

**Minutes for the Lutheran Moravian Coordinating Committee
Moravian Theological Seminary
Bethlehem, Pennsylvania
May 13-14, 2003**

May 13, 2003

The morning session of the Committee meeting was opened with devotions by Dr. Otto Dreydoppel and the members shared their most recent life events. Those in attendance were: The Reverend Dennis Bushkofsky representing the Office of the Secretary of the ELCA, Mr. Bob Hunter of the Provincial Elders Conference of the Southern Province for the Moravian Church, Reverend Patricia Garner of Trinity Moravian Church, Ms. Judith Garber representing the ELCA, Reverend Ron Rinn of Augsburg Lutheran Church, and Professor Dreydoppel. Dennis was welcomed into the group and will be relating to the committee for the ELCA, national church.

The Agenda was reviewed and adopted as revised. The Minutes from the previous meeting were distributed and will be reviewed for corrections and amendment later in the meeting.

Health and Wellness issues were discussed as per the program of the ELCA. This major initiative of the church was reviewed via way of an Internet connection of their Web site: www.healthlutherans.org. Gwen Hallis is the director of the study/program and the committee discussed how we might use the material for the Moravian Convocation coming in September for the Southern Province. Ron Rinn will be attending that Convocation and might be able to introduce the materials there. Bob Hunter will explore ways to use the Health Risk Assessment with “credit” given the Lutherans. Also the parish nurse program should be explored by the Moravian Provinces through conversation with the Lutherans.

Patty Garner introduced the possibility of working with the Eastern West Indies Province and also a mission effort in Jamaica Province where the impact of the Moravians has been felt on the culture and history of that island. Jimmy Tucker, a Moravian College and Theological Seminary graduate, has indicated a desire to have some folks for the US come for a series of lectures, projects and concerts in selected areas of Jamaica. This could be coordinated with other entities such as the Cross Cultural Unit for Study at Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary, the Bishop’s School (a summer program for high school students also at LTSS), and other youth events currently planned (Moravian youth will be in Miami, and Lutherans in Atlanta this summer). This could be a pilot project targeting ELCA Synods as proposed at our October 2002 meeting, with populations of Moravians in those Synods with both youth and adult participation. Patty moved that, “we adopt this as a project for our Committee to explore the possibility for joint mission trips to the Jamaica Province for the purpose of rehabilitating their economy and exploring the history and culture of Jamaica and the religious connections.” Motion seconded by Judy Garber, discussion followed and a

positive vote was taken. Ron Rinn will give Patty some contact names at Augsburg Lutheran Church who might be interested in helping to write grants (Rita Toivonen) and making a mission trip, (Jo Dowell and Elizabeth Craven, two nurses). The Metro New York Synod is also a “target Synod” for this project because of the Jamaican population there. Judy Garber will also work with Patty on this mission project with Jimmy Tucker and Trinity Moravian will take the lead.

Otto had emailed Craig Settlage of the ELCA the Division for Ministry earlier in the meeting about the Ministerial Health and Wellness Program and shared the response with the committee through a printout from the Web site. In addition to the printout, a visual projection program as viewed by the committee with a variety of topics was explored. Ron Rinn reported that he had attended a Pre-retirement Conference sponsored by the ELCA Board of Pensions and will provide the materials to Bob Hunter upon return to Winston-Salem, NC.

Full Communion endeavors were reported: Bob Hunter attended the three day April Candidacy Committee meeting of the North Carolina Synod; Lutherans and Episcopalians have cooperated in the New England Synod where an Episcopal priest has been serving a Lutheran parish; Moravians, Lutherans and Episcopalians met in Winston-Salem, North Carolina in February 2003 for a round of exchanges; the Lower Susquehanna Synod LARC (Lutheran, Anglican and Roman Catholic) is very supportive of endeavors of ecumenical exchanges and interim pastorates are a good resource for exchanges. Local leadership in congregations really helps to make activities possible—this should be true at all levels—pastoral, deans for ELCA Synods and the Synodical/Provincial level. The Common Lectionary resources will also aid in pulpit exchanges as texts now are standardized.

Otto reported on the Moravian/Episcopal Dialogue in the Northern Province. An agreement was reached at the Northern Province Synod with relatively little controversy but that was not the case in the Southern Province. While some in the Northern Province were concerned about some aspects of the Episcopal Church and some “personalities” in that body, an interim agreement for pulpit and altar fellowship was reached. This agreement will now go to the Episcopal gathering for their vote sometime in the future. The “historic episcopate” is a problem for some in the Moravian church, and for some in the Episcopal Church, the suspension of the Episcopal Order – which was done for Called to Common Mission with the ELCA – is a sticking point. This suspension will not be done with the Moravians according to current thought. The next meeting for the Moravian/Episcopal Dialogue group will be in May in New York to work out a report for the General Convention of the Episcopal Church, which meets in three years, and the Synod for the Moravian Church, which meets in four years.

Dennis handed out for information the current ELCA status report for the Sexuality Study being conducted in that body.

Discussion was held on a variety of topics in Lutheran/Moravian circles: sexuality, theology, piety, Christology, and ecclesial issues and implications for our work. The group broke for lunch.

