

## A COMMUNICATION FROM THE CHAIRMAN OF PEC — EWI PROVINCE



# The Information

MONTHLY PUBLICATION  
MAY 2007

*“For we are God’s workman-  
ship, created in Christ Jesus to  
do good works, which God pre-  
pared in advance for us to do.”  
Ephesians 2:10 [NIV]*

## VISION STATEMENT

A Church - Transformed,  
United, Victorious in Christ

## MISSION STATEMENT

By the grace of God, we seek to be faithful to our Lord Jesus Christ; without distinction, we use all that we possess to call all peoples to the truth of the Gospel through worship, evangelism, discipleship and service

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## THE UNITAS FRATRUM THE UNITY BOARD MEETING BARBADOS, MAY 18-24, 2007

### MESSAGE TO THE PROVINCES OF THE UNITY

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

The Unity Board of the Unitas Fratrum, meeting in the beautiful Caribbean Island of Barbados greet you in the name of Jesus our Chief Elder. We have chosen for our theme: Discerning God’s Mission Through Our Unity.

We expressed our appreciation to our immediate past President, Br. Robert Sawyer (Southern Province, U.S.A.) for the leadership he gave to the Unity during his tenure as President. Sr. Angelene Swart (South Africa Province), Vice President of the Unity Board was elected as President in November 2006. Our meeting elected Br. Paul Gardner (Jamaica Province) as Vice-President. We have been inspired by Br. Sam Gray’s daily Bible

Studies throughout the meeting. We enjoyed the generous hospitality of our host the Barbados Conference of the Eastern West Indies Province. It has been a joy to share in worship in the congregations and to have fellowship with members and their families.

As we meet we are cognizant of the fact that we are gathered in a year of special anniversaries. It is the 550<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Unitas Fratrum, the 275<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Moravian Missions, and the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Abolition of the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade. It is indeed a moment of special significance and as a Unity we recognize the need to recommit ourselves to be faithful to the Mission of our Lord.

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The PEC says Thank you to the  
Barbados Conference

Greetings in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord and on behalf of a grateful Province!

The recently held Unity Board Meeting was a success. The business sessions went exceedingly well. This was due in no small way to the

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### Vice President

At the meeting of the Unity Board held in Barbados, the Rev. Dr. Paul Gardner of Jamaica was elected Vice President of the Unity.

### Unity Board Meeting

The meeting which brought together the Heads of Provinces and the Moravian Church Foundation went very well. The sessions were held at the Duncan C. Moore Educational Center—the Office Complex of the Barbados Conference. It was the first Unity Board meeting being chaired by the new President—Sis. Angelene Swart of South Africa. Sis. Cicely Athill-Horsford and Bro. Ezra Parris, and later Sis. Roslyn Hamblin all played the role of minutes takers. The theme for the meeting was **Discerning God's Mission Through our Unity**. The Bible studies were ably led by Bishop Sam Gray.

### Yup'ik Woman Ordained

In the Alaskan Province, the first local Yup'ik native woman, Sis. Sarah Owens was ordained a Deacon in the Moravian Church. She serves as Pastor of the Tuluk-sat Moravian Church.

### Unity Youth

A Unity Youth Newsletter is in circulation and the website: **moravianyouth.org** is active. However, it was the consensus that the Unity needed to create more space for the youth, and take deliberative steps to further encourage the promotion and strengthening of youth work within every Province.

Bro. Paul Gardner was appointed the Unity Board contact person with regard to the Unity Youth Steering Committee.

### Standing Committee on Theology

What was previously an Ad Hoc Committee of the Unity has been voted a regular inter-synodal committee of the Unity. It is expected to explore theological issues relevant to the Unity; and will receive assignments for study from Unity Synod, Unity Board and the Executive Committee.

### The Heritage Fund

Adequate revenue does not exist for this Moravian Church Foundation undertaking. Applications for assistance with the refurbishment of historic buildings may yet be submitted for review and possible funding assistance.

### Dominican Republic

The Unity no longer recognizes the work in the Dominican Republic as a Moravian work. The work has been placed in the care of another church (Lutheran?).

### Women's Consultation

The Women's Steering Committee of the Unity is as follows:

Sis. June Hutchings - European Region (Chair)  
Sis. Joan Smith - Caribbean Region  
Sis. Mary Kategile - African Region  
Sis. Tamra Thomas—North American Region  
Sis. Mallie Graham—Treasurer

The next Unity sponsored Women's Consultation is scheduled for June 19—25, 2008 in Herrnhut, Germany. The theme is *"Valiant Women in a Violent*

is catering for 75 participants — 2 representatives from each Province.

This will be the third Moravian Women's Consultation. The theme will *"explore the various ways in which women survive and thrive in the world today, and the many challenges this apparently violent world brings in a woman's daily and spiritual life experiences. Attention will be given to many forms of violence, including emotional and spiritual, and responses to all form of suffering and persecution within ethnic and religious groups."* The aim is to strengthen women to become part of the solution to the problems of our world.

