

Report to Synod 2018 from the Bishops

During the current quadrennium, the following have been serving as bishops in the Southern Province: Wayne Burkette, Sam Gray, Graham Rights, Lane Sapp, and John Wilson. Brother Gray's position as Director of Intercultural Ministries and Communication for the Board of World Mission has provided opportunities for him to serve both within and beyond our Province.

Responsibilities

Duties assigned to bishops are generally in four areas as set forth by the *Church Order of the Unitas Fratrum*, par. #688. These include officiating at ordinations and consecrations, serving as pastor to pastors and congregations, being available for consultation with the Provincial Board (PEC), and intercession for the Unity and for the Church of Christ as a whole.

Summary of Activities

For ordinations and consecrations at which the bishops have officiated, see the report from the Provincial Elders' Conference.

Our bishops have been available for consultation as called upon by pastors and congregations. Often this involves consultation by a pastor with a bishop who has been his or her ordaining or consecrating bishop.

The ministry of intercession to which the bishops are called is aided by monthly meetings with the President of the Provincial Elders' Conference, who presents a list of concerns that are matters for prayer. These prayer concerns are sent to Bishop John Wilson, who resides in Florida.

Matters about which the PEC wishes to consult with the bishops are generally brought up in the monthly meetings. Leadership for these meetings and coordination of other matters for the bishops is shared by rotation, each bishop serving for three months at a time. The bishops also rotate responsibility for leading prayers of intercession at the monthly meetings of the Moravian Ministry Association.

Our bishops fill slots for bishops in the following: Leadership Team for the Moravian Ministry Association, Ordination Review Committee, Interprovincial Faith and Order Commission, and Moravian-Episcopal Coordinating Committee.

Through the Bishop in Residence program annual visits are made to Moravian Theological Seminary by one of our bishops for interaction with students from both the Northern and Southern Provinces.

As a result of the full communion agreement of the Northern and Southern Provinces with The Episcopal Church, during this quadrennium our bishops have participated in the ordination of Episcopal bishops in the Dioceses of Southeastern Florida, Southwestern Virginia, Western North Carolina, and North Carolina. Bishop Sam Gray has participated in the consecration of Moravian bishops in the Provinces of the Eastern West Indies and Alaska (2 consecrations) and the consecration of two presbyters and ordination of a deacon in Albania.

During this quadrennium, at the request of the Resolution 12 Committee, each of the bishops has led a service of worship. At the request of the Planning Committee for the Moravian Music Festival, held in Winston-Salem in July of 2017, each of the bishops planned morning worship for one of the days of the festival.

Every four years, bishops of the Northern and Southern Province gather for a conference. In 2015 this gathering was held at Mt. Morris in Wisconsin.

We are grateful for the close cooperation we experience from the PEC, pastors and congregations as we seek to respond faithfully to the call given to us by our Chief Elder and his Church.

D. Wayne Burkette
Samuel J. Gray
Graham H. Rights
Lane A. Sapp
John F. Wilson