

**Lutheran Moravian Coordinating Committee
Moravian Seminary, Bethlehem, Pennsylvania
October 9 – 11, 2007**

Lutheran Moravian Coordinating Committee (LMCC) members, advisors, and visitors present were:

Otto Dreydoppel, Jr., Professor, Moravian Seminary; Judy Garber, lay person, ELCA; Patty Garner, pastor, Moravian Church Southern Province; Bob Hunter, Assistant to the President, Provincial Elders' Conference, Moravian Church Southern Province; ELCA; Kingsley Lewis, Bishop, Moravian Church, Eastern West Indies Province; Allison Zbicz Michael, Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg seminarian/intern, ELCA; Carlyle Sampson, pastor, ELCA; William Sibert, Jr., Executive Director, Board of World Mission, Moravian Church in North America; Michael Trice, Director, Ecumenical Formation and Inter-Religious Relations, ELCA.

Tuesday, October 9:

The meeting began with informal conversation over dinner at the Main Street Depot.

Wednesday, October 10:

The meeting convened at Moravian Seminary. Opening devotions were led by our host, Otto Dreydoppel using the Liturgy for Christian Unity from the *Moravian Book of Worship*.

The minutes were approved as corrected.

Michael drew attention to the packet and agenda. **We rejoiced in the action of the ELCA Churchwide Assembly in adopting the agreement of Full Communion with the Moravian Church Eastern West Indies Province and with the Moravian Church Alaska Province by a vote of 905 yes to 23 no. The EWI Province had already taken reciprocal action at the 28th Provincial Synod in 2006 and so the agreement is now fully realized between the two church bodies.**

Members of the committee held a discussion on the Martin Marty article on ELCA full-communion partners which had appeared in the October issue of the *The Lutheran*, the magazine of the ELCA. Members of the committee believe that the article gave too little emphasis to the theology revealed in the practice of the Moravian Church, especially regarding the theology and practice of the Lovefeast. The article sentimentalizes and trivializes the theology of the Moravian Church. We discussed whether it would be worthwhile to send a letter to the editor of *The Lutheran*. However, Michael explained that he, as the associate director of Ecumenical and Inter-Religious

Relations, had already had a lengthy discussion with the editorial staff and had reminded them that the department is always willing to provide support and accurate information, especially as regards the ELCA's full-communion partners. The Lutheran members of the coordinating committee expressed regret to their Moravian sisters and brothers for pain this article has caused.

Reports:

Bob welcomed guests Allison Zbicz Michael, Moravian Seminary students Adam Spaugh and Christy Melvy-Gibbons, the Rev. Dr. Steven Simmons, Director of Continuing Education, Moravian Seminary.

He also welcomed coordinating committee member Pastor Ronald Rinn who was joining the meeting via speakerphone.

The first topic to be discussed at length was greater unity between the Alaska Province, Moravian Church and the ELCA, particularly in terms of the ELCA Alaska Synod as well as a possible project offering the opportunity for eligible Alaska Province students to attend Pacific Lutheran University, Tacoma, WA. Key players identified in this discussion are Bishop Michael Keys, ELCA Alaska Synod; Rev. Peter Green, PEC president, Alaska Province; and Rev. Doc Nicholson of the Alaska Province. **Michael explained that there are fundamental issues of trust and safety** on the minds of the Yup'ik peoples who are the members of the Moravian Church in Alaska, as regards sending their children to PLU. We agreed that the function of the LMCC regarding this relationship was to facilitate greater unity rather than imposing a plan. The committee understands that full-communion may be a distant hope. Otto explained that most ELCA members are Anglos living in Alaskan cities, with the exception of seven native congregations in small villages, while Moravian Church members are entirely native people with two exceptions. The city of Dillingham is one of the few places where Lutherans and Moravians exist in the same city. The committee discussed the possibility of a visit by officials from PLU, along with members of the LMCC, to the Seward Peninsula. Will stated that the Board of World Missions would also be supportive of such a step and the Moravian First Nations Outreach project would be a natural fit. **Will, Judy and the Rev. Chris Giesler, Director of Youth Ministry, Eastern Region of the Moravian Church, will work on a proposal.** We thanked Ron for his participation and expressed our prayers for the marriage of his daughter which was to take place on the weekend.

