

Report to the Synod of 2018

From: Moravian-Episcopal Coordinating Committee (MECC)

Mission, Purpose and Values: *Finding Our Delight in the Lord*, the document establishing full communion between the Episcopal Church in the U. S. and the Moravian Church in America (Northern and Southern Provinces) called for the creation of a “joint commission, fully accountable to the decision-making bodies in the two churches” (Paragraph 38).

Responsibilities: The charge given to this inter-provincial body is very broad and casts it primarily as an advisory body advocating the cause of full communion and cooperation between both denominations.

Summary of activities: Since the initial meeting of the MECC in Winston-Salem, January 16-17, 2013, the MECC has met numerous times via conference calls and in face-to-face meetings every 12-18 months. Since 2014 two face-to-face meetings have been held, both in Bethlehem, PA. Current members of the MECC include: the Rt. Rev. Steven Miller, Co-chair (Diocese of Milwaukee, WI); the Rt. Rev. Wayne Burkette, Co-chair (SP); the Rev. Janel Rice (NP); the Rev. Jonah Kendall (Durham, NC); the Rev. Maria Tjeltveit (Allentown, PA); the Rev. Dale Granfield (Bethlehem, PA); Fran Saylor (SP); the Rt. Rev. Blair Couch (NP); and, the Rev. Margaret Rose, working with ecumenical and inter-faith programs at the national Episcopal Church Center, NYC. The MECC acknowledges the death of the Rev. Dr. David Schattschneider (NP) during the past inter-synodal period. Bro. Schattschneider served ably as the Moravian Co-chair of the MECC until his health prohibited his participation.

The major activity of the MECC over the past four years was the development of a protocol for the orderly exchange of ordained persons between the two denominations. As of November, 2017, two Moravian clergy are serving pastorates in Episcopal parishes; Moravian clergy have also served interim pastorates in Episcopal congregations; Episcopal clergy have led Moravian clergy retreats and continuing education events; a Moravian-Lutheran-Episcopal Reformation Day celebration, “Reformations Yesterday and Tomorrow”, was held at Moravian Theological Seminary on October 31, 2017 initiated by MECC members from the Bethlehem, PA area. In addition, Bishop Blair Couch served as Chaplain for the Diocese of Bethlehem’s Bishop Search Committee. Moravian bishops have participated in several consecrations of Episcopal bishops in states of the U. S. where Moravian congregations are located. The MECC developed a “Frequently Asked Questions” document for each denomination to support understanding of each church’s polity and structure. The MECC has recognized the need for more publicity and promotion of full communion documents and potential cooperative efforts (e.g., refugee resettlement) to enable more joint ministry, especially among local congregations. Possibilities which were explored included: joint service projects and mission trips; joint services of worship; Habitat for Humanity projects; local shelters for homeless persons; welcoming events for immigrants; and other activities to cultivate relationships between members of the two denominations.

Future Direction and Opportunities: The MECC recognizes the need for a future focus on encouraging and providing ideas and resources for joint ministry activities among local congregations, especially

among small congregations with limited membership and resources. Making available and sharing worship resources could also enrich the worship traditions of each denomination, including use of the Moravian Daily Texts and Episcopal liturgical resources.

Respectfully submitted,
The Rt. Rev. Wayne Burkette
November 15, 2017