

**Report to the 2014 Synod of the Moravian Church, Southern Province
from
the Board of World Mission in North America**

Mission, Purpose and Values

The BWM represents the Moravian Churches of the Southern, Northern and Alaskan Provinces, and the churches of Unity of the Brethren in Texas in world mission. It seeks to facilitate the individual and collective efforts of the churches to proclaim Christ in Word and deed. Primary values have been being centered in Christ, encouraging mutuality, and promoting accountability and self-reliance for those we serve. In an attempt to help our partners to develop vital ministries we are moving from maintenance to mission—decreasing subsidies for basic operations of our partner provinces and seeking ways to accompany them in leadership development, economic strengthening and mission outreach. At our fall 2013 BWM retreat a new direction emerged for intentionally building our relationships with our constituent congregations so that together we might discern God's will for mission, both locally and globally, and identify, invite, equip and connect individuals and churches for specific mission service. An important aspect of this is ongoing communication, which has been improved with our monthly newsletters and updated website.

Global Partnerships

Costa Rica was an outreach of the Nicaraguan Province and currently has three congregations in San Jose and Limon. BWM sent an Antioch servant in 2012 to help with leadership development for youth ministry, and Antioch servants frequently help out at the School of Music and Worship. The Province hopes to build a retreat center that will be multipurpose. BWM currently provides \$4,590 in support to Costa Rica.

Eastern West Indies. Moravian missionaries first proclaimed the Gospel here in 1732. The E.W.I. is completely independent with ministry in St. Thomas, St. Croix, St. John, Antigua, Barbados, St. Kitts, Tobago, Trinidad, and Tortuga, and new mission outreach in Grenada, which received one of our Antioch servants in 2013. A member of the EWI Province participates at BWM meetings and BWM staff recently led a clergy retreat for the province.

Guyana, a mission province with only eight congregations, receives an annual subsidy of \$3,744 from BWM to support provincial administration and programs. The mission province hopes to become an independent Unity Province in the next couple of years. They have an effective weekly radio program to share the gospel, which BWM has supported, and have also begun a monthly medical program for addressing health needs. BWM is evaluating how to work with them on periodic health fairs and HIV/AIDS prevention efforts.

Honduras, where Nicaraguan and North American Moravian missionaries established work in 1930, boasts 83 congregations, although the province is now divided into three groups. In 1998 a division developed between the "traditional" and "renewal" groups, with the renewal group being those elected at a synod and recognized as the Honduras Province. Both the BWM and the Unity Board has worked diligently toward reconciliation of these groups. The traditional group is now recognized as a Unity Mission Province and is under the supervision of the Nicaraguan Province.

Currently the Mission Province receives a subsidy from BWM annually for \$12,240 and the Honduras Province receives \$18,360. There has been a strong desire on both sides to continue to move toward reconciliation and they have been sharing some events and activities, including participation last fall in the consecration of a bishop for each group.

In 2010-2011 another group broke from the Province, under the leadership of then Bishop Wincap Cassy and Rev. Melaneo Henriquez. This group is not recognized by the Unity and continues to be a source of strife for the Honduras Province.

The Reformed Church in America (RCA) is also in partnership with the Honduras Province and Mission Province. They have begun a chicken project with the Mission Province in the hope of generating income. They also have a missionary couple who plan to arrive in Puerto Lempira in early 2014 to head the Moravian Bible Institute and also help with the Mission Province Bible Institute in Ahuas.

The Honduras Medical Work has faced significant challenges during this intersynodal period following the departure of Drs. Norvelle Goff and Gerard Rudy in June 2012. New leadership at the Ahuas Clinic, under Dr. Ovelio Lopez, has increased staffing salaries to minimum wage, has begun to pay the government-required double salaries in June and December, and is dealing with bringing the buildings up to code and paying off severance packages. Rick Nelson, previous administrator for the clinic, served as consultant in January and November, 2013 to help establish sound financial and management practices and he expects to return periodically to work on maintaining accurate financial records and regular reports to BWM. In partnership with the RCA, we are helping the leadership of the Honduras Medical Board to improve its oversight of the medical work. BWM is also considering requesting an external needs assessment to help the Ahuas Clinic be more effective in what it offers patients.

