

**Report to the 2018 Synod of the Moravian Church, Southern Province  
Board of World Mission in North America (BWM)**

**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—continuing to decrease subsidies for basic operations of our partner provinces and seeking ways to accompany them in leadership development, economic strengthening and mission outreach. A major initiative in recent years has been supporting business development. At our spring 2017 BWM retreat the board established priorities for mission outreach (sharing the Gospel outside of our constituencies) and mission engagement (engaging and equipping our congregations and members in the mission of the church).

**Global Partnerships**

**Costa Rica** was an outreach of the Nicaraguan Province and currently has three congregations in San Jose and Limon. They continue to work toward reconciliation with a fourth congregation that has split from the province. Costa Rica went off BWM subsidy in 2015. BWM has helped to support their multipurpose building project, which includes their School for Music & Worship.

**Eastern West Indies.** Moravian missionaries first proclaimed the Gospel here in 1732. The EWI is completely independent with ministry in St. Thomas, St. Croix, St. John, Antigua, Barbados, St. Kitts, Tobago, Trinidad, and Tortuga, and mission outreach in Grenada. A member of the EWI Province is an advisory member of BWM meetings. We are working closely with leadership to help with disaster recovery from two hurricanes in 2017 that brought significant damage. Specific focus is being placed on the rebuilding of the Emmaus Congregation on St. John, and the Moravian primary school on St. Thomas.

**Guyana**, with eight congregations, became a Unity Province at the 2016 Unity Synod. They went off BWM subsidy that same year. We hope to provide music workshops for their congregations in 2018. They have an ecumenical mission outreach in the mines area. We welcome their new bishop, the Rev. Brinmore Phaul.

**Honduras Unity Province.** Honduras continues to suffer from the 1998 division in their province. They receive \$15,120 in annual subsidy from BWM. They have been working with BWM missionary, Rick Nelson, to develop a reliable accounting system and had their first audit in 2017. They are having 3 pastors receive higher theological training to provide more qualified teaching at their Bible Institute. They have mission outreach in Belize, and to the Garifuna and Tawahka people.

**Honduras Mission Province** receives a subsidy from BWM annually for \$10,080. Their supervising province, Nicaragua, has sent pastors to help at their Bible Institute. They also have mission outreach in the larger cities of Honduras and are just starting a bean planting project that was funded by BWM in order to generate more income for the church. Both the Unity and Mission Provinces desire to work more together in steps toward reconciliation.

**The Honduras Medical Work** in Ahuas continues to face significant challenges. Rick Nelson has helped to develop a good accounting system and the new accountant is coming up to speed. Rick completed his term with BWM in September 2017 and hopes to return on a quarterly basis in 2018 in order to continue to provide consultation to both the provinces and the medical work. Significant donations have helped to clear the mounting debt, refurbish buildings and update equipment. However it is clear that income does not cover the expenses of the ministry. The medical board is considering ways to both increase income and decrease expenses. There is also a shortage of physicians for multiple reasons, and the Reformed Church in America (RCA), which has partnered with this work for many years, is cutting back its funding to cover only two doctors. The Honduras Medical work has had a significant impact on the health of the indigenous people in La Mosquitia. Please pray that solutions can be found to make this ministry viable.

An associated ministry is **Alas de Socorro** – Wings of Mercy – the aviation ministry that helps patients get to the clinic in Ahuas. It has also faced significant challenges these past years. Rick Nelson has helped re-develop a board to oversee this ministry. They have addressed many problems such as plane repair and insurance. Pilot George Goff went into retirement and his successor, Wayne Miller, had to leave because of illness. They now have secured a new pilot, Erick Maireno, and once he is trained to the smaller air strips we hope to have Alas flying again. The RCA provides the majority of support for this ministry, with BWM sending \$5,000 annually, along with any donations that come in.

There continue to be problems in Honduras related to the drug-trafficking activity. Also recent claims of a fraudulent election and government corruption have resulted in demonstrations and violence. Please keep these brothers and sisters in your prayers.

**Newfoundland and Labrador**, established in 1771, the Newfoundland/ Labrador mission province supports four congregations in Nain, Hopedale, Makkovik and Happy Valley. BWM annual subsidy is now \$29,250. Rev. Glenna Tasedan retired from her ministry there a couple of years ago. Rev. Beatrice Hope, the first Inuit ordained woman in the Moravian Church, took a leave of absence, but now has returned to the church and currently serves the Happy Valley congregation. The Labrador Church continues to struggle with the lack of ordained clergy. BWM is hoping to support training and workshops for their lay leadership, as well as partner with any wanting to do theological studies. We are grateful to the Rt. Rev. Paul Graf who provides bishop support to the mission province. The Moravian Church in Newfoundland/ Labrador is working with its native government through their truth and reconciliation process to address issues arising from the historic residential school system.

**Nicaragua** has 226 congregations, mostly along the Atlantic coast, but 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. They have been struggling with land rights for the indigenous people, as colonists from the West Coast come in and take over land that has been held for generations. BWM is evaluating ways to support their efforts. 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 \$26,520 annually in 2018. We supported updating the Mayangna hymnal, a women's conference, as well as an income-generating project for the province.

Moravians in **Western Tanzania (MCWT)** continue to increase, with overall membership around 110,000 in 61 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 provide educational institutions of the Kisanji Girl's School and Lusangi Bible Seminary, as well as healthcare needs through the Sikonge Hospital and a renovated dispensary in Tabora. The British and Danish Mission Boards also partner with MCWT. MCWT went off of BWM subsidy in 2018. We are currently providing support for a capacity building workshop for their pastors and for a new mission outreach.