In preparation for this consultation, there is a call to love and prayerful action. Six areas of consideration for prayer has been provided. These will be followed in a six month cycle and repeated through to the date of the consultation in 2008 - beginning June 2007. Appropriate scripture texts have also been given. The six prayer concerns are:

- I. *The Consultation*
- II. *The Unity Board*
- III. *Female Leaders in the Church*
- IV. *Anti-Slavery*
- V. *Violence against Women*
- VI. *The Unity-Worldwide Church*

### Prayer Jubilee

The year 2007 marks the 50th Anniversary of the Revived Prayer Watch. The Prayer Watch originated in 1727, and lasted for 100 years. After this it lapsed. It was revived in 1957 after the experience of the World Wars.

## Development of the Work in Africa

The Unity Board recognized the development of the work in the areas listed and has upgraded their status pending ratification by the Unity Synod scheduled for 2009:

- The Mission in Congo as an Affiliate Province to the Moravian Church in Tanzania-Rukwa Province.
- The mission in Zambia as an Affiliate Province to the Moravian Church in Tanzania—South Western Province.
- Northern Tanzania was accepted as a Mission Province under the supervision of the Moravian church in Tanzania—South Western Province.
- Eastern Tanzania and Zanzibar was accepted as a Mission Province under the supervision of the Moravian Church in Tanzania, Southern Province.
- Mission in Malawi was accepted as a mission Province under the supervision of the Moravian church in Tanzania, Southern Province.

Further details on the mission areas will likely be given in a separate report.

## Unity Synod

The next Unity Synod will be held in the British Province from July 27 to August 7, 2009, at the High Leigh Conference Centre in Broxbourne, Herts, U.K. We

continue to encourage the prayers of the church for the Unity and for Unity Synod. The theme of the Synod shall also be “Discerning God’s Mission Through Our Unity.”

- ♦ **Report on the Mission in Northern Tanzania** - The work covers a very broad geographical area. It has a membership of 3,358 in 18 congregations and additional Evangelism Centres.
- ♦ **Report on the Mission in Kigimo (formerly known as Lake Tanganyika)** - The membership of this mission is 23,172 in 15 parishes and 106 outstations. There are 16 pastors. The mission raised Tshs 56,250,000 last year.  
(*Tshs means Tanzanian shillings*)
- ♦ **Report on the Mission in Zambia** - The mission has a membership of 4,000 including children. Currently all pastors and other leaders are Zambian. As an outreach to HIV/AIDS sufferers retroviral drugs are being accessed through the local Council of Churches. A request from the mission that it be recognized as an Affiliated Province was supported by the Unity Delegation which visited.
- ♦ **Report on the Mission in Malawi**— This report covers the work beginning in 2002, which is the second attempt at missionary work in Malawi. There are 6 congregations and more than 1600 members.

Among the challenges is the need to cater to the growing number of orphans and widows caused by the effects of HIV/AIDS.

♦ **Report of the Mission in Latvia** - European Continental Province supervises this work. It had been a mission field of the Moravian Church early in the 18th century. The work was revived in the 1990’s and has been receiving New World Witness funding. It has been previously considered as a movement within the Lutheran Church. However, since 2006 the work has been more defined and was recognized as Diaspora Work in the structure of the European Continental Province. Because of a historical connection between Latvia and Tobago, there is an expressed desire and willingness to collaborate with Tobago in terms of assistance with a building project.

♦ **Report of the Mission in Albania** - The report on the Albania mission was presented by Bro. Frieda Vollprecht of the European Continental Province. This work is scattered across the country in 10 or 12 places with a membership of more than 500. Critical work has been done among the youth and children.

Albania has a strong Muslim background therefore there is the need for serious education. The church is officially called the Lutheran Church but the emblem of the church is the Moravian Seal. A change is to be made in the name to show distinction between the Lutheran Church and the Moravian Church. Identifying local leadership has been a problem and so Bro. Jorgen Boytler visits for sacraments and other pastoral needs.

### **Report of the Mission in Cottbus in Eastern Germany—**

The report on the Cottbus mission was presented by Bro. Frieda Vollprecht of the European Continental Province. He highlighted that there is a membership of 80 and though the congregation is small it is growing. The congregation had its first baptisms in 2006—one adult and one child on Easter Sunday and Ascension Day respectively.

### **Report on the Star Mountain Rehabilitation Centre -**

The Report was submitted by the General Director, Sis. Rawda Ma'rouf Khouriya, and presented by Bro. Frieda Vollprecht. A picture slide show on the Silver jubilee celebrations at Star Mountain was shared. It was pointed out that there is no Moravian Church in the area and that the Director is, in fact, of the Roman Catholic Church. The participants have various disabilities and the role of the Centre is helping them to gain vocational skills.

In addition to this, there is some community based work. The ECP has committed itself to extend this programme to support persons working with those disabilities.

### **Report of the Czech Undertaking -**

This portion of the Moravian ministry to the Czech Republic has 9 congregations and 675 members. The Undertaking has satisfied the requirements of the Unity Board, therefore the sanctions are to be lifted, and MCF funding for Theological Training is to be re-instated with effect from September, 2007.

