any unfavorable prejudices and learn to know, in love, those who labor among them. They must not demand of them an impossible perfection, and they must not base their judgment of them only on their natural gifts and dispositions. If the members feel that those who are entrusted with the guidance of the congregation and with the care of souls have a sincere desire to discharge their office according to the mind of Christ and to be faithful in His sight, have patience with their weaknesses and bear with them in love, according to the admonition of the apostle, "We appeal to you, brothers and sisters, to respect those who labor among you and have charge of you in the Lord and admonish you; esteem them very highly in love because of their work" [*I Thess. 5:12, 13 NRSV*].

Such communion of spirit requires much grace from the Lord. Mere outward friendliness does not suffice; without a deeper basis it would be easily disturbed when earnest correction becomes necessary. Both pastor and people must be conscious of their laboring at one task, serving the Lord. This is the real bond of union, that together they partake of divine life and yet feel the need for the daily nourishment of this life, for eating

of one bread and drinking of one fountain. We recognize that together we have been called to follow Jesus and to apprehend Him ever more fully even as we are apprehended of Him.

The servants of the Lord and of the church, who would bring forth fruit for their Lord, must diligently and trustfully pray for a union of hearts between themselves and their members. Likewise, all faithful members of our fellowship must constantly pray to the Lord of the harvest that the Lord may raise up such servants who have life in the Lord and who regard it as a privilege to serve the church and devote all their powers to Christ who loved us and gave Himself for us.

STANDARDS OF RESPONSIBLE BEHAVIOR FOR ORDAINED MINISTERS OF THE MORAVIAN CHURCH

Introduction: The Call to Live in Christ

- ¶202. (b) “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.” [1995 COUF, ¶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. 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 recognize that “they can render their service well only through the grace of their Chief Elder.” [1995 COUF, ¶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” [The 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” [The Liturgy for Ordination of a Deacon].

The Ordained Minister in Relation to God

- ¶202. (c) “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. [1995 COUF, ¶51]

At heart, the ordained minister is a person carrying on a living, personal relationship with the Triune God. 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." [1995 COUF, ¶52]

"We realize that our Christian faith must be continually nourished if it is to remain living and vital" [The Moravian Covenant for Christian Living, ¶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].

The Ordained Minister in Relation to Self

¶202. (d) 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." [The Moravian Covenant for Christian Living, ¶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 the 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 he desires." [The Moravian Covenant for Christian Living, ¶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.” [1995 COUF, ¶2]

“Do you in this faith turn away from sin, evil, and selfishness in your thoughts, words, and actions. . .?” [The 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 [II Cor. 3:18]. They seek appropriate counsel (from bishops, pastoral counselors, mentors, peers) in overcoming 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.” [The Moravian Covenant for Christian Living, ¶8]

Ordained ministers are committed to a process of lifelong 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.” [The Moravian Covenant for Christian Living, ¶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 [II Tim. 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.” [Rom. 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.” [*The Moravian Covenant for Christian Living*, ¶31]

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.” [*The Liturgy of Ordination*]

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.

The Ordained Minister in Relation to Others

¶202. (e) 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 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 their marriage is threatened, they are to seek the counsel of their pastor, or of other spiritual leaders in the Church as soon as possible and before any other action is taken.” [*The Moravian Covenant for Christian Living*, ¶21, ¶22]

“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.” [*The Moravian Covenant for Christian Living*, ¶24]

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 [*I Tim. 5:8*].

2. Sexuality

“We view all of life as a sacred trust to be used wisely.” [*The Moravian Covenant for Christian Living*, ¶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.” [*The Moravian Covenant for Christian Living*, ¶29]

The ordained view their bodies as the property of the Lord [*I 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 legally married are called to a life of sexual fidelity to their spouse/partner; those who cannot be legally married and who desire to make a lifelong commitment must be in a covenanted relationship before God which requires continuous loyalty of the individuals toward each other and calls them to a life of sexual fidelity to their partner.”

3. The Church

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

“The ordained minister, as a servant of Christ and the Church, is a pilgrim. He/she has in his/her active ministry no fixed and permanent home. His/her roots are not in any one place or congregation. He/she is under compulsion to follow the Lord’s leading and to go wherever the Lord calls him/her.” [*Southern Province Book of Order*, ¶860]

It is a demand, for which there is no compromise, that the ordained servant of Christ keep an open mind 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*].

1. 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?” [*The Liturgy of Ordination*]

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.

2. 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*].” [*The Moravian Covenant for Christian Living*, ¶29, ¶30]

The ordained ministry is a position of power and trust which may be subject to abuse. Therefore, ordained ministers are careful to avoid even the appearance of using their office to influence or impact parishioners with regard to receiving gifts or personal favors or preferential consideration in the course of daily life or business. 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 gain and/or sexual gratification. They avoid any sexual activity with those whom they serve.

3. 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.” [*The Moravian Covenant for Christian Living*, ¶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*].

4. Ecumenism and Interfaith 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.” [*The Moravian Covenant for Christian Living*, ¶19]

“A Church is and remains a living one when it seeks fellowship with all who confess Christ.” [1995 *COUF*, ¶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].” [*The Moravian Covenant for Christian Living*, ¶20]

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

The Ordained Minister in Relation to the Community and World

¶202. (f) 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 nowise 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.” [*The Moravian Covenant for Christian Living*, ¶25, ¶26]

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.” [*The Moravian Covenant for Christian Living*, ¶27]

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.” [1995 *COUF*, ¶10]

“...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.” [*The Moravian Covenant for Christian Living*, ¶29]

Ordained ministers work for peace and justice, recognizing the complex inter-relation 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.

Conclusion

- ¶202. (g) 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. [*The Moravian Covenant for Christian Living*, ¶34]

ORDERS OF THE MINISTRY

Ordination in General

- ¶203. (a) The constituted orders of the ministry in the Moravian Church are those of Deacon, Presbyter, and Bishop. 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. [1995 *COUF*, ¶682]

- (b) The roster of ordained clergy and other servants of the church shall be maintained by the Provincial Elders' Conference in an "Official Directory." The following code for the "Official Directory" shall be used to identify the status of those listed:

ac	Active clergy (i.e., parish pastors, provincial staff, cross-cultural servants, seminary and archives staff while serving under call)
ap	Serving under appointment
dc	Directors of Christian Education (certified)
dr	Disability retirement
la	On leave of absence
nc	Currently without call
os	Released for other service
rd	Retired director of Christian education
rm	Retired missionaries (non-ordained)
rp	Retired ministers
sp	Specialized ministry (serving under call)
wi	Widowed

- (c) The names of ministers who are currently without call for a period of three years, within which time a call has not been issued or accepted, will be removed from the official directory of the church, provided that no other category be applicable to such ministers.

Deacon

- ¶204. (a) 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.
- (b) A candidate for ordination shall meet with the Ordination Review Committee, appointed by the Provincial Elders' Conference. The recommendation of this committee is required before the candidate's name can be submitted to any congregation or board for 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) 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 someone appointed for this purpose by the District Board.
- (g) In the event that an ordained minister is received from another denomination, the Provincial Elders' Conference may receive him or her as a Deacon or Presbyter as it deems appropriate. [2009 COUF, Chapter XIII, ¶683]

Presbyter

- ¶205. (a) 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. [1995 COUF, ¶686]

- (b) The District Board, after consultation with the supervisor and the local church boards or other administrative board being served by the Deacon, recommends to the Provincial Elders' Conference that the Deacon be approached concerning his/her readiness to accept consecration as a Presbyter.
- (c) The consecration of a Presbyter is an act of approval of the entire Church. The candidate may choose the consecrating Bishop and the place for the service, with the approval of the Provincial Elders' Conference.

Bishop

- ¶206. (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 of the Ancient Unitas Fratrum. Formerly, a Bishop had a Church-governmental and administrative function. In our day, however, this function is not necessarily linked to the episcopal office. 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.

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. [1995 *COUF*, ¶687]

- (b) 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.

All Provincial and District Boards shall consult a Bishop or Bishops in all matters concerning the work in 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.

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

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 they are 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 in the name of and by commission of a Bishop.

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.

The Synod of the Bishop's Province may also add administrative responsibility by electing him/her a member of the Provincial Board.

A Bishop may be assigned by his/her Province to represent the Province in ecumenical gatherings and before governmental agencies. [1995 *COUF*, ¶688, ¶816]

- (c) The election of Bishops is a prerogative of the Provincial Synod. The election shall be by ballot without nomination, and the choice shall be made from among the Presbyters. The number of votes necessary for election shall be two-thirds of the votes cast. On the occasion of the consecration of a Bishop, at least two Bishops of the Unity should

officiate. [1995 COUF, ¶689]

The consecration of a Bishop may take place in the Synod where the election of the Bishop took place or in a congregational setting.

Election of Bishop(s) shall be called at any Provincial Synod when fewer than two bishops are serving under full-time call of the Moravian Church-Northern Province.

Receiving Ministers from Other Denominations

- ¶207. A minister who has been ordained for service in another Christian church who has become a member of the Moravian Church, and who wishes to serve as an ordained minister in the Moravian Church, shall follow the prescribed candidate procedure. The minister is received as a Deacon by action of the Provincial Elders' Conference.

Procedures for a Leave of Absence and/or Withdrawal from the Ministry

¶208. (a) Leave of Absence

1. A minister may apply for and be granted, at the discretion of the Provincial Elders' Conference, a leave of absence for an agreed period of time and for a specific purpose, such as for study, for maternity leave, or for extenuating circumstances recognized by the Provincial Elders' Conference as valid.
2. At the end of this agreed period, the person shall be available for full-time service in the Province.
3. The Provincial Elders' Conference shall have a prior understanding with the individual on leave concerning pension credits and major medical insurance.

(b) Withdrawal from the Ministry

1. A minister may resign from the ministry of the Moravian Church by giving the Provincial Elders' Conference a written notification at least three months in advance of the date of leaving.
2. On the date of leaving the ministry, the minister's name shall be removed from the official roll of ministers. Pension rights shall be frozen and shall be defined as to vesting and accrual rights.
3. A person who has withdrawn from the ministry has the privilege at a future time of submitting in writing a request 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 within the

Church at that time as well as require the candidate to meet with a Review Committee.

4. When a minister educated in whole or in part at the expense of the Church requests dismissal to unite with another church, or to enter some other vocation, before fulfilling obligations to the Moravian Church for financial assistance received towards theological education, honorable dismissal will be extended only when cash payment or negotiation with the Church Chancellor for a legal plan for the systematic and complete liquidation of the amount owed to the Moravian Church has been effected.

(c) Official Functions of Those Who Are On Leave Or Who Have Withdrawn from the Ministry

Neither leave of absence nor withdrawal from the ministry of the Moravian Church implies abrogation of ordination but only the cessation of official service within the Moravian Church. Persons who are not currently on the active roll of the Moravian ministry should not perform any of the functions of an ordained minister within the Moravian Church without specific authorization from the Provincial Elders' Conference or one of the District Executive Boards.

Ministerial Service by Unordained Persons

- ¶209. Prior to ordination, or without subsequent admission to the regular orders of the ministry of the Moravian Church, suitable persons may be set apart to function as licensed ministers or acolytes.

(a) Licensed Ministers

The Provincial Elders' Conference may grant license to a person for the purpose of ministry within a specific congregation or emerging ministry. Such license shall be issued after satisfactory completion of a course of study and fulfillment of guidelines as determined by the Provincial Elders' Conference. Such a license shall include the privilege of administering the Sacraments.

Such license shall be reviewed and considered for renewal by the District Board annually, with recommendation to the Provincial Elders' Conference. The Licensee shall be supervised by a pastor appointed by the District Board and shall be responsible to the Joint Board of the congregation served and the District Board.

(b) Acolytes

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. An acolyte's selection should be made by the local congregation's board or boards and approved by the Provincial Elders' Conference and takes place in the presence of the assembled congregation by the Right Hand of

Fellowship given by the presiding pastor. The Provincial Elders' Conference 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. [1995 COUF, ¶691]

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

(c) Approved Ministerial Candidates

Persons studying for the Master of Divinity degree, designated by the Provincial Elders' Conference of the Northern Province as "approved ministerial candidates," shall be permitted to take part in the leadership of Holy Communion in their Supervised Ministry setting, under the supervision of their pastoral supervisor(s), by serving the elements when an ordained minister is present to consecrate the elements and preside at the Holy Communion.

PLACEMENT

- ¶210. The call to service in the Church and the appointment of ministers is committed to the Provincial Elders' Conference through the District Executive Boards who function on their behalf. All pastoral changes shall be initiated by the District Executive Boards, according to their stated procedures, who shall keep the Provincial Elders informed.
- ¶211. It is a principle of the Moravian Church that a pastor cannot be forced upon a congregation against its will. No minister can become the pastor of a congregation without the consent of a two-thirds vote of the entire membership of the Joint Board of Elders and Trustees or unified church board. In no event shall appointments be submitted to the Church Council of the congregation for consultation or action. To carry these principles into effect, the District Executive Board shall in every case consult with the Joint Board of a congregation and secure the approval by the Joint Board by a two-thirds majority vote of the total membership of the board before a call is issued.
- ¶212. It is the duty of the District Executive Boards to exercise faithful care over the ministers of their respective districts. The Provincial Elders' Conference shall assume responsibility only after the District Executive Board concerned has used its full power and influence to correct any error or failure of administration.
- ¶213. No person shall be employed as a minister in any of our congregations unless the Provincial Elders' Conference and the District Executive Board concerned shall be fully satisfied with that person's qualifications, including a knowledge of the doctrines, principles, and discipline of the Moravian Church. Membership in the Moravian Church for at least one year before placement is required. The restriction as to time and membership shall not apply to regularly ordained ministers and licentiates presenting the proper credentials.

- ¶214. When a pastorate become vacant, the Joint Board of the congregation may name pastors who in their opinion are suitable for the position. The District Executive Board shall give these consideration but is not bound by such nominations.
- ¶215. The termination of a pastoral relationship is best accomplished by a process of mutuality and respect, although such a termination may be initiated unilaterally by the Joint Board, the District Executive Board, or the pastor. The Joint Board of every congregation has the right, in the event it conscientiously for any reason desires a change of pastors, to lay the matter before the District Executive Board for review. If, in the judgment of the District Executive Board, in consultation with the pastor, the Provincial Elders' Conference, and the Joint Board, a pastor cannot effectively discharge the duties of the pastoral office, the District Executive Board and/or the Provincial Elders' Conference may act to end a pastoral relationship in accordance with the stated policy.

Similarly, the District Executive Board may initiate such a review. If, following the review, it deems change in pastoral leadership is right and advisable for the best interests of all concerned and instead of awaiting the opportunity or willingness for a change, the District Executive Board may apply stated policies as follows:

(A) In cases where it is determined that a pastor is no longer suited for ministry:

- (1) The basic severance package offered will include salary, housing or housing allowance and healthcare for three (3) months. Additionally, for pastors who have at least five years of service under call in the Moravian Church, salary, housing, and healthcare will be continued at the rate of one month per every three years of service under call. The severance package shall in no case extend beyond one year from the date of removal, as determined by the Provincial Elders' Conference. The cost of the severance package will be negotiated among the Provincial Elders' Conference, the District Board, and the congregation.
- (2) Career/outplacement counseling at a Career Development Center may be offered, the cost of which will be negotiated among the Province, the District, and the congregation.

(B) In cases where it is believed that a pastor remains suited for ministry, but needs to change pastorates:

- (1) The pastor shall be offered a call to temporary service for no more than six months. Salary, housing and healthcare would continue during the time of temporary service.
- (2) If, after six (6) months, an appropriate permanent situation is not available, the severance package for pastors who have at least five (5) years of service under call in the Moravian Church, salary, housing, and healthcare will be continued at the rate of one (1) month per every three (3) years of service under call, not to exceed six (6)

additional months, the total package not to exceed twelve (12) months from the original date of removal.

(3) Counseling services (vocational or personal) will be offered, the cost of which will be negotiated among the Province, the District, and the congregation.

(C) In cases where a pastor is temporarily disabled due to injury or illness (mental or physical):

(1) Disability insurance will begin and continue based upon the pastor's condition.

(2) Counseling services will be offered with the cost to be covered by worker's compensation and disability insurance first, and then, if necessary, negotiated among the Province, the District, and the congregation.

(D) In cases where it is determined that a pastor is no longer suited for ministry, but it is late in his/her career:

(1) The pastor shall be offered a call to temporary service for no more than six (6) months. All salary, housing and healthcare would continue during the time of temporary service.

(2) The pastor may choose instead to retire in keeping with the *Book of Order*.

¶216. (a) There shall be no time limit set to the duration of ministerial placements, except only when temporary arrangements are made.

(b) When a pastorate has run ten full years, it shall be subject to review at a meeting between a representative of the District Board and the Joint Board of Elders and Trustees of the congregation, and such a review shall take place at least every two years thereafter.

¶217. It is contrary to the spirit of the Moravian Church for any congregation to honor its pastor with the title "Pastor Emeritus."

SALARY OF MINISTERS

¶218. Synod holds to the apostolic principles, "If we have sown spiritual good among you, is it too much if we reap your material benefits? . . . In the same way, the Lord commanded that those who proclaim the gospel should get their living by the gospel" [*I Cor. 9:11, 14 NRSV*]. "The laborer deserves to be paid" [*Luke 10:7 NRSV*]. It is the duty of every congregation to provide according to its ability for the support of its pastor, and to pay a sufficient salary to help promote an effective ministry.

- ¶219. For purposes of determining equitable comparative salaries, clergy financial compensation shall be defined as follows:

Clergy compensation = Cash Salary + (a) Housing Allowance/Utilities or (b) Housing Equity Allowance + (c) Other compensation.

- (a) A minimum housing allowance shall be required for pastors where a parsonage is not provided. The amount of this allowance shall be \$15,000, to be achieved incrementally over a four-year period, as follows:
- 2019 - \$11,250 annual clergy housing allowance
 - 2020 - \$12,500 annual clergy housing allowance
 - 2021 - \$13,750 annual clergy housing allowance
 - 2022 - \$15,000 annual clergy housing allowance
- (b) A minimum housing equity allowance shall be required for pastors residing in a provided parsonage. The amount of this allowance shall be \$2,500, to be achieved incrementally over a four-year period, as follows:
- 2019 - \$1,375 annual clergy equity allowance
 - 2020 - \$1,750 annual clergy equity allowance
 - 2021 - \$2,125 annual clergy equity allowance
 - 2022 - \$2,500 annual clergy equity allowance

The money must be invested and qualify as a tax-deferred investment under the U.S. Internal Revenue Code such as provided in Section 403(b) of the Code and comparable Canada Revenue Agency code.

(c) Other compensation, e.g., Social Security allowance, tax-sheltered annuity, etc. It does not include auto allowance or educational allowances which should be handled by expense voucher system, nor does it include health care, long-term disability insurance, life insurance, and pension.

- ¶220. Standard salary ranges shall be established for full-time parish pastors based on years of experience. The purpose of the “standard salary” is to provide a measure of equivalent salary exclusive of housing and utilities. Standard salary is defined as follows:

Standard Salary with Parsonage Provided:

Standard Salary = Clergy Compensation + housing equity allowance

Standard Salary with No Parsonage Provided:

Standard Salary = Clergy Compensation + housing allowance

The above standard salaries are not directly applicable to part-time service, husband and wife team ministries, those serving in the Canadian District, and other special situations.

¶221. The following standard salary ranges shall become effective January 1, 2016:

Years of Experience	Minimum Salary
0 — 5	\$30,000
6 — 10	\$35,000
11 — 15	\$42,000
16 plus	\$47,000

“Years of Experience” for salary purposes is calculated by the number of years a pastor has served under call or appointment whether part-time or full-time, and that years of service should also include years a pastor has served under call or appointment in another province of the Moravian Unity or in other recognized denominations. *(2018 Synod Resolution)*

¶222. The Provincial Elders’ Conference of the Moravian Church-Northern Province shall annually review the standard salary ranges and make appropriate revisions in recognition of economic and job market factors and the effect on congregations.

¶223. The District Executive Boards of the Moravian Church-Northern Province shall make an annual evaluation and, in all cases where the pastor’s salary is not within the range, shall work with the Joint Board to develop strategies to meet current compensation standards.

¶224. Calls should not be issued unless the “standard salary” is within the range.

EXPENSES OF PASTORAL CHANGES

¶225. Moving expenses to a place of service for ministers under call of the Province or those retiring from an appointed place of service to a place of retirement shall be paid from the Provincial Administration Account according to the “Guidelines for Procedures in Moving” policy of the Provincial Elders’ Conference.