We moved on to Michael's report on ***The Ecumenical Church in a Globalized World, the 2008 J-term experience sponsored by the Lutheran World Federation in coordination with ELCA Ecumenical and Inter-Religious Relations. The event will take place January 8 – 24, 2008 in Geneva, Switzerland.*** Adam and Christy will be among those participating. Their attendance is sponsored by the Moravian Church Board of World Missions. The capacity of the program is 30 students and 25 are already registered, coming from ten different seminaries.

The coordinating committee welcomed **Kim Bartholemew, HIV/AIDS coordinator for the Moravian Church Board of World Missions.** Will introduced Kim, his wife. Kim is a registered nurse and holds a BSN and a Masters degree in Public Health. Kim had attended the ELCA AIDS conference in Philadelphia in September, 2007. She reported that Presiding Bishop Hanson had offered a long-term vision of such ministries as being 1) attentive to those threatened by HIV/AIDS, 2) imaginative, 3) collaborative, 4) and prophetic. She also told us the important comment from a participant from Niger who said, "What good are the HIV/AIDS programs if we have no food or jobs." Currently there are Moravian projects in Tanzania and South Africa. Efforts are being made to develop a partnership between Lutherans and Moravians working in South Africa. Kim will be going to South Africa.

Kim also discussed the role of parish nurses in understanding and preventing HIV/AIDS in the U.S. and Eastern West Indies. In the EWI Province there are efforts to address the challenge of HIV/AIDS with education.

After a short break, Patty introduced **Mary Kategile, African Province, of Tabora, Tanzania.** Mary is a student at Moravian Seminary and the widow of a Moravian pastor. Mary is preparing to teach at the Moravian Seminary in Mbeya. Mary serves on the steering committee of the **Moravian Women's Consultation which represents all 19 provinces of the Moravian Church. They are sponsoring a Women's Consultation in Herrnhut, Germany, June 19 – 25, 2008, with the topic, *Valiant Women in a Violent World.*** Mary invited Judy to participate as a representative of the Lutheran Church, and Judy will attend, along with her daughter Beth.

We then moved to a **presentation by guest Andrew Genzler, director of the Advocacy Department and the ELCA Washington Office. Andrew's presentation is a follow-up to our continuing discussion of advocacy and public theology in our churches.** Andrew recommended a congregational study guide, *God's Mission in Our World: An ecumenical Christian study guide on global poverty and the Millenium Development Goals.* This resource, which was prepared by the Episcopal Church Office of Government Relations and the ELCA Washington Office is available from Augsburg-Fortress or for download on the ELCA website. Andrew said that as Christians we have a Biblical mandate both from the Old Testament prophets and from the life and ministry of Jesus to be advocates on behalf of others in need. The three most important areas of concern in which Andrew works are hunger, care for creation, and peace and reconciliation. After some discussion, we thanked Andrew for his presence at our meeting.

We ate lunch in the Saal where we continued the discussion of the morning's discussions.

Our first guest in the afternoon was Pastor Fred Lehr, Director of Church Planting of the Northern Province of the Moravian Church. Fred, a Lutheran pastor, has responsibility for Vision 2020, planting 20 new congregations by the year 2020. We also welcomed Rebecca Craver, a Moravian pastor from the Southern Province, who

serves part-time as the associate director of the Antioch Project of the Board of World Missions.