### New Work

**Cuba.** The Cuban church was named a Mission Province of the Unity at the 2016 Unity Synod. They report 8 congregations and 12 fellowships (though these numbers continue to grow, and hopefully are "out of date" by the time you read this!). In their first synod, held in September 2017, the Rev. Tania Sanchez was elected chair of their Provincial Board and the Rev. Armando Rusindo was elected a bishop of the Unity. The Cuban church is active in outreach to disadvantaged youth through their Comenius Center in Havana. They also have agricultural projects in Matanzas that help not only the church, but the surrounding community.

**Peru** was recognized as a mission area by the Unity in 2011. They are now under the supervision of the Northern Province. They have four churches in Lima and Chiclayo with new fellowships also beginning. We are grateful to the support of many that have allowed these churches to rent space, which has improved their ministry and connection to community. All of the churches are also exploring small businesses that can augment their income and move them toward self-reliance.

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 (LCOL) congregation in Charlotte, NC. The church continues to grow, with churches in two neighboring villages and new fellowships forming. LCOL was able to provide a solar system which has been a big help to the secondary school. They hope to have a science and computer lab completed, and now are exploring a radio ministry.

### **Likewise Ministries**

Our Likewise Ministries has broadened its focus from HIV and AIDS to addressing the needs of vulnerable populations in general. The HUKWAF program, in addition to periodic food distributions, registration for health care and education for orphans, is seeing groups of women developing small businesses, such as a chicken farm, to improve their level of living. Likewise continues to support AIDS management for patients at the Ahuas Clinic in Honduras. They provided nursing lab equipment for the TEKU University in Tanzania and are hoping to work in conjunction with the Unity Women's Desk to provide small business opportunities for women.

### **Mission/ Congregational Partnerships**

The BWM has formed some partnerships with congregations and mission programs, 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; Annie B Mission and its support of a speech therapist at Star Mountain, Palestine; and Nepal Moravian Outreach, which has supported the development of a kindergarten in Nepal. A recent partnership is with the Rajpur Ministry (in India) through the Canadian District of the Northern Province and in collaboration with the British Mission Board.

### **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.

**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 \$3,000 annually in support of one Moravian family serving with MAF (Steve and Ann Marx).

BWM affirms and supports other **Cross-Cultural Servants** serving in mission. In 2018 we will provide \$7,000 to Phil and Eunice Raiford, serving the Mixe people in Mexico; \$5,000 to the Ray of Hope orphanage in Kenya, led by Michael and Ceci Tesh; and \$3,000 to the Adopt a Village program, led by Drs. Bill and Peg Hoffman.

### **Antioch Sending**

BWM supports short-term mission through its Antioch program to provide opportunities for people of all ages. Over the past 4 years Antioch servants have served in Nepal, Tanzania, Kenya, Honduras, Canada, Pennsylvania, New York, Nicaragua, and Labrador. Servants are generally funded at 40% of their proposed budgets, are provided education and assistance with the details of the travel, and are requested to share back with congregations about their experiences. Many Antioch young adults, as well as others concerned about mission, have joined in BWM FIT events for education, sharing, and further seeking of God's call to mission.

A related initiative is the BWM intern program where BWM employs a young adult over the summer months to help in a variety of projects. This has provided some important support to our staff, as well as increased understanding for interns of our overall mission. In 2017 BWM also served as a supervised ministry site for a seminary student.

### **Moravian Volunteer Resources/ Disaster Response**

Moravian Disaster Response (MDR) has been very active in the inter-synodal period. Most recently, the Hurricane damaged caused in the fall of 2017 has elicited a generous response from our congregations. Through these gifts we have been able to establish on site team housing and coordination in Port Arthur, Texas, through partnership with a Unity of the Brethren congregation. As of writing this report, plans were also being put in place for involvement in the lengthy process of rebuilding the congregations and ministries in the Eastern-West Indies province.

Other initiatives of MDR have included a change over in MDR trailers to make three trailers of tools available to be used on site at Disasters, with placements including Eastern North Carolina following Hurricane Matthew (2016), and in Milwaukee, WI to assist with the remodeling of a store front for the emerging ministry Tricklebee café. MDR has also provided funding in response to flooding in various parts of the U.S. and with partners in Honduras and Malawi. Following an earthquake in Nepal, MDR funds helped with the purchase of land for a new church building. Similarly, in Haiti, MDR funds have helped congregations recovery from Hurricane and Earthquake damage as the church continues to grow under the guidance of the Jamaican and Eastern-West Indies Provinces.

### **Conclusion**

The BWM offers its heartfelt thanks for the ongoing support of our Provinces, and the many congregational and individual efforts that help this ministry continue its work. In the years ahead we see no decrease in the opportunities for mission, and are even exploring options of new mission areas in conjunction with missionaries from our current mission partners, such as Cuba missionaries in Ecuador, or an outreach to the Amazon region by our churches in Peru! We anticipate an increase in our mission engagement with congregations through our internship program, and offering of short term team training and MDR team experiences.

As we look ahead, we also look back and give thanks for the tremendous work and leadership of Rev. Judy Ganz, who began her retirement at the end of 2017. Her tireless efforts have left a strong foundation for the BWM to continue to build on, and grow its ministries. The work Judy has done to establish, maintain, and grow relationships around the world cannot be overstated. Her work has set a precedent where all are valued for the contributions they offer to this mission ministry, and this is certainly how the BWM wishes to continue to work well into the future.

#### **Staff**

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Samuel Gray, Director of Intercultural Ministries  
Jill Kolodziej, Director of Antioch (PT)  
Rex Knowlton, Treasurer/ Accountant (PT)  
Deb Swanson, Administrative Assistant North (PT)  
vacant, Director of Mission Engagement

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