¶226. Moving expenses of ministers called to service in the educational institutions shall not be paid from the Provincial Administration Account.

¶227. The District Executive Boards shall recommend to the congregations of their districts, which provide parsonages, that they provide as minimum parsonage furniture and equipment: a suitable stove, refrigerator, washer and dryer, rugs, and the furnishing of one guest bedroom.

MARRIAGE OF MINISTERS

¶228. Ministers should be careful to choose a spouse who will honor the role of ministerial partner.

METHODS OF PROCEDURE WHEN ACCUSATIONS ARE MADE AGAINST A MINISTER

The Scriptural Rule

- ¶229. “Never accept any accusation against an elder except on the evidence of two or three witnesses. As for those who persist in sin, rebuke them in the presence of all, so that the rest also may stand in fear” [I Tim. 5:19, 20 NRSV].

Discipline

- ¶230. The Provincial Elders’ Conference shall be thorough, firm, and faithful in exercising the discipline of the Church upon its ministers.

Accusations Affecting a Minister’s Standing

- ¶231. When accusations are made charging a minister with disloyalty to the faith and teachings of the Church, with incompetence, inefficiency, imprudence, or bad habits, the District Executive Board shall carefully investigate these charges, giving the accused a fair hearing and, upon demand, the names of the accusers. If the District Executive Board is convinced that the accusations are well-founded, in whole or in part, it shall be its duty to recommend specific action to the Provincial Elders’ Conference in accord with the following principles:
- (a) Admonish the minister, urging correction of acknowledged faults in order to restore usefulness in the service of the Church, or
 - (b) Impart such censure as the offense demands, or
 - (c) Remove the minister from the position held at the time to another position, or
 - (d) Dismiss the minister from the service of the Church.

Accusations regarding the Moral Character of Ordained Clergy and Allegations of Clergy Sexual Misconduct

- ¶232. (a) When accusations are made regarding the moral character or conduct of an ordained clergy person (except for accusations of clergy sexual misconduct), the District Executive Board shall make an investigation. If, after investigation, the District Board finds merit in the accusation, it shall request that definite written charges be presented against the accused by the accuser(s). In the event the accuser(s) fail or refuse to present such written charges, the District Executive Board may, in its discretion, (1) prepare written charges and present them against the accused, or (2) find in favor of the accused and dismiss the accusations, noting the dismissal in the pastor’s personnel record.

In the event written charges are presented against the accused by either the accuser(s) or the District Executive Board, the accused shall be given a fair and impartial hearing

before the Provincial Elders' Conference. At such hearing, the accused shall have the right to confront and examine witnesses and present a defense. The accused shall be entitled to representation, including but not limited to legal counsel. The accused shall be allowed the benefit of reasonable doubt and the presumption of innocence.

If the Provincial Elders' Conference finds that the written charges have been satisfactorily proven, the Provincial Elders' Conference shall impose such sanctions as it deems appropriate, including but not limited to private admonition, public censure, rebuke, suspension from the ministry for a definite time, and/or dismissal from the ministry.

Any adjudication by the Provincial Elders' Conference affirming the written charges against an ordained clergy person shall be noted in the clergy person's personnel file and shall be disclosed to the governing board of any congregation to whom the clergy person is subsequently extended a call.

The Provincial Elders' Conference (or District Executive Board, as the case may be) may, if it chooses, utilize the process set forth in *Book of Order* ¶233(b) [below] to investigate and adjudicate serious allegations regarding a minister's moral character.

- (b) Accusations of sexual misconduct of persons under call or appointment to the church must be treated seriously and with the utmost care and concern for all parties involved, which includes the accuser, the accused, the accused's congregation, and the church at-large. Every allegation of sexual misconduct involves unique circumstances and, as a result, it is difficult, if not impossible, to develop a uniform process by which such allegations are investigated, resolved, or adjudicated. In general, however, allegations of sexual misconduct will be investigated and dealt with in a way which gives due care and consideration for the needs and rights of all interested parties involved.

Clergy sexual misconduct is sexual activity or romantic or sexual contact (not just sexual intercourse) which takes advantage of the vulnerability of any parishioner, church employee, or clergy colleague. Clergy sexual misconduct also includes any sexual or romantic conduct or contact or romantic conversation by a pastor with a minor.

The Provincial Elders' Conference of the Moravian Church in America, Northern Province, acting jointly with the Provincial Elders' Conference of the Moravian Church in America, Southern Province, shall develop and implement the policy by which allegations of clergy sexual misconduct are investigated, resolved, and adjudicated. The P.E.C., acting jointly with the Southern P.E.C., is authorized to update this policy as necessary and to distribute the policy to ordained clergy, governing board(s), churches, and affiliated institutions and agencies, as well as the Moravian Theological Seminary.

- (c) The church's policy and the procedure by which allegations of clergy sexual misconduct are investigated, resolved, and/or adjudicated shall be communicated and distributed widely within the church, including but not limited to: 1) Ordained and licensed clergy, 2) Ministerial candidates, 3) Governing Board(s), and 4) All agencies and institutions within the church.

- (d) An ordained clergy person dismissed from the ministry of the church as set forth herein shall not be entitled to the basic severance package as described in the *Book of Order* ¶215.

Right of Appeal

- ¶233. An ordained clergy person shall have the right to appeal to the Provincial Synod any adjudication rendered by the Provincial Elders' Conference pursuant to *Book of Order* ¶231-¶233. The Chair of the Synod, in conjunction with the chancellor, shall determine the process by which the appeal is to be heard in plenary session. The clergy person's expenses to and from the Synod to present an appeal shall be paid by the Synod. A two-thirds majority, by secret written ballot, shall be required to overrule the findings of the Provincial Elders' Conference.

RETIREMENT

The following conditions of retirement shall apply to all ministers in the service of the Northern Province of the Moravian Church:

- ¶234. All ministers under call from the Provincial Elders' Conference or elected to office by District or Provincial Synods shall be entitled to retire upon reaching the age of 65 years.
- ¶235. The Provincial Elders' Conference and/or the District Executive Board shall notify both the minister and the board or boards of the congregation or institution concerned at least three months prior to the minister's 65th birthday. By election of the minister and with the concurrence of the Provincial Elders' Conference and/or the District Executive Board and the board or boards of the congregation or institution concerned, a minister may continue in service until he or she reaches the age of 70 years.
- ¶236. At the age of 70 years, the minister shall retire. After retirement at any age, the minister may be appointed by the Provincial Elders' Conference and/or the District Executive Board for continued service on an annual or less-than-annual basis.

PENSIONS

- ¶237. (a) Ordained persons in service under call or appointment of the Provincial Elders' Conference or under appointment by a District Executive Board are entitled to coverage under the pension program of the Moravian Church-Northern Province, provided payment of the pension assessment is made to fund her/his credited service.
- (b) The pension program shall be administered by the Provincial Elders' Conference according to principles established by Provincial Synod. The Provincial Elders' Conference shall have authority to make changes in pension program provisions at any time that it deems desirable or that may be prudent in maintaining comparability with government legislation affecting pension programs. It shall provide each covered person and every congregational board the current pension program provisions, and shall notify covered persons promptly of any changes in these provisions.

- (c) The Provincial Elders' Conference shall appoint an advisory commission of at least five members to review the pension program annually and recommend any dollar-value changes for monthly credited services, as well as other appropriate actions affecting the pension program. This advisory commission shall serve at the pleasure of the P.E.C.

RETIREE MEDICARE SUPPLEMENTAL HEALTH CARE BENEFIT

- ¶238. It shall be the objective of the Provincial Elders' Conference to provide a retiree Medicare supplemental health care benefit.

SPECIALIZED MINISTRIES

- ¶239. The Provincial Elders' Conference is empowered to issue calls to specialized ministries when ordination is either an absolute or highly desirable requirement for functioning in the position to which a call to specialized ministry is being considered. Such a call should speak clearly of the ministry of servanthood that we hold up for our Church's ministry in the world.

[The following conditions governing a call to Specialized Ministry shall be observed:

- (a) The Provincial Elders' Conference shall be satisfied that standing as ordained clergy under call will be of profit both to the ministry of the position and to the broader ministry of the Northern Province, and shall be representative of the ministry of the Northern Province.
- (b) The terms of employment under a specialized call [salary, housing, and benefits] shall be reviewed and accepted at the time of the call. The holder of the call shall report subsequent changes to the Provincial Elders' Conference.
- (c) An annual report shall be required by the Provincial Elders' Conference.
- (d) The Provincial Elders' Conference shall receive an annual review of the work being done by the holder of a call provided by the employer.
- (e) The one called shall maintain a relationship with the denomination through attendance at clergy meetings, district and provincial events, etc.; shall share special leadership talents with the denomination as requested and as possible; and shall remain open to calls to serve within the denomination.
- (f) Annually the Provincial Elders' Conference shall review and reconsider whether the circumstances warrant the continuation of the call. The holder of the call shall be notified of P.E.C.'s action on this matter.]

STUDY LEAVE

- ¶240. Believing that there is a need for the clergy of the Church to continue their education on a regular basis and that the concept of a study leave is one which has both religious meaning and

modern application for a person to be renewed for further usefulness, the 1978 Provincial Synod established a policy of study leave for clergy, using the following plan as a guideline:

- (a) The Moravian Church-Northern Province shall establish a study leave policy for all its clergy who have completed six years of service to the province, with a minimum of two completed years in the congregation or agency at the time the leave is requested. In the event of a change of pastorate while the application is in process or after the leave has been granted, the Provincial Elders' Conference shall negotiate terms with the new congregation or agency.
- (b) Such study leave shall be for a maximum of four months.
- (c) Such study leave time shall be granted for study and renewal of a person's skills and understandings for more effective service in the congregation or agency and the Church.
- (d) The study leave proposal shall contain a definite plan of study approved by the official Boards of the congregation or the agency, and a definite plan for handling the regular work of the candidate while on leave.
- (e) This policy does not apply to clergy serving an institution or agency which has its own study leave policy.

CLERGY PERSONAL SABBATICAL LEAVE

- ¶240.5 (a) Every five years in ordained ministry, a pastor who has served a minimum of two years in his or her current call will receive an additional two to four consecutive weeks as a personal sabbatical for rest, reflection and renewal, as determined by the Joint Board or Governing Board and the Pastor.
- (b) The Pastor will receive full salary and benefits and will have the opportunity to plan and structure this time as he or she determines to be most beneficial.
 - (c) The Joint Board will work together with the Pastor to arrange for pulpit supply and meeting pastoral care needs during this personal sabbatical.
 - (d) Clergy will be responsible for financing any personal expenses incurred during the sabbatical.

DIRECTORS OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

- ¶241. Directors of Christian Education who are so certified by the Provincial Elders' Conference may be called to service by the Provincial Elders' Conference and are then entitled to all the rights and privileges of persons under call, except those granted by ordination. [See *Book of Order* ¶1202 - *Standards and Procedure for the Certification of Directors of Christian Education and Assistants in Christian Education in the Moravian Church*]

CHAPTER IV

OUTREACH

MOTIVATION AND PURPOSE

- ¶300. (a) Recalling with gratitude the example of our forebears who preached the Gospel not only in trackless forest and in frontier hamlets but also in the great centers of population, the Church continues to acknowledge its responsibility to give its witness for Christ with the goal of offering all people an invitation to trust Jesus Christ as Savior and follow Him as Lord within the fellowship of His church beginning where we are and extending to the uttermost parts of the earth. The Church recognizes the vitally important place of church extension in its ministry, and directs the boards and agencies that are responsible for this work to carry it forward with the utmost vigor and perseverance as the Lord may lead us and open doors of opportunity before us.
- (b) The funds obtained under this and subsequent paragraphs of the *Book of Order* for New Church Development and Redevelopment/Revitalization shall be distributed at the discretion of the Provincial Elders' Conference.

The Provincial Church Extension Fund

- ¶301. (a) The Provincial Elders' Conference shall hold and securely invest the Church Extension Fund created by authority of the Synod of 1876, subject to the conditions then imposed and such as are imposed by the charter of the Province. The money shall be invested in real securities, and in such other securities as are named in the Acts of the Assembly of Pennsylvania, authorizing investments by trustees. No loans of this fund or any part thereof shall be made upon the security of church property.
- (b) The Provincial Elders' Conference shall cause the income accruing from the Church Extension Fund to be used to aid in the building of churches and parsonages, and paying debts resting on church property.

The foregoing rule shall not prohibit the Provincial Elders' Conference from aiding self-supporting congregations in emergencies.

Old Church Extension Fund

- ¶302. (a) All property of abandoned congregations that came into possession of the Church since the year 1868 has been sold and the proceeds thereof have gone to form and constitute the fund known as the Old Church Extension Fund.
- (b) Control and Management. This fund is under the control and management of the Provincial Elders' Conference.
- (c) Property of Abandoned Congregations. The property of abandoned congregations in the possession of the Province or that may come into the possession of the Province shall be

sold and the proceeds of such sales shall be added to this fund.

- (d) New Work. When new work is begun, the proceeds from the sale of abandoned congregations may be used for the acquisition of property and the erection of buildings and other costs involved in the development of new congregations. The Provincial Elders' Conference shall have authority to allocate such funds.

[Note: It is understood that Canadian Law may require a change in this provision as it affects Moravian churches in Canada. The Provincial Elders' Conference is authorized, in cooperation with the Canadian District Board, to develop regulations that would carry out the intention of the preceding provisions so that they will be in keeping with Canadian Law.]

- (e) Use of the Principal. The moneys and credits constituting or belonging to this fund may be loaned to congregations with interest on good security.
- (f) Application of the Income. The accrued interest and net income of said fund shall be used in the first instance in the support of home missionaries at the discretion of the Provincial Elders' Conference. Any surplus from the annual or accumulated income may be applied to other homeland ministries work as the Board may determine.

BOARD OF WORLD MISSION

General Principles

- ¶303. The Moravian Church still accepts the challenge and command of the Lord, "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" [Matt. 28:19 NRSV]. 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. [1995 COUF, ¶700]
- ¶304. 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 spiritual, social, physical, and economic needs of humanity. This total ministry will express itself in the preaching of the Word, 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. [1995 COUF, ¶701]
- ¶305. The Provincial Synod recognizes its overseas mission to be the responsibility of all members of the Church, under the Great Commission of our Lord. It is, therefore, the duty of each congregation in the Province to support this endeavor by prayers and gifts to the utmost of its ability.

Administration

- ¶306. The administration of the overseas mission of the Moravian Church-Northern Province shall be vested in the Board of World Mission of the Moravian Church in America, incorporated May

31, 1949, in Northampton County, Pennsylvania, as the Board of Foreign Missions of the Moravian Church in America, and formed by the authority of the Northern Provincial Synod of 1946 and the Southern Provincial Synod of 1947.

- ¶307. The Board shall function under the constitution and bylaws on file with the Provincial Elders' Conference. It shall create its own policies in promoting the mission cause overseas, recognizing the need for change in the methods used to present the message of the unchanging Christ.
- ¶308. The Moravian Church recognizes the importance of cooperation with other Christian churches in joint action for mission. It also recognizes the strengthening values of Christian service organizations (such as "The Theological Education Fund," "Bread for the World," "Church World Service," "CROP," "Agricultural Missions, Inc.," and "Missionary Aviation Fellowship"). [1995 COUF, ¶705]
- ¶309. Every mission outreach should aim at the development of a local church as soon as possible by a vigorous program of evangelism, leadership training, stewardship, and Christian education. [1995 COUF, ¶706]

THE SOCIETY FOR PROMOTING THE GOSPEL

- ¶310. (a) The Society for Promoting the Gospel is an auxiliary missionary society.
- (b) This Society shall continue to hold and administer for the benefit of world mission the funds which have been entrusted to the Society through the years.
- (c) The management of the affairs of the Society shall be in the hands of a Board of Directors. This Board shall consist of six members of the Society and two members of the Provincial Elders' Conference elected by that body from among its own members.

CHAPTER V

ECUMENICAL RELATIONSHIPS

GENERAL DECLARATIONS

- ¶400. (a) The founders of the Brethren's Church, in the century before the Protestant Reformation of the sixteenth century, in the interest of what they accepted as the faith of Christ and His apostles, secured for themselves the historic episcopate and organized as a church of Christ. This church in all the centuries of its existence and activity, in all parts of the world, has maintained a position of most cordial recognition and of fellowship with members of other Christian communions of different names and forms of government.
- (b) The Moravian Church has always advocated the unity of Christ's followers, desiring ever the fulfillment of the prayer of the Master "that they all may be one." It recognizes in formulated principles the often expressed truth that those who adhere to Christ by faith, who are partakers of the Holy Spirit and worship the Father in Spirit and in truth, are the Body of Christ, the house of God, the flock of the Good Shepherd, and the holy, universal Christian Church.
- (c) Accordingly, we rejoice in any effort put forth in faith to secure closer fellowship and communion between the churches of Christ.

ATTITUDE TOWARD SPECIFIC MOVEMENTS

- ¶401. (a) The Moravian Church in America is a member of the National Council of Churches of Christ in the United States of America and of the World Council of Churches, and recognizes in these bodies an opportunity for promoting unity in spirit and in action among the various evangelical churches of the nation and of the world. Delegates to these organizations shall be appointed by the Provincial Elders' Conference.
- (b) The Moravian Church recognizes the work of the American and Canadian Bible Societies in publishing and promoting the use of the Holy Scriptures.
- (c) Local Moravian churches are urged to cooperate with state, provincial, county, and city councils of churches and in other similar groups that effectively assist the churches in giving a united testimony to the Gospel.
- (d) A minister of the Moravian Church who serves on the staff of any inter-denominational body of which the Moravian Church is a constituent member shall be considered as a minister in the service of the Church insofar as pension, future calls, and other rights are concerned, provided the call has come through the usual official channels of the denomination.

FULL COMMUNION

¶402. (a) As one of its strategies for promoting Christian unity, the Moravian Church–Northern Province pursues relationships of full communion with other churches.

(b) In pursuing full communion with another church, Moravians are remaining faithful to Christ’s will for his church and to our Moravian heritage:

- On the night before he died, our Lord Jesus prayed —”...that they may all be one. As you, Father, are in me, and I am in you, may they also be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me.” (John 17: 21 NRSV);
- “We believe in and confess the unity of the Church, given in the one Lord Jesus Christ as God and Savior. 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. ...It is the Lord’s will that Christendom should give evidence of and seek unity in Him with zeal and love.”¹ —The *Unitas Fratrum* is committed to the unity of the children of God as a reality created by God in Jesus Christ.”²

When we can remove any perceived barriers between ourselves and another church, we live out our affirmations about Christ’s Church.

(c) When we mutually affirm a relationship of full communion with another church:

- We recognize and value the gifts present in each other as part of the Body of Christ, and we will be mutually enriched by sharing those gifts with each other.
- We will cooperate in common ministries of evangelism, witness, and service.
- We mutually recognize and respect each other as part of the one holy catholic and apostolic Church, which affirms its faith through the Apostles’ Creed and the Nicene Creed.
- We mutually recognize each other’s practice of the two sacraments ordained by Christ himself—Baptism and the Lord’s Supper, thus allowing for joint worship, including the celebration of the Holy Communion, and for the transfer of membership between churches as within each church.
- We recognize the validity of the ministerial orders of the other church, allowing for the orderly interchange of ordained ministers subject to the regulations of church order and practice of each church.
- We commit ourselves to work toward removing all barriers between ourselves and those with whom we are in full communion. We acknowledge that current differences in structure, doctrine, liturgy, and positions on social and ethical issues may require each church to speak for itself at times. At the same time, being in full communion, we shall be open to the encouragement and admonition of the other church for the sake of the Gospel.

¹ *Church Order of the Unitas Fratrum*, —The Ground of the Unity,” p6.

² *Church Order of the Unitas Fratrum*, —The Witness of the Unitas Fratrum,” p150. Page 2 of 2

- (d) The Moravian Church–Northern Province is in full communion with
- The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America under the terms of *Following Our Shepherd to Full Communion: Report of the Lutheran–Moravian Dialogue with Recommendations for Full Communion in Worship, Fellowship and Mission* (1999); and
 - The Episcopal Church under the terms of *Finding Our Delight in the Lord: A Proposal for Full Communion Between The Episcopal Church; the Moravian Church-Northern Province; and the Moravian Church-Southern Province* (2010).
 - The United Methodist Church under the terms of the *Statement on the Mutual Recognition of Full Communion between The Moravian Church (Northern and Southern Provinces) and The United Methodist Church* (2018).