Fred has written a book on pastor burn-out. Patty explained to Fred that one of the purposes of SOS, Sustaining our Shepherds, is renewal of parish pastors. SOS is currently being used in both North Carolina and Virginia by Moravians, Lutherans, and other ecumenical partners. **Fred shared that the most important pieces of Vision 2020 is to call the right person for the right place and provide adequate funding up front. He also shared the Vision Statement on Lay Evangelists, a project he is developing with Moravian Seminary and the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg.**

Kingsley again raised the issue of getting help selecting mission developers in the EWI Province. The training needs to take place in the Eastern West Indies because it is difficult for participants to obtain visas to enter the U.S.

Otto then introduced our next guest, Rev. David Wickman, President of the Provincial Elders Conference, Northern Province. President Wickman stated that he is pleased with how fruitful the relationship has been, since he expected very little at the time of the adoption of the full-communion agreement. **He then called our attention to several areas of the *Principles of Orderly Exchange* which have caused him concern in the past.** One concern is that a Lutheran bishop rejected a Moravian candidate for a pastoral call stating that the call could not be extended unless the Moravian would become Lutheran. He also noted the slow process in two call processes of which he was aware. He then specifically called attention to these items: p. 6 IIIc, p. 7 IIIg, p. 3 #10, p. 4 Ia and p. 5 Ic. Michael met with President Wickman privately in an attempt to address some of these issues.

Otto then introduced Rev. Chris Giesler, Director of Youth of the Moravian Church, Northern Province. He referred to copies of *Portraits of Protestant Teens* which he shared with committee members. This study shows that the most significant influences self-reported by the youth surveyed are: parents; grandparents; other adults – church leaders, teachers, and coaches; parents of friends; friends; and media. **He said that the most important aspect of youth ministry for him is to give young people a place to release their passion.** Michael suggested that Chris contact Kristen Glass, ELCA Youth Ministry.

Rebecca and Will then showed the DVD presentation on the Antioch Project, a project of hands-on service for youth and young adults. The DVD is undergoing its final edits and the committee served as yet another focus group. The group offered suggestions which were graciously received by the authors, Rebecca and Will.

Having reached the end of the day, the meeting was adjourned for the day. The group met again for supper together.

Thursday, October 11:

At the beginning of the day, Otto introduced a guest who stopped in, The Rev. Dr. Walter Wagner, co-chair of the dialogue team and principle author of *Following Our Shepherd to Full-Communion*.

The devotion was led by Judy and Allison using the Evangelism Liturgy of the *Moravian Book of Worship*.

The group agreed on dates for their work:

Dec. 5, 2007 due date for 1-page proposals regarding continuing work

Dec. 12, 3 p.m. conference call

May 20 0 22 LMCC meeting at the ELCA Lutheran Center in Chicago

Fall, 2008 LMCC meeting in Winston-Salem

Michael led a discussion on a suggested theological study to be led by the coordinating committee. He suggested the topic of piety. A brief discussion ensued in which Otto suggested that Moravians and Lutherans are close cousins who have bickered over small points because we are so similar. While the most important theme for Moravians at Halle was piety, for Wittenberg Lutherans, it was orthodoxy. Topics which could be covered in this theological study could be: reconciliation, anti-racism, education and formation, new church plants and public church. Michael envisioned a series of three meetings over the course of 2 years. There would be a call for papers to be discussed at the first and second meetings. We agreed to take on this project. **Members of the subcommittee with responsibility for this project are Allison, Michael and Otto.**

Those accepting responsibility for other projects of this committee are:

- **Patty and Kingsley on an project on HIV/AIDS. Will will ask Kim to work with this team.**
- **Judy and Will will take responsibility for the Alaska project. Will will ask Chris Giesler to be part of the team and he will also the the contact person with Movavian pastors of the Alaska Province and Michael will be the contact person with Bishop Keys of the Alaska Synod.**

All these teams must submit 1-page proposals by December 7 to Michael and Bob. These proposals will be reviewed during the Dec. 12 conference call.

At the close of the meeting we shared family updates and glimpses of our Lebenslauf with each other. The meeting ended with prayer and the distribution of lunches provided again by Otto.

Judith L. Garber
recorder