

Resolution #24 - Racial Reconciliation

Subject: Racial Reconciliation

From: Social Concerns Ministry Group

WHEREAS, "the Moravian Covenant for Christian Living teaches that Moravians oppose any discrimination based on color, gender, race, creed, or land of origin" ["A Moravian Church Statement on Racism," *Racism and the Church*, Interprovincial Faith and Order Commission, Moravian Church in America, 1998, p. 2];

WHEREAS, the Moravian Church has recognized "the segregation apparent in our church's worship life in general, and the tendency of congregations and Provincial Elder's Conferences to extend calls only to pastors of the same race as the congregation" ["A Moravian Church Statement on Racism", p. 2];

WHEREAS, "Given the far-flung reach of the Moravian Church and its diverse heritages, from the vantage point of our present century one can hardly understand how Moravians in North Carolina in the 18th and first half of the 19th centuries could have genuine concern for the spiritual welfare of the African Americans around them, and yet accept and participate in the institution of slavery. The acceptance of slavery and the adopting of more 'American' ideas about African Americans is the low point in the story of the Moravians in the South." [C. Daniel Crews, *Neither Slave nor Free: Moravians, Slavery, and a Church That Endures*, Winston-Salem, NC: Moravian Archives, 1998, p. 1-2];

WHEREAS, it is impossible "to be reconciled to God without being reconciled to your neighbor." [Spencer Perkins and Chris Rice, *More Than Equals: Racial Healing for the Sake of the Gospel*, rev. ed., Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000, p. 10];

WHEREAS, the Moravian Church has recognized the need to "yoke black and white congregations"; to promote "more black/white interaction"; to "include blacks in leadership, on boards and committees, writing for *The Moravian*, and *Daily Texts*, etc."; to "learn to celebrate diversity"; and to "sensitize white congregations to black culture," [*Racism and the Church*, p. 1]; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Christian Education of the Southern Province, through the Commission on Church and Society, has established a racial reconciliation program to bring together members of predominantly white and predominantly African American congregations; has affiliated with, and participates in leadership of, the Institute for Dismantling Racism in Winston-Salem; and is in the process of establishing a team to deal with the matter of institutional racism under the guidance of Crossroads Ministry, an anti-racism program; therefore, be it.

RESOLVED, THAT the 2006 Synod of the Southern Province expresses its regret and apologizes to the African American community for the past participation of the Moravian Church in the institution of slavery; and

RESOLVED, THAT the 2006 Synod endorses a mandate to the Provincial Elders' Conference to expand, their efforts in respect to racial reconciliation, the elimination of institutional racism, and the fostering of diversity in churches of the Southern Province.