

# Reflections on the past 4 years

For those who inquire about the accomplishments of the Concerned Moravians, one does not have to speculate what has been achieved by this group over the past four years. Just study the contents of the Concerned Moravian's website! There, one can find a comprehensive historical record of what the Concerned Moravians have accomplished since 2018. Our achievements include:

1. Creation of an extensive, detailed website where exists:
  - (a) a chronicle of activities since inception.
  - (b) a copy of the petition sent to the PEC (which had over 1000 signatures enclosed).
  - (c) letters of appeal to the PEC and the Unity.
  - (d) correspondence and meetings with the PEC.
  - (e) minutes of over twelve general meetings and worship gatherings, many with guest speakers such as Bishop Armando Rusindo from Cuba and the Lt. Gov. of NC, Mark Robinson.
  - (f) videos of many events.
  - (g) copies of letters and actions by others.
2. Development of a mailing list database of Concerned Moravians.
3. Publication and distribution of two booklets and two books:

With some writers among the Concerned Moravians and the technological expertise of Judy and Johnnie Tayloe, the following publications came to life:

- (a) the booklet, *American Moravian Church Theology: a perspective by Moravian Laity*.
  - (b) two books, each authored by Brother Jules Modlinski
    - *Moravian Voice*, and
    - *Mountain of Despair*, and
  - (c) the booklet, *God's Word: The Way! The Truth! The Life!*, authored by John and Judy Tayloe.
4. The Holy Spirit further touched Brother Jules Modlinski's heart and hand as Brother Jules not only authored the previously mentioned two books supported by the Concerned Moravians, but he also published the book, *A Tearful Heart*, and the soon-to-be released book, *Apostasy in the Pulpit*.

5. Special recognition and appreciation are extended to Marcia Phillips for her artistry and enthusiastic contributions through emails, handouts, and other broadcasts she has initiated on behalf of the Concerned Moravians.

6. During this period, we observed:

- the resignation of David Guthrie, the President of the Moravian Church Southern Province, and Interim President of the Worldwide Unity,
- through their respective church council actions, only two Southern Province Moravian Church congregations (Home and Raleigh), permit same-sex marriage and use of gay clergy in their congregations, and
- from resolutions submitted by Judy and Johnnie Tayloe among others, the 2022 Synod formally resolved that the Bible is essential.

This is an awesome amount of success for a period when 50% of it occurred during a worldwide pandemic which caused the closure of many Moravian churches and cessation of church activities for many, many months. Despite this, we have been blessed financially by benefactors and individual contributions throughout the four years.

Objectives that we had hoped would have been more successful or stronger:

1. Repeal of Resolution # 14.
2. Committee development: We continue to seek more personal activism in committees and leadership on the part of the larger body of Concerned Moravians. Their enthusiasm and talents are much needed. Some of the original leaders of the Concerned Moravians have left the Moravian Church, or sadly, have passed away.
3. Sustained momentum: Some attrition was experienced when people's enthusiasm faltered after pandemic closures slowed our momentum and activities as it did with all Moravian activities.
4. More meetings with outside speakers: The pandemic presented difficulties in scheduling meetings and getting outside speakers. Despite many months of planning, a meeting with a Moravian speaker from the Northern Province had to be cancelled at the last minute when the speaker's family became afflicted with Covid.
5. More support from clergy: While some clergy support our theological position and efforts, they have, for the most part, become 'silent'.

6. Comprehension of the gravity of the situation: Many of our sisters and brothers in the pews still do not know of, nor understand, the impact of the current secular culture on the state of the Church in America and in our Moravian Province and denomination. Or, *if* they do comprehend the situation, some have chosen to not return to the Moravian pew.

7. Quick, viable solutions: These complex religious/cultural issues have been evolving within the Moravian Church over several decades. Solutions that are satisfactory to all will not be quick, nor easy.

***BUT!***

God heard our prayers and in His perfect timing, Rev. Luke Bell saw our sponsored advertisement in the newspaper and attended our September 2021 meeting. Luke spoke from the audience in the *Question-and-Answer* session, and we immediately recognized the Providential hand of God was at work.

The Providential hand of God was also at work by providing us a supportive congregation, Bethabara Moravian Church, whose congregation has graciously hosted many meetings of the Concerned Moravians.

As a result, God's Providence has gifted Bethabara Moravian Church with a minister who preaches and teaches the Word and who declares unequivocally that the Bible *is* essential. Rev. Bell now leads their Sunday morning worship, and a well-attended Tuesday evening Bible study.

We give thanks to God who guides us, blesses us, and sustains us. And we thank God for Rev. Luke Bell's leadership and ministry and the leadership of Bethabara Moravian Church.

***Praise God!***