



The Moravian Church in America

NORTHERN PROVINCE PROVINCIAL ELDERS' CONFERENCE

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A Letter and Statement to the Church Humbly and Boldly Following Christ in Our Ministries of Caring and Public Witness

Grace and peace to you in the name of Jesus Christ.

We write to offer our prayers and encouragement in these very difficult and challenging times for the church, our nations, and the world. We especially pray for those who are fearful and anxious, and for those whose lives are being negatively impacted by recent executive orders and other developments in the United States. Be assured that the PEC is holding you and all our Province in prayer for God's wisdom, consolation, strength and courage in these times.

We also write to affirm some of the related commitments set out by our Synods; to advise of available resources; and to call the church to remain steadfast in faith, hope, and love as together we humbly and boldly seek to follow Christ in our ministries of caring and public witness.

The MCNP is committed to the ongoing call and work for justice and the healing and repair of relationships with people harmed by the legacies of the Doctrine of Discovery, colonialism, slavery, and segregation, and to the elimination of racism in all its forms, as affirmed by 2023 Provincial Synod legislation. Love for all, demonstrated by equitable treatment and inclusion of all people, is a principle of the *Moravian Covenant for Christian Living* (MCCL):

We will not hate, despise, slander, or otherwise injure anyone. We will ever strive to manifest love towards all people, to treat them in a kind and friendly manner, and in our dealings with them to approve ourselves upright, honest and conscientious, as becomes children of God. Together with the universal Christian Church, we have a concern for this world, opening our heart and hand to our neighbors with the message of the love of God, and being ever ready to minister of our substance to their necessities (Matthew 25:40). [MCCL ¶29]

The church celebrates the diversity of God's creation:

The diversity of life is nowhere more profound than among human beings. We are many colors, shapes, and ages. Language, music, culture, and custom vary among us. We are a great tapestry woven from God's love. [Celebration Liturgy, Moravian Book of Worship]

And:

Because we hold that all people are God's creatures [Gen. 1:27] and that He has made of one blood all nations [Acts 17:26], we oppose any discrimination based on color, race, creed, or land of origin and declare that we should treat everyone with love and respect. [MCCL, ¶33]

We reiterate resolutions from the 2023 Provincial Synod on immigration matters, joining the National Council of Churches (US) in its call:

for a comprehensive solution to our immigration challenges that respects the "Imago Dei" (the image of God) in all people, keeps our borders safe, and honors the diversity that makes our nation a great tapestry

and we affirm:

the worth, dignity, and inherent value and rights of immigrants, migrants, refugees and asylum seekers, and declare support for the humane treatment of any person coming across our borders, regardless of legal status.

The MCNP's mission statement expresses its embrace and affirmation of people of all genders and identities:

The Northern Province of the Moravian Church in America equips people and congregations to be agents of God's transforming love in the world. No matter who you are or how you identify, you are embraced and affirmed by God's expansive love.

The MCNP rejects Christian nationalism as a distortion of the gospel of Jesus Christ; as supporting the sins and systems of racism and white supremacy; and as a threat to democracy. Further, Christian nationalism is inconsistent with statements in the MCCL regarding civic life:

Considering it a special privilege to live in a democratic society, we will faithfully fulfill the responsibilities of our citizenship, among which are intelligent and well-informed voting, a willingness to assume public office, guiding the decisions of government by the expression of our opinions, and supporting good government by our personal efforts. Though giving our loyalty to the state of which we are citizens, we do recognize a higher loyalty to God and conscience (Acts 5:29). [MCCL ¶26 and 27]

We offer support for our congregations, and our ecumenical and interfaith partners, in their care for immigrants, migrants, and asylum seekers, and in their resettlement ministries for refugees; their work for justice and peace; and their calls for mercy. We call for the restoration of aid for life-saving food, water, medicine, and other critical humanitarian needs; for scientific research for treatments for cancer and other diseases; for support for public and higher education; and for adherence to legal means for making program, policy, and funding changes. We pray for peace with justice and freedom for all people, and for respect and protection of human and civil rights and the sovereignty of nations.

We affirm our call to public witness. We encourage the church to pray, to learn, and to be in conversation around these and other critical concerns internally and with others; to express your opinions to your elected officials; to join those in your communities working for justice; to organize, and to find creative responses in your context. The MCNP Racial Justice Team will continue to provide resources on the MCNP website. We ask you to let us know what additional resources you may need to support your congregation's ministries of service and public witness.

Jesus still leads on. Our Chief Elder will guide us through these times as we continue to follow him, obey his commandments, and remain steadfast in faith, hope, and love.

The Provincial Elders' Conference, Moravian Church Northern Province

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