

Report to the Synod of 2018

From: Archives

Mission, Purpose, and Values

The Archives is the official repository for records of the Moravian Church, Southern Province.

Responsibilities

Our main function is to serve the Church in the collecting, cataloging, and safekeeping of the records of its Synods, and all its boards, agencies and congregations, and to make them available to Church agencies and individuals as appropriate. We also make many of our historical holdings available for research by genealogists, academics, cultural institutions, and the general public. The Archives, from its beginnings though without official charge as its mission, has created publications and presentations to publicize and interpret the history and faith of the Moravian Church within the church itself and to the wider community

Summary of Activities

Many of our daily inquiries are about family and church history, mostly within the Moravian community. Our Reading Room computers allow access to a Memoir Collection that has biographical accounts of 14,485 Southern Province Moravians from the eighteenth century through 2007, and we are collecting new memoirs to be added to that digital collection up until the present time. Our Photograph Collection contains pictures of numerous individuals, gatherings, and buildings from early daguerreotypes and tintypes to present-day digital images. We continue to digitize older images to make them more available for use by the Church and purchase by our publics. Photos from our Collection appear daily on our Archives' Facebook page, telling the story of "On This Day in Southern Province History," and increasing interest in the Archives.

Since the 2014 Synod, the Archives has published one booklet. Written by Archivist Daniel C. Crews it details the life of Jan Hus. We have also published two new books: volumes Six and Seven, of the *Records of the Moravians Among the Cherokees*. Early volumes in that book series were published in collaboration with the Eastern Band of the Cherokee and the Cherokee Nation in Oklahoma. More recent volumes have been supported by grants from the Cherokee Nation. Recording contacts between the two communities from the 18th into the 19th centuries, the series documents the mutual respect and friendship between Moravians and the Cherokee. Books and other Archives' publications are offered for sale at the Archie Davis Center and on our Web site.

Our monthly Lunchtime Lecture series offers lively discourse on Moravian history topics by staff and guests, recordings of which are available on our Web site. And we continue the long tradition of making presentations about the Archives and our church history to congregations, historical associations and other civic groups. In 2015 and 2016 Archivist Starbuck highlighted the N.C.

Moravian story in lectures and online as part of the 250th Anniversary Celebration of the founding of Salem..

Approximately 800 persons a year use the Archives in-person or through remote requests for information and assistance. In 2016 one of our in-house guests was Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, President of Liberia and a Nobel Peace Prize winner. We continue to serve a variety of family historians, academic researchers, student classes, and staff of other cultural institutions. We are grateful to serve the Moravian Church as custodian of its stories and goodwill ambassador.

Future Direction and Opportunities

Since the Synod of 2014 the Archives has had an unaccustomed turnover in staffing with the retirements of long-time Archivist C. Daniel Crews in 2014 and his successor Archivist Richard W. Starbuck in 2017. Eric Elliott was appointed interim archivist in July 2017. Nicole Crabbe continues as assistant archivist. We are excited about what the future can hold for the Archives, but also challenged by diminishing resources. The Province and Salem Congregation equally fund the operations of the Archives and while funding remains level, for which we are grateful, it falls short of meeting basic expenses. Funding by Friends of the Archives now accounts for nearly a quarter of the annual budget. The Archives Commission and staff will continue to explore options for filling the gap with new revenue streams.

In addition, we need volunteer support more than ever in the coming years and are exploring potential new services, programs and Friends' opportunities to expand our outreach and enhance our resources. We remain blessed and thankful by the enthusiasm and support of our Church and Church members for our work.

J. Eric Elliott, Interim Archivist, 11/30/2017