CHAPTER VI
E D U C A T I O N

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

The Moravian View of Education

- ¶500. The Moravian Church, by tradition and conviction, is committed to the principle of encouraging and providing the best possible education for its youth. The history of the Moravian Church offers abundant testimony through the lives of its leaders and the development of its schools and colleges that growth in the grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, combined with education according to the highest known standards, is important in a needy world.

Moravian Schools and Colleges

- ¶501. The Unitas Fratrum established schools in its ancient homeland. The Renewed Church founded schools in Germany and other parts of the European continent, as well as in England. Among the early leaders of the Church were several pioneers of modern education.

The American Moravian Church established Moravian Seminary and College for Women in 1742; Moravian Preparatory School (founded by the Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, Moravian Congregation) in 1742; Linden Hall Junior College and School for Girls in 1748; Salem Academy and College in 1772; and the Moravian College and Theological Seminary in 1807, the latter being established from the beginning as an institution of higher education. There were, in addition, several other schools begun which are now no longer in existence.

Financial Responsibility Toward Provincial Schools and Colleges

- ¶502. The Northern Province recognizes a moral responsibility to give financial support to the educational institutions which it founded. The Provincial Elders' Conference, District Boards, and other appropriate groups shall bring this cause to the attention of the churches in such a way as to elicit the desired support.

The Moravian Church and Public Education

- ¶503. (a) The Moravian Church holds that the primary responsibility for religious nurture lies with the home and the church. It is also committed to the principle of separation between Church and State; but at the same time, the Church recognizes the profound influence of the public school in almost every phase of a child's life and development. The Church, therefore, seeks to encourage an adequate emphasis on the religious foundations of our culture, and it supports every effort to maintain the highest standards of Christian practice and conduct in schools.
- (b) Because of the belief that all worthy callings, if dedicated to the service of the Lord Jesus

Christ, are holy callings, the Moravian Church encourages its youth to hold a high view of the profession of teaching. In public education, teachers of positive Christian character and training have an outstanding opportunity for Christian service.

Education and the Congregation

- ¶504. To meet the ever present need for Christian character and practice among all human beings, the Moravian Church advocates a strong program of Christian education in every congregation, designed to interpret the Christian message for all age groups — from infancy to old age — above and beyond what may be achieved through the conventional Sunday church services.

Indications of the strength or weakness of such a program of Christian education will be reflected in such factors as the following: the practice of family worship in all church homes; the prevailing habit of stewardship; the success of a congregation in enlisting youth for service in the ministry at home and abroad; the ability of the Church to win the active and faithful devotion of its young men and women. Such a program of Christian education accordingly would include Sunday, weekday, and vacation church schools, camps and conferences, and other formal and informal phases of the church's program as well as the training and testimony centered in the home.

MORAVIAN COLLEGE

Character and Purpose

- ¶505. (a) The corporation MORAVIAN COLLEGE originated with the merger in 1954 of Moravian Seminary and College for Women, founded in 1742, and Moravian College and Theological Seminary, founded in 1807. The Church looks to the corporation MORAVIAN COLLEGE for the training of candidates for the ministry at home and abroad, and of young men and women for other fields of activity, thereby carrying on the spiritual mission of the Moravian Church in higher education.
- (b) In fulfillment of the aforementioned purpose, MORAVIAN COLLEGE maintains two separate academic programs — Moravian College, a liberal arts college, and Moravian Theological Seminary, a graduate-professional school of theology.
- (c) Moravian College, as a church-related institution, stresses Christian ideals and standards of conduct, believing that in them lies the fullest promise of achieving the high goals of liberal education. In the continuing development of the program of liberal education to which it is committed, Moravian College, as an educational institution of the Moravian Church in America, seeks to accomplish its twofold task: first by graduating ministerial candidates who will be qualified and prepared to undertake the study of theology, and second by providing training in a Christian atmosphere for young men and women who wish to enter other fields of activity.
- (d) Moravian Theological Seminary offers, through an academically recognized theological curriculum, a thorough training to students who have chosen to enter the ministry of the Church at home and abroad, to afford the best possible facilities for the pursuit of

theological studies under competent guidance, and to foster growth in Christian experience and in spiritual life and work.

Buildings, Equipment, and Endowment Funds

- ¶506. The Church recognizes with profound gratitude the vision and devotion of our forebears to which it is indebted for the continuing development of buildings, equipment, and endowment funds throughout the years, and calls upon each generation to respond liberally to the urgent and continuing necessity for adding, by direct gifts and by bequests, to the heritage that is the Moravian College.

The Board of Trustees

- ¶507. The government and all corporate powers of Moravian College are vested in a Board of Trustees of not less than fifteen nor more than fifty-two members. These Trustees shall be designated as College Trustees or Seminary Trustees with the duties specified in the corporation bylaws.

Charter Provisions Relating to the Church

- ¶508. Though Moravian College is an autonomous corporation, its charter has certain provisions relating to its connection with the Moravian Church.
- (a) Its ex officio College Trustees shall include the President and two members of the Provincial Elders' Conference of the Moravian Church-Northern Province, and the President of the Provincial Elders' Conference of the Moravian Church-Southern Province.
 - (b) Its ex officio Seminary Trustees shall include the President and two members of the Provincial Elders' Conference of the Moravian Church-Northern Province, and the President and one member of the Provincial Elders' Conference of the Moravian Church-Southern Province.
 - (c) Both the above ex officio College and Seminary Trustees representing the Provincial Elders' Conferences shall serve for the intersynodal period of their respective provinces. They shall have all the rights and privileges of elected trustees, including the right to vote.
 - (d) In addition to the ex officio trustees representing the Moravian Church on the Seminary Board, there shall be three members elected as Seminary Trustees by the Provincial Synod of the Northern Province and two members elected by the Provincial Synod of the Southern Province. They shall serve for the intersynodal period of their respective provinces.
 - (e) The majority of the Seminary Trustees shall at all times be members of the Moravian Church in America.
 - (f) The stipulation in the Bylaws that the majority of Seminary Trustees must be members

of the Moravian Church in America, as well as the stipulation regarding the number of Seminary Trustees elected by the Provincial Synods and the members ex officio, shall not be subject to amendment by the Board of Trustees without approval of the Provincial Synod of the Northern Province of the Moravian Church in America or its successors.

- (g) Any proposed changes in the nature of the relationship between the Seminary and the College, including *inter alia*, establishment of a separate seminary or its merger with another institution, must be approved by the Provincial Synod of the Northern Province of the Moravian Church in America or its successors.
- (h) All assets of the corporation MORAVIAN COLLEGE upon dissolution shall be distributed to the Provincial Elders' Conference of the Moravian Church-Northern Province, in trust for such exempt educational uses as are described in Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954.

The Annual Day of Prayer and Appeals for Financial Support

- ¶509. November 20, or the Sunday following November 20, is appointed as the Annual Day of Prayer for Moravian College. Pastors and congregations throughout the Church are urged to observe this day as a Day of Prayer in behalf of Moravian College. Wherever possible, the College and Seminary are urged to provide faculty members and students as special speakers on this occasion.

OTHER CHURCH SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES

Ownership

- ¶510. The properties of other church schools, namely, The Moravian Academy at Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, and Linden Hall School for Girls at Lititz, Pennsylvania, are held in trust for the Province by the respective boards of trustees of the institution, but these trusts shall be administered for the benefit of the schools.

Board of Trustees

- ¶511. The Moravian Academy and Linden Hall School for Girls have separate Boards of Trustees. The Provincial Elders' Conference shall designate from among its number members of the Board of Trustees of each of these institutions of the Province, in accordance with the Charter of each institution.

EDUCATIONAL MINISTRIES

District Commissions on Christian Education

- ¶512. The District Synods are authorized to form District Commissions on Christian Education

to supervise any part of the Church's program of Christian education that is organized on a district rather than provincial basis. The Commission is responsible to the District Executive Board.

CHAPTER VII
PUBLICATIONS AND ARCHIVAL RECORDS

GENERAL

Importance of Publications

- ¶600. Since the early days of the Ancient Unity when the Brethren pioneered in publishing the Scriptures and hymnals and in furthering the Lord's work through the printed word, the Moravian Church has recognized the use of the press to be an important part of its ministry. Audio-visual aids have likewise taken their places as effective means of communicating the Gospel. The Brethren issued a hymnal in 1501 and completed the renowned Kralitz Bible in 1593. John Amos Comenius was a pioneer in the writing of illustrated books.

The Church continues to emphasize the importance of using all forms of communication in order to proclaim the saving name of the Lord Jesus, and calls upon the general officers of the Church to emphasize strongly this part of the Church's program. The Church also calls upon its ministers and lay leaders to make full use of such media of mass communications as may be available in their own local communities.

Support

- ¶601. The Moravian Church recognizes its obligation to give adequate support to the publications of the Church, and all ministers are directed to promote with vigor the use of these publications by the members of the Church.

Management

- ¶602. The Interprovincial Board of Communication is appointed by the Provincial Elders' Conferences of the Southern and Northern Provinces and is responsible to them. This board is responsible for the communications program of the Church, except for such specialized media as other entities and agencies may produce in connection with their own work. The Interprovincial Board of Communication also serves as a resource to other agencies and entities of the church in public relations, promotion, and use of various media, and it serves the Provincial Elders' Conferences directly in these fields.

PERIODICALS

- ¶603. (a) *THE MORAVIAN* [name changed in 1988 from *THE NORTH AMERICAN MORAVIAN*] is established by the authority of Provincial Synod of 1970 [superseding the *Journal of the Northern Province*, *THE MORAVIAN*, (1856) and the *Journal of the Southern Province*, *THE WACHOVIA MORAVIAN*, (1893)] as the official journal of the Church and deserves universal and continued support of the membership. [Note: *The Southern Province Synod of 1968* took concurrent action.]
- (b) *THE MORAVIAN* shall also be a forum in which members of the Church can express

their opinions on pertinent subjects, and the Editor is instructed to admit, at his/her discretion, all expressions of opinion that are written in a benevolent spirit and free from personalities.

- (c) *THE MORAVIAN* is the official publication of the Moravian Church in America. It is published by the Interprovincial Board of Communication, appointed by the Provincial Elders' Conferences of the Southern and Northern Provinces. *THE MORAVIAN* is sent to every family in the communicant membership of the province as a privilege of membership.

OTHER STATED PUBLICATIONS

¶604. The following four publications have a special place in the life of the Moravian Church, through long usage and because of their importance in interpreting the doctrinal position of the Church:

- (a) The *Moravian Daily Texts* (German title: "Die Losungen") has been an annual publication of the Moravian Church since the year 1731. Pastors and elders are directed to use their influence to encourage the use of the *Moravian Daily Texts* in every Moravian home.
- (b) The *Moravian Book of Worship* is the official liturgy and hymn book of the province and is to be used in all congregations.
- (c) *Readings for Holy Week* is intended both for private reading and for use during public services of Passion Week. Its use is recommended to all congregations.
- (d) The *Catechism* is the official statement of doctrine prepared for study and instruction.

THE MORAVIAN ARCHIVES

- ¶605. (a) The Moravian Archives were consolidated by order of the Synod of 1861 with those of the Moravian Congregation of Bethlehem and are permanently housed in the Archives Building at 41 West Locust Street, Bethlehem, Pennsylvania 18018.
- (b) The care and management of the Archives is committed to an incorporated Board of Directors of up to twelve members, up to four of whom are appointed by the Provincial Elders' Conference, up to four of whom are appointed by the Board of Directors of the Bethlehem Area Moravians, Inc., and up to four of whom are appointed by the Board of Directors itself. The first eight must be Moravians.
- (c) The endowment funds, the annual budget, the employment of staff, and all other responsibilities for the Archives are committed to the Board of Directors.

CHAPTER VIII

F I N A N C E

HISTORICAL INTRODUCTION

- ¶700. The early financial support of the Moravian Church was dependent to a large extent on the liberality of supporters in Germany, particularly the Zinzendorf family. By a settlement made in the year 1771, the so-called Sustentation Diacony was created as an independent financial institution under the control of the American Province. An agent of the Unity, however, represented the General Synod in control of the property of the Unity in the American Province.

Originally the Sustentation Diacony was formed from certain monies, credits, and properties belonging to the Province after settlement had been made with Unity and with old “settlement congregations” of Bethlehem, Nazareth, and Lititz. Then Bethlehem and Nazareth relinquished a part of their property, assigning it to the Province to remain unimpaired and undiminished as a permanent trust fund to be held by the Province through the Provincial Elders’ Conference as trustee.

During the twentieth century the operating funds of the Province were completely separated from the Sustentation Fund, and the latter was recognized solely as the Pension Fund of the Moravian Church-Northern Province. In a modernization of the accounting practices of the Church, the name PENSION FUND was officially adopted for this account.

Pension Fund

- ¶701. The Provincial Elders’ Conference, with the assistance of its advisory committees, holds and manages the Pension Fund. The policy of limiting expenditures to the income of the Fund, without invading the capital, continues to be regarded as a vital principle of management.
- ¶702. The increase of the capital of the Pension Fund is recognized by the Church to be of the highest importance in order to meet the legitimate requirements of the Church’s Pension Plan.

Advisors

- ¶703. The Provincial Elders’ Conference shall appoint an investment advisory committee, a property committee, and such other advisory committees as it shall deem necessary.

Provincial Auditors

- ¶704. The Provincial Elders’ Conference shall select and engage a professional auditor for the purpose of auditing all provincial accounts.

The Provincial Budget

- ¶705. The Provincial Elders' Conference shall annually prepare an income-based budget utilizing Common Ministries funding from each congregation and listing all the anticipated expenses of the Province. This shall be sent to the Joint Board of each congregation prior to the beginning of the budgeted year.

The Common Ministries Commitment shall be based on congregational income as Synod may determine. Recognizing that each congregation is blessed and is a blessing to the province, each congregation's Common Ministries Commitment shall be calculated in a manner that is fair for all congregations.

- ¶706. Each congregation shall include its Common Ministries Commitment, as confirmed by the Finance Office, in its annual budget and remit monthly payments to the Provincial Controller unless a different payment schedule is made in advance with the Provincial Controller.
- ¶707. The District Presidents are instructed to call attention of the church boards to the regulations concerning the Provincial Budget when official visits are made to the congregation.
- ¶708. The Provincial Elders' Conference is charged with the specific responsibility of conducting in each congregation a program of education concerning the activities covered by the Provincial Budget.

Delinquencies

- ¶709. The joint boards of the congregations are charged with the responsibility of the payment of their annual Common Ministries Commitment and District Assessments.
- ¶710. The unpaid Common Ministries Commitment and District Assessments of any congregation will not be excused nor removed from the books of the Provincial Controller and/or District Treasurer except by specific action of the Provincial Elders' Conference. Such action shall be reported to the next Provincial and District Synods.

Property of Schools, Colleges, Homes for the Aged, Camps, etc.

- ¶711. Whenever any affiliated corporation organized at the direction of Provincial Synod, such as a school, college, home for the aged, camp, etc., is dissolved, the rights, privileges, and title to the property thereof, real and personal, shall vest in the Moravian Church-Northern Province, and be administered according to the rules and regulations of the Moravian Church-Northern Province, unless its articles of incorporation or charter expressly provide otherwise.
- ¶712. The individuals who are officers, trustees, or board members of such affiliated corporations shall have no claim on the property, real or personal, of such corporation, nor are they subject to liability for its debts.
- ¶713. Such reversionary clause shall be included in the articles of incorporation of any new affiliated

corporation or in any amendment thereto.

THE LARGER LIFE FOUNDATION

- ¶714. The Larger Life Foundation was established in 1921 as a means of supporting a number of different causes of the Church.
- ¶715. The Larger Life Foundation is administered by a Board of Trustees of seven (7) lay members of the Moravian Church, Northern Province: three (3) elected by the Provincial Synod; one (1) member of the Provincial Elders' Conference, appointed by the Provincial Elders' Conference; three (3) appointed by the Trustees of the Larger Life Foundation.
- ¶716. Distributions from the Larger Life Foundation and the determination of the amount available for distribution each year is made by the Trustees of the Foundation in accordance with the Bylaws of the Foundation.

Distributions

- ¶717. The Trustees of the Larger Life Foundation shall assess the needs of each core agency on the annual basis and consider new core agencies every four (4) years. Recommendations by the Trustees for changes to either the named core agencies, or the amount allocated to each, shall first receive the approval of the Provincial Elders' Conference, then be brought to the next Synod for final approval.

Discretionary grants shall be made pursuant to Guidelines set and administered by the Trustees.

Loans may be made to congregations of the Moravian Church, Northern Province for capital projects pursuant to criteria set and administered by the Trustees.

CHAPTER IX

THE PROVINCIAL WOMEN'S BOARD

- ¶800. The name of this organization shall be The Provincial Women's Board of the Moravian Church-Northern Province.
- ¶801. The Provincial Women's Board shall be divided into geographical regions — the Eastern Region, the Middle States Region, and the Western Region.
- ¶802. The Provincial Women's Board shall consist of the following:
- (a) Three members, one each from the Eastern, Mid-States, and Western Regions, who shall be elected by Provincial Synod to serve for the intersynodal period.
 - (b) Three members shall be presidents of the Regional Women's Boards, each of whom shall be elected by her Region in accordance with the method of election defined by its Bylaws.
 - (c) Three members at-large shall be elected by the Provincial Women's Board, to serve for the same number of years as the intersynodal period.
 - (d) The employed Administrator.
 - (e) The advisory members of the Board shall be the Presidents of the District Executive Boards of the Northern Province and the Executive Director of the Board of World Mission of the Moravian Church in America.
- ¶803. The Provincial Women's Board shall encourage the organization and strengthening of the Moravian Women in the Regions and shall aid these organizations in their educational program. Program materials and service projects shall be coordinated where appropriate with other Provincial Boards. It shall represent the women of the Northern Province in denominational activities and cooperate in matters of mutual interest with organizations for women's work in other Provinces of the Moravian Church, both at home and abroad. It shall, under the approval of the Provincial Elders' Conference, represent the women of the Northern Province in interdenominational activities, and it shall in all instances be responsible to the Provincial Elders' Conference.
- ¶804. The Provincial Women's Board shall elect three Board members and its staff person to membership on the Interprovincial Women's Board, which is hereby recognized as such, and to which the Provincial Women's Board, Southern Province, elects three members of its Board and its staff person.

CHAPTER X
THE DISTRICTS

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

- ¶900. The Moravian Church-Northern Province may be divided into districts by the Provincial Synod, the number and boundaries of which shall be determined as the Provincial Synod may deem expedient.
- ¶901. (a) The Provincial Synod may organize District Synods, invest them with legislative powers or with other rights, and determine of what members they shall be composed.
- (b) The congregations shall be entitled to lay representation in such synods, and every congregation shall be entitled to at least one lay delegate, provided it has paid in full the amounts required for Provincial and District Administration and has fulfilled any other requirements necessary to continued recognition as a Moravian congregation in good standing in the District and Province.
- (c) No District Synod shall exercise any authority or adopt any projects or policies contrary to enactments of the Provincial Synod or the Unity Synod.

BYLAWS

Number and Boundaries of Districts

- ¶902. The Moravian Church-Northern Province shall be divided into the following districts:
- (a) All congregations of the Province in the states and Canadian Provinces east of the eastern boundaries of Michigan and Indiana shall constitute the Eastern District.
- (b) All congregations of the Province in the states west of the eastern boundaries of Michigan and Indiana shall constitute the Western District.
- (c) All congregations in western Canada shall constitute the Canadian District.

DISTRICT SYNODS

Definitions

- ¶903. (a) Each District shall hold a District Synod in 1992 and every four years thereafter.
- (b) The time and place of the District Synod shall be set by the District Board. Notice shall be sent to the Provincial Elders' Conference and to the pastors and congregations of the District not less than six months before the opening date of the Synod.

- (c) The officers of synod, committees, and committee officers shall be appointed by the District Executive Board prior to the convening of Synod.
- (d) The Rules of Order of the Provincial Synod (*Book of Order*, ¶1200) shall govern the conduct of Synod business. The latest edition of *Robert's Rules of Order* shall be followed on any points not adequately covered in the Rules of Order of the Provincial Synod.
- (e) The tentative order of business for the District Synod shall be prepared by the District Executive Board. The Synod shall have power to alter the order of business.
- (f) The District Executive Board holding office at the opening of the District Synod shall, with the chairman and vice-chairman of the Synod, serve as a steering committee so that all items of business of the Synod may be handled with dispatch and in proper relation to one another.