Dr. Benno Marx and wife Teresa returned to Ahuas in September 2012 to help with the transition in leadership. They expect to complete their service there by March 2014. They have been instrumental in assisting teams for medical and surgical care, providing repairs to the clinic and building a new sanitation facility to bring it up to code. Our annual subsidy to the Medical Work in Honduras is \$150,658, including health care for Dr. Marx and his wife. The RCA pays all three physician salaries, as well as contributing to some programs, such as the Diver's School. Of note is that the Cauquira Clinic has refused to come under management by the medical board and our last information is that it is under the control of the breakaway group.

Both the Honduras Province and Mission Province, as well as the Clinic in Ahuas continue to serve the people of La Mosquitia despite the significant challenges brought by increasing drug trafficking activity in that area of Honduras.

Newfoundland and Labrador, established in 1771, the Newfoundland/ Labrador mission province supports four congregations in Nain, Hopedale, Makkovik and Happy Valley. BWM subsidy is \$38,250. Currently Rev. Glenna Tasedan, from the Southern Province and under call of the Labrador Province, is the sole active pastor, serving the Happy Valley Congregation. In the fall of 2011, Beatrice Hope was ordained as the first native female pastor, but she is currently on leave. Chapel servants provide significant leadership for the churches. Sis. Tasedan recently started an on-line Bible study course with participants from three of the congregations. We are grateful to the Rt. Rev. Paul Graf who provides bishop support to the mission province.

Nicaragua has 226 congregations with outreach along the west coast. Major initiatives by the province are for youth programming and Christian Education, as well as assistance for retired pastors, of which there are now 97, along with 58 widows of pastors, 38 active pastors with illness, and 20 disabled pastors or their wives. The Presbyterian Church (USA), Mission Covenant Church of Sweden, Reformed Church in America and the United Church of Canada continue to partner with Moravians in Nicaragua. The BWM provides \$34,680 annually.

Moravians in **Western Tanzania (MCWT)** continue to increase, with overall membership around 102,439 in 47 congregations and outreach among the Sukuma people and in the Lake Victoria region. MCWT also supports mission outreach in Rwanda, Uganda, Kenya and Burundi. They support educational institutions of the Kisanji Girl's School and Lusangi Bible Seminary, as well as healthcare needs through the Sikonge Hospital. In addition to \$10,200 in BWM support, Danish and British Moravians also partner with Moravians in Western Tanzania.

New Work

In 2011 the BWM accepted responsibility for walking alongside three new mission areas. The mission area of **Cuba** was transferred to the Southern Province from Jamaica and delegated to BWM. The Cuban Moravian Church has 8 congregations and 12 fellowships and a new group forming in Guantanamo. In 2012 they held their first women's conference, electing their first women's board. In October, 2013 they held their first national assembly and elected their first board and president, Rev. Armando Rusindo. They now have five

ordained pastors. Seven lay members are taking on-line theology courses in Spanish at reduced rates through Laurel University in Miami.

The **Unity of Brothers and Sisters in Peru** was recognized as a mission area by the Unity in 2011. They are under the supervision of the BWM. This church was formed by the coming together of 4 different Christian congregations from Lima to Chiclayo. One outreach is to street children.

The mission area of **Sierra Leone**, located in the small village of Luawa-Yiehun, was initiated by Mohamed and Safie Braima in 2007, with the support of the Little Church on the Lane congregation in Charlotte, NC. In 2010 the Southern Province was assigned supervision of the work in Sierra Leone, and delegated this to the BWM. Bro. Braima was ordained to specialized ministry in February 2012. Last year the ministry spread to a neighboring village, where a second church was built. One of the primary emphases of the mission is construction of the village's only secondary school, which now allows hundreds of youth the opportunity to continue their education further than sixth grade.

Likewise Ministries

Our Likewise Ministries continues its focus on HIV and AIDS, providing support to patients in Ahuas, Honduras and evaluating potential partnerships in Nicaragua and Guyana for prevention education. In addition they provided support for the HUKWafa program in Mwanza, Tanzania through a grant from the Stafford Fund, to provide periodic food distributions, healthcare registration and schooling for 250 vulnerable children. The program now has organized groups of 166 mostly women for community strengthening and micro-loans for community strengthening.

Mission/ Congregational Partnerships

The BWM has recognized the increasing development of missions directly out of congregations and has formed some partnerships with varying levels of BWM involvement, mostly administrative and consultative. These include Central Moravian Church and their Adopt-a-Village program in Western Tanzania; Little Church on the Lane and their mission to Sierra Leone through Mohamed and Safie Braima; Annie B Mission and its support of a speech therapist at Star Mountain, Palestine; Nepal Moravian Outreach, and Moravian Monthly Missions—a group of youth in the Southern Province who do a variety of mission projects for congregations, individuals, and disaster relief.

