

Report to Synod 2018

From: Lutheran Moravian Coordinating Committee

Mission, Purpose, and Values

The Lutheran Moravian Coordinating Committee (LMCC), was approved by both provinces of the Moravian Church in America in 1998 and was approved in 1999 by the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America (ELCA). This approval came as the result of a lengthy process of discernment between both denominations that formally began in 1992. Entering into full communion with the ELCA was the first of this kind of relationship for the Moravians.

The guiding scripture from the beginning has been: *I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, just as the Father knows me and I know the Father. And I lay down my life for the sheep. I have other sheep who do not belong to this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd.*” John 10: 14-16 (NRSV)

This scripture influenced the naming of the main document that provides the LMCC with its purpose as we seek to ensure the commitments made in Following Our Shepherd to Full Communion¹ are maintained today.

Responsibilities

The committee meets once a year for a face to face meeting, alternating between the ELCA hosting and the Moravians. We also have at least 2 conference calls during the year. These interactions help us stay committed to the responsibilities outlined by either denomination and our founding documents Following Our Shepherd to Full Communion, The Principles for the Orderly Exchange of Ordained Ministers of Word and Sacrament, and *The Charter of the LMCC* (est. 1999).

We are also responsible for maintaining clear communication with our respective judicatory leadership. And for helping to maintain fluid relationships between the denominations on all levels – congregational, regional, and national; especially in areas where joint ministry and mission could or should be occurring.

Another goal of the LMCC is to keep the full communion agreement visible, after 20 years of existence. Clergy and lay alike have at times forgotten the covenant agreement we made and it is our responsibility to try to keep the agreement moving forward.

Summary of Activities

We met in Chicago in 2014, Laurel Ridge in 2015, Bethlehem, 2016 and Winston-Salem in 2017.

A strategic plan was developed for roughly a 5 year span. Acknowledging that we were nearing our 20th Anniversary of being in full communion and acknowledging that many clergy have been ordained since that time, we decided to do some focusing on clergy.

Events for clergy were held in Bethlehem (2016) and Winston-Salem (2017). There were 25-30 clergy at each event. This gave the committee the opportunity to discover what clergy knew about the agreement, as well as gave us glimpses of what was already happening on the ground- how

¹ All documents listed in this report can be found at www.elca.org you can either type in the name of the document you are looking for and download it for free or you can type in Moravian and find all references to Moravians.

churches were working together to help one another, to serve a need within their community or attending retreats and functions together. There is good stuff happening and always opportunities for more. Relationships seem to be the catalyst for bonding together in work, ministry and mission.

Communication was discussed at length. We recognize that improved communication is greatly needed yet often came up at a loss as to how to do that with such a vast amount of people and area to cover. We did set up a Facebook page and a Blog². They are not heavily used, however, we encourage individuals to write articles for the blog and submit them³, so they can be posted and shared (please be sure you have permission to use pictures and/or names).

As a group we lifted up and celebrated the relationship that Water of Life Lutheran Church and Covenant Moravian Church in Wilmington, NC had under the leadership of Rev. Dr. Rachel Connelly (and hopefully will continue to have as Rachel moves on in her ministry). We also celebrated the relationship that the Rev. David Bennett (President of the Eastern District of the Northern Province) and Bishop Sam Ziesler (Bishop of the North Eastern Synod of the ELCA) have and how that also fosters greater communication and connectedness.

Future Directions and Opportunities (For your group and our Province)

Communication will continue to play a part as the LMCC moves forward. We need to stay on top of all the facets of communication, including but not limited to Facebook, Blogs, Instagram, etc. Communication will only deepen our bonds and relationships and thus do ministry together.

We've began and continue to have conversations with how to educate new seminary/divinity school graduates about the importance and significance of our full communion partnership. Ecumenical partnerships seem to be getting lost in the mix of education and we are beginning discussions on how we might help facilitate more education.

Each denomination is unique in it's own way. We strive to celebrate our differences and embrace our differences. We continue to Follow our Shepherd as we continue to live into our Full Communion Agreement.

Respectfully Submitted,

Rev. Kelly Moore
Chair, LMCC

² www.lutheranmoravian.wordpress.com and just search Lutheran Moravian on facebook

³ pastorkellymoore@gmail.com