Membership of District Synods

A — Voting Members by Virtue of Office

- ¶904. (a) All members of the Provincial Elders' Conference in attendance.
- (b) The Bishops residing in the District.
- (c) The members of the District Executive Board.
- (d) Ordained Moravian ministers holding office under call of the Provincial Elders' Conference and serving under the supervision of the District Executive Board.
- (e) Any other persons in pastoral service under appointment by the District Executive Board.
- (f) Those serving in an institution or agency under District supervision or fiduciary responsibility will be full voting delegates to that District Synod. Their expenses will be paid by their agency or institution.
- (g) Those residing in a district serving a non-Moravian agency, board, or institution shall be invited to the District Synod by that District Executive Board as voting delegates with their organization paying their expenses.

B — Voting Members by Election

- ¶905. (a) The District Executive Board shall determine the number of lay delegates to be elected to the synod of its respective District, subject to the following principles:
- (1) Each officially recognized congregation in good standing shall be represented by at least one elected lay delegate.

- (2) Additional elected lay delegates shall be apportioned among the congregations in proportion to the communicant membership of the congregations.

The number of delegates shall be based upon the congregation's most recent Annual Report.

- (b) One retired clergy residing in the District to be elected from among their own number to represent them at the District Synod. This election process should be carried out by each of the respective District Executive Boards.
- ¶906. Any lay communicant member, whether male or female, who is of the legal age required for church legislative assemblies in the State or Province in which the District Synod or Conference is to be held and who is in good standing in the congregation where membership is held shall be eligible for election as a delegate.

C — Advisory Non-Voting Members

- ¶907. (a) The treasurer of District funds shall be required to attend as an advisory member, if other than a member of the District Executive Board.
- (b) All persons on furlough in the District who are serving under the Board of World Mission in a full-time appointment shall be invited to attend. The travel expenses of such persons shall be paid by the Synod, but other expenses shall be paid by the Board of World Mission.
- (c) District Executive Boards may, at their discretion, invite those outside their District in specialized ministry or holding positions with Provincial boards, commissions, agencies, or institutions to attend their District Synod as non-voting delegates. The board, agency, commission, or institution will pay the delegate's expenses.

Expenses of District Synods

- ¶908. (a) The traveling expense, including necessary meals and lodging en route, of all accredited voting delegates to the District Synod, with the exception of Provincial Elders' Conference members and Bishops, shall be borne by the District Administration Account. The District Executive Board shall determine and announce in advance the rate allowed for travel expenses.
- (b) The official expenses of the District Synod shall be borne by the District Executive Board. The District Executive Board shall determine what other expenses, if any, shall be borne by the District Administration Account.
- (c) All expenses for board and lodging for all voting or advisory members shall be borne by the congregations, boards, or institutions they represent. The expenses of board and lodging for the retired clergy delegate shall be borne by the District Administration Account. The expenses of board and lodging for Bishops and Provincial Elders' Conference members shall be borne by the Provincial Administration Account.

Purpose of District Synods

¶909. The purposes of the District Synod shall be as follows:

- (a) To confirm and renew Christian love and fellowship.
- (b) To stimulate and strengthen the work of the Lord.
- (c) To assemble and distribute information concerning the work of the District, the Province, and the world-wide Unitas Fratrum.
- (d) To review the work of the District, including all congregations, boards, and institutions, and to consider ways and means for strengthening the work.
- (e) To elect necessary boards and officers for the intersynodal period or for such terms as are herein provided, legislate on matters pertaining to the District, and transact other business related directly to the District.
- (f) To give preparatory consideration to matters which will come before the Provincial Synod and, if desired, present recommendations thereon. However, the major purpose of District Synods shall be the work of the congregations, boards, and institutions of the respective districts. As a rule, matters which can be decided only by the Provincial Synod shall be referred at once to the Provincial Synod.

Powers of District Synods

¶910. The District Synod shall have these powers:

- A To fix the time and place of its meeting. If the Synod does not designate the time and place of the next Synod, then the District Executive Board shall fix the time and place.
- B To elect the President of the District who shall also be President of the District Executive Board.
 - 1. The election of the District President shall be by ballot without nomination with two-thirds of the votes cast necessary for election.

The election of the Canadian District Board President shall be by a ballot, with two-thirds of the votes cast necessary for election; a committee appointed by the Canadian District Executive Board shall present nominations and each ballot shall be an open ballot.
 - 2. In this election, any ordained Moravian minister in active service in the Province under call from the Provincial Elders' Conference may be eligible. The President of the Canadian District may be a layperson.
 - 3. The Presidents of the Eastern and Western Districts shall assume office between 30

and 45 days following adjournment of District Synod. The exact date shall be determined by the respective District Boards in consultation with the outgoing and incoming District Presidents. When District Presidents assume office, they become members of the Provincial Elders' Conference.

C To elect a Board to be known as the District Executive Board.

1. The terms of office of the members of this Board shall run from one District Synod to the next regular District Synod. Should any District desire to stagger the terms of the Executive Board, the following procedure may be followed:

A majority of the members of the District Executive Board (or half of the members where there are an even number of members on the Board) may be elected to serve four-year terms. The remaining board members would be elected to serve two-year terms. Thereafter, all elections shall be for four-year terms. In case of vacancy by reason of death, resignation, or failure of the District Conference or Synod to meet or to elect such members to the District Executive Boards, the remaining members of the respective Boards shall fill any vacancy for the unexpired term as provided in *Book of Order* ¶913.

2. The election shall be by ballot, using nominations in accordance with *Book of Order* ¶910.C.8. A simple majority of the votes cast shall be necessary for election.
3. This Board shall include both ordained and lay persons.
4. The number of members on the Board shall be determined by the District Synod. However, any proposal to change the structure or the manner of election of this Board shall be mailed in its complete form to the Provincial Elders' Conference, to all bishops and ordained ministers in active service, to official congregational boards of the District, and to other boards or institutions responsible to the District Synod, at least three months prior to the opening of District Synod.
5. Any ordained minister in service in the District under call of the Provincial Elders' Conference shall be eligible. Any lay member residing in the District who is also a member in good standing in a Moravian congregation of the District shall be eligible.
6. The members of the District Executive Board, with the exception of the Eastern and Western District Presidents (*Book of Order* ¶910.3), shall take office at the close of the District Synod, and shall hold office until their successors have been elected and qualified.
7. (a) All members of the District Executive Board shall be limited to three consecutive terms in the same office.

(b) A member who has retired because of tenure restrictions may be elected to the same office again after a lapse of one term, and may again serve for three

consecutive terms.

8. Districts shall conduct their elections using a Nominating Committee, with the following guidelines:
 - (a) A Nominating Committee shall be formed under the direction of the District Executive Board, as said Board deems most advisable.
 - (b) The Nominating Committee will function for District Synods, and for District Conferences, if necessary.
 - (c) The Nominating Committee will nominate at least two candidates for each office to be filled at said Synod or Conference except that of District President.
 - (d) The Nominating Committee will submit a written report to be distributed to each delegate prior to Synod or Conference.
 - (e) The Nominating Committee will provide biographical and qualification information on all lay nominations as a part of their report to all delegates. It is recommended that such information will be supplied about all clergy in a ministerial directory.
 - (f) Nominations in addition to those made by the Nominating Committee may be made from the floor of Synod or Conference. Any nominations from the floor shall be accompanied by biographical and qualification information sheets for distribution to delegates of Synod or Conference.
- D To hear and redress complaints and grievances. Appeal may be taken to the Provincial Elders' Conference and to the Provincial Synod.
- E. To review all aspects of the work within the District and lay plans for its further development.
- F. To collect and publish information regarding various kinds of church activity, to support all causes advocated by Provincial and Unity Synods, and to promote Christian beneficence.
- G. To require reports from the District Executive Board, and from those boards, agencies, institutions, and committees responsible to the District Synod. These reports shall include a comprehensive, audited financial report covering the entire intersynodal period.
- H. To require reports from pastors and congregations.
- I. To receive memorials from boards, institutions, congregations, and individuals.
- J. To legislate on matters pertaining to the District, including the pastors, congregations,

boards, and agencies; endeavor to secure the faithful observance of the enactments of all synods — District, Provincial, and Unity — provided, however, that all legislation and other enactments of the District Synod shall not conflict with the functions and powers of the Provincial and Unity Synods; prescribe rules for the management of District finances.

K. The powers of the District Synod listed above shall not be construed as limiting the Synod

to the powers enumerated. The Synod shall have power to deal with any matters specifically related to the welfare of the District as long as this power is exercised in conformity to the rules and regulations of the Province and of the Unity.

DISTRICT CONFERENCES

- ¶911. (a) In the interval between District Synods, a Conference or Conferences may be held in each District at the call and under the authority of the District Board. Such Conference or Conferences may include an entire District or may be carried out on an area, regional, or other basis, as determined by the District Board.
- (b) The purposes of a District Conference shall be to confirm and renew Christian love and fellowship, to stimulate and strengthen those in the work of the Lord, and to serve as an agency to disseminate information and strengthen the ongoing program of the District.
- (c) The District Board shall establish and announce in advance of each Conference the basis for membership in that Conference.
- (d) The date, place of meeting, program, form of organization, and powers of Conferences shall be determined by the District Board.
- (e) The expenses of a District Conference shall be covered in the manner prescribed by the District Board. The Provincial Administration Account shall not be responsible for the expenses of the District Conferences.
- (f) A record shall be kept of each Conference. The record shall include a list of the persons attending the Conference, a copy of the program, a summary of the principal activities of the Conference, and a report of the expenses. Copies of the record shall be given to appropriate persons, boards, institutions, and libraries, including the Provincial Archives.

DISTRICT EXECUTIVE BOARDS

Rights and duties

¶912. The rights and duties of the District Executive Boards include the following:

- (a) To complete the organization of the Board by electing a secretary and a treasurer and any other officers deemed necessary. The Board may, if it desires, elect to these offices persons who are not voting members of the District Executive Boards.

- (b) To act as the Executive Board of the District Synod during the intersynodal period.
- (c) To exercise faithful care over all the ministers and congregations of the District in accordance with the regulations of the District and Provincial Synods. This shall include general oversight of all boards, institutions, corporations, agencies, committees, or other entities created by and responsible to the District Synod.
- (d) To supervise all pastoral changes and make recommendations to the Provincial Elders' Conference in accordance with the provisions specified in ¶210 of the *Book of Order*.
- (e) To uphold the doctrine, discipline, ritual, and worship of the Church, and to promote the distinctive features of the Moravian Church by emphasis upon its history, customs, music, hymnody, liturgies, and teachings.
- (f) To visit or cause to be visited such enterprises as are under its care, to give advice and encouragement to the pastors, and also to advise with the people in regard to the means and measures for the successful carrying on of the work.
- (g) To have charge of the development and extension of the work in the District.
- (h) To enter new fields of labor, and to begin and organize new congregations; to construct new church buildings and parsonages, and to cooperate with new congregations in their work; to aid and encourage new congregations in their spiritual and material endeavors, including the liquidation of debts on their properties, subject to the cooperation and approval of the Provincial Elders' Conference.
- (i) To act in conjunction with the Provincial Elders' Conference in the annual apportionment of funds for the homeland ministries work in the districts.
- (j) To control and distribute the money appropriated to the District Board for homeland ministries work by the Provincial Elders' Conference, and to have direct charge of the homeland ministries work within the District, subject to the cooperation and approval of the Provincial Elders' Conference.
- (k) To take advantage of every opportunity, after careful survey, to extend the work of the Church within the District, and to inaugurate work with the ultimate view of the establishment of new Moravian congregations.
- (l) To advocate through the District the projects and the program for the District as well as the general needs and enterprises of the entire Province.
- (m) To report to the Provincial Elders' Conference as occasion requires on the work within the District.
- (n) To act in conjunction with the Provincial Elders' Conference in the transaction of business requiring a knowledge of District or local needs.

- (o) To report to the District Synod. This shall include a financial report.
- (p) To report the enactments and recommendations of the District Synod to the Provincial Synod next following.
- (q) To convene the District Synod in case of emergency.
- (r) To determine the number of lay delegates to be elected to District Synod, to apportion those delegates among the various congregations of the District in accordance with *Book of Order* ¶905, to appoint the officers of the District Synod, the committees and committee officers, and to perform the duties of a Standing Committee on Credentials.

Filling of Vacancies

- ¶913. (a) In case of a vacancy in the office of District President of the Eastern or Western Districts, the rule for filling a vacancy in the Provincial Elders' Conference shall be followed. [*See Book of Order* ¶116(c)]
- (b) 1. In case of a vacancy in the District Executive Board, but not in the office of District President of the Eastern or Western District, the remaining members of the Board shall arrange for the election of a new member.
2. The District Board shall have power to convene, if it so desires, a special District Synod to fill the vacancy. If this is done, all the expenses shall be borne by the District Board and by the congregations of the District.
3. The District Board shall have power, if it so desires, to fill the vacancy by a mail ballot. In such an election by mail, each minister in the District under call of the Provincial Elders' Conference shall have one vote, the Joint Board of each recognized congregation in good standing in the District shall have one vote, and each bishop residing in the District shall have one vote. The person receiving a majority of the votes cast shall be declared elected.

AMENDMENTS

- ¶914. All paragraphs of the foregoing District Bylaws, excepting paragraphs that contain constitutional requirements, may be amended by a vote of two-thirds of the members present at a regular session of the District Synod. [*See Book of Order* ¶106]

CHAPTER XI

THE CONGREGATIONS

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

- ¶1000. God calls the Church to serve God and all people in response to God's own act of love demonstrated in the Life, Death, and Resurrection of Jesus Christ, Son of God. In the Church we are confronted by Jesus Christ, who leads it as Lord. We are bound to Him by a debt we cannot hope to pay and yet in love we are freed by Him.

In this fellowship which is the Church we give thanks for that redeeming love here proclaimed and experienced. God has made us one and we joyfully acknowledge our benefits in that self-giving sacrifice, through which we have the promise of continued fellowship with God and of eternal life.

The Christian Church consists of persons living in fellowship and service with one another out of obedience to Christ and who, in this fellowship, experience the presence of their Lord in joyful thanksgiving and communion. We offer to all the love with which God loves us. Members of the Church, therefore, are:

- (a) those who accept God's call in Christ to enter into a relationship with Christ as Savior, to have their broken lives restored to human wholeness, to share a creative fellowship with other Christians;
- (b) those who know themselves to be under God's judgment to be redeemed by the love of Jesus Christ and to be in constant need of forgiveness and guidance from the Holy Spirit;
- (c) those who minister and worship in every area of their life;
- (d) those who work to maintain and stimulate communion between God and humankind;
- (e) those who are eager to discover and apply God's will in every human situation;
- (f) those who are willing to be God's agents for creative change in the world;
- (g) those who grow in understanding of and gratitude for the life God has entrusted to them.

Membership

- ¶1001. Membership in the Body of Christ is an expression of a person's relationship with Christ as Lord and Savior. In that relationship, members seek to fulfill and carry out the responsibilities and obligations to which membership commits them.

Therefore, we hold the following expectations of one another as a practical expression of our Christian faith:

1. Of Congregations:

Congregations are charged with the responsibility to develop a variety of ways in which people can express their commitment to Christ, such as

1. Commitment to regular participation in the worship life of the congregation.
2. Commitment to financial support of the congregation and denomination according to financial ability.
3. Commitment to serve when elected or appointed to the Boards and Committees of the congregation.
4. Commitment to the total Church in recognition that this congregation is an integral part of the total Body of Christ.
5. Commitment to witness the love of God for the World, and a willingness to be a part of some form of service within the larger community.

2. Of Resident Members:

Involvement in the congregation as:

the Worshiping/Praying Community
the Studying/Growing Community
the Loving/Supporting Community
the Giving/Caring Community
the Serving/Witnessing Community

3. Of Non-Resident Members:

For the spiritual well-being of the individual or family concerned, it is generally best to establish relationship with a church in the place of residence, especially when a stay of a year or more is anticipated.

Requirements of Membership

¶1002. Persons desiring membership in a Moravian congregation shall:

- (a) demonstrate their commitment to Jesus Christ.
- (b) be provided with opportunities for growth in that commitment.
- (c) receive from the appropriate Board the expectations and obligations of membership as defined by the local congregation.

Non-Resident Members

- ¶1003. (a) It is recommended that persons removed from their home congregation by many miles and a prolonged period of time find a church affiliation at the place of residence.
- (b) Until transferring of membership, participation by sharing in the ministry of the congregation through support of the budget seems to offer the only concrete evidence of intention to remain a member. Each year a pledge card should be mailed to all non-resident members. Financial support sufficient to maintain the ministry of the congregation is expected in an amount commensurate with the person's financial ability.

Categories of Membership

- ¶1004. The members of the congregation are classified as Confirmed Communicants, Communicants, and Non-communicants.
- ¶1005. Confirmed Communicants are all baptized members who have accepted full responsibility for the life of the church through adult baptism, the rite of confirmation, or reaffirmation of faith.
- ¶1006. Communicants are all baptized members who have been admitted to the communion of the Moravian Church by authority of the Board of Elders.
- ¶1007. Non-communicants are all baptized members under twenty-one years of age, and who have not been admitted to the Holy Communion, and the children of adherents of the congregation who have received baptism in the Moravian Church.

Admission of Members

- ¶1008. The Boards of Elders of congregations, whose duty it is to decide on all cases of admission, dismissal, and exclusion of members, are enjoined to exercise the greatest care in the admission of new members. They should make a thorough examination of the candidates for reception with regard to their sincerity and secure, as far as possible, a membership that has met with a change of heart.
- ¶1009. Individuals can claim membership in the Moravian Church only by virtue of their connection with some regularly recognized Moravian congregation.
- ¶1010. Children are formally received into the congregation by baptism, in which connection their names are placed on the rolls of the church.
- ¶1011. When both parents are received, all their baptized children under thirteen years of age are received with them. In cases when only one of the parents is received, the same rule shall apply, unless it is the expressed wish of the parents that their children shall not be so regarded.
- ¶1012. All persons not baptized as infants are received into communicant membership on confession of faith by adult baptism. Persons baptized in infancy are received on confession of faith by confirmation.
- ¶1013. Communicant members from other Moravian Churches or other denominations are received at

a public service by the right hand of fellowship, after the letter of transfer presented has received favorable action on the part of the Elders. In cases where no letter of transfer can be furnished, it shall be the duty of the Board of Elders to decide the question of their reception and the manner of it. They may require a profession of faith.

- ¶1014. The re-admission of members need not take place in public. A public announcement of such action of the Elders shall be sufficient. The term “re-admission” shall apply to all applicants who were formerly connected with the congregation and who, at the time of making application, are not members of any church.
- ¶1015. Exceptional cases connected with the admission of members shall be referred to the Provincial Elders’ Conference for a decision.

Removal of Members

- ¶1016. When members in good standing remove from a congregation and request letters of transfer, the Board of Elders shall authorize the same and the pastor shall send such letters of transfer directly to the congregation which the member wishes to join. For this purpose, a form authorized by the Provincial Elders’ Conference shall be used.
- ¶1017. When members remove to places where there are Moravian congregations, their pastors are required to notify the pastors of those congregations, and furnish them with the names of such members.

Organization of a Congregation

- ¶1018. (a) The formation of new congregations of the Moravian Church is a responsibility of the District Executive Board.
- (b) A group or congregation of believers desiring to become a congregation of the Moravian Church shall consist of persons who have publicly confessed their faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, and have signified their desire to unite with the Moravian Church.

Guidelines shall be established between District Boards and the forming groups for stages of development into congregations of the Moravian Church, such as:

A Moravian Fellowship; Calling of a Pastor; Opening of a Charter; Closing a Charter; the Formation of a Constitutional Structure; Purchase of Land; Construction of a Building, with a much lower priority on land purchase and building construction, thereby affirming alternative models and approaches.

The District Boards shall use these guidelines to establish a covenant with a group of people seeking to become a Moravian congregation at each stage of development that would include the following minimal criteria:

- A functioning plan for the worship life of the congregation;
- A functioning plan for evangelism, assimilation, and discipline with attendance and membership goals;

- A functioning plan of stewardship education with goals of individual tithing, congregational support of denominational responsibilities and benevolences, and local operating expenses;
- A functioning plan of Christian Education, with goals of participation in Church School, small groups, leadership opportunities, and development.

The group shall be recognized by the Provincial Elders' Conference as a congregation of the Moravian Church.

- (c) The Executive Board shall in every case recommend the recognition of the group or congregation before action is taken by the Provincial Elders' Conference.

In every case, the official recognition of a group or congregation, with the essential facts, shall be entered into the minutes of the Provincial Elders' Conference and into the other appropriate records of the Province.