Ecumenical and Other Partnerships:

Church World Service (CWS) is the world mission arm of the National Council of Churches. BWM benefits from the CWS heads of mission forum that is held annually. In 2013 we budgeted \$1,500 support to CWS.

Mission Aviation Fellowship is an evangelical, para-church mission agency providing aviation and communication services to churches and missions in the developing world. BWM provides \$7,000 annual in support of two Moravian families serving with MAF (Steve and Ann Marx) and a closely related indigenous ministry (Jorge Goff who serves in Honduras with Alas de Socorro).

The **Reformed Church in America** is a partner with BWM in support of the medical program in Honduras, contributing over \$75,000 to this ministry in 2013. BWM is providing \$5,000 toward the budget of Andrew and Amy Fields and is encouraging Moravian congregations to consider supporting them in their service at the Moravian Bible Institute in Honduras.

The **Overseas Ministry and Study Center** receives \$425 annually from BWM to support its ministry of continuing education for those associated with mission endeavors.

BWM affirms and supports other **Cross-Cultural Servants** serving in mission: we provide \$7,000 to Phil and Eunice Raiford, serving the Mixe people in Mexico. Through the Stafford Fund which is designated to feed the hungry in Africa, we provide \$10,000 to the Ray of Hope orphanage in Kenya, led by Michael and Ceci Tesh.

Antioch Sending

Antioch began as a vision in 2005 and gained momentum at a Youth in Mission Summit in September 2006. The Northern and Southern Province synods affirmed this passion and charged the BWM to create a structure that enables young adults to participate in mission. The structure that was envisioned continues to develop and support the sending of young adults to serve with ministry partners worldwide. Over the past 4 years Antioch servants have served in Nepal, Tanzania, Kenya, Honduras, Canada, Pennsylvania, New York, Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Grenada, and Labrador.

Some of the ongoing ways in which Antioch continues to grow include: the sending of older adults beyond the original age range; strengthening relationships with ministry partners; use of technology to maintain ongoing communication with partners and servants prior to, during, and following service; exploring new areas for service; and intentional spiritual formation/discipleship alongside the many aspects of servant preparation.

Moravian Volunteer Resources

BWM has continued to provide opportunities and training for individuals and teams wanting to serve on work crews or help with disaster relief. A large part of the effort during this intersynodal period was for ongoing work in Mississippi related to the effects from Hurricane Katrina. As other organizations pulled out, the Moravians were one of the few to keep helping repair homes. We finally closed this program in July 2012, although BWM felt committed to complete the last home that we had started—the Rollins House. This was finally done by mid-2013. The MS House that was purchased to host teams was put on the market, but with no potential buyers BWM decided to go with a rental for a one-year period and reevaluate. With the resignation of Mark Ebert, our Director for Volunteer Ministries in the fall of 2013, the BWM incorporated some of his role into a new position that will work more with congregations in mission engagement. We thank Mark for his passion in living the gospel through the discipleship of many work crews in mission and through faithful efforts in helping with disaster relief, especially for the work done in Mississippi following Hurricane Katrina.

Conclusion

For the last several years due to market fluctuations and declining income from the provinces the BWM has needed to dip into reserve funds to meet its multiple commitments. Realignment of staff in 2012 and again at the end of 2013 helped decrease expenses, but more aggressive measures may be needed in the future if income does not stabilize. The Directors and Staff of the BWM extend a heartfelt thanks to the many members and congregations who demonstrate the priority of world mission in their own ministries and budgets. We thank God for the privilege of being your partners in mission as together we seek God's guidance in where we are to be sharing the gospel today—be that local and global.

Staff

Judith Ganz, Executive Director
Barbara Ottervik, Administrative Assistant North (PT)
Samuel Gray, Director of Intercultural Ministries
Jill Kolodziej, Director of Antioch (PT)
Sheila Beaman, Administrative Assistant South (PT)
Joel Landreth, Treasurer/ Accountant (PT)

Board of Directors

Loren Jendro, Chair
Justin Rabbach, Vice-Chair
David Geyer, Secretary
Roman Brady
Becky Frey
Peter Green
Jack Geis
David Guthrie
Donna Hurt
Shirley Louis
Betsy Miller
Joe Moore
Marion Perrin
Kent Laza, Unity of Brethren
Errol Connor, EWI (advisory)