

Report to the Synod of 2014

Archives

The primary function of the Archives is to preserve, organize, and maintain the official records of the Synods, and all boards, agencies and congregations of the Moravian Church, Southern Province, and to make them available to agencies and individuals as appropriate. These include not only historical records from former years, but also current minutes, reports and correspondence from the present. Our Memoir Collection has biographical accounts of some 15,000 Southern Province Moravians from the eighteenth century to the present time. Our Photograph Collection contains pictures of numerous individuals, gatherings, and buildings from early daguerreotypes and tintypes to digital images of the present. The Archives, through publications and presentations, also publicizes and interprets the history, activity, and faith of the Moravian Church within the church itself and to the wider community today.

Since the Synod of 2010 the Archives has continued to maintain and catalog existing records and to gather new materials as they are produced. Approximately 800 persons a year make use of the Archives for official business, scholarly research, genealogy, and personal interest.

Sales of Archives publications on Moravian history and theology continue, and more materials are being placed in electronic format and on our web-site for easier access. These include sessions of our lunch-time lecture series, which are being video recorded and also placed on our website. With the Moravian Music Foundation the Archives has recently produced a booklet on Moravian celebration and theology of the Holy Communion.

The long term project of translating, editing, and publishing the records of the Moravian mission among the Cherokee continues, with five volumes already in circulation, and more in preparation. This series not only tells an important story from our own history, but is valued by the Cherokee for insights into their traditional culture and life. The volumes have received good reviews in the academic community as well. We acknowledge the generous financial assistance of the Cherokee Nation and the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians in making this project possible.

The Archives staff has been active since last Synod in making presentations in the congregations, and speaking to civic groups and historical associations. In addition, Senior Friends and confirmation classes from several congregations have come to the Archives for tours and other presentations. The Archivist has also conducted annual training sessions for new Old Salem guides on Moravian history, polity, and traditions.