- (d) Every congregation of the Moravian Church shall normally be managed in its local affairs by two boards elected from the communicant membership of the congregation, namely, the Board of Elders and the Board of Trustees. [See *Book of Order*, ¶1024]
- (e) Within one year after receiving recognition as a congregation of the Moravian Church, the body shall formulate and transmit to the District Executive Board adequate rules and regulations under which the congregation will carry on its work. The District Executive Board shall transmit the proposed Rules and Regulations to the Provincial Elders' Conference for final action. The Rules and Regulations shall go into effect only after they have received the approval of the Provincial Elders' Conference.

Ineffective Governance, Viability, and Dissolution of Congregations

- ¶1019. (a) A congregation will be deemed unable to function when it gives evidence of such as the following as discerned by the District Executive Board:

- Failure to act decisively in matters of conflict of interest or malfeasance;
- Failure to express prudent care of its real estate — maintaining its properties in good repair as a trust for future generations, secure from the threat of weather, vandalism, neglect, or abuse;
- Ongoing inability to achieve a quorum for the business of its executive boards or Church Council.

- (b) When circumstances arise in which a congregation is deemed by the District Executive Board to be unable to function in its own best interest, or in the best interest of the District and Province, in regard to the care of its real estate or in matters of law and finance, so as to jeopardize the safety of its own material assets or the good name and assets of the District and Province, the District Executive Board, with the concurrence of the Provincial Elders' Conference, shall have the authority to function as the executive board of the congregation with power such as, but not limited to,

- appoint pastoral leadership;

- hire and terminate employees;
- contract for legal and other services in the name of the congregation;
- secure mortgages or other loans in the name of the congregation as may be needed to return or maintain congregational property in good repair, safe from the threat of weather, vandalism, neglect, or abuse;
- liquidate assets;
- dismiss members of the executive boards of the congregation as may be necessary in response to irreconcilable differences or conflicts of interest; and appoint members of the executive boards of the congregation as may be necessary in the absence of the congregation's ability to do so.

(c) A congregation shall be deemed to be viable when it gives evidence of the following:

- Active confirmed communicant members;
- Ability to consistently achieve a quorum for the business of its executive boards and Church Council;
- Lay leadership sufficient to carry out worship and program life;
- Minimum of 85% participation in payment of Common Ministries Commitment and District Assessments;
- 100% participation in payment of pastor's benefits (insurance and retirement)
- Ability to maintain leadership compensation commensurate with the size and ministries of the congregation or emerging ministry;
- Prudent care of its real estate — maintaining its properties in good repair as a trust for future generations, secure from the threat of weather, vandalism, neglect, or abuse;
- Engagement in local ministries, such as VBS (Vacation Bible School), food pantries, child care, scouting programs, community education and support groups, etc.

(d) Whenever a Moravian congregation fails to fulfill a majority of the criteria for congregational viability, the District Executive Board shall meet with its Joint Board to discuss the future of the congregation and its options for ministry.

(e) Whenever the Joint Board and the District Executive Board fail to reach an agreement whereby the congregation can continue to serve as a meaningful context for vital and ongoing ministry, a special Church Council shall be convened for the purpose of voting on discontinuance. The President of the District or a designated representative shall preside over the Church Council. The preamble and resolution to be adopted by the Church Council shall be the following or its equivalent:

“Whereas, a quorum of the members of the _____ Congregation of the Moravian Church are assembled on this [date] in [place] in a properly announced and convened Church Council, now therefore be it

“Resolved, that the _____ Congregation requests the Provincial Elders' Conference of the Moravian Church to dissolve the congregation and arrange for the disposition of its records and properties in accordance with the rules and

regulations of the Moravian Church as set forth in the *Book of Order*.”

- (f) Whenever the Church Council, called for the purpose of discontinuing the congregation, declines voluntary dissolution, the District Executive Board shall have power to postpone dissolution for a period of not more than a year at a time. Should the District Executive Board, after a reasonable extension of the existence of the congregation, recommend to the Provincial Elders’ Conference the dissolution of the congregation, the Provincial Elders’ Conference shall then have authority to dissolve the congregation without a formal resolution from the congregation in question.
- (g) The Provincial Elders’ Conference is empowered to dissolve congregations which consistently fail to meet their fiscal responsibilities to the District and/or Province or which are grossly negligent in the repayment of debts to the District and/or Province, or congregations which by their inappropriate actions jeopardize the name and status of the Moravian Church-Northern Province.

COOPERATION WITH OTHER CONGREGATIONS

- ¶1020. Wherever it seems in the best interest of the cause of Jesus Christ to encourage local Moravian congregations to seek closer working relationships with congregations of other communions, the Provincial Elders’ Conference or the respective District Executive Board shall take the initiative and encourage local congregations to work toward arrangements for sharing pastoral leadership, the organization of federated congregations, or the merger of congregations.

THE CHURCH COUNCIL

- ¶1021. (a) The government of each congregation is vested in the Church Council, whose function it is to consider and determine all matters of general interest and importance, and to lay down the general rules for the management of the spiritual and temporal affairs of the congregation. The Church Council is accountable to the District Executive Board.
- (b) The Church Council, unless otherwise provided by the charter of a congregation, shall elect the executive boards of the congregation, such as the Board of Elders and the Board of Trustees, and all delegates to synods, and provide for the election or appointment of all other officers or committees of the congregation.

Qualifications for Membership

- ¶1022. Local congregations may determine for themselves the minimum age of membership and qualification for voting membership, but no rule adopted concerning voting membership shall be at variance with the laws of the state or province in which the congregation is situated.

Right of Petition

- ¶1023. The Church Council, the executive boards, and every member of a congregation have the right of petition successively to the District Executive Board, the District Synod, the Provincial

Elders' Conference, and the Provincial Synod.

EXECUTIVE BOARDS

Number of Boards

- ¶1024. (a) For the management of its affairs there shall be in each congregation two executive boards, namely, the Board of Elders and the Board of Trustees, which boards, while primarily accountable to the Church Council, are subject to the supervision of the District Executive Board. The pastor shall in every case be the president of the Board of Elders.
- (b) While the desirability of having separate boards in each congregation is strongly urged, a congregation shall have the right to unite the functions of the two boards into one Administrative Board.

Eligibility for Membership of Boards

- ¶1025. Only communicant members in good and regular standing are eligible to election as members of the Board of Elders and the Board of Trustees of a congregation.

Qualifications of Members of Boards

- ¶1026. A congregation should conscientiously select such members for the office of Elder and of Trustee as possess the grace and the gifts required for the office. Especially should the Elders be persons whose hearts and minds are in the work of saving souls, who are qualified to deal with souls privately, and who are able and willing to assist the pastor in the spiritual work of the congregation.
- ¶1027. Before an election of Elders, the pastor shall call public attention to the nature and duties of the office. After their election, they shall be solemnly inducted into their office in the presence of the congregation.

Powers and Duties of Boards

- ¶1028. (a) The primary function of the Board of Elders and the Board of Trustees shall be to promote, respectively, the spiritual and the temporal welfare of the congregation.
- (b) These boards are the properly constituted representatives of the Church Council, vested with such rights and charged with such duties as are specified in the rules and regulations of the congregation, and as the Council may from time to time refer to them.
- (c) In the discharge of their duties, the members of the boards shall not be influenced by selfishness and self-interest; but sincere love for the Lord and His Church, unity of the spirit, and Christian confidence must rule in every heart.
- (d) It shall be the right and the duty of all members of the boards to state an opinion on any

subject freely, and their colleagues shall recognize the correlative duty of not divulging these sentiments to others.

- (e) It shall be the duty of the boards to render each other mutual assistance and to abstain from all interference with each other.
- (f) When a board has come to a decision in any matter, it shall be the duty of each member of the same to make every reasonable effort to carry the will of the board into execution. Such decisions are binding upon every member of the board, as well as upon every member of the congregation. Cases, wherein all the members of a board cannot feel satisfied with the conclusion of the majority or wherein any member of the congregation cannot conscientiously accept a decision of a board, may be laid before the District Executive Board for decision.
- (g) Emphasis should be placed upon the function which can be discharged by the Elders in active support of the pastors in their pastoral duties.

The Joint Board

- ¶1029. When a matter that concerns both Boards arises and the two Boards acting separately are not agreed in opinion, the Boards shall meet in joint session for mutual consideration, and the matter will be decided by a two-thirds vote of the entire membership of the two Boards.
- ¶1030. The Joint Board of each congregation is solemnly charged with the responsibility of leading that congregation in meeting its annual obligations for District and Provincial Administration, as well as meeting its other financial obligations and indebtedness to the District and/or Province.

For congregations which repeatedly fail to make a good faith effort toward meeting their denominational obligations and/or indebtedness, the District Board and/or Provincial Elders' Conference is empowered to take the following steps:

1. Call a Special Church Council of the congregation to inform the members of the situation, and to seek a motion from the congregation to pay such obligations and/or indebtedness to the District and/or Province.
2. Deny seating at synods to delegates of the congregation until such time that arrangements for paying the obligations and/or indebtedness are agreed to by all parties.
3. Deny seating at synods to the pastor of the congregation in cases where it is reasonably clear that the pastor is negligent in his/her responsibility to lead the congregation toward honoring its fiscal responsibilities.
4. After all reasonable measures for resolution have been exhausted and agreement to meet the financial obligations and/or indebtedness of the congregation to the District and/or Province proves to be unattainable, the congregation may be dissolved and/or the pastor dismissed.

CHURCH RECORDS

¶1031. The pastor of every congregation shall carefully keep the following records, which records shall in every case be kept according to the rules laid down by the Provincial Synod:

- (a) The Register shall contain a reliable record of all baptisms, confirmations, receptions of communicants, marriages, funerals, removals and dismissals, and ordinations. The entries of the Register must be made according to the printed instructions furnished with the same.
- (b) The congregation shall catalog the names of the entire membership, divided into the categories of Confirmed Communicants, Communicants, and Non-Communicants (as defined in *Book of Order* ¶1004-¶1007).
- (c) The Diary shall contain a record of the most important occurrences in the life of the congregation; such official and pastoral work as is not recorded in the Register; and all meetings and services, if no special record of such meetings and services is kept in a separate book. Pastors are expected to keep an accurate record of the attendance at the services.

¶1032. The blanks for the annual statistical reports of congregations shall contain the following questions, which each pastor shall answer in writing by “Yes” or “No”:

“Have you kept, according to the rules adopted by the Provincial Synod, the Register?
the Catalog? the Diary?”

¶1033. The Provincial Elders’ Conference shall insure the availability of the proper books and cards necessary for the keeping of church records. [*For reference, see pages 205-208, Journal 1951.*]

- ¶1034. (a) All congregations shall maintain on their premises only those records in current use, and shall take proper care of their current records by storing them in a fire-rated cabinet, by microfilming, or by using other accepted methods. All non-current records in the congregations shall be transferred immediately to the Provincial Archives, except in the case of the Canadian congregations, where those records shall be transferred to the Canadian District Moravian Archives. The District Presidents shall see to the inspection of the conditions of storage of church records periodically on their visits to congregations and shall transfer to the Archives for safekeeping any church records which, in the opinion of the District Executive Boards, are being subjected to undue risks.
- (b) For congregations in the United States, a copy of all legal documents including, but not exclusive to, the Articles of Incorporation, the Charter, the Bylaws, and deeds to all church real estate will be filed at Provincial Elders’ Conference headquarters for safekeeping and reference.
 - (c) For congregations in the Canadian District, a copy of all corresponding legal documents listed in *Book of Order* ¶1034.(b) and required insurance forms shall be kept at the Canadian District Executive Board headquarters for safekeeping and reference. The

Canadian District Executive Board shall provide copies to the Provincial Elders' Conference as warranted.

- ¶1035. Every pastor shall care for the records and other documents of the congregation which the pastor serves, including completion of the Annual Report in a timely manner.

REPORTS OF CONGREGATIONS

- ¶1036. Every congregation shall require its treasurer to submit to the Church Council an annual written statement of its finances.
- ¶1037. In the last month of each year the Provincial Elders' Conference shall send each congregation an annual report form to be correctly completed, and signed by the pastor(s) and named officers of the congregation; one copy to be filed with the records of the congregation, one copy to be forwarded to the District Executive Board concerned, and one copy to the Provincial Elders' Conference not later than the day designated by the Provincial Elders' Conference by which reports for the previous year are to be filed. The Annual Report shall call for such information as to membership, finances, activities, and spiritual conditions as may be required. The report shall be the basis for congregational synod representation and Common Ministries Commitments for subsequent years.
- ¶1038. Synod requests that great care be exercised in properly filling out these report blanks to meet the requirements of the *Book of Order* and the requests of the Provincial Elders' Conference. A complete file of these reports should form a part of the records of each congregation.
- ¶1039. Synod charges every pastor and Joint Board to keep an accurate record of church membership and report only those members who have made an honest effort to meet their obligations to the Church as outlined in provincial, district, and local legislation.

CHURCH PROPERTY

Unincorporated Congregations, Incorporated Congregations, Titles to Real Estate, Restrictions, and Defunct Congregations

- ¶1040. Where a congregation is not presently incorporated, all trustees who have been or may hereafter be chosen or appointed in any such congregation according to the rules and regulations of the Moravian Church-Northern Province, and their successors in office appointed as aforesaid, shall have power to receive, acquire, hold, possess, and enjoy in trust for said congregation and the Moravian Church-Northern Province any bequests, land, tenements, inherited property and to use, administer, and manage the same in the manner provided in this *Book of Order* and the local bylaws, rules, and regulations of the congregation for the proper benefit of the Moravian Church. Said trustees and the congregations they represent shall always be under and subject to the rules and regulations and bylaws of the Moravian Church-Northern Province, as contained in the *Book of Order* and in conformity with current legislation and enactments of the Provincial Synod.
- ¶1041. All new congregations of the Northern Province shall apply for incorporation under the laws of

their respective state or province. It is recommended that all existing congregations not now incorporated shall apply for separate incorporation. The Provincial Elders' Conference shall in every case approve the Articles of Incorporation before application is made for a Charter. All Articles of Incorporation shall contain a provision that the corporation is under and subject to the rules and regulations and bylaws of the Moravian Church-Northern Province, as contained in the *Book of Order* and in conformity with current legislation and enactments of the Provincial Synod. In all cases when the Articles of Incorporation contain the above provisions, the Provincial Elders' Conference is authorized to convey title to the congregation real estate to said corporation. Until such time as the title to congregation real estate is conveyed by the Provincial Elders' Conference to such congregation corporation, under the above provisions, the title of such congregation real estate shall be held by the Provincial Elders' Conference in trust for said congregation and the Moravian Church-Northern Province, as heretofore.

- ¶1042. When the Moravian Church-Northern Province holds title to property for the benefit of a specific congregation, board, or agency, and agrees to transfer the property by deed to the congregation, board, or agency, whether to an incorporated board or congregation, or to the Board of Trustees of an unincorporated congregation, the deed shall include the following or its equivalent:

“Under and subject to the Rules, Regulations, and Bylaws of the Moravian Church-Northern Province, as contained in the *Book of Order* of said Province.”

or shall contain the following provision:

“No transfer of the above-described property shall be made without the approval of the Moravian Church-Northern Province, to be evidenced by its joining in the deed.”

- ¶1043. Any Moravian congregation, board, or institution, which in the future applies for incorporation or amendment to its articles of incorporation, shall include in the articles of incorporation or amendment thereto the following Statement of Purpose or its equivalent:

“To teach the religious beliefs and doctrines of the Moravian Church, to worship God according to the faith, ritual, and discipline of the Moravian Church, to promote religious education, and to perform such activities as are incident, pertinent, and related thereto.”

- ¶1044. Any Moravian congregation, board, or institution, which in the future applies for incorporation or amendment to its articles of incorporation, shall include in the articles of incorporation or amendment thereto the following statement or its equivalent:

“The congregation or corporation acknowledges itself to be a member of, and to belong to, the Moravian Church-Northern Province, and that as such it accedes to, recognizes, and adopts the constitution, canons or ecclesiastical laws, doctrines, discipline, and worship of the Moravian Church-Northern Province.”

- ¶1045. (a) No incorporated congregation or trustees of an unincorporated congregation shall sell, convey, mortgage, encumber, or lease any of its real estate in any manner without the written consent of the District Executive Board and the written permission of the

Provincial Elders' Conference.

- (b) No congregation may lease or purchase any real estate without the approval of the Provincial Elders' Conference, Moravian Church-Northern Province.

- ¶1046. Whenever any Moravian congregation expressly or virtually severs its connection with the Moravian Church-Northern Province, or shall become defunct or be dissolved, the rights, privileges, and title to the property thereof, both real and personal, shall vest in the Moravian Church-Northern Province, and be administered according to the rules and regulations of said Church.
- ¶1047. The individual members of a congregation are not in any way entitled to a claim upon its property, real or personal, nor are they subject to liability for its debts.
- ¶1048. No congregation, board, or institution of the Moravian Church-Northern Province shall receive aid from Provincial funds unless the title to its property is held as required by the *Book of Order*.

[Note: It is understood that Canadian law may require a change in this paragraph as it affects Moravian churches in Canada. The Provincial Elders' Conference is authorized, in cooperation with the Canadian District Board, to develop regulations that would carry out the intention of the preceding provisions so that they will be in keeping with Canadian law.]

Construction of Church Buildings

- ¶1049. No congregation receiving stated financial assistance from District or Provincial sources shall construct or acquire a church building or parsonage without the consent of the District Executive Board and of the Provincial Elders' Conference.
- ¶1050. Every congregation which receives stated financial assistance from District or Provincial sources shall be required to lay before the District Executive Board and the Provincial Elders' Conference for approval plans of every proposed building and estimates of the cost, which boards shall have the right to reject any plan that may be found unnecessarily expensive or otherwise unsuitable.

Dedication of Church Buildings

- ¶1051. The Provincial Elders' Conference or the Executive Board of the District concerned shall authorize the dedication of any building erected or acquired by a Moravian congregation or institution when the Board bearing administrative responsibility has been officially notified that the building is ready for use.
- ¶1052. When all obligations incurred in erecting or acquiring the building shall have been met, it is recommended that the congregation or institution hold some appropriate service in recognition of this fact.

Providing and Furnishing Parsonages

- ¶1053. It shall be required of every congregation having a resident pastor to provide the pastor with a parsonage, or an allowance in addition to the stated salary, enabling the pastor to provide for his/her own housing. The District Executive Boards shall recommend to the congregations of their districts, which provide parsonages, that they provide as minimum furniture and equipment a suitable stove, refrigerator, washer and dryer, rugs, and the furnishing of one guest bedroom. [See also *Book of Order* ¶1228]

ENDOWMENTS AND SEPARATE FUNDS

- ¶1054. A Moravian congregation already in possession or which may hereafter come into possession of unrestricted funds by bequest or gift shall, as a general rule, regard such funds as a heritage to be prudently invested. The application of the income from such funds shall be designated by the trustees. Only in an emergency or when circumstances warrant shall the Board of Trustees authorize the spending of the principal of such funds in whole or in part.
- ¶1055. Every Moravian congregation which has or may hereafter be given trust funds, permanently restricted funds, endowment funds, or cemetery funds is instructed to prudently invest such funds with the objective of a reasonable return at an acceptable risk. When temporarily restricted funds are received, the principal is to be preserved until the funds are expended for the restricted purpose. The trustees of the congregation are instructed to lay before the Church Council at least once each year a written report of the management and market value of such funds (including unrestricted funds covered in *Book of Order* ¶1054) and the application of the income therefrom.

DISCIPLINE

PRINCIPLES

- ¶1056. In common with the Ancient Brethren, we understand by the word *discipline*, in its wider sense, a faithful care of souls by means of public instruction and private conversation with individuals, or the training of the individual members of the Church for their high calling as followers of the Lord Jesus Christ, which is effected by means of the various regulations and institutions of the Church. In its more restricted sense, the word *discipline* designates the special corrective measures applied for the restoration of erring members.
- ¶1057. The first object of discipline is the welfare of the Church as a community. The true interest of the whole must ever be kept in view by fostering and maintaining earnest Christian life and practice in every congregation. The second object of discipline is the spiritual welfare of the individual members of the Church. Our efforts must consequently be directed toward preserving those who stumble from falling and giving offense, keeping every member in the right way, and bringing back those who have gone astray.
- ¶1058. It is, in the first instance, the task of the ministers to exercise church discipline, partly through public preaching of the Word, partly by means of the special care of individual souls. This care of souls belongs so essentially to the idea of a Christian Church that no church member is exempt from it, whatever his/her station may be. Whoever withdraws entirely from this care

of souls proves that he is no true member of the Church, and must give account to God [*Ezek. 33:9*]. Pastors, remembering what great responsibility they would assume if they were negligent in this important part of their calling, should minister with the greatest conscientiousness. They must not be slow, from fear of others or desire to please, to show firmness where needful; they must rather, with the justice and impartiality commanded by the Holy Scriptures, act undismayed on all sides. Yet, with all needful firmness, let admonitions be always in the spirit of true love and humility.