Further, it was noted that the Czech Province, on the other, is yet to satisfy the requirements. Accordingly, the division within the Moravian Church in the Czech Republic is yet to be healed.

### **Report on the Unity Undertaking in South Asia -**

Bro. Robert Hopcroft, member of the British PEC who has been charged with special responsibility for this Undertaking on behalf of that Province, presented this report in the form of a picture slide presentation. He pointed out that this is not a new work. In Leh there has been a Moravian congregation for more than 100 years. There is also a school. At Rajpur there is a congregation and an Institute, but no church building. There are 500 children in this Institute, mostly from the poorer communities. Both a sanctuary and a school exist at Binnakandi in Assam. There is a rubber plantation with approximately 3,000 trees. South Asia is able to provide all its ministers but it is still an Undertaking. The work has extended in recent times.

### **PEC CALL**

Sis Roslyn Hamblin has accepted a call to serve as Pastor of the Calvary/GraceHill congregations in Barbados, effective May 16, 2007.

We wish Sis. Hamblin good success in this new pastorate and pledge our prayers.

### *Continued from page 1* **PEC Thanks Barbados**

excellent arrangements made and the wonderful hospitality provided by the Barbados Conference.

Your organizing committee led by Sis. Cicely Horsford, along with the kitchen staff, transportation providers, families and other helpers, seen and unseen, made it possible for the Unity Board to enjoy Barbados while accomplishing the work of the church. You have done us proud.

On behalf of the PEC, and the entire Province please convey our sincere and abiding gratitude for the service rendered and a job well done.

May the Conference continue to prosper in the service of Christ, and may its witness grow from strength to strength unto the increase of the Kingdom of God.

Sincerely in Christ,  
Errol Connor (Rev.)  
Chairman of PEC.

### **APPOINTMENTS**

- Sis Julie Joefied-Parris has been appointed Provincial Director of Christian Education as of May 1, 2007. She will be responsible for coordinating work of this ministry and will serve as the point person in the flow of information between the Ministers of Christian Education and the Provincial Board.

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We must continue to treasure the legacies of our church and forge ahead to be relevant in the various contexts within which we are exercising ministry. It means that we should be faithful stewards as we build bridges of harmony and peace across the world; across cultures and peoples. The Abolition of the trading in Africans reminds us that we must recommit ourselves to uphold the dignity and worth of **all** human beings who are created in the image of God.

The reports that we received from the Provinces provided us with an opportunity to celebrate the wonderful things that God is doing in the Provinces of the Unity. The area of new work being undertaken represents the church's commitment to continue to do mission both within and without our respective Provinces. We had to grapple with the challenges being experienced by many of our provinces and empathize with our sisters and brothers as they seek to discern God's will in the face of many challenges.

The Czech and the Honduras Provinces continue to be a concern of the Unity. We ask you to commit these Provinces of the Unity to our Lord as we pray for real unity in this our 550<sup>th</sup> year of witness. The fellowship that these provinces enjoyed has been fractured and we remain resolute in our attempt to search for restoration of such fellowship to all parties within the Unity. As we work towards this realization, we must recommit ourselves to the principles of the Unity; affirming

and embracing this unity of the church in its diversities. We must remain a single church of mutual accountability to the Unity Synod and the Unity Board.

We accepted the Moravian Church in Congo and the Moravian Church in Zambia as Affiliated Provinces. The Moravian Church in Northern Tanzania, Moravian Church in Eastern Tanzania and Zanzibar and the Moravian Church in Malawi as Mission Provinces. The South-Eastern section of Kenya was accepted as a new Mission Area under the supervision of Western Tanzanian Province and the San Juan de Lurigancho area of Lima, Peru was accepted as a Mission Area under the supervision of the American Board of World Mission. Our decisions will be taken to The Unity Synod for ratification.

Sisters and brothers, we are conscious of the nature of the world in which we are exercising the ministry of the Church. We ask each Province to be discerning of the time and the context within which such ministry is being exercised. We urge you, therefore, to commit to prayers the work of our Church in all the Provinces of the Unity.

May God grant us success in our work and in our attempt to heal relationships within the Unity.

Yours in His grace,

Angelene Swart  
President, Unity Board

*Appointments continues from page 4*

- Sis. Adlyn Mgonela has been appointed Acting Superintendent of the Trinidad Conference with effect from May 1, 2007.

Brothers Rowan Simmons and Devon Mannix have been appointed Coordinators of the Grenada Mission with effect from May 1, 2007. They are charged with the responsibility of leadership in spearheading the development of the call to be in mission with the community at Mt. Tranquil and its environs in Grenada. We invite both your prayers and full support for all the foregoing appointments.



#### **Birthday Greetings are extended to:**

Bro. Samuel Jacobs	8
Bro. Patmore Smith	10
Sis. Ivy Vessup	10
Sis. Patricia St. Hill	12
Sis. Eulalie King	19
Si.s Karen Bowers-Jones	21
Sis. Deborah Challenger	27



#### **Anniversary Greeting are extended to the following persons:**

Rev. Adrian & Sis. Andrea Smith	14
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