After the lunch break the Committee reviewed the ELCA Web site on Health and Wellness. A good discussion and observation about expectations of clergy and how these expectations have changed over the course of time followed. Otto also emailed Craig Settlage about our “posting” on the Discussion Forum.

Dennis will ask Paul Schreck to contact the Lutheran Bishop in the Caribbean Synod and ask that they contact the Moravian President of the Eastern West Indies Province to explore the possibility of an agreement with that Province.

Patty Garner will contact Craig Settlage about being in conversation with John Largen, Pastor for the Seminary at Lutheran Theological Seminary in Columbia, SC, about spiritual formation and our mutual development of program and materials. This would perhaps include Gemeinschaft materials for use at the seminary level.

Bob Hunter will contact Judy Knopf about having Johathan Linman as a participant in developing the materials for Gemeinschaft program (see [October 23, 2002 Minutes](#)).

Judy asked about the prospects of pursuing conversations between Lutherans in Canada and Moravians in the Canada Province (North America). We should be looking at taking steps with the Alaska Province as well as the Eastern West Indies.

The topic of new church starts was discussed. Pastor Melissa Johnson of the New Church Strategy Committee of the Northern Province was invited to the meeting. Reverend Johnson is the Director of Admissions for Moravian Seminary and serves on the Strategy Committee. The Province wants to plant 20 new churches by 2020, the first of which is being formed this summer. The Northern Province will identify Church Planters, rather than identify places first—this is a new concept for Moravians. There should be conversation about utilizing existing facilities of each denomination for church planting by the other denomination. The training program is at Ashland Theological Seminary used by the Moravians.

In the Southern Province the emphasis may be on revitalization rather than new starts. Johnson stated that some exploration by ethnicity has been considered with Moravian immigrants. This also plays into “person first; place next” strategy. In the Southern Province the entity for mission development is the Board of Home Missions.

It was moved and seconded that the Committee issue the following Statement to our judicatories: A Statement from the Lutheran Moravian Coordinating Committee On Collaboration in Church Planting and Mission Development:

“Believing that mutual conversation and consolation for the upbuilding of the church is a part of Following our Shepherd to Full Communion, we encourage

consultation to identify and share common resources as we start missions, plant churches, and redevelop existing ministries.”

The vote was positive. This Statement will go to the following ELCA Synods: East-Central Synod of Wisconsin with nine Moravian churches; South-Central Synod of Wisconsin with eight Moravian churches; Metro New York with 10 Moravian churches, Lower Susquehanna, Northeast Pennsylvania, Indiana/Kentucky and North Carolina. The Statement should be addressed to the Bishop’s of each Synod as well as the Vice President of Synod Council. Both the Northern and Southern Provinces of the Moravian Churches will also receive the Statement. Otto will write to the Northern Province, Bob Hunter to the Southern Province, and Ron Rinn will write to the ELCA Synods.

Dennis handed out a Web site resource on Life Long Learning sponsored by the ELCA/Episcopal Church USA/United Methodist Church (www.faithandwisdom.org) through the College of Preachers in Washington, DC.

Agenda building for the next meeting was discussed. It should include follow-up, which always generates new ideas.

Our next meeting is in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, on the 17th/18th of November beginning with supper at 6:00 PM and run through 4:00 PM on the 18th. Future meetings will be: in Chicago, June 23-24, 2004.

The Minutes were reviewed and corrections made. It is the desire of the Committee to keep Craig Settelge on our Committee as a resource person.

May 14, 2003 Meeting

Otto Dreydoppel opened the session with devotions. Dr. Steve Simmons, Director of Continuing Education at Moravian Theological Seminary, was introduced to the Committee and shared with us the *Gemeinschaft* program at the Seminary. This is a three year program that consists of an internal life journey, a social implication of service to the community, and the development of a personal creed which has future implications. The difficulty is trying to schedule this into a one-year program—a group experience that faces the difficulty of getting folks together on a regular basis. The church has moved from a CEO model for Pastors to a “therapist model,” but now the need is to show Pastors how to be Spiritual Shepherds. Theology includes prayer as well as philosophy. Art Freeman has been a good pioneer for spiritual formation at the Seminary. How can this program be introduced into the Seminary curriculum with a Moravian flavor without diluting the ecumenical nature of spiritual formation? Simmons hopes to have this started next year.

Good discussion and great possibilities for vast ecumenical exploration and implications too place. Helping folks to “be” as well as “to do,” is most needed at the Seminary educational level.

The Committee will add Dr. Steve Simmons to our Committee as a resource person.

For Lutherans, the Committee might need to expand our communications to other Divisions and groups to keep them apprised of developments and implications.

Broad Stroke Re-cap of topics discussed:

- Health and Wellness—also the Parish Nurse Program
- Ongoing spiritual formation: for ministers and at the Seminaries
- Expansion for of full agreement partners with ELCA/Provinces
- Jamaican Mission Project
- Mission starts and “re-starts”
- Pre-retirement/retirement process/issues
- Progress of ongoing ecumenical dialogues and documents formulated for implementation
- Sexuality study documents exchange
- Challenge to “congregationalism” which is inward directed rather than mutual for support and accountability in the community.
- Ecumenism lifts us out of ourselves to see interdependence—Following our Shepherd to Full Communion
- Contracts with each judicatory for ongoing communications and exploration of mutual endeavors.

Ron Rinn, Recorder