- ¶1059. In this it is of great importance that pastors should receive the strongest support from the congregation in discharging those pastoral duties which pertain to church discipline. This duty is especially incumbent upon the Board of Elders.
- ¶1060. But beside the official care of souls, there must not be wanting, in a Christian church, the mutual admonition and correction by individual members among themselves. “My friends, if anyone is detected in a transgression,” or seems to be in a doubtful state of heart, “restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness” [*Gal. 6:1 NRSV*]. A good word in due season, even though it be earnest and reproving, is then in place, and many a spiritual injury may be averted before it spreads further.
- ¶1061. As once in the Ancient Brethren’s Church, so in the Moravian Church of the present day, a holy discipline shall be deemed essential to the maintenance and spiritual growth of the Church.

DEGREES OF DISCIPLINE

- ¶1062. (a) The first degree is private reproof and correction by the pastor or the Elders.
- (b) If thought necessary, the second degree is to be applied by citing delinquents into the presence of the pastor and Elders, who are to admonish them faithfully and in love. A stubborn refusal to meet the Elders at once forfeits membership. When in the exercise of this degree of discipline immediate information is not attained, the Board of Elders may exercise the milder discipline of suspension from the Holy Communion unless, in their estimation, the offense is so flagrant as to require the application of the third degree.
- (c) The third degree of discipline is exclusion from church fellowship. This degree is applied to such as persist in disregarding established rules, despite all admonition, and/or exert an injurious influence upon the congregation. [*See also 1995 COUF, ¶103, ¶654*]

MODE OF EXERCISING DISCIPLINE

- ¶1063. Pastors and Boards of Elders must faithfully carry out the discipline of the Church, which duty is to be performed in all cases in the spirit of patience, gentleness, and love. Each case under consideration must be thoroughly examined to ascertain the full truth, and such corrective measures must be adopted as will prove most beneficial to the individual concerned.
- ¶1064. Those charged with the exercise of discipline must see to it that persons applying for admission

from other Moravian congregations or from congregations of other denominations are actually in good standing in the same and, if not, that they first prove the sincerity of their profession before they are received.

- ¶1065. When transgressions occur in the congregation which cannot be passed over in silence, but render it necessary that information should be given to the pastor or the Elders, it shall be the duty of every member who has knowledge of things that are improper or culpable to make a prompt, open, and truthful disclosure of the same to those who are charged with the exercise of discipline. Yet this must never degenerate into malicious tale-bearing or slander, which in the Holy Scriptures are reckoned among grievous sins.
- ¶1066. Should it be necessary to prove the truth of an accusation, the name of the person making the same must not be concealed from the person accused. In case the latter wishes it, opportunity must be given for both to appear together before the pastor. A pastor may at once decline to entertain any complaint against another member unless the accuser shall agree, in case it be required, personally to confront the accused.

CHURCH RULES

- ¶1067. Every congregation shall be governed by written rules and regulations following closely the Sample Handbook of a Congregation as shown in ¶1201 in the *Book of Order* of the Moravian Church-Northern Province. This Sample Handbook provides for some specifics to be decided by the local congregation. All rules and regulations shall be in full accord with the actions of the Synods of the Unity and the Synods of the Moravian Church-Northern Province, and shall include ***The Moravian Covenant for Christian Living***.

The final draft of the rules and regulations must be presented to the respective District Executive Board which shall make its recommendation to the Provincial Elders' Conference for its sanction. These rules and regulations shall be presented to candidates for membership, the signing of which indicates their willingness to adhere to them.

- ¶1068. Pastors are instructed to see to it that every communicant member is provided without delay with a copy of the ***Moravian Covenant for Christian Living***, and such other Rules and Regulations as the congregations may adopt for their government. The standard form of the ***Moravian Covenant for Christian Living*** to be recommended as the Code of Principles and Discipline to which members of the Moravian Church in the Northern Province subscribe is as follows:

THE MORAVIAN COVENANT FOR CHRISTIAN LIVING (Formerly known as "The Brotherly Agreement of the Moravian Church")

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 faith of the Unitas Fratrum and therefore shapes our 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 Savior 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 principle, "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 Morning Liturgy.

I. — THE WITNESS OF THE CHRISTIAN LIFE

5. (1) 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. (2) 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 the 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. 3:1-46; I Peter 2:11-3:12; Eph. 4:1-6:20*].
7. (3) 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. (4) 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

9. (1) Recognition of Authority

As members of the Moravian Church we will abide by the decisions made by the official boards of our congregations, 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.

10. (2) Stewardship

(a) 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. (b) 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. (c) We will also recognize the support of worthy causes outside of the Church as part of our stewardship.

13. (3) Personal Relationships

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

16. (4) Worship and Sunday Observance

(a) 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. (b) 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.

18. (5) Holy Communion

In the 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. (1) 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. (2) 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. (1) 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. (2) We regard Christian marriage as a lifelong covenant before God which requires 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 their 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 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 to 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.

E. 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 in 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" 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 with aiding than censuring those who falter, being conscious of our own need for correction and forgiveness.

[Note: *The Synod recommends this Moravian Covenant for use in the congregations of the Northern Province. Any other form of the Moravian Covenant must have the approval of the Provincial Elders' Conference.*]

OBJECTIONABLE DOCTRINAL VIEWS

- ¶1069. Boards of Elders are fully authorized and required to exercise discipline on those who hold erroneous or unscriptural views on doctrinal points, even to the extent of exclusion from church fellowship if, in their opinion, the case demands it; provided that there be reserved for the concerned person the right of appeal successively to the District Executive Board and the Provincial Elders' Conference.

Declaration of the Synod of 1913

- ¶1070. (a) In these testing times Synod most heartily reaffirms and renews its faith in the atonement, in the real substitution of Christ for the sinner on the cross, the substitution of Christ for self in the heart, the manifestation of Christ in and through believers as the power all sufficient for the redemption of the world, and our reliance on Christ as our Chief Elder unlimited and unhampered in His power in the world except by our weak faith.
- (b) Since it is our chief glory to show forth the Lord, Synod deplores and condemns the all-too-common practice of substituting culture, natural evolution, human methods, and philosophies in the place of Christ the Savior, and reaffirms its entire dependence on Christ and Him crucified as the one hope of the Church and that we proclaim no other Gospel.

MARRIAGE, DIVORCE, AND REMARRIAGE

- ¶1071. The Moravian Church, Northern and Southern Provinces, regards it as a sacred obligation to hold to the ideal of Christian marriage given by our Lord in His teaching. This is: Christian marriage is a lifelong covenant before God which requires the continuous loyalty of the man and the woman towards each other [Matt. 5:32, 19:9; Mark 10:11-12; Luke 16:18; I John 1:9].

Congregations and pastors shall endeavor to teach the meaning and sacred obligations of Christian marriage, and are specifically charged with responsibility for:

- (a) creating in the congregation and its organizational life an atmosphere in which the Christian home and family will receive regular and continuing emphasis;
- (b) creating among the young of the congregation and among the parents the opportunities for considering the meaning and obligations of Christian marriage;
- (c) providing counsel regarding the meaning and obligation of Christian marriage for every couple contemplating marriage. Because marriage is intended to be a lifelong covenant, it is the responsibility of husband and wife to meet frictions, offenses, and disagreements with a forgiving spirit that persistently works for reconciliation. 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.

The church acknowledges the painful reality of divorce and desires both to respond with grace to divorced persons, and to affirm our commitment to the ideal of Christian marriage as a permanent lifelong union between husband and wife. 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 failure in the marriage state.

Where divorce occurs, it is the responsibility of the church, recognizing its own involvement, to lead all persons concerned to repentance and forgiveness. It is the responsibility of the church to continue to minister to each member of the broken family. It is the responsibility of members of that family to fulfill their obligations from the former relationship, e.g., to the children, whether or not remarriage occurs. The church will faithfully minister with them towards the goal of healing, wholeness, and the new life made possible through the sacrificial love of our Savior.

When divorced persons come to the church seeking remarriage, it is the responsibility of the church to assist them in understanding their new marriage covenant before God.

INSTRUCTION IN THE DISCIPLINE

- ¶1072. It shall be the duty of pastors and elders to make themselves and the members of their congregations fully acquainted with the discipline of the Church.

PUBLIC WORSHIP

ORDER OF WORSHIP AND LITURGICAL PRINCIPLES

- ¶1073. The variety and wealth of our liturgies and litanies for divine worship belong to the essential character of the Moravian Church. While complete uniformity in everything connected therewith is neither possible nor to be desired, whether throughout the entire Unity or within the several Provinces, yet the agreement in these forms of worship, as to features of chief

importance, constitutes one of the strongest links that bind us together as a Church. It is, therefore, necessary that we should, as far as possible, continue to uphold this agreement in our arrangements for public worship.

All our liturgies and litanies should exemplify the spirit of a living church of Christ, and by them again the same spirit should daily be renewed and strengthened in the individual members. Therefore, the essence and the soul of our meetings is not to be found in the form, beautiful and attractive as that should ever be, but rather in the religion of the heart, which is expressed in the form.

Regulations belonging to our ritual must never be allowed to become a dead letter, or to degenerate into dry, cold form. It is rather a principle of our Church to be highly esteemed, that we have and shall maintain the liberty to introduce changes and improvements in our ritual as circumstances may require.

Every minister presiding at a service must be at liberty, in unessential points connected with the ritual, to act as the Spirit may move the minister; for instance, to introduce a prayer or a portion of Scripture, according to the words of the Apostle, “Quench not the Spirit.” Yet in such matters the minister must also have regard for the wishes of the congregation. In reference to the more important alterations in the mode of conducting the services, the congregation also has a right to be heard.

THE USE OF THE RITUAL

- ¶1074. As substantial uniformity in the use of the ritual of the Church constitutes one of the strongest bonds of union, our pastors are expected to conduct the regular, as well as the special, services in their churches according to the liturgical principles and rules established by the Church, and to use the regularly prescribed liturgical forms at the appointed time.

CHURCH MUSIC

- ¶1075. Music answering to the character of the Moravian Church serves in a high degree to give harmony and charm to the worship of the Church. This refers to artistic anthems as well as to the organ accompaniment to the singing of the congregation. The great influence of the music upon the devotion and the edification of the congregation must not be regarded lightly. All the more is there a call for wise and judicious leading that answers to the spirit of the Church. For when the music, however artistic, improperly intrudes itself as the chief concern and an object in itself, its effect is not to edify and help, but to distract and disturb. Only such compositions, therefore, should be chosen for performance as are distinguished by true beauty, and especially by simplicity and dignity. The minister of a congregation has, therefore, to see to it that only such leaders are entrusted with the conduct of the Church music as are fitted for it by their spiritual character and insight.

THE HYMN BOOK

- ¶1076. Our hymn books have become to many thousands, both within and outside of the Moravian Church, stimulating and strengthening books of devotion, whether used at the public meetings, or by the individual in private. The most sacred and joyous emotions, deep convictions, and

helpful spiritual experiences of God's children have found expression therein. When believers have appropriated these verses and made them their own, they will be in later life an inalienable possession, providing for them a suitable expression for the different phases of their inner life and a means for the confirmation of their faith.

ADMINISTRATION OF THE SACRAMENTS

Baptism, Holy Communion, and Confirmation

Holy Baptism

- ¶1077. The Sacrament of Holy Baptism is a gift of God and a means of grace made effectual by the preaching of the Word and the response of faith. Baptism sets forth the saving work of Christ, whereby through the power of the Holy Spirit we participate in the death and resurrection of our Lord, are washed from our sins, are raised into newness of life, are embodied in the covenant of grace, and become a part of the fellowship of His Church.

Our children share with us in these benefits of our Lord's redeeming work, through the faith of parents and of the Church. There is one difference between the baptism of adults and the baptism of children. The baptism of adults is administered at the request of an adult who personally responds to the proclamation of God's Word of grace after a period of instruction. It is to be obedient to Christ and to grow "in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." Therefore, baptism is not to be administered lightly.

The baptism of children is a frank recognition of the fact that children raised in a Christian home have the advantage of a spiritual heritage. Without any action or choice on their part, they are living in the fellowship of Christ's Body, the Church, where the Word is preached and the Sacraments are celebrated through the power of the Holy Spirit.

The baptism of children is administered at the request of believing parent(s) or other adult(s) responsible for the spiritual welfare of the child. We baptize our children not because we believe them to be in danger, nor because we believe that the baptismal water itself has the power to effect salvation. Rather, we believe that our children share with us in the benefits of our covenant relationship with God through Christ.

The baptism of both children and adults is a baptism "unto faith." In the baptism of children, personal confession is expected later as the child matures, and Christian nurture is directed toward enabling this confession.

In most Christian communities, baptism of both children and adults will be taking place. The baptism of children serves to emphasize that God's loving action in Christ **always** comes before the human response of faith. The baptism of adults serves to emphasize the importance of a **personal** faith in Christ. On one hand, we accent the initiative of God; on the other, we accent the proper human response to God's initiative.

Except in extraordinary circumstances, baptism is conducted in a public service, and all those present are called upon to remember the saving work of Christ and affirm their own baptism.

Admission to the Holy Communion

- ¶1078. Baptism embodies a person in the covenant of grace and initiates him or her into the community of faith. The Sacrament of Holy Communion is a means of grace by which God nourishes us in the faith and unites us in the family of Christ. Therefore, it is appropriate and desirable for all baptized, confessing Christians to participate in the Holy Communion.

Faith is primarily a response of the heart and not merely of the intellect. In Scripture we are all urged to a childlike faith. Furthermore, faith is not an expression of our worthiness, but of trust in the Lord's mercy. Since baptized children are in covenant relationship with the Lord, are part of the Christian community, and are able to make a response in faith, they therefore are to be welcome at the Lord's Table.

When a baptized child desires to participate in the Holy Communion, the pastor and/or someone designated by the Board of Elders will meet with that child and his or her parents (or others responsible for the child's spiritual nurture) to hear the child's profession of faith and to discuss the implications of partaking of the Holy Communion. The child will be publicly welcomed to the Lord's Table and receive communion with the congregation, looking forward to the child's participation in catechetical instruction and confirmation at the appropriate time.

Baptized children who previously have not been communing are admitted to Holy Communion by confirmation. The baptism of adults admits those who have not been baptized as children.

Confirmation

- ¶1079. Confirmation is a rite by which a person baptized as a child publicly affirms the covenant relationship signified in his or her baptism and confirms his or her faith. In the rite, the person makes a profession of faith and the congregation prays for the strengthening of his or her faith and the blessing of the Holy Spirit. Confirmation is a personal decision to accept the full responsibilities of membership in the church. It is also a time for the congregation to celebrate and acknowledge the confirmand's decision.

Confirmation should follow a period of instruction which familiarizes the person with the doctrines, practices, and heritage of the Church and which helps to equip that person for the responsibilities of mature Christian life and membership in the congregation.

Practice of Baptism

- ¶1080. (a) Baptism is to be administered with due solemnity and, if at all possible, at a public meeting of the congregation, on which occasion the children especially should also be in attendance.

- (b) As witnesses, or sponsors, only such persons should be selected who are able to appreciate the real significance of the matter. While no legal obligation devolves upon them to care for the children at whose baptism they are invited to stand as witnesses, they should nevertheless recognize it as a duty of Christian love to make such children special subjects of prayers, and to look after them faithfully should they be left orphans.
- (c) All candidates for adult baptism shall receive a preparatory course of instruction before they are baptized and are received by their baptism into the church of Christ as communicant members.
- (d) The mode of administering baptism shall be that of pouring or sprinkling. In special cases only, and by way of exception, immersion shall be allowed, provided that there is not combined with the desire for this mode of baptism a rejection of infant baptism, and that the sanction of the Provincial Elders' Conference be secured in every case.

Practice of Holy Communion

- ¶1081. (a) As to the time and frequency of the celebration of the Holy Communion or the Lord's Supper, no fixed rule can be made that is binding on all congregations.
- (b) A Communion Service is a service for the members of the congregation. Communicant members of other Christian denominations may be invited to commune with the congregation.
 - (c) It shall be a rule of discipline for all congregations that if a member willfully and persistently abstains from participation in the Lord's Supper, or from attending the services, the member shall be dropped from church fellowship.
 - (d) The Holy Communion is to be administered to the sick whenever they request it and the circumstances of the illness permit.
 - (e) The use of unfermented wine in individual cups is recommended to all our congregations at the celebration of the Holy Communion.
 - (f) Those officially elected as elders of a congregation shall be permitted to assist the pastor(s) of the congregation at the pastor's discretion in the distribution of the elements.

The pastor in consultation with the elders may, upon occasion, commission individuals to help in the distribution of the elements as deemed necessary and/or appropriate.

Those selected as elders of a congregation shall be informed annually that they are eligible to serve the communion elements, but that they are not required to do so. Those elders, and all who accept the invitation to serve, shall be trained.

The pastor and Board of Elders shall offer appropriate education to the membership regarding the elders' distribution of the Elements.

The presiding pastor will administer the Sacrament according to the Rules and Regulations of the Church [*Book of Order* ¶1026].

SOLEMNIZATION OF MARRIAGES

- ¶1082. The *Solemnization of Marriage* is a complete, Biblically-based ritual. If changes or additions are made, they should be in keeping with the spirit and intent of the printed Liturgy. [*See Book of Order* ¶1073, *Order of Worship and Liturgical Principles*.] Where a pastoral meditation is included, it is recommended that the pastor call attention to the couple's mutual responsibilities to God and to each other according to the teachings of Holy Scripture. The pastor must be careful to observe the requirements of civil law.

THE USE OF THE SURPLICE

- ¶1083. The underlying principle involved in the use of the surplice is that this official white garment, symbolizing the Savior's righteousness, when worn, covers those serving and thereby indicates that the pastor is serving not in his or her own personality, but in a specific sense as the representative of the Lord; that in the function being performed the blessing must come directly from the Lord. This applies preeminently to the administration of the Sacraments and to the services connected therewith. Hence, in accordance with traditional custom in the Moravian Church, the surplice is worn:

- (a) at the administration of both infant and adult baptism;
- (b) at the administration of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper;
- (c) at the administration of the rite of confirmation because it is an extension of baptism;
- (d) at ordination because this rite imparts the authority to administer the Sacraments.
- (e) It may also be used at the solemnization of matrimony because the minister may solemnize matrimony only as an ordained servant of Christ, and may pronounce the union only in the name of the Lord.

FUNERALS

- ¶1084. (a) The funerals of departed members afford an opportunity, that should never be neglected, for reminding those who remain behind to number their days in the light of eternity and to apply their hearts unto the wisdom that makes wise unto salvation.
- (b) Both in the arrangements and in the conduct of funerals, there should be special regard for simplicity. All forms of vain display should be discouraged, as out of keeping with the spirit of such occasions.
- (c) A memoir, or the intimate knowledge which the pastor may have acquired of the spiritual

experiences of the departed, may give occasion to glorify the riches of the grace of Jesus, also to encourage and warn the congregation, and to comfort the bereaved. But empty praise, or the passing of strict judgment on the dead, must be avoided in funeral discourses.

- (d) In our burial grounds, simplicity and uniformity with reference to gravestones and to the inscriptions thereon should be maintained as far as possible.
- (e) Cremation is an acceptable alternative to the traditional form of burial.

LOVEFEASTS

- ¶1085. (a) Lovefeasts are recommended on festive occasions, and are to be deemed very suitable in connection with the celebration of the Lord's Supper.
 - (b) These meetings were instituted in imitation of the "Agapæ" of apostolic times [*Jude 12*] and are intended to set forth by a simple meal, of which all partake in common, that there is no difference in persons before the Lord, and that all are one in Christ, united among themselves by the closest bonds of Christian love.
- ¶1086. Another form of the lovefeast is the "Cup of Covenant" which, however, must not be confounded with the use of the cup in the Lord's Supper. Like the lovefeast, it is the expression of the spiritual fellowship of those who participate. This service is, therefore, appropriate when the entire congregation, or a division of the same, desires in a special manner to express its union in the Lord.

SONG AND LITURGICAL SERVICES

- ¶1087. (a) A treasure of the Moravian Church is its special song and liturgical services. Such services consist largely, if not altogether, of singing or liturgical petitions and responses, both of which features may be united in the same service.
- (b) Our song services are based on the idea that the congregation is not merely led by the pastor, but is itself acting in giving expression to its spiritual desires and emotions in united song. This is still more the case with our liturgies. In these the leader appears only as a member of the congregation. This meaning and purpose is indicated by the form and contents of a liturgy. But it should also be brought to the attention of the congregation, not only by the solemn liturgical treatment of the service, but also by an occasional direct reminder on the part of the minister.

