

With interest, we have read the booklet “American Moravian Church Theology – A Perspective by Moravian Laity”. Apart from the introductory narrative section written by Br. Modlinski, it consists mostly of personal testimonies and confessions of faith, written by more than a dozen of long-time lay members of the Moravian Church Southern Province.

In all statements, profound wisdom is reflected, coming from both faith and life based on Scripture. One can feel in them a deep personal relation with Lord Jesus Christ. All the authors are long-time active members of the Moravian church. They confess both true love towards this church and a fear of its next development, when its foundations are challenged, upon which it was always based on (and upon which is based on, according to COUF, also today).

In the entire history of the Moravian church, as in the early church, lay and theologically non-educated members played an important role. Though they had no formal theological education, they deeply knew Scripture and were able to interpret it authentically. From the testimonies of the booklet “American Moravian Church Theology – A Perspective by Moravian Laity”, we can see that this phenomenon has been preserved in the Moravian church up to now.

Despite mainstream developments of the church in general, close cooperation between theological educated and those without a formal education, between lay and ordained members always existed in the Moravian church, to the benefit of God’s work, just as it was in the early church: theologian Paul and fisherman Peter; layman Gregory the Patriarch and ordained priest Michael of Zamberk (Bradacius); first three bishops of the ancient Unity: Matthias of Kunvald, Thomas of Prelouc and Elias of Chrenovice, having no theological education, and the theologian Luke of Prague; layman Christian David, craftsmen (and later bishops) Leonard Dober and David Nitschmann, and theologically educated Nicolaus Ludwig Zinzendorf; and many others. Therefore we appreciate also the laity’s contribution on the current burning issues of the Moravian church as expressed in the booklet “American Moravian Church Theology – A Perspective by Moravian Laity” and we consider it important for finding the common way (in Greek “synodos”).

The booklet reminds us that the Scripture is a keystone of a life and faith, without which we cannot realize what is “essential” for the Moravian Church.

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