SERVICES OF THE PASSION WEEK

- ¶1088. It is recommended to all our pastors and congregations to hold services during Passion Week (Holy Week), featuring the use of "Readings for Holy Week."

BIBLE STUDY AND PRAYER GROUPS

- ¶1089. (a) The means applied for the spiritual growth of the congregation should not be confined to the Lord's Day but, as far as this is practicable, meetings with this end in view should also be held on week days. These meetings should be of such a nature that the spiritual nourishment for the congregation is provided, not so much by the set discourse of the pastors or leaders, as by permitting the life of the individual member to find proper expression in Bible study and prayer groups.
- (b) It is our firm conviction that meetings for prayer, the study of God's Word, and personal testimony are a most essential means of grace, and all our pastors are accordingly urged to maintain such meetings regularly in their congregations, with a view to reviving and confirming believers, and to awakening and converting sinners.
- (c) The duty, as well as the privilege, of supporting these meetings, especially by their attendance, is urged upon all the members of our congregations.
- (d) Pastors and congregations are urged to unite in fervent petitions for the outpouring of the spirit of prayer upon our whole Church that, in public and in private, in the church, in the social circle, and in the family, the name of our God and Savior may be glorified through the unceasing supplication of God's people.

THE CHURCH YEAR

- ¶1090. The experiences of Christians across the centuries have accumulated to our enrichment in a calendar known as the Church Year. This Church Year began at the resurrection of Christ and from this first celebration the Christian calendar developed, rooted in Christian experience. While not making a strict adherence to the Church Year mandatory, the Moravian Church strongly urges its use in all congregations. Through it is provided a pattern for worship which keeps before the Church all of the major elements of the Gospel.

The first half of the Church Year, Advent to Pentecost, celebrates all of the events in our Lord's life. The major theme is: God speaking to humanity through revelation. The second half, Trinity Sunday to the Sunday before Advent, has as a major theme: our response to God through commitment. The emphasis is on the work of the Holy Spirit in the Church. Once known as Trinity Season, it is currently known in America as Pentecost Season.

The liturgical services of the Moravian Church are carefully patterned for Church Year use, and the pericopes, used throughout Christendom, are recommended.

MORAVIAN MEMORIAL DAYS

- ¶1091. Beside the general festivals, we have in our congregations special historical Memorial Days. There are, beside October 31, 1517, the beginning of the Reformation by Luther, the following Memorial Days of the Moravian Church [*see 1995 COUF*, ¶681]:

March 1, 1457 - The founding of the Unitas Fratrum.

- March 26, 1467 - The election of the first ministers of the Unitas Fratrum.
- May 12, 1727 - The signing of the “Brotherly Agreement.”
- June 17, 1722 - The founding of Herrnhut.
- July 6, 1415 - Martyrdom of John Hus at Constance.
- August 13, 1727 - Spiritual baptism of the congregation at Herrnhut at the Lord’s Supper in the church at Berthelsdorf.
- August 17, 1727 - Revival among the children at Herrnhut.
- August 21, 1732 - Beginning of Missionary work.
- September 16, 1741 - The experience of the Headship of Christ in the Moravian Church.
- November 13, 1741 - Festival of the Eldership of Christ in the Moravian Church.

- ¶1092. 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.
- ¶1093. September 16 is the Covenant Day for the ministers of the Church, at which they bind themselves before the Lord to new faithfulness. This is a specially good opportunity for them mutually to strengthen the consciousness of their position under the leading of the divine Chief Shepherd and Elder, Jesus Christ, and of their high and holy calling and of their common debt of service. The Church is also reminded to remember its servants in prayer.
- ¶1094. Our pastors are requested to instruct their congregations more thoroughly in the history of the Moravian Church and to instruct them in the observance of the special Memorial Days of the same.

CHRISTIAN LIFE AND NURTURE

RELATION TO CIVIL GOVERNMENT

- ¶1095. (a) In regard to our relation to the civil power which has rule over us, we recognize it as a sacred duty to render punctual obedience, according to the precepts of the Holy Scriptures, as the minister of God to us for good; to observe, as faithful subjects and conscientious citizens, the laws and ordinances of the country in which the Lord has set us, and to honor and remember in prayer those who are set over us. It is the duty of every member of the Church scrupulously to observe all the ordinances of the government of their country and the regulations in force in the parish [*Rom. 13:1-7; I Tim. 2:1, 2*].
- (b) In respect to general festival days, religious and national, we conform to the Christian customs prevailing in the several countries.
- (c) If an oath is required according to the law of the land, we regard it as our duty not to refuse the same, where we are not exempted therefrom. If, therefore, in an individual case, an oath is required by the government or its officers, we take it in the prescribed

form, and the keeping sacred of the oath so taken must be one of the strictest duties on our conscience. But swearing lightly, without the constraint of the state, is not allowed among us [*Matt. 5:34; James 5:12*].

CIVIL LIFE

- ¶1096. It is characteristic of a living Church of the Lord that the civil life, the things done and left undone day by day, be in accord with what we profess before all the world as our faith. We pray in our litany: “May all our labor of body and mind be hallowed unto Thee” [*I Tim. 4:5*]. What we understand by this hallowing of our daily work and all our undertakings to earn money is felt by every brother and every sister who, living in the childlike fellowship with the Savior, look on their earthly calling as received from the Lord, and with all diligence in labor and faithfulness in business, await the blessing from Him alone.

TRAINING OF THE YOUNG

The Christian Home

- ¶1097. (a) The sphere of activity for the Kingdom of God which lies nearest to the Church is the training of its own children. Hence, every congregation must approve itself in the education and training of the children as living, active, and controlled by the Spirit of God. If our children see that their parents live in that which is the concern of the Church and of every child of God, that they are diligent in prayer and in the faithful use of the means of grace afforded them in church fellowship, and that they draw from these the strength for a godly life and conduct, it will be a blessed influence on them. They will thereby, from earliest youth, be stimulated to a close fellowship with the Savior in prayer and to a sincere desire to live for Him and the Church.
- (b) “Bring them (the children) up in the discipline and instructions of the Lord” [*Eph. 6:4 NRSV*]. This exhortation of the Holy Scriptures impresses on parents, as their first and most sacred duty, to become the guides of their children to the Kingdom of Heaven. But in doing so, they must let themselves be guided by a sacred love, which has in view the true well-being of the child, and not its momentary comfort and advancement.
- (c) It should be esteemed a sacred duty to promote a deep and thorough knowledge of the Scriptures in the congregation, of which knowledge the foundation must be laid by parental instruction in the home. The seed of the Word of God, thus sown in the tender hearts of the children, is then to be fostered in family worship, and in the daily morning and evening prayers in our schools. The use of the “Daily Texts,” with the accompanying hymn verses, and the reading of portions of the Holy Scriptures, with singing and prayer, all serve to lift up the hearts in fellowship to the Lord.
- (d) The Church solemnly recognizes the Christian training of the young as one of the greatest instrumentalities for the conversion of the world. Parents are, therefore, urged to cooperate with the Church in the religious education of their children, making it their earnest endeavor to lead them in their early years to Jesus, to a living experience of His

pardoning grace, and to a sincere devotion of their lives to His service.

- (e) It shall be the duty of all parents connected with our congregations to encourage the regular attendance of the children upon the services of the Church, and to strive to secure their early connection therewith as members.

The Church School

- ¶1098. (a) Our Church schools have been for many years an important and richly blessed field of labor for the Lord. They are, therefore, not only commended to the cordial sympathy and prayers of our congregations, but the ministers and boards of our congregations are anew and specially called on to make them an object of their fostering and directing supervision. Those brothers and sisters who have the needful gifts and are qualified by the Christian experience to render a service of love to the young in the Church schools are especially urged to do so. We must urge upon our teachers, however, the duty of qualifying themselves for the work by carefully studying the Scriptures themselves, both privately and, if possible, also by the arrangement of training classes.
- (b) It is the duty of parents and others connected with the Church to show their interest in the work of the Church school by faithfully cooperating with the workers of the same and, as circumstances permit, by serving as teachers or by attending adult classes.

Youth Ministry

- ¶1099. (a) We recognize that the youth of the Moravian Church-Northern Province are not the future of the Church but the precious present of the Church, and we celebrate the faith and growth of all as disciples of Jesus Christ.
- (b) We affirm the energy and honesty of youth and their ability to influence and embody the mission of the Church.
- (c) We envision a nurturing faith community in which youth are recognized and welcomed into every aspect of congregational life.

Religious Instruction in General

- ¶1100. (a) Pastors are charged to devote faithful attention to regular religious instruction of the children and youth of their congregations, not only in the Church school, but also in Youth Fellowships and in special instruction in the catechism of the Church.
- (b) Synod urges pastors and congregations earnestly to consider the following as of vital importance to their life and activities, especially with reference to the needs of the young:
 - 1. to make the preaching from the pulpit as largely as possible a teaching ministry;
 - 2. to provide as extensive and comprehensive a course of instruction preparatory to admission to Holy Communion and to confirmation or adult baptism as local conditions will allow;

3. to arrange for the careful instruction of those who are received as adults and who have not had the advantage of an early Christian training.

PASTORAL VISITS

- ¶1101. Synod emphasizes the importance of pastoral work in the church life. It shall be the duty of pastors to visit, as frequently as possible, the members of their charge for the purpose of mutual acquaintance, spiritual conversation, and prayer. In this work, the sick and distressed, the aged and infirm, and the wayward and erring are commended to the special care of the pastor.

BENEVOLENCE WITHIN THE CONGREGATION

- ¶1102. The granting of temporal relief to the poor and needy must ever form a part of the service rendered by a Christian congregation. Although those of our members who are more favored in temporal things will, known only to Him who sees in secret, of their own accord feel prompted to remember the needy, yet, according to the example of the Apostolic Church, 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 should be established. All almoners are not only to preserve the necessary reticence, but are also seek in prayer for tenderness of heart, that they may act after the pattern of our Savior.

LAY ACTIVITY

- ¶1103. It shall be the duty, not only of the elders and trustees, but of every member, to assist the pastor in the work of the congregation, both in public and in private.

STEWARDSHIP

- ¶1104. (a) Christian stewardship is the acceptance of our commitment to our Lord, and the living of all of life in grateful response to the grace and love of God in Christ Jesus, and in the awareness that we have the responsibility to give an accounting of the way we have managed our lives, spiritual gifts, abilities, time, and the resources of this universe.
- (b) The Biblical teaching of the tithe should be presented regularly to all members of the Moravian Church as the minimum for which they should reach and attain.
- (c) Percentage or proportionate giving at a lower level may be stressed as a step toward attaining the tithe and beyond, provided that such percentage or proportionate giving is presented to include not only one's material possessions, but also the commitment of our lives, our spiritual gifts, our abilities, and our time.
- ¶1105. The Provincial Elders' Conference shall, prior to September 30 of each year, distribute to congregations their Provincial Common Ministries Commitment amount for the next year.

SPECIAL DAYS OF PRAYER FOR BENEVOLENT CAUSES

- ¶1106. The following days shall be observed as special days of prayer for the causes listed, and in

congregations where special offerings are received toward the benevolence assignments, the offering for the stated cause shall be included:

1. Ecumenical Sunday: the last Sunday in January.
2. For Retired Ministers (optional): the last Sunday in January.
3. For Moravian Unity Work: the first Sunday in March.
4. Moravian Music Sunday: Fifth Sunday of Easter (fourth Sunday after Easter).
5. For Outdoor Ministries: the Sunday after Trinity
6. For World Peace and Nuclear Disarmament: the first Sunday in August.
7. Public Education Awareness Day: the last Sunday in August.
8. For Christian Education: the second Sunday in September.
9. For Church Development: the third Sunday in September.
10. For the Church's Ministry to Older Adults: the fourth Sunday in September.
11. For Children: a Sunday in October
12. For World Mission: the second Sunday in October.
13. For Peace with Justice and Freedom: the third Sunday in October.
14. Moravian Women Sunday: the first Sunday in November (date optional).
15. For the Bible Society: the Sunday before Thanksgiving.
16. For Moravian College and Theological Seminary: the Sunday on or immediately after November 20.
17. World AIDS Day: December 1

CHAPTER XII
FUNDAMENTAL DOCUMENTS

¶1200. ***THE RULES OF ORDER OF THE PROVINCIAL SYNOD***

The rules contained in the most recent edition of *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised* shall govern the Synod in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with the following rules of order and any other special rules of order the Synod may adopt.

Duties and Privileges of the President

- Rule 1. It shall be the duty of the president to preserve order, and to endeavor to conduct all business before the Synod to a speedy and proper result. The president shall state every case properly presented to the Synod, and before putting it to vote shall ask, "Is the Synod ready for the question?" The president shall announce all votes and decisions.
- Rule 2. In case the Synod shall be equally divided on any question, it shall be considered lost.
- Rule 3. The president may speak to points of order in preference to other members of the Synod, and shall decide questions of order, subject to an appeal to the Synod by any member.
- Rule 4. When an appeal is made from the decision of the president, the question shall be put thus: "Shall the decision of the chair stand as the judgment of the Synod?"
- Rule 5. Not less than one month before Provincial Synod, the Provincial Elders' Conference shall appoint all standing and special committees, and shall initially refer all reports, memorials, petitions, or resolutions to the appropriate committees.
- Rule 6. It shall be the duty of the president, and the privilege of any member of the Synod, to call to order a member who violates an established Rule of Order.

The Secretary

- Rule 7. The secretary shall enter upon the minutes the name of the member offering a resolution, proposition, or amendment.
- Rule 8. The secretary shall enter upon the minutes every resolution or proposition submitted to the Synod, or report made by a committee, in the words in which it was submitted by the mover, or presented by the committee; also all amendments offered, whether adopted or rejected; and before the final vote is taken on any resolution, proposition, or report which may have been amended, it shall be again entered in the words on which the final vote is taken, unless the amendments can readily be supplied from the minutes without such re-entry.

Motions

- Rule 9. A motion must be seconded and afterwards repeated from the chair, or read aloud, before it is debated. A motion shall be reduced to writing, if any member requests it.
- Rule 10. All resolutions shall be submitted in writing.
- Rule 11. Any member having made a motion may withdraw it, with leave of the Synod, before it is debated; but not afterwards without leave of the Synod.
- Rule 12. A motion to amend an amendment shall be in order, but to amend an amendment to an amendment shall not be entertained.
- Rule 13. An amendment destroying or altering the intention of a motion shall be in order; but an amendment relating to a different subject shall not be in order.
- Rule 14. On an amendment to “strike out and insert,” the paragraph to be amended shall first be read as it stands, then the words proposed to be struck out and those to be inserted, and finally the paragraph as it would stand, if so amended.
- Rule 15. A call for a “Division of the Question” can be granted only when the division called for will leave distinct and entire propositions.

Debate

- Rule 16. When speaking or offering a motion, a member shall rise and, respectfully addressing the president, deal only with the question under consideration.
- Rule 17. A member called to order shall be seated until the point is determined.
- Rule 18. When two or more members rise to speak at the same time, the president shall decide who is entitled to the floor.
- Rule 19. When a member is speaking, no one shall interrupt, except for the purpose of calling the speaker to order, or asking of the president leave to explain. A member allowed “to explain” shall have the right to explain only an actual misunderstanding of language, and is strictly prohibited from going into debate on the merits of the question.
- Rule 20. Any member speaking to impeach the motives of a fellow member, or treating the member with personal disrespect, shall be a violation of order.
- Rule 21. Any conversation, by whispering or otherwise, which is calculated to disturb a member while speaking or hinder the transaction of business, shall be a violation of order.
- Rule 22. In discussion, no one shall speak more than three times on any one question.

Privileged Questions

- Rule 23. When a question is before the Synod, the only motions in order shall be:

- (1) to adjourn;
- (2) the previous question;
- (3) to lay on the table,
- (4) to postpone to a definite session;
- (5) to refer;
- (6) to divide;
- (7) to amend; or
- (8) to postpone indefinitely,

which motions shall take precedence as herein arranged.

Rule 24. When a question is postponed indefinitely, it shall not be considered again during the sitting of the same Synod; but when laid on the table, it can be taken up again on motion.

Adjournment

Rule 25. A motion to adjourn shall always be in order, except

- (1) when a member is in possession of the floor;
- (2) when the yeas and nays are being called;
- (3) when the members are voting;
- (4) when adjournment was the last preceding motion; or
- (5) when it is decided to take the previous question.

Rule 26. A motion to adjourn cannot be amended; but a motion to adjourn to a given time may be, and is open to debate.

Rule 27. Adjournment to a subsequent day lays the matter under consideration on the table, whence it may be taken up at any time on motion.

Questions Not Debatable

- Rule 28. (1) A motion to adjourn, when to adjourn simply.
 (2) A motion for the previous question.
 (3) A motion to lay on the table, when claiming privilege over another motion, except when it prevents a member or a committee, in making any proposition, from stating the reasons therefor.
 (4) A motion to read a paper.
 (5) Questions of order when the previous question is pending.
 (6) Questions of order, when not appealed from the decision of the president.
 (7) A motion to extend or limit debate.
 (8) A motion to refer or commit to Committee.

Reading of Papers

Rule 29. The reading of any paper called for, relating to the subject under debate, shall always be in order.

Taking the Vote

- Rule 30. When the president has commenced taking a vote, no further debate shall be admitted unless a mistake has been made; in which case the mistake shall be rectified and another vote taken.
- Rule 31. The yeas and nays upon any question may be called for by two members, and when so called, shall be taken and entered upon the minutes. They may be called for at any time before the announcement of the vote by the chair.
- Rule 32. In all elections by ballot, a majority of the whole number of votes cast shall be necessary to a choice, except in cases when Synod shall determine two-thirds to be necessary.
- Rule 33. In voting by yeas and nays, all present must vote, unless excused by the president of Synod.

Filling Blanks

- Rule 34. When any blank is to be filled by the names of persons, a vote shall be taken on the names in the order of their nomination; but when a blank is to be filled by any sum of money or time proposed, the question shall be first put on the largest sum and the most remote time.

Reconsideration

- Rule 35. A question may be reconsidered at any time.
- Rule 36. A motion to reconsider must be made by a member who voted in the majority. No question shall be reconsidered more than once; nor shall a vote to reconsider be reconsidered.

Committees and Their Reports

- Rule 37. The Standing Committees of Synod and the number of members on each committee shall be determined before Synod by the Provincial Elders' Conference.
- Rule 38. The Provincial Elders' Conference shall be a Standing Committee on Credentials, whose duty it shall be, previous to the meeting of the Synod, to procure the credentials of the delegates of the different congregations, and to report immediately after the opening exercises of the Synod.
- Rule 39. The Provincial Elders' Conference shall act as a Standing Committee on Reference, whose duty it shall be to prepare, before Synod convenes, marked files of all printed reports to Synod, one complete file for each standing committee, indicating to which committee each of the different parts of these reports has been referred.
- Rule 40. The Provincial Elders' Conference shall name the officers of each committee. The chairpersons of all Standing Committees shall hold office during the intersynodal period, and shall act as advisors of the Provincial Elders' Conference with reference to carrying out the legislation of Synod, each chairperson acting for his/her committee.

- Rule 41. All reports of committees, except reports of progress, shall be made in writing. For easy reference, dates shall be placed on the first page of the report of each committee, and the pages and resolutions shall be numbered consecutively throughout the entire session of a Synod.
- Rule 42. When a majority report is followed by a report from the minority of the committee, the former, after being read, shall lie upon the table until the latter is presented, after which, on motion, either may be considered.
- Rule 43. When a report has been read, it shall be considered as properly before the Synod, without a motion to accept.
- Rule 44. A report of a standing committee cannot be taken up for consideration in the same session in which it is presented, except by the unanimous consent of the Synod.
- Rule 45. No member shall be absent from the business of Synod.
- Rule 46. No motion or resolution appropriating any of the funds of the province, or affecting the expenditures of the same, shall be acted on by the Synod until it shall have been considered and reported upon by the Committee on Finance.

Order of Business

- Rule 47. A proposed order of business shall be determined by the Provincial Elders' Conference, with modification as necessary by a steering committee which shall consist of the officers of Synod and the chairpersons of standing committees.
- Rule 48. When one or more members desire to protest against a resolution or other act of Synod, and to have this protest inserted in the minutes, the statement shall be presented in writing, before the adjournment of Synod, with the names of the originators affixed, to the secretary of Synod, to be read before the Synod and entered in the minutes.

Alterations of the Rules

- Rule 49. The Rules of Order may at any time be amended or suspended by a two-thirds vote of the members present.

¶1201. **SAMPLE HANDBOOK OF A CONGREGATION**

PART ONE

The Moravian Church in General

I. The Ground of the Unity

(See Book of Order, Chapter 1, ¶1-11)

II. Abstract of the Constitution of the Moravian Church

1. The government of the entire Moravian Church (Unitas Fratrum) in all general matters is vested in the Unity Synod, which meets every seven years.
2. The Unity Synod consists of delegates elected by the several provinces of the Unity.
3. The Unity Synod has final authority over the doctrine, life, and activity of the Moravian Church as-a-whole.
4. From one Unity Synod to the next, the government of the Unity is entrusted to the Unity Board for all matters pertaining to the Unity as-a-whole.
5. The Unity is divided into provinces. Each Unity province manages its own affairs in accordance with the constitution of the Unity and its own provincial constitution.
6. The Northern Province, of which this congregation is a part, has a Provincial Synod which is its governing body that meets once every four years. When Synod is not in session, the government of the Church is vested in the Provincial Elders' Conference.
7. The Moravian Church-Northern Province is subdivided into districts, each of which has its own Synod and Executive Board.
8. The government of each congregation is vested in the Church Council, which consists of the confirmed membership of legal age. The Council elects its own executive boards, viz., a Board of Elders and a Board of Trustees.
9. Pastors are called to serve a congregation by a call from the Provincial Elders' Conference after consultation and agreement between the congregational boards and the District Board.
10. The orders in the ministry of the Moravian Church are those of Deacon, Presbyter, and Bishop. For details regarding these orders, see *The Book of Order of the Moravian Church-Northern Province*, ¶203-¶206.
11. Everyone serving the Church in an official capacity is under obligation to observe faithfully the enactments of the various synods exercising authority over him/her.

III. The Moravian Covenant for Christian Living

(Include here the wording of THE COVENANT as approved by the Synod of 1982 and found in ¶1068 of the Book of Order.)

PART TWO

Rules and Regulations

I. NAME

This congregation shall be known by the corporate name _____.

II. CHURCH COUNCIL

1. The Church Council of the _____ Church at _____ shall consist of the communicant members of the congregation who have reached their birthday.
2. The Church Council is convened on _____. Special meetings may be called whenever the elders or the trustees may deem it necessary, or when a request is made by ten members, which request shall be in writing and state the business to be submitted. The stated reason for calling the meeting shall be the only business considered at the meeting.
3. Every meeting of the Council shall be announced on the two previous Sundays at the services of the congregation.
4. _____ of the members shall constitute a quorum.
5. The pastor shall call the annual Church Council to order, conduct devotions, and preside at the election of a President, Vice-president, and Secretary of the Council. Nominations for these offices shall be placed before the Council by the nominating committee. If there is no nominating committee, the Board of Elders shall make the nominations. The elected President, Vice-president, and Secretary shall serve for one-year terms. They would, therefore, preside at all called Councils from one annual Council to the next.
6. The secretary shall keep a faithful record of the proceedings of the Church Council, which record shall be submitted to the Joint Board of elders and trustees, meeting separately, for approval within two months following the meeting of the Council.
7. Except for the Treasurer and the Financial Secretary, the Council elects all officers of the congregation and its delegates to synods, considers all matters of general interest, and determines the rules and principles for the management of the spiritual and temporal affairs of the congregation.

8. Every member of the Council has the right to express an opinion concerning any matter under consideration, which, however, must always be done with Christian forbearance.

III. THE OFFICERS AND THEIR DUTIES

A. The Board of Elders

1. The Board of Elders consists of ____ members of the congregation and the pastor, who is the president of the board. ____ members of the board constitute a quorum. The Elders meet once a month, and more often as may be necessary. A vice-president and secretary are chosen from among their number.
2. The Elders are especially charged with the spiritual care and oversight of the congregation and all classes of its membership. They shall strive to secure faithful compliance with the enactments of the Unity, Provincial, and District Synods, with “The Moravian Covenant for Christian Living,” the section on discipline in the *Book of Order*, and the established rules of the congregation.
3. They shall see to it that the public means of grace are regularly and faithfully dispensed according to the ritual and usage of the Moravian Church.
4. They shall oversee the Christian culture of the members of the congregation and their instruction in the doctrine, history, principles and usages of the Moravian Church, the Church School, and societies. The supervision of the Church School may be delegated to a Committee on Christian Education, but such a committee is responsible to the Board of Elders.
5. They shall decide all matters pertaining to the admission, dismissal, suspension, and exclusion of members.
6. They shall determine when, how, and by whom the church edifice may be used.
7. They shall appoint the organist, ushers, sacristans, and such other assistants as may be necessary for the public services.
8. They shall, when not provided for by synodal enactment, determine when, how, and what appeals shall be taken for causes outside of the local congregation.

B. The Board of Trustees

1. The Board of Trustees consists of _____ members of the congregation of legal age. members of the board constitute a quorum. The Trustees meet once a month. Additional meetings may be called as often as necessary. A president, vice-president, and secretary are chosen from among their number, and the latter shall keep a faithful record of the board’s proceedings. The Trustees shall appoint a financial secretary and a treasurer, who are not voting members of the board unless elected by the Council to the Board of Trustees. The financial secretary shall receive, record, and deposit the receipts of the congregation while

the treasurer shall disburse monies on authorization of the board. The financial secretary has the further, special responsibility of recording and periodically acknowledging the identifiable monetary contributions of the members of the congregation.

2. The Trustees are especially charged with the oversight of the temporal affairs of the congregation. They shall strive to assure the prompt payment of all salaries, bills, and all Provincial and District obligations.
3. They shall keep all church property in good repair and in an attractive condition.
4. They shall have charge of all permanent funds of the congregation, exercising the greatest of care to invest said funds safely.
5. At the close of each year, they shall arrange for an audit of the accounts and preparation of the annual report of the treasurer and financial secretary, and report to the Church Council.
6. They shall appoint the sexton and required personnel not subject to appointment by the Board of Elders.
7. They shall secure an insurance bond for all church members who are involved with the finances of the church and all its organizations.

C. The Joint Board

1. The Joint Board consists of the Board of Elders and the Board of Trustees, and shall meet as often as necessary for the transaction of such business as may require the attention of both boards. The pastor shall preside at its meetings. In the absence of the pastor, the president of the Board of Trustees shall preside. In the absence of the pastor and the president of the Board of Trustees, the vice-president of the Board of Elders shall preside.
2. All decisions related to ministerial calls shall be made by the Joint Board. The members of the Boards of Elders and Trustees shall meet jointly, and a two-thirds vote of the entire membership of the two boards shall be required on such decisions. Such calls can only be issued by the Provincial Elders' Conference.

D. The Treasurer of the Congregation

1. The Board of Trustees appoints annually the treasurer of the congregation. The treasurer shall be in charge of all current funds of the congregation, and shall make no disbursements without proper direction from the Board of Trustees. At the annual meeting of the Church Council, the treasurer shall submit a detailed report of the treasury for the past year, and shall also attend the meetings of the Board of Trustees as often as that board extends an invitation to do so.

IV. THE ELECTION OF OFFICERS

1. A nominating committee appointed by the Joint Board shall prepare a slate of candidates for

every position to be filled. The nominating committee shall be appointed _____ months before the election.

2. All officers of the council and members of the boards, except the treasurer and financial secretary, are elected at the annual meeting of the Church Council, which election shall be by ballot.
3. Only such persons are eligible for election as officers or delegates as are of legal age of the State (or Province) of _____ and who are in good standing as members of the congregation.
4. No elected officer of the congregation shall be elected to serve for more than ____ successive terms. Each term shall be for a period of _____ years. After a period of _____ year(s), an individual may be eligible for election to the same office.
5. When a vacancy on any board occurs, the vacancy shall be filled at once by the remaining board members. The appointee shall serve until the next annual Church Council at which time the Church Council shall elect another officer to fill the unexpired term, if necessary.

V. Membership

*(Quote here in full ¶1002-1007 from the BOOK OF ORDER and add:
For more complete statements, see the BOOK OF ORDER ¶1002-1017.)*

VI. BAPTISM AND CONFIRMATION

1. It is expected that the children of members be baptized as soon as possible. This Sacrament shall be administered at a public service in the church unless extreme circumstances prohibit same.
2. Baptized children of the congregation are to be encouraged to confirm their faith at the age of discretion.
3. Confirmation is a rite by which a person baptized as a child publicly affirms the covenant relationship signified in his or her baptism and confirms his or her faith. In the rite, the person makes a profession of faith and the congregation prays for the strengthening of his or her faith and the blessing of the Holy Spirit. Confirmation is a personal decision to accept the full responsibilities of membership in the church. It is also a time for the congregation to celebrate and acknowledge the confirmand's decision.
4. The Sacrament of adult baptism and the rite of confirmation are administered as often as candidates present themselves. Confirmation should follow a period of instruction which familiarizes the person with the doctrines, practices, and heritage of the Church and which helps to equip that person for the responsibilities of mature Christian life and membership in the congregation.
5. All candidates for adult baptism shall receive a preparatory course of instruction before they

are baptized and are received by their baptism into the church of Christ as communicant members.

VII. THE HOLY COMMUNION AND LOVEFEASTS

1. The Holy Communion is administered at least seven times during the year, if possible, at the following seasons:
 - (a) The First Sunday after Epiphany
 - (b) The First Sunday in Lent
 - (c) Maundy Thursday and/or Good Friday or Easter
 - (d) Whitsunday
 - (e) The Sunday nearest the Thirteenth of August
 - (f) World-wide Communion Sunday
 - (g) The Sunday nearest the Thirteenth of November

If feasible, it should also be administered on the anniversary festival of the congregation.

2. A communion service is a service for the members of the congregation. Persons who profess faith in Jesus Christ and are communing members of other Christian denominations are welcome to commune with the congregation and should be invited to do so by the pastor.
3. The Holy Communion is administered to the sick and shut-in whenever they request it.
4. Lovefeasts were instituted in imitation of the “Agapæ” of apostolic times [*Jude 12*] and are intended to set forth by a simple meal that there is no distinction between persons before the Lord, and that all are one in Christ, united by the closest bonds of Christian love.

VIII. SPECIAL RULES FOR BAPTISMS, MARRIAGES, AND FUNERALS

1. It is always to be taken for granted that the pastor shall officiate at all baptisms, marriages, and funerals of members. To have someone else officiate shall naturally require the consent of the pastor.
2. That baptisms, marriages, and funerals may not unnecessarily come into conflict with the other engagements of the pastor, members are expected to consult the pastor as early as possible before making any binding arrangements for such occasions.

IX. THE SICK AND THE NEEDY

1. When the members are stricken with sickness or other distress, it shall be their duty to send word to the pastor so that he/she may minister to such needs.
2. Every member shall esteem it a special privilege to take both a prayerful and practical interest in those who are sick, sorrowing, distressed, or in need, bearing in mind that we are all members of the same Body, sharing each other’s joys and sorrows.

X. ORGANIZATIONS IN THE CONGREGATION

1. All organizations in the congregation, such as the Church school and the various societies, elect their own officers, adopt their own rules, and keep their own records and accounts.
2. These organizations should, however, bear in mind that they stand under the general oversight of the congregation and its executive boards. It is to be taken for granted, therefore, that everything in the statutes and practice of these organizations shall be kept in strict accord with the spirit, principles, and purpose of the congregation.

XI. FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

1. It is the duty of all adult members of the congregation to contribute, according to their ability, towards its needs.
2. The congregation shall participate in the various causes of the Moravian Church in accordance with the benevolence budget annually submitted by the Provincial Elders' Conference.

XII. WHEN THE CONGREGATION OPERATES A CEMETERY

1. The Board of Trustees shall have the oversight of the congregation's cemetery or shall appoint a special committee for this responsibility. Such a committee is responsible to the Board of Trustees, to whom it shall look for major decisions.

XIII. THE RECORDS

1. The pastor shall, in separate books procured for that purpose, carefully keep the following records, in accordance with the rules laid down by the Provincial Synod:
 1. The Register, which shall contain a reliable record of all baptisms, confirmations, receptions of communicants, marriages, funerals, removals and dismissals, and ordinations. The entries of the Register must be made according to the instructions furnished with the same.
 2. The Catalog, which shall contain the names of the entire membership, divided into the required categories, and the accompanying data prescribed by the forms and printed instructions.
 3. The Diary, which shall contain a record of the most important occurrences in the life of the congregation; such official and pastoral work as is not recorded in the Register; and all meetings and services, if no special record of such meetings and services is kept in a separate book or file. An accurate record of the attendance at service shall be kept.
2. The congregation shall maintain on its premises only those records in current use, and shall

take proper care of current records by storing them in a fire-rated cabinet, by microfilming, or by using other accepted methods. All non-current records of the congregation shall be transferred to the Provincial Archives.

XIV. THE RULES AND REGULATIONS

1. The Church Council only shall have the power to amend the foregoing rules and regulations. Notice of any proposed amendment must be given when the meeting of the council is announced. An amendment shall be valid only after it has received a two-thirds vote of those present, and has been sanctioned by the Provincial Elders' Conference.
2. The final draft of all amendments shall be presented to the respective District Executive Board which shall make recommendations regarding approval to the Provincial Elders' Conference.
3. The foregoing rules were adopted by the Church Council on _____ and sanctioned by the Provincial Elders' Conference on _____.

**STANDARDS AND PROCEDURES FOR THE CERTIFICATION OF
DIRECTORS OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION AND ASSISTANTS IN
CHRISTIAN EDUCATION IN THE MORAVIAN CHURCH**

*Approved by the 1956 Provincial Synod of the Northern Province
of the Moravian Church in America*

I — Certification Procedure

1. The examination of a member of the Moravian Church applying for certification as a Director of Christian Education shall be conducted by the Provincial Elders' Conference in the person's home province.
2. Application shall be made to the Provincial Elders' Conference, through its president, at least three months prior to the time the applicant wishes to be certified. Upon receipt of the application, the Provincial Elders' Conference shall inquire carefully into the Christian character, the personality, the vocational fitness, and the physical, mental, and spiritual qualifications of the applicant, and shall formulate a report upon these and other points which would have a bearing upon the qualifications for this vocation, including the recommendation as to whether the applicant should or should not be received as a candidate for certification as a Director of Christian Education. The candidate shall be examined in person by a member of the Provincial Elders' Conference on the personal religious experience and on the motives for becoming a Director of Christian Education as well as on the subjects hereinafter prescribed.
3. The Provincial Elders' Conference shall require a candidate for certification as a Director of Christian Education to show evidence of having secured from an accredited institution a master's degree based upon two years of graduate professional study in the field of Christian Education. The applicant shall also be examined on his/her understanding of basic Christian beliefs as understood and taught in the Moravian Church.

There shall be no exceptions to any of the above requirements for certification as a Director of Christian Education except in extraordinary cases; and whenever the Provincial Elders' Conference shall allow any exceptions, it shall always make a record of the exceptions and state the reasons therefor. (See, however, the provision under section II-2.)

4. If the Provincial Elders' Conference shall be satisfied with the qualifications and examination of a candidate, it shall proceed to certify him/her ***provisionally*** as a Director of Christian Education. Certification shall not be carried through, however, until the candidate has received and accepted a position of at least half-time service as a Director of Christian Education in a local Moravian Church or in a position of parallel responsibility under an official board of the denomination.

The certifying shall be done in a public service of recognition, conducted by a member of the Provincial Elders' Conference or some person authorized by this board. The following questions shall be addressed to the candidate:

- (a) Do you believe in the truth of the Old and New Testaments as inspired by the Holy Spirit?
- (b) Do you trust that by divine grace you have been brought to a saving knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ?
- (c) Insofar as you can determine in your own heart, is your motive for wishing to serve as a Director of Christian Education a love for your Lord and a sincere desire to serve Him?
- (d) Are you resolved to devote yourself to your calling within the fellowship of the Moravian Church?
- (e) Do you promise to be diligent in the study of God's Word and in prayer that in your teaching you may make known the full counsel of God to those who look to you for leadership?
- (f) Do you propose to live according to the precepts of God's Word, and to teach nothing but the truths and doctrines contained therein, as received and taught in the Moravian Church?
- (g) Do you promise to conform to the principles, regulations, and requirements of the Moravian Church as they are laid down by the Synods and constituted authorities and to work in full harmony with the pastor of the congregation in which you are employed?

The candidate having answered each of these questions affirmatively, the commissioning officer shall offer a prayer suitable for the occasion and shall then address the candidate:

In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the authority which has been delegated to me, I certify you for service in the Moravian Church as a Director of Christian Education. Now may the God of Peace who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus Christ, the Great Shepherd of the sheep, by the blood of the Eternal Covenant, equip you with everything good that you may do His will, working in you that which is well pleasing in His sight through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

- 5. A record shall be made of this certification in the minutes of the Provincial Elders' Conference. The name of the person so certified is then to be entered on the roll of certified Directors of Christian Education which is noted in the directory of the *Moravian Daily Texts*.
- 6. Certification for service as a Director of Christian Education remains valid so long as the person certified continues to be actively engaged in the service of a church or some other authorized agency of the denomination on at least a half-time basis. When he/she is no longer actively engaged in this field of service, the certification remains valid for a two-year period only; the certification of a person no longer actively engaged in the work of Christian Education may be renewed by the Provincial Elders' Conference for successive two-year

periods on written request of the person involved. By this same procedure, a person whose certification has become invalid may have it renewed by the Provincial Elders' Conference upon re-examination and the reaffirmation of the original vows.

While a person who has been once certified for service as a Director of Christian Education may keep the certification valid even though no longer actively engaged in the work, he/she is eligible to use the title "Director of Christian Education" only when professionally engaged for as much as half of the time in some phase of Christian Education.

Certification for service as a Director of Christian Education may be revoked on request of the person so certified, or the Provincial Elders' Conference, for sufficient reason, may revoke the certification; in such cases, the Provincial Elders' Conference shall grant a hearing at which time the person involved shall be fully informed of the charges brought against him/her. In cases where certification is revoked, the action and reasons for it shall be communicated in writing both to the worker and to the Board of Elders of the congregation which is being served.

7. The official roll of certified Directors of Christian Education is to be published annually in the official directory of the province.

When a certified director transfers membership to a church in another province, the Provincial Elders' Conference may grant a certificate by which the record of certification may be transferred to the Executive Board having jurisdiction over the church to which membership has been transferred.

II — The Certification of Assistants in Christian Education

1. The procedure for the examination and certification of Assistants in Christian Education shall be identical with that prescribed above for Directors of Christian Education, except that the requirements differ as follows:

The Provincial Elders' Conference shall require a candidate for certification as an Assistant in Christian Education to show evidence of having secured from an accredited educational institution a Bachelor's degree with a major in Christian Education or its equivalent.

2. An Assistant in Christian Education may achieve certification for service as a Director of Christian Education by completing a five-year period of service as an Assistant in Christian Education in which he/she has successfully demonstrated vocational ability and by completing a minimum of ten semester hours of graduate study in Christian Education in an accredited institution. When these requirements have been met, a written request of the candidate shall be made to the Provincial Elders' Conference that the person involved be certified as a Director of Christian Education. The Provincial Elders' Conference may then take this action without further examination of the candidate and without the renewal of the vows, simply recording its action.

III — Procedure in Appointing a Director of Christian Education

1. A certified Director of Christian Education or Assistant in Christian Education shall receive appointment from the Provincial Elders' Conference, this board holding the final decision for such an appointment. It shall make the appointment, however, only on recommendation of the District Executive Board of the district in which the person concerned resides after an official request has been made by the Joint Board of Elders and Trustees of the congregation wishing to employ such a person, the District Executive Board having the right to veto over the call if for good and sufficient reason.

The Provincial Elders' Conference, in offering the appointment, shall state the terms of the contract as agreed on by the official boards of the congregation concerned. This shall include an outline of the main responsibilities involved, salary, living accommodations if any, vacation, provisions for in-service training, pension, and the like.

When an appointment is to be offered to a director in another province, it shall be forwarded by the Provincial Elders' Conference concerned to the president of the Provincial Elders' Conference of the province in which the director resides.

When a director or the Joint Board of a congregation desires to change the relationship, either has the right to a hearing before the District Executive Board; and, the other party being heard, the District Executive Board may then recommend that the Provincial Elders' Conference terminate the appointment if it deems this proper.

The employment of a certified Director of Christian Education or an Assistant in Christian Education is not allowed in any other way than that which is here prescribed.